



February 27, 2012

The Meir Amit Intelligence and
Terrorism Information Center

Iranian and Hezbollah Terrorist Attacks against Israeli Targets Abroad The Situation on the Ground and Background Information¹ (February 15, 2012)

Overview

1. For the past half year (May 2011-February 2012) **Iran and Hezbollah have organized and carried out a terrorist campaign against Israeli targets abroad**. So far six attacks have been attempted in five Asian countries, **four in sequence** (Turkey, Azerbaijan, twice in Thailand) and **two simultaneously** (India and Georgia). Several methods were employed, the most conspicuous of which, according to information made public so far, was the **attaching of a magnetic explosive device to a vehicle (or vehicles) mainly used, in our assessment, by representatives of the State of Israel**.

2. **Iran (through the Quds Force and other apparatuses linked to the regime) conducts a global terrorist campaign against countries and individuals it perceives as its enemies**: the United States and the West, Israel and the Jewish people, Saudi Arabia and other pro-Western Arab countries, and Iranian and foreign figures who oppose the Iranian regime. **Hezbollah** and foreign operations apparatus serve as the main Iranian proxy, handled by the Iranians for subversion and terrorism in the Middle East and around the globe. Both the Iranians and Hezbollah repeatedly and strongly deny involvement in terrorism and subversion around the globe.

3. **During the past year the Iranian terrorist campaign has faced a succession of failures**, caused, in our assessment, by their low professional capabilities and perhaps also

¹Full version.

by haste and excessive motivation to carry out terrorist attacks regardless of the cost. One example was the **prevention of the attempted assassination of the Saudi Arabian ambassador to the United States.**² Others were the series of prevented or failed attempts to attack Israeli and Jewish targets abroad in revenge for the deaths of Iranian nuclear scientists and of Imad Mughniyeh, attributed by the Iranians and Hezbollah to Israel. However, it seems that despite their failures **the Iranians** (and Hezbollah) **are determined to continue their terrorist campaign against Israel** and other countries they perceive as their enemies, for both "revenge" and deterrence, and to send the entire world a message regarding Iran's potential for terrorism around the globe.

4. During the past half year, six terrorist actions which Iran and Hezbollah tried to carry out in five countries were exposed. Five of them either failed or were prevented and one in India was successful:

1) **Turkey:** On May 26, 2011, **there was an attempted attack on the life of David Kimchi, the Israeli consul in the heart of Istanbul.** The attack failed but wounded eight Turkish civilians, and might have been a so-called "work accident." According to the Italian Corriere della Sera, July 2011, the Turkish authorities concluded that **the attempted assassination had been carried out by three Hezbollah operatives who had arrived from Beirut.** They followed the consul's daily routine, in our assessment **intending to attack him on his way to the consulate.**

2) **Thailand:** In the middle of January, 2012, an attack against an Israeli target in Bangkok was prevented, apparently a venue customarily frequented by Israelis. On January 12, Thai police at the Bangkok airport arrested **Hussein Atris, a Shi'ite Hezbollah operative from south Lebanon,** as he was trying to flee the country. In his possession were a Lebanese and an expired Swedish passport. During the investigation **the Thai police uncovered a supply of chemicals for manufacturing explosives** for the attack/attacks.

3) **Azerbaijan:** On January 24, 2012, a three-man Azeri terrorist cell was exposed, **run by Iran.** They planned to **attack both the Israeli ambassador to Azerbaijan as well as two Chabad emissaries,** the director and head rabbi of the local Jewish

²For further information see the November 3, 2011 bulletin "The United States foiled an Iranian plot to assassinate the Saudi ambassador in Washington using Quds Force, a Revolutionary Guards elite unit..." at http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/pdf/iran_e138.pdf.

school. The cell has handled by an Azeri living in the city of Ardabil in northwestern Iran, and wanted by the authorities in Azerbaijan for kidnapping, murder and arms smuggling. The Azeri, **handled by the Iranians**, promised the cell **\$150,000** and in October 2011 **smuggled weapons to them** (including a sniper rifle with a silencer, three hand guns with suppressors and plastic explosives).

4) **India**: At 15:00 hours on February 13, 2012, a day after the anniversary of the death of Hezbollah's senior terrorist operative Imad Mughniyeh, **a motorcyclist attached an explosive device to the car of an Israeli Ministry of Defense representative in New Delhi**. In the car were the local driver and the wife of the Israeli Ministry of Defense representative, who was seriously wounded. Of the series of six attempted attacks initiated by Iran and Hezbollah, **it was the only one which was carried out and harmed an Israeli**. The Indian media reported that the police had detained five men for interrogation who had been detected by security cameras as they examined the Israeli car. The Indian media also reported that the motorcycle had been found abandoned near the site of the attack.

5) **Georgia**: On February 13, 2012, the same day as the attack in New Delhi, an explosive device was attached to an Israeli embassy car in the capital city of Tbilisi. A Georgian employee of the Israeli embassy driving an embassy car felt the car was dragging something behind it. He alerted the police, whose demolition experts neutralized the bomb. **The Israeli prime minister accused Iran and Hezbollah of responsibility for the attacks in Tbilisi and New Delhi**, following those in Azerbaijan and Thailand. The Iranians, however, denied any and all involvement in the attacks in India and Georgia, and accused Israel of planning the attacks itself to incite world public opinion against Iran.

6) **Thailand**: At 14:00 hours on February 14 **a bomb exploded in a rented apartment in Bangkok** near the Israeli embassy, possibly a so-called "work accident." The explosion revealed the existence of an Iranian terrorist cell of at least four operatives. Two men fled the scene in a taxi. Another left the apartment five minutes later, threw an explosive device at a taxi and then another at a police car. The device thrown at the police car ricocheted and exploded, critically wounding him. The injured man was identified as carrying an Iranian passport. The same day, the Thai police arrested a third operative who also **held an Iranian passport** and was **planning to flee the country to Malaysia**. On February 15, a third operative was detained in Malaysia with an Iranian passport, who was supposed to fly to Tehran. Another suspect is a woman named Leila Rohani, who managed to escape to Iran. **A**

search of the apartment in which the explosion occurred revealed four kilos (8.8 pounds) of plastic explosives and two radios. In our assessment, the detained Iranians belonged to a terrorist squad which was planning to attach an explosive device to an Israeli vehicle.

Appendices

5. Three appendices follow with information and background about **Iran and Hezbollah's subversion and terrorist activities** in the three of the five arenas in which the terrorist campaign is being waged against Israel:

- 1) **Appendix I: Turkey as an arena for Iranian and Hezbollah terrorism and subversion .**
- 2) **Appendix II: Thailand and Southeast Asia as arenas for Iranian and Hezbollah terrorism and subversion .**
- 3) **Appendix III: Azerbaijan as an arena for Iranian and Hezbollah terrorism and subversion.**

Appendix I

Turkey, an Iranian Terrorist and Subversion Arena

Background

1. Turkey and Iran often state that there has been peace along their border for more than four hundred years. They have no territorial demands on one another and trade relations between them are well developed. Both countries share the struggle of the Kurdish minority, each in its own way. While relations are superficially good, **beneath the surface they are mutually suspicious**, and their suspicions have grown considerably since the Iranian Islamic Revolution.

2. The suspicions are based on various factors: Turkey's Western orientation, manifested by its NATO membership; its fear that the Islamic Revolution's ideology might trickle into Turkey; Iran's long history of subversion and terrorism on Turkish soil; and the million Iranian refugees who fled the Islamic Revolution and found asylum in Turkey.³ In addition, **Turkey supports the uprising against the regime of Iran's strategic ally Bashar Assad**, Turkey and Iran **differ regarding the nature of the Iraqi regime** after the withdrawal of the American army (because of the Sunni-Shi'ite tensions in Iraq), and they are in competition for **influence in the Caucasus and Central Asia**.

3. Beyond the above considerations there are the general **regional uprisings**, which increased **Turkey and Iran competition for Middle Eastern influence and hegemony**. At its core, the competition is between **the radical Shi'ite anti-West Iranian Islamic model** and the moderate Sunni pro-West Turkish Sunni model with its democratic features, which still preserves Ataturk's secular legacy.

4. Despite the complexity of the relationship, which sometimes creates friction, both Turkey and Iran **are careful not to destroy the balance of the relationship**. Iran, which regards Turkey as a central regional power, promotes political, security and economic cooperation. **Turkey** implements pragmatic and moderate policies in its dealings with Iran, and promotes political and economic ties even though Iran carries out subversive and terrorist activity within Turkish territory, and works to contain such activity when it is discovered.

³ Turkey allowed about a million Iranians into the country who had fled Iran. Their presence caused mutual suspicions: The **Turks** were concerned lest they prove to be fertile ground for Iranian espionage. The **Iranians** were afraid they would be enlisted for counter-revolutionary activities ("Conflict and Cooperation in Turkey-Iran Relations: 1989-2001," a thesis submitted by Bayram Sinkaya to the Graduate School of Social Sciences of Middle East Technical University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in the Department of International Relations, January 2004).

Iranian Terrorism and Subversion in Turkey

Overview

5. In the three decades since the Islamic Revolution, **the Iranians have often been involved in terrorism and subversion within Turkey**. Most of the activities were carried out by **Iranian intelligence apparatuses** (including during the term of Ali Fallahian as intelligence minister) and by the **Quds Force of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards** after its establishment. The Iranian embassy in Istanbul was involved its subversive and terrorist activities and Guards operatives were posted as diplomats.⁴

6. During the past two decades the **Quds Force has been the leading** (but not the only) **Iranian body engaging in subversion and terrorism** in Turkey by means of its ad hoc Unit 5000,⁵ in the following areas:

- 1) **Terrorist attacks against Israeli and Jewish targets** in Turkey, usually the attempted assassinations of Israeli diplomats.
- 2) **Terrorist attacks against Turkish public figures and opponents of the Iranian regime operating in Turkey.**
- 3) **Smuggling weapons and military equipment** through Turkish territory for Syria and Hezbollah through various routes (with trucks and trains, and by air).
- 4) **Support for Kurdish organizations hostile to the Turkish regime** (the PKK and the Turkish Hezbollah).
- 5) **Exporting Khomeini's ideology to Turkey** (for example by constructing Islamic schools and cultural centers)

Terrorist Attacks Against Israeli and Jewish Targets

7. During the past two decades **Iranian proxies** (local Turkish organizations or the Lebanese Hezbollah) murdered a number of Israeli diplomats and Turkish-Jewish public figures by **gunning them down or detonating car bombs**. In one instance they murdered an Israeli and in three instances their attempts failed:

⁴**Manouchehr Mottaki**, who served as Iranian ambassador to Turkey, belonged to the Revolutionary Guards before he joined the diplomatic service. As ambassador to Ankara he was suspected of being involved in the attempted murders of two opponents to the Iranian regime. Following protests lodged by the Turkish authorities he was returned to Iran. **Muhammad Reza Bakri**, his replacement, had also been in the intelligence unit of the Revolutionary Guards (Islamic-fundamentalism.info website)

⁵Islamic-fundamentalism.info website

The Attempted Assassination of Moshe Kimhi, Israeli Consul, Istanbul, 2011

8. On **May 26, 2011**, an explosion in Istanbul wounded eight Turks. No organization claimed responsibility for the explosion.

9. In July 2011 the Italian newspaper Corriere della Sera reported that initially the Turkish authorities thought the explosion was the work of the PKK, a Kurdish opposition organization. However, **they later concluded that it had been an attempted assassination of Israeli consul Moshe Kimhi**, carried out in retaliation for the death of an Iranian nuclear scientist. According to the newspaper, **three Hezbollah operatives came to Istanbul from Beirut** and followed the consul's daily route from his home to the consulate.

10. According to Yoram Cohen, head of the Israel Security Agency, Iran attempts to attack Israeli targets abroad using the **Revolutionary Guards**. This past year, said Cohen, **three serious attacks** were prevented even as the perpetrators were in place and about to act. In Turkey, he said, **an attempt was made on the life of the Israeli Consul General**, and other attacks were attempted in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, and in Thailand (Haaretz, February 3, 2012).

The Attempted Murder of Jak Kamhi, a Head of the Turkish Jewish Community, 1993

11. On **January 28, 1993**, the attempted murder of businessman Jak Kimhi,⁶ one of the heads of the Turkish Jewish community, failed: **four gunmen shot at Kamhi's car**.

12. Apparently, **a local terrorist group directed by Iran** was responsible for the attempted murder. According to a book by Israeli author and journalist Ronen Bergman, **Jak Kamhi** had been warned by Israeli intelligence that Iranian intelligence was planning to kill him, enabling him to escape unscathed.⁷

The Murder of Ehud Sadan, the Security Officer at the Israeli Embassy, Ankara, 1992

13. On **March 7, 1992**, Ehud Sadan, the security officer at the Israeli embassy in Ankara, was killed by **a bomb which was attached to his car**. The explosion wounded two Turkish passersby, a nine year-old child and a taxi driver.

14. Three pro-Iranian Islamic organizations, among them Lebanese Hezbollah, claimed responsibility for the murder. Turkish commentators claimed at the time that **the murder**

⁶Founder of the Profilo Holding company.

⁷Ronen Bergman, *The Secret War with Iran*, Simon and Schuster, 2008, page 190.

was committed in retaliation for the IDF killing of Hezbollah leader Abbas Musawi.⁸

15. On May 9, 2000, Turkish intelligence detained a terrorist cell suspected of responsibility for the murder. According to reports from Turkey, investigations revealed that **the cell had received instructions from the Iranian vice-consul in Turkey**, who gave them half a million dollars and **explosives for killing a Turkish correspondent in 1993** (apparently Uğur Mumcu, see below). The cell was also suspected of responsibility **the murder of an American officer and the abduction of a high-ranking Turkish officer** (walla.co.il website, May 9, 2000). On January 8, 2001, the court in Ankara sentenced two of Ehud Sadan's assassins to death.

The Attempted Assassination of David Golan, Israeli Diplomat, Istanbul, 1991

16. On **February 14, 1991**, an RPG was launched at David Golan, an Israeli diplomat in Istanbul. There were no casualties. The attack was carried out by a group of Turkish terrorists **handled by Iran**.

Elimination of Iranian Regime Opponents in Turkey

17. **In addition to the foregoing attacks, Iranians were involved in attempts to eliminate Turkish figures** (correspondents, member of the academia and other personalities) **and opponents of the Iranian regime who operated in Turkey**. The most prominent murder occurred on January 24, 1993, when the author and journalist Uğur Mumcu was killed. He was killed by an IED put in his car while it was parked in front of his house.

18. The perpetrators belonged to a terrorist network called **the Tevhid-Selam-Quds Organization, handled by the Iranian regime. Its operatives were trained in Tehran and other Iranian cities and equipped with weapons, ammunition and explosives** (TNT and C4). They carried out a long series of terrorist attacks in Turkey, including **the murder of Israeli security officer Ehud Sadan**.⁹ The Turkish interior minister at the time linked the murder of Uğur Mumcu to **organizations operating from Iran** and said that they had been involved in the **murders of other media personnel**.¹⁰

⁸**Another revenge attack**, also orchestrated by Iran and carried out by Hezbollah, occurred around the same time in Argentina: On March 7, 1992, a car bomb driven by a suicide bomber exploded at the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires, killing 29 Argentineans and Israelis. In May 1991 the Argentinean supreme court accused Hezbollah of responsibility for the terrorist attack.

⁹Haberguncel.blogspot.com website.

¹⁰Sinkaya, "Conflict and Cooperation."

19. On **April 16, 2009**, the trial of **four Army of Al-Quds terrorist operatives** began (one tried in absentia). They were accused of the murder of Turkish citizens (including Uğur Mumcu), a Saudi Arabia diplomat, an American citizen and Ehud Sadan. According to the indictment they had been in Iran, where they received training.¹¹

20. At the **beginning of 2012** the Turkish media reported that the American authorities had informed the Turkish administration that the Iranian-handled **Army of Al-Quds was planning to attack the American diplomatic mission in Turkey**.¹²

21. **Iranian involvement in the murder of Turkish figures was exposed on several occasions between 1996 and 2002:**

1) In **March 1996** Irfan Cakirci, leader of an organization called the Islamic Action Movement, was detained in Istanbul. During interrogation he admitted that **the weapons used to kill a correspondent named Cetil Amak and several opponents of Iran had been supplied by an Iranian diplomat**. According to his confession and the findings of the Turkish police investigation, the Iranian diplomat ran an office for planning and directing terrorist activities. As a result, **Turkey deported four Iranian diplomats**.¹³

2) In **May 2000** the Turkish media reported the **murders of 17 well-known Turkish figures including correspondents, politicians, professors** and other public figures had been solved, and **that Iranians were behind them all**. The detainees admitted to **having been trained by and receiving support from operatives and agents of Iranian intelligence and the Quds Force**. The exposure of Iran's involvement in the murders **created a crisis in Turkish-Iranian relations** because Turkey considered them as interference in its internal affairs.¹⁴

3) On **May 17, 2000**, Turkish prime minister Ecevit told a press conference that **Iran was providing sanctuary for terrorist extremists and was still trying to export the revolution**. He said that support for terrorism in Turkey was liable to be considered intervention in Turkey's internal affairs. **He added that unfortunately, several terrorists and fundamentalist organizations in Turkey enjoyed various forms of Iranian support and were exploited by Iran to export the revolution** (Turkish Daily News, May 18, 2000). However, interviewed by Turkish TV,

¹¹Yenisafak.com.tr website, April 16, 2009.

¹²Haberinkabli.com website, January 17, 2012. In January 2012 the Turkish newspaper Today's Zaman reported that the Quds Force was planning to send a terrorist group to Turkey for a series of attacks, among them targeting either the American embassy or consulate general in Turkey. According to the report from the Turkish Security General Directorate, groups linked to Hezbollah in Lebanon would probably participate in the attacks (Today's Zaman, January 17, 2012).

¹³Sinkaya, "Conflict and Cooperation."

¹⁴Robert Olson, "Turkey-Iran Relations, 1997 to 2000: The Kurdish and Islamic Questions," www.tandfonline.com, August 25, 2010.

Iranian foreign minister **Ali Akbar Velayati** denied the existence of anti-Turkish Iranian activity and proposed a discussion of the "mutual accusations" in a joint Turkish-Iranian security committee.¹⁵

4) In **May 2002** the security court in Ankara **accused Iran** of links to the Tevhid-Selam network. The court indicted network activists on **22 criminal charges, including murders**, with the intention of bringing chaos to Turkey, destroying its constitutional order, and **establishing an Iranian-type Islamic state**. The court also stressed the fact that the activists had **visited Iran many times during the 1980s, where they received training from the Revolutionary Guards**. **The Turkish media also reported that the Iranian intelligence services and the Quds Force had provided them with weapons** (Turkish newspapers Hürriyet and Zaman, May 30 2002).

Attempted Murder of a Saudi Arabian Diplomat

22. During a wave of anti-Saudi attacks carried out between 1987 and 1996, in October 1989 Iran and its proxies attempted **to kill the Saudi military attaché in Ankara** (See the section on Saudi Arabia).

Transporting Weapons to Syria and Hezbollah in Lebanon through Turkish Territory

Overview

23. Turkey's geographical location and open border with Iran **have made it a conduit for the shipments of weapons Iran smuggles to Syria and Hezbollah in Lebanon, overland** (by train and truck) and **by air**. The Quds Force's fully operational smuggling mechanisms make it easy for Iran to provide arms for the various terrorist organizations whose activities it orchestrates.

Smuggling Arms by Train

24. On **May 25, 2007**, a shipment of weapons was transported by train **from Iran to Syria through Turkey, apparently for Hezbollah**. The train was derailed by a PKK explosion. It was later revealed that **two containers held weapons, among them 81mm mortar shells, 122mm rockets, ammunition, explosives and RPG launchers**. Iran, as usual, denied having sent the shipment.

¹⁵Sinkaya, "Conflict and Cooperation."



Train route and site of the explosion which revealed the attempt to smuggle weapons.

25. In **December 2008** a suspicious shipment was discovered in Turkey, which was on its way from Iran to Venezuela. The shipment was transferred to the southern port of Mersin, where it was found to contain **chemical equipment and materials which could be used to construct an explosives laboratory**.

26. It was not the first such attempt. According to a WikiLeaks document from March 2009, the Turks investigated information **that Iran had sent a shipment of unmanned aerial vehicles and additional equipment through Turkey for loading aboard a ship bound for Venezuela**. The opinion in the United States was that the shipment contained weapons and equipment which Iran was forbidden to ship according to UN Security Council Resolution 1747.

Smuggling Arms by Truck

27. Iran often smuggles arms through Turkey for Syria. In 2011 Turkish media reported that six trucks carrying weapons and ammunition were impounded. One of the trucks carrying weapons was impounded in March 2011 (zaman.com.tr website).

28. **Proof of weapons smuggled by trucks in January 2012:** On January 10, 2012, Yusuf Odabas, governor of the southeastern province of Kilis, said that **four trucks had been impounded by customs at the Kilis border-crossing between Turkey and Syria**. The vehicles, which had Iranian license plates, had **arrived in Turkey from Iran and were on their way to Syria**. They were stopped by the police following information that they were carrying **military equipment** (cumhuriyet.com.tr website, January 11, 2012). The equipment had been **hidden under 80 sacks of tanning chemicals**, which had been shipped by Rock Chemie, an Iranian company. The truck drivers, all of whom held Iranian citizenship, were interrogated and released (zaman.com.tr website).

29. On January 20, 2011, the Turkish media reported that **the Iranian trucks contained military equipment used for the manufacture of surface-to-surface missiles and 60 tons of sodium sulfate**, which, according to the Turkish media, could be used in the manufacture of chemical weapons. According to the report, the material was examined by the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (zaman.com.tr website).

Smuggling Arms by Air

30. **On March 22, 2011**, Turkey discovered a shipment of arms aboard an Ilyushin aircraft belonging to **the Iranian airline Yas Air**, which was en route to Damascus. The plane landed at Diyarbakir (eastern Turkey) where materials were uncovered which Iran was forbidden to transport according to a UN resolution. The materials were confiscated and the plane was permitted to return to Iran.¹⁶

Iranian Support for Organizations Hostile to the Turkish Administration: Turkish Hezbollah, the PKK and Other Groups

Overview

31. In the past, a considerable amount of information accumulated, based for the most part on the Turkish media, indicating **the support Iran provides to two Kurdish opposition organizations conducting a violent struggle against the Turkish administration**: the Marxist **PKK** and Kurdish-Sunni-radical **Turkish Hezbollah**, which seeks to establish a state based on Islamic law. However, it is unclear what the nature of Iran's relationship with the two organizations has been in recent years.

32. For years, the issue of the Kurds has been a **basis for collaboration** between Turkey and Iran, and at the same time a **subject of discord**. In the past Turkey blamed Iran for transferring military equipment to the Turkish PKK and Hezbollah. Military aid was manifested by the provision of weapons, the training of operatives in Iran, logistic support, permitting anti-Turkish operations to be held along the border and giving asylum to operatives wanted by the Turkish authorities. Iran, on the other hand, accused Turkey of attacking Kurdish targets in Iranian territory.

¹⁶Announcement made by the Turkish embassy in Washington, March 23, 2011; avherald.com website, March 21, 2011.

Turkish Hezbollah

33. **Turkish Hezbollah** is an **Islamic Kurdish terrorist organization** established in 1979 by Huseyn Velioglu to counter the Marxist Kurdish PKK. Turkish Hezbollah operates in Turkey's east and southeast to promote the rights and autonomy of the Kurdish people.

34. During the 1990s Turkish Hezbollah operatives were involved in violent confrontations with the PKK and its supporters. During the second half of the 1990s the organization extended its activities to attacks on stores selling alcoholic beverages, houses of prostitution and other institutions it regarded as violating Islamic values (turkishweekly.net website).

35. **The connection between Iran and Hezbollah in Turkey** became evident when an indictment was brought against Hezbollah operatives at the court in Diyarbakir in **May 2001**. Under the heading "Foreign Aid," the following was said:¹⁷

1) In 1981, following the Islamic Revolution in 1979, an office was opened for exporting the revolution, especially Muslim countries. **To that end Iranian embassies and consulates in various countries were enlisted.** The activities were funded by an Iranian office and included visits to Iran. The foreign visitors were indoctrinated with the Ayatollah's ideology and when they returned to their own countries they joined local Hezbollah organizations.

2) **As part of exporting the revolution, Iran worked to establish an Islamic religious state in Turkey** and had ties with senior members of Hezbollah in Turkey. The Hezbollah leader and his supporters went to Iran a number of times in the 1980s, where **they were trained by the Revolutionary Guards**. After Khomeini died, members of Turkish Hezbollah expressed criticism of Iran for reducing its support, although Iran continued to serve as a role model.

36. **On October 20, 1999, the Turkish authorities detained 92 Hezbollah in Turkey members, claiming they had undergone training in Iran.** The following day a car bomb killed **Ahmet Taner Kislali**, a well-known professor and journalist who had devoted his life to secularism and Kemalism. The day after the murder three Iranians were detained at the Istanbul airport on the grounds that they were attempting to flee the country.¹⁸ Iran denied any connection to the murder.

37. **At the beginning of 2000 the Turkish security forces initiated a broad action against Turkish Hezbollah.** The police raided the organization's headquarters and **its leader was shot and killed.** Several Hezbollah operatives apprehended at the time said

¹⁷ Sinkaya, "Conflict and Cooperation."

¹⁸ Sinkaya, "Conflict and Cooperation."

during interrogation that **their senior leaders had received political and military training from the Revolutionary Guards**. The police chief in Ankara said that **all the Hezbollah leaders had been trained in Iran**. A Turkish "security figure" reported that in addition to Hezbollah's being a terrorist organization, **its operatives were also run as intelligence agents by Iran** and collected information about Turkish army units (Hürriyet, January 21, 2000).

38. According to the Turkish media, **on January 3, 2011, nine Hezbollah in Turkey leaders were released**. Two senior leaders, Edip Görmüş and Cemal Tutar, **then fled to Iran**, while the others fled to Syria.¹⁹

Iranian Support for the Kurdish PKK

39. One of the issues clouding Turkish-Iranian relations during the 1990s was **the Turkish claim that Iran was allowing the PKK to operate from its territory**. Nihat Ali Özcan, a Turkish expert on the PKK and terrorism, noted that **the PKK's ties to Iran began in the early 1980s**. He said **Iran wanted to destabilize Turkey by increasing its support of the PKK**, because Turkey presented a danger to post-revolutionary Iran by virtue of the many Iranians in Turkey who opposed the revolution, and concern that the United States would attack Iran from Turkey. Iran also wanted PKK operatives to collect intelligence in Turkey, especially information about opponents of the Iranian regime.²⁰ However, **anti-imperialist discourse and opposition to Turkey** were the basis for PKK collaboration with Iran.

40. Despite Iran's repeated denials of relations with the PKK, the denials were proved false by the **confessions of detained PKK operatives**, among them the leader of the organization, **Abdullah Öcalan**. Öcalan said that Iran and the Turkish administrations differed on various political issues, leading to the development of close relations between Iran and the PKK.²¹

41. According to a report by the **Turkish journalist Ismet G. Imset**, as of 1992 there were only a few training camps in Iran, and of about 20 fewer remained after the end of the Gulf War. He approximated **the number of PKK operatives who had trained in Iran in 1992 as between 700 and 800**. He also revealed that **the PKK had acquired weapons from the Revolutionary Guards and that Özcan had been responsible for contacts with them**. Imset claimed that Turkey possessed information that **PKK leaders had crossed the border into Iran and had met with senior Iranians, including the commanders of the Revolutionary Guards**. He said that at the beginning of 1992 the

¹⁹Haber.ekolay.net website, January 19, 2012, "Hezbollah terrorist organization: We have returned."

²⁰Sinkaya, "Conflict and Cooperation."

²¹Sinkaya, "Conflict and Cooperation."

PKK crossed the border more often and that there was close collaboration between the PKK and the Revolutionary Guards.²²

42. **Turkish intelligence and other security apparatuses in Turkey repeatedly claimed that Iran was providing the PKK with military and logistic support, especially in Iran's western province near the Turkey-Iran border. Moreover, based on the confessions of detained PKK operatives, in several instances senior Turkish figures passed information and documents to the authorities in Iran about the presence of PKK camps and offices in Iran and about training and the provision of weapons.** Iran, however, repeatedly denied the accusations [based on the confessions of PKK operatives] and claimed Turkey had to make greater efforts to prevent the activities of Iranian opposition groups operating on its soil.²³

Exporting the Iranian Islamic Revolution

Overview

43. Like other Muslim countries, **Turkey is a target for the export of Iranian Islamic ideology** combined with **social activity** exploited to strengthen its influence within radical Islamic sectors of the population. The ideological and social foundation is **fostered by Iran** through organizations and institutions it operates, also providing, in our assessment, a cover for its subversion and terrorism and is exploited for anti-Israeli, anti-West propaganda.

44. To that end Iran carries out a variety of activities in Turkey to export its Islamic revolution: **the construction of Islamic schools** (in competition with Saudi Arabia), **funding the establishment of Iranian cultural centers throughout Turkey**, inculcating Iranian ideology in Turks who go to Iran for religious education, **distributing anti-Turkish booklets and propaganda to Turkish pilgrims to Mecca**, **disseminating propaganda materials in Turkey** through Iranian diplomatic facilities, **organizing propaganda events – the most central of which is Jerusalem Day – and spreading anti-Turkish incitement** through the Iranian media directed at Turkey, etc.²⁴

²²Sinkaya, "Conflict and Cooperation."

²³Sinkaya, "Conflict and Cooperation."

²⁴For further information see the December 3, 2011 article by investigative journalist Ms. Nur Guducu "Playing at Turkey's Expense" in September 2 at the turania.org website.

Propaganda Events

45. Iran's supporters in Turkey **customarily organize propaganda events** in Istanbul, Ankara and other cities where they spread hatred for the United States and Israel and express support for Iran. Through their supporters, **the Iranians organize Jerusalem Day**, initiated by the Iranian regime throughout the Arab-Muslim world.

46. For example, **on February 4, 2012, a pro-Iranian demonstration was held in Taksim Square in the heart of Istanbul**. Iranian flags were waved, Israeli flags were burned, and people held anti-American and anti-West signs reading "Death to American Imperialism," "Death to America," "Death to Israel," "Shi'ites and Sunnis are bothers, America is a traitor," "The Iranian people is not alone," "Iran has the right to nuclear energy," "Turkey and Iran, shoulder to shoulder."²⁵

Pictures from the Taksim Demonstration



²⁵Zeynebiye.com website, February 4, 2012. The website has been active for the past two years and posts pro-Iranian content. In our assessment it is supported by Iran.

47. Jerusalem Day events, initiated by the Iranian regime, took place in 2011 on August 26 in Iran, the Arab-Muslim world and Western countries. As they are every year, the events were exploited for **vicious anti-Israeli anti-West (Britain and the United States) propaganda and incitement**, and for shows of **support for Iran and the so-called Palestinian "resistance"** (Hezbollah and Hamas).

48. Jerusalem Day events in Turkey were attended by **radical Islamic organizations and activists, in our assessment some of them supporters of Iran and supported by them**. Events focused on Istanbul, where anti-Israeli, anti-Jewish, anti-American and anti-British slogans were shouted, and Khamenei was widely quoted. Hezbollah flags were prominently flown and there were posters of Hassan Nasrallah and Imad Mughniyeh. Below is a selection of photos. **The terminology of the slogans and demonstrators were clearly directed by Iranian policy.**²⁶



Hamas and Hezbollah flags and pictures of Imad Mughniyeh (velfecr.com website)



Demonstrators carry pictures of Imad Mughniyeh, Hezbollah's former military-terrorist commander. At the upper right is a sign reading "The United States, Israel and England, the Satanic Triangle" (velfecr.com website)



Pictures of the Ayatollah Khomeini and Supreme Leader Khamenei; below them are pictures of the terrorist operatives killed aboard the Mavi Marmara (velfecr.com website)



A Jerusalem Day Forum sign quoting a saying of Khomeini: "If every Muslim empties one pail of water Israel will be washed away in the flood" (velfecr.com website)

²⁶For further information see the September 1, 2011 bulletin "Jerusalem Day, marked on August 26 this year, is an annual Iranian-sponsored event in support of the Palestinian cause. The Iranian regime expects extensive participation in events in Iran, the Arab-Muslim world and the West (including the United States and Britain). The events are traditionally exploited for anti-Israeli antiWest incitement" at http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/pdf/iran_e127.pdf.



"Jerusalem Day – The Islamic Resistance Day" (Al-Quds forum) (velfecr.com website)



The sign reads "Jews, remember Khaybar, Muhammad's army will return"¹ (velfecr.com website)



Burning the Israeli, American and British flags. In the background are yellow Hezbollah flags (occupiedpalestine.wordpress.com website)



A sign reading "Israel will soon disappear" (upper right) next to pictures of Supreme Leader Khamenei and Imad Mughniyeh (velfecr.com website)



Poster of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah at a demonstration near the Zeynebiye mosque. Behind it is an anti-Saudi poster reading "The Saudi murderers...", the rest of which cannot be read (zeynebiye.com website)



Sign calling the Saudi Arabian king a murderer near the Zeynebiye mosque (zeynebiye.com website)

Nureddin Shirin – Profile of a Pro-Iranian Turkish Activist

49. **Nureddin Shirin Mahmet Shahin** is a **journalist** who edits the Islamic website Velfcer. He is also a **radial Islamic political activist** who for years has been deeply involved in pro-Iranian propaganda both inside and outside Turkey. **He is anti-West, hostile to Israel and openly supports Hezbollah and Hamas.**

50. At the end of the 1990s he headed the Tevhid-Selam-Quds,²⁷ an Iranian-run terrorist network whose operatives were involved in terrorist activities in Turkey, as noted above. Nureddin Shirin edited Salam, the network's organ.

51. In 2000 network operatives, among them Nureddin Shirin, stood trial. According to the indictment, **they had maintained contacts with the Iranian embassy and the Iranian cultural center in Turkey**, and had received money from Iran.²⁸ **Nureddin Shirin was sentenced to 17.5 years in prison and was released in 2004** when the AKP took control of the government.

52. In recent years Nureddin Shirin has been conspicuous in pro-Iranian anti-Israeli propaganda activities:

1) On **May 15, 2008**, he gave an anti-Israeli anti-American speech **in front of the Israeli embassy in Ankara** to mark Nakba Day. Among his remarks were the following:²⁹

"Today is the anniversary of the founding of the **blood-drinking, vampire Zionist entity** that every day since its inception kills, destroys and commits genocide against defenseless, innocent people. There cannot be a greater calamity, greater treachery and disaster than this. **Right now George Bush, the president of the great satan America, is in Tel Aviv.** The heads and the representatives of the Western Crusaders are in Tel Aviv. Friends of the Zionists are all gathered in Tel Aviv. They got together and they are celebrating the **founding of this cancer virus, the terrorist regime called 'Israel.'** Yes it is our sad day. Our day of grief and disaster. [Crowd: '*Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar..Allahu Akbar... Lai Lahe Illallah'*] **But we came here today to**

²⁷The radical.com.tr website, July 3, 1999.

²⁸The ARSIV.ntvmsnbc.com website.

²⁹According to the Islamist website Velfcer.com, May 18, 2008, and translated into English by MEMRI (MEMRI Turkish Media Blog).

celebrate the great victories of Hizbullah and of Hamas against the Zionist entity. [Crowd repeatedly: 'Blessings to Hamas... On with resistance!']... **America, England and Israel axis of satan!** You will pay such a big price, you will account for all you have done... We came here to celebrate the great price you will have to pay..." (ITIC emphasis throughout).

2) Nureddin Shirin headed a delegation of activists who participated in the *Mavi Marmara* and who **went to Iran in February 2011**, invited by Iranian president Ahmadinejad (to celebrate the anniversary of the Islamic Revolution). Meeting with Ahmadinejad, Nureddin Shirin said that "we are here today, determined to build a Middle East without Israel and the United States and to continue the path of the *Mavi Marmara* shaheeds" (MEMRI, February 18, 2011).

3) **On May 15, 2011, Nakba Day**, Nureddin Shirin led a small Islamist delegation from Turkey to participate in a march in Jordan calling itself "**the march of return.**" The march, attended by Palestinians and Jordanians, left from Karameh in Jordan, north of the Dead Sea, and proceeded toward the Allenby Bridge. Their slogans were "**Returning, returning,**" "**The right of return is sanctified,**" "**A million shaheeds are going to Jerusalem,**" "**With our souls and blood we will redeem you, Palestine.**" The marchers refused to comply with instructions given by the Jordanian security forces, confronted them and tried to breach the border. **A violent confrontation ensued during which one marcher was killed and several dozen were wounded.** According to the Turkish prime minister, **the Turkish delegation marched at the head of the demonstrators who confronted the Jordanian security forces. Five of them were wounded and their bus was damaged.**³⁰

³⁰For further information see the May 29, 2011 bulletin "A Turkish Islamist delegation, which in our assessment included IHH activists, was involved in violent clashes with Jordanian security forces near Allenby Bridge on Nakba Day. The incident is yet another demonstration of the violent methods used by the IHH and its Islamist allies during anti-Israeli PR activities" at http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/html/ipc_e195.htm.



Nureddin Shirin, head of the Turkish delegation, in Jordan (Al-Jazeera TV, May 15, 2011).

4) On June 21, 2011, Nureddin Shirin met with the Ayatollah Kaymakami, an Iranian cleric who headed an Iranian delegation to Turkey in order to participate in the IHH campaign for the upcoming flotilla to the Gaza Strip (the IHH later changed its mind and did not participate in the flotilla). On the night of May 30, the **Iranian delegation took part in a mass march in Istanbul**, carrying the pictures of the nine terrorist operatives killed aboard the *Mavi Marmara*, and shouted slogans against Israel and in favor of Islamic solidarity.³¹



Nureddin Shirin (right) welcomes the Ayatollah Kaymakami (velfecr.com website, June 1, 2011)



The Ayatollah Kaymakami and Nureddin Shirin meet with the father of Furkan Dugan, killed aboard the Mavi Marmara (velfecr.com website, June 1, 2011)

³¹For further information see the June 5, 2011 bulletin "An Iranian delegation participated in events held by the IHH in Istanbul on the anniversary of the Marmara flotilla, focused on fostering the myth of the "Marmara shaheeds". The Iranian delegation raised the flags of Iran and Hezbollah, and held meetings with IHH activists and radical Islamist elements affiliated with it" at http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/pdf/iran_e118.pdf.

5) **On August 26, 2011, Nureddin Shirin participated in the Jerusalem Day events held in Istanbul.** He gave a speech at a panel discussion at a community center in the **Bagcilar** neighborhood, in which he emphasized Jerusalem's "strategic importance" for the Muslim world, and said he expected the "defeat of the Zionist forces."



Nureddin Shirin speaks at a panel discussion in Bagcilar. The picture behind him is Abbas Musawi, former head of Hezbollah.



Nureddin Shirin in Bagcilar. The picture at the foot of the podium is Imad Mughniyeh.

Appendix II

Thailand and Southeast Asia as Arenas for Iranian and Hezbollah Terrorism and Subversion

Overview

53. Since the late 1980s, Southeast Asia, particularly **Thailand**, has been a favorite theater of terrorist operations for **Iran and Hezbollah**. In our assessment, that is the result of the combination of **operative convenience** (i.e., the loosely organized counterterrorism structures of the local security services), the ability to easily recruit local collaborators for logistical assistance, and the presence of facilities and individuals belonging to countries targeted by Iran and Hezbollah's terrorist activity.

54. During that time, three anti-Israeli terrorist attacks in **Thailand** were prevented or failed, while two others, aimed at Kuwaiti and Saudi targets, were carried out. In addition, security services in the **Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia** and other countries in Southeast Asia exposed Hezbollah terrorist networks and prevented terrorist attacks. In Southeast Asia the targets were countries defined by Iran as its enemies, primarily **Israel, the United States, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait**. The activities were **part of terrorist waves initiated by Iran at various times and carried out by Hezbollah** in Southeast Asia and other places across the globe.

55. Since the late 1980s, the following acts of terrorism took place in **Bangkok**:

- 1) An attempted terrorist attack prevented by a "work accident:" So far the target of the attack is unknown. In our assessment the plan was to attach one or more IEDs to a vehicle used by Israelis. The planned attack was exposed on February 14, 2012.
- 2) A foiled attempt to detonate IEDs at a Bangkok site frequented by Israelis (mid-January 2012).
- 3) A failed attempt to detonate a car bomb at the **Israeli embassy** (March 1994).
- 4) The hijacking of a **Kuwaiti airliner** en route from Bangkok to Kuwait, and a foiled attempt to hijack another airliner (April 1988).
- 5) The murder of three **Saudi diplomats** (January-February 1988).

56. In addition, **networks belonging to Hezbollah were exposed and terrorist attacks planned were prevented in the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore and other countries in Southeast Asia:**

1) **An Indonesian Hezbollah operative named Pandu Yudhawinata** was detained at the Manila Airport in the **Philippines** in 1999. During questioning he revealed Hezbollah's plans to **recruit Thai, Malaysian and Indonesian nationals** to carry out terrorist attacks in Southeast Asia and other countries (Australia and Israel). The Philippine authorities said that the potential targets of the network included the embassies of Israel and the United States, Israeli companies, synagogues, American and Israeli visitors, the offices of Israel's national airline and Israeli and American military and commercial vessels.³²

2) In 1995, Hezbollah established a terrorist network in **Singapore** to attack local American and Israeli targets. To that end, Hezbollah operatives were dispatched from Lebanon to Singapore, where they recruited five Muslim civilians. Their objective was **to attack American and Israeli ships passing through or anchored in the Singapore Strait**. The cell members also photographed **the local Israeli embassy**.³³

3) In the late 1990s, a key local Hezbollah operative belonging was arrested in **Malaysia**. **The network he belonged to was planning terrorist attacks in Southeast Asia**.³⁴

Failed Iranian-Squad Terrorist Attack (As of February 16)

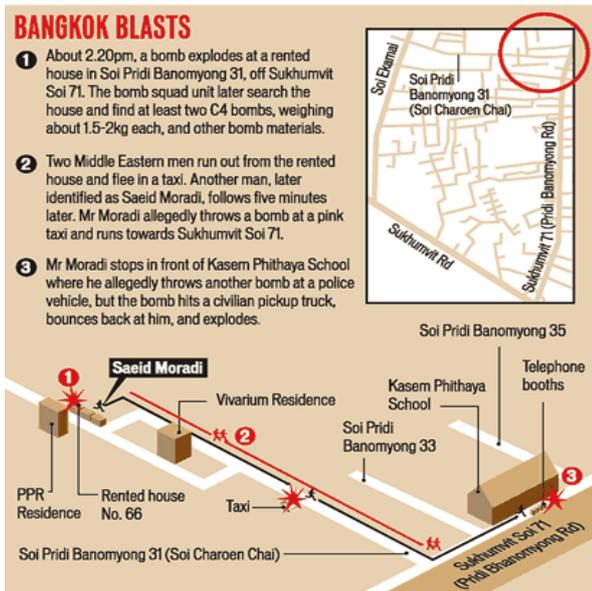
57. At around 1400 hours on February 14 an IED exploded in a rented apartment in a two-story building in Bangkok, possibly a "work accident." The building is situated in the vicinity of the Israeli embassy in Bangkok. The explosion revealed the existence of an Iranian cell consisting of at least four terrorists. Two of them fled the scene in a taxi. Another person came out from the house five minutes later, threw an IED at a taxi, and fled.

58. The fleeing terrorist **stopped near a school, where he threw another IED at a police vehicle**. The IED hit a civilian truck, bounced back at him, and exploded, blowing off the terrorist's legs. Three other people were injured (bangkokpost.com).

³² Matthew Levitt, "Hizballah" poised to strike in southeast Asia," January 18, 2012.

³³ "Hezbollah, Profile of the Lebanese Shiite Terrorist Organization of Global Reach Sponsored by Iran and Supported by Syria" (ITIC Special Information Bulletin, June 2003).

³⁴ Ibid.



Police demolitions expert deactivating the IED near the Kasem Phithaya School (bangkokpost.com)

Diagram of the events leading to the terrorist's arrest (bangkokpost.com)

59. The injured man **carried an Iranian passport and was identified as Saeid Moradi**. Shortly thereafter, at about 4:00 PM, the police detained another suspect at the Bangkok Airport who was planning to flee the country to Malaysia. The second suspect, **who also carried an Iranian passport, was identified as Mohammad Khazaei, 42**. Investigation revealed that **he had come to Thailand from Malaysia on February 8, on the same flight as Moradi and another operative who was detained in Malaysia** (bangkokpost.com, February 14, 2012).

60. **Ten pounds (22.2 kilograms) of C4 plastic explosives and two radio transmitters** were found in the apartment. The police said **the IEDs used in the aforementioned events were made from the same type of explosives**. According to experts, their blast radius was 120 feet (about 36.6 meters). They said that no similar IEDs had previously been found in Thailand (bangkokpost.com, February 14, 2012). According to the Thai newspaper Bangkok Post (quoted by the British Guardian, February 15), the Israeli ambassador said that in the apartment the Thai police neutralized two magnetic charges that could be attached to a vehicle. In our assessment **the terrorist cell was planning to attach an IED to a vehicle, similar to the attempted terrorist attacks in India and Georgia**.

61. The third operative, an Iranian named **Masoud Sedaghatzadeh**, was detained in Malaysia on February 15. Another operative carrying an Iranian passport, **Leila Rowhani**, managed to flee to Tehran.

Attempted Terrorist Attack against an Israeli Target (Mid-January 2012)

Overview

62. A terrorist attack against an Israeli target in Bangkok was foiled in mid-January 2012. In our assessment the attempt was made by the **Quds Force, employing Hezbollah** for the attack. According to media reports, the target was **a site frequented by Israelis**.

63. **The terrorist attack in Bangkok was planned as one of a series in retaliation for the disruption of the Iranian nuclear program and the death of senior Hezbollah military operative Imad Mughniyeh.** According to Israel Security Agency Chief Yoram Cohen, prior to the terrorist attack Iran had tried to attack Israeli targets abroad using its Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC). Three serious terrorist attacks were prevented: **one in Azerbaijan** (see the section on Azerbaijan), **another in Turkey** (see Appendix I on Turkey), **and the third in Thailand** (interview with Yoram Cohen, Israeli daily Haaretz, February 3, 2012).

Situation on the Ground

64. Current information about the foiled terrorist attack in Bangkok:

1) **On January 12, 2012**, the Thai police detained **Lebanese Hezbollah operative Hussein Atris** as he was trying to board a flight at the Bangkok Airport. He is suspected of having taken part in preparations for the terrorist attack in Bangkok.³⁵ According to the New York Times, he was arrested after the Thai authorities had received a warning from Israeli intelligence that a group of Hezbollah terrorists was planning to carry out a terrorist attack at a tourist site in Bangkok.³⁶

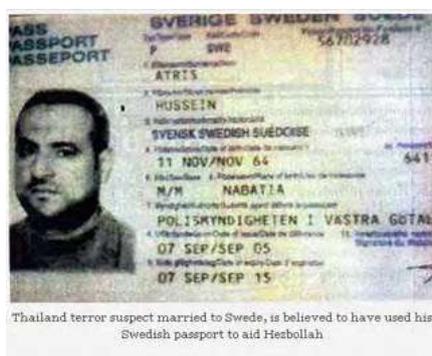
³⁵ naharnet.com, January 20, 2012. The Atrises are a clan from south Lebanon. Most of them live in the village of Habbush, north of the Litani River. "Atris family sources" told a reporter for the Lebanese newspaper Al-Nahar that the facial features of the person detained in Thailand, judging by the photos that appeared in the media, are reminiscent of Ali Hussein Y. Atris, born 1964, who lives with his family in the village of Al-Janah (Al-Nahar, January 20, 2012).

³⁶ The New York Times, January 16, 2012.



Hussein Atris, the terrorist detained in Thailand (globaljihad.net, January 13, 2012)

2) The Hezbollah operative Hussein Atris carried **Lebanese and Swedish passports**. Anders Jörle, spokesman for the Swedish Foreign Ministry, reported that **Atris' Swedish passport had expired**. He also noted that the Swedish authorities could not confirm or deny whether Atris was a Swedish citizen. The other suspected terrorist was **James Sammy Paolo**, 40, from Lebanon, who was Atris' roommate. The Thailand Criminal Court issued a warrant for Paolo's arrest on charges of the possession of illegal chemical substances. He has not been apprehended so far and the authorities are trying to ascertain whether he is still in Thailand.³⁷



Hussein Atris' Swedish passport (thailand-business-news.com, January 16, 2012)

65. On January 16, 2012, acting on information obtained from the Lebanese detainee, Thai police forces searched a three-floor commercial building in a city near Bangkok. On the second floor police found **4,380 kg (9640 pounds) of fertilizer (urea) and 38 liters (10 gallons) of ammonium nitrate liquid**. In the proper concentration, ammonium nitrate is an explosive,³⁸ hence in many countries possessing large quantities requires a

³⁷ naharnet.com, January 20, 2012.

³⁸ A mixture of fertilizer and ammonium nitrate was used to make the explosives for the 1993 WTC bombing.

permit. Urea (found mixed with nitric acid) is used to produce urea nitrate, an improvised explosive.

66. **In our assessment the chemicals were meant to be used to prepare one or more IEDs to attack an Israeli target (or several Israeli targets) in Bangkok.** The large quantity of chemical explosives found could indicate that some of them **were also supposed to be shipped to other countries** to be used in terrorist attacks, as reported by the Thai police.³⁹

Failed Car Bomb Attack at the Israeli Embassy in Thailand (March 1994)

Overview

67. In March 1994, **a suicide bomber** attempted to carry out a terrorist attack on the Israeli embassy in Thailand with an **explosives-laden car**. The foiled terrorist attack was similar to those carried out on the Israeli embassy in Argentina in March 1992 and on the Jewish community building in Argentina in July 1994. All these attacks **were carried out by Hezbollah terrorists assisted by Iran**.

68. The following is the information we have on the failed terrorist attack:⁴⁰

1) As the suicide bomber exited an underground parking lot, he crashed into a local vehicle (an automated rickshaw called a *tuk-tuk*), panicked and fled the scene. When police inspected the van they found a water tank **filled with approximately 1,000 kg (2,200 lbs) of fertilizer, two oil containers, a battery and C4 plastic explosives**. They also found two switches beneath the driver's seat, apparently wired to set off the explosives.

2) After removing the explosives from the tank, **police also discovered a dead body**. The van's owner recognized the body as one of her local drivers and said that she had **rented the vehicle with the driver. Apparently he was murdered at some point by the Hezbollah terrorists who had rented the truck, and his body was placed in the explosive-filled tank**. Had the bomb gone off as planned, his death would have been discovered.

3) **A group of Thai collaborators involved in the terrorist attack was exposed in 1999** with the arrest of **Pandu Yudhawinata**, a Hezbollah operative from

³⁹ A high-ranking Thai police official reported that the police found proof that Hussein Atris had contacted a number of shipping companies to export the substances that can be used to manufacture explosives (Thai daily The Nation, January 18, 2012).

⁴⁰ Levitt, "Hiszbollah."

Indonesia. Pandu was **arrested in the Philippines** as he stepped off a Philippines Airlines flight from Zamboanga City to Manila. **His arrest led to the discovery of a number of Hezbollah cell operatives across Thailand.** During interrogation they provided information about Pandu's terrorist network and **Hezbollah's role in the failed 1994 terrorist attack.**⁴¹

4) Pandu, investigators discovered, **was the one who had rented the van** for the terrorist attack under a false identity. **He was also in charge of coordinating with senior Hezbollah commanders in Lebanon** and took care of the network's passports and purchases. Investigators also discovered that **Hezbollah was planning to target other Israeli and American interests in Southeast Asia and Europe.**⁴²

5) An inspection of Pandu's luggage revealed documents with **the names and telephone numbers of various Hezbollah and Iranian intelligence operatives.** Also found were **five Philippine passports** in the various names, a photocopy of a sixth passport, and personal data for five more individuals. Investigators therefore concluded that **one of Pandu's specialties was procuring false passports for Hezbollah operatives.** In addition, they found that **Pandu maintained Hezbollah arms caches in both Bangkok and Manila.**⁴³

6) From 1994 until his arrest in 1999, **Pandu made several trips to Iran and Lebanon for training. He also carried out missions for Hezbollah which involved the procurement of weapons and fake passports in Indonesia, surveillance of terrorist targets and recruiting members.** Although he was living in Malaysia at the time, Pandu was also involved in stockpiling weapons in both **Thailand and the Philippines**, presumably in preparation for future missions.⁴⁴

7) In 1996, Hezbollah sent one of the operatives involved in the Bangkok bomb plot two years previously **back to Thailand and other countries**, apparently to prepare more terrorist attacks. However, they were apparently **contingency plans** in preparation for attacks to be carried out if and when the order was given.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Levitt, "Hizballah."

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

Hijacking a Kuwaiti Airliner (April 1988)

69. **On April 5, 1988, two Hezbollah squads attempted to hijack two Kuwaiti airliners** en route from Bangkok Airport to Kuwait. The Thai police arrested one of the squads at the Bangkok Airport before it could board the flight.

70. **The other squad managed to take over a Kuwaiti airliner**, forcing the pilot to land in the Iranian city of Mashhad. The hijackers sought the release of seventeen imprisoned Shi'ite terrorist operatives jailed in Kuwait for their role in the 1983 bombings of the American and French embassies. During the hijacking two passengers were murdered and their bodies thrown off the plane.

71. A bargain was made with the hijackers to release the hostages in exchange for free passage to Beirut and the release of terrorist operatives jailed in Kuwait. **Lebanese Hezbollah**, including its top operative **Imad Mughniyeh**, was **publicly accused of responsibility for the attack by the Kuwaiti authorities**.

Killing Three Saudi Arabian Diplomats (January-February 1989)

72. **At the beginning of 1989, three Saudi diplomats** working at the embassy in Bangkok were shot dead. Their killing was part of a wave of terrorist attacks initiated by the Iranians between 1988 and 1999 targeting were Saudi diplomats in various locations around the globe (Nigeria, Pakistan, Thailand, Brussels, Turkey and Lebanon).

73. **In January 1989, the third secretary of the Saudi embassy in Bangkok was shot in front of his residence**. In February 1990, **two Saudi diplomats and a telex operator at the Saudi embassy in Bangkok were shot dead**. A few days later, a Saudi businessman vanished without a trace. He was declared dead, but his body was never found.⁴⁶ The diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Thailand were downgraded as a result of the assassinations.⁴⁷ Some believe that Hezbollah, headed by Imad Mughniyeh, was behind the murder of the Saudi diplomats.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ It is unclear whether the disappearance and apparent murder of the Saudi businessman has to do with the assassinations of the diplomats. In January 2010, five Thai police officers were charged with the murder of the missing Saudi businessman. The murder was allegedly sparked by the theft of money and jewels smuggled into Thailand. However, the five police officers denied the accusations (news.bbc.co.uk, January 12, 2012).

⁴⁷ intellasia.net, September 17, 2007.

⁴⁸ Levitt, "Hizballah."

Appendix III

Azerbaijan as an Arena for Iranian and Hezbollah Terrorism and Subversion

Background

73. Azerbaijan is a relatively young country, established on October 18, 1991. It has about eight million residents, most of whom define themselves as Muslims. **Seventy percent of the residents are Shi'ite Muslims** (the country's Shi'ite population is second only to Iran); the rest are Sunnis. **In Iran, a substantial Azeri minority represents nearly 25% of the population.** The Azeris in Iran live mostly in the country's north, referred to as South Azerbaijan (shalom-magazine.com).

74. Iran was one of the first countries to establish **full diplomatic relations with Azerbaijan** after Azeri independence was declared. In December 1991, Iran's Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati visited Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, where he signed political, economic and cultural cooperation treaties. On January 4, 1992, Iran upgraded its relations with Azerbaijan to full diplomatic representation. **With regard to economy,** the two countries have **well-established relations** with an annual trade volume of around \$500 million a year (Iran is one of the largest exporters of Azeri natural gas).

75. However, there are **profound political differences of opinion** between the two countries: **Azerbaijan,** despite its being a Shi'ite Muslim country, has a strong **pro-Western orientation and, to Iran's dissatisfaction, maintains good relations with Israel. In addition, Azerbaijan is a secular country with a clear separation of religion and state.** Examples of Azerbaijan's pro-Western orientation include sending troops to fight with American forces in Iraq, Afghanistan and Kosovo, and opening the Azerbaijani air space to American planes flying to Afghanistan (shalom-magazine.com). **Those fundamental differences have often created tensions between the two countries and influenced their political relations, which have experienced ups and downs.**

Azerbaijan as an Arena for Iranian Terrorism and Subversion

Overview

76. **Azerbaijan's geographical and social characteristics make it a convenient target for Iranian terrorist activity and subversion.** The two countries share a 618-km (386-mile) border, **making it fairly easy for Iran to infiltrate terrorists and weapons into Azerbaijan.** The religious and cultural relations between the Shi'ite populations and the close family bonds between Azeris on both sides of the border also facilitate Iran's subversive activities.

77. Iran's terrorist activity and subversion in Azerbaijan are reflected in the following:

- 1) **Terrorist attacks on Israeli and Jewish targets** carried out by recruited Azeri operatives or through **Lebanese Hezbollah.**
- 2) **Political subversion directed against the Azeri regime** through providing assistance to radical Islamic organizations and separatist groups.
- 3) **Exporting the ideology of the Iranian Islamic revolution to Azerbaijan** through cultural institutions, mosques and charitable societies.
- 4) **Encouraging criminal economic activities in the territory of Azerbaijan** with the purpose of making profits for the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps and bypassing the sanctions imposed on Iran.

Foiled Terrorist Attacks against Israeli and Jewish Targets

Overview

78. In the past three years Azerbaijan has been used twice by Iran and Hezbollah **to carry out terrorist attacks in retaliation for the 2008 death of Imad Mughniyeh and the repeated sabotage of Iran's nuclear program,** attributed by Iran and Hezbollah to Israel. In both attempts the main target was **the Israeli embassy in Baku.** The second terrorist attack targeted **a Jewish school in Baku.** In our assessment the attacks **were directed by the Quds Force in cooperation with Lebanese Hezbollah and with the assistance of local Azeri agents.**

Foiled Terrorist Attack against the Israeli Embassy and a Jewish School in Baku (January 2012)

79. On January 24, 2012, Azerbaijan's Ministry of National Defense reported that **a squad consisting of three Azerbaijani terrorists handled by** the "Iranian special services" had planned to carry out terrorist attacks on the embassy of Israel and a Jewish school. According to the Azeri Ministry of Interior, **the primary target was Michael Lotem, the Israeli ambassador to Azerbaijan. The secondary target was the Or Avner Jewish school in Baku**, where the terrorists were planning to kill two Chabad emissaries, one a director and the other the chief rabbi. Azeri security forces placed the three terrorists under surveillance and arrested them outside of the Jewish school.⁴⁹

80. Azeri security forces said that **the three squad members were arrested after several months of covert surveillance**. Their names were **Balagardash Dadashev, who formerly resided in Iran; his nephew Rasim Aliyev, who was promised \$150,000; and Ali Huseynov, assigned to fire a sniper rifle**. The three terrorists received weapons, explosives and ammunition smuggled from Iran (news.az, January 19, 2012).

81. Preliminary findings of the Azeri investigation indicate the following:⁵⁰

- 1) **Balagardash Dadashev** was handled by Iranian intelligence agents to carry out the terrorist attack. Dadashev, 60, is a resident of the city of Ardabil, Iran. Until the mid-1990s, he was wanted by the Azeri authorities for conspiracy to commit abduction, involvement in murder and smuggling weapons.⁵¹



Balagardash Dadashev (AZTV, February 1, 2012, as shown on YouTube)

⁴⁹ Britain's Telegraph citing an announcement released by the Azeri Interior Ministry,

⁵⁰ news.az, January 19, 2012; AP, February 21, 2012.

⁵¹ hurriet.com.tv citing the Iranian News Agency.

2) **Rasim Aliyev**, Dadashev's nephew, met him at his Ardabil apartment in **August 2011** and was instructed by his uncle to assassinate foreigners (i.e., Israelis) working in Baku. **Dadashev promised his nephew \$150,000 dollars for killings** and gave him an initial payment of \$9,300 (news.az, January 19, 2012).



Rasim Aliyev (AZTV, February 1, 2012, as shown on YouTube)

3) Rasim Aliyev asked **his neighbor Ali Huseynov to shoot selected targets and promised him half of the money he would receive for the terrorist attacks**. Ali Huseynov agreed, and Aliyev gave him a \$7,000 down payment for the preparations, which included purchasing a car. He also showed him maps and photographs of the terrorist attack targets and their cars. Ali Huseynov spent some of the money to purchase and repair a BMW and other equipment.



Ali Huseynov (AZTV, February 1, 2012, picture from YouTube)

4) After carrying out surveillance on one of his targets, **Ali Huseynov decided to use a sniper rifle** since there were many security cameras in the vicinity of the Jewish school. An alternative was using a pistol to shoot targets **near their homes**. Ali Huseynov told Rasim Aliyev that he would need **a Russian-made sniper rifle with a**

silencer and a Makarov pistol. Aliyev **returned to Iran to report on progress** and received instructions to obtain the weapons.

5) At a meeting held in Ardabil, Dadashev told Aliyev that **the weapons for the terrorist attacks would be hidden in a secret cache on the Iranian border** and asked Aliyev to pick them up there. However, Aliyev claimed the place was dangerous and suggested another location, giving Dadashev a small map showing the place where the weapons would be stashed. **Dadashev consulted the Iranian security services, which disagreed.** He then told Rasim **that the weapons would be hidden at the original location, at the 150th kilometer of the Baku-Astara highway.**

6) In October 2011, Dadashev had the following munitions smuggled from Iran: **an SVD sniper rifle⁵² with a silencer, two ammunition clips and a telescopic sight;** three **Makarov pistols, each with silencers and ammunition;** **16 bags of C-4 plastic explosives;** ten electronic detonators and two packs of bullets. **The weapons were hidden at the agreed-upon location.**



The weapons of the terrorist squad, found by Azeri security forces (AZTV, February 1, 2012, as shown on YouTube). The sniper rifle with the silencer is at the lower left.

⁵² A sniper rifle produced in the former Eastern Bloc. It is currently also produced in Iran.

82. According to reports in the media, **Huseynov was conducting surveillance of two Jewish individuals who visited the Beit Chabad area on several occasions.** After he realized he would not be able to carry out a terrorist attack because of the many security cameras installed there, the terrorist squad decided to shoot **from a greater distance using the sniper rifle.** Another alternative the squad considered was hitting the two targets near their homes (Israeli daily Haaretz, January 25, 2012).

Foiled Terrorist Attack against the Israeli Embassy in Baku (2008)

83. After Imad Mughniyeh's death in Damascus in February 2008, **Hezbollah promptly sent a terrorist squad to Azerbaijan to retaliate by carrying out a terrorist attack on the Israeli embassy in Baku.** The squad consisted of **two Hezbollah operatives** and four Azeri collaborators. The two Hezbollah operatives were **Ali Karaki**, a former member of Hezbollah's foreign operations unit, and **Ali Najem Aladine**, a Hezbollah sapper. The squad members were **arrested by the Azeri security services in May 2008.**⁵³

84. The two Hezbollah operatives **went to Baku from Lebanon. They then traveled to Iran, returned to Lebanon,** and went to Azerbaijan once again. **Iranian passports were found in their possession.** While in Baku, they stayed in luxury hotels and laid the groundwork for the attack on the Israeli embassy⁵⁴ (by collecting information, preparing weapons, and setting up safe houses). **In May 2008, the Azerbaijan police intercepted a car carrying the two Hezbollah operatives.** Inside were explosives, binoculars, cameras, pistols with silencers, and photographs taken during reconnaissance carried out on the target (the Israeli embassy). After intercepting the car, police raided the squad's safe houses.⁵⁵

85. The affair was **publicized in the Los Angeles Times in late May 2009,** when proceedings against the terrorist squad members began in an Azeri court behind closed doors. According to an Israeli security source, **preparations for the attack were well underway:** Hezbollah had a network in place to carry out the attack.⁵⁶ During the court proceedings it was reported that the target of the attack was the Israeli embassy, and that the squad was organized and directed by **Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards.** Since the two Lebanese operatives had poor knowledge of Azerbaijan and did not speak the local

⁵³ Los Angeles Times, May 30, 2009 (hereinafter: Los Angeles Times); IDC Herzliya, "ICT's Jihadi websites monitoring group," August 2009.

⁵⁴ Los Angeles Times.

⁵⁵ Los Angeles Times.

⁵⁶ Los Angeles Times.

language, **the Hezbollah operatives received assistance from Iranian agents, who even provided them with an interpreter.**⁵⁷

86. **In early October 2009, two Hezbollah operatives were found guilty of planning the attack on the Israeli embassy and sentenced to 15 years in prison each.** In addition, **four Azeris who assisted them** were sentenced to 12 to 14 years in prison. However, about one year later, in November 2010, **the Azeri authorities released the two Hezbollah operatives and deported them to Lebanon** (Ynet, November 22, 2010).

Iranian Political Subversion against the Azeri Regime

Overview

87. Since Azerbaijan's independence, Iran, **with Quds Force participation,** has **intensively engaged in subverting the Azeri regime.** Iran's objective is to destabilize Azerbaijan **to pressure its regime into changing the country's secular character and damage its pro-Western orientation and good relations with Israel.**

88. To that end, **the Iranians have made use of various proxies, including radical Islamic organizations, separatist groups, and Iranian-oriented religious and education institutions.** On several occasions, Iranian subversion has provoked tensions between the two countries and repeated accusations by Azerbaijan that Iran interferes in its internal affairs. In addition, Iran has instructed its proxies to **collect intelligence** on Israeli, American and economic targets (such as the oil pipeline to Turkey) on Azeri soil.

89. A WikiLeaks document discussed **a meeting between former President Heydar Aliyev and the American representative in Baku held in 2009.** President Aliyev complained that **Iranian provocations in Azerbaijan were increasing.** Iran, he said, financed not only radical Islamic groups and Hezbollah terrorists, but also **a series of activities against the Azeri regime,** such as encouraging violent religious rallies in Baku, anti-regime incitement on the Iranian Azeri-language TV channel (for example, showing a photograph of President Aliyev with a Star of David), and organizing demonstrations in front of the consulates of Azerbaijan in Tabriz and Istanbul.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Dr. Alexander Murinson, "Iran Targets Azerbaijan," June 23, 2010 (biu.ac.il),

⁵⁸ Foreignpolicyblog, November 29, 2009.

Supporting Subversive Parties and Groups

90. **Iran provided political and financial support for the Islamic Party of Azerbaijan (AIP).** It is a religious, pro-Iranian Shi'ite opposition party that was banned in Azerbaijan.⁵⁹ The AIP was founded in 1991 and openly embraced **anti-Israeli, anti-American and anti-Semitic views.** It began as a legal party but was later outlawed.

91. In 1997, the AIP was put on trial, accused of carrying out **extensive subversive activities with Iranian assistance.** According to the indictment, the Iranians encouraged the establishment of AIP military groups, led by Mahir Javadov, **to topple President Heydar Aliyev's regime.**⁶⁰ In 2003, as a result of the trial, the party was banned by the authorities.⁶¹

92. Nevertheless, the party remained active. **Its members organized anti-Israeli demonstrations in Baku in 2009 during Operation Cast Lead, and during Israel's President Shimon Peres visit.**⁶² AIP leader Movsum Samadov was detained in January 2011 for incitement to topple the government. He denied the accusations that his party had close relations with Iran, claiming that Iran provided nothing more than "moral support."⁶³

93. In the early 1990s, Iran also began funding the activity of other networks joined by some AIP members:

- 1) **The Azeri Hezbollah,** which has operated clandestinely since 1993. Many of its activists underwent training in Iran and obtained weapons from the Iranians.
- 2) **Jayshallah** ("God's Army") an organization established in 1995, carried out attacks on Western targets, **including the United States embassy in Baku.**⁶⁴

94. **In the second half of the 1990s,** Azeri security services exposed extensive Iranian-run espionage and subversion networks. In June 1999, Azeri authorities reported that during the previous several years **13 Iranian nationals** in Azerbaijan were identified as spies; **80 Azerbaijani citizens** were asked to cooperate with the Iranian services; **15 Azerbaijani citizens recruited by the Iranian intelligence services** were arrested and their crimes were proven in court; and since 1992, **hundreds of Azerbaijani youngsters,** with the

⁵⁹ eurazianet.org.

⁶⁰ Nasib L. Nassibli: "Azerbaijan-Iran Relations: Challenges and Prospects (Event Summary)." Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. Nassibli was the former Azeri ambassador to Iran; eurazianet.org.

⁶¹ almanac.abpc.org.

⁶² Murinson, "Iran."

⁶³ bloomberg.com, March 31, 2011.

⁶⁴ Murinson, "Iran."

assistance of the Iranian embassy in Baku, **traveled to Iran** and were recruited by religious leaders to prepare them for becoming mujahedeen (Islamic jihad fighters).⁶⁵

95. **In 2007**, the Azeri security services apprehended members of a network directed by Iranian intelligence. Members of the group, called **the Northern Fighters of Imam Mahdi (NIMA)**, had received orders to monitor **the activity of American, Israeli and Western diplomats and companies on Azerbaijani soil**. In 2005 and 2006, 16 NIMA activists **went to Iran to establish ties with the Iranian intelligence services and the Islamic Revolutionary Guards**. The group produced 150 reports for Iranian intelligence on the activities of the United States, Britain and Israel, and was paid \$10,300.⁶⁶

96. **On December 10, 2007**, NIMA members were charged with conspiracy to **stage a coup** for the purpose of enforcing Islamic religious law in Azerbaijan, in cooperation with **Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards**. According to a Congress report, the group activists received instructions from Iran **to gather information on the Israeli and American embassies, international companies and the oil pipeline to Turkey**. The activists were sentenced to prison terms for subversive activity. The group was headed by **Sa'id Dadashbeyli, a young Shi'ite cleric**. Evidence put forward during trial indicated that **the group had received funding and training from Iran's Quds Force**.⁶⁷

Killing an Opponent of Iran and Radical Islam (2011)

97. On November 19, 2011, **author and journalist Rafiq Tagi was stabbed in Baku**. He was known for strongly criticizing radical Islam, Iran and the Azeri government's policy on Iran and radical Islam. In 2006, he published two articles claiming that Islam was holding back the development of Azerbaijan and other Muslim countries. Consequently, he was severely criticized in Iran and Azerbaijan. In 2007, he was put on trial in Azerbaijan, found guilty, and sentenced to three years in prison.⁶⁸

98. **However, incarcerating him did not satisfy Iran and radical Muslims**. Although several ayatollahs in Iran issued a fatwa sentencing him to death, he continued writing poems and articles. His last article, about Iran and globalization, was published on November 10, 2011. In it **Tagi referred to modern Iran as an easily shattered myth**, and said that Iran's threats against Azerbaijan sound ridiculous.⁶⁹ After that, he was referred to by the Iranian media as **"Azerbaijan's Salman Rushdie"**.⁷⁰

⁶⁵ Nassibli, "Relations."

⁶⁶ Murinson, "Iran."

⁶⁷ fas.org, January 14, 2009; crisisgroup.org, March 25, 2008.

⁶⁸ cacialanalyst.org, December 14, 2011.

⁶⁹ cacialanalyst.org, December 14, 2011.

⁷⁰ rferl.org, November 22, 2011.

99. When interviewed in a hospital **shortly before dying from his stab wounds, Tagi claimed that he had been attacked by Iranian and radical Muslim agents in revenge for his two articles.**⁷¹ The Iranian embassy in Azerbaijan released a statement denying any Iranian involvement in the stabbing, saying that the allegations were intended to sabotage the relationship between Iran and Azerbaijan.⁷²

Exporting the Ideology of the Iranian Islamic Revolution to Azerbaijan

100. After Azerbaijan gained independence in 1991, **it was marked by Iran as an easy target for exporting the Khomeinist Islamic revolution.** Numerous clerics armed with pamphlets, books and money, were sent to the cities of Azerbaijan **to foment an Islamic revival and prevent the new country from developing a pro-Western orientation.** To achieve its objectives, Iran established **welfare organizations, clinics and educational institutions** to consolidate its hold over Azeri society (as it did in other countries). In addition, the Iranian regime made efforts to staff **numerous mosques in Azerbaijan with its own clerics.**⁷³

101. Two major institutions used by Iran to export the revolution to Azerbaijan are **the Iranian Cultural Center in Baku**, which disseminates Khomeinist ideology and has had an effect on many strata of Azeri society,⁷⁴ and **the Imam Khomeini Emdad Welfare Foundation**, which opened a regional branch in Azerbaijan in 1993 (the foundation is highly active in Lebanon and assists Hezbollah). A bulletin published by the Iranian embassy in Baku stated that between 1993 and 2002 Emdad provided aid in 19 population centers to 19,000 people in need and 8,000 students. Figures from 2003 indicated that **the aid provided by the foundation and other Iranian organizations totaled 25 million dollars.**⁷⁵

102. Iran's attempts to influence the hearts and minds in Azerbaijan **have often provoked dissension and even violent clashes between Iran's supporters and Azeri authorities.** For example:

- 1) **In 2002-2006 violent clashes took place in Nardaran, a village situated about 30 kilometers (about 18.6 miles) from Baku (referred to as "the Nardaran events)". Since the village is located in the vicinity of a holy Shi'ite site, it has been an important focus of Iran's propaganda and religious activity in Azerbaijan.** Azeri security forces clashed with disgruntled residents who

⁷¹ cacialanalyst.org, December 14, 2011.

⁷² rferl.org, November 22, 2011.

⁷³ Murinson, "Iran."

⁷⁴ Murinson, "Iran."

⁷⁵ Murinson, "Iran."

complained that economic aid was not being divided fairly. As a result of **Iranian incitement, the confrontations turned into protests against Azerbaijan's secular constitution. The groups organizing the events had received money, inflammatory literature and weapons from Iran.**⁷⁶ (Note: In February 2012, the Azeri security forces detained a group of 20 civilians from Nardaran on suspicion of involvement in terrorism and drug trafficking).

2) **In the first half of 2011, protests took place across Azerbaijan after women were banned from wearing veils (*hijab*).**⁷⁷ Azeri authorities claimed that the protests **broke out because of Iranian incitement**, and that **Iran was interfering in Azerbaijan's internal affairs**. At the same time, the authorities worked to defuse the tension, mainly by lifting some of the restrictions imposed on wearing veils.

Results of the Iranian Efforts to Export the Revolution

103. **Iran's efforts to export the Islamic revolution, which cost it tens of millions of dollars, were unsuccessful in Azerbaijan.** The main reason was that intensive anti-religious activity in Soviet Union times **had weakened the foundation of Islam in Azeri society**, where atheistic sentiments overcame over religious faith.⁷⁸ Another contributing factor was the successful counter-activity conducted by Azeri authorities.

104. The preaching of Iranian clerics in the 1990s prompted the Azeri parliament to **pass a law in 1996 banning foreign nationals and non-Azeris from engaging in religious propaganda.**⁷⁹ In addition, **former President Heydar Aliyev jailed and deported Iranian mullahs** who preached in Azeri mosques. In 2001, **Azerbaijan shut down all Iranian schools in the country.** Since then, few Iranian preachers have come to Azerbaijan.⁸⁰

105. A number of Shi'ite communities still maintain religious ties with Iran and other Shi'ite centers. The Iranian Cultural Center and the Emdad Welfare Center, the two main institutions involved in exporting the revolution, still operate in Azerbaijan. **However, Iran's religious influence in Azerbaijan has greatly diminished.**

⁷⁶ Nassibli, "Relations.

⁷⁷ eurasianet.org, March 14, 2011.

⁷⁸ Nassibli, "Relations."

⁷⁹ almanac.afps.org.

⁸⁰ www.crisisgroup.org, March 25, 2008.

Encouraging Criminal Economic Activity on Azeri Soil

106. The documents leaked by the WikiLeaks website included one **written by the United States embassy in Baku in March 2009**. The document discussed illegal activity, including **money laundering, conducted by Iranians in Azerbaijan to bypass the sanctions imposed on Iran**. According to the document, Iranian businessmen in Azerbaijan, owners of construction companies, factories, trade companies, and shops were actually engaged in illegal activity. **Some of the companies created by Iranians were involved in obtaining spare parts needed by Iran and in various economic and financial activities to generate profits for the Islamic Revolutionary Guards**. The document also said that some of the companies were involved in **drug trafficking**, whose revenues ultimately made their way into Iran's treasury.⁸¹

107. The WikiLeaks document included statements about **the extent of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards' economic activity in Azerbaijan**. The statements came from Iranian citizens in Baku and Azeri businessmen, including the director of Azerbaijan's petroleum company.⁸² The document listed a number of Iranian individuals in Azerbaijan involved in such activities:

1) **Jamal Alavi**, an ally of Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, **is the director of several trade companies in Azerbaijan** and owner of real estate in Baku. Alavi imports spare parts and weapons for the Islamic Revolutionary Guards, dividing his time between Baku, Kazakhstan, Russia and China. According to one statement, **Alavi's companies are exclusively owned by the Islamic Revolutionary Guards**.

2) **Adil Sharabiani**, a wealthy foreign currency trader, resides in Baku and has close ties with the Tehran regime. **He was formerly a senior official in Iran's Melli Bank**. One source claimed to have seen Sharabiani transfer \$5 million in cash, which came from Tehran, to an Azeri bank. It is unclear whether it was a payment Sharabiani received for his services or money intended for other purposes. The United States embassy reported that, **from time to time, he transfers similar sums of money to the Azeri Xalq Bank**.⁸³

⁸¹ calcalist.co.il, November 30, 2010.

⁸² calcalist.co.il, November 30, 2010.

⁸³ Opening front companies and banks in countries where Iran conducts its subversive activities is a familiar method. For instance, on January 27, 2012, the Guardian published an article on **similar activity taking place in Iraq**. According to the article, Iran helps establish **private banks** in Iraq and has Iranian **front companies** there. The companies have started entering the currency trade in Iraq by purchasing dollars from Iraq's Central Bank and selling them in Iran. This is made possible thanks to the considerable influence exerted by Iran on the Iraqi prime minister and the considerable financial benefits to those who participate in the illicit trade.

3) **Kamal Darvishi**, a famous fighter during the Iran-Iraq War who rose **to the rank of general in the Islamic Revolutionary Guards**. Although from a poor family, he is now one of the wealthiest people in Iran. He directs several road-building and other construction companies in Iran **controlled by the Islamic Revolutionary Guards**. He came to Baku with his two brothers about ten years ago. He has developed a close personal friendship with Ziya Mammadov, Azerbaijan's minister of transportation. In recent years, Darvishi's companies have won eight major infrastructure contracts issued by the Azeri government.

108. The money-tracking service of Azerbaijan's Central Bank has blacklisted Iran as a country whose financial activity in Azerbaijan is unwanted, **since it is involved in money laundering and financing terrorism**.⁸⁴

⁸⁴ abc.az, March 11, 2011.