Iran War Update:
October 31– November 2, 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 November 2 at 10:00 am ET.

Iranian missiles and drones launched since July 7: **At least 609** (4 on October 30–November 1)

Brent Crude Oil Price: **$106.76 a barrel as of 9:00 am ET** (day range: $108.11–112.41)

1. Overview

- On November 1, President Donald Trump remarked to the Right Side Broadcasting Network that, "We've had such a victory [against Iran], and we'll put it away very soon, one way or the other."
  - » He added, "Either they'll make a deal, or we'll just end it. End it—I guess you could say maybe the easy way."
  - » At a rally later that day, President Trump stated, "The only reason why I'm not finished with Iran is I want to be nice. I want to try and save all those lives if I can… But at some point we're going to have to give them the hammer."
- On November 1, President Trump confirmed earlier reporting that he had a call with Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu the previous day, remarking that they had a "very good talk."
  - » According to *Axios* reporting, during the call between the two leaders on October 28, Prime Minister Netanyahu pushed for U.S. strikes against Iran to resume immediately following the U.S. midterm elections on November 3. President Trump, however, shared that he wants to give negotiations with Iran more time.
- *The Atlantic* reported on November 1 that President Trump is seeking to blame one of his advisors for the inability to end the Iran war, after being assured prior to February 28 that the war would be over well before the midterms.
  - » The report indicated those Trump could blame include Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Dan Caine.
- On October 31, President Trump told reporters that talks with Iran are "going fine" but the Iranians are "not very reliable. … They make a deal and then they back out."

» President Trump noted, “We're not in that much of a hurry” to reach a deal with Iran, given the effectiveness of U.S. strikes.

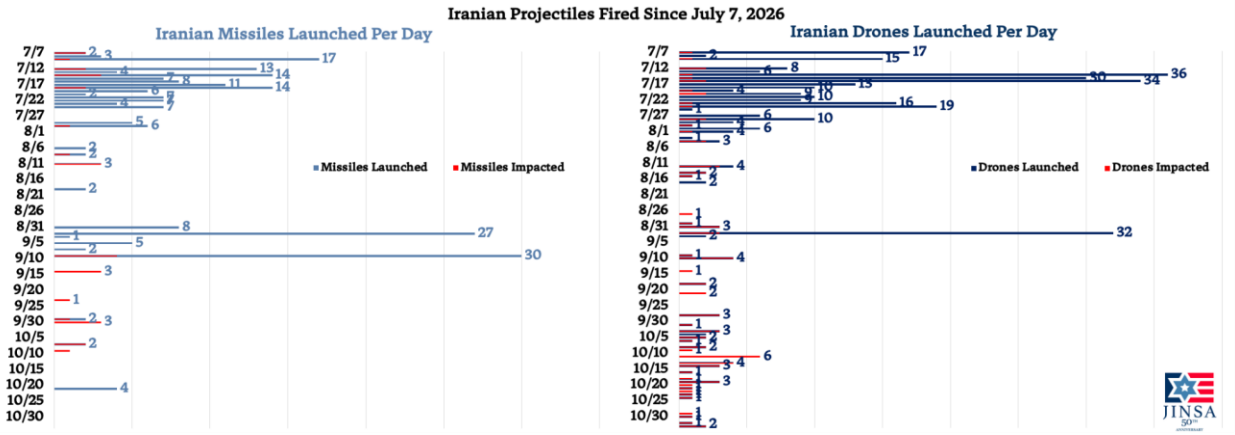
» He also stated, “We still have to take care of, I would say, one or two sites, but we can do that in 10 minutes,” noting, “You probably could look at Pickaxe Mountain, and you have to take care of that.”

- According to MSNOW reporting on October 31, which cited three senior Gulf officials, the Trump administration has warned Gulf allies to be ready for strikes against Iran to restart as soon as November 4, one day after the midterm elections.

» The officials noted that the U.S. strikes are expected to be short but intense.

- Analysis from *The Wall Street Journal* on October 30 determined that in the first six months of the Iran war, Iranian attacks damaged “274 structures at 24 [U.S. military] installations,” with the majority of damage at bases less than 200 miles from Iran.

» The following day, the Associated Press reported that Iranian attacks on American bases in the Middle East prioritized hitting U.S. air defenses prior to striking buildings and aircraft.



2. Diplomatic Engagement

Iran

- Iranian negotiators met with Qatari mediators over the weekend in Doha, yet there has been little progress made towards a deal, according to Reuters.

» Reuters reported on November 2 that Iranian officials now believe a return to war is more likely than reaching a deal.

» On November 1, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi stated that Tehran hopes Washington will opt for “diplomacy over other paths,” noting that Iran is prepared for both diplomacy and defensive measures, contingent on the United States’ “rationality.”

» On October 31, Foreign Minister Araghchi stated in an *Al Jazeera* interview that, “Currently, there are no plans for meetings with American officials, and any speculation to the contrary is merely media assumption.”

– Earlier that day, Qatari media reported that U.S. officials were set to travel to Doha to join the talks.

» A draft proposal was “circulated for feedback” during the negotiations this past weekend, according to a November 2 Reuters article. Reuters did not provide further details about the proposal.

- On November 2, Iran’s foreign ministry said in a statement that it was considering a two-day reopening of the Strait of Hormuz as part of broader talks with U.S. negotiators.

- On November 1, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Donald Blome stated that "The hand of negotiation has been extended, and those channels have continued to be open and active."
  - » He added, "At the same time, we've been also prepared to go in another direction," noting that, "We just can't allow Iran to take this region and the global economy hostage."
- On October 31, Mohsen Rezaei, the head of Iran's supreme national security council, stated that he had "read the letter [from Vice President JD Vance]. I haven't yet responded. Their tone has completely changed," adding that this is "a good sign" and that Iran "consolidated its victory."
  - » That day, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi told reporters that Iran's leaders have discussed the letter in high-level internal meetings.
  - » The letter from Vice President Vance, which was addressed to Rezaei, offered to immediately restart advanced negotiations, according to *The New York Times*. However, President Trump has denied this, stating the vice president's letter discussed providing Iran with medical supplies.

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

Iran

- On October 31, Secretary of State Marco Rubio said President Trump had not decided whether to launch renewed military strikes against Iran amid stalled peace negotiations, emphasizing that the United States "would have the ability" to conduct military operations if necessary but would "prefer to do it peacefully."

Lebanon

- On October 31, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) carried out a controlled detonation of infrastructure in Kfar Tebnit in southern Lebanon, with Lebanese media reporting the routine operation as an Israeli strike on the village.
- On October 30, a Lebanese military court charged 13 people in connection with an October seizure of a Hezbollah-owned truck carrying 780 kilograms of explosives on a highway linking Beirut to the Bekaa Valley.
  - » Hezbollah acknowledged owning the explosives but claimed they were intended for use against Israeli forces in southern Lebanon and demanded their return.

Strait of Hormuz

- On October 31, U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) reported that U.S. forces have redirected 144 vessels attempting to bypass the Strait of Hormuz blockade reimposed on July 14.
- On October 31, Iran's semi-official Fars News Agency reported that two fishing boats were hit by an "enemy" drone in the Strait of Hormuz, 14 nautical miles south of Iran's Qeshm Island, resulting in two fishermen that were wounded and two that are missing.

Yemen

- On November 2, Yemen's Iran-backed Houthis accused the Saudi-led coalition of carrying out airstrikes against Ras Issa port and an oil facility in Hodeidah province, wounding four at the port and three at the oil facility.
- On November 1, the Saudi-led coalition announced that it had conducted a "precision military operation" targeting resources used by the Houthis to launch attacks against Saudi Arabia and Red Sea shipping. The statement did not indicate the precise location of the strikes.

» The Houthis separately accused Saudi Arabia of carrying out two airstrikes against the University of Hodeida's medical school. No casualties were immediately reported.

4. Strait of Hormuz and Red Sea Shipping

- On October 29, Somali pirates hijacked the Iranian fishing vessel *Azini* off northeastern Somalia, seizing 21 Iranian crew members and two Somali security guards, according to the Puntland Maritime Police Force.
  - » The Maritime Security Center Indian Ocean warned that the pirates could use the vessel as a "mother ship" to launch attacks against commercial shipping. The European Union's Operation Atalanta launched an investigation, while the crew's safety remained unknown.
- The seven OPEC+ countries met virtually on November 1, and decided to extend September's required production levels through the end of December. They are scheduled to meet again on November 29.

5. Iranian and Proxy Operations

Maritime

- On November 2, Iranian state broadcaster IRIB claimed that 11 oil tankers had caught fire in the Strait of Hormuz since October 25, with some allegedly sinking, disputing CENTCOM Commander Adm. Brad Cooper's assertion that the Strait's primary shipping routes remained "free and clear." IRIB provided no evidence to substantiate its claims.
- On November 1, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) claimed that two oil tankers taking an "unauthorized route" in the Strait of Hormuz struck mines in the area, causing them to explode.
- On November 1, the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) Center reported that two unknown projectiles struck a tanker 72 nautical miles east of Ras al Khafji, Saudi Arabia, without injuring the crew.
- On November 1, an unknown projectile struck a vessel transiting the Strait of Hormuz, according to the Master of a separate merchant vessel relaying a Mayday call.
- On October 30, UKMTO reported that an unknown projectile struck a vessel 40 nautical miles south of Lavan Island, sparking a fire on board, but causing no injuries to the crew.
- On October 30, "unidentified objects" struck *Al Mayedal*, a Qatari liquefied natural gas carrier in the Gulf, without causing injuries to the crew.

Saudi Arabia

- On November 1, Saudi air defenses intercepted and destroyed launched by the Houthis toward the kingdom's southern region.
- On November 1, a Houthi military source warned that Saudi Aramco facilities were within range of the group's weapons, describing investments in the company as risky ventures vulnerable to losses, according to the Houthi-run Saba news agency.
  - » The source also warned international airlines against using Saudi airspace, with the exception of space over Mecca and Medina.
- On October 31, Saudi air defenses shot down a drone over Riyadh.

Yemen

- On November 1, United Nations (UN) High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk announced that Mohammad el Shami, a Yemeni UN human rights staff member detained by

the Houthis since June 2024, had died in Houthi custody under unexplained circumstances. He called for an independent investigation and the release of other detained UN personnel.

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

- On November 1, Iranian state television reported that Iran's army spokesman Mohammad Akraminia stated, "a potential future war could last longer than previous conflict, and the American president would not be in a position to dictate the timing or the conditions of its conclusion."
- On October 31, Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamanei's Telegram account posted that he ordered the Iranian military to respond without "geographic limits to any enemy threat … if the enemies once again launch military or terrorist attacks, it is the armed forces of the Islamic Republic and the Iranian nation that will determine the time and conditions for ending them."
- On October 31, Iran's army spokesman Mohammad Akraminia posted on X that "If the US president once again embarks on more regional adventurism under pressure from, and in an attempt to appease, the Zionists, the flames of war will undoubtedly engulf a much wider geographical area."
- On October 31, Iranian Supreme National Security Council Secretary Mohsen Rezaei said Tehran would not engage in negotiations over its nuclear program or reopen the Strait of Hormuz until the United States accepted Iran's demands.
  - » Iran's seven demands remain: the United States ending its naval blockade; releasing frozen Iranian assets; removing oil sanctions; halting military action against Iran and its regional allies; withdrawing U.S. forces from areas around Iran; and paying compensation to Iran for war damages.
  - » Rezaei said on October 31 that while Iran's leaders have not made a "new decision" regarding Iran's nuclear doctrine, that could change if war resumes.
- On November 1, Iran designated the U.K. naval and air forces as terrorist organizations and MI6 as a hostile entity.
- On October 31, Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Mohsen Rezaei stated that Iranian leaders are mulling over whether the country should maintain its ban on developing nuclear weapons if hostilities with the United States resume.

7. International Response

- On November 1, United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.) presidential advisor Anwar Gargash stated, "We don't really want to see another round of confrontation in the region." He added, "military solutions will only complicate the current very complicated scene that we have and will not actually bring any quick off-ramps."
- On October 31, Egypt's Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty stated, "the second round will be more dangerous, more destructive, and it will lead to nowhere. We have to draw lessons from the past."
- On October 31, Syria's Foreign Minister Asaad al-Shaibani indicated that "discussions are currently underway to evaluate Syria's entry into the Mecca alliance" of Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and Turkey.

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

