



## Iran War Update: 5/28/26

**Ari Cicurel**  
*Associate Director of Foreign Policy*

**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 May 28 at 10:30 am ET.

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

Days left in Israel-Lebanon ceasefire: **33**, following May 15 45-day extension

Iranian missiles and drones launched since ceasefire: **At least 320** (6 on May 27)

Hezbollah attacks since ceasefire: **At least 160** (at least 5 between May 27–28)

Ships transiting Strait of Hormuz since ceasefire: **At least 390** (at least 3 between May 27–28)

- 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 115** (2 between May 27–28)

Total blockade-eligible ships that [evaded the blockade](#): **At least 9** (0 between May 27–28)

- Note: JINSA has revised down its evasion estimates after the U.S. military revealed on May 23 that it permitted 26 ships to pass the blockade line for humanitarian reasons.
- 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 28, *Axios* reported that U.S. and Iranian officials had [agreed](#) on a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to extend the ceasefire and begin a 60-day negotiation period to discuss Iran's nuclear program but are waiting for President Donald Trump's approval of the agreement.
- On May 27, Iran [resumed](#) its missile and drone attacks by firing a ballistic missile at Kuwait and five drones at a [commercial ship](#) in the Strait of Hormuz. The United States also [prevented](#) a sixth drone from launching by striking a site in Bandar Abbas overnight.
- At a Cabinet meeting on May 27, President Trump [stated](#) that "We can make a good deal right now, but maybe not a great deal," noting that he wants to sign only a great agreement.

- » President Trump [reiterated](#) the demand from his May 25 Truth Social [post](#) that Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.), and other regional states sign on to the Abraham Accords, stating, “I’m not sure we should make the deal [with Iran] if they [regional countries] don’t ... join the Abraham Accords.”
  - When questioned whether an Iran deal would be contingent on states joining the Accords, President Trump then clarified that “I’m not going to [tell] you what’s contingent, and what’s not.”
- » President Trump denied that Iran and Oman would jointly manage transit through the Strait of Hormuz, per Iranian state media reports, stating that “the strait is going to be open to everybody ... It’s international waters.” He added, “Nobody’s going to control it. We’re going to watch over it.”
  - He noted, “Oman will behave just like everybody else, or we’ll have to blow them up. They understand that, and they’ll be fine.”
- On May 28, Reuters [reported](#), citing a letter by U.S. Senator Ron Wyden, that U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) has “received multiple threat reports concerning adversary exploitation of commercial location data to target or surveil U.S. personnel in theater.”
  - » The letter explains that “Commercial location data can be used to identify where U.S. troops congregate and their pattern of life, which can be exploited by adversaries to target attacks such as missiles, drones, and roadside bombs, as well as for counterintelligence purposes.”
- On May 28, the U.S. Treasury Department [sanctioned](#) Iran’s new Persian Gulf Strait Authority that organizes Strait of Hormuz passage requests, citing its links to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).

## 2. Diplomatic Engagement

### *Iran*

- *Axios* reported on May 28 that U.S. and Iranian negotiators had [agreed](#) to a MOU to extend the ceasefire and begin a 60-day negotiating period over Iran’s nuclear program and that the deal is now awaiting President Trump’s final approval.
  - » Iran would agree not to pursue nuclear weapons and the first stage of the 60-day window would include discussion of how to remove Iran’s highly enriched uranium and its enrichment program.
  - » As part of the deal, the naval blockade would be lifted in proportion to the resumption of commercial shipping.
  - » The deal reportedly includes a U.S. commitment to discuss sanctions relief, the release of frozen Iranian funds, and a mechanism for Iran to receive goods and humanitarian aid.
- Pakistan’s Foreign Ministry [announced](#) on May 28 that Pakistani Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar will meet with U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio on May 29 in Washington.
- Speaking at the May 27 Cabinet meeting, President Trump [addressed](#) key points of the U.S.-Iran MOU currently being negotiated, stating, “One of the things that will happen is the Strait [of Hormuz] will open immediately.”
  - » President Trump [noted](#) that Iran “wants to make a deal,” but the United States is “not satisfied” currently with the talks, stating that “We will be [satisfied] ... Either that, or we’ll have to just finish the job.”
    - He added, “With Operation Epic Fury, our warriors are ensuring that the world’s number one state sponsor of terror never obtains a nuclear weapon.”

- » When asked whether the issue of Iranian enriched uranium would be deferred to a future round of talks, President Trump indicated that the initial deal would mention nuclear issues.
- » President Trump stated that sanctions relief is contingent on Iran first “behav[ing] properly,” noting that “When they do what’s right, we’ll let them have their money.”
  - However, he then stated, “One thing is not contingent on the other.”
- » President Trump reiterated that he is not comfortable with Russia or China taking control of Iran’s enriched uranium stockpile.
- » He also reiterated that the United States had implemented regime change in Iran, alleging that Tehran’s “new leaders” are “much more reasonable” and “smarter” than the former leadership.
- » President Trump [stated](#) that Tehran has started to lift the internet blackout it imposed on the country “because they’re getting clobbered.”
- » He [noted](#) that the Iranians “thought they were going to out-wait me” because of pressures to reduce rising prices before the midterm elections this fall. President Trump added, “I don’t care about the midterms.”
  - When asked about rising gas prices in the United States, President Trump [stated](#) that the United States has sufficient oil and that the closure of the Strait of Hormuz impacts other countries more.
  - He repeated that his primary concern is to ensure that Iran does not obtain a nuclear weapon, and he noted that gas prices will quickly fall once that problem is addressed.
- At the May 27 Cabinet meeting, Secretary Rubio [reiterated](#) that “some progress” had been achieved in negotiations with Iran, adding, “We’ll see over the next few hours and days whether progress could be made.”
  - » Rubio repeated that while the Trump administration prefers a diplomatic solution to keep Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, the administration “ha[s] other options available.”
- On May 27, Ebrahim Azizi, the head of the Iranian parliament’s national security committee, [claimed](#) that “Iran will not be pushed back by Trump’s rhetoric from its red lines: the right to enrich uranium, possession of enriched uranium, authority over the Strait of Hormuz, and the removal of sanctions. It is obvious Trump, seeking a way out of this strategic deadlock, alternates between issuing threats and appealing for an agreement.”

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

#### *Iran*

- Overnight on May 28, the United States [struck](#) “a ground control site in Bandar Abbas” to prevent Iran from launching a drone after it had fired five drones at a commercial ship in the Strait of Hormuz, all of which were successfully intercepted, according to CENTCOM.
- On May 27, U.S. Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth [claimed](#) during a Cabinet meeting that Iran “may have missiles, but they can’t build more right now,” and that “They can’t build more drones right now, and they can’t build more ships, and so they came and cried ‘uncle’ to talk.”
  - » Secretary Hegseth added that “No Iranian tanker around the globe is safe, and we’ve seen seizures all around the globe, choking off their economic life blood.”

#### *Lebanon*

- On May 28, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu [stated](#) that Israeli troops had crossed the Litani River to combat Hezbollah in southern Lebanon.
- On May 28, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) [launched](#) an airstrike on the Lebanese capital of Beirut for the first time since May 6.
  - » An unnamed security source [claimed](#) that the Israeli military was targeting Ali al-Husni, the missile force chief for the Imam Hossein Division, which is an Iranian militia aligned with Hezbollah.
  - » At the request of the Trump administration, most likely out of concern that it would negatively impact U.S.-Iran negotiations, the IDF has refrained from attacking Beirut.
- On May 28, the IDF [bombed](#) more than 135 Hezbollah sites throughout the past day, including 10 rocket launching sites and a training camp in the Beqaa Valley and southern Lebanon, as well as 15 facilities in Tyre and fighters exiting a rocket launching position previously used to attack Israeli soldiers.
- On May 28, the Lebanese Armed Forces [announced](#) that an Israeli strike in southern Lebanon's Nabatieh killed a Lebanese soldier traveling along the Zaqta–Deir al-Zahrani road.
  - » According to the Lebanese military, this is the third Lebanese soldier in three days to be killed in an Israeli strike.
- On May 27, after issuing evacuation warnings, the IDF [carried out](#) airstrikes targeting Hezbollah command centers in the southern Lebanese city of Tyre and the surrounding areas.
- On May 27, the IDF [announced](#) that its troops eliminated the Hezbollah operative responsible for killing Maj. (res.) Itamar Sapir in southern Lebanon on May 19, while also striking weapon depots, observation sites, and other buildings used by the group.

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

- On May 26, the U.S. Treasury Department [sanctioned](#) Iran's Persian Gulf Strait Authority—the newly created body that Tehran established to manage vessel passage requests through the Strait of Hormuz.

#### 5. Iranian and Proxy Operations

##### *Maritime*

- On May 27, Iran [fired](#) five one-way attack drones at a [commercial ship](#) in the Strait of Hormuz and attempted to launch a sixth before U.S. strikes stopped it. Iran later launched a missile at Kuwait in [retaliation](#) for the U.S. strike.
  - » Iran's state broadcaster IRIB later [claimed](#) that “four vessels attempted to cross the Strait of Hormuz and enter the Persian Gulf without coordination with the security forces,” adding that “they were warned, but after they ignored the warning, warning shots were fired at them, forcing them to return.”
- On May 27, *The Wall Street Journal* [reported](#) that Iranian oil continues to make its way to China through a shadow fleet of tankers, noting the utilization of ship-to-ship transfers of oil, in which one ship transfers sanctioned Iranian oil onto another ship to mask the source of the oil.

##### *Lebanon*

- On May 28, the IDF [intercepted](#) a suspected Hezbollah drone flying near Israeli soldiers operating in southern Lebanon, which prompted sirens in northern Israel's Galilee Panhandle.
- On May 27, two Hezbollah drones [attacked](#) an IDF military zone in northern Israel, killing Sgt. Rotem Yanai and injuring two reservists.

## Kuwait

- On May 27, Kuwait [intercepted](#) an Iranian ballistic missile fired toward the country, without any reported casualties. The IRGC later [claimed](#) it targeted a U.S. base in Kuwait in retaliation for recent American strikes near Bandar Abbas.

## Outside the Middle East

- On May 27, a U.S. court [handed](#) Jonathan Loadholt of Staten Island, New York, a 10-year prison sentence for plotting to kill Iranian dissident and rights activist, Masih Alinejad, on behalf of the IRGC.

## 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 54 people have been killed in Israel](#), while over 7,795 have been [injured](#). At least 24 of these [casualties](#) include Israeli soldiers who have been killed while fighting Hezbollah.
- 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, 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 3,213 people have been [killed](#), and nearly 9,737 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.

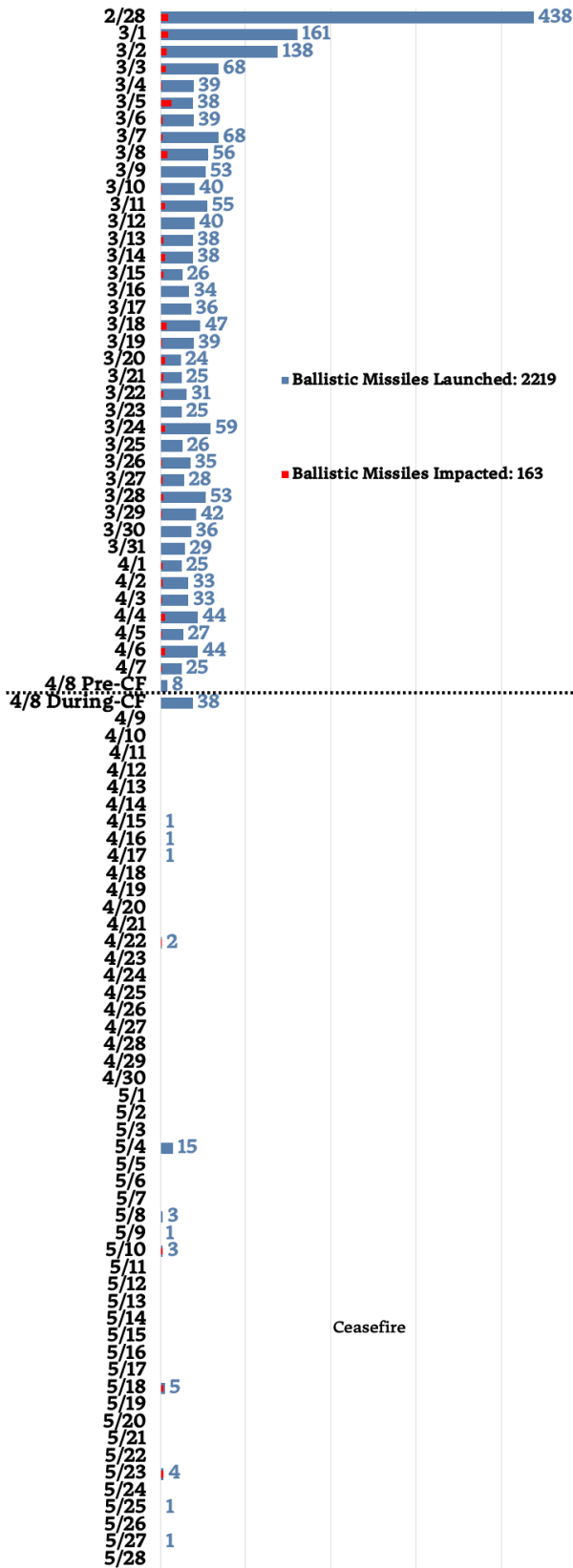
## 7. Threats, Condemnations, and Statements from Iranian Officials

- Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei [condemned](#) recent U.S. strikes on Bandar Abbas on May 28 and criticized what he described as the “threatening rhetoric” of American officials toward Iran and regional states, including President Trump’s comments toward Oman.
- The IRGC [warned](#) on May 28 that the U.S. military would face a “firm response” if Washington conducts additional strikes against Iran.

## 8. JINSA Resources

- LTG Charles Hooper, USA (ret.) and Yoni Tobin, [Abraham’s Fortress: Strengthening Middle East Defenses Against Iran](#), May 19, 2026
- 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

### Iranian Missiles Launched Per Day



### Iranian Drones Launched Per Day

