Danon: Iran spends $7b. a year on Middle East terror, incl. in West Bank

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Iran has spent $7 billion annually on terror in the Middle East, including in the West Bank, where it wants to open a fourth front against Israel, Ambassador to the United Nations Danny Danon told the Security Council on Tuesday.  
  
“The Iranian regime’s obsession with Israel is not just well-known,” he said. “It is expensive. Seven billion dollars annually are directed toward the never-ending attempts to destroy Israel.” Danon spoke before the council’s monthly meeting on the Middle East.

“Follow the bloody trail of money starting in Tehran and you will arrive at the terror tunnels in Lebanon and Gaza and the weapons warehouses in Syria,” he said. “It is now trying to infiltrate Judea and Samaria.”

He blamed the 2015 Iran deal for providing the Islamic Republic with billions of dollars, which it has used to finance terror.  
  
Iran’s spending broke down was divided as $4 billion to Syria, $1 billion to Lebanon, $50 million to Hamas in Gaza and $70 million to the Islamic Jihad, Danon explained.  
  
Tens of millions of Iranian dollars have gone to Yemen and hundreds of millions of dollars to Shi’ites in Iraq, he said. The money trail starts in Tehran, moved to Iraq, then across the Arab Gulf to Yemen, into Damascus and into Hezbollah bank accounts. The international community must halt the flow of money to Tehran if it wants to stop regional terrorism, he said.  
  
He warned that Iran is using those funds to turn the West Bank into a fourth battle ground against Israel. The other three fronts are Gaza, Lebanon and Syria.  
  
“With the help of Saleh Al-Arouri, Hamas’s deputy political chief, and Saeed Izadi, the head of the Palestinian branch of the Iranian Quds Force, Iran is trying to turn Judea and Samaria into a fourth military front against Israel,” Danon said.

Danon took the Palestinians to task for not speaking up about the link between Palestinian terror organizations and Iran, including Hamas and Islamic Jihad in the Gaza Strip and Judea and Samaria.  
“Iran, all of a sudden, is now speaking publicly about training Palestinian terrorists. High-profile terrorists of Hamas and Islamic Jihad are meeting with high ranking officials in Tehran,” Danon said.   
  
Hamas is also working to build a military front against Israel from Lebanon, and Iran invested millions of dollars to help Hezbollah build attack tunnels in Lebanon that stretched into Israel, he added.  
  
“The world’s silence allows Iran to continue with its operations and aggression to undermine stability in the Middle East,” Danon said. He called on the UNSC to recognize Hamas, the Islamic Jihad and Hezbollah as terror organizations and to impose sanctions upon them as well as on Iran.  
  
In specific, he asked the UNSC to condemn Iran’s launch from Syria earlier this week of a medium range surface-to-surface missile into northern Israel which was intercepted by the Iron Dome missile defense system. Israel holds both Syria and Iran responsible for this missile, he said.  
  
“The Security Council must condemn Iran for this act of aggression,” he said. “The firing of this missile proves, once again, Iran’s deep entrenchment in Syria.” He called on Iran to fully withdraw its military presence and militia forces from Syria, and that it must do so immediately.  
  
“The European Union has taken a crucial step forward by imposing new sanctions against Iran,” he said. “It is now the council’s turn to take a leap.” Danon warned that Israel would take action if needed, even without the international community.  
  
“We will respond with force and remove any threat to our people,” he said. “If Israel must act, Israel will not hold back.”