

Iran's Revolutionary Guards claimed responsibility for a dozen ballistic missiles that struck Iraq's northern Kurdish regional capital of Erbil in the early hours of Sunday, Iran's state media reported, adding that the attack was against Israeli "strategic centres" in Erbil.

The missile attack comes as talks to revive the 2015 Iran nuclear deal face the prospect of collapse after a last-minute Russian demand forced world powers to pause negotiations for an undetermined time despite having a largely completed text.

The missiles, which targeted the U.S. consulate's new building, caused only material damage and one civilian was injured, the Kurdish interior ministry said. An Iraqi security official told Reuters that the missiles were manufactured in Iran.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards released a statement taking responsibility for the missile attack against Israeli "strategic centres" in Erbil, Iran's state media reported.

The United States condemns the criminal attack on civilian targets in Erbil. Iranian regime elements have claimed responsibility for this attack and must be held accountable for this flagrant violation of Iraqi sovereignty and for terrorist attacks on innocent civilian properties

— U.S. Embassy Baghdad (@USEmbBaghdad) [March 13, 2022](#)

"Any repetition of attacks by Israel will be met with a harsh, decisive and destructive response," the Revolutionary Guard said in the statement.

A U.S. official blamed Iran for the attack earlier on Sunday but did not give further details.

A Kurdish spokesperson for the regional authorities said that Sunday's attack only targeted civilian residential areas, not a foreign base and called on the international community to carry out an investigation.

Separately, a U.S. State Department spokesperson called it an "outrageous attack" but said no Americans were hurt and there was no damage to U.S. government facilities in Erbil.

geolocation of a video showing missiles launched from Khasabad

<https://t.co/vChFizfNcX> <https://t.co/gShLypArI0> pic.twitter.com/iDWucRCdeM

— Samir (@obretix) [March 12, 2022](#)

U.S. forces stationed at Erbil's international airport complex have in the past come under fire from rocket and drone attacks that Washington blames on Iran-aligned militia groups, but no such attacks have occurred for several months.

Asked about Sunday's attack, Israel's military said it did not comment on reports in the foreign press and the prime minister's office declined to comment.

In another sign of increased regional tensions, Iran also suspended on Sunday a fifth round of talks with regional rival Saudi Arabia that were due to take place in Baghdad on Wednesday.

The last time ballistic missiles were directed at U.S. forces was in January 2020 – an Iranian retaliation for the U.S. killing earlier that month of its military commander Qassem Soleimani at Baghdad airport.

No U.S. personnel were killed in the 2020 attack but many suffered head injuries.

Iraq and neighbouring Syria are regularly the scene of violence between the United States and Iran. Iran-backed Shi'ite Islamist militias have attacked U.S. forces in both countries and Washington has on occasion retaliated with airstrikes.

An Israeli airstrike in Syria on Monday killed two members of Iran's Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC), Iranian state media said last week. The IRGC vowed to retaliate, it said. Israel has not confirmed it carried out the strike.

A Kurdish spokesperson for the regional authorities said there were no flight interruptions at Erbil airport.

Residents of Erbil posted videos online showing several large explosions, and some said the blasts shook their homes. Reuters could not independently verify those videos.

Iraq has been rocked by chronic instability since the defeat of the Sunni Islamist group Islamic State in 2017 by a loose coalition of Iraqi, U.S.-led and Iran-backed forces.

Ballistic missiles hit areas near U.S. consulate in Iraq; Iran claims responsibility

Since then, Iran-aligned militias have regularly attacked U.S. military and diplomatic sites in Iraq, the U.S. and many Iraqi officials say. Iran denies involvement in those attacks.

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