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The withdrawal of the United States from the nuclear agreement is one part of a much more complex picture, one that includes Israel's attacks on Iranian targets in Syria and the exposure of the intelligence operation in Iran. From Iran's standpoint, these actions required a response. In recent days it was reported that Israel thwarted possible rocket fire at its territory. This morning, the Quds force fired approximately 20 rockets from Syrian territory at IDF posts in the Golan Heights. At this stage, it is unclear if this constitutes the end of the Iranian "revenge". It seems that, in light of Israel's extensive round of attacks on Iranian targets in Syria, Iran may continue its efforts to respond. If this is indeed the case, Iran has several options for action which include: firing rockets or activating proxy organizations in Syria to carry out missile attacks against the Golan Heights, accelerating preparations for "high-quality" attacks against senior Israeli officials abroad. Should the Iranians fail in their efforts to carry out terrorist attacks, they may hit "soft" targets, such as Israeli citizens abroad.

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Trump’s withdrawal from the nuclear agreement is not expected to shake up the region and we do not expect to see an increase in terrorism. Iran’s most important interest is to maintain its relationships with the other countries that support the nuclear agreement. However, it is important to separate and understand that there may be an Iranian response (not necessarily direct) as a result of Israel's actions against Iranian targets in Syria. The Iranian attack that took place last night is not related to the nuclear issue and is an Iranian response to the air strikes against Iranian sites in Syria. It should be viewed as a focused and delimited response aimed at military targets in the Golan Heights, but one that at this stage is not accompanied with an intention to escalate Iranian activity against Israel.

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Iran's response in the region to the US withdrawal from the nuclear agreement is tied to what is currently happening in Syria and to the attacks that Israel is carrying out against Iranian assets there. There are several possibilities for terrorist acts in Israel and against Israeli targets around the world: terrorist attacks carried out by an Iranian or Hezbollah cell against senior Israeli targets or individuals abroad, such as diplomats, military attachés and Israeli embassies, as was done in the wave of terrorist attacks at the beginning of 2012. Another alternative is the recruitment of various terrorist organizations that can carry out large-scale attacks, such as suicide bombings or hostage-taking attacks in Israel by Hamas or the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, or even the paid recruitment of Fatah members (as was done in the past). "Harakat Al-Nujaba", the Iraqi Shi'ite organization operating under the auspices of Iran and deployed in southern Syria close to the border with the Golan Heights, could try to infiltrate Israeli territory in order to carry out terrorist attacks in the nearby settlements or at military bases. This organization previously threatened to participate in the liberation of the Golan Heights and Jerusalem.
A differentiation should be made between the short/immediate-term and the long-term regional outcomes of the withdrawal from the nuclear agreement. A differentiation should also be made between the actions that the Iranians will take because of Trump’s withdrawal from the agreement and the actions that might be carried out against Israel in retaliation for actions attributed to Israel that are being carried out in Syria against Iranian assets. These are two different, parallel events, but from the Iranian point of view these events can converge and lead to a situation in which future Israeli actions in Syria, which are intended to prevent Iranian consolidation there, will increase the level of escalation/friction.

In the short-term, no change to the terrorism level in the region is expected. Iran will take time to study the meaning of the US withdrawal from the agreement, while the European countries that signed the agreement will try to calm Iran. In the long-term, the main factor is how strong the US sanctions will be, and which other countries will be partners to them, if any. The more the Iranians are pushed to the corner economically and politically, the greater an interest they will have in turning up the heat in the region against those countries perceived by them as problematic in the context of the nuclear agreement and they will try to act against them. This is particularly true of Israel, Saudi Arabia and American targets in the region. It is reasonable to assume that they will do so by using their proxies in areas such as Syria, Saudi Arabia, the Gulf states, Yemen and Iraq as well.

The withdrawal from the nuclear agreement is not expected to lead to an increase in terrorism in the region. The interest of the Iranians is for the nuclear agreement to remain intact despite the American withdrawal. This depends on the good will of the other countries that are party to the agreement. The withdrawal caused the United States to take a “step back” from the world and allowed Iran to take a “step forward”. In a rare manner, Iran has succeeded in creating a coalition of countries that stand by it, support the agreement and oppose Trump’s move. This coalition includes countries such as Russia, India, China and the European Union. The withdrawal from the agreement should be separated from Israel’s actions in Syria against Iranian assets there. As long as Israel does not try to exploit the situation in order to initiate operations in Syria, the situation will remain tense and volatile, but will not result in a significant change in the order of battle and the terrorism level.