



# Spotlight on Iran and the Shiite Axis

October 1 - 9 , 2024

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## Highlights<sup>1</sup>

- ▶ **On October 1, 2024, the IRGC fired about 200 ballistic missiles at Israel in response to the killing of Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran, and Hassan Nasrallah and a senior IRGC officer in an Israeli airstrike in Beirut.** Most of the missiles were intercepted by the Israeli Air Force and air defense forces, in collaboration with the United States and other countries. After the attack, senior Iranian officials stressed that the attack was carried out as part of their legitimate rights and that Iran did not want further escalation. However, they threatened a powerful response to an Israeli attack against them.
- ▶ Iranian Supreme Leader Khamenei and other senior figures continued to express support for the Palestinian “resistance” a year after the October 7, 2023, attacks. President Pezeshkian met with a senior Hamas delegation in Qatar and called for unity in the face of “Israel’s crimes.”
- ▶ The Iranian foreign minister visited Lebanon and Syria. He condemned the Israeli attacks and stressed his country’s support for the “resistance” in Lebanon. The IRGC denied that Qods Force commander Qaani had been hit in an Israeli airstrike in Beirut.
- ▶ Last week, the pro-Iranian militias in Iraq claimed responsibility for 26 attacks against targets in Israel using drones and cruise missiles. Two IDF soldiers were killed by a drone in the Golan Heights, the first fatalities in Israel since the start of the attacks by pro-Iranian Iraqi militias against Israel in November 2023. The pro-Iranian Iraqi militias continued to express willingness to fight alongside Hezbollah in Lebanon and threatened retaliation against American interests if the United States helped Israel attack Iran.
- ▶ The Houthis announced airstrikes using ballistic missiles and drones against Israel. The Israeli Air Force intercepted a ballistic missile and a drone. There were no casualties. In addition, the

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<sup>1</sup> The weekly study includes the activities of Iran, the Shiite militias in Syria and Iraq, and the Houthis in Yemen.

Houthis claimed responsibility for attacks against two vessels in the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean.

## The Iranian missile attack on Israel

► **On the evening of October 1, 2024, Iran’s Revolutionary Guards carried out a missile attack against Israel.** IRGC commander Hossein Salami announced the launch of Operation True Promise II<sup>2</sup> and the launching of 200 ballistic missiles at the “occupied territories.” Upon issuing the order to launch, Salami noted that the attack was revenge for the death of the head of Hamas’ political bureau, Ismail Haniyeh, who was killed in Tehran on July 31, 2024, and for “violating the sovereignty of the Islamic Republic of Iran,” in addition to “the recent evil acts of the criminal Zionist entity that caused the killing of leaders, the killing of Hezbollah’s great leader, Hassan Nasrallah, and Abbas Nilforoushan, an IRGC commander, and as revenge for the blood of the oppressed children of the Gaza Strip and of the resistance and oppressed in Lebanon” (Tasnim, October 2, 2024).



**Right: The IRGC commander gives the order to launch (Tasnim, October 2, 2024).**

**Left: One of the missiles fired at Israel (Tasnim, October 2, 2024)**

► According to the IRGC’s announcement, the missile attack targeted “strategic centers inside the occupied territories,” including air bases and radars and “centers for planning assassinations” of the leaders of the “resistance” and commanders of Hezbollah, the “Islamic Resistance in Palestine,” and the IRGC. According to the announcement, 90 percent of the missiles hit their target, and the IRGC threatened that any “additional stupidity” on the part of the “enemy” would be met with a destructive response (Tasnim, October 1, 2024).

► The IDF Spokesperson said Iran fired at Israel 181 ballistic missiles from its territory and that most of the missiles were intercepted by Israel’s Air Force and air defense units, in

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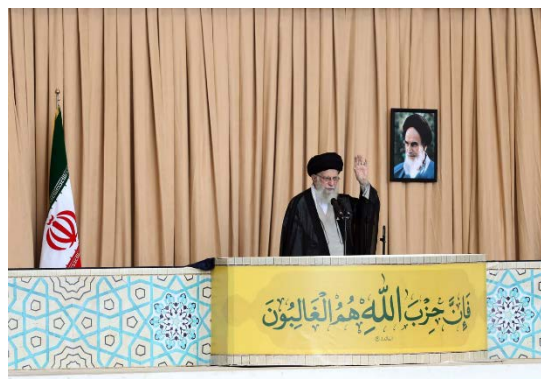
<sup>2</sup> “True Promise I” was the name given to the Iranian attack against Israel using drones, cruise missiles, and ballistic missiles on April 14, 2024, in response to an attack near the Iranian embassy in Damascus on April 1, 2024, in which senior IRGC commander in Syria and Lebanon Hassan Mahdavi was killed.

collaboration with a defense coalition led by the United States. Some of the missiles landed in central and southern Israel. A Palestinian resident of the Gaza Strip was killed by a missile (that was intercepted and fell) in Jericho. Several people sustained minor injuries, and property was damaged (IDF Spokesperson and Israeli media, October 1, 2024). Subsequently, the IDF Spokesperson confirmed that civilian sites and two Air Force bases had been hit, but no planes had been hit and operational capability had not been impaired (IDF Spokesperson, October 5, 2024).

► Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei awarded IRGC Air Force commander Amir-Ali Hajizadeh the Fatah Award, Iran’s highest military decoration, reportedly for the “brilliant act of the True Promise.” Also participating in the event were Armed Forces Chief of Staff Mohammad Bagheri, Army Commander Abdolrahim Mousavi, and Defense Minister Aziz Nasirzadeh (the Supreme Leader’s website, October 6, 2024).

► Senior Iranian officials claimed that carrying out the attack was an exercise of Iran’s legitimate rights. They made it clear that they did not want further escalation but warned that if Israel carried out its threats to retaliate against Iran, the Iranian response would be powerful. The following are notable statements:

◆ **Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei** said in a Friday sermon speech in Tehran that every blow inflicted on Israel is a service to the entire region and that the dreams of Israel and the United States are impossible illusions. He said Iran’s missile attack on Israel was a legal and legitimate act, the minimal punishment for its “crimes.” He said Iran would do so again in the future if necessary (Tasnim, October 4, 2024).



**Khamenei in the Friday sermon (IRNA, October 4, 2024)**

◆ **Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian** said Iran responded based on its legal rights while protecting its interests and citizens. He noted that Prime Minister Netanyahu must know that Iran does not seek war but stands firmly against any threat. He claimed that Iran had demonstrated only a small part of its capabilities in the attack and called on

Netanyahu not to enter a confrontation with Iran (Masoud Pezeshkian's X account, October 1, 2024). In a conversation with Dutch Prime Minister Dick Schoof, Pezeshkian explained that Iran did not respond immediately to the killing of Ismail Haniyeh to enable reaching a ceasefire agreement in the Gaza Strip. He noted that the objective of the attack was "to halt the attempts of the entity [i.e., Israel] to expand the scope of its crimes in the region, as well as to establish peace and stability, and therefore we attacked only military targets" (IRNA, October 6, 2024).

◆ **Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi** warned against an Israeli response to the Iranian missile attack. He said the attack was an exercise of Iran's right of self-defense and that if Israel responded, Iran's response would be even harsher and more powerful (Abbas Araghchi's X account, October 1, 2024). In talks with the foreign ministers of Britain, Germany, France, and other countries, Araghchi claimed that Iran had shown restraint for two months, since the killing of Ismail Haniyeh, while Israel extended the war in Gaza to Lebanon. He explained that Iran had exercised its legitimate right to respond and attacked military bases of the "Zionist regime" (Iranian Foreign Ministry Telegram channel, October 2, 2024).

◆ **Iranian Defense Minister Aziz Nasirzadeh** said the attack had "military, operational, and intelligence" targets. He warned that if Israel responded to the attack and led to a regional war, Iran would use missiles with more advanced technology and greater power, which would cause massive destruction to Israeli infrastructure (Tasnim, October 1, 2024).

◆ **Iranian Army Commander Abdolrahim Mousavi** warned that if the "Zionist regime" made a mistake in its calculations and carried out another "crazy act," the next blows would be harsher and more destructive (snn.ir, October 4, 2024).



**Abdolrahim Mousavi (Tehran Times, October 7, 2024)**

◆ **Deputy IRGC commander Ali Fadavi** said that if Israel made a mistake, it would put its existence in danger. He warned that in such a case, all energy sources, power plants, refineries, and gas fields would be attacked by Iran. He added that Iran is a large country with extensive economic centers, while Israel has three power plants and several refineries which can be attacked simultaneously (snn.ir, October 4, 2024).

◆ **Ebrahim Jabari, advisor to the IRGC commander**, threatened that Iran would flatten Haifa and Tel Aviv if Israel wanted to continue the campaign. According to him, at the same time as the missiles were fired at Israel, Iran carried out a large cyberattack against Israel's defense systems, which led to the missiles hitting their targets (Tasnim, October 2, 2024).

◆ **Iran's mission to the UN** said Iran's legal and legitimate response to the "terrorist activities of the Zionist regime" had been carried out lawfully. It was also noted that if the "Zionist regime" dared to respond, there would be an overwhelming response from Iran (Iran's mission to the UN X account, October 1, 2024).

◆ "Informed sources" reported that at least ten scenarios had been prepared for response in the event of a possible action by the "Zionist regime." According to the sources, Iran's response will not necessarily be adapted to the Israeli action but could be harsher and directed at various targets that will strengthen the effectiveness of the response. According to them, many countries have informed Iran that they will not act in Israel's favor, but the "sources" warned that "any country that helps the Zionists will cross Iran's red line and be harmed" (Tasnim, October 7, 2024).

## Iranian involvement in the Palestinian arena

► Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei said in a speech given in a Friday sermon in Tehran that the Palestinians had the full right to "rise against the occupation." He added that over the past year, the "resistance" had set Israel back 70 years, and Israel is in a situation where its main concern is to preserve its existence as it was in its early days (Tasnim, October 4, 2024).

► Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, speaking at the Asian Cooperation Dialogue Conference in Qatar, said that support for the "resistance in Palestine" was a religious obligation and that Iran would continue to support the "resistance" until the liberation of "Palestine" (snn.ir, October 3, 2024).

► In Qatar, Pezeshkian met with a senior Hamas delegation headed by Muhammad Ismail Darwish, head of the movement's Shura Council, with the participation of Hamas-abroad

leader Khaled Mashaal, deputy head of the political bureau in the Gaza Strip Khalil al-Haya, and member of the political bureau Hussam Badran. Pezeshkian strongly criticized the support of Western countries, particularly the United States, for Israel. He said the continuation of the “crimes of the Zionist regime” would lead to a crushing response from the Iranian armed forces, and that any further small mistake on its part would be met with a stronger and decisive response. He also called for unity among Muslim countries to stop Israel’s “crimes” (IRNA, October 3, 2024).



**The Iranian president (right) meets with senior Hamas figures (IRNA, October 3, 2024)**

- ▶ During his visit to Damascus, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi met with the heads of the Palestinian factions in Syria. He said the deaths of Hezbollah secretary-general Nasrallah and the other commanders of the “resistance” would add to the strength of the “resistance” and Hezbollah and lead to the final victory against the “Zionist enemy.” The leaders of the Palestinian factions praised Iran’s position in supporting the “resistance” and stressed the legitimacy of Iran’s position against “Zionist aggression” (snn.ir, October 5, 2024).
- ▶ Foreign Minister Araghchi said at a conference held in Tehran to mark the first anniversary of the war in the Gaza Strip that the Iranian government is committed to supporting the Palestinian cause and that the two Iranian attacks against Israel proved that any aggressive move would be met with a response from Iran. He added that the message of his recent visit to Syria and Lebanon was that Iran stood and would continue to stand by the “resistance” with all its forces. He reiterated that any Israeli attack on Iran and its infrastructure would be met with a decisive response (IRNA, October 8, 2024).

## Iranian involvement in Lebanon and Syria

- ▶ In his Friday sermon speech, Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei referred to the death of Hezbollah secretary-general Hassan Nasrallah. He emphasized that Hezbollah had grown step by step under Nasrallah’s leadership and acknowledged that his death was a great loss. However, Khamenei added that mourning should not lead to despair, frustration, or panic, but rather

inspire hope and motivation. He stressed that it was the duty and responsibility of Iran and all Muslims to help Lebanon and that the “resistance” in the region would not weaken or retreat in light of the “martyr’s death” but prevail (Tasnim, October 4, 2024).

► Khamenei and several other senior Iranian clerics ruled that part (between one-third and one-half) of the charity tax (khums), to which Shiite believers are obligated, can be delivered for the benefit of the residents of southern Lebanon (Tasnim, October 3, 2024).

► On October 4, 2024, Iranian Foreign Minister Araghchi arrived in Lebanon for a visit. The foreign minister was accompanied by the head of the Iranian Red Crescent Society, who arrived in Beirut to help deliver a shipment of humanitarian aid containing ten tons of food and medicine (ISNA, October 4, 2024).

► During his visit to Lebanon, Araghchi met with interim Prime Minister Najib Mikati and Lebanese Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri. At a press conference in Beirut, Araghchi stressed that Iran fully supports Lebanon’s efforts in its struggle against the “crimes of the Zionist regime.” He noted that in the meetings, he stressed Iran’s support for Lebanon and the “resistance.” According to him, Iran does not intend to continue its attacks against Israel. But if Israel acts against Iran, Iran’s response will be harsher (snn.ir, October 4, 2024).

► After his visit to Lebanon, Araghchi continued to Damascus, where he met with his Syrian counterpart, Bassam Sabbagh. At a press conference in Damascus, Araghchi said the purpose of his visit was to continue consultations on developments in the region. He noted that a ceasefire in Lebanon and the Gaza Strip is the most pressing issue and mentioned that there are ongoing initiatives and consultations that will hopefully yield positive results. Unfortunately, he said, the “crimes of the Zionist regime” continue (Fars, October 5, 2024).

► Araghchi also met with Syrian President Bashar Assad and discussed bilateral relations between the countries and regional developments. The foreign minister stressed the need to rely on the strength of the “resistance” in Lebanon and “Palestine” against the “killing and destruction machine of the Zionist regime,” and the need to coordinate with all the countries that support the cessation of Israel’s “acts of aggression” (Tasnim, October 5, 2024).



**The meeting between Araghchi and Assad (the Syrian president's office Telegram channel, October 5, 2024)**

- ▶ Iran's new Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei strongly condemned Israel's attacks in Lebanon and the Gaza Strip. He noted that the attacks carried out by the "Zionist regime" in recent days against "holy places, schools, mosques, and medical compounds in Palestine and Lebanon" were reminiscent of ISIS's crimes. He referred to Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu as "the Hitler of the modern era" and called on the international community to act seriously against Netanyahu "and the criminal leaders of the Zionist regime" and send immediate humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip and Lebanon (Iranian Foreign Ministry website, October 6, 2024).
- ▶ Qods Force deputy commander Iraj Masjedi denied the rumors surrounding the disappearance of Qods Force commander Esmail Qaani. He admitted that many asked what happened to Qaani and said he was safe and sound and busy with work. He added that some said the IRGC should issue a statement about his condition, yet there was no need for it (Tasnim, October 7, 2024). Previously, "Iranian sources" were quoted as saying that Qaani had come to Beirut last week to meet with senior Hezbollah figures and help the organization recover from the wave of Israeli attacks (The New York Times, October 5, 2024). Another report quoted "two senior Iranian security officials" as saying that Qaani was in Beirut's Dahiyeh during the Israeli attack on the site where Hezbollah's Central Council head Hashem Safi al-Din was staying, and that contact with him had since been cut off (Reuters, October 6, 2024).
- ▶ Iranian media reported that IRGC military advisor Majid Divani died of his wounds three days after he was wounded in an IDF airstrike in Damascus on September 30, 2024 (snn.ir, October 3, 2024).
- ▶ The Iranian embassy in Damascus stated that no Iranian citizen was killed or wounded in an attack attributed to Israel in the al-Mazzeh neighborhood of Damascus on the evening of



October 8, 2024. The embassy condemned the attack, calling it “another crime of the Israeli enemy” (Iranian embassy in Damascus X account, October 8, 2024).

## Operations of the Shiite militias

### Iraq

#### Attacks by Iraqi militias against Israel

► This past week, the Islamic Resistance in Iraq issued 13 claims of responsibility for 26 attacks against targets in Israel, including one that for the first time included responsibility for five separate attacks. The attacks were carried out using drones and cruise missiles, with one of the attacks allegedly making the first use of a drone with “advanced capabilities” (Islamic Resistance in Iraq Telegram channel, October 1-9, 2024). On the night of October 2, 2024, two IDF soldiers were killed and several others were wounded by a drone attack on the Golan Heights, the first Israeli fatalities since the start of attacks by pro-Iranian Iraqi militias against Israel in November 2023. In addition, the IDF Spokesperson reported that four drones coming from the east were intercepted in three separate incidents (IDF Spokesperson, October 1-7, 2024). It was also reported that the Jordanian army had intercepted a drone that penetrated from Iraq and another drone was intercepted by Israel over the Daraa Governorate in southern Syria (ALYEMENNET Telegram channel, October 8, 2024).



**Right: Photos of Hassan Nasrallah on a drone (Islamic Resistance in Iraq Telegram channel, October 2, 2024). Left: Three drones being launched at various targets (Islamic Resistance in Iraq Telegram channel, October 5, 2024)**

► According to “Iraqi security sources,” the drone that caused deaths and injuries in the Golan Heights is a new model with an initial speed of 370 kilometers per hour, capable of evading air defense systems. It can remain in the air for close to 27 hours (Mehr and 1news-iq.com, October 5, 2024).

► Amid assessments that Israel will retaliate against the pro-Iranian Iraqi militias due to their continued attacks, a “source close to the militias” said that they had strengthened their

collaboration and coordination. According to him, the militias regard Israeli attacks in Iraq as “inevitable,” and they have made it clear to the Iraqi government that they will intensively harm American interests and continue to attack “in the occupied territories.” In addition, the source noted that the militias had taken additional precautions to secure their headquarters throughout Iraq alongside increasing security for the militia leaders (Al-Araby al-Jadeed, October 5, 2024).

### **Militia threats over the escalation in Lebanon**

► It was reported that offices for registering to volunteer for fighting in Lebanon were opened in al-Basra and Baghdad and that many volunteers had registered. A prominent member of Kata’ib Sayyid al-Shuhada said that the militia decided to provide ground support to Hezbollah immediately after Hezbollah secretary-general Hassan Nasrallah was killed, adding that “the land of Lebanon will become a grave for the occupation” (Al-Araby al-Jadeed, October 1, 2024).

► According to an Iraqi source, nine infantry brigades of the Popular Mobilization are preparing to intervene in the campaign in Lebanon to repel the Israeli “invasion.” According to him, it is the 4th Brigade belonging to the Badr militia, the 6th Brigade belonging to Kata’ib Jund al-Imam, the 7th Brigade belonging to Liwa al-Muntathar, the 8th Brigade belonging to Saraya Ashura, the 12th Brigade belonging to the Nujaba Movement, the 14th Brigade belonging to Kata’ib Sayyid al-Shuhada, the 40th Brigade belonging to Kata’ib al-Imam Ali, the 41st Brigade belonging to Asa’ib Ahl al-Haqq, and the 45th Brigade belonging to Kata’ib Hezbollah (IraqiWazir X account, October 1, 2024).

► Ali al-Fatlawi, a senior Ansar Allah al-Awfiya official, said that the militias possess very advanced military capabilities that they had not yet used in the war with Israel and that in the near future, these means would be put into use if Israel escalated its ground operations in southern Lebanon (Shafaq News, October 1, 2024).

► “A source close to the Iraqi militias” said that the militias’ decision to participate in the war against Israel was a strategic decision that was taken seriously and in broad dialogue among all elements in the “resistance,” and that at the moment, the factions are waiting for permission from Lebanon to enter the war on land as well. He said they recognized the possibility that Israel would harm the militias or their senior officials and threatened that any attack against them would be met with a strong response. He noted that the militias have capabilities that will “greatly surprise the enemy,” especially in the field of drones and missiles.

He also stressed that in any case, the Iraqi militias would continue their “support” efforts for Lebanon and “Palestine” (baghdadtoday.news, October 5, 2024).

► In this context, senior officials in the Iraqi militias reported that the necessary steps to cross into Lebanon had been completed, but Hezbollah officially informed them that it does not currently need fighters and that it can deal with any Israeli invasion (Al-Araby al-Jadeed, October 1, 2024).

► According to Iraqi “security sources,” the Iraqi militias have finished building new “secret tunnels” between Iraq and Syria to transfer weapons from Iran and Iraq to Syria and Lebanon. The sources added that the new tunnels serve the militias as an underground land passage in the Albukamal Desert area connecting Iraq and Syria and that they were built to evade the American and Israeli UAVs (al-Sumaria, October 5, 2024).

► It was reported that “the first militia established by Iran in Iraq” sent 29 truckloads of weapons to Hezbollah in Lebanon under the title of “Operation in Support of Our Brothers in Lebanon.” It was also claimed that the Red Cross branch in Iraq was involved in smuggling the trucks and that the weapons were hidden under food, tents, and blankets. The report also stated that the weapons were purchased from funds from the Iraqi government, which transferred them to the militia, and that they also contained weapons manufactured in France this year (IraqiWazir X account, October 8, 2024).

## **Militias’ references to Iran’s missile attack on Israel**

► The Nujaba Movement hailed “the great victory of the missile attack against the Zionist bases on our occupied land.” According to a statement issued by the militia, “the Islamic resistance has proven its ability to reach wherever and whenever it chooses.” “The Zionists and their ally the United States should know that this response is the first rain and that the resistance attacks will be powerful.” The militia also criticized Jordan for intercepting some of the Iranian missiles and warned the United States that any action against Iran would lead to “an equal response against them and that their bases would become graves for their soldiers” (the Nujaba Movement Telegram channel, October 2, 2024).

► Asa’ib Ahl al-Haqq secretary-general Qais al-Khaz'ali said that the missiles launched from Iran “broke and crushed the tyrannical entity, proved the axis of resistance’s ability to achieve victory over the enemies and avenge the blood of our martyrs, and proved that Iron Dome is weaker than spider webs” (Taghridat al-Hashd Telegram channel, October 1, 2024).

► Kata'ib Hezbollah praised the Iranian attack on Israel, saying it represented a commitment to the equation of confrontation “that the enemy is trying to undermine by harming civilians and civilian infrastructure.” It was also claimed that the Iranian attack proved “the level of distress in which the enemy finds itself and the ability of the axis operatives to keep their promises” (Kaf Telegram channel, October 1, 2024).



**Celebrations in Iraq following the Iranian missile attack**  
(Saberin News Telegram channel, October 1, 2024)

## **Militias’ references to the anniversary of the October 7 attacks**

► The Iraqi pro-Iranian militias issued announcements praising the first anniversary of the al-Aqsa Flood, the name given by the “axis of resistance” to the campaign that began with Hamas’ attack on Israel on October 7, 2023. The following are the main statements:

► Kata'ib Hezbollah said that a year had passed since “the historic struggle of the entire front of truth against the entire front of evil.” The militia praised the “achievements of the axis of resistance” and accused that “the enemy front embodied all forms of evil, barbarism and crime and transcended all limits of human imagination.” The militia also accused the United States and Western countries and the regimes in Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE of supporting Israel, and threatened that “these actions will be etched in the memory of the Islamic nation and will lead to an erupting volcano and revenge that they will not be able to stop” (Kaf Telegram channel, October 7, 2024).

► Kata'ib Sayyid al-Shuhada secretary-general Abu Alaa al-Wala’i said that October 7, 2023, was a day when “the forces of justice set out to contend, despite their minority, against the many infidels” and that they brought disgrace to the “temporary entity.” He also accused the United States of helping Israel “wreak havoc” in the Gaza Strip and Beirut's Dahiyyeh (Abu Alaa al-Wala’i’s X account, October 7, 2024).

► Haidar al-Gharawi, secretary-general of Ansar Allah al-Awfiya, said that the “axis of resistance” would continue fighting and expressed hope that “by next October 7, we will

witness the end of the tyrannical entity and pray at al-Aqsa Mosque” (Haidar al-Gharawi’s X account, October 7, 2024).

## **Militia attacks against American targets**

- ▶ Rockets were reportedly fired at the Ain al-Assad base in the al-Anbar Governorate in western Iraq, which is home to US forces (al-Sharq, October 1, 2024). Subsequently, the Islamic Resistance in Iraq issued an unusual statement, denying responsibility for the attack and claiming that it was carried out by “an organization linked to the Americans themselves” (Islamic Resistance in Iraq Telegram channel, October 1, 2024).
- ▶ On October 4, 2024, an “Iraqi security source” reported that the American base in the CONOCO gas field in the Deir ez-Zor area of eastern Syria was attacked with a drone and several rockets. According to the report, several rockets fell inside the base area, causing minor damage, but no casualties were reported (Shafaq News, October 4, 2024). On October 8, 2024, “sources” reported an explosion at the CONOCO base as a result of a missile launch, but no casualties or damage were reported. As a result, US-led coalition forces fired artillery at the nearby villages of Khasham, Tabiyah, and Deir ez-Zor, which are controlled by the Syrian army (al-Mayadeen, October 8, 2024)
- ▶ The Iraqi Resistance Coordination Committee threatened that if the Americans intervened in any “hostile action” against Iran, or if the “Zionist enemy” used Iraqi airspace to carry out operations against Iran, all American bases and interests in Iraq and the region would be targeted by the militias (Kaf Telegram channel, October 1, 2024).
- ▶ US State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller stressed that the Iraqi government has a responsibility to control militias close to Iran that threaten US forces and destabilize Iraq. He warned that no faction in the region should take advantage of the current situation to attack US interests (nabd.com, October 3, 2024).

## **Yemen**

### **The direct confrontation between Israel and the Houthis**

- ▶ On October 2, 2024, Houthi forces spokesman Yahya Saria claimed responsibility for attacking “military sites deep inside the Zionist entity” with three Qods 5 cruise missiles. According to him, the airstrikes achieved their goal, while Israel conceals it (Yahya Saria’s X account, October 2, 2024). There has been no verification of the claims. They may possibly be an attempt by the Houthis to present themselves as having participated in the Iranian missile attack the previous evening, as they did in the previous attack in April 2024.

► On October 3, 2024, Saria claimed responsibility for launching several Jaffa drones at the city of Jaffa (Tel Aviv). This time, too, Saria claimed that the operation had achieved its goal without Israel succeeding in intercepting the drones (Yahya Saria's X account, October 3, 2024). The IDF Spokesperson reported that the Air Force had intercepted a suspicious aerial target in the maritime area off the coast of Gush Dan, without activating the alerts (IDF Spokesperson, October 3, 2024).

► On October 7, 2024, the Israeli Air Force intercepted a surface-to-surface missile launched from Yemen. As a result of the launch, alerts were activated in central Israel. There were no casualties (IDF Spokesperson, October 7, 2024). Yahya Saria said that the Houthi forces attacked two "military targets" in the Jaffa area with two ballistic missiles, the first being Filastin 2 ("Palestine 2") and the second Dhu al-Fiqar,<sup>3</sup> and that the strikes achieved their objective. He also reported that earlier in the day, several Jaffa and Samad-4 drones had been launched at targets in the Jaffa and Eilat areas. According to Saria, some of the drones successfully hit their targets (Yahya Saria's X account, October 7, 2024). There has been no verification of the claims about the drone launch.

► "A senior Yemeni military official" confirmed that the Houthis had begun using the Samad-4 suicide drone in an early morning attack on October 1, 2024. According to him, the drone can reach a range of more than 2,000 kilometers and can evade air defense systems. He noted that it would also be used during the upcoming operations (al-Mayadeen, October 1, 2024).

## **Houthi references to the Iranian missile attack on Israel**

► In his weekly speech, Houthi Movement leader Abd al-Malik al-Houthi repeated Iranian claims that the missiles were aimed at security targets in Israel and that 90 percent of the targets had been successfully hit. He claimed that Israel's allies, led by the United States, had failed to prevent the attack and intercept the missiles. Al-Houthi also referred to the killing of Hezbollah secretary-general Hassan Nasrallah, praising him for his actions against Israel and for the "resistance" and stressing that the Houthis stand with Hezbollah and the Lebanese people (al-Masirah, October 4, 2024).

► Mahdi al-Mashat, head of the Houthi supreme political council, praised Iran's response, which, he claimed, had "destroyed important Zionist military and security targets in the heart

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<sup>3</sup> This is the first announcement of the use of the Dhu al-Fiqar missile. So far, no details have been given about its characteristics.

of the occupied lands.” He also threatened that if the Americans committed an “act of foolishness,” they would act against them (Mahdi al-Mashat’s X account, October 1, 2024).

► The Houthi political bureau praised “Iran’s high-quality military operation, which proved that Iran is a true supporter of the Palestinian cause that has been abandoned by most Arab and Muslim countries.” He further said, “We appreciate Iran’s great role in supporting the resistance and the oppressed. We welcome the Palestinian operation in Jaffa tonight and the escalation of Hezbollah’s attacks from Lebanon” (al-Masirah, October 1, 2024).

► Houthi Movement spokesman Mohammed Abdeslam said the response to the “Zionist enemy” and the confrontation with it was the only way to stop it and prevent it from continuing its “cruel crimes” against the Palestinian people, the Lebanese people, and the entire region (Mohammed Abdeslam's X account, October 1, 2024).

► Nasr al-Din Amer, deputy chairman of the Houthi media organization, said “October is going to be the blackest month in the history of the tyrannical entity” (Nasr al-Din Amer’s X account, October 1, 2024).

► Hezam al-Asad, a member of the Houthi political bureau, issued several posts in Hebrew. They read, “Time passes, and the opportunity diminishes. The land is not yours; Leave before it’s too late. The entity is no longer safe for the settlers, it is Palestine, and the next one will have no mercy;” “Hezbollah uses a language that the enemy understands, and we will stand by it; and the next one is bigger;” “The end of the criminals is approaching;” “Tel Aviv-Jaffa is burning and the next one is even bigger” (Hezam al-Asad’s X account, October 1, 2024).

## **Houthi references to the first anniversary of the October 7 attacks**

► Houthi Movement leader Abd al-Malik al-Houthi gave a speech marking one year since the beginning of the war in the Gaza Strip, praising the Palestinian people’s stance against “Israeli aggression” and the support of members of the “axis of resistance” for the Palestinian people. He stressed Yemen’s willingness to continue supporting the Palestinian struggle and even escalate its operations until the “siege” of the Gaza Strip is lifted, and the “Israeli aggression” stops. Al-Houthi summarized the Houthis’ actions in the past year and claimed that they had launched more than a thousand missiles and drones, attacked 193 vessels linked to Israel, the United States, and Britain, and intercepted 11 American MQ9 drones (al-Masirah, October 7, 2024).



**Diagram showing Houthi activity since the beginning of the war (the Houthi forces' media arm Telegram channel, October 6, 2024)**

► Mohammad Ali al-Houthi, a member of the Houthi political bureau, spoke during the “Million March” in Yemen to mark the anniversary of the October 7, 2023, attacks. He congratulated “the Palestinian people and all those who support them in Lebanon and Iraq,” adding that “the people of Palestine have never surrendered due to the Israeli blockade or the American bombs.” He said that new airstrikes “will reach the Israeli enemy in the coming days so that they can taste what the residents of Palestine and Jaffa have tasted” (al-Masirah, October 7, 2024).

### Additional Houthi military activity

► On October 1, 2024, Houthi forces spokesman Yahya Saria claimed responsibility for three attacks against vessels (Yahya Saria’s X account, October 1, 2024): a combined attack against a British oil tanker in the Red Sea using ballistic and cruise missiles, a drone, and an unmanned surface vehicle (USV); The United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) confirmed that the tanker was hit by a USV and was damaged. However, there were no casualties and it continued on its way (UKMTO X account, 1 October 2024); A complex attack against a cargo ship using a cruise missile in the Indian Ocean and a UAV in the Arabian Sea. There has been no verification of the claims.



**The alleged attack on the British tanker (Houthi combat media Telegram channel, October 3, 2024)**



►The US Central Command (CENTCOM) reported that its forces had carried out airstrikes against 15 targets in Houthi-controlled territory in Yemen. The report stated that the targets included Houthi “offensive military capabilities” but did not specify what the targets were (CENTCOM X account, October 4, 2024). Houthi media reported that four airstrikes had been carried out west of al-Hudaydah in the city’s airport area; three airstrikes were carried out in the Dhamar Governorate, and additional airstrikes were carried out throughout the capital Sanaa (al-Masirah, October 4, 2024).

►The spokesman for the Houthi government of “change and construction” said in response that the “aggression” against the capital Sanaa and the Yemeni governorates was a “pathetic and desperate attempt to frighten our people.” He made it clear that they would not be deterred and would continue their attacks “until the aggression against the Gaza Strip and Lebanon stops” (ALYEMENNET Telegram channel, October 4, 2024).

### **Sanctions against the Houthis**

►On October 2, 2024, the US Treasury Department announced sanctions against entities linked to the Houthi arms smuggling network. The sanctions were imposed on a Yemeni citizen operating from Iran, three Chinese companies, and a Marshall Islands shipping company that operates two ships that took part in smuggling for the Houthis (US Department of the Treasury, October 2, 2024).