



Spotlight on Iran and the Shiite Axis

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Highlights¹

- The Palestinian ambassador in Tehran said that Tehran has provided Palestine with unconditional moral and political support.
- An Iranian researcher claimed on a television program that Israel is destined to be destroyed as a political entity prior to the reappearance of the Twelfth Shiite Imam (the Mahdi).
- Iran's embassy in Lebanon strongly condemned the IDF strikes in southern Lebanon and the Beqaa Valley, claiming they strengthen the Lebanese people's determination to "resist."
- Reports indicated that Iran's Supreme Leader welcomed the nomination of Nouri al-Maliki for the formation of the new government in Baghdad. Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson claimed that Tehran does not interfere in Iraq's internal political affairs.
- The secretary-general of the Iraqi Harakat al-Nujaba movement opposed efforts to disarm the pro-Iranian militias, claiming that the "resistance's weapons are ideological and disciplined."
- The Houthis and the pro-Iranian militias in Iraq escalated their threats to strike American and Israeli targets in the event of an attack against Iran.

Iran and the Palestinian Arena

- The "Palestinian" ambassador in Tehran, Salam al-Zawawi, said that Iran, both as a state and as a people, has strong ties to the Palestinian cause and that Tehran has provided unconditional moral and political support to "Palestine" in all international arenas and political frameworks (Al-Alam, January 22, 2026).

¹ The weekly study includes the activities of Iran, the Shiite militias in Iraq, and the Houthis in Yemen.



Al-Zawawi during an interview (Al-Alam, January 22, 2026)

► Iranian researcher Hamid-Reza Bigdelo claimed on the Iranian television program “Toward the Horizon of Palestine” that Israel’s fate is “destruction.” Relying on religious sources, Bigdelo said that Islamic texts mention the end of the Jewish state prior to the reappearance of the Twelfth Shiite Imam (the Mahdi). According to him, the elimination of the Jewish political structure is described in religious sources as an event to be led by the Iranian people. He added that with the Mahdi’s reappearance, Judaism would remain solely as a religious faith and not as a political entity (Khabar Online, January 24, 2026).



Hamid-Reza Bigdelo (Khabar Online, January 24, 2026)

Iran and the Lebanese Arena

► Iran’s embassy in Lebanon strongly condemned IDF strikes carried out on January 25, 2026, in southern Lebanon and the Beqaa Valley. According to the embassy’s statement, the strikes constitute a “blatant violation” of Lebanon’s sovereignty and territorial integrity. It claimed that the continued killing of innocent civilians, the violation of Lebanese sovereignty, and attempts to normalize such attacks do not change the fact that these are “serious crimes,” and only increase the Lebanese people’s awareness of the scope of “Zionist aggression” and their determination to “resist” (Tasnim, January 26, 2026).

► Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei strongly condemned Israel’s killing of Hezbollah operative Ali Nur al-Din on January 26, 2026 (Iranian Foreign Ministry Telegram channel,

January 27, 2026). According to Hezbollah, Nur al-Din, whom the IDF identified as the head of the artillery unit in the village of al-Harsh in southern Lebanon, was a reporter for Hezbollah-affiliated Lebanese channel Al-Manar (IDF Spokesperson and Al-Manar, January 26, 2026).

► Iran’s ambassador to Lebanon, Mojtaba Amani, met with Lebanon’s Shiite mufti, Sheikh Ahmad Qabalan, and discussed developments in Lebanon (Ambassador Amani’s X account, January 24, 2026).



**Meeting of the Iranian ambassador to Lebanon with the Shiite mufti
(The ambassador’s X account, January 24, 2026)**

Iran and the Iraqi Arena

► Aqil al-Fatlawi, spokesman for Iraq’s State of Law coalition, said in an interview with the pro-Iranian Shiite militia-affiliated Iraqi channel Al-Ahd that Iran’s Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei welcomed the nomination of former Iraqi prime minister Nouri al-Maliki to head the new government in Baghdad (Al-Ahd X account, January 25, 2026). Earlier, the pro-Iranian Shiite militias’ Coordination Framework officially announced al-Maliki’s nomination to form Iraq’s next government (Shafaq News, January 24, 2026).

► Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei addressed al-Maliki’s nomination during his weekly press conference, saying that, unlike the United States, Iran is committed to respecting the will of the Iraqi people. He stressed that all matters related to governance in Iraq, including elections and the question of who will serve as president or prime minister, fall exclusively under the authority of the Iraqi people and that they must be allowed to decide independently on their governing institutions and the management of their affairs according to their interests. He added that interference in the internal affairs of regional states has become an “ugly practice” of American officials and is unacceptable to any people or state (Iranian Foreign Ministry Telegram channel, January 26, 2026).

The Houthis in Yemen

► Houthi movement leader Abd al-Malik al-Houthi said in a speech marking the anniversary of the death of senior Houthi figure Saleh al-Samad that as part of the “Zionist project,” the United States operates throughout the region, directly and indirectly, seeking to ensure that those holding senior positions serve American and Israeli interests. He said that no Arab or Islamic regime can replace Israel as “America’s main regional agent, regardless of how much it offers in money or services.” Referring to developments in the Gaza Strip, he claimed that “the Israeli enemy continues daily killings in Gaza and that the siege, restrictions, and all forms of suffering against the Palestinian people persist,” while “the enemy also carries out all forms of aggression in the West Bank.” Regarding the “Peace Council,” he claimed that “Trump’s council seeks control, bullying, tyranny, extortion, and the seizure of the peoples’ interests and wealth,” and that it would primarily serve American and Israeli interests while “exploiting others.” Addressing Israel’s activity in Lebanon, al-Houthi said that despite the existence of an agreement, there are continued airspace violations, ongoing killings, incursions, kidnappings, continuous airstrikes, and all forms of aggression (Saba News Agency, January 22, 2026).

► The Houthi Foreign Ministry strongly condemned what it called “ongoing Zionist aggression against Palestine and Lebanon and the resulting systematic crimes against civilians and civilian infrastructure, in blatant violation of all international norms, laws, and conventions.” The statement said that “despite continued talk of peace in Palestine and the establishment of Trump’s so-called Peace Council, headed by a war criminal, the Zionist enemy entity continues its brutal aggression and commits genocide against civilians and civilian infrastructure in Gaza and the West Bank.” The ministry reaffirmed Yemen’s “firm and principled support for the steadfast Palestinian people until they achieve all their legitimate rights.” Regarding Lebanon, it called on the Lebanese people to thwart “enemy plots aimed at sowing division and igniting internal conflicts.” It urged Arab and Muslim states to assume their religious, moral, and legal responsibilities regarding the “crimes of aggression and Palestinian and Lebanese genocide,” and to take serious and effective steps, including unified positions and practical measures, to halt “Zionist aggression” and restore legitimate Arab rights (Houthi Foreign Ministry Telegram channel, January 22, 2026).

The Pro-Iranian Militias in Iraq

► Akram al-Kaabi, secretary-general of Harakat al-Nujaba, released a video expressing firm opposition to disarming the militias. According to al-Kaabi, the “resistance’s weapons” are “ideological and disciplined,” unlike the “unrestrained weapons” that he claimed serve Israel and the

United States. He stressed that the resistance's weapons were the only ones that confronted ISIS and defended holy sites and the people's interests. He therefore rejected calls to relinquish the weapons and declared that "Trump does not frighten us" (Harakat al-Nujaba Telegram channel, January 25, 2026).

► In another statement, al-Kaabi said that the "Islamic Resistance in Iraq" began its military operations within the framework of "Operation al-Aqsa Flood" on the second day of the fighting, carrying out attacks against American bases in Iraq to support the "Palestinian resistance." He claimed that the "Palestinian resistance" is capable of continuing the fighting for two years or more (Harakat al-Nujaba X account, January 27, 2026).

The Militias and the Tension Around Iran

The Houthis

► Houthi political bureau member Mohammed al-Farah said that any "potential aggression" against Iran extending beyond state and geographic boundaries would constitute "aggression against the entire Islamic nation and a blatant violation of state sovereignty and international law." He claimed that harming Iran would be viewed as "a prelude to unlimited escalation, whose consequences would not stop at its borders but would expand to include the entire region, similar to the aftermath of the aggression against Afghanistan." Al-Farah expressed confidence in Iran's and its allies' ability to respond forcefully and stressed that any confrontation would not be symbolic, but could expand to include "the Israeli entity, American bases and warships, American interests, and American sea lanes" (Al-Mayadeen, January 26, 2026).

► A "Houthi military source" threatened that the Houthis would not allow American vessels to approach the Red Sea or the Arabian Sea considering the threat they pose to Houthi-controlled Yemen. The source said that Houthi forces have raised their combat readiness to the highest level due to US activity in the region, especially Washington's announcement that the aircraft carrier Abraham Lincoln has entered the area. The carrier was previously attacked by the Houthis while operating in the Red Sea (Al-Akhbar, January 28, 2026).

► To reinforce their threats to respond against vessels in the event of an American attack on Iran, the Houthis released a video depicting their January 26, 2024, attack on the vessel Marlin Luanda. The video showed preparations for the attack, the weapons used, and the resulting damage (Houthi Combat Information Telegram channel, January 26, 2026).



Picture from the video about the attack on the *Marlin Luanda* with the inscription “Coming soon” (Al-Masirah, January 26, 2026)

The Iraqi Militias

► Abu Hussein al-Hamidawi, secretary-general of Kata’ib Hezbollah, called for preparations for an “all-out war in support of Iran.” He claimed that the “forces of deception – the Zionists and their allies” are mobilizing to try to subdue Iran and even destroy it and erase all “moral and ethical principles.” He warned that the war “will not be a picnic; rather, you will taste the bitterest forms of death, and nothing of you will remain in our region.” Al-Hamidawi also called on the “mujahideen” to prepare for this confrontation, especially if it is declared jihad, and to be ready for “martyrdom operations,” i.e., suicide attacks (Kata’ib Hezbollah Telegram channel, January 25, 2026). Subsequently, footage was published showing al-Hamidawi and other volunteers signing forms declaring their readiness to conduct suicide attacks in support of Iran (Saberin News, January 26–27, 2026).



Al-Hamidawi signs the forms (Kata’ib Hezbollah Telegram channel, January 26, 2026)

► Reports also indicated that the Badr Organization pledged to support Iran in the event of a war with the United States and Israel. A statement by the organization’s “Ideological Guidance Office” said that this would be a “decisive battle between the Front of Truth and the Front of Falsehood, in which all believers will rise against all supporters of polytheism, leaving no room for neutrality, hesitation, or silence.” Firas al-Yasser, a member of Harakat al-Nujaba’s political bureau, said that any attack against Iran would drag the region into a wider confrontation involving the Gulf states and Iraq, in

which Iran's response would be exceptional in both the nature of the targets and their locations (Shafaq News, January 26, 2026).

► The group calling itself “The True Promise Brigades – Sons of the Arabian Peninsula,” considered a front organization for Kata’ib Hezbollah,² threatened to strike American interests due to what it called “the terrorist policies of the American administration and its proxies in the region,” aimed at “subduing all who oppose their malicious methods designed to cause harm, strip peoples of their will, and plunder their wealth.” The group threatened to target American interests in the region, foremost the flow of oil from the Red Sea and the Arabian Gulf, American energy sources in the Arabian Peninsula, and American embassies (True Promise Brigades – Sons of the Arabian Peninsula Telegram channel, January 26, 2026).

² See the ITIC’s study from January 2, 2023, “[Kata’ib Hezbollah, A Dominant Iraqi Pro-Iranian Militia](#)”