



Security Council

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Letter dated 30 October 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 precision strikes against two facilities in eastern Syria in response to an ongoing series of armed attacks by militia groups affiliated with Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps against United States personnel and facilities in Iraq and Syria. This action was taken in the exercise of the United States' inherent right to self-defence, as reflected in Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. The present letter supplements prior letters provided to this Council, including on 27 February and 29 June 2021, 26 August 2022 and 27 March 2023.

In those prior letters, the United States reported that 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. Since 17 October 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, on the evening of 26 October, the United States conducted targeted strikes against two facilities in eastern Syria. The precision strikes targeted facilities used by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-affiliated groups for command and control, munitions storage and other purposes. These necessary and proportionate actions were intended to establish deterrence and were conducted in a manner to limit the risk of escalation and avoid civilian casualties. The military action was 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.

This military response was 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 to 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. This action was conducted together with diplomatic measures.

The targeted strikes on 26 October 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 Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-backed militia groups in response to armed attacks and will take further such action in the region as may be necessary in the exercise of its inherent right to 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**

Ambassador

Representative of the United States to the United Nations
