

MEMMO

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Iran's Ballistic Missile Test Violates International Law

On Oct. 11, Iran violated United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2231 by test-firing the Emad, a new intermediate-range ballistic missile capable of carrying a nuclear warhead. Iran is prohibited under the Security Council resolution—the highest form of international law—from undertaking any activity related to ballistic missiles capable of delivering nuclear weapons. The United States must lead a global effort to hold Iran accountable for its actions.

Iran's ballistic missile test violates UNSCR 2231.

- Adopted on July 20, 2015, [UNSCR 2231](#) states in paragraph 7(a) that the provisions of the previous six UNSCRs related to Iran shall terminate only when the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) certifies that Tehran has completed certain nuclear commitments.
- Tehran has yet to meet its nuclear commitments and has not received the proper IAEA certification. Therefore, the provisions of [UNSCR 1929](#) remain in full effect. Paragraph 9 of Resolution 1929 states that, “Iran shall not undertake any activity related to ballistic missiles capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches using ballistic missile technology...”
- The Center for Strategic and International Studies reports that the Emad has a 1,650 lbs. payload, making it more than capable of carrying a nuclear warhead.
- Iran's Emad test is the first of its kind in several years, highlighting Iran's intention to rebuff U.N. Security Council restrictions and violate international law.



Iran's firing of the Emad ballistic missile was a clear violation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 2231.

Iran rejects any limits on its ballistic missile program.

- Following the adoption of UNSCR 2231, Iran's Foreign Ministry released a statement saying, “Iran's military capacities, especially ballistic missiles...are outside the scope and competence of the Security Council resolution.”
- On July 21, 2015, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif told Iran's parliament that per UNSCR 2231, the constraints on its ballistic missile program “has turned into a non-binding restriction.”
- On Aug. 1, 2015, Iranian Parliamentary Speaker Ali Larijani claimed that the resolution contains clauses on missiles “which we will not listen to, and we do not accept.” He added, “[Iran will] continue missile work.”

- On Aug. 22, 2015, Iran flaunted its ongoing ballistic missile activities by unveiling the new Fateh 313 missile. Iranian President Hassan Rouhani explicitly declared Iran’s intention to continue ignoring international law, stating, “We will buy, sell and develop any weapons we need and we will not ask for permission or abide by any resolution for that.”

Iran’s ballistic missile test represents a significant advance in technology.

- According to Iranian Defense Minister Hossein Dehqan, the new Emad missile constitutes a significant improvement over Iran’s current Shahab-3 ballistic missiles, which have a range of up to 1,250 miles that can reach Israel, other U.S. allies and regional U.S. military bases.
- Iran claims it can guide the Emad toward its target which, if true, substantially improves its accuracy and will necessitate Israel and the U.S. to devote additional resources to missile defense.

Iran already has the most robust ballistic missile program in the region.

- According to U.S. Director of National Intelligence James Clapper, Iran has the largest, most diverse stockpile of ballistic missiles in the Middle East, including short- and medium-range missiles.
- In May 2015, the Congressional Research Service reported that ballistic missile technology cooperation between Iran and North Korea is “significant and meaningful.”
- According to the U.S. intelligence community:
 - Iran is currently developing intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM) capable of striking the United States, which could be operational within a matter of years.
 - Iran is developing solid-fueled ballistic missile technologies that will significantly reduce a missile’s launch preparation time and footprint.
 - Iran is investing significant resources to improve the guidance and precision strike capabilities of its existing ballistic missiles stockpile.