

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 3, 2025

The Honorable Marco Rubio
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

The Honorable John Ratcliffe
Director
Central Intelligence Agency
1000 Colonial Farm Rd.
Langley, VA 22101

Dear Secretary Rubio and Director Ratcliffe:

We write to request a classified briefing regarding recent public reporting that the People's Republic of China (PRC) is shipping key ingredients used for producing rocket fuel to the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC). According to reporting, two Iranian vessels docked in the PRC were recently loaded with around 1,000 tons of sodium perchlorate, a crucial chemical precursor used to produce solid propellant for missiles. If delivered to the IRGC, these inputs would be enough to fuel 260 mid-range Iranian missiles, including those Tehran used last year in its ballistic missile attacks on Israel.¹ These reports are highly concerning and provide yet more evidence of the PRC's destabilizing behavior and support to authoritarian aggressors around the globe.

According to reports, two Iranian-flagged ships controlled by a U.S.-sanctioned Iranian shipping company, Rahbaran Omid Darya Ship Management Co., are expected to carry 1,000 tons of sodium perchlorate from the PRC to Iran in the coming weeks. One ship, containing approximately 600 tons of these chemicals, left a Chinese port near Shanghai late last month, and the second is expected to depart a separate port in the eastern PRC in early February.²

These shipments come at a time when Iran's missile inventory and missile production capabilities have been severely degraded by its ballistic missile attacks against Israel last year, Israel's counterattack on Iranian missile production facilities, and the IRGC's shipment of missiles to Russia in support of Vladimir Putin's illegal invasion of Ukraine. Iran is also believed to have supplied ammonium perchlorate, the solid propellant for missiles produced from sodium perchlorate, to pro-Iranian militias like the Houthis to support their missile programs.³

¹ <https://www.wsj.com/world/middle-east/china-is-helping-supply-chemicals-for-irans-ballistic-missile-program-ab272ad7>

² <https://www.ft.com/content/f0bc9fcc-11b3-4615-bd24-163f8938f2a5>

³ <https://www.wsj.com/world/middle-east/china-is-helping-supply-chemicals-for-irans-ballistic-missile-program-ab272ad7>

The PRC's support for the IRGC reconstituting its missile forces adds fuel to the fire of multiple ongoing conflicts involving authoritarian aggressors from Europe to the Middle East. Nor are the recent shipments an aberration in behavior, as the PRC has supplied solid propellant for Iranian missiles since the 1990s, and according to one expert "was and is still the main supply for Iran for everything needed to build weapons."⁴ Because of this activity, the U.S. government under both Democratic and Republican administrations has sanctioned numerous individuals and companies in Iran and the PRC for helping build Iran's ballistic missile program.⁵

Therefore, we respectfully request a classified briefing regarding the recent reports and any potential responses under consideration by no later than February 14, 2025.

Specifically, the briefing should address the following questions:

1. To what extent is the PRC helping Iran reconstitute its ballistic missile capabilities and how is this support evolving?
2. Did Iran use any materiel shipped from the PRC in its ballistic missile attacks on Israel last year?
3. Has Iran delivered any missile-related materiel or components sourced from the PRC to Russia or Iranian proxy groups in the Middle East, such as the Houthis?
4. What actions, if any, are under consideration to respond to the PRC's support to Iran's ballistic missile program?
5. What steps, if any, are underway to coordinate our analysis of, and response to, these concerning shipments with our allies and partners?

As Ranking Member of the House Select Committee on the Strategic Competition between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party and Ranking Member of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces, we believe that Congress has an important role to play in preserving global peace in the face of the PRC's aggressive activities.

We look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,



Representative Raja Krishnamoorthi
Ranking Member
House Select Committee on the CCP



Representative Joe Courtney
Ranking Member
House Armed Services Subcommittee
on Seapower and Projection Forces

⁴ <https://www.wsj.com/world/middle-east/china-is-helping-supply-chemicals-for-irans-ballistic-missile-program-ab272ad7>

⁵ <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy1524>; <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sm0088>