

How to Contain and Roll Back Iranian-Backed Militias

by [Michael Knights \(/experts/michael-knights\)](#)

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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Articles & Testimony

A six-step plan that can help U.S. officials actively counter Tehran's efforts to deploy its inexpensive proxy forces throughout the Middle East.

The following is an excerpt from prepared remarks delivered before the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade. To read the full testimony, [download the PDF](#).

We're here today because Iran is in the process of spreading its military and political influence across the Middle East to a greater extent than ever before. How is it achieving this? Tehran has found an economical and sustainable means of resourcing its expansion -- the so-called Iranian Foreign Legion. This formula works for one simple reason: At little cost, Iran can take poor, enthusiastic young men from Arab countries and Afghanistan and throw them into the meat-grinder of the region's wars. Instead of risking its own people, Iran has hit on an alternative way of putting boots on the ground. This will increasingly allow Tehran to "fight to the last Arab" or "the last Afghan" in its regional wars, because these casualties bear no political repercussions in Iran. This is a capability that cannot be allowed to develop any further because it is a potential war-winner -- against America, our allies in Iraq and Yemen and Syria, and even against Israel... ❖

House Foreign Affairs Committee

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