



Iran War Update: October 24–26, 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.

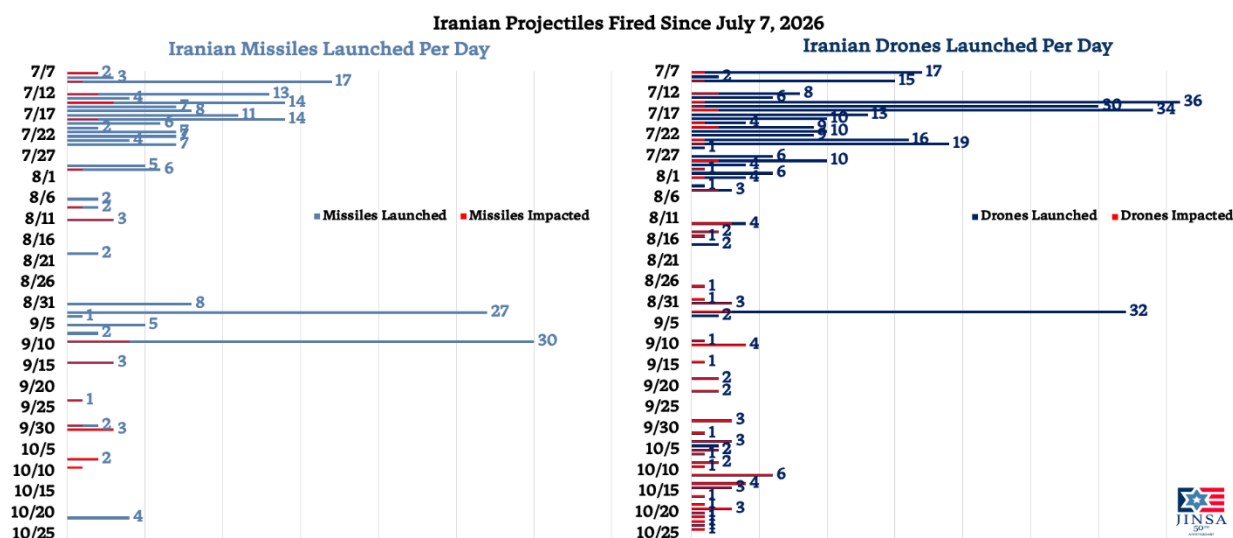
Iranian missiles and drones launched since July 7: **At least 604** (2 on October 23–26)

Brent Crude Oil Price: **[\\$115.15 a barrel](#)** as of **9:00 am ET** ([day range](#): \$114.00–115.97)

1. Overview

- On October 26, CNN reported that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been pushing to [resume](#) combat operations against Iran, but that the United States has requested that Israel wait to do so “until the Trump administration is ready to conduct joint operations.”
 - » CNN quoted an Israeli security official as saying, “Netanyahu really wanted and tried to convince Trump for a joint attack [against] Iran before the elections, and Trump did not give a green light.” Prime Minister Netanyahu’s office denied the allegation in a statement to CNN.
 - » The United States now has sufficient military assets and forces in the region to launch major operations against Iran within 96 hours of being given the order, per U.S. officials who spoke with CNN. The United States will soon have at least 25 warships in the region’s waters, according to a senior Pentagon official [cited](#) by *The Wall Street Journal*.
- On October 25, various Israeli media outlets [reported](#) that Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Eyal Zamir has pushed back against Prime Minister Netanyahu’s efforts to restart major combat operations against Iran before Israel’s upcoming elections.
 - » Prime Minister Netanyahu [denied](#) the reports during an October 25 interview with Israel’s Channel 14, stating, “there is no [internal] confrontation.”
 - » CNN reported the following day that Lieutenant General Zamir told Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Dan Caine that striking Iran before Israel’s October 27 election would lead to it [being postponed](#), which is reportedly part of President Trump’s rationale for delaying military action.
- On October 25, U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) Commander Admiral Brad Cooper [visited](#) the Strait of Hormuz, flying over the waterway aboard a U.S. Army CH-47 Chinook.

- In a Truth Social [post](#) supporting Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on October 25, President Donald Trump touted U.S. and Israeli operations that have degraded Iranian military capabilities and indicated that “we have to finish the job” against Iran.
 - » That day, President Trump [stated](#), “Do you really think I’m going to tell you if I’m going to [strike Iran?]” He continued, “there’s a possibility I will. There’s also a possibility we’ll have a nice, big, beautiful agreement ... the problem is, will [Iran] hold the deal?”
- On October 23, President Trump [stated](#) that the United States “may do another little Epic Fury” against Iran.
 - » Following Ambassador Tom Barrack’s [statement](#) on October 23 that the United States could “absolutely” strike Iran that weekend, President Trump [remarked](#), “If that’s the case, I don’t know anything about it.”
 - » He also [noted](#), “We could end it [the conflict with Iran] very quickly,” reiterating comments in recent months, adding, “Do we want to finish it or let it wither is the question.”
- On October 23, *Axios* [published](#) a leaked memo from Director of National Intelligence Jay Clayton addressed to Secretary of State Marco Rubio stating, “we have received intelligence that Iran has substantially increased efforts to target U.S. personnel. Lethal plotting efforts by the Iranians against U.S. citizens have reached advanced stages in both the Middle East and certain other countries.”
 - » Barak Ravid of *Axios* [reported](#), citing U.S. officials, that the State Department has been reducing the number of personnel at Middle East embassies because of the new intelligence findings.
 - » *The New York Times* later [reported](#) that two Iranian officials confirmed Iran has expanded its targets to U.S. diplomats and personnel.



2. Diplomatic Engagement

Iran

- On October 25, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei [said](#) Tehran remained open to diplomacy with the United States and continued to exchange messages through intermediaries despite weeks of stalled negotiations and concerns over renewed hostilities.
 - » Baghaei accused Washington of maintaining unilateral demands, rejecting calls for Iran’s “complete surrender” as unacceptable.

- On October 23, German Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul [said](#) Germany, France, and the United Kingdom were prepared to negotiate with Iran to prevent it from acquiring nuclear weapons.
 - » Wadephul also called for supporting Saudi Arabia and Yemen in defending themselves against Houthis attacks and creating conditions for renewed negotiations with the Houthis.

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

- In response to a question from a reporter about the possibility of resumed attacks against Iran on October 25, President Donald Trump [responded](#), “the answer is no. ... There will not be a strike today.”
 - » Israel’s Channel 12 [reported](#) that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s decision to post an [AI-generated image](#) of a nuclear explosion in Tel Aviv alarmed White House officials and President Trump’s response may have been an attempt to avoid Iranian miscalculation.
- Israeli media outlets reported on October 25 that IDF Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Eyal Zamir reportedly [resisted](#) an unspecified order from Prime Minister Netanyahu that would have likely sparked a major conflict with Iran, citing the need for more discussions and more formal authorization.
 - » According to *The Jerusalem Post*, which cited Israeli officials, Zamir has [stalled](#) in carrying out the ordered action because he is “concerned that the political echelon may be trying to exploit the front with Iran ahead of elections for political gain.” Israel’s elections are on October 27.
 - » Prime Minister Netanyahu later [denied](#) the reports, calling them untrue and saying, “there is no [internal] confrontation.”

Iran

- On October 25, CENTCOM Commander Admiral Brad Cooper [visited](#) the Strait of Hormuz, announcing that U.S. forces had helped Gulf partners export more than 1.5 billion barrels of crude oil since the summer and supported the passage of over 3,000 commercial vessels through the Strait over the previous six months.
 - » CENTCOM said U.S. forces had cleared Iranian naval mines from the Strait’s primary international shipping lanes and that more than 95 percent of vessels navigating the waterway had transited safely in recent months.
- On October 25, the IDF [began](#) a two-day military exercise involving the Israeli Air Force, Northern Command, and Central Command in northern and central Israel to simulate defending against a multi-front attack and prepare for a potential escalation.

Lebanon

- On October 25, the IDF [reported](#) launching an interceptor missile at a suspicious aerial target detected over southern Lebanon, where Israeli troops were operating. No air raid sirens were activated in Israel, as the target was not deemed a threat to civilians.

4. Iranian and Proxy Operations

Iraq

- On October 24, an explosive-laden drone [struck](#) a base belonging to the Kurdistan Komala Party of Iran in the Alana Valley northeast of Erbil in Iraq’s Kurdistan Region, causing material damage but no casualties.

Israel

- On October 25, Prime Minister Netanyahu [warned](#) that Iran and its regional proxies could launch attacks to disrupt Israel's October 27 election, citing unspecified intelligence indicators and threatening a "disproportionate" response.
 - » Netanyahu said the IDF was prepared for both defensive and offensive operations, warning Iran and its proxies, "Don't test us."

Maritime

- On October 23, the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) Center [reported](#) that a tanker transiting outbound through the Strait of Hormuz was struck by an unidentified projectile, disabling the vessel. All crew members were reported safe.
- On October 22, UKMTO [reported](#) that a tanker transiting outbound through the Strait of Hormuz was struck by an unidentified projectile approximately seven nautical miles northeast of Limah, Oman. The vessel was able to continue to its next port of call.

Saudi Arabia

- On October 25, the Saudi-led coalition [intercepted](#) 10 Houthi ballistic missiles targeting southern Saudi Arabia.
- On October 25, Houthi spokesman Yahya Saree [said](#) that the group attacked Riyadh's international airport with three waves of ballistic missile volleys. He claimed that the Houthis struck the airport with at least one missile.
- On October 25, the Saudi-led coalition announced that it [shot down](#) a Houthi ballistic missile targeting Riyadh.
- On October 25, Saudi-led coalition forces [downed](#) a Houthi cruise missile targeting the Saudi city of Khamis Mushait. That day, the Houthis [claimed](#) to have targeted Saudi Arabia's King Khalid military base in the city, and a Saudi naval base in Jazan.
- On October 24, two Houthi ballistic missiles were [intercepted](#) in airspace near Saudi cities Mecca and Medina, Islam's two most holy cities, causing shrapnel to land outside of Mecca. The Houthis later [denied](#) that they targeted either city.
- On October 24, the Houthis claimed to [have attacked](#) three Saudi airports, including Riyadh's international airport; an oil pipeline; two oil facilities; and a Saudi military base. That day, coalition forces [shot down](#) a Houthi ballistic missile near Riyadh.
- On October 24, Saudi Arabia [shot down](#) two Houthi ballistic missiles that targeted Taif and Yanbu.
- On October 23, the Houthis [targeted](#) Saudi Arabia's capital city of Riyadh with a ballistic missile, which was intercepted. No damage or casualties were reported.
- On October 22, Saudi-led coalition forces [intercepted](#) a Houthi ballistic missile launched at the Saudi city of Najran. No damage or casualties were reported.

Yemen

- On October 24, the Houthis [claimed](#) to have attacked a naval base and military camp in Aden, the interim capital of Yemen's internationally recognized government, targeting what Houthi military spokesperson Yahya Saree described as Saudi military positions.

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

- On October 26, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Aragchi [claimed](#), "The victorious resistance of our beloved country during the enemy's two recent acts of aggression has been made possible only through the solidarity and mobilization of all military and civilian sectors, as

well as the proud presence of all segments of the Iranian people on the front lines of resistance.”

- On October 25, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi [warned](#) that renewed U.S. or Israeli military strikes would not change Tehran’s policies, stating, “Whether there is war or not, our policies remain the same,” and adding that another attack would produce a result “no different than what they experienced in the past.”
- On October 23, Reuters reported that an Iranian official [claimed](#), “If Iran is attacked, there will be no more red lines ... from undersea cables to military bases, including covert ones.”

6. International Response

- On October 26, senior officials from Mecca Pact countries, including Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Pakistan, plan to [meet](#) Iranian officials in Tehran.
- On October 25, Saudi Arabia [reopened](#) two terminals at the King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh to domestic and international flights amid continued Houthi attacks.
- On October 23, French Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot [stated](#), “a further escalation between Iran and the United States would leave no winners and would likely have very serious consequences for hydrocarbon prices.”

7. 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