

Uli al-Baas (Part 2): Key Analytic Findings

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Brief Analysis

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

or see Part 1: [How to Use Militia Spotlight \(/policy-analysis/how-use-militia-spotlight\)](/policy-analysis/how-use-militia-spotlight)

Uli al-Baas certainly looks and feels like an Iran-supported militia info-ops platform, designed to give the impression (possibly accurate) that a pantheon of armed groups are activating to fight Israel and the new Syrian government.

As [Part 1 \(/node/19246\)](/node/19246) of this article noted, the new Syrian group Uli al-Baas (UAB) adopted Hezbollah-like iconography and a new name between December and January, then began claiming kinetic operations against Israeli forces and the new Syrian government. Part 2 will draw out some tentative analytical findings about the group's likely role in the Iran threat network.

Iconography of UAB

As noted in Part 1, UAB was initially known as Jabhat Tahrir al-Janoub (Southern Liberation Front, or JTJ), but then changed its name in early January and updated its logo. The original logo featured a map of Syria with the name "Southern Liberation Front," while the new version resembles logos used by armed organizations aligned with Iran's "axis of resistance." Both logos retained the color order of the Syrian flag used under the Assad regime.

The new logo also features a long arm holding an AK-47, similar to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) emblem that has been adopted by most militias linked to that Iranian military force, such as Hezbollah in Lebanon and [Kataib Hezbollah \(https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/profile-kataib-hezbollah\)](https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/profile-kataib-hezbollah) and [Harakat Hezbollah al-Nujaba \(https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/profile-harakat-hezbollah-al-nujaba\)](https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/profile-harakat-hezbollah-al-nujaba) in Iraq (Figure 1).



Figure 1: On the left, JTJ's logo; on the right, UAB's.

IRGC Online Support from Late January

(/sites/default/files/2025-

03/1_0.jpeg)

UAB has received active support from IRGC-linked Farsi-language channels on Telegram since late January. On February 1, a channel called "IRGC Cyber Corps," which had over 419,000 followers as of early March, posted a message titled "Official announcement of the Syrian Resistance Front Uli al-Baas against the occupiers." It read: "A Syrian group called Uli al-Baas is carrying out direct attacks on Israeli forces infiltrating the village of Taranja in the Quneitra

countryside, resulting in casualties among the Zionist army" (Figure 2).

Evidence Supporting Attack Claims

Thus far, quite limited evidence has been presented of any UAB attack against forces belonging to Israel or the new Syrian government. Moreover, there is no supporting evidence of the claimed deaths of "martyrs," which one would normally expect to be accompanied by funeral notices and other social commemoration.

UAB has also poured cold water on some of its early attack claims by posting contradictory statements. On January 31, for example, it claimed to attack Israeli forces in the village of Taranja (see [Part 1 \(/node/19246\)](#)). Yet on February 14, the UAB Telegram channel shared a quote from one of its commanders, referred to as "Colonel N.B.," who refuted any claims of kinetic operations up to that point: "Not starting our operations is due to preparation and readiness, as military science requires taking the correct steps" (Figure 3).



Figure 3: "Colonel N.B"'s quotes, February 14, 2025.

Geographic Role of UAB

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03/3_0.jpeg)

If one lends credence to the February 21 communique read by a masked man introduced as Miqdad Fatiha and shared by UAB's Telegram channel (see [Part 1 \(/node/19246\)](#)), the following geographic alliance may be emerging between *muqawama* (resistance) groups in Syria:

- **The west.** This area is serviced by Liwa Dir al-Sahel (Coastal Shield Brigade) under the command of Fatiha, an army officer loyal to the Assad regime.
- **The south.** According to Fatiha's February 21 statement, UAB covers the south.
- **The east.** According to Fatiha's statement, Quwwat Ashbah Rouh al-Muqawama (Ghosts of the Spirit of Resistance Forces), commanded by Dr. Abdulhamid al-Shamali, covers the "eastern region," which may refer to Deir al-Zour.

Early Impressions

While UAB's kinetic capabilities remain unproven, its emergence could signal the early stages of a new Iran-backed militia formation in Syria, an outcome that was always likely post-Assad. Whether through the above trio of groups or at some future juncture, it is useful to assess how an Iran-backed unconventional warfare project might unfold in Syria. Tehran has been a game warden in Syria for over a decade, but it could just as easily be a poacher. In January, Brig. Gen. Behrooz Esbati, a high-ranking IRGC commander and one of the last to flee Syria, confirmed that [Iran was already working with Syrian elements](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZAJEwtYQdBI&t=3s) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZAJEwtYQdBI&t=3s) to establish these factions.

To be sure, Iran faces significant challenges in reestablishing its influence in Syria, especially in the south and west, where logistical obstacles abound. Yet it has repeatedly demonstrated the intent and the capability to reach remote, strategically difficult areas, as seen in its longstanding support for Houthi forces in Yemen. Indeed, Iran has a lot of experience running supply lines through closely monitored waterways and across hundreds of miles of hostile ground territory, so supporting a new insurgency in Syria is eminently doable. ❖



Figure 2: Farsi-speaking "IRGC Cyber Corps" channel promoting UAB, February 1, 2025.

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