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Countering Iranian Malign Influence: The Need for a Regional Response

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While global attention has been focused mostly on Iran’s developing nuclear capability, the Iranian regime has also been very active in extending its malign influence throughout the Middle East, according to this extensively documented analysis by two military strategic planners. They recommend a multi-dimensional regional approach to counter these subversive and destabilizing threats. – Ed.

Abstract: The behavior and the policies pursued by Iran’s current leadership pose profound and wide-ranging challenges to U.S. interests, the interests of its friends and allies, and the international community as a whole. Particularly concerning is Iran’s ability to foment instability through the use of terrorism. Recognizing this, the authors participated in a series of roundtables, discussions, and forums on Iranian Malign Influence. Participants included military and civilian experts from a number of Middle Eastern, European, and Central Asian countries, U.S. think tanks, and U.S. intelligence and interagency subject matter experts. This paper is a reflection of the insightful dialogue that took place during these engagements, and also incorporates newly declassified U.S. government information on Iran’s support for terrorism. This review revealed a need for a regional response to Iran’s malign activities in the region. Regional governments must take action to neutralize Iranian intelligence networks.

Iran poses a profound threat to the United States’ national security and to the security of its friends and allies. Iran is run by a regime into which we have little insight, and its government is determined to acquire nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons, support terrorism, and undermine political stability throughout the broader Middle East.1

Strategically, challenges in Iraq and Afghanistan have created an environment of instability that has enabled Iran to assert itself as a regional power. This is part of what has fueled Iran’s aggressive nuclear program. While Iran’s acquisition of nuclear weapons has been the primary concern of the international community, other important concerns include Iran’s pursuit of chemical and biological weapons, its ballistic missile program, its support for terrorism, and its malign influence in the region.

Iran is a regional problem that requires regional attention and leadership to develop and implement a regional solution. While the United States cannot adequately address this threat alone, America will continue to play a critical
role by enabling regional partners to develop the capability and the capacity to counter Iran via the use of diplomatic, informational, and economic instruments of power – in conjunction with their military and security apparatus.

**The Nature of the Iranian Threat**

U.S. intelligence agencies have determined Iran is likely pursuing chemical and biological weapons. While such weapons would be of limited military value, they could nevertheless change the nature of a conflict, as they would have psychological and possibly political effects far greater than their actual magnitude.

Iran's ballistic missile inventory is among the largest in the Middle East. One of the most disturbing aspects of the Iranian WMD program is its determined effort to construct ballistic missiles that will enable Tehran to deliver conventional (or potentially chemical, biological, or nuclear) warheads against its neighbors in the region and beyond.

Iran's efforts since December 2005 to resume enrichment of uranium in defiance of the international community, along with its willingness to endure international condemnation, isolation, and economic disruptions in order to carry out nuclear activities covertly, indicate that Iran is developing a nuclear weapons capability. According to the November 2007 unclassified National Intelligence Estimate of Iran’s nuclear program, Iran could have a nuclear weapon sometime in the beginning to the middle of the next decade.

In addition to the potential for a regional arms race and the breakdown of non-proliferation regimes worldwide, a nuclear capability could embolden Iran in its application of covert action and support to terror abroad. Iran’s financial and lethal support for terrorist groups, along with its efforts to undermine stability in Iraq and Afghanistan, are directly responsible for hundreds of U.S., coalition, and civilian casualties. As stated by Dr. Condoleezza Rice, “The regime’s aggressive foreign policy and hegemonic aspirations, as demonstrated by its lethal assistance to militants in Iraq, Lebanon, Afghanistan, and the Palestinian territories, further underscores the threat to regional stability posed by Tehran.” In fact, the State Department’s Annual Country Reports on Terrorism 2007 (issued April 2008) calls Iran “the most active state sponsor of terrorism,” and Secretary Rice has referred to Iran as the “central banker for terrorism.”

**Qods Force – Exporting the Islamic Revolution Abroad**

The Army of the Guardians of the Islamic Revolution (IRGC) is an ideologically motivated branch of the Islamic Republic of Iran's (IRI) military that is responsible for Iranian extraterritorial operations, including terrorist operations. The Qods (Jerusalem) Force is a special unit of the IRGC with the primary mission of organizing, training, equipping, and financing foreign Islamic revolutionary movements by building and maintaining contacts with underground Islamic militant organizations throughout the world. The Qods Force reports directly to the Supreme Leader of Iran, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

The Iranian regime uses the Qods Force to clandestinely exert military,
political, and economic power to advance Iranian national interests outside of Iran and further its goal of regional hegemony. Qods Force global responsibilities include: gathering tactical intelligence; providing training, arms, and financial support to surrogate groups and terrorist organizations; and facilitating some of Iran’s provision of humanitarian and economic support to Islamic causes.

Iran has used terrorism over the years as a means of projecting power, and also against internal dissidents and other adversaries in Europe. Iran’s relationship with Lebanese Hizballah is illustrative of how the IRGC develops its proxies abroad. Unhappy with the coalition-building approach that the Lebanese Shi’a party Amal was taking with other confessional groups in the early 1980s, the Iranian Embassy in Beirut set out to identify radical elements of Amal that could be recruited, trained, and split away into a revolutionary organization that eventually emerged as Hizballah. The organization has increased in lethality since that time.

The July 2006 Hizballah attacks on Israel and the May 2008 Hizballah "coup" in Beirut are recent examples of Iran’s use of terrorism to advance its regional policy goals and influence events in the Levant far beyond its economic or military might. Iran’s activities are not limited to the Middle East alone. Iranian intelligence has teamed with Lebanese Hizballah and Sunni extremists to conduct attacks throughout Europe and South America as well.11

Iran’s methodology of fomenting violence and instability via an increasingly cell-based Lebanese Hizballah model provides Iran with significant leverage at a very low cost. This model has been seen again and again in places like Turkey, Azerbaijan, Gaza, and Iraq.12

Implications for the Region
Iran seeks regional hegemony where it can dictate its will to vassal states, satellites, and neighbors who have been cowed by the threat of violence. Iran seeks to counter or co-opt emerging democracies in the region, such as those in Lebanon, Iraq, and Afghanistan, by exploiting fissures – the dislocated and pools of the discontented – and via proxy warfare by surrogates.

Iran is acting in a neocolonial manner within the Arab world, infiltrating Gulf economies, radicalizing populations, and using a belligerent public diplomacy to intimidate neighboring states.13 As will be seen in the following examples, Iran provides lethal aid, training, and financing to the Taliban, the Lebanese Hizballah, and insurgents in Iraq in an effort to destabilize emerging democracies in Afghanistan, Lebanon, and Iraq. It also provides material support to terrorist organizations, such as the Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS) and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), to derail the Middle East Peace process. A review of these actions across the region will be followed by a discussion of the regional approach needed to deal with this threat.

Iraq
Iran seeks a weakened and Shia-dominated Iraq that is incapable of posing a threat to Iran. Iranian involvement in Iraq is extensive, and poses a serious threat to U.S. national interests and U.S. and coalition forces. Iran provides
training, funds, and weapons to a variety of Shia militias in Iraq which have been linked to assassinations, human rights abuses, and the planting of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) designed to maim and kill U.S. and coalition troops, while actively interfering in Iraqi politics. Iran’s lethal support to these groups has clearly intensified the conflict in Iraq.

In Iraq, the Qods Force has provided lethal support in the form of weapons, training, funding, and guidance to select groups of Iraqi Shia militants, including secret cells referred to as Special Groups from Jaysh al-Mahdi (JAM). Weapons supplied by Iran, including small arms, mortars, battlefield rockets, explosives, and Man Portable Air Defense Systems (MANPADS), have been used by Shia militants in attacks against Iraqi citizens, Iraqi security forces, senior Iraqi leaders, and Coalition forces. The United States government (USG) has learned a good deal about Iranian support to Special Groups through the capture of Special Groups leaders, Lebanese Hizballah operatives, and Iranian Qods Force officers, as well as the recovery and exploitation of Special Group weapons caches. Coalition Forces and Iraqi government security forces, for example, discovered Iranian-origin mortar rounds with packing materials dated 2008. Declassified USG information indicates that in March 2007, Coalition forces detained Qais Khazali, a former senior aide and spokesperson to radical Iraqi Shia leader Moqtada al-Sadr, and his brother Laith Khazali. Qais was in charge of Special Groups throughout Iraq since June 2006, and his brother Laith was a member of the Special Groups networks. The Khazali brothers ran an Explosively Formed Penetrator (EFP) network in Iraq.

Further, the Qods Force has enlisted the help of its long-standing partner, Lebanese Hizballah, to train and support the Special Groups – both inside Iran and Iraq. According to declassified U.S. government information, on March 20, 2007 Coalition Forces captured a Lebanese Hizballah operative, Ali Musa Daqduq, in southern Iraq. They later discovered that in 2005, senior Lebanese Hizballah leadership directed Daqduq to go to Iran and work with the Qods Force to train Iraqi militants. The Qods Force directed Daqduq to make trips in and out of Iraq and report on the training and operations of the Iraqi Special Groups, including the employment of IEDs and kidnapping operations. He was tasked to organize the Special Groups in ways that mirrored the Hizballah organization in Lebanon. Iran continues to fund, train, arm, and equip JAM Special Group leaders and anti-Coalition forces in Iraq.

Operational Vignette – Diyala Province, Iraq
The experience of Col. David Sutherland, Commander of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, Greywolf, 1st Cavalry Division, in Diyala Province Iraq from November 2006 - December 2007, is representative. Working day and night to end the brutal sectarian violence in the province, Colonel Sutherland's team developed source networks to root out Special Groups that were fomenting violence and carrying out attacks against civilians and coalition forces. In one case, an informant’s tip led Iraqi Police to a large improvised explosive device cache in the Baqubah area in the spring of 2007. The cache included EFPs in various stages of assembly, 130 disks capable of producing as many individual EFPs, large quantities of IED-making materials to include detonation cord, C4, blasting caps, fuses, EFP launching tubes, bags of ball bearings, voltage...
regulators, and more than 400 plastic and steel containers in various stages of fabrication for IED construction. Serial numbers on many of the items could be traced directly back to Iran. "The terrorists and sectarian fighters who use these explosives have no other desire than to stop the progress of the country," Sutherland said. “Their hatred manifests itself in the weapons that these supplies would have been used for. The people realize this and understand that without stopping the violence, progress is impossible.”

**Afghanistan**

During the battle of Tora Bora in December 2001, IRGC aided senior al-Qa’ida leaders in fleeing to Iran from Afghanistan to escape the fighting. Today, Iran still harbors a number of these senior al-Qa’ida operatives. Iran has resisted numerous calls to extradite these al-Qa’ida criminals to their countries of origin or third countries for trial.

Iran also provides material support to Taliban terrorists seeking to derail the fledgling Afghan democracy. According to recently declassified USG information, between mid-2006 and June 2007, Iran arranged dozens of shipments of small arms and associated ammunition, rocket propelled grenades, mortar rounds, 107mm rockets, plastic explosives, and possibly MANPADS to the Taliban.

In April and May 2007, Coalition forces intercepted and seized two weapons convoys in southern Afghanistan. These shipments included plastic explosives, small arms ammunition, several RPG antitank grenades, mortar rounds, artillery rockets, and rocket fuses. Iran provided the weapons and arranged the shipments. The convoys were suspected to be supplying the Taliban.

These allegations are supported by the fact that a March 2007 raid on a Taliban compound in Afghanistan netted an Iranian manufactured copy of an Austrian .50 caliber anti-materiel sniper rifle with a probable 2005 production date. Further, Taliban weaponry, ordnance, and explosives seized in Afghanistan in early September 2007 were of Iranian origin.

**The Levant**

Currently, both Iran’s Ministry of Intelligence and Security (MOIS) and IRGC provide Lebanese Hizballah and Palestinian terrorist groups – notably HAMAS, the PIJ, the al-Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigade, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC) – with funding, safe haven, training, and weapons with the aim of opposing Israel and disrupting Middle East peace negotiations.

According to recently declassified USG information, the Qods Force provides roughly $100 to $200 million in funding a year to Hizballah, and allegedly facilitated the provision of medium-range rockets to Hizballah. After a series of meetings in August 2006, Senior Iranian officials – including Qods Force leaders – agreed to provide Hizballah with surface-to-air missiles. Finally, the Qods Force has used Turkish routes to transit weapons to Lebanese Hizballah. For example, in May 2007, Turkey seized a train enroute to Syria from Iran that contained a shipment of rockets, machine guns, pistols, other weapons, ammunition, and rocket launcher pads.
The Gulf
In the Arabian Gulf, the IRGC-QF have supported Gulf Shi’a militant groups that seek to advance extremist agendas that threaten regional economic stability, key energy infrastructure, and state security forces. Though the current nature and scope of Tehran’s relationship with Gulf Shi’a suggests Tehran probably does not seek to overthrow these governments, they seem to be cultivating ties to local militants for use in future conflicts.

Additionally, according to declassified USG information, a Qods Force officer in the Persian Gulf was in charge of the bombing of Khobar Towers in eastern Saudi Arabia on June 25, 1996, which killed 19 and wounded more than 500 others, including 240 U.S. military personnel. Here Iran tried and tested its cell based methodology, utilizing members of Saudi Hezbollah, who studied and trained in Iran to carry out this attack under the direction of the IRGC-QF. Iranian actions within the Sunni heartland clearly demonstrate Iran’s capability to carry out terrorist operations in the Gulf States.

Turkey and Azerbaijan
In 2000, Turkish authorities disrupted the terrorist activities of Turkish Hizballah and arrested members of the group who were trained by Iran. According to public statements by Turkish officials, Iran directed the group to undertake subversive activities with the goal of creating an Islamic state in Turkey. According to official Turkish Government reports, members of the group admitted receiving weapons and training in small arms and bomb-making from the Revolutionary Guard – at camps in Iran.

According to declassified USG information, Azerbaijan has long been a target of the IRGC-QF because of its shared border with Iran, large Shi’a population, close relationship with the United States, and Iran’s problems with its own ethnic Azeri population. Its primary goal is to export the ideals of the Iranian Shi’a revolution into Azerbaijan, as well as to monitor the Azeri population and government. For example, in 1997, Azerbaijan authorities disrupted Iran’s sponsorship of the Islamic Party of Azerbaijan (IPA). IPA members had signed an agreement with high-ranking IRGC official Mansur Haqiqat-Pur, who was responsible for military and intelligence operations in Azerbaijan and pledged to work with the IRGC to create an Islamic state in Azerbaijan modeled on Iran. At the behest of Iran, the IPA formed armed detachments to conduct terrorist attacks in Azerbaijan, and – according to arrested cell members – received military training at bases in Iran.

While only a small sampling of Iranian malign activities in the Middle East Region, these examples demonstrate how Iranian Qods Force activities pose significant threats to the region, and show that the strategic implications of Iranian behavior on regional security are extremely problematic. Defeating this asymmetric, net-centric threat requires a coordinated regional response.

Changing Iran’s Strategic Calculus – Call for a Regional Response
An ideologically expansionist, nuclear weapons-emboldened Iran represents a clear threat to the region; a more assertive foreign policy will almost certainly
follow Iran’s mastery of the nuclear fuel cycle. Additionally, Iran is expanding its claims to oil and natural gas fields in the Gulf and the Caspian Sea, giving it greater strength as a world energy provider. As Iran grows as a real and perceived power in the region, there is great danger that it will be emboldened to increase its IRGC-QF adventurism abroad. To check this threat, regional governments must work domestically and internationally to root out IRGC-QF networks, to increase their own security capacity, to look forward to a possible policy of deterrence with regard to Iran, and to move forward on the gradual process of political and economic reforms needed to address many of the root causes of extremism.

To start, regional leaders must come to grips with the threat they face – in many ways this has already begun. Regional leaders remember the tension and feared the effects of the 1979 revolution in Iran. Tensions in the region today are reminiscent of the ensuing uncertainty of the 1980s – the Iran-Iraq war, Ayatollah Khomeini’s endless rebukes, U.S.-USSR competition in the region, and the siege of Mecca. Today, regional leaders feel Iranian nuclear weapons will provide Iran the cover to renew the revolution and expand its hegemony throughout the region. They are concerned when they see the gains made by Iran in Lebanon, Syria, the Palestinian Authority, Iraq, and Afghanistan. While there is not much they can do in Iraq, they want to do what they can to limit Iranian influence in places where Iranians seem to be getting stronger. This has led to what can be described as “a new strategic alignment” in the Middle East – an alignment of U.S., international, and regional governments that desire to counter those who support violent extremism. While the future efficacy of this alliance in confronting Iran is unclear, the underlying Iranian threat to regional stability is very clear.

Iran is not inviolable. In fact, Iran’s reliance on human intelligence and covert operations is a critical vulnerability that is susceptible to direct and indirect influence. To exploit this vulnerability, however, the international community – and the Middle East leaders in particular – must acknowledge the threat posed by Iranian agents, dedicate the proper resources to the problem, and then work together to identify and neutralize Qods Forces and operations. Regional law enforcement and intelligence officers, for example, must pay careful attention to Qods Force officers working from Iranian diplomatic establishments and commercial entities and other establishments that provide non-official cover. Front companies can be identified and closed, finances seized, diplomats declared persona-non-grata, and officers in non-official cover positions arrested or detained.

As part of its strategy to contain Iranian malign influence and bolster regional defenses and deterrent capabilities, the USG initiated the Gulf Security Dialogue (GSD). GSD is a diplomatic effort that reaffirms the United States’ commitment to protecting vital shared interests in the region, and focuses on arms sales and other forms of assistance to include improving port security and protecting critical and key energy infrastructures throughout the region. The purpose of these weapons sales is to enhance the capability of U.S. regional partners to defend against and deter Iranian aggression. Further, foreign military sales are a symbol of America’s longstanding commitment to the Middle East region.

There are positive indicators that this initiative is working. Particularly noteworthy are Iranian statements promising to retaliate against any U.S. attack by firing missiles at American bases in the region – most of which are located in GCC countries – whether American attacks were to emanate from those countries or not. This has had the effect of further uniting Arab countries with the U.S. against Iran. According to the Saudi News Agency, Saudi Chief of the General Staff General Saleh Al-Mehaya commented that “the security of the GCC and protection of its resources can only be achieved through a unified military strategy.” This can only be accomplished through close coordination and full integration with the United States. A failure of this strategic partnership to mature would further embolden Iran as a destabilizing force in the Middle East and enable it to undermine U.S. interests in a variety of spheres.

Finally, some analysts and policymakers have suggested that the United States might offer a set of formal security guarantees. A prospective declaratory policy (or policies) would affirm U.S. commitments to defend its regional partners against aggression or, specifically, against nuclear attack. This could build regional confidence and undermine Iran’s rationale for pursuing nuclear weapons.

These actions alone (intelligence, law enforcement, diplomacy, and military actions) will not be sufficient. A lasting regional solution will require treatment of those conditions that give rise to radicalism. Underlying economic, demographic, political, and social developments and challenges contribute to the emergence of and support to radical ideologies. Ken Pollack, a leading Iran expert at the Brookings Institute, calls for the region to look for “vaccines rather than cures.” He analogizes the spread of Iranian sponsored extremism to malaria, where Iranian Qods Force agents lay their eggs in the roiling waters of the Middle East and rely on conflict and tension to spread the disease. Iran is very good at building revolutionary cells abroad, such as Hizballah or Special Groups; they know how to capitalize on dislocation and discontentment. The massive transfer of wealth to the oil-rich Gulf has widened the gap between the “have’s” and “have not’s,” and Iran is excellent at supporting the “have not’s.”

**Conclusion**

The behavior and the policies pursued by Iran’s current leadership pose profound and wide-ranging challenges for U.S. interests, and the interests of its friends and allies in the Middle East, South Asia, and the international community as a whole. These policies include Iran’s nuclear ambitions, its support for terrorist groups, and its longstanding rejection of a two-state solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Its efforts to sow violence and undermine stability throughout the region and the strategic implications of Iranian behavior for regional security are significant. In a post-9/11 world, the threat posed by even a few small extremist cells can be significant when they have been Iranian-trained, Iranian-equipped, and Iranian-funded for lethal operations. Eliminating these problems and preventing future problems will not be done by the United States alone.

Iranian malign influence is a regional problem that requires regional attention.
and regional leadership. A regional solution will need to not only include direct and indirect action against terror cells and support networks, but will require treatment of the socio-economic and political problems that give rise to radicalism throughout the region. Because burgeoning democracies on its border and in the region would go a long way toward forcing a change in Iran’s strategic calculus, regional leaders should do everything they can to check Iranian adventurism – including assisting the United States in strengthening Lebanese, Iraqi, and Afghan democracies and increasing their governmental capacities.

The United States must continue to strengthen bilateral relationships, enhance regional interoperability, and improve the ability of our partners to protect their people, sovereignty, and security through the use of diplomatic, informational, and economic instruments of power – in conjunction with their military forces and security organizations. Where America can, it should continue to provide assistance to enable our regional friends and partners to better address the socio-economic cleavages within their own societies.

The international community must be diligent and must work with regional leaders to neutralize Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Qods Force and their proxies, and to pressure Iran to renounce these methods. Without increased international pressure, Iran will continue to provide support to terrorists, revolutionaries, and insurgents, and will use violence and the threat of violence as a means of bullying its neighbors. Iran’s current course needs serious correction, and the international and regional communities must work together to stand up to Iranian malign influence and aggression.

The views in this paper are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Defense or its components.

1. For the purpose of this paper, the broader Middle East includes the countries of North Africa (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and Egypt); the Levant (Israel/Palestinian Territories, Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan); the Arabian Peninsula (Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Oman, Yemen); and other major regional influencers to include Turkey, Iran, Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.

2. U.S. House of Representatives, Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Recognizing Iran as a Strategic Threat: an Intelligence Challenge for the United States, Staff Report of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Subcommittee on Intelligence Policy, August 23, 2006.

3. Iran claims that its Shahab-3 missile can currently strike targets at distances up to 1,200 miles, including Israel, Egypt, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, and southeastern Europe. We believe that Iran's Shahab-4 will have a range of 2,400 miles, allowing Iran to strike Germany, Italy, and Moscow.

4. U.S. House of Representatives, Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Recognizing Iran as a Strategic Threat: an Intelligence Challenge for the United States, Staff Report of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Subcommittee on Intelligence Policy, August 23, 2006.


13. Neocolonialism is defined as “a policy whereby a major power uses economic and political means to perpetuate or extend its influence over underdeveloped nations or areas,” The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition copyright 2000 by Houghton Mifflin Company, updated in 2003.

14. U.S. House of Representatives, Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Recognizing Iran as a Strategic Threat: an Intelligence Challenge for the United States, Staff Report of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Subcommittee on Intelligence Policy, August 23, 2006.

15. The Man Portable Air Defense System (MANPADS) missile is a highly effective weapon proliferated worldwide. Typically containing an Infra-Red seeker, the missile offers little opportunity for a warning before impact.

16. Explosively Formed Projectiles are improvised explosive devices designed to defeat the armor of coalition vehicles.

17. By early 2004, Special Groups were receiving training in Iran by IRGC-QF and had established a relationship with Lebanese Hizballah (LH), working to develop an organization modeled on the LH; Mustafa al-Sheibani was responsible for developing this network of IRGC sponsored insurgents with the express purpose of committing violence against coalition forces in Iraq. Michael Ware, Inside Iran's Secret War for Iraq, Time, (Aug. 15, 2005), available at http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1093747,00.html (last visited July 31,


21. According to the federal indictment of members of Saudi Hizballah, “from some time in the 1980s…, Hizballah, or “Party of God,” was the name used by a number of related terrorist organizations operating in Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Kuwait, and Bahrain, among other places. These Hizballah organizations were inspired, supported, and directed by elements of the Iranian government. Saudi Hizballah, also known as Hizballah Al-Hijaz, was a terrorist organization that operated primarily in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and that promoted, among other things, the use of violence against nationals and property of the United States located in Saudi Arabia. Because Saudi Hizballah was an outlaw organization in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, its members frequently met and trained in Lebanon, Syria, or Iran.” Available online at [http://www.fbi.gov/pressrel/pressrel01/khobar.pdf](http://www.fbi.gov/pressrel/pressrel01/khobar.pdf).

22. For a detailed account on Turkish Hizballah’s Iranian connections, see Rusen Cakir, Derin Hizballah, and Istanbul: Metis, 2001.


27. While this proposition is debatable, prominent U.S. decision makers repeatedly make this point in public statements and congressional testimony.

29. In October 1987, the GCC agreed on a mutual defense pact whereby an attack on any Member State would be construed as an attack on all Member States. Further, both Kuwait and Qatar have signed defense pacts with the United States. The 1992 defense pact Qatar signed with the United States was renewed in 2002. Likewise, the 1991 10-year defense pact Kuwait signed with the United States was renewed in 2002.


32. “Those markets are producing what one economist calls the ‘greatest wealth transfer the world has ever known.’ In a single year, the revenue of oil- and natural gas-producing Persian Gulf states has nearly doubled—giving nations in the region hundreds of billions of surplus dollars to play with.” Michael J. Gerson, “The Wrong Way to Kick An Oil Habit,” Washington Post June 25, 2008.

33. For further discussion of these problems and how they relate to radicalization in the Middle East, as well as a road-map for economic and political reform, see Kenneth M. Pollack, A Path out of the Desert: a Grand Strategy for America in the Middle East, Random House, New York (2008).
Investigations (AFOSI). He has served as commander of AFOSI detachments in Utah and at Tallil Air Base, Iraq. Major Lajeunesse has been a visiting associate at the Institute for the Study of Diplomacy at Georgetown University, a visiting Military Fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, and a Foreign Policy Fellow in the Office of the Foreign Policy Advisor to the Chief of Staff of the Air Force. He currently serves as a Political Military Planner on the Iran-Levant Policy Division, Directorate for Plans and Policy (J-5). He is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts, and has a Masters degree in Middle Eastern Studies from the Naval Postgraduate School (2000) and a Juris Doctor degree from Georgetown University Law Center (2008). He is a term member at the Council on Foreign Relations.

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