

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2023

Letter to Congressional Leaders on United States Military Operations in Syria
October 27, 2023

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Madam President:)

As I have reported previously, militia groups affiliated with Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) have perpetrated a series of attacks against United States personnel and facilities in Iraq and Syria. Since October 17, 2023, these militia groups have conducted numerous attacks using unmanned aerial systems and indirect fire, injuring several United States service members. A United States contractor suffered a fatal cardiac incident while moving to shelter during one of these attacks. These attacks have placed under grave threat the lives of United States personnel and of Coalition forces operating alongside United States forces.

In response to this series of attacks and continuing threats of future attacks, at my direction, on the night of October 26, 2023, United States forces conducted targeted strikes against facilities in eastern Syria. The precision strikes targeted facilities used by the IRGC and IRGC-affiliated groups for command and control, munitions storage, and other purposes. The strikes were intended to establish deterrence and were conducted in a manner to limit the risk of escalation and avoid civilian casualties. I directed the strikes in order to protect and defend our personnel, to degrade and disrupt the ongoing series of attacks against the United States and our partners, and to deter Iran and Iran-backed militia groups from conducting or supporting further attacks on United States personnel and facilities.

I directed this military action consistent with my responsibility to protect United States citizens both at home and abroad and in furtherance of United States national security and foreign policy interests, pursuant to my constitutional authority as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive and to conduct United States foreign relations. The United States took this necessary and proportionate action consistent with international law and in the exercise of the United States' inherent right of self-defense as reflected in Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. The United States stands ready to take further action, as necessary and appropriate, to address further threats or attacks.

I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution (Public Law 93–148). I appreciate the support of the Congress in this action.

Sincerely,

JOSEPH R. BIDEN JR.

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Michael Johnson, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Patricia L. Murray, President pro tempore of the Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Categories: Communications to Congress : Syria, U.S. military operations, letter.

Subjects: Iran, Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps; Iran, terrorism sponsorship; Iraq, rocket attacks against U.S. personnel and facilities; Syria, U.S. and coalition airstrikes; Syria, unmanned aerial system attacks against U.S. personnel; U.S. servicemembers, casualties.

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