

Iran Update



Ashka Jhaveri, Johanna Moore, Alexandra Moore, and Brian Carter

May 25, 2024, 2:00 pm 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. 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. Click [here](#) to subscribe to the Iran Update.

CTP-ISW defines the “Axis of Resistance” as the unconventional alliance that Iran has cultivated in the Middle East since the Islamic Republic came to power in 1979. This transnational coalition is comprised of state, semi-state, and non-state actors that cooperate to secure their collective interests. Tehran considers itself to be both part of the alliance and its leader. Iran furnishes these groups with varying levels of financial, military, and political support in exchange for some degree of influence or control over their actions. Some are traditional proxies that are highly responsive to Iranian direction, while others are partners over which Iran exerts more limited influence. Members of the Axis of Resistance are united by their grand strategic objectives, which include eroding and eventually expelling American influence from the Middle East, destroying the Israeli state, or both. Pursuing these objectives and supporting the Axis of Resistance to those ends have become cornerstones of Iranian regional strategy.

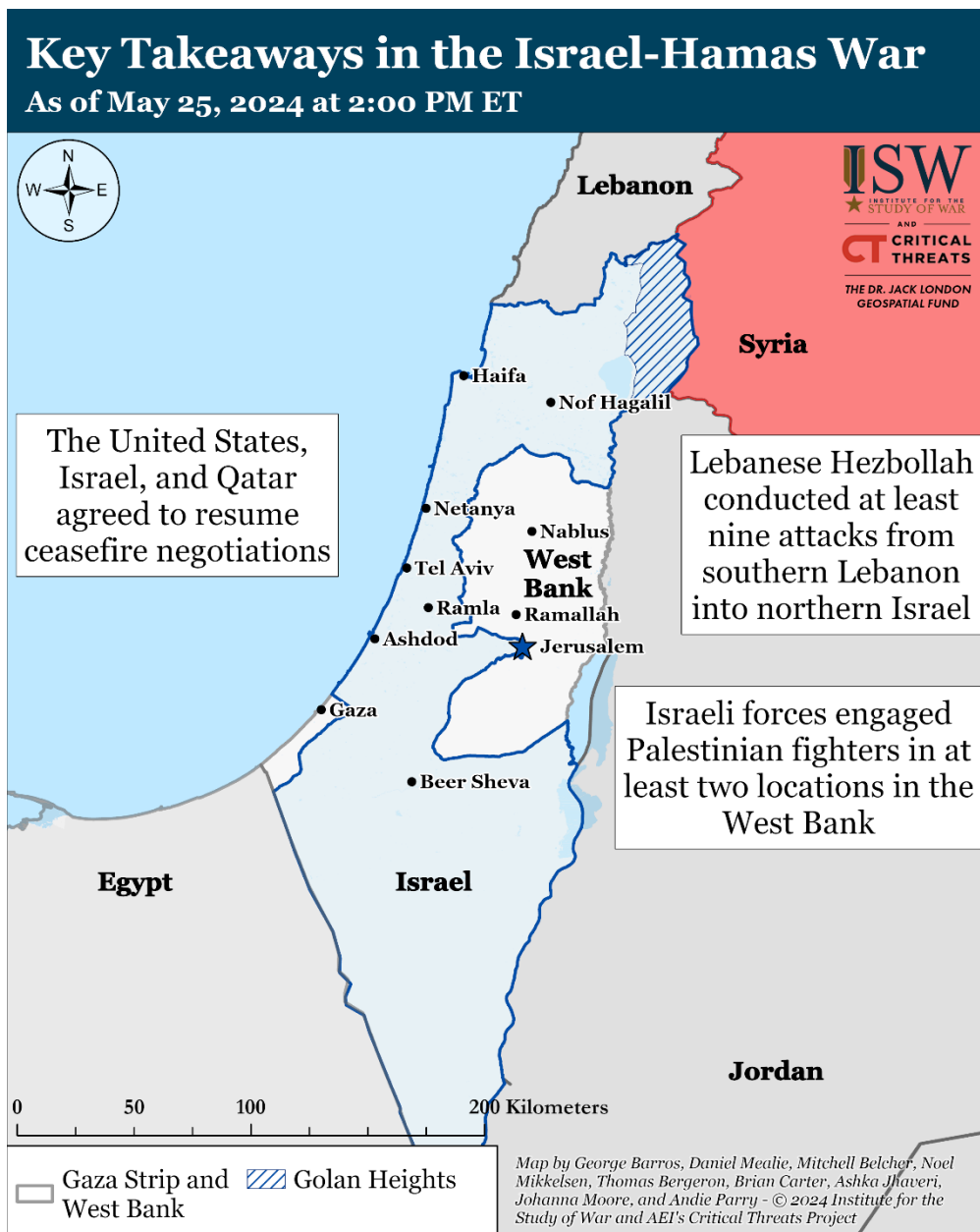
We do not report in detail on war crimes because these activities are well-covered in Western media and do not directly affect the military operations we are assessing and forecasting. We utterly condemn violations of the laws of armed conflict and the Geneva Conventions and crimes against humanity even though we do not describe them in these reports.

CTP-ISW will publish abbreviated updates on May 25 and 26, 2024. Detailed coverage will resume on Monday, May 27, 2024.

Key Takeaways:

- **Gaza Strip:** The IDF is moving “more deliberately” in Rafah, according to Israeli officers who recently left Rafah who spoke to the *New York Times* on May 25.
- **Humanitarian Aid in the Gaza Strip:** A US Army landing craft and part of the US-constructed pier in the Gaza Strip was swept away by waves to Ashdod, Israel.
- **Lebanon:** Lebanese Hezbollah conducted at least nine attacks from southern Lebanon into northern Israel.
- **West Bank:** Israeli forces engaged Palestinian fighters in at least two locations in the West Bank on May 25.

- **Iraq:** The Islamic Resistance in Iraq claimed one drone attack targeting an unspecified “vital target” in Eilat, southern Israel.



Gaza Strip

Axis of Resistance objectives:

- Erode the will of the Israeli political establishment and public to sustain clearing operations in the Gaza Strip
- Reestablish Hamas as the governing authority in the Gaza Strip

Israeli forces continued clearing operations in Jabalia on May 25. Three Israel Defense Forces (IDF) brigades are in Jabalia. The IDF Air Force killed a Hamas sniper team in the area who had fired at Israeli forces a few days earlier.[1] Palestinian militias claimed several attacks in the Beit Lahia area, north of Jabalia, indicating that the IDF is operating in some areas north of Jabalia refugee camp.[2]

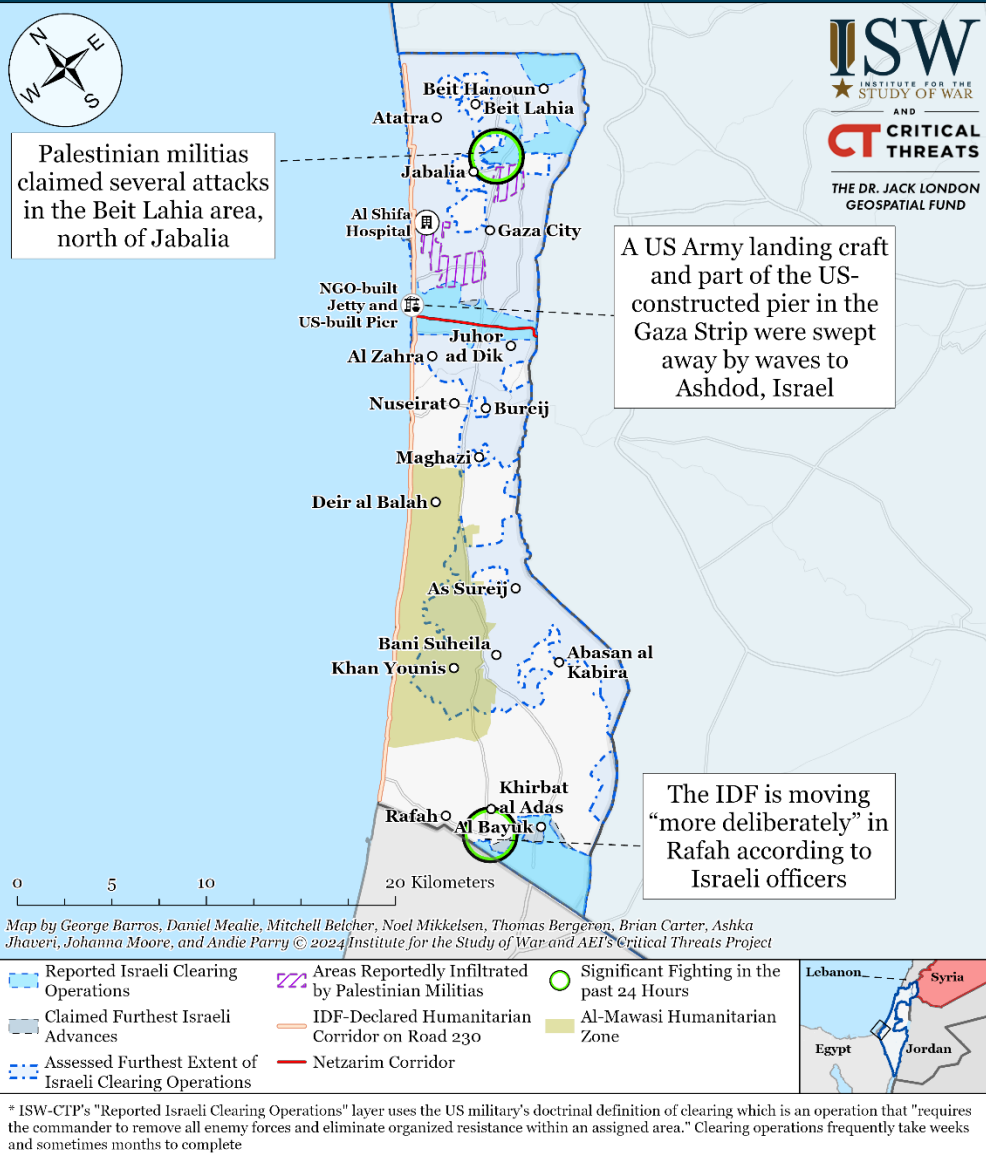
The IDF 99th Division continued operations along the Netzarim corridor in southern Gaza City on May 25[3]

Israeli forces continued clearing operations in Rafah on May 25. The IDF has five brigades operating in Rafah.[4] Israeli forces located and destroyed tunnel shafts.[5] Palestinian militias engaged Israeli forces in the area using rocket propelled grenades, mortars, and rockets.[6]

The IDF is moving “more deliberately” in Rafah, according to Israeli officers who recently left Rafah who spoke to the *New York Times* on May 25.[7] The officers said that the IDF is using “less airpower and artillery, and fewer, smaller bombs,” which forces Israeli soldiers to clear urban areas on foot. An Israeli reserve soldier said that some Israeli forces are working near the border and others are moving into Rafah’s outskirts. This comment is largely consistent with CTP-ISW’s current control of terrain assessment of reported Israeli clearing operations. The officers said that the four Hamas battalions in Rafah “are not as well trained” as those in the northern Gaza Strip and “are not an urgent problem.” Israeli forces have described the ongoing fighting in the northern Gaza Strip around Jabalia are particularly intense.[8]

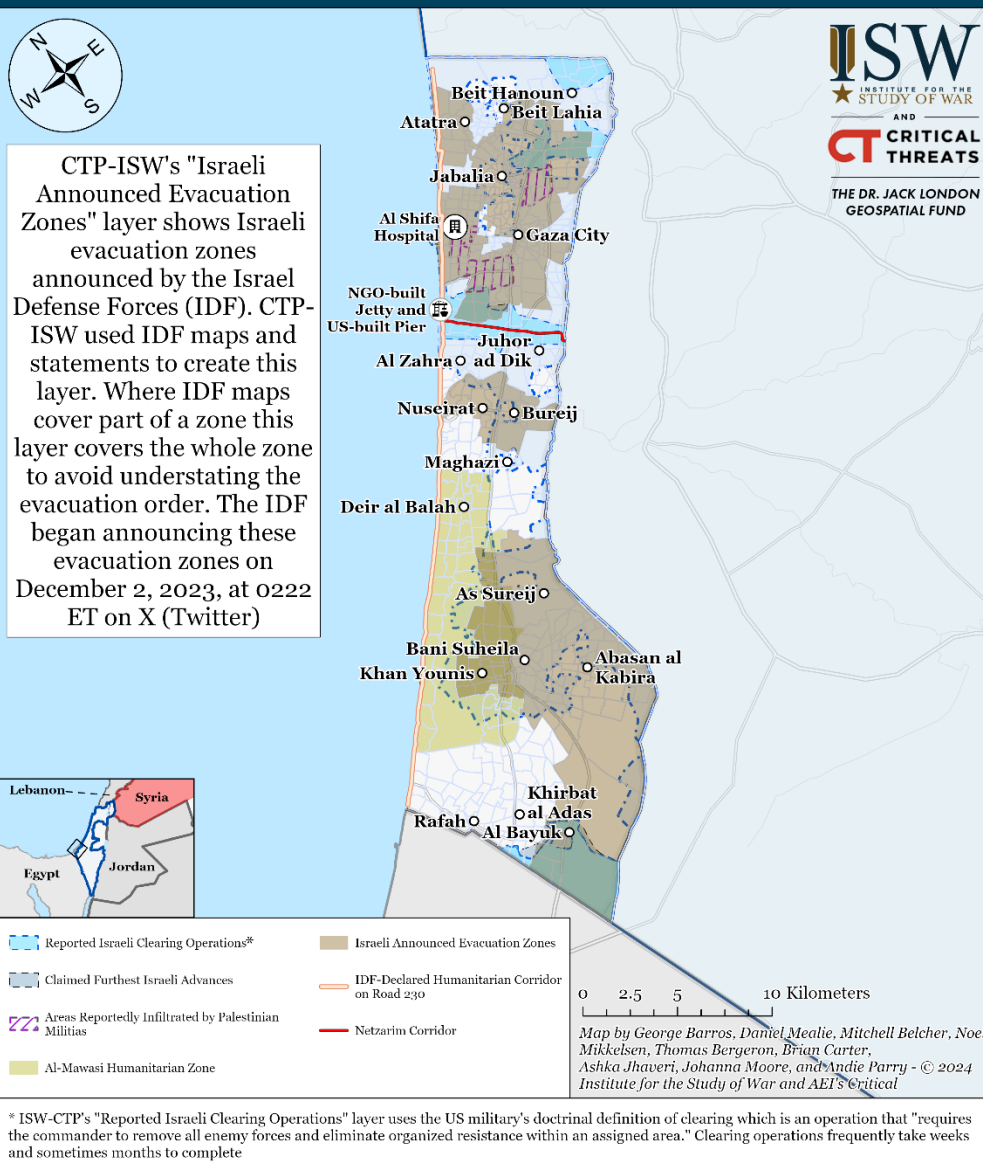
Reported Israeli Ground Operations in the Gaza Strip

As of May 25, 2024, 2:00 PM ET



Israeli-Announced Evacuation Zones in the Gaza Strip

As of May 25, 2024 at 2:00 PM ET



The Qatari prime minister, along with US and Israeli intelligence chiefs, agreed to resume ceasefire negotiations during a meeting in Paris on May 25.^[9] Egypt did not have a representative at the meeting. An unspecified individual familiar with the talks said the meeting was “very successful” though there was no breakthrough.^[10] The source said that despite Egypt’s reported actions in modifying the deal during the previous round of negotiations, Cairo will participate in the next round.^[11] An Israeli media war correspondent said that Israel and the United States were disappointed with Egyptian mediators in the previous round of negotiations for unspecified reasons.^[12] Egypt has dismissed Western reports that an Egyptian intelligence official secretly modified the most recent ceasefire deal before sending it to Hamas.^[13] The correspondent observed that that Egypt’s absence places the weight of negotiations on Qatar.^[14]

A US Army landing craft and part of the US-constructed pier in the Gaza Strip was swept away by waves to Ashdod, Israel.^[15] Ashdod's Coastal Division assisted US forces on the scene.^[16] Israeli media reported that a US military vessel was sailing toward the Gaza Strip when it detached from the chain of the leading ship guiding to its destination. Israeli media reported that a separate piece of the pier drifted to Ashdod. The United States has spent \$320 million on the pier and deployed 1,000 soldiers and sailors to operate the pier. The pier is facilitating the delivery of humanitarian aid.^[17]

Palestinian militias did not conduct any indirect fire attacks from the Gaza Strip into Israel on May 25. This marks the first day without such an attack since May 2.^[18]

West Bank

Axis of Resistance objectives:

- Establish the West Bank as a viable front against Israel

Israeli forces engaged Palestinian fighters in at least two locations in the West Bank on May 25.^[19]

Significant Activity in the West Bank

As of May 25, 2024 at 2:00 PM ET



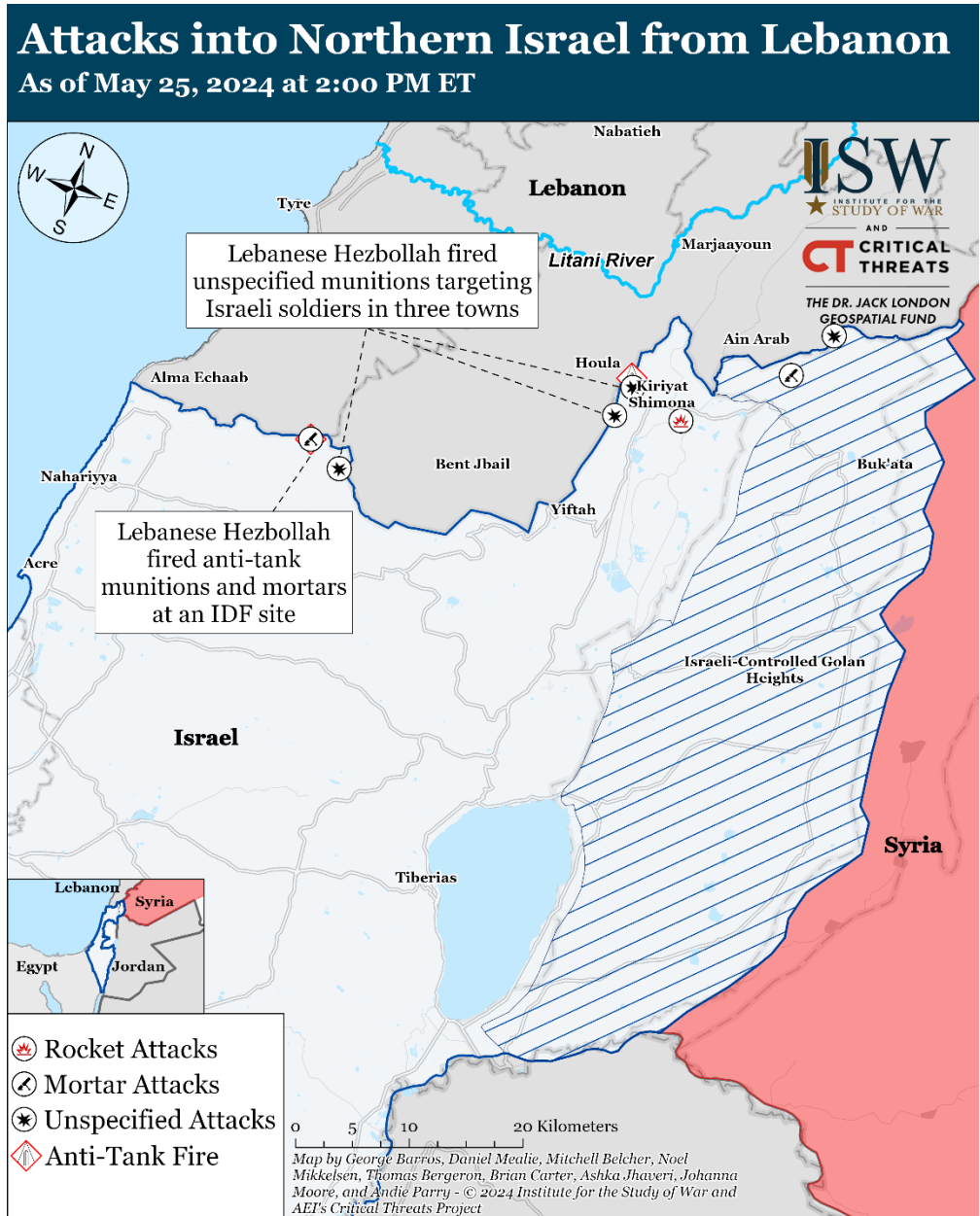
This map is not an exhaustive depiction of clashes and demonstrations in the West Bank.

Southern Lebanon and Golan Heights

Axis of Resistance objectives:

- Deter Israel from conducting a ground operation into Lebanon
- Prepare for an expanded and protracted conflict with Israel in the near term
- Expel the United States from Syria

Lebanese Hezbollah has conducted at least nine attacks from southern Lebanon into northern Israel since CTP-ISW's last data cutoff on May 24.[20]



Recorded reports of attacks; CTP-ISW cannot independently verify impact.
Iran and Axis of Resistance

The Islamic Resistance in Iraq claimed one drone attack targeting an unspecified “vital target” in Eilat, southern Israel since CTP-ISW's last data cut off on May 24.[21] Israeli officials have not commented at the time of this writing.



- [1] <https://x.com/idfonline/status/1794301202932564017>
- [2] <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/2283>; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/2284>;
<https://t.me/qassam1brigades/2291>
- [3] <https://x.com/idfonline/status/1794301210473984333>
- [4] <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/05/25/world/middleeast/israel-gaza-rafah.html>
- [5] <https://x.com/idfonline/status/1794301213594591367>
- [6] <https://t.me/sarayaps/17958>; <https://t.me/nedalps/4140>
- [7] <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/05/25/world/middleeast/israel-gaza-rafah.html>
- [8] https://x.com/Doron_Kadosh/status/1793644110034997516;
<https://x.com/manniefabian/status/1791409021343203502>
- [9] <https://x.com/GLZRadio/status/1794343041622573540>
- [10] <https://www.ynet.co.il/news/article/hkfvfknr#autoplay>
- [11] <https://www.ynet.co.il/news/article/hkfvfknr#autoplay>
- [12] <https://x.com/amirbarshalom/status/1794347155546861593>
- [13] <https://www.newarab.com/news/egypt-denies-cnn-claims-gaza-ceasefires-deal-manipulation#:~:text=A%20high%2Dlevel%20Egyptian%20security%20official%20denied%20a%20report%20run,collapse%20of%20talks%20early%20this;https://edition.cnn.com/2024/05/21/politics/sources-say-they-were-duped-by-egypt-changing-ceasefire-terms-for-hamas/index.html>
- [14] <https://x.com/amirbarshalom/status/1794347155546861593>
- [15] <https://x.com/einavkerner/status/1794299604974120981>; https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-802621#google_vignette
- [16] <https://x.com/einavkerner/status/1794299604974120981>
- [17] https://www.wsj.com/world/middle-east/the-u-s-built-a-320-million-pier-to-get-aid-to-gazans-little-of-it-has-reached-them-f14e0175?mod=middle-east_news_article_pos2
- [18] <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/1945>; <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1786667920203854307>; <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1787085953120477486>; <https://t.me/sarayaps/17724>; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/1973>; https://t.me/kataeb_moqawma/4225;
<https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1788281117197365579>; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/2000>; https://t.me/kataeb_moqawma/4233; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/2054>; <https://t.me/sarayaps/17774>; <https://t.me/sarayaps/17796>; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/2134>; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/2167>; <https://t.me/alwya2000/6243>;
<https://t.me/sarayaps/17881>; <https://t.me/sarayaps/17892>;
<https://t.me/sarayaps/17919>; https://t.me/kataeb_moqawma/4256; <https://t.me/sarayaps/17935>; https://t.me/kataeb_moqawma/4265; <https://t.me/moriahdoron/10438>
- [19] <https://t.me/QudsN/410802> ; https://t.me/khalaya_almujahidin/14664
- [20] <https://t.me/mmirleb/4176> ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/4181> ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/4183> ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/4186> ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/4188> ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/4190> ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/4193> ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/4194> ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/4197>
- [21] <https://t.me/ElamAlmoqawama/1156>

