

Iran Update



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The Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute and the Institute for the Study of War (ISW) publish the Iran Update, which provides insights into Iranian and Iranian-sponsored activities that undermine regional stability and threaten US forces and interests. CTP-ISW publishes the Iran Update daily.

Click [here](#) to see CTP and ISW's interactive map of assessed control of terrain in Syria, and [here](#) to see CTP and ISW's interactive map of Israeli ground operations. The Syria map is updated daily alongside the static Syria maps in this report. CTP-ISW ended daily maps of Israeli ground operations in February 2025.

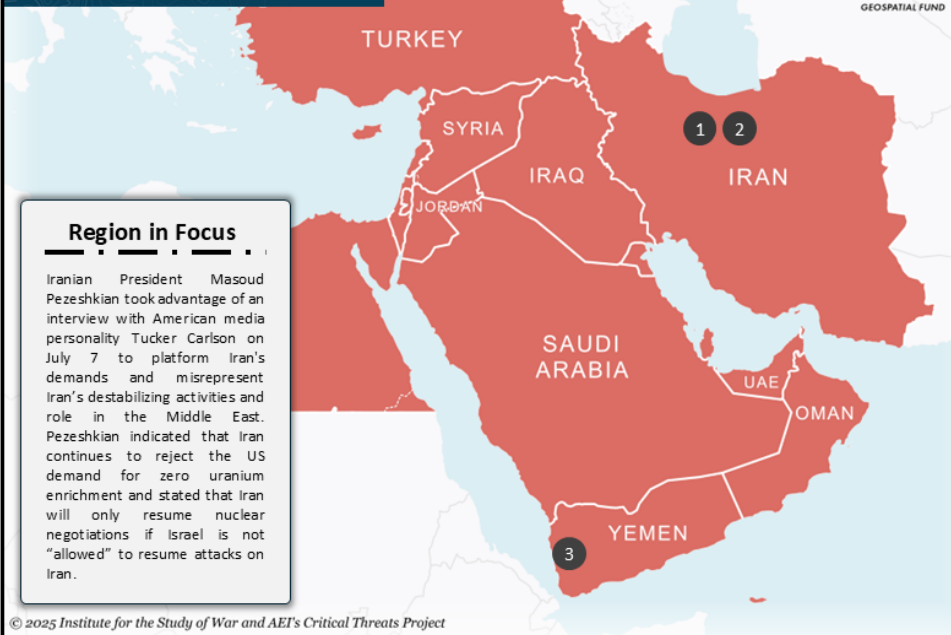
Click [here](#) to see ISW-CTP's interactive map showing the total strikes in Iran since June 12, as well as an interactive timelapse showing the strikes day-by-day.

Key Takeaways

- Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian took advantage of an interview with American media personality Tucker Carlson on July 7 to platform Iran's demands and misrepresent Iran's destabilizing activities and role in the Middle East. Pezeshkian leveraged the interview to falsely present Iran as a peaceful force in the Middle East to a Western audience.
- Senior Iranian officials have claimed that Iran retains a significant missile stockpile that it can use to attack Israel. Israeli airstrikes on Iran between June 12 and 24 likely degraded Iran's missile program, however.
- The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) struck several Houthi targets in Hudaydah Governorate, Yemen. The Israeli strikes follow a Houthi ballistic missile attack targeting Ben Gurion Airport in central Israel on July 5.
- The Houthis claimed responsibility for a July 6 complex attack targeting the Liberian-flagged bulk carrier *Magic Seas* off the coast of Hudaydah, Yemen. The Houthis had not attacked a merchant vessel in the Red Sea since November 2024. This attack highlights that the Houthis remain capable of resuming attacks on ships whenever they want and for reasons they choose.

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July 7, 2025



Region in Focus

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian took advantage of an interview with American media personality Tucker Carlson on July 7 to platform Iran's demands and misrepresent Iran's destabilizing activities and role in the Middle East. Pezeshkian indicated that Iran continues to reject the US demand for zero uranium enrichment and stated that Iran will only resume nuclear negotiations if Israel is not "allowed" to resume attacks on Iran.

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- 1 **TEHRAN, IRAN.** Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian took advantage of an interview with American media personality Tucker Carlson on July 7 to platform Iran's demands and misrepresent Iran's destabilizing activities and role in the Middle East. Pezeshkian leveraged the interview to falsely present Iran as a peaceful force in the Middle East to a Western audience.
- 2 **TEHRAN, IRAN.** Senior Iranian officials have claimed that Iran retains a significant missile stockpile that it can use to attack Israel. Israeli airstrikes on Iran between June 12 and 24 likely degraded Iran's missile program, however.
- 3 **HUDAYDAH, YEMEN.** The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) struck several Houthi targets in Hudaydah Governorate, Yemen. The IDF targeted Hudaydah, Ras Issa, and Salif ports, as well as the Ras al Khatib power station. The IDF also struck a vessel that the Houthis seized in November 2023.

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian took advantage of an interview with American media personality Tucker Carlson on July 7 to platform Iran's demands and misrepresent Iran's destabilizing activities and role in the Middle East.[1] Pezeshkian leveraged the interview to falsely present Iran as a peaceful force in the Middle East to a Western audience. Pezeshkian stated that Iran has never sought and will never seek a nuclear weapon.[2] The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) confirmed in May 2025 that Iran conducted undeclared nuclear activities that could support the development of nuclear weapons at three locations in Iran until the early 2000s.[3] The IAEA also reported in May 2025 that Iran possessed 408.6 kilograms of 60 percent enriched uranium, which is enough uranium, if enriched further, to produce nearly 10 nuclear weapons.[4] Pezeshkian claimed that Iran has "never shied away from [IAEA] verification" and is

"ready for another inspection." [5] Iran has historically restricted IAEA oversight in Iran, including by withdrawing the certifications of several inspectors in 2023. [6] Iran's Guardian Council approved a bill on June 26 that suspends Iran's cooperation with the IAEA and bars inspectors from accessing Iran's nuclear facilities. [7] Pezeshkian also claimed that Iran has "always been after peace." [8] Iran has cultivated a transnational coalition of partners and proxies since 1979 to pursue its strategic interests, including expelling the United States from the Middle East and destroying the Israeli state. Iran and the Axis of Resistance have conducted numerous attacks against Israel and US forces across the region. Iran supported the Axis of Resistance against Israel during the October 7 War and has sought to reconstitute its proxies, such as Hezbollah, after the war.

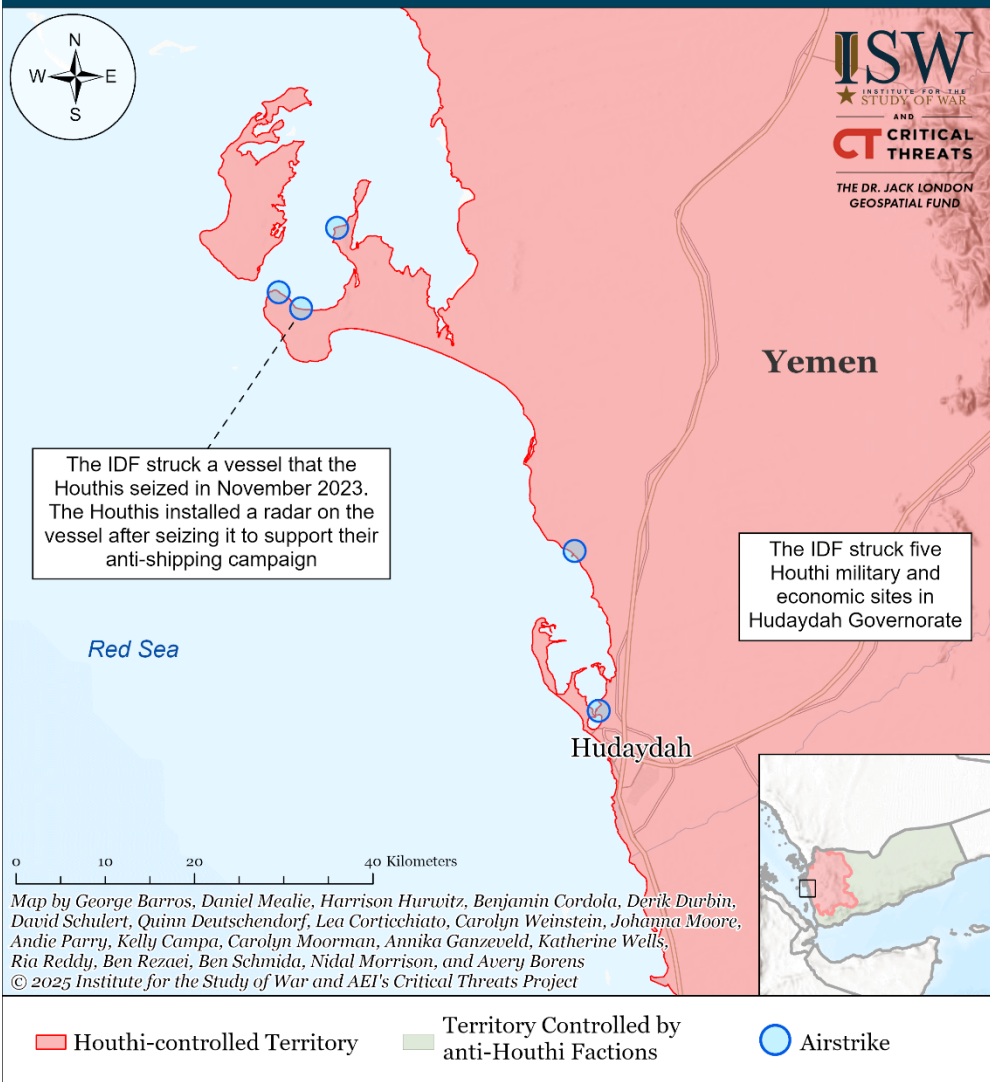
Pezeshkian separately reiterated Iran's demands for nuclear negotiations. Pezeshkian indicated that Iran continues to reject the US demand for zero uranium enrichment and stated that Iran will only resume nuclear negotiations if Israel is not "allowed" to resume attacks on Iran. Senior US and Israeli officials have indicated that they could resume attacks on Iran if Iran attempts to reconstitute its nuclear program. [9]

Senior Iranian officials have claimed that Iran retains a significant missile stockpile that it can use to attack Israel. [10] Israeli airstrikes on Iran between June 12 and 24 likely degraded Iran's missile program, however. Supreme Leader Military Affairs Adviser Major General Yahya Rahim Safavi stated on July 7 that Iran has produced thousands of missiles and drones and warned that Iran still retains the capability to attack Israel. [11] The IDF reported on June 17 that it had destroyed "about half" of Iran's ballistic missile launchers and between 35 to 45 percent of Iran's ballistic missile stockpile. [12] Israeli airstrikes also destroyed at least 20 Iranian missile bases and several factories related to Iran's ballistic missile program. [13]

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) struck several Houthi targets in Hudaydah Governorate, Yemen, on July 6. [14] The IDF targeted Hudaydah, Ras Issa, and Salif ports, as well as the Ras al Khatib power station. [15] The IDF also struck a vessel that the Houthis seized in November 2023. The Houthis installed a radar on the vessel after seizing it to support their anti-shipping campaign in the Red Sea. The Israeli strikes follow a Houthi ballistic missile attack targeting Ben Gurion Airport in central Israel on July 5. [16] Israel intercepted the missile before it entered Israeli airspace. [17] Israel last struck Houthi targets in Yemen on June 10. [18]

The Houthis claimed on July 7 that they conducted multiple ballistic missile and drone attacks targeting Israel in response to the Israeli airstrikes on Hudaydah Governorate. [19] The Houthis claimed that they launched ballistic missiles at Ben Gurion Airport, Ashdod Port, and the Ashkelon power station, as well as eight drones at Eilat Port. The IDF fired interceptors at two Houthi ballistic missiles on July 6, and a third Houthi ballistic missile fell before it reached Israeli territory on July 7. [20] The IDF also intercepted a Houthi drone on July 7. [21]

Israeli Airstrikes near Hudaydah July 7, 2025 at 2:00 PM EST



The Houthis claimed responsibility for a July 6 complex attack targeting the Liberian-flagged bulk carrier *Magic Seas* off the coast of Hudaydah, Yemen.[22] Houthi military spokesperson Yahya Sarea claimed on July 7 that the ship had completely sunk.[23] The *Magic Seas* was carrying fertilizer near the Zubair Islands when Houthi fighters on eight small vessels fired small arms, rocket-propelled grenades, and at least two one-way attack naval surface drones at the ship.[24] A Yemen analyst suggested that Houthi fighters used one-way attack naval surface drones and fast attack craft to attack the *Magic Seas* to conserve the group's stockpile of anti-ship ballistic and cruise missiles following the Israel-Iran War.[25] Iran has reportedly provided the Houthis with anti-ship ballistic and cruise missiles and helped the group develop its anti-ship missile manufacturing capabilities.[26] The IDF struck several missile production facilities in Iran during the Israel-Iran War. It is possible that Iran used some of these facilities to produce missiles or missile components for its proxies and partners, including the Houthis.

The Houthis claimed that they targeted the *Magic Seas* because the vessel belonged to a company that has repeatedly “violated” the Houthis’ ban on ships entering Israeli ports.[27] The Houthis have launched hundreds of drones and missiles targeting Israel and vessels near Yemen since the Houthis began their campaign to enforce an economic blockade on Israel in November 2023.[28] This campaign has frequently targeted vessels that have no clear ties to Israel, however.[29] The Houthis had not attacked a merchant vessel in the Red Sea since November 2024, though they have attacked US Navy warships.[30] The Houthis agreed to a ceasefire with the United States in May 2025, in which the Houthis agreed to cease attacks on international shipping.[31] The Houthis remain capable of resuming attacks on ships whenever they want and for reasons they choose, despite the ceasefire.

Houthi attacks on international shipping impose an economic toll on the United States and the broader international community. Shipping costs around the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden increased significantly after the Houthis began attacking vessels there in October 2023. These costs have yet to return to their pre-October 2023 levels, even though the Houthis did not conduct any attacks between November 2024 and July 6.[32] The resumption of Houthi attacks will likely raise shipping costs further, as transit around Yemen becomes riskier and international shipping companies take longer and more expensive routes around the Cape of Good Hope.[33]

BRICS member states reiterated their diplomatic support for Iran during the 2025 BRICS Summit in Brazil. Iranian Foreign Affairs Minister Abbas Araghchi attended the summit in Rio de Janeiro on July 6 and 7.[34] Russian Foreign Affairs Minister Sergei Lavrov offered Russia’s diplomatic assistance to resolve the Iranian nuclear issue during a meeting with Araghchi on July 6.[35] The Russian Foreign Affairs Ministry condemned the US and Israeli strikes on Iran and stressed that all issues surrounding Iran’s nuclear program must be resolved through diplomacy.[36] Reuters previously reported on June 23 that Iran was unsatisfied with Russia’s support for Iran during the Israel-Iran War, citing unspecified Iranian sources.[37] Araghchi also met with officials from South Africa, Malaysia, Brazil, and Turkey at the summit.[38] BRICS member states declared on July 6 that the strikes on Iran violated international law and the United Nations Charter.[39]

The IDF detained Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) Quds Force operatives along the Golan Heights-Syria border on July 7.[40] Israeli forces entered Syrian territory to detain seven individuals in Kwdana, Quneitra Province.[41] Israeli forces transferred the detainees to Israeli territory for questioning.[42] The IDF said that the individuals posed a threat to an IDF outpost in the area.[43] The IDF conducted a similar operation in southern Syria on July 2, after which it released three men whom it had identified as members of an Iranian cell.[44]

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