



The Iran-Israel War: Possible Iranian-Orchestrated Attacks on Israeli and Jewish Targets

March 18, 2026

Overview¹

- ▶ On February 28, 2026, Israel and the United States launched a combined preemptive strike in Iran which included attacks on dozens of military, security and regime targets across the country, during which Iranian's supreme leader Ali Khamenei and dozens of other senior officials were eliminated. Iran responded with missile and UAV attacks on Israel, American facilities in the Middle East and neighboring countries.
- ▶ Along with a military response, concern increased that the regime in Tehran would also carry out revenge attacks on Israeli, Jewish and American targets, using the terrorist infrastructure it has constructed in many countries around the world, which it uses as a tool for attacks and attempted attacks to advance the interests of the Islamic Republic. Shi'ite religious scholars also issued fatwas and calls for jihad.
- ▶ Since the beginning of the war, Iranian terrorist plots against Israeli and Jewish targets in the United Kingdom and Azerbaijan have been exposed and prevented from coming to fruition. In addition, an unknown organization suspected of being inspired by Iran claimed responsibility for four attacks on Jewish institutions in Europe.
- ▶ Israeli sources called on Israeli citizens around the world to take increased precautionary measures, particularly near Jewish and Israeli sites, and Israeli missions reduced they activity and presence.
- ▶ **In ITIC assessment, given the damage to the heads of the regime in Iran in general and the elimination of Iran's leader in particular, and given the risk to the regime's stability, Iran will seek to exact a high price from Israel and the United States, in addition to the arena of direct hostilities, and to increase pressure to halt the attacks as soon as possible. It is entirely possible that the combination of a desire for revenge and a strategic need for**

¹ Click <https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en> to subscribe and receive the ITIC's daily updates as well as its other publications.

leverage could promote various terrorist networks directed and assisted by Iran to attack Israeli and Jewish targets worldwide, as long as the war continues and after it ends.

Iran: Terrorism as a Response²

► The use of global terrorism has been one of Iran's main strategic tools for advancing the national interests of the Islamic Republic since its establishment in 1979, as well as for exacting revenge for damage to its vital interests. Over the years Iran has targeted Israel and the Jewish people, the United States and its allies in the West, Arab states opposed to Iran and opposition activists to the Iranian regime. For example, in 2012 attempted attacks on Israeli figures and targets abroad in response to the elimination of Iranian nuclear scientists attributed to Israel were prevented.

► Branches of the Iranian regime, primarily the Qods Force of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and the ministry of intelligence, are directly involved in terrorist attacks around the world, sometimes using intelligence agents operating under diplomatic cover in Iranian embassies. However, most of the actual attacks are carried out by proxy organizations, primarily Hezbollah, or by foreign nationals recruited for the mission, to obscure evidence of Iranian involvement. In recent years, Iran's use of criminal elements to carry out attacks has also been exposed.

The Iranian Terrorist Threat since the Beginning of the War

► On February 28, 2026, Israel and the United States launched a combined preemptive strike on Iran, during which Iran's leader, Ali Khamenei, and dozens of other senior regime and security force figures were eliminated, and thousands of military, security and regime targets in Tehran and throughout the Islamic Republic were attacked. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) announced the launch of Operations True Promise 4 and claimed responsibility for launching missiles and UAVs at Israel and American bases and vessels in Gulf States, including Qatar, Bahrain, the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Oman (which mediated indirect talks between the United States and Iran), and for closing the Strait of Hormuz.

► Shi'ite religious authorities called on the Muslim faithful to wage jihad on the United States and Israel in response to the elimination of Iran's leader. For example, Ayatollah Makarem

² See the July 2025 ITIC report, [Possible Iranian Terrorist Attacks Abroad Following the Israel-Iran War](#)

Shirazi, a member of Iran's Assembly of Experts, called on the faithful to declare jihad and avenge the death of Khamenei (Mehr, March 1, 2026). Ayatollah Nouri Hamedani issued a fatwa stating that revenge was a personal obligation of every true Muslim believer (Tasnim, March 1, 2026). Sayyid Hashem al-Haidari, secretary general of the Iraqi al-Ahd movement affiliated with the Iranian regime, issued a similar fatwa, stating that "the pursuit of revenge is not only a matter of justice, but it is a religious, moral and human obligation" (WANA agency, March 5, 2026).

► During the period before the strike, with the buildup of American forces in the Middle East and the increasing likelihood of military action against Iran, an Israeli source stated that alert levels at all Israeli diplomatic missions worldwide had been raised to the highest level and that the possibility of evacuating some embassies and consulates in areas considered sensitive was being examined (al-Hadath, February 23, 2026).

► Thus concern increased that in addition to the military response, Iran would also use its capabilities for revenge attacks on Israeli and Jewish interests:

- ◆ With the start of the war, the National Security Council called on Israelis abroad to take increased precautionary measures. The statement said that "the escalation with Iran increases the likelihood that the Iranian regime will intensify efforts to carry out attacks abroad on Israeli/Jewish targets," along with the possibility of attempted attacks by other terrorist actors or local initiatives (Israeli National Security Council website, February 28, 2026).

- ◆ The National Security Council also warned that "increased motivation" and expansion of efforts and threats by Iranian military bodies to attack Israeli and Jewish targets worldwide had been identified. The warning level was elevated and Israelis abroad were called on "to maintain a low profile regarding Jewish and Israeli identifiers in the public sphere" and to avoid going to places identified as Jewish and Israeli (Israeli National Security Council website, March 5, 2026).

- ◆ Senior Israeli officials stated that Iran had "loosened the reins" in efforts to promote terrorist attacks, based on its perception that terrorism abroad would be an additional, significant response against Israel. According to the officials, the Iran leadership gave a green light to all bodies to attack in every possible way without making an effort to conceal involvement, focusing on attacks on Israeli and Jewish communities, from

official sites such as embassies and missions to civilian institutions (Israeli media, March 14, 2026).

- ◆ According to reports, in light of specific warnings, Israeli diplomats were forced to move to safe houses or leave the countries in which they were stationed, while many diplomatic representatives were required to work from home. In addition, the Israeli Foreign Ministry reduced the activity of missions worldwide according to security needs (Ynet, March 16, 2026).

- ◆ In the United States as well, concern increased regarding Iranian attempts to attack American interests worldwide. It was revealed that American intelligence had intercepted encrypted radio communications originating in Iran shortly after the elimination of Khamenei. According to American intelligence assessments, it was a covert activation message to Iranian sleeper terror cells abroad (ABC News, March 10, 2026). It was also reported that the FBI issued a warning that unverified information had been collected according to which Iran allegedly sought to carry out a drone attack on California, launched from an unidentified vessel off the west coast of the United States, if the country were attacked (ABC News, March 12, 2026).

► Since the beginning of the war on Iran, several Iran-related terrorist plots focusing on Israeli and Jewish targets have been uncovered:

- ◆ Authorities in the United Kingdom revealed that they had prevented an Iranian terrorist attack on Jewish targets in London. An Iranian citizen and three men with dual Iranian-British citizenship were arrested on suspicion of collecting intelligence on Jewish targets (BBC, March 6, 2026).

- ◆ Security authorities in Azerbaijan foiled a plot by the IRGC to attack the Israeli embassy in Baku, a leader of the Jewish community, the Ashkenazi synagogue and the strategic Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline, through which about one third of Israel's oil consumption passes. According to the authorities, three explosive devices intended for use in the attacks were seized. At least seven Azerbaijanis were arrested and international arrest warrants were issued for four Iranians involved in the plot (Azerbaijani Report news agency and Times of Israel, March 6, 2026).

► In addition, there were three attacks targeting Jewish institutions in Europe which caused damage but no casualties:

- ◆ On March 9, 2026, an explosion occurred near a synagogue in the city of Liège in Belgium.
 - ◆ On March 13, 2026, a Molotov cocktail was thrown at the entrance to a synagogue in Rotterdam in the Netherlands.
 - ◆ On the night of March 13, 2026, a Molotov cocktail was thrown at a Jewish school in Amsterdam. Dutch police arrested four men 17 to 19 years of age on suspicion of involvement in the attack in Rotterdam. The Dutch minister of justice, David van Weel, said Iranian involvement was suspected and was being examined (Reuters, March 17, 2026).
 - ◆ With the growing threat to the Jewish community, the Belgian government announced it would deploy military and federal police forces at sites with links to the Jewish community, including synagogues and schools (Brussels Times, March 16, 2026).
- An unknown group called Harakat Ashab al-Yamin al-Islamiyya (The Islamic Movement of the Companions of the Right) claimed responsibility for the three attacks, and for an attack on a Jewish institution in Greece on March 11, 2026 (Fox News, March 16, 2026). The group also claimed responsibility for an explosion at the entrance to the World Trade Center in Amsterdam on March 15, 2026 and published a video stating it was the "final warning to the peoples of the world, especially in the European Union, to distance yourselves immediately from all American and Zionist interests and everything connected to them" (Telegram channel of Harakat Ashab al-Yamin al-Islamiyya, March 16, 2026). According to a report by the Israeli Ministry for Diaspora Affairs and Combating Antisemitism, the group is suspected of being connected to pro-Iranian networks, and the videos of the attacks and the organization's statements were also distributed on social media networks affiliated with the "resistance axis"³ (Ynet, March 15, 2026). The group's logo resembles those of the IRGC and Hezbollah, and its name is similar to that of a pro-Iranian militia in Iraq (Long War Journal, March 12, 2026; al-Manshar, March 14, 2026).

³ Iran, Hezbollah, the Palestinian terrorist organizations, the Houthis in Yemen and the Shi'ite militias in Iraq.



Right: The movement's logo in a threat against American and "Zionist" interests (Telegram channel of Harakat Ashab al-Yamin al-Islamiyya, March 16, 2026). Left: From the video of the attack on the school in Amsterdam (X account of iranhashtags, March 14, 2026)

► The United States embassy in Oslo was also attacked. An explosive device was placed at the entrance to the building on the night of March 7, 2026 and law enforcement authorities in Norway arrested three brothers, Norwegians of Iraqi origin, on suspicion of responsibility for the explosion. One of the lines of investigation being examined is reportedly that an Iranian-directed organization ordered the attack, with suspicion of the involvement of Foxtrot, a Swedish criminal organization, which was operated by Iran in previous attempted attacks on Israeli and Jewish targets, mainly in Scandinavian countries (Aftenposten, March 11, 2026).