



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on October 9, 2023

Hamas: Tracking the Source of Weapons Used in Attack on Israel

“Follow the money.” That was the advice given to the reporters trying to follow the serpentine trail of evidence to find the person responsible for ordering the Watergate Hotel break-in. That advice remains relevant today as people try to decipher the nearly inscrutable receipts that could reveal the source of the funds used by Hamas to purchase the weapons it is currently deploying in its attack on the state of Israel. This article is a small contribution to the search for sponsors of Hamas’ deadly arsenal.



AP Images

Israel following Hamas strike on October 8

The Suggested Connection Between the Biden Administration and Hamas Weapons Funding

In what should be seen a significant step in that direction, many are pointing to the Biden administration’s questionable decision to release \$6 billion in Iranian frozen funds months before the attack by Hamas.

“For three years, the president has appeased Iran, the world’s worst state sponsor of terrorism. It’s not just the \$6 billion that was released from sanctions controls last month. It’s \$10 billion that was released from Iraq into Iran,” [said Senator Tom Cotton](#) (R-Ark.) during an appearance on Fox News on Sunday.

“These are all acts of appeasement, concessions and weakness that embolden[ed] the leaders in Tehran, as well as Hamas, to believe that they could launch this brazen, savage attack against Israel,” Cotton added.

Later that day, Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-Ga.) called for the United States to work with the government of Israel to trace the serial numbers of any weapons used by Hamas that were made in the U.S. in an effort to discover the provenance of those weapons.

“We need to work with Israel to track serial numbers on any U.S. weapons used by Hamas against Israel. Did they come from Afghanistan? Did they come from Ukraine? Highly likely the answer is both,” [Greene tweeted](#).

The Israel-Hamas conflict, which has had a profound impact on the stability of the Middle East, has stretched on for years. At the heart of this protracted struggle lies Hamas’ acquisition of a wide array of sophisticated weapons. In the year 2023, particularly in light of the unprecedented escalation of the last several days, gaining a clear understanding of how Hamas obtains its weaponry remains of utmost importance. This quest to unveil the sources of the group’s armament is intricate, with a network of supply routes encompassing maritime deliveries, covert channels from Iran and Syria, and support from external entities. Of course, discovering whether or not any of those channels pass through the White



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House is of immeasurable importance.

First Step Toward Identifying the Sources of the Weapons

Back in 2005, Israel's withdrawal from Gaza marked a pivotal turning point. This move inadvertently enabled Hamas to establish a clandestine supply route, forging connections with Iran and Syria and ultimately strengthening its weapons cache. It's worth highlighting that in 2007, Israel intercepted a shipment of Iranian-manufactured Fajr-5 rocket launching systems intended for Hamas, which was en route through Sudan. However, the enduring problems of maritime smuggling, the thriving black market, and the dominance of rocket weaponry have ensured a consistent inflow of arms.

Sea Traffic and Smuggling

Throughout history, a substantial portion of Hamas' weaponry has been transported via maritime routes. Sealed containers holding various arms are released miles away from Gaza's shoreline. This method, known as "ship-to-shore transfer," comes with considerable risks, primarily due to the presence of the Israeli Navy. Nevertheless, it provides Hamas with a strategic advantage by circumventing official border checks, thereby guaranteeing a continuous influx of significant weapon stockpiles.

Iranian and Syrian Supply Chain

The covert supply route established in 2005 largely escaped international attention, and a continuous stream of weapons, ammunition, and critical military resources from Iran and Syria has found its way into Gaza. The linchpin of this supply chain can be traced to the extensive tunnel network concealed beneath the Egypt-Gaza border.

The arms — including Fajr-3, Fajr-5, and M302 rockets — procured from foreign sources have broadened Hamas' capacity to wage its war with Israel.

This is the locus of Senator Cotton's and Representative Greene's calls to drill down on the question of whether the Biden administration's choice to let Iran access \$6 billion in previously frozen funds contributed to the materiel used by Hamas in its ongoing offensive.

Admittedly, up to this point, there has been no concrete evidence to substantiate these assertions. Nonetheless, [one unverified video](#) making rounds on the internet claims to depict a Hamas militant expressing gratitude to Ukrainians for providing weaponry, while displaying an array of American-manufactured items, including a standard-issue M136 antitank grenade launcher.

The Central Role of Rockets in Hamas' Attacks on Israel

For Palestinian factions, especially Hamas, rocket weaponry is of paramount importance. Economical and uncomplicated to manufacture, the rockets empower them to strike distant Israeli locales. The 2014 Gaza War saw over 4,500 rockets fired at Israel by Hamas.

On Sunday, Israeli Ambassador to the United States Michael Herzog [told CNN's Abby Phillip](#) that Hamas fired an additional 4,000 rockets at Israel, revealing the continuing and critical role of rockets in the war.

Conclusion

Hamas' avenues for acquiring weaponry are multifaceted and perpetually adaptable, ranging from maritime smuggling operations and clandestine partnerships with nations such as Iran and Syria — perhaps facilitated by the current presidential administration — to the shadowy realms of the black



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market. The question of where Hamas gets its weapons cannot be answered simply or surely. As noted above, rocket weaponry continues to be a significant part of Hamas' arsenal. As the situation maintains its tense and dynamic nature, comprehending these procurement methods becomes increasingly imperative, particularly if any of the funds used were made available by the government of the United States.



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