



Iran War Update: October 22–23, 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 23 at 10:15 am ET.

Iranian missiles and drones launched since July 7: **At least 601** (0 on October 22–23)

Brent Crude Oil Price: [\\$114.68 a barrel](#) as of **9:00 am ET** ([day range](#): \$112.74–115.16)

1. Overview

- On October 23, Brent crude prices reached \$115 per barrel for the first time since May.
- On October 23, in an interview with *The Financial Times*, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Mike Waltz [stated](#) that the war in Iran could continue for another year, noting that key U.S. goals will be unmet until Iran gets rid of its highly enriched uranium and accepts a “meaningful agreement on their domestic enrichment.”
 - » He also noted that President Trump and “the U.S. Navy can maintain this blockade [on Iranian ports] for the foreseeable future,” adding that the Trump administration is “tightening” its campaign of economic pressure on Iran.
 - According to maritime intelligence firm Kpler, Iran has fully exhausted its seaborne oil reserves. October 23 reporting from *The Jerusalem Post* suggested that while, “at their peak, these reserves consisted of almost 90 million barrels of oil,” they are now entirely depleted.
- On October 22, President Trump [remarked](#) to the press that “We are not negotiating with” Iran and “Something one way or another will happen, fairly soon,” adding that “Most people seem to think it’s after the election.”
- On October 22, in a post on Truth Social, President Trump [alleged](#) that “Iran is doing everything they can to drive up the price of Oil prior to the U.S. Midterm Election,” noting that the Iranians “are even making up fake hits, mines, and everything else, because more Oil is coming through the Hormuz Strait now than it did even prior to the beginning of the Conflict.”
 - » He added, “They [Iran] continue to kill protestors, and anyone else that happens to be in their way,” noting that “75,000 protestors lie dead in less than seven months.”

- » President Trump concluded by reiterating, “IRAN CAN NEVER HAVE A NUCLEAR WEAPON, AND THEY WILL NEVER HAVE A NUCLEAR WEAPON!”
- According to Israel’s Channel 13, Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir [shared](#) in a private meeting that Israel does “not see any indications of a need to strike Iran before the election” scheduled to take place in Israel next week.
- *The New York Times* [reported](#) on October 21 that the United States and Israel prepared plans for a short, intense operation against Iran to take place after the U.S. midterm elections, citing American officials and others familiar with the matter.
 - » The renewed strikes would likely target energy facilities, nuclear sites, and missile and drone storage.
 - » Some officials cited by the *Times* stated that a new round of major strikes could lead to further deterioration in Iran’s economy, forcing the regime to make concessions in diplomatic talks.

2. Diplomatic Engagement

Iran

- According to the State Department, on October 22, Secretary of State Marco Rubio [shared](#) his appreciation for Qatar’s continued mediation efforts in a call with Qatari Prime Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani.

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

- The United States [ordered](#) U.S. diplomats to evacuate from Saudi Arabia amid escalating Saudi-Houthi hostilities. In addition, according to Reuters, “U.S missions in other Gulf states [are] ordering family members” of diplomats to leave.

Iran

- On October 22, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu [told](#) Israel’s Channel 7 that a report that Israel planned to strike Iran in mid-October but faced opposition from President Trump was “incorrect.”
- On October 21, *Axios* [reported](#) that dozens of Israeli Air Force (IAF) jets flew across Syria and Iraq to the Iranian western border as part of an exercise. The drill was “meant to deter Iran,” according to *Axios*.
 - » Israel reportedly informed U.S. officials about the aerial exercise beforehand.
- On October 21, the U.S. Treasury Department [sanctioned](#) “Panama- and Greece-based law firm Karnakis and Karnakis, which has supported illicit Iranian shipping activity for years, indirectly aiding Tehran’s ability to generate revenue to fund its military, weapons, and nuclear programs.”
 - » The Treasury Department statement announcing the sanctions also indicated that the U.S. Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FINCEN) issued an administrative subpoena to investigate a Greek bank over ties to Iran and has requested information from six other banks in Europe.
 - » In response, the Greek Finance Ministry [stated](#) it would implement existing sanctions.
- On October 21, Iran’s IRNA news agency [reported](#) that multiple explosions were heard in Hormozgan Province, near the Strait of Hormuz, though the cause of the explosions is unclear.

Strait of Hormuz

- October 22 [marked](#) the 100th day of the ongoing U.S. naval blockade of Iran, which U.S. Central Command announced “helped prevent Iran from exporting at least \$25 billion worth of crude oil and constrained the IRGC’s ability to fund proxy militias, criminal networks, and terrorism. There have been no exports or imports to Iran by sea except for the humanitarian aid U.S. forces have allowed.”

Yemen

- On October 22, the Yemeni Armed Forces [announced](#) that over the past day, its fighters carried out 780 strikes, which neutralized over 500 Houthis and damaged over 330 military vehicles belonging to the rebel group.

4. Iranian and Proxy Operations

Maritime

- On October 23, Emirati officials [released](#) a statement that the country had “detected a tanker oil spill affecting Umm Al Quwain’s beaches.”
- On October 22, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) [claimed](#) that four vessels hit mines near the Strait of Hormuz, repeating frequent statements that ships have hit mines without providing evidence, and making misleading claims about its missile and drone attacks against shipping.

Outside the Middle East

- On October 23, *Iran International*, citing Semperis cybersecurity firm, [reported](#) that an Iranian state-sponsored hacker organization, known as Prince of Persia, exploited command-and-control infrastructure in the United States to target Iranian dissidents throughout the war.

Saudi Arabia

- On October 23, Saudi-led coalition forces [intercepted](#) a Houthi ballistic missile targeting Khamis Mushait in Saudi Arabia’s southwestern region.
- On October 22, Saudi-led coalition forces [shot down](#) four drones operating near the cities of Riyadh and Medina.
 - » That same day, the coalition intercepted a ballistic missile targeting [Riyadh](#) and the city of [Najran](#) in southern Saudi Arabia.
- On October 22, Saudi Aramco [announced](#) that it informed its staff to leave the organization’s headquarters and work from home following repeated Houthi attacks on its facilities.
- On October 21–22, the Houthis [claimed](#) that their forces fired projectiles at several targets in Saudi Arabia, including the kingdom’s Ministry of Defense in Riyadh, Aramco facilities in the city of Yanbu, and Dammam’s King Fahd International Airport.
 - » The attack on Dammam killed two people when debris from intercepted projectiles fell in the city.

Yemen

- *Asharq al-Aswat* reported on October 22 that the Houthis have been strengthening their control in southwestern Yemen, including damaging roads and creating military barricades, outposts, and trenches.
 - » The report also noted that the Houthis have been conducting raids, looting homes, and abducting residents.
- On October 21, the Houthis [fired](#) three drones at Yemen’s Al-Rayyan International Airport and fired a ballistic missile at the city of Aden, according to Yemeni media.

5. Internal Iranian Dynamics

- On October 22, Iranian parliamentary speaker Mohamed Qalibaf, the lead negotiator in talks with the United States, [met](#) with Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei, according to Iran's state-run *Tasnim News Agency*.
 - » During the meeting, the two discussed “military, economic, and cognitive warfare,” as well as “strengthening the country’s components of power, the role of parliamentarians in preserving social cohesion and national unity, and the continued participation of the people in government-backed gatherings,” according to an Iranian readout.
 - » High-level meetings between Supreme Leader Khamenei and other Iranian officials have [reportedly](#) been rare.
- On October 22, the Kurdistan Human Rights Network [reported](#) that over the past few weeks, the IRGC has deployed troops and armed military convoys throughout Sanandaj, Kamyaran, Sarvabad, Marivan, and Baneh in Kurdistan Province.

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

- On October 23, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Aragchi [posted](#) on X, “The U.S. has over the past three years spent \$11 BILLION in taxpayer money on missile defense for Israel. It has fired more interceptors defending Israel than Israel has. That is not a symbiotic relationship. It is a parasitic one.”
- On October 23, Iranian state television [claimed](#), based on an unnamed source with ties to the IRGC, that all transit of “non-compliant” ships through the Strait of Hormuz has stopped.
- In response to U.S. escorting ships through the Strait of Hormuz, the IRGC [posted](#) on its Sepah website on October 22 that “The US military must know that if this trend continues, the conflict will extend to its bases in the region,” adding, “This is a serious warning.”
- On October 21, IRGC spokesperson Hossein Mohabi [stated](#) that Iran is “in the preparatory stages of unveiling the ‘Father of All Bombs.’ This is something new for the enemy.” He did not specify further details about this supposed new weapon.

7. International Response

- On October 21, Turkey, Qatar, Pakistan, and Indonesia [signed](#) the Badr Memorandum of Understanding, an agreement to increase defense cooperation and capabilities.

8. JINSA Resources

- Ari Cicurel, [Iran Escalates Before U.S. Midterm Elections](#), October 19, 2026
- LtGen Michael Groen, USMC (ret.) and Sarah Havdala, [“Iranian Cyber Operations,” RealClearDefense](#), October 17, 2026
- John Hannah and Rena Gabber, [“Iran ‘Blew the Hell Out of Bahrain’ — And Trump’s Gulf Strategy With It,” The Washington Examiner](#), October 12, 2026
- 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