



Iran War Update: 5/29/26

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 29 at 10:00 am ET.

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

Days left in Israel-Lebanon ceasefire: **32**, following May 15 45-day extension

Iranian missiles and drones launched since ceasefire: **At least 320** (0 on May 28–29)

Hezbollah attacks since ceasefire: **At least 162** (at least 3 between May 28–29)

Ships transiting Strait of Hormuz since ceasefire: **At least 400** (at least 7 between May 28–29)

- 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** (0 between May 28–29)

Total blockade-eligible ships that have [evaded the blockade](#): **At least 9** (0 between May 28–29)

- 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

- Israeli and Lebanese military officials are [scheduled](#) to meet at the Pentagon on May 29 for a new round of U.S.-mediated talks. According to the State Department, the discussions will [launch](#) a military “security track” focused on ceasefire implementation.
- Pakistani Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar [arrived](#) in Washington on May 29 to hold advanced discussions with Secretary of State Marco Rubio on a potential Iran deal, per Reuters.
- President Donald Trump [stated](#) on May 28 that while the Iranians are “very good negotiators, they’re crafty ... in the end we have all the cards because we’ve defeated them militarily.”
 - » Discussing the red line Iran would need to cross for the United States to contemplate resuming military action in Iran, President Trump stated, “A deal that wasn’t going to be

good for us is the line, ultimately, because you know I'm playing it out and we're going to see."

- Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent [stated](#) on May 28 that "We perhaps have the makings of a deal here," adding that, "Everything depends on what the president wants to do, and President Trump is not going to make a bad deal."

2. Diplomatic Engagement

Iran

- On May 29, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, Iran's Parliament Speaker and key negotiator in talks with the United States, [posted](#) on X, "We seize concessions not through dialogue, but with missiles; in negotiations, we merely make them understand."
 - » He stated, "We have no trust in guarantees or words—only actions are the measure. No action will be taken before the other side acts."
 - » He added, "The winner of any agreement is the one who is better prepared for war from the day after."
- On May 28, *The New York Times* [reported](#), citing an Iranian official and two diplomats from an unspecified country, that the draft framework currently before President Trump may involve providing Iran access to at least \$300 billion in international investment as part of a deal.
 - » The money would reportedly be dispersed as part of an "international investment fund" to be facilitated by the United States and other unnamed countries.
 - » Iranian negotiators have requested the investment fund be as high as \$1 trillion as part of a deal, officials who spoke to the *Times* asserted.
 - » According to the *Times*, U.S. special envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner proposed a similar idea earlier in negotiations.
 - They reportedly advocated that a deal include both an investment fund and a number of U.S.-promoted real estate projects in Tehran that would provide the Iranian regime with additional revenue.
- *The Guardian* [reported](#) on May 28 that President Trump provided some regional partners, including Israel, with a copy of the draft memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Iran.
- Speaking to reporters on May 28, Vice President J.D. Vance [noted](#) that the United States has "made a lot of progress" on reaching an agreement with Iran, [adding](#) that "we're not there yet, but we're very close and we're going to keep on working at it."
 - » Vice President Vance stated, "I can't guarantee that we're going to get there, but right now I feel pretty good about it."
 - » He [added](#), "It's hard to say exactly when or if the president is going to sign the MOU. We're going back and forth on a couple of language points," [including](#) the "question of enrichment." He [noted](#) that the United States has the ability to significantly roll back the Iranian nuclear program.
 - » He further [stated](#) that "it's very clear" that the Iranians "want a deal. They want to open the Strait of Hormuz, we want them to open the Strait of Hormuz."
 - » In addition, Vice President Vance said, "we do think they are negotiating, at least so far, in good faith, and we're making some progress. Hopefully we'll continue to make progress and the president can be in a position where he can endorse the agreement but obviously that's [not yet determined]."

- On May 28, Treasury Secretary Bessent [stated](#) that in a deal, Iran must consent to getting rid of its highly enriched uranium, commit to never pursuing a nuclear weapon, and permit commercial shipping flows in the Strait of Hormuz to safely resume.
- Iran's Tasnim News Agency, affiliated with the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), [stated](#) on May 28 that the text of an agreement with the United States is not yet "finalized nor confirmed," citing a source with knowledge of the negotiations.

Lebanon

- On May 29, the Pentagon will [host](#) Israeli and Lebanese military officials to establish a security plan for combating Hezbollah in Lebanon—a discussion separate from the ongoing ceasefire negotiations between the countries.
- Hezbollah leaders are [pushing](#) the Iranian regime to reach a deal with the United States, according to Israeli defense sources cited in a May 28 article from Israel's *Maariv* outlet.
 - » Reportedly, Hezbollah is pushing Iran to specifically reach a deal that would restrict Israel's ability to operate in Lebanon.
 - » The *Maariv* article claimed that, according to intelligence estimates, Hezbollah as an organization "is in serious distress" due to Israel's combat operations.

3. U.S. and Israeli Operations

- Speaking to Fox News on May 28, President Trump [reiterated](#) his previous statements on the success of U.S. strikes in Iran, stating that Iran's "navy is totally gone, 100 percent. Their air force is totally gone, 100 percent. Their military, we sort of left it alone because we think that their military is somewhat moderate."
 - » He also highlighted the importance of U.S. strikes in the 12-Day War last June, stating, "If we didn't hit them [Iran] with the B-2 bombers nine months ago, they would have a nuclear weapon right now, and it would be a whole different story."
- On the evening of May 28, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) [shot at](#) a civilian plane flying over the West Bank after mistaking it for a hostile drone.
 - » No one was injured, but the IDF claimed it would investigate the incident.

Iran

- On May 28, Treasury Secretary Bessent [stated](#) that Washington would "be shutting down both Iranian airlines' access to landing spots, refueling, and ticket sales" as part of a broader pressure campaign on Tehran, while [noting](#) that travel for religious pilgrimages and humanitarian purposes would remain permitted.
- On May 28, the Treasury Department [imposed](#) sanctions on more than 15 entities and eight vessels involved in the facilitation of crude oil and petroleum shipments on behalf of Iran's military-linked oil sales networks.

Lebanon

- On May 29, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu [revealed](#) that "our forces crossed the Litani [River in southern Lebanon], and they advanced to the dominating terrain," referring to the IDF's 36th Division.
 - » He added, "We are operating in Beirut as well, in the Beqaa as well, across the entire front, and striking Hezbollah hard."
 - » The statement follows the IDF's May 28 [announcement](#) that its troops have been operating north of the Israeli military's security zone in southern Lebanon, seeking to push Hezbollah fighters farther from the Israeli border.

- On May 28, IDF Spokesman and former JINSA Visiting Fellow Brig. Gen. Effie Defrin [claimed](#) that “Hezbollah has around 30,000 terrorists, of whom we have already eliminated nearly a third of its force,” in recent years.
 - » The IDF also [confirmed](#) that its forces have killed approximately 2,500 Hezbollah operatives since the group joined the war in support of Iran in March 2026, with the Israeli military eliminating at least 800 of these fighters since the ceasefire went into effect in mid-April.
 - » According to the IDF, some of those [killed](#) include the “most senior field commanders of Hezbollah,” such as “the commander of Hezbollah’s forces in the Khiam area; an assistant to the deputy commander of the Badr regional division; the intelligence officer for the Beaufort Castle area; the chief of engineering in the Yohmor area and his deputy; the commander of Hezbollah’s forces in Jibchit; and the chief of engineering in the Jouaiya area,” as reported by *The Times of Israel*.
- On May 28, IDF Arabic-language spokeswoman Lt. Col. Ella Waweya [stated](#) that on May 27, Israeli forces struck and killed members of Hezbollah who were “observed earlier this week attempting to harm the activity of the Qaraoun Dam, which is considered national and strategic infrastructure of the Lebanese state.”

4. Strait of Hormuz Shipping and Blockade Status

- On May 28, Treasury Secretary Bessent [warned](#) that Washington could sanction Oman and other actors involved in a Strait of Hormuz tolling system, stating that the Treasury Department would “aggressively target any actors involved — directly or indirectly — in facilitating tolls for the Strait” and that “any willing partners will be penalized.”

5. Iranian and Proxy Operations

- U.S. Central Command [denied](#) Iranian state media claims on May 29 that Iranian forces had downed an American aircraft near Bushehr, stating that “no U.S. aircraft were shot down” and that “all U.S. air assets are accounted for.”

Maritime

- Fars News Agency, affiliated with the IRGC, [claimed](#) on May 28 that Iran’s armed forces conducted a missile launch operation from the country’s south toward unspecified targets.
 - » Separately, Tasnim News Agency [stated](#) that reported exchanges of fire in the Strait of Hormuz were intended as warning shots directed at vessels transiting the waterway.

Lebanon

- On the afternoon of May 29, the IDF [intercepted](#) a Hezbollah drone flying near Israeli soldiers operating in southern Lebanon, triggering sirens in the northern Israeli town of Hanita.
 - » Earlier in the day, the IDF [shot down](#) a “suspicious aerial target” flying near troops, triggering sirens in Margaliot and Misgav Am in northern Israel.

Internal Dynamics and Repression

- The Norway-based Hengaw Organization for Human Rights and the France-based Kurdistan Human Rights Network [reported](#) on May 29 that Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps killed Kurdish brothers Meisam and Mojtaba Visi in Kermanshah province after they went into hiding following the January protests.
 - » Iranian state-linked media claimed the pair were armed “instigators” who opened fire on security forces.

Outside the Middle East

- On May 29, British authorities [confirmed](#) that they arrested a Greek national on May 23 and charged him under Britain's National Security Act on suspicion of cooperating with Iranian intelligence to target an *Iran International* journalist.
- On May 28, U.S. federal prosecutors [charged](#) Mohammad Baqer Saad Dawood Al-Saadi on eight counts of terrorism-related offenses, citing his membership in the IRGC and the Iran-backed Kata'ib Hezbollah Iraqi militia.
 - » According to Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche, "Al-Saadi has been directly involved in terrorist operations and military decisions to attack U.S. and Israeli interests across the world and conspired with others to plan deadly attacks on American soil."

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, [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.

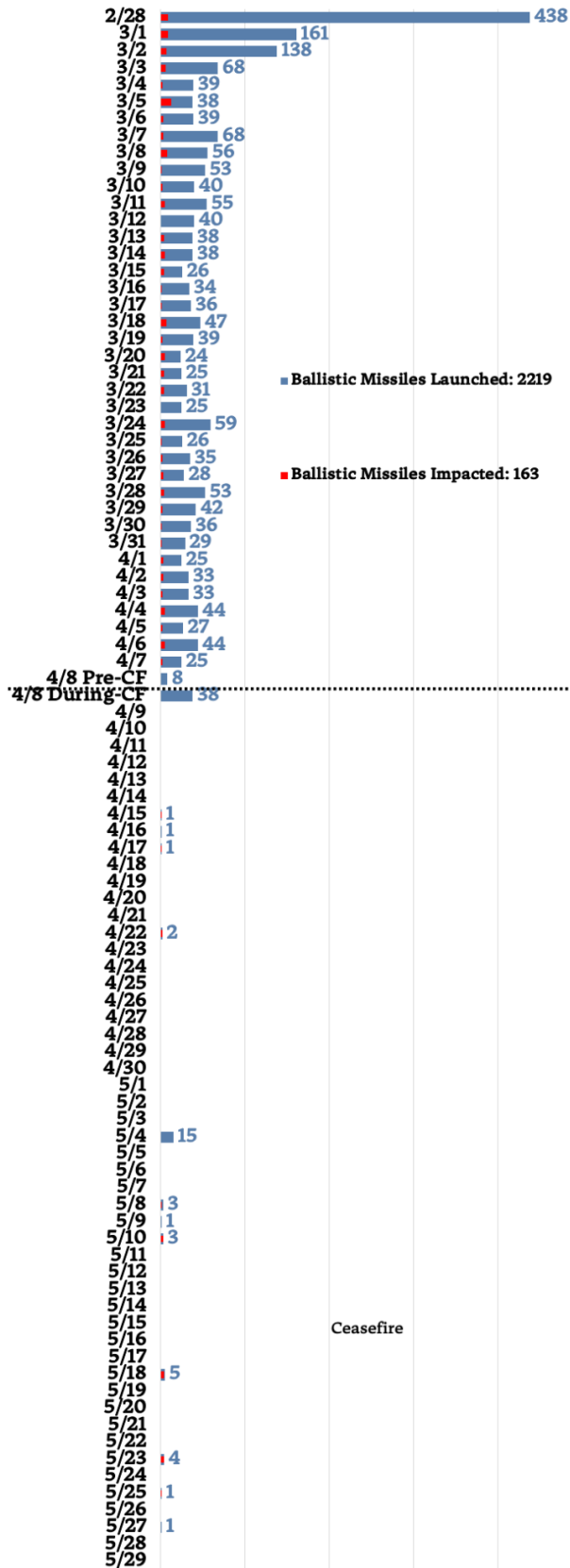
7. Threats, Condemnations, and Statements from Iranian Officials

- In a written statement to Iranian state television on May 28, Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei [warned](#) that “the enemy’s blind plan, after the imposed war, the economic pressure, and the political and propaganda siege, is to create divisions and disintegration in order to compensate for military defeats and bring the nation to its knees.”

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

