

Profile: Sharia Youth Gathering

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Brief Analysis

Part of a series: [Militia Spotlight: Profiles \(https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/series/militia-spotlight-profiles\)](#)

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The Sharia Youth Gathering is an umbrella movement of social service, cultural, sports, and scouting organizations that is effectively controlled by Kataib Hezbollah through a cadre of linked commanders.

Name: Tajamo Shabab al-Sharia (TSS), Sharia Youth Gathering

Type of movement: Youth organization. Nonkinetic, mainly legal activities such as cultural events and peaceful protests to promote *muqawama* (resistance) causes, provision of social services and offering education courses for example teaching the English language.

History and objectives:

- TSS announced its existence on November 7, 2020, in Baghdad. Its Facebook account [describes \(https://www.facebook.com/shababalshryetshababa/\)](#) the group's mission as "preparing the Iraqi youth to lead the Iraqi society."
- Propagating political Islam is an important objective of TSS, as [described \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vhvrkZwVZo&ab_channel=%D9%85%D9%81%D9%88%D8%B6%D9%8A%D8%A9%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D9%87%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%86\)](#).



Sharia Youth Gathering logo

[v=vhvrkZwVZo&ab_channel=%D9%85%D9%81%D9%88%D8%B6%D9%8A%D8%A9%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D9%87%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%86\)](#) by Amir al-Musawai, the group's spokesperson.

- TSS was built on resources from Jamiat Kashafat al-Imam al-Hussein (JKIH) ([Imam Hussein Scout Association \(https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/profile-imam-hussein-scout-association\)](#)) which was established in 2012 ([https://www.instagram.com/p/CMgx0UWlpEE/](#)) and has been used by [Kataib Hezbollah \(https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/profile-kataib-hezbollah\)](#) (KH) to [recruit fighters. \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B6RWCK-33xE&ab_channel=%D9%85%D9%81%D9%88%D8%B6%D9%8A%D8%A9%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D9%87%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%86\)](#) In a clear sign of affiliation, JKIH's initial logo included KH's flag. Also, JKIH members regularly wear baseball caps with the [KH flag printed on them \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YZijvZboY2I&ab_channel=%D9%85%D9%81%D9%88%D8%B6%D9%8A%D8%A9%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D9%87%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%86\)](#).
- TSS is rapidly expanding its presence in southern Shia-populated provinces, probably to recruit as many Shia youths as possible.
- In February 2022, TSS held a [fundraiser for the Houthis movement, Ansar Allah. \(https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/kataib-hezbollah-behind-grassroots-iraqi-fundraising-yemen\)](#). The campaign was launched by Amir al-Musawai, the spokesman for TSS.

Chain of command:

- TSS claims to be an independent NGO, but the preponderance of the evidence shows it is a KH organization, or at least has close ties with KH and its membership. The majority of known TSS leaders have direct links to KH through their prior membership in JKIH.
- TSS's known senior executive leadership **all held similar senior executive appointments in JKIH** (<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/leaders-kataib-hezbollahs-youth-strategy>). It is probable that TSS leaders have direct links to KH through their tenure at JKIH and their similar executive roles at TSS. Senior leaders include:
 - **Executive Manager of Sharia Youth Gathering:** Abbas al-Lami, **ex-commissioner-general** (<https://www.alebaa.tv/2020/02/04/194427/>) of JKIH.
 - **Spokesman of Sharia Youth Gathering:** Amir al-Musawi, **ex-spokesman** (<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=325545328811269>) for JKIH.
 - **Head of Jihad al-Binaa:** Sheikh Abbas al-Kenan, **ex-coordinator** (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tGsFJImSOk&ab_channel=%D9%85%D9%81%D9%88%D8%B6%D9%8A%D8%A9%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D9%87%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%86) of JKIH/Nahrawan branch.
 - **Commissioner-general of the Imam Hussein Scouts:** Safi al-Saidi.
- Social media accounts belonging to the *muqawama* describe **TSS members** (https://t.me/albaroon_aliraqe/2068) as **sons of KH**. (<https://t.me/HHHHNB/4402>)
- TSS *mokibs* (Shia service tents set up during pilgrimage seasons to assist pilgrims) clearly **fly** (<https://www.facebook.com/shababalshryetshababa/videos/2765490307113711/>) KH flags, and their videos are **posted** (<https://t.me/sayhgg/197>) by TSS social media accounts.
- TSS is an open cultural and societal movement, and it is probable that not all members are affiliated with KH. Yet the group is led and organized by individuals with deep ties to KH. Through its KH-affiliated leaders and members, TSS carries out the policy objectives of KH and is effectively controlled by the militia.
- In February 2022, TSS **undertook fund-raising for the U.S.-designated terrorist movement, Ansar Allah (Houthis)**. (<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/kataib-hezbollah-behind-grassroots-iraqi-fundraising-yemen>) The campaign was launched by Amir al-Musawi, the spokesman for TSS.

Affiliate relationships:

- None known at present.

Subordinate elements:

- According to TSS social media accounts and statements, the group consists of at least four other sub-organizations:
 - **Jihad al-Binaa** (the Construction Jihad), a development foundation engaged in providing services such as water facilities for poor communities.
 - **Muasasat al-Shabab al-Riyadhi** (the Athlete Youth Organization), which is engaged in youth sport activities such as football tournaments.
 - **Muasasat Ibn al-Jawad al-Thaqafiya** (Ibn al-Jawad Cultural Foundation), which organizes cultural activities such as poster competitions.
 - **JKIH**, whose members **received training** (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-dhOd-bpynQ&ab_channel=ScoutAssociationImamHussein) at the hands of the Lebanese Imam al-Mahdi Scout Association, which **reportedly** (<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8008733/Scout-movement-Lebanon-youth-wing-Hezbollah.html>) helps Lebanese Hezbollah recruit soldiers.
- TSS operates its own YouTube channel, Telegram channel, and Facebook page.



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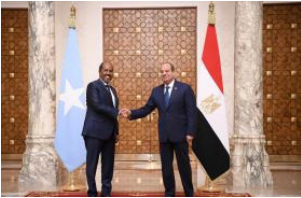
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