

Name: Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)

Type of Organization: sponsor of terrorism, state actor, violent

Ideologies/Affiliations: Islamist, Khomeinist, Shiite

Place of Origin: Iran

Year of Origin: 1979

Founder: Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini

Place(s) of Operation: Afghanistan, Europe, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, South America, Syria,

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Also Known As:

- Islamic Revolutionary Guards
- Pasdaran (“Guards”)
- Revolutionary Guards
- Sepah (“Corps”)
- Sepah-e Pasdaran-e Enghelab-e Eslami (“Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps”)

Executive Summary:

The Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) is tasked with preserving the Islamic Republic of Iran and the ideals of the 1979 revolution. The IRGC combines traditional military roles with a relentless focus on supposed domestic enemies. The IRGC is Iran’s primary instrument for exporting the ideology of the Islamic Revolution worldwide and it is rigidly loyal to Iran’s clerical elite. The IRGC is Iran’s main link to its terrorist proxies, which the regime uses to boost Iran’s global influence. Within the IRGC are the Basij militia and the Quds Force (IRGC-QF).

The Basij, literally “mobilization,” is a paramilitary organization charged with channeling popular support for the Iranian regime. The Basij is famous for its recruitment of volunteers, many of them teenage children, for human wave attacks during the Iran-Iraq war. Today, the Basij has two missions: to provide defensive military training to protect the regime against foreign invasion, and to suppress domestic anti-regime activity through street violence and intimidation. After the contested 2009 Iranian presidential elections, for example, the Basij reportedly brutally quashed protests and attacked student dormitories.

The Quds Force specializes in foreign missions, providing training, funding and weapons to extremist groups, including Iraqi insurgents, Hezbollah, and Hamas. The Quds Force allegedly participated in the 1994 suicide bombing of a Jewish community center, killing over 80 and wounding about 300; arming anti-government Bahraini militants; and

assisting in a 2011 assassination attempt on Saudi Arabia's ambassador to the United States. The Quds Force also acts in an advisory role to Syrian regime forces in that country's civil war.

Key Leader(s):

- Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei
- Head of Islamic Revolutionary Guards: Major General Mohammad Ali Jafari
- Head of Al-Quds Force-Islamic Revolutionary Guards: Major General Qasem Soleimani
- Head of Basij Militia: Commander Mohammad Reza Naqdi

Doctrine:

The IRGC is an Iranian government agency tasked with defending the regime against internal and external threats. Espousing a radical ideology and a paranoid worldview, the IRGC uses secret police methods against its opponents within Iran, and terrorist tactics against its enemies abroad.

Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps

Iranian law defines the IRGC as “an institution commanded by the Supreme Leader whose purpose is to protect the Islamic Revolution of Iran and its accomplishments, while striving continuously . . . to spread the sovereignty of God's law.”¹

In the first months after the 1979 Iranian revolution, before its existence was enshrined in law, the IRGC operated as a network of militant activists loyal to revolutionary leader Ruhollah Khomeini. In this role, the IRGC helped to stamp out dissident currents within the revolutionary movement.² The IRGC views its task as preserving the “Islamic republican” form of government created by Khomeini, and faithfully implementing the instructions of Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, who succeeded Khomeini after the latter's death in 1989.

The IRGC today enjoys the power of a government agency, while still maintaining the zeal and fanaticism of an ideologically motivated terrorist group. The IRGC's mission combines traditional military roles with a relentless focus on pursuing supposed domestic enemies. According to the Ministry of Defense, the IRGC's role is to “protect [Iran's] independence, territorial integrity, and national and revolutionary ideals, under the shadow of the orders given by the Commander in Chief, the Grand Ayatollah Imam Khamenei.”³ Political beliefs considered inconsistent with “revolutionary ideals” are treated as military threats. As IRGC commander Jafari recently put it: “today's war is not

¹ “Statute of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Islamic Revolution,” Islamic Parliament Research Center, ratified September 6, 1982, article 1, <http://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/90595>.

² Afshon P. Ostover, “Guardians of the Islamic Revolution: Ideology, Politics, and the Development of Military Power in Iran, 1979-2009,” Ph.D. Thesis, University of Michigan, 2009, 50-52.

³ “Statement of the Ministry of Defense on the Anniversary of the Founding of the IRGC,” ISNA, April 21, 2014, <http://bit.ly/1qFjx84>.

fought on land or sea, it is fought at the level of belief, and the enemy is investing efforts to gain influence inside the Islamic Republican system.”⁴

The IRGC’s doctrine combines rigid loyalty to Iran’s clerical elite with deep paranoia about the outside world. In IRGC publications, Iran is portrayed as threatened by American and “Zionist” plots, which are said to be capable of exerting great influence within Iran. Allegations of foreign meddling in Iran provide the justification for terrorism abroad, fueling the high-profile international conflicts that provide the basis for ever harsher crackdowns on internal dissent.

Over time, domestic repression has come to overshadow traditional military missions, as the IRGC’s influence has spread into every aspect of Iranian life.⁵ In 2007, following the formal incorporation of the Basij militia into the IRGC, IRGC Commander Mohammad Ali Jafari said, “The new strategic guidelines of the IRGC have been changed by the directives of the Leader of the Revolution [i.e., Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei]. The main mission of the IRGC from now on is to deal with the threats from the internal enemies. [The number-two priority of the corps] is to help the military in case of foreign threats.”⁶

The IRGC considers its loyalty to Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei a religious imperative. At times, the organization’s devotion to Khamenei slips into hero-worship: deputy IRGC commander Mohammad Hejazi recently credited Khamenei with overruling the objections of scientific experts to direct research towards increased accuracy in ballistic missiles, “resulting in proud accomplishments in this field.”⁷

Leadership Structure:

Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps

By law, the power to appoint and remove the commander of the IRGC is given to the Supreme Leader.⁸ The Supreme Leader also appoints clerical representatives to the various units of the IRGC whose guidance and instructions are binding on commanders.⁹ Iranian law makes “belief and practical obedience to the principle of clerical rule” a

⁴ “IRGC Commander: The Corps Supports Religious Authority,” ISNA, May 24, 2014, <http://bit.ly/1j4suWo>.

⁵ Frederic Wehrey et al., *The Rise of the Pasdaran: Assessing the Domestic Roles of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps* (Santa Monica, Arlington, and Pittsburgh: RAND Corporation, 2009), 32, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2008/RAND_MG821.pdf.

⁶ Frederic Wehrey et al., *The Rise of the Pasdaran: Assessing the Domestic Roles of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps* (Santa Monica, Arlington, and Pittsburgh: RAND Corporation, 2009), 33, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2008/RAND_MG821.pdf.

⁷ “Commander Hejazi: The Leader’s Orders Led to Increased Accuracy of Ballistic Missiles,” ISNA, April 28, 2014, <http://bit.ly/1q2U6JZ>.

⁸ “Statute of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Islamic Revolution,” Islamic Parliament Research Center, ratified September 6, 1982, article 29, <http://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/90595>.

⁹ “Statute of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Islamic Revolution,” Islamic Parliament Research Center, ratified September 6, 1982, article 33, <http://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/90595>.

condition of membership the IRGC, further establishing absolute loyalty to Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei as the IRGC's guiding principle.¹⁰

Efforts to normalize the IRGC's extraordinary role in Iran over the years have resulted in a misleadingly complex organization chart. Administratively, the IRGC falls under the Joint Armed Forces General Staff, part of the Ministry of Defense. But these layers of oversight do not give Iran's nominally elected civilian authorities real control over the IRGC, as the entire military remains subordinate to the Supreme National Security Council, which in turn answers to Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei.¹¹

Scholars who study the IRGC have concluded that "individuals appear to matter more than institutions when considering national security decision[-]making."¹² Consequently, they have identified personal networks, often based on ties of family, friendship, or joint service in the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq War as the key structures in IRGC leadership.¹³ The opacity of the IRGC's real command structure helps make Iran an erratic and therefore especially dangerous player in regional affairs.

Basij

The Basij militia, whose name means "mobilization," is a paramilitary organization tasked with channeling popular support for the Islamic Republican regime. The Basij is most famous for its recruitment of volunteers, many of them teenage children, for human wave attacks on Iraqi forces during the Iran-Iraq war in which thousands died. Today, the Basij has two missions: giving military training to regime supporters to prepare them to resist foreign invasion, and helping suppress domestic opposition to the regime through street violence and intimidation.

The Basij presents itself as a popular volunteer association, although it is very much an organ of the state. The group's "regular members," said to number more than ten million, are unpaid volunteers motivated by ideological zeal or the hopes of advancement. Its "active members," whose exact number is unknown, receive salaries and work full time to organize the volunteer members. The group has been nominally subordinate to the IRGC since the early 1980s, and organizational changes in recent years have increased the IRGC's direct control over the Basij, apparently to better manage the two groups' repression of internal dissent.¹⁴

¹⁰ "Statute of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Islamic Revolution," Islamic Parliament Research Center, ratified September 6, 1982, article 34, <http://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/90595>.

¹¹ Wehrey et al., *The Rise of the Pasdaran: Assessing the Domestic Roles of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps* (Santa Monica, Arlington, and Pittsburgh: RAND Corporation, 2009), 9-10.

¹² Wehrey et al., *The Rise of the Pasdaran: Assessing the Domestic Roles of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps* (Santa Monica, Arlington, and Pittsburgh: RAND Corporation, 2009), 11.

¹³ Will Fulton, "The IRGC Command Network: Formal Structures and Informal Influence," *American Enterprise Institute Iran Tracker*, July 18, 2013, <http://www.irantracker.org/analysis/fulton-irgc-command-network-july-22-2013>.

¹⁴ Ali Alfoneh, "The Basij Resistance Force | The Iran Primer," United States Institute of Peace, accessed February 27, 2015, <http://iranprimer.usip.org/resource/basij-resistance-force>.

Quds Force

The Quds Force (IRGC-QF) is a special branch of the IRGC tasked with achieving sensitive missions beyond Iran's borders. The IRGC-QF has played an active role in providing training and weapons to extremist groups including Iraqi insurgents, Lebanese Hezbollah, and others. The group's commander is Major General Qassem Soleimani. In addition to overseeing the group's violent attacks, Soleimani serves as an emissary of Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, reportedly using a combination of violence and bribes to wield enormous influence over the politics of neighboring Iraq. He is also said to coordinate much of Iran's support for the Ba'ath regime in the Syrian civil war.¹⁵ Soleimani's prominence has aroused jealousy in some circles, and he has clashed at times with IRGC commanders over the extent of his authority.¹⁶

Training and Recruitment

General

The IRGC is the third-wealthiest organization in Iran after the National Iranian Oil Company and the Imam Reza Endowment.¹⁷ Due to its vast wealth, the IRGC is able to use a very simple recruitment tactic: money. The IRGC attracts young men by paying them up to \$265 a month.¹⁸ The Basij and Quds Force operate under the IRGC and are responsible for the bulk of the umbrella organization's recruitment. Both groups have developed an organized method of enrollment and training. Both, the Basij and the Quds Force strategically place recruiters near holy sites, mosques, schools, and community centers to attract volunteers.¹⁹ The IRGC also trains foreign fighters from groups like Hezbollah and Hamas.²⁰

Basij

Training

The Basij is a paramilitary organization operating under the IRGC that relies heavily on volunteers as well as paid members. The Basij constitution highlights the importance of

¹⁵ Dexter Filkins, "The Shadow Commander," *New Yorker*, September 30, 2013, <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2013/09/30/the-shadow-commander>.

¹⁶ Ali Alfoneh, "Disputed Chain of Command: Conflict at the Helm of Iran's Revolutionary Guards?" American Enterprise Institute, October 1, 2012, <http://www.aei.org/article/foreign-and-defense-policy/regional/middle-east-and-north-africa/disputed-chain-of-command-conflict-at-the-helm-of-irans-revolutionary-guards/>.

¹⁷ Hossein Aryan, "Iran's Basij Force – The Mainstay of Domestic Security," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, January 15, 2009, http://www.rferl.org/content/Irans_Basij_Force_Mainstay_Of_Domestic_Security/1357081.html.

¹⁸ "Hama Media Office: IRGC Presence 'Noticeable,'" Syria Direct, February 26, 2015, <http://syriadirect.org/main/36-interviews/1857-hama-media-office-irgc-presence-noticeable>.

¹⁹ Anthony H. Cordesman, "Iran's Revolutionary Guards, the Al Quds Force, and Other Intelligence and Paramilitary Forces," Center for Strategic & International Studies, August 16, 2007, http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/070816_cordesman_report.pdf.

²⁰ Mark Mazzetti, "Striking Deep Into Israel, Hamas Employs an Upgraded Arsenal," *New York Times*, December 31, 2008, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/01/world/middleeast/01rockets.html>.

training, stating that one of the force's most important responsibilities is to train volunteers to "defend the country and the Islamic Republic regime."²¹ The Basij is increasingly being used to quell internal unrest in Iran and, consequently, has become highly organized.

The Basij has an extensive membership of regular, active, and special recruits. Each classification is based on the volunteer's level of training and, to a lesser degree, on his level of commitment.²²

The Basij relies heavily on Ideological-Political Trainers (IPTs) to indoctrinate and educate its fledgling members. IPTs are divided into three groups: organizational, non-organizational, and invited members. Organizational and non-organizational IPTs typically hold high school degrees, while invited trainers are usually well-connected and well-educated.²³ Trainees are also required to attend at least 18 hours of ideological and political courses on subjects like "Major Islamic Commandments."²⁴

The next level of training consists of courses that include "Jihad and Defense of the Quran," and "Fluency in Reading the Quran." Specialized training courses in areas such as advanced psychological warfare and anti-riot training last even longer but are not mandatory. Only after completing this final level of training can Basij members go to mosques, schools, and factories to organize.²⁵ Basic Basij members are also trained in practical matters such as weaponry, guard duty, civil defense, and first aid.

IPTs are themselves educated by a network of political guides. IPT's are taught subjects like: Islamic commandments, the Quran, the history of Islam, sociopolitical knowledge, and the fundamentals of belief.

Recruitment

²¹ Dr. Saeid Golkar, "The Ideological-Political Training of Iran's Basij," Brandeis University Crown Center for Middle East Studies, September 2010, <http://www.brandeis.edu/crown/publications/meb/MEB44.pdf>.

²² Dr. Saeid Golkar, "The Ideological-Political Training of Iran's Basij," Brandeis University Crown Center for Middle East Studies, September 2010, <http://www.brandeis.edu/crown/publications/meb/MEB44.pdf>.

²³ Dr. Saeid Golkar, "The Ideological-Political Training of Iran's Basij," Brandeis University Crown Center for Middle East Studies, September 2010, <http://www.brandeis.edu/crown/publications/meb/MEB44.pdf>.

²⁴ Dr. Saeid Golkar, "The Ideological-Political Training of Iran's Basij," Brandeis University Crown Center for Middle East Studies, September 2010, <http://www.brandeis.edu/crown/publications/meb/MEB44.pdf>.

²⁵ Dr. Saeid Golkar, "The Ideological-Political Training of Iran's Basij," Brandeis University Crown Center for Middle East Studies, September 2010, <http://www.brandeis.edu/crown/publications/meb/MEB44.pdf>.

Basij recruitment relies heavily on the cooperation of local and regional mosques.²⁶ Members are recruited under “clerical [sic] supervision and trusted citizens.” Paid Basij positions are available by application at Basij central offices.²⁷

Quds Force

Training

The Quds Force is a special unit of the Revolutionary Guard that oversees weapons and training.²⁸ The Quds Force’s commander is Major General Qasem Soleimani. Basic training can last anywhere from three to nine months and takes place at three main facilities in Iran. The first is the Imam Ali Base near Tehran, which specializes in ground training for foreign fighters. The second is the Wali-e-Assar Base in Shiraz and the third is the “Jerusalem Operation” College in Qom, where trainees study spirituality and ideology. There are other smaller training facilities throughout the country that are used to train armed groups from foreign countries as well.²⁹

Recruitment

The Quds Force sets up recruitment offices near Islamic holy sites to attract a wide variety of devout people from many nationalities throughout the Muslim world, including Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Iraq. The most important recruitment office is in the “Dar al-Tawahid” hotel in Mecca, Saudi Arabia.³⁰ The Quds force helps operate the Manzariyah training center in Iran near the holy city of Qom. The Manzariyah training center recruits from a pool of foreign students studying at a nearby religious seminary.³¹ The Quds force also recruits in Iraq, where they pay Iraqi Shiites up to \$150 per month to go to Iran to train.³²

Sources of financial support:

IRGC

²⁶ Ali Alfoneh, “The Basij Resistance Force | The Iran Primer” United States Institute of Peace, <http://iranprimer.usip.org/resource/basij-resistance-force>.

²⁷ Ali Alfoneh, “The Basij Resistance Force | The Iran Primer,” United States Institute of Peace, <http://iranprimer.usip.org/resource/basij-resistance-force>.

²⁸ Paul Richter, “Top Iranians Direct Iraq Missions,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 24, 2007, <http://articles.latimes.com/2007/oct/24/world/fg-usiran24>.

²⁹ Dore Gold, “Inside the Octopus: Unraveling Iran’s terrorist Quds Force,” *Israel Hayom*, March 16, 2012, http://www.israelhayom.com/site/newsletter_article.php?id=3532.

³⁰ Dore Gold, “Inside the Octopus: Unraveling Iran’s terrorist Quds Force,” *Israel Hayom*, March 16, 2012, http://www.israelhayom.com/site/newsletter_article.php?id=3532.

³¹ Anthony H. Cordesman, “Iran’s Revolutionary Guards, the Al Quds Force, and Other Intelligence and Paramilitary Forces,” Center for Strategic & International Studies, August 16, 2007, http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/070816_cordesman_report.pdf.

³² “Experts: Iran’s Quds Force Deeply Enmeshed in Iraq,” Fox News, February 16, 2007, <http://www.foxnews.com/story/2007/02/16/experts-iran-quds-force-deeply-enmeshed-in-iraq/>.

As a government body, the IRGC enjoyed a budget of approximately \$1.7 billion for the 2013-2014 year.³³ The IRGC is also Iran's most powerful economic actor, according to the U.S. Treasury Department, which labeled the National Iranian Oil Company "an agent or affiliate of the Revolutionary Guards."³⁴ Within the IRGC, the Quds Force exerts control over strategic industries, commercial services, and black-market enterprises.³⁵ According to a 2007 *Los Angeles Times* report, the IRGC has ties to over 100 companies, controlling over \$12 billion.³⁶ These funds are used to exert influence in Iran and Iranian proxies. According to Ray Takeyh of the Council on Foreign Relations, the IRGC is "heavily involved in everything from pharmaceuticals to telecommunications and pipelines – even the new Imam Khomeini Airport and a great deal of smuggling. Many of the front companies engaged in procuring nuclear technology are owned and run by the Revolutionary Guards. They're developing along the lines of the Chinese military, which is involved in many business enterprises. It's a huge business conglomeration."³⁷

Basij

In the 2009/2010 Iranian national budget, the Basij received \$430 million from the government, but the Basij reportedly earned large sums of cash through its control of non-profit foundations created by the Basij and IRGC in the 1980s and 1990s.³⁸ The Basij are also reportedly a major investor in the Tehran stock exchange.³⁹

History:

May 5, 1979: Ayatollah Khomeini creates the IRGC to be the "ideological custodian charged with defending the Islamic Republic against internal and external threats."⁴⁰

November 25, 1979: Ayatollah Khomeini calls for the creation of a "twenty million man army."⁴¹

April 30, 1980: "The people's militia," or Basij, is created.⁴²

³³ "Fifty Percent Increase in Army Budget While Basij Budget Decreases," Mehr News, December 9, 2013, <http://mehrnews.com/detail/news/2191697>.

³⁴ "Treasury Links Iran Oil to Elite Military," U.S. Institute of Peace, September 25, 2012, <http://iranprimer.usip.org/blog/2012/sep/25/treasury-links-iran-oil-elite-military>.

³⁵ Greg Bruno, Jayshree Bajoria, and Jonathan Masters, "Iran's Revolutionary Guards," Council on Foreign Relations, June 14, 2013, <http://www.cfr.org/iran/irans-revolutionary-guards/p14324>.

³⁶ Kim Murphy, "Iran's \$12-Billion Enforcers," *Los Angeles Times*, August 26, 2007, <http://articles.latimes.com/2007/aug/26/world/fg-guards26>.

³⁷ Robin Wright, "Iranian Unit to Be Labeled 'Terrorist,'" *The Washington Post*, August 15, 2007, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/08/14/AR2007081401662.html>.

³⁸ Ali Alfoneh, "The Basij Resistance Force | The Iran Primer," United States Institute of Peace, accessed February 27, 2015, <http://iranprimer.usip.org/resource/basij-resistance-force>.

³⁹ Ali Alfoneh, "The Basij Resistance Force | The Iran Primer," United States Institute of Peace, accessed February 27, 2015, <http://iranprimer.usip.org/resource/basij-resistance-force>.

⁴⁰ Greg Bruno, Jayshree Bajoria, and Jonathan Masters, "Iran's Revolutionary Guards," Council on Foreign Relations, June 14, 2013, <http://www.cfr.org/iran/irans-revolutionary-guards/p14324>.

⁴¹ Ali Alfoneh, "The Basij Resistance Force | The Iran Primer," United States Institute of Peace, accessed February 27, 2015, <http://iranprimer.usip.org/resource/basij-resistance-force>.

⁴² Ali Alfoneh, "The Basij Resistance Force | The Iran Primer," United States Institute of Peace, accessed February 27, 2015, <http://iranprimer.usip.org/resource/basij-resistance-force>.

July 1980: A Basij informant prevents a royalist coup (called the “Nojeh coup”) by infiltrating the group and reporting back to the ayatollah’s regime.⁴³

Sept. 22, 1980: Iraq invades Iran, sparking the eight-year Iran-Iraq War, during which the IRGC becomes a major player in Iran’s operations abroad.

June 28, 1981: The People’s Mojahedin of Iran (MEK) bombs the headquarters of the regime’s ruling Islamic Republic Party, killing 72 government officials.⁴⁴ The IRGC and Basij execute 7,000 MEK members in retaliation for the bombing.⁴⁵

1982: Hezbollah, a pro-Shiite Islamist group, emerges in Lebanon during the country’s 15-year civil war. The IRGC provides Hezbollah with crucial financial support and training.⁴⁶

April 18, 1983: A Hezbollah suicide attack on the U.S. embassy in Beirut kills 63 and wounds 120.⁴⁷

Oct. 23, 1983: A suicide truck bombing of the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut kills 241 U.S. service personnel. Hezbollah is suspected.⁴⁸

1983: The IRGC cedes some of its intelligence-gathering role to Iran’s newly created Ministry of Intelligence and National Security (MOIS).⁴⁹

May 25, 1986: A group of IRGC commanders meet with Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, then commander-in-chief of Iran’s armed forces and later president of Iran, to discuss “a bitter report on retreats.”⁵⁰

July 13, 1989: Iranian Kurdish dissident Abdul Rahman Ghassemlou is shot to death in Vienna, Austria, along with Fadil Rasoul and Abdullah Ghaderi, after being lured to a supposed negotiation with Iranian regime officials. The three Iranians who committed the murders were arrested by Austrian authorities but later released. Austrian police

⁴³ Frederic Wehrey et al., *The Rise of the Pasdaran: Assessing the Domestic Roles of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps* (Santa Monica, Arlington, and Pittsburgh: RAND Corporation, 2009), 27, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2008/RAND_MG821.pdf.

⁴⁴ Frederic Wehrey et al., *The Rise of the Pasdaran: Assessing the Domestic Roles of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps* (Santa Monica, Arlington, and Pittsburgh: RAND Corporation, 2009), 110, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2008/RAND_MG821.pdf.

⁴⁵ Frederic Wehrey et al., *The Rise of the Pasdaran: Assessing the Domestic Roles of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps* (Santa Monica, Arlington, and Pittsburgh: RAND Corporation, 2009), 110, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2008/RAND_MG821.pdf.

⁴⁶ Jonathan Masters and Zachary Laub, “Hezbollah (a.k.a. Hizbollah, Hizbu’llah),” Council on Foreign Relations, January 3, 2014, <http://www.cfr.org/lebanon/hezbollah-k-hizbollah-hizbullah/p9155>.

⁴⁷ “Incident Summary for GTDID: 198304180001,” Global Terrorism Database, START: National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, accessed February 27, 2015, <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/IncidentSummary.aspx?gtdid=198304180001>.

⁴⁸ “Beirut Marine Barracks Bombing Fast Facts,” CNN, June 13, 2013, <http://www.cnn.com/2013/06/13/world/meast/beirut-marine-barracks-bombing-fast-facts/index.html>.

⁴⁹ Frederic Wehrey et al., *The Rise of the Pasdaran: Assessing the Domestic Roles of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps* (Santa Monica, Arlington, and Pittsburgh: RAND Corporation, 2009), 30, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2008/RAND_MG821.pdf.

⁵⁰ Ali Alfoneh, “Iran’s Secret Network: Major General Qassem Suleimani’s Inner Circle,” AEI Middle Eastern Outlook, no. 2, March 2011, <http://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/MEO-2011-03-No-2-g.pdf>.

confirmed that at least one of the suspected killers carried an Iranian diplomatic passport.⁵¹ However, the suspected killers were allowed to return to Iran after pressure from the Iranian regime.⁵²

March 17, 1992: A suicide bomber in a pickup truck blows up at the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires, Argentina, killing 29 and wounding 242.⁵³ Hezbollah admits to orchestrating the attack.⁵⁴

Sept. 17, 1992: Four Iranian Kurdish dissidents are assassinated at Mykonos, a Greek restaurant in Berlin, Germany. In 1997, a German court issued an international arrest warrant for Iranian Intelligence Minister Hojjat al-Islam Ali Fallahian after determining that he had ordered the dissidents' assassination with the knowledge of Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei.⁵⁵ Then-Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani was also implicated.⁵⁶

July 18, 1994: A truck bombing at the AMIA Jewish community center in Buenos Aires, Argentina kills over 80 and wounds 300. Hezbollah and the IRGC are suspected of orchestrating the attack and Argentine officials issue an indictment in 2006 for former Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani for involvement in the attack.⁵⁷

August 1994: Violent rioting erupts in the Iranian city of Qazvin. Many of the commanders and soldiers in the IRGC units sent in to calm the riots refuse to fire on the unarmed protesters. In response, the Iranian government brings in other Basij and IRGC units from outside the region.⁵⁸

February 25, 1996: Twin Hamas bus bombings in Jerusalem kill 40 people.⁵⁹ Hamas claims responsibility. Iran is later found liable for the attack in a U.S. court.

June 25, 1996: A truck bomb blows up a dormitory complex at Saudi Arabia's Khobar Towers, a military housing complex for U.S. Air Force pilots and staff. Nineteen Americans are killed and 372 wounded.⁶⁰ An investigation by the U.S. Federal Bureau of

⁵¹ "Iranian Wounded in Vienna Killings," *Los Angeles Times*, July 17, 1989, http://articles.latimes.com/1989-07-17/news/mn-2921_1_iranian-kurdish.

⁵² "Iranian President Allegedly Involved in Vienna Murders," *Austrian Times*, June 18, 2009, <http://www.austriantimes.at/index.php?id=14092>.

⁵³ Matthew Levitt, "Hezbollah's 1992 Attack in Argentina Is a Warning for Modern-Day Europe," *Atlantic*, March 19, 2013, <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/03/hezbollahs-1992-attack-in-argentina-is-a-warning-for-modern-day-europe/274160/>.

⁵⁴ Matthew Levitt, "Hezbollah's 1992 Attack in Argentina Is a Warning for Modern-Day Europe," *Atlantic*, March 19, 2013, <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/03/hezbollahs-1992-attack-in-argentina-is-a-warning-for-modern-day-europe/274160/>.

⁵⁵ Roya Hakakian, "Looking Back at the Mykonos Trial: The End of the Dispensable Iranian," *Spiegel Online*, October 4, 2007, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/looking-back-at-the-mykonos-trial-the-end-of-the-dispensable-iranian-a-476369.html>.

⁵⁶ Roya Hakakian, "Looking Back at the Mykonos Trial: The End of the Dispensable Iranian," *Spiegel Online*, October 4, 2007, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/looking-back-at-the-mykonos-trial-the-end-of-the-dispensable-iranian-a-476369.html>.

⁵⁷ "Iran Charged over Argentina Bomb," BBC News, October 25, 2006, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/6085768.stm>.

⁵⁸ Frederic Wehrey et al., *The Rise of the Pasdaran: Assessing the Domestic Roles of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps* (Santa Monica, Arlington, and Pittsburgh: RAND Corporation, 2009), 82-83, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2008/RAND_MG821.pdf.

⁵⁹ Rachel Gottlieb, "Parents of Two Bombing Victims Take on Iran," *Hartford Courant*, February 9, 1999, http://articles.courant.com/1999-02-09/news/9902090099_1_gaza-strip-bombing-killed.

⁶⁰ "Attorney General Statement," U.S. Department of Justice, June 21, 2001, <http://www.fas.org/irp/news/2001/06/khobar.html>.

Investigation finds Shiite militants “inspired, supported, and directed by elements of the Iranian government” responsible for the bombing.⁶¹

1997: Following the election of purported reformist Iranian President Mohammad Khatami, the IRGC begins to reassert itself as a traditionalist intelligence agency loyal to the Supreme Leader. The IRGC’s move is in reaction to what the IRGC feels was the Ministry of Intelligence and Security’s (MOIS) increasingly sympathetic position towards Khatami.⁶²

1998: In response to celebrations across Iran after the country wins a spot in soccer’s World Cup, the Iranian regime decides to revamp the Basij in order to reclaim control of the streets.⁶³

1999: The Basij militia quashes anti-regime student protests.⁶⁴

June 2001: A U.S. federal grand jury indicts the leader and 13 other members of Saudi Arabian Hezbollah for the 1996 Khobar Towers attack. “Elements of the Iranian government” are charged with providing support.⁶⁵

2004: The Iranian government institutes a constitutional amendment allowing young men to avoid active military service by joining the Basij.⁶⁶

May 2004: The IRGC forces the newly opened Imam Khomeini Airport to close.⁶⁷

2005: The U.S. Congress agrees to a request by President George W. Bush to fund covert operations from Iraq into Iran to combat the IRGC’s Quds Force, gather intelligence on Iranian nuclear strategy, and destabilize the religious leadership.⁶⁸

February 14, 2005: A bombing in Beirut kills 23 people, including former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri. Hezbollah is suspected of carrying out the attack at the instigation of Iran.⁶⁹

August 3, 2005: Hardliner Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, a Basij volunteer during the Iran-Iraq War,⁷⁰ is sworn in as Iran’s president.⁷¹

⁶¹ *United States vs. al-Mughassil*, FindLaw, June 19, 2001,

<http://news.findlaw.com/hdocs/docs/khobar/khobarindict61901.pdf>.

⁶² Frederic Wehrey et al., *The Rise of the Pasdaran: Assessing the Domestic Roles of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps* (Santa Monica, Arlington, and Pittsburgh: RAND Corporation, 2009), 30, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2008/RAND_MG821.pdf.

⁶³ Neil Macfarquhar, “Shadowy Iranian Vigilantes Vow Bolder Action,” *New York Times*, June 19, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/19/world/middleeast/19basij.html>.

⁶⁴ Ali Alfoneh, “The Basij Resistance Force | The Iran Primer,” United States Institute of Peace, accessed February 27, 2015, <http://iranprimer.usip.org/resource/basij-resistance-force>.

⁶⁵ “Attorney General Statement” U.S. Department of Justice, June 21, 2001, <http://www.fas.org/irp/news/2001/06/khobar.html>.

⁶⁶ Frederic Wehrey et al., *The Rise of the Pasdaran: Assessing the Domestic Roles of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps* (Santa Monica, Arlington, and Pittsburgh: RAND Corporation, 2009), 46, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2008/RAND_MG821.pdf.

⁶⁷ Frederic Wehrey et al., *The Rise of the Pasdaran: Assessing the Domestic Roles of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps* (Santa Monica, Arlington, and Pittsburgh: RAND Corporation, 2009), 111, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2008/RAND_MG821.pdf.

⁶⁸ Seymour M. Hersh, “Preparing the Battlefield,” *New Yorker*, July 7, 2008, http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2008/07/07/080707fa_fact_hersh?currentPage=all.

⁶⁹ Dexter Filkins, “The Shadow Commander,” *New Yorker*, September 23, 2013, <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2013/09/30/the-shadow-commander>.

⁷⁰ Frederic Wehrey et al., *The Rise of the Pasdaran: Assessing the Domestic Roles of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps* (Santa Monica, Arlington, and Pittsburgh: RAND Corporation, 2009), 103, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2008/RAND_MG821.pdf

July 2006: The IRGC Quds Force reportedly trains members of Lebanese Hezbollah in Qom, Iran.⁷²

December 22, 2006: A U.S. federal judge rules that Iran is responsible for the 1996 Khobar Towers bombing and orders the Iranian government to pay \$254 million to the families of 17 American victims in damages.⁷³

January 2007: U.S. forces detain five IRGC Quds Force members during a raid of the Iranian government's liaison office in Irbil, Iraq for conspiring with Iraqi militants to attack U.S. forces.⁷⁴

March 23, 2007: The IRGC's navy seizes 15 British Royal Navy personnel in what the British claim is Iraqi waters and the IRGC claims is Iranian waters.⁷⁵

April 4, 2007: The detained British navy personnel are allowed to return home.⁷⁶

May 28, 2007: U.S. and Iranian representatives meet in Iraq to discuss the deteriorating security situation.⁷⁷ The Iranian ambassador continuously calls for breaks to report back to and seek further instructions from IRGC Quds Force Commander Qasem Soleimani.⁷⁸

May 29, 2007: Shiite militants in Baghdad kidnap British computer expert Peter Moore and four private security guards.⁷⁹ A year-long investigation by the *Guardian* concludes in 2009 that the men were kidnapped at the IRGC's behest and held in a Quds Force detention center inside Iran where they were later murdered.⁸⁰

May 2007: Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair accuses "elements of the Iranian regime" of arming the Taliban in Afghanistan.⁸¹

September 29, 2007: Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei gives the IRGC's commander total authority over the Basij as part of a broader reorganization of the IRGC to face possible foreign attack or invasion.⁸²

⁷¹ "Iran Hardliner Becomes President," BBC News, August 3, 2005, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/4740441.stm.

⁷² Michael R. Gordon and Andrew W. Lehren, "Leaked Reports Detail Iran's Aid for Iraqi Militias," *New York Times*, October 22, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/23/world/middleeast/23iran.html>.

⁷³ Carol D. Leonnig, "Iran Held Liable In Khobar Attack," *Washington Post*, December 23, 2006, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/12/22/AR2006122200455.html>.

⁷⁴ Mary Jordan and Robin Wright, "Iran Seizes 15 British Seamen," *Washington Post*, March 24, 2007, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/03/23/AR2007032300574.html>.

⁷⁵ Mary Jordan and Robin Wright, "Iran Seizes 15 British Seamen," *Washington Post*, March 24, 2007, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/03/23/AR2007032300574.html>.

⁷⁶ Thomas Harding, George Jones, and David Blair, "Freed British Hostages Leave Iran," *Telegraph* (London), April 5, 2007, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1547726/Freed-British-hostages-leave-Iran.html>.

⁷⁷ John Ward Anderson, "U.S., Iran Open Dialogue On Iraq," *Washington Post*, May 29, 2007, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/05/28/AR2007052800080.html>.

⁷⁸ Bozorgmehr Sharafedin, "Iran's Qasem Soleimani Wields Power behind the Scenes in Iraq," BBC News, June 17, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-27883162>.

⁷⁹ Sean Rayment and Damien McElroy, "British Hostages in Iraq Named after Bodies Found," *Telegraph* (London), June 21, 2009, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iraq/5594701/British-hostages-in-iraq-named-after-bodies-found.html>.

⁸⁰ "Revealed: Hand of Iran Behind Britons' Baghdad Kidnapping," *Guardian* (London), December 30, 2009, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/dec/30/iran-britons-baghdad-kidnapping>.

⁸¹ Fisman Abrashi, "Iran's President 'Doubts' Arming Taliban," *USA Today*, August 14, 2007, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/topstories/2007-08-14-2803528991_x.htm.

September 29, 2007: The Iranian parliament labels the CIA and U.S. Army terrorist organizations in response to a U.S. Senate resolution earlier that week calling for designating the IRGC Quds Force as a terrorist organization.⁸³

October 25, 2007: The U.S. designates the Quds Force as a terror supporting organization for supporting proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.⁸⁴

November 2007: IRGC forces take control of Iranian naval operations in the Persian Gulf.⁸⁵

March 2008: IRGC Quds Force Commander Qasem Soleimani helps negotiate the end to a week of fighting between U.S.-backed Iraqi leaders and followers of Muqtada al-Sadr, a radical, Iranian-supported Iraqi Shiite cleric.⁸⁶

May 2008: Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki sends a group of senior Shiite leaders to Tehran to discuss concerns that Iran is arming and financing militias in Iraq.⁸⁷

October 2008: General Hossein Hamedani, deputy commander of an IRGC volunteer, tells an Iranian news agency that the IRGC is providing weapons to “liberation armies” in the Middle East, including groups in Lebanon and Iraq.⁸⁸

June 12, 2009: Following Mahmoud Ahmadinejad’s reelection as president of Iran, protests break out in Tehran alleging electoral fraud.⁸⁹ Hezbollah and Hamas reportedly work with the Basij to suppress protests in Tehran.

June 2009: The Quds Force is implicated in custodial deaths, killing election protesters, and other acts of politically motivated violence, including torture, beatings, and rape.⁹⁰

June 2009: Iraqi authorities hand over the bodies of two security guards kidnapped in 2007.⁹¹

July 2009: IRGC Commander Mohammad Ali Jafari tells Iranian media that anyone speaking against the government would be labeled an enemy of the state.⁹²

⁸² Ali Alfoneh, “What Do Structural Changes in the Revolutionary Guards Mean?” AEI Middle Eastern Outlook, no. 7, September 2008, http://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/20080923_23487MEO07_g.pdf.

⁸³ “Iran’s Parliament Votes to Label CIA, U.S. Army ‘Terrorist’ Groups,” CNN, September 29, 2007, <http://www.cnn.com/2007/WORLD/meast/09/29/iran.parliament/index.html>.

⁸⁴ “Text of H.R. 854: Quds Force Terrorist Designation Act (Introduced Version),” GovTrack.us, February 27, 2013, <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/113/hr854/text>.

⁸⁵ “Iran’s Revolutionary Guards Patrol Persian Gulf, U.S. Says,” CNN, November 29, 2007, <http://www.cnn.com/2007/WORLD/meast/11/29/iran.navy/index.html>.

⁸⁶ Warren P. Strobel and Leila Fadel, “Iranian Who Brokered Iraqi Peace Is on U.S. Terrorist Watch List,” McClatchy DC, March 31, 2008, <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2008/03/31/32141/iranian-who-brokered-iraqi-peace.html>.

⁸⁷ Alissa J. Rubin and Michael R. Gordon, “Iraq Team to Discuss Militias With Iran,” *New York Times*, May 1, 2008, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/01/world/middleeast/01iraq.html>.

⁸⁸ Ali Akbar Dareini, “Iranian General Reports Arming ‘Liberation Armies,’” *USA Today*, October 27, 2008, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/world/2008-10-27-2687460468_x.htm.

⁸⁹ “Ahmadinejad Hails Election as Protests Grow,” CNN, June 13, 2009, <http://www.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/meast/06/13/iran.election/index.html>.

⁹⁰ “Text of H.R. 854: Quds Force Terrorist Designation Act (Introduced Version),” GovTrack.us, February 27, 2013, <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/113/hr854/text>.

⁹¹ Sean Rayment and Damien McElroy, “British Hostages in Iraq Named after Bodies Found,” *Telegraph* (London), June 21, 2009, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iraq/5594701/British-hostages-in-iraq-named-after-bodies-found.html>.

⁹² Michael Slackman, “Iran Warns West Against Interference,” *New York Times*, July 7, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/07/world/middleeast/07iran.html>.

October 2009: A suicide bomber attacks a group of IRGC commanders and tribal chiefs meeting to discuss Sunni-Shiite relations, killing 42 people, including 11 IRGC commanders.⁹³ A Sunni group called Jundallah, or Soldiers of God, claims responsibility, but Iran blames the United States and United Kingdom.⁹⁴

November 2009: The Iranian regime announces plans to create 6,000 Basij centers in elementary schools across the country to promote the ideals of the Islamic Revolution. Naqdi announces a new era of “super media power” cooperation between the media and the IRGC.⁹⁵

November 2009: Turkish security forces foil a Hezbollah attack against Israeli targets in Turkey.⁹⁶

December 27, 2009: On the Shiite holy day of Ashura, during which violence of any kind is forbidden, Basij forces open fire on the largest protest rally since the contested June presidential election, resulting in the death of 15 and arrest of hundreds.⁹⁷

December 30, 2009: British computer expert Peter Moore is released after being taken hostage by Iraqi Shiite militants in 2007. Moore’s four security guards who captured with him are reported dead.⁹⁸ The *Guardian* reveals that the IRGC kidnapped and held the four men in Quds Force-run prisons.⁹⁹

January 2010: The IRGC Quds Force and Hezbollah agree to cooperate in carrying out global attacks against Israeli, U.S., and Western targets.¹⁰⁰

January 2010: IRGC Commander Mohammad Ali Jafari reportedly slaps President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad across the face for suggesting that the government relax restrictions on the media during a Supreme National Security Council meeting.¹⁰¹

April 2010: The IRGC Quds Force increases its number of operatives in Venezuela in order to build terrorist networks throughout the region so they may be called upon in case of a military conflict with the U.S. over Iran’s nuclear program.¹⁰²

⁹³ “Iran Vows Swift Response to Attack,” Al Jazeera English, October 19, 2009,

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2009/10/20091018201522994684.html>.

⁹⁴ “Iran Vows Swift Response to Attack,” Al Jazeera English, October 19, 2009,

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2009/10/20091018201522994684.html>.

⁹⁵ Robert F. Worth, “Iran Expanding Effort to Stifle the Opposition,” *New York Times*, November 24, 2009,

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/24/world/middleeast/24iran.html>.

⁹⁶ Avi Issacharoff, “Turkish Forces Foil Hezbollah Attack on Israeli Target,” *Haaretz*, December 9, 2009,

<http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/news/turkish-forces-foil-hezbollah-attack-on-israeli-target-1.2529>.

⁹⁷ Jim Sciutto, “Protester: ‘Killing Muslims on Ashura Is Like Crucifying Christians on Christmas,’” ABC News, December 28, 2009, <http://abcnews.go.com/WN/iranian-government-arrests-hundreds-tensions-mount/story?id=9436148>.

⁹⁸ Mona Mahmood, Maggie O’Kane, and Guy Grandjean, “Revealed: Hand of Iran behind Britons’ Baghdad Kidnapping,” *Guardian* (London), December 30, 2009,

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/dec/30/iran-britons-baghdad-kidnapping>.

⁹⁹ Mona Mahmood, Maggie O’Kane, and Guy Grandjean, “Revealed: Hand of Iran behind Britons’ Baghdad Kidnapping,” *Guardian* (London), December 30, 2009,

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/dec/30/iran-britons-baghdad-kidnapping>.

¹⁰⁰ Matthew Levitt, *Hizballah and the Qods Force in Iran’s Shadow War with the West* (Washington: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2013), 1,

<http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/uploads/Documents/pubs/PolicyFocus123.pdf>.

¹⁰¹ Robert Mackey, “Ahmadinejad Was Slapped by General, Leaked Cable Says,” *New York Times*, January 3, 2011, <http://thelede.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/01/03/ahmadinejad-was-slapped-by-general-leaked-cable-says/>.

February 2011: Using teargas, batons and live fire, the Basij assists riot police to quell protesters chanting anti-government slogans in Tehran.¹⁰³

April 2011: The U.S. and EU accuse the IRGC Quds Force of providing equipment and support to the Syrian regime to suppress revolts.¹⁰⁴

April 29, 2011: President Obama issues Executive Order 13572, placing sanctions on perpetrators of human rights abuses in Syria, including the IRGC Quds Force, for its use of violence and torture against peaceful protestors.¹⁰⁵

October 2011: The IRGC Quds Force is tied to a failed attempt on the life of the Saudi ambassador to the United States.

October 11, 2011: The U.S. Department of Treasury names five people, including four members of the IRGC Quds Force, for suspected involvement in a plot earlier that month to assassinate the Saudi ambassador to the United States.¹⁰⁶

October 27, 2011: Former CIA Middle East specialist Reuel Marc Gerecht testifies before Congress that IRGC Quds Force Commander Qassem Soleimani should be found and assassinated for his attempt to blow up the Saudi ambassador to the U.S.¹⁰⁷

November 2011: After the United Kingdom breaks diplomatic ties with Iran, hundreds of protesters allegedly led by the Basij overrun the British embassy in Tehran.¹⁰⁸

2012: The Quds Force provides training to Taliban forces in Afghanistan on small unit tactics, small arms, explosives and indirect fire weapons such as mortars, artillery and rockets.¹⁰⁹

January 2012: Azerbaijani authorities arrest at least two local men, linked to Iranian intelligence agencies, for plotting to attack the Israeli ambassador to Azerbaijan and a local rabbi.¹¹⁰

¹⁰² Bill Gertz, "Iran Boosts Qods Shock Troops in Venezuela," *Washington Times*, April 21, 2010, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/apr/21/iran-boosts-qods-shock-troops-in-venezuela/>.

¹⁰³ Saeed Kamali Dehghan, "Iran Protests See Reinvigorated Activists Take to the Streets in Thousands," *Guardian* (London), February 14, 2011, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/feb/14/iran-protests-reinvigorated-activists>.

¹⁰⁴ Greg Bruno, "State Sponsors: Iran," Council on Foreign Relations, October 13, 2011, <http://www.cfr.org/iran/state-sponsors-iran/p9362>.

¹⁰⁵ "Text of H.R. 854: Qods Force Terrorist Designation Act (Introduced Version)," GovTrack.us, February 27, 2013, <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/113/hr854/text>.

¹⁰⁶ "Treasury Sanctions Five Individual Tied to Iranian Ploy to Assassinate the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the United States," U.S. Department of the Treasury, October 11, 2011, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/pages/tg1320.aspx>.

¹⁰⁷ Siobhán O'Grady, "The Dark Knight Rises," *Foreign Policy*, October 14, 2014, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2014/10/14/the_dark_knight_rises_qassem_suleimani_iran_quds_force?wp_login_redirect=0.

¹⁰⁸ Robert F. Worth and Rick Gladstone, "In Tehran, Protesters Storm British Embassy," *New York Times*, November 29, 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/30/world/middleeast/tehran-protesters-storm-british-embassy.html>.

¹⁰⁹ "Country Report on Terrorism 2012 State Sponsors of Terrorism Overview," U.S. Department of State, May 30, 2013, <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2012/209985.htm>.

¹¹⁰ "Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps," Anti-Defamation League, April 2012, <http://archive.adl.org/nr/exeres/a8f45a87-2b3d-42e9-95cd-98bbdd80b164,db7611a2-02cd-43af-8147-649e26813571.frameless.html>.

January 2012: Quds Force Commander Qassem Soleimani pledges additional military aid to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in Syria during a meeting in Syria.¹¹¹

February 2012: Four Iranian jets bring munitions to Syria.¹¹²

February 13, 2012: An Israeli diplomat's wife is wounded in a car bomb attack in New Delhi, which is credited to the IRGC.¹¹³ Members of the IRGC had reportedly discussed the plan in 2011 with an Indian journalist, who claimed he had been in touch with the IRGC for almost 10 years.¹¹⁴

February 21, 2012: The Azerbaijani National Security Ministry announces the arrest of an unspecified number of people working for the IRGC and Hezbollah. The suspects are accused of planning attacks against the Israeli embassy and a Jewish cultural center.¹¹⁵

March 2012: The U.S. Department of the Treasury designates IRGC Quds Force General Gholamreza Baghbani as a Specially Designated Narcotics Trafficker under the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act (Kingpin Act). This is the first use of the Kingpin Act against an Iranian official.¹¹⁶

March 14, 2012: Azerbaijan announces the arrest of 22 Azerbaijani citizens accused of plotting with the IRGC against the American and Israeli embassies.¹¹⁷

June 19, 2012: Kenyan police arrest two Iranians, Ahmad Abolfathi Mohammad and Sayed Mansour Mousavi, for allegedly planning attacks against Israeli and American targets in the country. Mohammad and Mousavi are believed to be IRGC members.¹¹⁸

July 2012: A New York Police Department intelligence report links the IRGC or its proxies to nine foiled international plots against Jewish or Israeli targets.¹¹⁹

August 2012: Ayatollah Khamenei reportedly orders the IRGC Quds Force to step up attacks against Western targets in retaliation for U.S.-backing of Syrian rebels in that country's civil war.¹²⁰

¹¹¹ Jay Solomon and Siobhan Gorman, "Iran's Spymaster Counters U.S. Moves in the Mideast," *Wall Street Journal*, April 6, 2012,

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702303816504577305742884577460>.

¹¹² Jay Solomon and Siobhan Gorman, "Iran's Spymaster Counters U.S. Moves in the Mideast," *Wall Street Journal*, April 6, 2012,

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702303816504577305742884577460>.

¹¹³ Neeraj Chauhan, "Cops Name Iran Military Arm for Attack on Israeli Diplomat," *Times of India*, July 30, 2012, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/delhi/Cops-name-Iran-military-arm-for-attack-on-Israeli-diplomat/articleshow/15263013.cms>.

¹¹⁴ Neeraj Chauhan, "Cops Name Iran Military Arm for Attack on Israeli Diplomat," *Times of India*, July 30, 2012, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/delhi/Cops-name-Iran-military-arm-for-attack-on-Israeli-diplomat/articleshow/15263013.cms>.

¹¹⁵ "Access ADL: Israeli Diplomats in India and Georgia Latest Targets Abroad," Anti-Defamation League, February 14, 2012, <http://accessadl.blogspot.com/2012/02/israeli-diplomats-in-india-and-georgia.html>.

¹¹⁶ "Treasury Designates Iranian Quds Force General Overseeing Afghan Heroin Trafficking through Iran," U.S. Department of the Treasury, March 7, 2012, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg1444.aspx>.

¹¹⁷ "Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps," Anti-Defamation League, April 2012, <http://archive.adl.org/nr/exeres/a8f45a87-2b3d-42e9-95cd-98bbdd80b164,db7611a2-02cd-43af-8147-649e26813571.frameless.html>.

¹¹⁸ Randy Kreider, "Iranians Planned to Attack US, Israeli Targets in Kenya: Officials," ABC News, July 2, 2012, <http://abcnews.go.com/Blotter/iranians-planned-attack-us-israeli-targets-kenya-officials/story?id=16699615>.

¹¹⁹ Mark Hosenball, "Exclusive: New York Police Link Nine 2012 Plots to Iran, Proxies," Reuters, July 20, 2012, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/07/20/us-iran-hezbollah-plots-idUSBRE86J0SW20120720>.

September 2012: IRGC Commander Mohammad Ali Jafari confirms that members of the Quds Force are in Syria but do not constitute a “military presence.”¹²¹

November 2012: IRGC Commander Mohammad Ali Jafari admits the IRGC has transferred long-range missile technology to Hamas so the terrorist group can build an unlimited number of missiles.¹²²

February 27, 2013: The Qods Force Terrorist Designation Act is introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives, calling on the U.S. Secretary of State to label the IRGC Quds Force a terrorist organization.¹²³

May 2013: An Argentine prosecutor releases a 500-page indictment in the AMIA bombing case, accusing Iran of building terrorist networks in Argentina and other Latin American countries for the purpose of conducting terrorist attacks. The indictment lists Mohsen Rabbani, a former Iranian cultural attaché in Argentina, as a key leader directing the AMIA bombing.¹²⁴

May 19-June 5, 2013: Syrian army forces, aided by Hezbollah, retake the rebel-controlled Syrian city of Qusair¹²⁵ after two weeks of fighting¹²⁶ that leaves more than 500 rebels dead and more than 1,000 people wounded.¹²⁷ IRGC Quds Force Commander Qassem Soleimani reportedly orchestrated the Syrian army offensive and Hezbollah’s participation.¹²⁸

August 19, 2013: Iranian media reports that the IRGC intends to teach students how to bring down aerial drones by hacking their computer systems.¹²⁹

January 11, 2014: General Amir Ali Hajizadeh, head of the IRGC’s aerospace division, announces that Hezbollah’s missile capabilities has greatly improved and the group is able to target any location in Israel.¹³⁰

¹²⁰ Con Coughlin, “Iran’s Supreme Leader Orders Fresh Terror Attacks on West,” *Telegraph* (London), August 22, 2012,

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iran/9490878/Irans-supreme-leader-orders-fresh-terror-attacks-on-West.html>.

¹²¹ Ian Black, “Iran Confirms It Has Forces in Syria and Will Take Military Action If Pushed,” *Guardian* (London), September 16, 2012, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/sep/16/iran-middleeast>.

¹²² Thomas Erdbrink, “Iranian Missiles in Gaza Give Tehran Government a Lift,” *New York Times*, November 21, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/22/world/middleeast/iran-missiles-in-gaza-give-tehran-government-a-lift.html>.

¹²³ “Text of H.R. 854: Qods Force Terrorist Designation Act (Introduced Version),” GovTrack.us, February 27, 2013, <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/113/hr854/text>.

¹²⁴ “AMIA: Prosecutor Accuses Iran of Infiltrating South American Countries,” *Buenos Aires Herald*, May 29, 2013, <http://www.buenosairesherald.com/article/132260/amia-prosecutor-nisman-accuses-iran-fugitive-rabbani-of-infiltrating-several-south-american-countries>.

¹²⁵ “Syria Army Storms Rebel-Held Town,” BBC News, May 19, 2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-22586378>.

¹²⁶ “Syrian Army Retakes Town of Qusair,” BBC News, June 5, 2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-22778310>.

¹²⁷ Mariam Karouny, “Syrian Rebels Lose Strategic Town in Boost for Assad,” Reuters, June 5, 2013, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/06/05/us-syria-crisis-idUSBRE9530VE20130605>.

¹²⁸ Dexter Filkins, “The Shadow Commander,” *New Yorker*, September 23, 2013, <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2013/09/30/the-shadow-commander>.

¹²⁹ “Iran to teach drone-hunting to school students,” Associated Press, August 19, 2013, <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/iran-teach-drone-hunting-school-students>.

¹³⁰ Ali Akbar Dareini, “Iran commander: Hezbollah’s missile power improved,” Associated Press, January 11, 2014, <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/iran-commander-hezbollahs-missile-power-improved>.

May 31, 2014: Brigadier General Hossein Salami, deputy commander of the IRGC, announces that Iran has built a top-secret air defense system and that the Islamic Republic possesses ballistic missiles with “pinpoint precision....”¹³¹

June 2013: Ahead of Iranian presidential elections, Reuters reports that IRGC commanders “have made clear in public statements that they will accept only a winner who is both deeply loyal to Khamenei and committed to public order.”¹³²

June 11, 2014: Iran dispatches IRGC units to Iraq to combat ISIS.¹³³

July 2014: Reports surface that Quds Force Commander Qassem Soleimani is personally overseeing the fight against ISIS in Iraq.¹³⁴

August 24, 2014: IRGC forces allegedly shoot down an Israeli spy drone near the Natanz nuclear facility.¹³⁵

August 2014: IRGC Commander Mohammad Reza Naqdi reveals Iran has begun arming militants in the West Bank and supplying weaponry and training to Hamas during its conflict with Israel earlier that summer.¹³⁶

August 26, 2014: The Saudi-owned *Asharq Al-Awsat* newspaper, citing a coalition of Shiite parties, including politicians with close links to Tehran, reports that IRGC Quds Force Deputy Commander Hossein Hamedani would replace Quds Force Commander Qasem Soleimani because of the latter’s inability to secure a third term for Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki.¹³⁷ The website Nuclear Iran, which has ties to Saeed Jalili, former nuclear negotiator and former secretary of Iran’s Supreme National Security Council, denies the reports.¹³⁸

September 21, 2014: Houthi rebels, aided by the IRGC Quds Force, take over Yemen’s capital city of Sanaa.¹³⁹

¹³¹ Ariel Ben Solomon, “Iranian Commander Says Readying Launch of Air Defense System More Advanced than Russian S-300,” *Jerusalem Post*, June 1, 2014, <http://www.jpost.com/Iranian-Threat/News/Iran-Islamic-Republic-has-air-defense-system-more-advanced-than-Russian-s-300-355014>.

¹³² Babak Dehghanpisheh, “Iran Guards Wield Electoral Power behind Scenes,” Reuters, June 4, 2013, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/06/04/us-iran-election-guards-idUSBRE9530V120130604>.

¹³³ Farnaz Fassihi, “Iran Deploys Revolutionary Guard Forces to Fight Militants in Iraq, Iranian Security Sources Say,” *Wall Street Journal*, June 12, 2014, <http://online.wsj.com/articles/iran-deploys-forces-to-fight-al-qaeda-inspired-militants-in-iraq-iranian-security-sources-1402592470>.

¹³⁴ Qassim Abdul-Zahra and Hamza Hendawi, “Iranian commanders on front line of Iraq’s fight,” Associated Press, July 17, 2014, <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/iranian-commanders-front-line-iraqs-fight>.

¹³⁵ “Basij Commander: Iran Has Large Collection of Foreign Spy Drones,” Fars News Agency, August 25, 2014, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13930603001408>.

¹³⁶ “Basij Commander: Arming West Bank Started,” Fars News Agency, August 27, 2014, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13930605000983>.

¹³⁷ Arash Karami, “Iran Website Denies Qasem Soleimani Sidelined,” *Al-Monitor*, August 28, 2014, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2014/08/iran-quds-suleimani-fired-guard-corps-jalili-nuclear.html>.

¹³⁸ Arash Karami, “Iran Website Denies Qasem Soleimani Sidelined,” *Al-Monitor*, August 28, 2014, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2014/08/iran-quds-suleimani-fired-guard-corps-jalili-nuclear.html>.

¹³⁹ Yara Bayoumy and Mohammed Ghobari, “Iranian Support Seen Crucial for Yemen’s Houthis,” Reuters, December 15, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/15/us-yemen-houthis-iran-insight-idUSKBN0JT17A20141215>.

October 2014: Reversing its PR strategy, Iranian state television openly publicizes the regime’s role in fighting ISIS by airing images of IRGC Quds Force Commander Qasem Soleimani in action.¹⁴⁰

November 10, 2014: A group of U.S. veterans and family members file a lawsuit in U.S. District Court alleging five European banks facilitated Iranian payments to Iraqi militants to pay for violent anti-American attacks. The plaintiffs accused Barclays Plc, Credit Suisse Group AG, HSBC Holdings Plc, Royal Bank of Scotland Group Plc, and Standard Chartered of channeling more than \$100 million to Iraqi militants in violation of U.S. sanctions. The suit alleges the money went toward such militant groups as the IRGC Quds Force, Kataib Hezbollah, and a Shiite militia in Iraq.¹⁴¹

December 2014: An Iranian official confirms the IRGC Quds Force has “a few hundred” military personnel in Yemen training Houthi rebels.¹⁴²

December 28, 2014: Armed “bandits” kill three IRGC members in Iran’s Sistan-e-Balochistan region, which borders Pakistan.¹⁴³

February 25, 2015: IRGC speedboats attack a replica of a U.S. aircraft carrier during large-scale naval drills.¹⁴⁴

Designations by U.S. government:

Date	Designated Entity	Designation	Designating Entity	Effects of Designation	Reference
October 25, 2007	Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)-Qods Force	Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT) under Executive	U.S. Department of the Treasury	Blocks all property in U.S. or under possession of control of U.S.	¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁰ Saeed Kamali Dehghan, “Qassem Suleimani Photo Makeover Reveals Iran’s New Publicity Strategy”, *Guardian* (London), October 14, 2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/oct/14/suleimani-high-profile-to-publicise-irans-key-anti-isis-role>.

¹⁴¹ Alison Frankel, “U.S. Veterans Sue Banks, Claim They Should Pay for Iraq Attacks,” Reuters, November 10, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/11/10/us-usa-courts-banking-iran-idUSKCN0IU1Q120141110>.

¹⁴² Yara Bayoumy and Mohammed Ghobari, “Iranian Support Seen Crucial for Yemen’s Houthis,” Reuters, December 15, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/15/us-yemen-houthis-iran-insight-idUSKBN0JT17A20141215>.

¹⁴³ “Three Iranian Revolutionary Guards Killed Near Pakistan Border,” Reuters, December 29, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/29/us-iran-military-pakistan-idUSKBN0K70PJ20141229>.

¹⁴⁴ Ali Akbar Dareini and Adam Schreck, “Fake US Aircraft Carrier The Target in Latest Iranian drills,” Associated Press, February 25, 2015, <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/f032e35430d14051b11376690b4d31ea/irans-guard-begins-military-exercises-near-key-strait>.

¹⁴⁵ “Treasury Sanctions Five Individuals Tied to Iranian Plot to Assassinate the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the United States,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, October 11, 2011, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/pages/tg1320.aspx>; “Treasury and State Department Iran Designations Identifier Information Pursuant to E.O. 13224 (Terrorism) and E.O. 13382 (WMD),” U.S. Department of the Treasury, October 25, 2007, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Documents/hp644report.pdf>.

		Order 13224		persons; bans any property-related transactions by U.S. persons or within U.S., including giving or receiving contributions to the entity.	
October 25, 2007	Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)	Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferators and their Supporters under Executive Order 13382	U.S. Department of the Treasury	Blocks the property of specially designated WMD proliferators and members of their support networks. The action effectively denies those parties access to the U.S. financial and commercial systems.	¹⁴⁶
October 25, 2007	Hosein Salimi, commander of IRGC air force;	Individual associated with IRGC, designated under	U.S. Department of the Treasury	Blocks the property of specially designated WMD	¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁶ “Nonproliferation,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, accessed February 25, 2015, <http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/programs/documents/wmd.pdf>; “Treasury and State Department Iran Designations Identifier Information Pursuant to E.O. 13224 (Terrorism) and E.O. 13382 (WMD),” U.S. Department of the Treasury, October 25, 2007, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Documents/hp644report.pdf>; “Designation of Iranian Entities and Individuals for Proliferation Activities and Support for Terrorism,” U.S. Department of State, October 25, 2007, <http://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2007/oct/94193.htm>.

¹⁴⁷ “Designation of Iranian Entities and Individuals for Proliferation Activities and Support for Terrorism,” U.S. Department of State, October 25, 2007, <http://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2007/oct/94193.htm>.

	<p>Brigadier General Morteza Rezaie, deputy commander of the IRGC; Vice Admiral Ali Akbar Ahmadian, in 2007 the most recent former chief of the IRGC Joint Staff; Brigadier General Mohammad Hejazi, in 2007 the most recent former commander of Basij militia; Brigadier General Qasem Soleimani, commander of the Quds Force.</p>	<p>Executive Order 13382</p>		<p>proliferators and members of their support networks. The action effectively denies those parties access to the U.S. financial and commercial systems.</p>	
<p>September 29, 2010</p>	<p>Mohammad Ali Jafari, then commander of the IRGC forces; Sadeq Mahsouli, then Minister of Welfare and Social Security; Qolam-</p>	<p>Human rights abusers under executive order 13553</p>	<p>U.S. Department of the Treasury</p>	<p>Blocks the designated individual from obtaining any property in the U.S. or in the possession or control of U.S. persons.</p>	<p>¹⁴⁸</p>

¹⁴⁸ “Fact Sheet: New Executive Order Targeting Iranian Officials Responsible for or Complicit in Serious Human Rights Abuses,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, September 29, 2010, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg877.aspx>.

	Hossein Mohseni-Ejel, then Prosecutor General of Iran; Saeed Mortazavi, former Tehran Prosecutor-General; Heydar Moslehi, then Minister of Intelligence; Mostafa Mohammad Najjar, then Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Armed Forces; Ahmad-Reza Radan, then Deputy Chief of Iran's National Police; Hossein Taeb, then Deputy IRGC Commander of Intelligence.				
February 2011	Abbas Jafari Dolatabadi, Tehran Prosecutor General; Mohammed	Human rights abusers under executive order 13553	U.S. Department of the Treasury	Blocks the designated individual from obtaining any property	¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁹ "Treasury Designates Tehran Prosecutor General, Basij Commander for Human Rights Abuses in Iran," U.S. Department of Treasury, February 23, 2011, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg1076.aspx>; "Fact Sheet: New Executive order Targeting Iranian Officials Responsible For Or Complicit In Serious Human Rights Abuses," U.S. Department of the Treasury, September 29, 2010, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg877.aspx>.

	Reza Naqdi, commander of IRGC's Basij Forces.			in the U.S. or in the possession or control of U.S. persons.	
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Designations by foreign governments:

Government/Organization	Date	Designated Entity	Designation	Reference
Canada	December 2012	Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' Qods Force	Terrorist entity	¹⁵⁰

Associations

Associations

Ties to other extremist groups

The IRGC-Quds Force provides training, logistical assistance and material and financial support to many extremist groups. For example,

- Taliban¹⁵¹
 - General Hossein Musavi and Colonel Hasan Mortezaei, senior IRGC members, were designated on Aug. 3, 2011 as terrorists under EC 13224 for providing financial and material support to the Taliban.¹²
 - ISAF General Stanley McChrystal¹² stated that Iran is training Taliban insurgents and providing them with weapons.¹³ This was corroborated by a Taliban commander who stated that Iran was training Taliban fighters in “small unit tactics” because they “both want to kill Americans.”¹²
 - 107-mm rockets were supplied to the Taliban by the IRGC with their recent manufacture date suggesting that support is ongoing¹⁴
- Hamas¹⁵²

¹⁵⁰ “Currently Listed Entities,” Public Safety Canada, accessed February 25, 2015,

<http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/ntnl-scr/cntr-trrrsm/lstd-ntts/crrnt-lstd-ntts-eng.aspx>.

¹⁵¹ “Treasury Sanctions Five Individual Tied to Iranian Ploy to Assassinate the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the United States,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, October 11, 2011, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/pages/tg1320.aspx>.

¹⁵² “Treasury Sanctions Five Individual Tied to Iranian Ploy to Assassinate the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the United States,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, October 11, 2011, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/pages/tg1320.aspx>.

- Khaled Mashaal, head of Hamas’ political bureau, has traveled to Iran to improve ties and receive increased material support. ““We [Hamas] stretch our hand of cooperation for materializing the Palestinian cause, because Palestine is an essential issue that needs more efforts,” Mahmoud al-Zahar, a senior Hamas official, told Al-Manar television, a network affiliated with Hezbollah.”¹⁷
- Hezbollah¹⁵³
 - The Iranian government uses the IRGC Quds Force to transfer cash and weaponry to Hezbollah in Lebanon.¹⁵⁴
 - On November 4, Israel intercepts merchant vessel FRANCO carrying 36 containers (60 tons) of weapons to Hezbollah. The cache includes 122mm katyushas, 107mm rockets, 106mm antitank shells, hand grenades and light-weapon ammunitions. The weapons transfer was reportedly coordinated by the IRGC, given its bases in Lebanon and financial support for Hezbollah, which is estimated at \$100-200 million annually.¹⁴
 - An Iranian IRGC commander and six Hezbollah fighters were killed on January 18, 2015 by an Israeli strike, indicating increased cooperation between Iran and Hezbollah.¹⁵
 - “The Islamic Republic of Iran has helped Iraq, Syria, Palestine and the Lebanese Hezbollah by exporting the technology that it has for the production of missiles and other equipment, and they can now stand against the Zionist regime, the ISIL [Islamic State group] and other Takfiri [apostate] groups and cripple them,” IRGC aerospace force commander Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajizadeh said.¹⁶
 - IRGC has given Hezbollah Fateh-110 missiles that have a range of 120 miles and can carry warheads of up to 500 kilograms.¹⁷
- Palestinian Islamic Jihad¹⁵⁵
- Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine–General Command¹⁵⁶

Ties to foreign governments/leaders:

- According to a 2010 Pentagon report, Quds Force members are actively developing terrorist networks in Venezuela and other parts of Latin America to attack the United States in the event of a breakdown in the nuclear negotiations

¹⁵³ “Treasury Sanctions Five Individual Tied to Iranian Ploy to Assassinate the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the United States,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, October 11, 2011, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/pages/tg1320.aspx>.

¹⁵⁴ Matthew Levitt, “Hezbollah Finances: Funding the Party of God,” Washington Institute for Near East Policy, February 2005, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/hezbollah-finances-funding-the-party-of-god>.

¹⁵⁵ “Treasury Sanctions Five Individual Tied to Iranian Ploy to Assassinate the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the United States.” U.S. Department of the Treasury, October 11, 2011, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/pages/tg1320.aspx>.

¹⁵⁶ “Treasury Sanctions Five Individual Tied to Iranian Ploy to Assassinate the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the United States.” U.S. Department of the Treasury, October 11, 2011, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/pages/tg1320.aspx>.

- between Iran and the West.¹⁵⁷ The report further claims the Quds Force engages in “paramilitary operations to support extremists and destabilize unfriendly regimes.”¹⁵⁸
- Los Zetas¹⁵⁹
 - Syrian government¹⁶⁰
 - The IRGC and its branches are widely suspected of advising the Syrian army and fighting on behalf of Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad in the Syrian Civil War.¹⁶¹

Media coverage/analysis of group:

Just as the international community is divided regarding Iran’s nuclear program, the IRGC’s role in spreading terrorism on behalf of the Iranian regime is equally disputed. The international media, for the most part, agrees on the brutal nature of IRGC’s domestic action, condemning the Basij’s practice of silencing dissidents and acting as a morality police. But there is disagreement – largely in non-Western media and media from countries with stronger relations with Iran – over whether the IRGC’s role in international terrorism has been exaggerated in order to tarnish Iran’s reputation and bolster the U.S. argument that Iran is pursuing nuclear weapons.

Given the adversarial relationship between Iran and the West over the Iranian nuclear issue, Western media has prominently covered the activities of the IRGC and its branches in recent years. Global Western media outlets such as the Associated Press and Reuters have widely reported on the presence of IRGC forces in Syria and the role of the IRGC in fighting on behalf of the Syrian regime. The 2009 protests in the aftermath of Iran’s disputed presidential elections were also widely covered, and many outlets reported violent crackdowns by IRGC forces, particularly the Basij militia.

Western media typically acknowledges the IRGC’s involvement in anti-U.S. activities, extremism in Iran, and support of terrorism. A 2007 NPR report on the Guards describes the organization’s evolution from a “people’s army” meant to mobilize the Iranian population against foreign threats to actively creating Hezbollah and other terror networks abroad.¹⁶²

Globally, however, the media – just like members of the international community – do not always agree with Western claims that the IRGC supports terrorism and will ignore or

¹⁵⁷ Bill Gertz, “Iran Boosts Qods Shock Troops in Venezuela,” *Washington Times*, April 21, 2010,

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/apr/21/iran-boosts-qods-shock-troops-in-venezuela/>.

¹⁵⁸ Bill Gertz, “Iran Boosts Qods Shock Troops in Venezuela,” *Washington Times*, April 21, 2010,

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/apr/21/iran-boosts-qods-shock-troops-in-venezuela/>.

¹⁵⁹ Charlie Savage and Scott Shane, “Iranians Accused of a Plot to Kill Saudis’ U.S. Envoy,” *New York Times*, October 11, 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/12/us/us-accuses-iranians-of-plotting-to-kill-saudi-envoy.html>.

¹⁶⁰ Ruth Sherlock, “Iran Boosts Support to Syria,” *Telegraph* (London), February 21, 2014, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iran/10654144/Iran-boosts-support-to-Syria.html>.

¹⁶¹ Ian Black, “Iran Confirms It Has Forces in Syria and Will Take Military Action If Pushed,” *Guardian* (London), September 16, 2012, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/sep/16/iran-middleeast>.

¹⁶² Renee Montagne, “The Evolution of Iran’s Revolutionary Guard,” NPR, April 5, 2007, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=9371072>.

justify IRGC actions. Just as the international community has been unable to agree on a singular definition of terrorism, the global community appears split between the hemispheres on the IRGC, with media in non-Western countries portraying Iran in a positive light, as standing up to the American hegemon.

A 2007 piece in the *Asia Times*, for example, argues against the U.S. designation of the IRGC, claiming that the “case for the designation of the IRGC as terrorists has been built on thin empirical grounds and even thinner legal grounds.”¹⁶³ Ahead of Iran’s 2013 elections, Zimbabwe’s *Herald* reported on the IRGC encouraging high voter turnout and interviewed a senior IRGC commander, but did not mention any of the IRGC’s terrorist ties or even its involvement in the Syrian civil war.¹⁶⁴

Columnists in Canadian media, on the other hand, appeared largely to support the country’s 2012 designation of the Quds Force as a terrorist entity. Former Canadian justice minister and international commentator Irwin Cotler praised the Canadian government for adding the Quds Force to the terror list, but accused the government of a “piecemeal” strategy and said it needed to add the entire IRGC organization.¹⁶⁵ Cotler goes on in a *Jerusalem Post* column to declare that the IRGC “has been at the forefront of a long-standing global campaign of terror against perceived opponents of Iran.”¹⁶⁶

In European media, particularly in countries that have better relations with Iran than the United States, the role the IRGC plays is considered more open to interpretation. The *Guardian*’s Henry Newman questioned in a 2009 column how much power the IRGC actually has, noting that despite Khomeini’s directive that the IRGC remains apolitical, the IRGC has “an increasingly significant role in Iranian politics.”¹⁶⁷ Newman points out the IRGC’s economic power, citing its forced closure of the Imam Khomeini Airport in 2004 because it lost its bid to control the airport to a Turkish firm – and that the IRGC has been in “temporary” control of the airport since 2008.¹⁶⁸ He further points out that the Iranian regime has to increasingly rely on “repression and a culture of fear” and as such the role of the IRGC is growing.¹⁶⁹

The *Guardian*’s Ian Black and Saeed Kamali Dehghan wrote in a 2014 article about the IRGC’s increased role in battling ISIS in Iraq. The article obliquely acknowledged the IRGC’s ties to terrorism by placing the group in an offensive role, describing the Quds Force’s mission as carrying out “a range of highly sensitive functions: intelligence,

¹⁶³ Kaveh L. Afrasiabi, “Iran Terror Label Bites Deep,” *Asia Times*, October 4, 2007, http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Middle_East/IJ04Ak03.html.

¹⁶⁴ “IRGC Commander Calls for High Voter Turnout,” *Herald* (Zimbabwe), June 13, 2013, <http://www.herald.co.zw/irgc-commander-calls-for-high-voter-turnout/>.

¹⁶⁵ Irwin Cotler, “Cotler: Listing of Quds a Welcome Step, but Government Lacks a Comprehensive Strategy,” Irwin Cotler, MP, December 20, 2012, <http://irwincotler.liberal.ca/blog/cotler-listing-quds-step-government-lacks-comprehensive-strategy/>.

¹⁶⁶ Irwin Cotler, “Iran: The Leading State Sponsor of Int’l Terrorism,” *Jerusalem Post*, <http://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Op-Ed-Contributors/Iran-The-leading-state-sponsor-of-intl-terrorism>.

¹⁶⁷ Henry Newman, “The Grip of Iran’s Revolutionary Guards,” *Guardian* (London), August 28, 2009, <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2009/aug/28/iran-revolutionary-guards-grip>.

¹⁶⁸ Henry Newman, “The Grip of Iran’s Revolutionary Guards,” *Guardian* (London), August 28, 2009, <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2009/aug/28/iran-revolutionary-guards-grip>.

¹⁶⁹ Henry Newman, “The Grip of Iran’s Revolutionary Guards,” *Guardian* (London), August 28, 2009, <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2009/aug/28/iran-revolutionary-guards-grip>.

special operations, arms smuggling and political action – anything that constitutes protecting the revolution or attacking its enemies, Israel foremost among them.”¹⁷⁰ Even in the United States, some pundits take a more sympathetic position on the IRGC, making supportive and apologist arguments. In September 2009, for example, author and analyst Juan Cole cited an IRGC commander in charge of Iran’s missile program who said Iran would act militarily only in response to external military threats.¹⁷¹ Pointing to Western media reports that Iran’s missile tests coincided with Iranian threats to wipe out Israel, Cole contended that the IRGC had made a “no first strike” pledge and “no current high official in the Iranian executive has threatened war against Israel...”¹⁷² In 2012, after the IRGC’s Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajizadeh said Iran would destroy Israel if “the Jewish state” attacked, Cole argued that “this is not a threat to commit an act of aggression” as “Iran has a ‘no first strike’ policy” reaffirmed by Khamenei, and Iran is only “threatening to retaliate with everything he has if Iran is itself the victim of a naked act of aggression.”¹⁷³

Even in the Arab media, the role of the IRGC is not so clearly presented. Iranian dissident Akbar Ganji describes the IRGC’s economic power in Al Jazeera, but ignores the organization’s terrorist ties, even whitewashing them by laying the blame for a “securitised” Iranian society and political process on “nearly 35 years of military threats, by Iraq, the US, Israel, and others...”¹⁷⁴

Iran’s English media, of course, shed a sympathetic light on the IRGC, often taking IRGC statements at face value. An April 2014 article by the Fars News Agency (FNA) cited Major General Mohammad Ali Jafari defending the group’s role in Syria, claiming that the IRGC provided only Iran’s intelligence support and not physical support.¹⁷⁵ FNA provided no balance in the article, providing only a quote from another IRGC commander who agreed with Jafari.

Sympathetic journalists who view the United States as unfairly targeting the Islamic Republic are more skeptical of reports on the IRGC’s involvement in global terrorism, viewing these reports as propaganda to further cast the Iranian regime as an enemy of freedom. Just as some pundits denounce Hamas’s and Hezbollah’s deadly attacks against Israel while upholding the “legitimacy” of their causes, the IRGC’s involvement with these and other terrorist organizations is viewed as noble Iranian aid. In a 2012 article on the IRGC’s transfer of missile technology to Hamas, the *Tehran Times* did not comment

¹⁷⁰ Ian Black and Saeed Kamali Dehghan, “Qassim Suleimani: Commander of Quds Force, Puppeteer of the Middle East,” *Guardian* (London), June 16, 2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jun/16/qassim-suleimani-iraq-iran-syria>.

¹⁷¹ Juan Cole, “IRGC Air Force Commander: Missile Tests Defensive; Pledges Iran to ‘No First Strike’,” *Informed Comment*, September 29, 2009, <http://www.juancole.com/2009/09/irgc-air-force-commander-missile-tests.html>.

¹⁷² Juan Cole, “IRGC Air Force Commander: Missile Tests Defensive; Pledges Iran to ‘No First Strike’,” *Informed Comment*, September 29, 2009, <http://www.juancole.com/2009/09/irgc-air-force-commander-missile-tests.html>.

¹⁷³ Juan Cole, “Hajizadeh: If Israel Attacks Iran, It Will Be Destroyed,” *Informed Comment*, July 2, 2012, <http://www.juancole.com/2012/07/hajizadeh-if-israel-attacks-iran-it-will-be-destroyed.html>.

¹⁷⁴ Akbar Ganji, “Guardians of the Revolution - and Business,” *Al Jazeera*, December 26, 2013, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2013/12/guardians-revolution-business-2013121010184257375.html>.

¹⁷⁵ “IRGC Top Commander: Transfer of Experience Iran’s Only Military Aid to Syria,” *Fars News Agency*, April 21, 2014, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13930201000866>.

on the IRGC chief's statement that, "Iran provides technological assistance to help the world's Muslims and the oppressed so that they can stand up to tyrants and the hegemonistic system...."¹⁷⁶ While Iranian media is subject to extreme censorship by the government, sympathetic coverage of the IRGC is not limited just to Iranian sources. On the whole, global media acknowledges the IRGC's role as a harsh enforcer of the Iranian revolution's ideals domestically and abroad, but there remains dissent on whether the IRGC is a politically powerful domestic militia or a global terrorist organization.

Violent activities:

IRGC and IRGC-Quds Force

The IRGC and Quds Force are Iran's "primary mechanism for cultivating and supporting terrorists abroad."¹⁷⁷ According to a 2010 Pentagon report, the Quds Force "maintains operational capabilities around the world," and "it is well established in the Middle East and North Africa and recent years have witnessed an increased presence in Latin America, particularly Venezuela."¹⁷⁸ Further, the report concluded that if "U.S. involvement in conflict in these regions deepens, contact with the IRGC-QF, directly or through extremist groups it supports, will be more frequent and consequential."¹⁷⁹ Illustrating this point, Ayatollah Khamenei in 2012 reportedly ordered the Quds Force to step up attacks against Western targets in retaliation for U.S.-backing of Syrian rebels in that country's civil war.¹⁸⁰

According to a 2013 bill in the U.S. House of Representatives to label the Quds Force a terrorist organization, the Quds Force "stations operatives in foreign embassies, charities, and religious and cultural institutions to foster relationships, often building on existing socio-economic ties with the well-established Shia Diaspora, and recent years have witnessed an increased presence in Latin America."¹⁸¹

The IRGC and IRGC-QF have been accused of the following acts in individual countries:

Afghanistan:

- The Pentagon has accused the Iranian regime of providing "ongoing" support to insurgents – and insurgent leaders Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and Ismail Khan in particular – through Quds forces, which are working with non-government

¹⁷⁶ "Iran Transferred Fajr-5 Missile Technology to Gaza: IRGC Chief," *International Daily Tehran Times*, November 21, 2012, <http://tehrantimes.com/politics/103510-iran-transferred-fajr-5-missile-technology-to-gaza-irgc-chief->.

¹⁷⁷ Greg Bruno, "State Sponsors: Iran," Council on Foreign Relations, last updated October 13, 2011, <http://www.cfr.org/iran/state-sponsors-iran/p9362>.

¹⁷⁸ Bill Gertz, "Iran Boosts Quds Shock Troops in Venezuela," *Washington Times*, April 21, 2010, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/apr/21/iran-boosts-qods-shock-troops-in-venezuela/>.

¹⁷⁹ Bill Gertz, "Iran Boosts Quds Shock Troops in Venezuela," *Washington Times*, April 21, 2010, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/apr/21/iran-boosts-qods-shock-troops-in-venezuela/>.

¹⁸⁰ Con Coughlin, "Iran's Supreme Leader Orders Fresh Terror Attacks on West," *Telegraph* (London), August 22, 2012, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iran/9490878/Irans-supreme-leader-orders-fresh-terror-attacks-on-West.html>.

¹⁸¹ "Text of H.R. 854: Quds Force Terrorist Designation Act (Introduced Version)," GovTrack.us, February 27, 2013, <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/113/hr854/text>.

organizations and political opposition.¹⁸² “Arms caches have been recently uncovered [in Afghanistan] with large amounts of Iranian-manufactured weapons, to include 107 millimeter rockets, which we assess IRGC-QF delivered to Afghan militants,” according to a 2010 Pentagon report.¹⁸³

- The U.S. State Department suspects Iran, through the IRGC-QF, of providing training and weapons—including “small arms and associated ammunition, rocket propelled grenades, mortar rounds, 107mm rockets, and plastic explosives—to Taliban fighters in Afghanistan.¹⁸⁴

Argentina:

- On July 18, 1994, a suicide bomber exploded at the Argentine Jewish Mutual Association (AMIA) community center in Buenos Aires, killing 85 people and wounding 300.¹⁸⁵ Hezbollah and Iran are suspected.
- In 2007, Argentine prosecutors named several Iranian suspects in the AMIA bombing, including then Defense Minister Gen Ahmed Vahidi, who was the commander of a special unit of the IRGC at the time of the attack.¹⁸⁶
- In May 2013, an Argentine prosecutor releases a 500 page indictment in the AMIA bombing case, in which he accuses Iran of creating terrorist networks in Argentine and other Latin American countries to conduct terrorist attacks. He names Mohsen Rabbani, a former Iranian cultural attaché in Argentine, as a key leader directing the attack.¹⁸⁷

Austria:

- On July 13, 1989, Iranian Kurdish dissident Abdul Rahman Ghassemlou was shot to death along with Fadil Rasoul and Abdullah Ghaderi after being lured to a supposed negotiation with Iranian government officials. The three Iranians who committed the murders were arrested by Austrian authorities, but later released. Austrian police confirmed that at least one of the suspected killers was bearing an Iranian diplomatic passport.¹⁸⁸ However, the suspected killers were allowed to leave Austria and return to Iran “after the Austrian government came under massive pressure from the Iranian government.”¹⁸⁹ Iran’s Minister of Information and Security, Ali Fallahian, later boasted of the assassinations in a televised

¹⁸² Bill Gertz, “Iran Boosts Qods Shock Troops in Venezuela,” *Washington Times*, April 21, 2010, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/apr/21/iran-boosts-qods-shock-troops-in-venezuela/>.

¹⁸³ Bill Gertz, “Iran Boosts Qods Shock Troops in Venezuela,” *Washington Times*, April 21, 2010, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/apr/21/iran-boosts-qods-shock-troops-in-venezuela/>.

¹⁸⁴ Greg Bruno, “State Sponsors: Iran,” Council on Foreign Relations, last updated October 13, 2011, <http://www.cfr.org/iran/state-sponsors-iran/p9362>.

¹⁸⁵ “Argentina Passes Iran Amia Deal,” BBC, February 28, 2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-21612517>.

¹⁸⁶ “Argentina Passes Iran Amia Deal,” BBC, February 28, 2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-21612517>.

¹⁸⁷ “AMIA: Prosecutor Accuses Iran of Infiltrating South American Countries,” *Buenos Aires Herald*, May 29, 2013, <http://www.buenosairesherald.com/article/132260/amia-prosecutor-nisman-accuses-iran-fugitive-rabbani-of-infiltrating-several-south-american-countries>.

¹⁸⁸ “Iranian Wounded in Vienna Killings,” Reuters, July 17, 1989, http://articles.latimes.com/1989-07-17/news/mn-2921_1_iranian-kurdish.

¹⁸⁹ “Iranian President Allegedly Involved in Vienna Murders,” *Austrian Times*, June 18, 2009, <http://www.austriantimes.at/index.php?id=14092>.

interview, saying: “we were able to deal vital blows to the cadres” of the Kurdistan Democratic Party, Ghassemlou’s group.¹⁹⁰

Azerbaijan:

- In January 2012, Azerbaijani authorities arrested at least two local men, linked to Iranian intelligence agencies, for plotting to attack the Israeli ambassador to Azerbaijan and a local rabbi.¹⁹¹

Bahrain:

- The government of Bahrain has accused the Quds Force of providing explosives training to Bahraini militants opposed to the government. On Dec. 29, 2013, the Bahraini Coast Guard intercepted a speedboat carrying weaponry and explosives meant for Shi’ite militants in Bahrain, particularly the 14 February Youth Coalition.¹⁹² Following the incident, authorities discovered weapons caches in Bahrain, dismantled a car bomb, and arrested 15 Bahraini nationals.¹⁹³

Germany

- Four Iranian Kurdish dissidents are assassinated at Mykonos, a Greek restaurant in Berlin. In 1997, a German court issued an international arrest warrant for Iranian Intelligence Minister Hojjat al-Islam Ali Fallahian, after determining that he had ordered the assassination with the knowledge of Supreme Leader Ali Khomeini.¹⁹⁴ A report by Amnesty International noted that the Mykonos killings constituted part of a broader pattern of murder of Iranian political dissidents, with reports of state-directed assassinations both inside Iran and in neighboring Turkey.¹⁹⁵

India:

- Delhi Police accused the IRGC of involvement in a Feb. 13, 2012, bomb attack against an Israeli diplomat in New Delhi. According to the *Times of India*, members of the IRGC had discussed the plan with an Indian journalist in 2011,

¹⁹⁰ “Iran: Mykonos Trial Provides Further Evidence of Iranian Policy of Unlawful State Killings,” Amnesty International, April 10, 1997, [http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE13/015/1997/en/0fb294cb-
ea83-11dd-b05d-65164b228191/mde130151997en.html](http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE13/015/1997/en/0fb294cb-
ea83-11dd-b05d-65164b228191/mde130151997en.html).

¹⁹¹ “Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps,” Anti-Defamation League, April 2012, [http://archive.adl.org/nr/exeres/a8f45a87-2b3d-42e9-95cd-98bbdd80b164,db7611a2-02cd-43af-8147-
649e26813571,frameless.html](http://archive.adl.org/nr/exeres/a8f45a87-2b3d-42e9-95cd-98bbdd80b164,db7611a2-02cd-43af-8147-
649e26813571,frameless.html).

¹⁹² “Country Reports on Terrorism 2013,” U.S. Department of State, April 30, 2014. <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2013/224826.htm>.

¹⁹³ “Country Reports on Terrorism 2013,” U.S. Department of State, April 30, 2014. <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2013/224826.htm>.

¹⁹⁴ Roya Hakakian, “Looking Back at the Mykonos Trial: The End of the Dispensable Iranian,” *Spiegel Online*, October 4, 2007, [http://www.spiegel.de/international/looking-back-at-the-mykonos-trial-the-end-
of-the-dispensable-iranian-a-476369.html](http://www.spiegel.de/international/looking-back-at-the-mykonos-trial-the-end-
of-the-dispensable-iranian-a-476369.html).

¹⁹⁵ “Iran: Mykonos Trial Provides Further Evidence of Iranian Policy of Unlawful State Killings,” Amnesty International, April 10, 1997, [http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE13/015/1997/en/0fb294cb-
ea83-11dd-b05d-65164b228191/mde130151997en.html](http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE13/015/1997/en/0fb294cb-
ea83-11dd-b05d-65164b228191/mde130151997en.html).

and the journalist, Syed Mohammad Ahmad Kazmi, had been in touch with the IRGC for almost 10 years.¹⁹⁶

Iran:

- The IRGC has been accused of numerous violent acts against the Iranian population, particularly during the 2009 protests against Ahmadinejad's reelection. The Basij paramilitary organization is accused of brutally suppressing protests after the June 2009 election.¹⁹⁷
- According to Human Rights Watch, hundreds of protesters were arrested after the June 12, 2009, elections and the Basij militia attacked student dormitories, beating the students and ransacking their rooms.¹⁹⁸ Human Rights Watch also reported members of the Basij militia appearing in large groups at mass demonstrations and attacking protesters.¹⁹⁹ There were reports of Basij members armed with clubs and chains beating up anyone suspected of participating in the protests against the government.²⁰⁰

Iraq:

- Former U.S. President George W. Bush accused Iran, and the IRGC in particular, of providing roadside bombs to militants within Iraq in 2007.²⁰¹
- In 2007, Shi'ite militants, under the direction of the IRGC, kidnapped British computer expert Peter Moore and four security guards, who are held in Quds Force-run prisons.²⁰² Moore was released in December 2009, but the four guards were killed.
- The U.S. Treasury Department added the Quds Force to its list of terrorist supporters after coalition forces captured a number of Iraqi militants with alleged ties to Hezbollah and the Quds Force.²⁰³
- According to the Pentagon, Quds forces are supporting terrorists through Iranian embassies in Iraq. In 2010, the outgoing Iranian ambassador to Iraq, Hassan

¹⁹⁶ Neeraj Chauhan, "Cops Name Iran Military Arm for Attack on Israeli Diplomat," *Times of India*, July 30, 2012, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/delhi/Cops-name-Iran-military-arm-for-attack-on-Israeli-diplomat/articleshow/15263013.cms>.

¹⁹⁷ "IRGC's Basij Paramilitary Trains Special Battalions for Crackdown on Potential Protests," International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran, February 24, 2014, <http://www.iranhumanrights.org/2014/02/basij-battalions/>.

¹⁹⁸ "Iran: Halt the Crackdown," Human Rights Watch, June 19, 2009, <http://www.hrw.org/news/2009/06/19/iran-halt-crackdown>.

¹⁹⁹ "Iran: Halt the Crackdown," Human Rights Watch, June 19, 2009, <http://www.hrw.org/news/2009/06/19/iran-halt-crackdown>.

²⁰⁰ "Iran: Halt the Crackdown," Human Rights Watch, June 19, 2009, <http://www.hrw.org/news/2009/06/19/iran-halt-crackdown>.

²⁰¹ Greg Bruno, Jayshree Bajoria, and Jonathan Masters, "Iran's Revolutionary Guards," Council on Foreign Relations, June 14, 2013, <http://www.cfr.org/iran/irans-revolutionary-guards/p14324>.

²⁰² Mona Mahmood, Maggie O'Kane, and Guy Grandjean, "Revealed: Hand of Iran behind Britons' Baghdad Kidnapping," *Guardian* (London), December 30, 2009, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/dec/30/iran-britons-baghdad-kidnapping>.

²⁰³ Greg Bruno, Jayshree Bajoria, and Jonathan Masters, "Iran's Revolutionary Guards," Council on Foreign Relations, June 14, 2013, <http://www.cfr.org/iran/irans-revolutionary-guards/p14324>.

- Kazemi-Qomi, and the new ambassador, Hassan Danafar, were identified as Quds Force members.²⁰⁴
- The United States has also accused the Quds Force of providing Iraqi militants with armor-piercing explosives, homemade bombs, anti-aircraft weaponry, rockets, RPGs, and explosives.²⁰⁵
 - Eliminating the possibility that Quds Force operations in Iraq are undertaken by a handful of individuals acting under their own volition, the Pentagon has linked the Quds Force's actions in Iraq directly to the Iranian regime. "Although its operations sometimes appear at odds with the public voice of the Iranian regime, it is not a rogue outfit. It receives direction from the highest levels of the government and its leaders report directly, albeit informally, to Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei."²⁰⁶
 - In 2008, Gen. Hossein Hamedani, deputy commander of a volunteer militia in the IRGC, told an Iranian news agency that the IRGC is providing weapons to "liberation armies" in the Middle East, including in Lebanon and Iraq.²⁰⁷

Israel:

- After Hamas fired Iranian-made Fajr-5 missiles at Israel in 2012, IRGC head Gen. Mohammad Ali Jafari admitted that Iran had shared the missile technology, along with other military assistance, with Hamas.²⁰⁸

Lebanon:

- The IRGC provided Hezbollah with its initial financial support and training when the group emerged in the early 1980s.²⁰⁹
- The Quds Force is Iran's primary instrument for passing on support to Hezbollah, some of which is in the form of cash, while the rest is in weaponry.²¹⁰ The U.S. Department of Defense estimated in 2010 that Iran provides Hezbollah with \$100 million to \$200 million annually.²¹¹

Mexico:

²⁰⁴ Bill Gertz, "Iran Boosts Quds Shock Troops in Venezuela," *Washington Times*, April 21, 2010, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/apr/21/iran-boosts-quds-shock-troops-in-venezuela/>.

²⁰⁵ Bill Gertz, "Iran Boosts Quds Shock Troops in Venezuela," *Washington Times*, April 21, 2010, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/apr/21/iran-boosts-quds-shock-troops-in-venezuela/>.

²⁰⁶ Bill Gertz, "Iran Boosts Quds Shock Troops in Venezuela," *Washington Times*, April 21, 2010, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/apr/21/iran-boosts-quds-shock-troops-in-venezuela/>.

²⁰⁷ "Iranian General: Tehran Arming 'Liberation Armies,'" Fox News, October 27, 2008, <http://www.foxnews.com/story/2008/10/27/iranian-general-tehran-arming-liberation-armies>.

²⁰⁸ Ashish Kumar Sen, "Iran Admits Giving Hamas Technology for Missiles," *Washington Times*, November 21, 2012, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/nov/21/iran-admits-giving-hamas-technology-for-missiles/>.

²⁰⁹ Jonathan Masters and Zachary Laub, "Hezbollah (a.k.a. Hizbollah, Hizbu'llah)," Council on Foreign Relations, January 3, 2014, <http://www.cfr.org/lebanon/hezbollah-k-hizbollah-hizbullah/p9155>.

²¹⁰ Matthew Levitt, "Hezbollah Finances: Funding the Party of God," Washington Institute for Near East Policy, February 2005, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/hezbollah-finances-funding-the-party-of-god>.

²¹¹ Greg Bruno, "State Sponsors: Iran," Council on Foreign Relations, last updated October 13, 2011, <http://www.cfr.org/iran/state-sponsors-iran/p9362>.

- Iran's Quds Force is suspected of paying the Mexican drug cartel Los Zetas to carry out a failed 2011 attempt to blow up the Israeli embassy in Washington, D.C., and the Saudi and Israeli embassies in Argentina.²¹²
- As part of the 2011 plot, the Quds Force also attempted to negotiate a deal with Los Zetas to smuggle opium from the Middle East to Mexico.²¹³

Saudi Arabia:

- A truck bomb explodes on June 25, 1996, at a dormitory complex at Saudi Arabia's Khobar Towers, housing U.S. Air Force pilots and staff, and kills 19 people, including 19 Americans and wounding 372.²¹⁴ A U.S. federal grand jury in 2001 indicted the leader of Saudi Arabia Hezbollah and 13 other members for the 1996 Khobar Towers attack, and charged "elements of the Iranian government inspired, supported, and supervised members of the Saudi Hezbollah. In particular, the indictment alleges that the charged defendants reported their surveillance activities to Iranian officials and were supported and directed in those activities by Iranian officials. This indictment does not name as defendants individual members of the Iranian government."²¹⁵
- Six Hezbollah members captured after the attacks implicated Iranian officials, and after "overwhelming" evidence presented by experts on Hezbollah, U.S. Federal Judge Royce C. Lamberth ruled in December 2006 that Iran is responsible for the Khobar Towers bombing, and ordered the Iranian government to pay \$254 million to the families of 17 Americans victims.²¹⁶ Lamberth pointed to evidence that the Iranian military worked with Saudi Hezbollah members to carry out the attack, and the Iranian Ministry of Intelligence and Security provided money, plans and maps to help carry out the bombing.²¹⁷

Syria:

Syria is Iran's main supply route to Hezbollah in Lebanon²¹⁸ and thus a strategic asset. As such, the Iranian government has an interest in keeping besieged Syria President Bashar Assad in power.

²¹² Charlie Savage and Scott Shane, "Iranians Accused of a Plot to Kill Saudis' U.S. Envoy," *New York Times*, October 11, 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/12/us/us-accuses-iranians-of-plotting-to-kill-saudi-envoy.html>.

²¹³ Charlie Savage and Scott Shane, "Iranians Accused of a Plot to Kill Saudis' U.S. Envoy," *New York Times*, October 11, 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/12/us/us-accuses-iranians-of-plotting-to-kill-saudi-envoy.html>.

²¹⁴ "Attorney General Statement," U.S. Department of Justice, June 21, 2001, <http://www.fas.org/irp/news/2001/06/khobar.html>.

²¹⁵ "Attorney General Statement," U.S. Department of Justice, June 21, 2001, <http://www.fas.org/irp/news/2001/06/khobar.html>.

²¹⁶ Carol D. Leonnig, "Iran Held Liable in Khobar Attack," *Washington Post*, December 23, 2006, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/12/22/AR2006122200455.html>.

²¹⁷ Carol D. Leonnig, "Iran Held Liable in Khobar Attack," *Washington Post*, December 23, 2006, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/12/22/AR2006122200455.html>.

²¹⁸ "Country Reports on Terrorism 2013," U.S. Department of State, April 30, 2014, <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2013/224826.htm>.

- Before the Syrian civil war, between 2,000 and 3,000 IRGC officers were stationed in Syria, helping to train local troops and managing supply routes of arms and money to neighboring Lebanon.²¹⁹
- By Iran's own admission, members of the Quds Force are acting in an advisory capacity to Syrian government forces in that country's civil war, and Iran has committed itself to providing arms, financing, and training to Iraqi Shi'ite fighters in the war. A retired senior IRGC commander claims there are at least 60 to 70 Quds Force commanders in Syria at any given time.²²⁰
- In April 2011, the United States and the European Union accused the Quds Force of providing equipment and support to help the Syrian regime suppress revolts.²²¹
- In 2013, two senior Quds Force commanders were killed in fighting in Syria. According to Iranian media, Commander Mohammad Jamalizadeh Paghaleh, killed in November 2013 in Aleppo, was volunteering to defend Sayyida Zainab mosque in Damascus, more than 200 miles away from Aleppo.²²²

Turkey:

- In February 1996, two Iranians thought to be members of the opposition National Council of Resistance of Iran were assassinated in Turkey. An Iranian citizen, Reza Massoumi, was convicted of the killings. At his trial, he stated that he had acted on orders from the Iranian government.²²³
- In the aftermath of the 2009 election crisis in Iran, Iranian refugees in Turkey began to report facing monitoring and harassment from Iranian government agents inside Turkey.²²⁴

United States:

- According to the U.S. Treasury Department, Mansour Arbabsiar, a naturalized U.S. citizen holding both Iranian and U.S. passports, acted on behalf of the Quds Force to plan a failed assassination attempt on the Saudi ambassador to the United States in Washington, D.C., in 2011.²²⁵ The Treasury named Quds Force

²¹⁹ Charlie Savage and Scott Shane, "Iranians Accused of a Plot to Kill Saudis' U.S. Envoy," *New York Times*, October 11, 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/12/us/us-accuses-iranians-of-plotting-to-kill-saudi-envoy.html>.

²²⁰ Charlie Savage and Scott Shane, "Iranians Accused of a Plot to Kill Saudis' U.S. Envoy," *New York Times*, October 11, 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/12/us/us-accuses-iranians-of-plotting-to-kill-saudi-envoy.html>.

²²¹ Greg Bruno, "State Sponsors: Iran," Council on Foreign Relations, last updated October 13, 2011, <http://www.cfr.org/iran/state-sponsors-iran/p9362>.

²²² "Country Reports on Terrorism 2013," U.S. Department of State, April 30, 2014. <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2013/224826.htm>.

²²³ "Document - Iran: 'Mykonos' Trial Provides Further Evidence of Iranian Policy of Unlawful State Killings," Amnesty International, April 10, 1997, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE13/015/1997/en/0fb294cb-ea83-11dd-b05d-65164b228191/mde130151997en.html>.

²²⁴ Deborah Amos, NPR, January 4, 2010, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=122207587>.

²²⁵ "Treasury Sanctions Five Individual Tied to Iranian Ploy to Assassinate the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the United States," U.S. Department of the Treasury, October 11, 2011, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/pages/tg1320.aspx>.

- commander Qasem Soleimani; senior Quds Force officer Hamed Abdollahi, who coordinated aspects of the plot and oversaw the other Quds Force officials directly responsible for coordinating and planning this operation; Abdul Reza Shahlai, a Quds Force official who coordinated the operation; and Ali Gholam Shakuri, a Quds Force official who met with Arbabsiar to discuss the assassination and other planned attacks.²²⁶
- Abdul Reza Shahlai, a Quds Force official who coordinated the failed assassination attempt on the Saudi ambassador, had previously been linked to the killing of U.S. forces in Iraq, according to Col. Timothy J. Geraghty, USMC (retired).²²⁷
 - A 2012 New York Police Department intelligence report linked the IRGC or its proxies to nine foiled international plots against Jewish or Israeli targets.²²⁸

The Basij

While the Basij was involved in the Iran-Iraq War, it is primarily a domestic organization within Iran, where it acts as an extra-judicial police force.

- During the early years of the revolution, before the new regime could establish an effective police force, the Basij was responsible for maintaining security, removing anti-revolutionary components and Shah loyalists from the system.²²⁹ To do this, it created an information network nicknamed “the 36 million information network.”²³⁰
- In July 1980, loyalists to the Shah attempted a coup, called the Nojeh coup attempt, but a Basij spy had infiltrated the group and reported it to the ayatollah’s regime.²³¹
- The Basij were kept out of the Iran-Iraq war during its first year, but its later participation is credited with transforming Iran’s position from defensive to offensive.²³²
- The Basij paramilitary organization is accused of brutally suppressing protests after the contested June 2009 election.²³³ According to Human Rights Watch,

²²⁶ “Treasury Sanctions Five Individual Tied to Iranian Ploy to Assassinate the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the United States,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, October 11, 2011, <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/pages/tg1320.aspx>.

²²⁷ “Marine Commander Links 1983 Bomb and 2011 Plot,” United States Institute of Peace, October 26, 2011, <http://iranprimer.usip.org/blog/2011/oct/26/marine-commander-links-1983-bomb-and-2011-plot>.

²²⁸ Mark Hosenball, “Exclusive: New York Police Link Nine 2012 Plots to Iran, Proxies,” Reuters, July 20, 2012, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/07/20/us-iran-hezbollah-plots-idUSBRE86J0SW20120720>.

²²⁹ Frederic Wehrey et al., *The Rise of the Pasdaran: Assessing the Domestic Roles of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps* (Santa Monica, Arlington, and Pittsburgh: RAND Corporation, 2009), 30.

²³⁰ Frederic Wehrey et al., *The Rise of the Pasdaran: Assessing the Domestic Roles of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps* (Santa Monica, Arlington, and Pittsburgh: RAND Corporation, 2009), 30.

²³¹ Frederic Wehrey et al., *The Rise of the Pasdaran: Assessing the Domestic Roles of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps* (Santa Monica, Arlington, and Pittsburgh: RAND Corporation, 2009), 30.

²³² Frederic Wehrey et al., *The Rise of the Pasdaran: Assessing the Domestic Roles of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps* (Santa Monica, Arlington, and Pittsburgh: RAND Corporation, 2009), 30.

²³³ “IRGC’s Basij Paramilitary Trains Special Battalions for Crackdown on Potential Protests,”

International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran, February 24, 2014, <http://www.iranhumanrights.org/2014/02/basij-battalions/>.

hundreds of protesters were arrested after the June 12 elections and the Basij militia attacked student dormitories, beating students and ransacking their rooms.²³⁴ Human Rights Watch also reported members of the Basij militia appearing in large groups at mass demonstrations and attacking protesters.²³⁵ There were reports of Basij members armed with clubs and chains beating up anyone suspected of participating in the protests against the government.²³⁶ Hezbollah and Hamas were also suspected of working with the Basij to quash the protests.²³⁷

Extreme Rhetoric

Mohammad Reza Naqdi, commander of the Basij, November 17, 2014²³⁸

“...the US army and its economy are weak and their people do not accept to go to (another) war. The US does not have a strong logic and reasoning and it is, thus, forced to always resort to the language of force.”

Anti-American

Mohammad Ali Jafari, commander of the IRGC, October 21, 2014²³⁹

“Now the Islamic Iran doesn’t allow the Zionist regime’s expansion in the region and it is considered as the opposite point of the Zionist regime.”

Anti-Israel

Mohammad Ali Jafari, commander of the IRGC, October 21, 2014²⁴⁰

“Exporting the Islamic Revolution to the world, the country’s full and sustainable security and its pride and honor are the achievements gained as a result of the blood of our martyrs.”

Death-Glorifying, Pro-Global Domination, Pro-Islamism, Pro-Violence

Mohammad Ali Jafari, commander of the IRGC, October 20, 2014²⁴¹

“We thank God for the security that has been established in the Southeastern parts of the country despite all the investments of our trans-regional enemies, including the

²³⁴ “Iran: Halt the Crackdown,” Human Rights Watch, June 19, 2009, <http://www.hrw.org/news/2009/06/19/iran-halt-crackdown>.

²³⁵ “Iran: Halt the Crackdown,” Human Rights Watch, June 19, 2009, <http://www.hrw.org/news/2009/06/19/iran-halt-crackdown>.

²³⁶ “Iran: Halt the Crackdown,” Human Rights Watch, June 19, 2009, <http://www.hrw.org/news/2009/06/19/iran-halt-crackdown>.

²³⁷ Paul L. Williams, “Hamas and Hezbollah Unite to Crush Iranian Dissidents,” *Canada Free Press*, June 18, 2009, <http://www.canadafreepress.com/index.php/article/12109>.

²³⁸ “IRGC Commander: US Deeply Fearful of War with Iran,” Fars News Agency, November 17, 2013, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13920826001463>.

²³⁹ “IRGC Commander: Iran Prevents Expansion of Zionist Regime in Region,” Fars News Agency, October 21, 2014, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13930729001391>.

²⁴⁰ “IRGC Commander: Iran Prevents Expansion of Zionist Regime in Region,” Fars News Agency, October 21, 2014, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13930729001391>.

²⁴¹ “IRGC Top Commander Reiterates Enemies’ Failure in Creating Insecurity at Iranian Borders,” Fars News Agency, October 20, 2014, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13930728001066>.

Americans and the Zionists, as well as certain regional enemies and despite their too much planning.”

Anti-American, Anti-Israel

Mohammad Reza Naqdi, commander of the Basij, September 14, 2014²⁴²

“The command center of the ISIL is in the White House; the US itself has created this cancerous tumor and deflected stream in the region, and its plan to fight the ISIL is also the continuation of the same evil plot that it has pursued so far.”

Anti-American, Conspiracy Theory

Mohammad Reza Naqdi, commander of the Basij, August 27, 2014²⁴³

“Arming the West Bank has started and weapons will be supplied to the people of this region.”

Anti-Israel, Pro-Violence

Mohammad Reza Naqdi, commander of the Basij, August 27, 2014²⁴⁴

“[W]e will do our best with full force to arm and equip the resistance, especially in the West Bank.”

Anti-Israel, Pro-Violence

Mohammad Reza Naqdi, commander of the Basij, August 27, 2014²⁴⁵

“On behalf of the Zealous Basijis (volunteer forces) of the Islamic Iran, I take the honor to congratulate you as well as all the Palestinians and the entire Muslims on the great victory of the Muslim Ummah in their 51-day resistance (against Israel).”

Anti-Israel, Pro-Violence

Mohammad Reza Naqdi, commander of the Basij, August 27, 2014²⁴⁶

“The Zionists should know that the next war won't be confined to the present borders and the Mujahedeen will push them back.”

Anti-Israel, Pro-Violence

Mohammad Reza Naqdi, commander of the Basij, August 20, 2014²⁴⁷

“The West's cultural invasion is not merely against the Iranian nation and it also includes their own nations (in Europe) as they intend to separate not just our, but also their own

²⁴² “Basij Commander: ISIL Taking Orders from White House,” Fars News Agency, September 14, 2014, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13930623000438>.

²⁴³ “Basij Commander: Arming West Bank Started,” Fars News Agency, August 27, 2014, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13930605000983>.

²⁴⁴ “IRGC Vows to Continue Backing Resistance Movement till Liberation of Palestine,” Fars News Agency, August 29, 2014, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13930607000523>.

²⁴⁵ “IRGC Vows to Continue Backing Resistance Movement till Liberation of Palestine,” Fars News Agency, August 29, 2014, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13930607000523>.

²⁴⁶ “Basij Commander: Arming West Bank Started,” Fars News Agency, August 27, 2014, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13930605000983>.

²⁴⁷ “Basij Commander: European Race on Brink of Extinction,” Fars News Agency, August 20, 2014, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13930529000571>.

nations from ethics and morality because if the European and US nations live an ethics-based life, they won't accept the Zionists' cruelties so easily.”

Anti-American, Anti-Europe, Anti-Israel, Anti-Western

Mohammad Reza Naqdi, commander of the Basij, August 20, 2014²⁴⁸

“The result of institutionalization of corruption in the West is that their race is becoming extinct in such a way that history books should write 100 years later that a race named the European race existed on the Earth some time ago.”

Anti-European, Anti-Western

Mohammad Reza Naqdi, commander of the Basij, August 13, 2014²⁴⁹

“The filthy monarchical British regime still feels pity for the black era of colonialism and it wishes to find new Khans to follow the footsteps of its former servants like Reza Khan (the father of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, the last king of the Pahlavi dynasty in Iran who was toppled in the 1979 Islamic Revolution in the country) and rule the Iranian people and it wishes to return to the black era of colonialism by sowing discord and creating distance between the Iranian people and the pivot of Islam and unity, but it will take this wish to the grave.”

Anti-British

Qasem Soleimani, commander of the IRGC-QF, August 2014²⁵⁰

“Just like in the past we have put into action our religious duty to support the resistance, we will continue this duty and will push on with our support and aid until the moment of victory, until the resistance on the ground, in the air and sea will be transformed into a hell for the Zionists.”

Anti-Israel, Pro-Violence

Mohammad Ali Jafari, commander of the IRGC, August 2014²⁵¹

“We are prepared to back the resistance movement until Palestine is liberated.”

Anti-Israel, Pro-Violence

Qasem Soleimani, commander of the IRGC-QF, July 30, 2014²⁵²

“Martyrdom for Palestine is dream of every noble Muslim and freedom-seeker.”

Anti-Israel, Pro-Violence

²⁴⁸ “Basij Commander: European Race on Brink of Extinction,” Fars News Agency, August 20, 2014, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13930529000571>.

²⁴⁹ “Basij Commander Calls Britain’s Iran Embassy as ‘Spy Den,’” Fars News Agency, August 13, 2014, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13930522001069>.

²⁵⁰ Michael Segall, “Iran’s IRGC Quds Force Commander: ‘The Palestinian Resistance Movement Will Make the Sea, the Land, and Skies into Hell for the Zionists,’” Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, July 31, 2014, <http://jcpa.org/irans-revolutionary-guard/>.

²⁵¹ “IRGC Vows to Continue Backing Resistance Movement till Liberation of Palestine,” Fars News Agency, August 29, 2014, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13930607000523>.

²⁵² “IRGC’s Quds Commander: Israel Hallucinating Palestinians’ Disarming,” Islamic Republic News Agency, July 20, 2014, http://irna.ir/en/News/81254819/Politic/IRGC%CB%88s_Quds_commander_Israel_hallucinating_Palestians%CB%88_disarming.

Qasem Soleimani, commander of the IRGC-QF, July 30, 2014²⁵³

“Disarmament of resistance is daydream that will only come true in the graveyard for the Zionists.”

Anti-Israel, Pro-Violence

Mohammad Reza Naqdi, commander of the Basij, June 18, 2014²⁵⁴

“The scene they have created in Iraq is the result of the United States’ behind-the-scene attempts to sow discord and they are certainly the main mastermind of these events.”

Anti-American, Conspiracy Theory

Mohammad Reza Naqdi, commander of the Basij, June 10, 2014²⁵⁵

“They (the US and Israel) had come to destroy Syria, but they have failed now.”

Anti-American, Anti-Israel, Pro-Syrian Regime

Mohammad Reza Naqdi, commander of the Basij, June 9, 2014²⁵⁶

“The continued chain of US failures at the international level, on one hand shows the US and Europe’s turbulent internal situation and on the other hand indicates that liberal democracy has reached the end of the road and is no more able to analyze the conditions.”

Mohammad Reza Naqdi, commander of the Basij, June 2014²⁵⁷

“The US and Israel were the main losers of the presidential election in Syria.”

Anti-American, Anti-Israel, Pro-Syrian Regime

Mojtaba Zonnour, IRGC adviser, June 2014²⁵⁸

“In the event of an irrational attack by the U.S., America’s military bases will not be safe from our missiles, whether in Bahrain or at Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean.”

Anti-Israel, Pro-Violence

Hossein Salami, deputy commander of the IRGC, May 31, 2014²⁵⁹

²⁵³ “IRGC’s Quds Commander: Israel Hallucinating Palestinians’ Disarming,” Islamic Republic News Agency, July 20, 2014,

http://firma.ir/en/News/81254819/Politic/IRGC%CB%88s_Quds_commander_Israel_hallucinating_Palestnians%CB%88_disarming.

²⁵⁴ “Basij Commander Blames US for Volatile Situation in Iraq,” Fars News Agency, June 18, 2014, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13930328000806>.

²⁵⁵ “Basij Commander: US, Israel Main Losers of Syria’s Successful Election,” Fars News Agency, June 10, 2014, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13930320001486>.

²⁵⁶ “Basij Commander: Liberal Democracy Dying,” Fars News Agency, June 9, 2014, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13930319000575>.

²⁵⁷ “Basij Commander: US, Israel Main Losers of Syria’s Successful Election,” Fars News Agency, June 10, 2014, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13930320001486>.

²⁵⁸ Lisa Daftari, “US Military Base within Iranian Striking Distance, Official Warns,” Fox News, June 10, 2014, <http://www.foxnews.com/world/2014/06/10/us-military-base-within-iranian-striking-distance-official-warns/>.

²⁵⁹ Ariel Ben Solomon, “Iranian Commander Says Readying Launch of Air Defense System More Advanced than Russian S-300,” *Jerusalem Post*, June 1, 2014, <http://www.jpost.com/Iranian-Threat/News/Iran-Islamic-Republic-has-air-defense-system-more-advanced-than-Russian-s-300-355014>.

The IRGC “stands atop the world, given its hundreds of martyrdom-seeking battalions and hundreds of highly trained combat battalions.”

Death-Glorifying, Pro-Violence

Mohammad Ali Jafari, commander of the IRGC, April 2014²⁶⁰

“The (Islamic) Revolution is opposed to the hegemonic system and the new world order and all of the foreign policy slogans and positions are based on this pivot, including defending the Palestinian and Syrian people who are today targeted by the enemy.”

Conspiracy Theory, Pro-Islamist

Mohammad Ali Jafari, commander of the IRGC, April 2014²⁶¹

“The IRGC should be the guardian of the Revolution within and outside the borders.”

Pro-Global Domination

Mohammad Reza Naqdi, commander of the Basij, March 27, 2014²⁶²

“Whenever there is a slaughter, the footprint of the European governments, including Britain, can be readily seen.”

Anti-Europe, Anti-British, Conspiracy Theory

Hossein Salami, deputy commander of the IRGC, March 11, 2014²⁶³

“Islam has given us this wish, capacity and power to destroy the Zionist regime so that our hands will remain on the trigger from 1,400km away.”

Anti-Israel, Pro-Islamism, Pro-Violence

Mohammad Reza Naqdi, commander of the Basij, January 27, 2014²⁶⁴

“The crimes you are witnessing in all countries ruled by dictators and human-rights-violating rulers are backed by the US.”

Anti-American, Conspiracy Theory

Mohammad Ali Jafari, commander of the IRGC, January 25, 2014²⁶⁵

“Mr. Kerry must know that direct battle with the US is the biggest dream of pious and revolutionary people across the world. Your threats offer our revolutionary people the best opportunity.”

Anti-American, Pro-Violence

²⁶⁰ “IRGC Top Commander: Transfer of Experience Iran’s Only Military Aid to Syria,” Fars News Agency, April 21, 2014, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13930201000866>.

²⁶¹ “IRGC Top Commander: Transfer of Experience Iran’s Only Military Aid to Syria,” Fars News Agency, April 21, 2014, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13930201000866>.

²⁶² “Commander: Basij to Hold Exhibition on EU Human Rights Violations,” Fars News Agency, March 17, 2014, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13921226000544>.

²⁶³ “Iran’s Commander: Iran’s Finger on Trigger to Destroy Zionist Regime,” Fars News Agency, March 11, 2014, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13921220000944>.

²⁶⁴ “Basij Commander: US Main Supporter of All Dictators, Terrorists,” Fars News Agency, January 27, 2014, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13921107000870>.

²⁶⁵ “IRGC Commander: Iran to Give Crushing Response to Enemy’s Aggression,” Fars News Agency, January 26, 2014, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13921106000769>.

Mohammad Ali Jafari, commander of the IRGC, December 3, 2013²⁶⁶

“Lots of options are on the table for Iran, and they (enemies) will receive crushing responses, one of which would be elimination of the Zionist regime.”

Anti-Israel, Pro-Violence

Qasem Soleimani, commander of the IRGC-QF, December 2013²⁶⁷

“The Americans and (US President Barack) Obama are lying when they assert that all options are on the table against Iran. That the Americans say we have brought Iran to its knees by pressures and sanctions is nothing more than a lie, rather it is the US which has collapsed in political, economic and military arenas which are considered as the main elements of power.”

Anti-American

Mohammad Reza Naqdi, commander of the Basij, September 10, 2013²⁶⁸

“Egypt should return to the line of struggle against the US and Zionism and take control of the situation, but if it remains in the present situation it will receive further blows and its people will sustain serious harms.”

Anti-American, Anti-Egypt, Anti-Israel

Qassem Soleimani, commander of the IRGC-QF, September 2013²⁶⁹

“The aim of the United States is not to protect human rights... but to destroy the front of resistance [against Israel].”

Anti-American, Anti-Israel

Mohammad Ali Jafari, commander of the IRGC, August 31, 2013²⁷⁰

“The American people should awaken and realize that their assets and their country’s name is being sacrificed for the sake of the security of the criminal Zionist regime.”

Anti-American, Anti-Israel

Mohammad Reza Naqdi, commander of the Basij, August 3, 2013²⁷¹

“The Zionist are trying to stage a sectarian war among Muslims with the help and support of the US and Britain in a bid to delay their destruction.”

Anti-American, Anti-British, Anti-Israel, Conspiracy Theory

Mohammad Reza Naqdi, commander of the Basij, July 6, 2013²⁷²

²⁶⁶ “IRGC Commander: Iran to Give Crushing Response to Possible Threats,” Fars News Agency, December 3, 2013, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13920912000261>.

²⁶⁷ “Quds Force Commander: US Experiencing Collapse in All Arenas,” Fars News Agency, December 22, 2013, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13921001000776>.

²⁶⁸ “Basij Commander Urges Egypt’s Return to Path of Resistance against US, Israel,” Fars News Agency, September 10, 2013, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13920619001349>.

²⁶⁹ “Iran Says US Will Suffer If Syria Is Attacked,” Al Jazeera, September 5, 2013, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2013/09/201395104630886129.html>.

²⁷⁰ “Basij Commander: Grave Consequences Waiting for US If It Attacks Syria,” Fars News Agency, August 31, 2013, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13920609001354>.

²⁷¹ “Iranian Commander Asks Muslims to Keep Vigilant against Zionists’ Divisive Plots,” Fars News Agency, August 3, 2013, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13920512000527>.

“Had [former Egyptian president Mohammed] Mursi not been deceived by the US and had he started campaign against Israel, he would have attained a higher and better status than Jamal Abdel Nasser among Egyptians and today people would have defeated those who planned the coup against him and not only in Egypt, but in all Muslim countries large crowds would have come out to defend him.”

Anti-American, Anti-Israel

Mohammad Reza Naqdi, commander of the Basij, June 2013²⁷³

“Today the US has no power and courage to show presence among other countries because people in most countries have become awakened and rise constantly.”

Anti-American

Mohammad Reza Naqdi, commander of the Basij, June 2013²⁷⁴

“The Islamic Awakening caused the regional states to rise, the US to collapse and the leaders of the Islamic states to gain victory.”

Anti-American, Pro-Islamism

Mohammad Ali Jafari, commander of the IRGC, September 16, 2012²⁷⁵

“Given Israel’s small land area and its vulnerability to a massive volume of Iran’s missiles, I don’t think any spot in Israel will remain safe.”

Anti-Israel, Pro-Violence

Mohammad Ali Jafari, commander of the IRGC, September 2012²⁷⁶

“The US has many vulnerabilities around Iran, and its bases are within the range of the guards’ missiles. We have other capabilities as well, particularly when it comes to the support of Muslims for the Islamic republic.”

Anti-American, Pro-Violence

Gholam Reza Jalali, head of Iran’s Passive Defense Organization and former IRGC commander, August 15, 2012²⁷⁷

“[Quds Day] is a reflection of the fact that no other way exists apart from resolve and strength to completely eliminate the aggressive nature and to destroy Israel.”

Anti-Israel, Pro-Violence

²⁷² “Basij Commander: Mursi’s Fall Result of Trusting US,” Fars News Agency, July 6, 2013, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13920415001056>.

²⁷³ “Quds Force Commander: US Experiencing Collapse in All Arenas,” Fars News Agency, December 22, 2013, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13921001000776>.

²⁷⁴ “Quds Force Commander: US Experiencing Collapse in All Arenas,” Fars News Agency, December 22, 2013, <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13921001000776>.

²⁷⁵ Steven Lee Myers, “Netanyahu Says Iran Is ‘20 Yards’ From Nuclear Bomb,” *New York Times*, September 16, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/17/world/middleeast/netanyahu-says-iran-is-20-yards-from-nuclear-bomb.html>.

²⁷⁶ Ian Black, “Iran Confirms It Has Forces in Syria and Will Take Military Action If Pushed,” *Guardian* (London), September 16, 2012, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/sep/16/iran-middleeast>.

²⁷⁷ Herb Keinon and Joanna Paraszczuk, “Senior Iranian Official Threatens Israel with Destruction,” *Jerusalem Post*, August 15, 2012, <http://www.jpost.com/Iranian-Threat/News/Senior-Iranian-official-threatens-Israel-with-destruction>.

Mohammad Reza Naqdi, commander of the Basij, February 2011²⁷⁸

“Western intelligence agencies are searching for a mentally challenged person who can set himself on fire in Tehran to trigger developments like those in Egypt and Tunisia.”

Anti-Western, Conspiracy Theory

Mohammad Reza Naqdi, commander of the Basij, February 2011²⁷⁹

“They [the West] are very retarded and think by imitating such actions they can emerge victorious.”

Anti-Western

Mohammad Ali Jafari, commander of the IRGC, July 2009²⁸⁰

“Our rockets have the precision capabilities to target all the Israeli nuclear sites.”

Anti-Israel, Pro-Violence

Mohammad Ali Jafari, commander of the IRGC, August 2008²⁸¹

“The Guards have recently tested a naval weapon which I can say with certainty that the enemy’s [U.S.] ships would not be safe within the range of 300 kilometers. Without any doubt we will send them to the depths of the sea.”

Anti-American, Pro-Violence

²⁷⁸ Saeed Kamali Dehghan, “Iran Protests See Reinvigorated Activists Take to the Streets in Thousands,” *Guardian* (London), February 14, 2011, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/feb/14/iran-protests-reinvigorated-activists>.

²⁷⁹ Saeed Kamali Dehghan, “Iran Protests See Reinvigorated Activists Take to the Streets in Thousands,” *Guardian* (London), February 14, 2011, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/feb/14/iran-protests-reinvigorated-activists>.

²⁸⁰ Elisabeth Bumiller, “Gates, in Visit to Israel, Will Find Iran Looming,” *New York Times*, July 26, 2009, <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9407E6DF173DF935A15754C0A96F9C8B63>.

²⁸¹ Nazila Fathi, “Iran Escalates Military Rhetoric,” *New York Times*, August 5, 2008, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/05/world/africa/05iht-05iran.15003614.html>.