

'Abdallah 'Azzam Brigades (AAB)



OVERVIEW

AS OF OCTOBER 2022

The 'Abdallah 'Azzam Brigades (AAB) was a Sunni Islamist militant group operating in Lebanon, Syria, and the Arabian Peninsula under the auspices of al-Qa'ida, although there was never a formal relationship between the two groups. AAB was named after the influential jihadist ideologue Abdullah Yusuf Azzam. Saleh al-Qarawi formed AAB in 2009 per the instruction of then-amir of al-Qa'ida in Iraq, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, to establish an organization focused on targets in the Levant. AAB promoted sectarian violence against Iranian-backed regimes in Lebanon and Syria and threatened Western interests in the Middle East, including conducting attacks in Israel and the Persian Gulf. In late 2019, after several years of dormancy, the group's amir, Surajuddin Zureiqat, announced AAB's dissolution in a public statement.

Operating Area

Based in Israel, Lebanon, Syria, and the Arabian Peninsula

Members

No longer active

Tactics And Targets

Primarily employed rocket attacks, suicide bombings, and the limited use of seaborne VBIEDs, focusing mostly on Iranian-aligned targets in Lebanon and Syria as well as US interests in Israel and the Persian Gulf.

Terrorist Group Designation

The US Department of State designated AAB as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in May 2012, amending the designation in November 2017 to add additional aliases—the Marwan Hadid Brigades and Marwan Hadid Brigade—that the group operated under in Syria. AAB's founder and former amir, Saleh al-Qawari, was named a Specially Designated Global Terrorists in mid-December 2011.

KEY LEADERS



Surajuddin Zureiqat

Amir from October 2014 until the group's dissolution in late 2019



'Abdallah 'Azzam Brigades (AAB) *(continued)*

KEY LEADERS *(continued)*



Majid bin Muhammad al-Majid

Amir from June 2012 to December 2013, when Lebanese security forces arrested him; later died in custody from kidney-related illness



Saleh al-Qarawi

Founder and amir from 2009 to June 2012 until his arrest by Saudi security forces

NOTABLE ATTACKS

19 November 2013

Beirut, Lebanon

AAB claims responsibility for twin suicide bombs that detonated outside the Iranian Embassy in Beirut, Lebanon—killing 22 and injuring at least 140—including an Iranian diplomat.

28 July 2010

Strait of Hormuz

AAB attacks the Japanese-owned oil tanker M. Star, wounding one crewmember and damaging the hull of the ship.

