



Iran War Update: October 15–16, 2026

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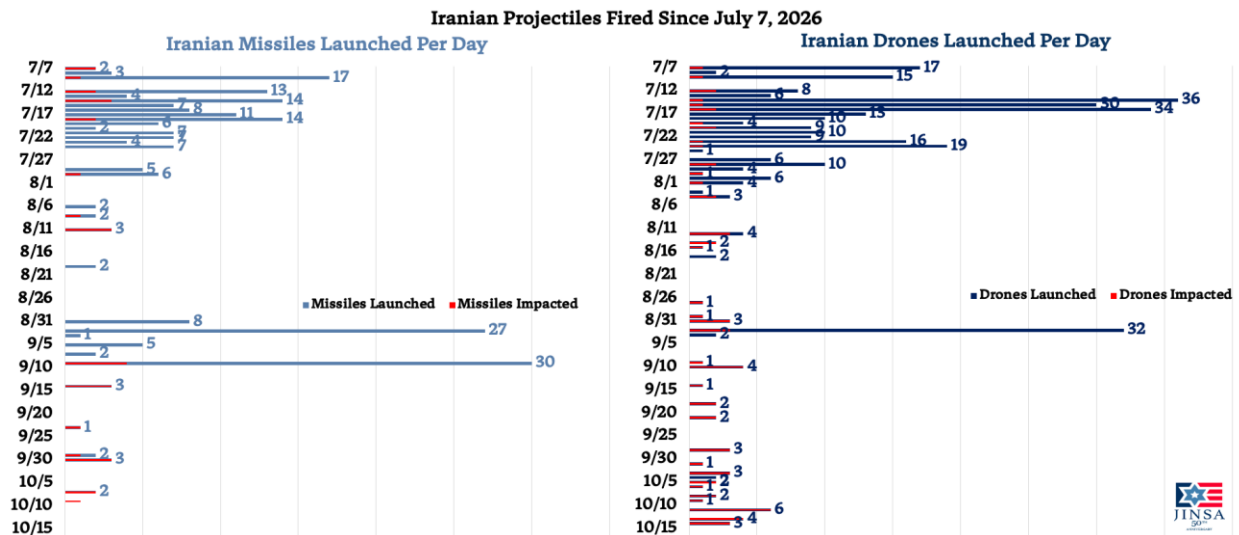
President Donald Trump and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian signed a now-expired Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on June 17, outlining terms to end the war and reopen the Strait of Hormuz over a 60-day period of further negotiations. However, on July 8, President Trump [declared](#) the MOU to be “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 October 16 at 9:45 am ET.

Iranian missiles and drones launched since July 7: **At least 590** (0 on October 15–16)

Brent Crude Oil Price: **[\\$106.96 a barrel](#)** as of **9:00 am ET** ([day range](#): \$102.33–106.99)

1. Overview

- On October 15, President Donald Trump [indicated](#) that he “wouldn’t use nuclear” weapons against Iran but may direct the U.S. military to drop GBU 43/B Massive Ordnance Air Blast Bombs, also known as the “Mother of All Bombs” (MOAB), on Iran.
 - » Earlier that day, CNN had [reported](#) that the U.S. military developed plans to attack Iran using the MOAB, the United States’ largest non-nuclear bomb. The MOAB is not a penetrating bomb capable of reaching Iran’s deep underground nuclear and military sites but can hit access points and other targets across a wide area.
- On October 15, President Trump [said](#) during an interview with Newsmax that “now we’re looking at Pickaxe Mountain. We may have to go there. We’ll take a shot at that one. We’ll knock it out fast.”
- On October 15, President Trump [joked](#) that he “probably went a little too far [by removing Iranian senior leadership]. I’m sorry, because I don’t know who the hell we’re dealing with anymore, but that’s going to end very soon.”
- On October 14, President Trump [stated](#) at a campaign rally in Alaska that “wait until you see what we do to Iran. We’re going to do a number.”
- On October 14, Reuters [reported](#) that the Trump administration is considering removing sanctions on some Iranian shadow fleet ships that transport oil and petroleum products in order to reduce global tanker freight rates.



2. Diplomatic Engagement

Lebanon

- On October 15, Secretary of State Marco Rubio [spoke](#) with Lebanese President Joseph Aoun about the recent seizure of hundreds of kilograms of explosives allegedly being transported by Hezbollah members, urging Lebanese authorities to hold those responsible for the shipment accountable.
 - Rubio also [emphasized](#) that returning the confiscated explosives to Hezbollah “should be out of the question.”

Yemen

- On October 15, Saudi Arabia [said](#) the Iran-backed Houthis had rejected a Saudi request to meet in Muscat, Oman, several weeks earlier to discuss de-escalating hostilities, marking the last direct communication between the two sides, according to Saudi Deputy Foreign Minister Rayed Krimly.

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

- On October 15, CBS News [reported](#), citing multiple U.S. officials, that former Army Chief of Staff Gen Randy George had warned two months before the Iran war that U.S. stocks of Patriot and THAAD missile interceptors were critically low and could remain at strategically insufficient levels through 2030.

Iran

- On October 15, the Treasury Department [imposed](#) sanctions on 16 individuals and 10 entities under Operation Economic Outcast, targeting Iran’s international financial networks and shadow banking operations used to evade sanctions, facilitate oil sales, and fund the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and its regional proxies.

Yemen

- On October 15, the Yemeni military [announced](#) that its forces carried out more than 1,250 strikes on Houthi targets over the past day, neutralizing 700 Houthi operatives and damaging over 150 vehicles and military equipment pieces belonging to the rebel group.

4. Iranian and Proxy Operations

Maritime

- On October 16, the Iranian Navy [announced](#) that an oil tanker illegally trying to travel through a prohibited route in the Gulf of Oman and that had turned off its tracking systems, was on fire. However, Iran's navy did not provide any reason for the blaze.

Outside the Middle East

- On October 16, a London court [sentenced](#) a Norwegian teenager to 20 years in prison for traveling to the United Kingdom to carry out an attack on behalf of the Sweden-based, Iran-backed organized crime group, Foxtrot Network.
 - » As of now, authorities are still unsure of the teenager's intended target.
- On October 15, a German court [sentenced](#) a Danish national and his Afghan accomplice to prison for spying on Jewish people and planning to attack supporters of Israel on behalf of Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) agents.

Saudi Arabia

- On October 15, the Saudi-led coalition [intercepted](#) a Houthi cruise missile flying near the holy city of Medina.
 - » That same day, the coalition also [shot down](#) a Houthi drone targeting the country's Eastern Province.
- On October 15, the Saudi-led coalition [revealed](#) that the Houthis have attacked King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh at least 20 times so far throughout the month of October.

Yemen

- On October 15, an unidentified Yemeni government minister [revealed](#) that three Houthi missiles struck a government command center, while two other missiles hit the Saudi-led coalition's headquarters at the presidential complex in Aden, causing casualties.

5. Threats, Condemnations, and Statements from Iranian and Proxy Officials

- On October 16, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian [spoke](#) at a nature conference in Armenia where he stated that "What has occurred in our region as a result of wars of aggression is ecocide, or environmental genocide, and it must be condemned."
- On October 16, Iranian military spokesperson Mohammad Akraminia [posted](#) on X that, "If America leaves the region, the Strait of Hormuz will reopen and collective security will be established with the participation of the region's countries, and the global economy will improve. If it doesn't leave, we'll expel it."
- On October 15, an Iranian naval official [stated](#) that "The Strait of Hormuz is closed; if it were not closed, oil would be passing through it and gas prices in the United States would not have increased," adding that Iran has "100% control and supervision" of the region.
 - » Later that day, U.S. Central Command [refuted](#) these claims on X, writing, "The United States and regional partners control the strait as commercial vessels continue to transit despite unwarranted IRGC aggression."
- On October 15, the Houthi military spokesman Yahya Saree [wrote](#) on X that "We have repeatedly warned all air navigation companies, throughout all previous periods, that Saudi Arabia's airspace and airports are unsafe, with the exception of the sacred airspace over Mecca and Medina," adding, "Now, we reiterate the same warning."

- On October 14, Iranian Parliament Speaker and former lead negotiator Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf [described](#) the United States as a “bullying enemy,” and said that American leaders “break their promises.”
 - » He insisted that “we must truly fight courageously on the battlefield” against the United States, saying “That is when we will have achieved sustainable deterrence.”
 - » He also stated that “America must be punished. America must change its behavior. It must understand that it has to come to terms with the Iranian people.”

6. International Response

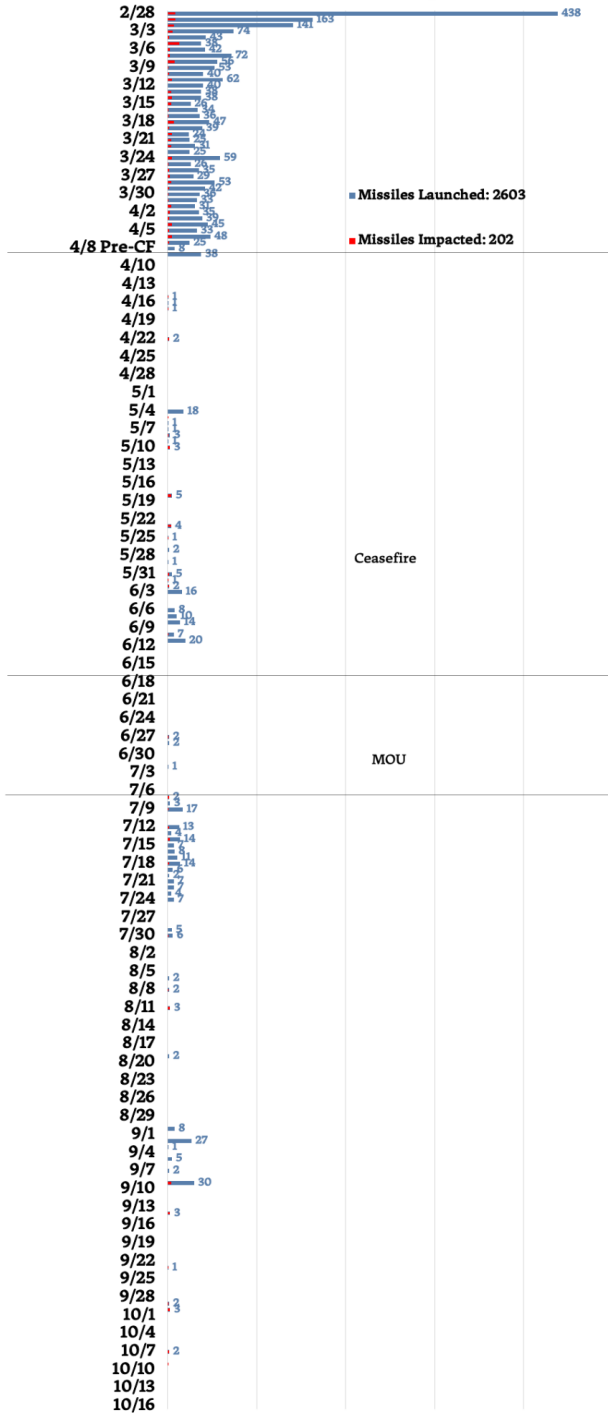
- On October 15, the European Union (EU) [announced](#) that the EU and Gulf Cooperation Council postponed their summit originally scheduled for October 24 in Riyadh amid ongoing Houthi attacks on the kingdom.
- On October 15, EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas [called](#) on member states to deploy additional warships to the EU’s Operation ASPIDES naval mission in the Red Sea to expand its capacity to escort commercial vessels through the Bab el-Mandeb Strait amid continued Houthi attacks.

7. JINSA Resources

- Lt Gen Thomas Bergeson, USAF (ret.), LTG Karen Gibson, USA (ret.), LtGen Sam Mundy, USMC (ret.), and MajGen Robert Sofge, USMC (ret.), “[How to Keep the Houthis Out of the Red Sea](#),” *The National Interest*, October 5, 2026
- Ari Cicurel, [Resupply Israel to Deter Iran and Protect U.S. Forces](#), September 23, 2026
- VADM Jeff Trussler, USN (ret.) and Sarah Havdala, [The US Needs an Information-Warfare Strategy for Iran — And Beyond](#), September 21, 2026
- 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

Iranian Projectiles Fired During 2026 War

Iranian Missiles Launched Per Day



Iranian Drones Launched Per Day

