Israel and US must cut Hamas off from Tehran

written by Dr. Yossi Mansharof | 10.02.2025

Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei's statements to a Hamas delegation in Tehran on Saturday regarding the need to rebuild Gaza leave no doubt about Iran's ambition to restore Hamas's infrastructure, which was severely damaged during the war. Experience shows that this reconstruction will focus on Hamas rather than Gaza's civilian population.

With Iranian assistance, the terrorist organization will rebuild its underground network while leaving Gaza's residents without shelter or protection from the bombings that Israel will be forced to carry out in response to Hamas's attacks – attacks that, as usual, will be launched from within civilian population centers.

In doing so, the regime led by Khamenei is complicit in Hamas's war crimes.

The Iranian force responsible for facilitating Hamas is the Quds Force, specifically Unit 190, which handles smuggling operations. This unit relies on a variety of alleged civilian infrastructures, including humanitarian aid organizations and religious associations. It has gained significant expertise, as evidenced by the diverse arsenal Hamas possessed on the eve of its October 7 massacre.

Khamenei's order to rebuild Hamas highlights Tehran's role in the war and the importance of restoring the resistance axis for Iran's security. Iran can no longer be allowed to remain behind the scenes, hiding behind its network of proxies. Tehran has already suffered significant blows during the war, including the loss of senior Quds Force officers on a scale not seen since the Islamic Revolution.

Despite Khamenei's denials, Tehran's security is closely tied to the capabilities of the resistance axis, which serves as its defensive shield. Accordingly, his directive to rebuild Hamas underscores the urgency of restoring Iran's network of proxies, including Hezbollah.

Israel actively working to thwart Iran

As demonstrated by Israel's operations during the ceasefire in Lebanon, it is actively working to thwart Iran and Hezbollah's efforts to reestablish smuggling routes and arms shipments. In response to these challenges, Iran has, in recent months, established an aerial smuggling route from Tehran to Beirut's airport, necessitating Israeli countermeasures with American backing.

Israel and the US must exert maximum effort to prevent the Quds Force from rebuilding Hamas, as its restoration would erase Israel's military achievements in the war and enable the terrorist organization to carry out another massacre.

Furthermore, Israel and the US should promote a comprehensive strategic plan for an all-out war against Hamas. A key element of this strategy is cutting it off from Iran, which serves as its primary source of financial and military support – resources that Hamas now needs as desperately as air to breathe.

Egypt, for instance, has proven to be a weak link in this regard, making it essential for the Trump administration to pressure Cairo into taking significant action to cut Hamas off from its sources of support in Iran.

Published in The Jerusalem Post, February 11, 2025.