Iran Update



Iran Update, October 13, 2024

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Information Cutoff: 2:00pm ET

The United States deployed a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) anti-missile system and US military personnel to operate the system to Israel on October 13 to bolster Israeli air defenses following the April 13 and October 1 Iranian attacks on Israel.[1] The THAAD system is a "ground-based interceptor designed to shoot down ballistic missiles."[2] Iran fired approximately 120 ballistic missiles at Israel in its April 13 attack and approximately 180 ballistic missiles in its October 1 attack.[3] The Wall Street Journal reported on October 13 that fewer than 100 US military personnel will operate the THAAD system in Israel.[4] The Pentagon stated that the deployment of the THAAD system underscores the United States' "ironclad commitment" to defending Israel.[5] The United States previously deployed a THAAD system to the Middle East following Hamas' October 7, 2023, attack into Israel.[6] The United States also deployed a THAAD system to Israel in 2019 for "training and an integrated air defense exercise."[7] Iranian Foreign Affairs Minister Abbas Araghchi responded to the deployment of the anti-missile system on October 13, warning that the United States is "putting [the] lives of its troops at risk by deploying them to ... Israel."[8] Araghchi added that Iran has "no red lines" in defending its interests and people.[9]

US officials told NBC on October 12 that they believe Israel has "narrowed down" its targets for a retaliatory attack on Iran.[10] The officials stated that the targets include Iranian military and energy infrastructure and added that there is "no indication" that Israel will attack Iranian nuclear facilities or conduct targeting killings.[11] The officials emphasized that Israel has not finalized "how and when to act," however.[12] An Israeli journalist separately reported on October 12 that Israel will delay its retaliatory attack until a US Army THAAD anti-missile battery arrives in Israel.[13] These reports come as Iranian officials have been conducting "urgent diplomacy" with Middle Eastern countries to try to reduce the scale of Israel's retaliation.[14] Iranian Foreign Affairs Minister Abbas Araghchi traveled to Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Iraq, and Oman on October 9, 10, and 13, respectively.[15] Unspecified sources told CNN that the Iranian regime is "extremely nervous" about the Israeli retaliation and is "uncertain" that the United States can convince Israel not to strike Iranian nuclear and energy infrastructure.[16] CTP-ISW previously assessed that Iran and its Axis of Resistance are likely trying to compel the United States to pressure Israel into a less-costly retaliatory strike by threatening to start an "energy war." [17]

Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar negotiated with Iran over financial support for a larger-scale attack on Israel in 2021, underscoring the coordination between Hamas and the wider Axis of Resistance before the October 7 attacks.[18] *The Washington Post* reported that Sinwar requested funding and military support from numerous senior Iranian officials, including Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) Quds Force Commander Brigadier General Esmail Ghaani, in order to "destroy Israel completely in two years."[19] Iran reportedly agreed to allocate \$10 million to the al Qassem Brigades, and several weeks later, Sinwar requested an additional \$500 million to be allocated in monthly dividends over two years.[20] Iran's financial support of Hamas and the al Qassem Brigades has been well-established and Western officials have previously estimated that Iran provides Hamas with around \$100 million in annual funding for Hamas' military activities.[21] This funding was instrumental for Hamas to be able to marshal the capabilities required to carry out the October 7 attacks.[22] Sinwar's direct coordination and communication with senior Iranian officials, along with meetings between Hamas and Iranian officials in July 2023, underscore that Iran had strategic foreknowledge of the October 7 attacks.[23] It remains unclear if Iran had tactical knowledge of the attack's exact timing.

An unspecified IDF division began a new ground operation near Aita al Shaab and Ramyeh in southern Lebanon on October 13.[24] An Israeli Army Radio correspondent reported the IDF Air Force and artillery conducted a "massive" bombardment before Israeli forces began ground maneuvers.[25] Hezbollah targeted Israeli forces with improvised explosive devices, small arms, rockets, anti-tank guided missiles, and mortars in Aita al Shaab and Ramyeh.[26]

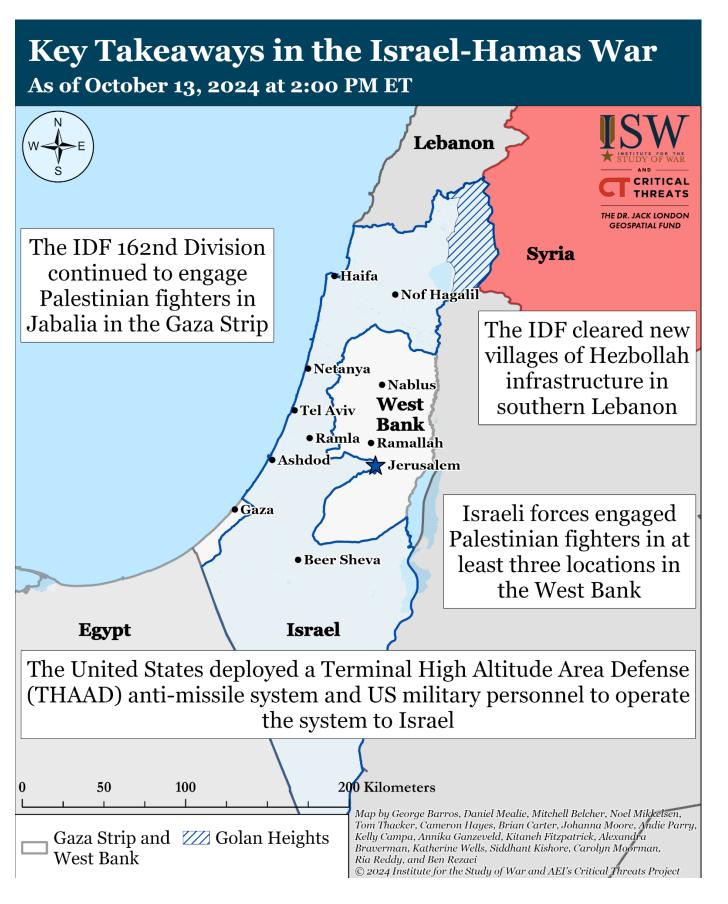
Israeli forces entered a UNIFIL position in Ramyeh, southern Lebanon, after sustaining injuries in a Hezbollah attack close to the UNIFIL position on October 13.[27] The IDF reported that Hezbollah targeted Israeli forces with "a massive anti-tank missile" during an operation in an unspecified area of southern Lebanon, injuring several soldiers.[28] Israeli media reported that over 25 Israeli soldiers were injured in combat in southern Lebanon on October 13.[29] This casualty count is high for Israeli operations. The IDF reported that Israeli forces had to come within a few meters of a UNIFIL position to evacuate the wounded soldiers.[30] The IDF said that it was in constant contact with UNIFIL forces during the maneuver.[31] UNIFIL stated two Israeli tanks destroyed "the main gate and forcibly entered" the UNIFIL position in Ramyeh on October 13.[32] UNIFIL also reported Israeli munition emissions caused skin irritation and gastrointestinal reactions to 15 peacekeepers.[33] Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu appealed to the UN Secretary General to remove UNIFIL forces from combat areas in southern Lebanon on October 13.[34] Netanyahu accused Hezbollah of using UNIFIL sites and personnel as "human shields" and "hostages."[35]

Hezbollah conducted a drone attack targeting an IDF training camp in Binyamina, south of Haifa, and injured at least 67 Israelis on October 13.[36] Hezbollah said it launched multiple drones targeting a training camp for the IDF 1st Infantry Brigade.[37] Israeli Army Radio reported that Hezbollah launched two or three drones in the attack and that the IDF Navy intercepted one of the drones over Israeli territorial waters.[38] The drone that impacted in Binyamina reportedly did not trigger any warnings or register on Israeli detection systems.[39] Israeli media reported that

the drones were fired at the same time as a barrage of rockets from Lebanon.[40] Hezbollah claimed a rocket attack targeting an IDF base in the Golan Heights shortly after the drone impacted Binyamin.[41] The Home Front Command loosened restrictions over the targeted area prior to the attack.[42] Israeli medics said that the attack wounded over 67 people.[43] Hezbollah said it conducted the drone attack in response to two IDF airstrikes on Basta and al Nuwairi neighborhoods in central Beirut on October 10.[44] The IDF reportedly targeted senior Hezbollah official and Jihad Council member Wafiq Safa in one of the October 10 strikes.[45]

Key Takeaways:

- **Israeli Retaliation Against Iran:** The United States deployed a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) anti-missile system and US military personnel to operate the system to Israel on October 13 to bolster Israeli air defenses following the April 13 and October 1 Iranian attacks on Israel. US officials told NBC on October 12 that they believe Israel has "narrowed down" its targets for a retaliatory attack on Iran.
- **Hamas:** Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar negotiated with Iran over financial support for a larger-scale attack on Israel in 2021, underscoring the coordination between Hamas and the wider Axis of Resistance before the October 7 attacks.
- **Israeli Ground Operations in Lebanon:** An unspecified IDF division began a new ground operation near Aita al Shaab and Ramyeh in southern Lebanon on October 13. Israeli forces entered a UNIFIL position in Ramyeh, southern Lebanon, after sustaining injuries in a Hezbollah attack close to the UNIFIL position on October 13. The IDF reported that Israeli forces had to come within a few meters of a UNIFIL position to evacuate the wounded soldiers.
- **Hezbollah Attacks into Israel:** Hezbollah conducted a drone attack targeting an IDF training camp in Binyamina, south of Haifa, and injured at least 67 Israelis on October 13.



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 to operate in the Gaza Strip on October 13.[46] Israeli forces attacked about 40 militia targets and killed dozens of Palestinian fighters.**[47]**

The IDF 162nd Division continued clearing operations in Jabalia in the northern Gaza Strip on October 13. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on October 13 that Israeli soldiers are operating in "the heart of Jabalia" to "dismantle Hamas strongholds."[48] Israeli forces killed dozens of Palestinian fighters and located improvised explosive devices (IED), grenades, and other weapons in the area.[49] Israeli forces also attacked the site from which Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) fighters launched rockets targeting Ashkelon on October 12.[50] Hamas and PIJ targeted Israeli armor in and near Jabalia camp with an explosively formed penetrator (EFP) and rocket-propelled grenades (RPG).[51] Hamas fighters also fired a thermobaric rocket targeting an Israeli unit in a house east of Jabalia camp.[52]

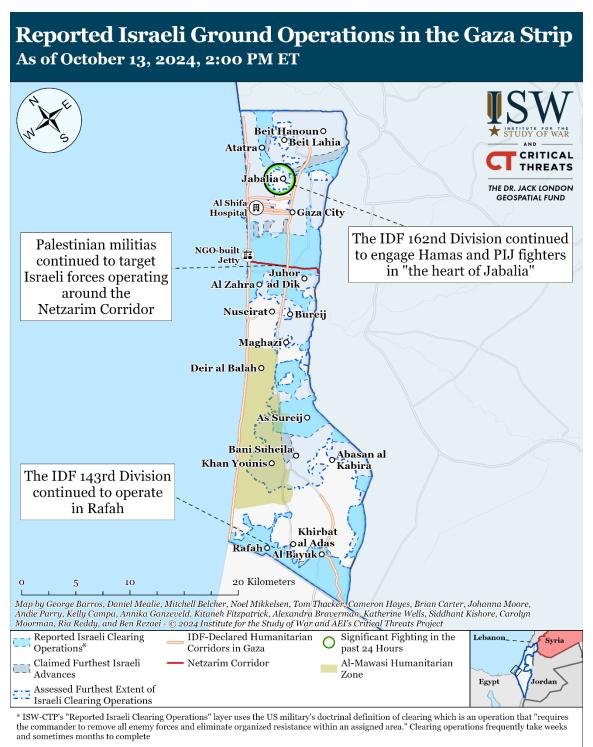
Palestinian residents told Israeli media that Israeli forces have "isolated" Beit Hanoun, Jabalia, and Beit Lahiya from Gaza City and blocked access to any travel between the areas except for evacuees.[53] The IDF has recently issued evacuation orders for areas where over 400,000 Palestinians live, according to UN estimates.[54] Israeli media reported that tens of thousands of Palestinians have passed through the IDF's security crossing along the Netzarim and headed towards the southern Gaza Strip, however.[55]

International aid groups reported that humanitarian aid has not reached the northern Gaza Strip since September 30. A senior UN official told Western media that no aid has entered the northern Gaza Strip since September 30 through border crossings or from southern Gaza, except one fuel shipment for hospitals.[56] The UN World Food Programme (WFP) said that border crossings to the north have been closed since at least October 1.[57] WFP's director for the Palestinian territories Antoine Renard said that WFP staff are not able to operate in the northern Gaza Strip due to an inability to access the area.[58]

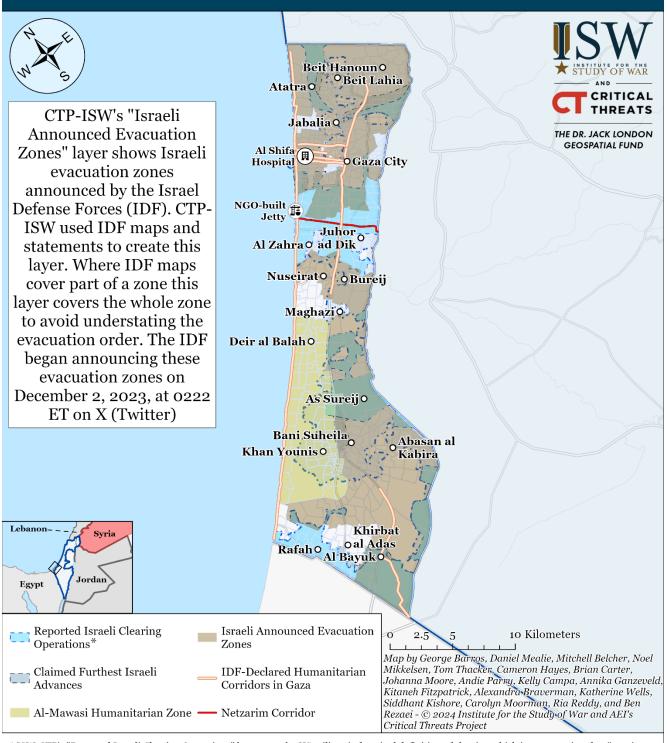
Palestinian militias continued to target Israeli forces operating around the Netzarim Corridor on October 13. PIJ detonated two EFPs targeting Israeli armor southeast of Zaytoun.[59] The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) and Popular Resistance Committees (PRC) targeted Israeli forces along the Netzarim Corridor with rockets and mortars.[60] The IDF 252nd Division operates around the corridor.[61]

The IDF 143rd Division continued to operate in the southern Gaza Strip on October 13.[62] Israeli forces killed several armed Palestinian fighters and directed an airstrike targeting a

group of fighters armed with a rocket propelled grenade (RPG) that posed a threat to Israeli forces.[63] A Palestinian journalist reported that Israeli forces conducted a "limited advance" along the Israel-Gaza border fence east of Khan Younis.[64] The journalist also reported IDF vehicle fire east of Abasan al Jadida, which is in eastern Khan Younis Governorate.[65] Hamas fired RPGs targeting Israeli armor in al Geneina neighborhood, east of Rafah.[66]



Israeli-Announced Evacuation Zones in the Gaza Strip As of October 13, 2024 at 2:00 PM ET



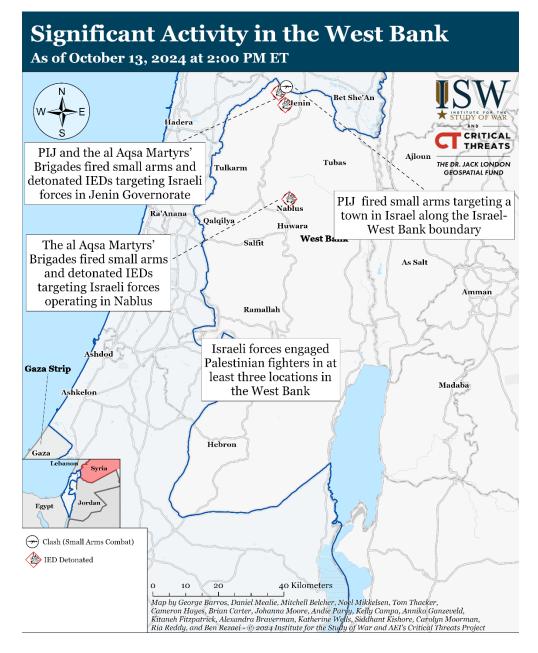
^{*} ISW-CTP's "Reported Israeli Clearing Operations" layer uses the US military's doctrinal definition of clearing which is an operation that "requires the commander to remove all enemy forces and eliminate organized resistance within an assigned area." Clearing operations frequently take weeks and sometimes months to complete

West Bank

Axis of Resistance objectives:

Establish the West Bank as a viable front against Israel

Israeli forces engaged Palestinian fighters in at least three locations in the West Bank since CTP-ISW's last data cutoff on October 12.[67] Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) and the al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades fired small arms and detonated IEDs targeting Israeli forces in two locations in Jenin Governorate.[68] The al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades separately fired small arms and detonated IEDs targeting Israeli forces operating in Nablus.[69] PIJ also fired small arms targeting Ram-On which is in Israel along the Israel-West Bank boundary north of Jenin.[70]



Northern Israel and Lebanon

Axis of Resistance objectives:

- Prepare for an expanded and protracted conflict with Israel in the near term
- Expel the United States from Syria

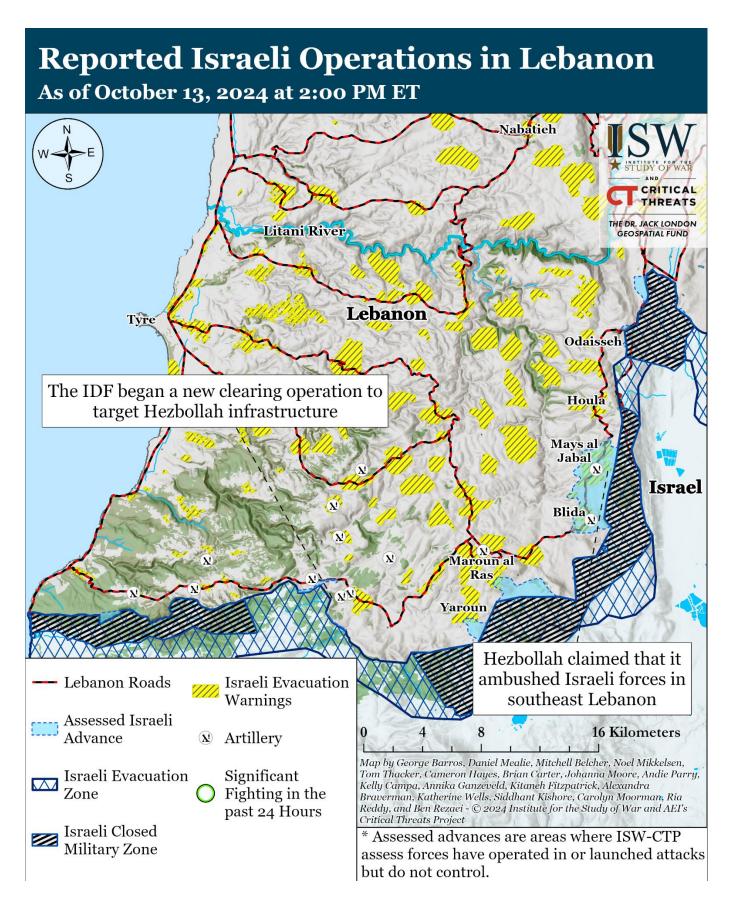
The IDF created a fifth closed military zone along the Israel-Lebanon border on October 12.[71] The new zone encompasses Zarit, Shtula, and Shomera, which is the central-western section of the Israel-Lebanon border.[72] Most of the border is now a closed military zone. The IDF created closed military zones to the east over the Metula area on September 30, over the Dovey, Tzvion, and Malkia areas on October 1, over Manara and Yiftah on October 6, and over the western-most part of the border on October 7.[73] Unconfirmed social media reporting suggests that the IDF has re-opened the Metula area since closing it in late September.[74] Lebanese Hezbollah-affiliated sources reported on October 9 that Israeli forces had withdrawn from the Lebanese border villages adjacent to Metula.[75]

The IDF 91st Division continued operations in southern Lebanon, likely near Blida and Mays al Jabal, on October 13.[76] The IDF 8th Armored Brigade engaged Hezbollah fighters in close range combat and destroyed Hezbollah infrastructure deployed along the border.[77] Israeli forces located, confiscated, and destroyed numerous weapons, including dozens of rockets, Kornet ATGMs, grenades, and ammunition intended for use by Hezbollah Radwan SOF fighters for ground attacks into northern Israel.[78] Israeli forces located underground Hezbollah infrastructure "in the heart of a village" and located dozens of other underground sites with "living quarters and weapons for Hezbollah fighters.[79] Unspecified Israeli forces located an underground living quarters buried seven meters underground with a Hezbollah fighter barricaded inside.[80] The Hezbollah fighter surrendered, and Israeli forces transported him to Israel for further questioning.[81] Hezbollah targeted Israeli forces near Blida with small arms and mortar fire.[82] Hezbollah fighters ambushed Israeli forces attempting to enter Mays al Jabal with close-range rocket and small arms fire.[83] Hezbollah claimed the attack killed and wounded Israeli forces.[84] Israeli forces have reportedly encountered very few Hezbollah fighters actively fighting in the southern border towns, making this ambush slightly abnormal.[85] Hezbollah fighters have reportedly retreated 5 to 10 kilometers into Lebanon and mainly target Israeli forces with anti-tank missiles and rockets.[86] CTP-ISW assessed that the Israeli air campaign into Lebanon has likely severely disrupted the strategic- and operationallevel military leadership in Hezbollah and impeded Hezbollah's ability to conduct and sustain coherent military campaigns at least in the short term.[87]

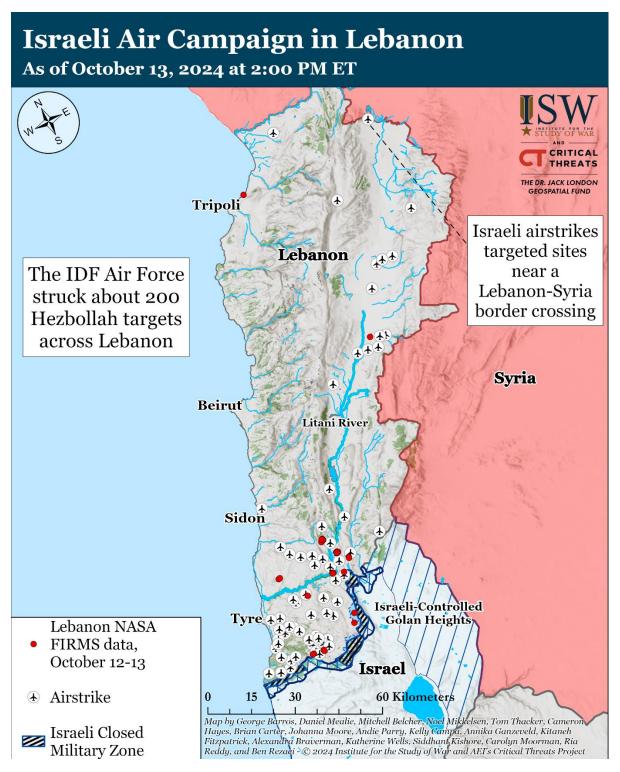
The IDF 146th Reserve Division continued clearing operations in southwestern Lebanon on October 13.[88] Israeli forces located dozens of Hezbollah compounds hidden in brush-filled ravines in southwestern Lebanon.[89] An Israeli Army Radio correspondent visited a hidden Hezbollah Radwan SOF forces compound a few minutes' walk from Israeli territory on October 13.[90] The compound had weapons for 100 Radwan fighters. Other larger compounds existed several kilometers from the site that could have supported a three battalion Radwan assault on Nahariya and nearby

towns.[91] The IDF 205th Armored Brigade (Res.) destroyed a Hezbollah tunnel outfitted with electrical infrastructure and ventilation about half a kilometer into Lebanese territory.[92] Covert Israeli targeted raids discovered the tunnel complex several months prior.[93] An IDF 646th Paratrooper Brigade (Res.) commander said the IDF is attempting to remove the forest and brush area to prevent Hezbollah fighters from moving undetected near the Israeli border.[94] IDF commanders fighting in Lebanon acknowledged that the IDF's current operations are destroying Hezbollah's ability to conduct ground operations into Israel, but that other operations or diplomatic agreements will halt Hezbollah rocket fire into northern Israel.[95] The operations described by the 646th Infantry Brigade's commander are broadly consistent with other IDF operations across southern Lebanon that have targeted Hezbollah's ability to conduct ground and direct fire attacks into Israel.[96]

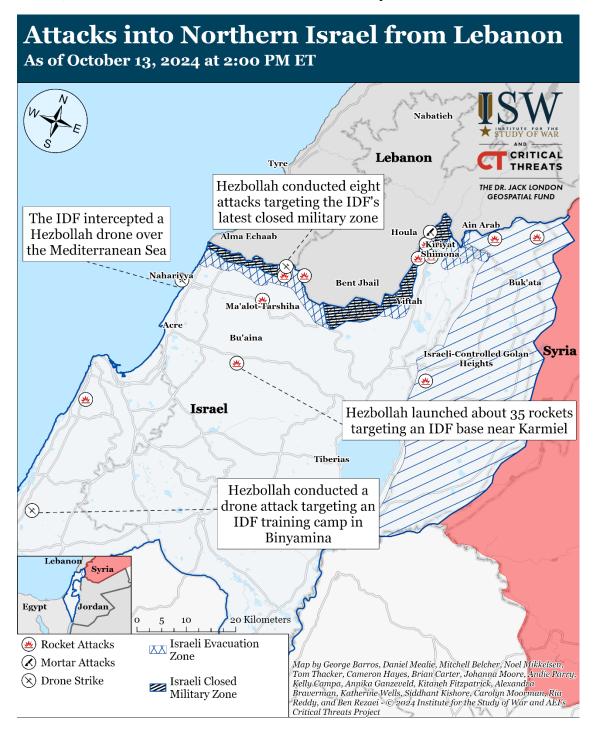
The IDF Arabic-language spokesperson called on civilians to evacuate immediately from 21 towns and villages in southern Lebanon on October 13. [97] The spokesperson told residents that they should move north of the Awali River. [98] The IDF previously called on civilians to evacuate from several of the towns in the order. [99]



IDF continued an air campaign to degrade Hezbollah capabilities and networks on October 13. The IDF Air Force struck about 200 Hezbollah targets in southern Lebanon and deep inside Lebanon over the past day.[100] The strikes targeted cells of fighters, launchers, military buildings, anti-tank positions, and military headquarters.[101] Israeli airstrikes targeted sites near a Lebanon-Syria border crossing in northeastern Lebanon.[102]



Hezbollah has conducted at least 23 attacks into Israel since CTP-ISW's last data cutoff on October 12.[103] The IDF intercepted a Hezbollah drone over the Mediterranean Sea on October 13.[104] Hezbollah launched about 35 rockets targeting an IDF base west of Karmiel.[105] The IDF intercepted some of the rockets and there were no casualties.[106] Hezbollah fired rockets, anti-tank guided missiles, mortars and drones in at least 13 distinct attacks targeting Israeli positions along the Israel-Lebanon border.[107] Hezbollah conducted eight of those attacks targeting positions near Zarit, Shtula, and Shomera—within the new closed military zone that the IDF announced on October 12.[108]



Iran and the Axis of Resistance

The Islamic Resistance in Iraq—a coalition of Iranian-backed Iraqi militias—has claimed four attacks targeting Israel since CTP-ISW's last data cutoff on October 12. The claims include the following:

- Two drone attacks targeting unspecified "vital target[s]" in the Golan Heights[109]
- A drone attack targeting two unspecified locations in Eilat[110]
- A drone attack targeting an unspecified military target in the Golan Heights[111]

The IDF detected a "suspicious aerial target" that was heading toward Israeli territory from the Red Sea on October 12.[112] The object did not enter Israeli airspace.[113]



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[62] https://x.com/idfonline/status/1845353864070877556
[63] https://x.com/idfonline/status/1845353864070877556
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[82] https://t.me/mmirleb/7851; https://t.me/mmirleb/7860
[83] https://t.me/mmirleb/7874
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[87] https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/iran-update-september-28-2024
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[91] https://t.me/moriahdoron/15415
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[105] https://t.me/mmirleb/7854; https://x.com/GLZRadio/status/1845427965464555798
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[109] https://t.me/ElamAlmogawama/1338;

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[110] https://t.me/ElamAlmoqawama/1339

[111] https://t.me/ElamAlmogawama/1342

[112] https://x.com/idfonline/status/1845174833723715835

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