

## Iran Update, November 13, 2023

**Ashka Jhaveri, Johanna Moore, Annika Ganzeveld, Amin Soltani, Peter Mills, and Kathryn Tyson.**

### **Information Cutoff: 2:00 pm EST**

*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:**

1. Israel is pressuring Hamas to surrender its position inside the al Shifa Hospital. Hamas prevented al Shifa Hospital staff from accepting fuel from Israeli forces, according to the Israel Defense Forces.
2. Israeli forces advanced further into the al Nasr neighborhood in the northwestern Gaza Strip. Israeli forces also fought with Palestinian militia fighters at the al Quds Hospital in southwestern Gaza City. The IDF said it has weakened 10 out of 24 Hamas battalions in the Gaza Strip.
3. Palestinian fighters engaged Israeli forces in seven small arms clashes and detonated five IEDs targeting Israeli forces across the West Bank on November 13.
4. Iranian-backed militants, including Lebanese Hezbollah (LH), conducted at least 12 attacks into northern Israel on November 13. Israeli officials stated on November 13 that LH attacks on November 12 killed and wounded 17 Israeli soldiers and civilians. LH acknowledged on November 13 that 73 of its fighters have died fighting Israel since October 7.
5. The Islamic Resistance in Iraq claimed one attack targeting US forces in Syria on November 12 and claimed to fire one drone at US forces stationed at Green Village. CTP-ISW recorded four attacks targeting US forces in Syria on November 13.

# Israel-Hamas War as of November 13, 2023, 2:00 PM ET

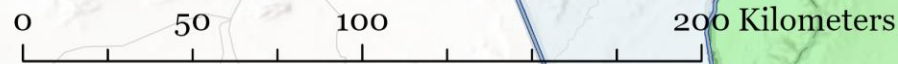


Israel is pressuring Hamas to surrender its position inside al Shifa Hospital

Iran-backed groups, including Lebanese Hezbollah, conducted a dozen attacks along the border with Israel

CTP-ISW recorded five reported attacks targeting US forces in Syria

Palestinian fighters engaged Israeli security forces in seven small arms clashes across the West Bank



Map by George Barros, Daniel Mealie, Mitchell Belcher, Noel Mikkelsen, Thomas Bergeron, Ashka Jhaveri, Johanna Moore, and Andie Parry - © 2023 Institute for the Study of War and AEI's Critical Threats Project

- Israel
- Gaza Strip and West Bank
- Jordan and Lebanon
- Syria
- Golan Heights

## 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

### **Israel is pressuring Hamas to surrender its position inside the al Shifa Hospital.**<sup>[1]</sup>

Reuters reported on November 13 that Israeli forces and tanks reached the gate of the al Shifa Hospital. Israeli Military International Spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Richard Hecht said that the IDF has not entered the hospital yet.<sup>[2]</sup> The al Quds Brigades—the militant wing of Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)—clashed with Israeli forces in the vicinity of the hospital, marking the fourth day of armed clashes between Palestinian militias and Israeli forces near the hospital.<sup>[3]</sup> The spokesperson of the Hamas-run Gaza Health Ministry said that 650 patients are still inside the hospital.<sup>[4]</sup> The World Health Organization reported that the al Shifa Hospital is no longer functioning.<sup>[5]</sup>

Israeli forces arrested Palestinian militia fighters northeast of the al Shifa Hospital on November 12.<sup>[6]</sup> A local news organization said that Israeli forces surrounded al Wafa Hospital east of the al Shifa Hospital on November 13 and ordered patients and medical staff to evacuate.<sup>[7]</sup>

**Hamas prevented al Shifa Hospital staff from accepting fuel from Israeli forces, according to the Israel Defense Forces (IDF).** The IDF reported on November 12 that it left 300 liters of fuel at a location approximately 300 meters from the hospital.<sup>[8]</sup> The head of the hospital told Al Araby TV that the amount of fuel is insufficient and that he agreed to accept the fuel so long as it was delivered by the International Committee of the Red Cross.<sup>[9]</sup> The IDF reported that Hamas prevented the hospital staff from taking the fuel.<sup>[10]</sup> A US official with knowledge of US intelligence said on November 13 that Hamas has a command node underneath the al Shifa Hospital and uses the fuel intended for the hospital.<sup>[11]</sup> US and Israeli officials have stated that Hamas uses hospitals and civilian facilities for command and control, storing weapons, and housing fighters.<sup>[12]</sup>

**Israeli forces advanced further into the al Nasr neighborhood in the northwestern Gaza Strip.** The IDF and Shin Bet arrested more than 20 Hamas operatives in the al Shati refugee camp.<sup>[13]</sup> The al Quds Brigades clashed with Israeli forces in the al Nasr neighborhood on November 13.<sup>[14]</sup> The IDF published footage of ground forces operating in the Ranteesi Specialist Hospital in the al Nasr neighborhood on November 13.<sup>[15]</sup> An IDF combat team continued raids on the outskirts of al Shati Refugee Camp, focusing on destroying military infrastructure in the heart of the civilian population including schools, universities, mosques, and homes. The al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades artillery unit launched mortars at the Israeli army operating in the vicinity of the camp.<sup>[16]</sup> A Palestinian woman told the BBC that the IDF ordered some 800 people taking shelter in a clinic in the camp to leave.<sup>[17]</sup>

**Israeli forces fought with Palestinian militia fighters at the al Quds Hospital in southwestern Gaza City.** The IDF said a brigade combat team of armored forces, engineers, and infantry with air support killed 21 militants during a period of intense fighting against Hamas.<sup>[18]</sup> The IDF published drone footage of a militant with an RPG taking cover within hospital grounds and an Israeli tank operating outside of the hospital grounds.<sup>[19]</sup> The IDF said the incident is another

example of Hamas' ongoing exploitation of sensitive sites, including hospitals.[20] The Palestinian Red Crescent Society said there was heavy shooting and the presence of Israeli military vehicles and forces in the vicinity of the hospital.[21]

**Hamas and other Palestinian militia fighters conducted indirect fire attacks against the IDF behind the Israeli forward line of advance, which is consistent with the nature of clearing operations.** The al Qassem Brigades fired mortars at Israeli forces east of Juhor ad Dik on November 13.[22] The Abu Ali Mustafa Brigades—the militant wing of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—separately claimed to fire rockets and mortars at Israeli forces east of Juhor ad Dik on November 12 in response to Israeli aggression in the Gaza Strip.[23] The al Quds Brigades fired 60 mortars at Israeli vehicles on Highway 10, where Israeli forces have been crossing to advance into Gaza City.[24] Palestinian media reported that the al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades—the self-claimed militant wing of Fatah— fired mortars at the Israeli army in an unspecified location in the southern Gaza city axis.[25]

Israeli forces continued clearing operations in Beit Hanoun in the northeastern Gaza Strip on November 11. The IDF said that reservists raided the home of a senior PIJ member in a civilian area in Beit Hanoun where they found various weapons and intelligence materials and located a tunnel shaft.[26] CTP-ISW previously reported on October 21 that the IDF faces a loose coalition of Palestinian militant groups in the Gaza Strip—rather than just Hamas.[27] The al Qassem Brigades conducted two attacks on Israeli forces north of Beit Hanoun using a rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) and sniper rifle.[28]

**The IDF said it has weakened 10 out of 24 Hamas battalions in the Gaza Strip.[29]** The IDF published a report explaining how it has been working to eliminate Hamas operatives and commanders at the field and senior levels since October 7.[30] The report says Hamas is comprised of 30,000 militia fighters in the Gaza Strip, which are divided into five regional brigades, 24 battalions, and 140 companies.[31] Each battalion is comprised of several strongholds and military outposts.[32] The IDF said that its ground forces are fighting in areas of several battalions.[33] The IDF has been assassinating several Hamas leaders to dismantle military structures. The IDF said on November 13 that it had assassinated five leaders with various roles in Hamas' intelligence services, anti-armor units, and special forces.[34]

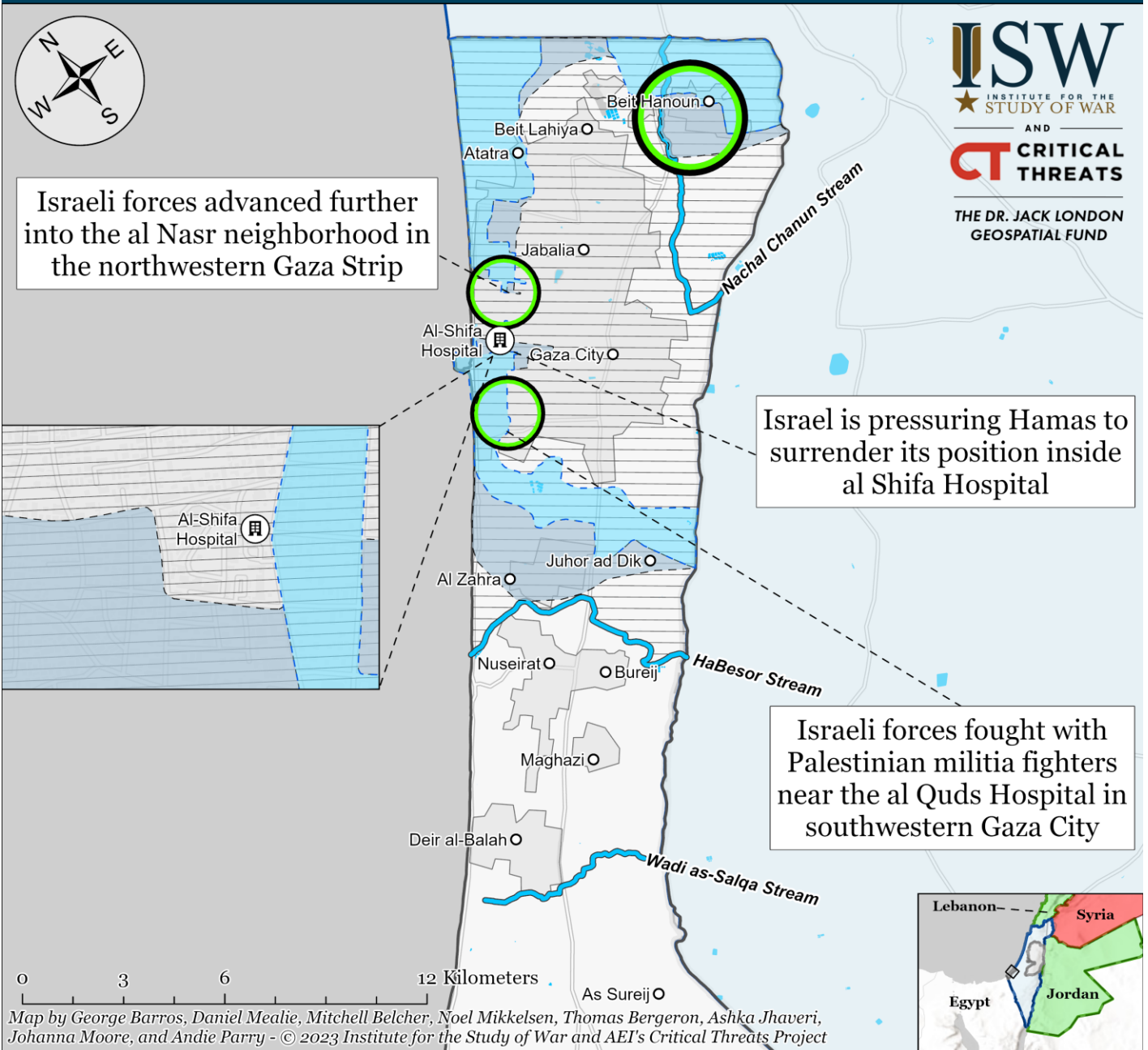
# Reported Israeli Ground Operations in the Gaza Strip as of November 13, 2023, 2:00 PM ET



Israeli forces advanced further into the al Nasr neighborhood in the northwestern Gaza Strip

Israel is pressuring Hamas to surrender its position inside al Shifa Hospital

Israeli forces fought with Palestinian militia fighters near the al Quds Hospital in southwestern Gaza City



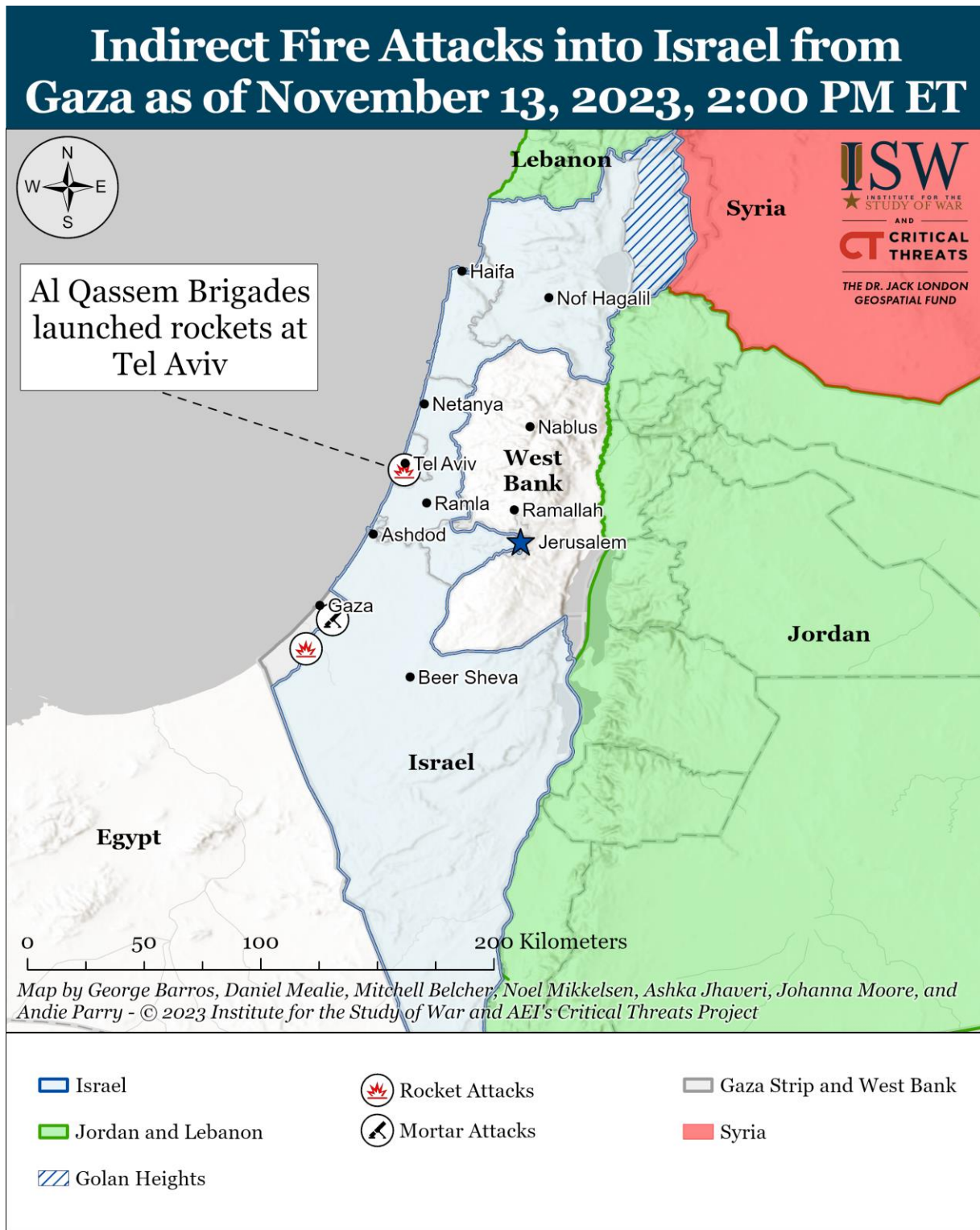
Map by George Barros, Daniel Mealie, Mitchell Belcher, Noel Mikkelsen, Thomas Bergeron, Ashka Jhaveri, Johanna Moore, and Andie Parry - © 2023 Institute for the Study of War and AEI's Critical Threats Project

- Israel
- Gaza Strip
- Jordan and Lebanon
- Syria
- Reported Israeli Clearing Operations\*
- Claimed Furthest Israeli Advances
- Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours
- Significant Water Obstacles
- Declared Evacuation Area
- Densely Urban Areas

\* 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

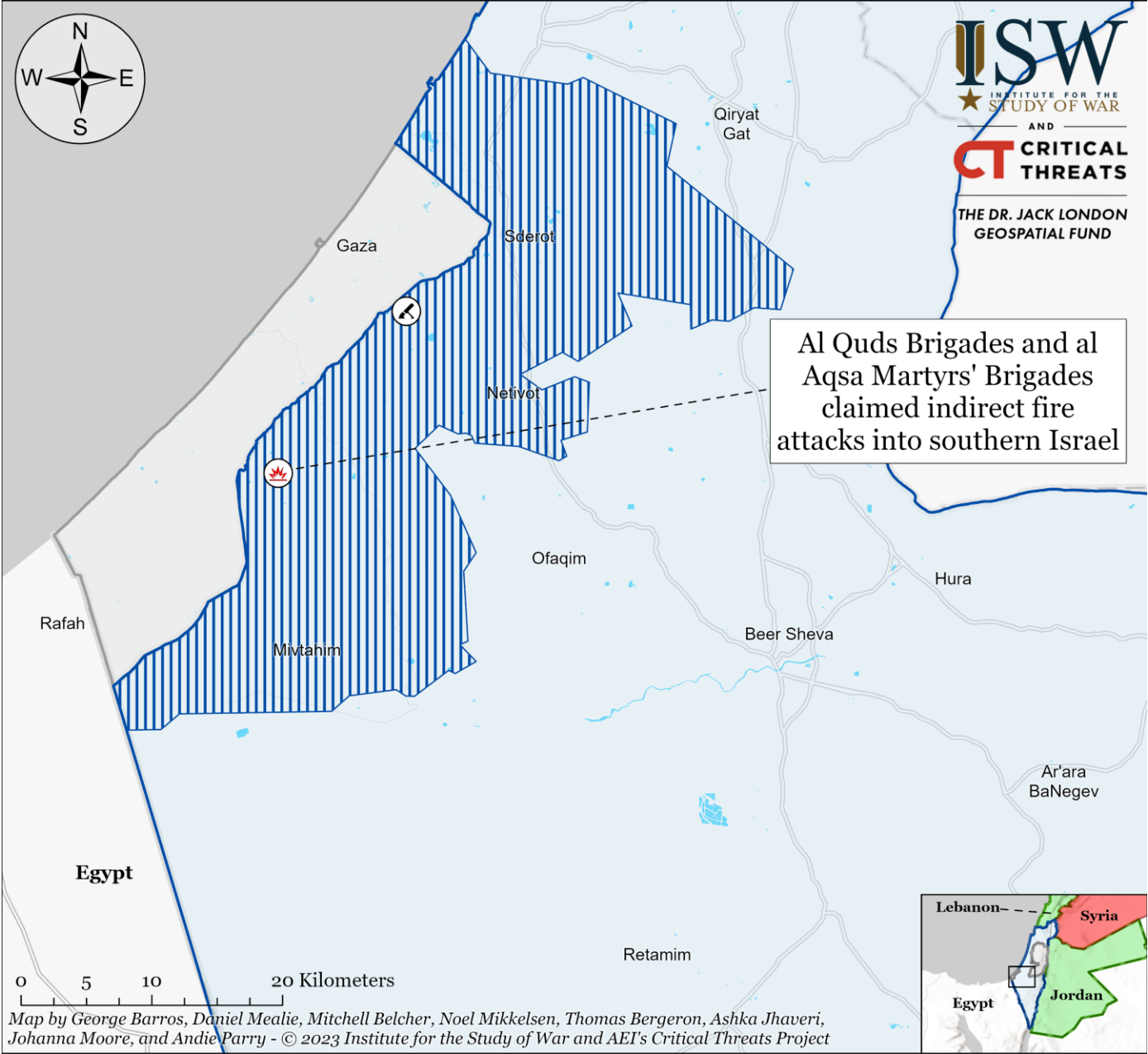


**Palestinian militias conducted three indirect fire attacks into Israel on November 13.** The al Qassem Brigades claimed one rocket attack at Tel Aviv.[35] The al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades claimed one mortar attack on an Israeli military site in southern Israel.[36] The al Quds Brigades claimed two rocket attacks on Israeli military sites in southern Israel.[37]



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

# Attacks into Israel from Gaza as of November 13, 2023, 2:00 PM ET



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Al Quds Brigades and al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades claimed indirect fire attacks into southern Israel

- Israel
- Israeli Closed Military Zone
- Jordan and Lebanon
- Rocket Attacks
- Mortar Attacks
- Gaza Strip and West Bank
- Syria

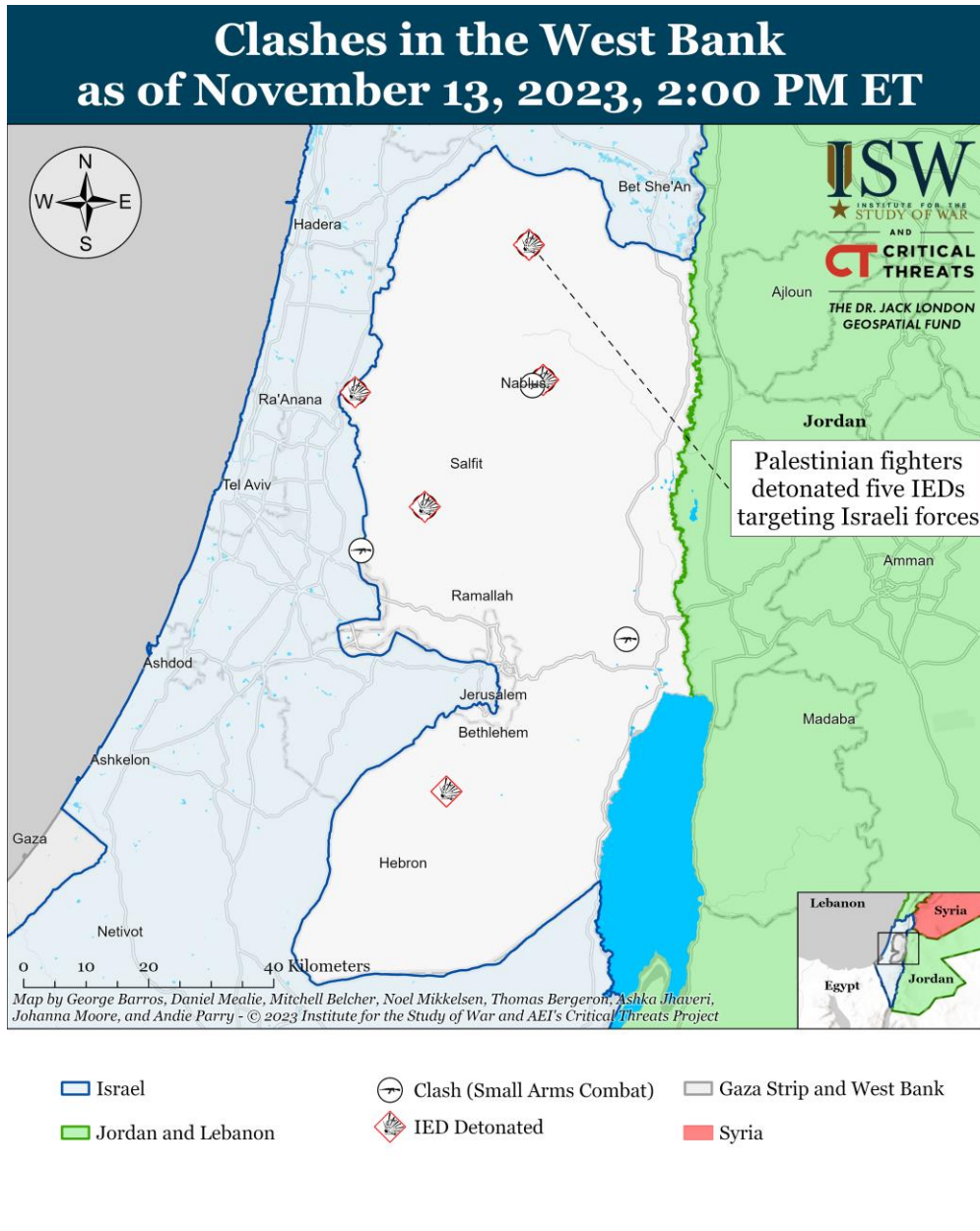
*Recorded reports of rocket attacks; CTP-ISW cannot independently verify impact.*

## West Bank

### Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

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

**Palestinian fighters engaged Israeli forces in seven small arms clashes and detonated five IEDs targeting Israeli forces across the West Bank on November 13.[38]** Palestinian militia groups have not claimed the attacks, which occurred primarily in major cities, including Nablus and Jenin. The attacks came as Israeli security forces continued conducting arrest raids in the West Bank on November 13.[39] The IDF said it detained 14 Hamas operatives during the overnight raids.



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

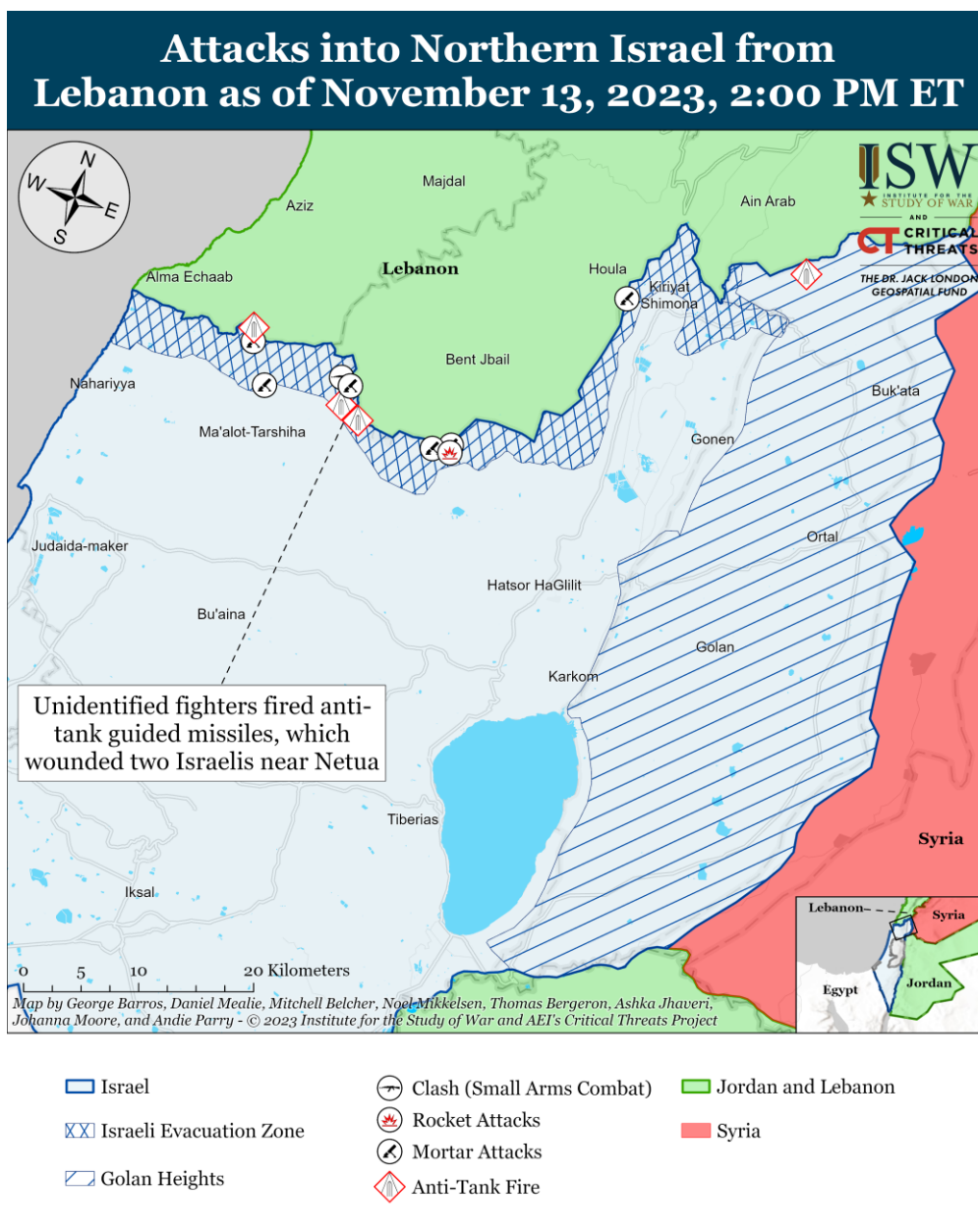


## Southern Lebanon and Golan Heights

### 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

**Iranian-backed militants, including Lebanese Hezbollah (LH), conducted at least 12 attacks into northern Israel on November 13.** LH claimed five attacks targeting the IDF along the Israel-Lebanon border.[40] Unidentified fighters conducted seven more indirect fire and anti-tank guided missile attacks on Israeli towns and IDF border posts along the Israel-Lebanese border.[41] Israeli officials stated on November 13 that LH attacks on November 12 killed and wounded 17 Israeli soldiers and civilians.[42] LH acknowledged on November 13 that 73 of its fighters have died fighting Israel since October 7.[43] Unidentified fighters also fired an anti-tank guided missile which caused several injuries near Netua, along the Israel-Lebanon border.[44]



## 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

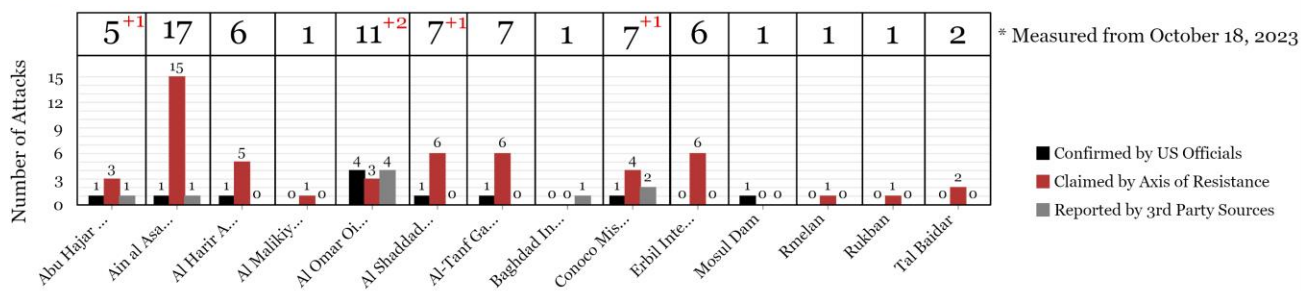
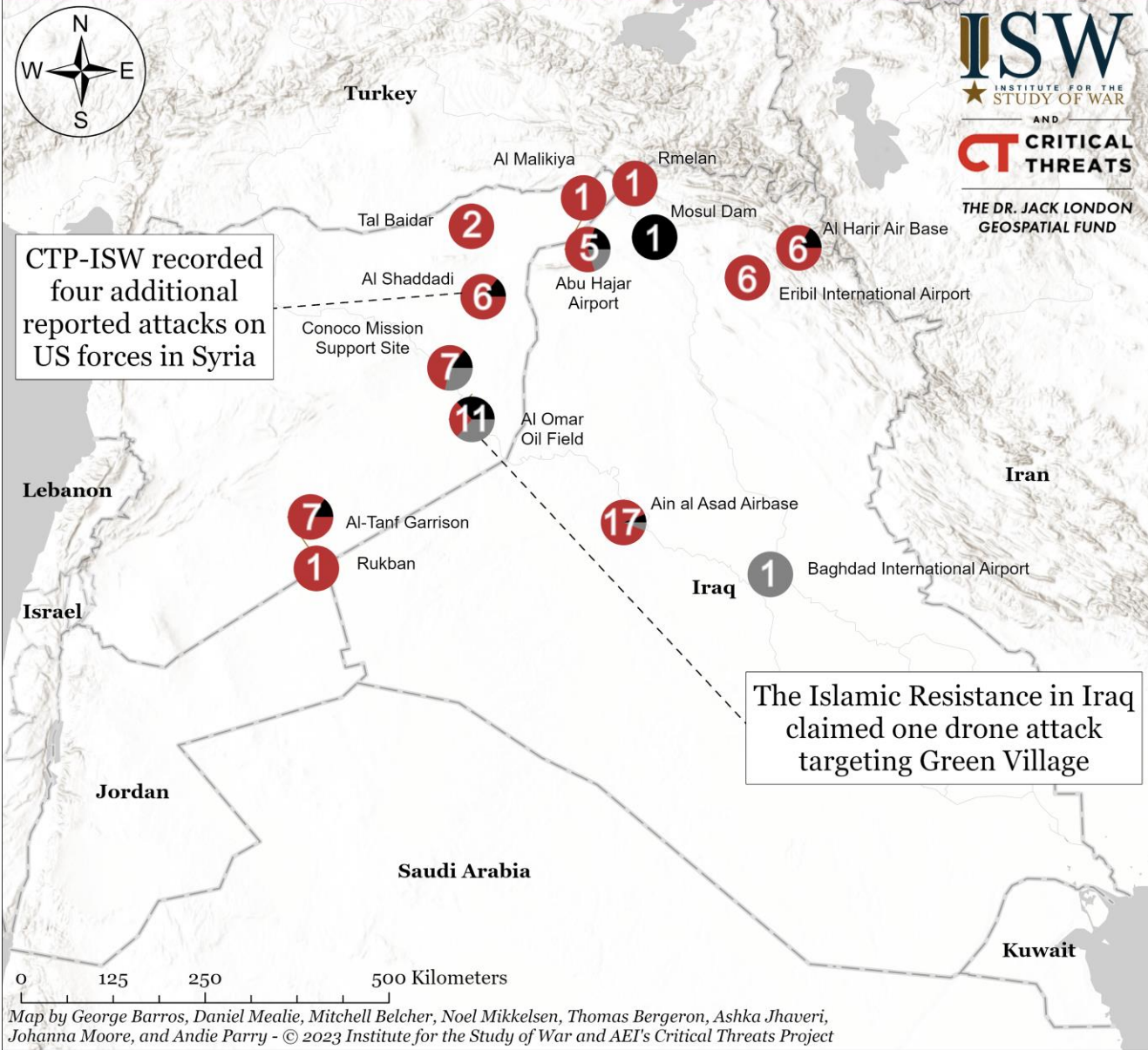
**The UK-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) reported that members of the Front for the Liberation of the Golan are currently operating in territory surrounding the Golan Heights.**<sup>[45]</sup> SOHR claimed that approximately 700 fighters deployed to the Qunaitrah countryside, western Rif Dimashque, and western Daraa in October 2023.<sup>[46]</sup> The Assad regime formed the Resistance of the Front for the Liberation of the Golan in 2006 and is primarily made up of Syrians and Palestinian refugees.<sup>[47]</sup> The group also has ties to LH according to the Washington Institute.<sup>[48]</sup> CTP-ISW has previously reported on LH and other Iranian-backed militias deploying to the border of the Golan Heights since the beginning of the Israel-Hamas war.<sup>[49]</sup>

**The Islamic Resistance in Iraq claimed one attack targeting US forces in Syria on November 12.**<sup>[50]</sup> **The group claimed to fire one drone at US forces stationed at Green Village.**<sup>[51]</sup> The Islamic Resistance in Iraq has claimed two attacks targeting US forces stationed at Green Village since October 18.<sup>[52]</sup> CENTCOM has not commented on the attack at the time of publication. CTP-ISW cannot independently verify this claim.

**CTP-ISW recorded four attacks targeting US forces in Syria on November 13.** The LH-controlled news outlet al Mayadeen reported that unidentified militants conducted attacks targeting US forces in Syria in retaliation for the US airstrike on an IRGC training facility and safe house on November 12.<sup>[53]</sup> CTP-ISW has not recorded any group claiming responsibility for the four attacks and cannot independently verify this claim.

- The Iranian-backed Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) fired 15 rockets at US forces stationed at al Omar Oil Field, according to unidentified sources cited by Iranian state news on November 13.<sup>[54]</sup> Unidentified militants also targeted US forces stationed at Conoco with Grad missiles, according to Iranian state news.<sup>[55]</sup> The local Syrian news outlet Deir ez Zor 24 reported that Iranian-backed militias were also behind the attack at Conoco.<sup>[56]</sup>
- Iranian-backed militants fired at least one drone targeting US forces stationed at Abu Hajar Airport on November 13 according to UK-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR).<sup>[57]</sup> Iranian state media reported that unidentified Iranian-backed militants launched three drones at US forces stationed at al Shadaddi, Hasakah Province.<sup>[58]</sup>

# Attacks against US Bases in the Middle East as of November 13, 2023, 2:00 PM ET



Note: The numbers placed inside the pie charts, as well as above the bar graph, denote the total number of attacks against that particular location. Locations that include an addition to its total number of attacks in red superscript represent new attacks against that location within the past 24 hours.

**The Ebrahim Raisi administration is pressuring Egypt to reopen the Rafah crossing to enable humanitarian aid to enter the Gaza Strip.** Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and Foreign Affairs Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian urged the Egyptian government to reopen the Rafah crossing in separate meetings with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al Sisi and Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry. The meetings occurred on the sidelines of the joint Arab League-Organization for Islamic Cooperation (OIC) meeting in Riyadh on November 11.[59] Foreign Affairs Ministry spokesperson Nasser Kanani separately emphasized the need for Egypt to reopen the Rafah crossing in a press conference on November 13.[60]

Iranian media claimed on November 13 that Israeli officials have called on the Egyptian government to turn away 60 tons of Iranian humanitarian aid destined for the Gaza Strip.[61] The media reports did not specify why Israel is blocking that aid. Iranian Red Crescent Society head Pir Hossein Kolivand announced on October 20 that this organization had sent its first humanitarian aid shipment to Egypt en route to the Gaza Strip.[62] CTP-ISW cannot independently verify that Iran has sent humanitarian aid shipments to Egypt or that Israel is blocking such shipments from entering the Gaza Strip.

**LEC Commander Ahmad Reza Radan met with senior Iraqi officials in Baghdad on November 13.** Radan discussed law enforcement and border security cooperation with Iraqi Prime Minister Shia al-Sudani, Interior Minister Lieutenant General Adel al Khaldi, and National Security Adviser Qassem al Araj.[63] Radan also discussed internal security cooperation with Popular Mobilization Forces Chairman Fali al Fayyadh.[64] Radan’s meetings follow Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei’s statement that Iran and Iraq should coordinate to “increase political pressure” on the United States and Israel during a meeting with Sudani in Tehran on November 6.[65] Sudani met with Khamenei after meeting with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken in Baghdad on November 5, during which he and Blinken discussed Axis of Resistance attacks on US forces.[66]

- Radan is a hardline member of the IRGC and has extensive experience crushing political dissent and protests.[67] He joined the Basij and IRGC as a teenager to fight in the Iran-Iraq War in the 1980s and transferred to LEC after the war.[68] Radan served as law enforcement deputy commander from 2008 to 2014, during which time he played critical roles in cracking down on the 2009 Green Movement and suppressing protests in Syria.[69] Radan traveled to Damascus in 2011 to meet with Syrian security services and support their crackdown against the Syrian people.

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[1] <https://www.wsj.com/world/middle-east/stricken-gaza-hospital-reports-dea...>

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- [12] <https://www.cnn.com/2023/11/13/politics/al-shifa-hospital-us-intelligence/index.html>; <https://www.idf.il/150310>
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- [19] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1724054594215424123>
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- [21] <https://twitter.com/PalestineRCS/status/1724091056159941066>; <https://www.wsj.com/livecoverage/israel-hamas-war-gaza-strip-2023-11-11/...>
- [22] <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/414>
- [23] <https://t.me/kataebabuali/10474>
- [24] <https://t.me/sarayaps/16656>
- [25] <https://t.me/AymanGouda/5861>

[26] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1723943786445676868>

[27] <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-update-october-21-2023?mkt...>

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[32] <https://idf dot il/150310>

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[38] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1724008154319503771>;  
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[40] <https://twitter.com/alishoeib1970/status/1724061310457942524> ;  
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[52] <https://t.me/elamharbi/81> ; <https://t.me/elamharbi/96> ; <https://www.almayadeen>

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[68] <http://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/10/17/2833046>

[69] <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/tg1224>

## Iran

File Attachments: