



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

July 16, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20050

Dear President Biden:

We write to express our concerns about your administration's decision to withdraw anti-missile batteries from the Middle East. As you may know, on June 21, 2021, the Pentagon issued a statement saying the United States is preparing to remove approximately eight Patriot anti-missile batteries from countries including Iraq, Kuwait, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia.¹ In addition, the U.S. will be withdrawing another anti-missile system known as the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system from Saudi Arabia.

According to your administration, the decision to remove defensive systems out of the Middle East reflects the Pentagon's view that the risk of escalating hostilities between the U.S. and Iran has diminished as your administration pursues nuclear talks with Tehran. Yet, on June 27, 2021, you issued a drone strike against Iranian-backed militias in Syria in response to the multiple drone attacks against facilities used by U.S. troops and allied forces in Iraq.² Furthermore, in the past year, there have been more than 100 attacks by Iranian-backed groups against Saudi Arabia,³ including one attack in which explosive-laden drones hit a royal court complex on January 23, 2021.⁴

Iran is the most significant threat the U.S. and our allies face in the Middle East. This reality is clearly reflected by your administration's recent drone strikes.

We respectfully request a member of your administration provide a briefing to relevant congressional committees on all of the conversations between your administration and any countries that led to this action; the justification for removing these anti-missile batteries; a list of persons and parties directly or indirectly involved in this decision; a list of persons who have inquired or displayed an interest in the removal of these anti-missile batteries; and the plan for removing and relocating these batteries.

Due to the ongoing nature of the threat posed by Iran, we request you or a member of your administration provide answers at the earliest possible opportunity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "B. Steil".

BRYAN STEIL
Member of Congress

¹ <https://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-military-to-withdraw-hundreds-of-troops-aircraft-antimissile-batteries-from-middle-east-11624045575>

² <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2021/06/27/biden-orders-airstrikes-syria-iraq-iranian-backed-militias/5367769001/>

³ <https://www.politico.com/story/2019/09/15/trump-locked-loaded-iran-saudi-arabia-1497452>

⁴ <https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/recent-drone-attack-saudi-royal-palace-launched-iraq-76105660>