

Iran Update, November 6, 2023

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Information Cutoff: 2pm ET

The Iran Update provides insights into Iranian and Iranian-sponsored activities abroad that undermine regional stability and threaten US forces and interests. It also covers events and trends that affect the stability and decision-making of the Iranian regime. The Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute and the Institute for the Study of War (ISW) provides these updates regularly based on regional events. For more on developments in Iran and the region, see our [interactive map of Iran and the Middle East](#).

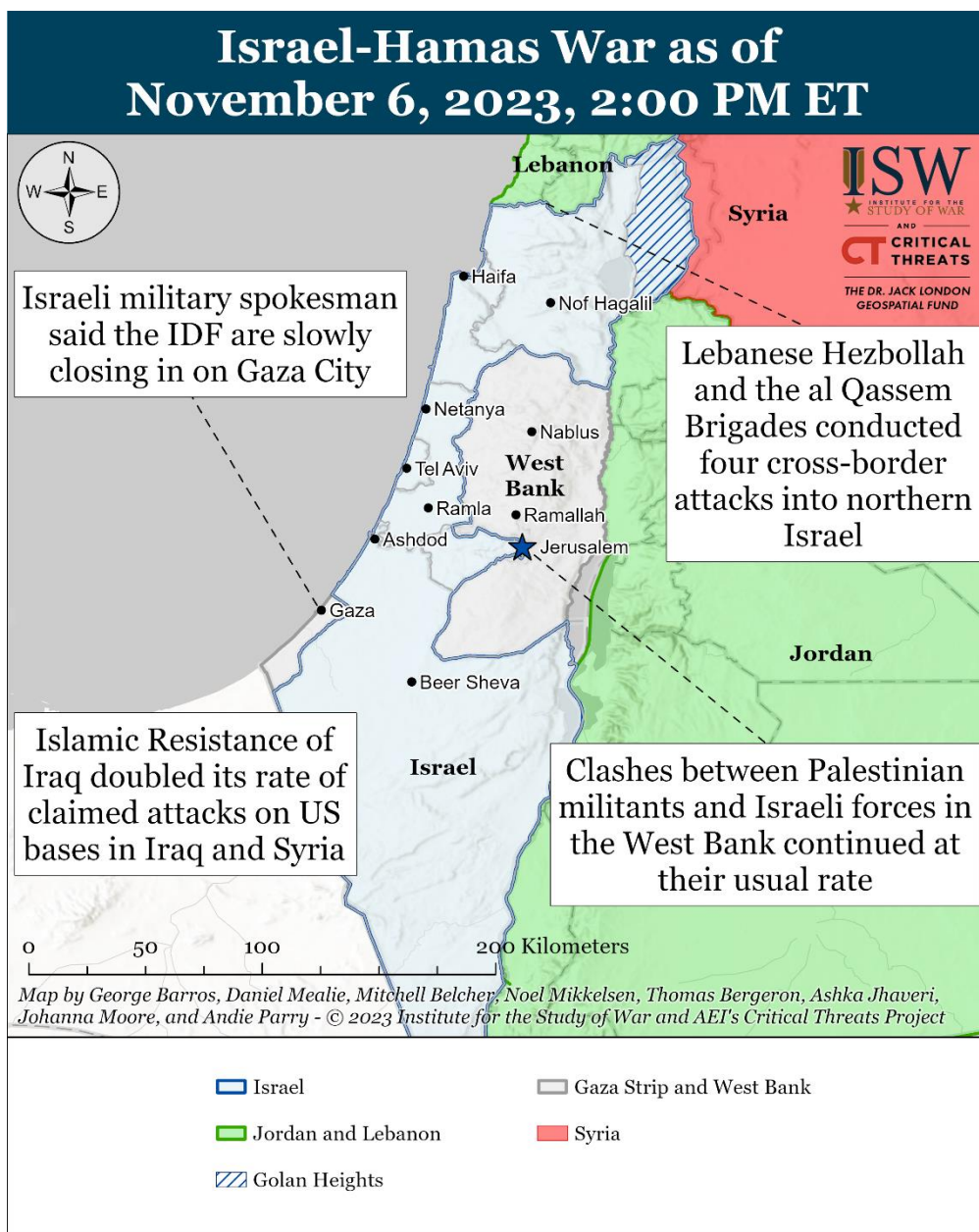
Note: CTP and ISW have refocused the update to cover the Israel-Hamas war. The new sections address developments in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, Lebanon, and Syria, as well as noteworthy activity from Iran's Axis of Resistance. We do not report in detail on war crimes because these activities are well-covered in Western media and do not directly affect the military operations we are assessing and forecasting. We utterly condemn violations of the laws of armed conflict and the Geneva Conventions and crimes against humanity even though we do not describe them in these reports.

Click [here](#) to see CTP and ISW's interactive map of Israeli ground operations. This map is updated daily alongside the static maps present in this report.

Key Takeaways:

1. Israeli military spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Richard Hecht said the IDF is slowly closing in on Gaza City.
2. Israeli ground forces advanced toward the Sheikh Hamad Hospital along the northwestern Gazan coast.
3. Palestinian militias mortared Israeli forces on the Gaza Strip's border with Israel on November 6, which is consistent with CTP-ISW's assessment that Palestinian militias are attempting to harass and disrupt Israeli ground lines of communication (GLOC).
4. The IDF reportedly advanced toward Tal al Hawa on November 6.
5. Clashes between Palestinian militants and Israeli forces in the West Bank continued at their usual rate on November 6.
6. The Hebron branch of the al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade threatened suicide attacks against Israeli forces on November 5.
7. Lebanese Hezbollah (LH) and the al Qassem Brigades conducted four cross-border attacks into northern Israel on November 6.

8. Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei dismissed US calls for Iran to restrain its proxies in Iraq during a meeting with Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed al Sudani in Tehran on November 6.
9. The Islamic Resistance in Iraq—an umbrella group of Iranian-backed Iraqi militias—doubled its rate of claimed attacks on US bases in Iraq and Syria and claimed that it fired a missile at US forces.
10. Iranian-backed Iraqi proxy Ashab al Kahf threatened to target the US Embassy in Iraq, which is consistent with calls for escalation from Kataib Hezbollah.



Gaza Strip

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Erode the will of the Israeli political establishment and public to launch and sustain a major ground operation into the Gaza Strip
- Degrade IDF material and morale around the Gaza Strip

Israeli Clearing Operations

Israeli military spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Richard Hecht said the IDF is slowly closing in on Gaza City.[1] The IDF Air Force and Navy struck over 450 targets in the previous 24 hours, including Hamas military compounds, observation posts, and firing positions.[2] The IDF said that it seized a Hamas position used for various military operations.[3] Additionally, the IDF published footage on November 6 of its effort to transport ammunition, medical equipment, food, and advanced weapons to support fighting in Gaza.[4]

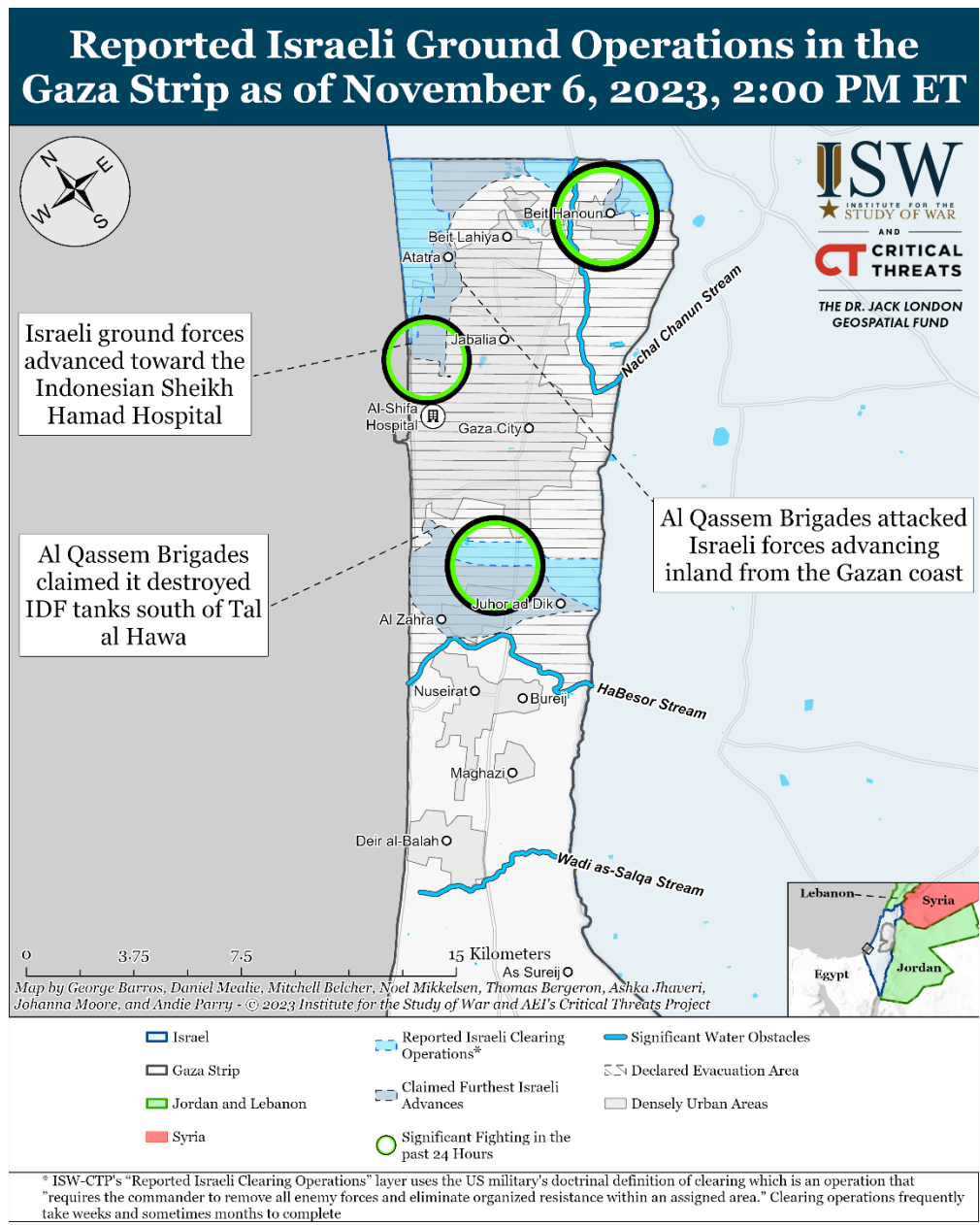
Hamas militants attacked IDF forces advancing inland from the northwest Gaza Strip coast. The al Qassem Brigades—the militant wing of Hamas—claimed that it fired an anti-tank missile at an IDF tank and engaged the IDF with small arms in the Sultan neighborhood south of Beit Lahiya.[5] Commercially available satellite imagery captured on November 6 shows flattened terrain in the area between Sultan and al Toam Roads, which indicates that Israeli tanks or bulldozers operated in the Sultan neighborhood south of Beit Lahiya. Palestinian militias claimed that they engaged IDF forces further south operating in or around the al Shati Refugee Camp on November 6. Gazan residents said on November 6 that Israeli airstrikes hit close to the al Shati camp[6] The al Qassem Brigades claimed that it destroyed four IDF vehicles on the outskirts of the camp, and 27 military vehicles in the last 48 hours.[7] The al Quds Brigades —the militant wing of Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)—claimed that it destroyed an IDF vehicle near al Maqousi with a bomb stuck to the vehicle.[8] Other insurgent groups in the region used “sticky bombs” to assassinate targets inside vehicles.[9]

Israeli ground forces advanced toward the Sheikh Hamad Hospital along the northwestern Gazan coast. IDF spokesperson Daniel Hagari released footage on November 5 that shows Hamas fighters using the Hamad Hospital for military operations.[10] The videos show Hamas militants firing small arms at the IDF from the hospital.[11] Independent analysts on X (Twitter) geolocated the footage of clashes and a tunnel shaft to the Hamad Hospital.[12]

Palestinian militias mortared Israeli forces on the Gaza Strip’s border with Israel on November 6, which is consistent with CTP-ISW’s assessment that Palestinian militias are attempting to harass and disrupt Israeli ground lines of communication (GLOC).[13] The al Qassem Brigades and al Quds Brigades mortared IDF vehicles near the Erez military checkpoint in the northern Gaza Strip. Israeli forces crossed into the Gaza Strip at and near Erez on October 29.[14] The al Qassem Brigades mortared IDF forces east of Juhor ad Dik.[15] Israeli forces crossed into the central Gaza Strip from near Juhor ad Dik at the beginning of the ground operation.

Fighting behind the Israeli forward line of advance is consistent with the doctrinal definition of “clear,” which is a tactical task that “requires the commander to remove all enemy forces and eliminate organized resistance within an assigned area.” The IDF opened a secure population evacuation corridor on November 6 to enable residents in the northern Gaza Strip to move south in view of military activity.

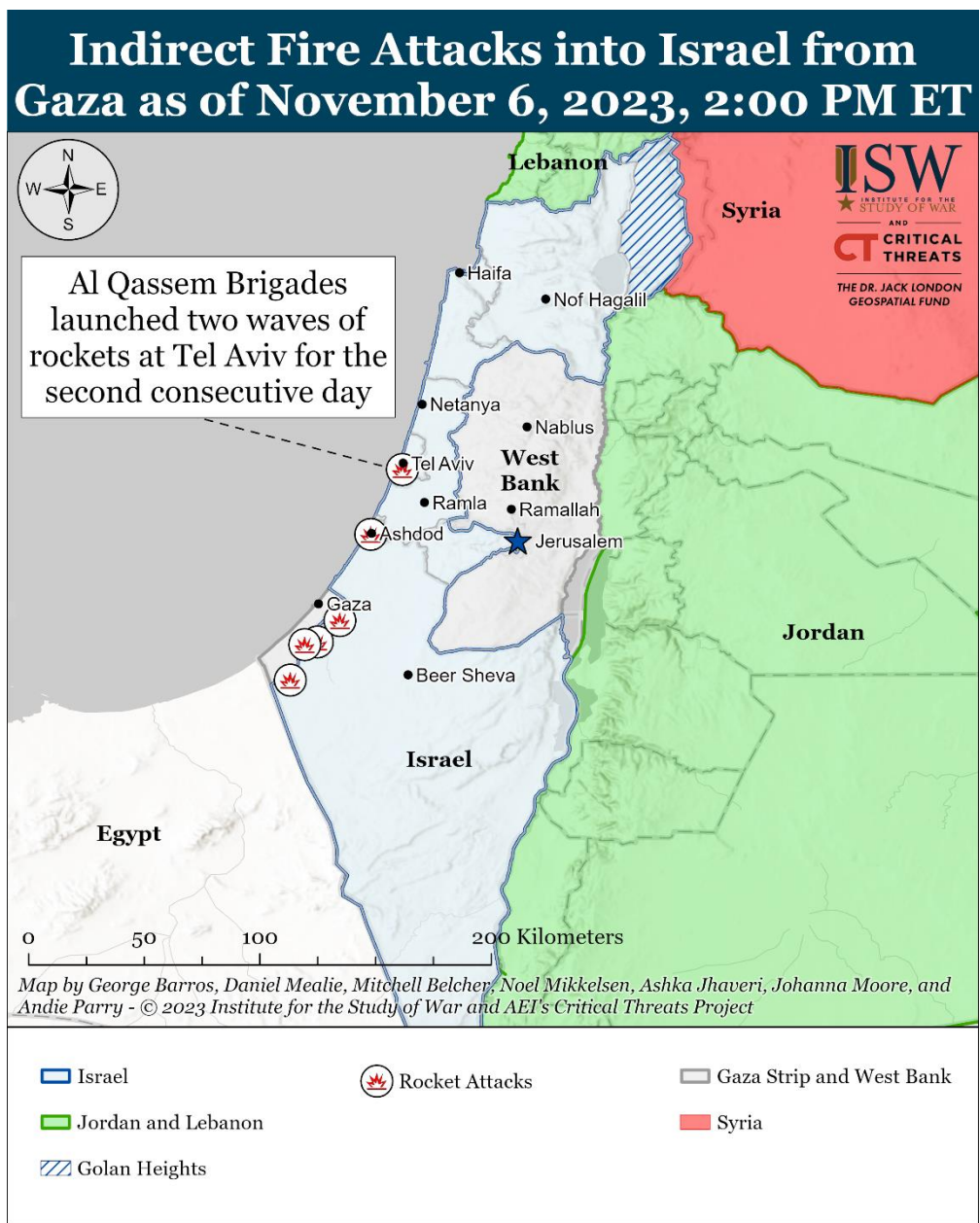
The IDF reportedly advanced toward Tal al Hawa on November 6. A Palestinian journalist reported that the IDF is making advances to the Tel al Hawaa neighborhood south of Gaza City. The journalist said that a local hospital closed as the IDF destroyed all access roads in the area.[16] The al Qassem Brigades claimed that it destroyed an IDF tank south of the neighborhood with an RPG on November 6.[17] Palestinian militias have claimed that they attacked Israeli advances from south of Tal al Hawa for three consecutive days.[18]



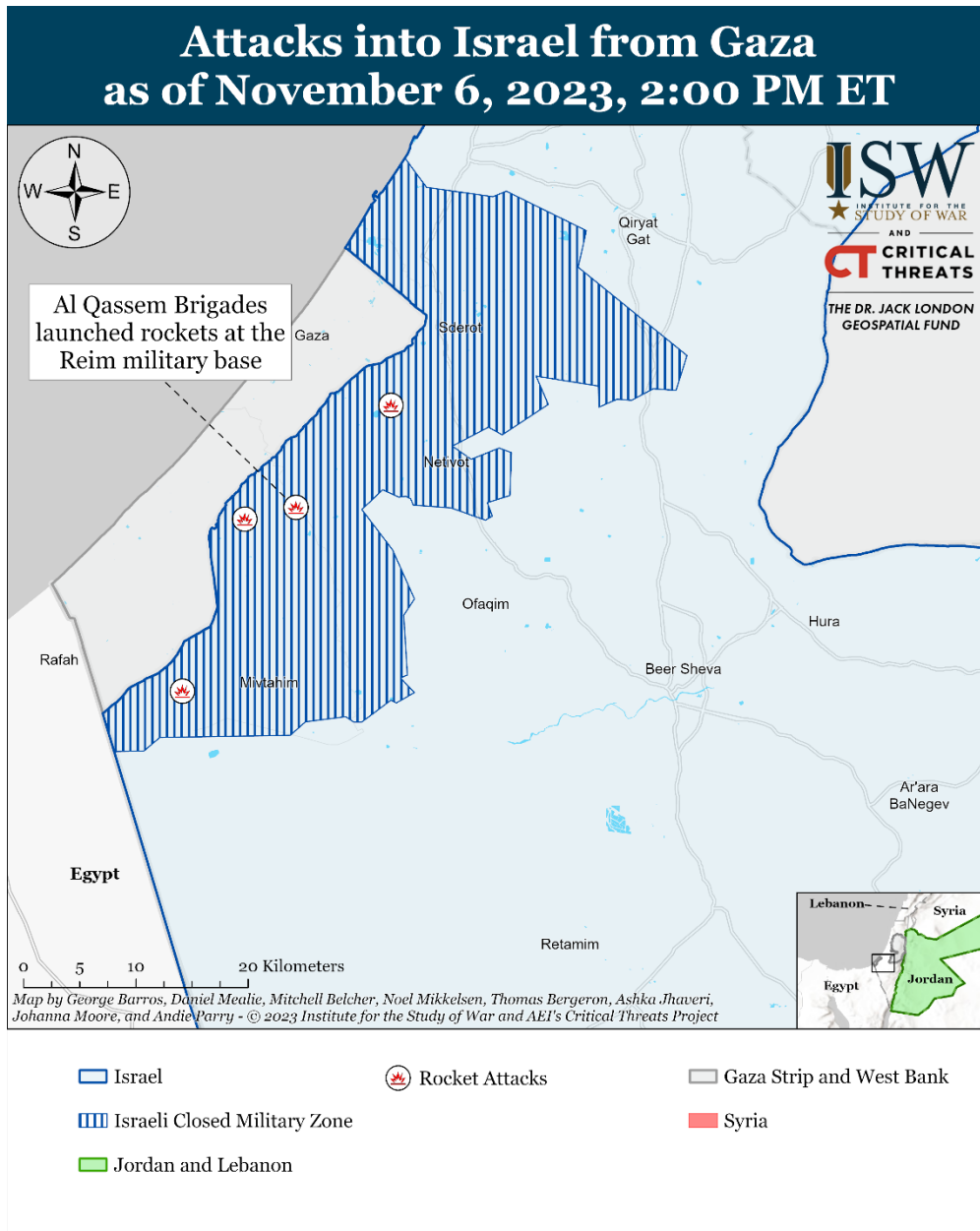
Palestinian militias in the Gaza Strip conducted indirect fire attacks into Israeli territory, primarily in southern Israel. The al Qassem Brigades claimed responsibility for four indirect fire attacks into the areas immediately adjacent to the Gaza Strip, including two targeting Tel Aviv.[19] The militants launched rockets at the Reim military base, where the IDF unveiled a reestablished observation room on November 6 for one of its intelligence battalions.[20] The al Quds

Brigades claimed responsibility for four indirect fire attacks on November 6.[21] The al Quds Brigades’ indirect fire exclusively targeted Israeli towns adjacent to the Gaza Strip.

Hamas is messaging that it can sustain a prolonged war with Israel. The *Wall Street Journal* reported that unspecified regional officials said that Hamas has privately stated that its weapons arsenal can sustain a prolonged conflict. The Lebanese foreign minister reported that shortly after the October 7 attack, Hamas told the Iranian foreign minister that it could fight for months without additional weapons. Hamas and PIJ have taken measures to prepare for a prolonged war, including reducing indirect fire attacks to conserve stockpiles.[22]



Recorded reports of rocket attacks; CTP-ISW cannot independently verify impact.



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West Bank

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Draw IDF assets and resources toward the West Bank and fix them there

Clashes between Palestinian militants and Israeli forces in the West Bank continued at their usual rate on November 6. CTP-ISW recorded 13 clashes between Israeli forces and

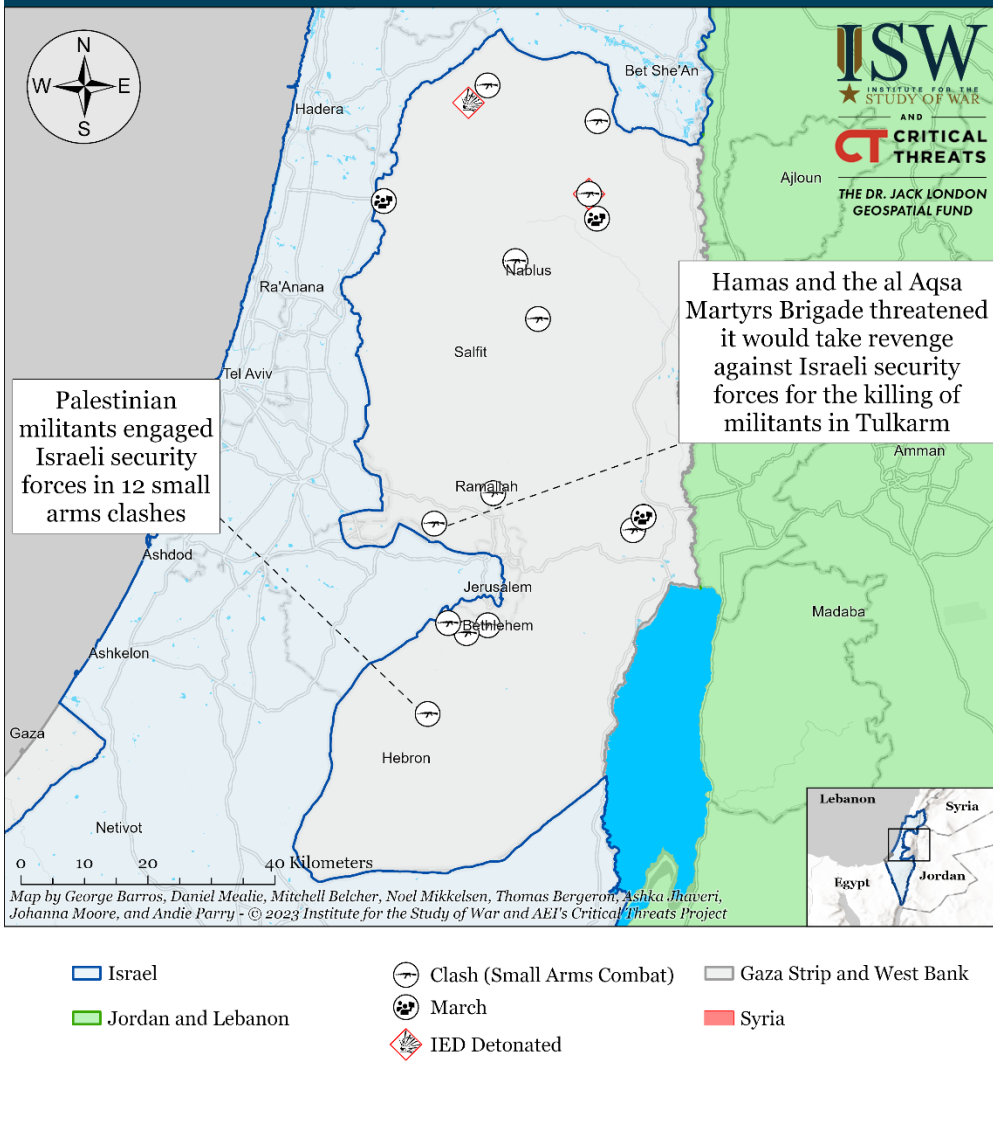
Palestinian militants in the West Bank.[23] CTP-ISW also recorded two instances of Palestinian militants conducting IED attacks against Israeli forces.[24] These clashes and attacks occurred in major West Bank cities including Bethlehem, Jenin, and Nablus. CTP-ISW recorded three anti-Israel demonstrations on November 6.[25]

The al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade's Tulkarm Battalion threatened revenge on November 6 after Israeli security forces killed Hamas and al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade fighters in a raid on the same day. Israeli forces killed at least three Hamas and al Aqsa fighters during a raid in Tulkarm in the northern West Bank.[26] The al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade's Tulkarm Battalion said it would avenge its fighters within 24 hours and held a large funeral march for the fighters on November 6.[27] Hamas said that Israeli security forces conducted assassinated the three fighters.[28]

The Hebron branch of the al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade threatened suicide attacks against Israeli forces on November 5. The al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade did not provide an explanation for the use of suicide bombs and has not employed suicide attacks since the war began on October 7.[29] The group claimed on November 4 that it had received new weapons and ammunition in Hebron for its fighters, but it did not corroborate these claims.[30]

The Hebron branch of the al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade separately claimed that the Palestinian militia group Sons of Commander Abu Jandal is attempting to generate strife through false statements and called for unity on November 6.[31] The militia gave a 24-hour deadline for Mahmoud Abbas to declare a confrontation with the IDF on November 5. The group released a list of its members' names, which it claimed defected from the Palestinian security services, on November 6.[32] A Palestinian journalist said they vetted the list on November 6 and reported that all of the individuals on the list disavowed involvement with the militia.[33]

Clashes in the West Bank as of November 6, 2023, 2:00 PM ET



This map is not an exhaustive depiction of clashes and demonstrations in the West Bank.

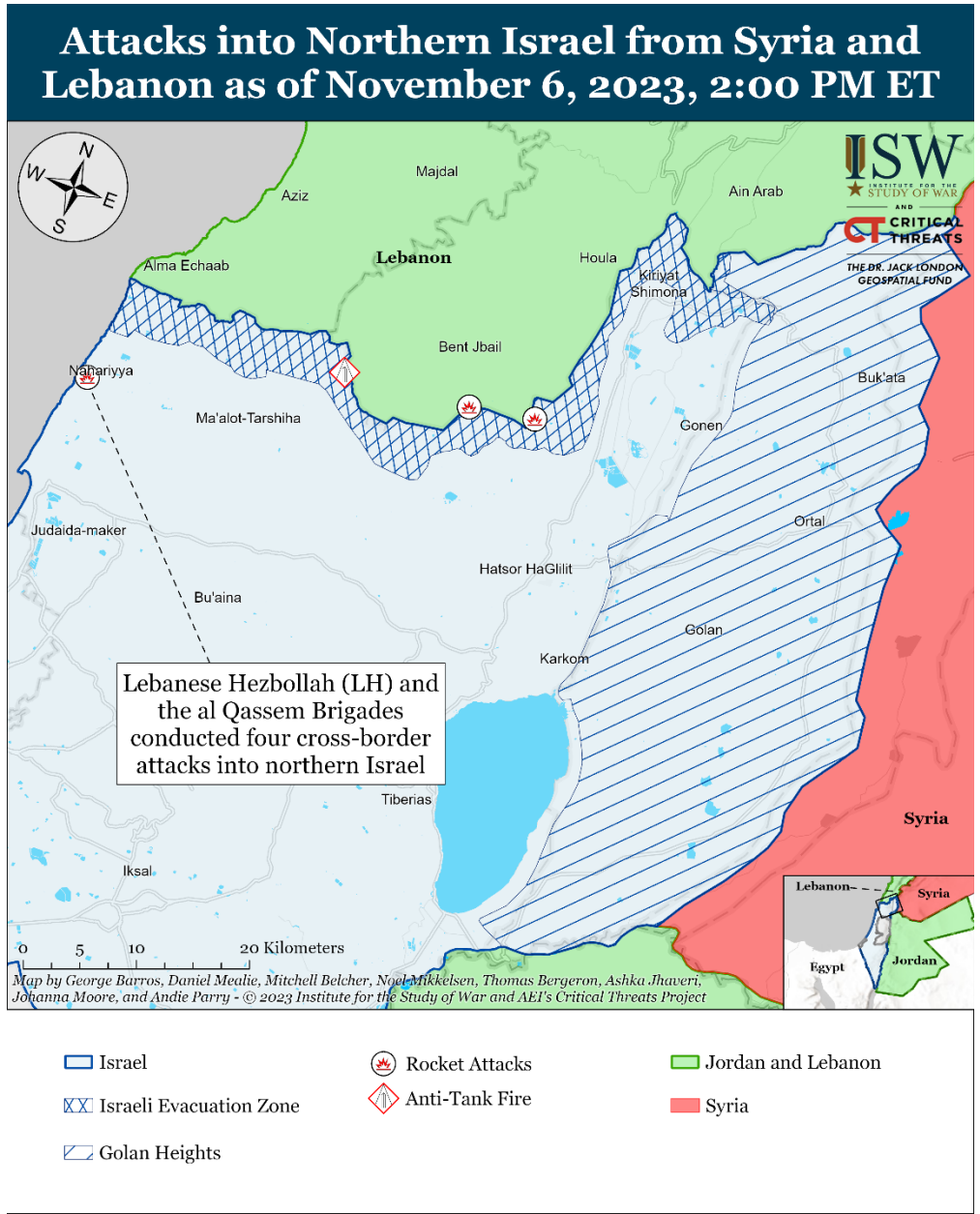
Southern Lebanon and Golan Heights

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Draw IDF assets and resources toward northern Israel and fix them there
- Set conditions for successive campaigns into northern Israel

Lebanese Hezbollah (LH) and the al Qassem Brigades conducted four cross-border attacks into northern Israel on November 6. LH claimed two indirect fire attacks and one direct fire attack targeting Israeli positions in northern Israel.[34] The al Qassem Brigades fired one salvo of 16 rockets from southern Lebanon targeting civilians in Nahariya, east of Acre, northern Israel, on November 6.[35] The al Qassem Brigades last fired a rocket salvo into northern Israel on

November 2, when it fired a salvo of 12 rockets at Kiryat Shmona, a border town in northern Israel.[36]

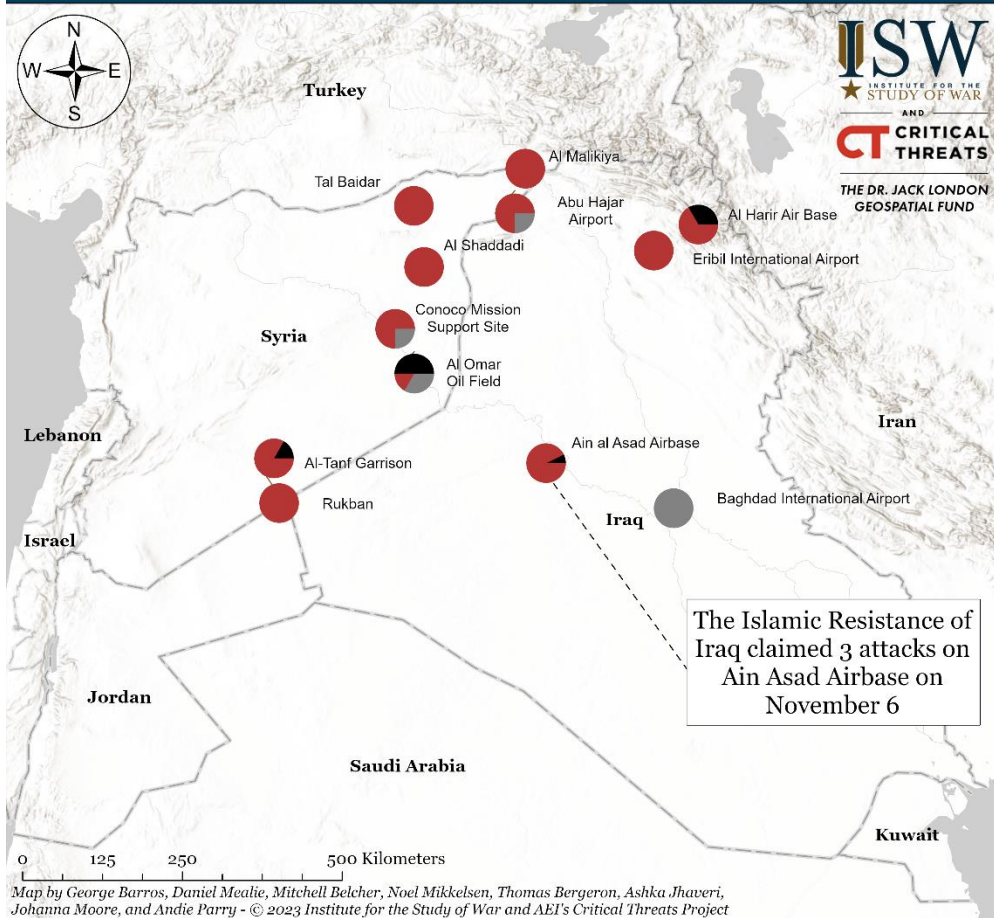


Iran and the Axis of Resistance

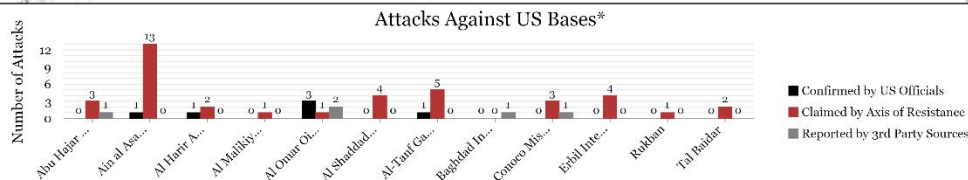
Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- Demonstrate the capability and willingness of Iran and the Axis of Resistance to escalate against the United States and Israel on multiple fronts
- Set conditions to fight a regional war on multiple fronts

Attacks against US Bases in the Middle East as of November 6, 2023, 2:00 PM ET



Map by George Barros, Daniel Mealie, Mitchell Belcher, Noel Mikkelsen, Thomas Bergeron, Ashka Jhaveri, Johanna Moore, and Andie Parry - © 2023 Institute for the Study of War and AEI's Critical Threats Project



* Measured from October 18, 2023

Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei dismissed US calls for Iran to restrain its proxies in Iraq during a meeting with Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed al Sudani in Tehran on November 6. Khamenei stated that Iran and Iraq should coordinate to “increase political pressure” on the United States and Israel.[37] Khamenei also repeated previous claims that the United States is “directing” Israel’s war against Hamas and abetting “Israeli crimes.” Sudani met with Khamenei after meeting with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken in Baghdad on November 5, during which he and Blinken discussed threats to US forces.[38] Blinken emphasized during his meeting with Sudani that attacks on US positions in Iraq are “totally unacceptable” and that the United States will “take every necessary step to protect [its] people,” as CTP-ISW previously reported.[39]

- Khamenei’s call for “political” pressure is part of the Iranian regime’s ongoing effort to cover up its involvement in the Israel-Hamas war. Iranian officials and media have

repeatedly framed Iran as a responsible and non-escalatory actor since the start of the war.[40] This narrative ignores the fact that Iran has already facilitated the expansion of the war to Lebanon, Iraq, and Syria by directing and encouraging its proxy and partner militias in these countries to attack US and Israeli targets.

- Other Iranian officials also dismissed US calls for restraint on November 6. Foreign Affairs Ministry spokesperson Nasser Kanani stated that the United States falsely accuses Iran of directing proxy attacks in the region to distract public opinion from US actions in the Israel-Hamas war.[41] Foreign Affairs Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian separately announced that the United States sent Iran a message in recent days expressing its desire for a ceasefire. Abdollahian dismissed the message, stating that US calls for a ceasefire contradict US support for "Israel's genocide in the Gaza Strip." [42]

The Islamic Resistance in Iraq—an umbrella group of Iranian-backed Iraqi militias—doubled its rate of claimed attacks on US bases in Iraq and Syria and claimed that it fired a missile at US forces.[43] This shift comes after key Iranian-backed Iraqi proxy militia Kataib Hezbollah threatened to escalate against the United States in Iraq and the region if US Secretary of State Antony Blinken visited Baghdad, which Blinken did on November 5. The Islamic Resistance in Iraq claims one to three attacks on US bases in Iraq and Syria per day on average.

- The group released a video showing the launch of several drones and a missile targeting US forces at Tal Baydar, al Tanf, Erbil International Airport, and Ain al Assad Airbase.[44] The group did not say which systems targeted which positions. The missile in the video bears visual similarities to the Iranian-built Fateh-313, which the Iranians used to target US positions in Iraq in January 2020 in retaliation for the US airstrike that killed IRGC-QF commander Qassem Soleimani.[45]

The Islamic Resistance in Iraq has claimed 39 attacks targeting US forces in the Middle East since October 18. CENTCOM has not commented on the November 6 attacks at the time of publication.

- The Islamic Resistance in Iraq claimed it conducted three unspecified separate attacks on Ain al Assad airbase in Anbar Province, Iraq, and a separate attack on Erbil International Airport in northern Iraq on November 6.[46] The group has claimed four attacks on Erbil International Airport and thirteen attacks on Ain al Assad since October 18.
- The Islamic Resistance of Iraq claimed it conducted an unspecified attack on US bases at Tal Baydar, in northern Syria, and al Tanf in eastern Syria. The group targeted Tal Baydar for the second time on November 6. It first targeted this position on November 5.[47] Islamic Resistance of Iraq has targeted al Tanf five times since October 18.
- The Islamic Resistance in Iraq claimed that it targeted an unspecified US base in Iraq and Syria with a medium-range "Aqsa 1" missile for the first time.[48] Prior Islamic Resistance in Iraq-claimed attacks used drones and short-range rockets.

Iranian-backed Iraqi proxy Ashab al Kahf threatened to target the US Embassy in Iraq, which is consistent with calls for escalation from Kataib Hezbollah. Ashab al Kahf is not linked to Kataib Hezbollah, but it is close to other top Iranian proxy groups in Iraq.[49] Ashab al Kahf circulated a statement signed by the Islamic Resistance in Iraq announcing the group's intent to target the US Embassy in Iraq on November 5.[50] Ashab al Kahf released the statement after Blinken's November 5 meeting with Sudani, during which he discussed ongoing attacks targeting US

forces in Iraq and warned of possible US retaliation.[51] The statement claimed that diplomatic efforts to close US bases in Iraq had been exhausted and that military force must be used. Ashab al Kahf last fired rockets at the US embassy in November 2020.[52] Ashab al Kahf issued several threats to target US forces in Iraq in June and July 2023 and conducted an IED campaign targeting US logistics convoys managed by Iraqi contractors in Iraq, as CTP-ISW previously reported.[53] Ashab al Kahf previously issued threats to target the US embassy in July and August 2023.[54] Iranian-backed Iraqi proxy militia Kataib Hezbollah also threatened on November 4 to escalate attacks on US forces if Blinken visited Baghdad.[55]

Iranian officials condemned Israeli Heritage Minister Amichai Eliyahu's suggestion that Israel could use a nuclear weapon on the Gaza Strip. Eliyahu made the comment in a radio interview on November 5.[56] Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu condemned the comment and suspended Eliyahu from participation in cabinet meetings.[57] Iranian Foreign Affairs Ministry spokesperson Nasser Kanani stated on November 6 that Eliyahu's comment underscores the threat Israel poses to international safety and security.[58] Foreign Affairs Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian separately called on the UN Security Council and International Atomic Energy Organization to denuclearize Israel.[59]

POWERED BY:



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[2] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1721409602896457890>

[3] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1721409527789105474>

[4] <https://twitter.com/IDFSpokesperson/status/1721471387464782198>

[5] <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/301>; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/305>

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[18] <https://t.me/QudsN/323719>; <https://t.me/QudsN/323716>; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/291>;
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