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## Iran's Support for Terrorism Worldwide

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Chairman Poe, Ranking Member Sherman, Chairman Ros-Lehtinen, Ranking Member Deutch, distinguished members of the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade and the Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa, it is an honor to appear before you this morning to discuss Iran's support for terrorism worldwide.

This hearing is timely. Over the past few years, Iran's state sponsorship of terrorism has increased dramatically to levels not seen since the late 1980s and early 1990s. Some of this is terrorism carried out by the regime's own operatives from the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) Qods Force, and some by the regime's closest militant ally, Hezbollah. Whereas Hezbollah might have once been described as just an Iranian proxy group, today U.S. intelligence characterizes the relationship of Hezbollah and Iran as "a partnership arrangement[,] with the Iranians as the senior partner."<sup>2</sup> This "strategic partnership," as National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) director Matthew Olsen put it, "is the product of a long evolution from the 1980s, when Hezbollah was just a proxy of Iran."<sup>3</sup> Events in Syria today have further cemented this partnership, with dire consequences for regional and international security.

### Background: Terrorism as a Tool of Foreign Policy

Iran's use of terrorism as a tool of foreign policy, one which is no more and no less legitimate than any other tool in its national toolkit, is well established. Writing in 1986, the CIA assessed in a now declassified report titled "Iranian Support for International Terrorism" that while Iran's support for terrorism was meant to further its

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<sup>2</sup> Statements of James Clapper and Lt. Gen. Ronald Burgess, "Senate Armed Services Committee Holds Hearing on Worldwide Threat to U.S. National Security," Defense Intelligence Agency, February 16, 2012, <http://www.dia.mil/public-affairs/testimonies/2012-02-16b.html>.

<sup>3</sup> Matthew G. Olson, "The Homeland Threat Landscape and U.S. Response," testimony before the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs, September 19, 2012, <http://www.dni.gov/files/documents/Newsroom/Testimonies/Olsen%209-19%202012%20SFR.pdf>.

national interest, it also stemmed from the clerical regime's perception "that it has a religious duty to export its Islamic revolution and to wage, by whatever means, a constant struggle against the perceived oppressor states."<sup>4</sup>

A 1989 CIA report highlights several factors that made Iran more likely to take increased risks in support of terrorism—factors that faded somewhat after the mid-1990s but that are now coming back with a vengeance. The first was the dominance of radical elements within the clerical leadership, which translated into significant Iranian hostility toward the West. Then as now, there was little chance more pragmatic leaders would come to the fore. Furthermore, igniting tensions abroad could shift popular attention away from domestic problems, while asymmetrical warfare provided Tehran with a potent weapon at a time when its military and economy were weak.

Underlying Iranian grievances with the West exacerbated these tensions in the late 1980s in much the same way that they have today. In the late 1980s, Iranian anger was fed by the accidental 1988 downing of an Iranian airliner by the USS *Vincennes*, as well as anger over the publication of Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*, deemed by Iran to be offensive to Islam. Now, the Iranian authorities' anger is fed by increasing U.S. and European sanctions plus Tehran's conviction that the West is pursuing a "soft overthrow" of the Islamic Republic by use of modern communications to whip up protests. Tehran thinks that the West caused the 2009 protests in Iran and is behind the protests shaking Syria now.

According to CIA reporting in the late 1980s, "Iranian leaders view terrorism as an important instrument of foreign policy that they use both to advance national goals and to export the regime's Islamic revolutionary ideals." The CIA noted that Iran had already "supported and sometimes directed terrorist operations by Hezbollah," described as "a thriving Shia fundamentalist movement in Lebanon." Iran had also "smuggled explosives into Saudi Arabia and conducted terrorist operations against Kuwait targets." Iran, the CIA concluded, would "keep the United States as a primary terrorist target" for itself and its surrogates for a variety of reasons, including the U.S. military presence in the Gulf, the recent reflagging of Kuwaiti oil tankers, the seizure of an Iranian ship laying mines in the Gulf, and an attack on an Iranian oil platform used to support Iranian military operations.<sup>5</sup>

### **"Marked Resurgence of Iran's State Sponsorship of Terrorism"**

In 2012, the State Department reported "a marked resurgence of Iran's state sponsorship of terrorism, through its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps—Qods Force (IRGC-QF), its Ministry of Intelligence and Security (MOIS), and Tehran's ally Hizballah. Iran and Hizballah's terrorist activity has reached a tempo unseen since the 1990s, with attacks plotted in Southeast Asia, Europe, and Africa."<sup>6</sup> A year earlier, Iran was implicated in a plot to murder the Saudi ambassador to the United States, Adel al-Jubeir, here in Washington, D.C., one of a number of violent missions Iranian operatives discussed carrying out at the time.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, Directorate of Intelligence, "Iranian Support for International Terrorism," November 22, 1986, approved for release June 1999, <http://www.foia.cia.gov/>.

<sup>5</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, Directorate of Intelligence, "Iran: The Uses of Terror," October 22, 1987, approved for release June 1999, [http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document\\_conversions/89801/DOC\\_0000259360.pdf](http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0000259360.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports on Terrorism," May 30, 2013, <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2012/209978.htm>.

<sup>7</sup> See Matthew Levitt, "Iranian Terror Operations on American Soil," testimony before a joint hearing of the House Homeland Security Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence and Subcommittee on Oversight, Investigations, and Management, October 26, 2011, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/iranian-terror-operations-on-american-soil>.

But the uptick in Iranian state sponsorship of terrorism goes back a few years more, to February 2008, as I detail in the January 2013 Washington Institute report I authored, *Hizballah and the Qods Force in Iran's Shadow War with the West*. That month a Damascus car bomb killed Hezbollah terrorist mastermind Imad Mughniyah. At his funeral, Hezbollah secretary-general Hassan Nasrallah promised to retaliate with an “open war” against Israel. A series of Hezbollah plots were thwarted over the next few months in places like Azerbaijan and West Africa, but it was a foiled attack in Turkey in September 2009 that proved to be a watershed event for Hezbollah operational planners and their Iranian sponsors. Despite the massive logistical support Qods Force operatives provided for that plot, Hezbollah operatives still failed to execute the attack successfully. Much finger-pointing ensued between Hezbollah and the Qods Force regarding where the blame lay for the two years of failed operations, culminating in the botched attack in Turkey and then another failed plot in Jordan in January 2010. Meanwhile by late 2009, Iran's interest in Hezbollah's operational prowess focused less on local issues like avenging Mughniyah's death and more on the much larger issue of combating threats to its nascent nuclear program. Malfunctioning components ruined Iranian centrifuges; IRGC officers defected; and then in January 2010 a bomb killed Iranian physics professor Masoud Ali Mohammadi outside his Tehran home.<sup>8</sup>

Furious Iranian leaders appear to have reached two conclusions after Mohammadi's death: first, that Hezbollah's Islamic Jihad Organization (IJO) had to revitalize its operational capabilities, not only to avenge Mughniyah's death but also to play a role in Iran's shadow war with the West; and second, that the IRGC would no longer rely solely on Hezbollah to carry out terrorist attacks abroad. It would now deploy Qods Force operatives to do so on their own, not just as logisticians supporting Hezbollah hit men. For this express purpose, the IRGC founded a new unit—Unit 400. Even more than the loss of its scientists, Tehran sought to address its damaged prestige—the image of an Iran so weak it could not even protect its own scientists at home could not stand. For its part, the Qods Force instructed Hezbollah to prepare a campaign of terrorist attacks targeting Israeli tourists worldwide. What followed was a three-tiered shadow war by Iran and Hezbollah targeting primarily Israeli, Jewish, Saudi, and Western interests—civilian and official both—worldwide.<sup>9</sup>

Over the past year, however, the operational tempo of these international plots appears to have decreased significantly. Some point to the election of President Hassan Rouhani and the subsequent and ongoing negotiations over Iran's nuclear program as the likely reasons for this change. That may well have played a role, though past precedent indicates that Iranian support for terrorism tends to continue even under the administrations of relatively more moderate presidents.<sup>10</sup> What has been far more significant, however, is Iran and Hezbollah's all-in investment in the defense of the Bashar al-Assad regime in Syria. The reality is that both Iran and Hezbollah are completely absorbed by what they see as an existential battle in Syria. To be sure, their deep investment in Syria has yielded results: whereas U.S. intelligence predicted early on in the Syrian rebellion that President Assad's days were numbered, that assessment was revisited once Hezbollah and Iran began their military campaign to support

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<sup>8</sup> See Matthew Levitt, *Hizballah and the Qods Force in Iran's Shadow War with the West*, Policy Focus 123, (Washington, D.C.: Washington Institute, January 2013), <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/hizballah-and-the-qods-force-in-irans-shadow-war-with-the-west>.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Matthew Levitt, “Iranian Terrorism under ‘Moderate’ Presidents,” PolicyWatch 2095 (Washington Institute for Near East Policy, June 25, 2013), <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/iranian-terrorism-under-moderate-presidents>.

Assad.<sup>11</sup> Focused on that campaign, neither Hezbollah nor Iran has the bandwidth to simultaneously prosecute a full-scale, asymmetric shadow war around the world.

### Iran's Support for Terrorism Continues

Iranian surveillance and terror plots reportedly continue, but not at the same scope, scale, or tempo of 2012. At least one of these appears to have focused on American diplomatic interests: in September 2013, an Iranian with Belgian citizenship was arrested for conducting surveillance outside the U.S. embassy in Tel Aviv.<sup>12</sup> Another occurred in North America: in July 2013, seven Iranians were caught using fake Israeli passports at Vancouver International Airport.<sup>13</sup> Two months later, in early September of 2013, three men—one Iranian, two possibly Eastern European—were arrested at a Brussels airport with forged Israeli passports. The men were attempting to fly to Toronto and Montreal.<sup>14</sup>

Meanwhile, more standard Iranian state sponsorship of terrorism continues unabated. Consider a few telling examples:

*Afghanistan:* Last month, the U.S. Treasury Department issued a series of designations targeting Iranian terrorism. In Afghanistan, which is set to have presidential elections next month and where the United States is in ongoing negotiations over troop levels after this year, three IRGC Qods Force officers and an associate were designated for terrorist activities. One was planning to execute attacks in the country with logistical support from two others. The Treasury Department noted that the designation “underscores Tehran’s use of terrorism and intelligence operations as tools of influence against the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.”<sup>15</sup>

*United Arab Emirates:* In the UAE, several additional entities and affiliates of the previously designated Mahan Air were targeted by the Treasury Department due to their participation in Iranian terrorism activities acting as front companies and the “procurement backbone” for Mahan Air. By doing so, they enabled the airline “to continue ferrying significant quantities of weapons and other illicit cargo into Syria on its own passenger aircraft to support the Assad regime’s violent crackdown against its own citizens.”<sup>16</sup>

*Yemen:* In 2012, the Qods Force helped facilitate the shipment of AK-47s, rocket-propelled grenades, and other arms to replace older weapons used by Shiite Houthi rebels in northern Yemen. Last year, the Yemeni coast guard intercepted a boat smuggling arms, explosives, and anti-aircraft missiles suspected to have originated in Iran.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Adam Entous and Siobhan Gorman, “Behind Assad’s Comeback, a Mismatch in Commitments,” *Wall Street Journal*, December 31, 2013.

<sup>12</sup> Gavriel Fiske, “Iranian Arrested in Israel on Suspicion of Espionage,” *Times of Israel*, September 29, 2013, <http://www.timesofisrael.com/iranian-arrested-on-suspicion-of-spying-on-israel/>.

<sup>13</sup> “Iranians Caught Using Fake Israeli Passports at Vancouver Airport,” *Jerusalem Post*, July 26, 2013, <http://www.jpost.com/International/Iranians-caught-using-fake-Israeli-passports-at-Vancouver-airport-321150>.

<sup>14</sup> Yori Yalon, “Yet Again, Iranian Caught with a Forged Israeli Passport,” *Israel Hayom*, October 13, 2013, [http://www.israelhayom.com/site/newsletter\\_article.php?id=12543](http://www.israelhayom.com/site/newsletter_article.php?id=12543).

<sup>15</sup> U.S. Department of Treasury, “Treasury Targets Networks Linked to Iran,” press release, February 6, 2014, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/jl2287.aspx>.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Jeremy M. Sharp, “Yemen: Background and U.S. Relations,” Congressional Research Service, February 6, 2014, <https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL34170.pdf>.

*Bahrain:* In January, Bahraini authorities intercepted a speedboat coming from Iraq with more than 220 pounds of explosives and other weapons onboard. Authorities seized C-4 high explosives, mines, grenades, ammunition, “professionally packaged” explosively formed projectiles, and more. A second boat was seized heading away from Bahrain carrying thirteen wanted suspects, including a Saudi national. According to Bahraini authorities, they had recently foiled four separate terrorist incidents. And while recent events in Bahrain, like charging doctors who treated protestors with terrorism offenses, have undermined a measure of Bahrain’s credibility on these matters, Western diplomats say the recent disrupted terrorist plots were the real deal.<sup>18</sup>

*Undermining Middle East Peace:* Iran continues to disrupt efforts to secure peace between Israel and the Palestinians, something it has pursued nonstop since the 1990s. In 2012, Hamas’s external leadership left Damascus, where its external headquarters had been based for more than a decade, over disagreements with the Assad regime’s violent suppression of the majority Sunni population’s antigovernment protests.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, by August 2011 reports indicated that Iran had already reduced its funding to Hamas for failing to show public support for Bashar al-Assad.<sup>20</sup> “Iran used to be the most supportive state to Hamas in all aspects: money, arms, and training,” lamented a senior Hamas leader. “We don’t deny this. Our position on Syria affected relations with Iran. Its support for us never stopped, but the amounts [of money] were significantly reduced.”<sup>21</sup> Recently, however, a rapprochement has occurred, with an aid to the Hamas prime minister in Gaza, Ismail Haniyeh, reporting that “Relations between us are now almost back to how they were [before the crisis over Syria].”<sup>22</sup>

While Hamas tries to rebuild its relationship with Iran, other Palestinian organizations are taking advantage of the political space and building their relationship with Hamas’s previous close patron. Last month, a delegation of Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) members led by Secretary-General Ramadan Shallah visited Tehran for a series of high-level meetings. Included in the delegation was Ziyad al-Nakhalah, PIJ deputy secretary-general, who was listed as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist by the State Department less than two weeks earlier. Among the PIJ attacks noted by the State Department was a December 22, 2013, bus bombing in Tel Aviv.<sup>23</sup> The delegation met with the Iranian national security advisor, defense minister, foreign minister, and President Rouhani.<sup>24</sup> Some Fatah elements have also traveled to Iran for meetings with officials there.<sup>25</sup>

*Syria and the Levant:* A tremendous amount of attention has been paid to Sunni foreign fighters traveling to fight in Syria against the regime, but at least as many Shiite foreign fighters have gone to defend the Assad re-

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<sup>18</sup> Frank Gardner, “Arms Ship Seizure Heightens Bahrain Fears,” BBC, January 9, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-25664217>.

<sup>19</sup> “Hamas Political Leaders Leave Syria for Egypt and Qatar,” BBC, February 28, 2012, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-17192278>.

<sup>20</sup> Reuters, “Iran Cuts Hamas Funding for Failing to Show Support for Assad,” *Haaretz*, August 21, 2011, <http://www.haaretz.com/news/middle-east/iran-cuts-hamas-funding-for-failing-to-show-support-for-assad-1.379845>.

<sup>21</sup> Elhanan Miller, “Iran Slashed Hamas Funding, Senior Official Admits,” *Times of Israel*, October 16, 2013, <http://www.timesofisrael.com/iran-slashed-hamas-funding-senior-official-admits/>.

<sup>22</sup> Harriet Sherwood, “Hamas and Iran Rebuild Ties Three Years after Falling Out over Syria,” *Guardian*, January 9, 2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jan/09/hamas-iran-rebuild-ties-falling-out-syria>.

<sup>23</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Terrorist Designation of Ziyad al-Nakhalah,” January 23, 2014, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2014/01/220540.htm>.

<sup>24</sup> Asmaa al-Ghoul, “Hamas Isolated as Iran Boosts Ties with Islamic Jihad, Fatah,” *Al-Monitor*, February 12, 2014, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2014/02/islamic-jihad-fatah-hamas-iran-palestinians.html>.

<sup>25</sup> Adnan Abu Amer, “Hamas Unfazed by Fatah Outreach to Iran,” *Al-Monitor*, February 6, 2014, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2014/02/fatah-hamas-iran-rajoub-zarif-palestine.html>.

gime.<sup>26</sup> Lebanese Hezbollah and Iraqi Shiite militants from groups like Asaib Ahl al-Haqq and Kataib Hezbollah make up a majority of the Shiites fighting in support of the Assad regime.<sup>27</sup> Shiites from Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Côte d'Ivoire, Yemen, and Afghanistan have also reportedly gone to Syria to fight on behalf of the regime.<sup>28</sup> Iranians are present in smaller support and advising roles, although recently reports have surfaced of additional deployments of various Iranian forces, including sixty to seventy Qods Force commanders.<sup>29</sup>

Despite large commitments to Syria, Iran is still keeping other irons in the fire. In 2011, the U.S. Treasury Department exposed the fact that al-Qaeda was using Iran as a transit point for funding and supporting its networks.<sup>30</sup> A year later, the details of the agreement were publicized. Al-Qaeda could use Iran as a transit point for money and fighters in exchange for refraining from conducting any operations within Iranian territory, recruiting operatives, and all the while keeping Iranian authorities informed of their activities.<sup>31</sup> In last month's release, the Treasury Department indicated that this is still the case, and indeed the network is operating to move funds and fighters through Turkey to Syria, including fighters for Jabhat al-Nusra.<sup>32</sup>

Iran's largest contribution to the destabilization of Syria—and Lebanon—was the leveraging of its relationship with Hezbollah to shift the momentum on the ground in favor of the Assad regime. As late as mid-2012, U.S. officials believed the Assad regime would crumble “within months.” Reportedly, Qods Force chief Gen. Qasem Soleimani was also increasingly concerned about this possibility.<sup>33</sup> But just months later, that assessment changed as intelligence revealed that Iran and Hezbollah were doubling down in defense of the Assad regime. U.S. intelligence assessments noted that Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah at first declined repeated requests from Iranian leaders, in particular Soleimani, for Hezbollah to send large numbers of experienced fighters to fight on behalf of the Assad regime. While some Hezbollah leaders were inclined to provide the fighters, others resisted what they (correctly) feared would prove to undermine their position in Lebanon and be, as one official put it, “bad for the brand.” Nasrallah only acquiesced, officials explained, after receiving a personal appeal from the Iranian Supreme

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<sup>26</sup> “Who Are the Foreign Fighters in Syria? An Interview with Aaron Y. Zelin,” Carnegie Middle East Center, December 5, 2013, <http://carnegie-mec.org/syriaincrisis/?fa=53811>.

<sup>27</sup> Jamie Dettmer, “Number of Shia Fighters in Syria Could Rise following Fatwa,” Voice of America, December 16, 2013, <http://www.voanews.com/content/number-of-shia-fighters-in-syria-could-rise-following-fatwa/1811638.html>.

<sup>28</sup> *Terrorist Groups in Syria: Hearing before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade, United States House of Representatives*, 113th Cong. (November 20, 2013) (statement of Mr. Phillip Smyth), <http://docs.house.gov/meetings/FA/FA18/20131120/101513/HHRG-113-FA18-Wstate-SmythP-20131120.pdf>;

Ariel Ben Solomon, “Report: Yemen Houthis Fighting for Assad in Syria,” *Jerusalem Post*, May 31, 2013, <http://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/Report-Yemen-Houthis-fighting-for-Assad-in-Syria-315005>.

<sup>29</sup> Jonathan Saul and Parisa Hafezi, “Iran Boosts Military Support in Syria to Bolster Assad,” Reuters, February 21, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/02/21/us-syria-crisis-iran-idUSBREA1K09U20140221>.

<sup>30</sup> U.S. Department of Treasury, “Treasury Targets Key al-Qa’ida Funding and Support Network Using Iran as a Critical Transit Point,” press release, July, 28, 2011, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg1261.aspx>.

<sup>31</sup> U.S. Department of Treasury, “Treasury Further Exposes Iran-Based Al-Qa’ida Network,” press release, October, 18, 2012, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg1741.aspx>.

<sup>32</sup> U.S. Department of Treasury, “Treasury Targets Networks Linked to Iran,” press release, February 6, 2014, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/jl2287.aspx>.

<sup>33</sup> Adam Entous, Charles Levinson, and Julian Barnes, “Hezbollah Upgrades Missile Threat to Israel,” *Wall Street Journal*, January 2, 2014, <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304361604579290613920542386:KEYWORDS=hezbollah+yakhont>.

Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Iran, the Supreme Leader made clear, not only expected Hezbollah to act, but to act decisively.<sup>34</sup>

Iran, for its part, would provide Hezbollah sophisticated guided-missile systems, in part to deter future Israeli strikes targeting either Lebanon or Iran's nuclear program. But the weapons were primarily stored in Hezbollah warehouses in Syria, and were delivered to Hezbollah via shared supply lines used by the regime and Hezbollah both. As such, the weapons transfers were also believed to be a means of giving Hezbollah another reason for having vested interests in the defense of the Assad regime.<sup>35</sup> Iran would work no less decisively to uphold its end of the bargain, deploying senior Qods Force commanders to personally oversee the transfer of advanced weapons systems to Hezbollah. The movement of such weaponry, however, crossed an Israeli redline, leading the Israeli Air Force to carry out at least six different airstrikes targeting weapons transfers for Hezbollah—some of which killed senior Iranian personnel like Gen. Hassan Shateri.<sup>36</sup> In response, Iran began to smuggle these guided missiles in smaller, component pieces that could later be reconstructed on arrival in Lebanon.<sup>37</sup>

As Hezbollah's combatant role in Syria has become more formal and overt, intercommunal violence has increased significantly in Lebanon, including gunfights between Sunni and Alawite militants in Tripoli, between Sunnis and Shiites in Sidon, and of course bombings by Sunni militants—including Jabhat al-Nusra in Lebanon—in Shiite neighborhoods in Beirut and Hermel. Hezbollah's stronghold in the Dahiya, in southern Beirut, has been struck on multiple occasions, and even the Iranian embassy in Beirut was the target of a double suicide bombing. Nonetheless, Hezbollah has doubled down in its support for the Assad regime, even after bombs started going off in the Dahiya. Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah was crystal clear: "If you are punishing Hezbollah for its role in Syria, I will tell you, if we want to respond to the Dahiye explosion, we would double the number of fighters in Syria—if they were 1,000 to 2,000, and if they were 5,000, they would become 10,000." Indeed, Hezbollah—and Nasrallah himself—has cast its lot with Assad to the end. "If," Nasrallah added, "one day came, and required that Hezbollah and I go to Syria, we will do so."<sup>38</sup>

## Conclusion

Iran sees terrorism, political violence, and other militant activities as policy tools that are no less or more legitimate than any other means of affecting foreign (or domestic) policy. It should therefore not surprise that even under the regime of President Rouhani, and even as Tehran engages in the P5+1 talks over its nuclear program, Iran continues to engage in these types of activities itself and sponsors the efforts of its partners like Hezbollah. Iran does this because, time and again, it has found such activities both effective and financially and politically

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<sup>34</sup> Adam Entous and Siobhan Gorman, "Behind Assad's Comeback, a Mismatch in Commitments," *Wall Street Journal*, December 31, 2013, <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702303453004579292543464208138>.

<sup>35</sup> Adam Entous, Charles Levinson, and Julian Barnes, "Hezbollah Upgrades Missile Threat to Israel," *Wall Street Journal*, January 2, 2014, <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304361604579290613920542386:KEYWORDS=hezbollah+yakhont>.

<sup>36</sup> "Syria Conflict: Israel 'Carries Out Latakia Air Strike,'" BBC, November 1, 2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-24767571>.

<sup>37</sup> Adam Entous, Charles Levinson, and Julian Barnes, "Hezbollah Upgrades Missile Threat to Israel," *Wall Street Journal*, January 2, 2014, <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304361604579290613920542386:KEYWORDS=hezbollah+yakhont>.

<sup>38</sup> Ali Hashem, "Nasrallah Threatens to Double Hezbollah Forces in Syria," Al-Monitor, August 16, 2013, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/08/nasrallah-double-forces-syria.html>.

inexpensive. Moving forward, Washington and its allies—within the P5+1 and beyond—must find credible ways of communicating to Iran that continuing to engage in such activities will incur a heavy price. In the context of current events, that will be very difficult to do. Failure to do so, however, guarantees a far less stable region with dire consequences for regional and international security.