Policy Analysis (/policy-analysis) / Profile: Al-Warithuun

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Brief Analysis

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Al-Warithuun is a muqawama brand that has a recurring connection to kinetic operations directed by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Qods Force (IRGC-QF) that are intended to be deniable.

**Name:** Al-Warithuun, Al-Tashkil al-Waritheen (The Inheritors).

**Type of movement:** Kinetic direct-action cell of IRGC-QF that uses Iraqis to conceal Iran’s hand. Facade group that claims IRGC-QF operations that use Iraqi territory.

**History and objectives:**
- The first mention of Al-Warithuun in a public document is a 2020-2021 West Point Combating Terrorism Center study (https://ctc.usma.edu/back-into-the-shadows-the-future-of-kataib-hezbollah-and-iran-proxies-in-iraq/) that claims the name relates to new deniable Iraqi militia cells formed by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Quds Force (IRGC-QF) from October 2019 onwards for the purpose of attacking U.S. and other targets. The study noted: "This effort is led today by one of [Qasem] Soleimani’s close aides, known as Hajj Hamid, who instituted a new intake of Iraqi recruits under the name of Al-Warithuun (The Inheritors) for training at an IRGC-QF camp in Dezful in southwestern Iran."
- On December 9, 2021, Akram al-Kaabi, founder of the Iraqi muqawama (resistance) group Harakat Hezbollah al-Nujaba (/node/16716) (HaN), gave a televised speech (https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/akram-kaabis-revealing-speech) in which he stood against a backdrop of flags from several militia facade groups. One of the group flags contained the name Al-Tashkil al-Waritheen (the same word as Warithuun, but a different grammatical case).
- On August 12, 2022, a group called Al-Tashkil al-Waritheen issued its first statement in which it announced that "Any military bases and security centers in any county in the region whose participation in the operation of the assassination of the martyred leaders [Soleimani and Muhandis] has been proven to us... as well as countries that pursue an extremist policy towards our country and our people, such as occupying [our] lands [Turkey] imposing sanctions in its various forms, or supporting discord... is [considered to be] a legitimate target".
- On August 19, 2022, Al-Tashkil al-Waritheen claimed to have carried out a drone attack on the U.S. military base at Ali al-Salem in Kuwait on August 12, 2022. The group published a video which purportedly showed the launch of the drones against Ali al-Salem base. The video showed a rocket booster-assisted drone launch of a Qasef-2K. (Figure 1). This drone has not been observed in...
use by Iraqi militias before, and the footage does not appear to be recycled imagery of Houthi use of the Qasef-2K. Interestingly, another drone attack on the U.S. base at Al-Tanf (using an Iran-provided KAS-04) took place on August 15, 2022 from a launch location in southern Iraq,

- On August 23, 2022, imagery appeared in Shafaq News showing a Qasef-2K explosive drone (see Figure 2) that had crashed near al-Fhood, Al-Chibayish, in southern Iraq, potentially on its way to Al-Salem. It is unclear whether the drone was launched from Iran or from southern Iraq.

Chain of command:
The preponderance of evidence shows that Al-Warithuun was developed by IRGC-QF to undertake paramilitary operations or to disguise the provenance of military attacks by Iran that take place in Iraq or using Iraqi territory. Access to a Qasef-2K drone suggests interaction with IRGC-QF or an IRGC-QF affiliate.

Affiliate relationships:
- The December 9, 2021 display of Al-Warithuun’s apparent flag by Akram al-Kaabi suggests a strong affiliation or command relationship with al-Kaabi and HaN. This, in turn, provides further evidence of a nexus between Akram al-Kaabi and IRGC-QF.
- Other flags displayed alongside Al-Warithuun included Saraya Thawat al-Ashrin al-Thaniya; Rijal Allah; Ashab al-Kahf; Al-Muqawama al-Duwaliya (MD); Liwa al-Thaireen; Liwa Thar Muhandis (LTM); and Liwa al-Qasim. Al-Warithuun has now conducted an operation against a Gulf State, suggesting affiliation with Kataib Hezbollah-linked cross-border attack plots against Saudi Arabia and the UAE claimed by Alwiyat al-Waad al-Haq.

Subordinate elements:
- Tashkil al-Waritheen has an active social media channel on Telegram. The Telegram channel was created on June 2, 2022.
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