

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 1, 2022

The Honorable Joseph Biden
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden,

We the undersigned are concerned about the evolving ballistic missile capabilities of the Islamic Republic of Iran as well as the lack of a clear U.S. strategy to counter and devalue these long-range strike systems. The Islamic Republic of Iran remains the world's foremost state sponsor of terrorism while also boasting the largest and most diverse ballistic missile arsenal in the Middle East, an assessment shared by the U.S. intelligence community.¹

Iran launches, proliferates,² parades, and even employs these missiles in military operations,³ all of which serve the Islamic Republic's political and strategic goals. In the last two weeks, Iran-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen launched at least 3 missiles and drone attacks at various targets in the UAE, killing civilians and putting U.S. and allied forces at risk. In January 2020, Iran fired over a dozen accurate short-range ballistic missiles at bases in Iraq housing U.S. troops after the targeted killing of Iran's chief terrorist, Qassem Soleimani, in a bid to kill Americans.

While Iran claims self-sufficiency in its ballistic missile program, it continues to rely on illicit networks that violate U.S. sanctions and export controls in order to procure equipment and technology for its missile and military needs. For example, a recent report⁴ by the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission noted that at least one of the missiles launched in the attack on U.S. bases in Iraq by Iran was "very likely to have been developed with Chinese ballistic missile technology." The Trump administration routinely sanctioned these networks which supported Iran's missile and military programs as well as those of its proxies⁵, whereas your administration has been lagging in this area.

¹ For example, see most recent Worldwide Threat Assessment:

<https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/assessments/ATA-2021-Unclassified-Report.pdf>

² For example, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/04/us/politics/iran-missiles-iraq.html>

³ For latest use in military operations, see: <https://thehill.com/opinion/international/479076-iran-is-increasingly-using-missiles-in-its-military-operations-thats-a>

⁴ https://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/2021-06/China-Iran_Relations.pdf

⁵ For example: <https://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/sm0136.aspx> and

<https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sm0392> and <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sm759>

Moreover, in the first year of your administration, the U.S. Treasury Department delisted several entities that it previously assessed to be tied to the Iranian ballistic missile program.⁶

Your administration has expressed concern over⁷ recent tests by Iran of a satellite-launch vehicle (SLV),⁸ something which contributes to Iranian attempts to develop an Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) and potentially put U.S. allies in Europe as well as the U.S. homeland in range.

But concern and condemnations are insufficient. Action is needed. Iranian sources recently reported that the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), a sanctioned terrorist entity, has overseen the testing of a new solid-propellant motor with maneuvering or thrust-vectoring capabilities.⁹ Solid-propellant motors for a potentially new solid-propellant SLV would move Iran's SLV program closer to being an ICBM program than before.¹⁰

These motor and SLV tests follow integrated IRGC wargames in Iran in December 2021, the same month your administration was holding indirect nuclear negotiations with Tehran in Vienna. According to Iranian reports, at least 16 ballistic missiles were launched during these drills.¹¹ The more often Tehran tests missiles, the more ready and reliable of an arsenal it has.

We believe that the more powerful and lethal Iranian missiles become, the more confident the clerical regime is likely to become in its support of regional terrorist proxies and allies.

We urge your administration not only to focus on drones and precision-strike capabilities,¹² but the entire ballistic missile arsenal of Iran as well as its other long-range strike systems like rockets and cruise missiles. Currently, your administration is working to restore the 2015 Iran nuclear deal known as the JCPOA, but this agreement's accompanying UN Security Council Resolution – 2231 – ends missile testing and transfer restrictions on Iran.¹³ Worse, even before the U.S. left the fatally flawed JCPOA, Iran had violated the missile tests and arms transfer provisions on multiple occasions.¹⁴

We urge your administration to maintain sanctions on all sectors of the Iranian economy that support or contribute to its ballistic missile program as well as the long-range strike capabilities of the IRGC and its regional partners and proxies. To that effect, we seek answers to the following questions in written form in 30 days:

⁶ See letter from U.S. Representatives seeking clarification here:

<https://steil.house.gov/sites/steil.house.gov/files/10.21.2021%20Treasury%20De-Listing%20Letter.pdf>

⁷ <https://thehill.com/policy/international/587732-us-concerned-over-iran-rocket-launch>

⁸ <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/iran-sends-3-research-payloads-into-space-tasnim-2021-12-30/>

⁹ <https://tn.ai/2643786> and <https://apnews.com/article/space-launches-business-middle-east-iran-tehran-3576176a6a6fba054f05528b9e350eca>

¹⁰ For differences and past attempted development of solid-propellant SLVs, see:

<https://english.alarabiya.net/views/news/middle-east/2020/04/28/Iran-military-satellite-launch-requires-US-action>

¹¹ <https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/iran-fired-16-ballistic-missiles-annual-drill-81930349>

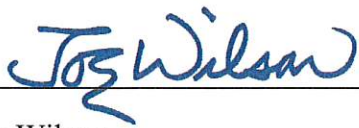
¹² [wsj.com/articles/u-s-plans-sanctions-against-irans-drones-and-guided-missiles-11627556400](https://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-plans-sanctions-against-irans-drones-and-guided-missiles-11627556400)

¹³ See: <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/2231/ballistic-missile-related-transfers-and-activities>

¹⁴ <https://www.wisconsinproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Irans-Compliance-with-UNSCR-2231-Alleged-Violations-Must-Be-Addressed.pdf>

- 1) What is your administration doing to both enforce sanctions not just on Iranian defense entities but on sectors¹⁵ of the Iranian economy supportive of its ballistic missile program?
- 2) What is your administration doing to take advantage of regional peace agreements like the Abraham Accords and foster cooperation between states that Iran threatens with these systems?
- 3) Does the U.S. have adequate air and missile defenses in place in the CENTCOM AOR to deal with the Iranian missile threat and defend all troops and U.S. positions?

Respectfully,



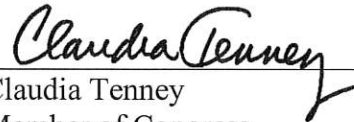
Joe Wilson
Member of Congress
Chairman
RSC National Security and Foreign Affairs Taskforce



Maria Elvira Salazar
Member of Congress



Tim Burchett
Member of Congress



Claudia Tenney
Member of Congress



Brian Mast
Member of Congress



W. Gregory Steube
Member of Congress

CC: Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

CC: Department of Defense
1400 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1400

¹⁵ For background, see: <https://www.fdd.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/fdd-memo-biden-congress-should-defend-missile-sanctions-imposed-on-iran.pdf>