

## FACT SHEET: IRAN – LEADING STATE SPONSOR OF TERROR

Iran has been identified as the world's leading state sponsor of international terrorism, funding Hezbollah, Islamic Jihad, and Hamas, as well as Shiite insurgent groups.<sup>1</sup> The Iranian regime is currently recruiting and training its citizens for suicide operations against western targets. This, combined with the regime's intransigence over its ambitions to become a nuclear power, poses a major threat and concern for the international community.<sup>2</sup>

- In Germany, European Union (EU) officials are aware of 800 Iranian-backed Shiite Hezbollah terrorists that reside in the country and sleeper cells in 20 EU nations. Hezbollah cells are utilizing key European capitals as intelligence gathering centers. Europe has also served as a popular location for Hezbollah operatives to conduct fundraising activities, estimated to accrue more than \$198 million a year.<sup>3</sup>
- Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and his spiritual leader have called upon Iranian youth to join the Iranian Organization of Martyrs, which trains men and women to carry out *shahada* (martyrdom) operations against the enemies of Islam. So far, 40,000 young Iranians are waiting to receive instructions to carry out their suicide-terrorist operations around the world.<sup>4</sup>
- The Shiite Iranian-backed terrorist group Hezbollah is viewed as Tehran's utmost violent weapon against Israel and the west. Iran helped found, organize, and train Hezbollah. Iran provides nearly €77.8 million (\$100 million) annually to the terror organization. Hezbollah terrorists maintain close ties with Islamic Revolutionary Corps officials, who are under the command of Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei.<sup>5</sup>
- In a Tehran cemetery, 100 aspiring suicide bombers were sworn in at a ceremony attended by a group of Hezbollah militants from Lebanon. The new recruits are part of a movement called Setad Padasht Shohadaye Nehzat Jahani Islam (Headquarters for the Commemoration of the Martyrs of the International Islamic Movement). Mohammad Ali Samadi, the organization's spokesman, said that "Israel is a target of the group along with the U.S. and European Union countries where the group has allegedly recruited militants. We have brothers who are ready to sacrifice their lives for the triumph of Islam in Great Britain, France, Belgium, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands and also the United States." According to Tehran, there are 25,000 members ready to be suicide bombers.<sup>6</sup>
- Twenty terrorist camps and centers run by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) have recently been exposed by a former IRGC officer. The former officer said the camps and training centers were under the control of the IRGC's elite Qods Force, the extra-territorial arm of the Revolutionary Guards. He stated, "The Qods Force has an extensive network that uses the facilities of Iranian embassies or cultural and economic missions or a number of religious institutions

such as the Islamic Communications and Culture Organization to recruit radical Islamists in Muslim countries or among the Muslims living in the West.” From stations abroad, recruits are then shipped to Iran via other allied countries and are sent to the training camps. According to the officer, some 50 Islamists from neighboring Arab countries are receiving training.<sup>7</sup>

The 20 Iranian bases used for training include:

1) Imam Ali Training Garrison, Tajrish Square, Tehran 2) Bahonar Garrison, Chalous Street, close to the dam of Karaj 3) Qom’s Ali-Abad Garrison, Tehran-Qom highway 4) Mostafa Khomeini Garrison, Eshrat-Abad district, Tehran 5) Crate Camp Garrison, 40 kilometres from the Ahwaz-Mahshar highway 6) Fateh Qani-Hosseini Garrison, between Tehran and Qom 7) Qayour Asli Garrison, 30 kilometres from Ahwaz-Khorramshahr highway 8) Abouzar Garrison, Qaleh-Shahin district, Ahwaz, Khuzestan province 9) Hezbollah Garrison, Varamin, east of Tehran 10) Eezeh Training Garrison 11) Amir-ol-Momenin Garrison, Ban-Roushan, Ilam province 12) Kothar Training Garrison, Dezful Street, Shoushtar, Khuzestan province 13) Imam Sadeq Garrison, Qom 14) Lavizan Training Center, north-east Tehran 15) Abyek Training Center, west of Tehran 16) Dervish Training Center, 18 kilometres from the Ahwaz-Mahshar highway 17) Qazanchi Training Center, Ravansar-Kermanshah-Kamyaran tri-junction 18) Beit-ol-Moqaddas University, Qom 19) Navab Safavi School, Ahwaz 20) Nahavand Training Center, 45 kilometres from Nahavand, western Iran

- Iran, under Ahmadinejad’s leadership, pledged £28 million (\$50m) to the Palestinians’ Hamas government. Hamas is recognized as a terrorist organization by both the European Union (EU) and the United States. Until Hamas came to power, the EU gave around 500m euros (\$600m) a year to the Palestinian Authority, but withdrew its aid when Hamas refused EU demands to recognize Israel and renounce violence.<sup>8</sup>
- Ahmadinejad has demonstrated his willingness to share nuclear technology with others: “With respect to the needs of Islamic countries, we are ready to transfer nuclear know-how to these countries.”<sup>9</sup>
- On Jan. 3, 2002, Israeli commandos seized the *Karine A*, a ship in the Red Sea carrying 50 tons of heavy arms and explosives that U.S. and Israeli intelligence have determined were heading from Iran to the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank. The U.S. and Israel say that two top aides to Yasser Arafat met secretly with Iranian officials in Moscow in May 2001 to arrange the shipment of weapons. According to *Time*, “The Israelis say the crew told them the weapons were loaded onto the *Karine A* from boats off the Iranian coast in an operation headed by Lebanese Hajj Bassem, an assistant to the notorious Hezbollah terrorist Imad Mughniyeh.”<sup>10</sup>

- In the past two decades Iran's intelligence service, operating out of its embassies around the world, has assassinated dozens of monarchists and political dissidents in Europe, Pakistan, Turkey and the Middle East.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>1</sup> O'Toole, Pam, "Rice: Iran is terrorism 'banker'," *BBC News*, Feb. 17, 2006, accessed July 7, 2006, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/4722498.stm>

<sup>2</sup> Thomas, George, "Iran trains 'ultimate martyrs,'" *Christian World News*, May 12, 2006, <http://www.cbn.com/CBNnews/CWN/051206Iran.asp> and International Institute for Strategic Studies, "Iran's nuclear programme," *Strategic Comments*, Volume 12, Issue 1, Feb. 2006

<sup>3</sup> Levitt, Mathew A., "Islamic extremism in Europe," Testimony to the Committee on International Relations Subcommittee on Europe and Emerging Threats, United States House of Representatives, April 7, 2005, [http://www.house.gov/international\\_relations/109/lev042705.pdf](http://www.house.gov/international_relations/109/lev042705.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> "Iran's new president glorifies martyrdom," Middle East Media Research Institute, Special Dispatch No. 945, July 29, 2005, <http://memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=archives&Area=sd&ID=SP94505>

<sup>5</sup> Byman, Daniel L, "Iran, Terrorism, and Weapons of Mass Destruction," Subcommittee on the Prevention of Nuclear and Biological Attacks of the Homeland Security Committee, The Brookings Institute, Sept. 8, 2005, <http://www.brookings.edu/views/testimony/fellows/byman20050908.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Rafat, Ahmad, "Europe a Target of Iranian Suicide Bombers," Student Movement Coordination Committee for Democracy in Iran, May 26, 2006, [http://daneshjoo.org/publishers/currentnews/article\\_6031.shtml](http://daneshjoo.org/publishers/currentnews/article_6031.shtml)

<sup>7</sup> Razi, Farhad, "20 Terrorist training camps in Iran uncovered," *Global Politician*, March 1, 2006, <http://globalpolitician.com/articledes.asp?ID=1639&cid=2&sid=4>

<sup>8</sup> "Iran pledges \$50m Palestinian aid," *BBC News*, April 16, 2006

<sup>9</sup> "Last chance to avoid war," *The Sunday Telegraph*, October 16, 2005

<sup>10</sup> Frontline, "Iran and the 'axis of evil'," *PBS*, May 2002,

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/tehran/axis/map.html>

<sup>11</sup> Priest, Dana, "Attacking Iran May Trigger Terrorism," *Washington Post*, April 2, 2006

## FACT SHEET: AHMADINEJAD'S EXTREMIST RELIGIOUS VIEWS

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is a Shia Muslim within Iran's dominant "Twelver" sect, known for his devotion to the Hidden Imam, a Messiah-like figure of Shia Islam. The President believes that his government must prepare Iran for the Imam's imminent return. Ahmadinejad believes that it is his duty to trigger a period of chaos, war and bloodshed, which will lead to the coming of the 12<sup>th</sup> Imam who will eventually rule the world.<sup>1</sup>

- Ahmadinejad claims a "private personal channel" to the Hidden Imam, also known as the Mahdi who disappeared during the 9<sup>th</sup> century. When Ahmadinejad was Mayor of Tehran, he allegedly had a highway re-paved so that the Mahdi would not experience a bumpy road back. Now, as President, he has asked Cabinet members to sign an oath of allegiance to the Messiah. In his speech on Sept. 14, 2005 to the United Nations, Ahmadinejad called for the Mahdi's re-emergence.<sup>2</sup>
- Recalling his speech afterwards, Ahmadinejad said: "One of our group told me that, when I started to say 'In the name of God, the almighty, the merciful', he saw a light around me and I was placed inside this aura. I felt it myself. I felt the atmosphere suddenly change and, for those 27 or 28 minutes, the leaders of the world did not blink."<sup>3</sup>
- In 2005, Ahmadinejad announced his intention to stand for President. Now, as President, he is boasting that the Imam gave him the Presidency for a single task: provoking a "clash of civilizations" wherein the Muslim world, led by Iran, takes on the "infidel" West, led by the United States, and defeats it in a slow but prolonged contest.<sup>4</sup>
- "In Ahmadinejad's analysis, the rising Islamic 'superpower' has decisive advantages over the infidel. Islam has four times as many young men of fighting age as the West, with its aging populations. Hundreds of millions of Muslim 'ghazis' (holy raiders) are keen to become martyrs while the infidel youths, loving life and fearing death, hate to fight. Islam also has four-fifths of the world's oil reserves, and so controls the lifeblood of the infidel."<sup>5</sup>
- "Have no doubt... Allah willing, Islam will conquer what? It will conquer all the mountain tops of the world."<sup>6</sup>
- "Today, we should define our economic, cultural and political policies based on the policy of Imam Mahdi's return."<sup>7</sup>
- "We must prepare ourselves to rule the world and the only way to do that is to put forth views on the basis of the Expectation of Return [the return of the Mahdi]."<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> La Guardia, Anton, "Divine mission' driving Iran's new leader Ahmadinejad's confidence," *The Daily Telegraph (London)*, January 14, 2006

<sup>2</sup> Manji, Irshad, "Armageddon? Great, bring it on," *The Times (London)*, May 1, 2006

<sup>3</sup> Moore, Charles, "There's method in the Mahdi madness of Iran's president," *The Daily Telegraph (London)*, January 14, 2006

<sup>4</sup> Taheri, Amir, "The frightening truth of why Iran wants a bomb," *The Daily Telegraph*, April 16, 2006

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> "Iran's New President Glorifies Martyrdom," *MEMRI-Special Dispatch Series- No. 945*, July 29, 2005, <http://memri.org/bin/opener.cgi?Page=archives&ID=SP94505>

<sup>7</sup> Ilan Berman, "Understanding Ahmadinejad," *The American Foreign Policy Council*, June 2006, No. 1, <http://www.afpc.org/IFI/UnderstandingAhmadinejad.PDF>

<sup>8</sup> "Iran's Ahmadinejad: Sharon dead and 'others to follow suit,'" *Iran Focus*, January 5, 2006, <http://www.iranfocus.com/modules/news/article.php?storyid=5166>

## FACT SHEET: AHMADINEJAD'S VIEWS ON ISRAEL AND THE HOLOCAUST

- *“Israel is doomed to be ‘wiped from the map’ in a ‘war of destiny.’”<sup>1</sup>*
- *“Ahmadinejad calls Israel ‘a disgraceful stain on the Islamic world’ and ‘a rotten, dried tree that will be eliminated by one storm.’”<sup>2</sup>*
- *“Israel is a danger, but one that is about to come to an end.”<sup>3</sup>*
- *“They have created a myth in the name of the Holocaust and consider it above God, religion and the prophets”<sup>4</sup>*
- *“Some European countries insist on saying that Hitler killed millions of innocent Jews in furnaces...Although we don’t accept this claim...If the Europeans are honest they should give some of their provinces in Europe—like in Germany, Austria or other countries—to the Zionists and the Zionists can establish their state in Europe.”<sup>5</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> Pryce-Jones, David, “A Particular Madness – Understanding Iran’s Ahmadinejad,” *National Review*, May 8, 2006

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> “Quote Unquote,” *The Jerusalem Post*, May 15, 2006

<sup>4</sup> Vick, Karl. “Iran’s President calls Holocaust ‘Myth’ in latest Assault on Jews,” *The Washington Post*, December 15, 2005

<sup>5</sup> “Ahmadinejad: Courting controversy,” *Aljazeera*, December 14, 2005, <http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/39AF3EA0-C8E9-456A-99D3-438045D4431F.htm>