

Iran Update



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October 22, 2024, Information Cutoff: 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.

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.

A senior Israeli intelligence official told Iranian anti-regime media that Israel’s recent operations in Lebanon have disrupted Iran’s ability to provide funds to Hezbollah.[1] The source stated that Israeli operations targeting key Hezbollah leadership and the Israeli air campaign have significantly disrupted Hezbollah funding. The official stated that Iran used Syria as a conduit to provide Hezbollah with \$50 million in cash each month prior to the start of the Israeli operations in Lebanon. IDF Spokesperson Daniel Hagari stated that Iran transfers money to Hezbollah through the transfer of oil and money from Iran to Syria through Hezbollah’s Unit 4400.[2] Hezbollah Unit 4400 is responsible for the transfer of funds and weapons from Iran to Hezbollah.[3] Israel killed the commander of Hezbollah’s Unit 4400, and his subsequent replacement on October 1 and October 21.[4]

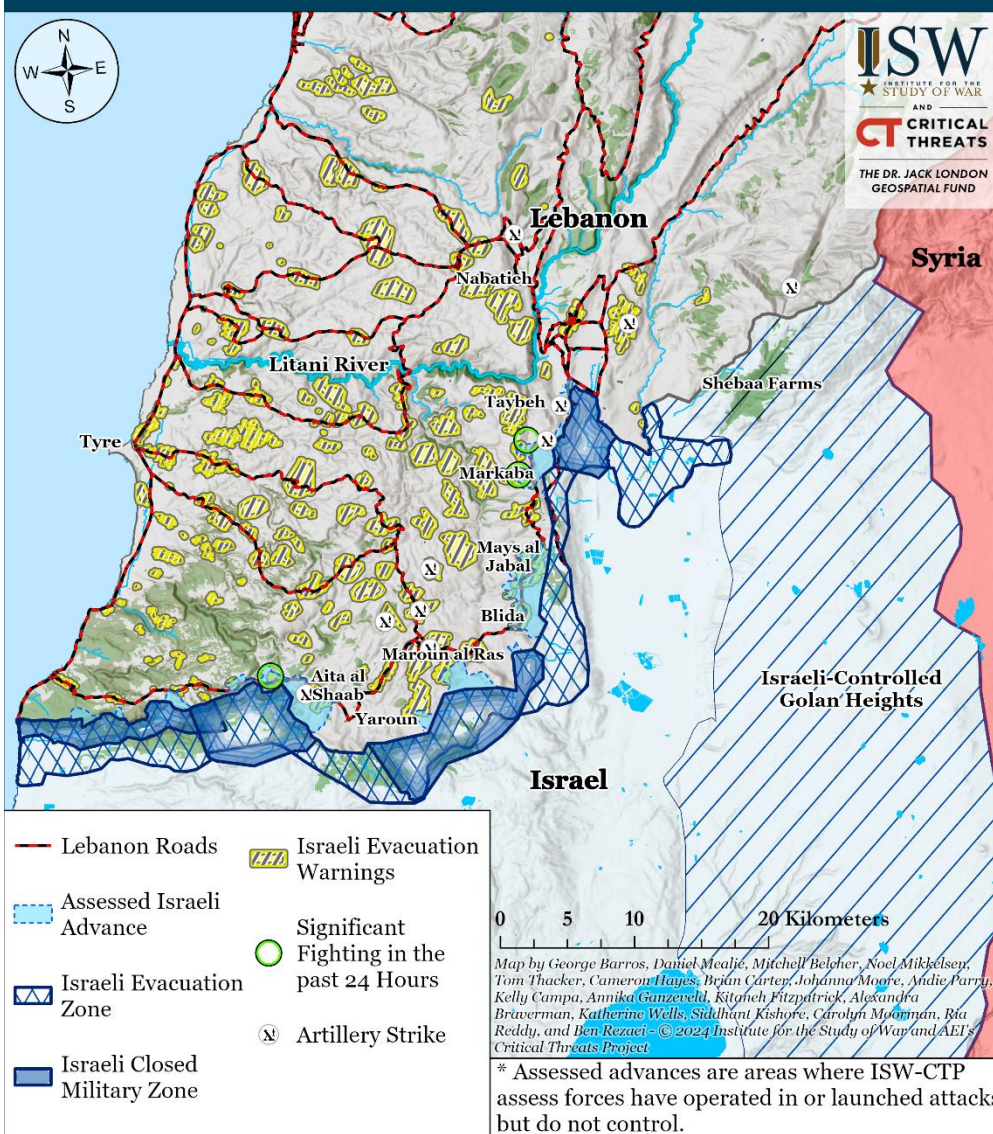
This report follows recent IDF airstrikes targeting branches of a Hezbollah-affiliated financial institution in Beirut in recent days.[5]

Hezbollah’s chief media official said that Hezbollah is attempting to capture Israeli soldiers.[6] The spokesperson noted in a press conference on October 22 that Hezbollah fighters had come “close” to seizing Israeli soldiers over the past several days but had not yet succeeded.[7] Hezbollah has a long history of taking Israeli soldiers prisoner to exchange for Hezbollah fighters held by Israel.[8] The spokesperson confirmed that Israel had detained Hezbollah fighters since beginning operations in southern Lebanon.[9] The IDF said that it has detained many Radwan fighters and has published clips of their testimony, including statements from fighters that many Hezbollah fighters fled southern Lebanon after Hassan Nasrallah’s death.[10] The Hezbollah official said that “after the war there will be indirect negotiations to recover our prisoners,” suggesting that Hezbollah wants to capture Israeli soldiers for future negotiations.[11]

Hezbollah’s chief media official also noted that Hezbollah had increased the pace of offensive and defensive operations against Israel.[12] Hezbollah Deputy Secretary General Sheikh Naim Qassem said on October 15 that Hezbollah would initiate a new phase of the war designed to inflict high casualties on Israel.[13] Hezbollah’s Operations Room also noted on October 17 that Hezbollah would “escalate” its attacks in the coming days.[14] Hezbollah has since expanded the scope and pace of operations into Israel, including by targeting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s home in Tel Aviv with an attack drone on October 19.[15] Hezbollah has consistently claimed ground engagements in southern Lebanon at a higher rate since the first week of Israeli ground operations, although this may be a result of increased proximity between Israeli and Hezbollah forces as Israeli forces operate in additional areas of southern Lebanon.[16] Hezbollah has conducted at least 39 attacks on Israeli forces, towns, and air assets over the past day.[17] Hezbollah officials have consistently argued that Hezbollah command, control, and logistical networks have returned to full operational capacity after being degraded by Israel’s air campaign in late September 2024.[18]

Reported Israeli Operations in Lebanon

As of October 22, 2024 at 2:00 PM ET



Hezbollah formally claimed responsibility for the October 19 drone attack on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s residence in Caesarea, Israel.[19] Hezbollah took “full and sole responsibility” for the attack.[20]

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Jerusalem on October 22.[21] Blinken urged Netanyahu to “capitalize” on Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar’s death to secure a ceasefire and hostage release deal in the Gaza Strip.[22] Blinken and Netanyahu also discussed ongoing diplomatic efforts to end the fighting in Lebanon and enable civilians to return to their homes along the border.[23]

Iranian Foreign Affairs Minister Abbas Araghchi obliquely threatened Arab states hosting US forces on October 21, which is probably an attempt to pressure Arab states to

discourage the United States from using its forces in the region to support an Israeli retaliation against Iran. Araghchi said that the Iranian military is monitoring all US troop movements on the ground and air regionally.[24] Araghchi's warning probably seeks to pressure Arab states to discourage the United States from using its forces based in Arab countries to support Israeli retaliation against Iran and Israeli defense against Iranian attacks. This effort also supports Iran's larger grand strategic objective of expelling US forces from the Middle East by subtly prodding these countries to constrain US efforts in the region. Araghchi also met with Bahraini King Hamad bin Isa al Khalifa and Foreign Affairs Minister Abdullatif bin Rashid al Zayani in Manama, Bahrain, on October 21.[25] Araghchi met with Kuwaiti Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled al Hammad al Dabah and Foreign Minister Abdullah Ali al Hiyaya in Kuwait City on October 22.[26] Araghchi warned during a press conference in Kuwait that Israel knows what Iran can do in response if Israel attacks Iran's critical infrastructure.[27]

The Israeli Police arrested seven individuals in East Jerusalem on October 22 on suspicion of planning and supporting attacks for Iran.[28] The Shin Bet and Israeli Police stated in a joint statement that Iran directed the suspects to assassinate a senior Israeli nuclear scientist and the mayor of an undisclosed large city in central Israel.[29] Iran also instructed the individuals to photograph various undisclosed locations, vandalize sites in Jerusalem, and post graffiti calling for the release of the Hamas-held Israeli hostages in the Gaza Strip. This is likely part of an Iranian effort to sow division in Israeli society and increase pressure on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to accept a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip. The joint statement confirmed that Israeli security forces arrested the 23-year-old "leader of the ring" who had recruited the six additional members.[30] A security official stated that the seven individuals worked as an "organized cell." [31] Six of the suspects are Israeli citizens, and the seventh suspect is an Israeli permanent resident.

This report comes one day after Israeli authorities arrested a separate Iranian spy network comprised of seven Israeli citizens who were given "hundreds of tasks" including observing Israeli military facilities.[32] Israeli police arrested an Israeli citizen in September accused of participating in an Iranian plot to assassinate Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.[33] Israeli media reported that this is the fifth public case of Iranian espionage attempts in Israel in the past month.[34]

Geolocated imagery posted on October 21 showed Israeli forces evacuating Palestinians from and distributing water in the area surrounding a former UNRWA medical clinic in northern Jabalia.[35] The 460th Armored Brigade (162nd Division) engaged Palestinian fighters on October 14 who used the former UNRWA medical facility as a weapons storage and base of operations.[36] The IDF reported that it detained Palestinian fighters who were attempting to retreat south by hiding among civilians as they evacuated south.[37] The IDF reported that "thousands" of civilians were evacuated from the area south to Gaza City.[38]

Key Takeaways:

- **Israeli Air Campaign:** A senior Israeli intelligence official told Iranian anti-regime media that Israel's recent operations in Lebanon have disrupted Iran's ability to provide funds to Hezbollah.
- **Hezbollah Operations in Lebanon:** Hezbollah's chief media official said that Hezbollah is attempting to capture Israeli soldiers. The Hezbollah official said that "after the war there will

be indirect negotiations to recover our prisoners,” suggesting that Hezbollah wants to capture Israeli soldiers for future negotiations. Hezbollah’s chief media official also noted that Hezbollah had increased the pace of offensive and defensive operations against Israel.

- **Blinken’s Regional Visit:** US Secretary of State Antony Blinken met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Jerusalem on October 22.
- **Iran:** Iranian Foreign Affairs Minister Abbas Araghchi obliquely threatened Arab states hosting US forces on October 21, which is probably an attempt to pressure Arab states to discourage the United States from using its forces in the region to support an Israeli retaliation against Iran.
- **Iranian Intelligence Efforts in Israel:** The Israeli Police arrested seven individuals in East Jerusalem on October 22 on suspicion of planning and supporting attacks for Iran.
- **Gaza Strip:** Geolocated imagery posted on October 21 showed Israeli forces evacuating Palestinians from and distributing water in the area surrounding a former UNRWA medical clinic in northern Jabalia.

Key Takeaways in the October 7 War

As of October 22, 2024 at 2:00 PM ET



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

The IDF 162nd Division expanded clearing operations in Jabalia, northern Gaza Strip, on October 22.[39] The IDF continued to engage Palestinian fighters in other areas of Jabalia as Palestinian civilians evacuated via established evacuation routes.[40] The 401st Armored Brigade directed an airstrike targeting approximately 10 Palestinian fighters that posed a threat to Israeli forces

operating in the area.[41] The Mujahideen Brigades conducted two mortar attacks targeting Israeli forces east and west of Jabalia refugee camp.[42] The al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades—the self-proclaimed militant wing of Fatah—mortared an IDF headquarters in eastern Jabalia refugee camp.[43] The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine engaged Israeli forces located in a building in western Jabalia refugee camp.[44]

The IDF killed 18 Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) fighters in an airstrike on October 17.[45] The IDF struck a Hamas and PIJ command-and-control center located in the former Abu Hasan School in the northern Gaza Strip.[46] The airstrike killed Hamas and PIJ battalion commanders, squad leaders, and fighters.[47]

IDF Southern Command Commander Major General Yaron Finkelman held a situational assessment with the 162nd Division Commander Brigadier General Itzik Cohen and other unspecified commanders on October 21.[48]

Elements of the 143rd Division completed an operation in Beit Lahia on October 22.[49] Israeli forces destroyed several tunnel entrances and rocket launch sites.

The al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades launched a salvo of rockets at Israeli forces around the Netzarim Corridor.[50]

The 252nd Division destroyed tunnel openings and rocket launch sites during clearing operations in the central Gaza Strip.[51] The 252nd Division resumed clearing operations in Nuseirat and Bureij refugee camps in the central Gaza Strip on October 17.[52]

Reported Israeli Ground Operations in the Gaza Strip

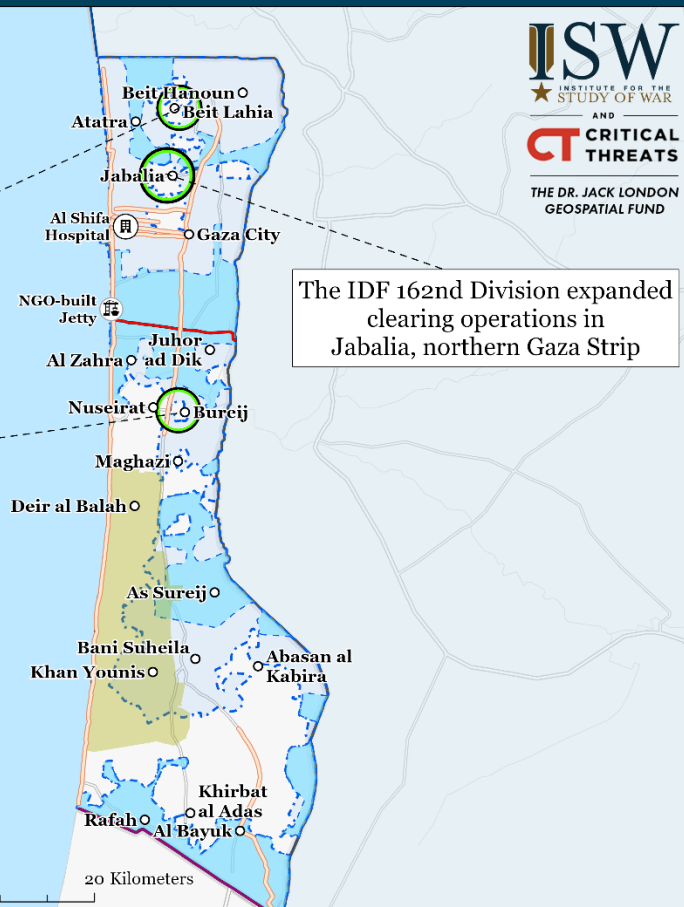
As of October 22, 2024, 2:00 PM ET



Elements of the 143rd Division completed an operation in Beit Lahia

The IDF 162nd Division expanded clearing operations in Jabalia, northern Gaza Strip

The 252nd Division continued to destroy militia infrastructure and locate weapons

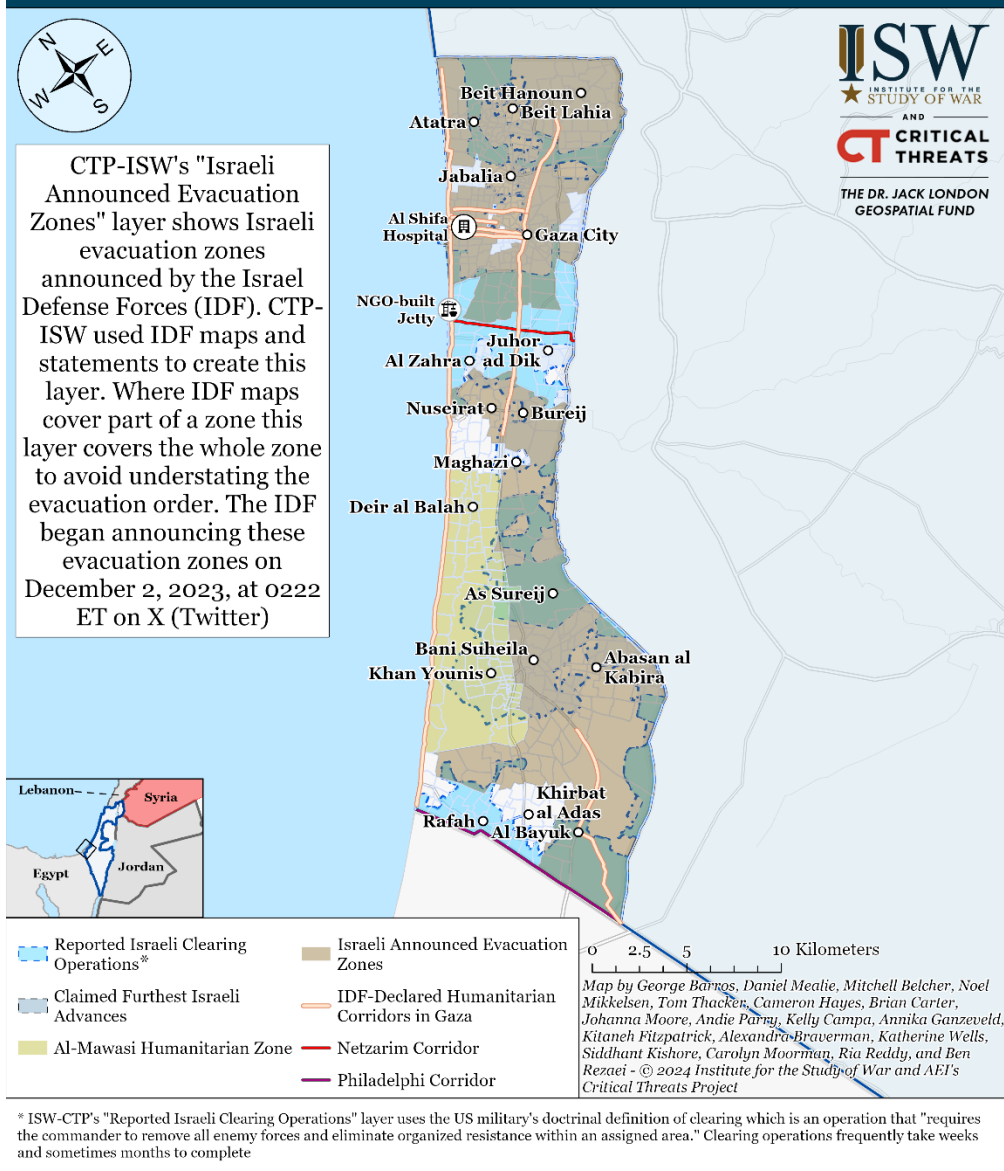


Map by George Barros, Daniel Mealie, Mitchell Belcher, Noel Mikkelsen, Tom Thacker, Cameron Hayes, Brian Carter, Johanna Moore, Andie Parry, Kelly Campa, Annika Ganzeveld, Kitaneh Fitzpatrick, Alexandra Braverman, Katherine Wells, Siddhant Kishore, Carolyn Moorman, Ria Reddy, and Ben Rezaei - © 2024 Institute for the Study of War and AEI's Critical Threats Project

Reported Israeli Clearing Operations*	IDF-Declared Humanitarian Corridors in Gaza	Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours	
Claimed Furthest Israeli Advances	Netzarim Corridor	Al-Mawasi Humanitarian Zone	
Assessed Furthest Extent of Israeli Clearing Operations	Philadelphi Corridor		

* 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

Israeli-Announced Evacuation Zones in the Gaza Strip As of October 22, 2024 at 2:00 PM ET



The Egyptian General Intelligence Service head Hassan Rashad proposed a new “small” ceasefire-hostage deal on October 20 during a meeting with Shin Bet head Ronen Bar.[53] The Egyptian proposal stipulates that Hamas would release a “small” number of Israeli hostages for a “few” days ceasefire in the Gaza Strip. Rashad claimed that the smaller ceasefire-hostage deal would facilitate negotiations to reach a more comprehensive ceasefire-hostage agreement. Bar claimed that there is a window of opportunity to renew hostage-ceasefire negotiations according to an unspecified source “with knowledge of the meeting” who was cited by Axios. Unspecified Israeli officials cited by Axios claimed that Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant supported the proposal while Itamar Ben Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich opposed the plan. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken claimed that Yahya Sinwar’s death presented an opportunity to reach a ceasefire-hostage agreement and urged

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to seize the opportunity during a separate meeting in Jerusalem on October 22.[54]

West Bank

Axis of Resistance objectives:

- Establish the West Bank as a viable front against Israel

CTP-ISW did not record any engagements between Israeli forces and Palestinian fighters in the West Bank since CTP-ISW's data cutoff on October 21.

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

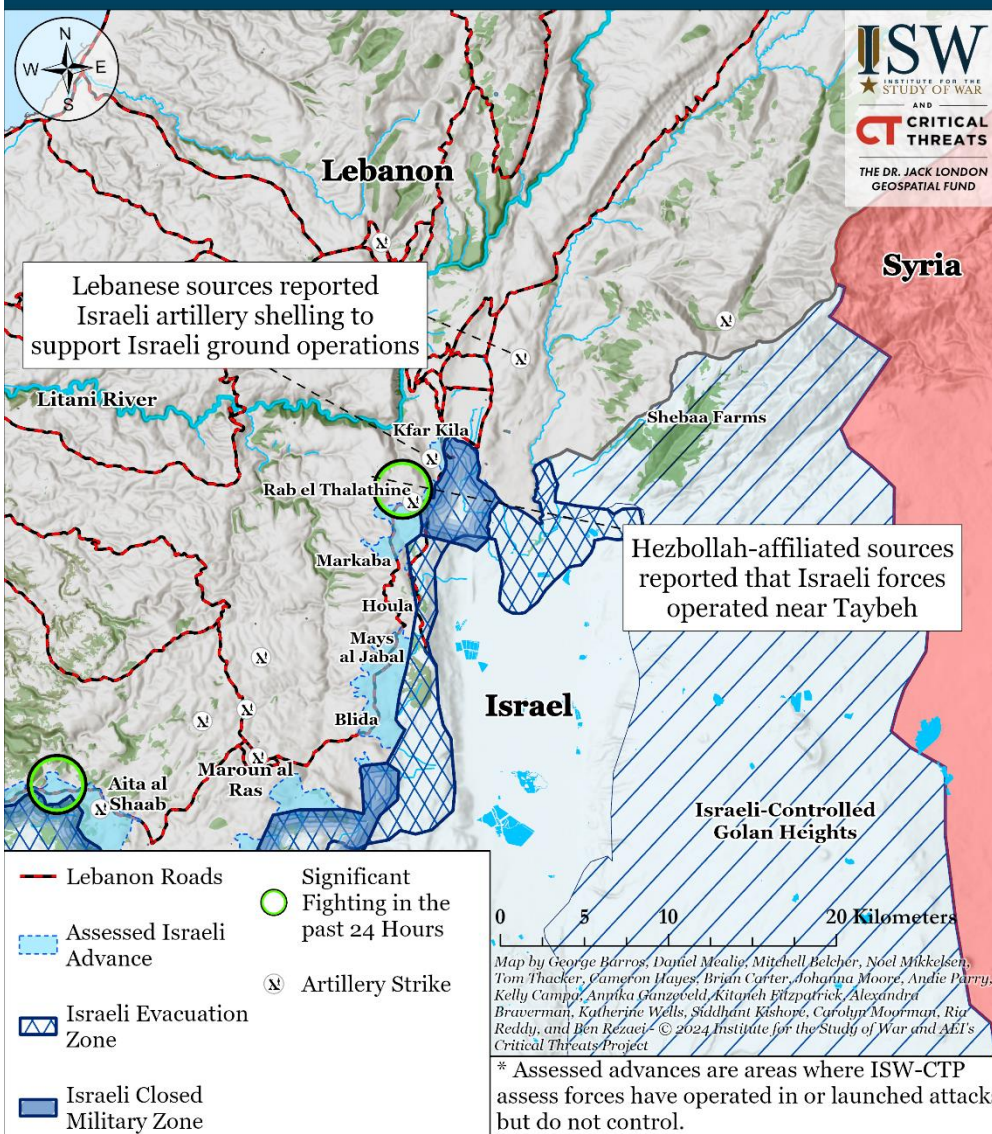
Lebanese sources reported that the IDF conducted artillery shelling in the town of Shebaa.[55] The IDF said on October 15 that the IDF 810th Brigade (210th Division) has conducted several “targeted raids” from Mount Dov into the mountainous areas in Hasbaya District over the past three weeks.[56]

Hezbollah reported that Israeli forces attempted to enter Taybeh in southeastern Lebanon on October 22.[57] The IDF 98th Division has operated in Taybeh’s adjacent towns and villages since the beginning of IDF ground operations in Lebanon.[58] Hezbollah claimed that fighters engaged Israeli infantry and tank units attempting to advance near Taybeh.[59] Hezbollah said—without providing any evidence—that its attack caused Israeli forces to retreat from the area.[60] Hezbollah also fired rockets and anti-tank guided missiles targeting Israeli infantry and armor between Taybeh and Odaisseh and Rab al Thalatheen, which are respectively east and south of Taybeh.[61]

The IDF 98th Division continued operations in southeastern Lebanon on October 22. The 98th Division located a Hezbollah operations room and directed an airstrike that killed 15 fighters in the compound.[62] The IDF 55th Paratroopers Brigade (Res.) directed an airstrike targeting two armed Radwan SOF fighters barricaded in a building.[63] The 55th Paratroopers Brigade also separately destroyed a launcher with four "missiles" ready to launch at Israel.[64] Israeli forces located and destroyed a weapons warehouse in southeastern Lebanon.[65] Hezbollah fighters targeted Israeli forces operating in Markaba with rockets.[66]

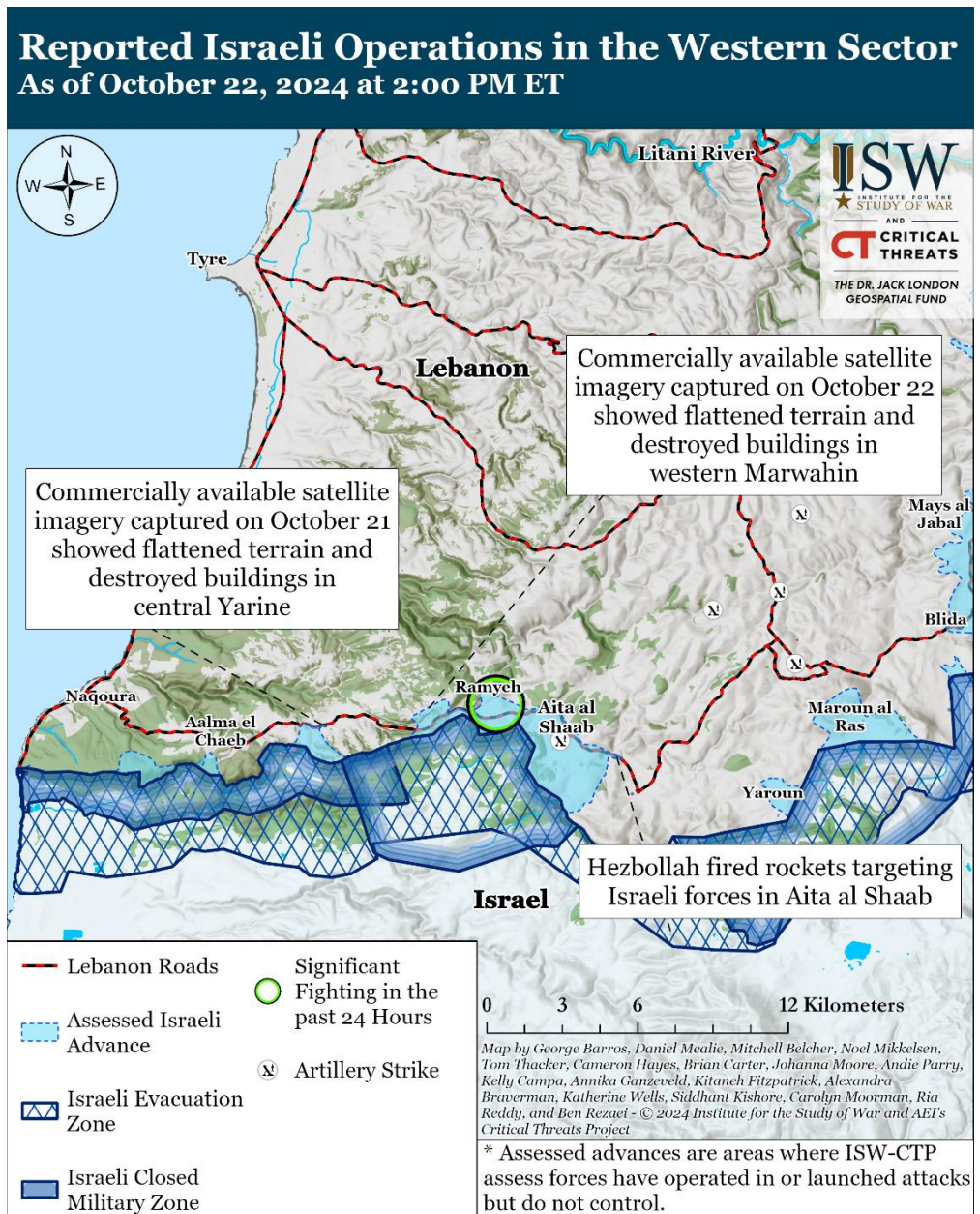
The IDF 91st Division continued operations in southeast Lebanon on October 22.[67] The IDF said that the IDF 3rd Infantry Brigade (Res.) has operated in both built-up residential areas and mountainous terrain and raided numerous Hezbollah compounds and weapons depots.[68] The 3rd Infantry Brigade has destroyed about 150 Hezbollah targets, including underground infrastructure and weapons stockpiles.[69] The 3rd Infantry Brigade also directed an airstrike targeting a cache of weapons hidden in a mosque.[70] The IDF said that it detected secondary explosions after the strike.[71] The IDF said that the 91st Division has also continued to conduct “defensive missions” in northern Israeli towns.[72]

Reported Israeli Operations in the Eastern Sector As of October 22, 2024 at 2:00 PM ET



The IDF 36th Division continued operations in Aita al Shaab on October 22.[73] Geolocated local footage showed IDF armor moving away from Aita al Shaab towards Rmeish on the Aita al Shaab-Rmeish road, east of Aita al Shaab.[74] Lebanese sources reported that Israeli ground forces conducted operations while Israeli artillery and airstrikes targeted the area.[75] The IDF 188th Armored Brigade destroyed several “operational” facilities and a Hezbollah weapons depot in southern Lebanon.[76] The 188th Armored Brigade also located numerous underground tunnel shafts, including tunnels that served as the headquarters for the region’s Hezbollah unit.[77] Hezbollah fighters fired rockets at Israeli forces operating in Aita al Shaab.[78] Lebanese sources also reported that the IDF clashed with Hezbollah fighters in al Qouzah, northwest of Aita al Shaab.[79] The IDF 36th Division has been operating near Aita al Shaab and Ramyeh since October 13.[80]

The IDF 146th Division continued operations in southwest Lebanon on October 22.[81] Commercially available satellite imagery captured on October 21 showed flattened terrain and destroyed buildings in central Yarine, indicating that Israeli forces operated in the area. The IDF 146th Division killed Hezbollah fighters, attacked dozens of militia targets, and destroyed weapons.[82] IDF Northern Command commander Major General Ori Gordin visited the 146th Division to conduct a situational assessment with the division’s commander and the IDF 205th Armored Brigade (Res.) commander.[83] Gordin said that Israeli operations have ”dealt a very serious blow to Hezbollah’s command and control.”[84]



The IDF continued its air campaign to degrade Hezbollah’s capabilities and infrastructure on October 22. The IDF said it struck numerous Hezbollah targets across Lebanon in the past day, including Hezbollah munition depots and military infrastructure in Dahiye,

Beirut.[85] The IDF Air Force also struck a Hezbollah naval base in Dahiyeh near Rafik Hariri International Airport in Dahiyeh.[86] The IDF said that Hezbollah’s naval unit used the position as a vital operational center to instruct its naval forces and store naval vessels used for maritime attacks against Israel.[87] The Lebanese Health Ministry reported that 63 people were killed in Israeli attacks on October 21, marking the most fatalities in a single day since September 30.[88]

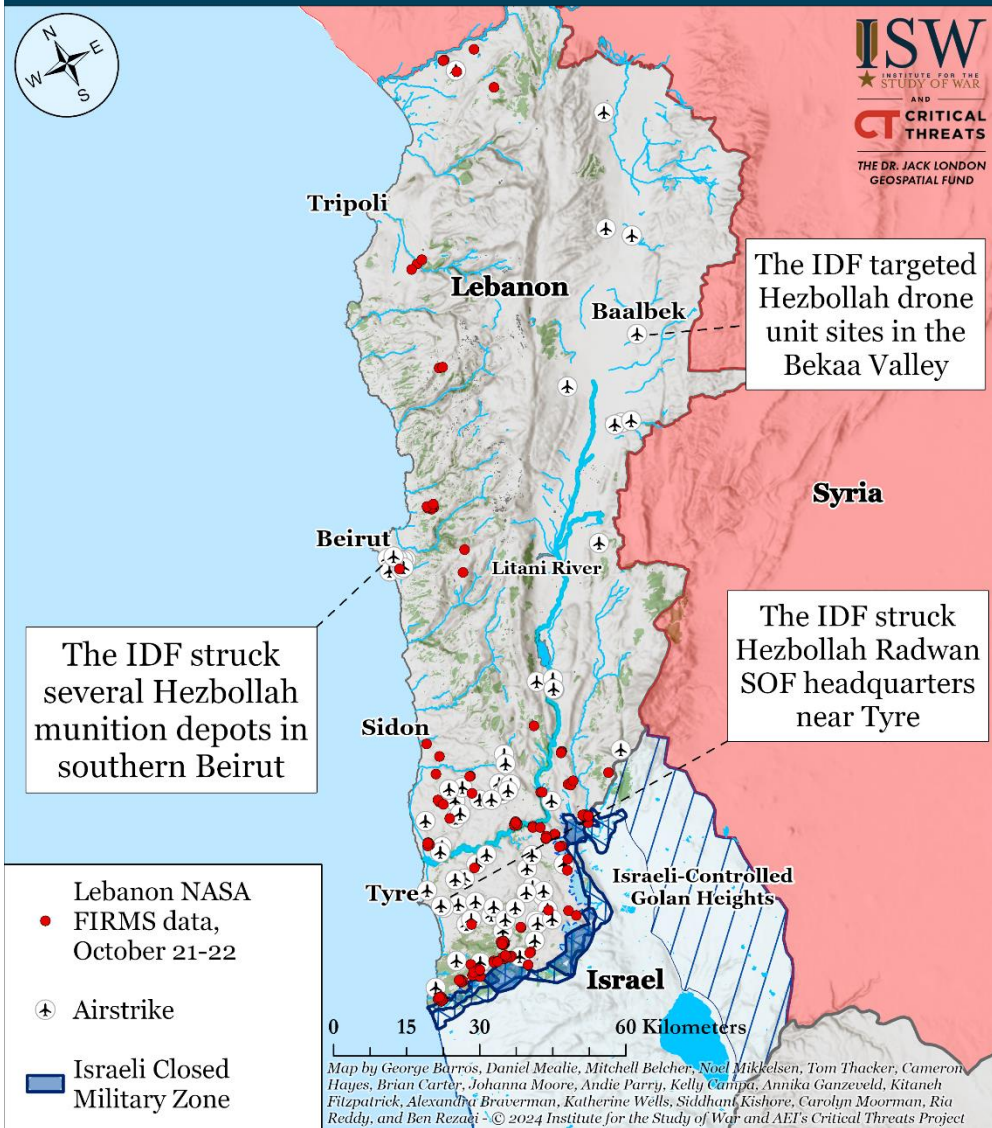
The IDF conducted airstrikes targeting Hezbollah drone assets on October 22. The IDF said it struck three headquarters for Unit 127—Hezbollah’s drone unit—“deep in Lebanon.”[89] The IDF conducted several strikes targeting the Bekaa Valley on October 22, although it is unclear which strikes were associated with Hezbollah’s drone unit.[90] The IDF said that Unit 127 used some of these positions to launch drones towards Israel.[91] The IDF vowed to respond to Hezbollah’s October 13 attack on an IDF base in Binyamina, Israel, that killed four Israeli soldiers by targeting Hezbollah’s drone unit and drone production infrastructure.[92]

The IDF struck an unspecified Hezbollah target nearby the Rafik Hariri University Hospital in the Jnah neighborhood of Beirut.[93] The strike killed at least 18 individuals.[94] UN Human Rights Chief Volker Turk stated that he was “appalled” by the strike and that any incidents that affect hospitals must be investigated thoroughly and promptly.[95] US State Department spokesperson Vedant Patel stated that the US asked Israel for additional information about the strike.[96] The IDF told the Washington Post that the hospital itself and its operations were not affected nor were the targets of the strike.[97]

The IDF Air Force also struck about ten Hezbollah command-and control-complexes outside of Tyre, southern Lebanon.[98] The IDF stated it struck a Radwan SOF headquarters located in al Hosh.[99] Hezbollah used these positions to plan and conduct its operations against Israeli civilians and Israeli forces.[100] The IDF issued warnings to residents of al Hosh to evacuate at least one kilometer from Hezbollah infrastructure prior to the strikes.[101]

Israeli Air Campaign in Lebanon

As of October 22, 2024 at 2:00 PM ET

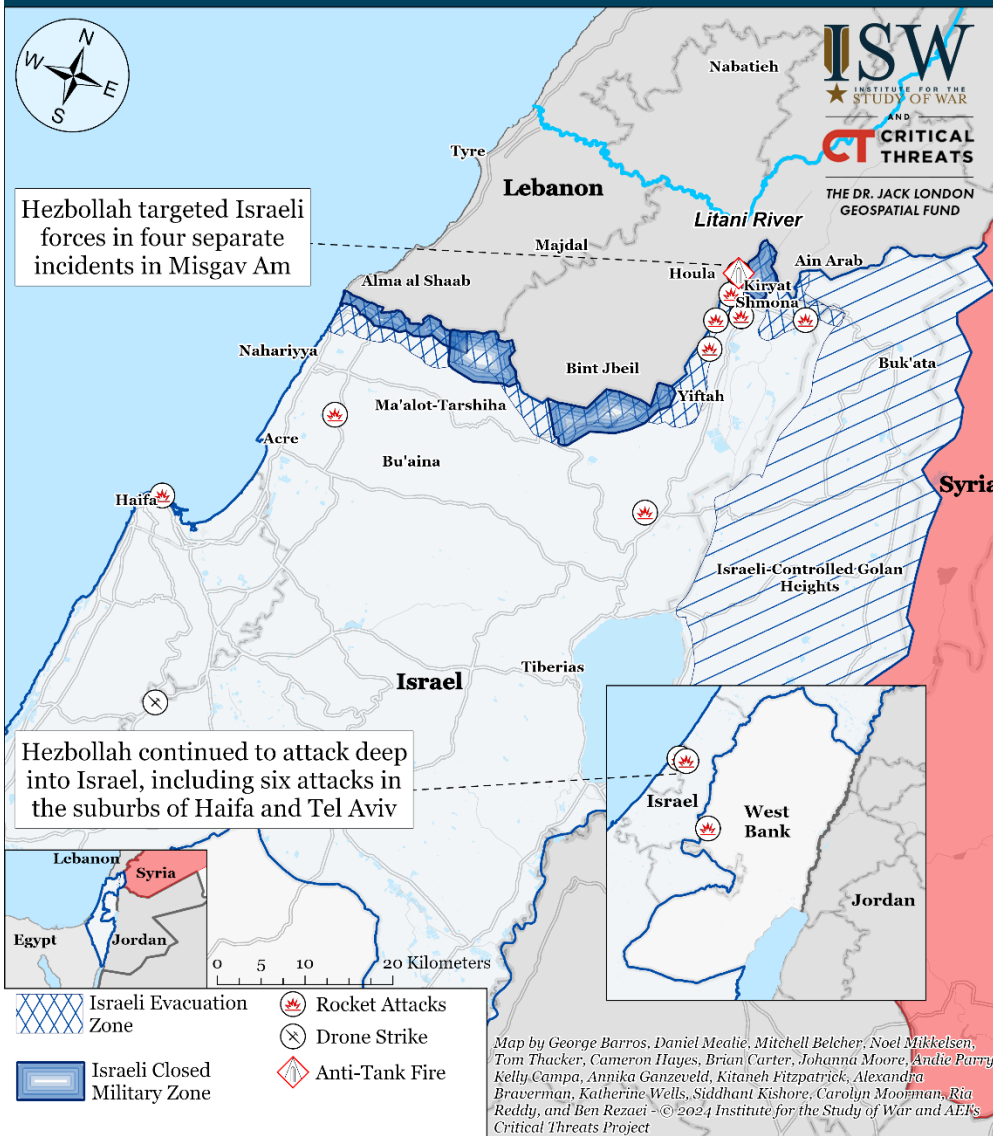


This map illustrates individual Israeli air and artillery strikes based on local Lebanese reporting. This map depicts strikes reported from 2:00pm ET on October 21 to 2:00pm ET on October 22. This map is not exhaustive. CTP-ISW cannot independently verify the locations of Israeli strikes.

Hezbollah conducted at least 17 attacks into Israel since CTP-ISW's last data cutoff on October 21.[102] Hezbollah continued to target civilian sites in northern Israel including Kiryat Shmona, Hatzor, and Beit HaEmek.[103] Hezbollah targeted Israeli forces in four separate incidents in Misgav Am.[104] Hezbollah continued to conduct long range attacks into central Israel, including six attacks in the suburbs of Haifa and Tel Aviv.[105] The IDF detected one rocket fired from Lebanon that landed in the West Bank near Modi'in Illit on October 22.[106]

Attacks into Northern Israel from Lebanon

As of October 22, 2024 at 2:00 PM ET



Iran and the Axis of Resistance

Iraqi Parliament Speaker Mohsen al Mandalawi traveled to Beirut on October 22 as part of Iraqi diplomatic efforts to prevent the October 7 War from escalating further.[107] Mandalawi is affiliated with the Shia Coordination Framework, which is a loose coalition of Iranian-backed Iraqi political parties.[108] Mandalawi will meet with Lebanese Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri and other unspecified Lebanese officials on October 23.[109] Iraqi media reported that Mandalawi's arrival in Beirut coincided with an Israeli airstrike near Beirut International Airport.[110] Mandalawi was not injured in the strike.[111]

The Islamic Resistance in Iraq--a coalition of Iranian-backed Iraqi militias—has claimed two attacks targeting Israel since CTP-ISW's last data cutoff on October 21. The claims include the following:

- A drone attack targeting a “vital target” in Tiberias, which is an Israeli city located on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee.[112]
- A drone attack targeting a “vital target” in the Jordan Valley.[113]

Israeli officials and media have not commented on the attack claims at the time of this writing.

Iranian Artesh Air Force Commander Brigadier General Hamid Vahedi traveled to Islamabad, Pakistan, on October 22.[114] Vahedi will visit the “Sindh Shield 2024” military exercise at the Mushaf Air Base in Sargodha, Pakistan, on October 23.[115] Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Turkey are participating in the exercise.[116] Vahedi will also meet with Pakistani Air Force Commander Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmad Babar and Pakistani Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir in the coming days.[117]

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian met with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in Kazan, Russia, on October 23.[118] Pezeshkian and Modi discussed the development of the Chabahar Port and the International North South Transport Corridor.[119] Pezeshkian emphasized that Iran seeks to develop political and economic relations with India through its membership in BRICS.[120] Pezeshkian and Modi also discussed the October 7 War, with Modi emphasizing the need to protect civilians in the Gaza Strip and Lebanon.[121]

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian submitted the budget for the next Persian calendar year (March 2025 - March 2026) to the Iranian Parliament on October 22.[122] Pezeshkian stated that the budget bill was compliant with the seventh five-year development plan, which is a former Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi-era agenda aimed at increasing economic growth, minimizing government debt, and optimizing the state budget.[123] Pezeshkian emphasized that the proposal prioritizes strengthening Iran's military and defense budget "given the regional conditions." [124] The proposed budget forecasts the price of oil per barrel to be \$63, and predicts a thirty-two percent increase in revenue from oil, gas, and related products.[125] The total proposed budget amounts to approximately 6,400 trillion tomans, or \$152 billion USD, a nearly \$45 billion USD increase from Iran's approved budget for the current Persian calendar year.[126] Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf stated that the parliament will start reviewing the budget on October 30.[127]

Houthi Spokesperson Yahya Sarea claimed that the Houthis launched a “Palestine 2” ballistic missile targeting Tel Aviv on October 22.[128] Israeli media did not acknowledge the attack. CTP-ISW cannot verify if these attacks took place. The Houthis previously claimed a “Palestine 2” hypersonic missile attack targeting Israel on September 14 that the IDF said that it "partially intercepted." [129]

Local Syrian media reported that 25 Houthi fighters with experience using missiles and drones crossed into Syria from Iraq near the Albu Kamal border crossing.[130] Houthi fighters have previously cooperated with Iranian-backed Iraqi militias in the Kataib Hezbollah-

controlled Jurf al Sakhr area south of Baghdad.[131] Kataib Hezbollah is an Iranian-backed Iraqi militia group. CENTCOM conducted an airstrike in late July 2024 that killed a high-ranking Houthi commander in Jurf al Sakhr.[132] Kataib Hezbollah also controls the Albu Kamal border crossing, which would have allowed it to facilitate the movement of Iranian-backed personnel and Iranian-provided materiel into Syria.[133] CTP-ISW previously reported on increased cooperation between the Houthis and Iranian-backed Iraqi groups, including the Houthis sending a drone expert to Iraq to train Iraqi militia members.[134] Israeli sources have also reported on an increase in Houthi personnel presence in Syria over the past two months.[135]

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