



Spotlight on Iran

July 31—August 7 , 2024

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Highlights¹

- ▶ During the past week, senior Iranian officials continued to threaten a harsh response to the killing of Ismail Haniyeh, head of Hamas' political bureau, in Tehran. At the same time, Iran held intensive diplomatic contacts, in which it stressed its right to attack Israel in response to Haniyeh's killing.
- ▶ The acting Iranian foreign minister met in Hamas' office in Tehran with the Hamas representative in Iran and stressed that Iran intended to respond decisively to the attack on Haniyeh.
- ▶ Senior representatives of the Iranian government and the IRGC attended ceremonies held in memory of an Iranian military advisor killed in the Israeli attack in Beirut that targeted senior Hezbollah operative Fuad Shukr.
- ▶ The secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council met in Tehran with the Syrian prime minister to discuss bilateral relations and expanding trade and economic cooperation between the two countries.
- ▶ Amid Iranian threats of retaliation against Israel, the secretary of Russia's National Security Council visited Iran and met with the president, the secretary of the National Security Council, and the chief of staff of the armed forces. Russia has reportedly begun transferring air defense systems to Iran.
- ▶ The Islamic Resistance in Iraq and the Houthis continued talks with Iran and other members of the "axis of resistance" to coordinate the joint response against Israel following the killing of Fuad Shukr and Ismail Haniyeh.

¹ The weekly study includes the activities of Iran, the Shiite militias in Syria and Iraq, and the Houthis in Yemen.

- ▶ “Security sources” confirmed that a Houthi officer responsible for coordination with the Islamic Resistance in Iraq had been killed along with four Iraqi militia members in the US attack on a Popular Mobilization headquarters. They were reportedly preparing for an attack against US forces in the area using drones.
- ▶ Rockets were fired at an American base in western Iraq, wounding five American soldiers and two defense contractors. A pro-Iranian militia claimed responsibility for the attack.
- ▶ The Houthis claimed responsibility for an attack on a vessel in the Gulf of Aden. The claim has not been verified; The Houthis shot down a US drone, the seventh since the beginning of the conflict in October 2023.

Iranian involvement in the Palestinian arena

- ▶ Acting Foreign Minister Ali Bagheri Kani spoke with Qatar’s prime minister and foreign minister, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani to discuss the consequences of the death of Ismail Haniyeh, head of Hamas’ political bureau.² Bagheri said that by killing Haniyeh, Israel had violated Iran’s national security, regional and international security and that Iran would respond in accordance with its rights and protect its national security and territorial integrity. He also called for an emergency meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) at the level of foreign ministers (Mehr, August 1, 2024).
- ▶ Bagheri also discussed the consequences of Haniyeh’s death and Iran’s right to retaliate against Israel in telephone conversations with the foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Egypt, Oman, Jordan, Russia, and the European Union. He also sent letters to the UN secretary-general, the president of the Security Council, and the secretary-general of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, stressing Iran’s right to defend its sovereignty following Haniyeh’s assassination (Iranian Foreign Ministry website, August 1-2, 2024).
- ▶ On August 6, 2024, Bagheri held another round of telephone calls with the foreign ministers of Syria, Egypt, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Malta, and Austria to discuss developments in the region. He reiterated Iran’s determination to protect its national security and retaliate against Israel. On August 7, 2024, he left to participate in an emergency meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (Iranian Foreign Ministry website, August 7, 2024).

² For further information, see the ITIC’s study from August 4, 2024, [“Reactions to the Deaths of Fuad Shukr and Isma’il Haniyeh”](#)

▶ On August 4, 2024, Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman al-Safadi made an unusual visit to Iran to discuss regional developments and escalation amid Iranian threats to attack Israel in response to Haniyeh's death. During his visit, al-Safadi met with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and with Acting Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Bagheri Kani. The president told the Jordanian foreign minister that killing Haniyeh was contrary to all international laws and a "big mistake on the part of the Zionists" that would not go unanswered (Tasnim, August 4, 2024).



Meeting between the Iranian president and the Jordanian foreign minister (Iranian president's website, August 4, 2024)

▶ Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian spoke with senior Hamas leader Khalil al-Haya and expressed condolences over the death of Ismail Haniyeh. He said Israel's "terrorist acts" stemmed from the impasse it had found itself in. He emphasized that Iran's support for the Palestinians and the "axis of resistance" would continue with greater determination (Fars, August 1, 2024).

▶ On August 3, 2024, the IRGC issued a statement regarding the circumstances in which Ismail Haniyeh was killed in Tehran. According to the statement, the operation was planned and carried out by "the Zionist regime with the support of the criminal American administration." It was also claimed that the "terrorist act" had been carried out by launching a short-range munition with a warhead of about seven kilograms, causing a large explosion. The IRGC stressed in its statement that revenge was certain and that "the terrorist Zionist regime will receive the response to this crime at the time, place, and quality it deserves" (Tasnim, August 3, 2024).

▶ The IRGC commander said in a speech at a ceremony in Tehran that the "Zionist regime" did not possess any of the elements that make up a nation and believed that it could prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear energy by eliminating nuclear scientists or survive by eliminating a revolutionary leader and fighter. He said Israel was gradually digging its own

grave, and when it received an overwhelming response, it would realize that it made a mistake in its calculations (Tasnim, August 5, 2024).



The IRGC commander (Tasnim, August 5, 2024)

▶ Revolutionary Guards spokesman Mohammad Naeini said there was no doubt that the “Zionist regime” was the loser from the “stupid act of assassinating Shahid Haniyeh.” According to his statement, the “Zionists” do not know what awaits them, at what time the response is expected, on what day, or in what week. He added that although Iran had not yet responded militarily against Israel, psychologically, the “Zionists” were already in fear and terror (Tasnim, August 6, 2024).

▶ Ebrahim Rezaei, spokesman for the Majles National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, referred to a meeting held on August 4, 2024, attended by the head of the Qods Force Intelligence Division and representatives of the Ministry of Intelligence in the wake of Ismail Haniyeh’s killing in Tehran. He noted that the al-Aqsa Flood accelerated the elimination of the “Zionist regime” and posed a threat to its very existence for the first time. He added that the “Zionists” had no choice but to accept their defeat because they had not achieved any of the war goals in the Gaza Strip (Tasnim, August 4, 2024).

◀ Acting Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Bagheri Kani, meeting with ambassadors and foreign representatives in the Foreign Ministry in Tehran, criticized the indifference of the international community to Israel’s “crimes,” noting that everyone has a moral responsibility not to remain silent in the face of one of the worst crimes of the recent century: the occupation of “Palestine” and the ongoing exile and “genocide” of a nation. He added that the “crime” committed by Israel in the assassination of Ismail Haniyeh was part of Israel’s plan to carry out “genocide” against the Palestinians, which was being implemented on various levels (Mehr, August 5, 2024).



Meeting between the acting Iranian foreign minister and foreign representatives in Tehran (Mehr, August 5, 2024)

▶ Acting Iranian Foreign Minister Bagheri visited Hamas' office in Tehran, met with Hamas representative Khaled Qaddoumi, and conveyed his condolences on the death of Ismail Haniyeh. He said Haniyeh's death had strengthened the "resistance front" in "Palestine" and the region and the connection between the Palestinian people and Iran. He added that killing Haniyeh was a violation of international law, stressing that Iran had the right to respond appropriately in defense of its security and sovereignty and that it would respond decisively to the "criminal act of the Zionist regime" (Iranian Foreign Ministry Telegram channel, August 6, 2024).



Acting Iranian foreign minister visits the Hamas office in Tehran (Tasnim, August 5, 2024)

Iranian involvement in Lebanon and Syria

▶ An "Iranian military advisor," Milad Bidi, was also reportedly killed in the Israeli strike on Beirut that targeted Hezbollah commander Fuad Shukr on July 30 (SSN, July 31, 2024). IRGC commander Hossein Salami issued a condolence message to Bidi's family and praised his activity in the service of the Islamic Republic against the "criminal regime and the Zionist occupier" and the enemies of Iran (Tasnim, August 1, 2024). Former acting president of Iran Mohammad Mokhber said on the sidelines of Bidi's funeral that the hatred in the world towards

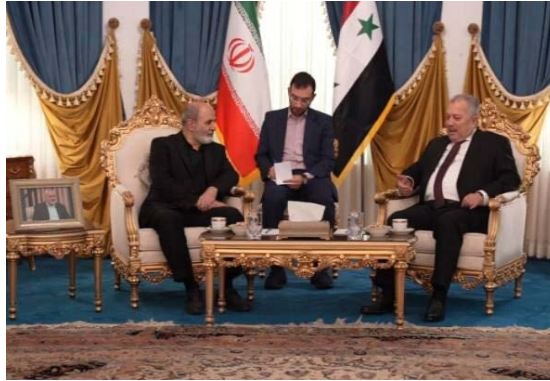
Zionism was growing day by day and that the Iranian public and all freedom lovers around the world were demanding the elimination of the “Zionist regime” (ISNA, August 3, 2024).



IRGC officer killed in the Israeli attack in Beirut (snn.ir, July 31, 2024)

- ▶ IRGC Commander Hossein Salami sent a letter of condolence to Hezbollah secretary-general Hassan Nasrallah following the killing of Hezbollah’s military commander Fuad Shukur in an Israeli airstrike in Beirut. Salami wrote that the enemies of the Islamic nation, especially the “criminal and terrorist Zionist gang” and its supporters, had to wait for harsh revenge from the “resistance” fighters (IRNA, August 2, 2024).
- ▶ IRGC’s Qods Force Deputy Commander for Coordination Affairs Iraj Masjedi said at a ceremony commemorating Milad Bidi that the enemy had no other weapon other than killing women and children and assassinating “resistance” senior operatives, fighters, and leaders. He stressed that the will of the Iranian nation, the Islamic Republic, and the “resistance front” was not weakened despite the casualties, losses, and bombings (Tasnim, August 5, 2024).
- ▶ On July 31, 2024, Ali-Akbar Ahmadian, the secretary of Iran’s Supreme National Security Council, met in Tehran with Syrian Prime Minister Hossein Arnous to discuss strengthening bilateral relations and expanding trade and economic cooperation between the two countries. Ahmadian said all the problems Syria was facing stemmed from Israel and the United States, and that ending the American occupation was the most important step in removing them (ISNA, July 31, 2024).
- ▶ On August 4, 2024, the Syrian news channel Ayn al-Furat reported on increased Iranian activity in higher education in areas controlled by the Syrian regime. According to the report, the president of Damascus University, Mohammad Yassar Abedin, recently met with an Iranian academic delegation which included representatives from several Iranian universities. This was part of strengthening university cooperation between the countries. Iranian graduate

students at Damascus University receive more teaching opportunities than their Syrian counterparts.

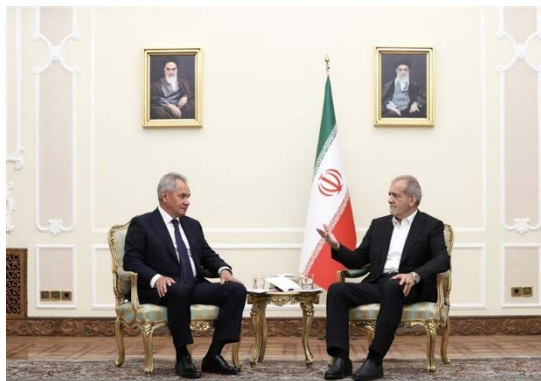


Syrian prime minister meets with the secretary of the Supreme National Security Council (ISNA, July 31, 2024)

Iran-Russia relations

Amid Iranian threats of retaliation against Israel, on August 5, 2024, Sergei Shoigu, secretary of Russia's National Security Council, visited Iran. Shoigu, who had served as Russia's defense minister for 20 years until May 2024, met with President Masoud Pezeshkian, National Security Council secretary Ali-Akbar Ahmadian, and Mohammad Bagheri, chief of staff of the Iranian armed forces (IRNA, August 5, 2024).

In the meeting with Shoigu, Pezeshkian noted that Russia was one of the countries that stood by Iran “during the difficult days that the Iranian people are going through” and praised it for its “positive positions” regarding the Palestinians. The Iranian president criticized the support of the United States and some Western countries for “the crimes of the Zionist entity,” adding that Iran did not seek to expand the crisis in the region, but “this entity will receive a response for its crimes and arrogance.” Shoigu expressed satisfaction with the joint efforts of the two countries to create a multipolar world and ensure regional security (Tasnim, August 5,



2024).

The meeting between Pezeshkian and Shoigu (Tasnim, August 5, 2024)

▶ In a meeting Shoigu held with Mohammad Bagheri, the chief of staff of the Iranian armed forces, he condemned the killing of Ismail Haniyeh, reportedly saying that “there is no doubt that the perpetrators of such crimes want to increase tension in the region” (Tasnim, August 5, 2024).

▶ “Two senior Iranian officials,” including a member of the Revolutionary Guards, said Iran had asked Russia for advanced air defense systems in preparation for the possibility of a war against Israel. According to the “officials,” Russia has begun transferring advanced radar systems and air defense equipment (The New York Times, August 5, 2024).

Activities of the Shiite militias

Preparations for attack following the killing of Ismail Haniyeh

▶ In light of the assassination attributed to Israel of Ismail Haniyeh and the killing of senior Hezbollah figure Fuad Shukur by Israel, “informed military sources” in Sana’a said that the response “is no longer just Yemeni, but together with the Lebanese, Iraqi, and Palestinian resistance movements” and that there was intensive coordination between the sides. They added that the response would be “an open war that will target the depth of the entity and the interests of its supporters in the region” (al-Akhbar, August 2, 2024).

▶ “Iranian sources” reported that as part of Iran’s response following the assassination of Ismail Haniyeh, the head of Hamas’ political bureau, Hezbollah, the Iraqi militias, and the Houthis would play an important, designated operational role in the attack. In addition, the “sources” predicted a scenario of a ground attack by forces from the “axis of resistance” from southwest Syria and south Lebanon if the situation escalated into a war. According to the report, large numbers of Iraqi, Syrian, and Lebanese “resistance forces” were recently seen positioning themselves on the borders with Israel (al-Amid Telegram channel, August 5, 2024).

▶ According to a “source” in the Islamic Resistance in Iraq, following the assassination of Ismail Haniyeh, Iran invited several leaders of the resistance organizations in Iraq and the countries of the region to come to Tehran to learn about matters related to “the work of the resistance and the appropriate military response mechanism for Israel in the coming days.” The source added that fighters deployed along the Iraq-Syria border had been urged to exercise caution and monitor Iraqi skies for UAVs that Israel or the Americans may launch. He stressed that there is a clear willingness among the organizations to carry out military operations against the “occupation” (Reuters, August 3, 2024).

▶ Following the killing of Ismail Haniyeh and Fuad Shukr, the leader of the Houthi movement in Yemen, Abd al-Malik al-Houthi, stressed that the position of the “al-Quds axis, jihad and resistance” was that there had to be a military response to the “serious crimes and significant Israeli escalation.” Al-Houthi said the killing of Haniyeh and Shukr was “part of a clear escalation after Prime Minister Netanyahu’s return from the United States.” He accused the United States of supporting Israel while talking about the need to prevent the expansion of the war. He added that the killing of Haniyeh “exposed the weak positions of some European and Arab countries that did not even condemn it” (al-Masirah, August 1, 2024).

▶ According to a member of the political bureau of the Nujaba movement, the “axis of resistance” has established a joint operations room for the response that will not only include Israeli territory but also American bases throughout the region (Reuters, August 1, 2024).

Cooperation between Iraqi militias and the Houthis³

▶ On August 4, 2024, “Yemeni sources” reported that senior Houthi officer Hossein Abdullah Mastur al-Shaabal, aka Abu Jihad, had been killed in a US airstrike in Iraq on July 30, 2024 (Iranian al-Alam News Agency, August 4, 2024). Kata'ib Hezbollah confirmed that in the attack on the Popular Mobilization headquarters in Jarf al-Nasr, a commander and three operatives engaged in the UAV sphere had been killed (Saberin News, July 31, 2024).

▶ A “Houthi security source” confirmed that Hossein Abdullah Mastur al-Shaabal was a UAV expert and had been responsible for coordinating joint operations between the Houthis and the Islamic Resistance in Iraq since their inception (Ahmad al-Shalafi's X account, August 6, 2024).

▶ According to “American security sources,” the American attack on a militia base in Iraq on July 30, 2024, in which a commander and three Kata'ib Hezbollah operatives were killed, also killed senior Houthi officer Hossein Mastur, who was an expert on UAVs. According to the report, he was in Iraq to train fighters and was killed along with operatives of the Islamic Resistance in Iraq while preparing to attack American forces in the area. The sources say the senior Houthi official demonstrates the growing cooperation between organizations belonging to the “resistance front” led by Iran (The Washington Post, August 5, 2024).

³ For further information, see the ITIC’s study from August 5, 2024, “[Cooperation between the Shi’ite militias in Iraq and the Houthis in Yemen](#)”



Houthi officer Hossein Mastur, killed in an airstrike in Iraq (Tasnim, August 4, 2024)

- ▶ According to “informed sources” in Iraq, a secret investigation has been opened to examine the details of the death of senior Houthi official Hossein Mastur. They noted that the purpose of the investigation was to check whether the reports about the circumstances of his death were true as well as to find out why he was present at the sites of the Iraqi security forces (Baghdad al-Youm, August 5, 2024).
- ▶ A Syrian opposition channel reported that 50 Houthi operatives had reached Albukamal on the Syria-Iraq border. According to the report, the Houthi fighters entered Syria from Iraq in vehicles belonging to the Iraqi Popular Mobilization. Upon arrival, they were received in the office of al-Haj Askar, the commander of the pro-Iranian militias in Albukamal. Forty of the fighters were transferred to the Syrian Shayrat airbase near Homs and to the Quneitra sector, while the remaining ten were transferred to the T2 pumping station on the outskirts of the Syrian Desert. It was also reported that the operatives were equipped with Iranian drones and would operate in Syria under the banner of the Islamic Resistance in Iraq (Ayn al-Furat, August 5, 2024).

Iraq

- ◀ This week, the Islamic Resistance in Iraq did not claim responsibility for attacks against targets in Israel, as it did last week.

Escalation between the Iraqi militias and the United States

- ▶ On the evening of August 5, 2024, it was reported that the American base of Ain al-Assad in western Iraq had been subjected to a rocket attack and was hit (Shafaq News and al-Arabiya, August 5, 2024). According to an “American security source,” five American soldiers and two American defense contractors were wounded when two rockets hit the base (Fox News, August 6, 2024).

▶ According to the Iraqi Political Information Department, the attack on the Ain al-Assad base was carried out with two rockets launched from the Haditha area, and the Iraqi security forces seized a vehicle containing eight of the ten rockets prepared for launch. According to the announcement, the Iraqi forces will not allow “the land of Iraq to become an arena for settling scores and for it to be dragged into the predicaments of wars and the consequences of conflicts” (the Iraqi Political Information Department X account, August 6, 2024). Three suspects were reportedly detained in western al-Anbar in Iraq on suspicion of involvement in the attack against the Ain al-Assad base (al-Arabiya X account, August 6, 2024).



The truck from which the rockets were fired at the Ain al-Assad base (shahokurdy X account, August 5, 2024)

▶ A militia called al-Thawriyun claimed responsibility for the attack on the Ain al-Assad base. According to its announcement, several rockets and drones were fired at the base and the attacks would continue “until the last American soldier leaves Iraq” (Thawriyun Telegram channel, August 5, 2024). “Sources” affiliated with the militias noted that the militia was an alliance of Kata’ib Hezbollah and Asa’ib Ahl al-Haq (Nafiseh Kohnavard’s X account, August 6, 2024). The militia also claimed responsibility for the attacks against the Ain al-Assad base and the American Koniko base in eastern Syria on July 26-27, 2024.

▶ The Syrian opposition reported that Iranian militias had hit an American observation balloon flying over the eastern area of Deir ez-Zor in eastern Syria. According to the report, the balloon fell in the town of Diban (Nahar Media X account, August 3, 2024).



The American observation balloon falls to the ground (Nahar Media X account, August 3, 2024)

▶ Following the American attack on the headquarters of the Popular Mobilization on July 30, 2024, the organization announced that “the forces of evil” continued to spill blood and violate their sovereignty, and therefore “we must defend the sovereignty and honor of Iraq and drive the foreign forces out of our country” (Popular Mobilization Telegram channel, July 31, 2024).

▶ Ali al-Fatlawi, a senior Ansar Allah al-Awfiya (AAA) operative, said that the American strike against the Popular Mobilization base was an official announcement by the United States of the end of the truce between the sides and that it would lead to a response from the militias. He stressed that the militias were prepared for any future escalation and that the time and manner of response would be determined by the militias’ coordination committee in Iraq (al-Araby al-Jadeed, August 1, 2024).

▶ “Iraqi sources” reported that US Secretary of State Antony Blinken had conveyed a warning to Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammad Shia’ al-Sudani amid concerns of possible escalation by armed groups attacking US forces in Iraq and across the Middle East. An “anonymous source” noted that in a phone call between the two on August 4, 2024, Blinken made it clear that the US administration was prepared to take all necessary measures to protect its forces and interests and that any escalation by these groups would result in a more severe response than in previous cases (Shafaq News, August 5, 2024).

Yemen

Houthi military activity

▶ On August 4, 2024, Houthi armed forces spokesman Yahya Saria reported that naval and missile forces had attacked the ship Groton in the Gulf of Aden using several ballistic

missiles. According to Saria, the hit was accurate (Yahya Saria's X account, August 4, 2024). The claim has not been verified by any other source.

► On August 4, 2024, Saria reported that air defense forces had intercepted a US MQ-9 drone while it was over Houthi-controlled Yemeni territory. He noted that the drone had been intercepted by a Houthi-made surface-to-air missile and that it was the seventh MQ-9 UAV intercepted by the Houthis since the war began (Yahya Saria's X account, August 4, 2024).



Right: Houthi fighters with the wreckage of the downed American drone.
Left: Infographic describing the seven American UAVs shot down by the Houthis so far (Houthi forces' media arm X account, August 4-5, 2024)

► The US Central Command (CENTCOM) reported during the week that its forces had destroyed two UAVs, an unmanned surface vessel (USV), and three anti-vessel ballistic missiles in the Red Sea and three drones over the Gulf of Aden. In addition, CENTCOM forces destroyed a UAV and a missile and launcher in airstrikes in Houthi-controlled areas in Yemen (CENTCOM X account, July 31-August 7, 2024).

Statements by senior Houthi officials

► On August 2, 2024, a march was held by the Houthis in support of the Palestinian people. According to the organizers, the march was attended by more than a million people. The organizers issued the following statement: "We emphasize our commitment to the victory of the Palestinian people and our absolute support for Houthi leader Abd al-Malik al-Houthi. We say to the accursed Israeli enemy, you will learn that assassinating the leaders of the resistance will not save you from your fate and failure. The Israeli enemy must understand that the period in which it would kill unhindered is over, and the time has come for the axis of resistance, which will make the Zionist enemy pay an increasingly heavy price for every crime it commits" (al-Masirah, August 2, 2024).

► The Houthi forces issued a statement condemning the "crimes and offenses" committed against the prisoners in "enemy" prisons. They reiterated their commitment to

release the prisoners and work to destroy the “cruel and criminal entity.” Finally, the Houthis condemned the failure of the Arab and Muslim governments to support “Palestine” and expose the crimes of the “Zionist entity” (Houthi forces’ media arm X account, August 3, 2024).

◀ Houthi political council member Hezam al-Assad claimed that Article 4 of the Arab League Charter made it possible to attack any Arab regime that intercepted missiles making their way to Israel, in light of reports that Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Jordan might intercept missiles in the event of a response by Iran and the “axis of resistance” against Israel. Al-Assad also issued several posts in Hebrew. Following are some of them, translated from the Hebrew original: “The Israeli will pay a heavy price for his attacks in Hudaydah, the Dahiya, Tehran and Jarf al-Sakhr. The price will be his disappearance;” “The Jews will understand that Netanyahu was nothing but a historical curse for them;” “Perhaps the shelters are no longer safe and can become mass graves;” “The stupid enemy watches over the sky, unaware of what awaits him underground! With Allah’s help, the volcano will erupt...;” “It is true that the Ashkenazi peoples will return to their homeland in Europe. Therefore, if Washington really loves the Jews, it must now begin to sort out the situation of the Sephardis, Mizrahim, Bukharians and Falashas in Manhattan or Florida” (Hezam al-Asad’s X account, August 1-7, 2024).

Russia-Houthi relations

▶ Russia reportedly stopped a shipment of missiles and other military equipment to the Houthis in July 2024 after being pressured by the United States and Saudi Arabia not to transfer the weapons. “Sources” said the US had asked the Saudis to persuade Russia not to help the Houthis. According to the sources, it is unclear whether it was this request that ultimately caused the halt in the shipment or whether there were other reasons. According to the report, the Russians view the aid to the Houthis as an act of retaliation against the United States considering the assistance given by the Americans to Ukraine and the authorization given by the United States to the Ukrainian forces to attack with American weapons on Russian soil (CNN, August 2, 2024).

▶ Russian intelligence officers were reportedly stationed in Yemen to assist the Houthis in finding targets in the Red Sea, including commercial vessels. A “senior US officer” said agents of Russia’s Military Intelligence Agency (GRU) had been operating in Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen as advisors for several months, but the nature of their activities remained hidden. In addition, it was noted that the Houthis had recently strengthened their ties with Russia, and

their representatives were holding meetings with high-ranking officials in Russia (Middle East Eye, August 2, 2024).

Sanctions against the Houthis

► The US Department of the Treasury imposed sanctions on a Chinese citizen and a Yemeni citizen and on four companies from Yemen, China, and Hong Kong for their involvement in smuggling equipment and supplies to the Houthi arms industry (US Department of the Treasury website, July 31, 2024).