

## Iran Update, August 14, 2024

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Information Cutoff: 2:00pm ET

**Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei indicated that he still believes Iran must respond to Israeli operations targeting senior Axis of Resistance leaders in recent weeks, despite back-channel threats from the United States emphasizing that Israel would respond forcefully to an attack that kills Israeli civilians or causes significant damage.**[1] Khamenei said on August 14 at a meeting with the National Congress of Martyrs of Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province that “according to [his interpretation of] the Quran” any non-tactical retreat, whether in military, political or economic affairs, leads to the wrath of God.[2] Khamenei also said that the United States and Israel are waging “psychological warfare” by exaggerating their ability to harm Iran in response to an Iranian strike.[3] This argument suggests that US and Israeli attempts to discourage a direct strike on Israel have failed to convince the supreme leader and his inner circle. Back-channel messages from the United States have emphasized to both Iran and Lebanese Hezbollah that Israel would respond forcefully to an attack that kills Israeli civilians or causes significant damage.[4]

These most recent statements are consistent with Khamenei’s belief that Iran has a “duty” to respond to Israel’s targeted killing of Haniyeh on July 31.[5] Khamenei will have the final say on how and when Iran’s retaliatory attack on Israel is conducted, and his repeated comments highlighting the necessity of a retaliation suggests that the Iranian regime will likely mount a retaliatory strike on Israel.[6] Khamenei’s statements do not, however, indicate his chosen form of response and so his statements do not independently verify CTP-ISW’s running assessment that Iran and its Axis of Resistance will most likely conduct a coordinated, large-scale drone and missile attack on Israel.

**Official Hamas statements suggest that a ceasefire during the August 15 Doha talks is unlikely.**[7] **Unspecified Hamas officials have suggested that Hamas could attend the talks, however.**[8] The United States, Qatar, and Egypt said on August 8 that they would present a “final bridging proposal” at these talks that resolves outstanding points of disagreement in a manner that can ideally meet both Israeli and Hamas expectations.[9] The Israeli Prime Minister’s Office confirmed on August 14 that Israel would send a high-level delegation with a mandate to negotiate to Doha.[10]

At least five named Hamas officials and an unknown number of unnamed Hamas sources spoke to Western media outlets about these talks on August 13 and 14.[11] The named Hamas officials have maintained consistently that Hamas will not attend ceasefire talks, claiming that talks allow Israel to introduce new conditions and to use the talks as “cover to continue aggression” against the Palestinian

people.[12] These statements are consistent with Hamas' public August 11 demand that international mediators "oblige" Israel to accept "a plan to implement" a previous ceasefire proposal that Hamas submitted in July 2024 instead of conducting further negotiations.[13] Unspecified Hamas statements given to international media have claimed there is a chance Hamas will attend the August 15 talks, however.[14] An unnamed Hamas source told CNN that the group had adopted a strategy of "intentional ambiguity" over its participation in ceasefire and hostage talks.[15] Two unspecified officials referencing knowledge of Hamas thinking said that Hamas would consider a "serious response" put forth by Israel that responds to Hamas' July 2 proposal.[16] Israel responded to Hamas' July 2 proposal on July 27 and issued "essential clarifications" to past clauses and did not introduce new clauses, according to Israel.[17] Israel said those "clarifications" included how to assure that only unarmed Palestinians cross into the northern Gaza Strip and the number of living hostages to be released.[18] Hamas official Osama Hamdan claims that Hamas never received the document.[19]

US President Biden "expect[s]" that a successful ceasefire in the Gaza Strip achieved in the next few days would make Iranian leaders hold off on a retaliatory strike targeting Israel.[20] It remains unclear if "hold off" means Iranian leaders would decline to mount any retaliatory strike on Israel, or just that Iran would delay its strike. Reuters first reported the suggestion that Iran would "hold back" from a strike on August 13, citing three unspecified senior Iranian officials.[21] CTP-ISW assesses that Iran is likely trying to expand divisions within Israel and between Israel and the United States ahead of a possible Iranian drone and missile attack by circulating this rumor.[22] Iran likely calculates that conditioning its attack on Israel on whether Israel and Hamas reach a ceasefire-hostage deal could force Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to choose between two bad options that could either cause him to lose the support of his political coalition or be blamed by Israeli society and allies for the ensuing Iranian-led attack on Israel.

**The Iranian Parliament will vote to approve four ministerial nominees during the week of August 18 who articulated policies largely consistent with the regime's current foreign policy.**[23] **The Iranian Parliamentary National Security and Foreign Policy Commission approved the qualifications and plans of four cabinet minister nominees on August 14.**[24] The nominees for Foreign Minister, Intelligence Minister, Defense Minister and Interior Minister presented proposals for their ministries to the Iranian Parliament between August 12-14. The proposals are largely consistent with current regime foreign policy, though the nominee for foreign affairs minister continued to signal the Pezeshkian Administration's willingness to pursue nuclear negotiations. The nominee for intelligence minister—who also served under former President Ebrahim Raisi—emphasized confronting Israel. Both the nominated foreign affairs minister and defense minister emphasized the importance of supporting Iran's Axis of Resistance. The full proposals are as follows:

- **Abbas Araghchi** (Foreign Minister): Araghchi emphasized the need to both neutralize the effect of western sanctions on Iran and pursue the removal of sanctions entirely "with honorable means." [25] Neutralizing sanctions suggests that Iran will attempt to reduce its economic dependency on other, pro-West states, while removing sanctions is a reference to pursuing negotiations. Pezeshkian's appointment of Araghchi signals his serious intent to pursue nuclear negotiations with the West, given that Araghchi previously played a prominent role in nuclear negotiations with the West under former President Hassan Rouhani.[26] Araghchi also said that

he is committed to “all-around support” for the Axis of Resistance.[27] Araghchi added that he will continue the “neighborhood policy” of former President Ebrahim Raisi by pursuing relations with other regional countries. Araghchi noted that he intends to increase Iranian exports through active economic diplomacy.

- **Esmail Khatib** (Intelligence Minister): Khatib stated that his top priority as Intelligence Minister would be to “confront” Israel.[28] Khatib further stated that Iran must confront Israel in the “field of influence” by producing informational content. Khatib stated his other priorities included fighting terrorist groups such as the Islamic State Khorasan Province. Khatib stated that Iranian cooperation with Iraq has increased the security of northwestern Iran. Khatib claimed that 53 foreign intelligence services are “structurally” working against Iran. Khatib also served in former President Ebrahim Raisi’s administration.
- **Brigadier General Aziz Nasir Zadeh** (Defense Minister): Nasir Zadeh proposed improving Iran’s airpower should he be approved as Defense Minister.[29] Nasir Zadeh proposed constructing vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) aircraft and airborne early warning and control aircraft. Nasir Zadeh stated that the Defense Ministry must continue to provide “effective and stable” support for the Axis of Resistance in all cultural, political, and economic fields. Nasir Zadeh also emphasized increased defense diplomacy to increase defense exports to neighboring countries and countries in Latin America and Africa.
- **Eskander Momeni** (Interior Minister): Momeni identified strengthening social and cultural capital, managing natural crises and environmental challenges, and increasing the political participation of citizens as the most important programs of the Interior Ministry.[30] Momeni proposed promoting social capital by promoting public satisfaction and trust with the regime. Momeni is likely referring to promoting positive relations between the people and the regime to increase public participation in politics when he discusses social capital. Momeni stated that the government could prevent the feeling of social isolation by improving interaction between the government and the people.

**Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz said on August 12 that Iran is cooperating with Hamas in Lebanon to smuggle weapons and funds into Jordan to destabilize the Jordanian government.**[31] Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi denied Katz’s statement.[32] CTP-ISW has observed previous Iranian attempts to undermine security in Jordan.[33] Jordanian police located two separate caches of explosives in Amman in June 2024 and linked these incidents to Iranian efforts to recruit agents in Jordan to destabilize the country.[34] Iranian-backed groups in Iraq have also shown an interest in developing networks in Jordan, including by threatening to equip thousands of “Islamic Resistance in Jordan” fighters with weapons in April 2024.[35] A destabilized Jordan could provide Iran with more opportunities to transport weapons to Palestinian fighters in the West Bank.

**Iran’s smuggling attempts through Jordan are part of a likely Iranian effort to increase its influence in the West Bank.** Katz said that the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps is working with Hamas to transport weapons and funds through Jordan to Palestinian fighters in the West Bank.[36] Jordan’s western border with the West Bank offers multiple routes through which Iran can move weapons into the West Bank.

Katz also said that Iran effectively controls Palestinian refugee camps in the West Bank and that the Palestinian Authority is “powerless to act.”[37] Katz highlighted the Jenin refugee camp as a hub of Palestinian militia activity and said that Israel must take action to dismantle militia networks in the camp. Katz’s comments come amid an uptick in Palestinian militia attacks in Jenin in August.

**Unspecified Iranian backed militia launched unspecified projectiles targeting US forces at Conoco Mission Support Site in Deir ez Zor Province on August 13.[38] The projectiles landed near the base and no damage or injuries were reported, according to two unnamed US officials cited by Reuters.[39]** Local Syrian sources reported that US aircraft launched three retaliatory airstrikes targeting the rocket launch sites in al Hussainiya and al Junaina in Deir ez Zor Province.[40] Local sources did not report any casualties. US official sources have not confirmed the attack on Conoco Mission Support Site or US retaliatory strikes in Deir ez Zor.

**Israeli media reported that the IDF has deployed Israeli security forces along the northern border to protect against October 7-like attacks from Lebanon.[41]** Israeli newspaper *Maariv* reported on August 13 that the IDF bolstered security forces’ preparedness amid fears of a potential Hezbollah ground attack into northern Israel.[42] The IDF deployed security forces to unspecified northern Israeli towns on an unspecified date to form an “intervention force” to respond quickly to October 7-like infiltration threats.[43] *Maariv* reported that the IDF pre-positioned this force in northern Israel after learning lessons from October 7. Israeli security forces reportedly began training local police to respond to infiltration-type attacks following October 7.[44] Israeli media did not say whether the deployment of security forces along the northern border was triggered by a specific threat.

Surprise ground attacks are becoming a central idea in Iranian planning to destroy the Israeli state. Hezbollah pioneered the idea of ground attacks into Israel, and it developed the Radwan Force to this end.[45] The IDF discovered one Hezbollah plan developed in the early 2010s that involved a major assault by the Radwan Force in which the unit would infiltrate northern Israeli towns, strong point them, and then use Israeli citizens as hostages and human shields to protect against the IDF’s response.[46] Senior Iranian leaders publicly expressed interest in involving Lebanese Hezbollah and Iranian-backed Palestinian militias to launch ground campaigns from multiple fronts to destabilize the Israeli political and social order.[47] A senior Iranian leader argued in May 2024 that the Axis of Resistance could destroy Israel by launching surprise attacks from Lebanon, the Gaza Strip, and the West Bank simultaneously, for instance.[48]

The IDF has previously conducted operations to protect against this threat, and the more recent deployments are drawing on the lessons the IDF learned on October 7 to better protect northern Israelis. The IDF launched an operation in 2018 to identify and destroy cross-border tunnels that would enable such infiltrations.[49] The mayor of the northern Israeli town Shlomi told *Maariv* that locals remain concerned about the existence of Hezbollah tunnels leading into northern Israel, however.[50]

### **Key Takeaways:**

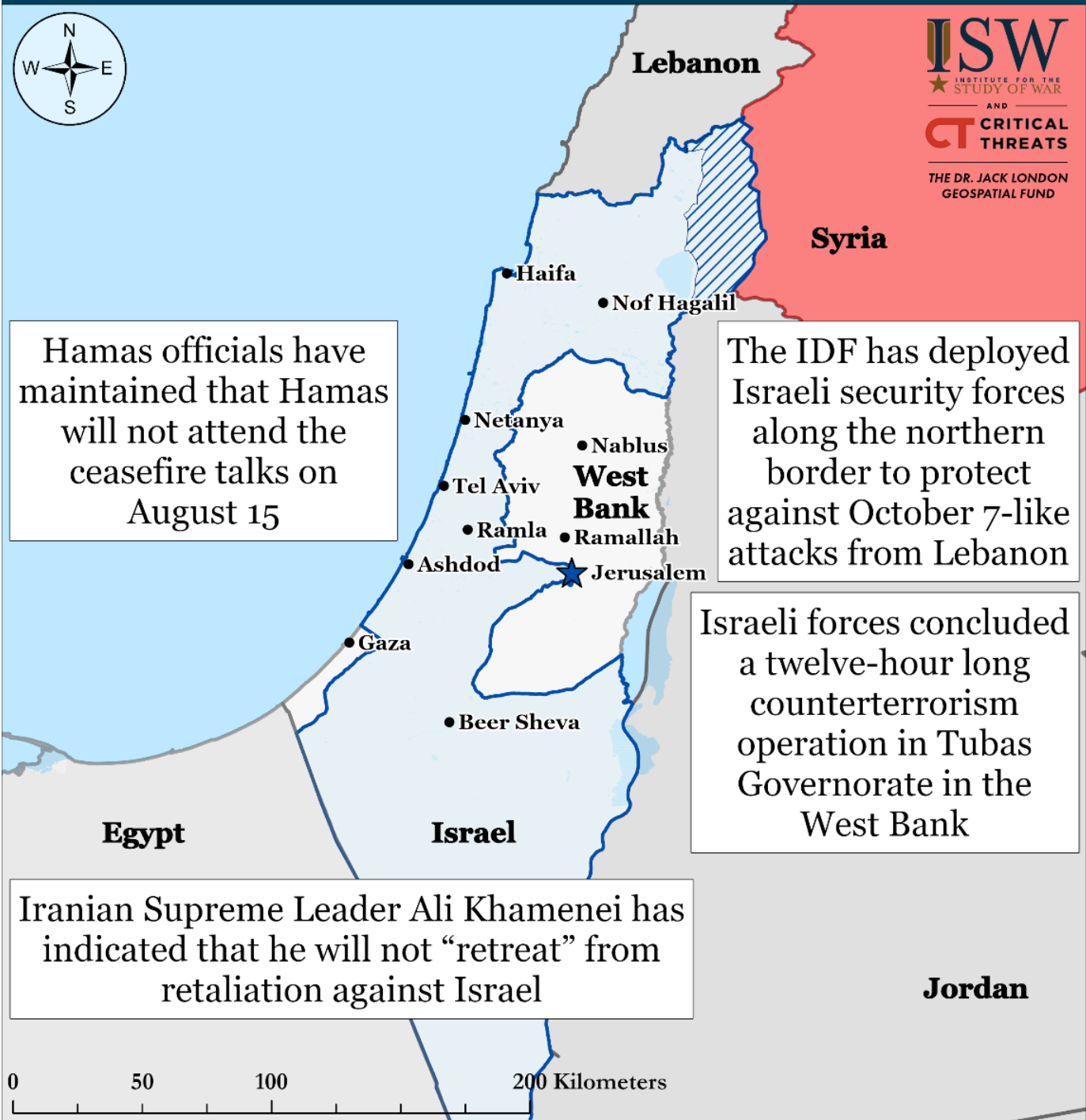
- **Iranian Retaliation:** Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei indicated that he still believes Iran must respond to Israeli operations targeting senior Axis of Resistance leaders in recent

weeks, despite back-channel threats from the United States emphasizing that Israel would respond forcefully to an attack that kills Israeli civilians or causes significant damage.

- **Gaza Ceasefire Talks:** Official Hamas statements suggest that a ceasefire during the August 15 Doha talks is unlikely. Unspecified Hamas officials have suggested that Hamas could attend the talks, however. US President Biden “expect[s]” that a successful ceasefire in the Gaza Strip achieved in the next few days would make Iranian leaders hold off on a retaliatory strike targeting Israel. CTP-ISW assesses that Iran is likely trying to expand divisions within Israel and between Israel and the United States ahead of a possible Iranian drone and missile attack by circulating a rumor that it would “hold back” if there is a Gaza ceasefire.
- **Iranian Cabinet Formation:** The Iranian Parliament will vote to approve four ministerial nominees during the week of August 18 who articulated policies largely consistent with the regime’s current foreign policy. The Iranian Parliamentary National Security and Foreign Policy Commission approved the qualifications and plans of four cabinet minister nominees on August 14.
- **West Bank:** Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz said on August 12 that Iran is cooperating with Hamas in Lebanon to smuggle weapons and funds into Jordan to destabilize the Jordanian government. Iran’s smuggling attempts through Jordan are part of a likely Iranian effort to increase its influence in the West Bank.
- **Iraq and Syria:** Unspecified Iranian backed militia launched unspecified projectiles targeting US forces at Conoco Mission Support Site in Deir ez Zor Province on August 13. The projectiles landed near the base and no damage or injuries were reported, according to two unnamed US officials cited by Reuters.
- **Lebanon:** Israeli media reported that the IDF has deployed Israeli security forces along the northern border to protect against October 7-like attacks from Lebanon. *Maariv* reported that the IDF pre-positioned this force in northern Israel after learning lessons from October 7.

# Key Takeaways in the Israel-Hamas War

As of August 14, 2024 at 2:00 PM ET



Hamas officials have maintained that Hamas will not attend the ceasefire talks on August 15

The IDF has deployed Israeli security forces along the northern border to protect against October 7-like attacks from Lebanon

Israeli forces concluded a twelve-hour long counterterrorism operation in Tubas Governorate in the West Bank

Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei has indicated that he will not “retreat” from retaliation against Israel

0 50 100 200 Kilometers

Gaza Strip and West Bank Golan Heights

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

## 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 Israel Defense Forces (IDF) 252nd Division continued to operate along the Netzarim Corridor on August 14.** Israeli forces destroyed Palestinian fighter infrastructure and killed Palestinian fighters in the area.[51] IDF 16th Infantry Brigade (Res.) engineers destroyed Hamas sniper positions and observation posts.[52] The National Resistance Brigades, Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), and the al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades conducted separate mortar attacks targeting Israeli forces, command posts, and supply lines along the Netzarim Corridor.[53]

**The IDF 98th Division continued clearing operations in Khan Younis on August 14.** The 7th and 35th Paratroopers brigades continued operations in unspecified areas in Khan Younis.[54] The IDF Air Force (IAF) conducted airstrikes targeting Hamas fighters and rocket launchers along the IDF-designated humanitarian corridor on Salah ad Din Road in Khan Younis following a Hamas attack in the area.[55] Hamas, PIJ, and the Mujahideen Brigades conducted a combined mortar attack targeting Israeli forces in eastern Khan Younis city on August 13.[56] The al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades also mortared Israeli forces in al Zana, east of Khan Younis, on August 14.[57]

**The IDF 162nd Division continued operations in Rafah on August 14.** The IDF Nahal Brigade engaged Palestinian fighters and located weapons in Tel al Sultan, including grenades, explosively formed penetrators (EFP), and rockets.[58] The National Resistance Brigades mortared Israeli forces operating near the Rafah crossing on August 14.[59]

**The IDF Air Force (IAF) conducted airstrikes targeting over 40 Hamas targets in unspecified areas in the Gaza Strip over the past day.[60]** The IAF struck Hamas fighters and infrastructure, including a building from which Hamas launched anti-tank munitions targeting Israeli forces.[61]

# Reported Israeli Ground Operations in the Gaza Strip

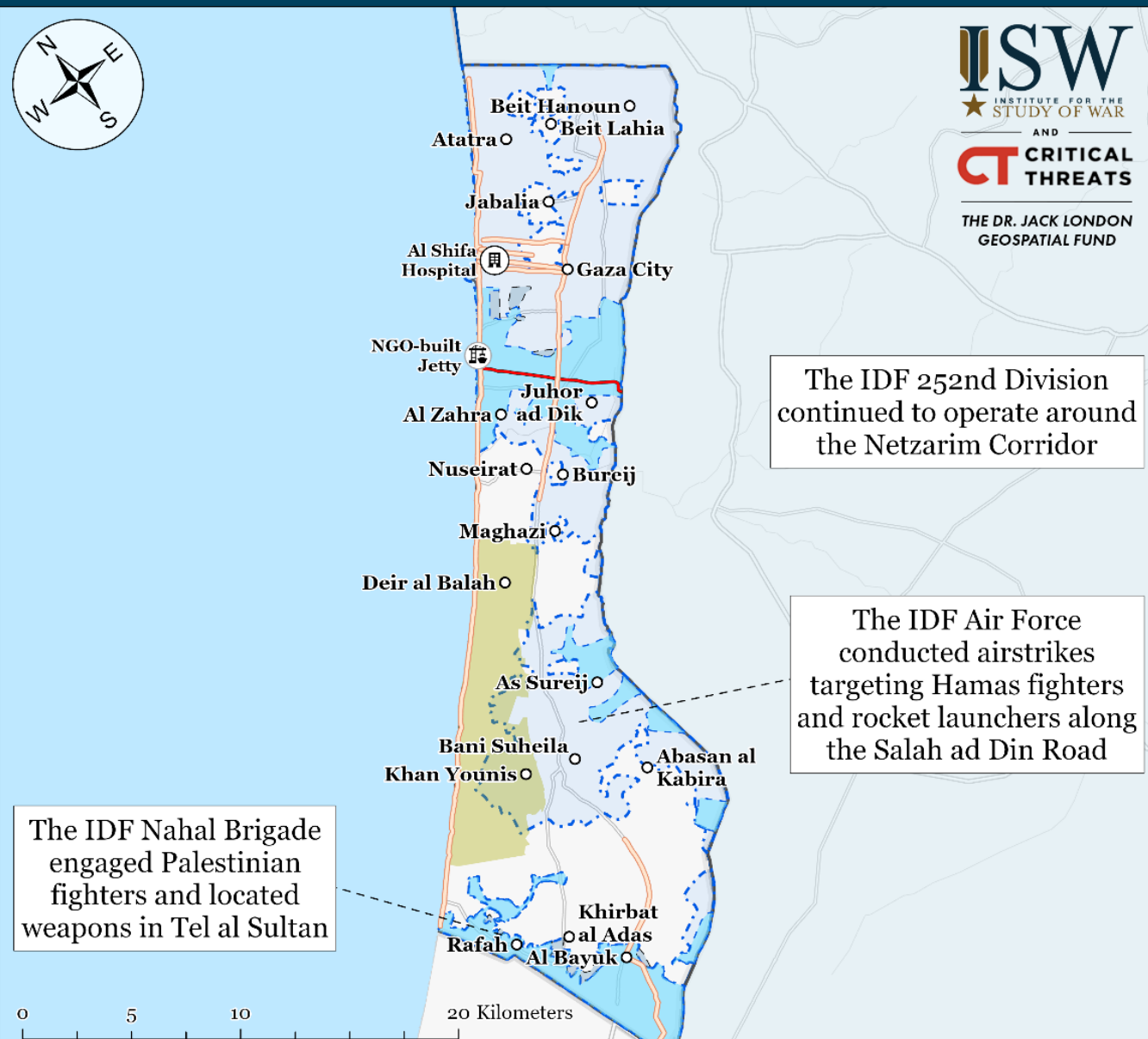
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The IDF 252nd Division continued to operate around the Netzarim Corridor

The IDF Air Force conducted airstrikes targeting Hamas fighters and rocket launchers along the Salah ad Din Road

The IDF Nahal Brigade engaged Palestinian fighters and located weapons in Tel al Sultan



Map by George Barros, Daniel Mealie, Mitchell Belcher, Noel Mikkelsen, Tom Thacker, Brian Carter, Johanna Moore, Andie Parry, Kelly Campa, Kathryn Tyson, Annika Ganzeveld, Kitaneh Fitzpatrick, Alexandra Braverman, Katherine Wells, Siddhant Kishore, and Carolyn Moorman  
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- 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

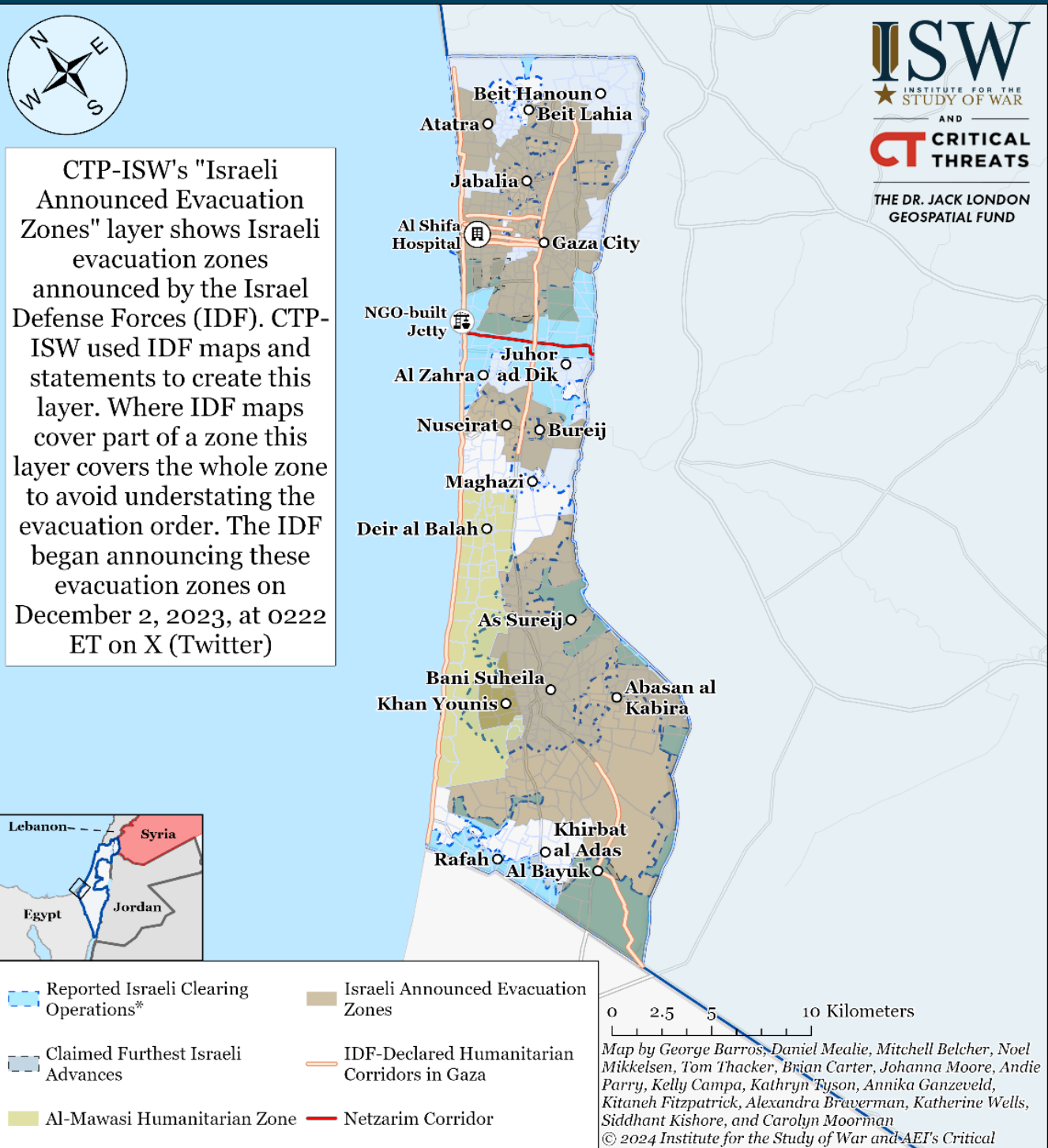


\* ISW-CTP's "Reported Israeli Clearing Operations" layer uses the US military's doctrinal definition of clearing which is an operation that "requires the commander to remove all enemy forces and eliminate organized resistance within an assigned area." Clearing operations frequently take weeks and sometimes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



# Israeli-Announced Evacuation Zones in the Gaza Strip

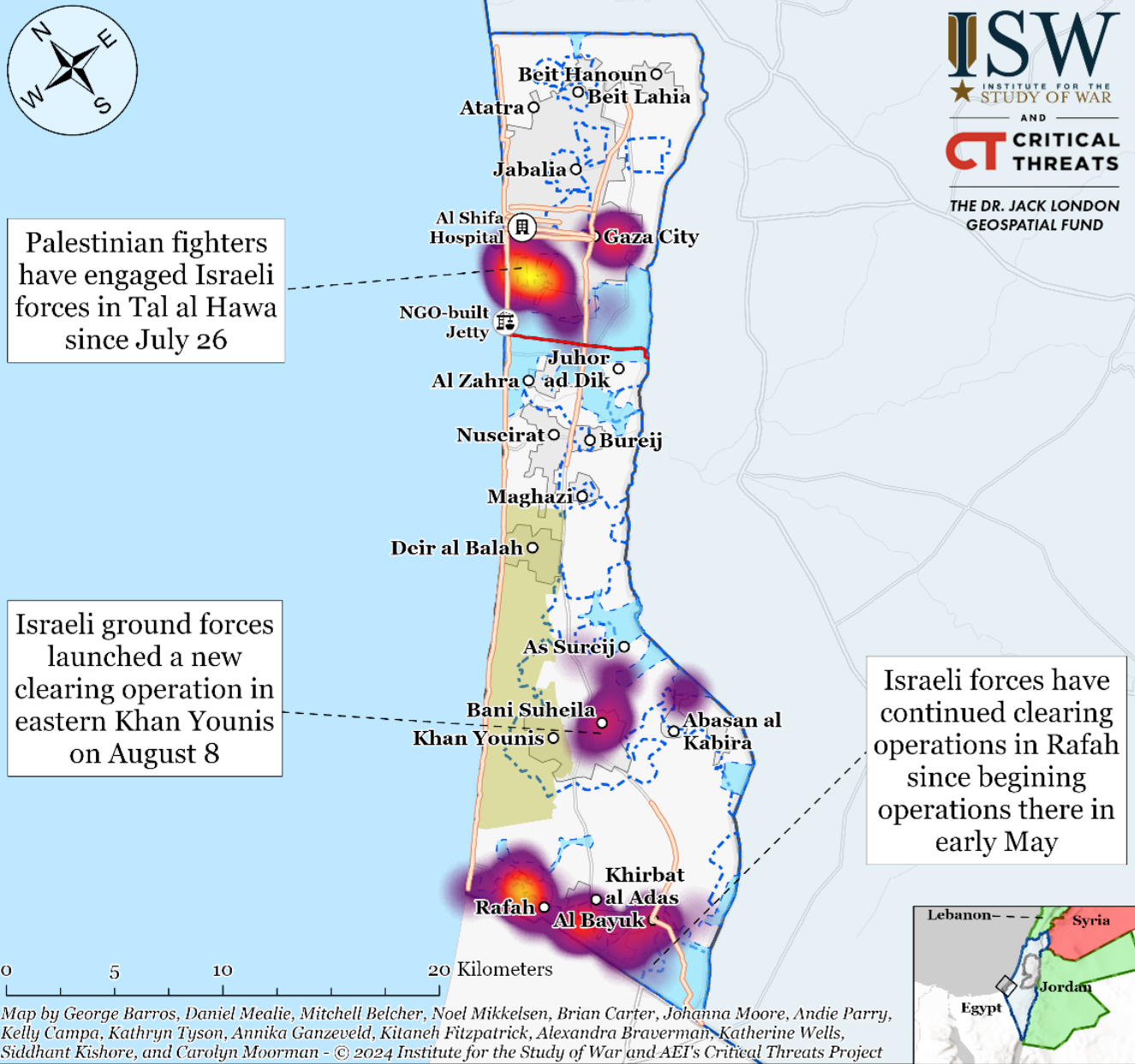
## As of August 14, 2024 at 2:00 PM ET



\* 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

# Palestinian Militia Attacks in the Gaza Strip

## Between July 3 to August 14, 2024



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Palestinian fighters have engaged Israeli forces in Tal al Hawa since July 26

Israeli ground forces launched a new clearing operation in eastern Khan Younis on August 8

Israeli forces have continued clearing operations in Rafah since beginning operations there in early May

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

- Reported Israeli Clearing Operations
- Israeli-Built Highway Route 749
- Low Concentration of Attacks (top) to High Concentration of Attacks (bottom)
- Claimed Furthest Israeli Advances
- Al-Mawasi Humanitarian Zone
- IDF-Declared Humanitarian Corridor on Road 230
- Assessed Furthest Extent of Israeli Clearing Operations

Note: The Palestinian militia attacks heat map shows the concentration of Palestinian militia attacks in the northern Gaza Strip since January 18. This heat map illustrates notionally the areas where Palestinian militias are attacking. Our data points correspond to both notional locations (a major neighborhood) and precise locations (a specific building).

**An Israeli Army Radio correspondent on August 14 highlighted the difficulties that the IDF faces in destroying Hamas rocket launch sites in the Gaza Strip.[62]** The report follows a Hamas rocket attack that targeted Tel Aviv on August 13.[63] The correspondent said that Hamas establishes launch sites quickly, making it difficult for the IDF to identify and intercept such attacks.[64] The correspondent said that Hamas fighters carry its rockets to makeshift, rudimentary launch sites shortly before the attack and then conceals the launch sites with plastic tarps.[65] Hamas also uses timers to remotely activate the launchers after moving away from the launch site.[66] Hamas' ability to obscure its launch sites and fire rockets quickly hinders the IDF's ability to identify preparation for the attacks, according to the correspondent.[67]

**IDF Chief of Staff Herzi Halevi held a situational assessment in the Philadelphi Corridor with the IDF Southern Command commander and IDF 162nd Division commander on August 14.[68]** The Philadelphi Corridor runs along the Rafah-Egypt border. Halevi said that Southern Command has made significant progress against Hamas along the axis.[69] Halevi also said that the IDF is working on the return of Israeli hostages "with great determination," and that the IDF will become "stricter" until the hostages are returned. Halevi added that the IDF is preparing for "whatever the political echelon decides" on the Philadelphi Corridor, and said that, if the IDF is ordered to stay on the corridor, "[the IDF] will know how to stay there and stay strong."

**The IDF suspended the coordination of humanitarian aid in Rafah after Hamas conducted an attack along the IDF-designated aid corridor on August 13.[70]** The IDF said that Hamas fired an anti-tank guided missile at an unspecified target along the IDF-designated humanitarian aid corridor in Rafah on August 13.[71] There were no casualties from the incident, but the IDF said that it has suspended the transportation and coordination of humanitarian aid along the route in response.[72] The United Nations and international aid groups have alleged that the IDF has not protected its designated aid routes, thereby creating a corridor that is unstable and vulnerable to be taken advantage of by Hamas and Palestinian militias to conduct attacks targeting Israeli forces.[73] The IDF reported on July 22 that Hamas fighters planned to hijack vehicles and take control of a humanitarian aid route in Rafah.[74] The Hamas Khan Younis Brigade fired rockets targeting Tel Aviv from the humanitarian corridor in Khan Younis on August 13.[75] Israeli Army Radio, which is funded and supported by the IDF and the Israeli state, reported on August 13 that the aid corridors reflect the failure of COGAT and the Israeli political establishment to develop an appropriate way to distribute aid.[76]

## **West Bank**

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

- Establish the West Bank as a viable front against Israel

**Israeli forces concluded a twelve-hour long counterterrorism operation in Tubas Governorate in the West Bank on August 14.[77]** The counterterrorism operation in Tubas involved several IDF units including the IDF 636th Reconnaissance Unit and Metzada unit, a tactical unit from the Israeli Prison Services.[78] The IDF executed the 12-hour long operation in Tubas city, Tammun (4.4km southeast of Tubas), and al Faraa refugee camp (3.8km southwest of Tubas).[79] The IDF reported that it killed five Palestinian fighters, including a senior Hamas member and at least four

other fighters in a drone strike.[80] Three of the four killed in the drone strike were Hamas members.[81] It also arrested three individuals, captured an unspecified number of improvised explosive devices (IED) and five M16 rifles.[82] The al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades separately claimed that the IDF killed five of its fighters.[83] The IDF reported that four of its personnel were injured during the operation when an IDF armored personnel carrier hit an IED.[84]

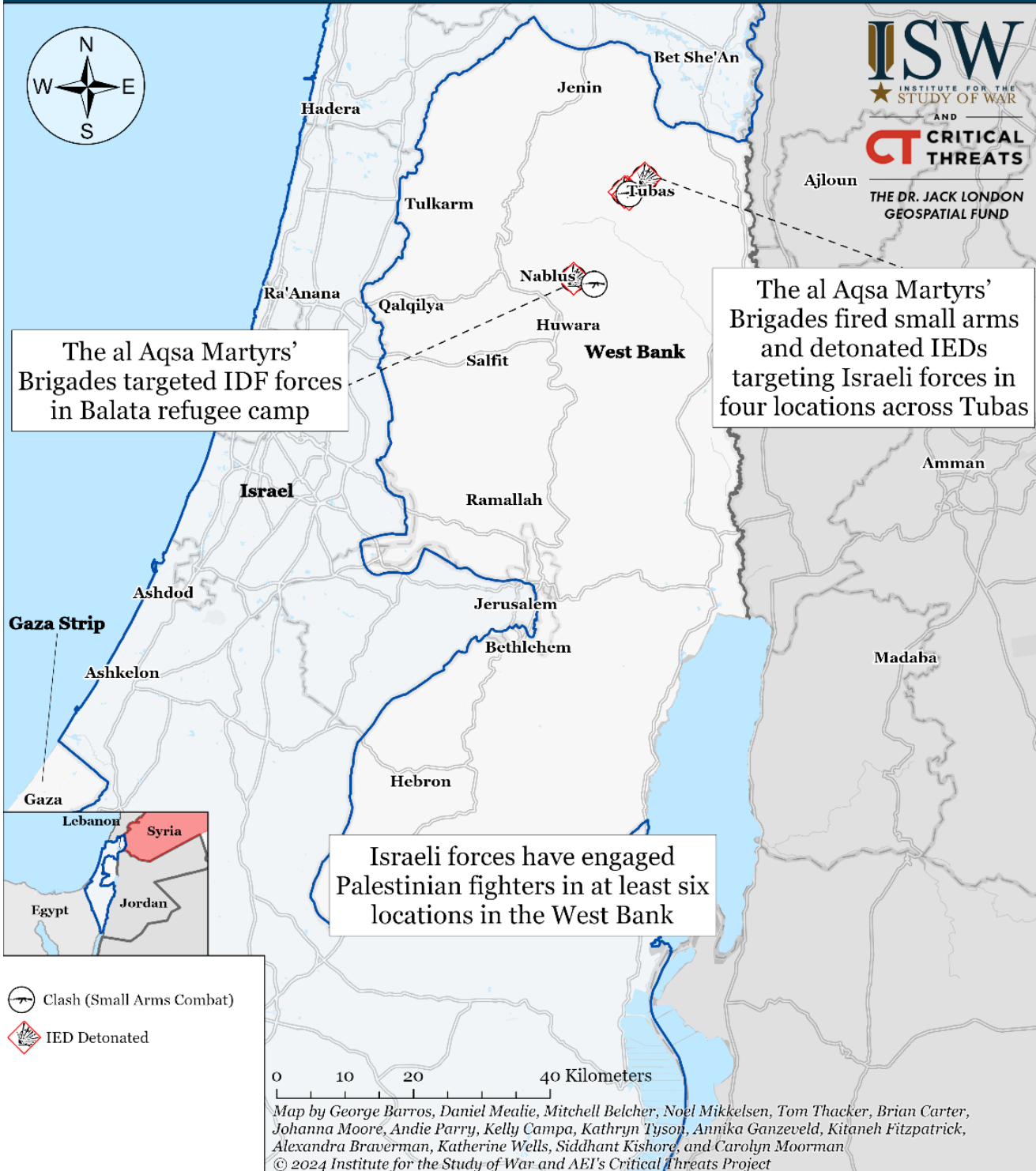
**The IDF conducted an operation to prevent cross-border infiltrations along the Israel-West Bank boundary in Qalqilya Governorate between August 13 and 14.**[85] The IDF reported that it detained five wanted persons during the operation in Hable, Qalqilya. Hable abuts the Israel-West Bank boundary wall. The IDF also confiscated a pistol and a rifle, and 120,000 Israeli Shekels used for funding terrorist activities in the West Bank.

**The Israeli Army Radio reported that two Palestinian fighters were injured in a vehicle that exploded in Hebron, in the West Bank on August 13.**[86] Israeli media reported that the fighters detonated explosives in the vehicle by "accident" while the fighters were transferring the "bomb" from "one location to another." [87] The explosion reportedly took place in Halhul, Hebron Governorate.[88] The IDF is investigating, however, if the explosion was caused due to a premature detonation of a "car bomb." [89] CTP-ISW cannot assess at this time whether the vehicle was a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device or a car bomb.

**Israeli forces have engaged Palestinian fighters in at least six locations in the West Bank since CTP-ISW's last data cutoff on August 13.**[90] The al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades fired small arms and detonated IEDs targeting Israeli forces in at least four locations across Tubas Governorate.[91] The al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades separately targeted IDF forces in Balata refugee camp and Beit Furik in Nablus.[92] Palestinian Authority (PA) security forces also discovered and conducted a controlled detonation of an IED planted under a road in Jenin on August 13.[93]

# Significant Activity in the West Bank

As of August 14, 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

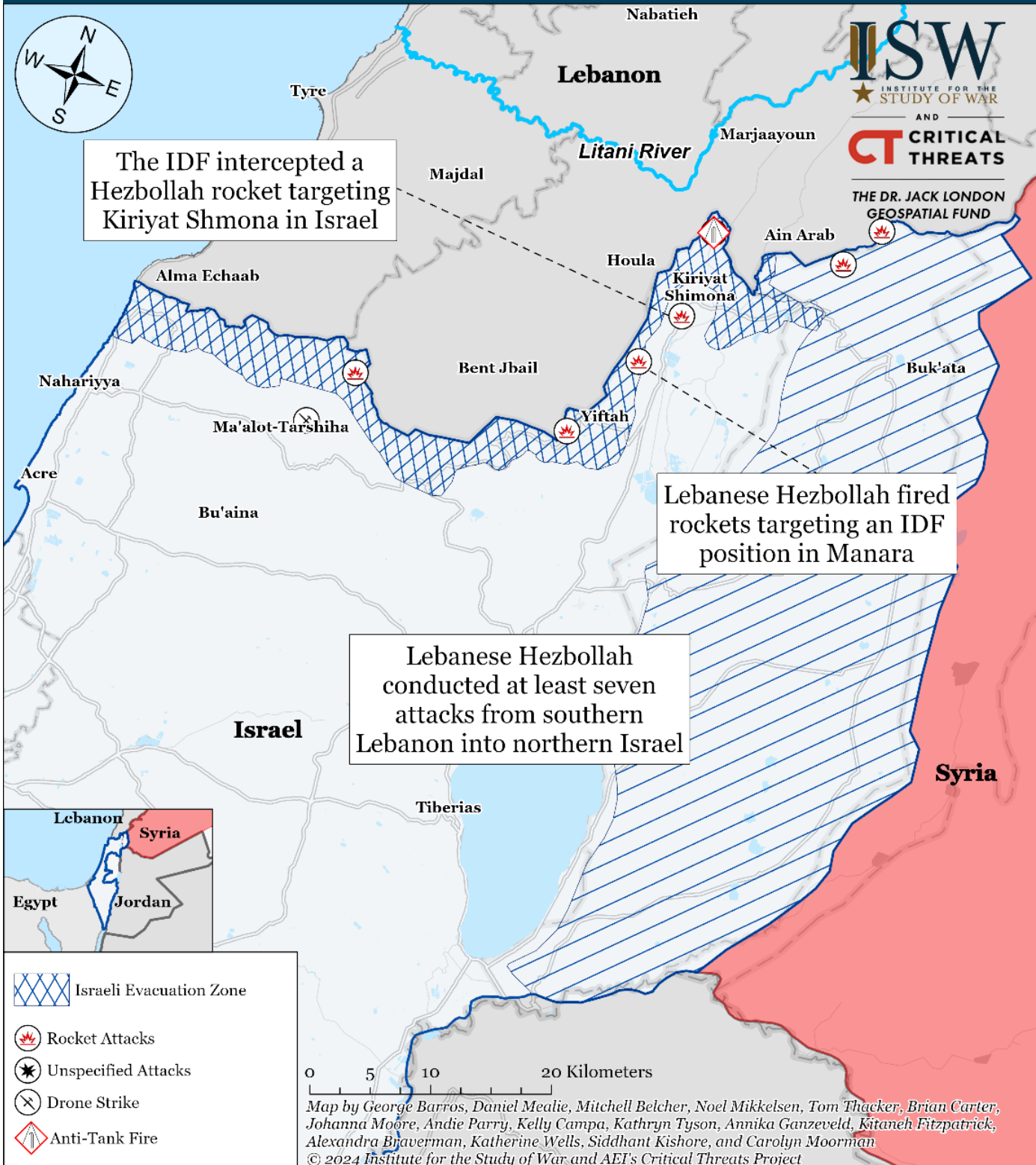
**Lebanese Hezbollah has conducted at least seven attacks from southern Lebanon into northern Israel since CTP-ISW's last data cutoff on August 13.[94]** Lebanese Hezbollah claimed that it fired unspecified number of rockets targeting an IDF site near Manara in northern Israel.[95] The IDF reported that the rockets fell into open areas and caused no casualties.[96] Hezbollah separately fired Katyusha rockets targeting Kiriya Shmona, Israel on August 14.[97] IDF air defenses reportedly intercepted one of the rockets targeting Kiriya Shmona, and two other rockets struck unspecified locations.[98]

**Senior Biden administration adviser Amos Hochstein met with Lebanese officials in Beirut on August 13 to discuss efforts to de-escalate tensions with Hezbollah.[99]** Hochstein met with Lebanese Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati, and Lebanese Armed Forces Commander Joseph Aoun.[100] An unspecified diplomat said that Hochstein discussed long-term diplomatic solutions for Lebanon and Israel that the United States and France have been preparing.[101] Hochstein told reporters following his meeting with Berri that the two men agreed that there were “no more valid excuses from any party for any further delay” on a Gaza ceasefire deal.[102] Hochstein said that a ceasefire in Gaza would enable diplomatic solutions between Israel and Lebanon.[103]



# Attacks into Northern Israel from Lebanon

As of August 14, 2024 at 2:00 PM ET



## Iran and the Axis of Resistance

**Iranian-backed Iraqi militia Harakat al Nujaba (HHN) political head Sheikh Ali al Asadi confirmed Iranian-backed Iraqi militias' intent to resume their attack campaign to expel US forces from Iraq and Syria if the United States "acts aggressively" within Iraq during an interview with an Iraqi news outlet.[104]** Asadi's language mirrors the August 12 statement of the Iraqi Resistance Coordination Committee, which is a coordinating body for Iranian-backed Iraqi militias.[105] The Coordination Committee and Asadi clarified that acts of aggression include attacking Iraqi troops or using Iraqi airspace to attack Iran.[106] Asadi and the committee's definition of "troops" presumably includes the elements of the Iraqi Popular Mobilization Forces that have attacked US forces in the past. Asadi also criticized the Iraqi federal government's inability to remove US forces from the country.[107]

Asadi added that the Iraqi militia that conducted the August 5 attack targeting US forces at Ain al Asad Airbase has not yet claimed responsibility due to "tactical considerations." [108] Newly-formed Iraqi militia al Thawriyyun, which claims affiliation with the Islamic Resistance in Iraq, has claimed three attacks targeting US forces in Iraq and Syria since July 25, including the August 5 attack Asadi mentioned.[109] The Iraqi Joint Operations Command arrested 5 individuals involved in the attack.[110] The individuals claimed they were not affiliated with any militia group, however.[111]

**US Central Command (CENTCOM) destroyed two Houthi "vessels" in the Red Sea.[112]**

**Iranian National Security Commission Member Alaeddin Boroujerdi met with Emirati Ambassador to Iran Saif Mohamed al Zabbi in Tehran on August 14 to discuss the expansion of bilateral relations between Iran and the United Arab Emirates.[113]** Boroujerdi is the former chairman of the national security and foreign policy committee in the Iranian Parliament. Boroujerdi expressed his intent to maintain strong relations with Iran's neighboring Islamic countries. Al Zabbi signaled his support for Iran's "neighborhood foreign policy." Al Zabbi declared that the UAE needs support from Iran "more than ever" due to "conditions in the region."

**Iranian officials are continuing to propose ways to secure Iran's borders.** The Iranian Law Enforcement Command (LEC) Border Guard Commander Brigadier General Ahmad Ali Gourdaki said that the Artesh and the Iranian Border Police are working on a joint "border blocking project" to secure southeastern Iran.[114] Iran is building new outposts and has purchased new weapons, cameras, and sensors to control the border. The Artesh separately began constructing a border wall in Khorasan Razavi Province along the Afghanistan-Iran border in May 2024, and Iran has urged Pakistan to better secure its border with Iran.[115] The focus on southeastern Iran's border region follows an uptick in anti-regime militancy in southeastern Iran since December 2023.[116]

**An unspecified actor conducted a major cyberattack targeting the Central Bank of Iran and several other Iranian banks on August 14.[117]** The attack caused widespread disruptions in the country's banking system. Unspecified actors leaked account information and balances and Iranians reported that ATMs across the country were down.[118] Social media users on X (Twitter) posted pictures showing notes taped to malfunctioning ATMs that say withdrawal is not possible because "all the budget and national resources of Iran were spent on foreign wars and the corrupt



mullahs."[119] Social media users claimed that anti-regime activists taped the notes on the ATMs.[120] Iranian opposition media reported that the attack could be one of the largest cyberattacks ever against Iranian state infrastructure.[121] The Central Bank's media denied the attack.[122]

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[1] <https://www.leader dot ir/fa/content/27562/>

[2] <https://www.leader dot ir/fa/content/27562/>

[3] <https://www.leader dot ir/fa/content/27562/>

[4] <https://www.wsj.com/world/middle-east/u-s-warns-iran-of-serious-risk-if-it-conducts-major-attack-on-israel-fddd0715> ; <https://www.axios.com/2024/08/07/israel-hezbollah-attack-civilians-us> ; <https://t.me/moriahdoron/12673> ; <https://baghdadtoday>

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