



## The "Resistance Axis" and the Israel-Iran War

### Overview

►Iran's use of the proxy organizations throughout the Middle East which compose "resistance axis," is one of the central tenets of Iran's national security doctrine and has motivated its regional activity since the Islamic Revolution. A primary goal in constructing the "resistance axis" was to deter Israel from attacking Iran's nuclear facilities and to provide an immediate response in the event of such an attack.

►Israel's attack on Iran on June 13, 2025, found the "resistance axis" organizations in crisis after nearly two years of combat, during which many leaders and thousands of operatives were eliminated and their military capabilities were severely damaged. Throughout the 12 days of the Israel-Iran War, during which the Islamic Republic's nuclear facilities were attacked and dozens of commanders and nuclear scientists were eliminated, the proxy organizations took virtually no offensive action against Israel and the United States. Instead, they issued statements of support for Iran and condemnation of Israeli and American attacks, while threatening they would intervene in the fighting if circumstances changed.

►Iran's leadership has yet to respond to the proxy organizations' lack of action during the war, but senior figures in Tehran have stated that the Islamic Republic remains committed to supporting the "resistance axis" until the "struggle against Israel" has been completed.

►From the perspective of the "resistance axis," the elimination of **Mohammad Saeed Izadi (Hajj Ramadan), the head of the Palestine branch of the Revolutionary Guards' Qods Force**, was critical. He was the key figure in Iran's ties with the Palestinian terrorist organizations and with Hezbollah, and played a role in preparing for the October 7, 2023 attack and massacre. The organizations' condolences emphasized Izadi's commitment to building the "resistance."

►**The results of the Israel-Iran War will have an impact on the proxy organizations in the immediate future. The United States, Qatar, and Egypt have increased efforts to advance a ceasefire agreement in the Gaza Strip and the release of the hostages, exerting greater pressure on Hamas; Hezbollah is struggling to rebuild its military-terrorist capabilities, has been forced to halt payments to homeowners affected by the fighting with Israel, and**

is facing increasing pressure to disarm; the issue of dismantling the pro-Iranian militias in Iraq has resurfaced; and the Houthis, who remain the only active "support arena," are attempting to raise their status within the "resistance axis," including by improving their military-terrorist capabilities with Iranian assistance.

►In ITIC assessment, Iran will now be forced to invest significant resources to rebuild the military capabilities damaged in the Israeli attacks and in stabilizing its military and security apparatus after the elimination of dozens of commanders. Despite the declarations of continued support for the "resistance axis," Iran will struggle to provide the scale of support for its proxies which existed before October 7, 2023. In all probability the elimination of Izadi will have a substantial impact on the continued financial and military support received by the proxy organizations because of his many years of experience. The proxies will also try to adapt to new, unprecedented concessions regarding their military capabilities.

## "The Resistance Axis" as Part of Iran's Middle Eastern Strategy

►Iran's use of proxy organizations across the Middle East has been a central part of Iran's national security doctrine and its regional activity since the Islamic Revolution (1979). Iran considers the network of "resistance axis" proxies part of its military power and a means of advancing its national interests and deterring its enemies, primarily Israel and the United States, as well as a way to expand its strategic depth and project power and influence beyond its borders. The use of proxies allows Iran to pursue its regional goals without engaging in direct military conflict while maintaining deniability, which reduces the risk of escalation to an all-out war.<sup>1</sup>

►Of its proxy organizations, Iran fostered Hezbollah in Lebanon as its favored strategic arm in terms of promoting ideology and regional influence, direct confrontation with Israel, and assistance to other organizations and militias of the "resistance axis," i.e., Hamas, the pro-Iranian militias in Iraq, the Houthis in Yemen, and the Shiite militias in the Syrian civil war until the fall of the Assad regime in December 2024. Iran's assistance in constructing Hezbollah's stockpile of precision long-range missiles was intended to establish the Lebanese organization

---

<sup>1</sup> For further information, see the October 2023 ITIC report, [Operation Iron Swords The development of Iranian-Hamas-Hezbollah cooperation](#)

as a tool to deter Israel from attacking Iran's nuclear facilities and as a means for rapid retaliation in the event of such an attack.<sup>2</sup>

►According to a Hamas document brought back from the Gaza Strip by IDF forces, Hamas was expected to participate in a broad "resistance axis" response in the event of an attack on Iran's nuclear facilities. In a letter sent in March 2023 by Yahya al-Sinwar,<sup>3</sup> at the time the head of Hamas political bureau in the Gaza Strip, to Isma'il Haniyeh,<sup>4</sup> head of the Hamas political bureau, before of Haniyeh's visit to Tehran, he wrote:

**"After seeing our bravery and our strength, they are pinning their hopes on one of two things: either that we will crush the occupation, break its ability to attack them, and spare them a destructive war on their path to joining the nuclear club and becoming a power, or that we will continue to preoccupy the enemy and wear it down; whether through small- or medium-scale campaigns in Gaza, or through the attrition of its forces and army by means of an intifada and a sustained revolutionary state in the West Bank, which Jerusalem and the interior [Israeli Arabs] will also join. Regarding the latter possibility, what they want on this front is that we be part of the response in case the Zionist enemy launches an attack on Iran."**

- وهم يراهنون بعدما رأوا شكيمنتنا وبأسنا على واحدة من اثنتين ، إما أن نهشم الاحتلال ونكسر قدراته على مهاجمتهم ونوفر عليهم حرباً طاحنة ليستكملوا مسيرتهم في الانضمام إلى النادي النووي وإلى مستوى الدول العظمى ، أو أن نمتصر في مشاغلة الاحتلال واستنزافه في غزاة بمعارك متوسطة أو صغيرة ، أو في الضفة من خلال حالة استنزاف قواته وجيشه من خلال الانتفاضة وحالة الثورة الممتدة يضاف لذلك القدس والداخل ، والخيار الأخير الذي يريدونه منها على هذا الصعيد هو أن نكون ضمن حالة الرد في حالة شن العدو الصهيوني عدواناً على إيران ، وعلى كل حال فإن وجودنا أقوياء عسكرياً ، واستنزافنا للعدو بأي مستوى ، أو إعدادنا العسكري يخدمهم بصورة كبيرة ، بالإضافة لعدائنا لعملية التطبيع والمطبيع والتسيق والتعاون مع العدو .

Letter from al-Sinwar to Haniyeh, March 6, 2023

## "Resistance Axis" Activity during the Israel-Iran War

►Beginning in October 7, 2023, and throughout the multi-front attacks on Israel, the limitations of Iran's power to activate the full range of military capabilities available to its regional axis were exposed. The war in the Gaza Strip provided Iran with its first real opportunity to implement its concept of the "unity of the fronts" through the simultaneous, coordinated activation of several fronts against Israel and the United States, and without its own direct

<sup>2</sup> For further information, see the January 2023 ITIC report, [The Birth of Hezbollah](#)

<sup>3</sup> Appointed head of the Hamas political bureau in August 2024 and eliminated by the IDF on October 16, 2024.

<sup>4</sup> Eliminated in an Israeli attack on July 30, 2024.

involvement and the consequences thereof. However, Iran failed to employ its network of proxies to force Israel to stop the fighting in the Strip.

►Moreover, the use of proxies and Iran's support for them, intended to reduce the risk of its being drawn into a direct military confrontation, ultimately led to the Israel-Iran War. The severe blow to the Hamas leadership and the movement's capabilities in the Gaza Strip; Hezbollah's defeat in the campaign against Israel in summer and fall of 2024, and the elimination of Hezbollah secretary general Hassan Nasrallah, who had led the "resistance axis" alongside Iran; and finally, the collapse of the Assad regime in Syria in December 2024, all posed a significant threat to the pro-Iranian axis that Tehran had nurtured for decades, and largely stripped it of its ability to deter Israel and respond in the event of an attack on its nuclear facilities.

►That was made clear during the war. Iran was left to fight alone and its proxies did virtually nothing to help it on "the day of command," as Iranian security doctrine dictated. According to the IDF, the only examples were the launch of approximately 40 UAVs by the pro-Iranian militias in Iraq at Israel and the launch of two or three ballistic missiles by the Houthis (IDF spokesperson, June 27, 2025). Yahya Saria, Houthi military spokesperson, claimed responsibility for launching "a number" of hypersonic Palestine 2 ballistic missiles at "sensitive targets in the occupied Jaffa area in coordination with operations carried out by the Iranian army against the criminal Israeli enemy" (Yahya Saria's Telegram channel, June 15, 2025).



**Cartoon by Dijwar Ibrahim, an opponent of the "resistance axis," of the Iranian octopus without its proxies, attacked by Israeli aircraft (Dijwar Ibrahim's X account, June 17, 2025)**

►Instead of attacking as Iran launched missiles and UAVs at Israel, the proxy organizations declared support for Iran and condemned Israeli and American attacks and the threats against Iran's leader Ali Khamenei. They also justified their non-involvement by claiming that Iran was

handling the situation alone, but warned that they would join the fighting "if circumstances changed;"<sup>5</sup>

### **The Palestinian terrorist organizations**

► Hamas called the Israeli attack in Iran "a gross violation of international law" reflecting "the dangerous nature of the Zionist project," which was not just a threat to "Palestine" but to the entire region. Hamas expressed full solidarity with Iran and sent condolences on the deaths of its senior officials, officers and nuclear scientists. Iran, according to Hamas, was paying the price for its support of "Palestine" and its right to sovereignty, and the situation required a unified response from the forces of the Islamic nation against the "central enemy," Israel, which was determined to drag the region into war for the sake of illusions of control and theology (Hamas Telegram channel, June 13, 2025). Following the American attack on Iranian nuclear facilities, Hamas expressed its solidarity with "our brothers" in the Islamic Republic and its confidence that Iran would be able to defend its sovereignty and interests and deal with the "aggression" (Hamas Telegram channel, June 22, 2025).

► Abu Obeida, spokesman for Hamas' military wing, expressed solidarity with Iran in the wake of Israel's attack, motivated by Iran's "uncompromising support" for the Palestinian people and the "resistance." He eulogized the Iranian leaders and those who fell in the attack, and warned that Israel was mistaken in thinking the attacks would weaken the "resistance" fronts or reinforce its regional presence. He claimed the attacks were repeated strategic errors which brought Israel closer to "its inevitable end" (Abu Obeida's Telegram channel, June 13, 2025).

► The Jerusalem Brigades, the military wing of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), praised the Iranian missile launches targeting the "occupied cities" and said it was confident the Iranian leadership and people would continue to confront the "enemy" with "wisdom and courage." It added that the factions of the "Palestinian resistance" viewed Iran's unprecedented response and capabilities with pride, respect and gratitude, and they stood alongside the Islamic Republic, which had demonstrated unwavering support for the Palestinian people and the "resistance" (Jerusalem Brigades Telegram channel, June 20, 2025).

---

<sup>5</sup> For further information, see the June 2025 ITIC report, ["Resistance Axis" Reactions to the Israel-Iran Military Conflict](#) and the weekly "Spotlight on Terrorism: Hezbollah and Iran," "Spotlight on Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict" and "Spotlight on Iran and the Shi'ite Axis."

►The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) also condemned the "terrorist aggression" against Iran, claiming it would not have occurred without the partnership, backing, and support of the American administration, which had long been and remained at the head of the "hostile colonial aggressor system" toward the Middle Eastern peoples and states (PFLP website, June 13, 2025).



**A blessing from the revolutionaries of "Palestine" to the revolutionaries of Iran  
(PFLP military wing Telegram channel, June 18, 2025)**

►However, when in response to the American attack on the nuclear facilities, Iranian missiles attacked the American base in Qatar on June 25, 2025, a dilemma was created. Iran, Hamas' primary financial backer, had attacked Qatar, Hamas' sponsor and home to many of its leaders. Therefore, Hamas and the PIJ did not congratulate Iran on the attack, in contrast to the other proxy organizations.

## Hezbollah

►Immediately after the war began, a senior Hezbollah figure stated that the organization would not carry out a unilateral attack on Israel in response to its attacks on Iran (Reuters, June 13, 2025). According to reports, the Lebanese government was warned by the United States that any missile fired from Lebanon would have serious consequences and provoke an "unprecedented" Israeli response. The Lebanese government therefore declared that any decision regarding war or peace rested solely with the government, and the Lebanese army was taking action against Hezbollah to ensure Lebanon's neutrality (al-Jadeed, June 13, 2025).

►After the war began, Hezbollah condemned the "brutal Israeli aggression against Iran, which constitutes a dangerous escalation under full American cover and sponsorship" (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, June 13, 2025). Later, Hezbollah warned that the Israeli threat to eliminate Iran's leader Khamenei was "foolish and reckless, [and would have] disastrous consequences," due to "the immense status" of the Iranian leader in his country, in the Islamic nation and throughout the world (Hezbollah combat information Telegram



channel, June 19, 2025). After the American attack, Hezbollah stated that it had full confidence in Iran's strength and ability "to confront the aggression and defeat the American and Zionist enemy" (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, June 22, 2025).



**Hezbollah solidarity posters. Right: Support for Khamenei. The Arabic reads, "[We are] with you, defender of the oppressed" (Telegram channel of SIMIA, Hezbollah's social media monitoring unit, June 16, 2025). Left: Iran's emblem encircling a missile at launch. The Arabic reads, "In the name of the Mighty Avenger" (SIMIA Telegram channel, June 21, 2025)**

►Mahmoud Qamati, deputy chairman of Hezbollah's political council, said Iran was very strong and steadfast and did not require military assistance from anyone. However, he said, political, popular and media support from across the region was needed in the confrontation with Israel (Sputnik, June 17, 2025).

►"A source close to Hezbollah" stated during the fighting that developments in Iran might require the organization to intervene, but it would only do so if it felt the regime in Tehran was at risk. According to the source, a larger role had been designated for Hezbollah in the event of war between Iran and Israel, but the blows it sustained in its recent fighting against Israel prevented it from meeting its commitment. Nevertheless, the source claimed Hezbollah still possessed capabilities, and that its role in the fighting, if it joined, would be "more than just a distraction" (al-Hadath, June 18, 2025).

## The Houthis

►Abd al-Malik al-Houthi, leader of the Houthis, called the Israeli attacks in Iran "a blatant, criminal aggression" against the Iranian people which endangered the entire region, and claimed that "all excuses and justifications for it are ridiculous." He added that "an Iranian victory over the entity" would benefit the countries of the Middle East, since "the Israeli enemy poses a threat" to them all, and their support for Tehran was important. He added that "we in Yemen support Iran and its response to the Israeli aggression" and "we will continue to support the Palestinian people" (al-Masirah, June 14, 2025). On another occasion he said that "raising the possibility of Iran's unconditional surrender is stupid and irrational." He claimed the death

of a senior military official or a specific person would not affect Iran, since it had "thousands of capable people in position" (al-Masirah, June 19, 2025).

►Mahdi al-Mashat, chairman of the Houthis' Supreme Political Council, said, "we will act to confront any participation in the aggression against Iran by all legitimate means" and called on the Arab and Islamic states to make the same declaration. He said, "our position is to stand against any hostile act directed at any Islamic country, as we declared in the past" (SABA News Agency, June 22, 2025).

►After the American attack on Iran, Mohammad al-Bukhaiti, a member of the Houthis' political bureau, warned that the Houthis' military response was "only a matter of time," and initially, American forces in the Red Sea would be targeted. He said Tehran had not asked the Houthis to intervene and act alongside it, but they did not intend to wait for such a request and would therefore fight "alongside our brothers in Iran against the United States, the Zionist entity and the Zionists." According to al-Bukhaiti, the members of the "resistance axis" communicated directly and would coordinate operationally (al-Jazeera, June 22, 2025).

### **The militias in Iraq**

►Akram al-Kaabi, secretary general of the Harakat Nujaba Movement, said the "Zionist aggression" against Iran and the violation of Iraq's airspace, coordinated with "the American occupier," would not pass without accountability. He said that the "American occupation" had to be expelled from all of Iraqi lands and airspace (official Telegram channel of the Harakat Nujaba Movement, June 13, 2025). The militia also released a video claiming, "If the United States enters the war, United States bases will be within the range of the Islamic resistance's missiles in Iraq" (Telegram channel of the Harakat Nujaba Movement, June 18, 2025).

►The secretary general of Hezbollah Brigades, Abu Hussein al-Hamidawi, claimed they were monitoring American military activity in the region 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 it had the men and the capabilities to "humiliate Netanyahu and curb the tyranny of the usurping entity" (Sabereen News, June 15, 2025).





**A demonstration of support in Baghdad by Hezbollah Brigades activists  
(Sabereen News, June 20, 2025)**

►Ali al-Fatlawi, a senior official in the Al-Fatah Alliance and Ansar Allah al-Awfiya militia, warned that a possible attack on Iran's leader, Ali Khamenei, would be "an attack on Islam." He said "if the situation escalates further, a jihadist *fatwa* might be issued, in which case the United States and Israel will be in great danger" (Shafaq News, June 19, 2025).

## Syria

►The Islamic Resistance Front in Syria – Men of Heroism, a militia affiliated with the Assad regime and Iran and claiming to be part of the "resistance axis," called "aggression against Tehran aggression against the [Islamic] nation" adding that "the Zionist aggression directed against Iran's capital is a new chapter in an open war being waged against all those standing in the path of the Zionist-American regional project." The militia claimed that Iran was "currently paying the price for its support of Palestine, Lebanon, Iraq, Syria and Yemen, for its adoption of resistance,<sup>6</sup> and for its bold defiance of the regional warlords and their agents." The militia called for the "enemy" to be confronted with "unity, escalation of the front, and intensified action" (Telegram channel of the Islamic Resistance Front in Syria – Men of Heroism, June 13, 2025).

## The After-Effects of War and the "Resistance Axis"

### Promoting the Iranian "victory" narrative

►After the ceasefire went into effect on June 24, 2025, the proxy organizations promoted the Iranian "victory" narrative, according to which the Islamic Republic inflicted heavy damage on Israel and therefore Israel and the United States sought to halt the fighting:

---

<sup>6</sup> Anti-Israeli terrorism.

◆ Hamas sent its congratulations to the Iranian people for their steadfastness and praised the performance of Iran's armed forces and "the painful blows they dealt the Israeli enemy, which exposed the temporary entity and proved that it can be stopped, broken, and brought to its end in the land of Palestine." It also said that "the hearts of the nation's sons continue to beat with resistance and hatred for the occupation, a feeling that intensified with every rocket that hit the entity or every blow suffered by its forces on the fronts of resistance" (Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades Telegram channel, June 26, 2025). In addition, a Hamas delegation participated in the funeral ceremony for senior IRGC commanders and nuclear scientists held in Tehran (Hamas Telegram channel, June 29, 2025).

◆ The PIJ said Iran had written "a glorious page in the confrontation with Zionist-American aggression and established a new regional deterrent equation." It added that they saluted Iran "with pride and appreciation" for "its magnificent stand" and for demonstrating "an extraordinary ability to manage a complex political, military, and technical confrontation," which would strengthen "the deep alliance between the resistance forces from Tehran to Gaza, Beirut, Baghdad, and Sana'a" (PIJ Telegram channel, June 25, 2025).

◆ Hezbollah congratulated Iran and its leadership on their "glorious victory in the precise, painful attacks on the Zionist entity and the response to the American aggression." Hezbollah called it "the beginning of a new historic era in confronting American hegemony and Zionist torment in the region" (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, June 25, 2025).

◆ Na'im Qassem, secretary general of Hezbollah, claimed Iran was "superior" in the region, adding that "the American and Zionist aggression" had failed to topple the Iranian regime and eliminate its nuclear or missile capabilities, and threatened that missiles would continue to attack the "Zionist entity." He claimed the ceasefire was a victory for Iran, which "proved its ability to attack the entity and without aid to confront Israeli, American, and Western aggression." Qassem added that the objective of Israel and the United States was "to destroy all the resistance capabilities in the region and the entire front for the liberation of Palestine" (Radio al-Nour, June 26, 2025).



**Right: The Arabic reads, "Khamenei, the commander of the victory" (Telegram channel of SIMIA, Hezbollah's social media monitoring unit, June 26, 2025). Left: Demonstration of Hezbollah supporters outside the Iranian embassy in Beirut (Hezbollah on the Ground Telegram channel, June 25, 2025)**

◆ Abd al-Malik al-Houthi, leader of the Houthi movement, congratulated Iran "on the great victory over the cruel Israeli enemy, which represents the victory of the entire Islamic nation, since Israel failed to achieve its objectives." In his weekly speech, he said that "Israel failed to defend itself against Iranian missiles and suffered heavy losses," claiming that the main goal of the "aggression" against Iran was to change the Middle East (Houthi Telegram channel, June 26, 2025).

◆ Mahdi al-Mashat, chairman of the Houthis' Supreme Political Council, congratulated Iran on "its victory over its Israeli and American enemies and on foiling their plots." He claimed that Iran "foiled the desperate attempt to impose hegemony on the Arab and Islamic region and emerged victorious from the aggressive war after regional mediation at the request of America, which sponsored, planned, and participated in the aggression" (SABA, June 24, 2025).

◆ Qais al-Khazali, secretary general of Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq militia, congratulated Iran on "its victory and steadfastness against the greatest military power in the world, represented by the United States and the Zionist entity." He claimed Iran had successfully confronted "the forces of evil" alone, and without Israel's achieving its goals, including regime change and damaging its missile and nuclear capabilities (Shafaq News, June 24, 2025).

◆ The Hezbollah Brigades claimed that Iran had responded to the "aggression" against it alone and waged war against the United States, Western countries, "the Zionist entity," and "regional agents." According to its statement, although Iran emerged with its head held high and "the enemies" had not achieved any of their objectives, they were not celebrating the achievement in view of the deaths of believers "in the treacherous attacks

of the enemies." It noted that "Palestine" was among the core issues of the militia and that "since ideological wars will not end, what is required is constant preparation and ongoing development to make the next round more destructive for the enemy" (Hezbollah Brigades Telegram channel, June 25, 2025).

## The Elimination of Mohammad Saeed Izadi

►During the war Israel eliminated more than 30 high-ranking figures in the Iranian security system, including the chief of staff of the armed forces, Mohammad Hossein Baqeri; the commander of the Revolutionary Guards, Hossein Salami; the commander of Khatam al-Anbiya, Gholam-Ali Rashid, and his replacement, Ali Shademani; and the commander of the Aerospace Force of the Revolutionary Guards, Amir-Ali Hajizadeh (IDF spokesperson, June 27, 2025).

►However, in terms of Iran's ties with the "resistance axis," the most important eliminations were of the head of the Palestine branch in the Qods Force of the Revolutionary Guards, Mohammad Saeed Izadi (Hajj Ramadan); and the commander of the Qods Force's Unit 190, Benham Shahriari, who was responsible for transferring funds and weapons from Iran to Hezbollah and the other proxy organizations (IDF spokesperson, June 21, 2025).

►For nearly two decades, Izadi liaised between the Qods Force's and Hezbollah, Hamas and the PIJ for activity against Israel, as well as liaising between them and the Iranian leadership. Hamas documents found by the IDF during the Gaza Strip War revealed Izadi's critical role in constructing the "resistance axis" according to the vision of former Qods Force commander Qassem Soleimani. The documents recorded the process by which, over the years, Izadi became a central figure in Hamas' decision-making, influencing its leadership and being involved in strategic moves developed in preparation for the "great campaign," the October 7, 2023 attack and massacre.<sup>7</sup> Documents discovered after the elimination of Muhammad al-Sinwar, the head of the Hamas military wing, in May 2025, showed he had been in contact with Izadi in recent months and that the two discussed transferring weapons to Hamas worth about \$21 million, and advancing the Tufan 2 plan<sup>8</sup> to transfer weapons to Hamas worth about \$25 million (IDF spokesperson, June 21, 2025).

<sup>7</sup> For further information, see the January 2025 ITIC report, [Activities of Saeed Izadi, Head of the Qods Forces' "Palestine Branch," Reflected in Captured Documents](#)

<sup>8</sup> Hamas referred to the October 7, 2023 attack and massacre as the Al-Aqsa Flood campaign (Ṭufan al-Aqṣa). Thus it can be inferred that calling the plan Tufan 2 indicated a Hamas-Iranian intention to prepare another surprise attack on Israel.

►Proof to Izadi's special status in the eyes of the Hezbollah and Palestinian terrorist organizations was the fact that he was the only high-ranking Iranian official eliminated in the war for whom personal condolence messages were received and he featured prominently on the social media accounts affiliated with the organizations, which published previously unseen photos of Izadi with leaders of the "axis."

◆ Hezbollah expressed its condolences on the death of Saeed Izadi, head of the Palestine branch in the Qods Force, who was eliminated in an Israeli attack in Iran on the night of June 20, 2025. Hezbollah said that through his extensive ties with various "resistance" movements and groups in the region, Izadi had created an effective, influential communication network and had brought about "a great resurgence and essential progress in the methods, capabilities, and plans of the resistance" (al-'Ahed, June 27, 2025).

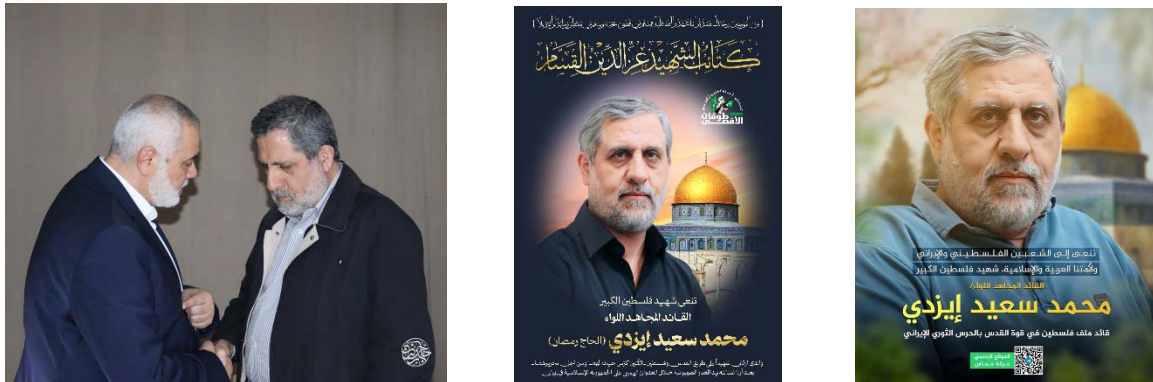


**Right: Hezbollah notice; the Arabic reads, “Palestine-loving martyr” (SIMIA, Hezbollah's social media monitoring unit, June 21, 2025). Left: Izadi with former Hezbollah secretary general Hassan Nasrallah (Iran in Arabic X account, June 26, 2025)**

◆ Hamas said that Izadi was considered a central figure in the relationship between Iran and the "Palestinian resistance," especially with Hamas and its military wing. It said he had taken a direct part in supporting and developing the military capabilities of the "resistance" over decades, training and commanding fighters alongside senior members of the Iranian leadership. Hamas said "his death will become a symbol in the struggle for the liberation of Palestine" (Hamas in Judea and Samaria Telegram channel, June 26, 2025).

◆ The Hamas military wing issued a "statement of mourning and pride" on Izadi's death and noted his longstanding contribution to the "Palestinian resistance" in general, and

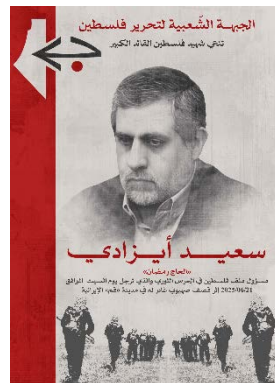
to Hamas and the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades in particular, both in supplying support and development and in direct connection with the leadership. The statement added that his death would not weaken the spirit of the "resistance" and that "Iranian acts of heroism proved Israel's fragility, as it has become transient and conquerable" (Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades Telegram channel, June 26, 2025).



**Right: Mourning notice issued by Hamas for Saeed Izadi (Hamas in Judea and Samaria Telegram channel, June 26, 2025). Center: Mourning notice issued by the Hamas military wing (Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades Telegram channel, June 26, 2025). Left: Izadi with Ismail Haniyeh (South Lebanon – Observer of the Enemy Telegram channel, June 26, 2025)**

◆ The PIJ's statement described Izadi as a "paragon of the resistance" and said he had dedicated his life to supporting the Palestinian people and the struggle to "liberate Palestine and Jerusalem." It added that Izadi excelled in strategic leadership, had deep understanding of the battlefield and unwavering determination, and had greatly contributed to strengthening the "Palestinian and regional resistance" over the years. The PIJ noted their loyalty to his memory and warned that Israel would pay a steep price for its crimes (PIJ Telegram channel, June 26, 2025).

◆ The PFLP's eulogized the "great leader" Izadi and said he "embodied a unique model of principled and practical commitment" to the Palestinian cause, which remained "his revolutionary compass and daily focus." Its statement added that Izadi had dedicated his life to serving the "resistance project" and devoted all his ability to strengthening its capabilities at various levels, out of the belief that "resisting the Zionist project is a collective responsibility of all free peoples around the world." It further stated that "Palestine will remain indebted to this great leader, and his pure blood will remain a beacon [s/c] on the road to Jerusalem and an added incentive to continue the resistance until the Zionist entity is dismantled" (PFLP website, June 26, 2025).



**Mourning notice issued for Izadi by the PFLP (PFLP website, June 26, 2025)**

- ◆ The Resistance Committees in "Palestine" noted that since 1992, Hajj Ramadan had overseen thousands of courses and training sessions for the "resistance factions"<sup>9</sup> in all fields: military, security, and ideological. He was also considered one of the pillars of Iranian support for the Palestinian struggle (al-Aqsa TV Telegram channel, June 27, 2025).

### **The Iranian perspective on the future of its ties with the "resistance axis"**

►Iranian officials have not yet responded to the fact that its proxies in the region, including Hezbollah and the Iraqi Shi'ite militias, did not open fronts against Israel during the Israel-Iran War. In all probability Iran expected support from its regional allies and most likely pressured them to join the fighting, but even if Tehran feels disappointed by the "resistance axis" conduct during the war, there has been no public demonstration of it.

►However, initial signs of criticism have begun to appear in the Iranian media. According to an op-ed piece on the conservative site Asr-e Iran, Iran's "proxies" gave it no support during the war. Hezbollah remained silent due to the damage it sustained over the past year; the Houthis issued verbal threats but took no significant action, even though they did launch a few missiles at the Port of Eilat; and the pro-Iranian militias in Iraq adopted a cautious political stance and did not even publish an official statement of support for Iran, which highlighted Baghdad's security dependence on the West. According to the article, the behavior of the "axis" members, alongside the silence of Iran's neighbors during the war, reflects the erosion of its "strategic depth" and its geopolitical isolation, which could become a strategic threat (Asr-e Iran, July 2, 2025).

►Moreover, during and after the war, senior Iranian officials noted the Islamic Republic's commitment to the "resistance axis," which it still sees as a central component of its strategy

<sup>9</sup> Terrorist organizations.



against the "Zionist enemy." For example, in an open letter to the Palestinian people, Mohammad Reza Naqdi, a high-ranking figure in the Revolutionary Guards, said that Iran would stand with the Palestinians in fulfilling their "historic mission" to liberate Jerusalem (al-Alam, June 19, 2025); The supreme leader's senior aide and advisor, Seyyed Rahim Safavi, said a new Middle East would arise around the Islamic revolution and the "axis of resistance," the power of the Islamic nation would overcome the power of Western countries, and the United States was on the way to decline (SNN.IR, June 30, 2025).

### Consequences of the Israel-Iran War for the "Resistance Axis"

►Despite declarations and slogans promoting the "victory" narrative and emphasizing the continuation of "resistance," the outcome of the Israel-Iran War has implications for the future of the proxy organizations, even in the immediate future, as seen in public actions and discussed in commentary articles.

### Hezbollah

►Even before the Israel-Iran War, Hezbollah faced a series of major challenges following the ceasefire in the fighting against Israel at the end of November 2024. Chief among them was the loss of smuggling routes for weapons and funds from Iran following the fall of the Assad regime in Syria and the ban imposed by the Lebanese government on flights from Iran, along with heightened oversight at Beirut Airport, as well as efforts by the Lebanese leadership to promote a state monopoly of weapons. Hezbollah's absence of military activity during the fighting between Israel and Iran exposed its weakness, and the ceasefire increased its challenges:

◆ **Financial problems and difficulty continuing the reconstruction project:** According to reports, the elimination of Saeed Izadi, who was partly responsible for transferring funds from Iran to Hezbollah, forced the organization to delay payments to Lebanese whose homes were damaged in the fighting and to freeze aid programs which were part of Hezbollah's reconstruction efforts for its support base in Lebanon. "Informed sources" stated that the living conditions of those whose homes were destroyed or damaged could be expected to worsen and pressure on the Lebanese government would increase (al-Jadeed, June 24, 2025; al-Hadath, June 26, 2025). Residents of the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia, a Hezbollah stronghold in Beirut, complained that the Hezbollah-appointed body responsible for reconstruction work had informed them that funding had ceased and therefore the work could not continue, nor could compensation be paid to homeowners (al-Sharq al-Awsat, July 2, 2025). In addition, Haitham Abdallah Bakri, who was

eliminated on June 24, 2025, was the owner of the al-Sadiq exchange office in Beirut and had assisted in transferring funds from the Qods Force to Hezbollah. The IDF stated that the elimination of Bakri, combined with that of Izadi, constituted a blow to Hezbollah's financial networks (IDF spokesperson, June 25, 2025).

◆ **The issue of weapons:** The end of the Israel-Iran War rekindled public debate in Lebanon over the issue of a state monopoly on weapons, including the disarmament of Hezbollah. The Lebanese government is expected to convene for a preliminary discussion on the issue of weapons, and in the meantime, Lebanon is formulating the position it will present to the United States special envoy, Thomas Burke, which is expected to include disarmament steps and a demand for an Israeli withdrawal from the five points it holds in south Lebanon. Even Hezbollah's allies, such as Druze leader Walid Jumblatt and Free Patriotic Movement chairman Gebran Bassil, joined calls urging Hezbollah to relinquish its weapons. Although Hezbollah continued to be defiant and claim the importance of the "resistance" weapons, the momentum created by the ceasefire between Israel and Iran, along with the potential for increased Israeli military pressure and international pressure on decision-makers in Beirut, may lead the organization to make concessions.

► Throughout the Israel-Iran War and after the ceasefire, commentators affiliated with the anti-Hezbollah camp shared their assessments of the campaign's implications for Hezbollah in particular and Iran and the "resistance axis" in general:

◆ Veteran Lebanese commentator Naufal Daou dismissed the importance of Iran's proxy organizations, saying, "These are not allies, these are limbs... they got beaten even before Iran, what will they do now?" Daou said, "Hezbollah itself says it is a soldier in the army of Wilayat al-Faqih<sup>10</sup> and part of the Qods Force of the Revolutionary Guards." He said that as long as the Lebanese government did not seize Hezbollah's weapons, it would remain powerless. According to him, Iran's attempt to destabilize the region through the Gaza war backfired, and any future regional settlement would not allow a reversal on disarming Hezbollah, preventing the Iranian project from re-expanding in "Palestine," Lebanon, Gaza and other countries (Spot Shot, June 20, 2025).

---

<sup>10</sup> Wilayat al-Faqih, or Guardianship of the Jurist, is a Shi'ite Islamic political theory advocating for governance by Islamic scholars during the absence of the 12<sup>th</sup> Imam, Muhammad al-Mahdi. The title formerly was held by Ayatollah Khomeini, and currently by Iran's leader, Ali Khamenei.

◆ Journalist and commentator Nabil Bou Monsef said Iran came out of the recent war "exhausted, with strategic wounds." He said the notion that Iran would return to its former state was "an illusion, an illusion, an illusion." He added that the blow Iran suffered added to the collapse of the entire "resistance axis:" "Hezbollah was dealt a near-decisive blow in Lebanon, the Syrian regime... collapsed. Iraq revived itself and Yemen barely managed to launch a missile." He said the Iranian regime had been saved only thanks to Trump, who gave it a lifeline (MTV Lebanon, June 28, 2025).

### **The Palestinian terrorist organizations**

► Immediately after the ceasefire went into effect, the American administration, along with Egypt and Qatar, began leveraging the momentum to promote a ceasefire agreement and the release of the Israeli hostages, which would end the war in the Gaza Strip:

◆ According to author and political analyst Suleiman Basharat,<sup>11</sup> the Gaza Strip is facing a watershed moment which will progress towards one of two scenarios. The first will be an American agreement that pressures the Palestinian "factions" to agree to an arrangement similar to that reached with Lebanon, without full Israeli withdrawal but while preserving military control in the Strip. The second will be an American-Israeli initiative to transfer Gaza's civilian management to Arab and regional countries as a basis for reshaping the Strip's future. Basharat claimed that after the Israel-Iran War ended, Gaza would return to the center of political attention, due to increasing pressure to end the war that began in October 2023. He said the next phase would be diplomatic and regional efforts to determine the future of the Strip, either through a political arrangement or a new management model mediated by external actors (al-Quds, June 25, 2025).

◆ Commentator Samer Anabtawi<sup>12</sup> claimed that including the Gaza Strip in the ceasefire agreement between Israel and Iran was not possible due to Israel's continued attacks and Iran's weakness, which was therefore unable to impose a ceasefire in Gaza as a condition for an arrangement. Despite hopes for a comprehensive end to Israel's regional conflicts, Anabtawi believes Gaza will soon be at the center of intensive political discussions, with various proposals for resolution. However, he said Israel insisted on treating Gaza as a

---

<sup>11</sup> A Palestinian journalist and commentator with Quds TV, who specializes in regional political and security issues.

<sup>12</sup> A Palestinian political activist, analyst and academician from Judea and Samaria. He was formerly a member of the Palestinian Legislative Council, representing the Arab Liberation Front.

separate conflict unrelated to its dispute with Iran and continued to regard it as a military arena where it had no intention of making significant concessions (al-Quds, June 25, 2025).

◆ Dr. Qusai Hamed<sup>13</sup> claimed that Iran had not linked its conflict with Israel directly to the issue of Gaza because it was under severe attack which exposed its military and political weaknesses. Instead, Tehran focused on defending its stability and nuclear program while relegating the Gazan issue to the strategic margins. Nevertheless, Hammad said Gaza remained "the absent presence" in the confrontation, as it was one of the main causes of its outbreak. He noted that the next stage was expected to be political, with American pressure on Israel and Hamas to end the war and Gaza likely to return to the center of negotiations as part of an attempt to promote regional normalization in exchange for a settlement (al-Quds, June 25, 2025).

## The Houthis

► Since the ceasefire in the fighting between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon which began in November 2024, the Houthis in Yemen remained the only "resistance axis support front" which continued to attack Israel. Although during the Israel-Iran War the Houthis reduced their activity, immediately after the ceasefire they resumed ballistic missile and UAV launches and threats to impose a "maritime and aerial blockade" on Israel until the "siege" on the Gaza Strip was lifted.

► According to authorities in the Western-backed Yemeni government, the Houthis are working to consolidate their status as the dominant force in the "resistance axis" amid the weakening of other members and are increasing cooperation with Iran, including after the Israel-Iran War:

◆ Moammar al-Eryani, Yemen's minister of information, warned that Iran could transfer part of its missile and UAV production to Yemen on the wake of Israeli attacks on manufacturing facilities in Iran. He claimed that international pressure to curb Iran's nuclear and missile program could push it to establish production in Yemen and the Houthis were prepared to allow it. He added that international complacency would cost the region and the world dearly and would give Iran the opportunity to turn Yemen into a workshop for advancing its programs, an advanced missile base for the Iranian

---

<sup>13</sup> A political science researcher. He received his doctorate in political science from the University of Bordeaux, France. His dissertation was entitled "Constants and Variables in the Ideology of the Hamas Movement (2006–2018)."

Revolutionary Guards, and a launchpad for regional security threats. He said such a situation would be dangerous and lead to a situation in which there would be no stability in Yemen or its vital surroundings and would open a permanent front against shipping and international trade in one of the world's most important maritime passages, posing a direct threat to the global economy, supply chains, and energy prices (Moammar al-Eryani's X account, June 26, 2025).

◆ "Security sources" reported that Iran had transferred materials required for producing ballistic missiles and solid fuel to the Houthis. According to "the sources," the Houthis may possess special equipment for preparing solid fuel by mixing ammonium nitrate (the material that exploded in the Port of Beirut in August 2020) and aluminum, with information indicating that the chemical materials arrived in shipments from Iran and via intermediaries, including Libya. According to the report, the Houthis also possess stockpiles of chemical weapons and radioactive materials. Experts called it a dangerous development which will upgrade the Houthis' missile production capability and reduce costs, since solid fuel is cheaper than liquid fuel (DefenseLineY, July 1, 2025).

► Major General Mutahir al-Shuaibi, police commander of Aden, the capital of the Western-backed Yemeni government, reported that the Houthis had set up a factory to produce Captagon in the al-Mahwit Governorate in northwest Yemen. He said the plant operated under the direct supervision of the Houthi leadership, similar to factories that operated in Syria under the Assad regime and distributed drugs across the Middle East and beyond, funding the Assad regime and the "resistance axis." He stated that the drugs were smuggled to south Yemen, to areas controlled by the Western-backed government, as well as to neighboring countries, to fund the Houthis' military and subversive activities. He added that several attempts to smuggle the drugs from Houthi-controlled areas had been unsuccessful and warned that the drug-smuggling endangered the stability of Yemen and the region. Information Minister al-Eryani confirmed the details and said it represented a new chapter in the use of drugs as a tool for financing terrorist activity by Iran and its proxy terrorist organizations after the fall of the Assad regime (al-Ain news site, June 30, 2025).

### **The militias in Iraq**

► The ceasefire in the Israel-Iran War returned the issue of disarming the pro-Iranian militias in Iraq to the fore, especially in light of their weak fighting alongside Iran, despite IDF data indicating that about 40 UAVs were launched at Israel and despite reports that Israeli aircraft

passed through Iraqi airspace en route to attacks in the Islamic Republic. The issue is also expected to feature prominently in campaigns ahead of the general parliamentary elections scheduled for November 2025 (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, June 28, 2025).

►Abd al-Mahdi al-Karbala'i, the Karbala representative of Ali al-Sistani, Iraq's top Shi'ite religious authority, called for limiting weapons to the state to avoid "dangers that threaten the region" (al-Sharqiya TV, June 26, 2025).



**Abd al-Mahdi al-Karbala'i (Iraqi Observer X account, June 26, 2025)**

►In the opinion of Dr. Ihsan al-Shammari, head of the Iraqi Center for Political Thought and a researcher of strategic and international affairs at the University of Baghdad, after the war with Israel, Iran will need to recalculate its regional conduct, which will have a profound impact on the militias in Iraq and on creating a new political picture. He claimed the militias' lack of involvement was part of an Iranian strategy meant to protect them, and Iraq, from the consequences of the fighting, but the question of their disarmament could become part of future negotiations between Iran and the United States (The National, June 2025).

►However, Iran made it clear that it would not give up the influence it built in Iraq, centered around the Shi'ite militias. Mojtaba al-Husseini, Iran's representative in Iraq for Supreme Leader Khamenei, stated that Tehran would not abandon its support for the "resistance factions" in Iraq and the region. He claimed that the factions' military capabilities had become "a threat to its enemies," adding that "the enemy" was wasting others' money on a lost war, while Iran relied on its own capabilities (Shafaq News, July 2, 2025).