

## Drawing a Clear Red Line: Biden's Imperative Response to Iranian Aggression

By

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In the wake of the recent drone attack on January 28, where Iranian proxies [killed three American soldiers and injured more than 30](#), President Joe Biden finds himself at a crucial crossroads in handling relations with Iran. This brazen act of aggression demands a resolute and swift response. The lack of a clear red line only exacerbates the volatility in the region and undermines American deterrence.

The escalating tensions with Iran present a serious problem that cannot be ignored. The [continued attacks](#) on American troops by Iranian proxies underscores the urgent need for the Biden administration to define and communicate [clear red lines](#) to prevent further acts of aggression and protect the lives of American military personnel in the region.

### The Need for Red Lines

Firstly, the absence of a defined red lines allows Iran to push the boundaries of acceptable behavior without facing substantial consequences. Currently the Biden administration is “[weighing responses](#)” to the attack. However, red lines were required once the administration entered office. Iran needed a clear picture of aggression's consequences, especially aggression causing American casualties. This continued lack of clarity from the administration not only undermines the safety of American soldiers but also weakens the credibility of the United States on the international stage. Without a clear stance, there is a risk of further attacks and a [wider regional conflict](#).

Secondly, defined red lines serve as a deterrent, signaling to Iran that the United States will not tolerate attacks on its military personnel. Establishing such boundaries is essential to maintaining stability in the region and preventing an escalation that can have [far-reaching consequences](#). This sends a powerful message that acts of violence will not go unanswered, fostering a more secure and predictable relationship.

Furthermore, the [ambiguity](#) surrounding American responses can embolden other hostile actors in the region and elsewhere to test the waters. Clear red lines are not only about dealing with Iran but also about deterring other potential aggressors and ensuring that the United States is perceived as steadfast and resolute in defending its interests. The Biden administration must follow through on any violations of red lines to solidify credibility.

### The American Response

To address this critical issue, the Biden administration must take decisive action. First, it is imperative to communicate clear and non-negotiable red lines to Iran, making it unequivocally clear that attacks on American soldiers will [trigger severe consequences](#). Simultaneously, diplomatic engagement with Iran is needed to convey the seriousness of the American position, emphasizing the importance of de-escalation and constructive dialogue—but always backed by the threat of overwhelming violence.

However, to fortify its position and respond effectively to the heightened tensions with Iran, the United States must go beyond diplomatic initiatives and reinforce its military

capabilities in the region. The US should [bolster its military presence](#), which serves as both a deterrent and a tangible demonstration of the nation's commitment to protecting its interests and ensuring the safety of its troops and allies. A visible and formidable American military presence sends a powerful signal, not only to Iran but to the entire region. The United States is prepared to defend its interests and respond decisively to any acts of aggression.

Additionally, the US must respond forcibly to the recent attack. As [William Wechsler](#) recently argued, it should be done in ways to avoid a wider regional war from occurring. [Matthew Kroenig](#), however, suggests the United States can incapacitate the Iranian navy. It could conduct strikes on Iranian naval bases or even emulate former President Donald Trump's approach by targeting Iranian leadership, as demonstrated in the [killing of General Qassem Soleimani](#) in Iraq. Additionally, the Biden administration should consider the option of striking and dismantling Iran's ability to proliferate nuclear weapons, especially considering American officials believe Iran can build a bomb in roughly [twelve days](#).

Lastly, strengthening alliances with regional partners (Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia, etc.) is another pivotal aspect of a comprehensive strategy that the Biden administration should pursue. Solidifying a unified front with its allies and friends in the Middle East fosters a collaborative approach to regional security. Collective efforts enable the sharing of intelligence, joint military exercises, and coordinated responses to potential threats. Such partnerships not only enhance the effectiveness of American actions but also contribute to regional stability by creating a cohesive and united response to aggression from Iran and its proxies.

Ultimately, well-defined red lines, coupled with a robust response to aggression, is essential for safeguarding American lives and maintaining stability in the Middle East. President Biden must seize the opportunity to demonstrate strength, resilience, and a commitment to protecting American interests in the face of escalating threats. If he fails to do so, deterrence will continue to falter, and attacks on American troops will continue to escalate. The stakes are high and clear red lines coupled with strict enforcement is the first step toward ensuring the US protects its interests within the region and enhances the credibility to deter further aggression.

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