

Iran Update, November 2, 2023

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Information Cutoff: 2:00 pm EST

The Iran Update provides insights into Iranian and Iranian-sponsored activities abroad that undermine regional stability and threaten US forces and interests. It also covers events and trends that affect the stability and decision-making of the Iranian regime. The Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute and the Institute for the Study of War (ISW) provides these updates regularly based on regional events. For more on developments in Iran and the region, see our [interactive map of Iran and the Middle East](#).

Note: CTP and ISW have refocused the update to cover the Israel-Hamas war. The new sections address developments in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, Lebanon, and Syria, as well as noteworthy activity from Iran's Axis of Resistance. We do not report in detail on war crimes because these activities are well-covered in Western media and do not directly affect the military operations we are assessing and forecasting. We utterly condemn violations of the laws of armed conflict and the Geneva Conventions and crimes against humanity even though we do not describe them in these reports.

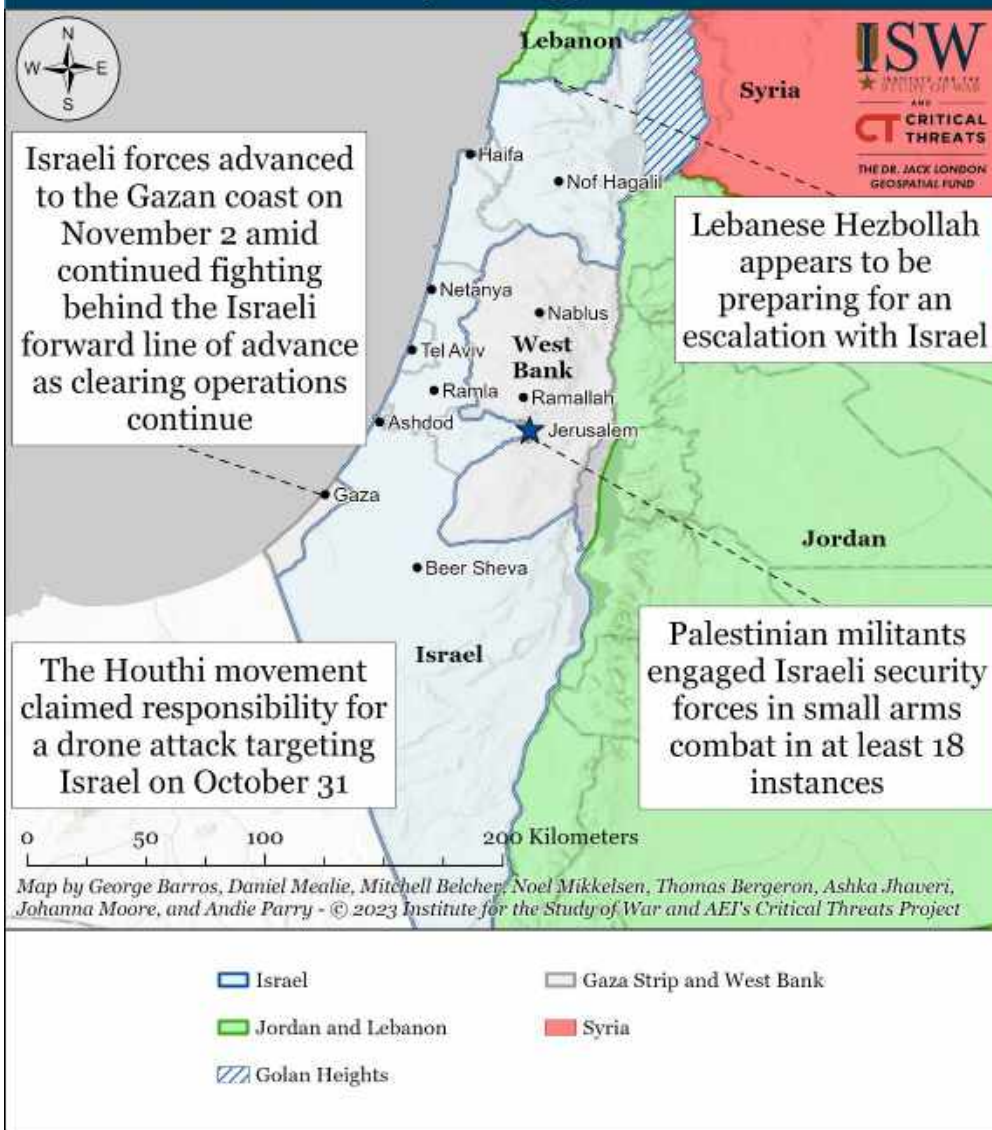
Click [here](#) to see CTP and ISW's interactive map of Israeli ground operations. This map is updated daily alongside the static maps present in this report.

Key Takeaways:

1. Israeli forces advanced to the coast in the central Gaza Strip on November 2 as clearing operations continued. Fighting continued behind the Israeli forward line of advance in the central Gaza Strip, however.
2. Palestinian militants targeted IDF ground forces with small arms, improvised explosive devices, and anti-tank fire along the northwestern Gazan coast north of al Shati camp.
3. Iranian and Axis of Resistance sources reported that Israeli forces continued their advance into Beit Hanoun.
4. Palestinian militias in the Gaza Strip conducted indirect fire attacks into Israeli territory adjacent to the southern Gaza Strip, possibly due to Israeli operations near Gaza City constraining the groups' ability to launch rockets into Israeli towns adjacent to Gaza City.
5. CTP-ISW recorded 18 separate clashes between Israeli forces and Palestinian militants in the West Bank.

6. Iranian-backed militants, including Lebanese Hezbollah, conducted 28 attacks into northern Israel, which is the largest offensive on this front since the Israel-Hamas War began.
7. Lebanese Hezbollah appears to be preparing for an escalation with Israel ahead of Hassan Nasrallah's planned speech on November 3.
8. The Chief of Staff of the Iraqi Popular Mobilization Forces said that the PMF is in a "state of emergency" during a meeting with other PMF leaders in Baghdad, indicating preparations for an escalation with the United States.
9. The Houthi movement claimed responsibility for a drone attack targeting Israel on October 31, marking the fourth attempted Houthi attack on Israel since the war began.
10. Iranian Supreme National Security Council Secretary Rear Admiral Ali Akbar Ahmadian met with Russian President Vladimir Putin's Special Representative for Syrian Affairs Alexander Lavrentiev in Tehran.

Israel-Hamas War as of November 2, 2023, 2:00 PM ET



Gaza Strip

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Erode the will of the Israeli political establishment and public to launch and sustain a major ground operation into the Gaza Strip
- Degrade IDF material and morale around the Gaza Strip

Israeli forces advanced to the coast in the central Gaza Strip on November 2 as clearing operations continued. Palestinian sources reported that Israeli troops reached the Gaza Strip's coastal roadway west of the Tika hospital and al Nour resort on November 2.^[1]

Fighting continued behind the Israeli forward line of advance in the central Gaza Strip, however. Palestinian militants attacked Israeli armor and infantry near Juhor ad Dik with anti-tank fire.^[2] The attack is consistent with the fact that the IDF is undertaking a clearing operation, which US military

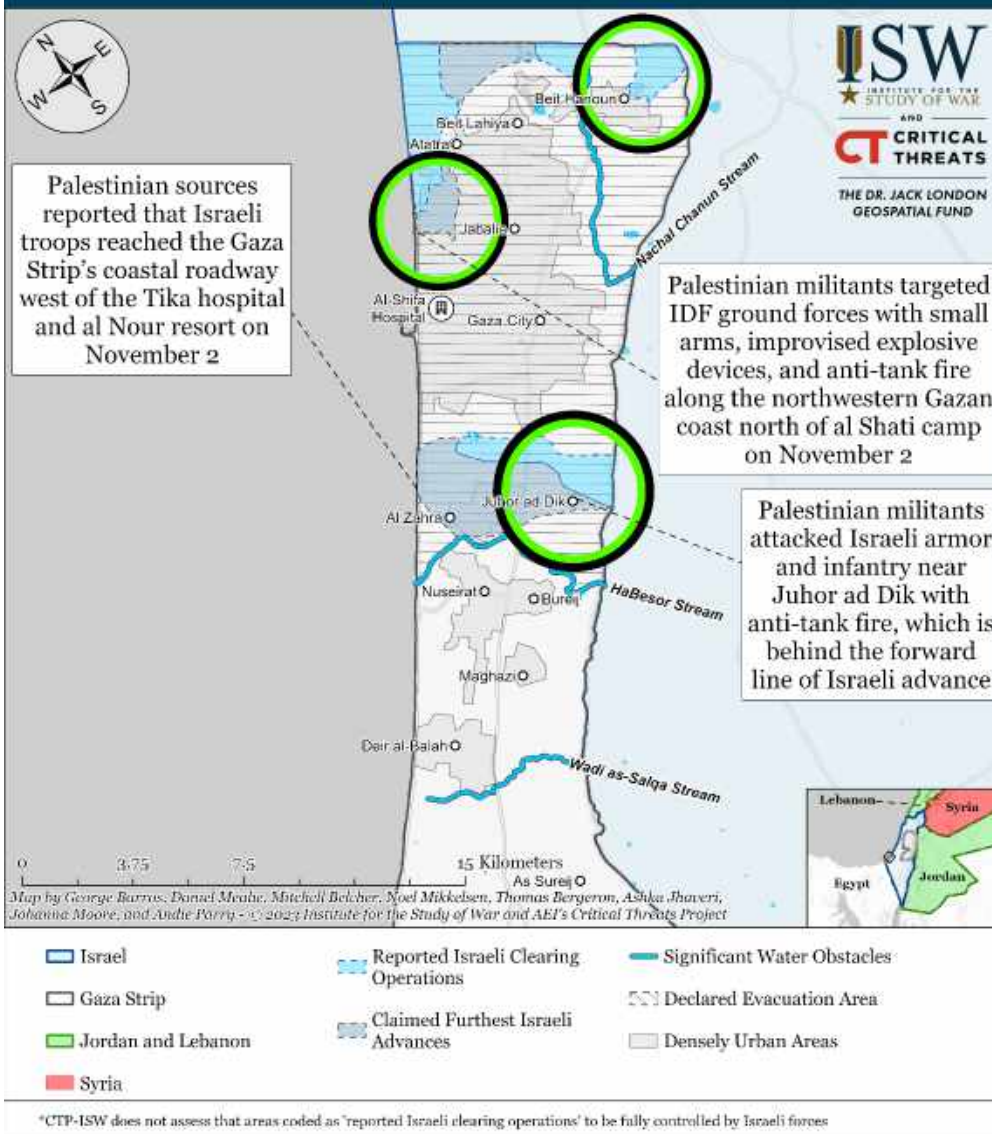
doctrine defines as an operation that “requires the commander to remove all enemy forces and eliminate organized resistance within an assigned area.”[3] Clearing operations frequently take weeks and sometimes months to complete.[4] Enemy counterattacks will often persist throughout a clearing operation until the clearing force has successfully eliminated organized resistance in its sector.[5] Attacks may still occur infrequently even after the end of a clearing operation due to the re-infiltration of enemy forces.

The tactical task “clear” differs from “control” in that control requires a force to “maintain physical influence over a specified area to prevent its use by an enemy or to create conditions necessary for successful friendly operations.”[6] Clearing operations precede a force gaining control over an area.

Palestinian militants targeted IDF ground forces with small arms, improvised explosive devices (IED), and anti-tank fire along the northwestern Gazan coast north of al Shati camp on November 2. The al Qassem Brigades—the militant wing of Hamas—claimed that it fired an anti-tank rocket at an IDF vehicle near the Khalidi mosque amid an IDF advance down the coastal road.[7] Palestinian militants also ambushed IDF forces in two separate engagements east of the coastal road.[8]

Iranian and Axis of Resistance sources reported that Israeli forces continued their advance into Beit Hanoun.[9] CTP cannot corroborate this reporting. Lebanese Hezbollah (LH)-affiliated outlet al Mayadeen claimed that the IDF is advancing from the east and south as part of an effort to encircle Beit Hanoun.[10]

Reported Israeli Ground Operations in the Gaza Strip as of November 2, 2023, 2:00 PM ET



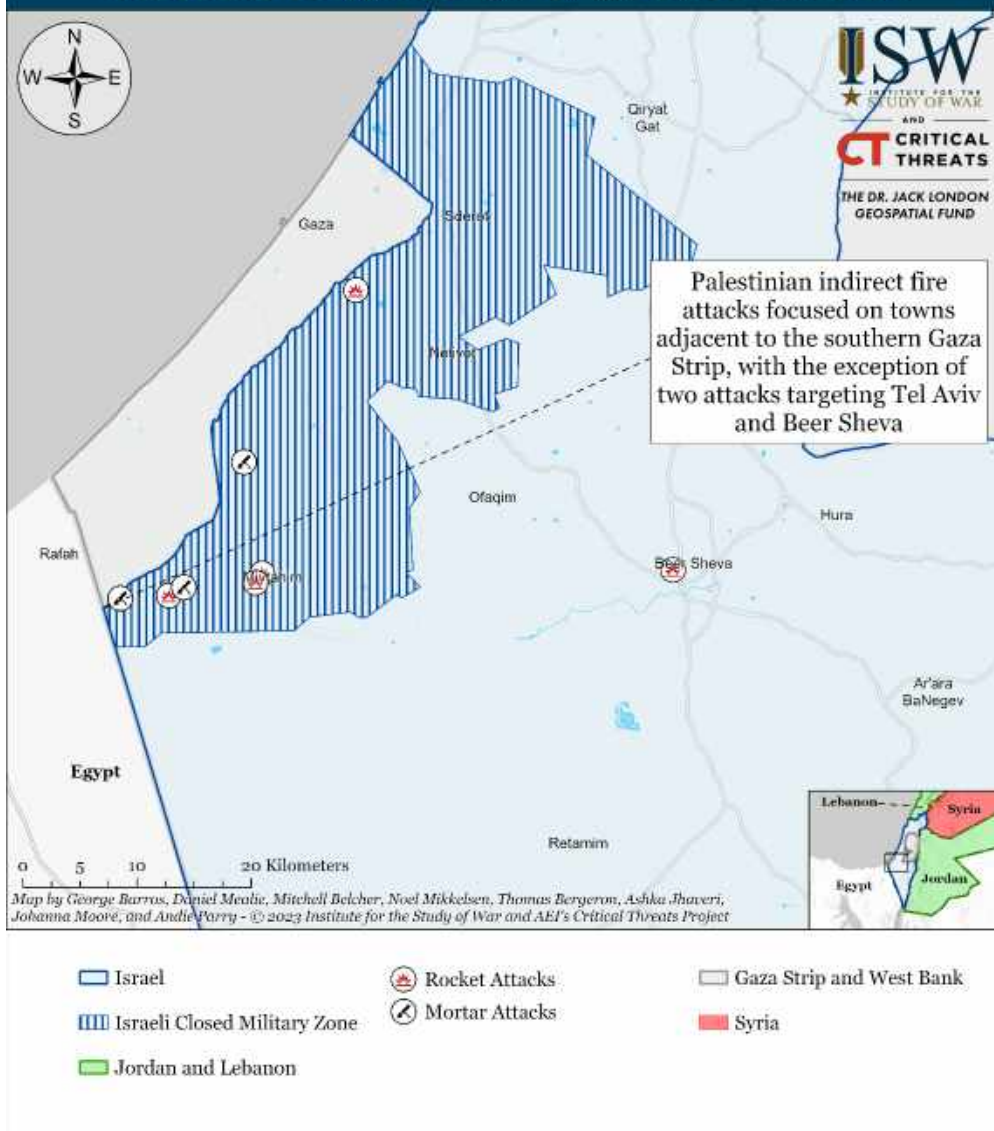
Palestinian militias in the Gaza Strip conducted indirect fire attacks into Israeli territory adjacent to the southern Gaza Strip, possibly due to Israeli operations near Gaza City constraining the groups' ability to launch rockets into Israeli towns adjacent to Gaza City. Palestinian militants launched a total of twelve indirect fire attacks from the Gaza Strip on November 2. These attacks focused on towns adjacent to the southern Gaza Strip, with the exception of two attacks targeting Tel Aviv and Beersheba.^[11] Israeli operations are making it more difficult for Hamas and its allies to fire rockets and mortars into areas adjacent to the northern Gaza Strip as Palestinian militants are forced to fight IDF units. Palestinian militias retain the ability to launch rockets from the southern Gaza Strip into northern Israel by using longer-range rockets, such as the R160.^[12]

Palestinian militias in the Gaza Strip conducted indirect fire attacks into Israel at a slightly decreased rate on November 2. The al Qassem Brigades claimed responsibility for four indirect fire attacks.[13] The al Quds Brigades—the militant wing of Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)—claimed responsibility for another five indirect fire attacks.[14] The National Resistance Brigades—the militant wing of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP)—claimed three indirect fire attacks into southern Israel.[15]



Recorded reports of rocket attacks; CTP-ISW cannot independently verify impact.

Attacks into Israel from Gaza as of November 2, 2023, 2:00 PM ET



Recorded reports of rocket attacks; CTP-ISW cannot independently verify impact.

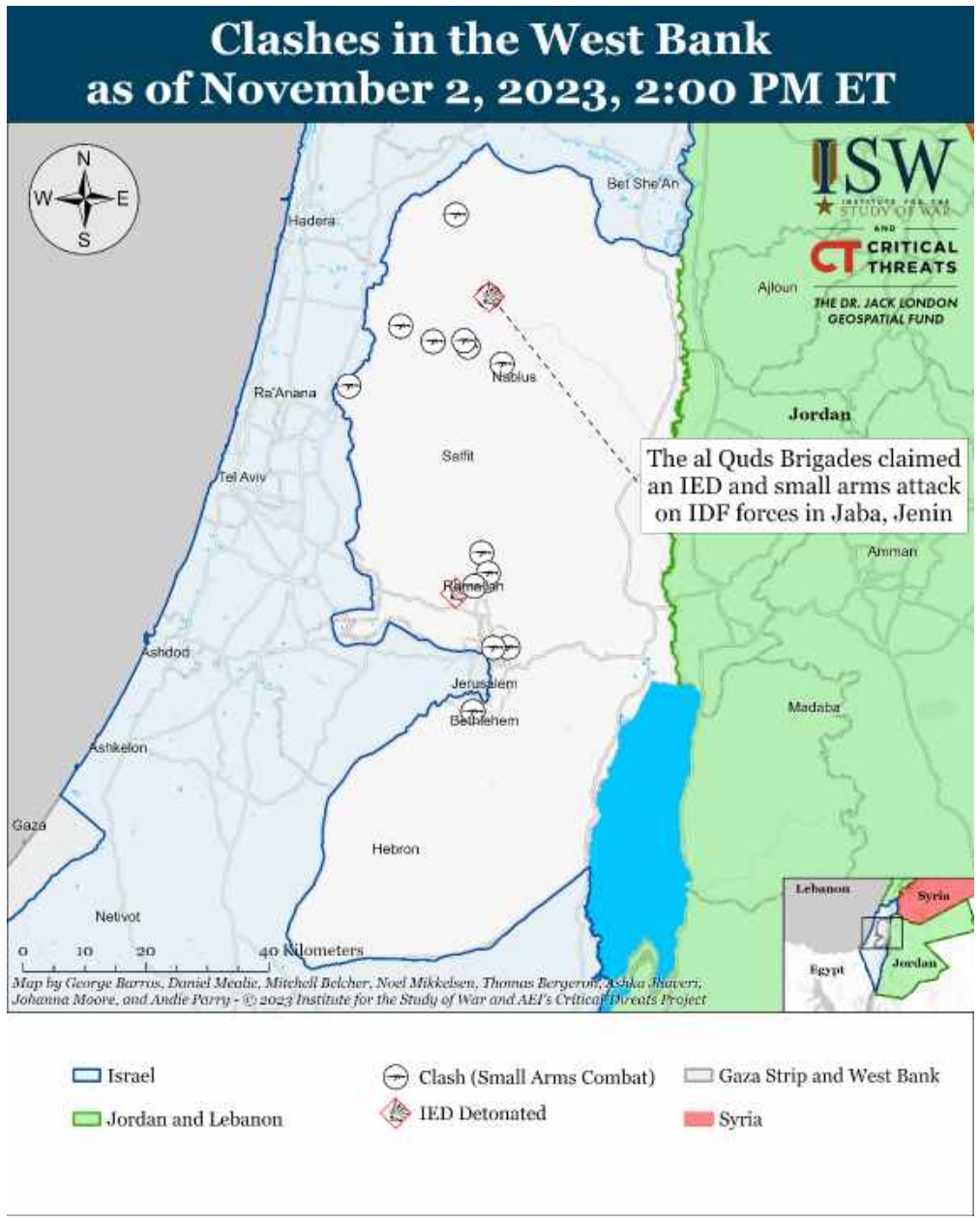
West Bank

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Draw IDF assets and resources toward the West Bank and fix them there

CTP-ISW recorded 18 separate clashes between Israeli forces and Palestinian militants in the West Bank on November 2. The al Quds Brigades' Jaba Battalion claimed an IED and small arms attack on IDF forces in Jaba the evening of November 1.^[16] Palestinian Authority-controlled Wafa News reported that the Jaba Battalion engaged the IDF at the entrance to the town.^[17] The al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades claimed a separate attack on Israeli forces at the Jalazone

refugee camp, north of Ramallah.[18] Axis of Resistance-affiliated media circulated a statement from the al Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades warning that Palestinian militants will attack if Israeli forces try to enter the town. The IDF reported that Palestinian militants threw explosives at Israeli forces conducting arrests and weapons seizures in Bitunya.[19] Axis of Resistance and Palestinian media reported 14 additional instances of fighting taking place between Palestinian militants and Israeli forces in central and northern West Bank.[20] The Lion’s Den—a West Bank-based Palestinian militia—released a statement on October 26 calling on West Bank residents to take up arms and “strike [everywhere] there is an [Israeli] soldier or settler.”[21] CTP-ISW previously recorded a comparable number of attacks on Israeli forces in the West Bank on October 28, after Israel began its clearing operations in the Gaza Strip.[22]



This map is not an exhaustive depiction of clashes and demonstrations in the West Bank.

Southern Lebanon and Golan Heights

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Draw IDF assets and resources toward northern Israel and fix them there
- Set conditions for successive campaigns into northern Israel

Iranian-backed militants, including LH, conducted 28 attacks into northern Israel on November 2, which is the largest offensive on this front since the Israel-Hamas War began. LH fired one-way attack drones for the first time at the IDF Zebdin barracks in the contested Shebaa Farms area. LH has primarily relied on anti-tank squads to attack IDF positions up until this point.^[23] LH claimed to simultaneously attack 19 IDF positions along the Lebanon-Israel border.^[24] This uptick in attacks precedes LH Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah's planned speech on November 3, during which he may announce further escalation against Israel. LH declared on October 8 that it is not a neutral party in the conflict but has nevertheless sustained daily attacks into northern Israel since the war began.^[25]

LH conducted attacks on IDF positions that are consistent with their ongoing attack campaign targeting IDF radar and sensor sites and military targets. LH attacked communication and surveillance equipment at the al Abbad site on November 2, which created conditions for successive operations against the IDF in northern Israel by targeting critical Israeli signals facilities and communications infrastructure.^[26] LH also fired a surface-to-air missile at an Israeli drone, which is a capability that LH has employed since October 28.^[27] The al Qassem Brigades claimed to have fired 12 rockets from southern Lebanon toward Kiriyat Shimona on November 2.^[28] LH almost certainly permits such attacks from southern Lebanon given the extent to which LH controls the area and coordinates with the other Iranian-backed groups operating there. CTP-ISW recorded five unclaimed attacks from southern Lebanon, including a rocket attack on Safed.^[29]

LH appears to be preparing for an escalation with Israel ahead of Nasrallah's planned speech. Iran and LH have been creating the expectation in the information environment that Nasrallah will announce some kind of escalation, which could include Hezbollah increasing its rate of attacks or using more advanced military systems against Israel. LH previously warned that it would get involved in the war if Israel conducts ground operations into the Gaza Strip.^[30]

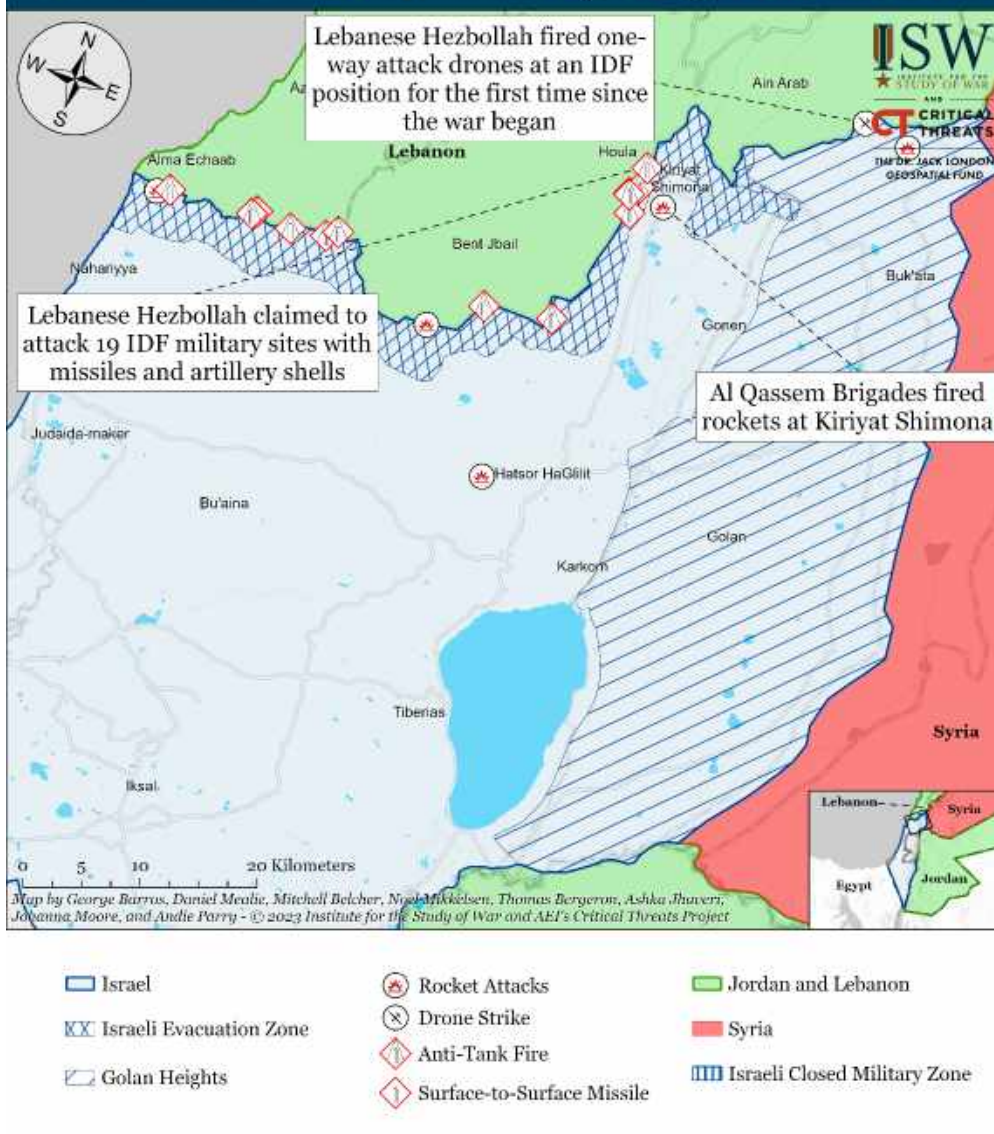
- Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) Quds Force Commander Esmail Ghaani traveled to Beirut on November 1 to coordinate the next stage of the Israel-Hamas War with LH.^[31] Ghaani also traveled to Beirut on October 20 to coordinate with LH and Palestinian militia leaders in a joint operation center there.^[32] Ghaani previously visited Syria to direct Iranian-affiliated militias to prepare to open a second front against Israel on October 15.^[33]
- Palestinian militias messaged their support for and anticipation of LH's involvement in the war. Unspecified Hamas sources informed the London-based al Quds al Arabi outlet that Hamas expects Nasrallah to announce LH's participation in the war.^[34] The sources said Hamas also wants LH to allow Palestinian groups within Lebanon to fight Israel, as LH controls the border. Hamas has previously messaged that LH is working at all military and political levels in the war.^[35] The al Quds Brigades separately released a statement on November 2 praising LH's combat abilities.^[36]

- US officials told the *Wall Street Journal* that US intelligence indicates that the Russian Wagner private military company plans to give LH Russian Pantsir-S1 air defense missile systems.[37] Russia and Iran have increased their military-technical ties over the past year. Iran has provided Russia with Shahed-136/131 drones and domestic Shahed production capabilities, and Russia reportedly provided Iran with advanced surveillance software and cyber weapons and promised Iran Su-35 aircraft.[38]

LH has been amassing forces on the borders with Israel in Lebanon and Syria since the Israel-Hamas war began. CTP-ISW has monitored LH redistribute its forces across the Levant for the possibility that the war in Israel will expand into a regional conflict fought on multiple fronts. LH and the IRGC Quds Force have attempted to build up their force presence in Syria and Lebanon to this end. LH immediately transferred special forces and medical teams to the borders with Israel. Hundreds of LH militants in the Radwan Unit, which is a special unit focused on infiltrating Israeli territory, mobilized and arrived in Syria on October 8 to spread out along the border with Israel.[39] LH deployed forces from eastern Syria to southwestern Syria and Lebanon several times in the past few weeks.[40] Ghaani previously warned Syrian President Bashar al Assad during a visit on October 15 that Iran intends to use Syria as a second front if the Israel-Hamas war expands geographically.[41]

IDF spokesperson for Arab Media Avichay Adraee said on November 2 that the Iranian-backed, Syria-based Imam al Hussein Brigade arrived in Lebanon in recent weeks to assist LH in fighting Israel.[42] The militia has already engaged with the IDF in recent weeks along the Lebanese border.[43] The militia has been preparing and gathering capabilities to threaten US forces in Syria and Israel, according to a document obtained by *Newsweek* about the Imam Hossein Division in July 2023.[44] Former IRGC Quds Force Major General Qassem Soleimani founded the militia in 2016, and it now represents an Iranian-led, multi-national combat force comprised of thousands of fighters from around the Middle East.[45] Iran uses cargo planes landing in Syria to arm the militia, according to *Newsweek*. [46] Iran has already attempted to facilitate arms to forces in Lebanon and Syria, which Israel interdicted and indicated that the airstrikes are meant to prevent Iran from delivering weapons and equipment to LH and other Iranian-backed militias.[47]

Attacks into Northern Israel from Syria and Lebanon as of November 2, 2023, 2:00 PM ET



Iran and Axis of Resistance

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

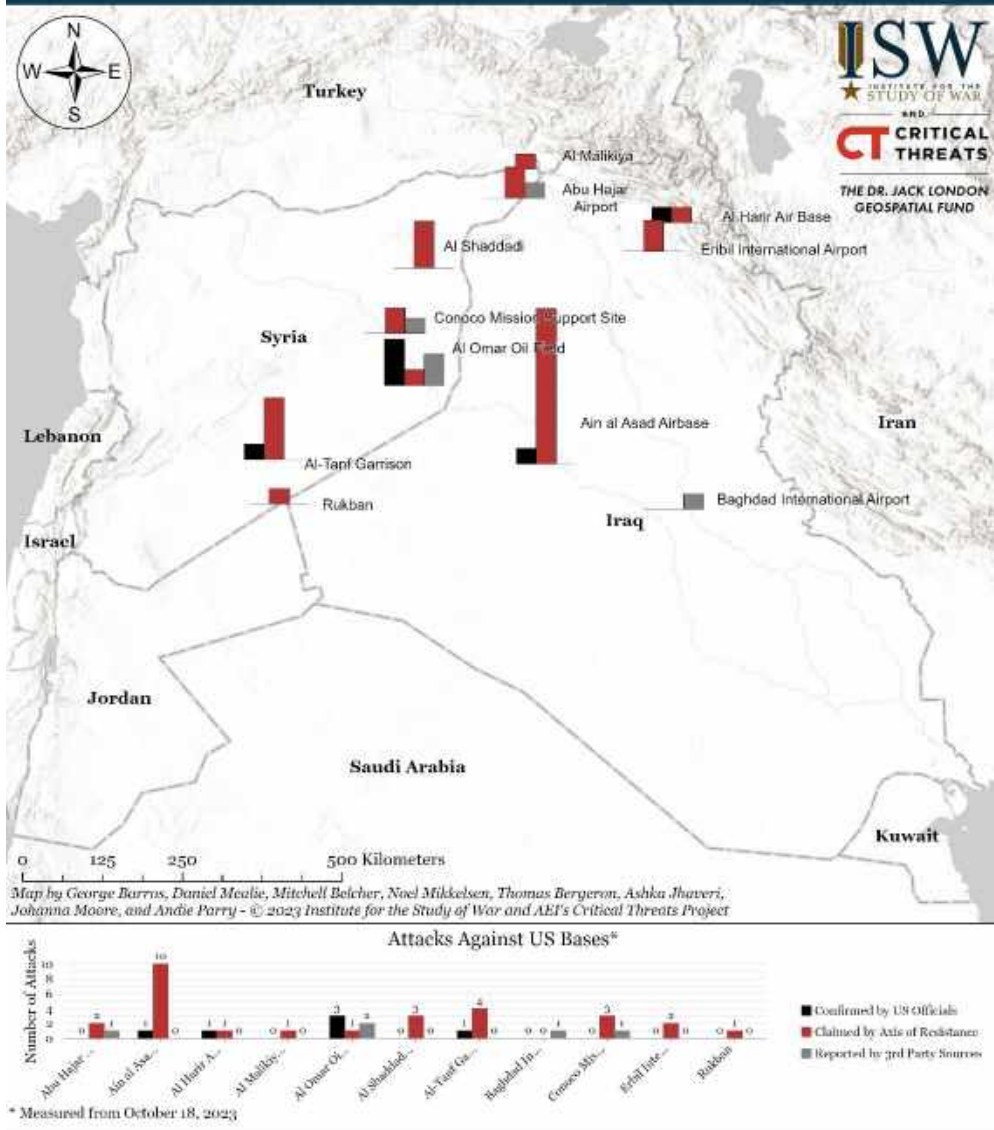
- Demonstrate the capability and willingness of Iran and the Axis of Resistance to escalate against the United States and Israel on multiple fronts
- Set conditions to fight a regional war on multiple fronts

The Chief of Staff of the Iraqi Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) said that the PMF is in a “state of emergency” during a meeting with other PMF leaders in Baghdad on November 2, indicating preparations for an escalation with the United States. PMF Chief of Staff Abdulazi al Mohammadawi said that the current conditions in the region “warn of war” and PMF forces must be on alert to defend Iraqi sovereignty.[48] Mohammadawi (also known as Abu Fadak) served as the secretary general of Iranian-backed Iraqi militia Kataib Hezbollah and maintains

strong ties to the group.[49] KH has repeatedly threatened to conduct attacks on US military positions in recent weeks and is part of the Islamic Resistance in Iraq, which is a loose coalition of Iranian-backed Iraqi militias and the group that has claimed most of the recent drone and rocket attacks on US forces in Iraq and Syria.[50]

The Houthi movement claimed responsibility for a drone attack targeting Israel on October 31, marking the fourth attempted Houthi attack on Israel since the war began. The Houthis said that it launched a “large batch of drones,” which it claimed hit Israeli territory.[51] The IDF said that it intercepted an “aerial attack” over the Red Sea on October 31 but that there was no threat to civilians and the attack did not enter Israeli territory.[52] A Houthi spokesperson separately criticized Saudi Arabia on November 2 for intercepting Houthi attacks targeting Israel and cooperating with the United States.[53] Saudi Arabia and the US Navy intercepted Houthi cruise missiles headed toward Israel on October 19.[54]

Attacks against US Bases in the Middle East as of November 2, 2023, 2:00 PM ET



Iranian Supreme National Security Council Secretary Rear Admiral Ali Akbar Ahmadian met with Russian President Vladimir Putin’s Special Representative for Syrian Affairs Alexander Lavrentiev in Tehran on November 1.[55] The two officials discussed the Israel-Hamas war, joint political and security cooperation, and cooperation in Syria. Lavrentiev also delivered a message from Putin to Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi.

An Iranian media delegation traveled to Lebanon to meet with Palestinian militia commanders on November 2, likely in part to coordinate Axis of Resistance messaging and information operations.[56] Unspecified Iranian media officials met with the representatives from various Palestinian militias fighting Israel, including Hamas and PIJ. *Nour News Agency*—an outlet tied to Iran’s Supreme National Security Council—reported on the delegation and emphasized that both Iranian and Palestinian officials agreed that “today’s war is a war of

narratives” and that the “responsibility of journalists. . . is to be in the field of the narratives war and present the voice and image of the oppressed Palestinian people to the world.”



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- [2] <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/193>; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/194>; <https://t.me/newpress1/56852>
- [3] <https://irp.fas.org/doddir/army/fm3-24.pdf>; <https://irp.fas.org/doddir/army/fm3-90-1.pdf>
- [4] [https://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/OperationalArt in COIN o.pdf](https://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/OperationalArt%20in%20COIN%20o.pdf)
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- [11] <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/204>;
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- [12] https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/idf-says-long-range-rocket-fired-from-gaza-toward-haifa-area-no-injuries/; https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/idf-says-long-range-rocket-fired-from-gaza-toward-haifa-area-no-injuries/
- [13] <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/196>; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/200>;
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[56] <https://nournews.com/ir/Fa/News/154447>

Iran Update, November 1, 2023

Johanna Moore, Andie Parry, Kathryn Tyson, Annika Ganzeveld, Peter Mills, Amin Soltani, and Nicholas Carl

November 1, 2023: 2pm ET

The Iran Update provides insights into Iranian and Iranian-sponsored activities abroad that undermine regional stability and threaten US forces and interests. It also covers events and trends that affect the stability and decision-making of the Iranian regime. The Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute and the Institute for the Study of War (ISW) provides these updates regularly based on regional events. For more on developments and in Iran and the region, see our [interactive map of Iran and the Middle East](#).

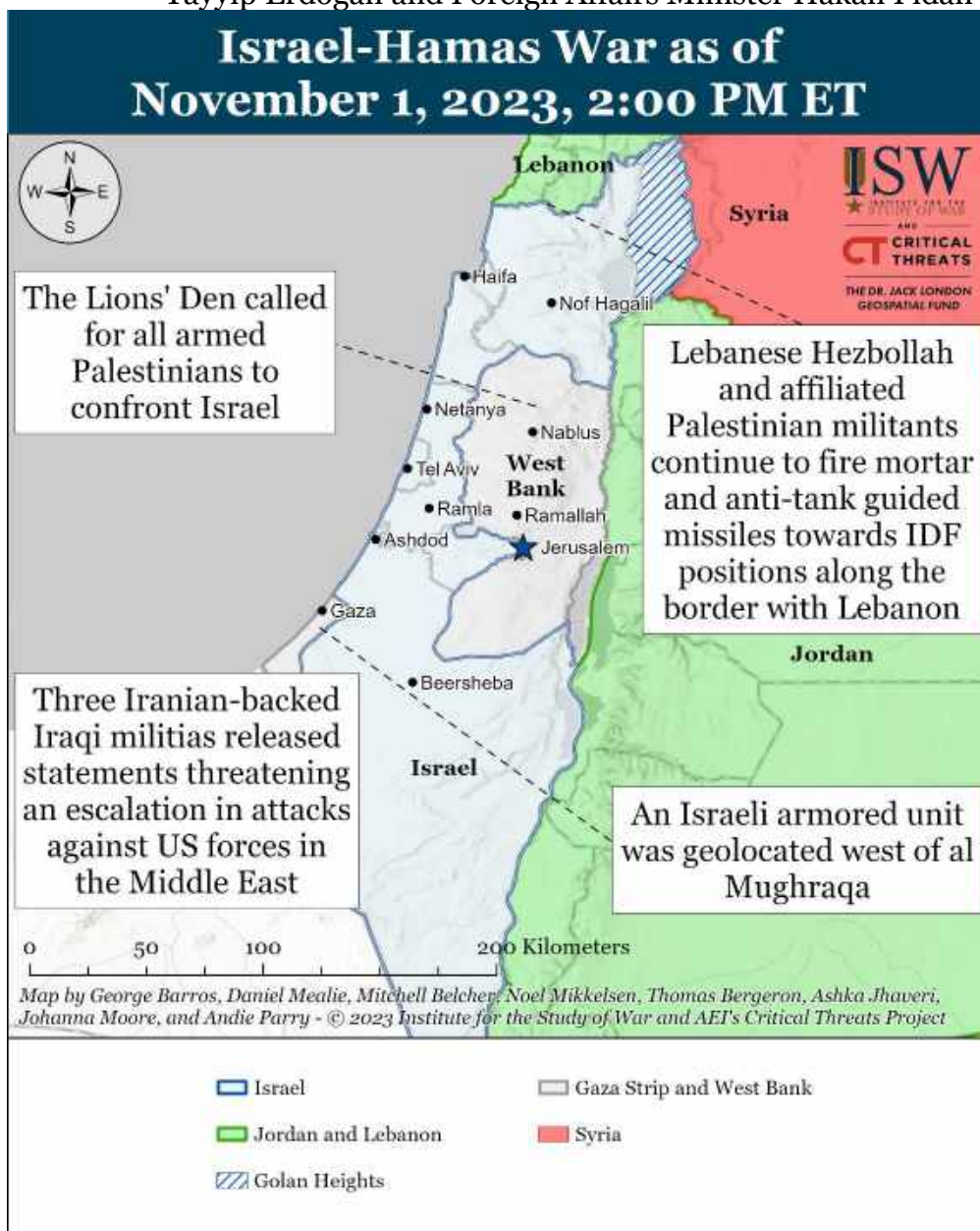
Note: CTP and ISW have refocused the update to cover the Israel-Hamas war. The new sections address developments in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, Lebanon, and Syria, as well as noteworthy activity from Iran's Axis of Resistance. We do not report in detail on war crimes because these activities are well-covered in Western media and do not directly affect the military operations we are assessing and forecasting. We utterly condemn violations of the laws of armed conflict and the Geneva Conventions and crimes against humanity even though we do not describe them in these reports.

Click [here](#) to see CTP and ISW's interactive map of Israeli ground operations. This map is updated daily alongside the static maps present in this report.

Key Takeaways:

1. Lebanese Hezbollah-affiliated al Mayadeen reported that an Israeli armored unit advanced from the northwestern Gaza Strip south along the coast.
2. Axis of Resistance and Palestinian media reported that the al Qassem Brigades clashed with an IDF unit in Beit Hanoun.
3. Palestinian militias in the Gaza Strip conducted indirect fire attacks into Israel at their usual rate. Multiple Palestinian militias appeared to conduct joint indirect fire attacks on locations in Israel, which would suggest greater coordination between these groups.
4. Anti-Israel militancy and protest activity in the West Bank returned to regular levels after surging on October 31. The Lions' Den released a statement calling for further anti-Israel militancy in the West Bank.

5. Iranian-backed militants, including Lebanese Hezbollah, conducted six attacks into Israel as part of an ongoing attack campaign targeting IDF radar and sensor sites and military targets.
6. The Islamic Resistance in Iraq—a coalition of Iranian-backed Iraqi militias—claimed responsibility for a one-way drone attack targeting US forces in Syria.
7. Iran and LH are continuing to promote the expectation in the information space that LH will announce some kind of escalation against Israel on November 3.
8. Iranian-backed Iraqi militias are signaling that they may escalate against US forces in Iraq and Syria, as LH similarly messages against Israel.
9. The Houthi movement may have conducted an attack targeting southern Israel, which would mark the fourth attempted Houthi attack on Israel since the war began.
10. Iranian Foreign Affairs Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian met Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Foreign Affairs Minister Hakan Fidan in Ankara.



Gaza Strip

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

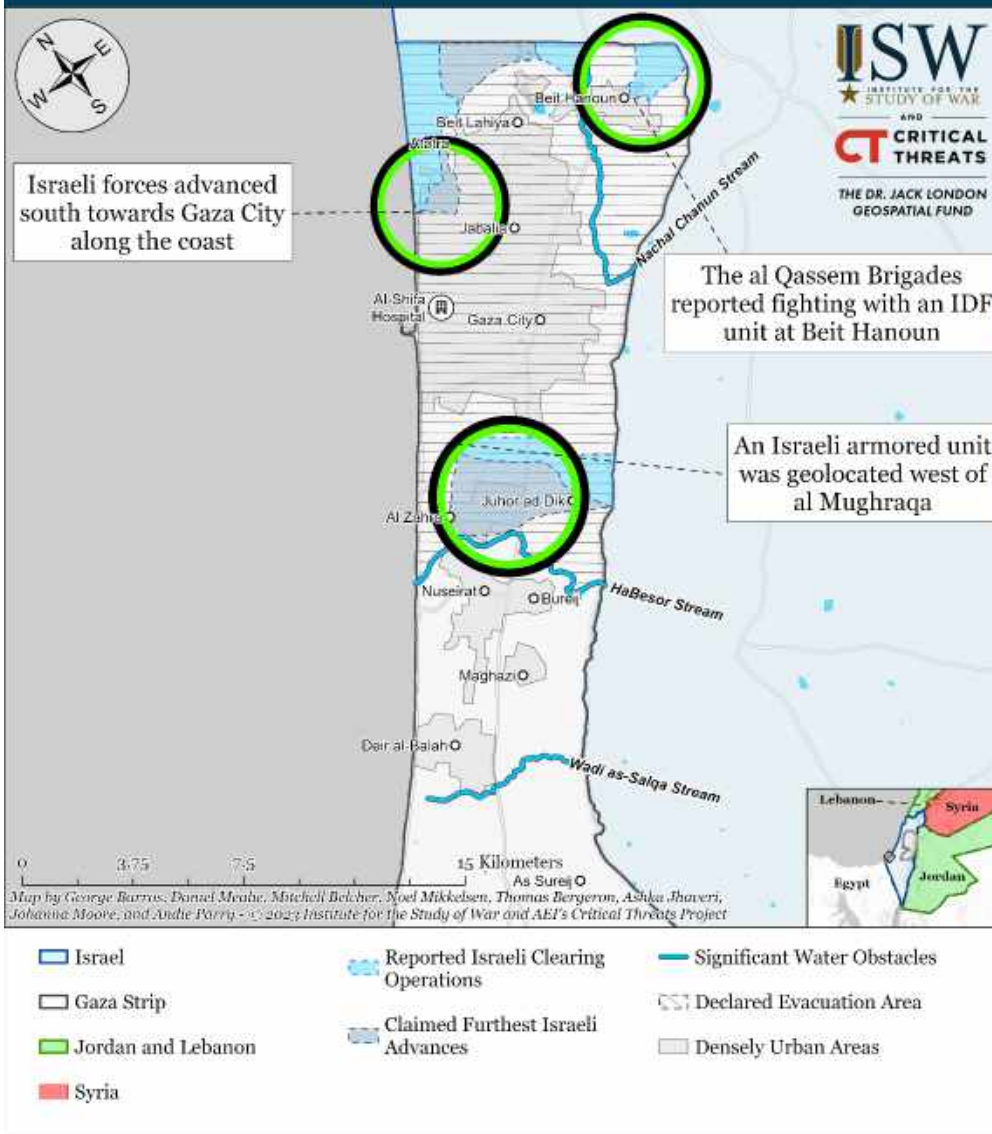
- Erode the will of the Israeli political establishment and public to launch and sustain a major ground operation into the Gaza Strip
- Degrade IDF material and morale around the Gaza Strip

Lebanese Hezbollah (LH)-affiliated al Mayadeen reported that an Israeli armored unit advanced from the northwestern Gaza Strip south along the coast to Salah Khalaf Street and later attempted to move east, inland, to al Nasr Street and al Toum Street.[1] The commander of the IDF 162nd Division stated that Israeli forces had reached “the gates of Gaza City,” possibly corroborating this reporting.[2]

Axis of Resistance and Palestinian media reported that the al Qassem Brigades—the militant wing of Hamas—clashed with an IDF unit in Beit Hanoun on November 1. The al Qassem Brigades claimed that its militants destroyed at least four Israeli Merkava tanks with Yasin-105 anti-tank weapons.[3] The al Qassem Brigades also claimed to have bombed a gathering of IDF soldiers near Beit Hanoun using a quadcopter drone.[4] The al Quds Brigades—the militant wing of Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)—claimed that its fighters fought an IDF unit in Karamah, southwest Beit Lahia.

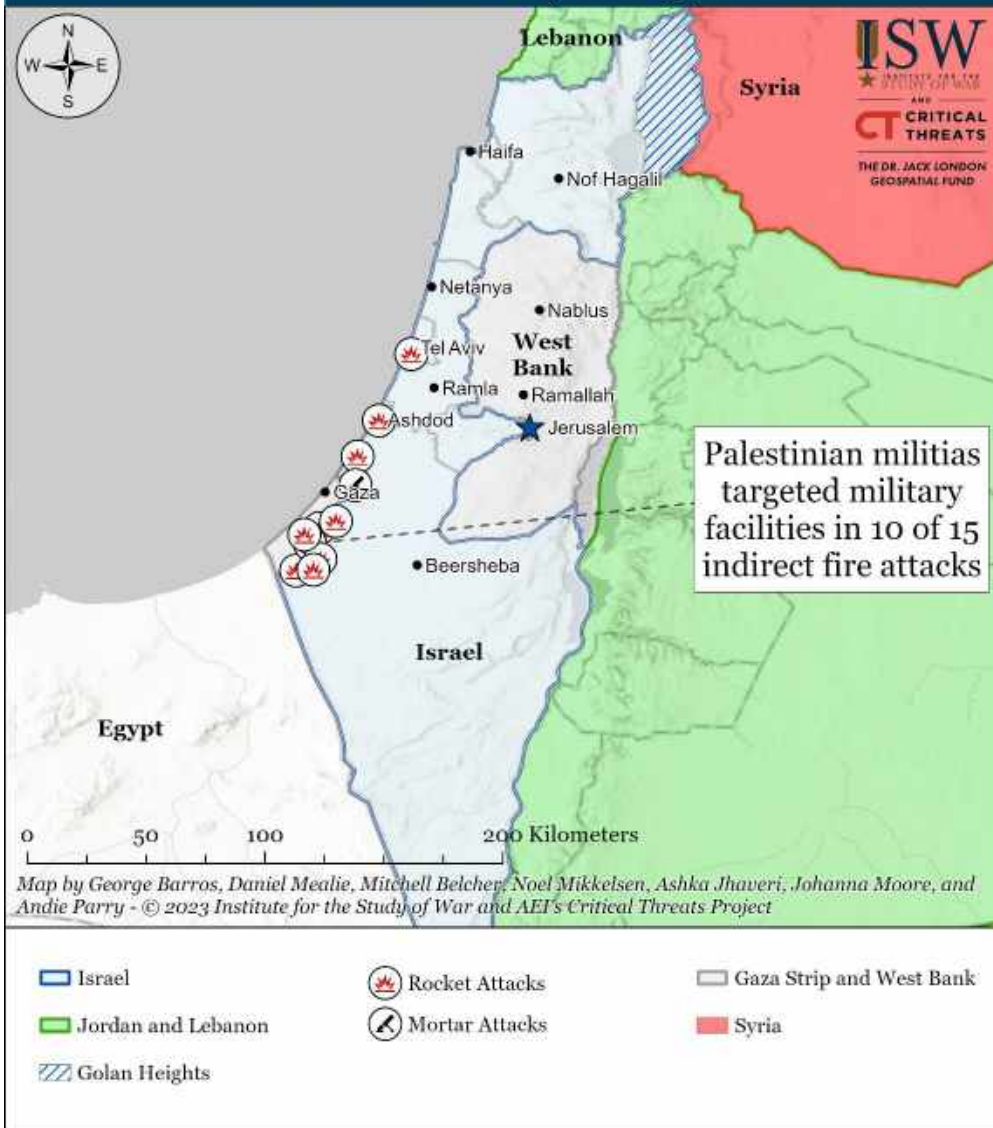
The al Qassem Brigades claimed that its militants engaged Israeli forces attempting to enter the Zaytoun neighborhood west of Gaza City. The al Quds Brigades militants reportedly fired Yasin-105 anti-tank weapons and conducted a mortar attack on advancing Israeli forces.[5] Palestinian media reported that militants were successful in destroying an Israeli armored personnel carrier during the fighting.[6] The al Quds Brigades claimed that its forces supported the fighting at Zaytoun and caused an unspecified number of Israeli casualties.[7]

Reported Israeli Ground Operations in the Gaza Strip as of November 1, 2023, 2:00 PM ET



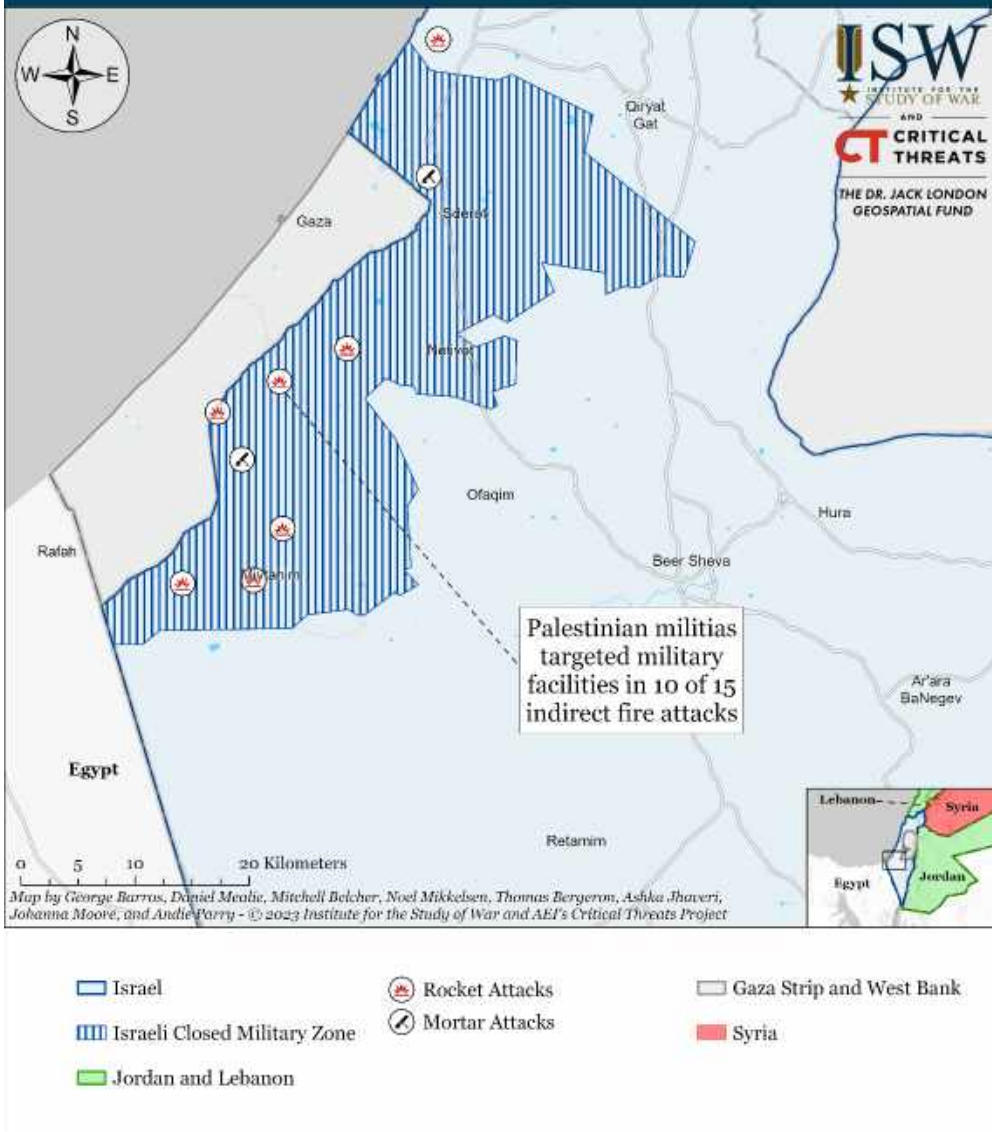
Palestinian militias in the Gaza Strip conducted indirect fire attacks into Israel at their usual rate on November 1. The al Qassem Brigades claimed responsibility for eight indirect fire attacks.^[8] The al Quds Brigades claimed responsibility for another three indirect fire attacks.^[9] The Abu Ali Mustafa Brigades—the militant wing of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—claimed to launch mortars into southern Israel.^[10] Palestinian media reported that the al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades—the self-claimed militant wing of Fatah—conducted three rocket attacks.^[11] Multiple Palestinian militias appeared to conduct joint indirect fire attacks on locations in Israel, which would suggest greater coordination between these groups. The al Qassem Brigades and Abu Ali Mustafa Brigades independently claimed mortar and rocket attacks on Nirim, southern Israel, at the same time.^[12] The al Quds Brigades and al Qassem Brigades jointly claimed mortar attacks on the Erez crossing into the Gaza Strip.^[13]

Indirect Fire Attacks into Israel from Gaza as of November 1, 2023, 2:00 PM ET



Recorded reports of rocket attacks; CTP-ISW cannot independently verify impact.

Attacks into Israel from Gaza as of November 1, 2023, 2:00 PM ET



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West Bank

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Draw IDF assets and resources toward the West Bank and fix them there

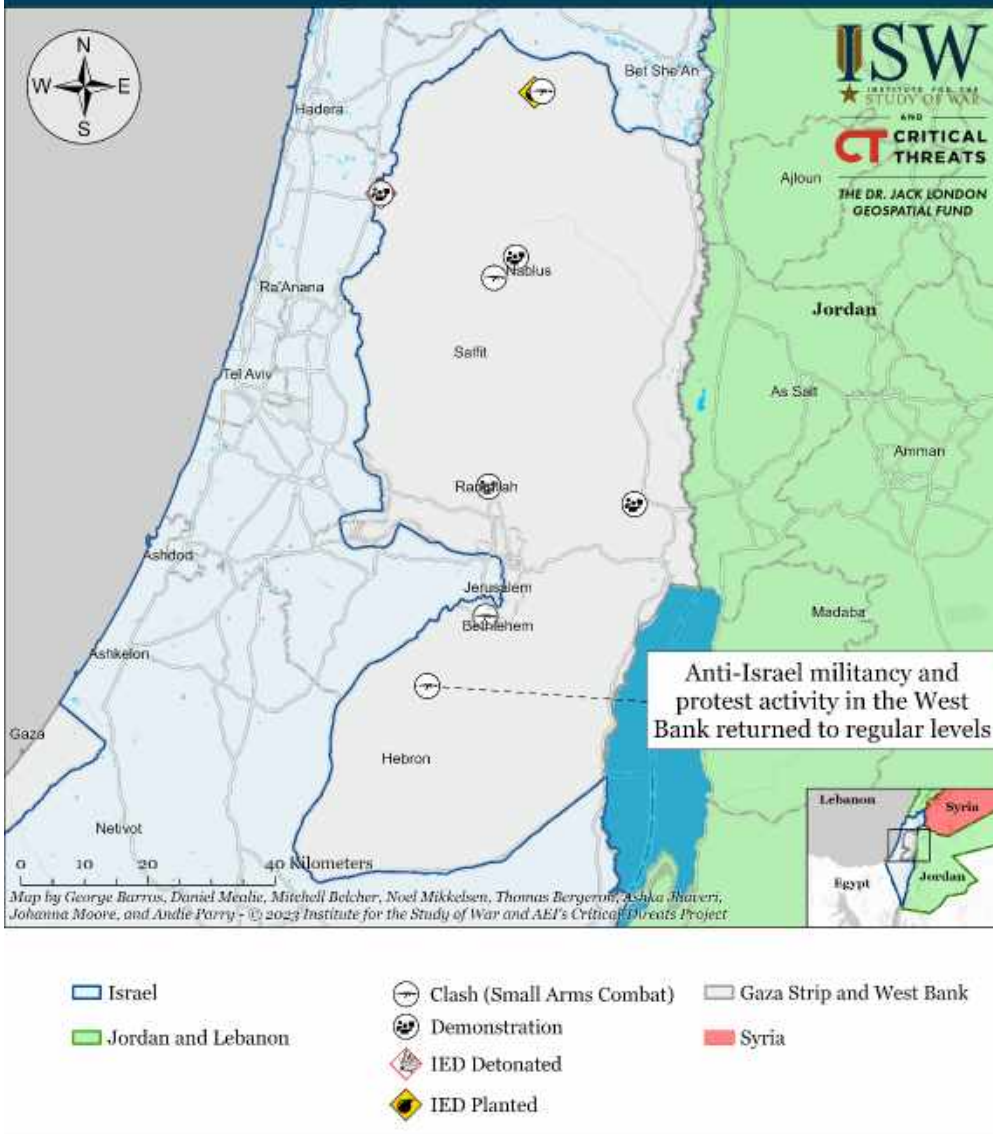
Anti-Israel militancy and protest activity in the West Bank returned to regular levels on November 1, after surging the day prior. CTP-ISW recorded five small arms clashes between Palestinian militants and Israeli forces, and two instances of Palestinian militants conducting IED attacks in the West Bank.^[14] Israeli forces also uncovered buried IEDs in the Jenin refugee

camp.[15] CTP-ISW recorded five demonstrations in support of the Gaza Strip.[16] Demonstrators in Nablus and Ramallah flew Hamas flags.[17]

The Lions’ Den—a West Bank-based Palestinian militia—released a statement on October 31 calling for further anti-Israel militancy in the West Bank.[18] The group reiterated its calls for mobilization and attacks against Israeli targets. The group also suggested that Israel could face a multi-front escalation on November 3, likely in reference to Hassan Nasrallah’s planned speech that day.[19] CTP-ISW previously noted that Iran and Lebanese Hezbollah are creating the expectation in the information environment that Nasrallah will announce some kind of escalation on November 3, which could include Hezbollah increasing its rate of attacks or using more advanced military systems against Israel.[20] The Lions’ Den has indicated growing alignment with Hamas in recent days, as CTP-ISW previously reported, even though the group has historically claimed that it is not affiliated with any specific Palestinian faction.[21]

Israeli forces arrested Fatah Secretary General in Jenin Ata Abu Ramila in an overnight raid on November 1.[22] Ramila is one of the few high-level Fatah officials whom Israeli forces have arrested since October 7.[23] The IDF accused Ramila of inciting, promoting, and financing terrorism in Jenin, which is a hotspot for Palestinian militant activity in the West Bank.[24] Ata Abu Ramila previously called for all Palestinian militias to unite and fight together against Israel in January 2023.[25] Israel continued raids throughout the West Bank, arresting 46 people affiliated with Hamas and other West Bank militias on November 1.[26] Israeli forces have arrested 1,830 people in the West Bank since October 7, according to Palestinian Authority media *Wafa*. [27] CTP-ISW cannot verify the accuracy of this report.

Clashes in the West Bank as of November 1, 2023, 2:00 PM ET



This map is not an exhaustive depiction of clashes and demonstrations in the West Bank.

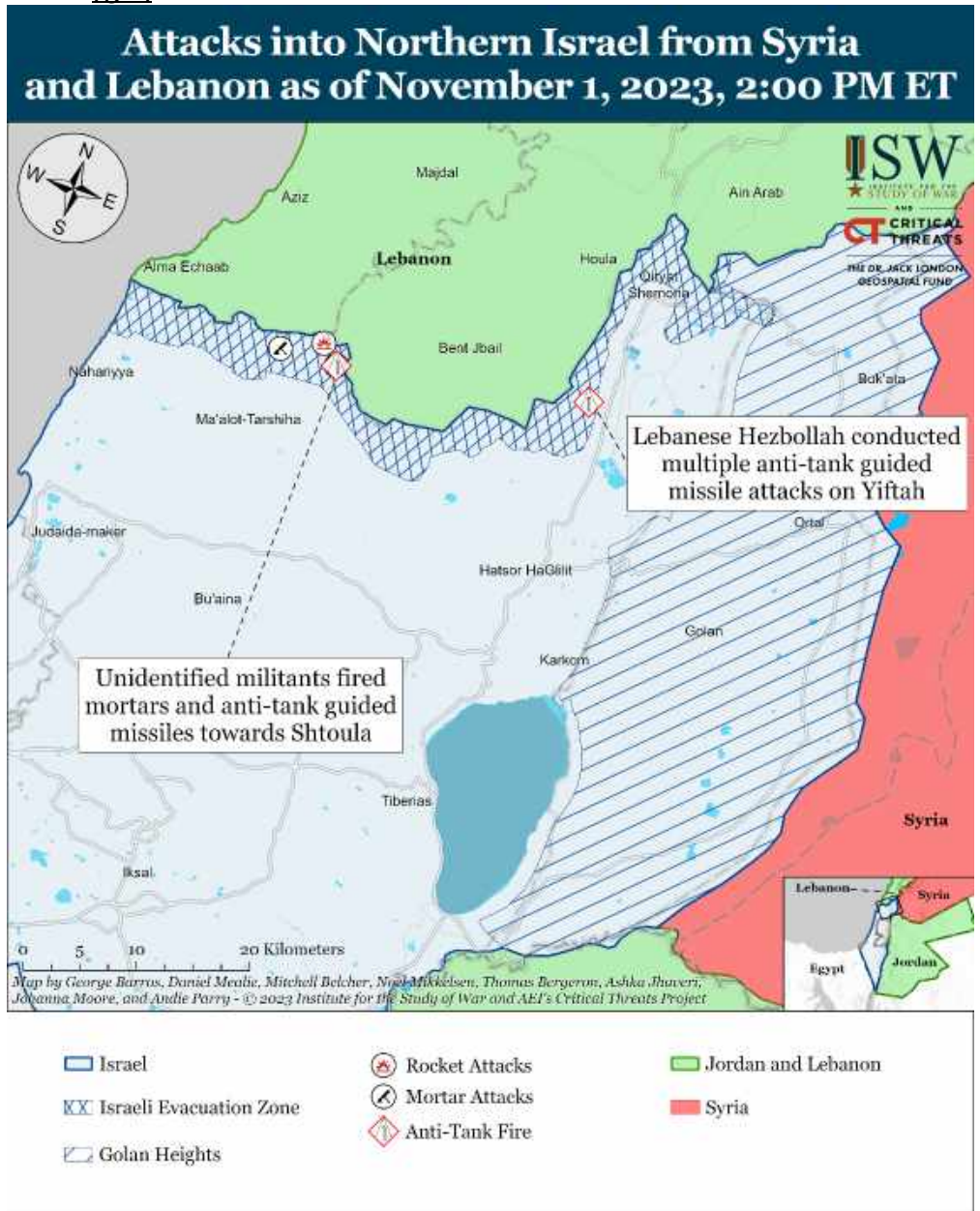
Southern Lebanon and Golan Heights

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Draw IDF assets and resources toward northern Israel and fix them there
- Set conditions for successive campaigns into northern Israel

Iranian-backed militants, including LH, conducted six attacks into Israel on November 1 as part of an ongoing attack campaign targeting IDF radar and sensor sites and military targets. LH claimed four indirect fire and anti-tank missile attacks on IDF positions in

northern Israel.[28] Unknown militants conducted two indirect fire and anti-tank missile attacks into northern Israel as well.[29] The IDF continues to conduct airstrikes and artillery strikes on Iranian-backed militants, who are attempting to launch indirect fire from southern Lebanon into northern Israel.[30]



Iran and Axis of Resistance

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Demonstrate the capability and willingness of Iran and the Axis of Resistance to escalate against the United States and Israel on multiple fronts
- Set conditions to fight a regional war on multiple fronts

The Islamic Resistance in Iraq—a coalition of Iranian-backed Iraqi militias—claimed responsibility for a one-way drone attack targeting US forces in Syria on November 1. The Islamic Resistance in Iraq claimed it fired two drones targeting US forces at the al Tanf Garrison in southeastern Syria and achieved “direct hits.”^[31] The Islamic Resistance in Iraq has attacked al Tanf Garrison four times since October 18. The group has conducted 27 total attacks on US forces in the Middle East since October 18.

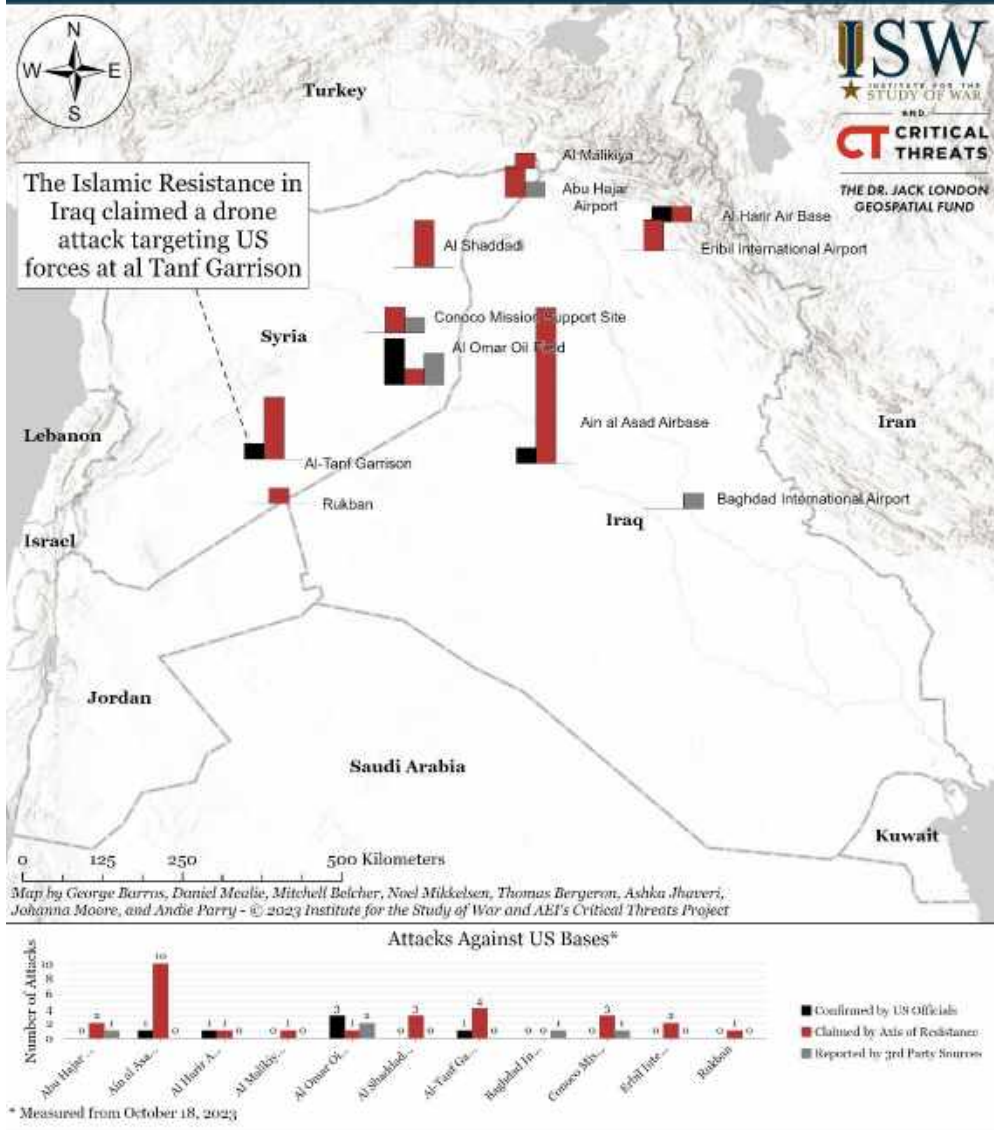
Iran and LH are continuing to promote the expectation in the information space that LH will announce some kind of escalation against Israel on November 3. CTP-ISW previously reported that LH has released two dramatic videos in recent days ahead of LH Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah’s planned speech on November 3, creating the expectation of a significant announcement on the Israel-Hamas war.^[32] This speech is significant in that it will be Nasrallah’s first public statement on the war. Iranian state media has further amplified the news of the upcoming speech and the dramatic videos, describing them as a “sign of future events.”^[33]

- Supreme Leader International Affairs Adviser Ali Akbar Velayati held a phone call with LH Deputy Secretary General Naim Qassem on October 31 for further political coordination.^[34] Velayati praised Nasrallah’s leadership and wished him success in his fight against Israel, according to Iranian state media.
- Unidentified LH members published an open letter on November 1, expressing solidarity with Palestinian militants fighting Israel in the Gaza Strip.^[35]

Iranian-backed Iraqi militias are signaling that they may escalate against US forces in Iraq and Syria, as LH similarly messages against Israel. Three Iranian-backed Iraqi militias released statements on November 1 to escalate their attacks on US military positions. The leader of Harakat Hezbollah al Nujaba said that the Islamic resistance is liberating Iraq militarily and that “what is coming is greater.”^[36] Ashab al Kahf responded to Harakat Hezbollah al Nujaba, quoting the statement and saying that Ashab al Kahf will strike American bases “until our land is liberated.”^[37] Saraya Awlia al Dam similarly said that it is ready to fight against the “aggression in Iraq and in other arenas.”^[38] All three groups have attacked the US forces in Iraq previously.^[39] The groups are affiliated with Iranian-backed Iraqi militia Asaib Ahl al Haq, which is a member of the Islamic Resistance in Iraq.^[40]

The Houthi movement may have conducted an attack targeting southern Israel overnight on October 31, which would mark the fourth attempted Houthi attack on Israel since the war began. The IDF said that it intercepted an “aerial attack” over the Red Sea but that there was no threat to civilians and the attack did not enter Israeli territory.^[41] Local journalists and social media accounts reported that the attack was intercepted near Eilat in southern Israel.^[42] A Houthi Shura Council member posted “Eilat” in Arabic and Hebrew on X (Twitter) shortly before the IDF confirmed an attack.^[43] The attack came after the Houthis launched drones, ballistic missiles, and cruise missiles targeting Israel earlier on October 31 and threatened more attacks.^[44]

Attacks against US Bases in the Middle East as of November 1, 2023, 2:00 PM ET



Iranian Foreign Affairs Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian met Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Foreign Affairs Minister Hakan Fidan in Ankara on November 1.^[45] Abdollahian praised Erdogan’s “strong and accurate positions” on the Israel-Hamas war and announced that Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi will soon travel to Turkey. Erdogan has expressed strong support for Hamas in recent days, describing the Palestinian militia as a “liberation group” on October 25 and organizing a pro-Palestine rally in Istanbul on October 28.^[46] Abdollahian’s visit to Turkey is likely part of Iran’s ongoing effort to unite Muslim countries against Israel. Iran has historically—and especially since the start of the war on October 7—sought to rally Muslim countries against Israel and frame itself as a champion of the Palestinian cause, as CTP-ISW previously reported.^[47] Abdollahian has traveled to Turkey four times since August 2021 and last traveled to Turkey in March 2023 to evaluate the impacts and damage of the February 2023 Turkey-Syria earthquake.^[48]

Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei discussed the Israel-Hamas war with a group of students on November 1, marking the fifth time he has publicly discussed the war since October 7.^[49] Khamenei called on Muslim countries to impose an oil and food embargo on Israel, echoing previous calls from other Iranian officials, such as Foreign Affairs Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian, to impose such an embargo.^[50] Khamenei also warned Muslim countries that Israel may threaten them in the future if they do not help Hamas defeat Israel. Khamenei repeated previous Iranian claims that Israel does not care about Israeli hostages in the Gaza Strip and that the United States is directing Israel's war against Hamas.^[51] CTP-ISW previously assessed that Hamas and its allies are preparing the information environment to blame Israel for the possible deaths of hostages in the Gaza Strip, especially if Hamas begins killing those hostages.^[52]

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[1] <https://www.almayadeen dot net/news/politics/%D9%85%D9%84%D8%AE%D8%B5-%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%BA%D8%B2%D8%A9---%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86--%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%B3%D9%8A%D9%86--%D8%AA%D8%AA%D8%B5%D8%AF%D9%89-%D9%84%D8%AA%D9%88>

[2] <https://twitter.com/BarakRavid/status/1719732686447648915?s=20>

[3] <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/165> ; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/182>

[4] <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/154>

[5] <https://twitter.com/SafaPs/status/1719723280267894915>

[6] <https://twitter.com/SafaPs/status/1719682410147717618>

[7] <https://t.me/sarayaps/16551>

[8] <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/152> ; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/156> ;

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<https://t.me/qassam1brigades/176> ; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/178> ;

<https://t.me/qassam1brigades/180>

[9] <https://t.me/sarayaps/16544> ; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16545> ; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/178>

[10] <https://t.me/kataebabuali/10458>

[11] <https://t.me/QudsN/322059>

[12] <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/164> ; <https://t.me/kataebabuali/10458>

[13] https://t.me/mihwar_almuqawama/38002 ; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/178>

[14] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1719611873937473704> ; <https://t.me/AymanGouda/5819> ;

<https://t.me/QudsN/321990> ; <https://twitter.com/SafaPs/status/1719651959727161481> ;

<https://t.me/QudsN/322086> ; <https://t.me/QudsN/322092>

[15] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1719611873937473704>

[16] <https://t.me/almanarnews/134162> ; <https://t.me/QudsN/322009> ; <https://t.me/QudsN/322148>

; <https://t.me/QudsN/322163>; <https://t.me/QudsN/322164>

[17] <https://t.me/QudsN/322148> ; <https://t.me/QudsN/322009>

[18] <https://t.me/areennabluss/290>

[19] <https://t.me/almanarnews/133800>

[20] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/iran-update-october-31-2023>
[21] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/iran-update-october-26-2023> ;
<https://t.me/areennabluss/288>
[22] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1719611867373445231>
[23] <https://www.wafa dot ps/Pages/Details/81480>
[24] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1719611869550260584>
[25] <https://twitter.com/PalestineChron/status/1719677364706115850>
[26] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1719665805523046493>
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[28] <https://twitter.com/alishoeib1970/status/1719737603354677337> ;
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<https://t.me/almanarnews/134244> ;
[29] <https://t.me/QudsN/322053> ; <https://twitter.com/GLZRadio/status/1719708842307502266>
[30] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1719728169693905029>
[31] <https://t.me/elamharbi/58>
[32] <https://x.com/MattMcBradley/status/1718634078776283189?s=20> ;
<https://x.com/MattMcBradley/status/1719424464234942797?s=20> ;
<https://twitter.com/MarioNawfal/status/1719403435588497437>
; <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/iran-update-october-31-2023>
[33] <https://www.farsnews dot ir/media/14020808000280> ; <https://defapress dot ir/fa/news/626699>
[34] <https://www.farsnews dot ir/en/news/14020810000370> ; <https://www.irna dot ir/news/85276922>
[35] https://twitter.com/amalsaad_lb/status/1719756221001953724 ; <https://t.me/maymun5/56988>
[36] <https://twitter.com/alhaidarshn1994/status/1719660102612123825>
[37] https://twitter.com/Tammuz_Intel/status/1719763677966942395
[38] <https://t.me/awliaaldam/57>
[39] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/iran-update-october-27-2023> ;
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[40] <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-update-october-29-2023> ;
<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/profile-saraya-awliya-al-dam> ;
<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/profile-harakat-hezbollah-al-nujaba> ;
<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/profile-ashab-al-kahf>
[41] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1719489325073584293>
[42] <https://twitter.com/sentdefender/status/1719488626961051827> ;
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[43] <https://twitter.com/hezamalasad/status/1719488547290308854>
[44] <https://twitter.com/Alsakaniali/status/1719358280126849451?s=20> ;
<https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-update-october-31-2023>
[45] <https://www.farsnews dot ir/news/14020810000486>

[46] <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/turkeys-erdogan-says-hamas-is-not-terrorist-organisation-2023-10-25/> ;

<https://twitter.com/RTErdogan/status/1718270191056900398>

[47] <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-update-october-12-2023>

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[49] <https://farsi.khamenei dot ir/news-content?id=54049> ;

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<https://www.leader dot ir/fa/content/26718> ;

<https://www.leader dot ir/fa/content/26731> ;

<https://www.leader dot ir/fa/content/26751>

[50] <https://www.presstv dot ir/Detail/2023/10/18/712947>

[51] <https://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1402/07/29/2975756> ;

<https://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1402/07/29/2975409> ;

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[52] <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-update-october-24-2023>

Iran Update, October 31, 2023

Ashka Jhaveri, Johanna Moore, Kathryn Tyson, Brian Carter, Annika Ganzeveld, and Nicholas Carl

Information Cutoff: 2:00 pm EST

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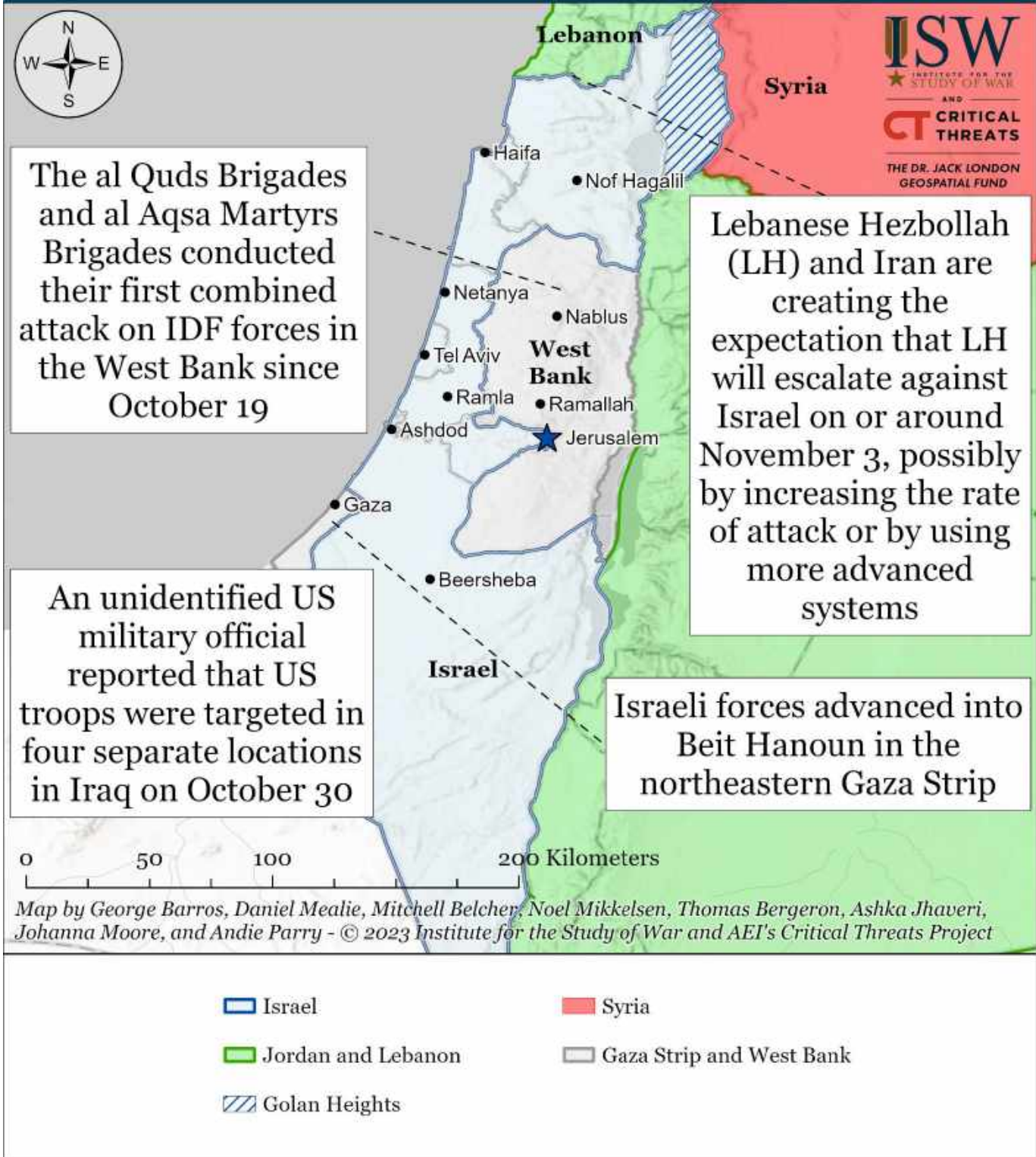
Click [here](#) to see CTP and ISW's interactive map of Israeli ground operations. This map is updated daily alongside the static maps present in this report.

Key Takeaways:

1. Palestinian militias in the Gaza Strip conducted indirect fire attacks into Israel at their usual rate. Palestinian militias continued to launch attacks on the Erez military site from the northern Gaza Strip after the IDF advanced from there on October 29.
2. Israeli forces advanced into Beit Hanoun in the northeastern Gaza Strip to conduct clearing operations. Israeli forces also extended their positions along the coastal line in the northwestern Gaza Strip.
3. Local media and Palestinian militias claimed to engage Israeli forces moving westward south of Gaza City.
4. Palestinian militants clashed with Israeli forces at their usual rate in the West Bank. Students held large, anti-Israel demonstrations across the West Bank.
5. Iranian-backed militants, including Lebanese Hezbollah, conducted nine attacks into Israel as part of an ongoing attack campaign targeting IDF radar and sensor sites and military targets.
6. Lebanese Hezbollah and Iran are creating the expectation in the information environment that Hezbollah will escalate against Israel on or around November 3, possibly by increasing the rate of attack or by using more advanced systems.
7. The Houthis launched drones, ballistic missiles, and cruise missiles targeting Israel, marking the third attempted Houthi attack since the war began.
8. An unidentified US military official reported that unidentified militants attacked US troops in four separate locations on October 30.

- Iranian Foreign Affairs Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian traveled to Qatar for further political coordination with Hamas leadership.

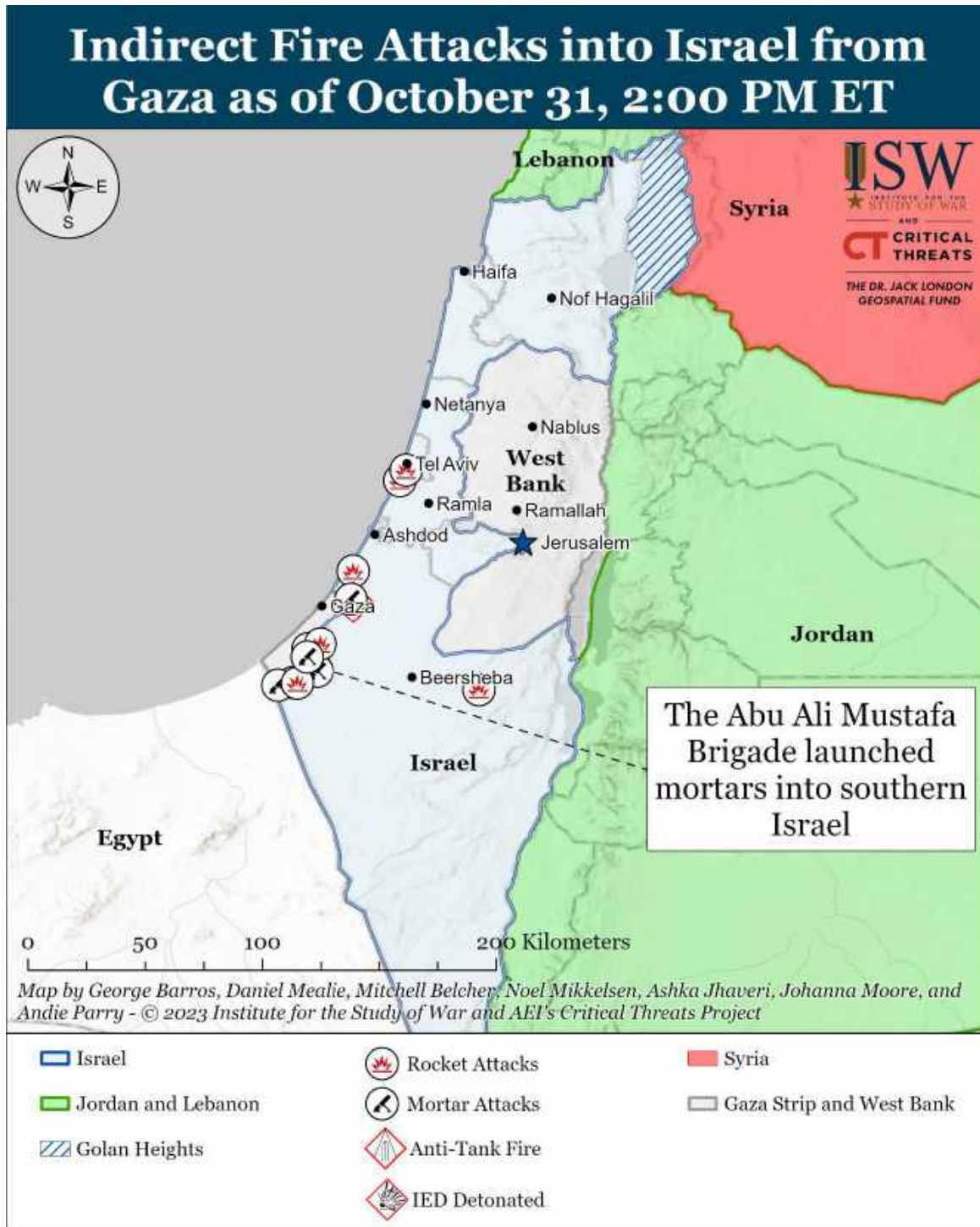
Israel-Hamas War as of October 31, 2:00 PM ET



Gaza Strip

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Erode the will of the Israeli political establishment and public to launch and sustain a major ground operation into the Gaza Strip
- Degrade IDF material and morale around the Gaza Strip



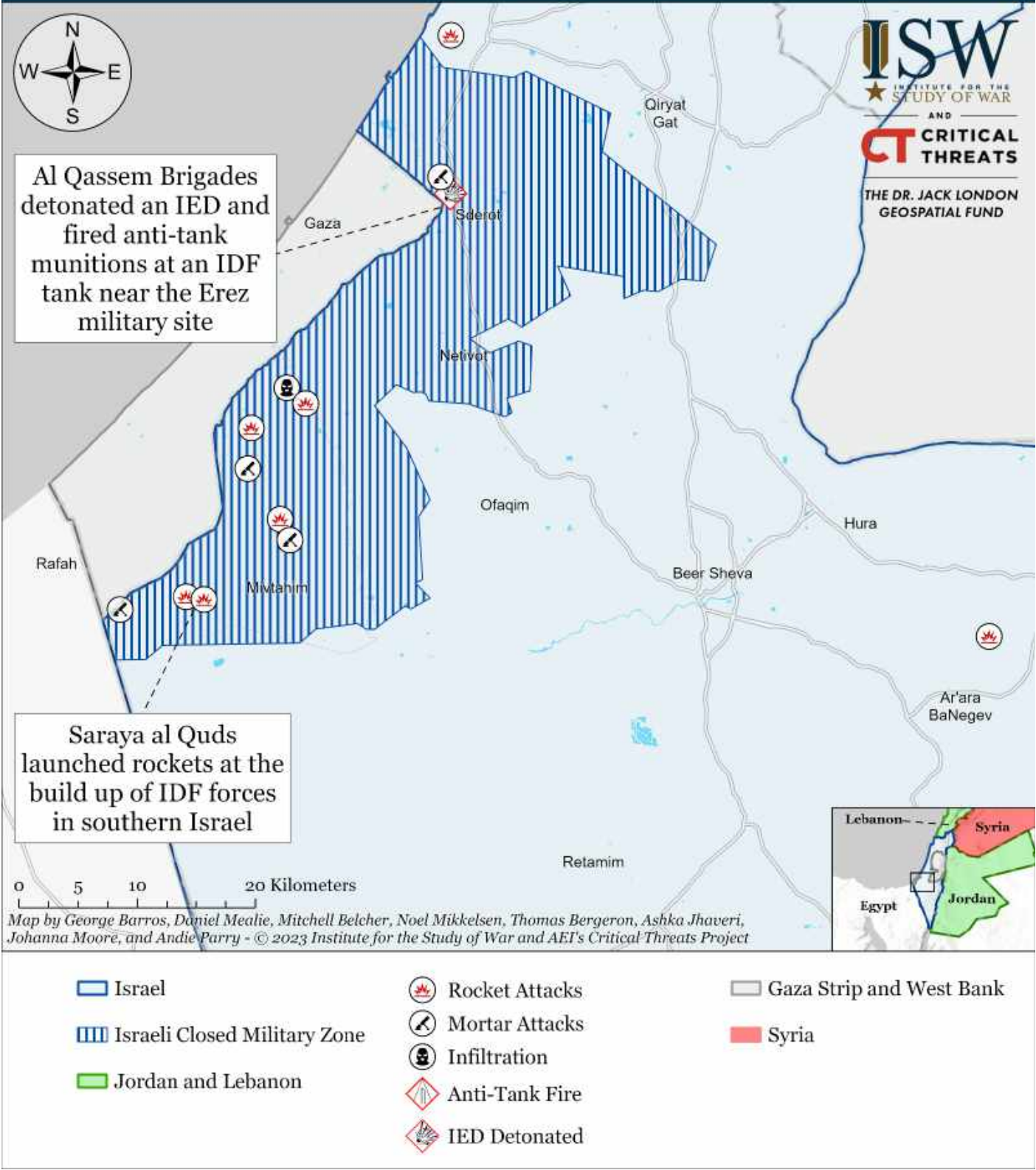
Recorded reports of rocket attacks; CTP-ISW cannot independently verify impact.

Palestinian militias in the Gaza Strip conducted indirect fire attacks into Israel at their usual rate on October 31. The al Qassem Brigades— Hamas’ militant wing—claimed responsibility for 12 indirect fire attacks. The al Qassem Brigades military spokesperson said that the group will continue to strike Israel with rockets of all ranges.[1] Saraya al Quds—the militant wing of Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)—claimed responsibility for another nine indirect fire attacks. The Abu Ali Mustafa Brigades—the militant wing of Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—claimed to launch mortars into southern Israel.[2] The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) shot and killed a person attempting to cross from the Gaza Strip into Israel at the Reim junction, which is the first ground infiltration attempt that CTP-ISW has recorded since October 21.[3]

Palestinian militias continued to launch attacks on the Erez military site from the northern Gaza Strip after the IDF advanced from there on October 29. The al Qassem Brigades detonated an IED and fired anti-tank munitions at IDF tanks east of Erez.[4] CTP-ISW cannot verify whether the attacks occurred in the Gaza Strip or Israel. The Saraya al Quds Brigades fired mortars at the Erez site.[5]

Hamas and PIJ leaders boasted about Palestinian militia resistance in the Gaza Strip. A Hamas senior leader Daoud Shihab said the resistance is on the verge of achieving a major strategic victory in the Gaza Strip.[6] Saraya al Quds military spokesperson Abu Hamza stated that the group’s jihad will continue no matter how long the war lasts.[7]

Attacks into Israel from Gaza as of October 31, 2:00 PM ET



Recorded reports of rocket attacks; CTP-ISW cannot independently verify impact.

Israeli Ground Operations in the Gaza Strip

Israeli forces advanced into Beit Hanoun in the northeastern Gaza Strip to conduct clearing operations. Israeli infantry and tanks maneuvered through Beit Hanoun on October 31.^[8] Local media reported that Palestinian militias engaged the IDF north of Beit Hanoun.^[9] The *New York Times* noted that lines of armored vehicles traveled on the Salah al Din road running north to south in the Gaza Strip and in the northeastern corner of Beit Hanoun.^[10] The al Qassem Brigades attacked an IDF unit clearing a building in the area.^[11] The IDF said its forces engaged in fierce battles deep inside the Gaza Strip and eliminated military infrastructure and seized weapons, including IEDs.^[12] The al Qassem Brigades military spokesman said that militants have introduced various types of lethal explosive devices to the battle.^[13]

Israeli forces extended their positions along the coastal line in the northwestern Gaza Strip. The *New York Times* satellite imagery showed dozens of armored vehicles cutting through open fields and amassing in urban spaces.^[14] Israeli vehicles are seen as far south as the neighborhood of al Karama, according to the *New York Times*.^[15] The Hamas-run Gazan Interior Ministry claimed that the IDF advanced to al Karama from the northwestern Gaza Strip.^[16] The Saraya al Quds Brigades launched mortars at IDF vehicles west of al Karam.^[17]

Local media and Palestinian militias claimed to engage Israeli forces moving westward south of Gaza City. The al Qassem Brigades, Saraya al Quds Brigades, and al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade attacked IDF forces in the central Gaza Strip.^[18] Al Qassem Brigades militants claimed to destroy four vehicles with anti-tank munitions at the Netzarim junction, although CTP-ISW has seen no evidence that these claims are true.^[19] A Palestinian journalist claimed that the IDF is operating inside outposts near the al Nour resort and near the Tika hospital after advancing westward from Samouni neighborhood.^[20] The Hamas-run Interior Ministry claimed that Israeli vehicles on the Sala al Din road are trying to reach the al Rashid Street less than three kilometers away on the coast.^[21] The locations of clashes are consistent with the Israeli-declared evacuation zone north of the HeBesor stream.^[22]

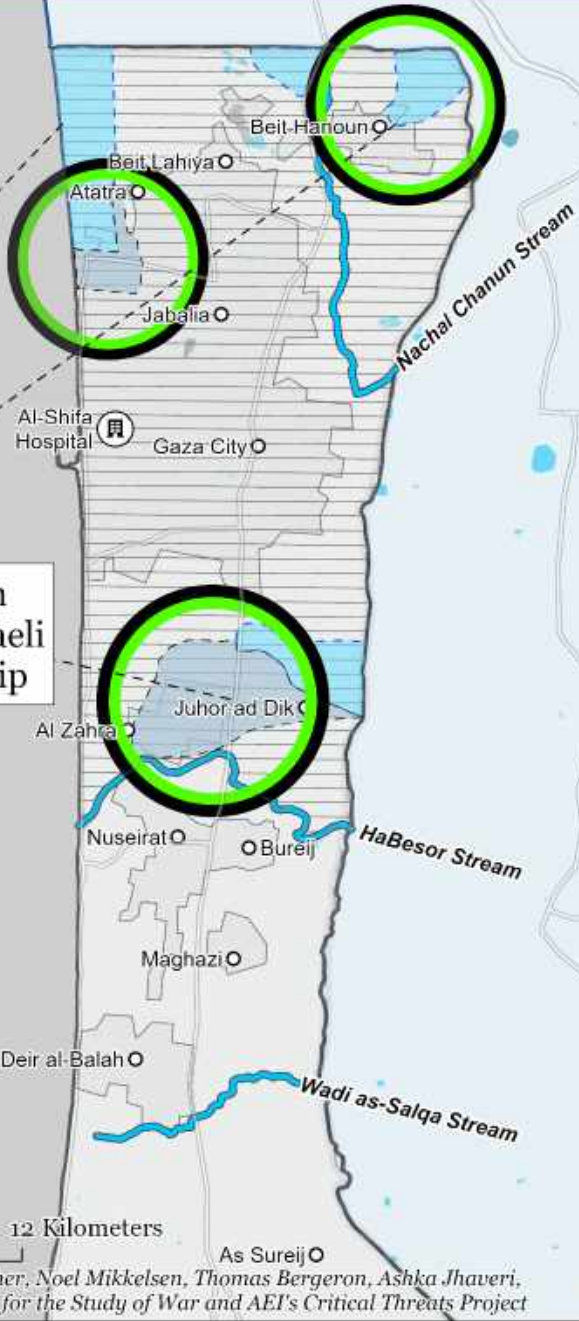
Reported Israeli Ground Operations in the Gaza Strip as of October 31, 2023, 3:30 PM ET



Israeli forces extended their positions along the coastal line

Israeli forces advanced into Beit Hanoun to conduct clearing operations

Local media and Palestinian militias claimed to engage Israeli forces in the central Gaza Strip



0 3 6 12 Kilometers

Map by George Barros, Daniel Mealie, Mitchell Belcher, Noel Mikkelsen, Thomas Bergeron, Ashka Jhaveri, Johanna Moore, and Andie Parry - © 2023 Institute for the Study of War and AEI's Critical Threats Project



- Israel
- Gaza Strip
- Jordan and Lebanon
- Syria
- Reported Israeli Clearing Operations
- Claimed Furthest Israeli Advances
- Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours
- Significant Water Obstacles
- Declared Evacuation Area
- Densely Urban Areas
- Gaza Strip and West Bank

West Bank

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

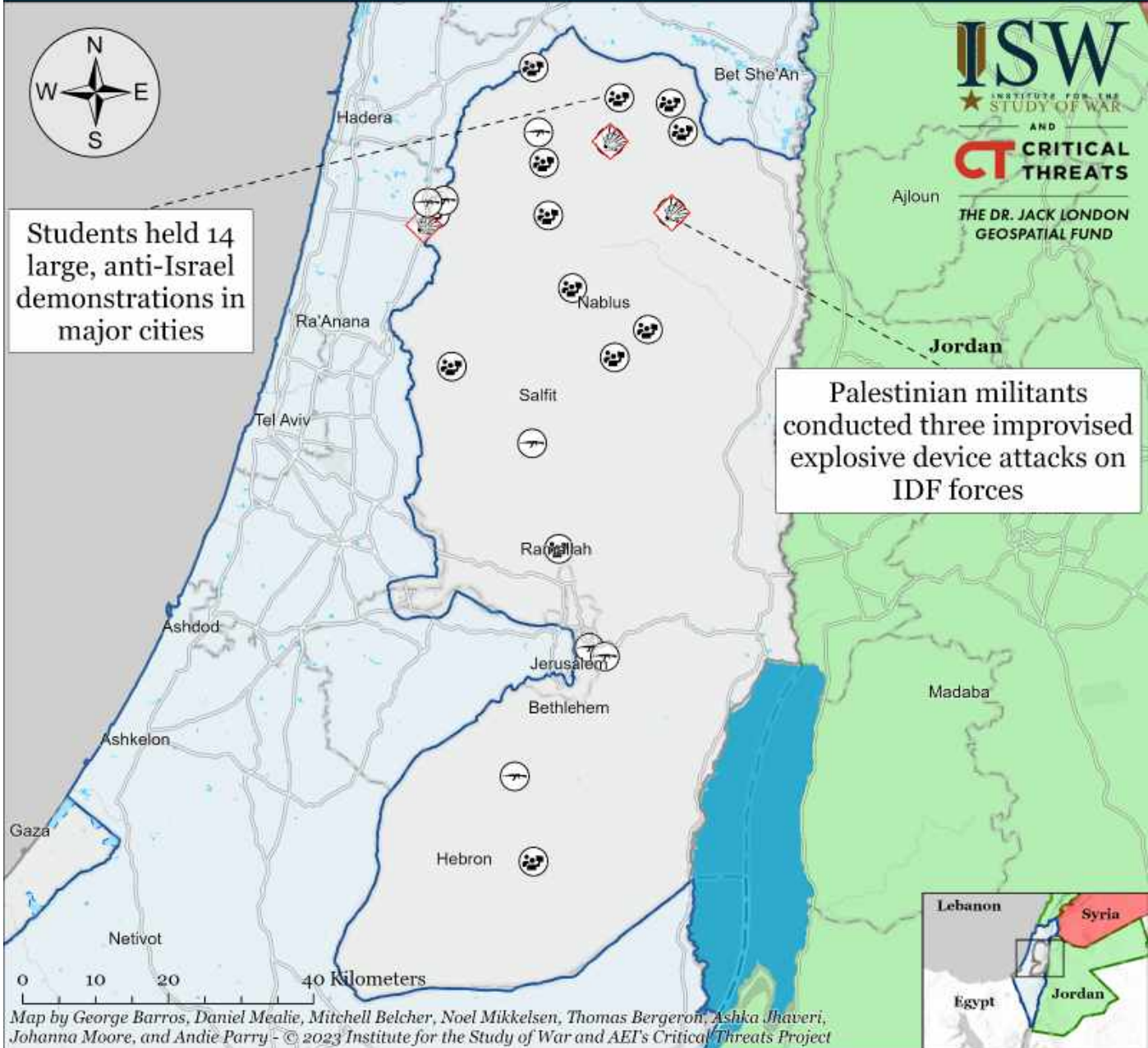
- Draw IDF assets and resources toward the West Bank and fix them there

Palestinian militants clashed with Israeli forces at their usual rate in the West Bank on October 31. CTP-ISW recorded ten small arms clashes between Palestinian militants and Israeli forces.[23] Palestinian militants also conducted three IED attacks on Israeli forces.[24] The al Quds Brigades and the Tulkarm Battalion of the al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades conducted a combined small arms attack on Israeli forces in Shuweika near Tulkarm, indicating growing coordination between the two groups.[25] This was the first combined attack between the al Quds Brigades and al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades in the West Bank since October 19.[26]

Students held large, anti-Israel demonstrations across the West Bank on October 31. Students held 14 anti-Israel demonstrations in major cities in the West Bank, including Bethlehem, Jenin, and Tulkarm.[27] These are consistent with the rate of demonstrations that CTP-ISW has observed in the last few weeks.

Senior Hamas leader Daoud Shehab said on October 30 that the al Quds Brigades is “leading the way” in the West Bank.[28] This remark is noteworthy in that it reflects a prominent Hamas official framing PIJ as one of the lead Palestinian militias fighting Israel in the West Bank. The al Quds Brigades has regularly claimed attacks targeting Israeli forces in the West Bank since October 7.[29] CTP-ISW has consistently reported on the close coordination between Hamas and PIJ throughout the war.

Clashes in the West Bank as of October 31, 2:00 PM ET



- Israel
- Jordan and Lebanon
- Gaza Strip and West Bank
- Syria
- ☰ Clash (Small Arms Combat)
- ☹ Demonstration
- 💣 IED Detonated

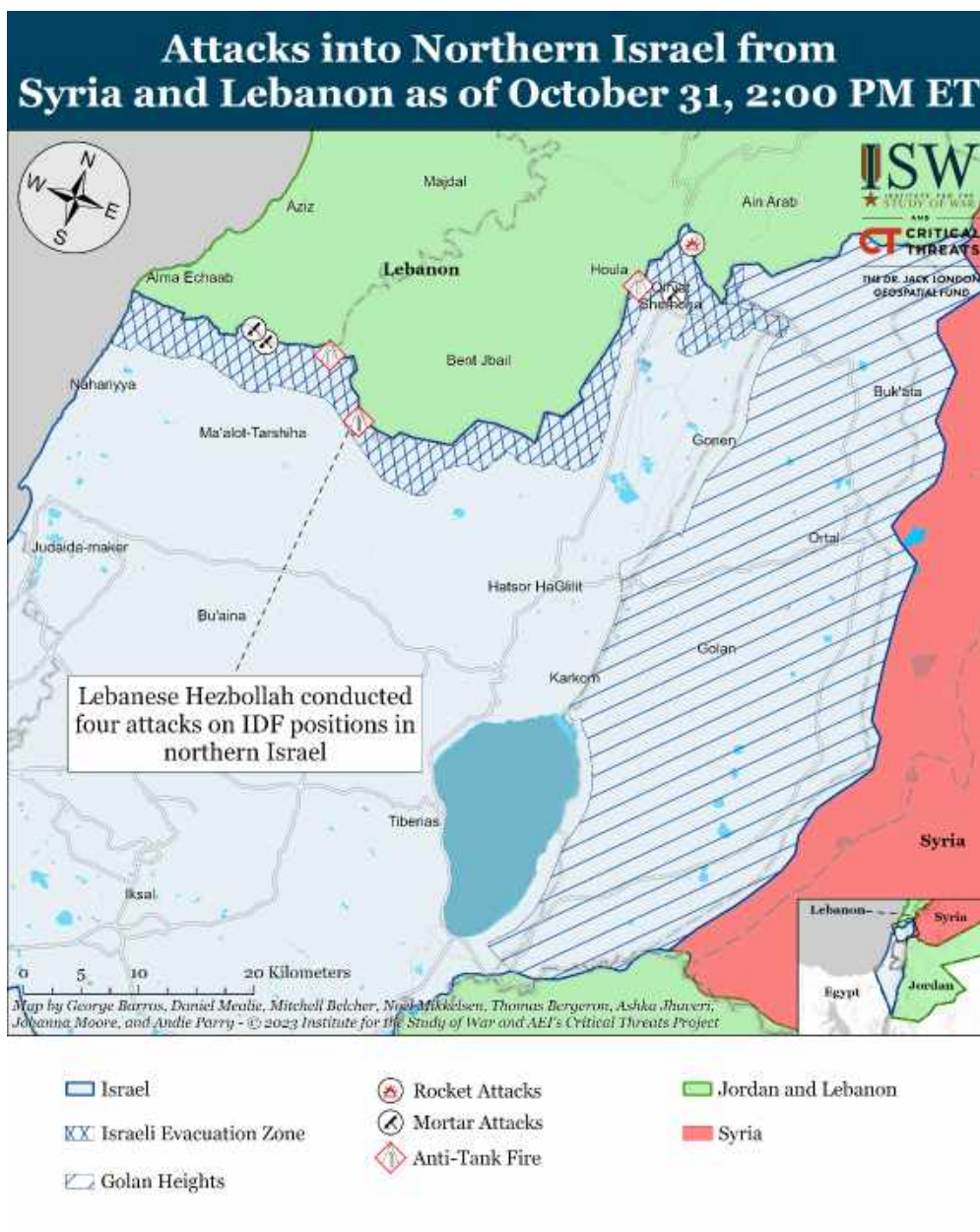
This map is not an exhaustive depiction of clashes and demonstrations in the West Bank.

Southern Lebanon and Golan Heights

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Draw IDF assets and resources toward northern Israel and fix them there
- Set conditions for successive campaigns into northern Israel

Iranian-backed militants, including Lebanese Hezbollah (LH), conducted nine attacks into Israel as part of an ongoing attack campaign targeting IDF radar and sensor sites and military targets. LH claimed four mortar and anti-tank missile attacks on IDF positions in northern Israel on October 31.[30] Unknown militants conducted four anti-tank, rocket, mortar, and small arms attacks into northern Israel as well.[31] Unknown militants also fired two rockets, which the IDF reported did not cross into Israeli territory.[32] The IDF continues to conduct airstrikes and artillery on militants, who are attempting to launch indirect fire from southern Lebanon into northern Israel.[33]



Iran and Axis of Resistance

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Demonstrate the capability and willingness of Iran and the Axis of Resistance to escalate against the United States and Israel on multiple fronts
- Set conditions to fight a regional war on multiple fronts

LH and Iran are creating the expectation in the information environment that LH will escalate against Israel on or around November 3, possibly by increasing the rate of attack or by using more advanced systems. LH has released two dramatic videos in recent days ahead of LH Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah’s planned speech on November 3, which creates the expectation of a significant announcement on the Israel-Hamas War.[34] This speech is significant in that it will be Nasrallah’s first public statement on the war. Iranian state media has further amplified the news of the upcoming speech and the dramatic videos, describing them as a “sign of future events.” Iranian state media also compared Nasrallah’s upcoming speech to the one he delivered at the beginning of the 2006 Israel-LH war.[35] Nasrallah’s speech and the two LH videos come as LH is coordinating extensively with Hamas, PIJ, and the IRGC Quds Force in Beirut.[36] The speech and videos also come as the Houthi movement threatened that it will “continue its strikes with rockets and drones until the Israeli aggression stops” during its statement claiming responsibility for three attacks against Israel since October 18.[37] Iranian state media has framed the Houthis’ statement as a declaration of war against Israel.[38]

It is possible that Nasrallah will make an escalatory statement on November 3, promising retaliation against Israel but refrain from taking any immediate action different from what LH has been already doing along the Israel-Lebanon border. LH and Nasrallah have used a similar pattern of rhetoric previously. For example, Nasrallah said in April 2023 that Israeli actions in early that year “may push the region into a major war.”[39] LH did not conduct any major escalatory moves in the weeks following this statement. An unspecified source “familiar with [LH] thinking” claimed to Reuters on October 26 that LH does not want Lebanon’s destruction or to see Lebanese civilians fleeing from southern Lebanon, where LH maintains prominent influence.[40]

The Houthis launched drones, ballistic missiles, and cruise missiles targeting Israel on October 31.[41] Israel intercepted the drones and missiles using its Arrow anti-ballistic missile system and fighter jets.[42] Users on social media posted an image showing a destroyed Quds-4 cruise missile in Jordan on October 31.[43] The Houthi movement possesses drones, ballistic, and cruise missiles capable of hitting Israel.[44] This marks the third attempted Houthi attack on Israel since the war began.

An unidentified US military official reported that unidentified militants attacked US troops in four separate locations on October 30. CTP-ISW previously reported that the Islamic Resistance in Iraq—a coalition of Iranian-backed Iraqi militias—claimed two separate rocket attacks targeting US forces stationed at Ain al Asad airbase and Conoco Mission Support Site on October 30.[45] The following text details the attacks that CTP-ISW has not yet reported.

- Local Syrian and Iraqi social media accounts reported that unidentified militants conducted a rocket attack on US forces stationed at al Omar oil field on October 30.[46] The militants launched between five and 15 rockets at the US position. CTP-ISW has recorded at least five attacks targeting US forces stationed at al Omar oil field since October 18, one of which was

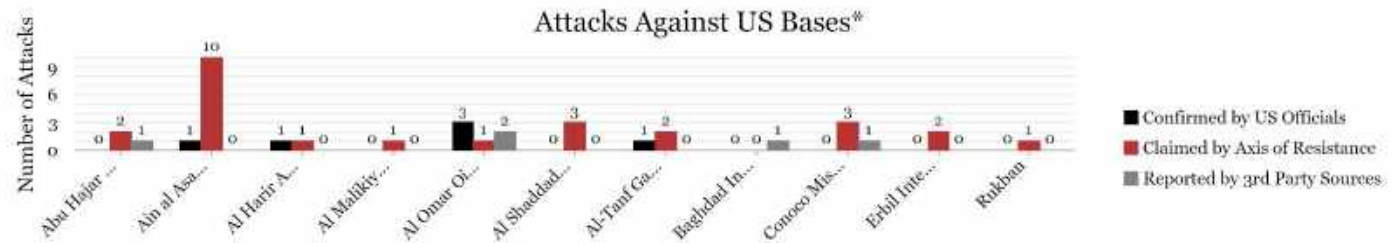
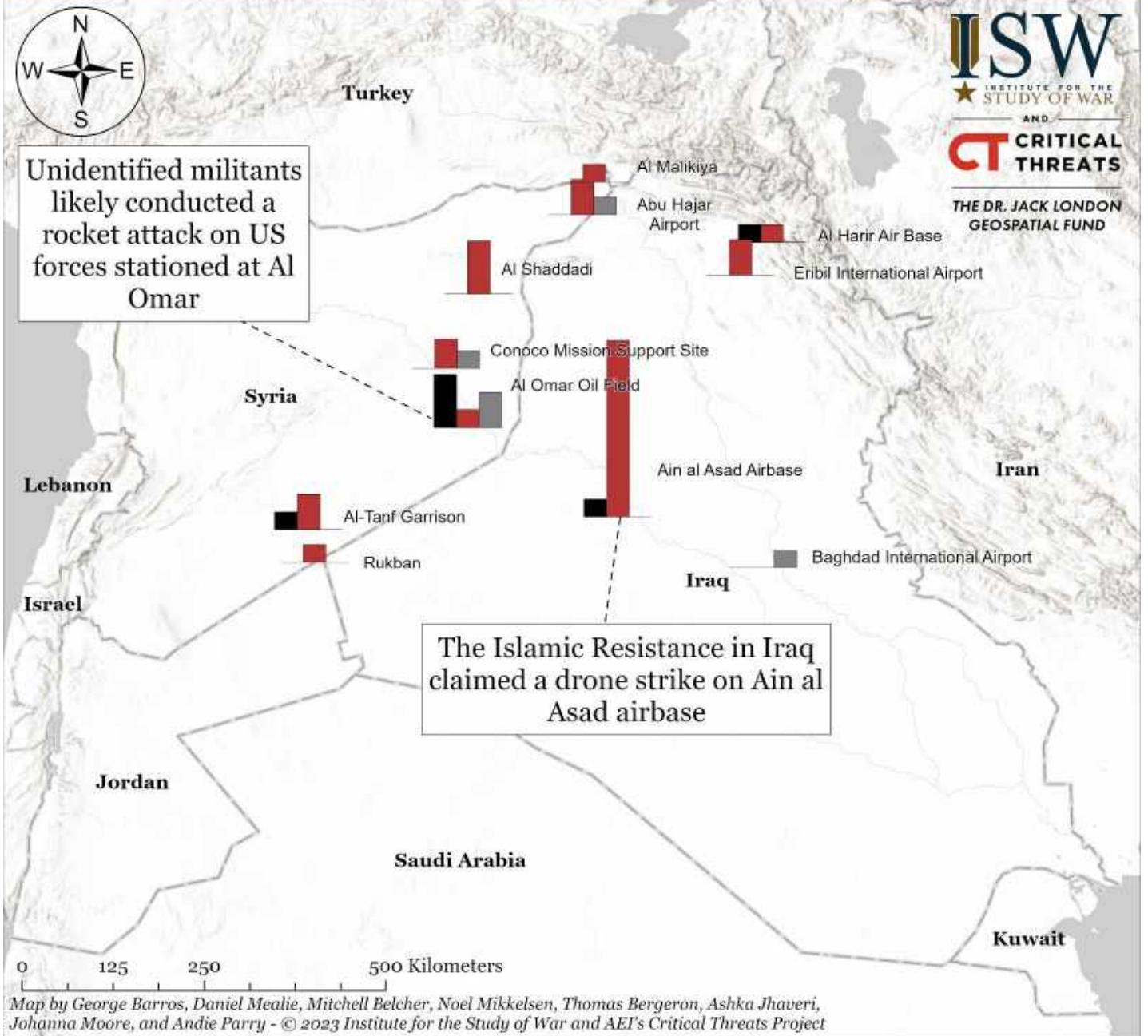
claimed by the Islamic Resistance in Iraq. Eye of Euphrates claimed that Iranian sleeper cells active in Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF)-held territory have similarly attacked US forces stationed at al Omar oil field in recent days, as CTP-ISW previously reported.[47]

- The Islamic Resistance in Iraq claimed a second attack targeting US forces stationed at Ain al Asad airbase on October 30.[48] The group’s statement claimed its forces conducted a drone strike on Ain al Asad airbase and successfully hit their target. Local Iraqi outlet Shafaq reported that the Islamic Resistance in Iraq launched two drones in the attack and that both were downed by the defensive systems at the airbase.[49]

The secretary general of the Iranian-backed Iraqi Badr Organization, Hadi al Ameri, argued that International Coalition forces should leave Iraq in a statement given to local media on October 30.[50] Ameri claimed that there was no longer any justification for International Coalition forces to remain in Iraq to support counter-ISIS operations because Iraqi security forces defeated ISIS at its height in 2015. The United States currently has non-combat troops stationed in Iraq operating in an advisory capacity to support counter-ISIS missions under Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR).[51] Ameri also asserted that International Coalition forces present in Iraq are limiting the growth of Iraqi security institutions.

Ameri argued that Iranian-backed Iraqi militia attacks on US forces were a “natural reaction” to US support for Israel. The Badr Organization threatened to attack US forces in the region if the United States intervened in the Israel-Hamas war on October 9.[52] US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin reported that the United States will “take further necessary measures” to protect US forces stationed in the Middle East if Iranian-backed attacks continue.[53]

Attacks against US Bases in the Middle East as of October 31, 2:00 PM ET



Iranian Foreign Affairs Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian traveled to Qatar for further political coordination with Hamas leadership. Abdollahian met with Hamas Political Bureau Chairman Ismail Haniyeh in Doha on October 31, marking the second time these officials have met there since October 15.[54] Abdollahian warned about the possible expansion of the Israel-Hamas war, stating that members of the Axis of Resistance “do not necessarily wait for political decisions” to act against Israel. Abdollahian also criticized US calls for restraint, claiming that the United States is “practically a party in the war.” These statements are consistent with the ongoing Iranian information operation to frame the United States and Israel as responsible for any further escalation of the war.[55]

Abdollahian also met with other unspecified senior Hamas officials, Qatari Emir Tamim bin Hamad al Thani, and Qatari Prime Minister Mohammed bin Abdul Rahman bin Jassim al Thani during his visit to Qatar.[56] Abdollahian last traveled to Qatar on October 14 following his diplomatic tour to Iraq, Lebanon, and Syria to coordinate with senior leaders in the Axis of Resistance, as CTP-ISW previously reported.[57] Abdollahian will travel to Turkey after concluding his current visit to Qatar.[58]



[1] <https://t.me/hamasps/17285>

[2] <https://t.me/QudsN/321444>

[3] <https://twitter.com/IDFSpokesperson/status/1719130587133268069>

[4] <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/125>

[5] <https://t.me/sarayaps/16532>

[6] <https://t.me/almanarnews/134003>

[7] <https://t.me/almanarnews/133982>

[8] <https://twitter.com/GeoConfirmed/status/1719313872350310537>

[9] <https://t.me/beitlahiaNews/4939>

[10] <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2023/10/30/world/middleeast/israel-i...>

[11] <https://t.me/newpress1/56536>

[12] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1719322411240231274>

[13] <https://t.me/hamasps/17284>

[14] <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2023/10/30/world/middleeast/israel-i...>

[15] <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2023/10/30/world/middleeast/israel-i...>

[16] <https://t.me/QudsN/321427>

[17] <https://t.me/sarayaps/16538>

- [18] https://t.me/C_Military1/38251; <https://twitter.com/ytirawi/status/1719392737470931208>;
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- [19] <https://twitter.com/ytirawi/status/1719392737470931208>
- [20] <https://x.com/ytirawi/status/1719332668624556370?s=20>
- [21] <https://t.me/QudsN/321430>
- [22] <https://twitter.com/IDF/status/1718240244129059167>; <https://apnews.com/article/israel-palestinians-gaza-hamas-war-c8b4fc20e4fd2ef381d5edb7e9e8308c>;
- [23] https://t.me/Palestine_news_Update/1475; <https://t.me/almanarnews/134035>;
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- [33] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1719396555029958800>;
<https://twitter.com/manniefabian/status/1719347220598698470>

[34] <https://x.com/MattMcBradley/status/1718634078776283189?s=20>;
<https://x.com/MattMcBradley/status/1719424464234942797?s=20>;
<https://twitter.com/MarioNawfal/status/1719403435588497437>

[35] <https://www.farsnews.ir/media/14020808000280/%D9%88%D8%A7%DA%A9%D9%86%D8%B4-BBC-%D8%A8%D9%87-%D9%88%DB%8C%D8%AF%D8%A6%D9%88%DB%8C-%D9%85%D9%86%D8%AA%D8%B4%D8%B1-%D8%B4%D8%AF%D9%87-%D8%A7%D8%B2-%D8%B3%DB%8C%D8%AF%D8%AD%D8%B3%D9%86-%D9%86%D8%B5%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87>; <https://defapress.ir/fa/news/626699/%D8%B1%DA%98%DB%8C%D9%85-%D8%B5%D9%87%DB%8C%D9%88%D9%86%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA%DB%8C-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D9%88%D8%AD%D8%B4%D8%AA-%D8%B8%D9%87%D9%88%D8%B1-%D8%B3%DB%8C%D8%AF-%D9%85%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%88%D9%85%D8%AA-%D8%A8%D8%B1-%D8%B5%D9%81%D8%AD%D9%87-%D8%AA%D9%84%D9%88%DB%8C%D8%B2%DB%8C%D9%88%D9%86-%D9%86%D8%AE%D8%B3%D8%AA%DB%8C%D9%86-%D9%88%D8%A7%DA%A9%D9%86%D8%B4-%D8%B3%DB%8C%D8%AF-%D8%AD%D8%B3%D9%86-%D9%86%D8%B5%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%A8%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%85%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%A8%D8%A7-%D8%B5%D9%87%DB%8C%D9%88%D9%86%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA%E2%80%8C%D9%87%D8%A7-%D9%81%DB%8C%D9%84%D9%85>

[36] <https://amwaj.media/article/axis-gaza-qaani>

[37] <https://twitter.com/army21ye/status/1719340968812425410>;
<https://twitter.com/army21ye/status/1719345629208412584>

[38] <https://www.yjc.ir/fa/news/8585761/%DB%8C%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%B1%D8%B3%D9%85%D8%A7-%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%AF-%D8%AC%D9%86%DA%AF-%D8%A8%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A6%DB%8C%D9%84-%D8%B4%D8%AF>;
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[39] <https://twitter.com/AlMayadeenNews/status/1646893284529405952>

[40] <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/broken-lebanon-cannot-afford-war-hezbollah-knows-it-2023-10-26/>

[41] <https://x.com/Alsakaniali/status/1719358280126849451?s=20>

[42] <https://x.com/IAFsite/status/1719312710947533140?s=20>;
<https://x.com/IAFsite/status/1719331767277003175?s=20>

[43] <https://x.com/BashaReport/status/1719408013079929224?s=20>

[44] <https://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Yemen%E2%80%99s-Houthis-and-the-expansion-of-Iran%E2%80%99s-Axis-of-Resistance.pdf?x91208>; <https://www.iiss.org/online-analysis/military-balance/2023/10/little-and-large-missile-surprises-in-sanaa-and-tehran/>

[45] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/iran-update-october-30-2023>

- [46] <https://twitter.com/OALD24/status/1718901924617957764> ;
[https://twitter.com/Tammuz Intel/status/1718915545238507905](https://twitter.com/Tammuz_Intel/status/1718915545238507905) ;
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- [47] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgroundunder/iran-update-october-30-2023>
- [48] <https://t.me/elamharbi/57>
- [49] <https://shafaq dot com/ar/>
- [50] https://twitter.com/murad_ismael/status/1719018293447512155 ; <https://www.shafaq dot com/ar/>
- [51] <https://www.inherentresolve.mil/WHO-WE-ARE/>
- [52] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgroundunder/iran-update-october-11-2023>
- [53] <https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/3570798/secretary-...>
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- [55] <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-update-october-24-2023>
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Iran Update, October 30, 2023

**Brian Carter, Andie Parry, Peter Mills, Johanna Moore, Annika Ganzeveld,
Amin Soltani, and Nicholas Carl**

Information Cutoff: 2:00 pm EST

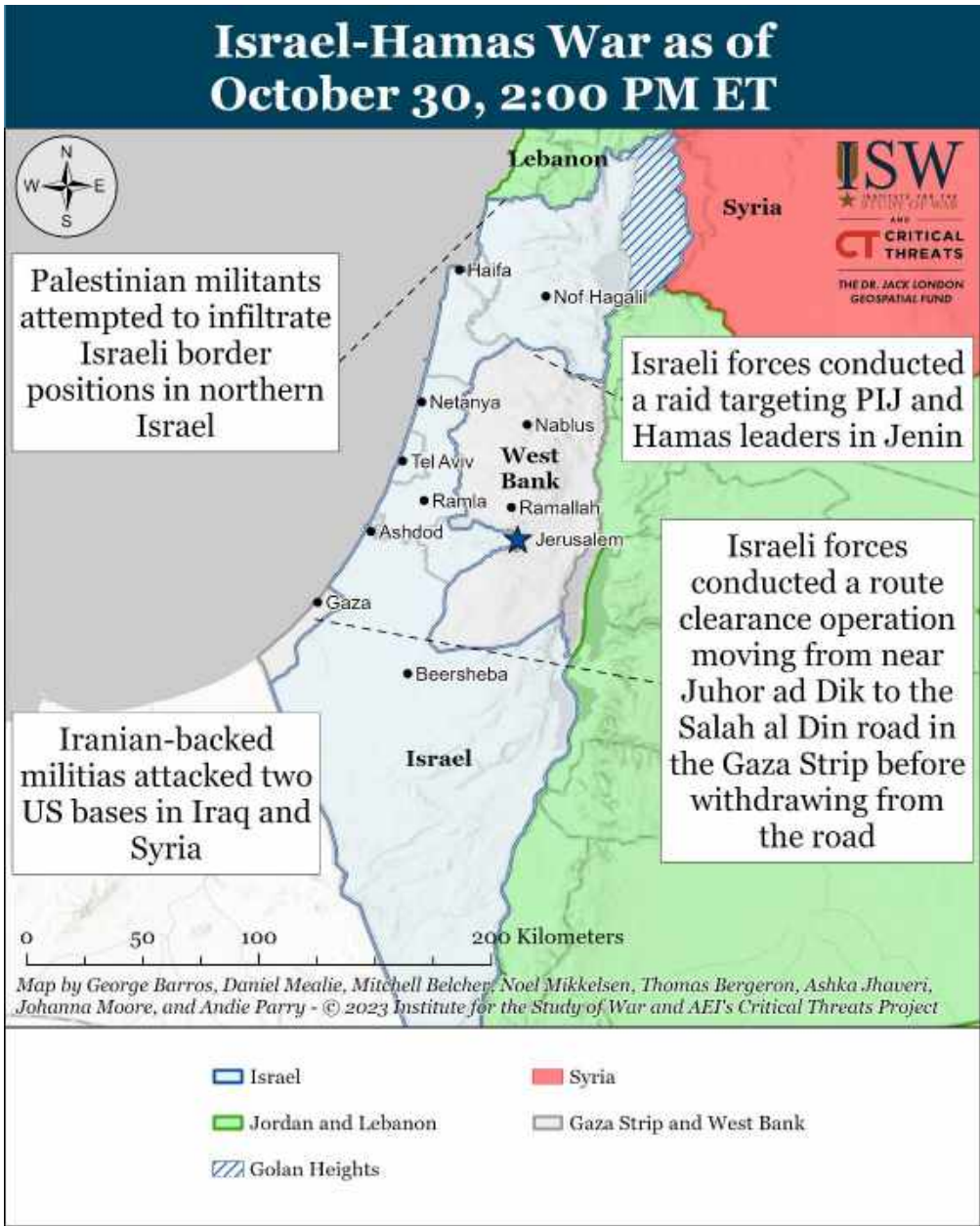
The Iran Update provides insights into Iranian and Iranian-sponsored activities abroad that undermine regional stability and threaten US forces and interests. It also covers events and trends that affect the stability and decision-making of the Iranian regime. The Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute and the Institute for the Study of War (ISW) provides these updates regularly based on regional events. For more on developments in Iran and the region, see our [interactive map of Iran and the Middle East](#).

Note: CTP and ISW have refocused the update to cover the Israel-Hamas war. The new sections address developments in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, Lebanon, and Syria, as well as noteworthy activity from Iran's Axis of Resistance. We do not report in detail on war crimes because these activities are well-covered in Western media and do not directly affect the military operations we are assessing and forecasting. We utterly condemn violations of the laws of armed conflict and the Geneva Conventions and crimes against humanity even though we do not describe them in these reports.

Key Takeaways:

1. Palestinian militias in the Gaza Strip conducted indirect fire attacks into Israel at a rate consistent with the rate observed on October 29.
2. Israeli forces conducted a route clearance operation moving from near Juhor ad Dik to the Salah al Din road in the Gaza Strip before withdrawing.
3. Israeli forces conducted an extensive operation targeting Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad leaders and infrastructure in Jenin. CTP-ISW has recorded noteworthy Palestinian militant activity around Jenin in recent months.
4. CTP-ISW recorded three additional clashes between Palestinian militants and Israeli forces.
5. Iranian-backed militants, including Lebanese Hezbollah, conducted 10 attacks into Israel.
6. LH leader Hassan Nasrallah is scheduled to give a speech on Friday, November 3, according to LH media. This planned speech is noteworthy given that Nasrallah has not yet made a public statement on the Israel-Hamas war.
7. The Islamic Resistance in Iraq—a coalition of Iranian-backed Iraqi militias—claimed responsibility for two separate rocket attacks targeting US forces stationed in Iraq and Syria.

8. Supreme Leader Military Affairs Adviser and former IRGC Commander Major General Yahya Rahim Safavi met with Belarusian Defense Minister Lieutenant General Viktor Khrenin on the sidelines of the 10th Common Security and Lasting Peace forum in Beijing.

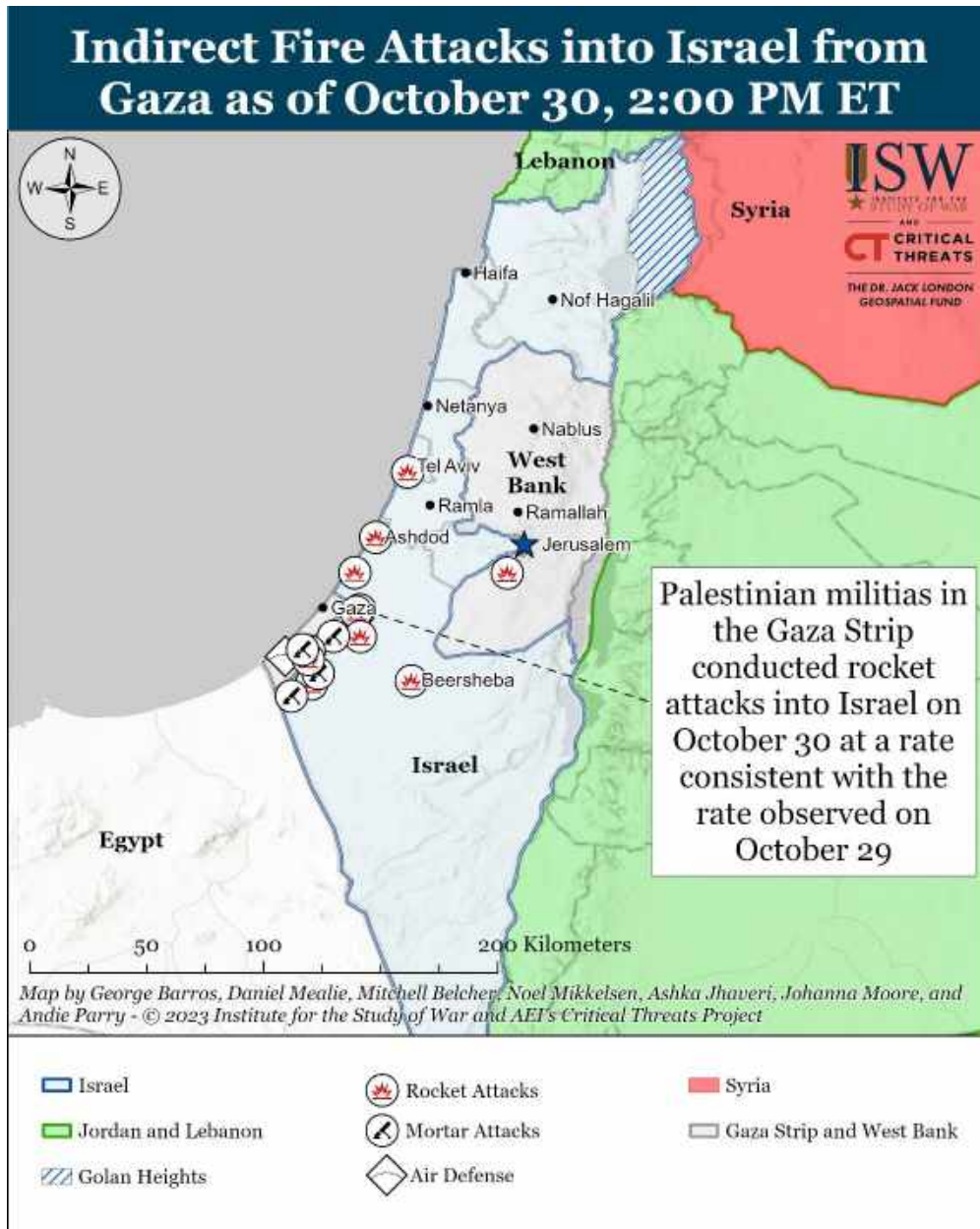


Gaza Strip

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

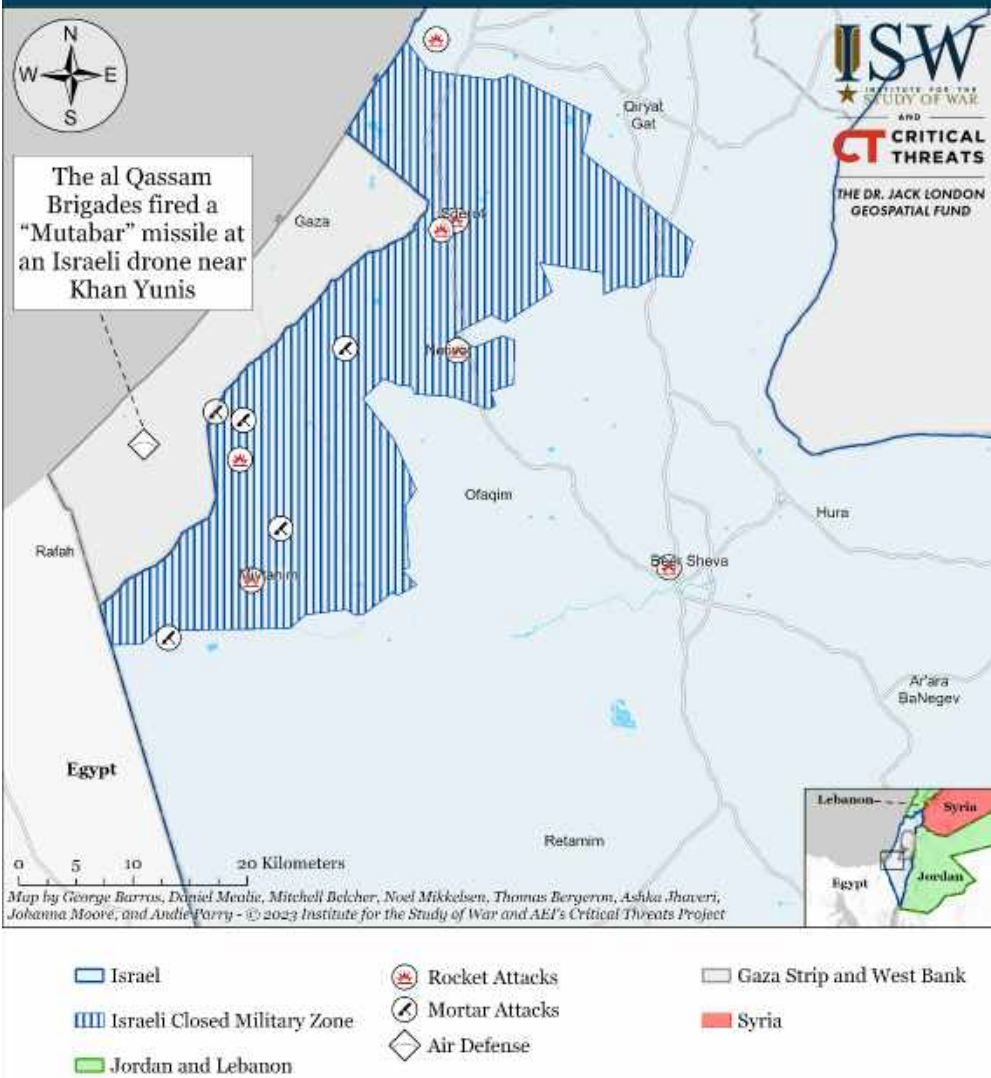
- Erode the will of Israeli political establishment and public to launch and sustain a major ground operation into the Gaza Strip
- Degrade IDF material and morale around the Gaza Strip

Palestinian militias in the Gaza Strip conducted indirect fire attacks into Israel on October 30 at a rate consistent with the rate observed on October 29. The al Qassem Brigades— Hamas’ militant wing—claimed responsibility for eight indirect fire attacks.[1] Saraya al Quds—the militant wing of Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)—claimed responsibility for another eight indirect fire attacks.[2]



Recorded reports of rocket attacks; CTP-ISW cannot independently verify impact.

Attacks into Israel from Gaza as of October 30, 2:00 PM ET



Recorded reports of rocket attacks; CTP-ISW cannot independently verify impact.

Israeli Ground Operations in the Gaza Strip

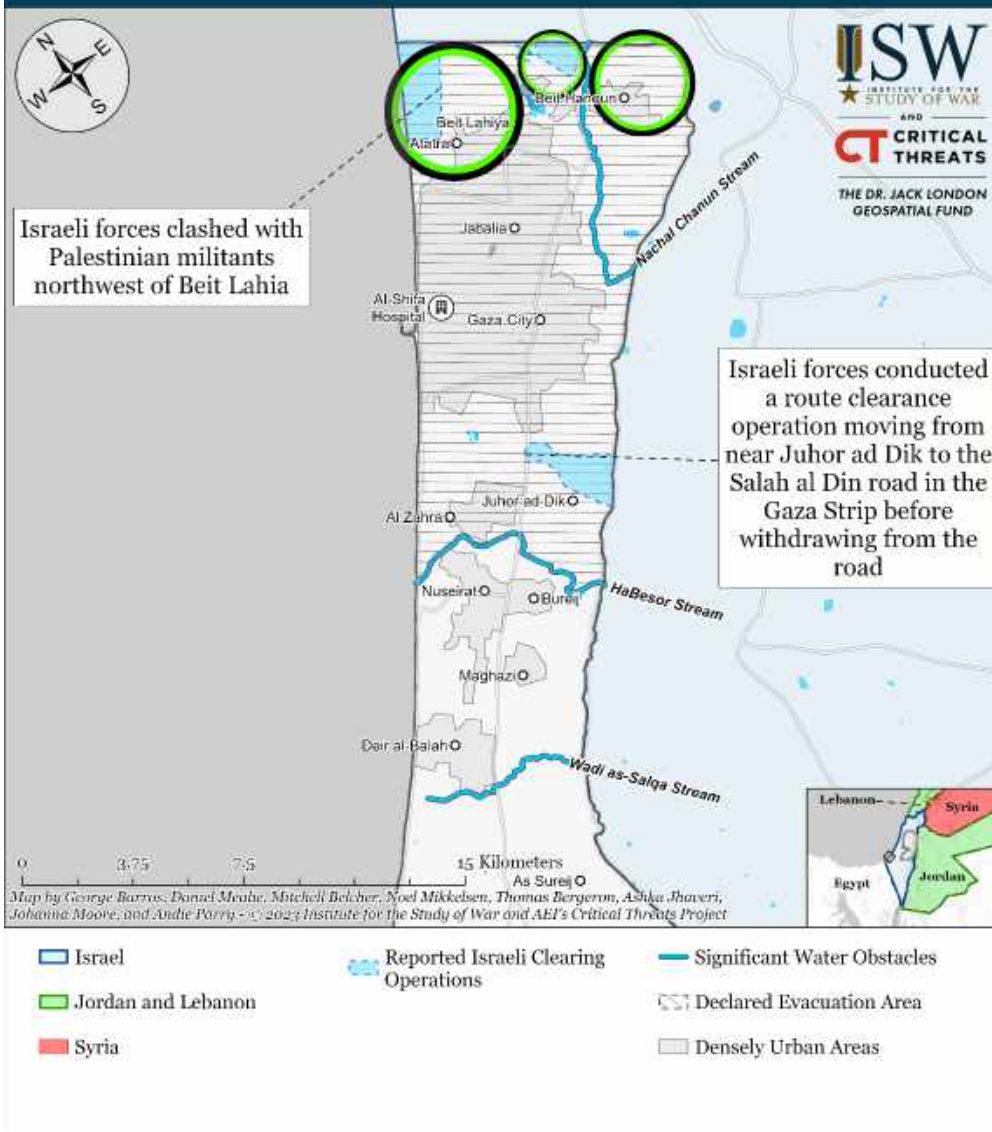
Israeli forces conducted a route clearance operation moving from near Juhor ad Dik to the Salah al Din road in the Gaza Strip before withdrawing.[3] Israeli forces, including at least one bulldozer and other armor, held a position on the Salah al Din road on October 30.[4] Israeli forces withdrew after a brief period.[5] Palestinian sources and the IDF reported that Palestinian fighters engaged IDF armor east of Zaytoun neighborhood, which is just west of Salah al Din road.[6] The Salah al Din road is an important north-south thoroughfare running through the entirety of the strip. This Israeli operation is consistent with Israeli military experts' characterization of IDF tactics, which involve small IDF units taking "limited areas" before following up with additional ground forces and armor.[7]

Palestinian media, Hamas, and Axis of Resistance media claimed that the al Qassem Brigades and National Resistance Brigades engaged IDF forces in the northwestern Gaza Strip on October 30. The National Resistance Brigades is the militant wing of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine. Hamas claimed that the al Qassem Brigades used mortars, snipers, anti-tank fire, and machine guns to target IDF units moving northwest of Beit Lahia.[8] The National Resistance Brigades mortared Israeli vehicles attempting to enter the strip in the northwest, according to the reports' claims.[9] The al Qassem Brigades also used anti-tank fire and machine guns against IDF forces in the northwestern Gaza Strip on October 30.[10]

Hamas is continuing its information operation claiming that the Palestinian militants are defeating the IDF and thwarting the IDF's plan.[11] The IDF is intentionally moving slowly to take "limited areas" with small forces before following them up with additional ground forces.[12]

Israeli special operations forces and Shin Bet personnel rescued IDF Private Uri Magidish on October 29 during a ground operation in the Gaza Strip.[13] The Israeli defense minister said that Israel planned the operation for "days" and that the operation was held in a "relatively remote area in the northern Gaza Strip." [14]

Reported Israeli Ground Operations in the Gaza Strip as of October 30, 2023, 3:30 PM ET



West Bank

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Draw IDF assets and resources toward the West Bank and fix them there

Israeli forces conducted an extensive operation targeting Hamas and PIJ leaders and infrastructure in Jenin on October 30.[15] The raid is part of the Israeli effort to degrade Hamas and PIJ capabilities in the West Bank. Israeli media reported the operation killed senior PIJ commander and founder of the Jenin Battalion Wiam Iyad Hanon.[16] The Jenin Battalion is an amalgamation of militia groups based in Jenin but most heavily associated with PIJ.[17] CTP-ISW recorded two claims of Palestinian militants using IEDs in Jenin on October 30.[18] PIJ claimed that

the IEDs damaged Israeli armored vehicles.[19] CTP-ISW cannot independently verify the claims of damage or casualties caused by the IED attacks.

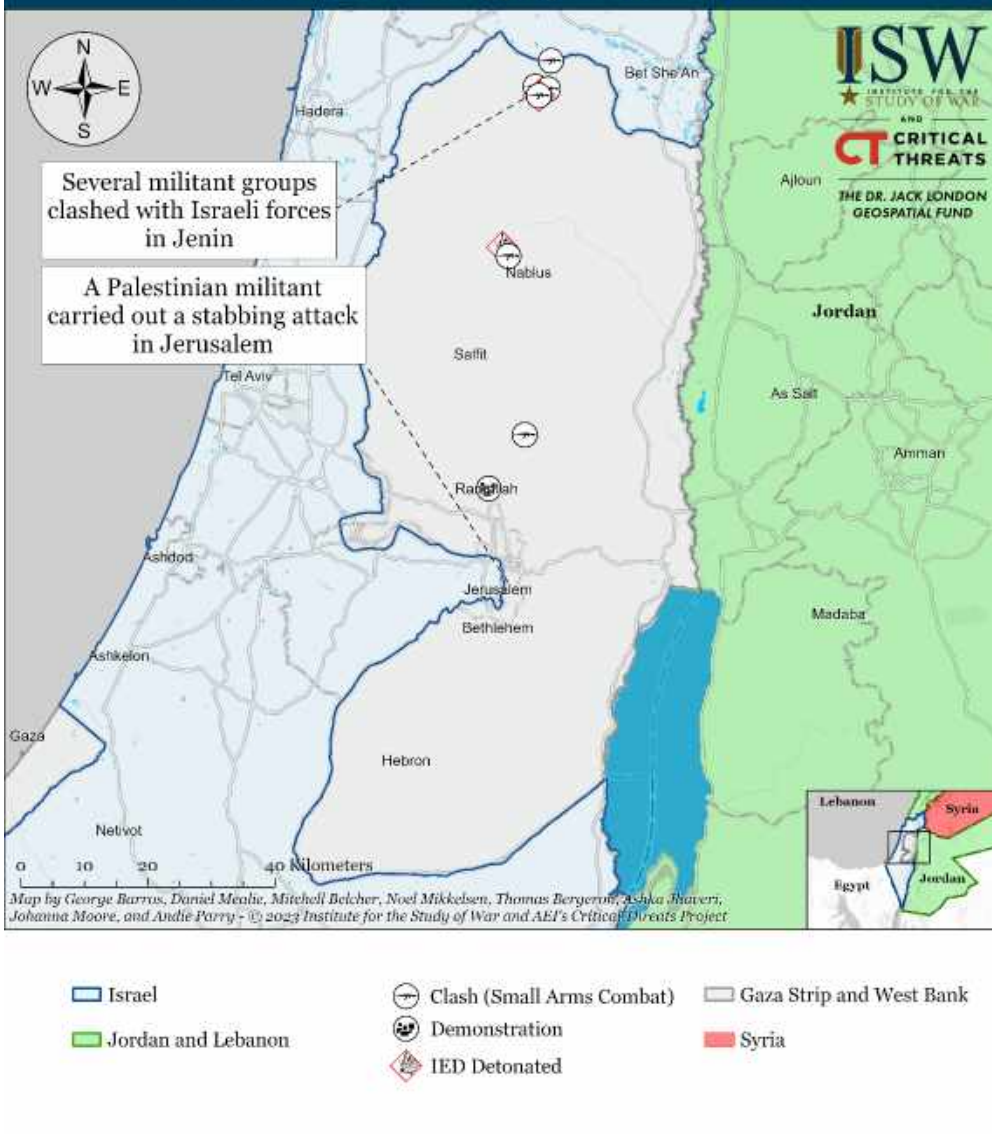
CTP-ISW has recorded noteworthy Palestinian militant activity around Jenin in recent months. PIJ stated on October 13 that the group is prioritizing attacking Israeli forces and infrastructure around Jenin.[20] PIJ's branch in Jenin separately announced in July 2023 that they have explosively formed penetrators (EFP), which are an Iranian-designed explosive device that Iranian-backed militias—with Iranian direction—used extensively against US forces in Iraq.[21]

CTP-ISW recorded three additional clashes between Palestinian militants and Israeli forces on October 30.[22] The IDF stated it arrested 38 Hamas members and 13 other militants while confiscating weapons across the West Bank.[23] CTP-ISW recorded a single anti-Israel demonstration in Ramallah compared to three the day prior.[24] It is noteworthy that there has been no significant inflection in anti-Israel activity in the West Bank since the IDF began ground operations into the Gaza Strip on October 27.

Shin Bet warned the Israeli government that continued settler attacks could lead to an eruption of violence in the West Bank, according to Israeli media.[25] Shin Bet head Ronen Bar warned on October 30 that an increase in Israeli settlers attacking Palestinians risks harming the war effort. US administration officials have also expressed concern over rising settler violence.[26]

West Bank Map

Clashes in the West Bank as of October 30, 2:00 PM ET



This map is not an exhaustive depiction of clashes and demonstrations in the West Bank.

Southern Lebanon and Golan Heights

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Draw IDF assets and resources toward northern Israel and fix them there
- Set conditions for successive campaigns into northern Israel

Iranian-backed militants, including Lebanese Hezbollah (LH), conducted 10 attacks into Israel. Saraya al Quds—the militant wing of Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)—claimed an infiltration into Hanita, northern Israel, and later acknowledged that two PIJ militants died during the operation.[27] LH claimed three anti-tank guided missile attacks on IDF positions in northeastern Israel on October 30.[28] Unidentified militants conducted seven mortar and rocket attacks into

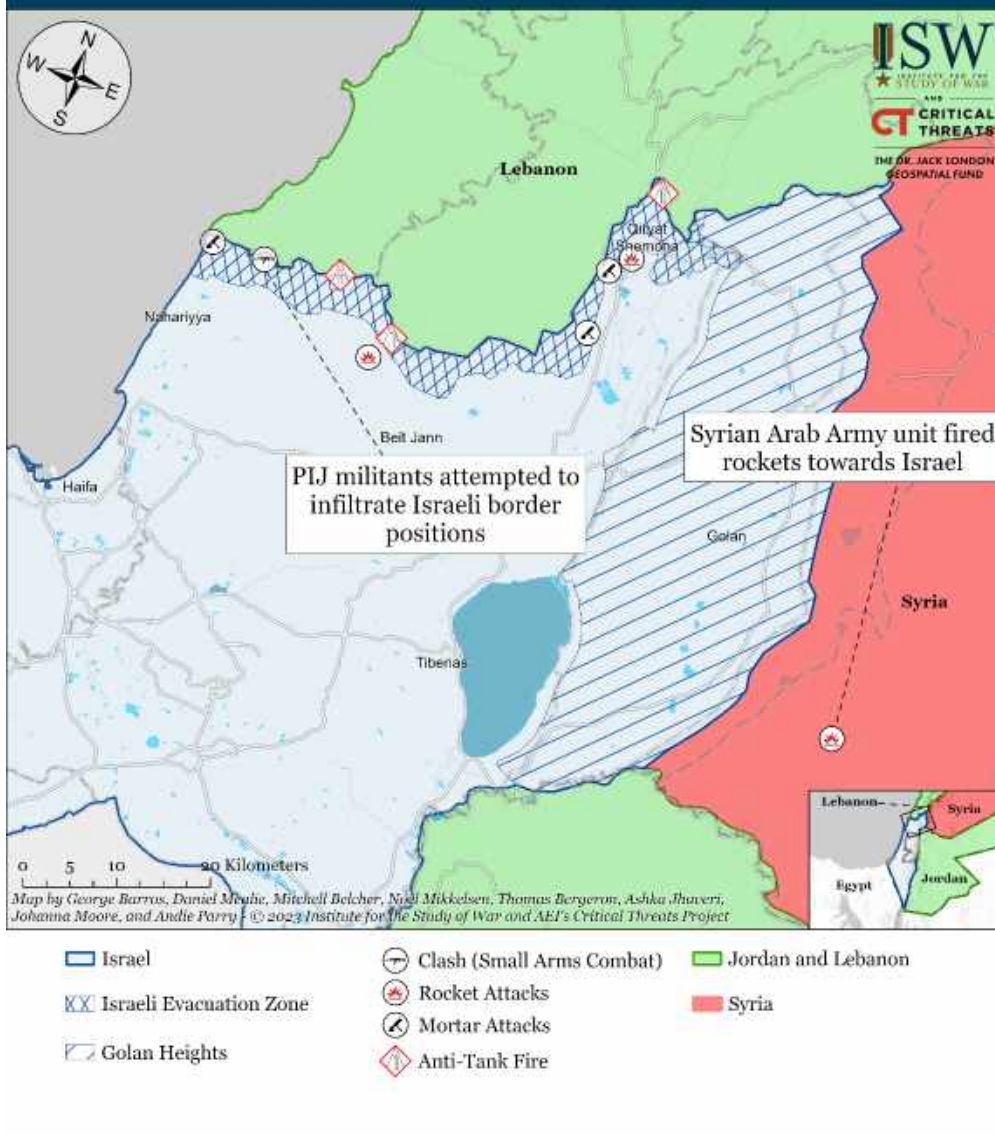
northern Israel.[29] The IDF continues to conduct airstrikes and artillery attacks targeting militants who are attempting to launch indirect fire into northern Israel.[30]

The PIJ attack is especially noteworthy given the closeness of the group to Iran and LH. Tehran and LH have provided various forms of support, including funding and military equipment and training, to PIJ for decades.[31] LH almost certainly permits Palestinian militant groups, such as PIJ, to conduct attacks from southern Lebanon given the extent to which LH controls the area and coordinates with the other Iranian-backed groups operating there.

A Syrian Arab Army (SAA) unit fired two rockets into the Golan Heights on October 29, according to local Syrian media.[32] The report claimed that the rockets landed in an open field. The IDF conducted airstrikes against the SAA 112th Brigade near Nawa, southern Syria, shortly after the rocket fire.[33]

LH leader Hassan Nasrallah is scheduled to give a speech on Friday, November 3, according to LH media.[34] This planned speech is noteworthy given that Nasrallah has not yet made a public statement on the Israel-Hamas war. Nasrallah's only major appearance since the war began was him attending a coordination and planning meeting with senior Hamas and PIJ leaders in Beirut on October 25.[35]

Attacks into Israel from Lebanon as of October 30, 2:00 PM ET



Iran and Axis of Resistance

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Demonstrate the capability and willingness of Iran and the Axis of Resistance to escalate against the United States and Israel on multiple fronts
- Set conditions to fight a regional war on multiple fronts

The Islamic Resistance in Iraq—a coalition of Iranian-backed Iraqi militias—claimed responsibility for two separate rocket attacks targeting US forces stationed in Iraq and Syria on October 30.[36] The Islamic Resistance in Iraq has claimed responsibility for 26 attacks on US forces in the Middle East since October 18.

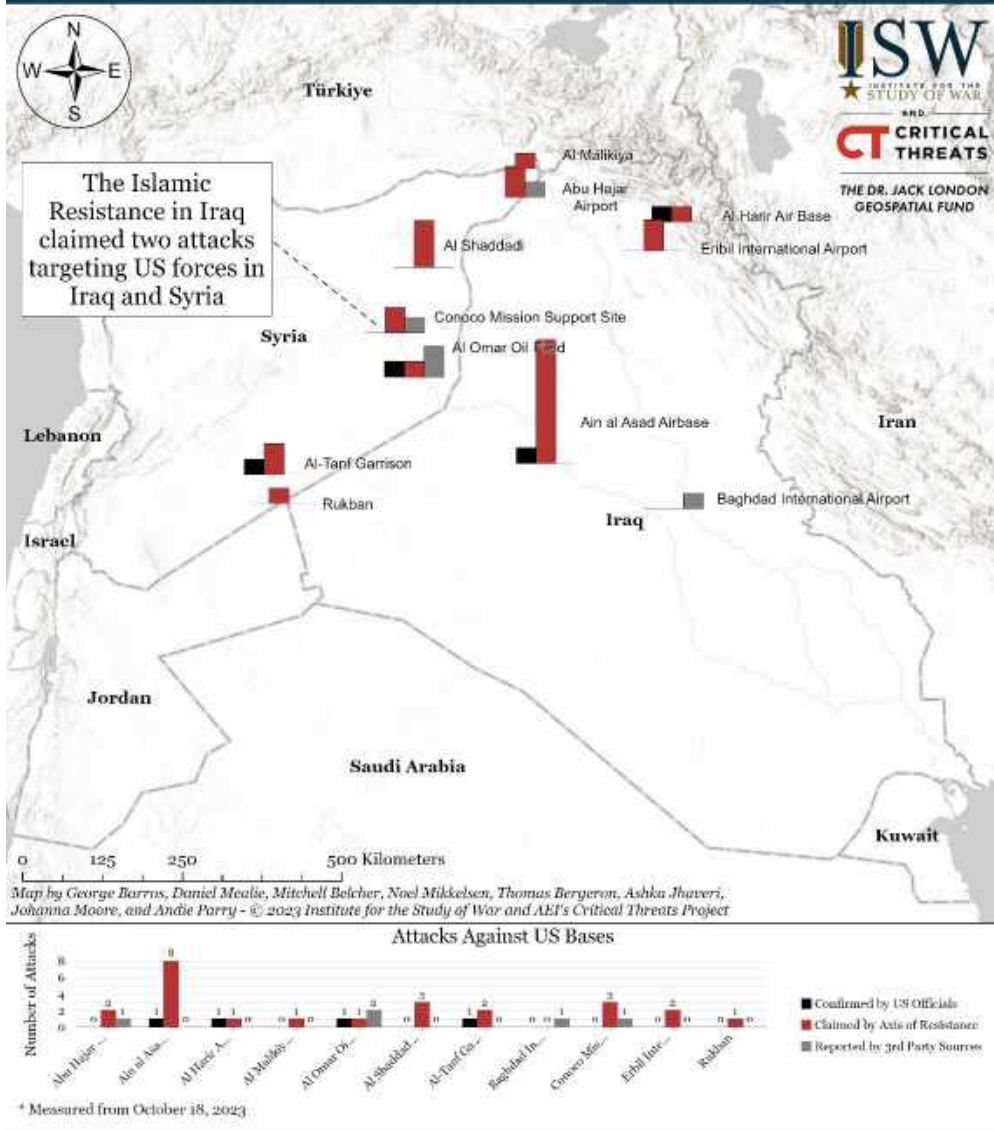
- The Islamic Resistance in Iraq claimed a rocket attack targeting Conoco Mission Support Site on October 30.[37] This is the third attack on this location that the Islamic Resistance in Iraq has claimed since October 18. Syria-based al Sharqiya News reported that the group launched the attack from a neighborhood within Deir ez Zor City controlled by Iranian-backed militias.[38]
- The Islamic Resistance in Iraq claimed a rocket attack on Ain al Asad airbase on October 30.[39] This is the eighth attack on Ain al Asad airbase that the Islamic Resistance in Iraq has claimed since October 18.

UK-based outlet Amwaj Media reported on October 30 that IRGC Quds Force Commander Brigadier General Esmail Ghaani is coordinating Axis of Resistance activities against Israel from a joint operations center in Beirut.[40] Ghaani traveled to Beirut on October 20 where he has since been stationed and met and coordinated with LH and Palestinian militia leaders, according to the report.[41] Ghaani previously visited Syria to direct Iranian-affiliated militias to prepare to open a second front against Israel on October 15, as CTP-ISW previously reported.[42]

Syria-based, anti-Iran news outlet Eye of Euphrates released a report detailing the various Iranian-backed militias responsible for conducting attacks on US forces in the Middle East since October 18.[43] The article reported that the most senior IRGC Commander in Syria, Hajj Askar, has coordinated all attacks on US forces in Syria with the local IRGC commanders in eastern Syria through a joint operations room based in Sayyida Zainab, Rif Dimashq Province. CTP-ISW cannot independently verify this report, although it is consistent with CTP-ISW's previous reporting.

- Eye of Euphrates reported that Iranian-backed Iraqi militias Kataib Hezbollah (KH) and Asaib Ahl al Haq (AAH) were responsible for conducting at least one of the one-way drone strikes targeting al Tanf Garrison in eastern Syria. The Islamic Resistance in Iraq, of which KH and AAH are both members, has claimed responsibility for two one-way drone attacks on Al Tanf Garrison since October 18.[44]
- Eye of Euphrates reported that the leader of the Iranian-affiliated Akidat militia, Hashem al Sattem, armed and directed Iranian sleeper cells active in Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF)-held territory to conduct strikes on US forces stationed at al Omar oil field. CTP-ISW previously reported on Iranian efforts to establish sleeper cells in SDF-held territory and warned that these cells possessed the capabilities to target US forces in eastern Syria.[45] CTP-ISW has recorded at least one attack targeting US forces stationed at al Omar oil field since October 18.[46]
- The article explained that Iranian-backed Syrian Hezbollah militants, led by Mohammad Amin Hussein al Raja and Tariq al Mayouf, and the Iranian-affiliated Sons of Jazira and Euphrates, led by Nawaf Ragheb al Bashir, conducted rocket attacks targeting US forces stationed at Conoco. According to Eye of Euphrates, the militants carried out attacks from Mazloum and Marat in Deir ez Zor Province. CTP-ISW has recorded two attacks targeting US forces stationed at Conoco Mission Support Site since October 18.[47]

Attacks against US Bases in the Middle East as of October 30, 2:00 PM ET



Iranian Parliamentary National Security and Foreign Policy Committee Chairman Vahid Jalal Zadeh discussed the Israel-Hamas war with Russian parliamentarians in Moscow on October 30.[48]

- Jalal Zadeh met with the following individuals:
- Russian State Duma International Affairs Committee Chairman Leonid Slutsky
 - Russian State Duma Defense Committee Chairman Andrey Kartapolov
 - Russian State Duma member Alexander Babakov
 - Russian Federation Council Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Kostantin Kosachev

Jalal Zadeh called on Russia to cooperate with Iran to stop Israeli “crimes” against Palestinians.[49] Jalal Zadeh’s visit to Moscow follows Iranian Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister Ali Bagheri Kani’s October 26-27 visit to Moscow, in which he met with senior Hamas and Russian officials.[50] Jalal Zadeh will travel to Turkey after concluding his trip to Russia.

Supreme Leader Military Affairs Adviser and former IRGC Commander Major General Yahya Rahim Safavi met with Belarusian Defense Minister Lieutenant General Viktor Khrenin on the sidelines of the 10th Common Security and Lasting Peace Forum in Beijing on October 30.[51] Iranian state media reported that the two officials discussed unspecified military cooperation.[52] Khrenin previously traveled to Tehran on July 31 to August 1 to discuss defense industry cooperation, establishing military attaches between Belarus and Iran, and conducting joint exercises. Khrenin met with Armed Forces General Staff Chief Major General Mohammad Bagheri and Defense Minister Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Ashtiani during the visit. [53] CTP-ISW previously assessed that Khrenin may have discussed establishing Shahed one-way attack drone factories in Belarus to support the Russian invasion of Ukraine.[54]

Iranian state media separately reported that Safavi will meet with other unspecified commanders and officials attending the forum to improve cultural, economic, and political ties.[55] Safavi stated that he seeks to represent the “voice of the oppressed people of Gaza” during his meetings and speech at the forum.



[1] <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/105>; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/106>; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/110>; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/109>; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/107>; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/113>; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/119>

[2] <https://t.me/sarayaps/16512>; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16515>; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16516>; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16517>; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16518>; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16519>; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16520>; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16521>; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16522>

[3] <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/10/30/israel-gaza-ground-incursion-tanks/>; <https://www.facebook.com/mediagovps/posts/pfbid0229KLSDeYZ4nBQaqNPES9L4X7SeqCsEKM3ab3u6iEpkLS1sQcpdyRGxEgMX900PbRl>; <https://www.wsj.com/world/middle-east/israel-makes-major-advance-toward-gaza-city-2339a2b6>

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[5] <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/10/30/israel-gaza-ground-incursion-tanks/>; <https://www.facebook.com/mediagovps/posts/pfbid0229KLSDeYZ4nBQaqNPES9L4X7SeqCsEKM3ab3u6iEpkLS1sQcpdyRGxEgMX900PbRl>

[6] <https://t.me/newpress1/56425>; <https://t.me/newpress1/56426>; https://twitter.com/Doron_Kadosh/status/1718903042823667930; <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1718864939429871618>

[7] <https://www.wsj.com/world/middle-east/israel-says-it-has-killed-one-of-planners-of-oct-7-attack-e3a11758>; <https://www.ynet dot co.il/news/article/rkepfbaga#autoplay>

[8] <https://t.me/newpress1/56437>; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/116>

[9] <https://www.almayadeen.net/news/politics/%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%88%D9%85%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%BA%D8%B2%D8%A9-%D8%AA%D8%AA%D8%B5%D8%AF%D9%89-%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%88%D9%84%D8%A9-%D8%AA%D9%88%D8%BA%D9%84-%D9%84%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%AA%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%84-%D9%88%D8%AA%D8%AF%D9%83-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%88%D8%B7%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%AA>

[10] <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/118>

[11] <https://t.me/hamasps/17247>; <https://t.me/hamasps/17238>

[12] <https://www.ynet.co.il/news/article/rkepfbaga#autoplay>; <https://www.wsj.com/world/middle-east/israel-says-it-has-killed-one-of-planners-of-oct-7-attack-e3a11758>;

[13] <https://www.axios.com/2023/10/30/israeli-military-rescues-soldier-held-hostage-by-hamas-in-gaza>

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[16] <https://twitter.com/GLZRadio/status/1718882024742662488>

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[20] <https://t.me/almanarnews/130370>

[21] <https://twitter.com/MohtadiBahmad/status/1680176927674363904>

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Iran Update, October 29, 2023

Ashka Jhaveri, Johanna Moore, Amin Soltani, and Nicholas Carl

Information Cutoff: 2:00 pm EST

The Iran Update provides insights into Iranian and Iranian-sponsored activities abroad that undermine regional stability and threaten US forces and interests. It also covers events and trends that affect the stability and decision-making of the Iranian regime. The Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute and the Institute for the Study of War (ISW) provides these updates regularly based on regional events. For more on developments and in Iran and the region, see our [interactive map of Iran and the Middle East](#).

Note: CTP and ISW have refocused the update to cover the Israel-Hamas war. The new sections address developments in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, Lebanon, and Syria, as well as noteworthy activity from Iran's Axis of Resistance. We do not report in detail on war crimes because these activities are well-covered in Western media and do not directly affect the military operations we are assessing and forecasting. We utterly condemn violations of the laws of armed conflict and the Geneva Conventions and crimes against humanity even though we do not describe them in these reports.

Key Takeaways:

- 1. The al Qassem Brigade—the militant wing of Hamas—likely conducted a complex attack targeting the IDF at the Erez checkpoint.**
- 2. The al Qassem Brigades and Saraya al Quds—the militant wing of PIJ— claimed a joint complex attack on the IDF in al Amiriya.**
- 3. Saraya al Quds claimed a complex attack on the IDF advancing along the Gaza coast.**
- 4. Palestinian militants clashed with Israeli forces and held large, anti-Israel demonstrations at their usual rate across the West Bank.**
- 5. Iranian-backed militants, including Lebanese Hezbollah, conducted seven attacks into Israel.**
- 6. Iranian-backed militants claimed two attacks targeting US forces in Syria.**
- 7. Asaib Ahl al Haq Secretary General Qais Khazali met with a Hamas delegation in Baghdad.**
- 8. Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi gave an interview with Arabic-language outlet al Jazeera, during which he tried to rally the support of the Arab world for Iran and the Axis of Resistance in opposing Israel. This messaging is likely meant to support the Iranian effort to disrupt Israeli normalization with Arab states by concentrating attention on Israel-Palestinian relations.**



Gaza Strip

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Erode the will of Israeli political establishment and public to launch and sustain a major ground operation into the Gaza Strip
- Degrade IDF material and morale around the Gaza Strip

The al Qassem Brigade—the militant wing of Hamas—likely conducted a complex attack targeting the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) at the Erez checkpoint on October 29. Militants from the al Qassem Brigades infiltrated Israeli territory via a tunnel west of the checkpoint before clashing with the IDF.¹ LH-affiliated media reported that the militants fired an anti-armor munition at Israeli vehicles at the checkpoint, killing several soldiers. The IDF reported that it “killed several and wounded others,” but did not provide further details.² The al Qassem Brigades claimed a rocket and mortar attack in the surrounding area to prevent support from reaching Israeli forces at Erez.³ Hamas leader Ismail Radwan claimed that al Qassem Brigades militants closed on the checkpoint and engaged in small arms clashes with IDF forces.⁴ CTP-ISW has not recorded independent confirmation of the clash or other tactical details.

The al Qassem Brigades and Saraya al Quds—the militant wing of Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)— claimed a joint complex attack on the IDF in al Amiriya on October 29.⁵ The al Qassem Brigades claimed to ambush IDF forces advancing south towards Beit Lahia Yasin, using anti-tank rocket launchers, indirect fire, and snipers.⁶ The al Qassem Brigades also claimed to attack the advancing forces using an al Zawari one-way attack drone.⁷ Saraya al Quds separately claimed that its militants and the al Qassem Brigades conducted a joint indirect fire attack on IDF forces as they advanced towards Beit Lahia.⁸ Palestinian media also claimed unidentified militants engaged in small arms fire with the IDF near Umm al Nasr Village, north of Beit Lahia.⁹

CTP-ISW has recorded several interactions between Hamas and PIJ, which suggest they are coordinating attacks into Israel. LH Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah held a coordination and planning meeting with Hamas Deputy Political Bureau Chairman Saleh al Arouri and PIJ Secretary General Ziyad al Nakhalah in Beirut on October 24¹⁰. Additionally, PIJ- and Hamas-affiliated militias in the West Bank coordinated small arms clashes during the war.¹¹

Saraya al Quds claimed a complex attack on the IDF advancing along the Gaza coast, injuring two on October 29. Saraya al Quds claimed that militants fired two waves of rocket and mortar attacks on advancing troops between October 28 and 29 and engaged in small arms clashes on October 29.¹² The IDF Air Force provided air cover and support for IDF soldiers advancing along the Gaza Strip coast from As Saifa. The IDF Air Force targeted and destroyed Hamas military buildings, anti-tank positions, observation posts, and unspecified military infrastructure.¹³



The al Qassem Brigades claimed an anti-tank guided missile attack on an IDF convoy east of Shujaiya, Gaza Strip.¹⁴ The group released a video of the attack reportedly showing a Russian-made Kornet missile munition hit an Israeli armored personnel carrier.

IRGC-affiliated Tasnim News Agency claimed that Palestinian militants ambushed an IDF unit attempting to cross into Gaza Strip east of Rafah.¹⁵ Tasnim reported that the militants forced the IDF to retreat after three hours of fighting, citing its own unspecified sources. CTP-ISW cannot independently verify this report.

Israeli Ground Operations in the Gaza Strip

CTP-ISW has refined its representation of the IDF clearing operations in the Gaza Strip. This change reflects new data collected on October 29 rather than new developments.

Palestinian and Axis of Resistance media reported that the IDF attempted to advance westward into the Gaza Strip and toward Beit Hanoun.¹⁶ The sources claimed that Palestinian militants destroyed two Merkava tanks and repelled the IDF advance. The IDF has not reported on any advance to the east of Beit Hanoun. CTP-ISW cannot independently verify these claims.

West Bank

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Draw IDF assets and resources toward the West Bank and fix them there

Palestinian militants clashed with Israeli forces and held large, anti-Israel demonstrations at their usual rate across the West Bank on October 29. CTP-ISW recorded nine distinct clashes between Palestinian militants and Israeli forces. CTP-ISW recorded three instances of Palestinian militants using IEDs, which has become increasingly common since October 18. CTP-ISW recorded three anti-Israel demonstrations in major cities across the West Bank, including Tulkarm, Bethlehem, Jenin, and Nablus. The Palestinian Ministry of Health claimed that Israeli security forces shot and killed three Palestinians on October 29.¹⁷ It is noteworthy that there has been no significant inflection in anti-Israel activity in the West Bank since the IDF began ground operations in the Gaza Strip on October 27.

Growing violence between Palestinian militants and Israeli settlers could drive greater anti-Israel activity in the West Bank. The al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade claimed to attack the Israeli settlement of Aveni Hevetz, targeting settlers and homes.¹⁸ The attack follows Iranian and Hamas rhetoric describing Israeli settlers in the West Bank as legitimate military targets.¹⁹ Hamas and the Axis of Resistance could exploit social tensions between local Palestinians and Israeli settlers to support the campaign to foment unrest and thereby draw IDF assets and resources toward the West Bank.



Southern Lebanon and Golan Heights

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Draw IDF assets and resources toward northern Israel and fix them there
- Set conditions for successive campaigns into northern Israel

Iranian-backed militants, including Lebanese Hezbollah (LH), conducted seven attacks into Israel. LH claimed two indirect fire attacks on IDF positions in northeastern Israel on October 28.²⁰ LH also claimed to shoot down an Israeli drone with a surface-to-surface missile.²¹ The al Qassem Brigades claimed to fire two waves of rockets at Kiriyat Shimona, hitting a residential building.²² The al Qassem Brigades last claimed to fire rockets from southern Lebanon on October 19.²³ LH almost certainly permits such attacks from southern Lebanon given the extent to which LH controls the area and coordinates with the other Iranian-backed groups operating there.

Iran and Axis of Resistance

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Demonstrate the capability and willingness of Iran and the Axis of Resistance to escalate against the United States and Israel on multiple fronts
- Set conditions to fight a regional war on multiple fronts

Iranian-backed militants claimed two attacks targeting US forces in Syria on October 29. This is the 28th attack targeting US forces in the Middle East since October 18.

- The Islamic Resistance in Iraq—an umbrella group for Iranian-backed Iraqi militias—claimed a one-way drone attack targeting US forces stationed at al Shaddadi, Hasaka Province, Syria on October 29.²⁴ The group stated that it launched two drones at the base and claimed that both hit their intended target. CENTCOM has not confirmed or denied the attack occurred. CTP-ISW cannot independently verify the claim.
- Unidentified Iranian-backed militias conducted a rocket strike targeting US forces stationed near al Omar Oil Field, Hasaka Province, Syria according to local news outlet Deir ez Zor 24.²⁵ The attack was reportedly in retaliation for US strikes on IRGC military facilities in eastern Syria on October 26.²⁶

Asaib Ahl al Haq (AAH) Secretary General Qais Khazali met with a Hamas delegation in Baghdad on October 29.²⁷ The Hamas delegation included Hamas' senior representative to Lebanon Osama Hamdan and a member of Hamas' Office of Arab and Islamic Relations Mohammad al Hafi. Khazali and the Hamas delegation discussed the Israel-Hamas war and reaffirmed the delegation of Iraqi militia support for the Palestinian militias fighting Israel. Khazali has previously threatened to conduct attacks on US forces in the



Middle East should the United States intervene in the Israel-Hamas war.²⁸ AAH is a member of the Islamic Resistance in Iraq, which has claimed 24 of the 28 attacks on US forces since October 18.

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi gave an interview with Arabic-language outlet al Jazeera on October 28, during which he tried to rally the support of the Arab world for Iran and the Axis of Resistance in opposing Israel.²⁹ This messaging is likely meant to support the Iranian effort to disrupt Israeli normalization with Arab states by concentrating attention on Israel-Palestinian relations. Raisi described Israeli crimes and falsely claimed that the IDF retreated from its ground operation into the Gaza Strip, describing the alleged retreat as a great military failure. Raisi also stated that the Axis of Resistance is “fed up” with Israeli “oppression.” This Iranian messaging marks a departure from the previous Iranian rhetoric that focused primarily on lauding the success of Hamas in attacking Israel on October 7.³⁰ Iranian and Palestinian militant officials have previously asserted that the purpose of the October 7 attack was to disrupt Israeli efforts to normalize its relations with the Arab world.³¹

Raisi separately justified further Iranian-backed attacks against US and Israeli targets during the interview. Raisi accused Israel of crossing all “red lines,” which could “force everyone to take action.” Raisi also emphasized the role of the United States in supporting Israel militarily. Members of Iran’s Axis of Resistance have repeatedly messaged that they would attack the United States and Israel if they cross their stated red lines, which included Israel conducting ground operations into the Gaza Strip and the United States providing meaningful military support to Israel.

Anti-Iranian regime protests occurred in Iran on October 28 and 29 in response to the death of a young Iranian Kurdish girl. The Iranian morality police reportedly assaulted 16-year-old Armita Geravand on the Tehran subway for not properly adhering to the mandatory hijab law on October 1.³² Geravand went into a coma after the incident and died on October 28. A medium-sized crowd gathered at her gravesite, chanting anti-regime slogans on October 29.³³

Her death parallels the circumstances that lead to the death of Mahsa Amini in September 2022. Amini’s death sparked one of the most significant anti-regime protest waves in the history of the Islamic Republic.

Geravand’s death underscores how little the regime changed its approach to policing women following the Mahsa Amini protest movement. Iranian leaders continue to refuse to grant serious concessions, such as easing the hijab requirement, to protesters and have even pursued harsher enforcement measures in recent months.³⁴



¹ <https://almanar dot com.lb/11150955?s=tg>

² <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1718649737178382375>

³ Source available upon request ; <https://t.me/khnmedia/149460> ; https://t.me/Palestine_news_Update/1395 ; <https://almanar dot com.lb/11150955?s=tg> ;

⁴ <https://almanar dot com.lb/11150955?s=tg>

⁵ Sources available upon request ; <https://www dot>

[tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/08/07/2979837/%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%AE%D9%88%D8%AF%D8%B1%D9%88%D9%87%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D8%AF%D8%B4%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%B5%D9%87%DB%8C%D9%88%D9%86%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA%DB%8C-%D8%B1%D8%A7-%D8%A8%D8%A7-%D8%AE%D9%85%D9%BE%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%87-%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%B3%DB%8C%D9%86-105-%D9%87%D8%AF%D9%81-%D9%82%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%AF%DB%8C%D9%85](https://www dot tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/08/07/2979837/%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%AE%D9%88%D8%AF%D8%B1%D9%88%D9%87%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D8%AF%D8%B4%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%B5%D9%87%DB%8C%D9%88%D9%86%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA%DB%8C-%D8%B1%D8%A7-%D8%A8%D8%A7-%D8%AE%D9%85%D9%BE%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%87-%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%B3%DB%8C%D9%86-105-%D9%87%D8%AF%D9%81-%D9%82%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%AF%DB%8C%D9%85) ;

⁶ <https://www dot>

[tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/08/07/2979837/%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%AE%D9%88%D8%AF%D8%B1%D9%88%D9%87%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D8%AF%D8%B4%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%B5%D9%87%DB%8C%D9%88%D9%86%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA%DB%8C-%D8%B1%D8%A7-%D8%A8%D8%A7-%D8%AE%D9%85%D9%BE%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%87-%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%B3%DB%8C%D9%86-105-%D9%87%D8%AF%D9%81-%D9%82%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%AF%DB%8C%D9%85](https://www dot tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/08/07/2979837/%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%AE%D9%88%D8%AF%D8%B1%D9%88%D9%87%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D8%AF%D8%B4%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%B5%D9%87%DB%8C%D9%88%D9%86%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA%DB%8C-%D8%B1%D8%A7-%D8%A8%D8%A7-%D8%AE%D9%85%D9%BE%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%87-%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%B3%DB%8C%D9%86-105-%D9%87%D8%AF%D9%81-%D9%82%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%AF%DB%8C%D9%85) ; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/94> ;

https://twitter.com/no_itsmyturn/status/1718603989489426653

⁷ Source available upon request

⁸ <https://t.me/sarayaps/16506> ; <https://t.me/khnmedia/149467> ;

<https://twitter.com/hengenahm/status/1718572679853174792> ;

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⁹ <https://t.me/tagamoo3/6429>

¹⁰

<https://www dotfarsnews.ir/en/news/14020803000608/Lebanese-Palesinian-Resisance-Leaders-Discss-Ways-Achieve-%E2%80%98Real>

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¹¹ [https://www dot almayadeen.net/news/politics/%D9%83%D8%AA%D9%8A%D8%A8%D8%A9-
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¹² <https://t.me/sarayaps/16498> ; HYPERLINK "https://t.me/sarayaps/16497"<https://t.me/sarayaps/16497> ;
<https://t.me/sarayaps/16495>

¹³ <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1718602908004933842>

¹⁴ <https://twitter.com/Sprinter99800/status/1718371038130581987>

¹⁵ [https://www dot tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/08/07/2979706/%D8%B5%D9%87%DB%8C%D9%88%D9%86%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA-
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¹⁶ <https://t.me/tagamoo3/6452> ; <https://t.me/khnmedia/149463> ; <https://t.me/tagamoo3/6460>

¹⁷ https://t.me/Palestine_news_Update/1367

¹⁸ https://t.me/Palestine_news_Update/1385



¹⁹ <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/iran-update-october-28-2023>

²⁰ <https://almanar dot com.lb/11150746;>

²¹ <https://twitter.com/AlMayadeenLive/status/1718675563202654621>

²² <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/103>; <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1718670061475434968>

²³ <https://twitter.com/AuroraIntel/status/1715015989656502391>

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²⁶ <https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/3570798/secretary-of-defense-lloyd-j-austin-iiis-statement-on-us-military-strikes-in-ea/>

²⁷ <https://twitter.com/Tammuz Intel/status/1718614168910074250> ; <https://shafaq dot>

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²⁸ <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/iran-update-october-11-2023>

²⁹ <https://www.tasnimnews dot com/ar/news/2023/10/28/2979622> ; <https://president dot ir/fa/147742> ;

<https://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1402/08/07/2979761>

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³¹ <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-update-october-11-2023> ;

<https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-update-october-20-2023>

³² <https://www.cnn.com/2023/10/28/world/armita-geravand-iranian-teen-dies-intl/index.html>

³³ <https://x.com/RahamimoffTamar/status/1718596321995612386?s=20> ;

<https://x.com/BabakTaghvaaee1/status/1718574574860710100?s=20> ;

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³⁴ <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-update-june-29-2023> ;

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Iran Update, October 28, 2023

Ashka Jhaveri, Andie Parry, Annika Ganzeveld, Amin Soltani, and Nicholas Carl

Information Cutoff: 3:00 pm EST

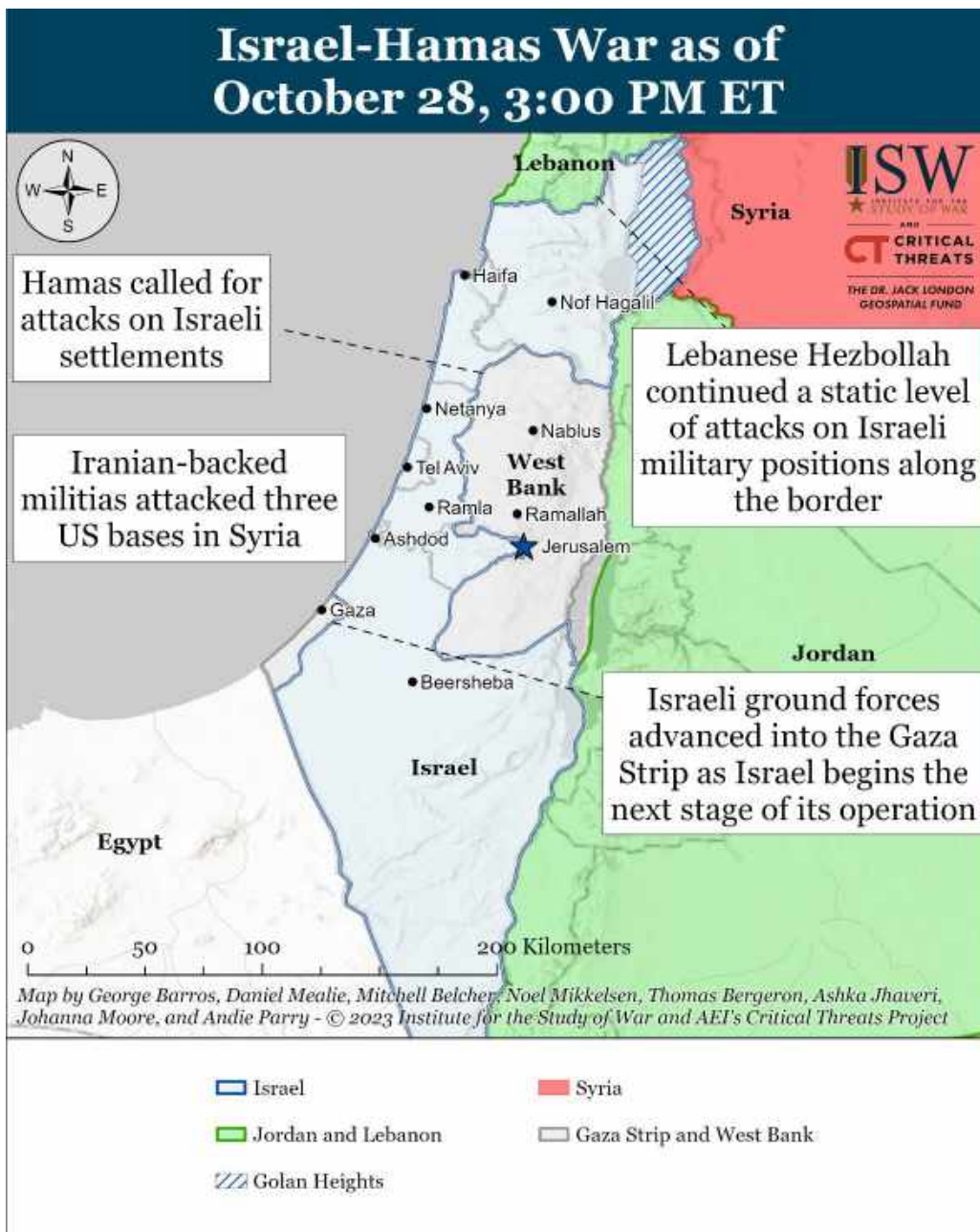
The Iran Update provides insights into Iranian and Iranian-sponsored activities abroad that undermine regional stability and threaten US forces and interests. It also covers events and trends that affect the stability and decision-making of the Iranian regime. The Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute and the Institute for the Study of War (ISW) provides these updates regularly based on regional events. For more on developments in Iran and the region, see our [interactive map of Iran and the Middle East](#).

Note: CTP and ISW have refocused the update to cover the Israel-Hamas war. The new sections address developments in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, Lebanon, and Syria, as well as noteworthy activity from Iran's Axis of Resistance. We do not report in detail on war crimes because these activities are well-covered in Western media and do not directly affect the military operations we are assessing and forecasting. We utterly condemn violations of the laws of armed conflict and the Geneva Conventions and crimes against humanity even though we do not describe them in these reports.

Key Takeaways:

1. Palestinian militias continued attacks at their usual rate from the Gaza Strip into Israel. The al Qassem Brigades claimed to fire rockets at Dimona for the first time since the war started.
2. Israeli ground forces advanced into the Gaza Strip. The al Qassem Brigades claimed to attack advancing IDF forces in Beit Hanoun and east of Bureij. Palestinian militias, including Hamas, are framing the IDF advances into the Gaza Strip as a failure likely to encourage civilians to stay rather than try to evacuate toward the southern part of the strip.
3. The Lions' Den—a West Bank-based Palestinian militia—appeared to implicitly call for further mobilization and violence against Israel in the West Bank after the IDF conducted ground operations into the Gaza Strip. Iranian and Palestinian sources are describing Israeli settlers in the West Bank as legitimate military targets. Palestinian militants clashed with Israeli forces and held large, anti-Israel demonstrations at their usual rate across the West Bank.
4. Iranian-backed militants, including Lebanese Hezbollah, conducted 12 attacks into Israel as part of an ongoing attack campaign targeting IDF radar and sensor sites and military targets.

5. The Islamic Resistance in Iraq—a coalition of Iranian-backed Iraqi militias—claimed to attack US forces at al Tanf Garrison in eastern Syria.
6. Iran is conducting a messaging campaign (1) to signal to the United States the potential for further Iranian-backed attacks against US forces in the region and (2) to reassure members of its Axis of Resistance, especially LH, of Iran’s commitment to supporting them in the event that the United States enters the war in support of Israel.
7. IRGC-affiliated media is continuing to provide the informational cover for Iran and the Axis of Resistance to conduct attacks against US positions on the false grounds that the United States is directing Israeli operations into the Gaza Strip.



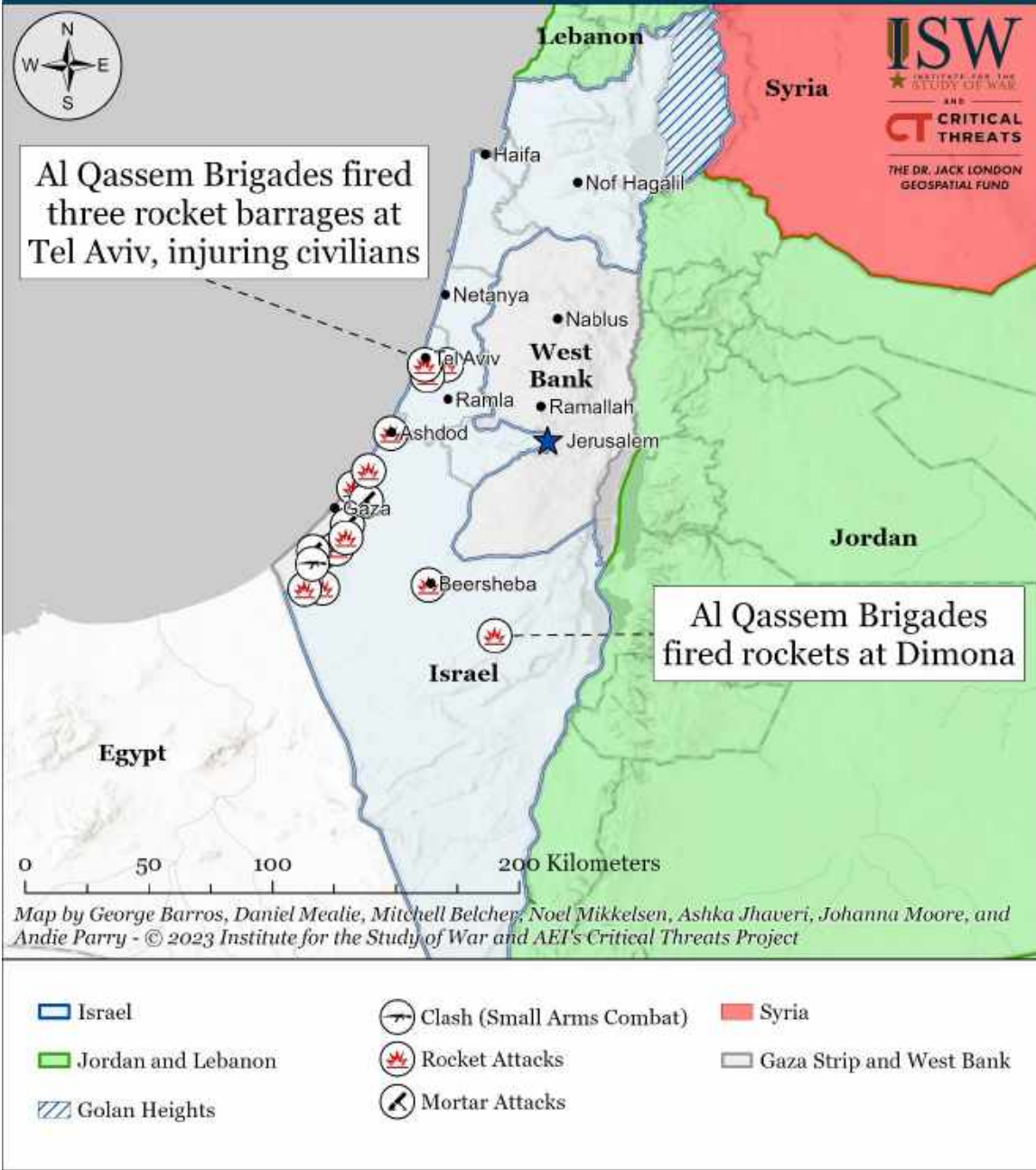
Gaza Strip

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Erode the will of Israeli political establishment and public to launch and sustain a major ground operation into the Gaza Strip
- Degrade IDF material and morale around the Gaza Strip

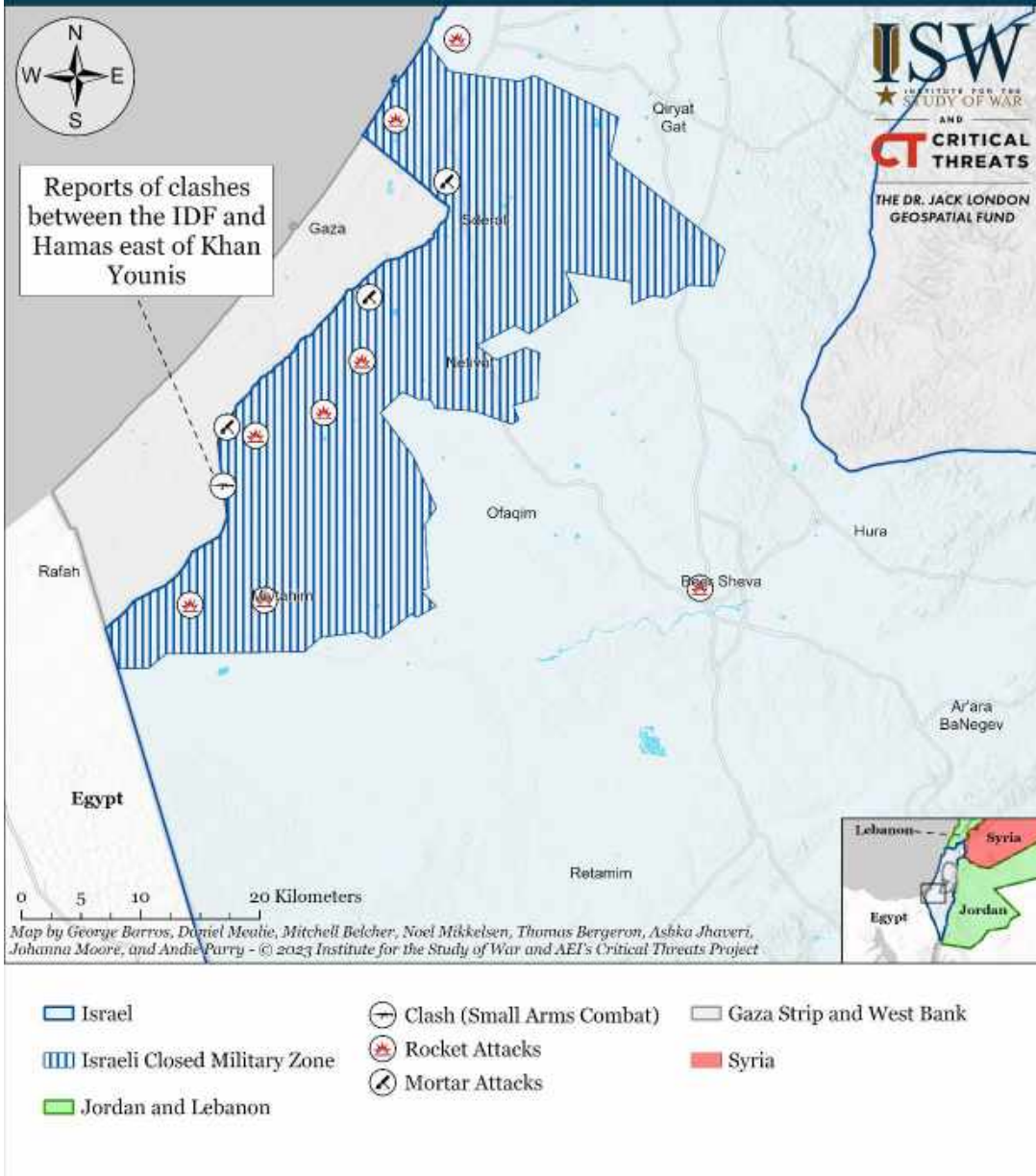
Palestinian militias continued attacks at their usual rate from the Gaza Strip into Israel on October 28. The al Qassem Brigades— Hamas’ militant wing—claimed responsibility for nine indirect fire attacks. The al Qassem Brigades claimed to fire rockets at Dimona for the first time since the war started.¹ Israeli news reported that the Iron Dome air defense system intercepted three of the rockets and one fell in an open area.² The Israeli Peres Negev Nuclear Research Center is based outside of Dimona in southern Israel.³ Iran and its Axis of Resistance have threatened to attack the facility previously, which has prompted Israel to reinforce the reactor, according to the head of the Israeli Atomic Energy Commission head.⁴ Saraya al Quds—the militant wing of Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)—separately claimed responsibility for nine mortar and rocket attacks.⁵

Indirect Fire Attacks into Israel from Gaza as of October 28, 3:00 PM ET



Recorded reports of rocket attacks; CTP-ISW cannot independently verify impact.

Attacks into Israel from Gaza as of October 28, 3:00 PM ET



Recorded reports of rocket attacks; CTP-ISW cannot independently verify impact.

Israeli Ground Operations in the Gaza Strip

Israeli ground forces advanced into the Gaza Strip on October 27. IDF Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Herzi Halevi said IDF ground forces supported by heavy fire entered the Gaza Strip to dismantle Hamas, secure the border, and return hostages.⁶ IDF Southern Command Fire Center Commander Lieutenant Colonel Gilad Keinan stated that Israel is using fire “from the air, from the ground, or from the underground.”⁷ IDF spokesperson Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari said that Israeli

troops entered the northern Gaza Strip with ground troops, armor, and artillery.⁸ The IDF released footage of tanks entering along the beach in the northwestern Gaza Strip.⁹ Hagari added that the ground operation was supported by "very significant, massive attacks from the sea."¹⁰ The IDF Air Force struck 150 underground targets in the northern Gaza Strip overnight, which included striking Hamas militants, tunnels, and other subterranean infrastructure.¹¹ Hamas maintains around 480 kilometers of tunnels under the strip.¹²

The al Qassem Brigades claimed to attack advancing IDF forces in Beit Hanoun and east of Bureij overnight.¹³ Hamas official Ali Bakara said Palestinian militants used anti-tank missiles to repel the attack and that it has been preparing defensive plans since the beginning of the battle.¹⁴ Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said overnight that Israel completed a phase in the war and that Israel will continue to be strong and precise.¹⁵ CTP-ISW cannot independently verify the locations of these Israeli ground operations.

Palestinian militias, including Hamas, are framing the IDF advances into the Gaza Strip as a failure likely to encourage civilians to stay rather than try to evacuate toward the southern part of the strip.

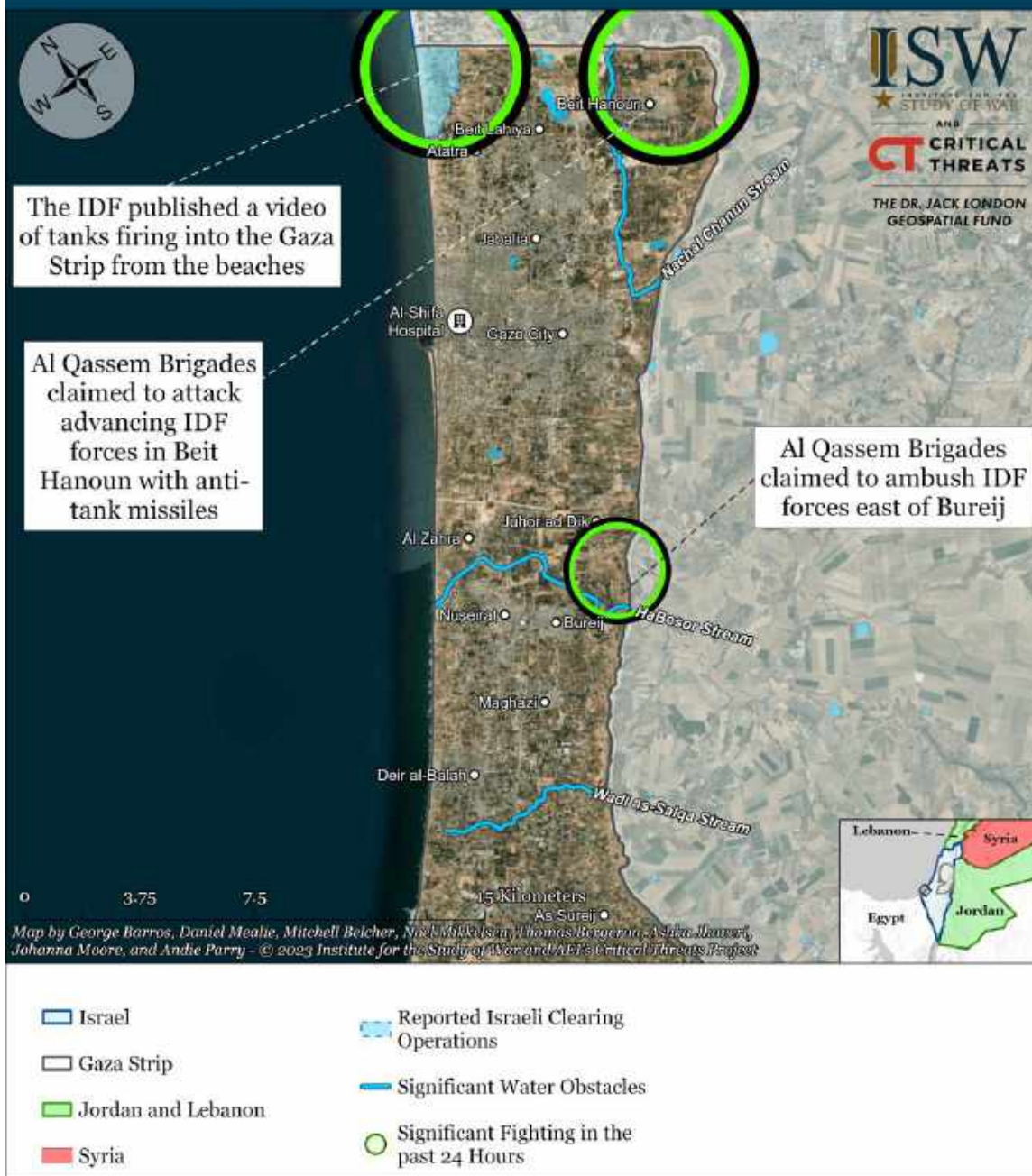
- Hamas claimed that the Israeli ground attack into the Gaza Strip was a failure.¹⁶ A Saraya al Quds official said that the IDF received painful strikes on the points of advance.¹⁷ Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine militant wing spokesman Abu Jamal said the IDF suffered heavy losses.¹⁸ An Israeli spokesperson said Israel had no casualties in Friday night's fighting.¹⁹
- Israel issued an urgent message for residents of the Gaza Strip and Gaza City to temporarily relocate south until intense hostilities end.²⁰ Israel dropped flyers in the northern part of the strip with a similar message. Hamas previously urged locals to stay in Gaza, describing the Israeli warnings on October 12 as "psychological warfare" against Palestinians.
- US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said that Hamas continues to use civilians as human shields, which intentionally puts these civilians in harm's way, to protect Hamas' military infrastructure and weapons.²¹ Civilians leaving the northern Gaza Strip en masse would risk depriving Hamas of the ability to use regular civilian activity to mask its military activities.

Iranian officials and media continued to argue on October 28 that Israeli ground operations into the Gaza Strip are failing and will not achieve their aim of destroying Hamas. IRGC-affiliated *Fars News Agency* claimed that on October 27 that the IDF ground operations inside the Gaza Strip were unsuccessful.²² IRGC-affiliated *Tasnim News Agency* similarly argued that Israel has had to repeatedly retreat after conducting limited operations inside the Gaza Strip and that Israel has not been able to do much more than launch a media campaign justifying these retreats.²³ State-controlled *Islamic Republic News Agency* recirculated Hamas' statement that the IDF operations failed as Hamas inflicted significant casualties and damage on the IDF.²⁴ IRGC Commander Major

General Hossein Salami argued that Israel is incapable of defeating Hamas, claiming that the Gaza Strip will become the grave for many Israeli soldiers.²⁵

This Iranian messaging ignores the fact that much of the IDF activity into the Gaza Strip in recent days had been raids.²⁶ US military doctrine defines a raid as “an operation to temporarily seize an area in order to secure information, confuse an enemy, capture personnel or equipment, or to destroy a capability culminating with a planned withdrawal.”²⁷ The IDF withdrawals after their operations were consistent with the US military doctrinal definition of a raid, which includes a planned retrograde at the end of the mission.

Reported Israeli Ground Operations in the Gaza Strip as of October 28, 2023, 3:30 PM ET



West Bank

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Draw IDF assets and resources toward the West Bank and fix them there

The Lions' Den—a West Bank-based Palestinian militia—appeared to implicitly call for further mobilization and violence against Israel in the West Bank after the IDF

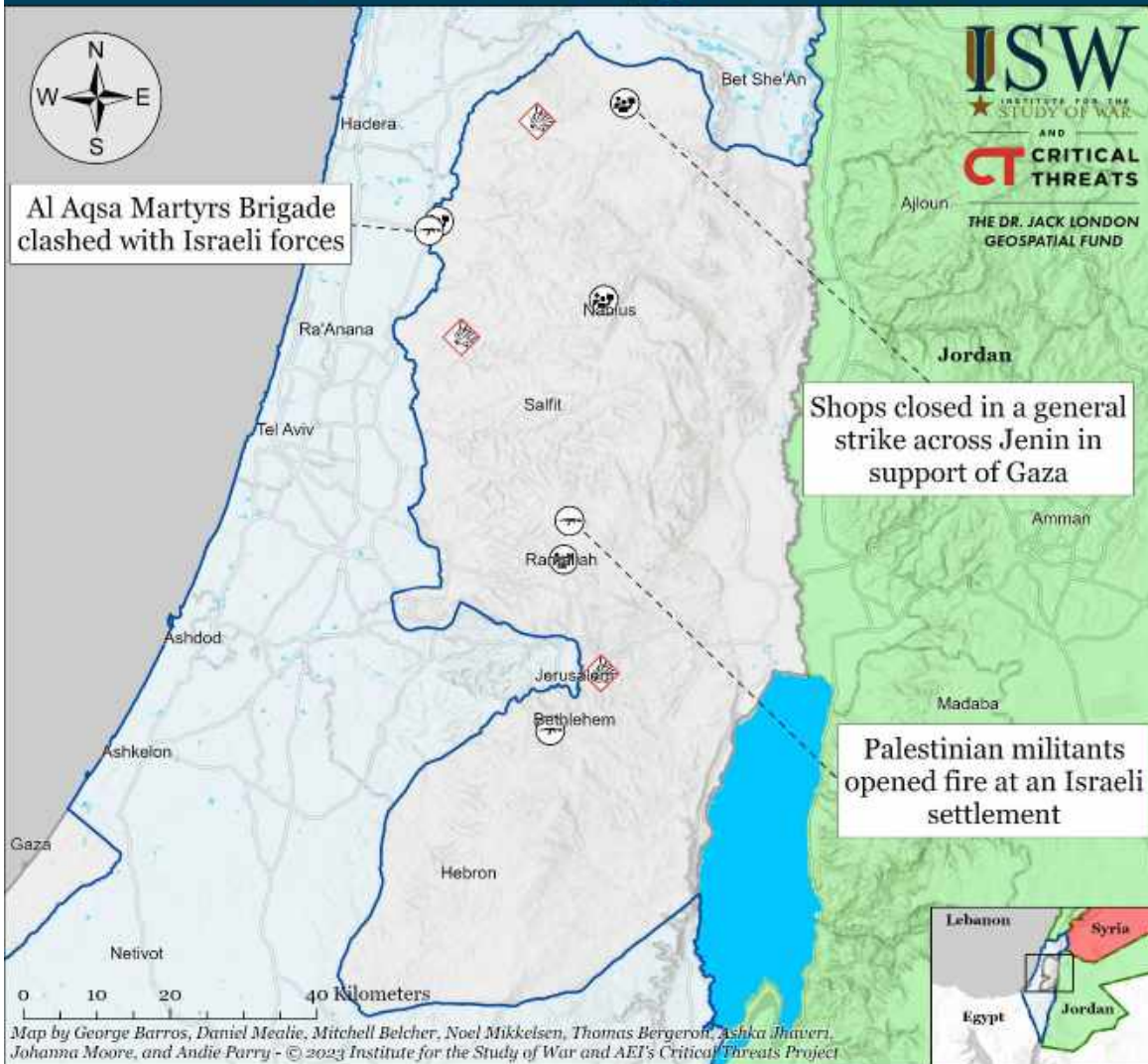
conducted ground operations into the Gaza Strip on October 27. The group posted on its Telegram for the first time since October 25, saying “long live jihad.”²⁸ The Lions’ Den has repeatedly called for mobilization in the West Bank in support of Hamas since the war began. The group claims to be unaffiliated with any specific Palestinian faction.²⁹ The Lions’ Den released a statement indicating increasing alignment with Hamas on October 25, however.³⁰ CTP-ISW previously reported that the group appeared to briefly trigger an uptick in violence after previous calls to mobilize.

Iranian and Palestinian sources are describing Israeli settlers in the West Bank as legitimate military targets. Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei’s official website pushed the narrative that Israeli settlers are armed and contribute to Israel’s “ethnic cleansing” of Palestinians on October 27.³¹ Hamas Political Bureau member Musa Dudin similarly stated on October 27 that “it is time for the West Bank to attack the security of the settlements.”³² The statements come amid heightened tension between Palestinians and settlers in the West Bank.³³ The Palestinian Health Ministry in the West Bank said an Israeli settler shot and killed a Palestinian on October 28.³⁴ Hamas responded to the shooting on Telegram, hailing the Palestinian as a martyr, who was killed “during the confrontations of the al Aqsa Flood battle.”³⁵

Palestinian militants clashed with Israeli forces and held large, anti-Israel demonstrations at their usual rate across the West Bank on October 28.

- CTP-ISW recorded 11 distinct clashes between Palestinian militants and Israeli forces across the West Bank. CTP-ISW recorded four instances of Palestinian militants using IEDs, which has become increasingly common since October 18.³⁶ The al Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigade’s Rapid Response Groups claimed to attack IDF soldiers stationed at Netzanei Oz on the border between Israel and the West Bank.³⁷
- CTP-ISW recorded five anti-Israel demonstrations in major cities across the West Bank, including Nablus, Jenin, Ramallah, and Tulkarm. Many shops closed in Jenin as part of a general strike against Israeli attacks into the Gaza Strip.³⁸ Local Telegram channels called for general mobilization in the West Bank on October 28, which is consistent with repeated Hamas calls for further resistance in the West Bank.³⁹

Clashes in the West Bank as of October 28, 3:00 PM ET



This map is not an exhaustive depiction of clashes and demonstrations in the West Bank.

Southern Lebanon and Golan Heights

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Draw IDF assets and resources toward northern Israel and fix them there
- Set conditions for successive campaigns into northern Israel

Iranian-backed militants, including Lebanese Hezbollah (LH), conducted 12 attacks into Israel as part of an ongoing attack campaign targeting IDF radar and sensor sites and military targets. LH claimed five anti-tank guided missile (ATGM) and rocket attacks on IDF positions along the border with Lebanon on October 28, which is consistent with its rate of attacks prior to October 26.⁴⁰ The IDF responded with multiple airstrikes and artillery strikes into southern Lebanon and on the Israel-Lebanon border, including against LH ATGM squads.⁴¹ LH claimed that one of its attacks caused IDF casualties along the border.⁴² LH fired an Iranian-designed 358 surface-to-air missile at an Israeli drone on October 28.⁴³ IDF air defense intercepted the missile over Tiberias in northern Israel.⁴⁴ The 358 missile is an Iranian-origin missile widely used by the Houthi movement in Yemen.⁴⁵

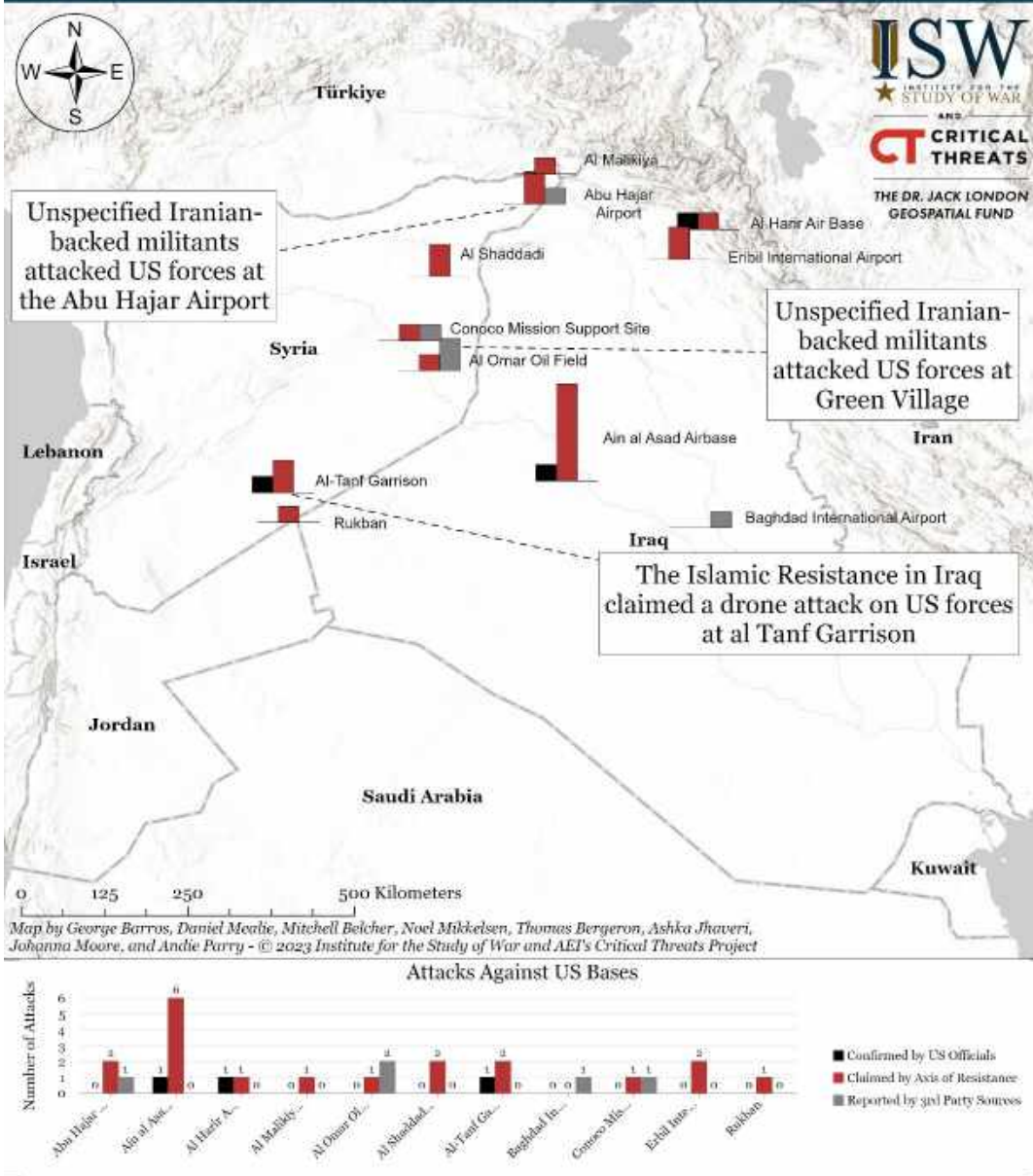
Iran and Axis of Resistance

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Demonstrate the capability and willingness of Iran and the Axis of Resistance to escalate against the United States and Israel on multiple fronts
- Set conditions to fight a regional war on multiple fronts

The Islamic Resistance in Iraq—a coalition of Iranian-backed Iraqi militias—claimed to attack US forces at al Tanf Garrison (ATG) in eastern Syria on October 27.⁴⁶ The group claimed to attack the base with two one-way attack drones, marking the group's third attack on ATG since October 19.⁴⁷ Local media reported two other unclaimed drone and rocket attacks on US forces stationed at bases in eastern and northeastern Syria.⁴⁸ Iranian-backed militias were responsible for these attacks, according to local anti-Syrian regime media.⁴⁹ Iranian-backed militias transported short range rockets to a town two miles from a US base in Deir ez Zor Province on October 28.⁵⁰ This is the eleventh consecutive day of Iranian-backed militia attacks on US forces in the Middle East. All three attacks occurred after Israel's expanded operation into the Gaza Strip.⁵¹

Attacks against US Bases in the Middle East between October 18 - 28, 2023



Iran is conducting a messaging campaign (1) to signal to the United States the potential for further Iranian-backed attacks against US forces in the region and (2) to reassure members of its Axis of Resistance, especially LH, of Iran’s commitment to supporting them in the event that the United States enters the war in support of Israel.

- Iranian Foreign Affairs Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian warned on October 27 that continued US support to Israel will result in the “opening of new fronts against the United States,” according to Bloomberg TV.⁵² Abdollahian spoke with Bloomberg TV, as well as other Western outlets, while visiting New York City for an emergency UNGA session on the Israel-

Hamas war.⁵³ Iranian state media heavily recirculated the headline of “new fronts against the United States” in its coverage of Abdollahian’s interview.⁵⁴ This warning diverges slightly from his previous warnings, which have mentioned the possibility for the war to expand geographically but had not framed this expansion as directed specifically against the United States.⁵⁵ Abdollahian separately pushed during his interviews with Western outlets the Iranian information operation asserting that the United States and Israel would be responsible for any further escalation and expansion of the war. Abdollahian stated in his interview with NPR on October 27, for example, that the continuation of Israeli attacks on Hamas could drive Iranian-backed Lebanese and Palestinian groups to implement plans “more powerful and deeper than what [the United States] has witnessed.”⁵⁶ The narrative that the United States and Israel would be responsible for the escalation of the war ignores the fact that Iran has already facilitated the expansion of this war to Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Yemen by directing its proxy and partner militias in these countries to attack US and Israeli targets.

- IRGC spokesperson Brigadier General Ramazan Sharif warned of further attacks on US positions in the region during an interview with LH-affiliated al Mayadeen on October 28.⁵⁷ Sharif warned that “those who cannot reach Israel [in battle] may be able to reach the US forces that are managing this war.”⁵⁸ He added that Iran is monitoring US bases in the region and US missile transfers to Israel. Al Mayadeen published the interview in Arabic and English, suggesting that Sharif meant to address local and Western audiences.⁵⁹ Sharif’s interview was firstly likely part of Iranian efforts to deter the United States from providing further military support to Israel. Sharif also likely sought to reassure the Axis of Resistance that Iran would support them, especially LH, in light of reports that the United States would intervene if LH attacked Israel.⁶⁰

IRGC-affiliated media is continuing to provide the informational cover for Iran and the Axis of Resistance to conduct attacks against US positions on the false grounds that the United States is directing Israeli operations into the Gaza Strip. *Tasnim* and *Fars* news agencies claimed that 5,000 American soldiers participated in the IDF’s October 27 ground operations into the Gaza Strip.⁶¹ *Tasnim* also repeated its earlier claim from October 16 that American military commanders have taken over command of Israeli operations in the area.⁶² Several elements in Iran’s Axis of Resistance, including various Iraqi militias and the Houthi movement, have threatened to attack the United States and Israel if the United States intervenes in support of Israel.

Axis of Resistance Red Lines

Members of Iran’s Axis of Resistance have articulated their thresholds for intervening in support of Hamas’ war in Israel



Actor	Threat	Stated Red Line
Iran	<p>Conduct missile attacks into Israel from Iran, Lebanon, and Yemen and send fighters from Syria into Israel</p> <p>Direct its proxies to attack US positions in Iraq and Syria</p>	<p>Israel attacks Iran</p> <p>United States refreezes \$6 billion to Iran</p>
Lebanese Hezbollah	Enter the war	Israel conducts a ground operation into Gaza
Badr Organization	Attack US military positions	The United States intervenes in the war
Kataib Hezbollah	Attack US military positions	The United States intervenes in the war
Kataib Seyyed ol Shohada	Intervene in the war	The United States intervenes in the war
Houthi Movement	<p>Conduct drone and missile strikes</p> <p>Target Israeli ships</p>	<p>The United States intervenes in the war</p> <p>Israeli operations in Gaza continue</p>

The Artesh—Iran’s conventional military—held its annual exercise near Esfahan on October 27-28. The Artesh regularly holds this exercise around the same time every year.⁶³ Senior armed forces officials assessed the Artesh’s missile, drone, armored combat, electronic warfare, helicopter transport, and engineering capabilities.⁶⁴ The Artesh also unveiled a series of purportedly new capabilities, including “a multi-rotor smart bomber,” a cruise-missile equipped helicopter, and other unspecified “operational and tactical equipment.”⁶⁵ Artesh Ground Forces Passive Defense and Engineering Deputy Commander Brigadier General Miser Arjoumandi stated that the Artesh implemented projects for a “five-kilometer fire wall” for coastal defense operations.⁶⁶ Khatam ol Anbia Central Headquarters Deputy Coordinator Brigadier General Ali Shadmani assessed that the Artesh Ground Forces are in “excellent” condition in all areas on the sidelines of the exercise on October 28.⁶⁷ Artesh Commander Major General Abdol Rahim Mousavi and Artesh Ground Forces Commander Brigadier General Kiomars Heydari similarly stated that the Artesh is fully prepared for defending Iran’s borders and responding to any threats.⁶⁸

- ¹ <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/80>
- ² https://twitter.com/IsraelRadar_com/status/1718280880131608832
- ³ <https://www.timesofisrael.com/israels-dimona-nuclear-reactor-isnt-chernobyl-but-does-have-vulnerabilities/>
- ⁴ <https://www.timesofisrael.com/israels-dimona-nuclear-reactor-isnt-chernobyl-but-does-have-vulnerabilities/>
- ⁵ <https://t.me/sarayaps/16488>; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16487>; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16489>; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16491>; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16492>; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16494>; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16494>; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16494>; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16490>
- ⁶ <https://twitter.com/IDF/status/1718293784725762312>
- ⁷ <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1718136441094459666>
- ⁸ <https://www.npr.org/2023/10/28/1209243034/israeli-troops-remain-in-gaza-marking-significant-escalation-of-conflict>
- ⁹ <https://twitter.com/IDF/status/1718312436380340443>
- ¹⁰ <https://www.npr.org/2023/10/28/1209243034/israeli-troops-remain-in-gaza-marking-significant-escalation-of-conflict>
- ¹¹ <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1718136436480729541>
- ¹² <https://nypost.com/2021/05/14/israel-pounds-gaza-in-effort-to-destroy-vast-tunnel-network/>
- ¹³ <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/72>
- ¹⁴ https://t.me/Palestine_news_Update/1289
- ¹⁵ <https://twitter.com/JoeTruzman/status/1718247059206361177>
- ¹⁶ https://t.me/Palestine_news_Update/1289
- ¹⁷ https://t.me/Palestine_news_Update/1290
- ¹⁸ https://t.me/Palestine_news_Update/1291
- ¹⁹ <https://www.npr.org/2023/10/28/1209243034/israeli-troops-remain-in-gaza-marking-significant-escalation-of-conflict>
- ²⁰ <https://twitter.com/IDF/status/1718240244129059167>
- ²¹ <https://thehill.com/homenews/administration/4253185-israel-hamas-blinken-gaza-humanitarian-concerns/>
- ²² <https://www.farsnews dot ir/news/14020806000721/%DA%86%D8%B4%D9%85%E2%80%8C%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B2-%D8%AD%D9%85%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%B2%D9%85%DB%8C%D9%86%DB%8C-%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%88%D9%81%D9%82-%D8%B1%DA%98%DB%8C%D9%85-%D8%B5%D9%87%DB%8C%D9%88%D9%86%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA%DB%8C-%D8%A8%D9%87-%D8%BA%D8%B2%D9%87-%DA%86%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA>
- ²³ <https://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1402/08/06/2979237/%D9%86%D9%85%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%B4-%D9%85%D8%B6%D8%AD%DA%A9-%D8%A8%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%AF%D9%86-%D9%88-%D9%86%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%86%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%87%D9%88-%D8%AF%D8%B1%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%87-%D8%AD%D9%85%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%B2%D9%85%DB%8C%D9%86%DB%8C-%D8%A8%D9%87-%D8%BA%D8%B2%D9%87-%D8%B1%D8%B3%D9%88%D8%A7%DB%8C%DB%8C-%D8%AC%D9%87%D8%A7%D9%86%DB%8C-%D8%AA%D9%86%D9%87%D8%A7-%D8%AF%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%AF-%D8%B5%D9%87%DB%8C%D9%88%D9%86%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA-%D9%87%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D8%B2-%D8%AC%D9%86%DA%AF>
- ²⁴ <https://www.irna dot ir/news/85272922/%D8%AC%D8%B2%D8%A6%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%AA%DB%8C-%D8%A7%D8%B2-%D8%AD%D9%85%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%B2%D9%85%DB%8C%D9%86%DB%8C-%D8%B4%DA%A9%D8%B3%D8%AA-%D8%AE%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%AF%D9%87-%D8%B1%DA%98%DB%8C%D9%85-%D8%B5%D9%87%DB%8C%D9%88%D9%86%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA%DB%8C-%D8%B9%D9%84%DB%8C%D9%87-%D8%BA%D8%B2%D9%87>
- ²⁵ <https://defapress dot ir/fa/news/626084/%D8%B3%D8%B1%D9%84%D8%B4%DA%A9%D8%B1-%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C-%D8%B7%D9%88%D9%81%D8%A7%D9%86%E2%80%8C-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%82%D8%B5%DB%8C-%D8%B6%D9%84%D8%B9%DB%8C-%D8%A7%D8%B2-%D9%87%D9%86%D8%AF%D8%B3%D9%87-%D8%AA%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%84-%D8%A7%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%A8%D8%A7-%DA%A9%D9%81%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA-%D9%81%D8%B1%D9%87%D9%86%DA%AF-%D8%B9%D8%B8%DB%8C%D9%85-%D8%AF%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%B9-%D9%85%D9%82%D8%AF%D8%B3-%D8%B1%D8%A7-%D8%A8%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%AF-%D8%A8%D9%87-%D9%86%D8%B3%D9%84-%D8%AC%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%85%D9%86%D8%AA%D9%82%D9%84-%DA%A9%D9%86%DB%8C%D9%85>; [https://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1402/08/06/2979183/%D8%B3%D8%B1%D9%84%D8%B4%DA%A9%D8%B1-](https://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1402/08/06/2979183/%D8%B3%D8%B1%D9%84%D8%B4%DA%A9%D8%B1-%)

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%D8%B4%D8%AF-%D9%81%DB%8C%D9%84%D9%85 ; https://www.presstv_dot_ir/Detail/2023/10/28/713560/Israel-incapable-of-fighting-against-Hamas-Gaza-to-become-its-graveyard-in-case-of-ground-attack--IRGC-chief ;

²⁶ <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1717403162485629277> ; <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1717770781151949034>

²⁷ <https://www.tradoc.army.mil/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/AD1029823-DOD-Dictionary-of-Military-and-Associated-Terms-2017.pdf>

²⁸ <https://t.me/areennabluss/289>

²⁹ <https://www.pcpsr.org/en/node/924> ; https://shehabnews_dot_com/post/109274/ - بالفيديو-مسيرات-ومواجهات-الضفة-الغربية-تنتفض-تلبية-لنداء-عربين-الأسود

³⁰ <https://t.me/areennabluss/288>

³¹ https://farsi.khamenei_dot_ir/others-dialog?id=54199

³² <https://t.me/c/1407249165/187>

³³ <https://ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-flash-update-21>

³⁴ https://www.jpost_dot_com/israel-news/article-770632

³⁵ https://www.jpost_dot_com/israel-news/article-770632

³⁶ <https://t.me/QudsN/319308> ; <https://t.me/QudsN/319306>

³⁷ https://t.me/Palestine_news_Update/1240

³⁸ https://t.me/Palestine_news_Update/1266

³⁹ <https://t.me/beitlahiaNews/4574>

⁴⁰ <https://t.me/maymun5/55919> ; <https://twitter.com/alishoeib1970/status/1718263430136647999> ; <https://t.me/QudsN/319708> ; <https://twitter.com/alishoeib1970/status/1718258893803909180> ; <https://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/iran-update-october-25-2023>

⁴¹ <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1718208795015278697> ; <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1718140430343143463> ;

https://twitter.com/ignis_fatum/status/1718211232446959849

⁴² <https://t.me/almanarnews/133592>

⁴³ <https://twitter.com/SAMSyria0/status/1718306506670497801>

⁴⁴ <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1718189383445057770> ; <https://twitter.com/manniefabian/status/1718183401939763528> ;

<https://twitter.com/SAMSyria0/status/1718306506670497801>

⁴⁵ <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/iraqi-militias-show-iranian-anti-air-missile> ; <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N20/372/40/PDF/N2037240.pdf?OpenElement>

⁴⁶ <https://t.me/elamharbi/52>

⁴⁷ <https://t.me/elamharbi/7> ; <https://t.me/elamharbi/26> ; <https://t.me/elamharbi/52>

⁴⁸ https://twitter.com/Sharqya_reporte/status/1717998230313586787 ; https://baladi-news_dot_com/ar/articles/98427/%D9%87%D8%AC%D9%88%D9%85-%D8%AC%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%AF-%D9%8A%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%AF%D9%81-%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D9%84%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D9%8A-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D8%B3%D9%83%D8%A9 ; <https://t.me/maymun5/55773>

⁴⁹ https://twitter.com/Sharqya_reporte/status/1717998230313586787?s=20 ; <https://t.me/AbomosaabSharkea/104233>

⁵⁰ <https://t.me/AbomosaabSharkea/104261>

⁵¹ https://x.com/idfspokesperson/status/1717956633320448215?s=46&t=SOgF7XQtnfAAhf_EGq1zPA

⁵² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aJLNrjFEPMA>

⁵³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aJLNrjFEPMA> ;

<https://www.npr.org/2023/10/27/1208575570/irans-foreign-minister-armed-groups-are-poised-with-their-finger-on-the-trigger> ;

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⁵⁴ https://www.isna_dot_ir/news/1402080604023 ;

https://nournews_dot_ir/Fa/News/154031

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- ⁵⁵ <https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/07/22/2971412> ;
<https://twitter.com/abasaslani/status/1714005468761161841?s=46&t=TMbDQtRFur-HDVAEVR7Byg>
- ⁵⁶ <https://www.npr.org/2023/10/27/1208575570/irans-foreign-minister-armed-groups-are-poised-with-their-finger-on-the-trigger>
- ⁵⁷ <https://www.irna.com/news/85273234>
- ⁵⁸ <https://english.almayadeen.net/news/politics/irgc-spox-to-al-mayadeen:-patience-running-out>
- ⁵⁹ <https://english.almayadeen.net/news/politics/irgc-spox-to-al-mayadeen:-patience-running-out> ;
<https://www.almayadeen.com/news/politics/%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AA%D8%AD%D8%AF%D8%AB-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B3%D9%85-%D8%AD%D8%B1%D8%B3-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AB%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D9%84%D9%84%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%86%D8%B7%D9%82%D8%A9-%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%86%D9%81%D8%AC%D8%B1-%D8%A5%D8%B0%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%85%D8%B1-%D8%A7>
- ⁶⁰ <https://amwaj.media/article/exclusive-blinken-delivers-us-message-to-iran-amid-surge-in-regional-tensions>
- ⁶¹ <https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/08/06/2979311> ; <https://www.farsnews.com/ir/news/14020806000755>
- ⁶² <https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/08/06/297931> ; <https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/07/24/2972822>
- ⁶³ <https://www.farsnews.com/ir/news/14020106000490>
- ⁶⁴ <https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/08/05/2978745> ; <https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/08/05/2978776> ; <https://defapress.com/ir/fa/news/626168> ; <https://defapress.com/ir/fa/news/626139> ;
<https://defapress.com/ir/fa/news/626244>
- ⁶⁵ <https://defapress.com/ir/fa/news/626225> ; <https://defapress.com/ir/fa/news/626222> ; <https://defapress.com/ir/fa/news/626168> ;
<https://defapress.com/ir/fa/news/626119>
- ⁶⁶ <https://defapress.com/ir/fa/news/626146>
- ⁶⁷ <https://defapress.com/ir/fa/news/626167>
- ⁶⁸ <https://defapress.com/ir/fa/news/626144> ; <https://defapress.com/ir/fa/news/626059>



October 27, 2023

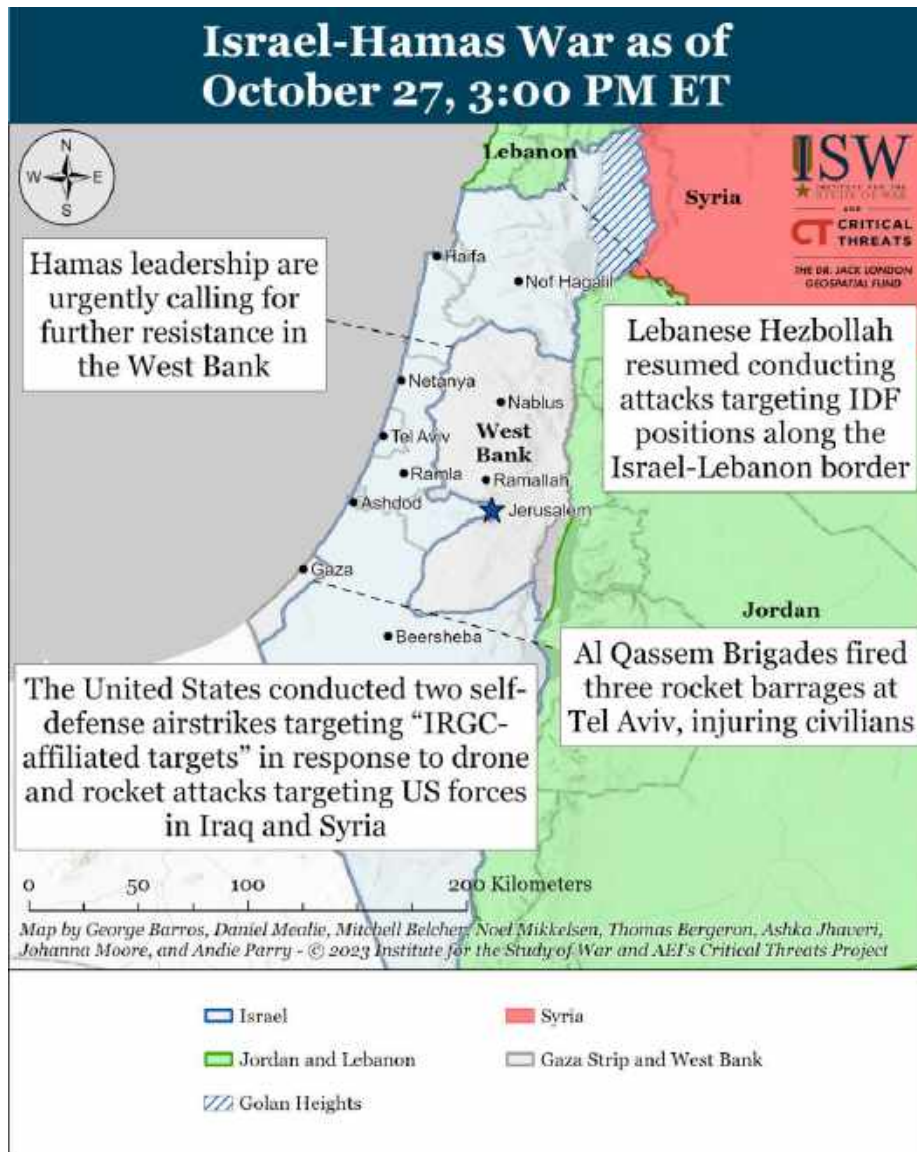
Andie Parry, Ashka Jhaveri, Annika Ganzeveld, Brian Carter, and Peter Mills

The Iran Update provides insights into Iranian and Iranian-sponsored activities abroad that undermine regional stability and threaten US forces and interests. It also covers events and trends that affect the stability and decision-making of the Iranian regime. The Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute and the Institute for the Study of War (ISW) provides these updates regularly based on regional events. For more on developments and in Iran and the region, see our [interactive map of Iran and the Middle East](#).

Note: CTP and ISW have refocused the update to cover the Israel-Hamas war. The new sections address developments in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, Lebanon, and Syria, as well as noteworthy activity from Iran's Axis of Resistance. We do not report in detail on war crimes because these activities are well-covered in Western media and do not directly affect the military operations we are assessing and forecasting. We utterly condemn violations of the laws of armed conflict, Geneva Conventions, and humanity even though we do not describe them in these reports.

Key Takeaways:

1. Palestinian militias in the Gaza Strip conducted rocket attacks into Israel at roughly half their usual rate on October 27.
2. The IDF conducted five raids into the Gaza Strip on October 27, and IDF ground forces will expand their operations overnight.
3. Palestinian militants clashed with Israeli security forces across the West Bank at a higher rate on October 27, amid Israeli arrest raids.
4. Iranian-backed militants, including Lebanese Hezbollah (LH), resumed attacks as part of an ongoing attack campaign targeting IDF radar and sensor sites and military targets.
5. The United States conducted two self-defense airstrikes targeting "IRGC-affiliated targets" in response to drone and rocket attacks against US forces in Iraq and Syria.
6. The Iran-backed Houthi movement conducted a drone attack targeting southern Israel on October 27.
7. Iran and its Axis of Resistance are continuing to signal their willingness and capability to escalate against the United States and Israel from multiple fronts.



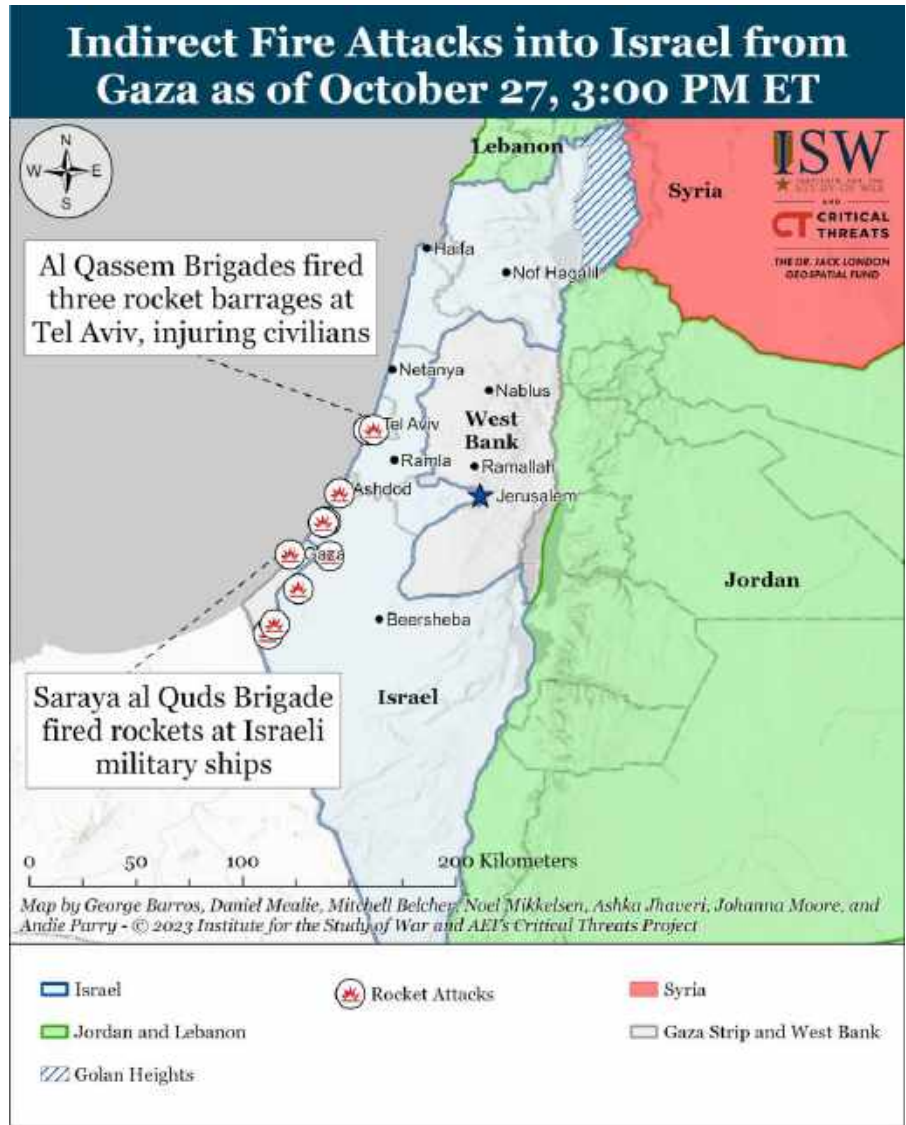
Gaza Strip

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

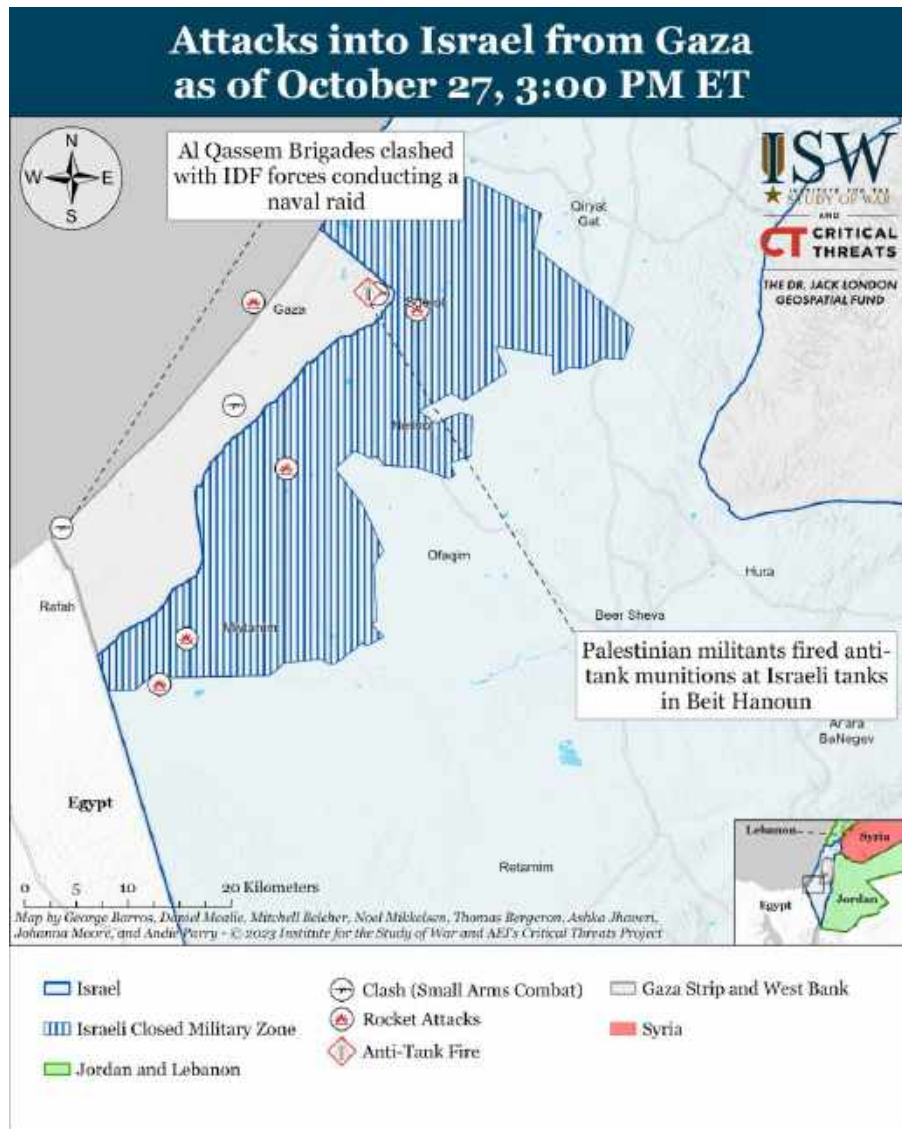
- Erode the will of Israeli political establishment and public to launch and sustain a major ground operation into the Gaza Strip
- Degrade IDF material and morale around the Gaza Strip

Palestinian militias in the Gaza Strip conducted rocket attacks into Israel at roughly half their usual rate on October 27.¹ The al Qassem Brigades— Hamas’ militant wing—claimed responsibility for five indirect fire attacks.² Three of these attacks targeted Tel Aviv and injured several Israeli civilians there.³ Saraya al Quds—the militant wing of Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)—claimed responsibility for six rocket attacks, including an attack using a Badr-3 rocket on Ashkelon.⁴ The Badr-3 rocket is produced in Gaza and has a 400 kilogram warhead, whereas Palestinian militias most frequently fire Qassem rockets with five kilograms of

explosives.⁵ Axis of Resistance-affiliated media reported one unclaimed anti-tank munition attack on Israeli forces.⁶



Recorded reports of rocket attacks; CTP-ISW cannot independently verify impact.



Recorded reports of rocket attacks; CTP-ISW cannot independently verify impact.

Israeli Ground Operations in the Gaza Strip

The IDF conducted five raids into the Gaza Strip on October 27, and IDF ground forces will expand their operations overnight.⁷ The IDF 13th Fleet deployed a tactical unit, ships, and aircraft in a naval raid on Rafah beach in the southern Gaza Strip on October 27.⁸ An IDF spokesperson stated that the unit "destroyed terrorist infrastructures of the Hamas terrorist organization and operated in a compound used by the organization's naval commando forces."⁹ The IDF 36th Division also conducted a raid into central Gaza near Shujayyah using infantry, armor, and engineering units supported by helicopter gunships.¹⁰ The IDF stated the Shujayyah operation had dozens of targets including anti-tank guided missile launch positions and Hamas operational headquarters and militants.¹¹ Axis media and social media users reported three other armed clashes between Palestinian militias and IDF troops in central and northern Gaza.¹² The IDF spokesperson disclosed IDF group operations in the Gaza Strip will intensify overnight.¹³

The al Qassem Brigades and Axis media incorrectly framed the naval raid engagement as a success for its militants by claiming they forced an IDF withdrawal and air engagement.¹⁴ US military doctrine defines a raid as “an operation to temporarily seize an area in order to secure information, confuse an enemy, capture personnel or equipment, or to destroy a capability culminating with a planned withdrawal.”¹⁵ The IDF withdrawal after the operation is consistent with the US military doctrinal definition of a raid, which includes a planned retrograde at the end of the mission. The IDF used air support to assist their elements’ withdrawal during the naval raid.¹⁶

West Bank

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

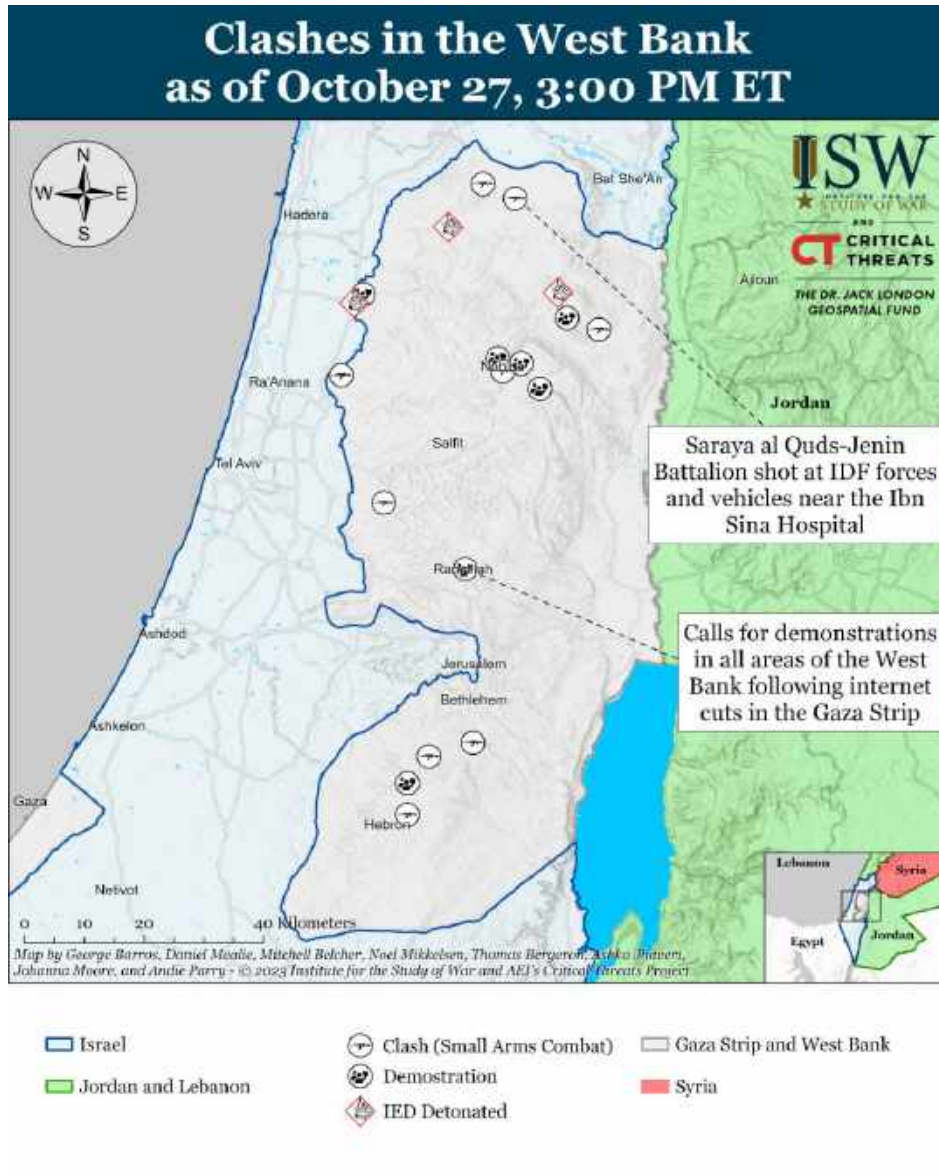
- Draw IDF assets and resources toward the West Bank and fix them there

Hamas leadership is urgently calling for further resistance in the West Bank. Hamas Political Bureau leader Ismail Haniyeh called for louder condemnation of Israeli attacks in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.¹⁷ Haniyeh claimed on October 7 that the Al Aqsa Flood Operation began in the Gaza Strip and will extend to the West Bank.¹⁸ A cybersecurity monitoring group said it had observed the largest single internet disruption in the Gaza Strip since hostilities began, amounting to a “total or near total blackout of internet service.”¹⁹ Hamas Political Bureau member Hussam Badran made an urgent appeal to people in the West Bank that “this is the time for weapons.”²⁰

Hamas and PIJ claimed their militants died while confronting IDF forces in Jenin. Saraya al Quds mourned a prominent field commander in its Jenin Battalion who died “supporting Gaza” in Jenin.²¹ Hamas mourned three militants who died in clashes in the West Bank in Jenin and Qalqiya.²² Ismail Haniyeh noted that the martyrs of the al Qassem Brigades are the same as Saraya al Quds Brigades and LH throughout the country in a speech on October 26.²³

Palestinian militants clashed with Israeli security forces across the West Bank at a higher rate on October 27, amid Israeli arrest raids. The IDF, Shin Bet, and Border Police forces arrested 36 Palestinians, including 17 Hamas operatives, in the West Bank. Israel is dismantling Hamas and PIJ command structures in the West Bank.²⁴ The Palestinian Authority reported that four Palestinians died overnight during Israeli raids in the West Bank.²⁵

- ISW recorded 14 distinct clashes between Palestinians and Israeli security forces across the West Bank. Saraya Al Quds-Tubas Brigade used an explosive device during clashes with IDF forces in Tubas.²⁶ CTP-ISW recorded two other instances of Palestinians using IEDs in the northern West Bank.²⁷
- CTP-ISW recorded eight anti-Israel demonstrations, a majority of which occurred after the internet cuts in the Gaza Strip. Hamas and the PIJ-affiliated Quds News Network reported on their Telegram pages that there are calls for marches in all areas of the West Bank and Jerusalem following the interruption of communication in the Gaza Strip.²⁸ Palestinians in Ramallah chanted “if you have a rifle, you should either kill a Jew or give it to Hamas.”²⁹



This map is not an exhaustive depiction of clashes and demonstrations in the West Bank.

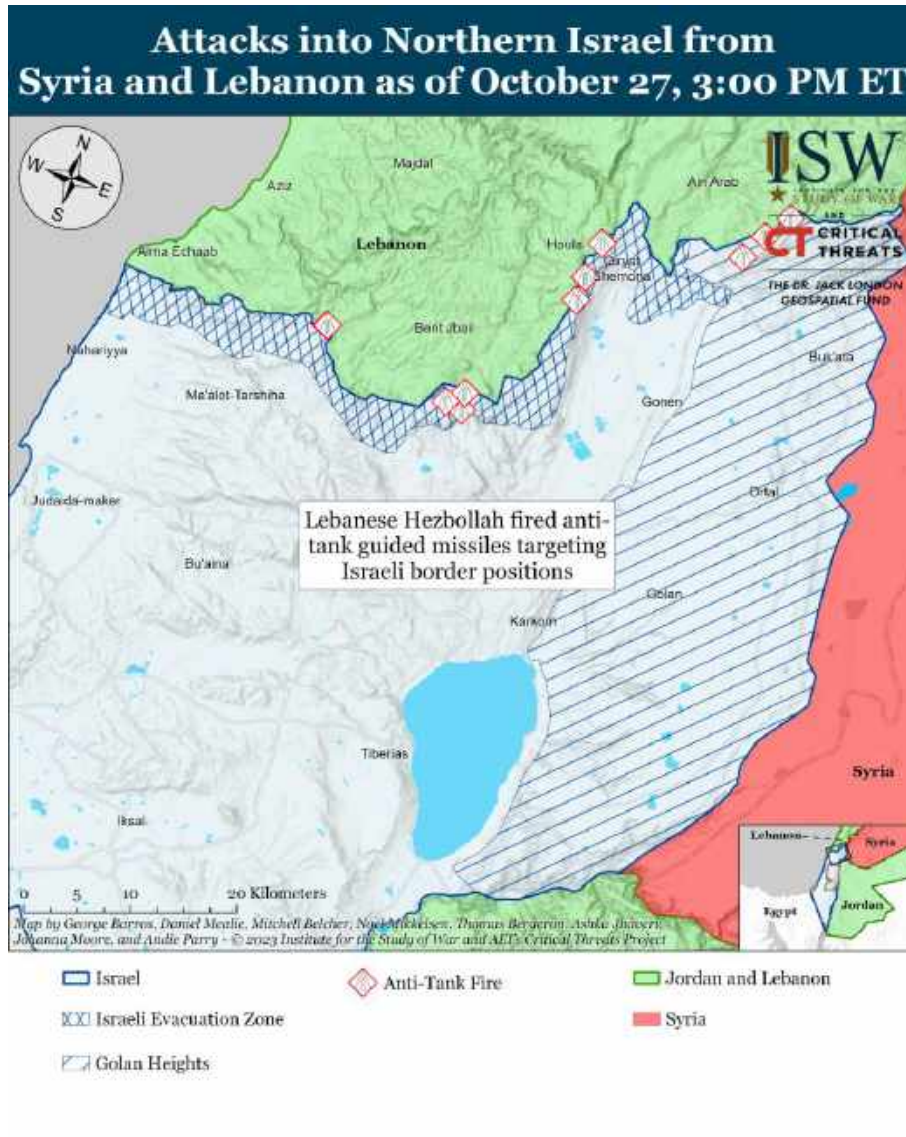
Southern Lebanon and Golan Heights

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Draw IDF assets and resources toward northern Israel and fix them there
- Set conditions for successive campaigns into northern Israel

Iranian-backed militants, including Lebanese Hezbollah (LH), resumed attacks as part of an ongoing attack campaign targeting IDF radar and sensor sites and military targets. LH claimed six anti-tank guided missile (ATGM) attacks on IDF positions along the border with Lebanon on October 27. This is consistent with its rate of attacks prior to October 26.³⁰ LH did not claim any attacks on October 26 for the first time since CTP-ISW began recording LH claims on October 11.³¹ IDF forces responded to the ATGM

attacks with artillery fire targeting locations in southern Lebanon where militants had fired into Israel.³² LH claimed its attacks inflicted "confirmed casualties", but the IDF denied that it suffered any casualties.³³ LH has acknowledged that at least 44 of its fighters have died since October 9 due to Israeli attacks responding to LH attacks on IDF forces and Israeli communities along the Lebanese border.³⁴



Recorded reports of attacks; CTP-ISW cannot independently verify impact.

Iran and Axis of Resistance

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Demonstrate the capability and willingness of Iran and the Axis of Resistance to escalate against the United States and Israel on multiple fronts
- Set conditions to fight a regional war on multiple fronts

The United States conducted two self-defense airstrikes targeting “IRGC-affiliated targets” in response to drone and rocket attacks against US forces in Iraq and Syria.³⁵ The United States targeted weapons and an ammunition storage facility near Abu Kamal, Syria.³⁶ US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin highlighted Iran’s role in attacks against US forces in his statement acknowledging the US airstrikes.³⁷ A US defense official said that the United States selected the targets to “send a message” to militia groups while “mitigating the risk of escalation.”³⁸ A local Syrian opposition outlet reported that the airstrike targeted a building used to “hold meetings and receive people coming from Iraq.”³⁹ It added that the last meeting was held a “few days ago” with “leaders” from the IRGC.⁴⁰ The same source reported no casualties in the airstrikes.⁴¹

The Islamic Resistance of Iraq launched one drone at US forces at Ain al Assad airbase, Iraq on October 27 in response to the US airstrikes.⁴² The Islamic Resistance of Iraq claimed the attack roughly 10 hours after the US airstrikes. Iranian state media and local media reported two other rocket attacks targeting US facilities in northeastern Syria on October 26-27.⁴³ The United States did not confirm these attacks, nor did the Islamic Resistance of Iraq claim the attacks.

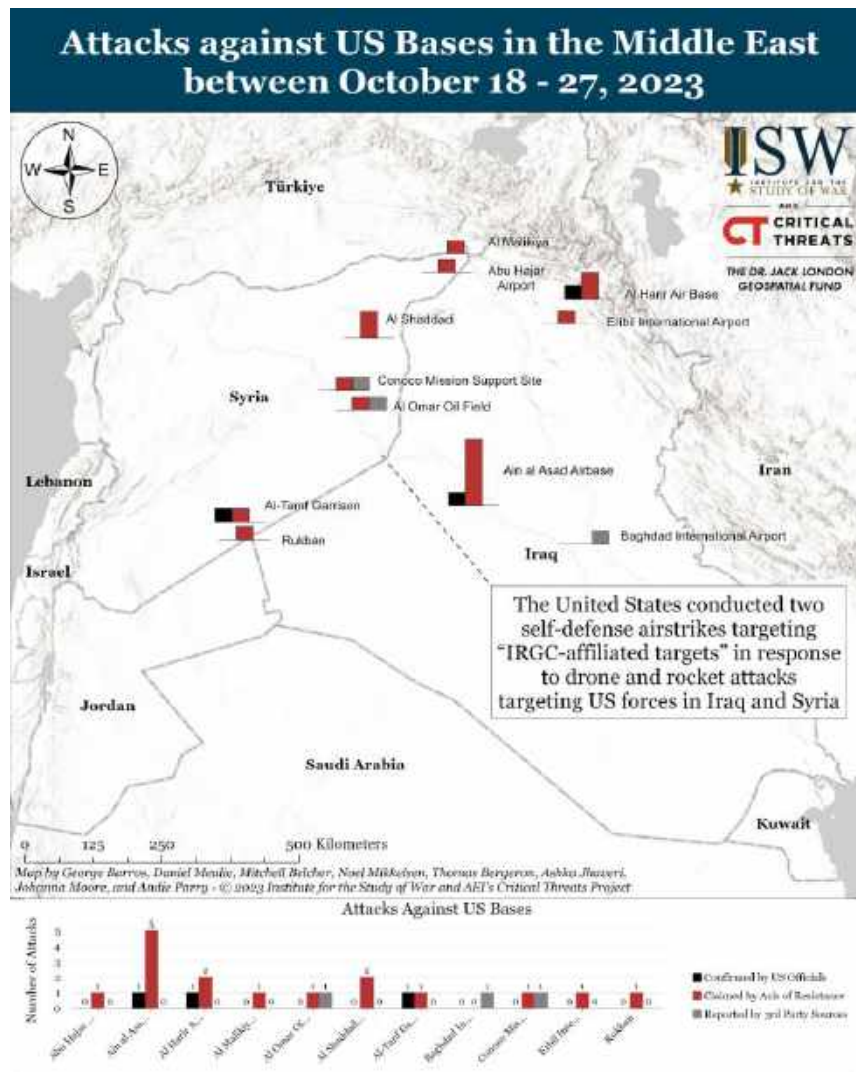
The Iran-backed Houthi movement conducted a drone attack targeting southern Israel on October 27.⁴⁴ The IDF said that it intercepted an “unknown aerial target” over the Red Sea on October 27.⁴⁵ At least two unspecified drones originating in the “Red Sea area” struck Egyptian territory near Taba, a resort town adjacent to Eilat, Israel, and near Nuweiba, 70 kilometers from the Israeli border.⁴⁶ The US Navy warship USS *Carney* intercepted nearly 20 drones and missiles launched by the Houthis from Yemen on October 18.⁴⁷

Iran and its Axis of Resistance are continuing to signal their willingness and capability to escalate against the United States and Israel from multiple fronts. Iranian Foreign Affairs Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian stated in an interview with NPR on October 27 that Palestinian and Lebanese resistance groups have plans that are “more powerful and deeper than what [the United States] has witnessed.”⁴⁸ Abdollahian has previously issued similar warnings. He warned on October 14 that the Axis of Resistance has its “hands on the trigger” and will respond to Israel “at an appropriate time” if Israel continues to attack the Gaza Strip.⁴⁹ Abdollahian subsequently warned on October 16 that Iranian-backed militias would imminently take “preemptive actions” against Israel.⁵⁰ Abdollahian issued the latter warning two days before Iranian-backed Iraqi militias conducted attacks on US forces in Iraq on October 18. These attacks marked the first attacks on US forces in the region since the start of the Hamas-Israel war on October 7. Lebanese Hezbollah Deputy Secretary General Naim Qassem echoed Abdollahian’s warnings on October 27, stating that the United States and Israel “do not know what the days will hold” if Israel continues its attacks.⁵¹ Qassem made this comment in a meeting with Iranian Parliamentary National Security and Foreign Policy Committee Deputy Chairman Ebrahim Azizi in Beirut.

Iranian Friday prayer leaders echoed the above rhetoric in their sermons on October 27. Tehran Interim Friday Prayer Leader Ali Akbari discussed the connected “regional resistance network” encompassing Palestine, Lebanon, Iraq, Yemen, Syria, and Iran and warned that “everyone is ready.”⁵² Mashhad Friday Prayer Leader Ahmad Alam ol Hoda separately stated that the Iranian government and people should be ready to go to the front with Israel as soon as Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei issues an order to do so.⁵³ Alam ol Hoda’s calls for mobilization are consistent with previous regime efforts to generate momentum for the Hamas-Israel war among the Iranian public, such as launching an online campaign to sign up volunteers to fight Israel.⁵⁴ CTP-ISW has previously noted that Alam ol Hoda is known for his ultra-hardline stances and provocative views, which means

that his statements do not always reflect the regime's official positions.⁵⁵ Alam ol Hoda called on vigilantes to enforce mandatory veiling in the aftermath of the 2022-2023 Mahsa Amini movement, for example.⁵⁶

Iranian Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister Ali Bagheri Kani discussed the Hamas-Israel war with Hamas' International Relations Office head and Political Bureau member Musa Abu Marzouk in Moscow on October 27.⁵⁷ Bagheri Kani stated that Iran seeks an immediate ceasefire in the Hamas-Israel war and the provision of humanitarian aid to Gazans.⁵⁸ The official Hamas readout of the meeting notably excluded Bagheri Kani's call for a ceasefire.⁵⁹ Marzouk told Saudi-owned Al Arabiya on October 27 that Hamas is trying to bring in all parties, including Iran and Lebanese Hezbollah, that "want to fight with us."⁶⁰



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- ¹ <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/66> ; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/67> ; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16479> ; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/68> ; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/69> ; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16480> ; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/71> ; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16481> ; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16482> ; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16485>
- ² <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/66> ; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/67> ; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/68> ; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/69> ; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/71>
- ³ <https://twitter.com/GLZRadio/status/1717875007882154024> ; <https://twitter.com/GLZRadio/status/1717949145871229249> ; <https://t.me/almanarnews/133317> ; <https://t.me/almanarnews/133322> ; <https://twitter.com/GLZRadio/status/1717864346909356071> ; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/67> ; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/66> ; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/71> ; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16479> ; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16480> ; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16481> ; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16482> ; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16485>
- ⁵ <https://www.timesofisrael.com/islamic-jihad-flaunts-rocket-arsenal-at-36th-anniversary-parade-in-gaza/> ; <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/hamas-qassam.htm>
- ⁶ <https://t.me/maymun5/55670>
- ⁷ <https://twitter.com/IDFSpokesperson/status/1717956633320448215> ; <https://twitter.com/GLZRadio/status/1717954334040768673>
- ⁸ <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1717872157726822542>
- ⁹ <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1717872157726822542>
- ¹⁰ <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1717770781151949034> ; <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/oct/27/israeli-troops-mount-second-overnight-raid-into-gaza>
- ¹¹ <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1717770835539251520> ; <https://twitter.com/GLZRadio/status/1717759132369875408> ; <https://x.com/YWNReporter/status/1717748302714700205?s=20>
- ¹² <https://twitter.com/sentdefender/status/1717967067654066344> ; <https://t.me/maymun5/55499> ; <https://t.me/maymun5/55500>
- ¹³ <https://twitter.com/IDFSpokesperson/status/1717956633320448215>
- ¹⁴ <https://t.me/maymun5/55548> ; <https://www.almanar.com.lb/11138536?s=20>
- ¹⁵ <https://www.tradoc.army.mil/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/AD1029823-DOD-Dictionary-of-Military-and-Associated-Terms-2017.pdf>
- ¹⁶ <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1717872157726822542>
- ¹⁷ <https://web.telegram.org/a/#-1001004223642>
- ¹⁸ [https://hamas\(dot\)ps/ar/post/18200/%D9%87%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D8%B7%D9%88%D9%81%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%82%D8%B5%D9%89-%D8%A8%D8%AF%D8%A3%D8%AA-%D9%85](https://hamas(dot)ps/ar/post/18200/%D9%87%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D8%B7%D9%88%D9%81%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%82%D8%B5%D9%89-%D8%A8%D8%AF%D8%A3%D8%AA-%D9%85)
- ¹⁹ <https://x.com/netblocks/status/1717942556703551590?s=20> ; <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/10/26/gaza-israel-siege-blackout-isolation/>
- ²⁰ <https://t.me/almanarnews/133397>
- ²¹ <https://t.me/sarayaps/16477>
- ²² https://t.me/mihwar_almuqawama/36897 ; https://t.me/mihwar_almuqawama/36896 ; https://t.me/mihwar_almuqawama/36895
- ²³ <https://web.telegram.org/a/#-1001004223642>

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- ²⁴ <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1717806157384102355> ; <https://www.almanar.com.lb/11138536?s=tg>
- ²⁵ <https://www.cbsnews.com/video/israel-conducts-another-ground-raid-in-gaza-tensions-soaring-in-west-bank/>
- ²⁶ <https://t.me/almanarnews/133209>
- ²⁷ <https://t.me/QudsN/319308>; <https://t.me/QudsN/319306>
- ²⁸ <https://t.me/QudsN/319263>
- ²⁹ <https://twitter.com/khaledabutoameh/status/1717870667285037165?s=46&t=EGYcIyXosW6lVJmixqr5Q>
- ³⁰ <https://t.me/maymun5/55585> ; <https://t.me/maymun5/55589> ; https://t.me/C_Military1/37921 ; <https://twitter.com/alishoeib1970/status/1717920885753933992>
- ³¹ <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/iran-update-october-26-2023>
- ³² <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1717894353841008987>
- ³³ <https://t.me/maymun5/55585> ; <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1717894353841008987>
- ³⁴ <https://twitter.com/QalaatM/status/1717601881457897576>
- ³⁵ <https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/3570798/secretary-of-defense-lloyd-j-austin-iiis-statement-on-us-military-strikes-in-ea/>
- ³⁶ <https://www.wsj.com/world/middle-east/u-s-launches-strikes-on-suspected-iranian-supported-bases-in-syria-6dcod2c3>
- ³⁷ <https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/3570798/secretary-of-defense-lloyd-j-austin-iiis-statement-on-us-military-strikes-in-ea/>
- ³⁸ <https://www.wsj.com/world/middle-east/u-s-launches-strikes-on-suspected-iranian-supported-bases-in-syria-6dcod2c3>
- ³⁹ <https://deirezzor24 dot net/%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%83%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%AA%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%AF%D9%81-%D9%85%D9%8A%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%B4%D9%8A%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D8%B1/>
- ⁴⁰ <https://deirezzor24 dot net/%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%83%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%AA%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%AF%D9%81-%D9%85%D9%8A%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%B4%D9%8A%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D8%B1/>
- ⁴¹ <https://deirezzor24 dot net/%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%83%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%AA%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%AF%D9%81-%D9%85%D9%8A%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%B4%D9%8A%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D8%B1/>
- ⁴² <https://t.me/elamharbi/50>
- ⁴³ <https://twitter.com/Tasnimarabic/status/1717896805558473006>; <https://eyeofeufrates.com/ar/news/2023/10/27/10008>; https://twitter.com/Sada_AlSharqieh/status/1717635453531095085?s=20; <https://twitter.com/DeirEzzorNow/status/1717633347030020210?s=20>
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- ⁴⁵ <https://x.com/Alsakaniali/status/1717975534041272478?s=20>; <https://x.com/BarakRavid/status/1717935598441234551?s=20>; <https://x.com/manniefabian/status/1717933305583096067?s=20>

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- 47 <https://abcnews.go.com/International/security-incident-involving-us-navy-destroyer-red-sea/story?id=104147141#:~:text=U.S.%20officials%20on%20Friday%20told,is%20pictured%20Aug%2011%2C%202020.>
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- 53 <https://donya-e-eqtasad dot com/%D8%A8%D8%AE%D8%B4-%D8%B3%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D8%AE%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%86-62/4014487-%D8%A7%D8%B8%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%87%D8%AF%DB%8C-%D8%AF%D8%B1%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%87-%D8%AC%D9%86%DA%AF-%D8%BA%D8%B2%D9%87-%D8%A7%D8%B2-%D8%AA%D8%B1%DB%8C%D8%A8%D9%88%D9%86-%D9%86%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%AC%D9%85%D8%B9%D9%87-%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%B1%D8%AF%D9%85-%D9%85%D8%A7-%D8%A2%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%87-%D9%81%D8%AF%D8%A7%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%B1%DB%8C-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B4%D9%86%D8%AF>
- 54 <https://amwaj.media/media-monitor/in-parallel-with-diplomacy-iran-warns-gaza-invasion-will-open-new-fronts>
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- 58 <https://www.mehrnews dot com/news/5922888>
- 59 <https://t.me/+tqKDayok5atmZWQo>
- 60 https://twitter.com/AlArabiya_Brk/status/1717859257201078333

Iran Update, October 26, 2023

**Peter Mills, Kathryn Tyson, Annika Ganzeveld,
Ashka Jhaveri, Brian Carter, and Nicholas Carl**

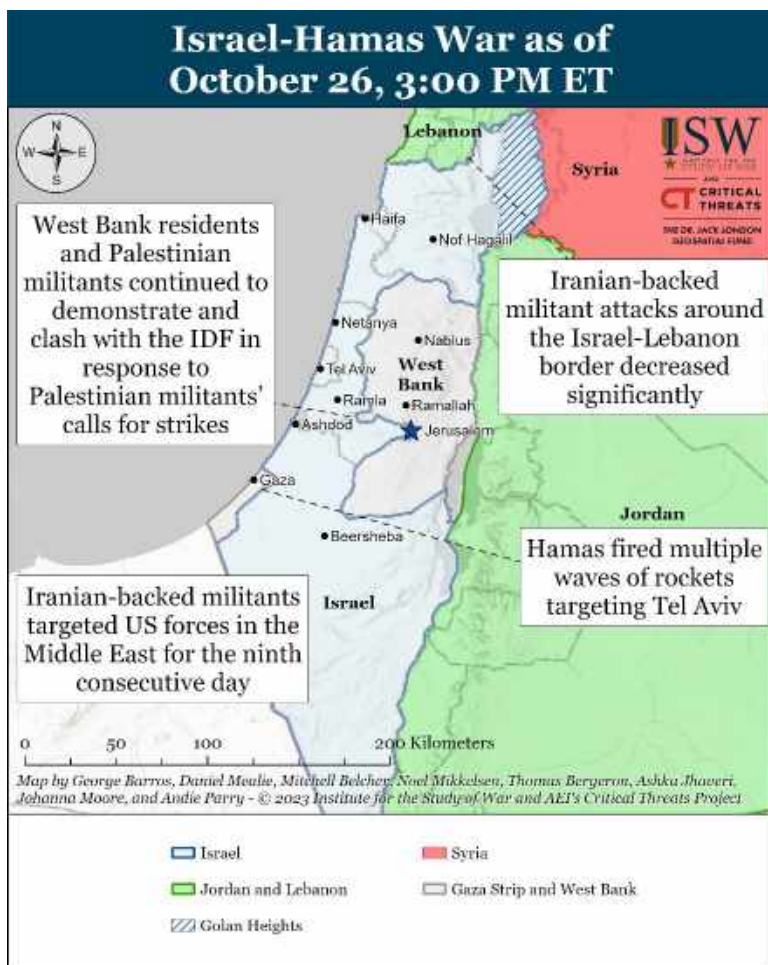
The Iran Update provides insights into Iranian and Iranian-sponsored activities abroad that undermine regional stability and threaten US forces and interests. It also covers events and trends that affect the stability and decision-making of the Iranian regime. The Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute and the Institute for the Study of War (ISW) provides these updates regularly based on regional events. For more on developments and in Iran and the region, see our [interactive map of Iran and the Middle East](#).

Note: CTP and ISW have refocused the update to cover the Israel-Hamas war. The new sections address developments in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, Lebanon, and Syria, as well as noteworthy activity from Iran's Axis of Resistance. We do not report in detail on war crimes because these activities are well-covered in Western media and do not directly affect the military operations we are assessing and forecasting. We utterly condemn violations of the laws of armed conflict, Geneva Conventions, and humanity even though we do not describe them in these reports.

Key Takeaways:

1. Palestinian militias continued attacks at their usual rate from the Gaza Strip into Israel. The IDF conducted a raid into the Gaza Strip, which Israeli media framed as preparation for the ground operation.
2. Clashes between Israeli forces and Palestinian militants and anti-Israel protests continued at their usual rate in the West Bank. The Lions' Den released a statement indicating increasing alignment with Hamas.
3. Iranian-backed militant attacks around the Israel-Lebanon border decreased significantly. The IDF is conducting daily airstrikes against LH and Palestinian militia targets along the northern Israeli border, which may have contributed to the reduced rate of attacks.
4. The Islamic Resistance in Iraq—a coalition of Iranian-backed Iraqi militias—claimed three attacks on US military positions in Iraq and Syria.
5. A senior Hamas delegation traveled to Moscow and met with Russian and Iranian officials.
6. Iranian officials and media are dismissing US calls for Iran and the Axis of Resistance to show restraint in the Hamas-Israel war. The narrative that Iran cannot control its proxy and partner

militias in the Axis of Resistance is an Iranian information operation meant to generate plausible deniability for Iranian-led actions in the Middle East and obfuscate Tehran’s responsibility.



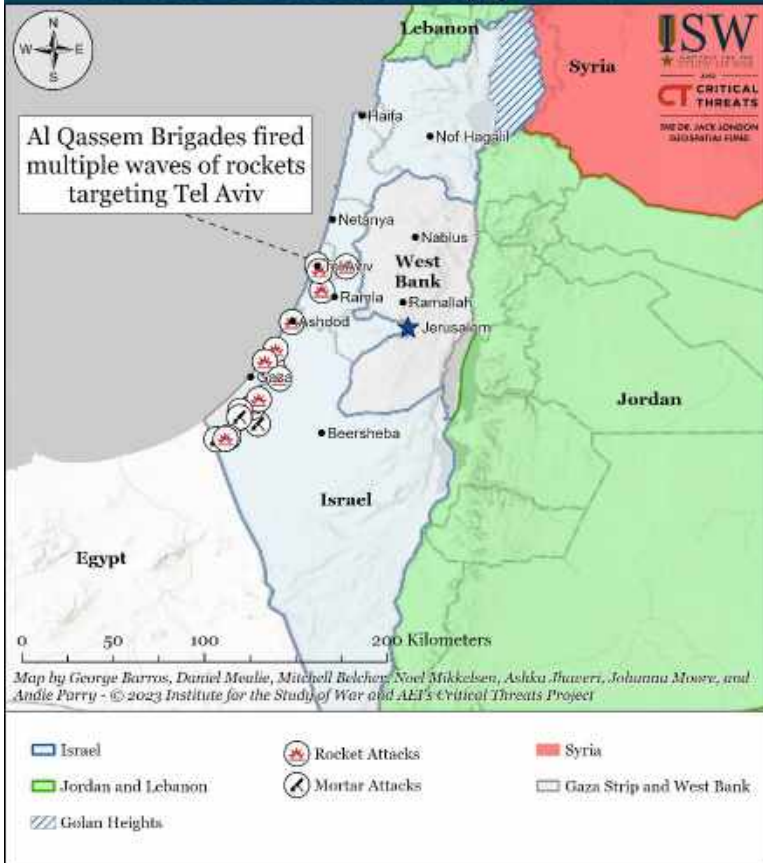
Gaza Strip

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

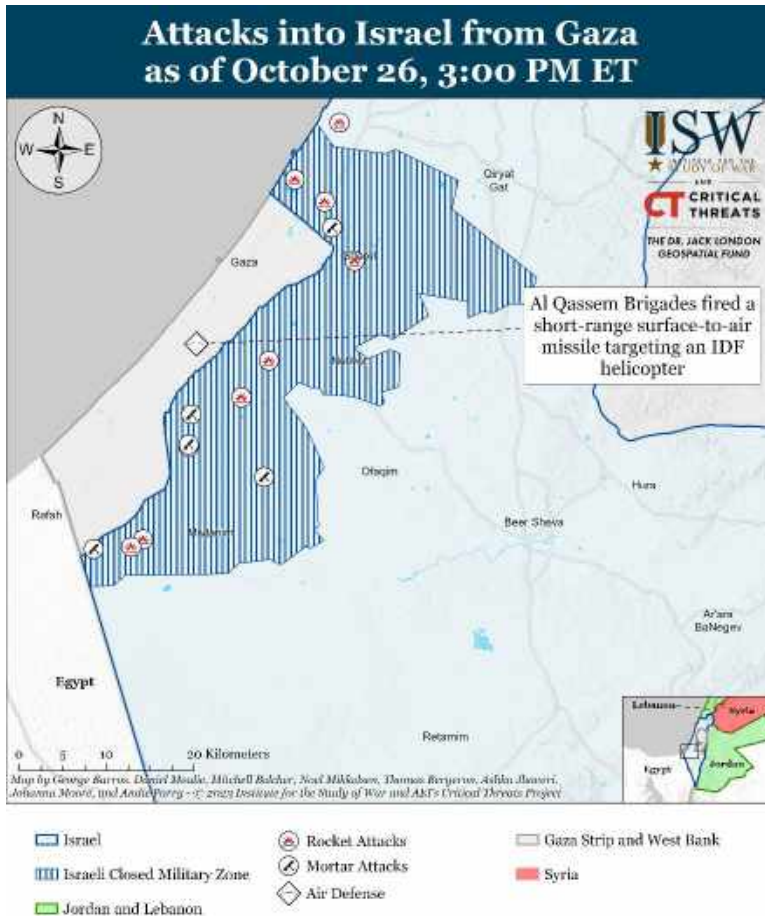
- Erode the will of Israeli political establishment and public to launch and sustain a major ground operation into the Gaza Strip
- Degrade IDF material and morale around the Gaza Strip

Palestinian militias continued attacks at their usual rate from the Gaza Strip into Israel on October 26. The al Qassem Brigades— Hamas’ militant wing—claimed responsibility for 10 indirect fire attacks.¹ Saraya al Quds—the militant wing of Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)—claimed responsibility for five mortar and rocket attacks.² The al Aqsa Matyrs’ Brigade, which claims it is affiliated with Fatah, claimed responsibility for one rocket attack.³ Fatah denies that it has any connection to the al Aqsa Matyrs’ Brigade, however. The Abu Ali Mustafa Brigades—the militant wing of Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—claimed responsibility for two rocket attacks.⁴ Axis of Resistance-affiliated media reported five other unclaimed mortar and rocket attacks.⁵

Indirect Fire Attacks into Israel from Gaza as of October 26, 3:00 PM ET



Recorded reports of rocket attacks; CTP-ISW cannot independently verify impact.



Recorded reports of rocket attacks; CTP-ISW cannot independently verify impact.

Israeli Ground Operations in the Gaza Strip

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reaffirmed that the IDF will conduct a major ground operation into the Gaza Strip and described its objectives in a televised speech on October 25.⁶ Netanyahu stated that the operation is meant to “eliminate Hamas by destroying its military and governance capabilities and to do everything possible to get our hostages back.” Netanyahu did not specify when the operation would begin.

The IDF conducted a raid into the Gaza Strip on October 26, which Israeli media framed as preparation for the ground operation.⁷ The IDF Givati Brigade deployed an armored company equipped with bulldozers for the raid.⁸ An IDF spokesperson stated that the unit “eliminated terrorists, neutralized threats, dismantled explosives, [and] neutralized ambushes” during the raid.⁹ Palestinian anti-tank elements attempted to fire on the IDF unit, and the IDF tanks returned fire and destroyed the anti-tank elements, according to local Israeli sources.¹⁰

Iranian state media responded to the raid by pushing the false narrative that Palestinian militants forced the IDF to withdraw from the Gaza Strip.¹¹ US military doctrine defines a raid as “an operation to temporarily seize an area in order to secure information, confuse an enemy, capture personnel or equipment, or to destroy a capability culminating with a planned withdrawal.”¹² The IDF withdrawal after the operation is consistent with the US military doctrinal definition of a raid, which includes a planned retrograde at the end of the mission.

IDF airstrikes continue to attrit Hamas leadership in the Gaza Strip. The IDF reported on October 26 that it killed the deputy head of Hamas’ intelligence department.¹³ The IDF stated that the deputy head helped plan the October 7 attack with other senior Hamas officials. The IDF reported that it killed the commander and deputy commander of the al Qassem Brigades’ Darj Tafah battalion in Gaza city.¹⁴ The IDF announced that it killed a battalion commander in the al Qassem Brigades in Khan Younis on October 25.¹⁵

West Bank

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Draw IDF assets and resources toward the West Bank and fix them there

Clashes between Israeli forces and Palestinian militants and anti-Israel protests continued at their usual rate in the West Bank on October 26.¹⁶ CTP-ISW recorded five small arms clashes and eight protests.¹⁷ This rate of activity follows a brief uptick in anti-Israel activity in the West Bank on October 25.¹⁸ The Lions’ Den—a West Bank-based Palestinian militia—appeared to trigger this brief uptick as it released a statement calling for mobilization on October 24.¹⁹

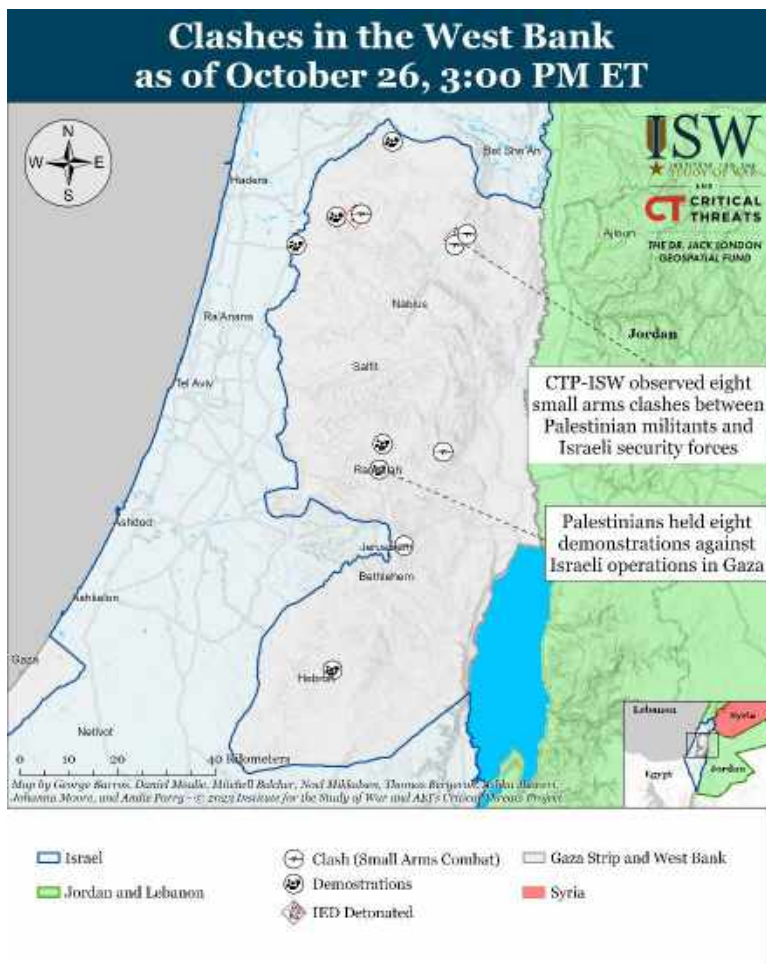
The Lions’ Den released a statement indicating increasing alignment with Hamas on October 26. The group called for a general business strike throughout the West Bank and described itself as “a sword in the hand of Commander Mohammad Deif,” who is the head of Hamas’ al Qassem Brigades.²⁰ This framing marks a departure from previous Lions’ Den claims that the group is not affiliated with any specific Palestinian faction.²¹ The statement also marks a departure from previous Lions’ Den calls for mobilization because it refers to the entire West Bank rather than specific locations.²²

The timing of this statement is noteworthy for several reasons:

- The statement coincides with additional Hamas calls for further escalation against Israel in the West Bank.²³ This apparent alignment comes after CTP-ISW observed indications that Hamas and the Lions’ Den were struggling to coordinate their efforts in the West Bank during the early days of the war.²⁴
- The statement comes after Lebanese Hezbollah, Hamas, and PIJ held a coordination and planning meeting in Beirut on October 24.²⁵ CTP-ISW is considering the hypothesis that this meeting has prompted a change in Palestinian militant behavior in the West Bank.

- The statement comes after Netanyahu reaffirmed on October 25 that the IDF will imminently conduct a major ground operation into the Gaza Strip to destroy Hamas’ “military and governance capabilities.”²⁶

The fact that Palestinian militias, especially Hamas, rely on public calls for escalation in the West Bank indicates that these groups lack the necessary chain of command and organization to do so covertly. Hamas has demonstrated that it can organize coordinated efforts in the Gaza Strip because it has organizational infrastructure there through which Hamas leaders can communicate instructions and orders.



This map is not an exhaustive depiction of clashes and demonstrations in the West Bank.

Southern Lebanon and Golan Heights

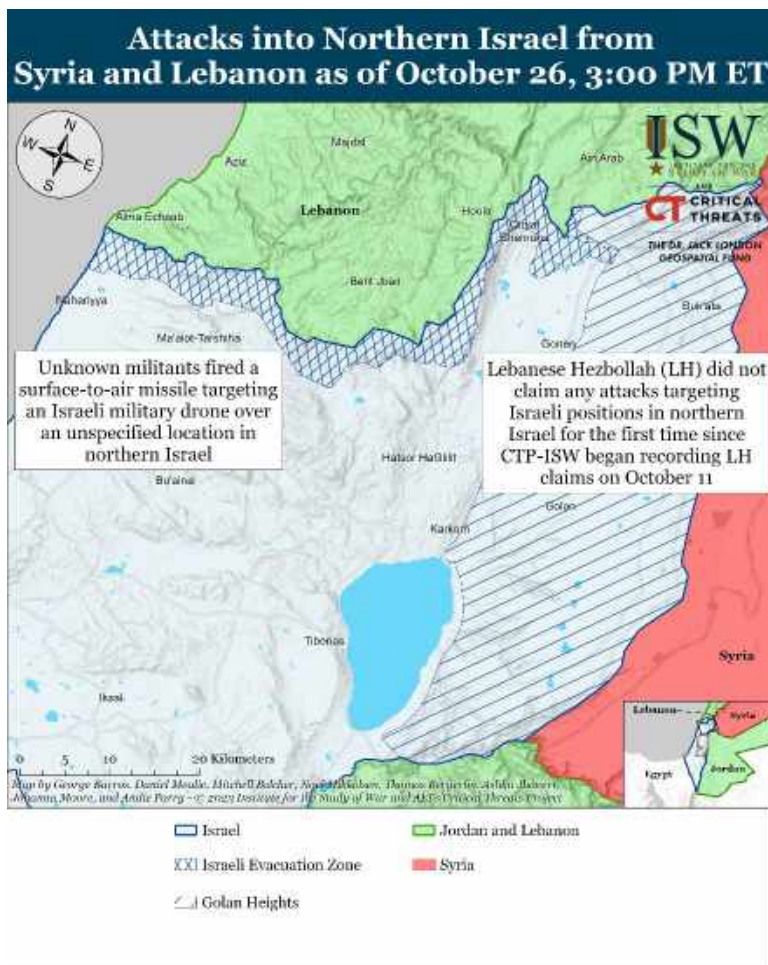
Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Draw IDF assets and resources toward northern Israel and fix them there
- Set conditions for successive campaigns into northern Israel

Iranian-backed militant attacks around the Israel-Lebanon border decreased significantly on October 26. Lebanese Hezbollah (LH) did not claim any attacks on Israeli targets for the first time since CTP-ISW began recording LH claims on October 11.²⁷ Unspecified militants fired a surface-to-air missile targeting an IDF drone.²⁸ This single attack marks a noteworthy decrease from the six Iranian-backed attacks that CTP-ISW recorded on October 25.²⁹

The IDF is conducting daily airstrikes against LH and Palestinian militia targets along the northern Israeli border, which may have contributed to the reduced rate of attacks.³⁰ LH acknowledged that IDF airstrikes have killed at least 44 of its fighters since October 9, including 30 fighters since October 21.³¹ Israeli airstrikes specifically targeting LH anti-tank guided missile cells on October 25 killed eight LH fighters before they could fire their missiles and hit Israeli targets.³²

It is noteworthy that the decreased rate of attacks occurred immediately after LH Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah held a coordination and planning meeting with Hamas Deputy Political Bureau Chairman Saleh al Arouri and PIJ Secretary General Ziyad al Nakhalah in Beirut on October 24.³³



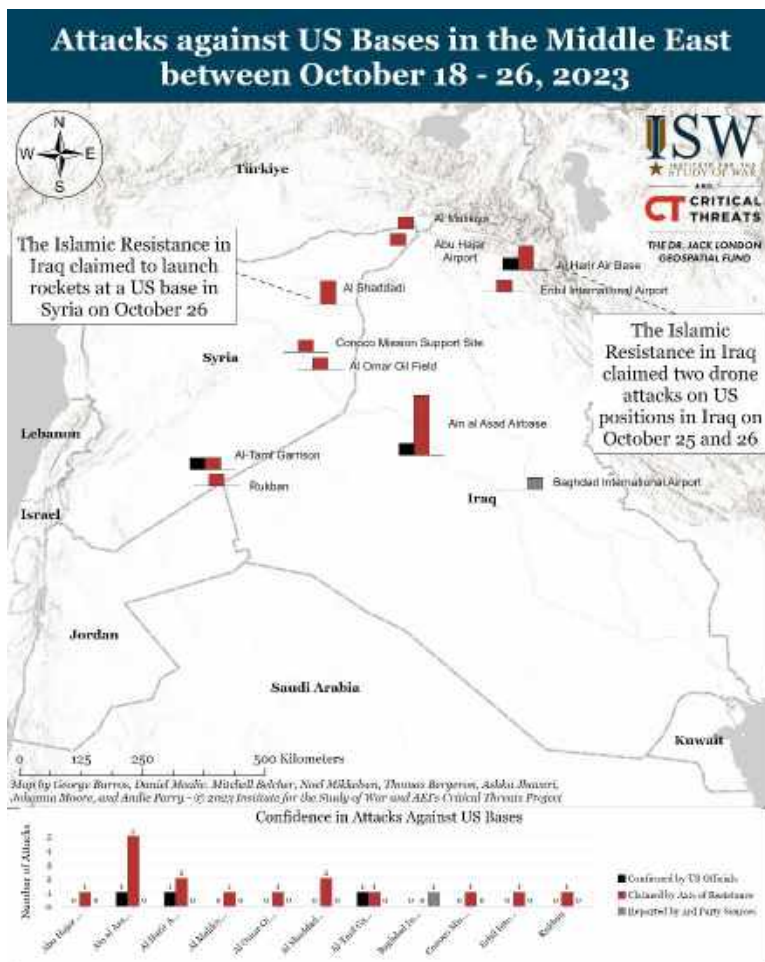
Iran and Axis of Resistance

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Demonstrate the capability and willingness of Iran and the Axis of Resistance to escalate against the United States and Israel on multiple fronts
- Set conditions to fight a regional war on multiple fronts

The Islamic Resistance in Iraq—a coalition of Iranian-backed Iraqi militias—claimed three attacks on US military positions in Iraq and Syria. The group conducted one-way drone attacks on US positions at Ain al Asad airbase and Erbil International Airport on October 25 and 26.³⁴ The group also conducted a rocket attack on a US base near Hasakah in northeastern Syria on October 26.³⁵ The Islamic Resistance in Iraq has claimed 20 of the 22 reported attacks on US forces in the Middle East since October 18. The US force presence in Iraq and Syria is essential to US efforts to counter ISIS.

Iranian-backed Iraqi militia leaders from the Islamic Resistance in Iraq reaffirmed on October 26 their commitment to waging a long-term fight against the United States, indicating that the group will conduct additional attacks in the coming days. Kataib Hezbollah (KH) leader Abdul Ali al Askari stated that the group is prepared to fight the United States "for years."³⁶ Asaib Ahl al Haq leader Qais Khazali stated that Iraqi militias are attacking the United States for its support for Israel.³⁷



A senior Hamas delegation traveled to Moscow and met with Russian and Iranian officials on October 26.³⁸ Hamas' International Relation Office head and political bureau member Musa Abu Marzouk led the delegation, which also included Health Minister of the Gaza Strip Basem Naim.³⁹ The delegation held a joint meeting with Russian Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister and Special Representative for the Middle East Mikhail Bogdanov and Iranian Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister Ali Bagheri Kani. Hamas leaders issued statements around the visit praising Russia's stance toward the Israel-Hamas war. Russia has framed itself as a possible mediator between Israel and Hamas and submitted a UN resolution calling for a humanitarian ceasefire on October 16. The UN resolution failed to mention Hamas by name.⁴⁰ The Israeli Foreign Affairs Ministry condemned Russia's invitation to Hamas on October 26.⁴¹ CTP-ISW previously assessed that the Kremlin is already exploiting and will likely continue to exploit the Israel-Hamas war to advance several information operations intended to reduce US and Western support for and attention to Ukraine.⁴² A senior Hamas delegation most recently visited Moscow in March 2023 amid strained tensions between Russia and Israel over the Russian invasion of Ukraine.⁴³

Iranian officials and media are dismissing US calls for Iran and the Axis of Resistance to show restraint in the Hamas-Israel war. The Biden administration has sent Iran at least two messages since October 7, expressing its desire to avoid a regional war and calling on Iran to show restraint and to urge its proxy militias to do the same.⁴⁴ US President Joe Biden also issued a direct warning to Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei on October 25, stating that the United States will respond to continued attacks on US forces in the Middle East.⁴⁵ Iranian Vice President for Political Affairs Mohammad Jamshidi dismissed the Biden administration's messages, describing the warnings against regional escalation as "nothing but requests."⁴⁶ An unidentified source separately told Iranian state media on October 26 that the United States' supply of military equipment to Israel contradicts US calls for restraint.⁴⁷ The source added that Iran cannot "order or forbid regional resistance groups [from acting.]"⁴⁸

The narrative that Iran cannot control its proxy and partner militias in the Axis of Resistance is an Iranian information operation meant to generate plausible deniability for Iranian-led actions in the Middle East and obfuscate Tehran's responsibility.⁴⁹ This narrative has repeatedly proven false.

- CTP-ISW reported in June 2023, for example, that Iraqi proxies stopped threatening to attack US forces following IRGC Quds Force Commander Brigadier General Esmail Ghaani's visit to Baghdad that month.⁵⁰ The cessation of proxy threats suggested that Ghaani had directed the proxies to deescalate.
- Khatam ol Anbia Central Headquarters Commander Major General Gholam Ali Rashid stated on October 26 that the Axis of Resistance in the "north, east, and south" of Israel would support Hamas in the event of an Israeli ground operation into the Gaza Strip.⁵¹ Rashid is a member of Iran's IRGC command network, a small group of senior leaders who dominate the IRGC and have close connections stemming from the Iran-Iraq War.⁵² Rashid has personal connections to

other senior members of Iran’s military leadership, such as former IRGC Commander Major General Mohammad Ali Jafari.⁵³ The Khatam ol Anbia Central Headquarters is the highest Iranian operational headquarters and is responsible for wartime operations. The headquarters, along with the Armed Forces General Staff, commands, controls, coordinates, and supports the three branches of Iran’s armed forces.⁵⁴ The commanders of these branches—the Artesh, IRGC, and Law Enforcement Command—relay orders from the Khatam ol Anbia Central Headquarters to their operational forces.⁵⁵ Statements by Rashid carry more weight than those by IRGC officers in lesser posts.

- Iran has facilitated the expansion of the Hamas-Israel war since October 7. Iran has directed its proxy and partner militias in Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, and Yemen to attack US and Israeli targets.⁵⁶ The militias have used weapons supplied by Iran in some of their attacks on US military positions.⁵⁷ Iran has historically provided extensive material and financial support as well as training to its proxies in the region. The *Washington Post* reported on October 9 that Iran provided Hamas fighters with training and weapons prior to the October 7 attack.⁵⁸ The IRGC Quds Force has separately coordinated the deployment of hundreds of Iranian-backed militants in southern Lebanon and southwestern Syria since the war began.⁵⁹ These militants include military engineers and missile experts, among others.⁶⁰ Israel has furthermore conducted several airstrikes on the Damascus and Aleppo international airports since October 12 and indicated that the airstrikes are meant to prevent Iran from moving weapons into Syria and/or opening a front against Israel from there.⁶¹

Iran’s claims are part of its ongoing information operation to deflect responsibility for any further escalation of the conflict away from Iran. The Iranian regime has repeatedly accused the United States of aggravating the conflict while framing itself as a promoter of peace. Iran has additionally set informational conditions to blame the United States and Israel for any further escalation of the war and deflect any responsibility from itself, as CTP-ISW previously reported.⁶²

¹ <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/51> ; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/52> ; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/54> ; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/56> ; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/57> ; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/58> ; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/59> ; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/60> ; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/62> ; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/64>

² <https://t.me/sarayaps/16465> ; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16470> ; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16471> ; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16472> ;

³ <https://t.me/AymanGouda/5801>

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<https://t.me/almanarnews/132997>

; <https://t.me/almanarnews/133124>

⁵ https://t.me/mihwar_almuqawama/36816 ; <https://t.me/almanarnews/132956> ; <https://t.me/almanarnews/133120> ; <https://t.me/almanarnews/133171>

⁶ <https://www.timesofisrael.com/netanyahu-following-war-everyone-will-have-to-answer-for-failures-including-me/>

- ⁷ <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/israel-ground-forces-raid-hamas-sites-gaza-withdraw-military-statement-2023-10-26/>; <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1717403162485629277>; <https://www.timesofisrael.com/idf-tanks-troops-briefly-push-into-gaza-strip-ahead-of-ground-offensive/>
- ⁸ <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1717403162485629277>
- ⁹ <https://www.timesofisrael.com/idf-tanks-troops-briefly-push-into-gaza-strip-ahead-of-ground-offensive/>
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- ¹² <https://www.tradoc.army.mil/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/AD1029823-DOD-Dictionary-of-Military-and-Associated-Terms-2017.pdf>
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- ¹⁶ <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-update-october-25-2023>
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- ¹⁹ <https://t.me/areennabluss/286>
- ²⁰ <https://t.me/areennabluss/288>
- ²¹ <https://www.pcpsr.org/en/node/924>; [https://shehabnews\(dot\)com/post/109274/](https://shehabnews(dot)com/post/109274/) بالفيديو-مسيرات-ومواجهات-الضفة-الغربية-تنتفض-تلبية-لنداء-عربين-الأسود
- ²² <https://t.me/areennabluss/236>, <https://t.me/areennabluss/249>, <https://t.me/areennabluss/269>
- ²³ https://t.me/mihwar_almuqawama/36744; [https://almanar\(dot\)com\(dot\)lb/11127327](https://almanar(dot)com(dot)lb/11127327)
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- ²⁵ <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-update-october-25-2023>
- ²⁶ <https://www.timesofisrael.com/netanyahu-following-war-everyone-will-have-to-answer-for-failures-including-me/>
- ²⁷ <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-update-october-11-2023>
- ²⁸ <https://x.com/manniefabian/status/1717276439161029015?s=20>
- ²⁹ <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-update-october-25-2023>
- ³⁰ <https://x.com/manniefabian/status/1717569789130858899?s=20>; <https://x.com/manniefabian/status/1717079923808981504?s=20>
- ³¹ <https://x.com/QalaatM/status/1717601881457897576?s=20>; <https://x.com/QalaatM/status/1715795708249362453?s=20>; <https://x.com/QalaatM/status/1715720893924622654?s=20>
- ³² <https://x.com/QalaatM/status/1717238137393385494?s=20>; <https://x.com/manniefabian/status/1717079923808981504?s=20>
- ³³ <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-update-october-25-2023>; <https://www.dot-farsnews.ir/en/news/14020803000608/Lebanese-Palestinian-Resistance-Leaders-Discuss-Ways-to-Achieve-80%98Real>; <https://www.dot-tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/08/03/2977725/%D8%AF%DB%8C%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D9%85%D9%87%D9%85-%D8%B1%D9%87%D8%A8%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%85%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%88%D9%85%D8%AA-%D9%81%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%B7%DB%8C%D9%86-%D8%A8%D8%A7-%D8%B3%DB%8C%D8%AF-%D8%AD%D8%B3%D9%86-%D9%86%D8%B5%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%AA%D8%A3%DA%A9%DB%8C%D8%AF-%D8%A8%D8%B1-%D9%87%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%87%D9%86%DA%AF%DB%8C-%D8%AC%D8%A8%D9%87%D9%87-%D9%85%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%88%D9%85%D8%AA>; <https://www.dot>

presstv.ir/Detail/2023/10/25/713381/Lebanese-Palestinian-resistance-leaders-discuss-cooperation-against-Israel ; [https://www dot timesofisrael.com/nasrallah-senior-hamas-and-pij-leaders-talk-of-achieving-victory-over-israel/](https://www.timesofisrael.com/nasrallah-senior-hamas-and-pij-leaders-talk-of-achieving-victory-over-israel/)

³⁴ https://twitter.com/no_itsmyturn/status/1717349699940688179;
<https://twitter.com/AlMayadeenNews/status/1717608222658335164>;
<https://twitter.com/JoeTruzman/status/1717603776981606463>

³⁵ https://t.me/C_Military1/37874; [https://www dot almayadeen.net/latestnews/2023/10/26/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%82--%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%88%D9%85%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%AC%D8%A7%D9%87%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%86%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%AF%D9%81%D9%88%D8%A7-%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%AA%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%84](https://www.almayadeen.net/latestnews/2023/10/26/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%82--%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%88%D9%85%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%AC%D8%A7%D9%87%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%86%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%AF%D9%81%D9%88%D8%A7-%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%AA%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%84)

³⁶ https://t.me/mihwar_almuqawama/36820

³⁷ https://t.me/mihwar_almuqawama/36820

³⁸ [https://ria dot ru/20231026/khamas-1905438005.html](https://ria_dot_ru/20231026/khamas-1905438005.html)

³⁹ <https://t.me/hamasps/17134>

⁴⁰ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/10/1142427>

⁴¹ <https://twitter.com/LiorHaiat/status/1717592919220056382>

⁴² <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-october-7-2023>

⁴³ <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20230316-hamas-sent-high-level-delegation-to-moscow-at-russias-invitation/>

⁴⁴ <https://amwaj.media/article/exclusive-blinken-delivers-us-message-to-iran-amid-surge-in-regional-tensions>

⁴⁵ <https://www.politico.com/news/2023/10/25/biden-iran-troops-attacks-00123561>

⁴⁶ <https://twitter.com/MhmmJamshidi/status/1717453588677448162>

⁴⁷ [https://www.irna dot ir/news/85271663](https://www.irna_dot_ir/news/85271663)

⁴⁸ <https://www.rand.org/blog/2019/05/irans-network-of-fighters-in-the-middle-east-arent.html>

⁴⁹ <https://www.rand.org/blog/2019/05/irans-network-of-fighters-in-the-middle-east-arent.html>

⁵⁰ <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-update-july-11-2023>

⁵¹ [https://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1402/08/04/2978302](https://www.tasnimnews_dot_com/fa/news/1402/08/04/2978302)

⁵² https://www.criticalthreats.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/pdf_uploadanalysisThe_IRGC_Command_Network-1.pdf

⁵³ <https://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Pivot-to-Offense-How-Iran-Is-Adapting-for-Modern-Conflict-and-Warfare.pdf?x91208> ;

https://www.criticalthreats.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/pdf_uploadanalysisThe_IRGC_Command_Network-1.pdf

⁵⁴ <https://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Pivot-to-Offense-How-Iran-Is-Adapting-for-Modern-Conflict-and-Warfare.pdf?x91208>

⁵⁵ <https://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Pivot-to-Offense-How-Iran-Is-Adapting-for-Modern-Conflict-and-Warfare.pdf?x91208>

⁵⁶ <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-update-october-24-2023>

⁵⁷ [https://presstv dot ir/Detail/2023/10/22/713191/Iraq-resistance-US-bases-Ain-Asad-Harir](https://presstv_dot_ir/Detail/2023/10/22/713191/Iraq-resistance-US-bases-Ain-Asad-Harir)

⁵⁸ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2023/10/09/iran-support-hamas-training-weapons-israel/>

⁵⁹ https://twitter.com/Mostafa_Najafii/status/1713509987538923983

⁶⁰ <https://www.wsj.com/livecoverage/israel-hamas-war-gaza-conflict/card/iran-s-revolutionary-guards-move-fighters-closer-to-syrian-border-with-israel-ptuq7qx5BPSC1wubltpx>

⁶¹ <https://twitter.com/yzarka/status/1713403385947316411>

⁶² <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-update-october-24-2023>

Iran Update, October 25, 2023

Nicholas Carl, Brian Carter, Kathryn Tyson, Johanna Moore, Amin Soltani, Annika Ganzeveld, Peter Mills, and Andie Parry

Contributor: Cosima von Moltke

The Iran Update provides insights into Iranian and Iranian-sponsored activities abroad that undermine regional stability and threaten US forces and interests. It also covers events and trends that affect the stability and decision-making of the Iranian regime. The Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute and the Institute for the Study of War (ISW) provides these updates regularly based on regional events. For more on developments in Iran and the region, see our [interactive map of Iran and the Middle East](#).

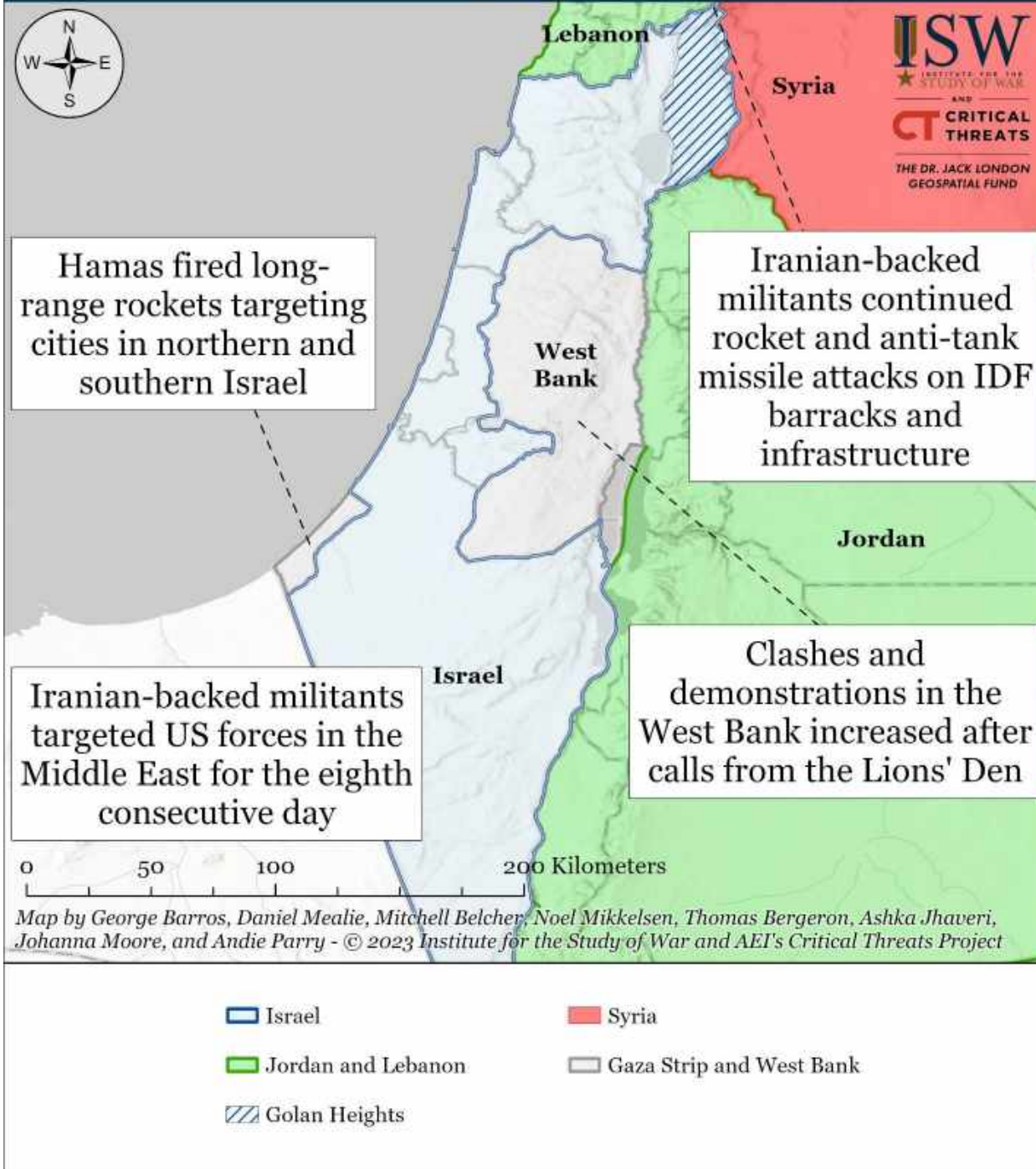
Note: CTP and ISW have refocused the update to cover the Israel-Hamas war. The new sections address developments in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, Lebanon, and Syria, as well as noteworthy activity from Iran's Axis of Resistance. We do not report in detail on war crimes because these activities are well-covered in Western media and do not directly affect the military operations we are assessing and forecasting. We utterly condemn violations of the laws of armed conflict, Geneva Conventions, and humanity even though we do not describe them in these reports.

Key Takeaways:

1. Iran and its so-called "Axis of Resistance" are pursuing a coordinated strategy to (1) deter Israel from trying to destroy Hamas in the Gaza Strip, (2) prevent Israel from destroying Hamas if deterrence fails, and (3) deter the United States from providing military support for Israel's ground operation in the Gaza Strip.
2. Hamas is conducting attacks targeting population centers and conducting an information operation to erode the will of Israel's political establishment and public to launch and sustain a major ground operation into the Gaza Strip.
3. Palestinian militias are trying to drive anti-Israel unrest in the West Bank to draw in IDF assets and resources and fix them there.
4. The Axis of Resistance is harassing IDF forces with indirect and direct fire along the Israel-Lebanon border, which aims to draw IDF assets and resources toward northern Israel while setting conditions for successive campaigns into Israel.
5. Iran and the Axis of Resistance are trying to demonstrate their capability and willingness to escalate against the United States and Israel from multiple fronts.

6. Iranian and Axis of Resistance leaders will need to adjust their strategy and the subordinate campaigns if Israel launches a major ground operation into the Gaza Strip.
7. Palestinian militias continued attacks at the usual rate from the Gaza Strip into Israel on October 25. Hamas fired two long range rockets Haifa and Eliat as part of its effort to erode the Israeli political establishment's will to support a ground operation into Gaza.
8. West Bank residents demonstrated and took up arms against the IDF in response to calls from the Lions' Den—an Iran-linked West Bank militia.
9. The IDF conducted airstrikes against two Syrian military positions in southwestern Syria on October 24 and an airstrike on the Aleppo International Airport runway on October 25. Militants are likely to respond with indirect fire attacks, which is the consistent response pattern to Israeli airstrikes in Syria since the war began.
10. The Islamic Resistance in Iraq claimed two attacks targeting US forces based at Abu Hajar Airport, Hasaka Province, Syria on October 24 and 25.
11. Hamas, LH, and PIJ appear to be coordinating and making final contingency preparations ahead of an Israeli invasion of Gaza.

Israel-Hamas War as of October 25, 3:00 PM ET



Iran and its so-called “Axis of Resistance” are pursuing a coordinated strategy to (1) deter Israel from trying to destroy Hamas in the Gaza Strip, (2) prevent Israel from destroying Hamas if deterrence fails, and (3) deter the United States from providing military

support to Israel’s ground operation in the Gaza Strip. Iran and its proxy and partner militias throughout the Middle East seek to ensure Hamas’ long-term survival, as Israel has indicated that it will soon launch a major ground operation into the Gaza Strip to destroy Hamas. The Iran-led effort to prevent this outcome is occurring along four main geographic axes: the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, southern Lebanon, and the broader Middle East. The following text examines the campaign objectives that CTP-ISW assesses that the Axis of Resistance is pursuing on each axis in support of its strategic objectives of deterring Israel and the United States.

Hamas is conducting attacks targeting population centers and conducting an information operation to erode the will of Israel’s political establishment and public to launch and sustain a major ground operation into the Gaza Strip. Hamas and its partner militias have conducted mass rocket barrages against Israeli population centers daily since the war began.¹ Hamas and its partners across the Axis of Resistance are also messaging that they will defeat Israel’s ground operation and kill and capture Israeli soldiers.² IRGC-affiliated news agencies and Iranian state media highlighted “significant challenges” facing the IDF in Gaza, which they claimed would cause heavy IDF casualties, poor relations with the Arab world, and declining public support.³ This messaging effort supports the Palestinian militants’ military operations by questioning Israeli military capabilities and Israel’s ability to successfully defeat Hamas to undermine political and popular will. It also buoys the groups’ supporters by highlighting Israel’s vulnerabilities and emphasizing the strength of Hamas and its partners.⁴

Hamas and its partners also use messaging and indirect fire targeting IDF units to degrade IDF material and morale around the Gaza Strip. Hamas and its partners are targeting military positions surrounding the Gaza Strip, including artillery batteries, airbases, and “concentrations” of IDF soldiers.⁵ Saraya al Quds spokesperson Abu Hamza highlighted that Israeli soldiers are “worn out” by these attacks, suggesting Hamas and its allies aim to demoralize IDF forces while simultaneously degrading IDF material.⁶ The Palestinian militant groups are coupling their military efforts with a messaging effort that highlights the groups’ strong defensive capabilities in the Gaza Strip, as well as the friction between the Israeli political leadership and military leadership.⁷

Palestinian militias are trying to drive anti-Israel unrest in the West Bank to draw in IDF assets and resources and fix them there. These militias have repeatedly called for Palestinians there to mobilize and join the fight against Israel. Hamas, for instance, released a statement on October 14 calling for the establishment of “popular protection committee” in all cities and towns in the West Bank to target Israeli settlers.⁸ Hamas added that all Palestinians have a duty to actively participate in the fighting against Israel. Iranian state media has recirculated Palestinian militia calls for greater violence in the West Bank.⁹ Unspecified armed militants have used small arms to target Israeli forces and anti-Israel protests have occurred daily in the West Bank, but it is unclear how much of this activity the Palestinian militias facilitated. Palestinian militias have cooperated to fight Israeli forces in some limited instances.¹⁰ Palestinian militias have increasingly used improvised explosive devices against Israeli forces since October 18.¹¹

The Axis of Resistance is harassing IDF forces with indirect and direct fire along the Israel-Lebanon border, which aims to draw IDF assets and resources toward northern Israel while setting conditions for successive campaigns into Israel. Lebanese Hezbollah (LH) is using indirect and direct fire to target Israel's civilian and military infrastructure while messaging that Israel will pay a “high price” when a ground operation begins.¹² These military operations aim to fix IDF units along the northern Israeli border to prevent their ability to support Israel’s ground operation in the Gaza Strip. LH’s deputy leader said on October 21 that LH’s operations in southern Lebanon aim to “weaken the Israeli enemy and let them know we are ready.”¹³ He claimed that LH has fixed three Israeli divisions in northern Israel.¹⁴ LH’s attacks simultaneously create conditions for successive operations against the IDF in northern Israel by targeting critical Israeli signals facilities and communications infrastructure.¹⁵ CTP-ISW has previously assessed that targeting these sites aims to create opportunities for LH in the event it decides to conduct ground operations into Israel by degrading signals intelligence and communications.¹⁶

Iran and the Axis of Resistance are trying to demonstrate their capability and willingness to escalate against the United States and Israel from multiple fronts. The Islamic Resistance of Iraq—a coalition of Iranian-backed Iraqi militias—has attacked US military positions in Iraq and Syria daily since October 18. The group has used drones and rockets in these attacks, which have killed one US contractor and injured dozens. The group has continually hit certain locations, such as the Ain al Asad airbase in Iraq, while also gradually expanding its attacks to new locations in Iraq and Syria. An Iranian-backed militia threatened on October 24 to further expand attacks to US positions in Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates. The Houthi movement in Yemen separately on October 19 tried to conduct a drone and cruise missile attack into Israel. A US Navy destroyer and Saudi air defenses intercepted the attack over the Red Sea before it struck Israel.¹⁷

Iran and the Axis of Resistance are preparing for the possibility that the war in Israel will expand into a regional conflict fought on multiple fronts. They are trying to build up their force presence in Syria and Lebanon to this end. The IRGC Quds Force has coordinated the deployment of hundreds of Iranian-backed militants in southern Lebanon and southwestern Syria since the war began.¹⁸ These militants include military engineers and missile experts, among others.¹⁹ Israel has furthermore conducted several airstrikes on the Damascus and Aleppo international airports since October 12 and indicated that the airstrikes are meant to prevent Iran from moving weapons into Syria and/or opening a front against Israel from there.²⁰

Iran has been messaging that the United States and Israel are to blame for any further escalation of the war while deflecting any responsibility from itself. Iranian officials and media have repeatedly emphasized the role of the United States and Israel in instigating the war and contrastingly messaged that Iran is a responsible and non-escalatory actor.²¹ This narrative ignores the fact that Iran has already facilitated the expansion of this war to Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, and Yemen by directing its proxy and partner militias in these countries to attack US and Israeli targets. Iranian officials and media have

separately messaged that they have popular support to fight a regional war against the United States and Israel if one erupts.²²

Iranian and Axis of Resistance leaders will need to adjust their strategy and the subordinate campaigns if Israel launches a major ground operation into the Gaza Strip. They will likely reorient from attempting to deter a ground operation into the Gaza Strip to prevent it from succeeding and eroding US, Israeli, and international support for the ground operation to cause Israel to terminate it prematurely.

Gaza Strip

Axis of Resistance Campaign Objectives

- Erode the will of Israeli political establishment and public to launch and sustain a major ground operation into the Gaza Strip
- Degrade IDF material and morale around the Gaza Strip

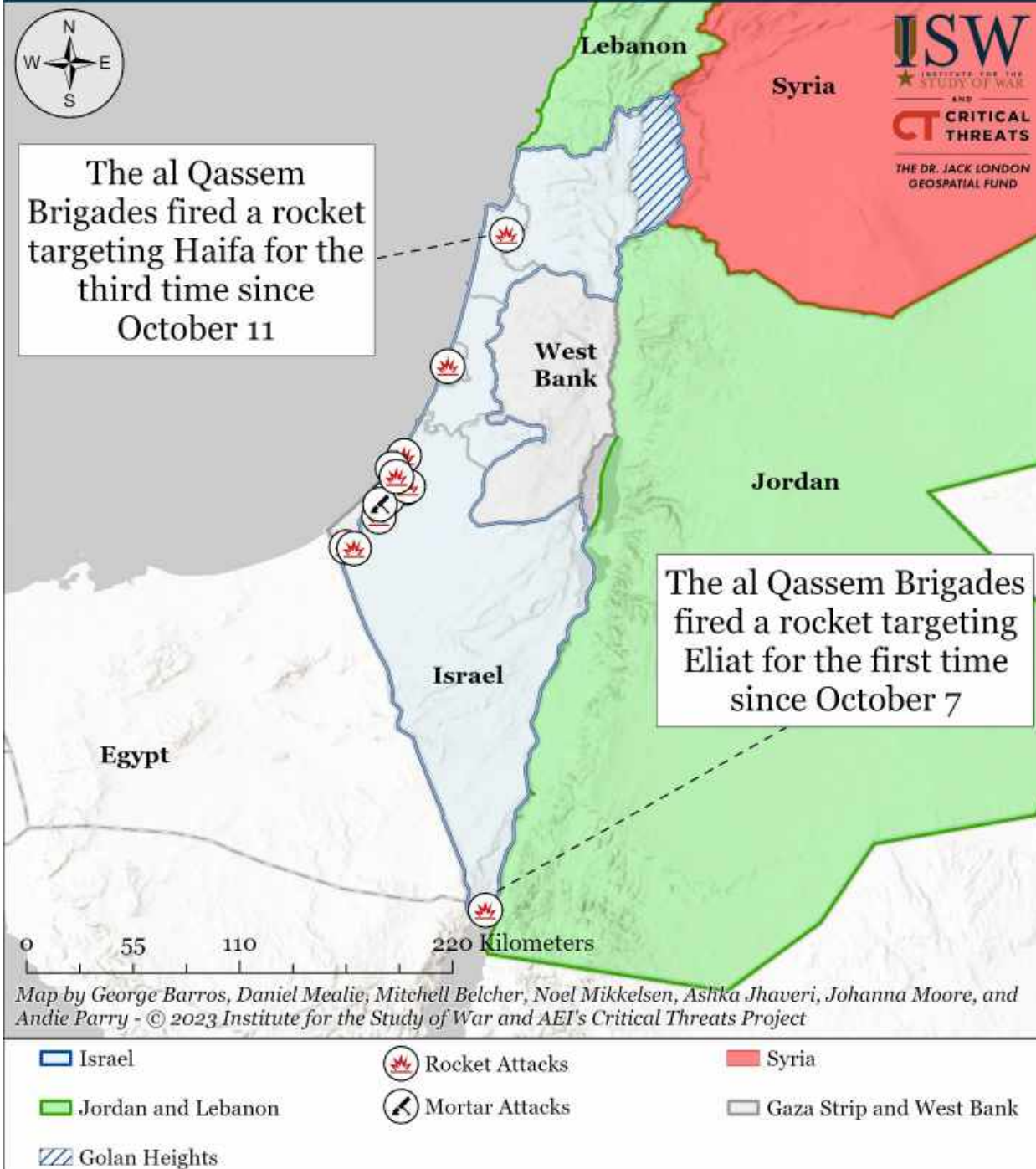
Palestinian militias continued attacks at the usual rate from the Gaza Strip into Israel on October 25. The al Qassem Brigades— Hamas’ militant wing—claimed responsibility for seven indirect fire attacks.²³ Saraya al Quds—the militant wing of Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)—claimed responsibility for six rocket attacks.²⁴ The National Resistance Brigades —the militant wing of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine—claimed responsibility for two mortar and rocket attacks.²⁵ Axis of Resistance-affiliated media reported two other unclaimed rocket attacks.²⁶ This rate of attacks is consistent with the rate that CTP-ISW has observed in recent days.

Hamas fired two long range rockets at cities in northern and southern Israel as part of its effort to erode the Israeli political establishment’s will to support a ground operation into Gaza. Hamas continues to fire mortars and rockets at a mixture of IDF military targets near Gaza and civilian towns farther from Gaza. The attacks follow the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps deputy commander’s October 23 threat that Iran would launch missiles at Haifa “if necessary.”²⁷

- Hamas fired one R160 rocket targeting Haifa in northern Israel on October 25.²⁸ This is the third time Hamas has fired R160 rockets targeting Haifa since October 11. The IDF stated the rocket exploded in the air south of Haifa.²⁹ Hamas produces the R160 rocket, which has a 160km range, locally in Gaza.³⁰ Iran has provided equipment and technical knowledge to help Hamas expand and improve its ability to domestically produce longer-range rockets.³¹
- Hamas also fired one Ayyash 250 rocket targeting Eliat in southern Israel on October 25 for the first time. Israeli social media accounts reported the rocket landed in an open field near Eliat.³² The Ayyash 250 rocket has a 250km range that Hamas produces locally with Iranian assistance.³³

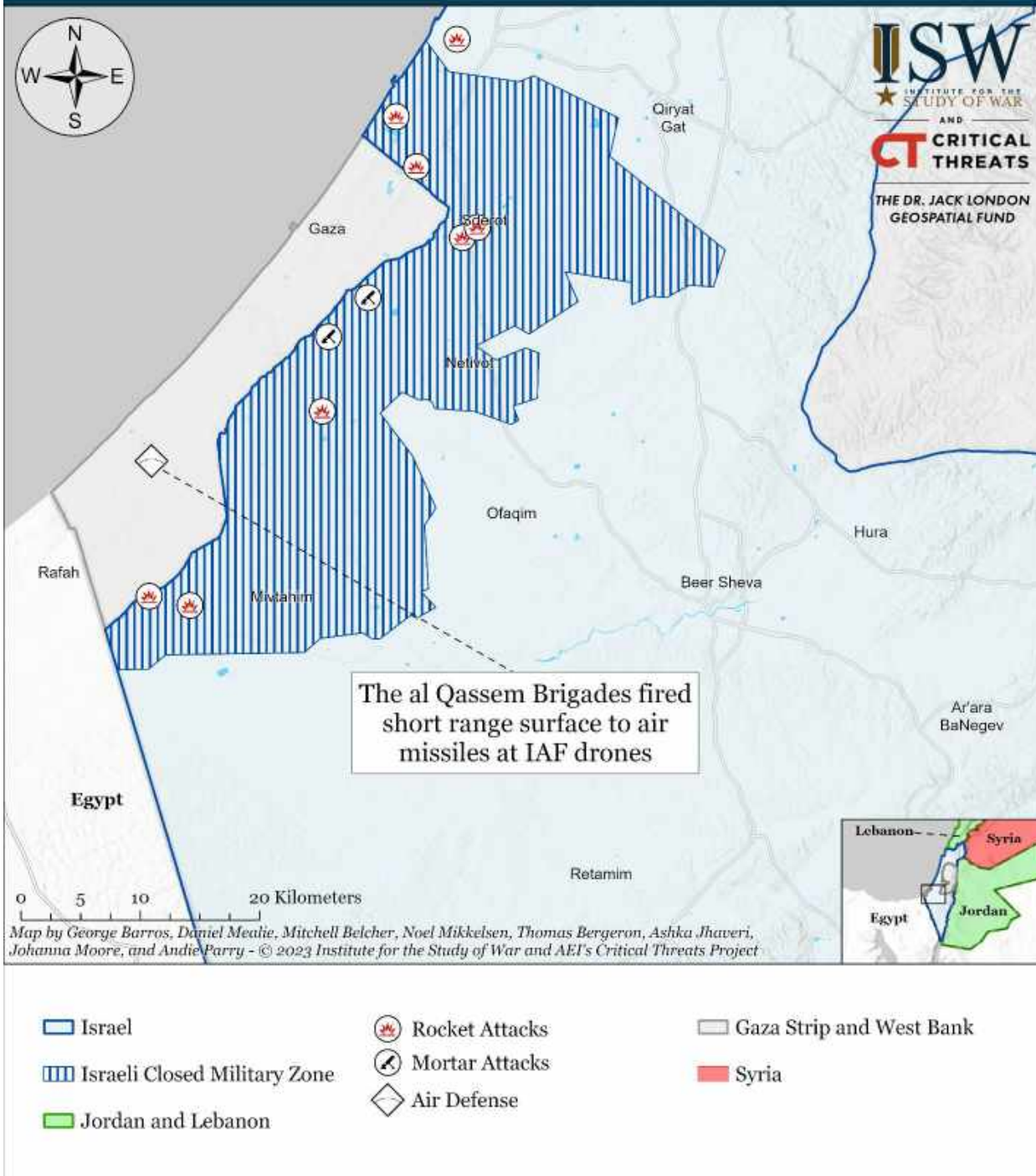
IDF airstrikes continue to kill Hamas leadership and operatives in Gaza. The IDF announced that it killed a battalion commander for Hamas' military wing, the al Qassem Brigades, in Khan Younis, Gaza, on October 25.³⁴ The IDF stated this commander previously served as the head of Hamas' naval forces. CTP-ISW previously reported the IDF is degrading Hamas' naval capabilities which Hamas could use to target Israeli gas rigs and other infrastructure.³⁵

Indirect Fire Attacks into Israel from Gaza as of October 25, 3:00 PM ET



Recorded reports of rocket attacks; CTP-ISW cannot independently verify impact.

Attacks into Israel from Gaza as of October 25, 3:00 PM ET



Recorded reports of rocket attacks; CTP-ISW cannot independently verify impact.

West Bank

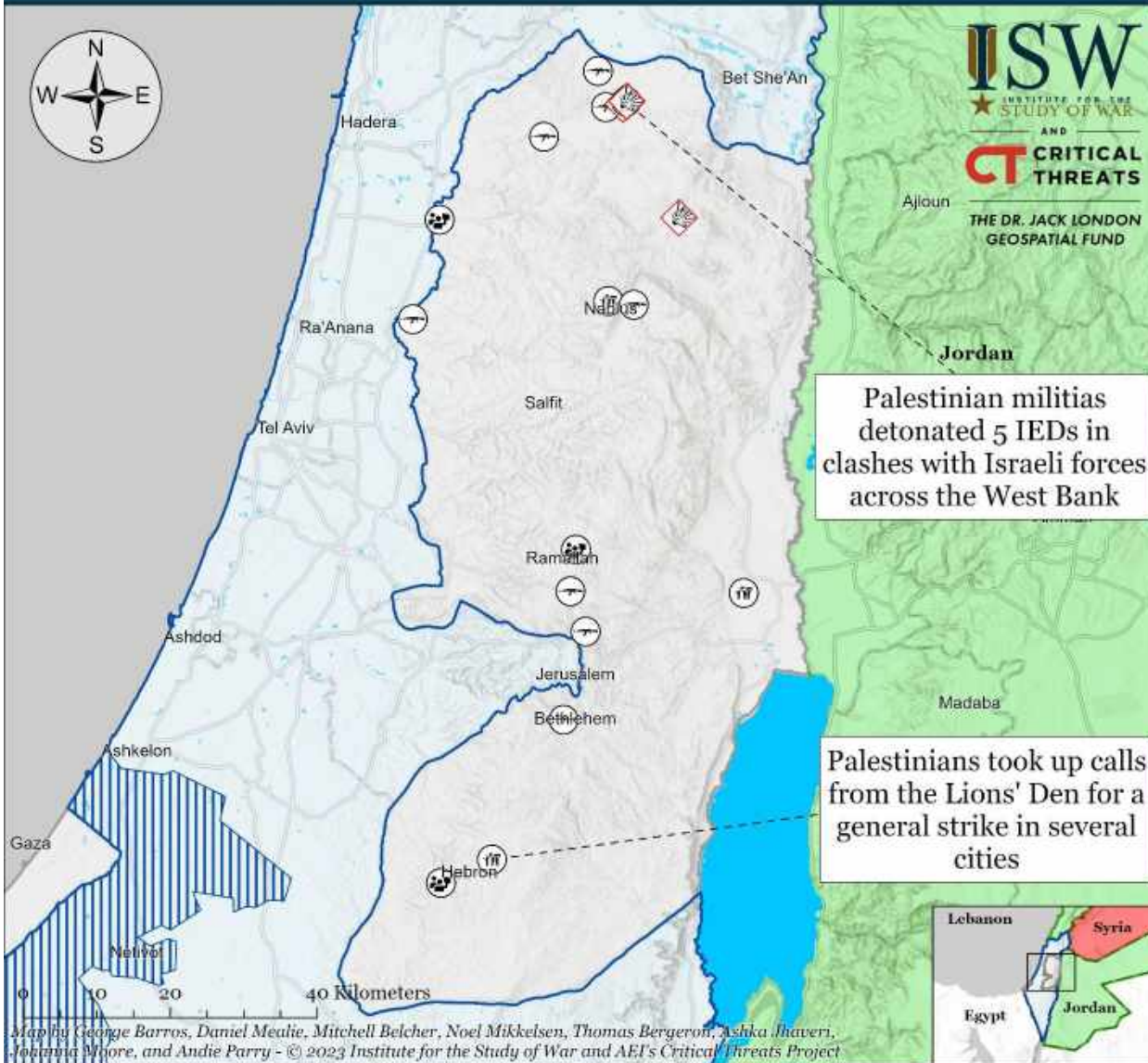
Axis of Resistance Campaign Objectives

- Draw IDF assets and resources toward the West Bank and fix them there

West Bank residents demonstrated and took up arms against the IDF in response to calls from the Lions' Den—an Iran-linked West Bank militia.³⁶ The Lions' Den call to arms is the first from the group since October 11.³⁷ CTP-ISW recorded 14 clashes in the West Bank on October 25 compared to three on October 24.³⁸ Palestinian militias used at least five homemade IEDs in clashes with Israeli security forces.³⁹ CTP-ISW recorded four demonstrations, four general strikes, and two student groups' strike statements in explicit response to the Lions' Den's call.⁴⁰

- The Jenin Battalion—a component of PIJ's Al Quds Brigades—claimed responsibility for an ambush targeting the IDF in Jenin.⁴¹ The battalion also claimed responsibility for a sniper attack on IDF personnel.⁴² The IDF conducted an airstrike on the camp during the ambush and extended clashes.⁴³
- October 25 was the highest level of militant and popular activity in the West Bank since Hamas issued a mobilization call on October 20.⁴⁴ The increase in activity demonstrates the ability of the Lions' Den to mobilize action across the West Bank. Elevated levels of clashes and demonstrations draw IDF assets and resources toward the West Bank.

Clashes in the West Bank as of October 25, 3:00 PM ET



- | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Israel | Clash (Small Arms Combat) | Gaza Strip and West Bank |
| Israeli Closed Military Zone | Strike (Demonstration) | Syria |
| Jordan and Lebanon | Demonstration | |
| | IED Detonated | |

Recorded reports of rocket attacks; CTP-ISW cannot independently verify impact.

Southern Lebanon and Golan Heights

Axis of Resistance Campaign Objectives

- Draw IDF assets and resources toward northern Israel and fix them there
- Set conditions for successive campaigns into northern Israel

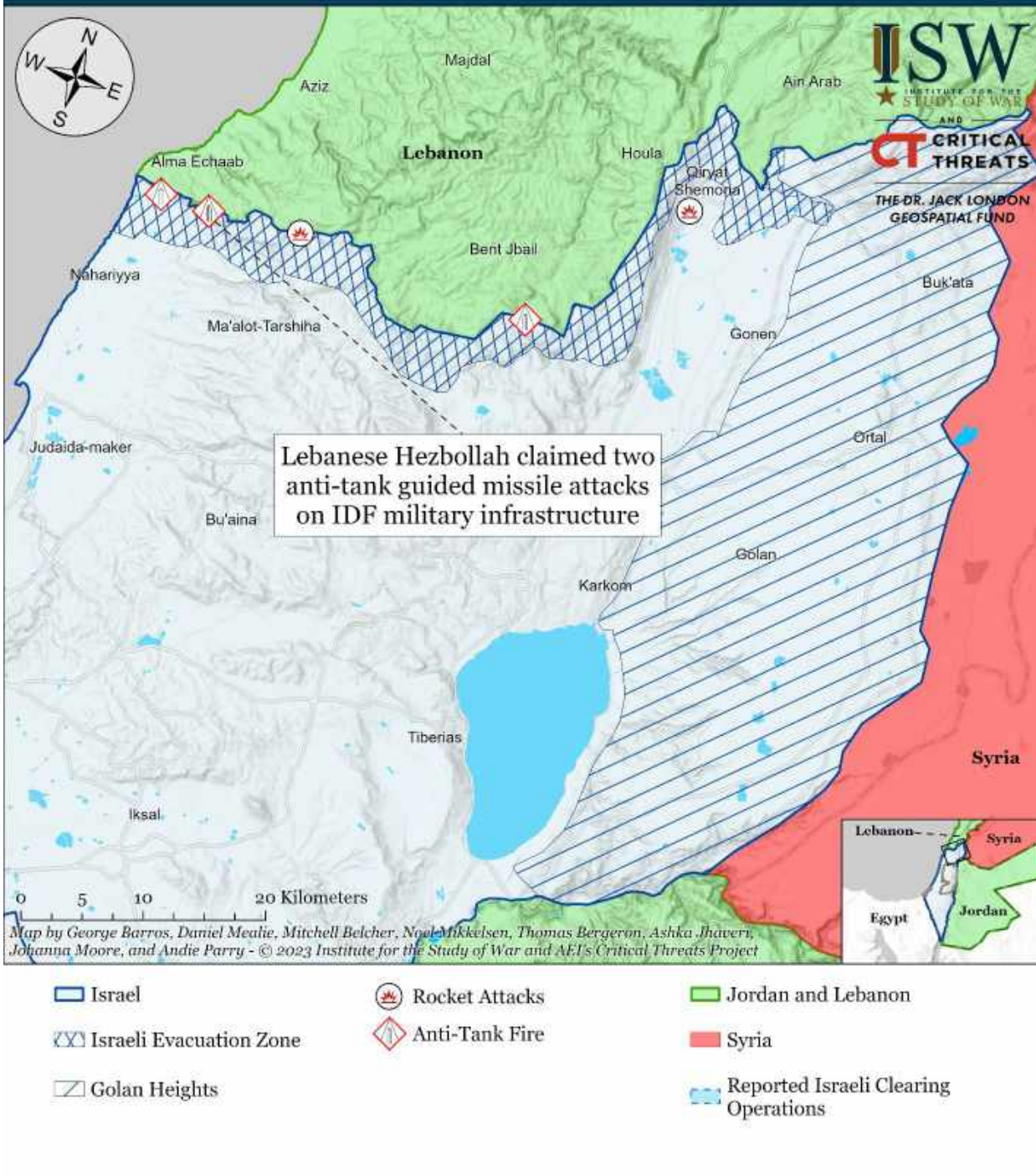
The IDF conducted airstrikes against two Syrian military positions in southwestern Syria on October 24, marking the first time the IDF has publicly targeted the Syrian military since the Israel-Gaza war began. The IDF has used artillery in response to militant attacks from Syria to northern Israel since October 7. CTP-ISW has recorded three instances of Iranian-backed militants in Syria firing rockets at northern Israel since October 7.⁴⁵ The IDF has responded by firing artillery into Syrian territory.⁴⁶ The Syrian Arab Army (SAA) also conducted a mortar strike into the Golan Heights after IDF airstrikes on the Aleppo and Damascus international airports on October 12.⁴⁷ The IDF has used artillery to strike SAA positions in southwestern Syria on several occasions in 2023.⁴⁸

- The IDF targeted the Syrian 5th Division, including the 12th Armored Brigade, in Izraa, Daraa Province, southwestern Syria.⁴⁹ The IDF also struck SAA weapons depots and radar systems in Qarfa, Daraa Province, southwestern Syria. Syrian state news agency SANA reported the strikes killed eight SAA soldiers and wounded seven others.⁵⁰ The IDF said the airstrikes were in response to rocket attacks from Syria into northern Israel.⁵¹
- The IDF dropped leaflets claiming that the SAA is responsible for attacks from Syria to Israel and warned that attacks from Syria would be met with an “iron hand.”⁵² The statement specifically blamed a Syrian commander in the 112th Mechanized Brigade, which is a component of the Syrian 5th Division.⁵³

The IDF Air Force conducted an airstrike on the Aleppo international airport runway on October 25 for the fourth time since October 7.⁵⁴ This was the sixth strike on Syrian airports total since October 7. Militants will likely respond with indirect fire attacks, which is the consistent response to Israeli airstrikes into Syria since the war began.⁵⁵ Iranian-backed militants continued to move into areas in Syria bordering the Golan Heights on October 24.⁵⁶

Iranian-backed militants, including LH, conducted six attacks as part of an ongoing attack campaign against IDF forces and assets on October 25. These attacks create opportunities for additional Iranian-backed ground attacks into Israel and increase the risk of further escalation, as CTP-ISW previously noted.⁵⁷ LH conducted three anti-tank guided missile (ATGM) attacks targeting IDF military barracks and infrastructure.⁵⁸ The IDF responded with multiple artillery strikes and airstrikes in southern Lebanon and on the Israel-Lebanese border, including against ATGM squads.⁵⁹

Attacks into Northern Israel from Lebanon as of October 25, 3:00 PM ET



Recorded reports of rocket attacks; CTP-ISW cannot independently verify impact.

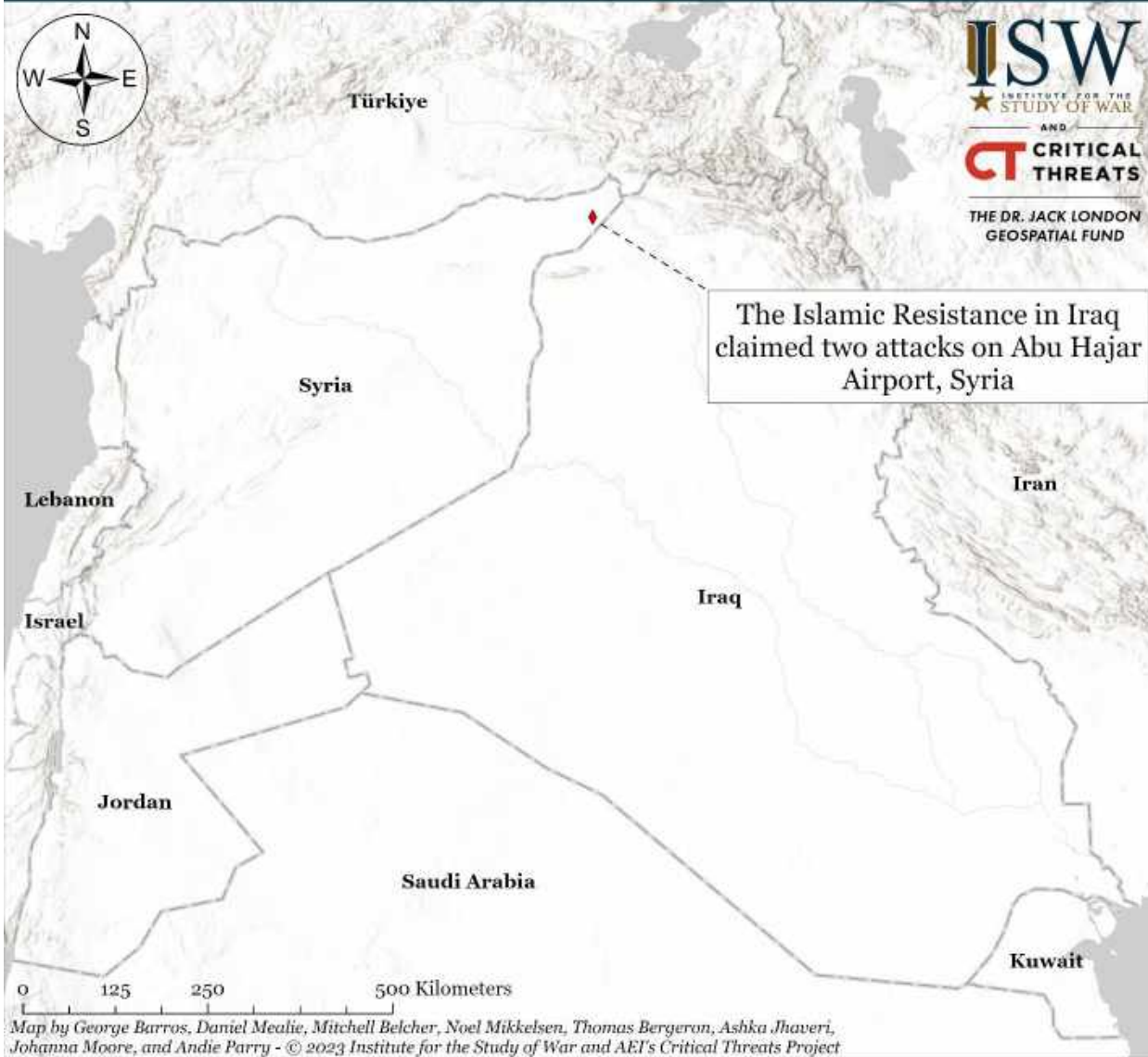
Iran and Axis of Resistance

Axis of Resistance Campaign Objectives

- Demonstrate the capability and willingness of Iran and the Axis of Resistance to escalate against the United States and Israel on multiple fronts
- Set conditions to fight a regional war on multiple fronts

The Islamic Resistance in Iraq claimed two attacks targeting US forces based at Abu Hajar Airport, Hasakah Province, Syria on October 24 and 25. The Islamic Resistance in Iraq reported that both rocket attacks “hit their target.” The group released footage of a rocket launch it claimed targeted US forces stationed at the airport, however, the footage did not depict any impact.⁶⁰ The United States has not confirmed any attack on US forces at Abu Hajar Airport as of 3:00 PM ET. The Islamic Resistance in Iraq has claimed 17 of the 19 reported attacks on US forces in the Middle East since October 18.⁶¹ The October 24 attack was the first by the Islamic Resistance in Iraq against US forces at Abu Hajar Airport. US forces use the Abu Hajar Airport to support Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR) counter-ISIS operations according to a 2016 Voice of America (VOA) report, however, US officials reported that it is not a US base.⁶²

Attacks on US Bases in the Middle East as of October 25, 3:00 PM ET



◆ Axis-Claimed Strike

Hamas, LH, and PIJ appear to be coordinating and making final contingency preparations ahead of an Israeli invasion into Gaza. LH Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah, Hamas Deputy Political Bureau Chief Saleh al Arouri, and PIJ Secretary General Ziyad al Nakhalah met

in Beirut on October 24 to discuss implementing “appropriate measures... at the current critical stage.”⁶³ Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reported that Israeli forces will conduct a ground operation into the Gaza Strip “soon” during a televised speech on October 25.⁶⁴ *The Wall Street Journal* cited an unidentified informed source who reported that Israel has delayed its ground operation into Gaza for at least another two days until the United States finished deploying air defense systems to US forces stationed in the Middle East.⁶⁵ Hamas, LH, and PIJ coordination suggest that actors within Iran’s Axis of Resistance are planning a coordinated response to an Israeli ground operation.

Iranian officials and media are calling for a “ceasefire” in the Hamas-Israel war and accusing the United States, France, and the United Kingdom of using their permanent membership in the UN Security Council (UNSC) to prolong the conflict. Iran’s Permanent Representative to the UN Amir Saeid Iravani called for an immediate ceasefire in a speech at the UN Security Council’s first open debate on the war on October 24.⁶⁶ Iravani also claimed that the United States has vetoed over 40 UNSC resolutions and that the UNSC’s “inaction” is emboldening Israel to commit “more egregious crimes” against the Palestinians. Iranian state media separately accused the United States, France, and the United Kingdom of prioritizing Israel’s right to self-defense over stopping Israeli attacks against Palestinians in Gaza.⁶⁷

CTP-ISW assesses that Iranian officials are likely using the term “ceasefire” to refer to the cessation of the Hamas-Israel war in its current state. It is in Iran’s interest to end the war in its current state because Hamas has inflicted losses on the IDF, the Israeli government, and Israeli society. Israel, on the other hand, is preparing a ground operation into the Gaza Strip to destroy Hamas.

Iran’s efforts to frame Western countries as the antagonists in the war and itself as a promoter of peace are part of the regime’s ongoing information operation to deflect responsibility for any further escalation of the conflict away from Iran. This information operation ignores the fact that Iran has already facilitated the expansion of this war to Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, and Yemen by directing its proxy and partner militias in these countries to attack US and Israeli targets.⁶⁸

The Iranian regime is facing a message-control problem in its ongoing information operations. The IRGC-affiliated *Tasnim News Agency* published an article stressing that Hamas’s rocket attacks against Israel would not be as successful as they are were it not for Iran’s extensive support during previous years.⁶⁹ Iranian officials and media have been rejecting claims of Iranian involvement in the Al Aqsa Flood operation since October 9, however, arguing that credit for Hamas’ “successful” operation belongs “solely” to the Palestinians themselves.⁷⁰

Iran is simultaneously engaged in separate information operations aimed at two distinct audiences which could explain the conflicting messaging. Iran is attempting to deter further escalation with the United States. The IRGC-affiliated *Fars News Agency* argued on October 24 that Axis of Resistance attacks on American bases in Iraq and Syria are only meant to deter further American involvement in the Israel-Hamas war, as CTP-ISW previously reported.⁷¹ Iran is also attempting to message its support

for Hamas to other members of its Axis of Resistance. Western media reported on October 22 that Iranian officials are concerned about preventing the perception among members of their Axis of Resistance that Iran is not sufficiently supporting Hamas.⁷²

The *Wall Street Journal* separately reported on October 25 that IRGC Quds Force officers trained hundreds of Hamas fighters inside Iran in the weeks leading up to the October 7 attack.⁷³ The *Washington Post* similarly reported on October 9 that Iran provided Hamas with weapons and training prior to the attack.⁷⁴ These reports are inconsistent with *Tasnim*'s claim that Iran has only supported Hamas' capabilities in distant years not recent weeks. The IRGC has previously armed and trained Hamas operatives inside Iran since the early 2000s.⁷⁵

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<https://t.me/qassam1brigades/43>; <https://t.me/QudsN/318187>; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/48>;
https://t.me/mihwar_almuqawama/36494; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/30>; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/31>;
<https://t.me/qassam1brigades/31>;
<https://t.me/qassam1brigades/32>; <https://t.me/kataebabuali/10438>

² <https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/08/01/2973041>; <https://t.me/abuhamzasaraya/79>;
<https://t.me/abuhamzasaraya/78>; <https://t.me/hamasps/17033> (Dead link. Source available on request)

³ <https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/08/01/2973041>; <https://www.irna.ir/news/85266625>; <https://www.irna.ir/news/85268344>

⁴ <https://t.me/abuhamzasaraya/69>

⁵ <https://t.me/qassambrigades/28711>; <https://t.me/almanarnews/132453>;
<https://twitter.com/qudsn/status/1716434964818841992>; https://twitter.com/ignis_fatum/status/1716438603331449177;
<https://t.me/qassambrigades/28692>; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16408>; <https://t.me/qassambrigades/28691>;
<https://t.me/qassambrigades/28690>

⁶ <https://t.me/abuhamzasaraya/78>

⁷ <https://t.me/abuhamzasaraya/77>

⁸ <https://t.me/hamasps>

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¹³ <https://apnews.com/article/hezbollah-hamas-gaza-israel-border-tensions-109cefe8b05ac6bd9abac9da0d2f53a3>

¹⁴ <https://apnews.com/article/hezbollah-hamas-gaza-israel-border-tensions-109cefe8b05ac6bd9abac9da0d2f53a3>

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<https://www.almanar.com.lb/11086682>; <https://central-media.org/36360/600/>;

<https://twitter.com/AlMayadeenNews/status/171429225501201810>

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²² <https://www.iranintl.com/en/202310237020>

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<https://t.me/maymun5/55188>

;

https://t.me/mihwar_almuqawama/36672

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³¹ <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/irans-rockets-palestinian-groups>

³² https://twitter.com/no_itsmyturn/status/1717153957611458790

³³ <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/irans-rockets-palestinian-groups>

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<https://t.me/QudsN/318162> ; <https://t.me/QudsN/318094> ; <https://t.me/QudsN/318094> ; <https://t.me/QudsN/318078> ;

<https://t.me/QudsN/317891> ; <https://t.me/QudsN/317864> ; <https://t.me/QudsN/318286>

³⁹ https://t.me/mihwar_almuqawama/36600 ; <https://t.me/AymanGouda/5796> ; <https://t.me/QudsN/317919> ;

<https://t.me/QudsN/317891> ; <https://t.me/QudsN/318286>

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<https://t.me/QudsN/318116> ; <https://t.me/QudsN/318098> ; <https://t.me/QudsN/318056> ; <https://t.me/QudsN/317993> ;

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<https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1711830875783004286>

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<https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1704859054936322381%20%20https://twitter.com/JoeTruzman/status/1704860176384405773%20%20https://twitter.com/nourabohsn/status/1704945258163851324%20%20https://twitter.com/NewpressPs/status/1704868281616613462%20%20https://t.me/damascusv011/18383>

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<https://twitter.com/nourabohsn/status/1716957627727409520>

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