



Spotlight on Iran and the Shiite Axis

November 12-19, 2025

Editor: Dr. Raz Zimmt



Highlights¹

- ▶ The Iranian Foreign Ministry expressed “deep concern” that the UN Security Council resolution adopting President Trump’s plan for the future of the Gaza Strip contradicts the Palestinians’ right to self-determination. It stressed that the international force in the Gaza Strip should only deal with implementing the ceasefire and bringing in humanitarian aid.
- ▶ The advisor to the Speaker of the Lebanese Parliament met in Tehran with senior Iranian government officials, headed by the Secretary of the Supreme Council for National Security, the Foreign Minister, and the Speaker of the Majles. He expressed hope that Iran would be more present in dealing with the challenges facing Lebanon.
- ▶ Iranian officials congratulated Iraq following the parliamentary elections held in the country, in which the pro-Iranian militias increased their power.
- ▶ It was reported that Iran returned the IRGC Qods Force representative to Yemen to help the Houthis reorganize following the ceasefire in the Gaza Strip and the Israeli strikes in Yemen. The UN Security Council extended sanctions on the Houthis and senior figures in the Houthi leadership and security forces by one year.

Iran and the Militias amid Developments in the Palestinian Arena

Iran

- ▶ The Iranian Foreign Ministry expressed “deep concern” regarding the provisions of UN Security Council Resolution 2803, which adopted US President Trump’s plan for a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip and the implementation of “the day after.” The statement said that a significant part of the provisions contradicts the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and imposes a guardianship system on the Gaza Strip, thereby depriving the Palestinians of their basic rights, primarily the right to self-realization and the establishment of a state with Jerusalem as its capital. The Iranian Foreign Ministry further stressed that the international forces that are supposed to operate in the Gaza Strip should

¹ The weekly study includes the activities of Iran, the Shiite militias in Iraq, and the Houthis in Yemen.

be under UN supervision and deal only with implementing the ceasefire and bringing in humanitarian aid. The Foreign Ministry also called on the international community to prevent the continuation of “the crimes of the Zionist entity, the occupation, and the violation of Palestinian rights,” while emphasizing “the legitimacy of resistance against occupation” (Tasnim, November 19, 2025).

► Iran’s ambassador to the UN, Amir Saeid Iravani, said that many members of the Security Council expressed concern about the provisions of the resolution because it was designed to strip both the UN and the Security Council of responsibility. However, they ultimately voted in favor of the resolution to stop “the bloodshed and genocide” in the Gaza Strip. He emphasized Iran’s position that the resolution and the mechanisms included in it should not be implemented or interpreted in a way that harms or undermines the legitimate rights of the Palestinians. He added that it is a temporary Palestinian committee that should manage the Gaza Strip and called for preventing any possibility of “annexation, occupation, and forced displacement” under the new resolution (Tasnim, November 19, 2025).

► Before the vote in the Security Council, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi spoke with his Russian counterpart, Sergey Lavrov, about the American draft resolution. Araghchi stressed that such plans contradict the principles of independence and the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people and cannot succeed (Mehr, November 12, 2025).

► The Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister, Majid Takht-Ravanchi, met in Doha with Qatar’s Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Mohammed al-Khulaifi, and discussed with him the relations between the countries and developments in the Gaza Strip and the “occupied Palestinian territories” in view of the ceasefire agreement between Hamas and Israel. During the meeting, the deputy minister conveyed a written message from Foreign Minister Araghchi to Qatar’s Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani (ISNA, November 16, 2025).



Meeting between the Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister and the Qatari Minister of State for Foreign Affairs (ISNA, November 16, 2025)

► Iranian government spokeswoman Fatemeh Mohajerani said that Iran welcomes any permanent agreement that brings calm and serves the interests of Gaza’s residents. She noted that the parties involved in the agreement are responsible for maintaining it and stressed that Iran leaves the question of Hamas’s future to the Palestinian people themselves (*Al-Mayadeen*, November 15, 2025).



The Iranian government spokeswoman interviewed (*Al-Mayadeen*, November 15, 2025)

The Houthis

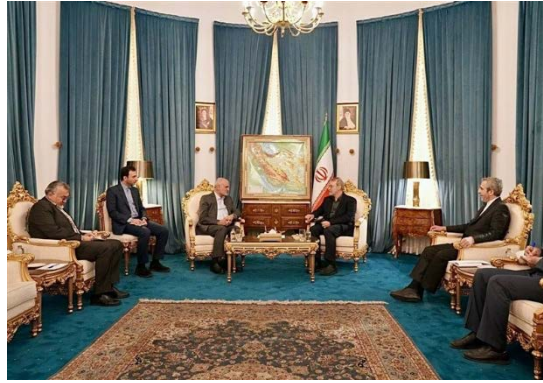
► The Houthi political bureau condemned the UN Security Council’s decision to establish a “peacekeeping force” in the Gaza Strip, which it claimed amounted to the restoration of “guardianship and patronage under American supervision.” The statement said that the decision fulfills the aims of “the Israeli enemy,” which had failed to achieve them through “excessive force and genocide.” The political bureau expressed regret over the support of Arab and Islamic countries for the American position and emphasized “the right of the Palestinian people to resist the enemy.” Additionally, it called on the Security Council and the international community to ensure the flow of humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip and to open the crossings (Houthi Movement Telegram channel, November 18, 2025).

Iran and the Lebanese Arena

► Iranian government spokeswoman Fatemeh Mohajerani addressed the issue of Hezbollah’s disarmament and said that Iran is following with concern the trends of “Israeli expansion” in the region. She stressed that the existence of a “resistance force” in a country living alongside “the fake regime” [Israel] is vital because it attacks other countries whenever it wants. She added that Iran itself was a target of Israeli attack, and it understands why Lebanon needs weapons to defend its people (*Al-Mayadeen*, November 15, 2025).

► Ali Larijani, the Secretary of Iran’s Supreme Council for National Security, met with the advisor to the Speaker of the Lebanese Parliament for political affairs, Ali Hassan Khalil. They discussed recent

developments in the region, and especially the IDF's activity in southern Lebanon and "the repeated violations of the ceasefire by the Zionist regime" (Tasnim, November 16, 2025). Khalil also met with Iranian Foreign Minister Araghchi and with the Speaker of the Majles, Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf. In his meeting with Qalibaf, Khalil expressed hope that Iran would be more present in dealing with the challenges facing Lebanon (Iranian Foreign Ministry Telegram channel; *Al-Alam*, November 17, 2025).



**Larijani's meeting with the advisor to the Speaker of the Lebanese Parliament
(Tasnim, November 16, 2025)**

► Foreign Minister Araghchi met on the sidelines of an international conference in Tehran also with former Lebanese Foreign Minister Adnan Mansour. Araghchi emphasized the need for coordination between the countries of the region to confront "the Zionist regime's violations and hegemonic aspirations" and said that maintaining unity among the parts of Lebanese society is vital to the struggle against war incitement and threats from Israel. He emphasized Iran's continued support for the government, the people, and the "resistance" in Lebanon (Tasnim, November 16, 2025).



Araghchi's meeting with Adnan Mansour (Tasnim, November 16, 2025)

► "Sources in Iran's Supreme National Security Council" stated that there is no truth to the reports regarding the content of the meeting held in August 2025 between Lebanese President Joseph Aoun and the Council's secretary, Ali Larijani, in which Aoun had allegedly made very harsh remarks

toward Larijani. The sources rejected any possibility that the statements attributed to Aoun were made by him and called on the Lebanese Presidency to release the recording of the meeting so that the truth may be clarified (*Al-Mayadeen*, November 18, 2025). Earlier, the Lebanese news website Asas Media published an interview with Aoun in which he allegedly claimed that, during his meeting with Larijani, he told him that the Shiites in Lebanon were under Aoun's responsibility, not Larijani's. According to Aoun, following these remarks, Larijani left the Presidential Palace, and his request for another meeting was denied (Asas Media, November 18, 2025). The interview was removed shortly afterward from the Lebanese news website, and it was claimed that a message had been conveyed to the site's editors that the remarks had nearly sparked a diplomatic crisis between the two countries (journalist Abdallah Kamah's X account, November 18, 2025).

Iran and the Iraqi Arena

- Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei congratulated the people and government of Iraq following the parliamentary elections held in the country on November 11, 2025. He noted that the increase in voter turnout and the quiet conduct of the elections were valuable, and expressed hope that the elections would pave the way for strengthening cohesion, security, and progress in the country (Iranian Foreign Ministry Telegram channel, November 13, 2025).
- Ali-Akbar Velayati, senior advisor to Iran's Supreme Leader for international affairs, noted that the holding of "enthusiastic, fair, and quiet" elections in Iraq reflects the political and social maturity of the Iraqi people and serves as a model worthy of emulation by the countries of the region. He expressed hope that "the historic elections" would carry a clear message to the enemies of the Iraqi people that no foreign power can interfere in determining the fate of this large and important country. Velayati added that the ties between Iran and Iraq are based on a deep historical, cultural, and religious partnership, and there is no doubt that a bright and successful future awaits the cooperation between the two peoples (ISNA, November 13, 2025).



Ali-Akbar Velayati (ISNA, November 13, 2025)

- Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian spoke with Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani and congratulated him on the achievements of the list under his leadership in the parliamentary elections. They discussed the relations between the two countries and ways to strengthen them (Shafaq News, November 14, 2025).
- According to the final results of the elections, the parties that are affiliated with or are partners of the pro-Iranian militias won 45 out of 329 seats in the Iraqi Parliament, thus significantly increasing their power since the previous elections in 2021, in which they won 17 seats. Together with the Prime Minister al-Sudani's coalition, which finished first with 46 seats, the political bloc of the "Shiite Coordination Framework" stands at 175 seats that are expected to enable it to choose the next Prime Minister. Political commentators in Iraq argued that the boycott of the elections by the senior Shiite cleric and political leader Muqtada al-Sadr enabled elements affiliated with Iran or willing to cooperate with parties affiliated with the pro-Iranian militias to expand their voter base among the Shiites in Iraq (Arab media, November 13-19, 2025).
- Even before the announcement of the final results, senior militia figures expressed satisfaction: Ahmad Mohsen Faraj al-Hamidawi, the secretary-general of Kata'ib Hezbollah, said that many of the incoming parliament members "embody the ethos and principles of the Islamic Resistance" and stressed that Kata'ib Hezbollah is committed to holding to its principled positions and serving as a "shield for the oppressed" (Kata'ib Hezbollah Telegram channel, November 12, 2025). Abu Alaa al-Wala'i, the leader of Kata'ib Sayyid al-Shuhada, congratulated "the great success of the resistance forces" and claimed that it proves the great trust the Iraqi public places in them and that it increases their responsibility to fulfill their duties and follow the path of victory (Kata'ib Sayyid al-Shuhada Telegram channel, November 12, 2025).

The Houthis in Yemen

The direct confrontation between the Houthis and Israel

- Nasr al-Din Amer, the deputy chairman of the Houthis' Media Authority, said that the movement is closely monitoring developments in the Gaza Strip, particularly "the enemy's failure to uphold its commitments and its violations," as well as "the mediators' inaction." He warned that "the enemy" must understand that every patience has a limit and that its ongoing preparations for escalation on the various fronts are met with counter-preparations. Amer threatened that "the result will not be as they imagine" (Nasr al-Din Amer's Telegram channel, November 15, 2025).

Iran and support for the Houthis

► “Senior Yemeni political sources” reported that Iran has increased its military and security support to the Houthis in an attempt to compensate for its losses in Lebanon and Syria. According to the sources, the cessation of the war in the Gaza Strip and regional instability forced the Houthis to deal with the consequences of their involvement in the regional conflict without sufficient experience. As a result, Iran returned to Sana’a the IRGC Qods Force representative, Abdolreza Shahlaei, who was returned to Tehran after the outbreak of the war in the Gaza Strip, to help the Houthis reorganize after the Israeli strikes in Yemen and the severe damage to the organization’s senior figures and to turn the movement into a central Iranian influence hub in the region that will compensate for the damage to its influence in other arenas. It was also noted in the report that Tehran now sees the Houthis as its most vital arm and that Shahlaei’s success in the mission may lead to the transfer of the center of gravity of the pro-Iranian axis in the region to Yemen. Shahlaei, also known as “Yusuf Abu al-Karkh” and “Hajj Yusuf,” began operating with the Houthis even before 2014. He was directly responsible for developing the organizational structure of the Houthi movement and its military capabilities, especially ballistic missile and drone programs (*Asharq Al-Awsat*, Defense Line, November 15, 2025). The US State Department has offered a reward of \$15 million for information about Shahlaei, who was also involved in planning attacks against Coalition forces in Iraq and in a plot to assassinate the Saudi ambassador to the US (Rewards for Justice website, November 19, 2025).



Reward notice on Shahlaei’s head (Rewards for Justice website, November 19, 2025)

Renewal of Security Council sanctions on the Houthis

► On November 14, 2025, the UN Security Council voted to renew sanctions on Houthi Yemen for another year under Resolution 2140 (2014). The targeted sanctions include travel bans and asset freezes against the Houthi movement and its leader, Abd al-Malik al-Houthi, as well as other senior figures in the leadership and the military forces. Thirteen countries voted in favor; Russia and China

abstained (UN Security Council website, November 14, 2025). The Houthis condemned the resolution:

- ◆ Mohammed al-Farah, member of the Houthi political bureau, stated that the sanctions are a tool “to serve Zionist goals” and to punish the Yemeni people for “their steadfast support for the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.” Al-Farah stressed the unwavering support of the Yemeni people for the Palestinians and wrote that “we will continue without hesitation in our resistance to American and Western hegemony in the region” (Mohammed al-Farah’s X account, November 15, 2025).
- ◆ The Houthi political bureau stated that the renewal of sanctions is linked to “the extension of collective punishment and the intensification of economic siege mechanisms.” It was also noted that the resolution “serves the American agenda and the coalition of aggression” (Houthis’ Combat Media Telegram channel, November 18, 2025).