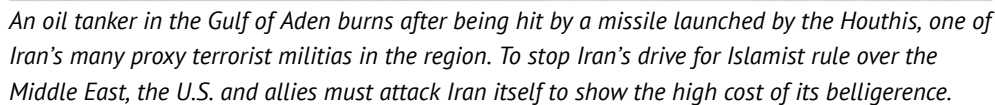




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Iran's mullahs have their blood-soaked hands in all the Middle East's conflict zones, like an

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octopus's tentacles that stretch over the entire region and beyond. These tentacles come in the form of proxy terrorist militias, which, although possessing a significant degree of autonomy, still serve [Iran's hegemonic agenda](#) over the entire region.

Iran's proxies are everywhere in the Middle East—the Gaza Strip, Judea and Samaria (aka, the West Bank), Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Iraq and the Arabian Peninsula. Recently, an attack by [Iranian-backed terrorists](#) killed three U.S. Service members in northeastern Jordan. The Biden administration retaliated by striking Iranian-backed militias in Iraq and Syria—but pointedly, not Iran itself.

While it is certainly necessary to hit terrorist groups supported by Iran, that won't halt terrorism in the Middle East. Whatever losses the terrorists sustain will be resupplied by the Iranians. In other words, the U.S. and its allies can continue to hit the tentacles of the octopus, but those appendages simply grow back. To stop the tentacles from their inexorable growth, the U.S. needs to [damage or sever the head](#) of the octopus—the Islamic Republic itself.

While Team Biden was hoping for an easy win—and a pre-election boost—by forcing Israel to accept a peace agreement with the Palestinians, it dramatically underestimated both antagonists' appetite for a deal. Instead, Biden faces mounting pressure to [stop daily attacks](#) by Iranian proxies on U.S. assets, as well as on international commerce in the Red Sea. Delaying will only hurt his election prospects.

Iran has proxy terrorist militias in every part of the Middle East. There are at least 19 armed groups on Israel's borders alone, including Hamas, Islamic Jihad and Hezbollah. There are also other groups, like the Houthis in Yemen, who are now [targeting commercial ships](#) in the Red Sea, as well as lesser-known groups, like Kata'ib Hizballah (KH) in Iraq.

Iran generously finances its proxies in the region. Since 2012, Iran has spent more than [\\$20 billion](#) to support foreign terror groups in the Middle East and beyond. The Islamic Republic sends \$100 million per year to Hamas, \$700 million a year to Hezbollah, and tens of millions to Islamic Jihad, just to name a few examples.

Iran provides extensive training for its terrorist proxies. For example, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, hundreds of Palestinian terrorists underwent “specialized combat training” in Iran just weeks before the October 7th massacre. Iran has trained Hamas members since the early 1990s. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), a branch of the Iranian military that answers directly to the country's Supreme Leader has been giving Hamas engineers [weapons training](#) for almost two decades.

Iran lends intelligence to its proxy groups. In Yemen, for instance, Iranian paramilitary forces provide intelligence that the Houthis use to attack ships in the Red Sea, according to *WSJ*, which also reported that an Iranian vessel stationed in the region is “enabling the Houthi drones and missiles to accurately [target the ships](#).”

Iran also ensures that all its terrorist proxies are well-armed. It provides everything from small arms to missiles and drones. Hezbollah, for example, has up to 150,000 rockets and missiles, ranging from unguided and short-range rockets to more advanced [long-range missiles](#).

The U.S. and its allies have repeatedly attacked Iran's proxies, but not Iran itself—a policy that has been largely ineffective. Recent strikes on the Houthis, for example, have not stopped attacks on Red Sea shipping. Likewise, U.S. strikes on Iranian proxies in Iraq and Syria have not stopped these terrorist militias from launching more than [160 attacks on U.S. forces](#) since October 7th.

The Biden administration can no longer delay—the situation grows more treacherous and costly by the day. Biden has actually made matters worse by trying to renegotiate the Iran nuclear deal, relaxing sanctions, and giving Iran \$6 billion in exchange for American hostages—money the mullahs will surely use to finance more terrorism. His administration looks [increasingly weak](#) in the eyes of the international community and American voters. It's time for the president to act before the costs of Iran's belligerence become unbearable.

Iran is the main instigator of conflict in the Middle East, and will continue wreak havoc in the region whether or not there is a Palestinian state. Thus far, the U.S. and its allies have

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targeted only its proxies, and that's not enough. The West needs to target Iran itself, since without the Islamic Republic, the various terrorist militias of the region cannot endure. It's become obvious to the world and the American people that the U.S. is losing its undeclared war with Iran. Without a determined, urgent response, Biden's floundering re-election hopes will soon sink irretrievably.

Please make the point when speaking with family, friends, colleagues—or in letters to the editor—that the U.S. and its allies must attack Iran directly. Only then will the mullahs realize there is a heavy price to pay for backing terrorists. In the words of Senator Lindsey Graham, “Hit Iran now. Hit them hard.”

Best regards,
Jason Shvili, Contributing Editor

Facts and Logic About the Middle East (FLAME)

P.S. The events of October 7 have changed our world forever—and especially the world for Israel and the Jewish people. Likewise, the words “Never Again” will never be the same for us. October 7 has shown us that despite all promises of equity and commitments against hate on campus and on our streets, we can never depend on it. We will likely never be free of the scourge of antisemitism, fueled by the most outrageous slanders. I hope you'll agree that we opponents of Hamas and its savage massacre—and of all who support Hamas, against all humanitarian values—need to speak out. FLAME's new *hasbarah*—explanatory message —“**Enemies of Israel Tell Five Big Lies**”—refutes today's most vicious lies against Israel and the Jewish people. I hope you'll review this convincing, fact-based editorial, which FLAME published in the *Washington Post*, *New York Post*, *Chicago Tribune* and *Los Angeles Times*. This piece will also be sent to all members of Congress, Vice President Harris and President Biden. If you agree that this kind of public relations effort on Israel's behalf is critical, I urge you to **support us** with a donation.

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