



## Iran War Update: 5/19/26

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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 May 19 at 10:00 am ET.

Days left in U.S.-Israel-Iran ceasefire: **Extended indefinitely**

Days left in Israel-Lebanon ceasefire: **41**, following May 15 45-day extension

Iranian missiles and drones launched since ceasefire: **At least 287** (at least 5 between May 18–19)

Hezbollah attacks since ceasefire: **At least 124** (at least 6 between May 18–19)

Ships transiting Strait of Hormuz since ceasefire: **At least 360** (at least 8 between May 18–19)

- Note: Many of these ships are local fast boats, tugboats, or landing craft, not commercial vessels. Numerous ships in the area are also transmitting false locations.

Total blockade-eligible ships rerouted by U.S. forces: **At least 92** (at least 4 between May 18–19)

Total blockade-eligible ships that [evaded the blockade](#): **At least 12** (0 between May 18–19)

- Note: JINSA is significantly revising down its estimates of total ships that evaded the blockade, based on the Pentagon's May 13 [statement](#) that it allowed 15 ships to cross the blockade line for humanitarian purposes.
- Note: The blockade line that the Pentagon announced crosses where the Gulf of Oman opens into the Arabian Sea, beyond the Strait of Hormuz itself. Some of the ships that evaded the blockade are small vessels with limited utility to the Iranian regime.

### 1. Overview

- On May 18, President Donald Trump [posted](#) on Truth Social that he was “asked by the Emir of Qatar, Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud, and the President of the United Arab Emirates, Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, to hold off on our planned Military attack of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which was scheduled for tomorrow [Tuesday, May 19].”
  - » President Trump later [indicated](#) that “there seems to be a very good chance that they can work something out. If we can do that without bombing the hell out of them, I would be very happy.”

- » In comments to the press on May 18, President Trump [noted](#) that the planned U.S. attack on Iran was pushed off “for a little while, hopefully, maybe, forever,” after he was asked by Qatar, the U.A.E., Saudi Arabia, and others to postpone the attack by “two or three days, a short period of time” due to progress in negotiations.
- Citing an anonymous U.S. official, *The New York Times* [reported](#) on May 18 that “Iran has used the monthlong cease-fire with the United States to dig out scores of bombed ballistic missile sites, move mobile missile launchers, and, despite significant losses, adjust its tactics for any resumption of strikes.”
- Israel and the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.) have established a joint fund to develop and acquire weapons, according to an [article](#) published in the *Middle East Eye* on May 18. The report cited current and former U.S. officials, who claimed that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s visit to the U.A.E. during the war was to finalize the agreement.
- On May 18, U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent [stated](#) that the United States will extend its 30-day sanctions waiver on purchases of “Russian oil currently stranded at sea.”
- Eight commercial ships transited the Strait of Hormuz on May 18-19, as trade flows through the waterway remain a small fraction of their pre-war levels.
- The U.A.E. [announced](#) on May 19 that it had engaged six drones over the previous 48 hours.

## 2. Diplomatic Engagement

### *Iran*

- On May 19, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi [claimed](#) that the most recent proposal Iran pitched to the United States includes U.S. forces lifting the maritime blockade on Iran and withdrawing from areas near Iranian territory; the U.S. government lifting sanctions on the Iranian government, releasing Tehran’s frozen funds, and paying reparations for the damages it caused; and the United States and Israel halting kinetic attacks, including on the Lebanese front.
- When announcing that he had delayed planned U.S. strikes against Iran on May 18, President Trump [stated](#) that this was due to “serious negotiations” for a deal that “will include, importantly, NO NUCLEAR WEAPONS FOR IRAN!”

## 3. U.S. and Israeli Operations

- On May 18, Israel’s *Globes* newspaper [reported](#) that the Israeli government has decided to allot 2 billion shekels, approximately \$683 million, of the country’s defense budget to find a way to counter Hezbollah’s fiber-optic drones after attacks killed several Israeli citizens in the past month.
- On May 18, U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent [announced](#) on X that the United States will extend its 30-day sanctions waiver on purchases of Russian oil “to provide the most vulnerable nations with the ability to temporarily access Russian oil currently stranded at sea.”
  - » On May 19, Secretary Bessent [urged](#) European allies and countries across the Middle East and Asia to more aggressively disrupt Iran’s financing networks by designating Iranian financiers, exposing shell companies, shutting down Iranian bank branches, and dismantling proxy networks.

### *Iran*

- On May 18, President Trump [posted](#) on Truth Social that he had “instructed Secretary of War, Pete Hegseth, The Chairman of The Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Daniel Caine, and The United States Military, that we will NOT be doing the scheduled attack of Iran tomorrow,

but have further instructed them to be prepared to go forward with a full, large scale assault of Iran, on a moment's notice, in the event that an acceptable Deal is not reached.”

#### *Lebanon*

- On May 19, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) [announced](#) that its forces had bombed over 25 sites belonging to Hezbollah over the past day in southern Lebanon, including some of the group's command centers, rocket launchers, and weapon facilities, while also targeting Hezbollah fighters operating near Cristofani Ridge.
- On May 18, a senior officer in the IDF's Northern Command [assessed](#) that the Israeli military dismantled approximately 60 percent of Hezbollah's infrastructure in Lebanese towns.
  - » The officer noted that part of this percentage includes the areas in southern Lebanon where Israeli forces have established operational control.

#### 4. Strait of Hormuz Shipping and Blockade Status

- U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) [announced](#) on May 19 that it has redirected 88 vessels in total—an increase of four vessels from JINSA's last update—since the U.S. naval blockade took effect, and that another four vessels have been disabled as part of CENTCOM enforcement operations.

#### 5. Iranian and Proxy Operations

##### *Iran*

- On May 19, permanent U.S. resident Shahab Dalili finally [returned](#) to the United States after he was wrongfully detained in Iran in 2016.
  - » Daili, who traveled to Iran for his father's funeral 10 years ago, was arrested by Iranian police after authorities accused him of spying for the United States.
- On May 19, four Iranian civilians were [injured](#) in Iran's Khuzestan province after Iranian forces carried out a botched air defense test, causing an object to crash in a residential area.
- Iran's *Tasnim News Agency* [reported](#) that the country activated its air defense systems in Qeshm Island on May 18 to intercept “small drones,” with the news agency describing them as “hostile targets.”
  - » Iran's *Mehr News Agency* also [reported](#) that Iran activated its air defenses in Isfahan on the evening of May 18, but did not provide an explanation for what prompted the activation.
- The regime-imposed internet blackout in Iran [hit](#) its 80th straight day on May 18.

##### *Lebanon*

- On May 19, Hezbollah launched several drones targeting Israeli troops in southern Lebanon that also endangered several communities in northern Israel.
  - » A Hezbollah drone [crashed](#) in Israeli territory, lightly injuring two people during an afternoon attack targeting IDF soldiers.
  - » Around noon local time, Israeli defenses [intercepted](#) a Hezbollah drone that had prompted sirens in several northern Israeli towns.
  - » In a separate morning incident, the Israeli military [fired](#) an interceptor missile to shoot down a Hezbollah drone flying near Israeli troops operating in southern Lebanon.

## Iraq

- On May 18, four Iranian missiles [hit](#) a Komala Toilers of Kurdistan base in Sulaimani, Iraq, injuring two people.

## U.A.E.

- The Emirati defense ministry announced on May 19 that the U.A.E. has been [targeted](#) with six Iranian drones over the past 48 hours, all of which were seemingly intercepted.

## 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 Khork, 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, [at least 50 people have been killed in Israel](#), while over 7,795 have been [injured](#). At least 20 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: 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, Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, 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 20 [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 3,020 people have been [killed](#), and nearly 9,210 have been wounded—figures that do not distinguish between Hezbollah operatives and civilians.

- » Oman: At least [three people](#) have been killed, and at least 17 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](#).
- » U.A.E.: 13 people have been [killed](#), and at least 230 have been injured.

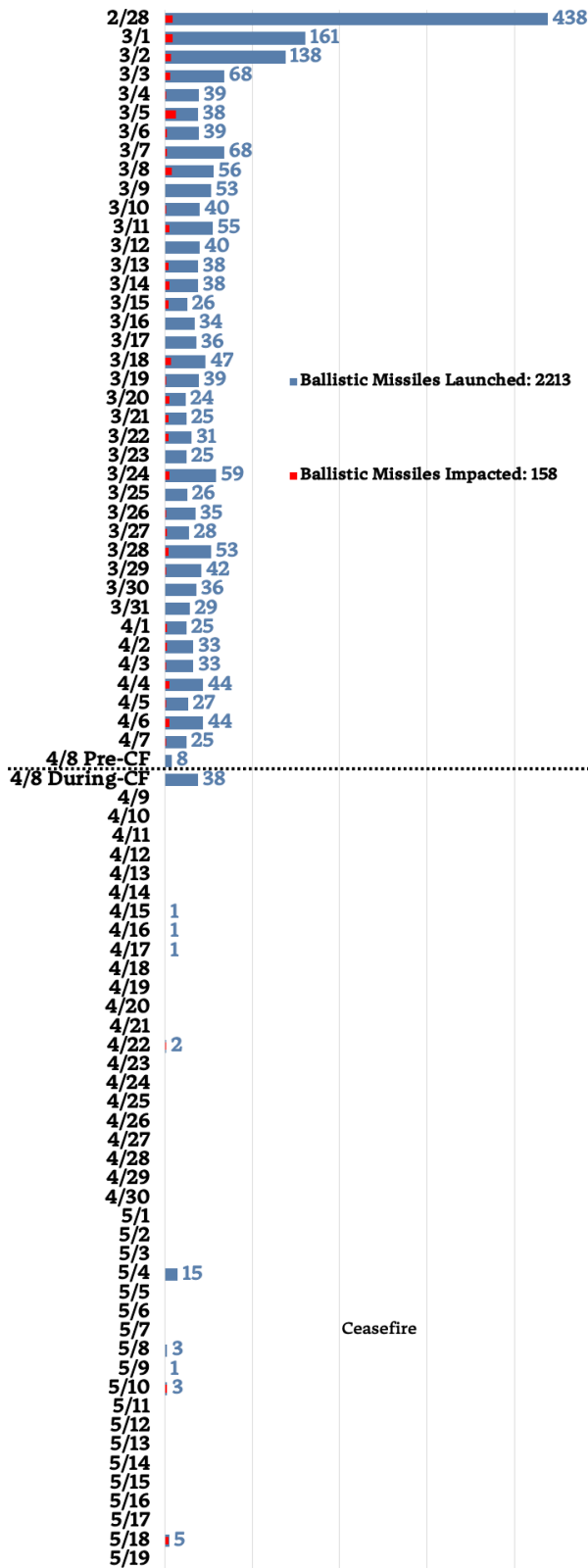
## 7. Threats, Condemnations, and Statements from Iranian Officials

- On May 19, Spokesman for the Iranian Army Mohammad Akraminia [threatened](#) that, should the United States renew attacks on Iran, “we will open new fronts against it, with new equipment and new methods.”
- In an X post on May 18, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian [stated](#) that “Dialogue does not mean surrender. The Islamic Republic of Iran enters into dialogue with dignity, authority, and the preservation of the nation’s rights, and under no circumstances will it retreat from the legal rights of the people and the country.”

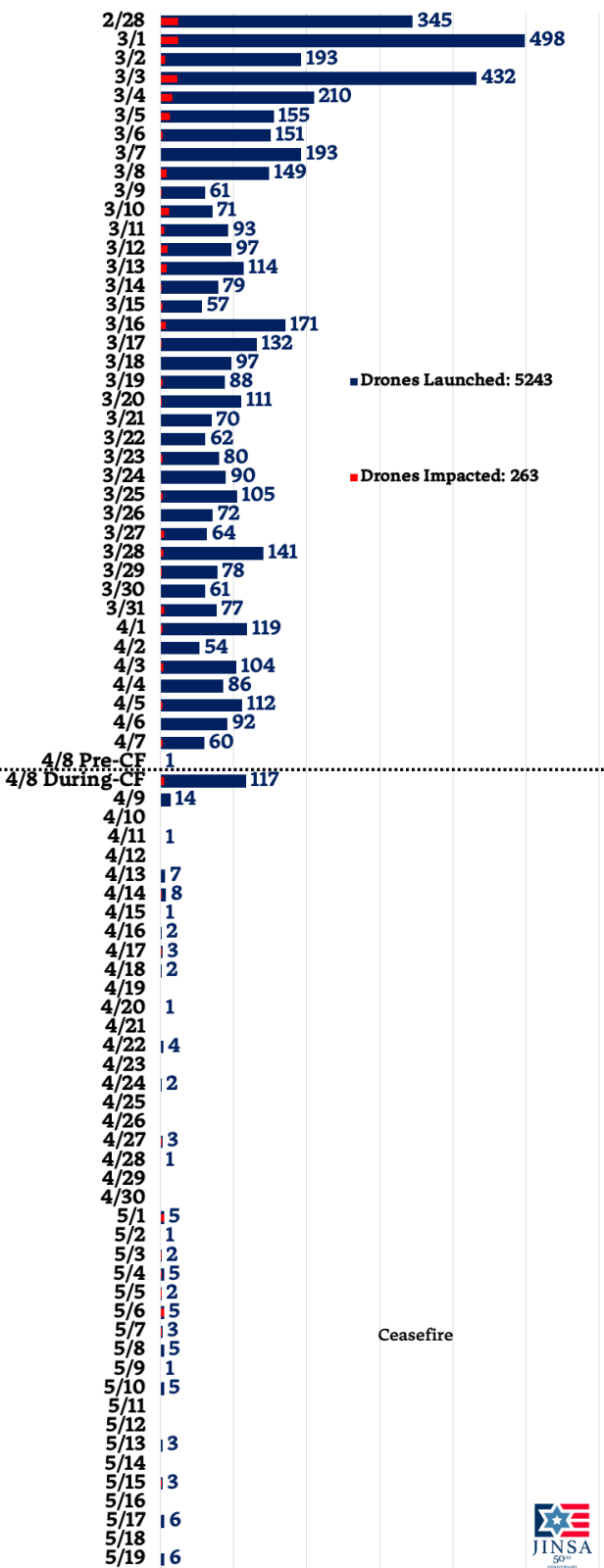
## 8. International Response

- On May 19, the finance ministers of the G7 countries (the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, and Japan) [issued](#) a statement reaffirming the importance of reopening the Strait of Hormuz and reiterating their support for multilateral action to offset global economic risks.
- On May 18, the Greek Government Council on National Security [decided](#) to withdraw Patriot air defense batteries stationed in Didymoteicho, which is along Greece’s northeastern border with Turkey, and Karpathos, an island in the Aegean Sea.
  - » Greece deployed the Patriot missile batteries to these locations in March to provide defense against possible Iranian missiles or drones.
  - » Two Mirage 2000-5 fighter aircraft will reportedly [deploy](#) to Karpathos to address a potential operational gap resulting from the withdrawal of the Patriot battery.

### Iranian Missiles Launched Per Day



### Iranian Drones Launched Per Day



## 9. JINSA Resources

- Yoni Tobin, [Blockade Evasion Update – 5/19/26](#), May 19, 2026
- Rena Gabber and Jonah Brody, [Holding China Accountable for Iran](#), May 13, 2026
- Gen Charles Wald, USAF (ret.), VADM Mark Fox, USN (ret.), VADM Robert Harward, USN (ret.), LTG Karen Gibson, USA (ret.), VADM John Miller, USN (ret.), VADM John Bird, USN (ret.), Blaise Misztal, Jonathan Ruhe, and Ari Cicurel, [Epic Fury II: Securing U.S. Objectives in Iran](#), May 8, 2026
- Michael Makovsky, PhD, and Blaise Misztal, “[The U.S. Blockade of Iran Is a Means, Not an End](#),” *The National Interest*, May 8, 2026
- Yoni Tobin, [Blockade Evasion Update - 5/8](#), May 8, 2026
- Giran Ozcan, [Iranian Attacks on Iraqi Kurdistan Threaten a Vital U.S. Partnership](#), May 7, 2026
- Yoni Tobin, [Turning Tides: U.S. Blockade Enforcement Exceeds Iranian Evasion](#), May 1, 2026
- Hussein Aboubakr Mansour, [The UAE’s OPEC Exit: Strategic Implications for the Gulf Order](#), April 29, 2026
- Ari Cicurel, [Iron Dome Deployment to U.A.E. Showed Abraham Accords Defense Potential](#), April 28, 2026
- Michael Makovsky, PhD, and Blaise Misztal, [The Iranian People: America’s Most Powerful Weapon](#), April 26, 2026
- 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