

# AAH Terrorist Planner Adnan Fayhan Takes Over as Babil Governor

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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)

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## Adnan Fayhan of Asaib Ahl al-Haq, identified by Qais al-Khazali as an organizer of the January 2007 murder-kidnapping of five Americans in Karbala, is now the governor of an Iraqi province.

On February 6, Babil provincial council elected the head of Sadiqun political parliamentary bloc, Adnan Fayhan al-Dulaymi, as the governor of Babil (Figure 1). Sadiqun is the political front for the U.S.-designated terrorist organization [Asaib ahl Al-Haq \(/node/16715\)](#) (AAH). Fittingly, the appointment was made under cover of darkness in an early-hours of the morning session boycotted by 7 of the 18 provincial council members, whose movements intend to protest the appointment.

This is a major step forward for AAH – its first governorship – and a new feather in the cap of Adnan Fayhan, who was AAH’s first MP and the leader of its growing bloc in parliament. But it is also a dark moment for Iraq: according to both AAH leader Qais al-Khazali and the U.S. government, Adnan Fayhan is also an Iran-backed militant who led the planning of the notorious January 2007 attack on the Karbala Provincial Joint Coordination Center, in which five Americans were killed, four of them by summary execution while tied-up and blindfolded. A relative of his (Azhar al-Dulaymi) led the actual assault, but was later killed by U.S. forces in May 2007.

### Fayhan’s background murdering Americans

Adnan Fayhan is from Hillah, Babil, where he now serves as governor. He first turned up on the U.S.’ radar as a young Sadrist commander. A [declassified March 30, 2007 U.S. Tactical Interrogation Report \(https://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/TIR-18.pdf?x91208\)](#) from Iraq noted that the talkative detainee Qais al-Khazali ‘also verified that Sheikh Adnan [Fayhan Musa al-Dulaymi] was the leader of the Sadr Trend “Special Groups” [the U.S. working title then for early AAH cells] for the central Iraq area, which comprised Diwaniyah, Karbala, Hillah and Najaf’.

[Qais al-Khazali also helpfully ‘verified \(https://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/TIR-18.pdf?x91208\)](#) that Sheikh Adnan Fayhan Musa al-Dulaymi came to his house in Sadr City, Baghdad, to have him approve of the attack plan on the Karbala Provincial Joint Coordination Center (PJCC), and to ensure it was in accordance with sharia law and get the detainee’s blessing on the attack.’ [‘The Karbala PJCC attack was proven to have been supported by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps – Qods Force \(https://www.army.mil/article/3890/iran\\_arming\\_training\\_directing\\_terror\\_groups\\_in\\_iraq\\_us\\_official\\_says\)](#) (IRGC-QF) at training facilities in Iran, where a [full-scale mock-up of the Karbala PJCC \(https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2007/06/us\\_finds\\_karbala\\_pjc.php\)](#) was photographed by U.S. satellites. Adnan Fayhan was later detained by the U.S. due to acts of anti-U.S. terrorism conducted inside Iraq.

### Fayhan as Qais al-Khazali’s political experiment

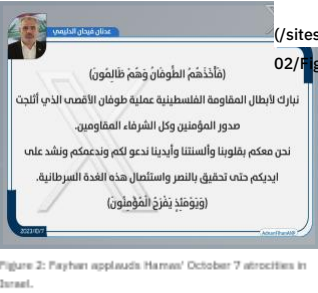


Figure 2: Fayhan applauds Hamas’ October 7 atrocities in Israel.

When Khazali and Fayhan were released by the Americans in 2010, prior to the U.S. departure from Iraq and in exchange for the bodies of murdered British civilians, Fayhan was put to work in politics. He first led AAH’s political office in Lebanon, organizing anti-Western conferences with Lebanese Hezbollah and Palestinian groups in 2011 ([https://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/ResurgenceofAAH.pdf](#)). (He remains openly supportive of acts of terrorism against Israel, noting on October 7, 2023: “We congratulate the heroes of the Palestinian resistance on the operation of [Al-Aqsa Flood] that heartened us ... [we are] supporting you and firmly shaking your hands until victory is accomplished by removing this cancerous gland, (Israel)” (Figure 2).

After U.S. departure in 2011, he returned to Iraq, building AAH’s first political party (Sadiqun) and scoring their first electoral victory in the 2014 national elections. Immediately after the win, he joined the new Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF), taking part in the PMF’s first battlefield victory – the effort to control the Jurf as-Sakr area - and being prominently photographed there with IRGC-QF leader Qassem Soleimani



(/sites/default/files/2024-02/Adnan%20Fayhan%20.jpg)

Figure 1: Adnan Fayhan, an organizer of the January 2007 kidnap-murder of Americans at the Karbala Provincial Joint Coordination Center (PJCC), is now the governor of Babil.



(/sites/default/files/2024-02/Figure%20Sakr.JPG)

Figure 3: Fayhan and Qassem Soleimani in Jurf as-Sakr in 2014.

(Figure 3). Since then, Adnan Fayhan has campaigned to refuse any resettlement of Sunnis within the area, with the exception of those linked to Sunnis who fall under the Shia bloc’s control. (Figure 4).

Adnan Fayhan led the Sadiqun bloc in its very successful campaign of voter intimidation and ballot-stuffing, which led to AAH’s increase

from one to fifteen seats in the very flawed 2018 elections ([https://eprints.lse.ac.uk/89698/7/MEC\\_Iraqi-elections\\_Report\\_2018.pdf](https://eprints.lse.ac.uk/89698/7/MEC_Iraqi-elections_Report_2018.pdf)). He served a second term on the parliamentary defense and security committee, where he consistently opposed U.S. military presence in Iraq, even when it was at the invitation of the Iraqi government. Fayhan defended his seat again in 2021 and ran the Sadiqun bloc until his appointment as governor.



**A key terrorist leader is now a governor**  
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Fayhan is viewed as the closest political advisor to Qais al-Khazali, the U.S.-designated terrorist leader's most successful political experiment. In one of his recent roles, Fayhan was AAH's representative in late 2023-early 2024 on the small group of Coordination Framework militia factions that negotiated the carve-up of over two thousand corrupted applications for their supported to be fast-tracked into the elite Counter-Terrorism Service (also known as the Counter-Terrorism Command and the Iraqi Special Operations Forces). ❖

Figure 4: Adnan Fayhan on the need to politically subjugate any Sunnis allowed to return to Jurf as-Sakr.

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