



Captured documents reveal how Iran smuggles weapons via Syria and Jordan

December 19, 2024

Overview¹

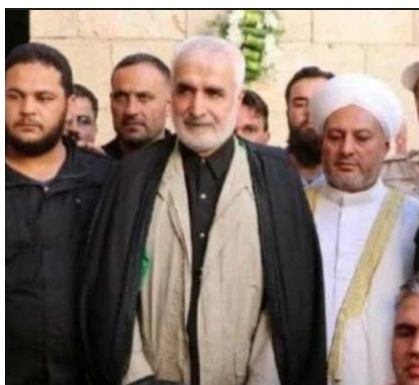
- ▶ For years, Iran, its Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps and Qods Force, have been operating a network smuggling weapons and funds to its proxies in the Middle East, primarily Hezbollah and Hamas. Until the overthrow of the Assad regime in early December 2024, Syria was the main smuggling route for arming Hezbollah with advanced precision weapons, many of which were used to attack Israel.
- ▶ Documents captured from Hamas during the war in the Gaza Strip expose Iran's aerial, maritime and overland routes to smuggle weapons to Syria, Lebanon, and Judea and Samaria. Some documents related to the arrest in Jordan of a smuggling network affiliated with Hamas and showed how Hamas and Iran transfer weapons to Judea and Samaria in hopes of igniting yet another front against Israel. They also related to Israeli and American methods to prevent arms smuggling.²
- ▶ In recent years, Jordan has intensified its efforts to combat the smuggling of weapons and drugs by networks directed by Iran and its militias, from south Syria into Jordanian territory. Israel has also increased its efforts to prevent arms from being smuggled to Hezbollah, Judea and Samaria.
- ▶ **The overthrow of the Assad regime undermined Iran's ability to transfer weapons through Syria, especially to Hezbollah, which is trying to recover from the blows inflicted by Israel. However, Iran's commitment to the "resistance" will most probably cause Tehran to seek alternative routes to replace the one through Syria and transfer weapons to its proxies for attacks on Israel.**

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

² The captured documents are exact replicas of the originals found in the Gaza Strip.

Iran Arms Hezbollah and the Palestinian Terrorist Organizations

- ▶ Iran's Middle Eastern proxies important for promoting the country's interests. After the Islamic Revolution, the use of "resistance axis"³ became an important factor in Iran's national security doctrine and regional activity, allowing Iran to take action against its adversaries, primarily the United States and Israel, without direct involvement.
- ▶ Iran turned Hezbollah, which is perceived as its strategic arm against Israel, and the Palestinian terrorist organizations into direct threats along Israel's borders. To that end for years Iran has been supplying them with weapons and other military aid, as well as financial assistance via land, air and sea.⁴ The operation is led by Division 4000, the special operations division of the Revolutionary Guards Corps Intelligence, headed by Javad Ghaffari, head of the Qods Force in Syria (Unit 18840), part of Unit 840 commanded by Ach'ar Bakhari (IDF spokesperson, March 25, 2024, and November 27, 2024).



Javad Ghaffari (IDF spokesperson, March 25, 2024)

- ▶ Since the late 1980s, Syria, under the Assad regime and with Bashar Assad's approval, has been an important route for transferring advanced Iranian weapons to Hezbollah, especially since Iran and Hezbollah assisted the Syrian regime forces against rebels during the Syrian Civil War. Advanced rockets, anti-aircraft missiles, air defense systems and components for improving existing weapons, such as the missile precision project, were sent by both military and civilian flights to Damascus airport and overland convoys from the Iraq-Syria border (IDF spokesperson in English, February 14, 2018; IDF spokesperson, November 25, 2024).

³ Iran, Syria, Hezbollah, the Palestinian organizations, the Shi'ite Houthis in Yemen and the pro-Iranian militias in Iraq.

⁴ For further information, see the October 28, 2023, ITIC report, "[Operation Iron Swords The development of Iranian-Hamas-Hezbollah cooperation.](#)"

▶ Since 2007, and especially over the past decade, Hamas has benefited from massive Iranian military support. Iran has supplied Hamas with weapons, trained its operatives in Iran, transferred Iranian technical capabilities to the Gaza Strip, Judea and Samaria, and provided Hamas with extensive financial support. The late Qassem Soleimani, commander of the IRGC's Qods Force, who was killed in an American strike in Iraq in January 2020, is considered to have established military assistance to Hamas, particularly regarding rockets and tunnels, and to this day the Qods Force is responsible for the military connection between Iran and Hamas. Iranian support played a significant role in Hamas' preparations for the October 7, 2023 attack and massacre.⁵

▶ Iran has also intensified its efforts to smuggle weapons to terrorist networks and operatives in Judea and Samaria. That was stated publicly by Ali Khamenei, Iranian supreme leader, in a speech marking World Jerusalem Day on June 23, 2014, in which he called for arming the "resistance" in Judea and Samaria. Since then, Iranian officials have reiterated their "obligation" to assist Palestinians in Judea and Samaria. In June 2019, Yahya Rahim Safavi, military advisor to Khamenei and former IRGC commander, said that following the leader's instructions, Judea and Samaria were being armed, although Iran's attempts to transfer missiles had not yet been successful.⁶

▶ After the Gaza Strip War broke out, a significant Iranian effort began to assist terrorist operatives in Judea and Samaria to escalate their attacks and open another "resistance axis" front closer to Israeli population centers. Iran tried to smuggle weapons which would have upset the balance of power and forced the IDF to change its tactics, and had they reached their destination, would have boosted terrorist capabilities to attack Israeli security forces and the home front. The weapons included explosive devices, mortars shells, anti-tank mines, plastic explosives and rockets, as discovered in shipments intercepted by the IDF in March and November 2024 (IDF spokesperson, March 25, 2024, and November 27, 2024).

▶ According to reports, two main routes were used to smuggle weapons to Judea and Samaria. One began in Syria and from there to Jordan, where the weapons were handed over to Bedouin smugglers who transported them through Israel's border to Judea and Samaria.

⁵ For further information, see the January 2024 ITIC report, "[Iranian media references to military aid provided by Iran to Hamas in the past](#)," and the November 2024 report, "[Captured Documents Show Iranian Support for Hamas in the Gaza Strip](#)."

⁶ For further information, see the February 2023 ITIC report, "[Declarations of Senior Iranian Officials Concerning the West Bank Point to Intensifying Iranian Effort to Expand Its Influence in this Arena](#)."

The other began in Syria and from there to Lebanon, from where the weapons were smuggled directly into Israel. After Hezbollah attacked Israel on October 8, 2023, the Lebanese route was partially blocked by increased Israeli security force presence along the Lebanese border (The New York Times, April 9, 2024).

▶ Iran also used Palestinians in Lebanon to smuggle weapons. Most important was Munir al-Maqdah, from the Ain al-Hilweh refugee camp in Lebanon, who has recruited terrorist operatives in Judea and Samaria for attacks and weapons smuggling for over two decades. His brother, Khalil al-Maqdah, who was eliminated by Israel on August 21, 2024, was involved in smuggling weapons to Judea and Samaria (IDF spokesperson, March 25, 2024).



Munir al-Maqdah (IDF spokesperson, March 25, 2024).

▶ Hamas documents captured by the IDF in the Gaza Strip referenced the routes used by Iran to smuggle weapons to its proxies, particularly terrorist operatives in Judea and Samaria, through Syria and Jordan. The documents also referenced efforts by Israel, Jordan and the United States to prevent the activities and ways to overcome their efforts.

Smuggling Routes Used by the "Resistance Axis"

▶ A document sent to Brother Malek (identity unknown), entitled, "The smuggling routes of the axis of resistance and the measures taken to prevent them," outlined the routes used by Iran to provide its "friends" in Syria and Lebanon with weapons, money and technology.⁷ The document presented the overland, maritime and aerial supply lines, images of the routes, and examines the measures taken by the Americans and Israelis to disrupt them.⁸

⁷ The document was undated, but was apparently written in September 2023 or shortly thereafter, because it relates to an incident which occurred in September 2023.

⁸ A Hamas document captured during the war. Reference to the complete document: (https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/app/uploads/2024/12/Booty_document_1E.pdf). The translated sections from the document are marked in red.

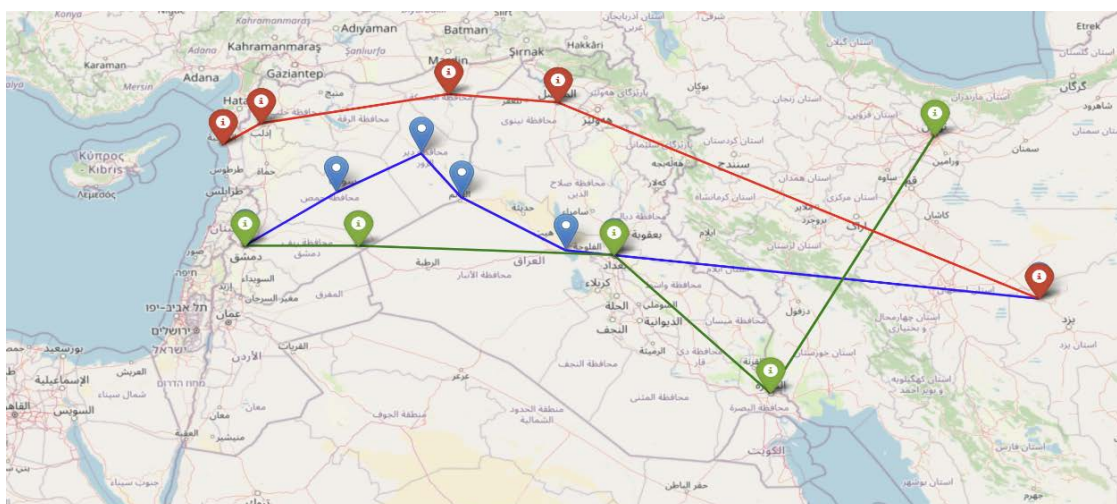
Overland smuggling routes to Syria and Lebanon

► The document begins with the land supply routes leading from Iran to Syria and Lebanon, all of which pass through Iraq.

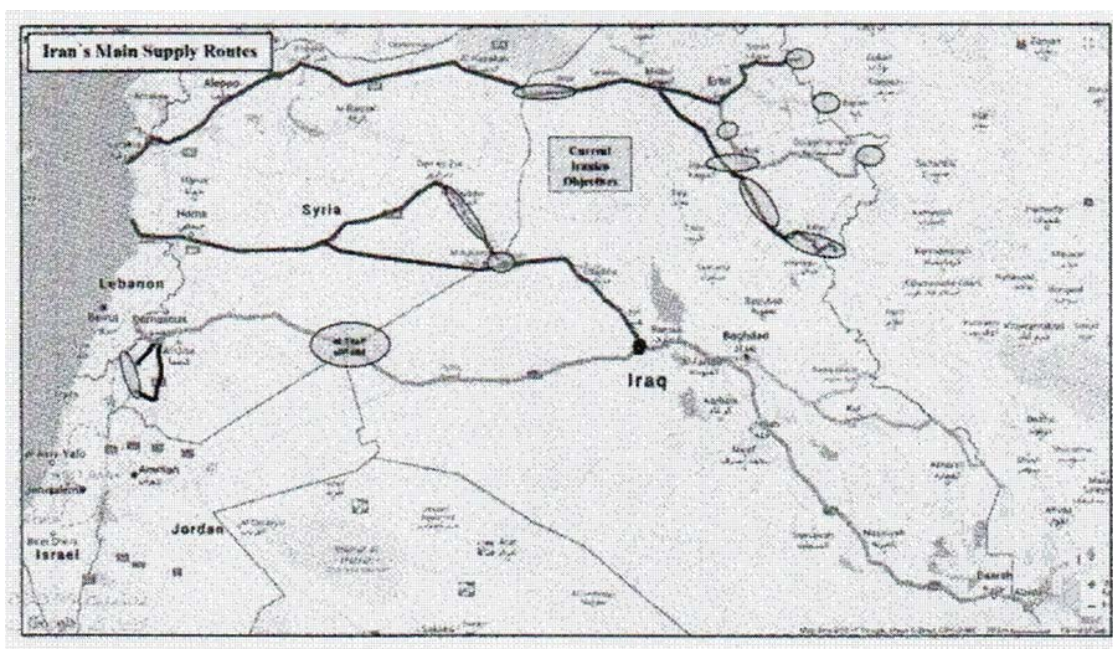
The first section discusses the land supply lines from Iran to Syria and Lebanon, which operate along three routes, as follows: The first route passes through Baghdad, continues through Ramadi, reaches the Albukamal crossing on the Syrian-Iraqi border, proceeds through Deir ez-Zor in Syria, then to Palmyra, Damascus, and finally to Beirut. The second route begins in Tehran, passes through Basra in Iraq, from there to Baghdad, continues to the al-Tanf Crossing on the Syrian-Iraqi border, and from there to Damascus. The third route starts in Iran, passes through Mosul in Iraq, then to Hasakah in Syria, continues to Adlah, and finally to Latakia. The route is currently inactive. American and Israeli measures to block the routes have been diverse, including United States control over nearby strategic areas, inciting unrest in regions under Syrian regime control to create internal chaos, imposing American sanctions on "groups and individuals" involved in these activities, and carrying out airstrikes to disrupt the routes [ITIC emphases].

Original Document 1, which relates to the arms smuggling routes.

يناقش القسم الأول خطوط الإمداد البرية من إيران إلى سوريا ولبنان، والتي تمر عبر ثلاث خطوط برية وهي على النحو التالي: الخط الأول يمر بمدينة بغداد مروراً بمدينة الرمادي وصولاً إلى معبر البوكمال على الحدود السورية العراقية ومن ثم يمر بمدينة دير الزور السورية ثم إلى مدينة تدمر، ثم إلى مدينة دمشق ثم إلى بيروت/ أما الخط الثاني فيبدأ من طهران إلى مدينة البصرة العراقية ثم إلى مدينة بغداد ومنها إلى معبر "التنف" على الحدود السورية العراقية ثم إلى مدينة دمشق/ أما الخط الثالث فيبدأ من إيران إلى مدينة الموصل العراقية ثم إلى مدينة الحسكة السورية ثم إلى مدينة إدلب ثم إلى مدينة اللاذقية، وهذا الخط غير مفعل، وقد تنوعت الإجراءات الأمريكية والإسرائيلية لعرقلة هذه الخطوط من خلال السيطرة الأمريكية على مناطق إستراتيجية قريبة من هذه الخطوط أو من خلال توتير المناطق التي يسيطر عليها النظام السوري وإثارة الفوضى الداخلية في بعض المناطق، وفرض عقوبات أمريكية على الجماعات والأفراد المشاركين في هذا الملف، وصولاً إلى عمليات القصف الجوي لعرقلة هذه الخطوط.



Map of the three routes described in Document 1: blue for Baghdad to Beirut, green for Iran to Damascus, red for Iran to Latakia.



Map of the arms smuggling routes from Iran to Syria

- ▶ Regarding the Israeli and American measures to disrupt the land routes, the document notes that according to Israeli statistics, in 2022 the Israeli Air Force attacked the Damascus area 15 times, northwestern Syria 10 times, southern Syria seven times, and Albukamal in eastern Syria, once. In 2023, according to the document, Israel attacked 28 times from the air and on the ground, Damascus 15 times, Quneitra six times, al-Suwayda three times and Aleppo three times. Sixty-four people were killed, including six IRGC operatives and three Hezbollah terrorist operatives.
- ▶ The document noted that Damascus was a focus for attacks because of the weapons stored there in preparation for transfer to Lebanon and the presence of Iranian advisors. The

goal was to prevent weapons from being transferred to Hezbollah and to improve and upgrade weapons production and capabilities in Syria.

The attacks focus on Damascus because it is where weapons are stored for future use by the "resistance axis" inside Syria or in preparation for their transfer to Lebanon. They also focus on Damascus because of the presence of Iranian experts and advisors, as many of the attacks targeted locations where advisors were situated, killing some of them.

The objective of the airstrikes was to prevent the transfer of weapons to Hezbollah and to reduce the production and modernization of weapons in Syria. Various research sites were targeted including facilities where technical and military capabilities were developed for the "resistance axis," as well as for Hezbollah and Iranian infrastructure in Damascus and the Golan Heights.

ب- يرجع تركيز الغارات على مدينة دمشق كونها المنطقة التي يتم فيها تخزين الأسلحة لاستخدامها مستقبلاً من قبل محور المقاومة داخل سوريا، أو تمهيداً لنقلها إلى لبنان، وكذلك تواجد الخبراء والمستشارين الإيرانيين فيها، حيث استهدفت العديد من الغارات أماكن كان يتواجد فيها الخبراء أدت إلى استشهادهم.

ت- تهدف الغارات الجوية إلى منع نقل الأسلحة المتجهة إلى حزب الله، كما تهدف الغارات لتجسيم تصنيع الأسلحة وتحديثها على الأراضي السورية في مواقع مختلفة لمنشآت مراكز الأبحاث التي تتولى تطوير القدرات الفنية والعسكرية لمحور المقاومة، والبنية التحتية لحزب الله وإيران في دمشق والبنية التحتية في مرتفعات الجولان.

Original Document 1

Smuggling routes to Judea and Samaria

► According to Original Document 1, Judea and Samaria are strategically important for Iran and Hamas, as they are a front from where pressure can be exerted on Israel.

The West Bank is of strategic importance to the "resistance axis" and is a critical arena because of its direct impact on the Israeli enemy. Iran and Hamas are working to exert pressure on the enemy by establishing control over and igniting the West Bank front. Therefore, Hamas and Iran are making efforts to transfer weapons and funds to the front by all available means because of the enormous impact on the enemy. In response, the enemy and its allies are taking action to disrupt and prevent the efforts.

تكتسب الضفة الغربية أهمية استراتيجية لمحور المقاومة وساحة مهمة لتأثيرها المباشر على العدو الإسرائيلي، حيث تعمل كل من إيران وحركة حماس على الضغط على العدو من خلال إشعال ساحة الضفة الغربية في إطار الضغط عليه وإشغاله، وعليه تبذل كل من حماس وإيران جهود مكثفة من أجل إيصال السلاح والمال إلى هذه المساحة بكافة الطرق المتاحة لعظم تأثيرها على العدو، وفي المقابل يعمل كل من العدو وحلفائه على إحباط هذه الإجراءات ومنعها.

Original Document 1, the importance of Judea and Samaria for the "resistance axis"

- ▶ The document referred to two supply routes which are also used for smuggling: **The first route** begins in the Shebaa Farms in south Lebanon, from there to the Beit Jann area in Syria, to Khan Arnabah, then to the village of Jasim, and then to the village of Nawa in southern Syria, to Daraa on the Syria-Jordan border and then into Jordan. **The second route** begins at the land border between Iraq and Jordan where weapons and funds are smuggled **into Jordan and from there to Judea and Samaria [ITIC emphases].**



Map from Original Document 1

- ▶ According to the document, Jordan and Israel connect drug smuggling with arms smuggling to Judea and Samaria, claiming that drug smuggling assists Hezbollah and Syria in gathering intelligence for "resistance" activities and that the "resistance axis" also uses drug smugglers to supply weapons.
- ▶ It was further noted that "creative methods" were used to bypass security measures along the Syria-Jordan and Iraq-Syria borders, including the use of drones to transport

weapons and drugs, the use of old oil pipelines connecting Jordan and Iraq and the use of refugees working along the Syria-Iraq border

- ▶ The measures taken by Israel and Jordan to prevent smuggling were also noted:
 - ◆ Strengthening military forces on both sides of the Jordanian-Israeli border;
 - ◆ Developing tools to detect drug smuggling using drones;⁹
 - ◆ American assistance to the Jordanian military to enhance the efficiency of its operations, including technologies for aircraft, armored vehicles, missiles, communication equipment and training systems;
 - ◆ IDF installation of surveillance and monitoring equipment and increasing coordination along the shared Jordan-Israel border;
 - ◆ Signing joint security agreements to prevent weapons and drug smuggling along the Jordan-Iraq border;
 - ◆ Jordanian Air Force attacks on drug-production sites in Syria and distancing groups linked to the "resistance axis," such as the Fatemiyoun Brigade, from the Syria-Jordan border, using intelligence on their presence in the area;
 - ◆ Plans to build a fence along the Jordanian border to reduce weapons and drug smuggling, a move supported by the Israeli government in cooperation with Jordan.

Aerial smuggling routes

▶ Regarding the aerial routes used by Iran for transferring weapons to Syria, it was noted that Qods Force Unit 190 was responsible for the operations. The weapons were flown to Damascus on direct civilian flights and then transferred to the land smuggling routes.

▶ According to the document, Israeli reports identified the Iranian cargo airline Mahan Air as central to the IRGC activities, including transferring weapons, equipment and funds from Syria and Lebanon to support regional IRGC operations. The company also used security clearances, arrangements and flight data to conceal its activities.

The aerial supply route begins at Iran's airports in Isfahan and proceeds to Baghdad International Airport. From there, the equipment is transported overland to Karbala in Iraq, then transferred by air to Deir ez-Zor in Syria.

⁹ The document states that according to the Jordanian Army, smuggling had increased along the Syria-Iraq border, with 88 instances of the use of drones and 194 overland smuggling operations.

and from there to Damascus or via direct flight to airports in Iran, Syria and Lebanon.



Aerial smuggling routes, from Original Document 1

► American and Israeli measures to prevent the aerial supply of weapons, as described in the document, include designating Iranian airlines Mahan Air, Pouya Air, and Qeshm Fars Air, and Syrian airlines Syrian Air and Cham Wings Airlines as terrorist entities and imposing American and European sanctions; arresting Iranian aviation personnel involved in weapons transfers (in June 2022, a pilot from Qeshm Fars Air was arrested and found to have connections to the IRGC Revolutionary Guards); and Israeli airstrikes targeting civilian airports in Syria.¹⁰

¹⁰ According to the document, in 2023, Aleppo International Airport was attacked four times, Damascus International Airport three times, al-Nairab Airport twice, and al-Dabaa Airport twice.



Airports attacked in Syria, from Original Document 1

Maritime smuggling routes

► The document also described how Iran uses maritime transportation to smuggle weapons and oil to Syria and Lebanon. The route begins at Iran's Bandar Abbas port in the Arabian Gulf,¹¹ continues to the Red Sea, through the Suez Canal and the Mediterranean Sea, and from there to the port of Latakia in Syria or the port of Beirut in Lebanon.

[In box] Iran falsifies the identification documents of the ships, claiming they carry oil, enabling them to smuggle weapons. Israeli and American sources stated that Russia protects the ships. Iran uses maritime supply routes to provide the Ansar Allah movement (the Houthis) with weapons and money by sailing through Kuwait's territorial waters in small boats, and from there to Yemen.

¹¹ Or the Persian Gulf, according to Iran.

تعمل إيران على تزوير وثائق تعريف السفن بأن حمولتها نفطية فقط، ويتم تهريب السلاح من خلالها، و تدعي مصادر إسرائيلية وأمريكية وجود حماية روسية لهذه السفن.

تعمل إيران على استخدام خطوط الإمداد البحرية في إمداد جماعة أنصار الله "الحوثيين" بالسلاح والأموال من خلال استخدام المياه الإقليمية للكويت عبر قوارب صغيرة ومنها إلى اليمن.



From Original Document 1, how Iran hides its smuggled arms in ships

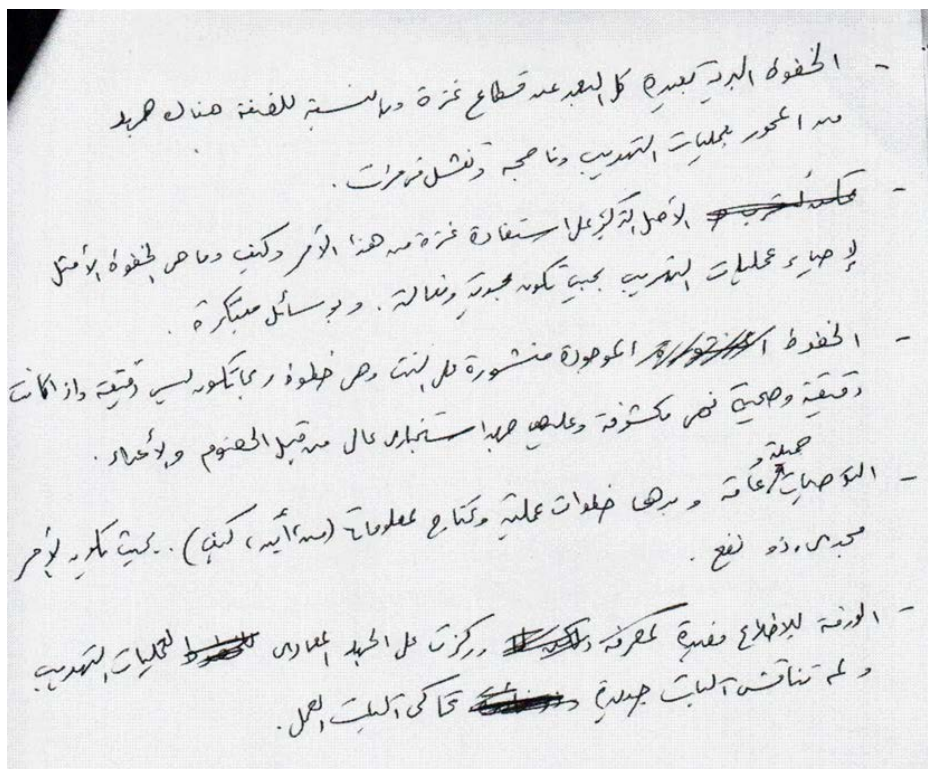
- ▶ According to claims, the Americans and Israelis prevent maritime smuggling to Syria and Lebanon by "investing in 'reshaping' the ruling elites in countries through which the maritime supply routes pass and 'engineering' the rise of leaders who act against the resistance project in their countries" [ITIC insertion of single quotation marks]. The removal of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated President Mohamed Morsi and the consolidation of President el-Sisi's regime were mentioned, as were the protests which led to the overthrow of Sudanese President al-Bashir in 2019.

Recommendations for smuggling arms to Jordan

- ▶ After describing the routes, the document presented recommendations to make it possible to continue smuggling activities despite countermeasures:
 - ◆ Monitor the steps taken to prevent smuggling, specialize in the field, and optimize operations.
 - ◆ Members of the "axis" should provide "brothers" in Syria with electronic equipment to jam the Jordanian army's drones, as the army relies on them to prevent smuggling using UAVs.

- ◆ Establish relations with smuggling networks in Yemen or the Horn of Africa and invest in them for the benefit of the "resistance;" begin with prominent figures from the al-Sabiha tribe, located in the Bab al-Mandab and Dhubbab areas.
 - ◆ Invest in "dead zones" in the Syria-Israel-Jordan border triangle to carry out smuggling in cooperation with "members of the axis" and increase activity in the northern Dead Sea area, because its complex terrain makes it difficult for the "enemy" to secure the region.
 - ◆ Develop trade relations between the Gaza Strip and Jordan and build trust between traders from both sides to establish financial networks which support "popular movements" in Jordan and the "resistance" in the West Bank, bypassing security inspections.
- ▶ The final section of the document included handwritten notes, likely made whoever received it. The notes indicate that the recipient was not particularly impressed and was particularly interested in knowing how the information could be leveraged for the benefit of the Gaza Strip:

- 1. The land routes are far from the Gaza Strip compared to the West Bank, where smuggling activities are carried out successfully at times and fail occasionally. The main focus should be on how Gaza benefits, how and what the optimal steps are to revive smuggling activities so that they are profitable and efficient, using creative means.**
- 2. The known routes have been published online and might not be accurate. Even if they are accurate, they are exposed and subject to massive intelligence efforts by rivals and enemies.**
- 3. The recommendations are good and general, but practical steps are needed, requiring information (who, where, how) to make them worthwhile and effective.**
- 4. The document is useful for understanding the topic and focuses on the effort against smuggling activities. It does not address new mechanisms which simulate operational mechanisms.**



Handwritten comments at the end of the document

Hamis investigation after smugglers are arrested in Jordan

In June 2023, seven suspects were arrested in Jordan for smuggling weapons for Hamas in Judea and Samaria.¹² On July 11, 2023, Omar (identity unknown) from the "Public Works Department" in the West Bank sent the findings of the investigation into the arrests, "Explanation for the blow in Jordan,"¹³ to Abu al-Baraa, head of the "Public Works Department," and Marwan Issa, deputy head of Hamas' military wing.¹⁴

According to the document, contact with the main suspect, Brother Ibrahim [Jabr], began in 2020. Contact with his brother "Osama" [Hudayfa Jabr] began two years later. He was responsible for scanning stash points [prearranged hiding locations] and transferring the

¹² Four of the suspects, Abd al-Rahman al-Mashouhi (son of former Jordanian MP Ibrahim Al-Mashouhi), Hudhayfa al-Tamouni (son of Ibrahim Bani Odeh, a senior Hamas terrorist operative eliminated by Israel in November 2000), Anas Makhaymar, and Ahmed Abu Khater were released by the Jordanians in December 2023 (aljazeera.net, December 5, 2023; Arabi21, December 5, 2023). The trial of the three remaining detainees, the brothers Ibrahim and Hudhayfa Jabr, and Khaled al-Majdalawi, began in July 2024 and has not yet concluded. According to reports, members of the smuggling network operated under the direction of Hamas' Lebanon branch (Israeli TV Kan News X account, June 24, 2023).

¹³ A Hamas document captured during the war https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/app/uploads/2024/12/Booty_document_2E.pdf The translated sections from the document are marked in red.

¹⁴ Killed in an Israeli attack in March 2024.

weapons; he had undergone training in Turkey. According to the document, the IRGC provided the locations of various stash points, some near the border with Israel, and coordination meetings were held in Turkey, Malaysia and Lebanon.

► Omar Asida¹⁵ liaised between the Jordanian smugglers and the operatives who were supposed to receive the weapons in Judea and Samaria.

The nature of the mission and the supply to the West Bank:

- 1. In April, Brother Omar Asida contacted me and said he could bring ammunition from Jordan to the West Bank and requested several things. I asked Brother Ibrahim to place the amount of TNT he had purchased at the stash point and he did so with the help of his brother Osama, who hid it at one of the locations he and Osama had selected in the al-Ramtha area and sent me the address and photos of the site.**
- 2. I sent the point to Brother Asida , but he requested that we forward the point to a contact in Jordan since there was no secure connection between Asida and Jordan.**
- 3. I sent Brother Asida the location of a live stash point in Jordan, and we set a meeting date. I sent the point via an SD card with a courier from Lebanon, but the person from Asida's side did not arrive at the location. Our courier stayed at the location for three days, but the brother from Asida's side did not show up. After contacting Brother Asida, it became clear that there was some mistake regarding the signs, and it seemed that his contact misunderstood him as the information was conveyed using codes and ambiguities.**
- 4. When we received the last point, the Jaber point, where an amount of explosives was located, I asked Osama to forward the point and place it along with the TNT which had been sent.**

¹⁵ Omar Asida, a senior Hamas terrorist operative from the village of Tal near Nablus, was detained in the early 2000s in Judea and Samaria and released in the Gilad Shalit exchange deal in 2011. He was deported to the Gaza Strip, where he was appointed head of the Nablus Committee in Hamas' West Bank Headquarters. In March 2024, he was detained during an Israeli security force operation at al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza and accused of security offenses (IDF spokesperson, March 21, 2024; Israel Police Force spokesperson's unit, December 9, 2024).

طبيعة المهمة وموضوع امداد الضفة:

- في شهر ٤ تواصلت معي الأخ "عمر عصيدة" وقال ان لديه إمكانية لإدخال عتاد من الأردن الى الضفة، وطلب عدة قضايا، فطلبت من الأخ "إبراهيم" ان يضع كمية الـ TNT التي اشتراها، في نقطة مينة. وفعل ذلك بمساعدة شقيقه "أسامة" حيث شحنها في احدى النقاط التي اختارها هو واسامة، في منطقة الرمثا، وأرسل لي العنوان، وصور للمكان.
- انا بدوري أرسلت النقطة الى الأخ "عصيدة" ولكنه طلب ان نوصل النقطة لشخص في الأردن، لانه لا يوجد تواصل امن بين الأخ عصيدة والأردن.
- أرسلت لـ "عصيدة" عنوان نقطة حية في الأردن، وحددنا موعد للقاء، وارسلت النقطة المينة عبر مكرو اس دي مع مرسال من لبنان، ولكن الشخص الذي من طرف الأخ عصيدة، لم يحضر الى المكان، وتردد المرسال الذي من طرفنا، على المكان لثلاثة أيام ولكن الأخ الذي من طرف عصيدة لم يأتي، وبعد التواصل مع الأخ عصيدة، تبين انه هناك خطأ ما في الإشارات، ويبدو ان صاحبه لم يفهم عليه لان الكلام بطريقة التمويه والتورية.
- عندما استلمنا النقطة الأخيرة، نقطة "جابر" وكان فيها كمية من المتفجرات، طلبت من "أسامة" ان ينقل النقطة ويضعها مع كمية الـ TNT التي شحنها.

Description of the communication between Omar Asida and the smugglers, from Original Document 2

► After the arrests, serious activity was undertaken to minimize the damage.

Our steps after the arrest:

1. We removed all individuals we could reach who had connections to the detainees.
2. The brothers' phones were disconnected from the communication network.
3. We provided financial and moral support to the brothers we exfiltrated from Jordan, and we continue to handle their interests.
4. We attempted to determine the real reason behind the blow [i.e., the wave of arrests] but we were unable to reach a conclusion.

اجراءاتنا بعد الاعتقال:

- تم اخراج جميع الأشخاص الذين استطعنا الوصول اليهم والذين على علاقة مع المعتقلين.
- تم فصل الهواتف التي مع الاخوة عن منظومة الاتصال.
- قمنا برعاية الاخوة الذين اخرجناهم الى خارج الاردن ماديا ومعنويا وما زلنا نتابع وضعهم.
- حاولنا اجراء تقييم لمعرفة السبب الحقيقي للضربة، لكن لم نستطع الوصول الى نتيجة محددة.

Hamas' actions after the arrests, from Original Document 2

► The author of the document ends with a criticism of the senior "external" Hamas leaders, who, he said, publicly complained about the arrests because they disrupted their planned vacations in Jordan. He also referred to an alleged verbal agreement with Jordanian intelligence, whereby Hamas would refrain from [terrorist] activities in Jordan but could continue to promote active support for Judea and Samaria.

First of all: the "external" brothers made all their noise because we disrupted their vacations, as most members of the movement usually arranged to summer in Jordan with their families and had planned celebrations and events. We ask Allah to grant them their reward, give them patience to cope with the disaster that has befallen them, and compensate them with goodness.

The verbal agreement with Jordanian intelligence, which some senior members of the movement speak of, was in the context of what is called the eastern front, as there was a military array there similar to the one on the northern front, meaning in the Lebanon arena. The mission of this array was to fight the enemy from Jordan through incursions and rocket fire. Their confessions also revealed that they had carried out intelligence activity, such as collecting information on the Zionist embassy in Amman and on Zionist tourists in Jordan. Therefore, the agreement concerns stopping the movement's activities in Jordan and has nothing to do with support and assistance in Judea and Samaria.

أولاً: الضجة التي اثارها الاخوة في الخارج، سببها اننا ضربنا عليهم الموسم السياحي، حيث كان ترتيب معظم كوادر الحركة ان يقضوا اجازتهم الصيفية في الأردن مع نوبيهم وكان لديهم افراح ومناسبات، نسال الله ان يكتب اجرهم وان يصبرهم على مصيبتهم، وان يخلفهم خيراً منها. الاتفاق الشفوي مع المخابرات الأردنية الذي يتحدث عنه بعض قيادات الحركة كان على خلفية ما يعرف بالقاطع الشرقي، حيث كان هناك تشكيل عسكري على غرار التشكيل الذي في القاطع الشمالي أي في ساحة لبنان، وكانت مهمة هذا التشكيل الاشتباك مع العدو من الأردن عبر عمليات نفوذ وعبر الرمايات الصاروخية، وقد تبين أيضاً اثناء الاعترافات انه كان لهم نشاط استخباري كجمع معلومات عن السفارة الصهيونية في عمان وعن السياح الصهاينة في الأردن، إذن الاتفاق كان ينص على وقف نشاط الحركة في الأردن، ولا علاقة له بدعم الضفة او اسنادها.

Comments on senior "external" figures and alleged agreements with Jordanian intelligence from Original Document 2

Jordan Tries to Combat Arms Smuggling

► A significant amount of arms smuggling to Judea and Samaria passes through Jordan, posing a serious threat to Jordanian national security. For the most part, smuggling into Jordanian goes through its border with Syria, in addition to the smuggling of large quantities of drugs, primarily Captagon (al-Arabiya, May 15, 2024; I24NEWS, June 26, 2024).

► The weapons transferred across the Jordanian border include rifles and pistols, as well as more advanced weapons such as mines, explosives like C4 and TNT, anti-tank missiles and RPG launchers. The smugglers drive trucks and pass through border points or desert

routes. In addition, drones were used to smuggle weapons from Syria to Jordan (Jerusalem Post, June 5, 2024; al-Hurra, October 25, 2024; al-Quds, October 25, 2023; Metras, May 9, 2024).



Drones used by the Jordanian Army during an attempted smuggling (Right: Jordanian Army, February 25, 2023. Left: Jordanian Army, June 16, 2023)

► There is an extensive network in Jordan of families involved in smuggling. The two most important are the al-Saeed and al-Ramthan families, with Muhammad al-Ramthan serving as the key figure. Muhammad al-Ramthan is the brother of Marai al-Ramthan, who was killed in a Jordanian airstrike in May 2023. The Syrian Army's Fourth Armored Division, led by Maher al-Assad (brother of the ousted Syrian president), assisted the smuggling through Hezbollah, which also collaborated with local armed groups, including Jihad and Mashafi al-Saeed from the village of al-Shaab. On the Jordanian side, four prominent smugglers were Abu Ammar al-Khaldi, Abu Khaled al-Sarhan, Saqr al-Fadous, and Muhammad al-Daij (Jerusalem Post, June 5, 2024).

► Since 2018, when the Assad regime regained control of the southern border, Jordan has relied on Russia (which played a central role in calming the security situation in southern Syria and the Syria-Jordan-Israel border triangle) to pressure the Syrian regime to reduce smuggling. However, after Russia shifted its focus to the war in Ukraine in early 2022, there was a renewed increase in drug and weapons smuggling, including the use of UAVs. That forced Jordan to adjust its security approach, deploying larger security forces along the border and attacking smuggling targets and drug and arms warehouses in southern Syria from the air and with artillery. There were also exchanges of fire between Jordanian security forces and smugglers attempting to infiltrate from Syria (Jusoor Center for Studies, February 13, 2024).

► Following the war in Gaza and Iranian attempts to ignite a new front in Judea and Samaria, smuggling attempts have become more violent, especially along Jordan's northern

border. In the past year, Jordan has foiled several attempts to smuggle weapons and drugs through the Syrian border by militias supported by Iran:

- ◆ Jordanian security forces prevented dozens of smugglers with connections to pro-Iranian militias from infiltrating into the country from Syria with a large quantity of weapons, including rocket launchers, mines and explosives, and approximately five million Captagon pills. Several border guards were injured in the exchange of fire and nine smugglers were arrested (Reuters, Jordan Times, December 19, 2023).
- ◆ Four suspects were arrested in the Tafila Governorate in western Jordan when it became known they belonged to a regional drug and weapons smuggling network. Authorities found 109 weapons, a large quantity of magazines and 12.5 kilograms of heroin in their possession (Sky News Arabia, October 28, 2024).
- ▶ At the Arab League summit in Bahrain in May 2024, King Abdullah II of Jordan called on Arab leaders to confront armed extremist groups committing crimes, particularly drug and weapons smuggling. He stated that Jordan had been preventing similar incidents for years (Reuters, May 16, 2024).
- ▶ Hamas has criticized the Jordanian efforts to curb smuggling to Judea and Samaria. Musa Abu Marzouq, head of the Hamas office for international relations, claimed it was Hamas' "duty" to supply operatives in Judea and Samaria with weapons, adding that the movement was not ashamed to admit it provided its operatives with weapons through Jordan, Egypt or Lebanon, as these were the countries surrounding "Palestine." Regarding claims of an attempt to create a rift between Hamas and Jordan, he noted that "the brothers in Jordan" should be more pleased with Hamas, claiming Hamas and the Palestinians "do more than anyone else to protect Jordan's interests [sic]" (Filastin al-A'an, August 13, 2023).
- ▶ The Palestinian website al-Shahid published an article criticizing the Jordanian regime and the actions it took against weapons smuggling. According to the article, the Jordanian regime deployed its security forces along 360 kilometers to protect Israel's eastern border and prevent the smuggling of weapons or "fighters" to Judea and Samaria. It also claimed that since the al-Aqsa intifada [the second intifada] in 2000, Jordanian authorities had arrested dozens of Palestinians and Jordanians on charges of weapons smuggling. Some were tried in state security courts while others remained imprisoned or awaited trial. Detainees allegedly reported torture and harsh detention conditions (al-Shahid, September 4, 2024).

Israel Combats Arms Smuggling

▶ Iran's smuggling of weapons to Hezbollah and Palestinian terrorist organizations poses a significant threat to Israel's security. For over a decade, Israeli security services have conducted a campaign to prevent smuggling from Syria, Lebanon, and Judea and Samaria. In March 2017, then-IDF Chief of Staff Gadi Eizenkot stated that the IDF was operating in Syria to prevent "the empowerment of those who should not be empowered with advanced weapons" (IDF spokesperson, March 22, 2017). Former Air Force Commander Amir Eshel noted that between 2012 and 2017, there were nearly 100 attacks on convoys transferring weapons to Hezbollah and other Iranian proxies (Haaretz, August 16, 2017).

▶ During the Gaza Strip War, Israeli security services intensified their activities against Iranian attempts to transfer weapons to Hezbollah and terrorist operatives in Judea and Samaria by targeting operatives and facilities, and exposing weapon shipments:

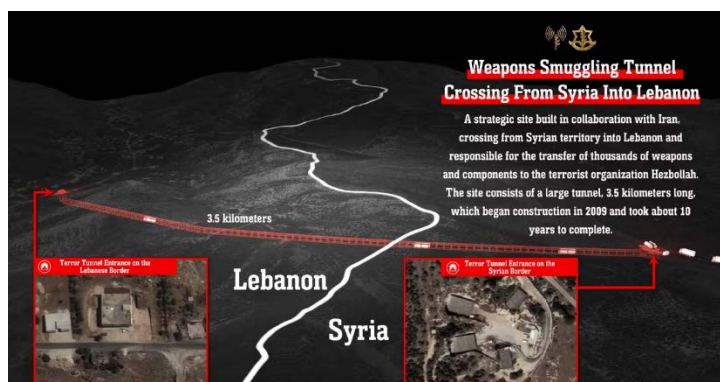
◆ On March 25, 2024, Israeli security forces reported seizing advanced weapons smuggled into Judea and Samaria by Iran, with the involvement of Munir al-Maqdah from the Ain al-Hilweh refugee camp in south Lebanon. Among the items seized were two BTB15 shrapnel explosives, five Iranian YM-2 anti-tank mines and five fuses, four M203 launchers, 15 kg of C4, 10 kg of Semtex, 13 anti-tank shoulder missiles, 15 RPG launchers, 16 RPG-7 rockets with explosives, 25 hand grenades, 33 M4 rifles and 50 pistols (IDF spokesperson, March 25, 2024).

◆ On August 21, 2024, Khalil al-Maqdah, a senior operative in the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades in south Lebanon, was eliminated in an Israeli airstrike in Sidon. According to the IDF, he was involved in smuggling weapons into Judea and Samaria under the leadership of his brother, Munir al-Maqdah, on behalf of the IRGC and the Qods Force (IDF spokesperson, August 21, 2024).

◆ On October 1, 2024, Mohammad Jafar Qasir, head of Unit 4400, responsible for transferring weapons from Iran and its proxies to Hezbollah in Lebanon, was killed in an Israeli airstrike in Beirut. He had overseen Hezbollah's financial sector and spearheaded economic initiatives to fund the organization's terrorist activities, including the global recruitment of financial facilities and businessmen. He also managed financial transfers from Iran and Syria to Hezbollah in Lebanon (IDF

spokesperson, October 1, 2024). On October 21, 2024, his successor, Ali Hassan Gharib, was also eliminated in an airstrike in Damascus (IDF spokesperson, October 21, 2024).

◆ During Operation Northern Arrows against Hezbollah, the IDF targeted routes used for transferring Iranian weapons through Syria to Hezbollah. Among the targets were trucks carrying weapons, transit routes along the Syria-Lebanon border, and a 3.5 km smuggling tunnel beneath the Syria-Lebanon border (IDF spokesperson, November 25, 2024). Strikes against border crossings continued even after the ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon went into effect on November 27, 2024 (IDF Spokesperson, December 6, 2024).



Weapons smuggling tunnel on the Syria-Lebanon border (IDF spokesperson, November 25, 2024)

◆ According to reports, on November 27, 2024, Israeli security forces seized weapons originating from Iran intended for terrorist operatives in the Jenin area. The shipment included weapons which would upset the balance of power, and forced the IDF to change its tactics, such as rockets, approximately 70 powerful Claymore-type explosive devices of various kinds, explosive devices, mortar launchers, RPG launchers and sniper rifles (IDF spokesperson, November 27, 2024).

The Influence of the Syria Revolution on Arms Smuggling

▶ On November 27, 2024, armed groups opposing Syrian President Bashar Assad's regime launched an operation against Syrian army forces and their allies. They took control of Aleppo, Hama and Homs, and on December 8, 2024, completed their takeover of Damascus. Assad fled the country and was granted political asylum in Russia.¹⁶

¹⁶ For further information, see the ITIC report, "[Spotlight on Syria \(Following the Toppling of the Syrian Regime\) – December 2-9, 2024.](#)"

- ▶ Ahmed al-Sharaa (Abu Mohammad al-Jolani), leader of Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, who led the campaign and is now regarded as Syria's ruler, said the revolution ended the Iranian presence which threatened Syria, the Gulf States, Turkey and Lebanon. He also criticized the Assad regime's involvement in Captagon drug trafficking, stating, "Everywhere the Iranians reached, they encouraged the drug industry under state sovereignty" (Syria TV, December 14, 2024; al-Sharq, December 17, 2024).
- ▶ Senior "resistance axis" figures publicly acknowledged that the revolution in Syria disrupted the supply lines which passed through the country but attempted to downplay the strategic blow:
 - ◆ Na'im Qassem, Hezbollah secretary general, said that with the fall of the Assad regime, Hezbollah lost its military supply line. He added that the "resistance" was "flexible" and that if the new regime did not permit the transfer of weapons, alternative routes would need to be found (al-Manar, December 14, 2024).
 - ◆ Hossein Salami, IRGC commander, said that all routes which could have been used for transferring Iranian forces to Syria were now closed. He also claimed that the "resistance front" had become self-reliant and was no longer dependent on Iran (ISNA, December 12, 2024).
- ▶ In all probability, in addition to disrupting weapons shipments from Iran to Hezbollah, the revolution in Syria will have an impact on Hezbollah's efforts to rebuild Lebanon. "Observers" noted that Hezbollah relied on Iran for economic support and logistical aid such as raw materials and construction supplies. However, with the Syrian opposition now controlling borders and crossings, the supply route from Iran via Iraq and Damascus is blocked (Lebanon24, December 14, 2024).
- ▶ Maher Abu Tir, a prominent Jordanian journalist, warned that the revolution in Syria combined with Israeli strikes on military infrastructure in Syria had led to the looting of many army warehouses, including by groups linked to drug trafficking. He predicted an increase in weapons and drug smuggling to Jordan in the near future, as the new Syrian regime had not yet raided drug strongholds in southern Syria, enabling criminal gangs to regroup and become stronger (al-Ghad, December 11, 2024).
- ▶ According to an American research institute, as Syria opens to the world with the flow of people, vehicles, humanitarian aid and raw materials for reconstruction, Iran might exploit the situation to renew land routes for weapons shipments to Hezbollah and reactivate its

proxies in Syria. It might also choose to cooperate with the new regime, as it has done in the past with the Taliban and al-Qaeda, to ensure its continued ability to operate through Syria (Washington Institute for Near East Policy, December 12, 2024).

► One of the arenas Iran might use for weapons smuggling is Sudan. "Intelligence officials and diplomats" reported that Iran was transferring weapons shipments, including UAVs, as well as intelligence information, to the Sudanese Army to assist in the current civil war. Tehran reportedly seeks to use Sudanese support to gain access to the strategic Port Sudan on the Red Sea (Bloomberg, December 18, 2024).

Appendix: Preventing arms from entering Israel along the Israel-Jordan border

► According to reports, at the end of November 2024 Israeli security forces seized a shipment of weapons originating from Iran intended for terrorist operatives in the Jenin area. The forces also located where most of the shipment had been hidden. The shipment included weapons which would force the IDF to change its tactics, such as rockets, approximately 70 powerful Claymore-type explosive devices of various kinds, some equipped with wireless activation systems, explosive devices, mortar launchers, RPG launchers and sniper rifles (IDF spokesperson, November 27, 2024).



Weapons sent by Iran to terrorist operatives in Jenin (IDF spokesperson, November 27, 2024)

► On November 25, 2024, an unsuccessful attempt to smuggle weapons into Israel near the Adam Bridge in the Jordan Valley was made. Israeli security forces detained a suspect and found two bags containing 14 pistols and 65 firearm components (IDF spokesperson, November 25, 2024).

► On November 10, 2024, the smuggling of 13 M-16 rifles and additional weapon parts was prevented in the area of the village of al-Auja, north of Jericho. Two Palestinian suspects were detained (IDF spokesperson, November 10, 2024).

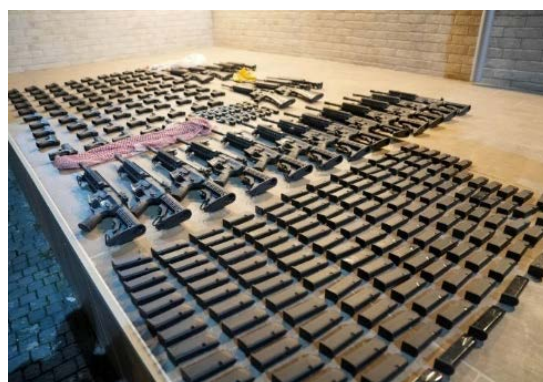
- ▶ On November 9, 2024, Israeli security forces at the Rabin Border Crossing, north of Eilat, detained two suspects from the Negev Bedouin city of Rahat. A search of their vehicle uncovered 101 Glock pistols with magazines (Israel Police Force Facebook page, November 9, 2024).
- ▶ On September 4, 2024, Israeli security forces in Jericho found two bags containing two pistols, ten weapon assemblies, six barrels for M-16 rifles and additional weapon parts (Israel Police Force spokesperson's unit, September 5, 2024).
- ▶ On July 17, 2024, the smuggling from Jordan to Israel of 22 pistols and 26 magazines was prevented at the Rabin Border Crossing; the weapons were hidden in two vehicles. The drivers, one from Rahat and the other from the Bedouin diaspora in the Negev, were detained (Israel Police Force X account, July 17, 2024).
- ▶ On July 1, 2024, the smuggling of over 75 pistols and dozens of weapon parts from Jordan was prevented. Three smugglers who crossed the border security fence in the Jordan Valley managed to escape (Israel Police Force X account, July 1, 2024).



Weapons seized in the Jordan Valley (Israel Police Force X account, July 1, 2024)

- ▶ On March 25, 2024, several Palestinians involved in attempts to carry out attacks in Judea and Samaria were detained and advanced weapons smuggled into Judea and Samaria by the IRGC were seized. They included two BTB15 shrapnel explosives, five Iranian YM-2 anti-tank mines and five fuses, four M203 launchers, 15 kg of C4, 10 kg of Semtex, 13 anti-tank shoulder missiles, 15 RPG launchers, 16 RPG-7 rockets with explosives, 25 hand grenades, 33 M4 rifles and 50 pistols (IDF spokesperson, March 25, 2024).

▶ On November 30, 2023, the smuggling of 137 weapons, 250 magazines, and numerous weapon parts, valued at approximately six million shekels (about \$1,640,000), was prevented. Four residents of the Yeruham diaspora were detained (Israel Police Force spokesperson's unit, November 30, 2023). It was reportedly the largest cross-fence smuggling operation ever foiled in the country's history, with the seized weapons including hundreds of Glock pistols, some manufactured in Azerbaijan (Israeli media, November 30, 2023).



Weapons seized by the police (Israel Police Force spokesperson's unit, November 30, 2023)

▶ On August 3, 2023, three suspects from the Tulkarm area were detained near the Jordanian border with four standard Russian Claymore explosives in their possession, which contained approximately 700 grams of armor-piercing material. According to reports, the equipment was intended for the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) in the Nur Shams refugee camp (Shin Bet and the Israel Police Force spokesperson's unit, September 5, 2023).

▶ On August 24, 2023, three residents of Kafr Qasim and one resident of Lod were detained on suspicion of receiving high-quality weapons from Hezbollah. They were found to be in possession of two Iranian-made explosive devices and other weapons (Israeli media, August 24, 2023).

▶ On April 22, 2023, Imad Zidan Abd al-Hamid al-Adwan, a member of the Jordanian Parliament, was detained after 12 rifles and 194 pistols were found in his vehicle during a search at the Allenby Crossing. Investigation revealed that since February 2022, exploiting his diplomatic passport, he had conducted 12 smuggling operations of various goods and weapons into Israel. Following the investigation, he was transferred to Jordanian authorities, who arrested five additional suspects involved in the smuggling operations (Israeli media, April 22, 2023). In November 2024, the Jordanian State Security Court sentenced al-Adwan to ten years in prison (al-Shahid, November 22, 2024).

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