

IRGC: Iran Can Extend Ballistic Missile Range

OE Watch Commentary: In the accompanying excerpted article from *Mashregh News*, an outlet close to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), General Amir Ali Hajizadeh, the commander of the IRGC's aerospace force, addresses Iran's missile program against the backdrop of a broader speech about how the United States and Europe cannot be trusted. He praises Iran's go-it-alone attitude and argues that if Iranian authorities listen to or compromise with the West, the Islamic Republic would face terrorist movements and military threats within its own territory. That he singles out both the Pahlavi regime (overthrown in 1979) and alleged US support for separatist movements highlights growing concern about the increasing profile and popularity of Reza Pahlavi, son of the ousted shah, as well as recent attacks in Iranian Kurdistan, Khuzestan, and Balochistan.

In the same speech, Hajizadeh acknowledges that sanctions and military embargoes had caused Iran difficulty, but said that indigenous defense industries (many of which the IRGC controls) had overcome such difficulties and enabled Iran to develop cutting-edge military technology.

Iran's continued development of ballistic missiles remains a diplomatic bone of contention between Tehran and many Western states. In the article, Hajizadeh urges his followers not to worry about the 2,000 kilometer limit to Iran's ballistic missile range, assuring them that such a limit is self-imposed and the result of a political decision, and that Iran has the technology to exceed that. Indeed, Iran has increasingly launched satellites utilizing the same rocket technology that could be used for longer range missiles. This creates a situation where Iran seeks diplomatic benefit from limiting its range, while pursuing the technology and means to extend its missiles' reach at will.

Beyond discussion of the longest range missiles, Hajizadeh brags about Iran's medium-range arsenal. Though he does not say as much outright, the 300-400 kilometer range missiles would be capable of hitting almost any US military facility in the Persian Gulf region, while the 700 – 800 kilometer range missiles could target Iranian adversaries in Saudi Arabia or Afghanistan. **End OE Watch Commentary (Rubin)**

“We have no technical or contractual limitations on the range of missiles.”

Source: “Europa va Amrika Tigheha-ye Yek Qichi baraye Fishar beh Iran Hastand (Europe and America are twin blades of a scissors to pressure Iran),” *Mashregh News*, 10 December 2018. <https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/918359>

General [Amir Ali] Hajizadeh said that Iran's jihadist and revolutionary outlook has solved many problems from the beginning of the revolution to the present, including confrontation with the separatist groups and the Holy Defense [Iran-Iraq War]...

He added: “One of our fundamental problems is the economic and military boycott, but today we have missiles and UAVs and a variety of equipment, and this is due to self-sufficiency, pursuit of a revolutionary outlook, and to be at the forefront of revolutionary people in this area....”

The commander of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Air Force Corps noted the range of ballistic missiles, and added: “We have the ability to build missiles with taller fins.” The 2000-kilometer range is not limited by technical restraints, but what [the 2,000 km range] we have decided on to date is based on our needs. Many enemy bases are between 300-400 km and the next step is 700-800 km. We have no technical or contractual limitations on the range of missiles.



Iran's Khorramshahr missile with a range of 1200 miles.

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