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Spotlight on Iran and the Shiite Axis

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Highlights[1]

- Iran's Supreme Leader said that "the crimes of the Zionist regime in the Gaza Strip" arouse astonishment and warned that any Islamic government that supports the "Zionist regime" will be left with a mark of shame.
- The Iranian Supreme Leader's advisor for international affairs met in Tehran with representatives of Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) and declared that his country is committed to continuing to support "the struggle of the Palestinian people until the liberation of Jerusalem." The Iranian foreign minister visited Egypt and stressed the need to stop the Israeli attacks in the Gaza Strip.
- The Iranian foreign minister met with senior Lebanese government officials in Beirut and stressed that his country respects Lebanon's internal affairs and is not involved in them.
- The Houthis claimed responsibility for four ballistic missile attacks on Ben Gurion Airport and three drone attacks. The IDF Spokesperson reported four incidents of intercepting a ballistic missile launched from Yemen. The Houthis also warned companies operating within the "Zionist entity" to leave immediately. The Iranian foreign minister expressed support for continued Houthi activity against Israel but emphasized that they do not operate according to Tehran's instructions.

Iran's involvement in the Palestinian arena

- Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei said in a speech marking the anniversary of the death of the founder of the Islamic Revolution Khomeini that the "Zionist regime" is in the process of collapse and that it will not take long for it to be completed. He noted that "the crimes of the Zionist regime in Gaza" are astonishing and that instead of using bombs, Israel kills people with bullets. He accused the United States of complicity in Israel's "crimes" and stressed that it

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

should be expelled from the region. According to him, if any Islamic government supports the "Zionist regime" in any way, it should be certain that eternal shame will remain engraved on its forehead. He said that Islamic governments bear great responsibility regarding the Palestinian issue and that this is not the time for silence (Iranian Supreme Leader's website, June 4, 2025).

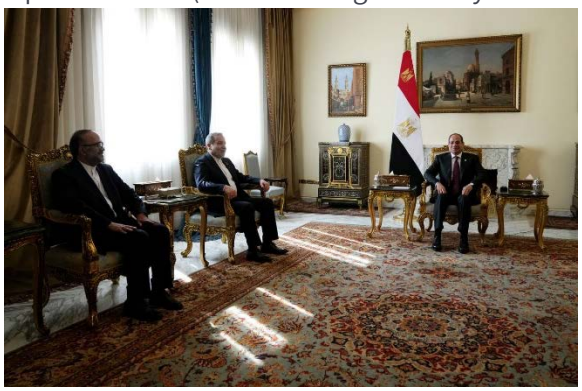
The Iranian Supreme Leader in a speech (Tasnim, June 4, 2025)

Ali Akbar Velayati, the Supreme Leader's advisor for international affairs, met in Tehran with representatives of Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), Khaled al-Qaddoumi and Nasser Abu Sharif, and discussed developments in the region, especially in the Palestinian arena and the Gaza Strip. He praised the "achievements of the Palestinian resistance" and stressed that steadfastness and jihad are the only way to liberate Jerusalem. According to him, the "Zionist regime" is doomed to annihilation and the Palestinian people will win in its "resistance." Velayati also said that "the path of the martyrs of the resistance – from Palestine to Yemen – will continue, and the enemy will never be able to break the spirit of the oppressed peoples." He emphasized that the Islamic Republic would continue to support the struggle of the Palestinian people until the liberation of Jerusalem (Khabar Online, May 28, 2025).

Velayati meets with representatives of Hamas and the PIJ (Khabar Online, May 28, 2025)

- In a message sent by Velayati to the participants of the international conference "Imam Khomeini and the Palestinian Question," which was held in Tehran to mark the anniversary of the death of the founder of the Islamic Revolution, the Supreme Leader's advisor declared that the real enemy is Zionism. Velayati praised Khomeini's positions regarding the denial of Israel's existence, opposition to any attempt to normalize relations with it, and the duty of Muslims and freedom seekers around the world to support the Palestinians. He noted that Israel's repeated "invasions" of Lebanon, Syria, and other countries provide living proof of the correctness of Khomeini's historical prediction, which warned that "the conquest of Palestine" is not the end of the Zionists' path. Velayati added that by distinguishing between Judaism and Zionism, exposing the expansionist and colonialist goals of the "Zionist regime," in the comprehensive support for the "resistance," in the wise use of religious and international resources, such as the pilgrimage and the "World Jerusalem Day," and in the total rejection of any recognition of Israel's legitimacy, Khomeini outlined a clear and unchangeable course of action for the Islamic nation and transformed the issue of "Palestine" from a regional issue into a global ideal of Islam and a beacon on the way to "the liberation of Jerusalem and the restoration of the rights of the oppressed Palestinian people" (Tasnim, June 2, 2025).
- Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi met in Cairo with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi and discussed relations between the two countries and developments in the region. The Iranian Foreign Ministry said in a statement that Araghchi was referring to the "painful situation of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip" resulting from "the continuation of the genocide by the Zionist regime." He stressed the need for joint and effective action by Islamic countries to stop "the crimes of the Zionist regime in Gaza and its expansion and occupation in Lebanon and Syria." At a joint press conference with Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty, Araghchi said that the two ministers stressed the need to stop the "crimes of the Zionist regime" and to support "Palestine" and the rights of the Palestinian people. He thanked Egypt and Qatar for their efforts to promote a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, saying that Iran demands an immediate

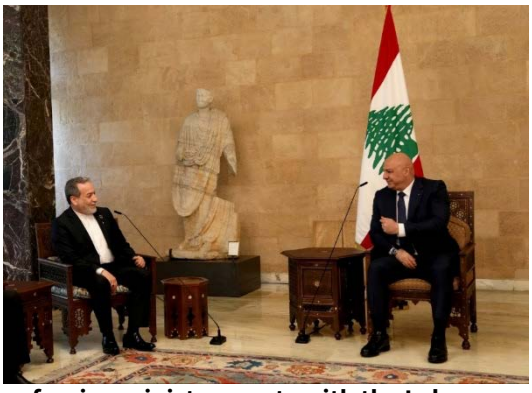
but stable ceasefire in the Gaza Strip and will support any ceasefire that is supported by the residents of the Gaza Strip themselves (Iranian Foreign Ministry website, June 2, 2025).



The Iranian foreign minister meets with the Egyptian president
(Iranian Foreign Ministry website, June 2, 2025)

Iran's involvement in Lebanon

On June 3, 2025, Iranian Foreign Minister Araghchi arrived in Lebanon for a visit. Upon his arrival, Araghchi said that Iran attaches great importance to Lebanon's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity and that it respects its internal affairs and is not involved in them. He added that Tehran is interested in improving relations between the two countries based on mutual respect. During his visit, Araghchi met with Lebanese President Joseph Aoun, Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam, Lebanese Foreign Minister Youssef Raji, and the speaker of the Lebanese parliament, Nabih Berri.



The Iranian foreign minister meets with the Lebanese president
(Iranian Foreign Ministry website, June 3, 2025)

In his conversation with President Aoun, the two discussed relations between the two countries and regional and international developments. Araghchi stressed Iran's willingness to expand its relations with Lebanon in areas common to the two countries and noted the readiness of Iranian companies to assist the Lebanese government in rebuilding the country. Araghchi also stressed the Iranian government's support for Lebanon's national sovereignty

and territorial integrity, and the importance of the Lebanese national dialogue between all religious and political groups in Lebanon for achieving a national consensus and resolving the country's problems. Aoun expressed his country's readiness to expand its relations with the Islamic Republic in all areas. In his meeting with the Lebanese foreign minister, Araghchi said that Iran supports the actions and efforts of the Lebanese government to deal with the "aggression and occupation of the Zionist regime" and to liberate the "occupied territories" in southern Lebanon (Iranian Foreign Ministry website, June 3, 2025).

▶ At the end of his visit to Beirut, Araghchi visited the grave of former Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah in Beirut's Dahiyeh. He declared that the final victory belongs to the Lebanese people and the "resistance" and that the defeat of the "Zionist regime" is inevitable (Mehr, June 3, 2025).

The Iranian foreign minister at Nasrallah's grave (snn.ir, June 3, 2025)

Iran's involvement in Iraq

▶ Iraqi Justice Minister Khaled Shwani met in Tehran with his Iranian counterpart, Amin-Hossein Rahimi, and discussed expanding legal cooperation between the two countries. Rahimi noted Iran's support for Iraq's fight against terrorism, especially ISIS, and referred to four legal agreements signed between the countries that are in the implementation stage. The two also discussed a proposal for a prisoner exchange between the two countries, legal issues relating to Iranian pilgrims in Iraq, and Iraqi assistance regarding the American sanctions against Iran (ISNA, June 2, 2025).

The meeting of the ministers of justice of Iran and Iraq (ISNA, June 2, 2025)

The Houthi confrontation with Israel

- During the past week, the Houthis' military spokesman, Yahya Saria, claimed responsibility for four ballistic missile attacks, all against Ben Gurion Airport, and three additional attacks against "vital targets" using three drones. He claimed that all the missile attacks had achieved their goal, caused the activity at Ben Gurion Airport to stop, and caused "millions of occupying Zionists to run to bomb shelters." He also claimed that the landing of an American military cargo plane at Ben Gurion Airport had been thwarted (Yahya Saria's X account and Telegram channel, May 28-June 4, 2025). The IDF Spokesperson reported four cases of intercepting a ballistic missile launched from Yemen, with no casualties. The claims about drone launches have not been verified (IDF Spokesperson, May 28 –June 4, 2025).
- Senior Houthi regime figures continued to emphasize the "successes" of their attacks against Israel and reiterated that they would not stop their activities in "support" of the Gaza Strip despite Israeli strikes in Yemen as long as the "crimes" in Gaza continued:
  - Abd al-Malik al-Houthi, the leader of the Houthi movement, spoke a few hours after the Israeli attack on Sana'a Airport on May 28, 2025, and said that the goal of the Israeli "aggression" is to exert pressure on the Yemeni people because they support the Palestinian people. He noted that the "Israeli enemy" remains in a weak position after the American aggression stopped because it had failed. Al-Houthi added that "the Israeli enemy" is trying to restore deterrence through "aggression" against civilian facilities, stressing that no matter how many Israeli attacks there are, they will never affect their position on support for the Palestinian people. He made it clear that the escalation in the Gaza Strip "obliges us to escalate the resistance against the enemy." Al-Houthi stated that the reconstruction of Sana'a Airport would continue for as long as necessary to

enable its continued operation. The following day, al-Houthi gave another speech and said: “We aim to escalate support operations against the enemy, and they will be more effective and impactful” (Al-Masirah Telegram channel, May 28-29, 2025).

- Mahdi al-Mashat, the chairman of the Houthis’ Supreme Political Council, said that they have designated the “routes of the Zionist enemy” through which it carries out the attacks as dangerous areas, and called on all companies to refrain from sailing along those routes “for the safety of air and maritime navigation in our forces' areas of activity.” He threatened that “in the coming days, our air defense system will turn the enemy’s air force planes into objects of ridicule” (Al-Mayadeen, May 31, 2025).

Mahdi al-Mashat at Sana’a Airport (Al-Masirah, May 28, 2025)

- In another statement, al-Mashat referred to the warnings given by the Houthis to companies operating within the “Zionist entity,” saying that “they must take our warnings seriously and leave immediately because the area is not safe, and they will be the ones who will bear responsibility for any damage caused to them if they insist on staying.” He also emphasized that “we may make additional decisions in the coming days, which will expose these companies to real and significant risks.” Al-Mashat added that the Israeli government “gambles on the companies’ security for the benefit of its interests and does not attach importance to risks, just as it does not attach importance to the lives of its captives.” According to him, the relevant authorities will set a limited period for these companies to leave (Saba, June 1, 2025).
- Hezam al-Asad, a member of the Houthi movement’s political bureau, issued a statement in Hebrew shortly after a Houthi missile was fired at Israel. He said: “Four million have entered the bomb shelters – half of the settlers – and perhaps the other half will join them. But in the future, an exit will no longer be guaranteed. Not only fragments

await you... but also what seeps in and takes you directly to hell" (Hezam al-Asad's X account, June 2, 2025).

- Mohammed al-Atifi, the Houthis' defense minister, reported that they are prepared for another escalation against the "Israeli entity," which would lead to "an intensification of the siege and additional losses in it." According to him, they have the strategic deterrence initiative to launch missiles and drones around the clock and toward "enemy depth." He added that the ongoing battle with the "enemy" is reflected in the development of Yemen's military capabilities with "longer ranges, greater precision, greater impact, and modern technologies" (Houthi movement Telegram channel, June 3, 2025).
- Nasreddin Amer, the deputy information secretary for the Houthis, said that Israel must draw lessons from the American conduct. He added that they are not the only ones working to stop "aggression" in the Gaza Strip, but the entire world also participates in it. Amer stressed that the Houthis' steadfast position and continued fighting on their part are "a victory in itself," and threatened that "we are developing our missiles, and the escalation we will take is directed at the Israeli economy" (Al-Jazeera, June 3, 2025).

▶ Iran condemned the Israeli attacks in Yemen and expressed support for the Houthis' activity alongside the Palestinians against Israel:

- Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei strongly condemned the Israeli attack on Sana'a Airport on May 28, 2025. He noted that the Israeli attacks constitute "war crimes and crimes against humanity," and stressed the legal and moral responsibility of the countries of the region and the world to combat "the crimes of the Zionist regime in occupied Palestine and other countries in the region." He also condemned the incompetence of the UN Security Council and the support of the United States for Israel, which, according to him, endangers peace and security in the world (Iranian Foreign Ministry website, May 28, 2025).
- Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said at a press conference with his Egyptian counterpart in Cairo that Iran supports the Houthis' efforts in Yemen to support the Palestinian people and the Gaza Strip. However, he stressed that this does not mean that Tehran is instructing them what to do. He noted that the Houthis have goals they aspire to achieve, and Iran hopes they will succeed in doing so. He added that the Yemeni people want to support the Palestinian people and that the Houthis had clearly declared

that if a ceasefire was reached in the Gaza Strip, they would cease their activities in the Red Sea (Iranian Foreign Ministry website, June 2, 2025).

The Shiite militias in Iraq

- Kata'ib Hezbollah spokesman Abu Ali al-Askari said they are monitoring the withdrawal of American forces from Iraq and the areas agreed with the Iraqi government. He stressed that the Americans must first withdraw from the joint operations from the Ain al-Asad and Victoria bases and remove the spy and fighter planes from the skies of Iraq. He warned that "everyone must bear responsibility and act to put an end to the procrastination of the American enemy, otherwise it will suffer severe blows" (Abu Ali al-Askari's Telegram channel, June 2, 2025).