



# THE THREAT FROM IRAN

## IRAN THREATENS U.S. LIVES AND INTERESTS

Iran continually challenges American interests around the world. It undermines Arab-Israeli peace, sponsors international terrorism, opposes American efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq, and pursues an illicit effort to develop a nuclear-weapons capability.

### TERRORISM AGAINST THE UNITED STATES

- The Iranian plot to assassinate the Saudi ambassador to the United States, which was uncovered last October, points to Iran's growing aggressiveness in sponsoring attacks on American and allied targets.
- The NYPD has interrogated suspects with ties to Iran's government seen taking pictures of New York City landmarks, bolstering concerns that Iran or its proxy terrorist groups are prepared to strike inside the United States.
- Iranian diplomats in Mexico were involved last year in planned cyberattacks by a group of hackers against U.S. targets, including nuclear power plants.

### INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

- The State Department has labeled Iran as the world's "most active state sponsor of terrorism."
- Iran's terrorist proxies – Hizballah and Hamas – have killed scores of American and Israeli civilians and actively undermined peace efforts in the Middle East.
- Over the past year, Iran has attempted to assassinate the Saudi ambassador in Washington and kill Israeli diplomats in India, Thailand and Georgia.

### THE UNITED STATES ECONOMY

- By virtue of its status as a major oil producer, Iran is a key player in the OPEC cartel with influence on the price of gas in the United States and can thus hurt the American economy.
- A nuclear-capable Iran may believe it could disrupt a major portion of the world's oil supply with impunity, causing gas prices to skyrocket.
- A sharp and sustained increase in gas prices may send shockwaves through the economy, raising inflation and lowering gross domestic product.



### U.S. BASES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

- Iran has posed a serious threat to U.S. forces in Iraq and Afghanistan by providing weapons, financing and training to anti-American groups.
- U.S. bases in the Middle East are within the range of Iran's growing arsenal of missiles.
- As an emboldened regional power, a nuclear-capable Iran would feel it can dramatically increase its support to groups targeting U.S. troops with limited repercussions.

### NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

- Senior Iranian officials, including the head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization, have expressed willingness to share Tehran's nuclear knowhow with other countries.
- A 2010 U.N. report suggested that North Korea and Iran have cooperated on banned atomic technology.
- If Iran were to acquire a nuclear weapons capability, Arab countries like Saudi Arabia and Egypt have hinted they would develop such a capability.