

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2024

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the United States Military Posture in the Middle East and Security Assistance to Israel

October 15, 2024

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Madam President:) (Dear Minority Leader Jeffries:) (Dear Majority Leader Schumer:) (Dear Minority Leader McConnell:)

I write to apprise you of developments in Israel and the United States Government's response to them.

On October 1, 2024, Iran launched over 200 ballistic missiles at Israel. Consistent with our longstanding commitment to Israel's security and our public indication of our continuing efforts to protect Israel from Iranian and Iranian-aligned threats, I am reporting to you the posture of United States military forces to aid in Israel's defense against these attacks and any further such attacks. The outstanding performance of our service members across the Middle East, working in strong support of Israeli forces, contributed to a historic defense of Israel against Iranian threats, much like our shared success on April 13, 2024. Our shared success on October 1 included downing dozens of incoming Iranian weapons before they could harm civilians in Israel.

In recent months, we have adjusted the United States military posture to improve United States force protection and increase support for the defense of Israel. These adjustments include extension of the USS Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group, along with its destroyer escorts and carrier air wing that is equipped with F-35C Lightning II Fifth Generation Fighters, to replace the previously extended USS Theodore Roosevelt Carrier Strike Group. We also have deployed additional destroyers, including some that are ballistic missile defense-capable; the guided missile submarine USS Georgia, the USS Wasp Amphibious Ready Group/Marine Expeditionary Unit, multiple fighter and attack squadrons of Fourth and Fifth Generation Fighters including F-22, F-15E, and F-16, as well as A-10 Attack aircraft; and other forces.

United States forces will remain postured in the region to serve important national interests, including the protection of United States persons and property from attacks by Iran and Iranian-aligned militias, and to continue to support the defense of Israel, to which our commitment remains ironclad. In this context, I directed the deployment to Israel of a ballistic missile defense system and United States service members capable of operating it to defend against any further ballistic missile attacks while this defensive posture is deemed warranted.

I directed this action consistent with my responsibility to protect United States persons and interests 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.

Sincerely,

JOSEPH R. BIDEN JR.

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Michael Johnson, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Kamala D. Harris, President of the Senate; House Minority Leader Hakeem S. Jeffries; and Senate Majority Leader Charles E. Schumer and Minority Leader A. Mitchell McConnell. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Categories: Communications to Congress : Israel, U.S. military posture and security assistance, letter.

Subjects: Iran, missile attack against Israel; Iran, regional involvement; Israel, Iranian missile attack; Israel, security cooperation with U.S.; Israel, U.S. assistance; U.S. servicemembers, service and dedication.

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