



# Operations Epic Fury and Roaring Lion: 3/12/26 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 12 at 11:00 am ET.

## 1. Overview

- Iran continues to launch far fewer missiles than it did during the opening days of the war, but it has escalated its attacks against Saudi Arabia and maritime targets in an effort to pressure Washington and the Gulf nations to end the war.
  - » After four consecutive days of declining missile fire, Iran surged its launches to 46 missiles on March 11, a 70 percent increase from 27 on March 10.
  - » Iran has launched over 2,564 drones, 1,158 ballistic missiles, and 28 cruise missiles since the war began, with roughly 48 percent of total projectiles targeting the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.).
  - » According to Israeli Air Force (IAF) sources who spoke with Israel's *Channel 12*, [at least 80 percent](#) of Iran's capacity to launch missiles towards Israel has been eliminated, a figure they expect will rise to 95 percent within the next week.
- Iran's new Supreme Leader, Mojtaba Khamenei, released his first [public message](#) since being selected on March 8 to replace his father. As JINSA noted in a prior war [update](#), Mojtaba Khamenei was injured in the strike that killed his father.
  - » In the remarks, which were [read](#) by an Iranian state media television anchor and were not accompanied by any audio or video of Iran's new leader, Mojtaba Khamenei [declared](#) that Iran may open new fronts "where the enemy has little experience and is highly vulnerable." He also demanded that regional Arab countries end U.S. military basing access, amid other comments.
  - » Mojtaba Khamenei inherited control of a weak and battered Iranian regime which has [sustained major losses](#) across the board, as JINSA has [detailed](#), including at the leadership level. Reportedly, over 7,000 IRGC operatives and nearly 50 high-level regime officials have [been eliminated](#).
- On March 11, Hezbollah [launched](#) its largest salvo yet in the war—constituting over 200 rockets—towards Israel at roughly the same time as Iran launched multiple missiles targeting Israel. With Iran's missile launcher capacity severely degraded, the regime relied upon

mass barrages from its proxy in Lebanon to try to overwhelm Israeli air defenses as it fired its ballistic missiles.

- » Only a few direct impacts, and two minor injuries, were reported.
- » Israel's *Channel 12* [reported](#) that Israel's military pre-empted the Hezbollah attack by striking launchers and the Hezbollah operatives who manned them. Accordingly, Israel was able to substantially reduce the number of rockets the group launched from over 600, as it planned, to roughly 200.
- The opening week of U.S. operations [cost](#) the United States more than \$11.3 billion, a figure that does not include costs associated with the pre-war buildup, suggesting the total first-week expenditure could rise substantially, according to the *New York Times*.
  - » Defense officials had previously [told](#) Congress that approximately \$5.6 billion worth of munitions were expended in just the first two days of fighting—a burn rate significantly higher than earlier public estimates.
  - » However, the United States asserts it is not facing any munitions shortfalls.
    - U.S. Secretary of War Pete Hegseth has [maintained](#) that the Pentagon is not experiencing, or anticipating, any munitions shortage due to the war.
    - In addition, Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff General Dan Caine has [publicly stated](#), “we have sufficient precision munitions for the task at hand, both on the offense and defense.”
- As part of the International Energy Agency's (IEA) decision yesterday to release additional oil into the global market, the U.S. Department of Energy will [release](#) 172 million barrels of oil from the U.S. Strategic Petroleum Reserve over approximately four months.

## 2. U.S. and Israeli Operations

- President Donald Trump [stated](#) on March 11 that the United States and Israel “knocked out twice [Iran's] leadership, and now they have a new group coming up. Let's see what happens to them.” In addition, he [confirmed](#) that the U.S. military is “leaving certain things” in Iran intact so that, in the future, Iranians can “build that country back.”
  - » Claiming that the Iranian regime is “pretty much at the end of the line,” President Trump [remarked](#) that this reality “doesn't mean we're going to end [military operations] immediately.”
  - » President Trump also [expressed skepticism](#) that Iran has actually mined the Strait of Hormuz, stating that “we don't think” the regime has done so. He also encouraged shipping firms to resume sending tankers through the strait.
- President Trump has sought to [assuage concerns](#) about Iranian attacks on the U.S. homeland, [stating](#) on March 11, “we know where Iranian ‘sleeper cells’ are,” and, “we have eyes on all of them.”
- The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) is [ramping up operations](#) against Hezbollah leaders and the group's main strongholds in Lebanon, primarily in and around Beirut.
  - » An unnamed senior Israeli official [told](#) Israel's *Ynet News* outlet that Israel is “on the eve of a fateful campaign in Lebanon which will determine the future of both countries” and that “the campaign in Lebanon is going to expand significantly.”
  - » Israel [announced](#) that, several days ago, it eliminated senior Hezbollah missile unit commander Abu Dharr Mohammadi, who was also a member of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). Mohammadi was a key go-between who coordinated Iranian efforts to boost Hezbollah's missile capabilities.

- » Last week, the IDF [eliminated](#) Abu Ali Riyan, a sector commander of Hezbollah's elite Radwan force. Throughout the war, IDF strikes [have hit](#) over 60 Radwan command centers across Lebanon.
- » According to an Israeli official who [spoke](#) with *The Times of Israel*, Hezbollah strongholds in Beirut, like the Dahiyeh neighborhood, "will soon look like Gaza" if the Lebanese government cannot rein in Hezbollah.
  - Israeli strikes have reportedly [already eliminated](#) 20 high-rise buildings used for Hezbollah activity since the war began.
- Israeli strikes, involving [over 10,000 munitions](#) dropped since the start of the war, continue to bomb Iranian regime targets.
  - » Since the start of the war, according to official Israeli [military data](#) reviewed by Israel's *Walla News*, over 7,000 IRGC operatives have been killed.
  - » Over the past several days, the IAF has [destroyed](#) over 250 Iranian drones, dozens of launchers, and a large number of drone unit commanders.
  - » In recent days, Israeli strikes [hit](#) the Taleghan compound, where Iran worked on "critical capabilities in the development of nuclear weapons," according to a statement from the Israeli military.
- U.S. Secretary of Energy Chris Wright [stated](#) that the U.S. military is "simply not ready" to provide escorts through the Strait of Hormuz at this time, adding, "all of our military assets right now are focused on destroying Iran's offensive capabilities and the manufacturing industry that supplies their offensive capabilities."
  - » According to Secretary Wright, it is "[quite likely](#)" that U.S. military escorts of tankers will begin by the end of March.

### **Day 13 of Operations: March 12**

#### *Iran*

- The IAF [continued to conduct](#) airstrikes in Tehran against regime targets, including the IRGC's [Sayyid al-Shuhada](#) base in Tehran Province.
  - » Iranian state media reported that Iran's deputy intelligence minister, [Akbar Ghaffari](#), and a commander in the IRGC aerospace force, [Esmail Dehghan](#), were killed in strikes on Tehran.
- According to [witness accounts](#), Israeli strikes hit the Bandar Sirik port city; an Ahvaz district connected to the 92nd Armored Division, and air defenses in Qeshm Island.

#### *Lebanon*

- Israel's military [struck](#) 10 Hezbollah command posts and dozens of Hezbollah rocket launchers in the Dahiyeh area of Beirut. Several of these posts were used by Hezbollah's intelligence unit and its Radwan special forces unit.
  - » At least 7 people were [reportedly killed](#) in IDF strikes on Beirut.
- While continuing to target Hezbollah sites in Beirut, the IDF is also broadening its operations in southern Lebanon.
  - » Lebanese and Israeli media [reported](#) that Israel seeks to form a broad buffer zone in southern Lebanon, stretching as far as four miles inside Lebanese territory, to safeguard northern Israel from Hezbollah's attacks.
  - » For the first time in the war, Israel's military [issued](#) an evacuation order for southern Lebanon's residents to move north of the Zahrani River. This expands Israeli evacuation parameters to include over 20 additional Lebanese towns.

- According to Lebanon’s state media, Israeli strikes over the past 24 hours [targeted](#) the southern Lebanese towns of al-Sultaniyya, Qana, and Taybeh.

#### *Iraq*

- Airstrikes [hit](#) positions belonging to the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF), a collection of Iran-backed militias in Iraq, in the provinces of Kurkuk and Anbar, killing at least 30 fighters and wounding dozens more.

### **Day 12 of Operations: March 11**

#### *Iran*

- In the first reported unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) strike on the Iranian capital during the war, Israeli drones [eliminated](#) several Basij members at checkpoints in Tehran.
- The IAF [struck](#) several Iranian regime targets in Tehran and the country’s western region, including: an IRGC headquarters in Tehran; a command center and headquarters for the IRGC’s air force; a troop staging area at Imam Hossein University; air defense missiles; and ballistic missile storage and production facilities.
  - » Israeli strikes elsewhere in Iran [targeted](#) complexes used by the country’s internal security forces, Basij forces, and a Ministry of Intelligence headquarters.

### *U.S. and Israeli Rationale and Policy Objectives*

#### *United States*

- President Donald Trump, on March 11, [spoke about](#) his desire to see a new Iranian leader who “knows what they’re doing” and “can build a country.”
- President Trump [stated](#) that while U.S. strikes in June 2025 “obliterated Iran’s nuclear potential,” Tehran subsequently resumed building its nuclear program, citing reconstruction as justification for finishing the current campaign.
  - » He underscored that Iran’s nuclear program is “why we’ve got to finish” the war, since “we don’t want to go back every two years.”

#### *Israel*

- Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz [warned](#) that if Lebanon fails to prevent Hezbollah from attacking Israel, the IDF will “do it ourselves.”
- Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Sa’ar [said](#) only the Iranian people can topple the Islamic Republic, though he argued they would have no chance of succeeding without external assistance.

## **3. Iranian Operations**

- The Federal Bureau of Investigation [alerted](#) California police departments that Iran may launch a drone attack on the western coast of the continental United States “from an unidentified vessel” in retaliation for ongoing U.S. strikes on Iranian regime targets.
- The U.S. State Department [warned](#) that Iran and Iran-aligned militias may be planning attacks against American-owned oil and energy infrastructure in Iraq.
- The U.S. medical equipment company Stryker was [hacked](#) by an Iran-aligned group.
- Iran has reportedly [installed](#) approximately “a dozen mines in the Strait of Hormuz,” compromising the ability to reopen the waterway.
- Iranian and Hezbollah strikes continued targeting sites in Israel.

- » Iran and Hezbollah [launched](#) what the IRGC referred to as a “joint and integrated operation” overnight, supposedly targeting 50 sites in Israel.
  - Hezbollah [launched](#) around 200 rockets and 20 drones targeting northern Israel overnight. One rocket [impacted](#) a home in Bi’ina, and two people were injured by “flying objects.”
  - Iran launched ballistic missiles at both [northern](#) and [southern](#) Israel.
- » In a following attack, Hezbollah [fired](#) numerous long-range rockets at central Israel, landing in open areas.
- » A projectile [struck](#) the town of Haniel in central Israel, severely damaging three homes. No injuries were reported. According to Hezbollah, the group’s missile attack [targeted](#) an IDF military intelligence headquarters in central Israel.
- » The IDF [acknowledged](#) it should have informed the public ahead of a large Hezbollah rocket and drone attack on northern Israel, particularly after Israeli assessments of the planned strike were leaked.
- More broadly, regional Arab countries and international shipping in the Strait of Hormuz continue to come under Iranian fire. Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates each reported Iranian attacks on their country over the past day:
  - » Bahrain:
    - An Iranian attack [struck](#) Muharraq Island, Bahrain, resulting in a fire spreading to fuel storage tanks in the vicinity. The Bahrain International Airport is also located on Muharraq Island.
  - » Iraq:
    - An Italian military base in Erbil was [attacked](#) by a drone and an oil tanker docked in the Basra port in Iraq was [struck](#) by an explosive device, reportedly an [explosive-laden drone boat](#). The latter resulted in one death and the cessation of operations at all Iraqi oil terminals.
  - » Kuwait:
    - The Kuwait International Airport was [struck](#) in a drone attack.
  - » Qatar:
    - On Wednesday, March 11, Qatar was [attacked](#) with nine ballistic missiles and numerous drones. All but one missile was intercepted.
  - » Saudi Arabia:
    - Saudi Arabia intercepted three drones [targeting](#) the Shaybah oilfield, a missile [fired](#) at Prince Sultan Air Base, and a drone [targeting](#) the embassy district in Riyadh.
  - » United Arab Emirates:
    - Explosions were [reported](#) in downtown Dubai.
  - » Commercial shipping:
    - Two oil tankers were [struck](#) by unspecified projectiles in Iraqi waters, resulting in one death, and a container ship north of the U.A.E.’s port city of Jebel Ali was [hit](#) by a projectile.
- U.S. Central Command [warned](#) on March 11 that Iran is using civilian ports, in addition to its naval bases, along the Strait of Hormuz to target international shipping.

#### 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.
- Another U.S. servicemember, Sgt. Benjamin Pennington, 26, was [killed](#) during a March 8 Iranian attack targeting U.S. troops at the Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia.
- Around 140 members of the U.S. military have been [wounded](#) thus far in the war, of whom eight sustained severe injuries. As of March 11, according to *CBS News*, more than 30 U.S. servicemembers [remain hospitalized](#).
- Since the war's outbreak, numerous other casualties have been reported:
  - » 17 Israelis have [been killed](#), two of them soldiers [killed](#) in southern Lebanon, and over 2,500 have been [hospitalized](#);
  - » In the U.A.E., six people have been [killed](#), and 126 have [been 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](#);
  - » Two foreign nationals have been [killed](#) in Saudi Arabia;
  - » In Qatar, around 20 people have been [wounded](#);
  - » In Oman, one person has been [killed](#);
  - » In Bahrain, two people have [been killed](#), and 35 people have [been injured](#);
  - » At least [16 people](#) have been killed in Iraq, including an [Iraqi security officer](#) and [several fighters](#) in Iran-backed militias. A woman was [killed](#) after being hit by rocket shrapnel, and an airport employee [was wounded](#) in Iraqi Kurdistan. An Indian national was [killed](#) following a strike on an oil tanker in Iraqi waters.
  - » In Azerbaijan, four civilians have been [injured](#);
  - » In Lebanon, at least 575 individuals have [been killed](#), and more than 1,130 have been [wounded](#); and
- In Iran, at least 1,332 people have been [killed](#).

#### 5. Threats, Condemnations, and Statements from Iranian Officials

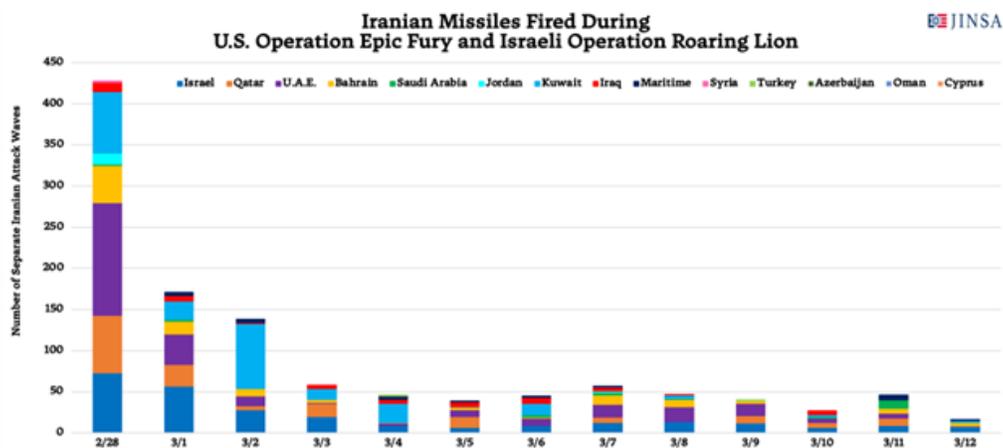
- In his first public statement since taking power, Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei [stated](#) that the Strait of Hormuz should remain closed, strikes on Gulf neighbors will continue, all U.S. bases in the Middle East should be closed, and the United States should provide compensation for Iranian casualties.
- Iran [informed](#) mediators that it will only agree to a ceasefire if the United States and Israel provide formal guarantees that neither country will launch future attacks against the Islamic Republic. Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian also [said](#) that any end to the war would require unspecified countries to pay Iran reparations.
- Iranian military spokesman Abolfazl Shekarchi [warned](#) that all regional ports and docks will become legitimate targets if Iran's port infrastructure comes under attack.

## 6. International Response

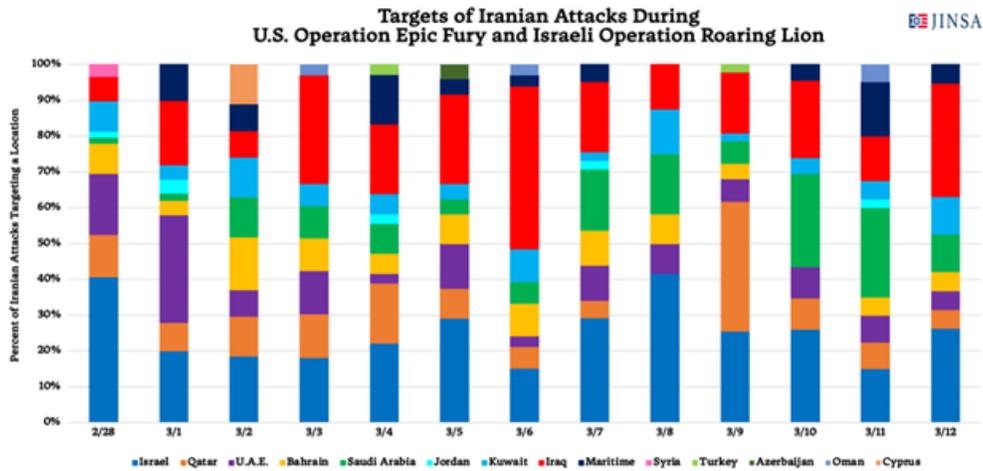
- Oil prices [surged](#) toward nearly \$100 a barrel following Iranian strikes on two tankers in Iraqi waters.
  - » As oil prices rise, some countries have begun taking measures to alleviate prices and potential shortages, including [South Korea](#), which will cap fuel prices at roughly \$1.17 per liter, and [Nepal](#), which will ration cooking fuel.
- The United Nations Security Council [passed](#) a resolution by 13 votes, with two abstentions, calling on Iran to immediately cease its attacks on Gulf states, declaring them a violation of international law and a threat to international peace and security.
- Following an Iranian strike yesterday on a Thai-flagged vessel in the Strait of Hormuz, Thailand [denounced](#) the attack, summoned Iran’s ambassador, and demanded an apology from Tehran, with the foreign ministry saying it was seeking clarification about the circumstances of the incident.
- Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan [stated](#) that “there should be no questioning of Iran’s territorial integrity” and “no pursuit of regime change.” He also [criticized](#) Israeli strikes on Hezbollah targets in Lebanon.

## 7. Charts and Trends

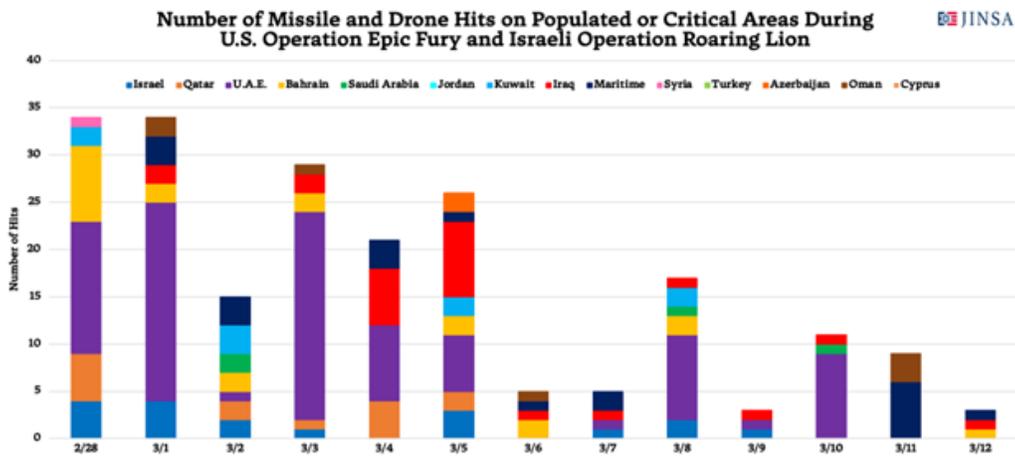
- After declining for four consecutive days, Iranian missile fire surged 70 percent on March 11, from 27 missiles on March 10 to 46 on March 11, likely reflecting a deliberate effort to launch larger salvos before U.S. and Israeli forces further degrade Iranian launch capacity.
  - » So far on March 12, however, Iran has fired just 15 missiles, a 67 percent decline from March 11 and the lowest single-day total of the conflict.



- Iran continued to escalate its fire against key energy sites in the Gulf, in particular Saudi oil fields and commercial ships, to raise economic costs in an effort to drive the United States to end the war.
  - » The percentage of Iranian attacks targeting Saudi Arabia held steady at roughly 25 percent on March 10 and 11.
  - » Iran sharply escalated its attacks against ships, with six attacks targeting ships in the Gulf on March 11, up from one on March 10 and zero on March 9.
  - » So far on March 12, Iran has focused its strikes more on Iraq, particularly in Kurdish regions, which received 32 percent of all attacks, the highest share for any country.



- Despite the decrease in overall fire, Iran continues targeting vulnerable ships as part of its growing emphasis on disrupting shipping through the Strait of Hormuz. The number of Iranian projectiles successfully hitting targets fell slightly on March 11 from the day prior, with multiple hits on ships and an Omani port.
  - » So far on March 12, there have been at least three hits, including 1 each against ships, Bahrain, and Iraqi targets.



## 8. JINSA Resources

- Meriem Mokhtari, [How the Muslim Brotherhood Funds Iran's Proxies](#), March 11, 2026
- 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