



## Operations Epic Fury and Roaring Lion: 5/14/26 Update

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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 14 at 11:30 am ET.

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

Days left in Israel-Lebanon ceasefire: **0**, following April 23 three-week extension

Iranian missiles and drones launched since ceasefire: **At least 273** (at least 3 on May 13)

Hezbollah attacks since ceasefire: **At least 100** (at least 10 on May 13–14)

Ships transiting Strait of Hormuz since ceasefire: **At least 335** (at least 7 on May 13–14)

- **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 disabled or rerouted by U.S. forces: **At least 74** (5 on May 13–14)

Total blockade-eligible ships that [evaded the blockade](#): **At least 12** (3 between May 13–14)

- **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

- Admiral Brad Cooper, Commander of U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), [testified](#) on May 14 that "Iran [is] a significantly degraded threat, and they no longer threaten regional partners, or the United States, in ways that they were able to do before."
  - » Admiral Cooper also said that "today, Hamas, Hezbollah, and the Houthis are all cut off from Iran's weapons supply and support." He further stated that the Iranian regime retains just 10 percent of its pre-war drone arsenal.
- A White House [statement](#) issued on May 14, following President Donald Trump's meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing, claimed that "the two sides agreed that the Strait of Hormuz must remain open to support the free flow of energy." It continued,

“President Xi also made clear China’s opposition to the militarization of the Strait and any effort to charge a toll for its use, and he expressed interest in purchasing more American oil to reduce China’s dependence on the Strait in the future.”

- » The readout added that “both countries agreed that Iran can never have a nuclear weapon.”
- Amid President Trump’s summit in China, *The New York Times* [reported](#) on May 13 that Chinese firms are secretly planning to provide Iran with arms by sending them through third-party countries, including at least one nation in Africa.
- As the Israel-Lebanon ceasefire expires on May 14, a [third round](#) of high-level talks between Israel and Lebanon is currently taking place in Washington, D.C.
- Israel is planning to [propose](#) a phased framework for Hezbollah’s disarmament and more expansive political ties between Jerusalem and Beirut, according to Israeli Ambassador to the United States Yechiel Leiter.
- During a May 14 interview with CNBC, Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent [claimed](#), “we believe we’re at the point where [Iranian] soldiers aren’t getting paid. They’re not able to replenish their weapons stocks from abroad. So, I think that they are on their last legs. And the blockade, President Trump’s blockade has been a resounding success.”
- On May 13, a ship off the Emirati coast was [seized](#) and is heading to Iran, and an Indian-flagged cargo ship sank off Oman’s coast after being attacked the previous day.
- On May 13, Energy Secretary Chris Wright [testified](#) before the Senate Armed Services Committee that Iran remains “frighteningly close” to building a nuclear weapon and is only “a small number of weeks” away from being able to enrich one ton of uranium to weapons-grade level.
- A vote on May 13 on a Democrat-led war powers resolution for the Iran war barely [failed](#) to pass in the Senate, with 50 senators voting against the resolution and 49 voting in favor.
  - » This was the seventh failed vote on a war powers resolution since the start of the Iran war.
- Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu [visited](#) the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.) and met with Emirati President Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed during the war, which “led to a historic breakthrough in relations” between the two countries, according to a statement from the prime minister’s office on May 13.
  - » Later that day, the Emirati foreign ministry [denied](#) reports that the visit took place, stating that “any claims regarding unannounced visits or undisclosed arrangements are entirely unfounded unless officially announced by the relevant authorities in the U.A.E.” The release was unclear about whether the U.A.E. was denying that the visit occurred or the accuracy of the reports about it.
- Following reports of previously undisclosed Saudi strikes against Iran during the war, Reuters [reported](#) on May 13 that Saudi Arabia had conducted airstrikes against Iran-backed militia in Iraq. The report also indicated that ground-based fire from Kuwait had targeted Iraqi militia as well, but that it remained unclear whether U.S. or Kuwaiti forces conducted these attacks.

## 2. Diplomatic Engagement

### *Lebanon*

- A [third round](#) of talks between Israel and Lebanon [began](#) in Washington, D.C. on May 14.
  - » *The Jerusalem Post* [reported](#) that the U.S. Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee, U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon Michael Issa, and Secretary of State Marco Rubio’s advisor

Michael Needham are representing the United States, with State Department official Jay Mens [reportedly](#) joining the discussion as well.

- » *The Jerusalem Post* [reported](#) that Israeli Ambassador to the United States Yechiel Leiter; Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Head of Strategy Brigadier General Amichai Levin; and Acting Israeli Military Attaché to the United States Brigadier General Arik Ben Dov are part of the Israeli delegation, with Deputy Advisor to the Israeli National Security Council Yossi Draznin [reportedly](#) also slated to join.
- » Lebanese Ambassador to the United States Nada Hamadeh Mouawad; Deputy Chief of Mission Wissam Boutros; former Lebanese Ambassador to the United States, Simon Karam; and Lebanese Military Attaché to the United States Brigadier General Oliver Hakmeh are [reportedly](#) representing Lebanon.
- Ahead of the talks, Ambassador Leiter [told](#) Israel's *Walla News* outlet that Israel is seeking a phased process where "we will jointly define a specific area and plan with them how that area will be cleared, and afterward continue onward."
  - » Leiter noted that "we are prepared for two tracks. One track is to conduct negotiations for full peace as though Hezbollah does not exist—borders, embassies, visas, tourism, everything. An agreement like that could be reached within a few months. But it would be contingent on the success of the second track—dismantling Hezbollah."
  - » He added that the current ceasefire "is a ceasefire in aspiration ... but we will protect our soldiers and our civilians under all circumstances, and under no condition will we agree to stop and allow Hezbollah to rearm."
- *The Times of Israel* [reported](#) that Israel may also convey to the United States during the talks that it supports equipping the Lebanese army to help disarm Hezbollah.
- A senior Lebanese official [told](#) *The Times of Israel* that Lebanon will advocate for "a ceasefire that Israel implements," referencing continued Israeli strikes against Hezbollah.

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

- According to a May 14 article from Israel's *Walla News*, the Israeli Ministry of Defense [has reached](#) an agreement with Elbit Systems subsidiary Cyclone to create a system that would extend the flight range and aerial endurance of Israel's F-35 fighter aircraft.

#### *Lebanon*

- On May 14, the IDF [carried out](#) several airstrikes targeting Hezbollah infrastructure across southern Lebanon after calling for civilians to evacuate from eight villages in the area.
- On May 13, Israel's Channel 12 outlet [reported](#) that over 400 Hezbollah terrorists have been eliminated and over 1,000 weapons have been seized since early March, when Israel's operation against Hezbollah began.
- On May 13, Israeli media reported that the IDF uncovered a large Hezbollah tunnel complex [located over 80 feet underground](#) in southern Lebanon.
  - » The tunnel complex [contained](#) a weapons depot, a communications center used to monitor Israeli troop movements, and food and shelter for Hezbollah operatives, according to Israel's *Ynet News*.
  - » Hezbollah's tunnel complex was embedded in a business district in Khaim, which is roughly five miles away from the Lebanon-Israel border.
- On May 13, Lebanon's head of National Council for Scientific Research, Chadi Abdallah, [stated](#) that since the ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon went into effect at midnight local time on April 17, "we have witnessed 5,386 housing units that were completely destroyed, and 5,246 housing units damaged."

- » Hezbollah routinely operates from civilian infrastructure, including staging rocket and missile launches from houses, as JINSA has [documented](#).
- Israeli forces are reportedly [conducting](#) a series of field tests and experiments in an attempt to deploy new defenses against Hezbollah's fiber-optic drones.
  - » Prime Minister Netanyahu [convened](#) an emergency session this week to discuss the threat from Hezbollah's fiber-optic drones, which are resistant to electronic warfare countermeasures, Israel's *Walla News* reported on May 14.
  - » At least 80 Hezbollah drones, many of them fiber-optic drones, have been launched at IDF forces in recent weeks, according to *Breaking Defense*. The defense outlet reported that 15 of these drones [impacted](#) their targets, causing at least five deaths and dozens of injuries.

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

- CENTCOM [announced](#) on May 14 that its forces have disabled, rerouted, or seized 74 vessels, an increase of five since JINSA's last update, that attempted to violate the blockade since it entered effect on April 13.
- JINSA tracked three blockade-eligible bulk carriers that evaded blockade enforcement between May 13 and May 14. However, following an information request from JINSA, the Pentagon [publicly clarified](#) on May 13 that U.S. forces have allowed 15 vessels to cross the blockade line heading to or from Iran for humanitarian reasons.
  - » This suggests that most or all of the bulk carriers JINSA tracked evading the blockade were permitted to do so, particularly since many traveled along similar routes between Brazil and Iran.
  - » It also suggests the three bulk carriers that JINSA tracked crossing the blockade line since May 13 were also authorized to do so.
  - » The Pentagon declined, when queried by JINSA, to provide details regarding any of the 15 humanitarian vessels.
- According to the Iranian news outlet *Fars News* on May 14, Tehran has [permitted](#) some Chinese ships to pass through the Strait of Hormuz after an understanding was reached regarding Iranian management of the strait.
- When asked during an interview with CNBC on May 14 whether China will help to open up the Strait of Hormuz, Treasury Secretary Bessent [claimed](#) that China will "do what they can" because it "has a much bigger interest in reopening the Strait than the U.S. does. China gets about a third of its energy needs from the Gulf."

#### 5. Iranian and Proxy Operations

- On May 14, CENTCOM Commander Admiral Cooper [noted](#) in a Senate testimony that there were over 350 Iran-backed attacks targeting Americans in the 30 months prior to the Iran war, including attacks that killed four American soldiers.

##### *Maritime*

- The United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations [reported](#) on May 14 that unauthorized individuals boarded a ship anchored northeast of the Emirati Fujairah port and seized the vessel, which is now traveling towards Iranian waters.
- On May 14, Indian officials reported that an Indian-flagged cargo ship, the *Haji Ali*, [sank](#) off the coast of Oman after an attack on May 13 caused a fire.

- » India's Ministry of External Affairs released a statement that the [attack](#) was "unacceptable and we deplore the fact that commercial shipping and civilian mariners continue to be targeted."

### *Lebanon*

- On May 14, Hezbollah fired a series of explosive drones, mortars, and an anti-tank guided missile at Israeli troops operating in southern Lebanon, as well as communities in northern Israel.
  - » In [two separate](#) afternoon incidents, Israeli defenses intercepted a suspected Hezbollah drone flying near Israeli soldiers in southern Lebanon.
  - » Mid-afternoon local time, Hezbollah fired a drone, prompting sirens in the communities of Betzet and Shlomi in northern Israel.
    - The IDF has since announced that the incident did not cause any injuries.
  - » Hezbollah [launched](#) a drone at Rosh Hanikra in northern Israel, striking a parking lot and injuring three civilians, including two seriously.
    - According to *The Times of Israel*, the drone attack did not prompt sirens in the area, suggesting that the IDF did not detect the incoming projectile.
  - » Israeli forces [launched](#) an interceptor missile at a suspected Hezbollah drone flying near northern Israel, prompting sirens in Misgav Am.
    - Israeli forces also [fired](#) another interceptor missile at a Hezbollah drone flying in southern Lebanon overnight in a separate incident.
  - » Overnight, Hezbollah [launched](#) mortars and an anti-tank guided missile at Israeli soldiers operating in southern Lebanon, with some exploding in close proximity to the troops but failing to injure them.
- On May 13, Israeli defenses [intercepted](#) a suspected Hezbollah drone flying near Israeli troops in southern Lebanon.

### *Iraq*

- On May 13, the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (PDKI) [reported](#) that two Iranian drones targeted the Jejnikan residential camp, which houses families linked to the PDKI.
  - » The PDKI noted that since February 28, it had been targeted by more than 126 Iranian drone and missile attacks.

### *Internal Dynamics and Repression*

- On May 13, Nasrin Sotoudeh, a distinguished human rights lawyer in Iran, was [released](#) on bail, following her arrest last month.

## 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 Kork, 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. service-members were [injured](#), including two who were seriously wounded.
- Since the war began, [at least 48 people have been killed in Israel](#), while over 7,795 have been [injured](#). At least 18 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 (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 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 2,883 people have been [killed](#), and nearly 8,787 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

- At a meeting of the 11-country BRICS geopolitical bloc on May 14, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi [condemned](#) the U.A.E., stating that it was “directly involved in the aggression against my country.”
  - » At the BRICS summit, Iranian Foreign Minister Araghchi [stated](#) on May 14 that “Iran calls upon BRICS member states and all responsible members of the international community to explicitly condemn violations of international law by the United States and Israel.”

- » Previously, on May 13, Minister Araghchi [posted](#) on X that Iran was aware of Prime Minister Netanyahu’s wartime visit to the U.A.E. and threatened that “Those colluding with Israel to sow division will be held to account.”
- In a separate post on X on May 13, Iranian Foreign Minister Araghchi [stated](#), “In clear attempt to sow discord, Kuwait has unlawfully attacked an Iranian boat and detained 4 of our citizens in the Persian Gulf,” adding that Tehran “reserve[s] right to respond.”

## 8. International Response

- On May 13, *The Washington Post* [reported](#) that a U.S. intelligence assessment prepared for the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Dan Caine, highlighted the various ways Beijing is leveraging the Iran war to bolster its position relative to the United States in military, diplomatic, economic, and informational domains.
- On May 12, Pakistani Defense Minister Khawaja Asif [indicated](#) that Turkey and Qatar may soon join the Pakistan-Saudi Arabia mutual defense agreement.
- In late April, Lebanon [submitted](#) a letter to the United Nations Security Council condemning Iranian violations of diplomatic protocol and unauthorized Iranian conduct within its territory.

## 9. JINSA Resources

- 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