



Operations Epic Fury and Roaring Lion: 3/7/26 – 3/8/26 Update

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With the United States and Israel launching a joint campaign—Operations Epic Fury and Roaring Lion, respectively—against Iranian regime targets and Iran launching retaliatory missile and drone attacks against U.S. forces in the region, Israel, and Arab nations, dubbed Operation True Promise IV, JINSA will regularly release updates detailing the conflict. The update below includes information since [JINSA's last update](#) as of March 8 at 12:00 pm ET.

1. Overview

- Overall, Iranian missile fire has continued a sharp decline compared to the first days of the war, with the number of missiles it has launched per day down roughly 90 percent. Iranian forces are typically firing one to three missiles per attack, with only sporadic bursts of larger fire.
 - » While Iran fired 56 missiles on March 7, a 40 percent increase from the 40 missiles on March 6, its fire so far on March 8 has dropped back to 38 missiles, suggesting its level of fire will continue the general downward trend of attacks over the past few days.
 - » Iran has likely fired over 1,000 ballistic missiles and 2,200 drones since the war began.
- As its missile and drone attacks face growing pressure, Iran appears to be turning to [terrorist](#) and [sabotage](#) attacks abroad as an alternative means of inflicting damage.
- Amid persistent Iranian attacks on surrounding Arab countries, which have killed over a dozen people and crippled key energy infrastructure, several of those countries are weighing—if not already conducting—direct strikes on Iran.
 - » The United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.) reportedly conducted [airstrikes](#) against Iran on March 7, and the prior day, Saudi Arabia's leaders reportedly [warned](#) Iran that Riyadh was weighing a military response. As JINSA previously [noted](#), Qatar reportedly conducted strikes on Iranian targets on March 2.
 - The Emirati and Qatari governments denied reports that they struck Iran.
- The Iranian regime's panel tasked with selecting a new Supreme Leader has [reportedly](#) reached a decision, though it has not made an official announcement nor named any final candidates.
- On March 8, U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) [warned](#) that Iran was “using crowded areas surrounded by civilians in cities such as Dezful, Esfahan, and Shiraz to launch attack drones and ballistic missiles,” leveraging its own people as a human shield to deter U.S. and Israeli attacks and raising international condemnation for civilian casualties.

- U.S. and Israeli operations are severely degrading Iran’s missile launch capacity. Israel, on March 7, [conducted](#) hundreds of strikes targeting Iran’s two main missile production sites, including the one that produced the majority of missiles launched at Israel.
- The United States is ramping up efforts to ensure it has enough munitions for a sustained campaign. On March 6, President Donald Trump announced that U.S. defense firms had agreed to [quadruple production](#) of certain high-end munitions.

2. U.S. and Israeli Operations

- On March 7, Fox News [reported](#) that the USS *George H.W. Bush* “is expected to deploy soon” to the Middle East, after the U.S. Navy announced that the aircraft carrier “wrapped up the composite unit training exercise” required prior to deployment.
 - » The USS *George H.W. Bush* would be the third U.S. aircraft carrier [deployed](#) to the region in recent weeks. The USS *Gerald R. Ford* and USS *Abraham Lincoln* arrived in regional waters in February.
- U.S. and Israeli operations have significantly degraded Iran’s missile launch capability.
 - » Israel [announced](#) on March 6 that Iran retains fewer than 200 ballistic missile launchers, down from approximately 500 at the war’s start.
- The United States has struck over 3,000 Iranian targets since the war began, including 43 warships, the Pentagon [announced](#) on March 6.
- U.S. leaders are seeking to increase munitions output, amid concerns of shortages exacerbated by ongoing operations.
 - » Following a March 6 meeting with the executives of U.S. defense manufacturers, President Trump [announced](#) that the firms had agreed to quadruple production of “exquisite class weaponry,” without elaborating.
 - Those present included the leaders of BAE Systems, Boeing, Honeywell Aerospace, L3Harris, Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, and RTX.
 - » Secretary of War Pete Hegseth has denied any munitions shortage, [stating](#) on March 5, “our stockpiles of defensive and offensive weapons allow us to sustain this campaign as long as we need to,” and “our munitions status only increases as our advantages increase.”
- The U.S. State Department, on March 6, [approved](#) the sale of 12,000 BLU-110A/B bomb bodies to Israel. Secretary of State Marco Rubio invoked emergency status under the Arms Export Control Act for the sale, bypassing Congressional review requirements.
- President Trump [stated](#) that he does not want Iranian Kurdish fighters based in Iraq to go into Iran, saying that the war is “complicated enough as it is.”
- U.S. intelligence agencies [determined](#) that Iran could retrieve its highly enriched uranium stockpiles from the Isfahan tunnel facility targeted by strikes last June. The United States and Israel have [discussed](#) deploying special forces to secure this stockpile.
 - » President Trump [stated](#) that such an operation would occur only after Iran “would be so decimated that they wouldn’t be able to fight at the ground level.”
- President Trump has [expressed interest](#) in deploying ground troops in Iran for limited strategic purposes without specifying what those purposes may be.
- The United States has [begun shifting](#) Merops counter-drone systems from U.S. Army stockpiles in Europe to the Middle East to counter Iranian drones.

- » Merops systems have been battle-tested in Ukraine against Russia’s Iran-made Shahed (Geran) drones.
- Israel has [dropped](#) over 7,500 munitions on Iranian targets since the war began.
- U.S. Arab partners are reportedly becoming more willing to act against Iran.
 - » According to Israeli officials who spoke with Israel’s *Walla* outlet, the Emirati military [struck](#) a desalination plant in Iran on March 7. The U.A.E. has officially [denied](#) such reports.
 - Saudi leaders reportedly told Iranian counterparts on March 6 that future Iranian attacks on Saudi Arabia may elicit [direct Saudi strikes](#) on Iran.

Day 9 of Operations: March 8

Iran

- Overnight, the U.S. and Israeli militaries [carried out](#) joint attacks on five Iranian oil facilities in Tehran and Alborz, including four oil depots and a center used to transport petroleum products, killing four people.
 - » The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) [stated](#) that Iranian forces “make direct and frequent use of these fuel tanks to operate military infrastructure.”
- Strikes reportedly targeted several regime sites throughout Iran, including:
 - » Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) [space and satellite](#) headquarters in Tehran; [IRGC barracks](#) and a [Basij building](#) in Shahreza; [IRGC Saheb al-Zaman headquarters](#); a [Basij intelligence district](#); [the Imam Ali barracks in Najafabad](#); [the army aviation base in Isfahan](#); and the [Faraja Intelligence Building](#) in the Qods district of Isfahan.

Lebanon

- Synchronously with its operations in Iran, the IDF continues its actions to degrade Hezbollah in Lebanon.
 - » Since Hezbollah entered the war on March 2, the IDF has [launched](#) over 500 attacks against Hezbollah and killed at least 200 Hezbollah operatives, including several senior members.
- Hezbollah is reportedly [faltering](#) under sustained Israeli military pressure. Its stronghold and main operating base of Dahiyeh, near Beirut, has been almost completely evacuated, and the group is now unable to pay operatives’ salaries.
- The IDF [announced](#) that two of its soldiers had been killed, and another lightly injured, in a Hezbollah attack in southern Lebanon.

Day 8 of Operations: March 7

Iran

- President Trump [announced](#) that the U.S. military has “knocked out 42 navy ships, some of them very large, in three days. That was the end of the [Iranian] navy.”
 - » President Trump also [declared](#) that U.S. forces have destroyed Iran’s air force and military communications.
- On March 7, Israel’s military announced that it had [conducted](#) hundreds of strikes against Iran’s two most essential ballistic missile production sites, estimating that it set back Iran’s missile programs by a matter of years.

- » The first site, in Parchin, included a research and development site; factories that produced warheads, combustible materials, and missile engines; and a missile assembly line.
- » The second site, in Shahrud, manufactured the majority of missiles Iran has fired at Israel.
- The Israeli Air Force [struck](#) over 400 targets across central and western Iran, including ballistic missile launchers and weapons manufacturing sites.
- The IDF [destroyed](#) several Iranian F-14 fighter jets, supplied to the country prior to the 1979 Islamic Revolution, at an airport in Isfahan.
- Strikes reportedly continued to target regime sites throughout Iran, including:
 - » The [Imam Hossein University](#) (an IRGC military academy) and the [Ministry of Intelligence](#) buildings in Tehran; the [115th Beit al-Muqaddas Battalion](#); [Shahid Mazfari Supply Base](#); [Melashieh missile base](#); [IRGC Ground Forces Habibollahi Barracks](#); [IRGC Vali-e Asr Khuzestan Headquarters](#); [Imam Hassan missile site](#); [IRGC Aerospace Division Six](#); [Ali-Akbar Drone Division](#); [IRGC Malkan headquarters](#) in East Azerbaijan; [Isfahan Flight School](#); [16th Qazvin Combat Division headquarters](#); and [Eighth Tactical Base](#) in Isfahan.
- A U.S. B-1 Lancer strategic bomber [landed](#) in the United Kingdom following an announcement by British Prime Minister Keir Starmer that he approved U.S. military use of British bases for exclusively “defensive” purposes.

Lebanon

- Overnight, the IDF [struck](#) a hotel in Beirut, targeting fighters of the IRGC Quds Force’s (QF) Lebanon Corps, killing four.
 - » The Israeli military [struck](#) Hezbollah’s military infrastructure throughout Lebanon’s southern districts and the Beqaa Valley region, including weapons depots and rocket launchers.
- According to Syria state media, the IDF [conducted](#) 13 airstrikes on targets near the Nabi Sheet district in eastern Lebanon’s Hezbollah stronghold of Baalbek. This area along the Lebanon-Syria border reportedly also was the site of a firefight when Israeli helicopters tried to land and came under heavy Hezbollah fire.
- Dozens of IRGC officers, primarily IRGC-QF officers advising Hezbollah, [left](#) Beirut for fear of being targeted.

Day 7 of Operations: March 6

Iran

- Israel carried out a wave of airstrikes [targeting](#) over 400 sites in western Iran, including ballistic missile launchers, drone warehouses, and air defense systems.
- The Israeli military [struck](#) Tehran’s Mehrabad International Airport, which the IDF claims the IRGC-QF uses “as a central hub for arming and funding the regime’s terrorist proxies in the Middle East.”
 - » The military destroyed at least 16 IRGC-QF aircraft in the strikes.
- Strikes reportedly targeted several regime sites throughout Iran, including the [Shiraz Air Defense Center](#) and the city’s [ammunition depot](#).

Lebanon

- The Israeli military [struck](#) the IRGC's air force headquarters in Beirut, as well as three other Hezbollah sites, including the group's naval force, financial division, and executive council headquarters.
- Israel also [targeted and struck](#) various fighters and buildings belonging to Hezbollah's elite Radwan Force.

U.S. and Israeli Rationale and Policy Objectives

United States

- The White House [defines](#) President Trump's demand for unconditional surrender, which he [declared](#) on March 6, as the point at which Trump "determines that Iran can no longer pose a threat to the United States."
- On March 6, U.S. Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt [stated](#) that Operation Epic Fury is expected to take 4-6 weeks to reach its objectives.
- Before Operation Epic Fury commenced, the U.S. National Intelligence Council [assessed](#) that Iranian opposition was "unlikely" to take control of the country after an attack.

Israel

- Prime Minister Netanyahu [stated](#) that Israel's plan for the next phase of the war seeks to "destabilize the regime" and "enable change." He called on the Iranian people to free Iran.

3. Iranian Operations

- The Israeli defense establishment [determined](#) that Iran intends to increase its attacks on Israel in the coming days. Iran is estimated to have several hundred ballistic missiles left.
- Iranian and proxy attacks continued to target the Israeli homeland, including:
 - » A March 8 ballistic missile attack [carrying](#) a cluster munition on central Israel, injuring at least six.
 - » A March 8 Hezbollah [rocket attack](#) on northern Israel.
 - » A March 7 [missile attack](#) overnight.
 - » Iran continued to strike nearby civilian infrastructure, as well as commercial vessels in regional waters, even after President Masoud Pezeshkian publicly apologized for attacks on "[neighboring countries](#)." These include Iranian strikes targeting:
 - » Bahrain:
 - On March 8, a drone [struck](#) a desalination plant, causing material damage.
 - On March 8, debris from an Iranian missile [damaged](#) a university building and injured three.
 - On March 7, Iran [targeted](#) the capital of Manama with an unspecified projectile, hitting a home and surrounding buildings.
 - » Kuwait:
 - On March 8, drones [targeted](#) fuel tanks at Kuwait International Airport.
 - » Iraq:
 - On March 8, two explosions were [reported](#) near Erbil International Airport.
 - On March 7, air defense systems [intercepted](#) rockets fired at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, marking the first such attack on the embassy since operations began. Explosions were [reported](#) throughout Erbil.

- On March 6, a drone attack [targeted](#) a hotel in Erbil after the U.S. Embassy in Iraq warned that pro-Iran militants may target foreign-frequented hotels in Iraqi Kurdistan.
- » Qatar:
 - On March 6, Qatar was [targeted](#) by 10 drones, nine of which were intercepted while one struck an uninhabited area without causing casualties.
- » Saudi Arabia:
 - On March 7, Saudi Arabia said it [destroyed](#) drones headed toward the Shaybah oil field and [intercepted](#) a ballistic missile fired toward Prince Sultan Air Base.
 - Another March 7 missile [targeting](#) the Prince Sultan Air Base fell “in an uninhabited area.”
 - On March 6, Saudi forces [intercepted](#) a cruise missile east of Al-Kharj governorate.
- » United Arab Emirates:
 - On March 8, explosions were [reported](#) in Abu Dhabi.
 - On March 7, a drone [crashed](#) near Dubai International Airport, prompting the airport to suspend operations before later resuming flights.
- » Commercial vessels operating in nearby waters:
 - An IRGC drone [targeted](#) and struck the *Louise P*, a Marshall Islands-flagged oil tanker transiting the Persian Gulf.
 - On March 6, the U.A.E.-flagged tugboat *Musaffah 2* was [struck](#) by two missiles and sank in the Strait of Hormuz, resulting in three missing crew members with four other members surviving.
- On March 7–8, Iranian-backed proxies carried out missile and drone attacks, striking various targets in Iraqi Kurdistan.
 - » Several drones [targeted](#) Erbil, most of which were intercepted by air defenses, though debris from one destroyed drone killed an Erbil International Airport security employee and wounded three others.
 - » Two drones [hit](#) near the United Nations facility and the Turkish consulate in Sulaymaniyah.
 - » Five drones [targeted](#) a base belonging to an Iraqi Kurdish group, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, with one drone shot down and no injuries reported.
 - » Three missiles [struck](#) a camp belonging to an Iranian Kurdish opposition group, the Komala Party of Iranian Kurdistan, killing one fighter and wounding another.
- On March 8, Ahmad Alamolhoda, a member of Iran’s Assembly of Experts, [said](#) the election for the next supreme leader has already taken place, and a successor has been chosen, with the head of the Assembly’s secretariat now responsible for publicly announcing the decision.
- Iram appears to be turning to terrorist and sabotage attacks to inflicting further damage.
 - » On March 8, a loud explosion [struck](#) the U.S. Embassy in Oslo, Norway, causing minor damage but no injuries in what Norwegian police said may have been a deliberate attack linked to the war in the Middle East.
 - » On March 7, Azerbaijan [said](#) it had foiled several IRGC-planned sabotage attacks, with targets reportedly including the Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan oil pipeline, the Israeli embassy in

Baku, an Ashkenazi synagogue, and a leader of the country's Mountain Jewish community.

- Officials from Hezbollah recently [told](#) Reuters that the terrorist group has spent months restocking its arsenal of rockets and drones in preparation for another war with Israel, drawing on Iranian support and its own weapons manufacturing.
 - » The group purportedly [concluded](#) that another round of fighting with Israel was inevitable, and has relied in recent months on a roughly \$50 million monthly budget, most of it provided by Iran and earmarked for fighters' salaries.

4. Estimated Casualties of Iranian Operations

- An Iranian drone attack [killed](#) six U.S. servicemembers at Port Shuaiba in Kuwait on March 1: Maj. Jeffrey O'Brien, 45; Chief Warrant Officer 3 Robert Marzan, 54; Capt. Cody Khork, 35; Sgt. 1st Class Nicole Amor, 39; Sgt. 1st Class Noah Tietjens, 42; and Sgt. Declan Coady (posthumously promoted from specialist), 20.
 - » 18 U.S. servicemembers have been seriously [wounded](#).
- Since the war's [outbreak](#), numerous other casualties have also been reported:
 - » 15 Israelis have been [killed](#), two of them soldiers [killed](#) in southern Lebanon, and over 1,473 have been [hospitalized](#);
- In the U.A.E., four people were [killed](#), and 112 were [injured](#);
 - » Two [Kuwaiti navy sailors](#), two [interior ministry officers](#), and a [Kuwaiti civilian](#) have been killed, and over 67 Kuwaiti military personnel have been [injured](#);
 - » Four people have been [killed](#) in Syria, and several have been [injured](#);
 - » In Qatar, around 20 people have been [wounded](#);
 - » In Oman, one person has been [killed](#);
 - » In Bahrain, three people have been [injured](#);
 - » One Iraqi security officer has been [killed](#), and an airport employee has been wounded in Iraqi Kurdistan;
 - » In Azerbaijan, four civilians have been [injured](#);
 - » In Lebanon, at least 394 individuals have been [killed](#), and 1,130 have been [wounded](#);
 - » In Iran, at least 1,230 Iranian civilians have been [killed](#); and
 - » Thousands of IRGC and internal security officials have reportedly been [killed](#) in the war.

5. Threats and Condemnation from Iranian Officials

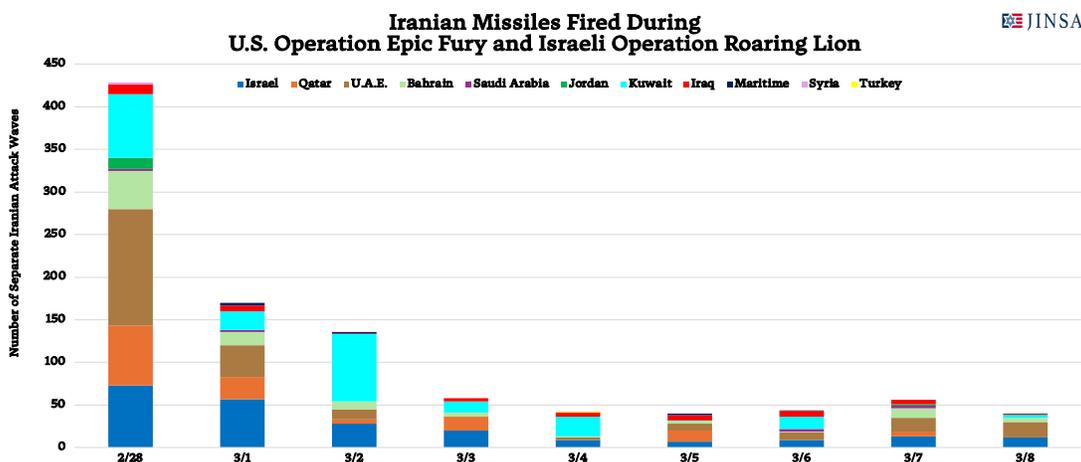
- An IRGC official [threatened](#) the U.S. Navy, saying it is "waiting for their presence" to escort ships through the Strait of Hormuz in order to strike them, adding, "we recommend that before making any decision, the Americans remember the fire of the American supertanker Bridgeton in 1987," a ship that was attacked by Iran.
- President Pezeshkian [stated](#) that President Trump's demand for unconditional surrender is a "dream" that they should "take to their grave."
- Iran's Intelligence Ministry [warned](#) on March 7 that people who film sites hit in attacks and send the footage to what it called hostile foreign satellite channels and online platforms would face legal action.

6. International Response

- Italy is [preparing](#) to deploy a frigate to Cyprus as part of a joint mission with France, the Netherlands, and Spain to defend the island following an Iranian drone attack.
- On March 8, U.A.E. President Mohammed bin Zayed [issued](#) his first public statement during the war, commending the country’s armed forces and pledging to defend the U.A.E.
- Omani Foreign Minister Badr bin Hamad Albusaidi [stated](#) that the action taken by Israel and the United States against Iran is “both immoral and illegal,” while adding that the “the retaliation by Iran against its neighbors is also deeply regrettable and unacceptable.”
- Two Iranian ships [departed](#) a Chinese port, likely carrying shipments of weapon-related chemicals.
- Turkey is [considering](#) deploying F-16 aircraft to northern Cyprus.
- Saudi Defense Minister Prince Khalid bin Salman [warned](#) Iran to “avoid miscalculation.”
- The Kuwait Petroleum Corporation [declared](#) force majeure and began reducing oil output.
- The Iraqi and Kurdistan Region governments [stated](#), “Iraqi territory must not be used as a launching point for attacks against neighboring countries.”

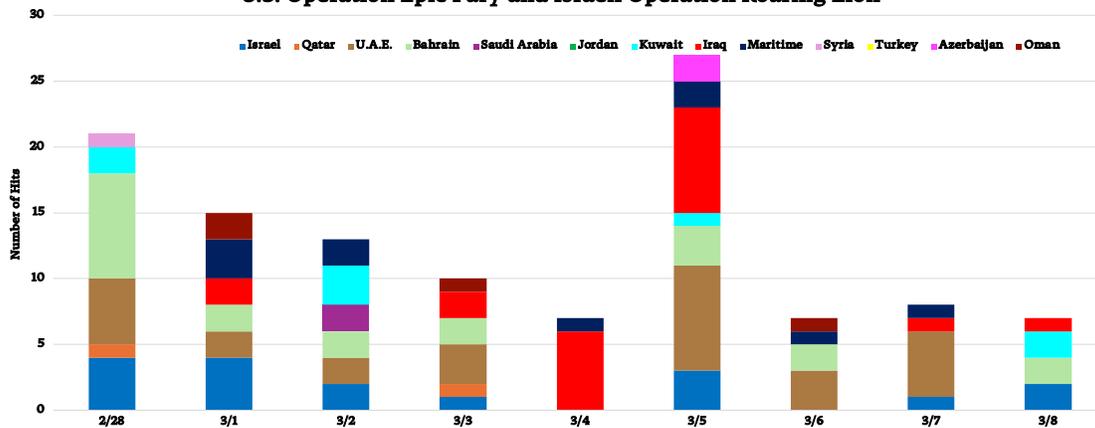
7. Charts and Trends

- Overall, Iranian missile fire has continued a sharp decline compared to the first days of the war, with a pattern of roughly one to three missiles per attack and only sporadic bursts of larger fire. By March 8, the 38 missiles Iran fired marked a 91 percent decrease from the 428 missiles it launched on the first day of the conflict.
 - » So far on March 8, Iran has launched 38 missiles, a 32 percent decrease from the 56 missiles fired on March 7, suggesting that fire continues its downward trend after a brief uptick on March 7.
 - » Since March 4, Iranian missile fire has plateaued at between roughly 40 and 50 missiles per day.



- Since the afternoon of March 7, the number of Iranian projectiles successfully hitting targets decreased 25 percent, from 8 hits on March 7 to 6 hits on March 8. The hit rate has stabilized at lower levels compared to the 27 hits on March 5, when Iran achieved greater success through drone attacks against the U.A.E. and targeting of Kurdish regions in Iraq.
 - » Iran has also increasingly turned to using cluster munitions against Israel, which have smaller total payloads but can spread damage across civilian and other soft targets.

Number of Missile and Drone Hits on Populated or Critical Areas During U.S. Operation Epic Fury and Israeli Operation Roaring Lion



8. JINSA Resources

- Blaise Misztal, [Principles for U.S.-Kurdish Partnership](#), March 6, 2026
- Hussein Mansour, [Gulf Situation Assessment: Iran's Attacks on Arab States Will Backfire](#), March 5, 2026
- Ari Cicurel, [Iran's Missile Fire Has Almost Run Out](#), March 5, 2026
- Blaise Misztal, [Iran is Not Iraq](#), March 4, 2026
- Giran Ozcan and Jonah Brody, [The Kurdish Moment in Iran](#), March 4, 2026
- Gen. Frank McKenzie, USMC (ret.), IDF MG (ret.) Yaakov Amidror, IDF MG (ret.) Oded Bassiuk, and John Hannah, "[Webinar: Operations Epic Fury and Roaring Lion](#)," March 1, 2026
- Jonathan Ruhe and Ari Cicurel, [U.S.-Israel Joint Operations Against Iran's Regime](#), February 28, 2026
- Blaise Misztal, Giran Ozcan, and Jonah Brody, [The Rise of Iran's Kurdish Coalition](#), February 27, 2026
- Jonathan Ruhe and Ari Cicurel, [Israel: America's Third Aircraft Carrier in the Middle East](#), February 25, 2026
- Jonathan Ruhe and Ari Cicurel, [Iran's Evolving Missile and Drone Threat](#), February 20, 2026
- Lt Gen Thomas Bergeson, USAF (ret.), LTG Karen Gibson, USA (ret.), and Lt Gen Sam Mundy, USMC (ret.), "[Any Action Against Iran Needs to Account for the Proxies](#)," *Breaking Defense*, February 19, 2026
- Jonathan Ruhe and Yoni Tobin, "[Iran Has Teeth. Can America Extract Them?](#)", *JNS*, February 12, 2026
- IDF MG (ret.) Yaakov Amidror, VADM Robert Harward, USN (ret.), Lt Gen Charles Moore, USAF (ret.), and Blaise Misztal, "[Webinar: How Should the United States Respond to Iranian Protests?](#)", January 15, 2026
- Gen Charles Wald, USAF (ret.), VADM Mark Fox, USN (ret.), and LTG Robert Ashley, USA (ret.), [Operation Rising Lion: Insights from Israel's 12-Day War Against Iran](#), November 20, 2025
- Ari Cicurel, [Shielded by Fire: Middle East Air Defense During the June 2025 Israel-Iran War](#), August 21, 2025