



Operations Epic Fury and Roaring Lion: 5/5/26 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 5 at 11:00 am ET.

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

Days left in Israel-Lebanon ceasefire: 9, following April 23 three-week extension

Iranian missiles and drones launched since ceasefire: **240** (23 on May 4)

Hezbollah attacks since ceasefire: **At least 68** (at least 7 on May 4–5)

Ships transiting Strait of Hormuz since ceasefire: **At least 315** (at least 15 on May 4–5)

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

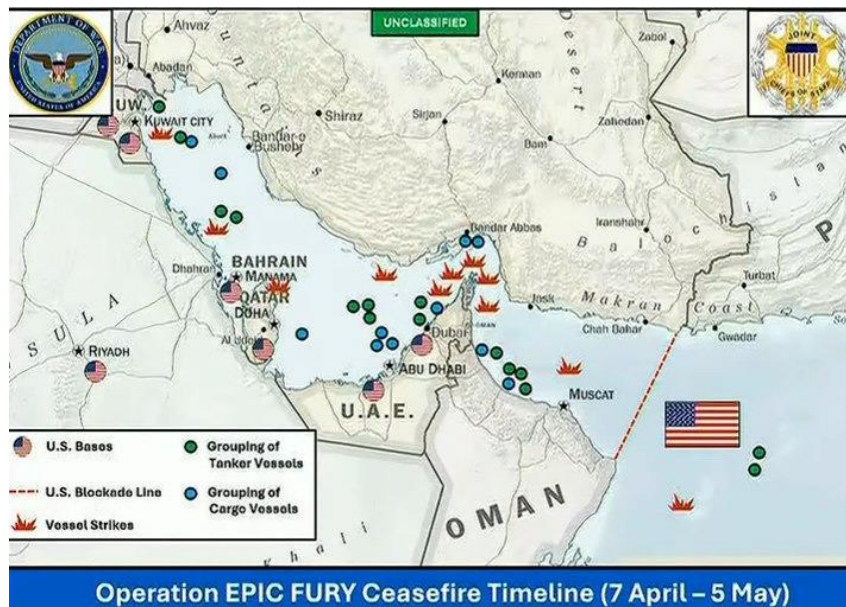
Total blockade-eligible ships rerouted by U.S. forces: **At least 51** (at least 2 between May 4–5)

Total blockade-eligible ships that [evaded the blockade](#): **At least 20** (None between May 4–5)

- 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

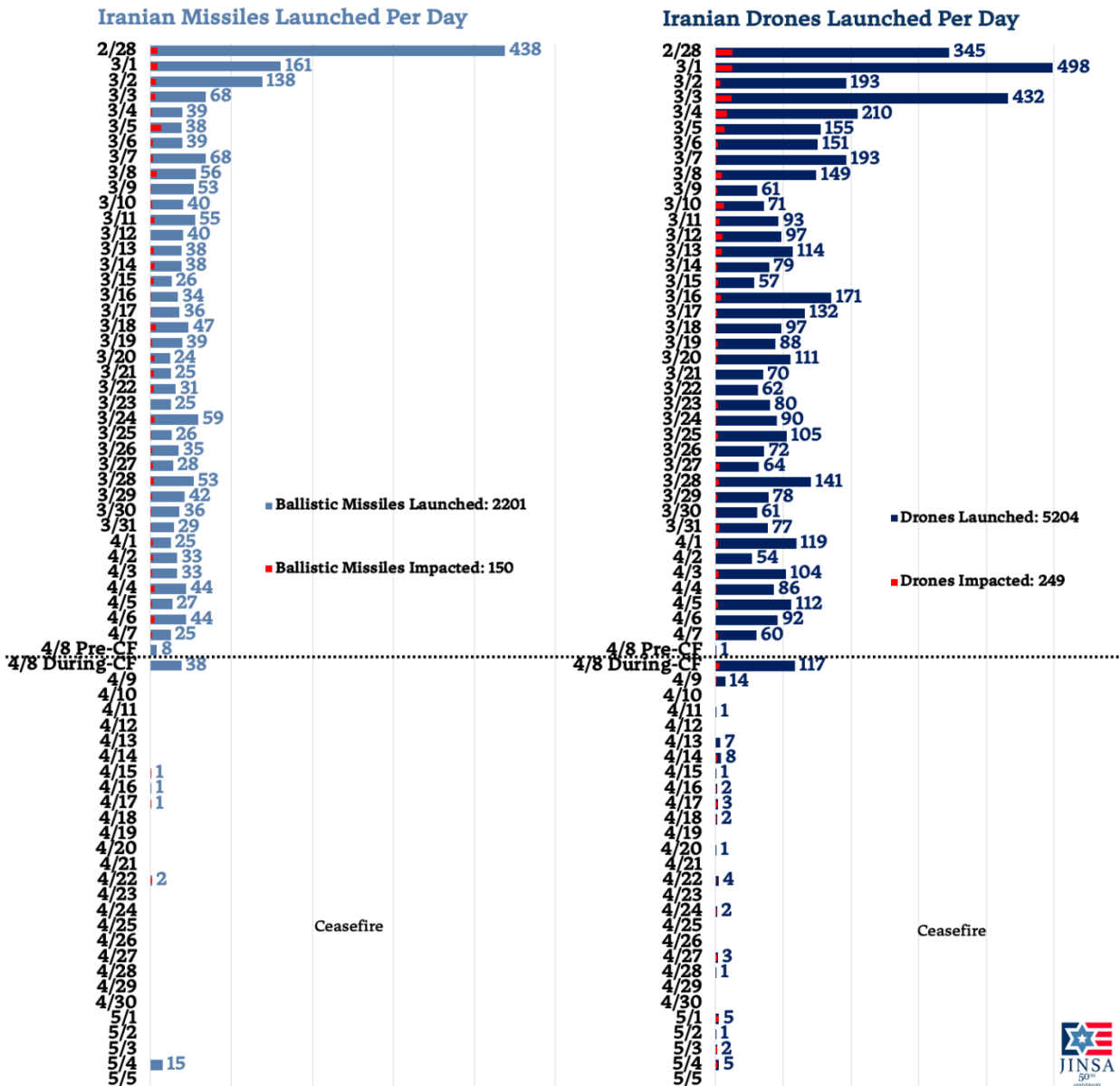
- On May 5, President Donald Trump [claimed](#) that if the United States resumes major combat operations against Iran, “we’ve taken out much of what we’d have to do, probably another two weeks, two weeks, maybe three weeks” of fighting. He added, “we either make the right deal, or we win very easily from the military standpoint.”
- During a Pentagon [briefing](#) on May 5 about the new U.S. effort to help commercial shipping safely leave the Persian Gulf, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Dan Caine [stated](#), “Since the ceasefire was announced, Iran has fired at commercial vessels nine times, and seized two container ships, and they’ve attacked U.S. forces more than ten times—all below the threshold of restarting major combat operations at this point.”



Source: [Department of Defense](#)

- On May 4, the USS *Truxtun* and USS *Mason* Navy destroyers, with the assistance of Apache helicopters, [crossed](#) the Strait of Hormuz and made their way to the Persian Gulf after dodging several Iranian missiles, drones, and small boats and returning fire at Iranian fast boats aiming to harm the ships.
- 51 ships have been [rerouted](#) as part of U.S. blockade enforcement since it went into effect on April 13, U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) [announced](#) on May 5. This means U.S. forces have still blocked the majority of known attempts to violate the blockade, as JINSA documented in its May 1 report, [Turning Tides](#).
- Only a single commercial vessel transited the Strait of Hormuz on May 5, according to JINSA's review of data from the Kpler shipping firm.
 - » Previously, on May 4, six commercial vessels traversed the Strait, including two U.S.-flagged ships which did so under the auspices of Project Freedom.
 - » Dozens of ships in the area also began broadcasting false locations on May 4.
 - This is likely a combination of Emirati, Iranian, and U.S. electromagnetic activities, ships deactivating or manipulating their transponders, or ships using false transponders.
- U.S. intelligence believes that it would take up to a year for Iran to construct a nuclear weapon, the same timeframe it assessed at the end of the 12-Day War in June 2025, according to a Reuters [article](#) published May 4. Strikes during Operation Epic Fury have focused largely on conventional military targets, although several key nuclear sites have also been hit.
- When asked about Iranian missile and drone attacks against the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.) on May 4, President Trump [replied](#) that it was “not heavy firing. ... They were shot down for the most part.”
 - » On May 4, Iran [launched](#) its first attacks against the U.A.E. in nearly a month by firing 12 ballistic missiles, 3 cruise missiles, and four drones at the country. The attacks led to a [fire](#) at the oil industrial zone in Fujairah and three moderate injuries.
 - The U.A.E. also [indicated](#) on May 5 that its air defenses were countering additional Iranian missiles and drones, but it remained unclear at the time of publication how many projectiles Iran launched.

- » A projectile also [struck](#) a residential building in Oman on May 4, the first attack against the country in nearly 40 days, which injured two people.
- » On May 4, Iran also conducted its first projectile attacks on commercial vessels in nearly two weeks.



2. Diplomatic Engagement

Lebanon

- On May 4, Lebanese President Joseph Aoun [announced](#) that he cannot directly meet with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu despite U.S. wishes, emphasizing that “we must first reach a security agreement and stop the Israeli attacks on us before we raise the issue of a meeting between us.”

3. U.S. and Israeli Operations

- Secretary Hegseth stated during the Pentagon [briefing](#) on May 5 that “we’re grateful that [the] Israelis have been very capable partners at many steps of this, and they may have

some objectives at times that are slightly different than ours, but there's only one hand on the wheel [with Epic Fury and Project Freedom] ... and it's President Trump's."

- » He added, "To what remains of Iran's forces, if you attack American troops or innocent commercial shipping, you will face overwhelming and devastating American firepower."

Iran

- On May 5, President Trump [indicated](#) that "we're not looking to decimate the [Iranian Artesh] army ... We purposefully have not gone after them too much, because we think that they're much more moderate, actually" in contrast to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).
 - » President Trump [added](#) that the Iranian people "have to have guns. And I think they're getting some guns. As soon as they have guns, they'll fight like, as good as anybody there is."
- During the May 5 Pentagon briefing, Secretary Hegseth [spoke](#) of the U.S. military's goals in Iran, stating that President Trump "will ensure that whatever deal is made, or whatever end state is reached, [ensures] Iran never has a nuclear weapon," adding that "what the Iranian people take advantage of after the fact is up to them."
- On May 4, President Trump [said](#) during a Fox News interview that the United States will blow Iran "off the face of the earth" if it decides to attack U.S. ships in the Strait of Hormuz.
 - » On the status of U.S. readiness for resumed operations with Iran, President Trump stated, "We have more weapons and ammunition at a much higher grade than we had before," adding, "We have the best equipment. We have stuff all over the world. We have these bases all over the world. They're all stocked up with equipment. We can use all of that stuff, and we will, if we need it."

Lebanon

- On May 4, Israeli soldiers [clashed](#) with Hezbollah fighters operating in southern Lebanon, with Hezbollah later confirming that some of its members "opened fire on the enemy force and engaged in heavy clashes with them," after Israeli troops advanced near Deir Seryan, which is still within Israel's forward defense line.
- On May 4, the Israeli military [announced](#) that its troops recently demolished a 30-meter-long Hezbollah tunnel in southern Lebanon and discovered a cache of weapons, including "three tons of explosives, 43 Claymore-style mines, other mines, and anti-tank guided missile systems," according to *The Times of Israel*.
 - » Throughout the day, the Israeli military also bombed around 15 Hezbollah sites in southwest Lebanon.

4. Strait of Hormuz Shipping and Blockade Status

- At the May 5 Pentagon briefing, Secretary Hegseth [described](#) Project Freedom as a temporary mission, saying "we are stabilizing the situation so commerce can flow again, but we expect the world to step up." He added that the United States will "hand responsibility back" to partners and allies "at the appropriate time, and soon."
 - » Secretary Hegseth indicated that the "ceasefire is not over," noting, "Ultimately this [Project Freedom] is a separate and distinct project. ... and ultimately the president will make a decision about whether anything were to escalate into a violation of the ceasefire."
 - » He stated that while the United States hopes Project Freedom would be "a peaceful operation," the U.S. military is "locked and loaded" to defend American troops, aircraft, vessels, and the Project's mission.

- Secretary Hegseth [shared](#) that in Project Freedom, “American forces won’t need to enter Iranian waters or airspace.”
- » While speaking during the briefing, General Caine [announced](#) that CENTCOM “has established an enhanced security area on the southern side of the Strait, that is now protected by U.S. land, naval, and air assets to help defeat further Iranian aggression against commercial shipping.”
- » Shipping firm Maersk [named](#) one of the two U.S.-flagged vessels that American forces guided through the Strait of Hormuz on May 4 as its *Alliance Fairfax*, a cargo ship transporting vehicles. The other ship’s identity is not publicly known.
- CENTCOM [announced](#) on May 5 that 51 vessels in total—an increase of two vessels from JINSA’s last update—had complied with U.S. orders to turn back toward Iranian ports since the U.S. naval blockade took effect.
 - » This constitutes the vast majority of blockade evasion attempts, according to JINSA’s review of Kpler, TankerTrackers.com, and Windward Intelligence data.
- In recent days, two analytics firms said they discovered vessels that may have evaded the blockade weeks ago. JINSA has not been able to independently verify these claims.
 - » TankerTrackers.com [alleged](#) on May 4 that the *Xavia*, a Guinea-flagged, U.S.-sanctioned liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) tanker, is now in the Arabian Sea after it took on cargo at Iran’s Asaluyeh port in early April.
 - However, the tracking service did not specify if this took place before the blockade took effect on April 13.
 - The firm has [previously released](#) misleading blockade enforcement data by aggregating pre-blockade and post-blockade activity.
 - » Windward Intelligence [claimed](#) on May 5 that an unnamed Vietnamese-flagged LPG tanker transited the blockade line en route to East Asia in mid-April.
 - Windward Intelligence said the ship “likely spoofed its location to conceal an Iranian loading following the April 13 blockade” without elaborating.
 - Currently, according to the firm, the vessel is off the coast of Indonesia.
 - » Previously, Windward Intelligence [asserted](#) on May 4 that an unnamed Madagascar-flagged LPG tanker, currently off Malaysia’s coast, was showing indicators of an “Iran-linked LPG deception pattern.”
 - Windward Intelligence said the ship switched on its AIS on April 20 in the Arabian Sea en route to East Asia.
 - The firm did not provide evidence of any links between the ship and Iran, nor did it document visits to any Iranian port.
 - » According to a May 4 analytics memorandum from Windward Intelligence, the *VIGOR*, a Botswana-flagged, U.S.-sanctioned oil tanker [shielding](#) its location, crossed the blockade line en route to Iran sometime between April 20 and 26.
 - Windward Intelligence claimed it tracked the tanker to Iran’s Kharg Island export terminal, where the ship allegedly spent four days loading oil before leaving the area on May 2. Its present whereabouts are unknown.
 - The tanker has previously moved energy shipments between Iran and East Asia, Windward asserted.
- After Iran attacked the U.A.E. and ships traveling near the Strait of Hormuz on May 4, JINSA-reviewed Kpler shipping data indicated unusually high levels of ships’ spoofing or otherwise hiding their publicly-broadcast location in the waterway.

- » According to JINSA-reviewed data from another shipping analytics firm, Windward Intelligence, approximately 50 ships near the Strait are operating with their Automatic Identification System (AIS) switched off to evade detection.
- » Given Iran's recent assault on ships in the area, many of these vessels likely disabled their AIS in an effort to avoid Iranian attack, rather than as part of nefarious activity like smuggling or illicit ship-to-ship transfers.
- Just a single commercial vessel has transited the Strait of Hormuz so far on May 5, the Comoros-flagged small cargo ship *Adryan*, according to JINSA-reviewed Kpler data.
- However, as noted, many ships are not transponding their real locations, suggesting that the figure may be higher. The *Alliance Fairfax*, which transited the Strait on May 4 as part of Project Freedom, did not transmit its location.

5. Iranian and Proxy Operations

Maritime

- During the May 5 Pentagon briefing, General Caine [described](#) Iranian attacks as “low harassing fire right now—feels like Iran is grasping at straws to do something across the southern flank.”
- A South Korean-operated cargo ship [suffered](#) an onboard explosion and fire that did not result in any casualties on May 4. While South Korean authorities were investigating the cause of the fire, President Trump said it was the result of an Iranian strike.

Lebanon

- On May 5, the Israeli air force [shot down](#) several Hezbollah drones before they could reach Israeli airspace.
- Overnight between May 4–5, Hezbollah [fired](#) an unspecified number of mortar rounds at Israel Defense Forces (IDF) troops in southern Lebanon on two different occasions. No casualties were reported.
- On May 4, Hezbollah [launched](#) a drone at IDF soldiers in southern Lebanon that was intercepted, resulting in no casualties.
- In a separate May 4 incident, an explosive-laden Hezbollah drone [targeted](#) Israeli troops in southern Lebanon, lightly injuring one of them.

U.A.E.

- On May 5, the U.A.E. [announced](#) that its air defenses were countering attacks from Iran, involving an undisclosed number of projectiles.
- On May 4, Iran conducted at least two waves of [attacks](#) against the U.A.E. that included a total of 12 ballistic missiles, three cruise missiles, and four drones.
 - » The attacks caused a [fire](#) at the Fujairah oil industry zone and resulted in three moderate injuries.
 - » As a result of Iranian strikes between May 4–5, the U.A.E. [partially closed](#) its airspace on May 5 for the first time in weeks, with overflight routes over the country restricted to certain areas until May 11.
- According to a source cited by CNN, the U.A.E. [utilized](#) Israel's Iron Dome air defense system to intercept at least one of the missiles Iran fired at the country on May 4.
 - » *Axios* originally [reported](#) on April 26 that Israel provided the U.A.E. with an Iron Dome system, along with IDF troops to manage the system, in the beginning stages of the Iran war.

Oman

- On May 4, two people [sustained](#) moderate injuries when a residential building housing employees from a company was struck by an unspecified projectile in Bukha along the Strait of Hormuz coastline.

6. Estimated Casualties of Iranian Operations

- 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 47 people have been killed in Israel](#), while over 7,795 have been [injured](#). At least 17 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 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 2,696 people have been [killed](#), and nearly 8,264 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 227 have [been injured](#).

7. Threats, Condemnations, and Statements from Iranian Officials

- On May 5, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi [referred](#) to President Trump's Project Freedom as "Project Deadlock," claiming that Monday's attacks on ships in the Strait of Hormuz "make clear that there's no military solution to a political crisis."
 - » He added that "As talks are making progress with Pakistan's gracious effort, the U.S. should be wary of being dragged back into quagmire by ill-wishers. So should the UAE," referencing several Iranian attacks targeting the Emirates on May 4.
- On May 5, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, Speaker of Iran's Parliament and its lead negotiator, [posted](#) on X that "The new equation of the Strait of Hormuz is in the process of being solidified," adding, "We know full well that the continuation of the status quo is intolerable for America; while we have not even begun yet."

8. International Response

- On May 5, the European Union [released](#) a statement condemning the recent Iranian attacks on Gulf countries, calling them a "blatant violation of international law."
- On May 5, French President Emmanuel Macron [confirmed](#) that he would speak with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian over the phone later that day at Pezeshkian's request.
 - » Macron called on all involved parties to cease attacks and "return to diplomatic negotiations."
 - » Macron also stated, "The only possible option is the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz ... and the absence of any tolls or coercive measures," adding that "Any unilateral escalation against tankers, container ships, or third countries is a mistake that fuels war and leads to escalation."
- On May 5, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky met with Bahrain's King Sheikh Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa and [offered](#) to provide the kingdom with drones, with Zelensky writing on X that "Our country is facing similar terrorist strikes almost every day, and our people have relevant experience in full-scale defense. Ukraine is ready to share this security expertise with Bahrain and help strengthen the protection of life."
- On May 4 and May 5, the Saudi Foreign Ministry released [two statements](#) following Iran's attack on the U.A.E., condemning the attack but stressing the importance of de-escalation and diplomacy "to reach a political solution that prevents the region from sliding into further tension and instability."
- According to the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations (U.N.) Mike Waltz, the United States and Gulf Arab countries [began](#) drafting a U.N. Security Council resolution on May 4 that would condemn Iran for blocking shipping in the Strait of Hormuz, with negotiations to discuss the resolution set to begin later this week.
- On May 4, Germany [announced](#) it deployed the minehunter vessel FGS Fulda to the Mediterranean to pre-position it for a potential multinational mission to secure the Strait of Hormuz, with additional naval assets to follow in the coming weeks.

- » Germany stated that any deployment to the Strait remains contingent on a sustainable end to hostilities, a mandate under international law, and authorization from the German parliament.

9. JINSA Resources

- 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