



Security Council

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Letter dated 11 September 2023 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

The United States remains gravely concerned by Russia's use of Iranian drones against Ukrainian cities and civilian infrastructure in its unprovoked war against Ukraine. Over the past several weeks, Russia has repeatedly used these unmanned aerial vehicles in attacks destroying Ukrainian public works, including infrastructure related to the export of grain to the rest of the world. Meanwhile, public reports have alleged that, through its cooperation with Iran in contravention of Security Council resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#), Russia intends to manufacture "thousands" of attack drones.

Today, I have the honour to bring your attention recently declassified information from the United States intelligence community that provides additional clear evidence of Iran's unauthorized supply of unmanned aerial vehicles to Russia in violation of Security Council resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) (see annex). The Defense Intelligence Agency collected, examined and compared debris from both Iranian drone attacks against targets in northern Iraq and Russia's attacks against civilian infrastructure in Ukraine. Specifically, the analysis compares components of an Iranian-made Shahed-131 unmanned aerial vehicle, following a September 2022 attack against Kurds in northern Iraq, for which Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps ground forces publicly claimed responsibility,¹ to components of a Shahed-131 drone launched by Russia and recovered in Ukraine. As this unclassified intelligence analysis details, there is also extensive comparative evidence between the Iranian-made Shahed-136 and Mohajer-6 unmanned aerial vehicles, often displayed in Iranian press reports, and Shahed-136 and Mohajer-6 components recovered in Ukraine.

We urge Member States and the Secretary-General to closely review this new unclassified report, which exists alongside extensive documentation of Russia's use of Iranian drones in Ukraine and builds on the extensive reports and analysis shared with the United Nations by the United States, the United Kingdom and Ukraine earlier this year. We further note that Iran and Russia have had multiple opportunities to view the evidence first-hand, but declined. Additionally, several credible independent organizations performed their own evaluations and definitively concluded that the unmanned aerial vehicles are of Iranian origin and were manufactured after resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) was adopted in 2015 and, as a result, their transfer to Russia absent advance case-by-case approval by the Security Council is a violation of resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#), annex B, paragraph 4.

¹ See www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2022/09/29/2781165/over-70-ballistic-missiles-hit-terrorists-in-northern-iraq-irgc-commander.



Far from denying the conclusions of these analyses, Iran's Foreign Minister publicly admitted² to supplying Russia with drones and, as recently as 26 August, Iran's Deputy Defence Minister, Brigadier General Reza Talaei-Nik, publicly stated³ that Iran is prepared to export military drones to other States, underscoring the threat to peace and security posed by Iranian unmanned aerial vehicle development and proliferation. The threat posed by Iran's export of unmanned aerial vehicles will likely only continue to grow, and it is critical that the Secretary-General carry out his mandate and undertake an investigation of these continued violations.

Indeed, the United Nations Secretariat has a responsibility to carry out its mandate to examine evidence of Iran's transfer of unmanned aerial vehicles to Russia in violation of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015), annex B, paragraph 4. The Secretariat has acknowledged that requests for investigations are common and that, earlier in 2022, the Secretary-General conducted a fact-finding mission in Ukraine at Russia's request. We are asking the Secretary-General to assess the evidence and reach an independent conclusion on Iran's unauthorized supply of unmanned aerial vehicles to Russia in violation of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015).

It is vital that Russia and Iran not succeed in their obstruction to prevent an inspection of unmanned aerial vehicle debris by the United Nations Secretariat. As the United States request for action by the Secretary-General on this issue by 31 August passed without a substantive response, we renew that request. Moreover, we reiterate that we are committed to pursuing this matter until appropriate answers are provided and action taken.

I request that the present letter and its annex be circulated as documents of the Security Council. I also request that the present letter and its annex be sent to both the Secretary-General and the Security Council Facilitator for the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015), Vanessa Frazier.

(Signed) Linda **Thomas-Greenfield**
Ambassador

Representative of the United States to the United Nations

² See www.cnn.com/2022/11/05/middleeast/iran-drones-russia-intl/index.html.

³ See www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14020605000149/Spkesman-Erpeans-Willing-Prchase-Iranian-Drnes.

Annex to the letter dated 11 September 2023 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED



Iranian UAVs in Ukraine: A Visual Comparison

AUGUST 2023 UPDATE

This product provides a visual comparison of UAVs used by Russian forces in Ukraine and Iranian UAVs used to attack U.S. and partner interests in the Middle East. Photos of UAV debris and components from Ukraine are consistent with systems showcased at military expos and other venues in the Middle East. This analysis confirms Russia's use of various Iranian lethal UAVs in its war in Ukraine.

Visualization: DIA CB Design • 230807636
ICD:7 August 2023
DIA_F_24-11_G

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Source: EPA Images



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For media and public inquiries about this report, contact DIA Public Affairs at DIA-PAO@dodis.mil

Information cutoff date: 10 August 2023

Cover Image: An Iranian-origin UAV is seen flying over Kyiv, Ukraine, during an attack on 17 October 2022 Image

Source: EPA Images

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DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY Iranian UAVs in Ukraine: A Visual Comparison–August 2023 Update

The Story So Far

In mid-2022, Iran provided Russia with unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) to sustain Moscow's ability to attack Ukraine after severely depleting its own stores of precision-guided munitions in the war's opening months. Since then, Iran has provided Russia with hundreds of one-way attack UAVs for its war in Ukraine. Ample evidence of such transfers has been provided to the public, but Iran continues to deny these UAVs were Iranian in origin. The U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) has collected actual debris from attacks in Ukraine and the Middle East that we have presented in the following pages to clearly prove Iran's support to Russia.

JUL 2022
Source: U.S. Government
Russian delegation visits Iran to examine Iranian UAVs

JUL 2022
White House says Iran is preparing to transfer UAVs to Russia

SEP 2022
Source: Wikimedia Commons
First use of Iranian UAVs by Russian military forces to attack Ukraine

OCT 2022
Iran's Foreign Minister denies providing Russia with UAVs to use against Ukraine

MAY 2023
Source: Wikimedia Commons
National Security Council highlights deepening Iran-Russia military cooperation

MAY/JUN 2023
The United Kingdom submits report to UN providing evidence of Iranian support to Russia

JUN/JUL 2023
The United States, Albania, France, the United Kingdom, and Ukraine urge the UN Security Council to investigate Russia's use of Iranian UAVs in Ukraine

JUN 2023
Source: U.S. Government
White House announces Iran is helping Russia establish a UAV production facility

AUG 2023
Recovered UAVs are displayed at DIA to offer undeniable proof that UAVs found in the Middle East and Ukraine share a common point of origin: Iran



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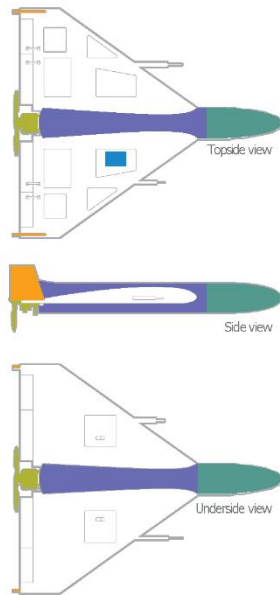
Shahed-131 (Geran-1) One-Way Attack UAV Comparison

The Iranian-origin Shahed-131, renamed Geran-1 by the Russians, has a delta-wing body shape similar to the Shahed-136 (Geran-2), but the vertical stabilizers extend only above the body. Recovered components in Ukraine and the Middle East appear to be very similar; some components even fractured in the same manner after impact.¹²



Source: President of Ukraine official website

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy showcased a Shahed-131 (Geran-1) recovered in Ukraine, 27 October 2022



Shahed-131 recovered in the Middle East, 2021

Selected points of comparison:

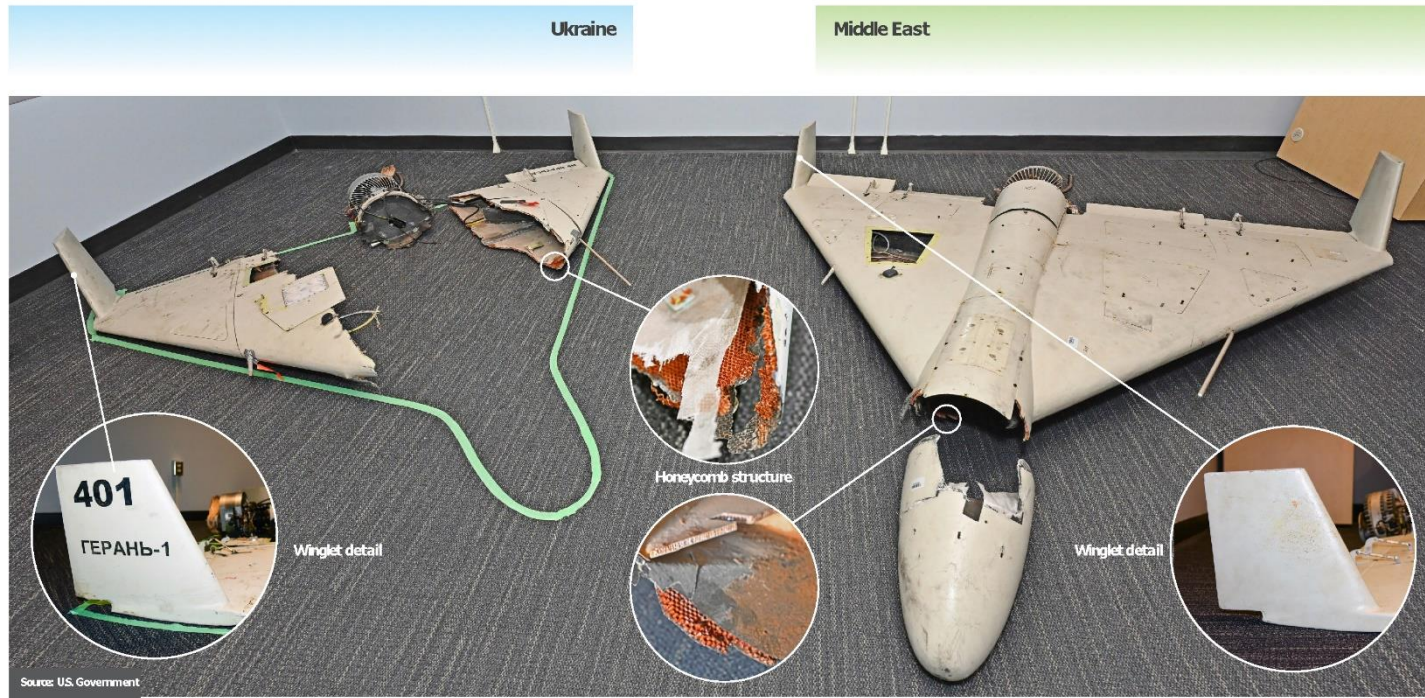
Engine Wing stabilizer Fuselage Nose cone Antenna array



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Side by Side–The Geran-1 and the Shahed-131

In August 2023, DIA publicly displayed debris from the Shahed-131s (Geran-1s) used in Ukraine in fall 2022 side by side with a Shahed-131 recovered in Iraq in 2021. The systems are the same size and shape and were built using similar materials and subcomponents. The Shahed-131s (Geran-1s) from Ukraine and the Shahed-131 from Iraq also share the same honeycomb-like structure within the airframe.





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A Clear Iranian Connection

On 28 September 2022, Iran conducted and then publicly claimed a missile and UAV attack against the Kurds in northern Iraq, enabling DIA to remove doubt about the origin of the UAVs recovered from the strike.

The UAVs recovered from Iraq were Shahed-131s, which match Shahed-131s (Geran-1s) recovered in Ukraine in fall 2022. Nearly identical UAV components appearing at the same time in two separate conflicts thousands of miles apart, with Iran publicly claiming responsibility for one of the UAVs, leads to the conclusion that both of these systems are Iranian in origin.



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Shahed-131 Wing Stabilizers

The wing stabilizers on the Shahed-131 (Geran-1) recovered in Ukraine are consistent with the wing stabilizers on the Shahed-131 recovered from an Iranian-claimed attack in Iraq. Notably, both wing stabilizers have the nearly identical material resembling a honeycomb on the inside of the stabilizer.

Ukraine

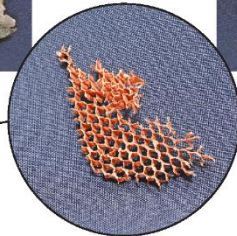
Middle East

Shahed-131 (Geran-1) wing stabilizer recovered in Ukraine, Fall 2022



Source: U.S. Government

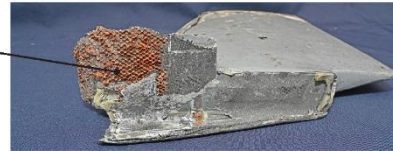
Underside of the Shahed-131 (Geran-1) recovered in Ukraine showing distinctive honeycomb design



Source: U.S. Government

Shahed-131 wing stabilizer recovered from a 2022 attack in Iraq that Iran claimed

Shahed-131 wing stabilizer from Iranian-claimed attack in Iraq showing distinctive honeycomb design

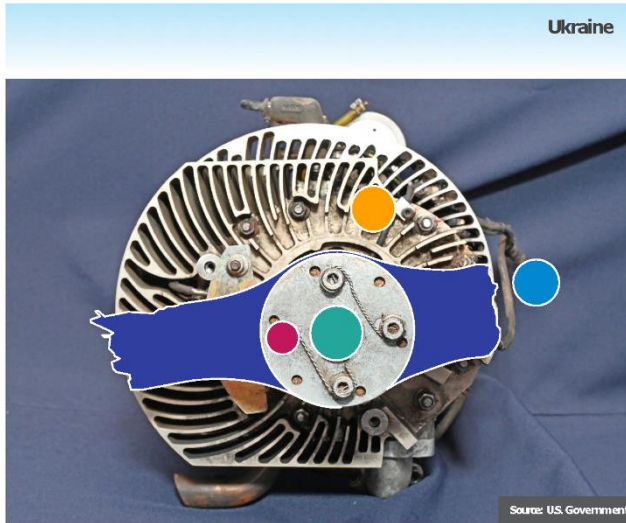




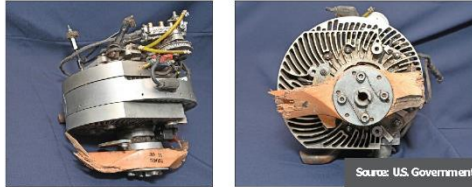
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Recovered Shahed-131 (Geran-1) Engine

The Shahed-131 (Geran-1) engines recovered in Ukraine are nearly identical to engines recovered from the September 2022 Iranian-claimed attack in Iraq.



- Selected points of comparison:
- Wooden propeller
 - Crankshaft
 - Hex screw
 - Distinctive housing feature
 - Engine mount





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Recovered Shahed-131 (Geran-1) Components

Shahed-131 (Geran-1) UAV components recovered from debris in Ukraine are consistent with Shahed-131 components recovered from the September 2022 Iranian-claimed attack in Iraq.³

Ukraine	Middle East
Recovered in Kyiv, Ukraine, October 2022 <small>Source: Ukrainian War Crimes Prosecutors</small>	Recovered after Iranian-claimed attack in Iraq, September 2022 <small>Source: U.S. Government</small>

Similar components:

- Rotary engine
- Wing stabilizer
- Compartment cover
- Engine throttle body
- Relay board
- Processing module case cover
- Processing module case

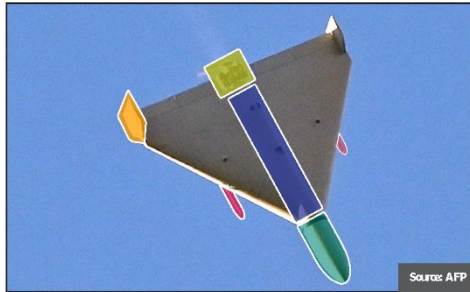


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Shahed-136 (Geran-2) One-Way Attack UAV Comparison

The Iranian-origin Shahed-136, renamed Geran-2 by the Russians, has a distinctive shape, with a delta-wing body and vertical stabilizers extending above and below the body, as displayed in Iranian press and military expos. Iran used Shahed-136 UAVs in the 2021 attack against the merchant vessel *Mercer Street* and has also transferred this system to the Huthis in Yemen. The Huthis have not used this system in an attack to date but have displayed it publicly. The images circulating in open press of UAVs in Ukraine clearly show the features of the Shahed-136's delta-wing body and vertical stabilizers.⁴⁵⁶

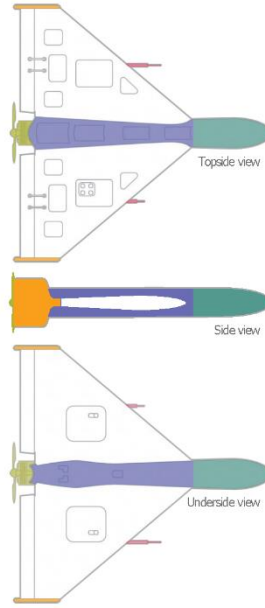
Ukraine



Underside of a Shahed-136 (Geran-2) spotted over Kyiv, Ukraine, October 2022



Shahed-136 (Geran-2) spotted over Kyiv, Ukraine, moments before impact, October 2022



Selected points of comparison:

Engine Wing stabilizer Air data collection Fuselage Nose cone

Middle East



Shahed-136 displayed by the Huthis in Yemen



Shahed-136 from an Iranian video of military exercises in Iran, April 2021



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Shahed-136 (Geran-2) Wing Stabilizer

Shahed-136 (Geran-2) wing stabilizers recovered in Ukraine are consistent with the size, shape, and markings of the Shahed-136 wing stabilizers observed or recovered in the Middle East.⁷⁸

Ukraine

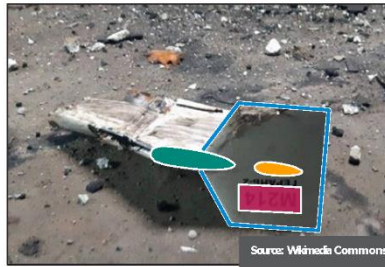
Shahed-136 (Geran-2) wing stabilizer recovered in Ukraine, October 2022



Ukraine

Source: Reuters

Shahed-136 (Geran-2) wing stabilizer recovered in Ukraine, September 2022



Source: Wikimedia Commons

Middle East



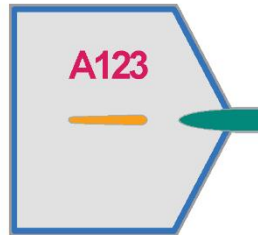
Shahed-136 UAVs preparing for launch from truck platform during IRGC Aerospace Force exercise in Iran, December 2021

Source: PA Media



Shahed-136 wing stabilizer recovered from the attack on the merchant vessel Pacific Zircon, November 2022

Source: Wikimedia Commons



Selected points of comparison:

- Stabilizer shape
- Serial number
- Winglet
- Edge of delta wing

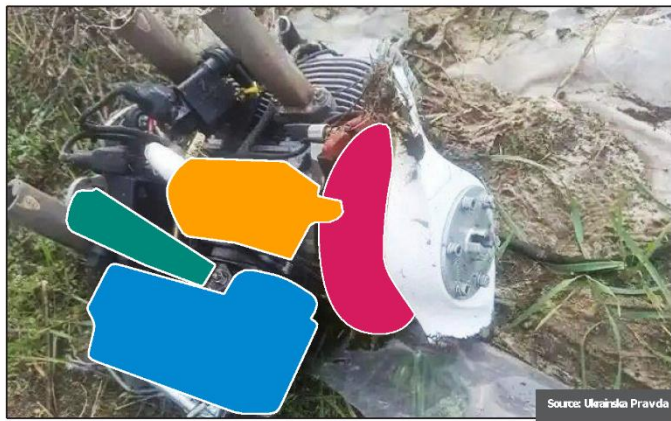


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Shahed-136 (Geran-2) Engine

Shahed-136 (Geran-2) engines recovered in Ukraine appear to be Iranian-produced MADO-550 engines, the same engine model used in the Shahed-136.⁹

Ukraine



Shahed-136 (Geran-2) engine recovered in Ukraine, October 2022

Source: Ukrainska Pravda

Middle East



MADO-550 engine displayed at the Iranian National Aerospace Exhibition, October 2014

Source: Iranian Military Forum

Selected points of comparison:

Ring gear

Starter

Exhaust

Heat sink and ignition components



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Mohajer 6 Multirole UAV Comparison

The Iranian-origin Mohajer 6 has been displayed publicly in Iran and Iraq, and it can be easily identified by its distinctive tail, as well as by the attached surveillance equipment and guided munitions. In October, Ukraine captured a mostly intact Mohajer 6 from the Black Sea, and it appears to be indistinguishable from the Mohajer 6 systems photographed in Iran and Iraq. Components recovered from the wreckage display very similar markings to those observed in Iran.^{10,11,12}



Mohajer 6 recovered from the Black Sea, October 2022



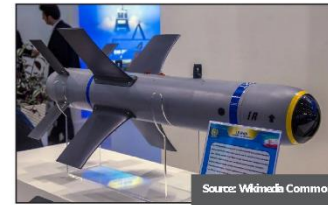
Mohajer 6 displayed in Iran, February 2018

Selected points of comparison:

- Horizontal stabilizer
- Serial number
- Landing gear wheel
- Surveillance equipment



Guided munition recovered from Mohajer 6, October 2022



Iranian guided munition displayed at a military expo, August 2022



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Source Endnotes

¹ PRESS RELEASE, UKRAINIAN GOVERNMENT; 27 OCT 2022; TODAY WE REMEMBER THE EXPULSION OF THE NAZIS, APPROACHING THE EXPULSION OF THE RASHISTS – ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF UKRAINE; URL: [HTTPS://WWW.PRESIDENT.GOV.UA/EN/NEWS/SOGODNI-MI-ZGADUYEMO-VIGNNNYA-NACISTIV-NABLIZHAYUCHI-VIGNAN-78753](https://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/sogodni-mi-zgaduyemo-vignnnya-nacitiv-nablizhayuchi-vignan-78753).

² PRESS RELEASE, UKRAINIAN GOVERNMENT; 13 OCT 2022; PROSECUTORS, TOGETHER WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT, RECORD ANOTHER CRIME OF THE RUSSIAN MILITARY - AN ATTACK ON THE ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE OF THE KYIV REGION; URL: [HTTPS://GP.GOV.﻿UA/UA/POSTS/ PROKURORI-SPLNO-Z-PREDSTAVNIKAMI-MKS-FIKSUUYUT-CERGOVII-ZLOCIN-VIISKOVIX-RF-ATAKU-NA-ENERGETIC-NU-INFRASTRUKTURU-KIYIVSHHINI](https://gp.gov.﻿ua/ua/posts/prokurori-splno-z-predstavnikami-mks-fiksuyut-cergovii-zlocin-viiskovix-rf-ataku-na-energetic-nu-infrastrukturu-kiyivshhini).

³ PRESS RELEASE, UKRAINIAN GOVERNMENT; 13 OCT 2022; (U) PROSECUTORS, TOGETHER WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT, RECORD ANOTHER CRIME OF THE RUSSIAN MILITARY - AN ATTACK ON THE ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE OF THE KYIV REGION; URL: [HTTPS://GP.GOV.﻿UA/UA/POSTS/ PROKURORI-SPLNO-Z-PREDSTAVNIKAMI-MKS-FIKSUUYUT-CERGOVII-ZLOCIN-VIISKOVIX-RF-ATAKU-NA-ENERGETIC-NU-INFRASTRUKTURU-KIYIVSHHINI](https://gp.gov.﻿ua/ua/posts/prokurori-splno-z-predstavnikami-mks-fiksuyut-cergovii-zlocin-viiskovix-rf-ataku-na-energetic-nu-infrastrukturu-kiyivshhini).

⁴ ARTICLE, THE DRIVE; THOMAS NEWDICK, TYLER ROGOWAY; 13 SEP 2022; RUSSIA HAS BEGUN USING IRANIAN KAMIKAZE DRONES ON UKRAINE; [HTTPS://WWW.THEDRIVE.COM/THE-WAR-ZONE/ RUSSIA-HAS-BEGUN-USING-IRANIAN-KAMIKAZE-DRONES-ON-UKRAINE](https://www.thedrive.com/the-war-zone/russia-has-begun-using-iranian-kamikaze-drones-on-ukraine).

⁵ ARTICLE, ORYX; MAR 2021; HOUSHI REBELS UNVEIL HOST OF WEAPONRY; URL: [HTTPS://WWW.ORYXSPIENKOP.COM/2021/03/HOUSHI-REBELS-UNVEIL-HOST-OF-WEAPONRY.HTML](https://www.oryxspioenkop.com/2021/03/houthi-rebels-unveil-host-of-weaponry.html).

⁶ UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE – THE IRAN PRIMER; 06 AUG 2021; CENTCOM: IRAN BEHIND DRONE ATTACK ON TANKER; URL: [HTTPS://IRANPRIMER.USIP.ORG/BLOG/2021/AUG/10/ CENTCOM-IRAN-BEHIND-DRONE-ATTACK-TANKER](https://iranprimer.usip.org/blog/2021/aug/10/centcom-iran-behind-drone-attack-tanker).

⁷ ARTICLE, MEHR NEWS; APR 2022; TITLE UNKNOWN.

⁸ UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE – THE IRAN PRIMER; 06 AUG 2021; CENTCOM: IRAN BEHIND DRONE ATTACK ON TANKER; URL: [HTTPS://IRANPRIMER.USIP.ORG/BLOG/2021/AUG/10/ CENTCOM-IRAN-BEHIND-DRONE-ATTACK-TANKER](https://iranprimer.usip.org/blog/2021/aug/10/centcom-iran-behind-drone-attack-tanker).

⁹ ARTICLE, USKOWI ON IRAN; 25 NOV 2014; TAKEAWAYS FROM IRANIAN NATIONAL AEROSPACE EXHIBITION 2014; URL: [HTTPS://WWW.USKOWI.COM/IRAN.COM/2014/11/TAKEAWAYS-FROM-IRANIAN-NATIONAL-﻿HTML](https://www.uskowi.com/iran/2014/11/takeaways-from-iranian-national-﻿html).

¹⁰ ARTICLE, JAMES DEFENCE WEEKLY; JEREMY BINNIE; 13 JUL 2022; CUT-PRICE CAPABILITY: THE PROLIFERATION OF IRANIAN ATTACK UAVS.

¹¹ ARTICLE, MEHR NEWS AGENCY; 05 FEB 2018; IRAN STARTS MASS PRODUCTION OF ADVANCED DRONE MOHAJER-6; URL: [HTTPS://EN.MEHRNEWS.COM/PHOTO/131926/ IRAN-STARTS-MASS-PRODUCTION-OF-ADVANCED-DRONE-MOHAJER-6](https://en.mehrnews.com/photo/131926/iran-starts-mass-production-of-advanced-drone-mohajer-6).

¹² ARTICLE, PAKISTAN DEFENCE; FEB 2018; IRAN STARTS MASS PRODUCTION OF MOHAJER-6 UCAV, QAEM SMART GUIDED BOMB [PIC]; URL: [HTTPS://DEFENCE.PK/PDF/THREADS/IRAN-STARTS-MASS-PRODUCTION-OF-MOHAJER-6-UCAV-QAEM-SMART-GUIDED-BOMB-PIC.542732/](https://defence.pk/pdf/threads/iran-starts-mass-production-of-mohajer-6-ucav-qaem-smart-guided-bomb-pic.542732/).



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