



"Resistance Axis" Reactions to the Israel-Iran Military Conflict

June 15, 2025

Overview

- ▶ On June 13, 2025, Israel launched a preemptive attack in Iran on dozens of military and security targets and sites of the nuclear program across Iran. More than 20 senior figures in the security leadership, military commanders and nuclear scientists were eliminated, including the commander of the armed forces and the commander of the Revolutionary Guards.
- ▶ Iran confirmed the deaths of the senior officials. Regime officials threatened that "the Zionist regime" would pay a "steep price," and the Revolutionary Guards launched Operation True Promise 3, attacking Israel with UAVs and ballistic missiles.
- ▶ Members of the "resistance axis" in the Palestinian terrorist organizations, Lebanon, Yemen, Iraq and Syria condemned Israel, accused it of "crossing red lines," and expressed solidarity with Iran. They claimed that the Israeli attacks only strengthened the "resistance" and that "the entity" would pay the price.
- ▶ According to reports, the Lebanese government conveyed a message to Hezbollah that it alone decided whether or not to go to war. A senior Hezbollah figure said the organization was satisfied with issuing a condemnation and did not plan to respond militarily against Israel.
- ▶ The Houthis claimed that they had attacked targets in Israel in coordination with the Iranians. Israel reportedly attempted to eliminate the Houthi chief of staff during a security meeting.
- ▶ The pro-Iranian militias in Iraq condemned Israel for violating Iraqi airspace during the attacks on Iran and threatened to take action against American interests if the United States joined the fighting alongside Israel. It was reported that the Iraqi prime minister conveyed messages to the militia leaders that he would act against them if they intervened in the war.
- ▶ **Iran built the military capabilities of the Hezbollah-led "resistance axis" as a deterrent against Israel and as part of its response capabilities in the event of an attack on Iranian nuclear facilities. The responses of the organizations were limited to condemnations, indicating the "resistance axis" had been weakened by Israel during the fighting in the Gaza Strip and Lebanon since October 7, 2023. In ITIC assessment, in light of the strategic changes in the Middle East, Hezbollah is currently restrained and the Lebanese**

government has, for now, successfully imposed its will on the organization. The Shi'ite militias in Iraq are also reluctant to intervene because of pressure from the Iraqi government. Therefore, at this stage, the "resistance axis" organizations, except the Houthis, will most likely not join the fighting. However, active American involvement alongside Israel could lead to an active response by the "resistance axis," especially in Iraq.

The Israel-Iran Military Conflict

► Before dawn on June 13, 2025, Israeli security and intelligence forces began a series of attacks on Iran, targeting dozens of military and security facilities and sites related to its nuclear program across the country. The IDF spokesperson said it was a preemptive attack to damage Iran's nuclear program and in response to the Iranian regime's ongoing aggression against Israel. According to the IDF, the attacks eliminated more than 20 senior officials and military commanders, as well as nuclear scientists. Among them were Ali Shamkhani, the advisor to Iran's leader and former secretary of the Supreme National Security Council; Mohammad Bagheri, the chief of staff of the Iranian armed forces; and Hossein Salami, the commander of the Revolutionary Guards (IDF spokesperson, June 13–15, 2025).

► Iran confirmed the deaths of the senior officials, and Iranian leader Ali Khamenei announced the appointment of replacements. There was no report on the fate of Qods Force commander Esmail Qaani and whether he was harmed in the attacks (IRNA, Fars, Tasnim, June 13–14, 2025). On June 13, 2025, the Iranian Revolutionary Guards announced the launch of Operation True Promise 3, which included attacking Israel with hundreds of ballistic missiles and UAVs (Fars Agency, June 13, 2025). Despite Iranian claims that the attacks targeted military installations and air force bases, only civilian residential areas in Israel were hit and at least 13 civilians were killed (Israeli media, June 14–15, 2025).

Reactions of the Iranian Leadership

► Senior Iranian officials accused Israel of committing "crimes" by violating the Islamic Republic's sovereignty and threatened that "the Zionist regime" would pay a "steep price":

◆ In his first response to the Israeli attack, Iran's leader Ali Khamenei said "the Zionist regime" had extended its "filthy, bloodstained hand" toward Iran and again exposed its evil nature by [allegedly] attacking residential centers. He stated that "the Zionist regime" had to be prepared for harsh punishment and the powerful hand of the Iranian armed forces would not release it. He claimed "the Zionist regime" has doomed itself to

a bitter, painful fate, which it would undoubtedly receive (Leader of Iran's website, June 13, 2025). Later, in a televised message shortly before the start of the Iranian "response," Khamenei declared that "the despicable Zionist regime" had made a "great mistake," the consequences of which would render it "miserable." He stated the Iranian nation would not forgive the blood of its fallen and Iran would not allow Israel to escape unharmed from "the great crime" it had committed. He added that the Iranian armed forces would deliver heavy blows to Israel and that the Islamic Republic would prevail over it (Leader of Iran website, June 13, 2025).



Iranian supreme leader Ali Khamenei (Khamenei's website, June 13, 2025)

◆ Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said Iran's "legitimate, powerful response" would make the "enemy" regret its "foolish act." He said "the barbaric act that violates all international commitments" proved the "criminal nature" of "the illegitimate Zionist regime," whose existence was based on "occupation, aggression and child murder." He said Iran would not stand idly by and would respond "forcefully, wisely and decisively" to defend its territorial integrity (Tasnim, June 13, 2025).



President of Iran (Tasnim, June 13, 2025)

◆ Abdolrahim Mousavi, the new chief of staff of the armed forces who replaced Mohammad Bagheri, claimed "the Zionist regime" believed that shedding the blood of children, women and the elderly alongside bombings and destruction would help it

prolong its life, but the Iranian people would not easily give up their "honor" and "the Zionist regime" was too pathetic to harm the will of the Iranian people. He stated that the Iranian armed forces were working to carry out severe punishment for those responsible for the "crime" committed by Israel (Tasnim, June 13, 2025).

◆ According to a statement from the Revolutionary Guards, the "crime" committed by Israel would not change the determination of the people and the Revolutionary Guards but would only strengthen their will and resolve to exact harsh revenge and continue the glorious path of the fighters (Tasnim, June 13, 2025). Mohammad Pakpour, the incoming commander of the Revolutionary Guards, wrote to Khamenei that the Guards were committed to defending the Islamic Revolution and the Iranian nation and to avenging the blood of the fallen. He stated that "the crime committed by the terrorist Zionist regime" in attacking the national security and territorial integrity of the Islamic Republic would not go unanswered and it would suffer a "bitter, painful fate with immense and destructive consequences." Pakpour declared that soon "the gates of hell will open upon the regime of child murderers" (Tasnim, June 13, 2025).

◆ In a letter to the UN Security Council, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi wrote that Israel, which he called "the world's greatest terrorist regime," had crossed all red lines and that Iran would not allow it to escape punishment. He stated that the Israeli attacks were a "blatant violation" of Iran's sovereignty and territorial integrity, "an act of aggression and a war crime" in violation of international law and the UN Charter. Araghchi said the Islamic Republic was determined to defend its sovereignty and national security and Israel would pay a heavy price for "its aggression and its terrible strategic mistake" (IRNA, June 13, 2025).

Reactions of the "Resistance Axis"

The Palestinian organizations

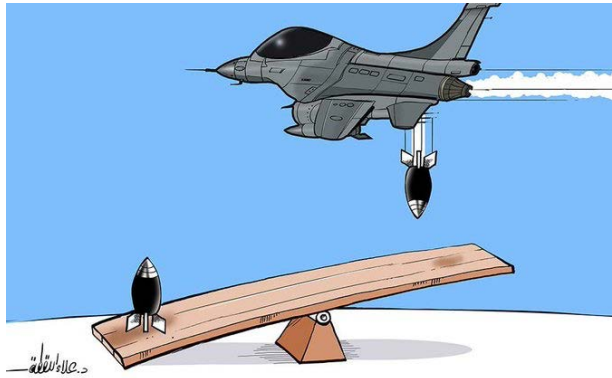
► **Hamas** claimed the Israeli attack in Iran was a "gross violation of international law" indicating the dangerous nature of the "Zionist project," which posed a threat not only to "Palestine" but to the entire region. Hamas expressed full solidarity with Iran and sent condolences on the deaths of the senior officials and nuclear scientists. It added that Iran was paying the price for its steadfast support of "Palestine" and its right to sovereignty, and the situation required a unified response by the forces of the [Islamic] nation against the "main enemy," Israel, which was determined to drag the region into wars for illusions of control and theological ideology

(Hamas Telegram channel, June 13, 2025). After the Iranian attack on Israel, Hamas said it proved that "there is no arrogance without response and no aggression without punishment." Hamas claimed that dozens of precision missiles and UAVs had attacked deep inside "the Zionist entity," while defense systems such as Iron Dome, Arrow and David's Sling had failed. Hamas claimed that "the occupation is burning today in the fire it itself ignited" and that "whoever attacks will pay the price" (Hamas in Judea and Samaria Telegram channel, June 14, 2025).

► Abu Obeida, spokesman for Hamas' military wing, expressed solidarity with Iran after the Israeli attack, which he claimed was a consequence of Iran's unwavering support for the Palestinian people and the "resistance." He eulogized the Iranian leaders and fallen who were killed in the attack and warned that Israel was mistaken in thinking that the attacks would weaken the "resistance" fronts or secure its regional existence. He claimed they were recurring strategic mistakes which brought Israel closer to "its inevitable end" (Abu Obeida's Telegram channel, June 13, 2025).

► Izzat al-Rishq, a member of the Hamas political bureau, claimed that the Iranian attack on Israel proved there was no longer room for unchecked arrogance. He added that the failure of the Israeli defense systems proved that "the occupation was now burning in the fire it itself ignited" (al-Risalah, June 14, 2025).

► Political journalist Muhammad al-Najjar claimed in Hamas' daily al-Risalah that the Iranian response represented a significant strategic development in favor of Iran. He said Tehran had quickly restored command and control after the elimination of senior officials in its military force and claimed that its missile capabilities were not harmed and even improved [sic]. He noted that the accuracy of the attacks this time was much higher and that the attack on Tel Aviv, "Israel's economic and political nerve center," was a bold decision reflecting the spirit of Khamenei's senior leadership and the hostility of the Iranian public to Israel since the Islamic Revolution. He claimed that the pictures of the unprecedented damage in Israel would strengthen the Iranians' fighting spirit, they did not have "the privilege of hesitation" in light of their injuries, and that any concession would lead to a loss of nuclear and missile capabilities, and even to a threat to the very existence of the regime. Al-Najjar noted Iran's geographic advantage, namely its vast size and distance from Israel, which he claimed made it difficult for the IDF to decisively win the campaign in a short time (al-Risalah, June 14, 2025).



Cartoon by Hamas "house cartoonist," 'Alaa al-Laqt'a ('Alaa al-Laqt'a's X account, June 13, 2025)

► **The Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)** strongly condemned the Israeli attack on Iran and called it "a dangerous development that threatens to drag the entire region into open confrontation." The PIJ claimed the Netanyahu government sought a full-scale confrontation as part of "theological aspirations for control and takeover of the region's resources." The movement expressed full solidarity with the Iranian people, its leadership and government, and expressed confidence in Iran's ability to respond "forcefully." The PIJ conveyed condolences on the deaths of Iranian officials and wished the wounded a speedy recovery (PIJ Telegram channel, June 13, 2025).

► **The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)**, whose deputy secretary general, Jamil Mazhar, met with Iran's president on June 11, 2025, also condemned the "terrorist aggression" against Iran. The PIJ claimed the "aggression" would not have occurred without the partnership, backing and support of the American administration, which had been and remained at the head of the "aggressive colonialist system hostile" to the region's peoples and states. The PFLP called on the nations of the world to condemn the "blatant terrorist aggression" and added that silence about "the crimes of the Zionist entity" was complicity in the "aggression" and cooperation with it. It also called for the escalation of popular protests against "the entity" and its supporters (PFLP website, June 13, 2025).

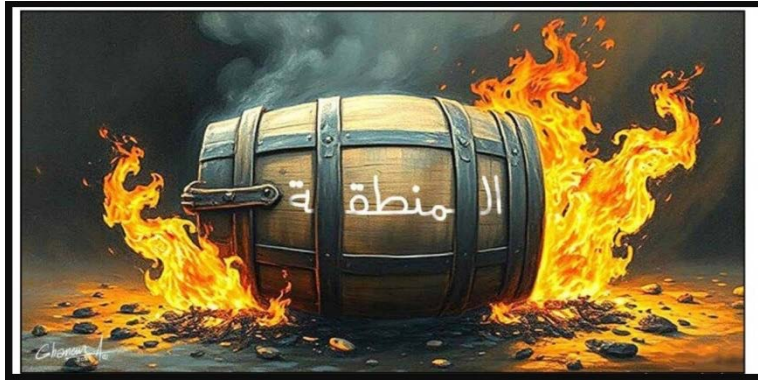
Hezbollah

► Hezbollah strongly condemned the "brutal Israeli aggression" against Iran, which it said constituted "a dangerous escalation with full American cover and sponsorship." It also stated that "the enemy does not heed logic or laws," knew only the "language of murder, fire and destruction," and had chosen "stupidity and escapades which threaten to ignite the entire region." The organization claimed that in recent times, Iran had "acted with restraint and avoided provocations" and responded to all international initiatives intended to defuse the

crisis and ensure its "natural right" to produce nuclear energy for "peaceful purposes." Hezbollah added that "the Israeli enemy has crossed all red lines," with "authorization and coordination" from the United States, would discover that the Iranian people would defend their freedom, honor and independence and that the attacks would only strengthen Iran. Hamas also sent condolences on the deaths of "the righteous martyrs," adding that "their pure blood will only bring disaster upon the criminal entity" (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, June 13, 2025).

► Hezbollah secretary general Na'im Qassem condemned the "dangerous and criminal Israeli aggression, backed by the United States," adding that "there is no justification for the Israeli aggression other than to silence the voice of truth that supports the Palestinian people in Gaza." He said the "aggression" would have significant regional consequences and would not go unpunished, and added that the organization supported Iran and all measures it took to defend itself (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, June 13, 2025).

► Concerns arose in Lebanon that Hezbollah might resume attacks deep into Israel for the first time since the ceasefire on November 27, 2024. For years Iran built Hezbollah's advanced military capabilities to enable it to play a central role in retaliation for any Israeli attack on Iran's nuclear facilities. Immediately after the Israeli attacks began, a warning reportedly arrived in Lebanon from the United States stating that any missile launched from Lebanon would have severe consequences and provoke an "unprecedented" Israeli response. Following the American message, the Lebanese government announced that any decision on war or peace rests solely with the government and that the Lebanese army was working with Hezbollah to ensure Lebanon's neutrality (al-Jadeed, June 13, 2025). In addition, "government sources" said that Prime Minister Nawaf Salam asked the commander of the Lebanese army, Rodolph Haykal, to notify Hezbollah that Lebanon's highest echelons condemned the Israeli attack on Iran but urged that there be no response from Lebanese territory and the state would not allow itself to be drawn into a new confrontation or war with Israel (al-Liwaa, June 14, 2025). A "senior Hezbollah official" stated the organization would not carry out a unilateral attack on Israel in response to its attacks on Iran (Reuters, June 13, 2025).



"The region on the brink of explosion" (al-Joumhouria, June 14, 2025)

The Houthis

► On June 13, 2025, shortly before the start of Iran's missile attack, a ballistic missile was launched at Israel from Yemen. It fell in the Hebron area and injured three people (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, June 13, 2025). Houthi military spokesperson Yahya Sarieh claimed responsibility for attacks on "sensitive sites" in the "occupied area of Jaffa" using several Palestine 2 supersonic ballistic missiles on multiple occasions over 24 hours, and claimed the launches were "coordinated" with the Iranian response and "the targets were successfully hit." Sarieh justified Iran, its leadership and its people for confronting the "brutal Zionist aggression" and stated they were delivering "blow after blow" to "Zionist" facilities, headquarters and bases. He reiterated the Houthis' stance of "support" for the Gaza Strip and the mujaheddin¹ and called for the participation of all Arab and Islamic states (Yahya Sarieh's Telegram channel, June 15, 2025).

► On the night of June 14, 2025, Mohammed Abd al-Karim al-Ghamari was reportedly the target of an Israeli attack while participating in a security meeting in Sana'a (al-Arabiya and Israeli media, June 14, 2025). The Houthis did not respond to the reports, but a "source in the movement" stated they would continue the fighting against Israel and were preparing to escalate it, and they were not afraid of being targeted because "every leader is replaced by a thousand leaders" (Newsweek, June 14, 2025).

► Senior Houthi regime officials condemned the Israeli attacks on Iran, expressed support for Tehran and its response against Israel, and claimed the Israeli action was caused by Iran's support for the Gaza Strip:

¹ Terrorist operatives.

◆ Houthi leader Abdulmalik al-Houthi said in his speech on Loyalty to Ali ibn Abi Talib Day² that the Israeli attacks in Iran were "blatant, criminal aggression" against the Iranian people and endangered the entire region. He claimed that "all excuses and justifications for it are ridiculous." He praised the positions of Arab and Islamic states condemning the "aggression" and called on them "not to yield to American and Western dictates." He claimed the structure of the Iranian regime was "strong and cohesive," and "Zionist aggression" would not lead to its collapse but rather presented an opportunity to "defeat and humiliate the enemy." He added that "an Iranian victory over the entity" would benefit all Middle Eastern countries, as "the Israeli enemy poses a threat" to all of them, and their support for Tehran was important. He added that "we in Yemen support Iran and its response to the Israeli aggression" and that "we will continue to support the Palestinian people." Al-Houthi said it was an important and sensitive phase in the conflict with "the Zionist enemy" and there were two options, to surrender to it or to confront its schemes. He argued that the true intent of "the Zionist enemy" was to subjugate the entire region to its control (al-Masirah, June 14, 2025).

◆ A statement by the Houthi movement strongly condemned the "brutal Israeli aggression against Iran," noting "Iran's legitimate right to respond by all means." They added that Israeli claims regarding Iran's nuclear program were baseless and that "Israel has no right to police the region while it is armed with nuclear weapons." It added that "the Zionist entity has caused the deaths of tens of thousands in Palestine, Lebanon and other Arab countries" and Iran is the only Islamic state that adopted the Palestinian cause and did not retreat from it (Houthi movement Telegram channel, June 13, 2025).

◆ The Houthi Supreme Political Council stated that its members affirmed Iran's right to a deterrent response to "the reckless aggression conducted by the Zionist enemy," and that they stood with Iran in its legitimate right to respond to the "aggression." They added that the United States' awareness of the "aggression" did not absolve it of responsibility and confirmed its involvement, so it had to bear responsibility. The Council added that "Zionist arrogance in the region must end forever" and that the "aggression" against Iran was caused by its "honorable positions and support for

² The day commemorates the declaration of Ali ibn Abi Talib as the successor to Prophet Muhammad by the Prophet himself at Ghadir Khumm. It is a significant event in Shi'a Islam, marking the foundation of divine leadership and Ali's role as the first Imam.

Palestine and its just cause" (Houthi combat information Telegram channel, June 13, 2025).

◆ Mohammad Ali al-Houthi, a member of the Houthi Supreme Political Council, sent condolences to the Iranian leadership and condemned the "terrorist attacks and aggression" against the independent Republic of Iran. He added that "the attacks by the Zionist enemy are clear evidence of the barbarism and terrorism of this enemy, which lies in wait for everyone and targets them" (Mohammad Ali al-Houthi X account, June 13, 2025).

◆ Mohammad al-Bukhaiti, a member of the Houthi Political Bureau, said that "Iran's destructive response, which will make the Zionist entity regret its aggression, is Iran's declaration of joining the struggle in support of the Gaza Strip." He added that "the question among Muslims should not be, are you with Iran or with Israel? Rather, are you with the Muslim nation or with its enemies?" Al-Bukhaiti also said that "the decisive battle between Islam and lack of belief, between faith and hypocrisy, has begun and will not end until the Zionist entity is eliminated and al-Aqsa Mosque is liberated. The people of the Hijaz, Jordan, Iraq and Syria must prepare to pave the way and participate in the march toward Palestine" (Mohammad al-Bukhaiti's X account, June 13–15, 2025).

◆ Hazem al-Assad, a member of the Houthi Political Bureau, published several messages in Hebrew. The following are excerpts: "The eighth decade is approaching... and Netanyahu has driven the final nail into the coffin of the temporary entity. The clock is ticking, and the end is inevitable;" "This must continue until the temporary Zionist entity is eliminated;" "Netanyahu fled his crises by igniting fire against Iran, but the flames have returned to him and to his temporary entity with unexpected force;" "All the herds [sic] without exception: Ashkenazis, Sephardi, North Africans, ultra-Orthodox, Ethiopians... pack your things and head temporarily to Cyprus, until the gates of America and Europe open for you. This land is not yours;" "The Zionists could have lived safely in Europe and America, but Western colonialism concentrated them in Palestine, so they would meet their end there, at the hands of those who do not forget and do not show mercy" (Hazem al-Assad's X account, June 13–15, 2025).



Cartoon by Yemeni cartoonist Kamal Sharaf, supporter of the "resistance axis," with the caption "Iran will not surrender... and what's coming is greater" (Kamal Sharaf's X account, June 13, 2025)

The Iraqi militias

► The pro-Iranian militias in Iraq expressed their support for Iran and accused Israel of violating Iraq's airspace. They also called for the expulsion of American forces from Iraq:

◆ Akram al-Kaabi, secretary general of Harakat al-Nujaba, said "the Zionist aggression" against Iran and the violation of Iraqi airspace, in coordination with "the American occupier," would have to be accounted for. He claimed "the American occupation" had to be expelled from all Iraqi lands and airspace (Harakat al-Nujaba Telegram channel, June 13, 2025).

◆ Kataib Hezbollah called for the "urgent expulsion" of all foreign forces from the country "to prevent further wars in the region and bloodshed." The militia claimed that after Trump authorized Israel to attack Iran, American forces in Iraq paved the way by opening Iraqi airspace to the Israeli air force (Kataib Hezbollah Telegram channel, June 13, 2025).

◆ In another statement, Kataib Hezbollah secretary general Abu Hussein al-Hamidawi warned they were monitoring American military activity in the area and that if the United States intervened in the war they would act directly against American bases and interests. He added that Iran did not need military assistance from anyone to deter "the criminal Zionist entity" and that it had the men and capabilities to "humiliate Netanyahu and curb the tyranny of the usurping entity" (Sabereen News, June 15, 2025).

◆ Asaib Ahl al-Haq called on the "honorable resistance fighters" to be ready following the Israeli attacks on Iran and expressed condolences over the deaths of "leaders and researchers" as a result of "the aggression." The militia noted its support for Iran and

stated that the "crimes and violations will not pass without severe and decisive punishment." The militia also called on Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammad Shia al-Sudani "not to yield to American pressure" and urged the government to take all measures to prevent "the enemy" from penetrating Iraqi airspace (Shafaq News Agency, June 13, 2025).



Supporters of pro-Iranian militias call for the removal of American forces at a demonstration near the American Embassy in Baghdad (Sabereen News, June 14, 2025)

► "Iraqi sources" reported that the government was making efforts to prevent the militias in Iraq from entering the war alongside Iran. A "source who preferred to remain anonymous" added that the factions did not promise not to intervene and noted that al-Sudani ordered increased intelligence monitoring and deployment of security forces to protect American interests in Iraq and prevent threats from any direction, even if it required force. According to a "senior government official," al-Sudani was making an effort to keep Iraq out of the war zone. He stated that as part of the coordination committee of the pro-Iranian parties, leaders in Iraq conveyed messages from al-Sudani to the militia leaders saying that any action on their part would lead to a security countermeasure and that they bear full responsibility (al-Araby al-Jadeed, June 14, 2025).

► An "American military source" and an "official source" reported that on the night of June 14, 2025, three UAVs were intercepted which had been launched at the American base Ain al-Assad in western Iraq (AP, June 15, 2025). However, a "senior Iraqi security source" claimed the UAVs did not target the Ain al-Assad base but were on their way to targets deep in Israel and crashed due to moving out of range or a technical failure caused by the long distance. He added that security forces were monitoring UAV flights and were handling any developments on the ground (Shafaq News, June 15, 2025).

Syria

► The Islamic Resistance Front in Syria – Men of Valor, a militia affiliated with the Assad regime and Iran, claimed that "aggression against Tehran is aggression against the [Islamic] nation" and "the Zionist aggression directed against the capital of Iran is a new chapter in an open war being waged against all who stand in the way of the Zionist-American project in the Middle East." It also claimed that "it is a political, military and moral crime that will not go unpunished." The militia claimed that Iran "is now paying the price for its support of Palestine, Lebanon, Iraq, Syria and Yemen, for its adoption of the resistance, and for its bold defiance of the warlords and their regional agents." The statement also said that "the enemy which assassinated leaders in Damascus, Baghdad, Beirut and now Tehran, is the same enemy waging both soft and hard war against the peoples of the entire [Islamic] nation." The militia called for "the enemy" to be confronted with "unity, escalation of the front and intensification of actions" (The Islamic Resistance Front in Syria – Men of Valor Telegram channel, June 13, 2025).