



Security Council

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Letter dated 10 March 2026 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On 28 February 2026, the United States commenced combat operations to defend the American people against attacks and ongoing threats from the Islamic Republic of Iran, in cooperation with our ally Israel. These combat operations were undertaken to protect United States Armed Forces in the region, to ensure the free flow of maritime commerce through the Strait of Hormuz and to protect our regional allies and partners from Iran and its proxies. This is the latest stage in the ongoing international armed conflict that my Government previously addressed in a letter to this Council on 27 June 2025. The United States is taking these necessary and proportionate actions in exercise of the inherent right of self-defense as reflected in Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations.

These combat operations are also being conducted in close cooperation with, and in the collective self-defense of, Israel. The Islamic Republic of Iran has rejected peaceful coexistence and chosen international armed conflict with Israel as well, waging an unprovoked religious war of annihilation against a once-friendly United Nations Member State located hundreds of miles distant from its borders. Since June 2025, the regime has also massively expanded its ballistic missile production for the purpose of overwhelming regional air defenses in order to provide a shield for its efforts to reconstitute its nuclear program, which it refuses to relinquish.

Gaming the international legal system, the Iranian regime routinely seeks to conceal its unlawful acts and to shield itself from accountability by, among other things, deploying proxies such as Hamas, Hizballah and the Houthis. For example, in a letter dated 5 February 2024, my Government reported that the regime's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and its partners and proxies had attacked United States personnel and facilities in Syria and Iraq. That letter identified nine prior letters sent to this Council between 2021 and 2024, a period that saw over 100 such attacks against the United States. Yet Iran falsely characterizes any forceful defensive response against it as a violation of international law, using a cynical lawfare strategy to support and enhance its kinetic activities.

Any analysis of the imminence, gravity and scope of the threat posed by the Iranian regime today must account for its decades of consistently malign foreign and domestic conduct and for the dangerous and destabilizing risks of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles in its hands. To begin with, the regime's ongoing attacks and threats are part of a very long pattern of aggression and provocation against the United States and its allies and partners. As soon as the regime seized power in 1979, the Ayatollah Khomeini himself approved the sacking of the United States Embassy in



Tehran and the abuse and torture of dozens of American hostages for 444 days. In the decades following, the regime's malign conduct – from the Marine barracks and Khobar Towers bombings, to attacks with improvised explosive devices and other attacks against Americans in Iraq, to supporting Hamas's monstrous atrocities on 7 October, to the ongoing and indiscriminate missile and drone attacks on civilians throughout the Middle East and beyond – has established that it is a uniquely dangerous actor. It would be both irrational and catastrophically dangerous to assume that this regime – with its calls for “Death to America” and insatiable appetite for brutality and indiscriminate violence against its own citizens – will cease its long history of bloodshed and belligerency.

The United States has acted now to address the continuing threat posed by the Iranian regime, because peaceful measures have once again been attempted and exhausted. In the wake of the crippling United States strikes in June 2025, our President engaged in yet another intense effort to secure a diplomatic resolution that would bring peace, prosperity and security for all States in the region, prevent the regime's development of ballistic missile capabilities directly threatening United States Armed Forces in the region, protect Iran's citizens and eliminate the threat from the regime's nuclear program. Unfortunately, the regime refused to negotiate in good faith.

The United States reserves the right in accordance with Article 51 and customary international law to further act in our own self-defense and in the collective self-defense of our allies and partners, as may become necessary.

I ask that you circulate the text of the present letter as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Michael G. **Waltz**
Ambassador
Representative of the United States to the United Nations
