

# Iran Update



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**Information Cutoff: November 8, 2024, 2:00 pm ET**

*The Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute and the Institute for the Study of War (ISW) publish the Iran Update, which provides insights into Iranian and Iranian-sponsored activities that undermine regional stability and threaten US forces and interests. 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.*

*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.*

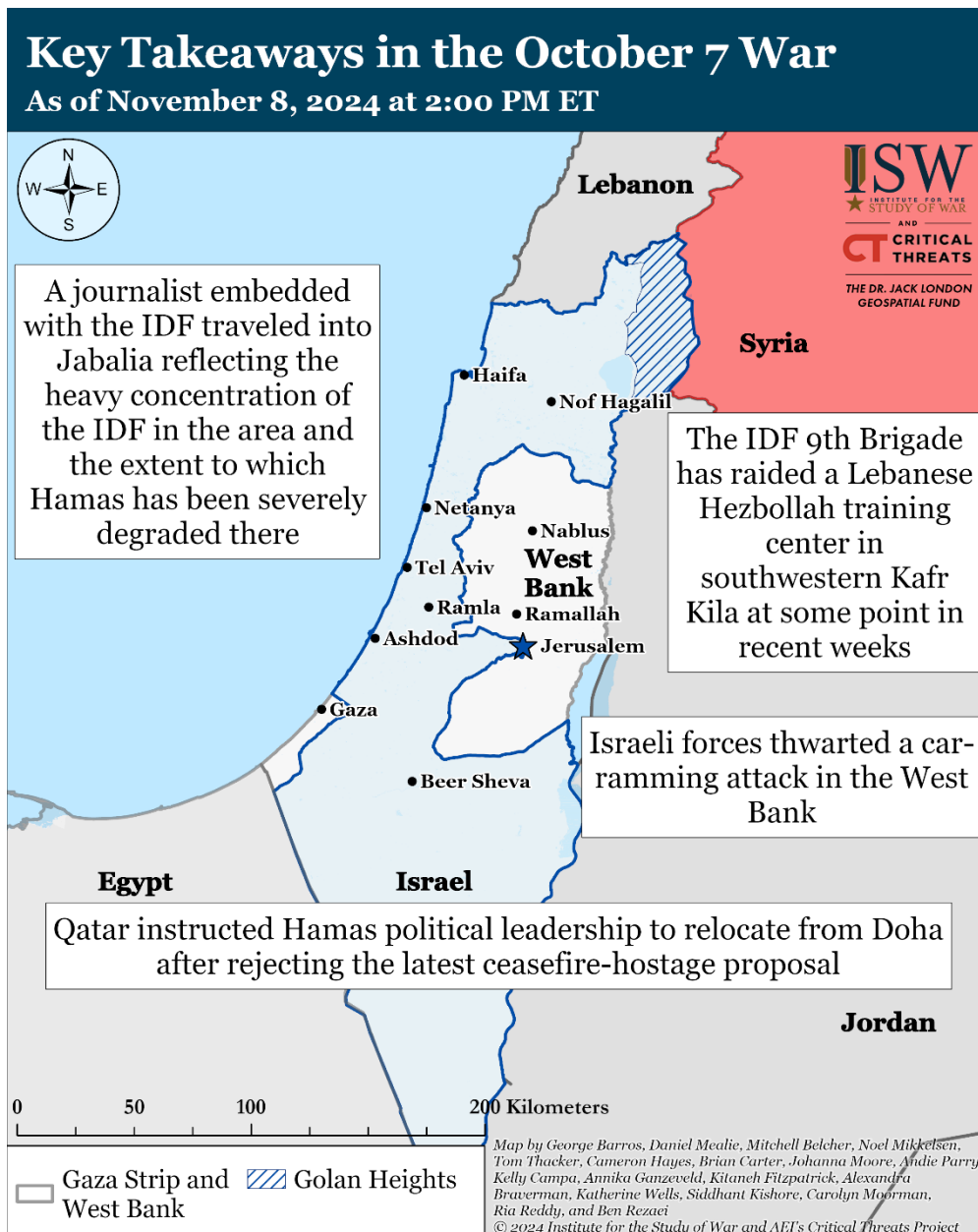
**Qatar instructed Hamas' political leadership to relocate from Doha, according to US officials and Israeli media.[1] The Qatar-based members of the Hamas Political Bureau would in this case need to find a new base of operations, which could be Iraq.** The United States reportedly pressured Qatar to expel Hamas' political leadership after the group rejected the latest ceasefire-hostage agreement proposed by international mediators.[2] Emirati media reported in June 2024 that Hamas was considering moving its headquarters to Iraq.[3] Hamas later established its first political office in Baghdad at some point in Summer 2024.[4]

Hamas political leadership moving to Iraq would be consistent with the growing importance of Iraq in Iranian strategy in the Middle East, as the IDF has degraded Hamas and Lebanese Hezbollah. Members of Iran's Axis of Resistance have increasingly used Iraq as a center for coordination and cooperation in recent months.[5] Iran and the Axis of Resistance, as they reevaluate their regional approach, could place greater emphasis on building their strength in Iraq and Syria to compensate for the losses in the Gaza Strip and Lebanon. Iran's proximity to and over two decades of developing proxy and partner militias in Iraq make it an appealing non-Iranian base of operations for the Axis of Resistance.

**A journalist embedded with the IDF traveled into Jabalia on November 5.[6] That a journalist entered the area safely reflects both the heavy concentration of the IDF in the area and the extent to which Hamas has been severely degraded there.** The IDF has deployed three brigades to Jabalia in recent weeks, highlighting the heavy securitization of the area.[7] These units include the 900th Infantry Brigade, which is the largest IDF brigade with five battalions.[8] The journalist entered Jabalia in a Humvee that would be vulnerable to attacks relative to a more heavily armored vehicle.[9]

## Key Takeaways:

- **Qatar instructed Hamas' political leadership to relocate from Doha, according to US officials and Israeli media. The Qatar-based members of the Hamas Political Bureau would in this case need to find a new base of operations, which could be Iraq.**
- **A journalist embedded with the IDF traveled into Jabalia on November 5. That a journalist entered the area safely reflects both the heavy concentration of the IDF in the area and the extent to which Hamas has been severely degraded there.**



## **Gaza Strip:**

### **Axis of Resistance objectives:**

- Erode the will of the Israeli political establishment and public to sustain clearing operations in the Gaza Strip
- Reestablish Hamas as the governing authority in the Gaza Strip

**The IDF 900th Infantry Brigade continued clearing operations west of Beit Lahia in the northern Gaza Strip on November 8.** The IDF fired artillery in the area.[10] The IDF also operated west of Jabalia refugee camp, according to a Palestinian journalist.[11] The IDF issued an evacuation order for areas west of Beit Lahia on November 7 as it planned to expand clearing operations in the northern Gaza Strip.[12] Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) and the al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades claimed two attacks targeting Israeli forces around the Jabalia refugee camp.[13] Hamas and the National Resistance Brigades mortared the IDF near Shujaiya, Gaza City, on November 8.[14]

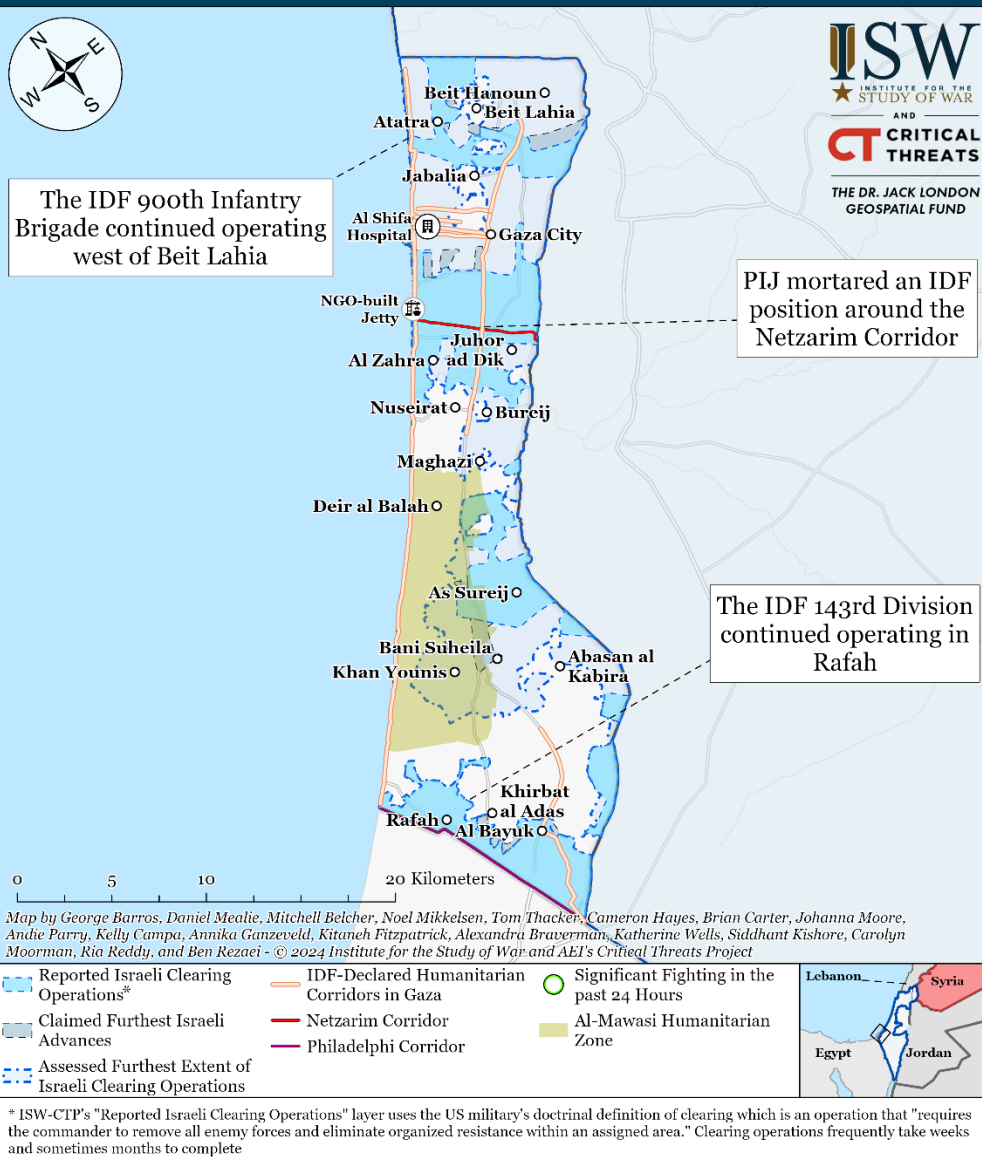
**The IDF is planning on upgrading the military infrastructure along the Netzarim Corridor in the coming months in order to establish a more permanent presence there.**[15] The IDF has reportedly doubled the size of the Netzarim Corridor to approximately 56 square kilometers in recent months.[16] The IDF is building a military outpost that will allow Israeli troops to monitor the movement of Gazans through the corridor. The IDF is also planning on paving the road along the Netzarim Corridor with asphalt in the coming months. The IDF presence along the Netzarim Corridor enables Israeli forces to keep Palestinians who have fled south from re-entering the northern Gaza Strip.[17]

**PIJ mortared an IDF position around the Netzarim Corridor on November 8.**[18]

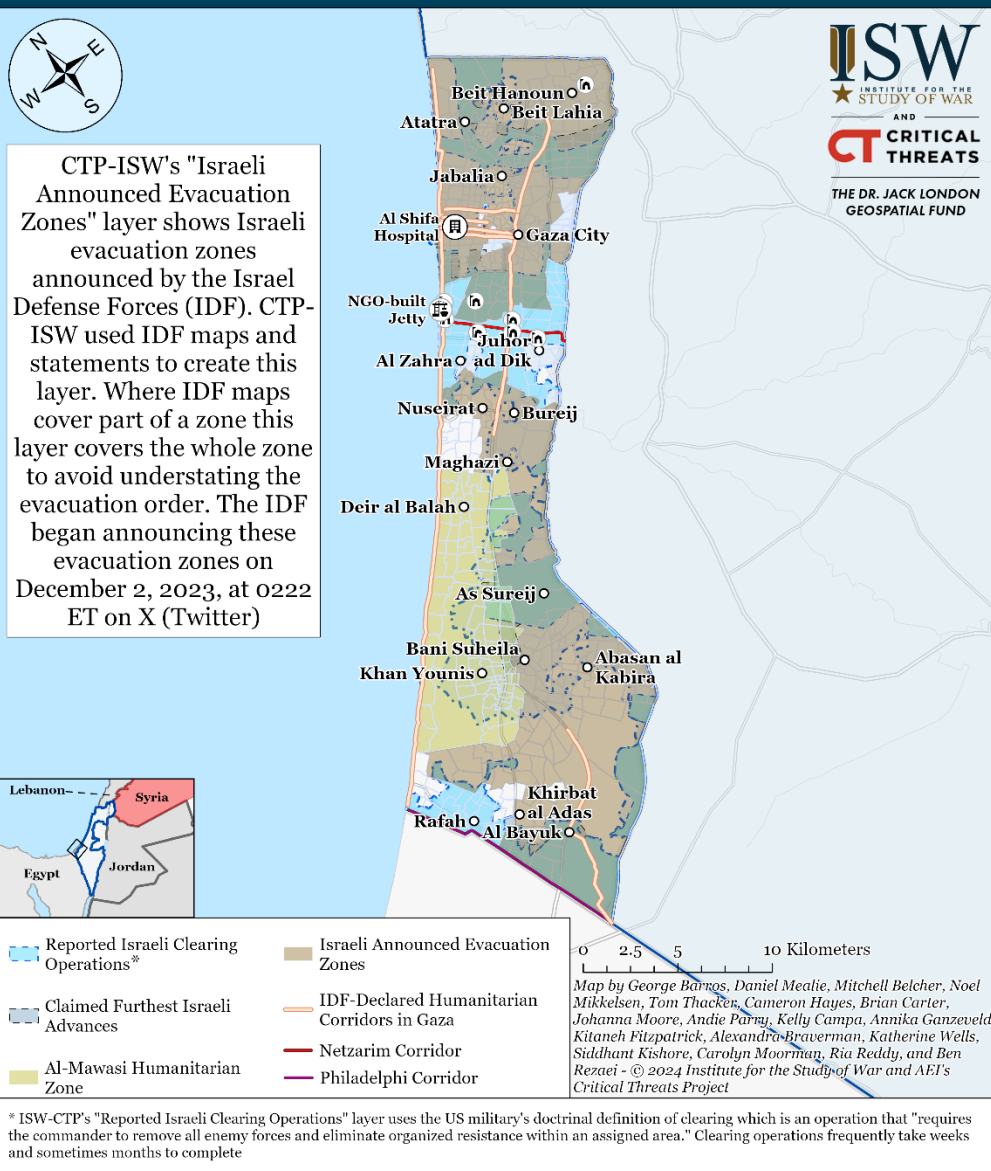
**The IDF 143rd Division continued operating in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip on November 8.** Commercially available satellite imagery published on November 8 indicates that the IDF marginally expanded its clearing operations east and south of Rafah city.

# Reported Israeli Ground Operations in the Gaza Strip

As of November 8, 2024, 2:00 PM ET



## Israeli-Announced Evacuation Zones in the Gaza Strip As of November 8, 2024 at 2:00 PM ET



**The IDF is preparing to reopen the Kissufim border crossing along the Israel-Gaza Strip fence in order to increase the flow of humanitarian aid into the Gaza Strip.**[19] The IDF Southern Command is paving the road along the border crossing to allow safe passage for aid trucks.[20] This comes after the United States sent a letter to senior Israeli officials on October 13 warning that the United States will be forced to take unspecified steps if aid is not delivered to non-combatants in the Gaza Strip.[21] The letter reportedly gave Israel a one-month ultimatum to increase the number of aid trucks entering the strip to 350 trucks per day.[22] The IDF currently allows 70 aid trucks per day, according to an Israeli Army Radio correspondent.[23] The IDF is also trying to improve the border infrastructure around the Kissufim crossing in order to protect Israeli communities in the Gaza envelope that could be vulnerable to Palestinian fighters' infiltration attempts.[24]

**Gazans speaking to BBC criticized criminal groups and local merchants for the increasing cost of basic goods in the Gaza Strip.**[25] Residents from central and southern Gaza Strip told BBC that merchants have increased the prices of aid and goods in the Gaza Strip by “dozens of times” due to Israel limiting the flow of goods into the strip.[26] Residents also blamed criminal groups for stealing goods from aid trucks entering the Gaza Strip and selling them at inflated prices. CTP-ISW observed daily protests and market closures in several neighborhoods in the central and northern Gaza Strip between November 4 and 7.[27] Gazan merchants’ ability to disproportionately increase the prices of goods and the presence of criminal groups controlling the flow of aid trucks into the Gaza Strip reflects Hamas’ weakening influence in the Gaza Strip.

## **West Bank**

### **Axis of Resistance objectives:**

- Establish the West Bank as a viable front against Israel

**Israeli forces thwarted a car-ramming attack in the Shuafat refugee camp near Jerusalem in the West Bank on November 7.**[28] An individual in a vehicle accelerated toward a group of Israeli Border Police personnel in the Shuafat refugee camp. The Israeli Border Police fired warning shots as the attacker approached.[29] Israeli forces shot and killed the attacker after he failed to stop the vehicle.

**The al Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades fired small arms and detonated IEDs targeting Israeli forces in Balata refugee camp in the West Bank on November 8.**[30]

## **Northern Israel and Lebanon**

### **Lebanese Hezbollah objectives:**

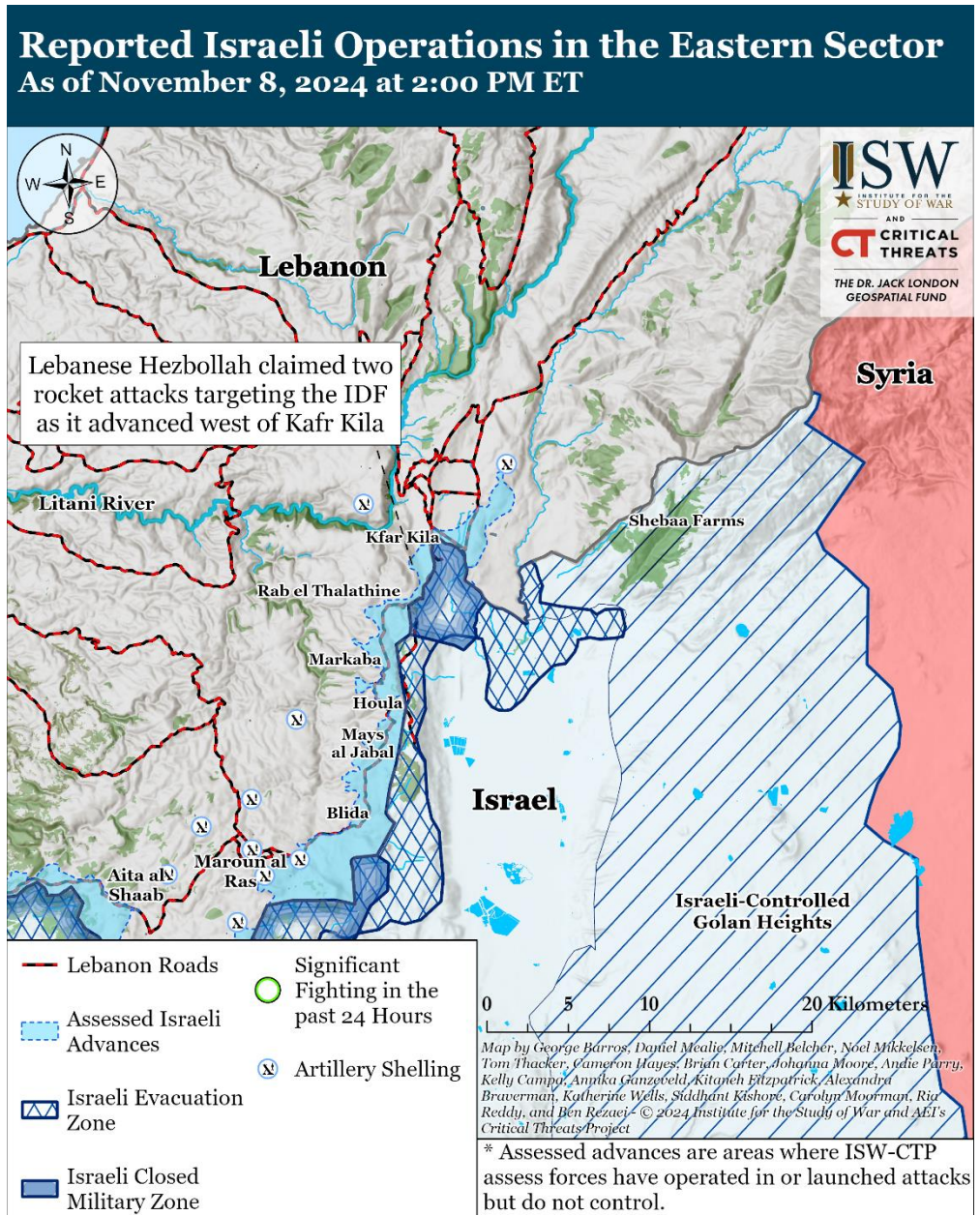
- End Israeli operations in the Gaza Strip
- Survive the October 7 War as a capable political and military organization with control over Lebanon

**The IDF continued clearing operations in Kafr Kila on November 8.** Hezbollah claimed a rocket attack targeting an IDF bulldozer and infantry advancing toward Sari Hill northwest of Kafr Kila.[31] Hezbollah claimed that the attack led to IDF casualties. Hezbollah also claimed an anti-tank fire attack on an Israeli armored personnel carrier advancing toward Sari Hill.[32] Israeli engineering elements commonly clear IEDs from roads and terrain for dismounted infantry and armored vehicles following behind. Hezbollah also claimed that it fired rockets at Israeli forces at Fatimah gate northeast of Kafr Kila on the Israel-Lebanon border.[33]

**The 9th Oded (Res.) Infantry Brigade (91st Division) had raided a Hezbollah training center in southwestern Kafr Kila during clearing operations in recent weeks.**[34] The 9th (Res.) Infantry Brigade reported that the facility trained Hezbollah fighters on combat tactics and doctrine and stored weapons. Israeli forces discovered documents detailing Hezbollah combat

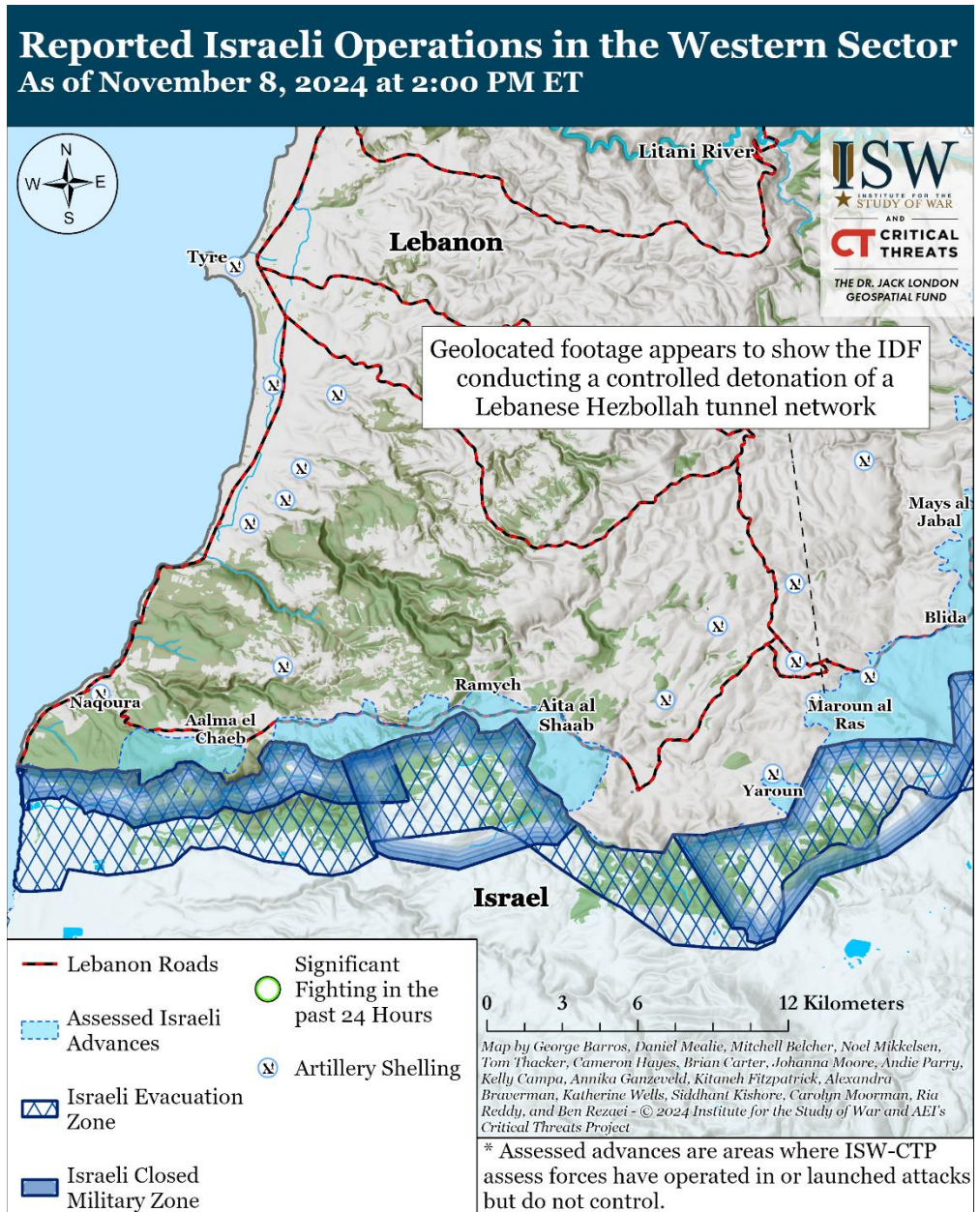


methods, maps of Israeli territory, and educational documents describing IDF capabilities. The 9th (Res.) Infantry Brigade located ready-to-go kits for fighters that included shoes, uniforms, and bullet-proof vests. The IDF also discovered unopened boxes of weapons, weapons components, and medical kits. The 9th (Res.) Infantry Brigade located tunnel shafts, weapons, and rocket launchers prepared to fire into Israel on the facility grounds. The training center was approximately 200 meters from the UNIFIL 9-16 position.[35]



**The IDF has continued clearing operations in Maroun al Ras since CTP-ISW's data cut off on November 7.** Geolocated footage appeared to show Israeli forces conducting a controlled detonation of a Hezbollah tunnel network in southern Maroun al Ras.[36] Hezbollah claimed a one-way drone attack targeting Israeli forces in eastern Maroun al Ras.[37]

**UNIFIL reported that two IDF excavators and an IDF bulldozer destroyed part of a fence and concrete structure of a UNIFIL position in Ras Naqoura on November 7.[38]** UNIFIL stated that the IDF denied it was operating within the UNIFIL position in response to UNIFIL’s complaint.

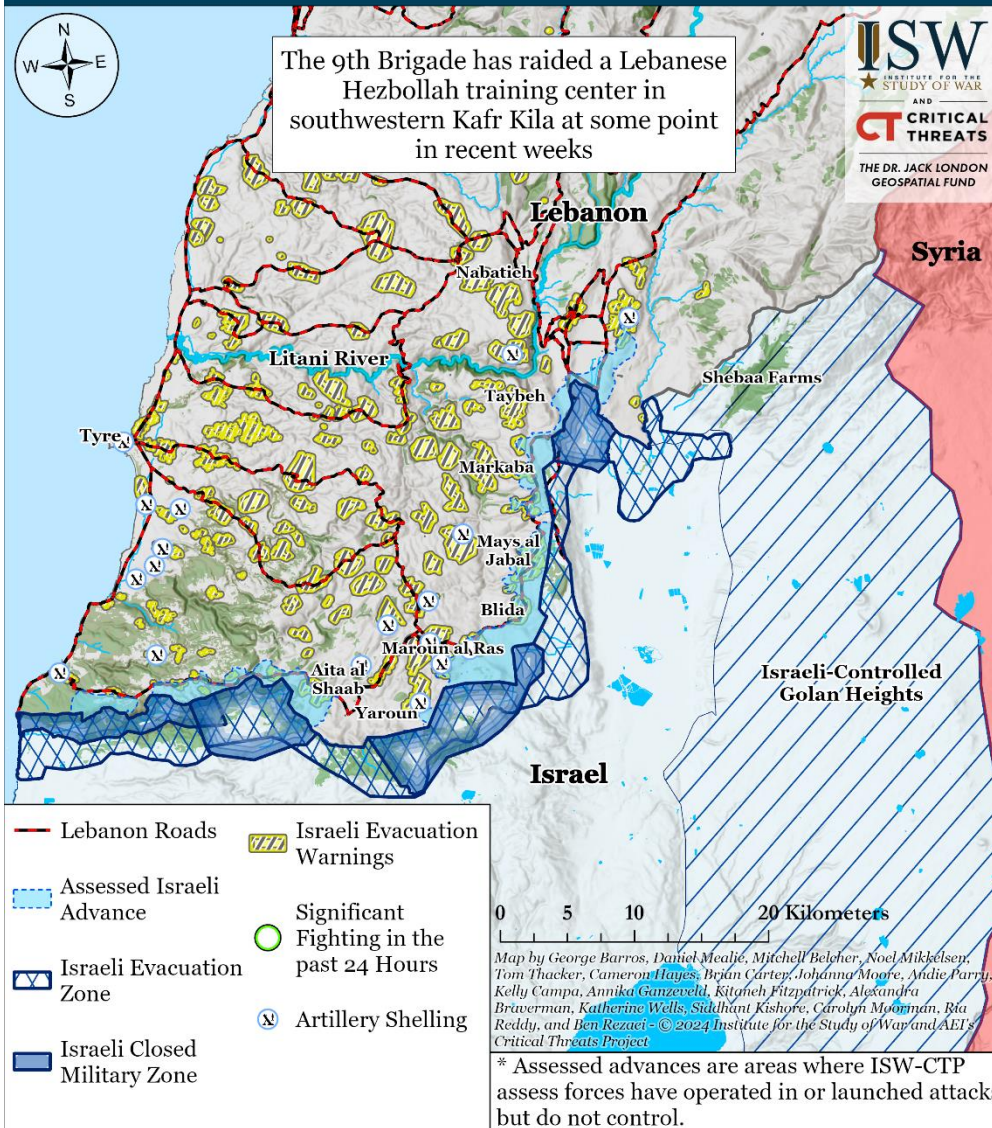


**Israel Katz became Israeli Defense Minister on November 8.[39]** Katz said that Israel will succeed in achieving its war objectives of curbing Iranian aggression and capabilities, dismantling Hamas as a governing and military force, and defeating Hezbollah. Katz added that his primary goal is to rescue Israeli hostages.[40]



# Reported Israeli Operations in Lebanon

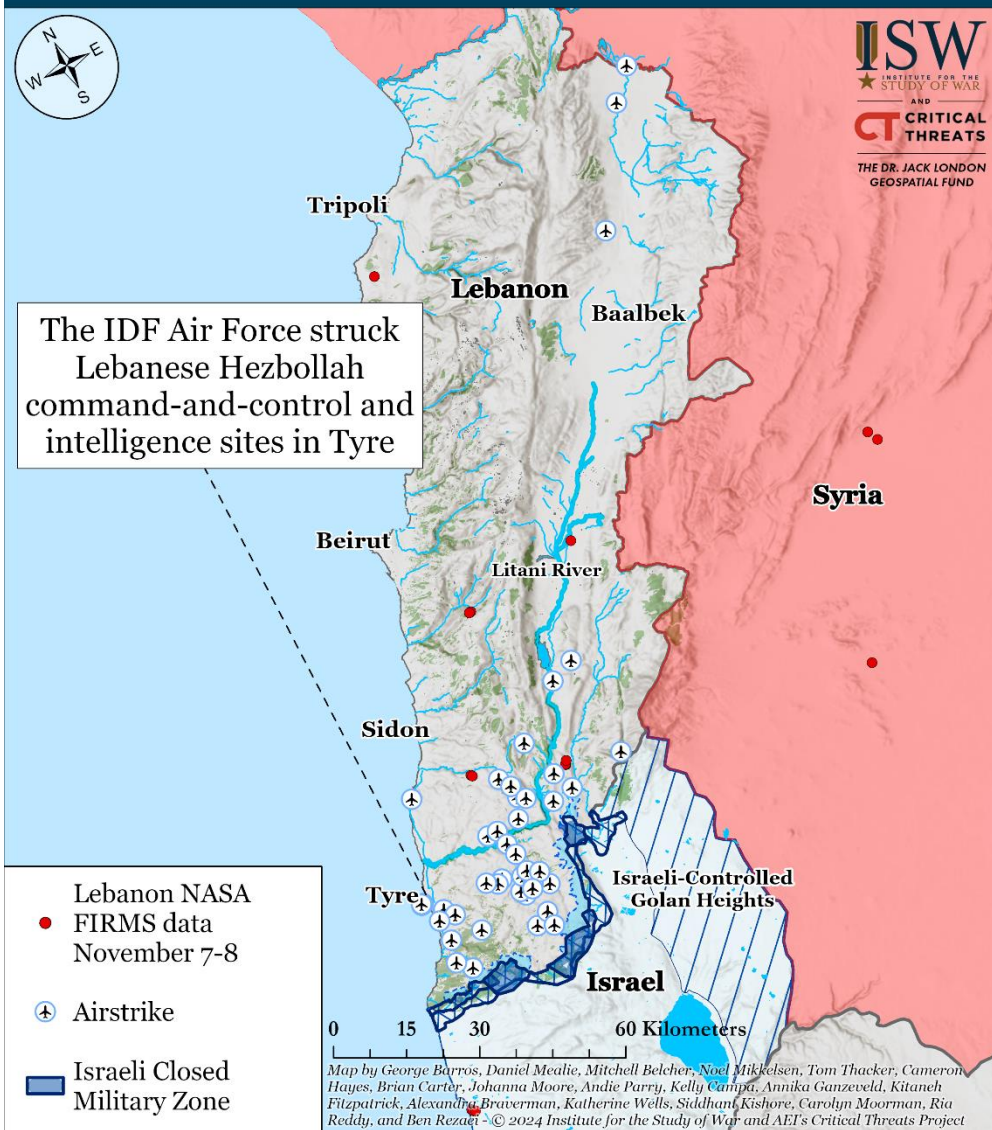
As of November 8, 2024 at 2:00 PM ET



**The IDF continued its air campaign targeting Hezbollah's capabilities and infrastructure on November 8.** The IDF Air Force struck Hezbollah command-and-control and intelligence sites in Tyre, southwestern Lebanon.[41] The IDF stated that Hezbollah used these facilities to plan and execute attacks on Israel.[42] Lebanese media reported that IDF airstrikes killed at least three individuals and caused “great” destruction to the area.[43] The IDF Air Force struck rocket launchers in southern Lebanon, which were recently used by Hezbollah to attack Acre and Ahhud in northern Israel.[44] The IDF Air Force also conducted airstrikes on numerous towns around Bint Jbeil in southern Lebanon, where the Hezbollah Aziz regional unit operates.[45]

# Israeli Air Campaign in Lebanon

As of November 8, 2024 at 2:00 PM ET



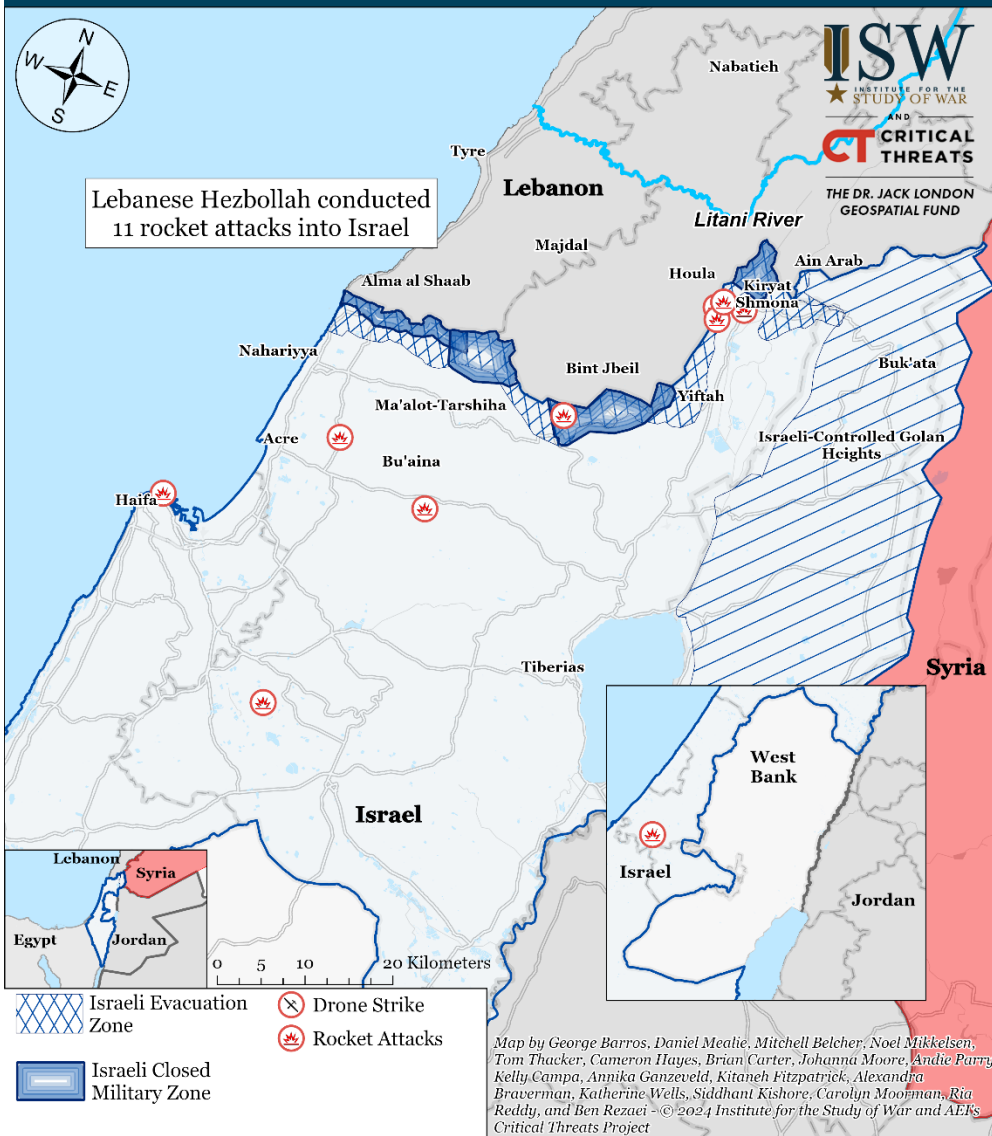
*This map illustrates individual Israeli air and artillery strikes based on local Lebanese reporting. This map depicts strikes reported from 2:00pm ET on November 7 to 2:00pm ET on November 8. This map is not exhaustive. CTP-ISW cannot independently verify the locations of Israeli strikes.*

**Hezbollah has conducted at least 11 rocket attacks into Israel since CTP-ISW's data cutoff on November 7.[46]** Hezbollah conducted eight of its 11 attacks targeting Israeli forces, including at the Stella Maris naval base, Ramat David airbase, and Tel Nof airbase.[47] Hezbollah also fired a rocket attack targeting an IDF paratrooper training base near Karmiel, northern Israel.[48] Hezbollah separately conducted two rocket attacks targeting Kiryat Shmona, which is adjacent to where Israeli forces were recently conducting clearing operations in southeastern Lebanon.[49] Attacks on IDF support elements are meant to degrade its ability to conduct effective operations, though it is unclear what effect these attacks will have if any at all.



# Attacks into Northern Israel from Lebanon

As of November 8, 2024 at 2:00 PM ET



## Iran and the Axis of Resistance

The Islamic Resistance in Iraq—a coalition of Iranian-backed Iraqi militias—claimed three drone attacks targeting unspecified military targets in northern Israel on November 8.[50]

Iraqi Foreign Affairs Minister Fuad Hussein denied on November 7 that Iran is preparing to launch an attack against Israel from Iraqi territory.[51] This statement follows reports that Iran is transferring drones and ballistic missiles to Iranian-backed Iraqi militias and planning a combined attack with these militias against Israel in retaliation for the IDF strikes into Iran on October 25.[52] It is unclear whether the Iraqi federal government can prevent Iranian-backed Iraqi militias

from conducting a combined attack with Iran, given that it has thus far failed to prevent the militias from conducting near-daily attacks on Israel.

**Local Syrian media reported on November 8 that hundreds of Afghan Fatemiyoun and Pakistani Zainabiyoun fighters entered Syria from Iraq.[53]** The fighters entered Syria via the Albu Kamal border crossing in Deir ez Zor Province. The IRGC commander in eastern Syria, Hajj Askar, reportedly deployed the fighters to several locations in Albu Kamal and al Mayadeen.



**Houthi spokesperson Yahya Sarea claimed that Houthis intercepted a US MQ-9 Reaper drone over Yemen's al Jawf province.[54]** The United States acknowledged Houthi footage appeared to show a burning aircraft and debris scattered across the area, which the US military has



acknowledged while launching an investigation.[55] Sarea also claimed the interception marks the 12th drone shot down by the Houthis since October 7.[56]

**Houthi spokesperson Yahya Sarea claimed a ballistic missile attack targeting the Nevatim airbase in the Negev region in Israel on November 8.**[57] Sarea stated that the missile operation used the hypersonic ballistic missile “Palestine II” and reached its target. IDF reported that it intercepted a missile fired from Yemen over Wadi Arabia, south of the Dead Sea.[58]

**Houthi media claimed that the US and UK coalition aircraft conducted two airstrikes on al Tuhayat district in Yemen’s al Hudaydah Province.**[59] CENTCOM has not confirmed the incident at the time of publication.

**Iran is continuing to signal that it might conduct a direct attack on Israel from Iranian territory in response to the IDF strikes into Iran on October 25.** Iranian state media published a video on November 8 showing 35 potential civilian and military targets in Israel.[60] The video included military sites, such as the IDF Nevatim airbase, that Iran previously targeted in its April and October 2024 attacks on Israel.[61] The publication of this video comes after senior IRGC commanders have said in recent days that Iran could directly attack Israel.[62]

**Tehran Mayor Alireza Zakani warned that Iran may reconsider its nuclear doctrine in response to US threats.**[63] Zakani also suggested that nuclear capabilities enhance Iran's deterrence. This a part of growing calls from Iranian officials to shift Iran’s nuclear doctrine, specifically Khamenei’s 2003 fatwa banning nuclear weapons.[64] Zakani was the chair of the JCPOA review committee in the Iranian Parliament in 2015, which voiced strong opposition to the JCPOA, arguing that the agreement disregarded Iran's key red lines and national interests.[65] Zakani criticized the Iranian negotiation team, asserting that they had failed to uphold Iran’s rights, and called for major changes to the deal in October 2015.[66]

**Senior Iranian military officials are continuing to theorize that imposing an unofficial economic blockade on Israel could facilitate the destruction of Israel.** Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) Commander Major General Hossein Salami claimed on November 8 that destroying Israeli ports and making the Mediterranean Sea unsafe for commercial vessels to transit would cause Israel to collapse.[67] Salami claimed that 98 percent of the Israeli economy depends on maritime trade and that disrupting Israel’s ability to conduct maritime trade would threaten Israel’s existence.[68] Iran and its Axis of Resistance have sought to impose an unofficial economic blockade on Israel in recent months.[69] The Houthis announced in May 2024 that they would begin targeting commercial shipping in the Mediterranean Sea.[70] The Houthis have since then continued to primarily attack commercial vessels in the Red Sea, however. Salami’s statements are consistent with the Iranian regime’s theory on how to destroy Israel, which revolves, in part, around stoking instability and terror in Israel to catalyze reverse migration away from Israel.[71]

**The IRGC Ground Forces continued combatting anti-regime militant groups in Sistan and Baluchistan Province on November 8.**[72] As part of the "Martyrs of Security" exercise, the IRGC killed four fighters on November 8, likely affiliated with Jaish al Adl--a Baloch Salafi-jihadi group--near Rask in Sistan and Baluchistan.[73] This exercise began in response to the October 26

killing of ten Law Enforcement Command (LEC) officers in Taftan, for which Jaish al Adl claimed responsibility.[74]

*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.*

*CTP-ISW defines the “Axis of Resistance” as the unconventional alliance that Iran has cultivated in the Middle East since the Islamic Republic came to power in 1979. This transnational coalition is comprised of state, semi-state, and non-state actors that cooperate to secure their collective interests. Tehran considers itself to be both part of the alliance and its leader. Iran furnishes these groups with varying levels of financial, military, and political support in exchange for some degree of influence or control over their actions. Some are traditional proxies that are highly responsive to Iranian direction, while others are partners over which Iran exerts more limited influence. Members of the Axis of Resistance are united by their grand strategic objectives, which include eroding and eventually expelling American influence from the Middle East, destroying the Israeli state, or both. Pursuing these objectives and supporting the Axis of Resistance to those ends have become cornerstones of Iranian regional strategy.*

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