



Security Council

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Letter dated 14 November 2023 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I wish to report, on behalf of my Government, that the United States has undertaken measures in the exercise of the United States' inherent right of self-defence, as reflected in Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. The United States took these measures in response to armed attacks by militia groups affiliated with Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps against United States personnel and facilities in Iraq and Syria. The present letter supplements prior letters provided to this Council, including on 27 February 2021, 29 June 2021, 26 August 2022, 27 March 2023 and 30 October 2023.

In the days since my letter to this Council of 30 October, militia groups affiliated with Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps perpetrated a series of attacks against United States personnel and facilities in Iraq and Syria. These attacks have placed under grave threat the lives of United States personnel and coalition forces operating alongside United States forces.

In response to these attacks and continuing threats of future attacks, on 8 November and 12 November the United States conducted precision strikes against facilities in eastern Syria used by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and groups affiliated with the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps for weapons storage and other purposes. These necessary and proportionate actions were intended to reaffirm deterrence and were conducted in a manner to limit the risk of escalation and avoid civilian casualties. These military actions were taken 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. These narrowly tailored strikes are separate and distinct from the ongoing conflict in Gaza and do not constitute a shift in our approach to the conflict in Gaza. We continue to urge all State and non-State entities not to take action that would escalate into a broader regional conflict.

These military responses were taken after non-military options proved inadequate to address the threat, with the aim of de-escalating the situation and preventing further attacks. As the United States has noted in prior letters to the Security Council, States must be able to defend themselves, in accordance with the inherent right of self-defence reflected in Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, when, as is the case here, the Government of the State where the threat is located is unwilling or unable to prevent the use of its territory by non-State militia



groups responsible for such attacks. These actions were conducted together with diplomatic measures.

The targeted strikes on 8 November and 12 November follow prior military actions that were reported to this Council in the letters referenced above. The United States has taken these military actions in Syria and Iraq against the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and militia groups backed by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps in response to armed attacks and will take further such action as may be necessary in the exercise of its inherent right of self-defence to respond to future attacks or threats of attacks against United States nationals and United States personnel and facilities.

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

(Signed) Linda **Thomas-Greenfield**
Representative of the United States to the United Nations
