



Security Council

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Letter dated 8 January 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

In accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, I wish to report, on behalf of my Government, that the United States has undertaken certain actions in the exercise of its inherent right of self-defence. These actions were in response to an escalating series of armed attacks in recent months by the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iran-supported militias on United States forces and interests in the Middle East region, in order to deter the Islamic Republic of Iran from conducting or supporting further attacks against the United States or United States interests, and to degrade the Islamic Republic of Iran and Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Qods Force-supported militias' ability to conduct attacks. These actions include an operation on 2 January 2020 against leadership elements of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Qods Force on the territory of Iraq. The United States is prepared to take additional actions in the region as necessary to continue to protect United States personnel and interests.

Over the past several months, the United States has been the target of a series of escalating threats and armed attacks by the Islamic Republic of Iran. These have included a threat to the amphibious ship USS *Boxer* on 18 July 2019, while the ship was conducting a planned inbound transit of the Strait of Hormuz, by an Iranian unmanned aerial system, which was previously reported to the Council, as well as an armed attack on 19 June 2019 by an Iranian surface-to-air missile on an unmanned United States Navy MQ-4 surveillance aircraft on a routine surveillance mission monitoring the Strait of Hormuz in international airspace. The actions taken by the United States occurred in the context of continuing armed attacks by the Islamic Republic of Iran that have endangered international peace and security, including attacks on commercial vessels off the port of Fujayrah and in the Gulf of Oman that threaten freedom of navigation and the security of international commerce, and missile and unmanned aircraft attacks on the territory of Saudi Arabia.

Additionally, Qods Force-backed militias have engaged in a series of attacks against United States forces. Qods Force-backed militia groups in Iraq, including Kata'ib Hizballah, have conducted a series of indirect fire attacks targeting bases where United States forces in Iraq are located. On 27 December 2019, one such attack resulted in the death of a United States Government contractor and injury to four United States service members, all of whom were present in Iraq with the consent and at the request of the Iraqi Government for counter-ISIS operations notified to the Council in the United States letter dated 23 September 2014. In immediate response to this 27 December attack, the United States struck five targets associated with



Kata'ib Hizballah in Iraq and Syria on 29 December 2019. Kata'ib Hizballah and other Qods Force-backed militias then participated in an attack on the United States Embassy in Baghdad on 31 December 2019, which resulted in significant damage to Embassy property.

Since our response, Iran on 7 January launched more than a dozen ballistic missiles against United States military and coalition forces in Iraq. It is clear that these missiles were launched from Iran and targeted at least two Iraqi military bases hosting United States military and coalition personnel at Al-Asad and Erbil.

The United States wishes to note – as it has done repeatedly over the past years – that we remain committed to a diplomatic resolution. We stand ready to engage without preconditions in serious negotiations with Iran, with the goal of preventing further endangerment of international peace and security or escalation by the Iranian regime.

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

(Signed) Kelly **Craft**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
