

U.S. Killing of Iranian Commander Qassim Suleimani

What Happened?

On January 3, 2020, an American drone strike near Baghdad airport killed Major General Qassim Suleimani, the longtime commander of the Quds Force of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. The incident followed an increasingly tense exchange of attacks between Iranian-backed Iraqi militias and the U.S. military, which included a violent demonstration by members and supporters of the former against the U.S. embassy in Baghdad. The assassination of Suleimani—a senior and prominent figure in the Iranian regime and across the region—represents a large-scale and dangerous escalation in tensions between Washington and Tehran.

Want to Dig Deeper?

The editors of *International Security* have selected the following articles as excellent starting points to help achieve a greater understanding of the crisis at hand:

ON THE ORIGINS AND IMPLICATIONS OF NORMS AGAINST INTERNATIONAL ASSASSINATION:

- **“Norms and Security: The Case of International Assassination”**
Ward Thomas (Summer 2000)

ON THE HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS OF IRAN’S FOREIGN POLICY AND APPROACH TO NUCLEAR WEAPONS:

- **“What the Iran-Iraq War Tells Us about the Future of the Iran Nuclear Deal”**
Ariane M. Tabatabai and Annie Tracy Samuel (Summer 2017)

ON A HYPOTHETICAL SCENARIO OF AN IRANIAN REPRISAL IN THE PERSIAN GULF:

- **“Closing Time: Assessing the Iranian Threat to the Strait of Hormuz”**
Caitlin Talmadge (Summer 2008)

ON WHY INDIVIDUAL LEADERS CHOOSE BETWEEN DIFFERENT INTERVENTION STRATEGIES:

- **“Transformative Choices: Leaders and the Origins of Intervention Strategy”**
Elizabeth N. Saunders (Fall 2009)

ON WHY FOREIGN-IMPOSED REGIME CHANGE CARRIES SUBSTANTIAL RISKS:

- **“You Can’t Always Get What You Want: Why Foreign-Imposed Regime Change Seldom Improves Interstate Relations”**
Alexander B. Downes and Lindsey A. O’Rourke (Fall 2016)