



Iran War Update: September 17–18, 2026

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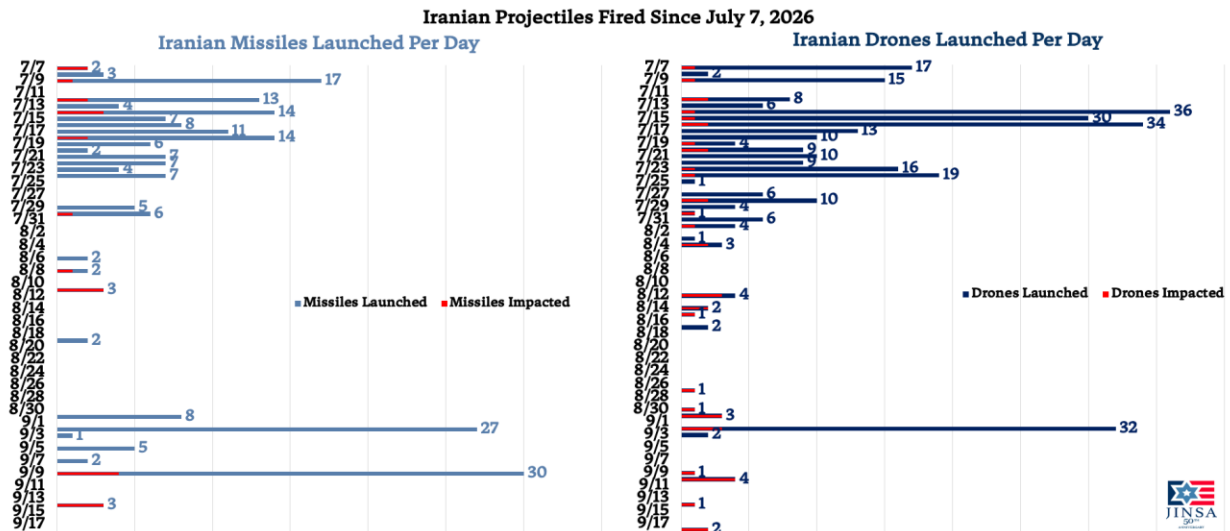
President Donald Trump and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian signed a now-expired Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on June 17, outlining terms to end the war and reopen the Strait of Hormuz over a 60-day period of further negotiations. However, on July 8, President Trump [declared](#) the MOU to be “over,” and both sides have resumed exchanging fire. JINSA continues to release regular updates about the conflict. The update below includes information since [JINSA's last update](#) as of September 18 at 10:00 am ET.

Iranian missiles and drones launched since July 7: **At least 552** (2 on September 17–18)

Brent Crude Oil Price: **[\\$104.00 a barrel](#)** as of **9:00 am ET** ([day range](#): \$101.92–104.27)

1. Overview

- On September 17, President Donald Trump [told](#) *Axios*, “I have a big decision coming up. Do I want to go in and annihilate them [the Iranian regime] or do I not? It’s a big decision. Anything could happen with me.”
 - President Trump also indicated that he plans to use a meeting at the United Nations (UN) on September 22 with the leaders of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.), Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait and Oman to “find out where they are and how they are doing,” adding “we have been very protective of them.”
- On September 17, *Israel Hayom* reported that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will [meet](#) with Secretary of State Marco Rubio—but not President Trump—on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly taking place in New York next week.
- A report from the Institute for Science and International Security published on September 17 [shows](#) that Iran is rapidly rebuilding its Taleghani 2 nuclear facility, based at the Parchin Military Complex.
- On September 17, a U.S. State Department spokesman [shared](#) that Washington will permit Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian to attend the UN General Assembly meeting next week.
- On September 16, Representative Gregory Meeks (D-NY), the top Democrat on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, publicly [announced](#) a hold on the Trump administration’s planned \$2.8 billion arms sale to Israel due to concerns about Israel’s use of the 2,000-pound munitions.



2. Diplomatic Engagement

Lebanon

- On September 15, Israeli Ambassador to Washington Yechiel Leiter [met](#) in Washington, D.C., with his Lebanese counterpart Nada Hamadeh Moawad, with an Israeli official telling *The Times of Israel* it was a “positive meeting” and that “they agreed to meet again in October to continue negotiations.”

3. U.S., Israeli, and Arab Partner Operations

- On September 18, Israel’s *Walla News* [reported](#) that Israel has requested new weapons systems from the United States following the September 17 State Department approval of an F-35 sale to Saudi Arabia.
 - » These forms of “compensation,” as the article described them, include a range of platforms which U.S. officials have never approved for sale to Israel, such as sixth-generation stealth aircraft, space-based weapons, advanced bunker-buster munitions, and autonomous systems capable of forming drone swarms.
- On September 17, the State Department [announced](#) that it had approved the sale of F-35 stealth aircraft to Saudi Arabia estimated at \$24.3 billion, despite reports of [concerns](#) from the U.S. intelligence community of China gaining access to the advanced technology.

Strait of Hormuz

- On September 17, the U.S. Treasury Department [sanctioned](#) BitBank, an Iranian cryptocurrency exchange, for allegedly processing payments from vessels to transit the Strait safely. BitBank is controlled by the Iranian financier Babak Zanjani, who the Treasury previously [sanctioned](#) in January 2026.
- On September 17, U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) [reported](#) that U.S. forces have redirected 104 vessels attempting to bypass the Strait of Hormuz blockade reimposed on July 14.

Yemen

- On September 17, the Houthis [claimed](#) that Saudi forces carried out strikes in Taiz province targeting three communications towers, in addition to striking the town of Abs, leaving one civilian dead and another wounded.
- On September 16, the Houthis [announced](#) that throughout the past day, Saudi F-15s launched 40 airstrikes on the provinces of Taiz, Marib, and Hodeidah in western Yemen.

4. Iranian and Proxy Operations

- On September 17, CBS News [reported](#) that Iran had downed two American MQ-1 unmanned aircraft in recent days, citing U.S. officials. It was not reported where specifically in the region the drones were brought down.

Maritime

- On September 18, Iranian media [reported](#) that the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) struck a Togo-flagged vessel attempting an “illegal passage” through the Strait of Hormuz. The impact sparked a fire onboard, forcing the vessel to stop its journey.
- On September 16, an unknown projectile [hit](#) a tanker exiting the Strait of Hormuz, according to the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) Center.

Outside the Middle East

- According to *The Wall Street Journal* on September 17, the United States is [investigating](#) whether cyberattacks on two tankers en route to Texas in August were caused by Iran, citing American officials familiar with the matter.

Saudi Arabia

- On September 17, Pakistan’s military spokesman Lt. Gen. Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry [stated](#) that Pakistan fully stands with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, both diplomatically and physically,” adding that “We will go to any extent” to defend Saudi Arabia.
- On September 17, Saudi state television [announced](#) that a drone interception effort over the kingdom’s Taif governorate resulted in the death of one individual and injured two others.
- On September 17, Reuters, citing satellite imagery and industry sources, [reported](#) that an attack last week in Saudi Arabia damaged three pumping stations that serve the East-West pipeline.
 - » As of now, the timeline to repair the pumping stations remains unclear.

5. Internal Iranian Dynamics

- On September 18—two days after Iranian civilians marked four years since the start of the Women, Life, Freedom movement—armed IRGC, Basij paramilitary forces, and children [paraded](#) throughout Tehran in a “state-organized show of force” event, according to *Iran International*.
 - » Iranian media claimed that over 300,000 people arrived for the event, while another 600,000 people signed up to receive military training as part of an IRGC initiative.

6. International Response

- On September 17, Reuters, citing three Iranian sources, [reported](#) that China, at the request of Saudi Arabia, has privately urged Iran to curb the Houthis’ attacks after the group’s repeated firing at the kingdom and takeover of key areas along Yemen’s Red Sea coast.
- On September 17, while convening for a UN Security Council meeting, China and Russia [rejected](#) the United States’s attempt to renew a mandate that would require UN experts to monitor the implementation of nuclear sanctions targeting Iran.

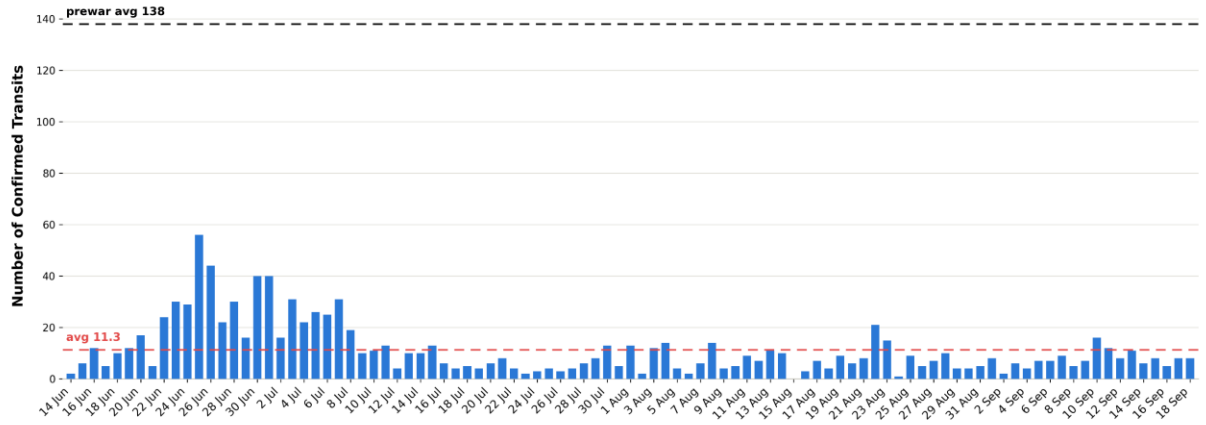
7. JINSA Resources

- Jonah Brody, [The Houthis Close in on the Gulf's Oil Export Lifeline](#), September 17, 2026
- Sarah Havdala, [Iran in the Wake of Women, Life, Freedom](#), September 16, 2026
- Giran Ozcan, [The United States Cannot Afford to Abandon the Kurdistan Region](#), September 14, 2026
- Ari Cicurel and Jonah Brody, [All Is Not Quiet on the Houthi Front](#), September 11, 2026
- Michael Makovsky, PhD, [Why Iran Fears Israel, But Not America](#), September 9, 2026
- Michael Makovsky, PhD, and Blaise Misztal, [How to Win the Iran War](#), September 3, 2026
- Michael Makovsky, PhD, John Hannah, Blaise Misztal, and Jonathan Ruhe, [Shifting the Center of Gravity: Transforming the U.S.-Israel Security Partnership](#), August 18, 2026
- Gen Charles Wald, USAF (ret.), VADM Mark Fox, USN (ret.), and VADM John W. Miller, USN (ret.), ["U.S. Must Reopen the Strait of Hormuz,"](#) *The Washington Times*, August 3, 2026
- Yoni Tobin, [Not Bottlenecks, But Strategic Opportunities: Making Room for More U.S. Refueling Tankers in Israel](#), August 3, 2026

Estimated Casualties of Iran War Operations			JINSA
Country	Killed	Injured	Notes
United States	18	500+	1 missing; 10 seriously wounded; 100 wounded in July; 358+ returned to duty
Israel	67+	7,800+	Killed include 26 civilians and 41 troops killed fighting Hezbollah (40 soldiers, 1 contractor)
Iran	3,724+	26,580+	Includes 1,221+ military; Iran International reports 4,700+ security personnel killed
Azerbaijan	—	4	All civilians
Bahrain	3	46	Killed include a Moroccan contractor; injured include 5 Emirati soldiers
Iraq	127	Several	Includes 28 in Iraqi Kurdistan
Jordan	—	31+	
Kuwait	9	161+	Injured includes 90 soldiers
Lebanon	4,386	12,407	Figures do not distinguish Hezbollah operatives from civilians
Oman	3+	17+	
Qatar	7	23	Killed occurred in March 22 helicopter crash
Saudi Arabia	3	47	Killed include 1 Saudi national and 2 foreign nationals
Syria	4+	Several	
United Arab Emirates	12	230	
International Waters	22	Several	

Data compiled by JINSA from various sources.

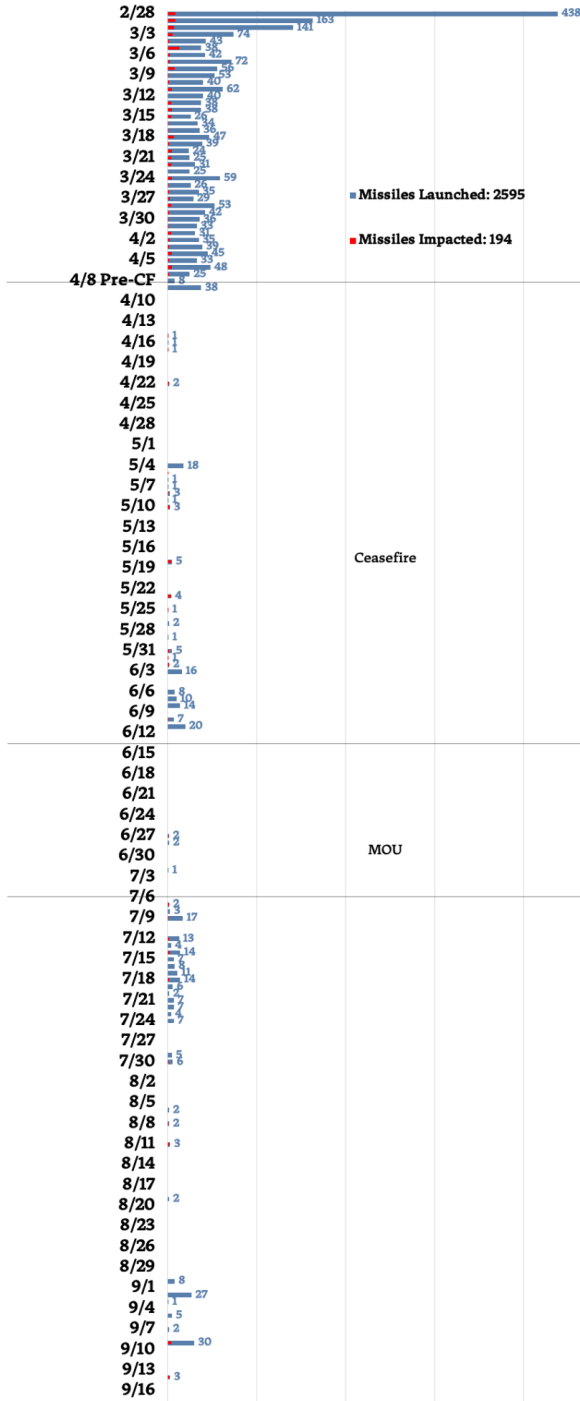
Commercial Ships Transiting Strait of Hormuz Since MOU



Figures derived from Kpler shipping data reviewed by JINSA.

Iranian Projectiles Fired During 2026 War

Iranian Missiles Launched Per Day



Iranian Drones Launched Per Day

