



## Operations Epic Fury and Roaring Lion: 4/24/26 Update

**Yoni Tobin**  
*Senior Policy Analyst*

**Jonah Brody**  
*Policy Analyst*

**Sarah Havdala**  
*Policy Analyst*

**Rena Gabber**  
*Research Associate*

The United States, Israel, and Iran reached a two-week ceasefire agreement on April 7, which President Donald Trump extended indefinitely on April 21. JINSA continues to release regular updates about the conflict. The update below includes information since [JINSA's last update](#) as of April 24 at 10:00 am ET.

Days left in U.S.-Israel-Iran ceasefire: **Indefinitely extended**

Days left in Israel-Lebanon ceasefire: **20**, following April 23 extension

Iranian missiles and drones launched since ceasefire: **205 (2 on April 24)**

Hezbollah attacks since ceasefire: **17** (At least 8 on April 23–24)

Ships transiting the Strait of Hormuz since ceasefire: **At least 198** (at least 8 on April 23–24)

- Note: The blockade line that the Pentagon announced crosses where the Gulf of Oman opens into the Arabian Sea and is at a different location than the Strait of Hormuz itself.

### 1. Overview

- On April 23, President Donald Trump, who [participated](#) in diplomatic talks between Israeli and Lebanese representatives earlier that day at the White House, declared that Israel and Lebanon would extend the ceasefire for another three weeks.
- In a post on Truth Social on April 23, President Trump [refuted](#) claims that he wants to end the war soon, noting, “I have all the time in the World, but Iran doesn’t — The clock is ticking!”
- During an April 23 press gaggle, President Trump [stated](#) that while Americans should expect higher gas prices “for a little while,” they “get, for that, Iran without a nuclear weapon that’s going to try to blow up one of our cities or the entire Middle East.” He further stated that he is not in a hurry to make a deal with Iran, saying, “don’t rush me.”
  - » Commenting on Iran’s internal dynamics, he said that Iran’s leaders are “fighting like cats and dogs over who’s going to control [the country]. We’ve created a real mess for them.”
- Reuters reported on April 24 that an internal Pentagon memo [laid out](#) options to penalize North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies that the administration feels did not sufficiently support Operation Epic Fury.
  - » The memo condemned NATO allies’ hesitancy or failure to provide the United States permission for “access, basing and overflight” (ABO), noting that ABO is “just the absolute baseline for NATO.”

- U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) [announced](#) in an April 24 press release that it has redirected 34 vessels away from the naval blockade line since the blockade went into effect on April 13.
- JINSA-reviewed data from Kpler analytics firm showed that at least eight ships transited the Strait of Hormuz between April 23–24, while no Iran-linked ships crossed the U.S. blockade line in the past 48 hours.
- On April 23, the USS *George H.W. Bush* aircraft carrier [entered](#) CENTCOM's area of responsibility, joining the USS *Gerald R. Ford* and USS *Abraham Lincoln* aircraft carriers already stationed in the region.

## 2. Diplomatic Engagement

### *Iran*

- Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi is [anticipated](#) to arrive in Pakistan later today for negotiations. He will also reportedly [travel](#) to Oman and Russia in the coming days.
- In an April 23 Truth Social post, President Trump [noted](#) that "A Deal will only be made when it's appropriate and good for the United States of America, our Allies and, in fact, the rest of the World."
  - » He highlighted damage to Iran's capabilities and leadership and the success of the blockade, adding, "from there, it only gets worse — Time is not on their side!"
- Talking to the press on April 23, President Trump [noted](#) that Iran ending its financing of Hezbollah "is a must" to reach a permanent ceasefire agreement with the United States.
- Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Esmail Baghaei [remarked](#) on April 23, "The claim that Iran wants to build a nuclear bomb has never been raised by us" in talks with the United States.
  - » He added, "these narratives are more a projection by the other side, and even calculations about 10 bombs are products of their own analysis."
- Israel's *Channel 12* reported on April 23 that Iran's parliament speaker Mohammad Ghalibaf has [stepped down](#) from leading talks with the United States due to interference from Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) generals.
  - » The network reported that tensions mounted when Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and other Iranian leaders blocked a Qatari proposal that would permit 20 Iranian ships to travel through the Strait of Hormuz in exchange for 20 vessels from Arab Gulf ports also transiting the waterway.
  - » However, on April 24, Eiman Shamsaei, the head of the Iranian Parliament's Communications, Media, and Cultural Affairs Center, [claimed](#) that Ghalibaf is heavily involved in the negotiations, dismissing the media reports as rumors to confuse the public.

### *Lebanon*

- The Israeli and Lebanese ambassadors to the United States met with President Trump in the White House on April 23, where the two sides agreed to a three-week ceasefire extension through May 14. Several other high-level officials also attended the meeting.
  - » While giving remarks to the press after the event, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio [said](#) that he is "very optimistic that in a few weeks we'll be even closer to the kind of permanent peace that the people of Israel and Lebanon deserve."
    - Secretary Rubio added that "Both [Israel and Lebanon] are victimized by the same terrorist organization [Hezbollah]," noting, "That threat needs to be eliminated."

- » Israel's Ambassador to Washington Yechiel Leiter stated, "Israel wants peace with Lebanon and Israel wants security for its citizens."
  - Amb. Leiter further added, "We hope that together, under your [President Trump's] leadership, we can formalize peace between Israel [and] Lebanon in the very near future."
  - He noted Israel is "united with the Lebanese government in wanting to rid the country of this malign influence called Hezbollah." The ambassador stated, "Iran has been so degraded, the possibility of degrading Hezbollah and liberating Lebanon from their occupation is real."
- On April 23, following his announcement that the ceasefire with Lebanon would be extended by three weeks, President Trump [affirmed](#) Israel's right to self-defense against threats emanating from Lebanon, noting "Israel is going to have to defend itself if they are shot at ... but they're going to do it carefully, and they'll be surgical."
  - » When asked about Lebanon's law criminalizing contact with Israeli citizens, President Trump [responded](#), "I never heard of that, but ... I'm pretty sure that'll be ended very quickly." Secretary of State Marco Rubio agreed with President Trump's statement.
  - » He also [noted](#) that "there's a great chance" an Israeli-Lebanon peace agreement will be achieved this year.
- That day, President Trump [stated](#) that he plans to welcome Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Lebanese President Joseph Aoun to Washington, D.C., "over the next couple of weeks," adding, "we're going to be working with Lebanon to get things straightened out in that country."

### 3. U.S. and Israeli Operations

- In a press briefing on April 24, U.S. Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth [referred](#) to the Iran war as a "gift to the world," noting that the blockade will remain in place "as long as it takes" to ensure that Iran can no longer undermine international security.
- The U.S. State Department [announced](#) on April 24 that it is offering a reward of up to \$10 million for information on Hashim Finyan Rahim al-Saraji, also known as Abu Alaa al-Walai, the leader of the Iran-backed Kataeb Sayyid al-Shuhada (KSS) group in Iraq.
- An internal Pentagon memo reported on by Reuters on April 24 [proposed](#) options to penalize NATO allies that did not support the U.S. campaign in Iran, including suspending Spain's membership in NATO in retribution for its refusal to provide support; barring "difficult" countries from key positions in the alliance; and re-evaluating U.S. support for British claims to the Falkland Islands.
  - » In response, Pentagon Press Secretary Kingsley Wilson noted, "As President Trump has said, despite everything that the United States has done for our NATO allies, they were not there for us. The War Department will ensure that the President has credible options to ensure that our allies are no longer a paper tiger and instead do their part."
- At a press gaggle on April 23, President Trump [revealed](#) that America's military has hit "about 75 percent" of the Iranian targets on its list.
  - » He also [said](#) in response to a reporter's question, "why would I use a nuclear weapon? We've totally, in a very conventional way, decimated [the Iranian regime] without it."
- U.S. military officials are [developing plans](#) to target Iran's capabilities in the Strait of Hormuz if the ceasefire fails, according to multiple sources cited by CNN on April 23.
  - » The strike options include targeting small fast attack boats, minelaying vessels, and other asymmetric assets around the Strait of Hormuz, southern Arabian Gulf, and Gulf of Oman.

- Israeli defense minister Israel Katz [remarked](#) on April 23 that the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) is “awaiting a green light from the United States, first and foremost to complete the elimination of the Khamenei dynasty ... and the successors of the leadership ... and in addition to return Iran to the age of darkness and stone by blowing up central energy and electricity facilities and crushing national economic infrastructure.”
  - » He added, “This time the attack will be different and deadly,” with hits “that will shake and collapse [the Iranian regime’s] its foundations.”

#### *Iran*

- On April 23, Iran’s *Fars News Agency* [reported](#) that Iranian air defense systems engaged what it described as “hostile targets” over parts of Tehran. An Israeli security official [denied](#) that Israel was striking Iran.

#### *Lebanon*

- On April 24, the IDF [bombed](#) surveillance equipment located at a Hezbollah rocket-launching pad that the Israeli military claimed “posed a direct threat to the forces operating in the area” of Kouine in southern Lebanon.
- On April 24, the Israeli military [called](#) for residents to evacuate at least a kilometer away from the southern Lebanese town of Deir Aames after Hezbollah launched rockets at Israeli targets from the area.
  - » Soon after the warning, Lebanese media [reported](#) that Israel carried out strikes in the region.
- On April 24, the Israeli military [confirmed](#) that Hezbollah shot down an IDF drone over Tyre in southern Lebanon with an anti-aircraft missile.
- Following Hezbollah’s rocket attack on the northern Israeli town of Shtula that violated the ceasefire on April 23, the IDF [carried out](#) strikes on Hezbollah-occupied buildings in Khirbet Selm and Toulina in southern Lebanon on April 24.
- On April 23, the Israeli military [killed](#) three Hezbollah fighters responsible for launching an anti-aircraft missile at an IDF drone.
- Israeli troops operating in the Lebanese town of Aynata in southern Lebanon on April 23 [killed](#) two armed Hezbollah fighters who had approached the soldiers “in a manner that posed an immediate threat.”
- On April 23, Lebanon’s health ministry [accused](#) Israel of conducting a strike in Shoukin in southern Lebanon, killing three people, as well as carrying out artillery shelling in the town of Yater.
- The Israeli military bombed two [primed](#) Hezbollah rocket launchers located in southern Lebanon on April 23.
- On April 23, the IDF [discovered](#) a Hezbollah command center full of weapons and supplies buried 25 meters below ground underneath a clothing store in Kham in southern Lebanon.
- The IDF [announced](#) on April 23 that its forces killed more than 25 Hezbollah operatives threatening Israeli troops in southern Lebanon and carried out over 50 airstrikes targeting Hezbollah sites and fighters since the Israel-Lebanon ceasefire took hold on April 17.

## 4. Strait of Hormuz Shipping and Blockade Status

- Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Dan Caine [stated](#) during an April 24 briefing that the crews of the three vessels seized by the United States over the past week—the *Tousca*, the *Tifani*, and the *Majestic X*—remain in U.S. custody.

- CENTCOM [stated](#) on April 24 that 34 vessels in total—an increase of three vessels from JINSA’s last update—had complied with U.S. orders to turn back toward Iranian ports since the U.S. blockade took effect.

## 5. Iranian and Proxy Operations

### *Maritime*

- The IRGC Navy [deployed](#) additional mines in the Strait of Hormuz this week, according to an American official and a source familiar with the situation, cited by *Axios* on April 23.
  - » The American official noted that the United States is aware of the number of mines Iran has recently laid in the Strait, but did not share the number with *Axios*.
  - » According to expert estimates, less than 100 mines had been deployed prior to the recent increase in mine-laying.

### *Lebanon*

- On April 24, the Israeli military [published](#) videos and pictures depicting Hezbollah’s exploitation of ambulances, including in the town of Qantara, to conceal weapons and the group’s activity in southern Lebanon.
- On April 24, the IDF [intercepted](#) a Hezbollah drone before it crossed into Israeli territory, prompting sirens in the Western Galilee region.
- On April 24, Hezbollah [fired](#) explosive-laden drones at Israeli forces in the southern Lebanese town of Qantara, with the projectiles exploding near the troops, but resulting in no injuries.
- On April 23, violating the ceasefire right as diplomatic talks began between Israel and Lebanon in Washington, D.C., Hezbollah [fired](#) four rockets at Shtula in northern Israel for the first time since the truce went into effect on April 17. Israel’s air defenses intercepted the rockets that crossed into Israeli territory, with no injuries reported.
  - » Hezbollah [stated](#) it had launched the attack in response to Israeli shelling in Yater in southern Lebanon, while also taking responsibility for conducting at least five separate attacks on Israeli troops in southern Lebanon earlier in the day.
  - » The IDF also [claimed](#) that Hezbollah had launched rockets at Israeli troops operating in the Aynata area, with some striking the ground near the soldiers.
  - » On April 23, Hezbollah [stated](#) that its forces fired at an Israeli military bulldozer operating in Rachaf in southern Lebanon, claiming that the equipment was destroying homes in the area.
- A United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) peacekeeper from Indonesia [died](#) on April 24 of wounds sustained in a March 29 incident in which an explosive detonated. The full circumstances of the March 29 situation remain unclear.

### *Kuwait*

- The Kuwaiti military [announced](#) on April 24 that two drones targeted land border posts in the country’s north, resulting in material damage but no casualties.

### *Outside the Middle East*

- A journalist from British broadcaster LBC was [offered](#) payment by an alleged Iran-linked contact to carry out acts of vandalism, according to an April 24 report from the outlet.
  - » Met Police deputy commissioner Matt Jukes warned that proxies being asked to act on behalf of Iran are easily expendable and will be dropped by their handlers as soon as police get involved.

## 6. Estimated Casualties of Iranian Operations

- Thirteen U.S. service members have died during Operation Epic Fury.
  - » 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 Khorak, 35; Sgt. 1st Class Nicole Amor, 39; Sgt. 1st Class Noah Tietjens, 42; and Sgt. Declan Coady (posthumously promoted from specialist), 20.
  - » A U.S. servicemember, Sgt. Benjamin Pennington, 26, was [killed](#) in a March 8 Iranian attack targeting U.S. troops at the Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia.
  - » Six U.S. servicemembers were [killed](#) when a KC-135 aerial refueling aircraft crashed over western Iraq on March 12: Major John A. Klinner, 33; Captain Ariana G. Savino, 31; Technical Sergeant Ashley B. Pruitt, 34; Captain Seth R. Koval, 38; Captain Curtis J. Angst, 30; and Technical Sergeant Tyler H. Simmons, 28.
- At least 400 members of the U.S. military have been [injured](#) thus far in the war.
  - » Ten have been seriously [wounded](#), and at least 354 of the injured have reportedly returned to duty.
  - » At least 15 Americans were [hurt](#) in an Iranian drone strike on Ali Al Salem Air Base in Kuwait on April 6, most of whom were lightly injured.
  - » In the March 27 Iranian attack on a U.S. base in Saudi Arabia, at least 15 U.S. servicemembers were [injured](#), including two who were seriously wounded.
- Since the war began, [46 people have been killed in Israel](#), while over 7,794 have been [injured](#). [15 of these casualties](#) include Israeli soldiers who have been killed while fighting Hezbollah in southern Lebanon.
- Since the war's outbreak, numerous other casualties have been reported:
  - » Iran: Through April 7, at least 3,636 people, including at least 1,221 military personnel, have been [killed](#), with at least 26,500 [wounded](#). *Iran International* reports that over 4,700 security personnel have been [killed](#), including members of the Basij, IRGC, and police forces.
  - » Azerbaijan: Four civilians have been [injured](#).
  - » Bahrain: Three people have [been killed](#), including a [Moroccan contractor](#), and at least 46 people [have been injured](#), including five [Emirati soldiers](#).
  - » Iraq: At least 119 people have been [killed](#), [including](#) 18 [people](#) in Iraqi Kurdistan.
  - » Jordan: At least 31 people have [been injured](#).
  - » Kuwait: Two [Kuwaiti navy sailors](#), two [Kuwaiti interior ministry officers](#), two [Kuwaiti civilians](#), and an [Indian national](#) have been killed; over 90 Kuwaiti military [personnel have been injured](#), and eight [civilians](#), including two [medical staff](#), have been wounded.
  - » Lebanon: At least 2,483 people have been [killed](#), and nearly 7,707 have been [wounded](#)—figures that do not distinguish between Hezbollah operatives and civilians.
  - » Oman: At least [three people](#) have been killed, and at least 15 have been [wounded](#).
  - » Qatar: Around 20 people have been [wounded](#), and seven were [killed](#) on March 22 in a helicopter crash in Qatari territorial waters due to a technical issue.
  - » Saudi Arabia: Three people have been killed, including a Saudi [national](#) and two [foreign nationals](#), and at least 23 others [have been injured](#).
  - » Syria: At least four people have been [killed](#) in Syria, and several others have been [injured](#).

- » United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.): 13 people have been [killed](#), and at least 224 have been [injured](#).

## 7. Threats, Condemnations, and Statements from Iranian and Proxy Officials

- Lebanese lawmaker Mohammad Raad, head of Hezbollah's parliamentary bloc, [urged](#) Lebanese authorities on April 24 to withdraw from direct negotiations with Israel.
- Iranian parliament speaker and lead negotiator Mohammad Ghalibaf, [stated](#) in an X post on April 23, "In Iran, there are no radicals or moderates; we are all 'Iranian' and 'revolutionary,' and with the iron unity of the nation and government, with complete obedience to the Supreme Leader of the Revolution, we will make the aggressor criminal regret his actions. One God, one leader, one nation, and one path; that path being the path to victory for Iran, dearer than life."

## 8. International Response

- On April 24, Kaja Kallas, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, [cautioned](#), "If the [U.S.-Iran] talks are only about the nuclear and there are no nuclear experts around the table, then we will end up with an agreement that is weaker than the JCPOA [Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action] was."
  - » She added, "And (if) the problems in the region, missile programs, their support to proxies, also hybrid and cyber activities in Europe are not addressed, we will end up with a more dangerous Iran."
- On April 24, senior Emirati advisor Anwar Gargash [noted](#) that restoring trust with Iran "will take ages and ages."
- Speaking on April 23, Reza Pahlavi, son of Iran's former Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, [condemned](#) negotiations with the Iranian leadership as equivalent to "appeasement" and referred to the country's new leaders as "different faces of the same machine."
  - » Pahlavi shared that he is hopeful revived demonstrations will remove the regime from power.
  - » He added that Tehran "slaughtered innocent citizens by the thousands" and threatened European security with its missile program, noting, "No deal will solve this. No negotiations will solve this. It is in their DNA."
  - » Pahlavi also [called](#) on Western states to participate in the Iran war, noting, "The real question is how many Iranians will lose their lives while the community of Western democracies continue to merely watch."

## 9. JINSA Resources

- Hussein Mansour, [The Emirati Moment: The U.A.E.'s Strategic Cycle and the Iran War](#), April 24, 2026
- Michael Makovsky, PhD, and Blaise Misztal, [In Defense of the War, And How to Finish It](#), April 17, 2026
- Blaise Misztal and Yoni Tobin, [Lebanon Ceasefire Cannot Become Iranian Leverage](#), April 17, 2026
- Rena Gabber and Jonah Brody, [Epic Fury Reveals Vulnerabilities in the Axis Behind Iran](#), April 16, 2026
- Jonathan Ruhe and Yoni Tobin, [Blockade Iran's Military, Not Just Its Export Revenue](#), April 15, 2026
- Jonathan Ruhe and Ari Cicurel, [Operation Epic Fury: A Work in Progress](#), April 10, 2026

- Michael Makovsky, PhD, and Jonathan Ruhe, “[Iran’s Next Move Is the Bomb—If the Regime Survives](#),” *RealClearDefense*, April 9, 2026
- Jonathan Ruhe, “[Trump Risks Losing the Plot—and the War—in Iran](#),” *The Dispatch*, April 7, 2026
- Ari Cicurel, [Finishing the Job: Targeting Iran’s Repression Machine](#), April 7, 2026
- Jonah Brody, [Greece and Cyprus in the War Against Iran](#), April 6, 2026
- JINSA Iran Policy Project, [End States, Not End Dates: Defining Success for Operation Epic Fury](#), April 1, 2026
- Blaise Misztal, [How This War Will End, If It Ends Now](#), April 1, 2026
- Meriem Mokhtari, [The Triple Betrayal: Operation Epic Fury, The Gulf’s Public Discourse, and U.S. Stakes](#), March 31
- Jonathan Ruhe, [Strengthening U.S. Force Posture at Israeli Bases](#), March 31, 2026
- Yoni Tobin and Sarah Havdala, [From the Ceasefire’s Ashes: War Returns to Israel’s Northern Front](#), March 30, 2026
- Svante E. Cornell, [Turkey on Iran: Gains, Risks, and Strategic Restraint](#), March 30, 2026
- Hussein Aboubakr Mansour, [If Tehran Survives](#), March 27, 2026
- Ari Cicurel, [The Eroding Shield: Air Defense Against Iran](#), March 26, 2026
- Jonah Brody and Rena Gabber, [The Axis Behind Iran: How China, Russia, and North Korea Sustain Tehran’s Military Threat](#), March 25, 2026
- Jonathan Ruhe, [Scared Strait: Ending Iran’s Threat to Hormuz and the Gulf](#), March 19, 2026
- VADM Herman Shelanski, USN (ret.), IDF MG (ret.) Yaakov Amidror, and Blaise Misztal, “[Webinar - Iran’s Threat to Global Shipping: What Can Be Done?](#)” March 19, 2026
- Giran Ozcan and Jonah Brody, [Iran’s Kurdish Coalition and the Future of the Opposition](#), March 18, 2026
- Hussein Mansour, [If Tehran Falls: How Iran’s Collapse Reshuffles Arab Gulf Relations](#), March 16
- Infographic: [Operation Epic Fury—What is the Aim Point?](#), March 13, 2026