

23 February 2024

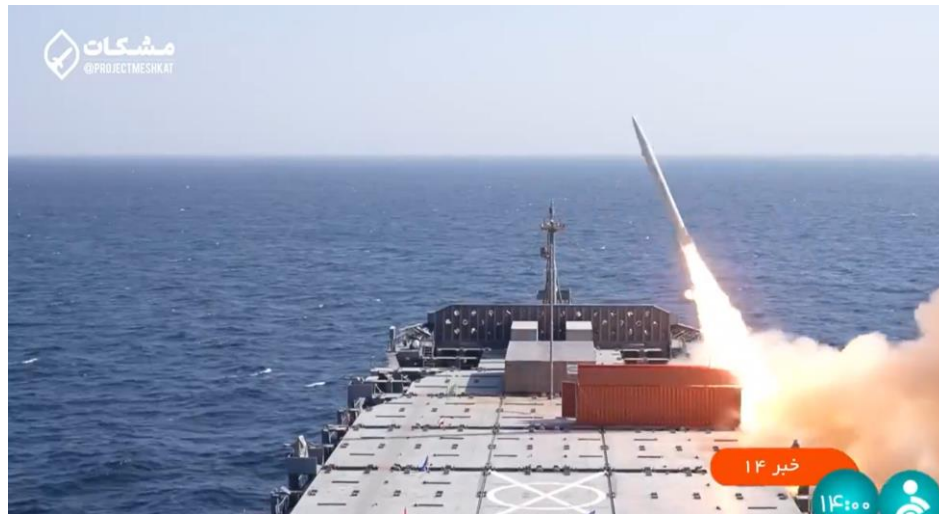
An Analytic Intelligence  
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# Issue 447

## Of Eagle Eye Intelligence

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## IRAN: Simulated Attack on Israel May Lead to Tehran's Open Support of Hamas

**Summary:** The simulated Iranian attack on an airbase in Israel showcases advances in military power which may indicate Tehran's intention to openly support Hamas and involve its own military in the Israel-Hamas War.

**Development:** On 12 February, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) launched a simulated attack on a replica of the Palmachim airbase, constructed in the Iranian desert, according to Al-Jazeera. The IRGC celebrated "Guard's Day," the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Iranian Revolution, with the launch of new missiles containing improved accuracy and extended range. Tehran demonstrates the advancing power of its military forces as it successfully strikes the airbase replica with the recently developed missiles from warships and submarines. The Shahid Mahdavi, the warship that launched the ballistic missiles, can carry several types of missiles, according to *OODALOOP*. The test strike aims to practice for an attack on the Palmachim airbase, according to *The Courier*. In response to speculation about the target, Iran claims the Palmachim airbase, south of Tel Aviv, houses the majority of Jerusalem's F-35 fighter jets and receives wounded soldiers, making it a critical base in the Israel-Hamas war, according to *Al-Jazeera*. The IRGC forces declared readiness to conduct a missile exercise to destroy any major threat, according to *The Courier*.

**Analysis:** Tehran may escalate their involvement in the Israel-Hamas war despite the recent confirmation from Tehran and Beirut which states that both governments agree war does not solve any issues. Tehran will likely continue to advance its weapons systems and increase its IRGC numbers to maintain a strong and readied military force. The IRGC may choose the Palmachim airbase as a potential first target due to its importance to Jerusalem in the ongoing war.

[Caileigh Tax]

## YEMEN: Houthis Likely to Continue Attacking Ships Passing through the Red Sea

**Summary:** Houthi rebels struck an Iran-bound vessel with two missiles, causing minor damage. A previous history of attacks indicates the Houthis will likely continue to strike ships in the Red Sea.

**Development:** On 12 February, Houthi militants fired two missiles at a cargo ship bound for Bandar Khomeini in Iran, according to CBS News. Missiles struck the bulk carrier MV Star Iris while transporting corn from Brazil in the Red Sea, according to Reuters. Houthi militants fired missiles from Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen, according to Reuters. Houthis identified the vessel as US-linked and confirmed striking the ship while it traveled in waters off Yemen, according to *Al-Jazeera*. The attack shows how widely the Houthis now target cargo vessels near Yemen, which appears to mark the first time Houthis targeted an Iran-bound vessel, according to Reuters.

**Analysis:** The Houthis will almost certainly continue attacking ships traveling through the Red Sea. Companies will probably halt routes through the Red Sea and opt for more expensive routes. The Houthis likely utilized the attack to show that the group operates independently of Iran. This will likely cause Iran to halt its support for the Houthis.

[Kate Hagopian]

## LEBANON: French Peace Proposal Unlikely to Change Hezbollah Involvement in Israel

**Summary:** Hezbollah will likely decline the Paris proposal and continue striking Jerusalem until Israeli aggression ends in the Gaza Strip.

**Development:** On 13 February, Paris proposed a peace treaty to end the conflict with Israel in Beirut. Paris' historical interest in the peace and security of Lebanon translates to its interest in a peace treaty. The proposal offers to create an area of peace six miles on either side of the Lebanon-Israel border. On 12 February, a Hezbollah strike killed two Israeli citizens. Jerusalem retaliated by launching multiple missile strikes on Hezbollah bases and Nabatieh, killing three civilians and a Hezbollah fighter, according to *Al-Jazeera*. Hezbollah Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah stated armed forces will not stop cross-border shelling until Israel ends aggression in the Gaza Strip. The first Hezbollah manifesto in 1985 pledges allegiance to the supreme leader of Iran and calls for the destruction of the Israeli state, according to The International Institute for Counterterrorism. One of three Hezbollah goals stated in the manifesto calls to expel Paris and their allies from Lebanon.

**Analysis:** Nasrallah will likely use political tensions from continued Hezbollah shelling to show loyalty to Hamas despite the Paris proposal. Beirut will likely pressure Hezbollah politically to end shelling due to the ties between Beirut and Paris. Due to continued Israeli shelling in the Gaza Strip, Nasrallah will likely use the pressure from Beirut and Paris as an opportunity to show dedication to supporting Hamas. The commitment to shelling Jerusalem from Nasrallah will probably lead to other Iran-allied forces assisting the attacks on Jerusalem. Nasrallah will not likely involve Hezbollah forces in similar Tehran-backed attacks on U.S. targets. The anti-imperialistic goal of Hezbollah likely furthers the wanted separation of policy between Nasrallah and Paris.

[Elliot Bankler]

## MALI: Opposition Coalition Will Likely Pose Moderate Challenge to Bamako

**Summary:** New opposition parties and affiliates seek to return Bamako to a civilian and democratic government. Despite influential members and many involved organizations, the new group will likely present a minor problem to the incumbent Junta leadership allied with Moscow.

**Development:** On 17 February, a coalition of 30 political groups and organizations formed the Synergy of Action for Mali. The new body calls to end the delayed transition period and for the return to constitutional order, according to Radio France Internationale. Members include Imam Mahmoud Dicko and other leaders who gathered between 30,000 and 50,000 protestors against Bamako's Prime Minister Soumeylou Boubèye Maïga and President Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta in 2019. Synergy of Action for Mali claims "a matter of urgency to save the country" because of the incumbent Junta presiding since 2020, according to *Le Journal de Montréal*. Synergy of Action for Mali calls for activism by all legal means. Bamako described the movement as a "non-event," according to Anadolu. Moscow still maintains a strong influence in Bamako, according to European Union External Action.

**Analysis:** Synergy of Action for Mali will likely face an uphill battle to push Bamako's government towards democratic functionality. With a larger, diverse coalition, Imam Dicko's involvement will likely help organize mass protests against the Junta. The emphasis on activism by all legal means likely suggests the movement intends to attract broader legitimacy and support. Despite the movement's size, Bamako will likely retain long-term control. Bamako and Moscow will almost certainly maintain a strong relationship for Bamako's security concerns and Moscow's investment in precious mineral resources. Moscow-affiliated resources like the rebranded Africa Corps private military company deployed to Burkina Faso last month will likely increase information operations against Synergy of Action for Mali.

[Markus Weinzinger]

## POLAND: Alleged Spyware Operation Likely to Decrease Trust in Previous Ruling Party

**Summary:** Warsaw's investigation into the previous government's illegal spyware use will likely result in the Law and Justice (PiS) Party experiencing diminished political influence in future Polish elections.

**Development:** On 19 February, parliamentary commission members began an investigation into allegations of the previous PiS-led government use of spyware to illegally hack the cellphones of political opponents and other critics of the government. Warsaw purchased Israeli-manufactured surveillance software tool called Pegasus for at least \$6.2 million from the State Justice Fund to aid crime victims and combat organized crime, according to BBC. However, Warsaw's previous administration used Pegasus against members of political oppositions, civil society, and journalists, according to Politico. Additional media reports also alleged that PiS used Pegasus against its own members, according to Reuters. In its first meeting, the commission agreed to summon several top PiS officials, including PiS party leader Jarosław Kaczyński, former prime minister Beata Szydło, former Justice Minister Zbigniew Ziobro, and former interior minister Mariusz Kamiński. In a press conference, Kaczyński criticized the commission, claiming the previous administration only used Pegasus in line with Polish national interest, and that neither PiS nor opposition members were spied on, according to TVN24.

**Analysis:** PiS's alleged use of Pegasus spyware will likely worsen the party's reputation on both the national and international stage. While officials in Warsaw determine the full extent of the spyware use and the individuals involved, citizens will likely drop their support for PiS-aligned candidates due to serious concerns about the party's abuse of power, as well as increasing beliefs favoring privacy rights and democratic principles. Potentially charging PiS officials of conducting corrupt practices will likely result in a decreased leadership presence in the party and further limit the support and outreach from PiS members and supporters.

[Brandon Greenaway]

## About GSIS

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University's (ERAU) Bachelor of Science in Global Security & Intelligence Studies (GSIS) degree program at our Prescott Campus blends both academic and professional studies to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to become future leaders in intelligence, security, and law enforcement. The program provides students with a sound foundation in the liberal arts, including international relations, foreign languages and cultures, international law, foreign policy, political and military history, and other essential topics.

## About EE

Eagle Eye Intelligence (EE) is an intelligence and research organization led by the students of the GSIS program at ERAU in Prescott, Arizona.

Dr. Philip E. Jones founded EE and Embry-Riddle's GSIS program in 2002, following a career with the Central Intelligence Agency and consulting work in international development and global security. Currently, Professor Dale R. Avery, a former career intelligence analyst, serves as EE's faculty advisor.

EE strives to provide actionable intelligence and analysis to its customers during the academic year. We are driven by a number of goals – continuous development, nonpartisanship, interdisciplinary studies, global awareness, and professionalism.

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Sebastien Bragg, a Junior in the GSIS program, currently serves as EE's Editor in Chief. For questions or comments, contact the team at [editorsee@gmail.com](mailto:editorsee@gmail.com) or Professor Avery at 928.777.4708. If you use material from this publication, you should attribute: Eagle Eye Intelligence Edition 447, a publication created by students at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott, Arizona.



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