



## Iran Update, March 24, 2024

**Andie Parry, Annika Ganzeveld, Peter Mills, and Brian Carter**  
**Information Cutoff: 2:00 pm ET**

**NOTE:** CTP-ISW will publish abbreviated updates on March 23 and 24, 2024. Detailed coverage will resume Monday, March 25, 2024.

**CORRECTION:** CTP-ISW inaccurately reported on March 23 that the IDF had concluded its operation at al Shifa Hospital. This operation is still ongoing, and the IDF did not report on March 23 that the operation had ended.

*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.*

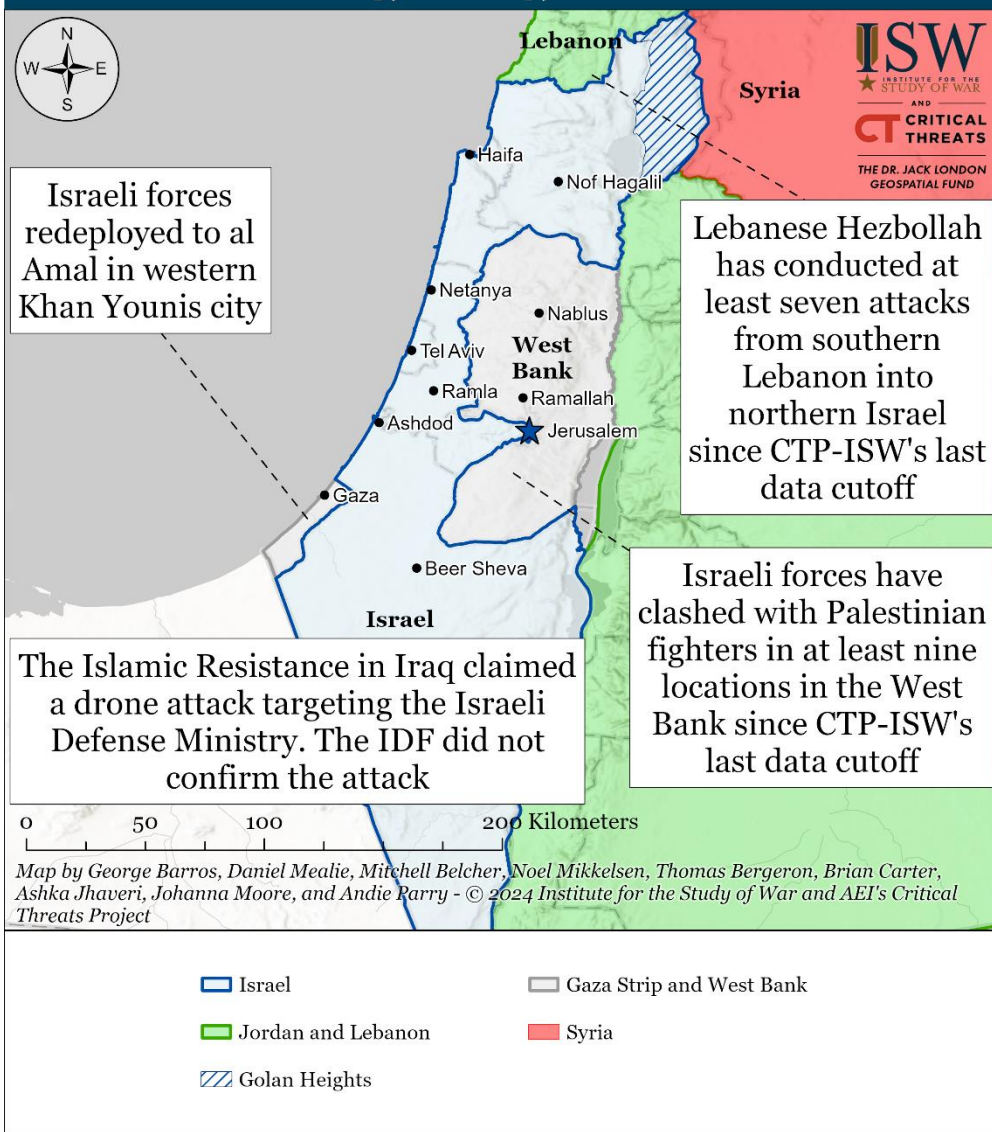
*Click [here](#) to see CTP and ISW's interactive map of Israeli ground operations. This map is updated daily alongside the static maps present in this report.*

### **Key Takeaways:**

- **Northern Gaza Strip:** The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) engaged Palestinian militias north of Gaza City, including in Beit Hanoun.

- Israeli forces continued operations near al Shifa Hospital, Gaza City, on March 24. CTP-ISW inaccurately reported on March 23 that the IDF had concluded its operation at al Shifa Hospital. This operation is still ongoing, and the IDF did not report on March 23 that the operation had al Shifa had ended.
- **Southern Gaza Strip:** The IDF launched a second clearing operation in al Amal, western Khan Younis, on March 24.
- **Lebanon:** The IDF conducted an airstrike targeting a Hezbollah “weapons workshop” in Baalbek, the Bekaa Valley, on March 23 following a Hezbollah attack targeting an Israeli air defense site in northern Israel.
- **West Bank:** Israeli forces have clashed with Palestinian fighters in at least nine locations in the West Bank since CTP-ISW's last data cutoff on March 23.
- **Yemen:** The Houthis launched five anti-ship ballistic missiles targeting the Panamanian-flagged, Chinese-owned, and Chinese-operated oil tanker Huang Pu in the Red Sea on March 23.

# Israel-Hamas War as of March 24, 2024, 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.

**The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) engaged Palestinian militias north of Gaza City.** Local Palestinian sources reported that Israeli armor entered eastern Beit Hanoun on March 23.[1] The IDF acknowledged on March 24 that its forces are operating in Beit Hanoun, saying that the IDF Air Force conducted an airstrike on a target in Beit Hanoun that “posed a threat to the forces operating in the area.”[2] The al Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigade, which is the self-proclaimed military wing of Fatah and aligned with Hamas in the war, targeted Israeli armor with a rocket-propelled grenade east of Beit Hanoun on

March 23.[3] The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), which is a leftist Palestinian militia aligned with Hamas in the war, reported its fighters detonated an improvised explosive device targeting Israeli armor in al Shati Camp, northern Gaza City on March 23.[4]

**Israeli forces continued operations near al Shifa Hospital, Gaza City, on March 24.**[5] The IDF said that it confirmed 480 of the 800 detainees it detained at al Shifa Hospital are linked to Palestinian Islamic Jihad or Hamas.[6] The IDF 401st Brigade (162nd Division) and Israeli special operations forces seized weapons, destroyed militia infrastructure, and engaged Palestinian fighters in the al Shifa Hospital area over the past 24 hours.[7] Palestinian militias conducted at least nine attacks targeting Israeli armor and infantry near al Shifa Hospital.[8] Hamas targeted three Israeli tanks with explosively formed penetrators (EFPs) and rocket-propelled grenades south of al Shifa Hospital on March 23.[9]

**The IDF Nahal Brigade (162nd Division) continued clearing operations in the central and northern Gaza Strip on March 24.** The Nahal Brigade raided a drone manufacturing site belonging to the Popular Resistance Committees (PRC), a Palestinian militia aligned with Hamas in the war, in the central Gaza Strip and killed Palestinian fighters guarding the site.[10] The DFLP targeted Israeli armor south of Deir al Balah with rocket-propelled grenades.[11]

**The IDF launched a second clearing operation in al Amal, western Khan Younis, on March 24.** The IDF previously operated in al Amal in February and early March 2024 before shifting ground operations to northern Khan Younis.[12] The IDF said that the IDF and Shin Bet redeployed to al Amal based on intelligence that Palestinian militias were using civilian infrastructure there for military purposes.[13] The IDF said that the clearing operations will continue to dismantle militia infrastructure and target remaining Palestinian fighters.[14] The IDF Air Force conducted approximately 40 airstrikes on militia targets to assist the IDF 89th Commando Brigade, Givati Brigade, and the 7th Brigade's maneuver into al Amal.[15] Local Palestinian sources reported that the IDF isolated al Nasser Hospital and al Amal Hospital in northern al Amal on the early morning of March 24.[16] The IDF issued a statement that called on Hamas to "stop using hospitals and other civilian facilities as a shield." [17] Palestinian Islamic Jihad said that its fighters targeted Israeli armor with rocket-propelled grenades, anti-tank guided missiles, and small arms in the al Amal area on March 24.[18]

**The IDF 7th Brigade and Kfir Brigade continued clearing operations in Qarara, northern Khan Younis, on March 24.**[19] The brigades killed Palestinian fighters near the Israel-Gaza Strip border and targeted a meeting site for Hamas fighters in Qarara.[20] Israeli forces seized weapons caches and an IDF helicopter struck a tunnel shaft in Qarara.[21] Palestinian militias did not claim attacks targeting Israeli forces in Qarara on March 24.

# Reported Israeli Ground Operations in the Gaza Strip as of March 24, 2024, 2:00 PM ET

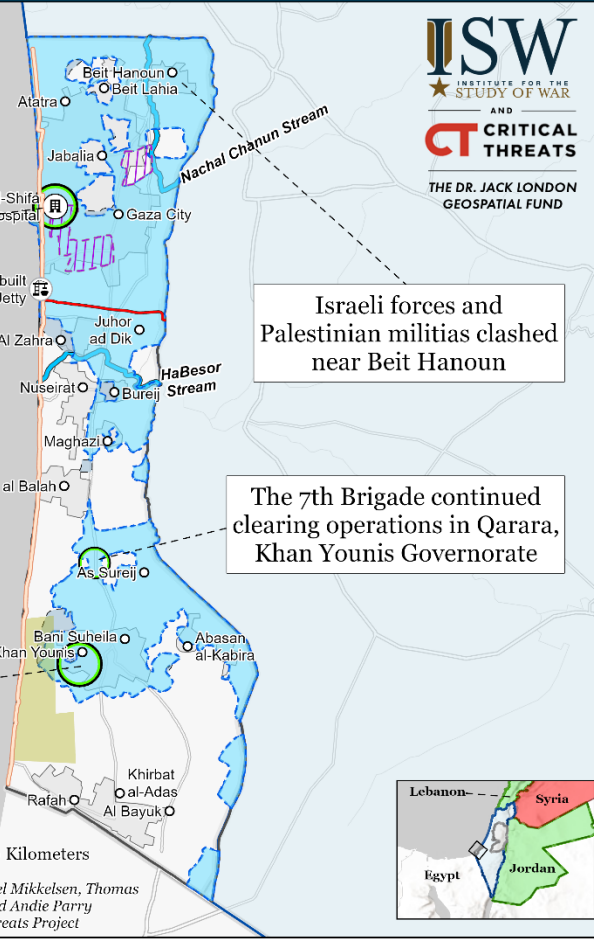


Israeli forces continued clearing operations in and around al Shifa Hospital

Israeli forces and Palestinian militias clashed near Beit Hanoun

The 7th Brigade continued clearing operations in Qarara, Khan Younis Governorate

The IDF redeployed forces to begin a second clearing operation in al Amal, western Khan Younis



0 5 10 20 Kilometers

Map by George Barros, Daniel Mealie, Mitchell Belcher, Noel Mikkelsen, Thomas Bergeron, Brian Carter, Ashka Jhaveri, Johanna Moore, and Andie Parry © 2024 Institute for the Study of War and AEI's Critical Threats Project



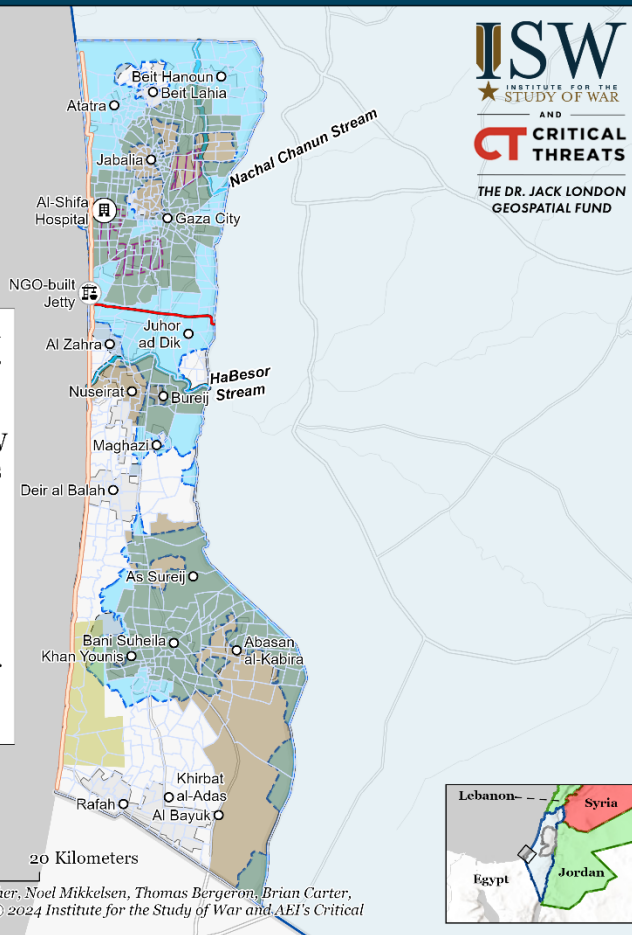
- Israel
- Reported Israeli Clearing Operations\*
- Al-Mawasi Humanitarian Zone
- Significant Water Obstacles
- Gaza Strip
- IDF-Declared Humanitarian Corridor on Road 230
- Densely Urban Areas
- Jordan and Lebanon
- Claimed Furthest Israeli Advances
- Israeli-Built Highway Route 749
- Syria
- Areas Reportedly Infiltrated by Palestinian Militias

\* 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 March 24, 2024, 2:00 PM ET



CTP-ISW's "Israeli Announced Evacuation Zones" layer shows Israeli evacuation zones announced by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). CTP-ISW used IDF maps and statements to create this layer. Where IDF maps cover part of a zone this layer covers the whole zone to avoid understating the evacuation order. The IDF began announcing these evacuation zones on December 2, 2023, at 0222 ET on X (Twitter)



Map by George Barros, Daniel Mealie, Mitchell Belcher, Noel Mikkelsen, Thomas Bergeron, Brian Carter, Ashka Jhaveri, Johanna Moore, and Andie Parry - © 2024 Institute for the Study of War and AEI's Critical Threats Project

Israel	Reported Israeli Clearing Operations*	Al-Mawasi Humanitarian Zone	Israeli Announced Evacuation Zones
Gaza Strip	Claimed Furthest Israeli Advances	IDF-Declared Humanitarian Corridor on Road 230	Densely Urban Areas
Jordan and Lebanon	Areas Reportedly Infiltrated by Palestinian Militias	Israeli-Built Highway Route 749	Significant Water Obstacles
Syria			

\* 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

Palestinian militias did not conduct indirect fire attacks from the Gaza Strip into Israel on March 24.

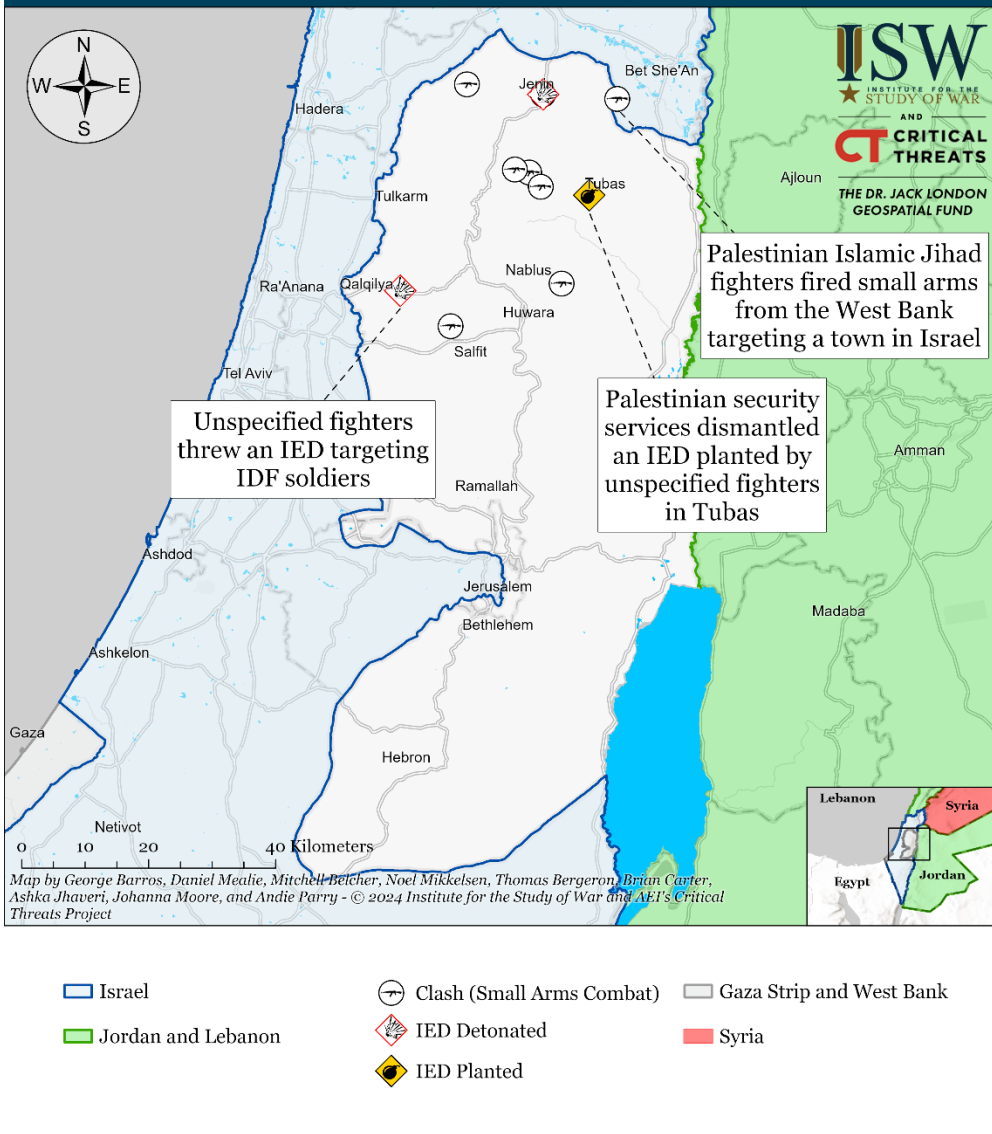
## West Bank

### Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

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

**Israeli forces have clashed with Palestinian fighters in at least nine locations in the West Bank since CTP-ISW's last data cutoff on March 23.[22]**

# Clashes in the West Bank as of March 24, 2024, 2:00 PM ET



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

## **Southern Lebanon and Golan Heights**

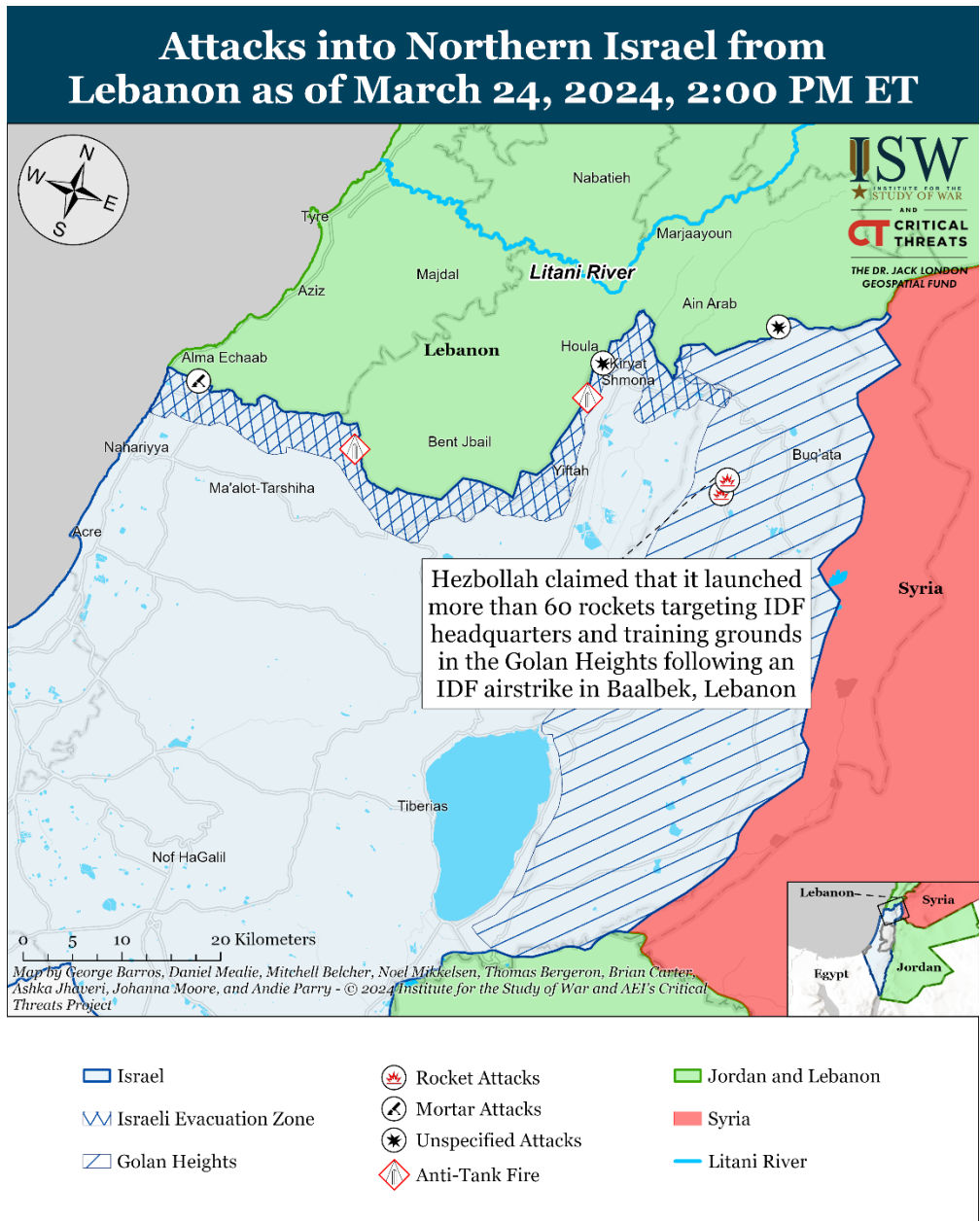
### **Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:**

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

**Lebanese Hezbollah has conducted at least seven attacks from southern Lebanon into northern Israel since CTP-ISW's last data cutoff on March 23.[23]**

**The IDF conducted an airstrike targeting a Hezbollah “weapons workshop” in Baalbek, the Bekaa Valley, on March 23 following a Hezbollah attack targeting an Israeli air**

**defense site in northern Israel.[24]** This is the fourth time that the IDF has conducted airstrikes in the Bekaa Valley since October 7.[25] The Bekaa Valley is an area that contains significant Hezbollah military infrastructure including training centers, weapons storage sites, and ballistic missile production facilities.[26] Hezbollah claimed that it launched more than 60 rockets targeting IDF headquarters and training grounds in the Golan Heights after the IDF airstrike in Baalbek.[27] Israeli media separately reported that a likely IDF airstrike killed an unspecified Syrian individual in Souairi in the Bekaa Valley on March 24.[28]



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



## **Iran and Axis of Resistance**

### **Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:**

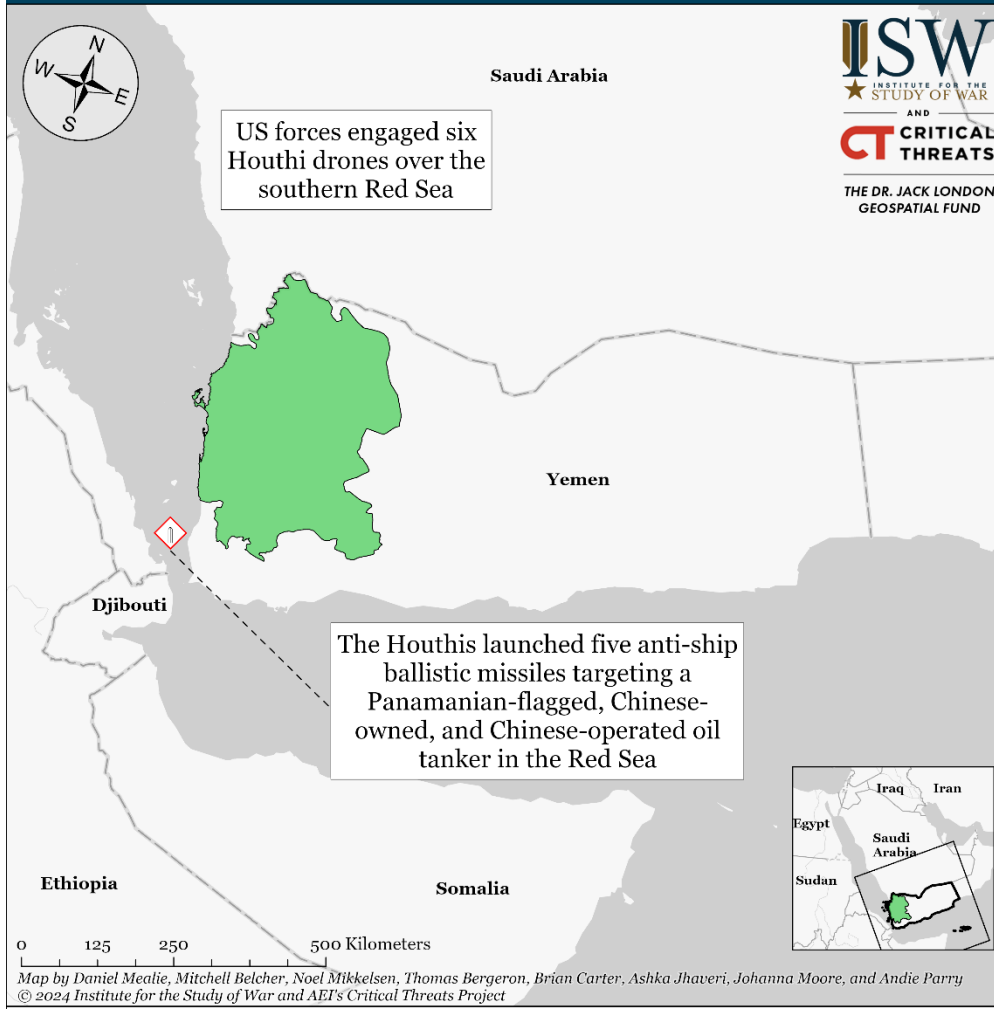
- Demonstrate the capability and willingness of Iran and the Axis of Resistance to escalate against the United States and Israel on multiple fronts
- Set conditions to fight a regional war on multiple fronts

**The Islamic Resistance in Iraq—a coalition of Iranian-backed Iraqi militias—claimed a drone attack targeting the Israeli Defense Ministry on March 23.[29]** Israeli officials have not commented on the claimed attack at the time of writing. The Islamic Resistance in Iraq also vowed to “escalate” its attacks during the month of Ramadan, which began on March 10 and ends on April 9.[30]

**The Houthis launched five anti-ship ballistic missiles targeting the Panamanian-flagged, Chinese-owned, and Chinese-operated oil tanker Huang Pu in the Red Sea on March 23.[31]** The attack caused a fire on the Huang Pu, which the crew quickly extinguished. The Houthis targeted the Huang Pu despite earlier Houthi claims that the group would provide safe passage to Chinese and Russian ships transiting the Red Sea.[32] The Houthis mistakenly launched an anti-ship ballistic missile targeting a tanker south of Yemen carrying Russian oil in early January 2024.[33]

**US forces engaged six Houthi drones over the southern Red Sea on March 23.[34]** Five of the drones crashed into the Red Sea while the sixth drone flew back into Houthi-controlled territory in Yemen. CENTCOM assessed that the drones presented an imminent threat to US, coalition, and commercial vessels in the Red Sea.[35]

# Houthi-controlled Territory in Yemen as of March 24, 2024, 2:00 PM ET



Map by Daniel Mealie, Mitchell Belcher, Noel Mikkelsen, Thomas Bergeron, Brian Carter, Ashka Jhaveri, Johanna Moore, and Andie Parry  
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■ Houthi-controlled Territory in Yemen
 ◆↑ Surface-to-Surface Missile

Note: This notional map is not a definitive assessment of areas under Houthi control in Yemen. This map is primarily an illustrative reference material and does not adhere to the very high level of spatial precision that ISW and CTP uses for our Israel-Hamas and Ukraine control of terrain maps.

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[1] <https://www.aacom.tr/ar/%D8%A5%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%8A%D9%84/%D8%BA%D8%B2%D8%A9-%D8%A2%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AA-> dot



[18] <https://t.me/sarayaps/17593>

<https://t.me/sarayaps/17594>

[19] [www idf.il/187564](http://www.idf.il/187564)

[20] [www idf.il/187564](http://www.idf.il/187564)

[21] [www idf.il/187564](http://www.idf.il/187564)

[22] [https://t.me/elaqsa\\_1965/6102](https://t.me/elaqsa_1965/6102) ; <https://t.me/kataebaqsapalestine/3098> ; <https://t.me/QudsN/385163> ; <https://t.me/sarayajneen/1219> ; [https://t.me/elaqsa\\_1965/6100](https://t.me/elaqsa_1965/6100) ; [https://t.me/elaqsa\\_1965/6101](https://t.me/elaqsa_1965/6101) ; <https://t.me/QudsN/385294> ; <https://t.me/QudsN/385311> ; <https://t.me/QudsN/385415>

[23] [https://t.me/C\\_Military1/47613](https://t.me/C_Military1/47613) ; [https://t.me/C\\_Military1/47626](https://t.me/C_Military1/47626) ; [https://t.me/C\\_Military1/47632](https://t.me/C_Military1/47632) ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/2826> ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/2828> ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/2830>

[24] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1771685157772120461> ; <https://twitter.com/AvichayAdraee/status/1771687475074802042> ; [https://t.me/C\\_Military1/47572](https://t.me/C_Military1/47572)

[25] <https://twitter.com/GLZRadio/status/1771663344178499746>

[26] <https://www.mei.edu/publications/hezbollahs-regional-activities-support-irans-proxy-networks#pt4> ; <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/hezbollahs-urban-missile-factories-put-civilians-risk> ;

[27] [https://t.me/C\\_Military1/47613](https://t.me/C_Military1/47613)

[28] [https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog\\_entry/man-killed-in-alleged-idf-airstrike-near-syrian-border-lebanese-security-source/](https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/man-killed-in-alleged-idf-airstrike-near-syrian-border-lebanese-security-source/) ; <https://twitter.com/GLZRadio/status/1771862252120903916>

[29] <https://t.me/ElamAlmoqawama/998>

[30] <https://t.me/ElamAlmoqawama/998>

[31] <https://twitter.com/CENTCOM/status/1771726107168960751>;

[https://twitter.com/UK\\_MTO/status/1771594936661540933](https://twitter.com/UK_MTO/status/1771594936661540933)

[32] <https://www.voanews.com/a/houthis-won-t-target-chinese-russian-ships-in-red-sea/7446893.html>

[33] <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/houthis-mistakenly-target-tanker-carrying-russian-oil-ambrey-report-2024-01-12/>;

[https://twitter.com/UK\\_MTO/status/1745845788440162362](https://twitter.com/UK_MTO/status/1745845788440162362)

[34] <https://twitter.com/CENTCOM/status/1771726107168960751>

[35] <https://twitter.com/CENTCOM/status/1771726107168960751>