

Iran Update



Andie Parry, Annika Ganzeveld, Siddhant Kishore, Ria Reddy and Brian Carter

September 15, 2024, 2:00pm 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. 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.

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.

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.

Israeli air defenses “partially intercepted” a Houthi ballistic missile that entered Israeli airspace on September 14.[1] This is the third time that a Houthi missile or drone has entered Israeli airspace from Yemen since October 7.[2] The Houthis claimed that the attack targeted an unspecified military target in the Tel Aviv area with a “new hypersonic missile” on September 14.[3] The IDF denied that the Houthis used a hypersonic missile.[4] The IDF launched several interceptors at the missile but only partially struck it, causing the missile to disintegrate over central Israel.[5] The missile and interceptor fragments damaged and set fire to several areas but did not strike populated or military targets.[6] The Houthis said the missile flew for 11 minutes and 30 seconds over 2,040 kilometers.[7] The Houthis did not say that the strike was in response to a specific event, but the attack coincided with the Prophet Mohammad's birthday.[8] Hezbollah similarly chose a religious occasion—Arbaeen—to conduct its August 25 rocket and drone attack on northern and central Israel.[9] The Houthi Defense Minister and Chief of Staff foreshadowed the attack on September 14, declaring to

Israel that "the coming days will bring you surprises that you will not expect" that would be "more severe and harsher than what you have witnessed in the past." [10] The Houthis said in their attack claim that they would continue to target Israel as the anniversary of Hamas' October 7 attack draws closer. [11]

Palestinian and Iranian-backed Iraqi militias praised the Houthi missile attack targeting Israel. [12] Hamas claimed that the attack was a "natural response" to Israeli "aggression" against Palestinians, Arabs, and the Yemeni people. [13] Kataib Sayyid al Shuhada Secretary General Abu Alaa al Walai claimed that the attack "surprised" Israeli air defenses and is part of the "new phase of operations" against Israel. [14] Walai recently announced on September 13 that Iranian-backed Iraqi militias would soon begin their fourth phase of operations against Israel. [15] Walai claimed that this phase will include joint military operations and coordinated actions between Iranian-backed Iraqi groups and other Axis of Resistance members across multiple fronts.

Iran, the Houthis, and the rest of the Axis of Resistance could learn lessons from the Houthi attack in order to increase the effectiveness of future attacks on Israel. The Houthi attack was likely in part a reconnaissance-in-force operation. The US Army defines reconnaissance-in-force as "a deliberate combat operation designed to discover or test the enemy's strength, dispositions, and reactions or to obtain other information." [16] The Houthis could use their attack on Israel to better understand the capabilities and disposition of Israeli air defenses. Iran could similarly study the failure of Israeli air defense to intercept the missile prior to it entering Israeli airspace to better understand how to penetrate Israeli defenses in the future.

Key Takeaways:

- **Yemen:** Israeli air defenses "partially intercepted" a Houthi ballistic missile that entered Israeli airspace on September 14. Iran, the Houthis, and the rest of the Axis of Resistance could learn lessons from the Houthi attack in order to increase the effectiveness of future attacks on Israel.
- **Gaza Strip:** Hamas conducted a relatively simple but multi-stage attack targeting Israeli forces in eastern Rafah City on September 15. Even severely weakened military organizations like Hamas' Rafah Brigade can continue to conduct simple opportunistic attacks targeting Israeli forces. This attack, while somewhat tactically notable in that the Palestinian fighters conducted the attack in two deliberate stages, does not indicate that the Rafah Brigade is operating at a high level of combat effectiveness given that it appears to have been executed by one cell using one type of direct fire weapon system.
- **West Bank:** Israeli forces thwarted an infiltration attempt by a group of Palestinians from the West Bank into Israel on September 14.
- **Lebanon:** An IDF brigade commander in northern Israel independently issued evacuation orders for areas of southern Lebanon without coordinating with Israeli political leadership or higher IDF headquarters on September 15.
- **Iraq:** The Islamic Resistance in Iraq—a coalition of Iranian-backed Iraqi militias—claimed a drone attack targeting an unspecified target in Haifa, Israel, on September 15.

Key Takeaways in the Israel-Hamas War

As of September 15, 2024 at 2:00 PM ET



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

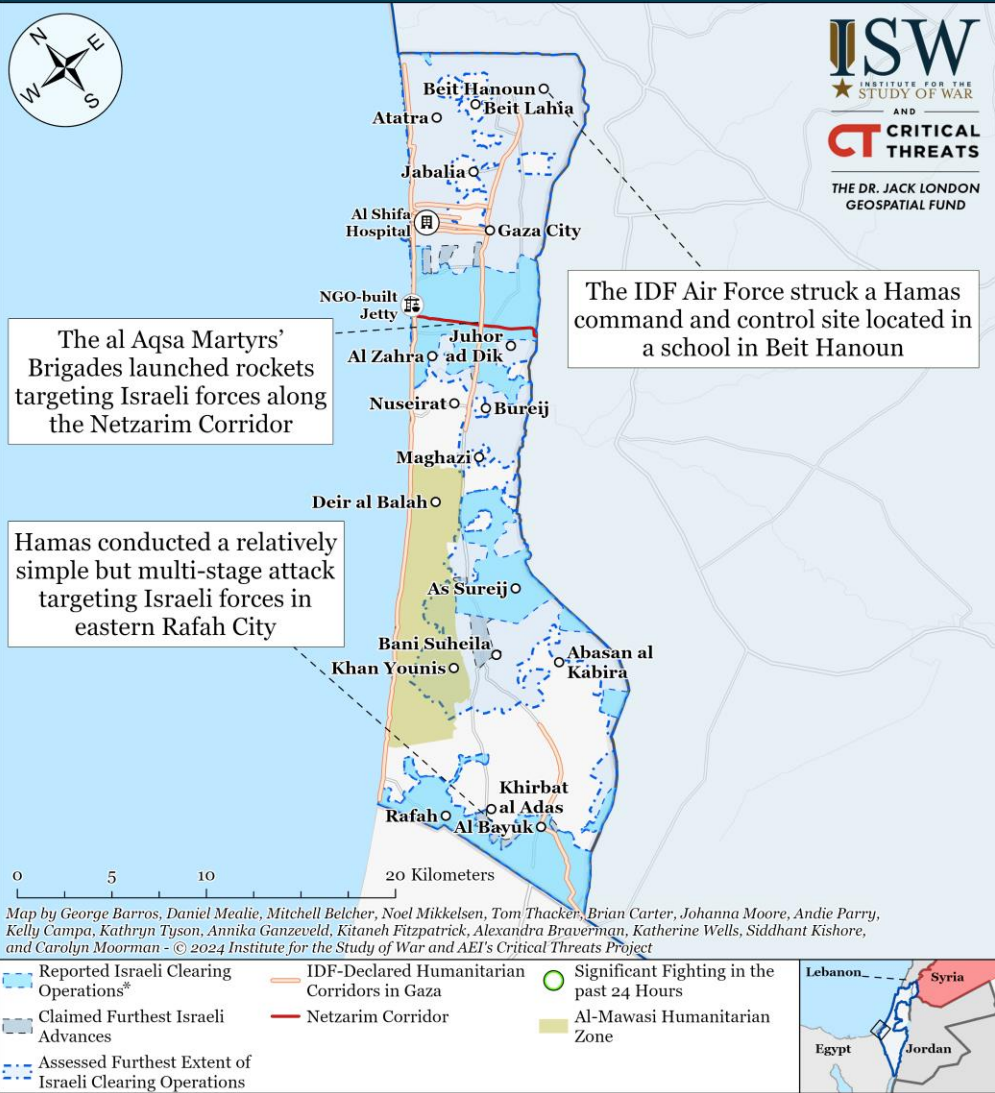
The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Air Force struck a Hamas command-and-control center in Beit Hanoun on September 15.[17] The IDF reported that the center was based in the former Ghazi al Shawa School and used to plan and carry out attacks on Israeli forces and territory.[18] The IDF added that it took steps to minimize civilian casualties in the strike.[19]

The al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades—the self-proclaimed military wing of Fatah—launched rockets targeting Israeli forces along the Netzarim Corridor south of Gaza City on September 15.[20]

Hamas conducted a relatively simple but multi-stage attack targeting Israeli forces in eastern Rafah City on September 15. Hamas said that it fired a rocket propelled grenade (RPG) targeting an Israeli armored bulldozer operating in al Janina neighborhood of eastern Rafah, before targeting the Israeli quick reaction force with another RPG.[21] Hamas claimed the attack wounded and killed Israeli soldiers.[22] IDF 162nd Division Commander Brigadier General Itzhak Cohen announced on September 12 that the IDF had “dismantled” Hamas' Rafah Brigade and secured control of the urban Rafah City area after four months of operations there.[23] Even severely weakened military organizations like Hamas' Rafah Brigade can continue to conduct simple opportunistic attacks targeting Israeli forces. This attack, while somewhat tactically notable in that the Palestinian fighters conducted the attack in two deliberate stages, does not indicate that the Rafah Brigade is operating at a high level of combat effectiveness given that it appears to have been executed by one cell using one type of direct fire weapon system. The IDF 162nd Division has continued to operate in Rafah, predominately in the west.[24] The IDF also remains along the Philadelphi Corridor, the border zone between the Gaza Strip and Egypt that spans all of Rafah.[25] Al Janina neighborhood is not directly along the Philadelphi Corridor.[26]

Reported Israeli Ground Operations in the Gaza Strip

As of September 15, 2024, 2:00 PM ET

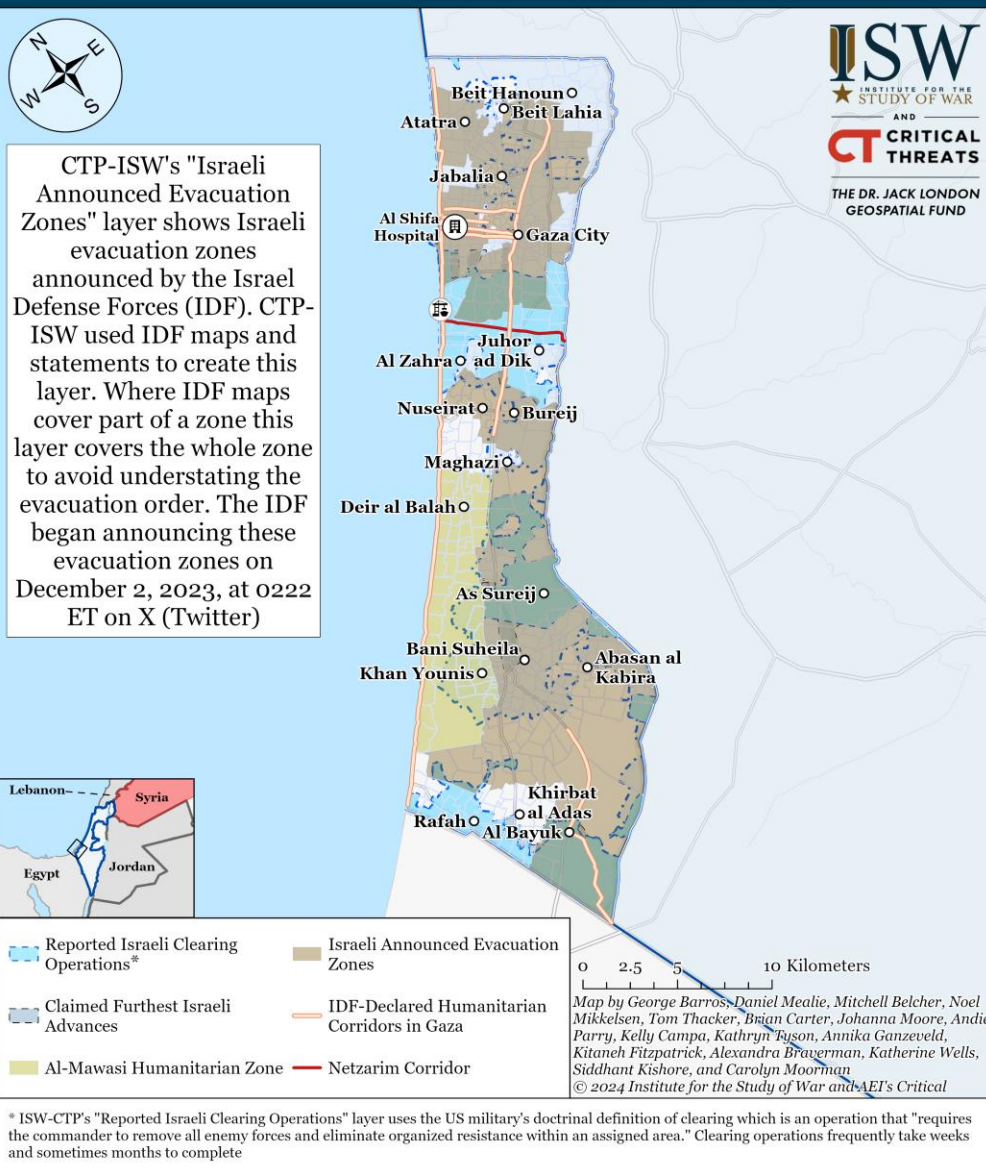


Map by George Barros, Daniel Mealie, Mitchell Belcher, Noel Mikkelsen, Tom Thacker, Brian Carter, Johanna Moore, Andie Parry, Kelly Campa, Kathryn Tyson, Annika Ganzeveld, Kitaneh Fitzpatrick, Alexandra Braverman, Katherine Wells, Siddhant Kishore, and Carolyn Moorman - © 2024 Institute for the Study of War and AEI's Critical Threats Project

Reported Israeli Clearing Operations*	IDF-Declared Humanitarian Corridors in Gaza	Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours	
Claimed Furthest Israeli Advances	Netzarim Corridor	Al-Mawasi Humanitarian Zone	
Assessed Furthest Extent of Israeli Clearing Operations			

* ISW-CTP's "Reported Israeli Clearing Operations" layer uses the US military's doctrinal definition of clearing which is an operation that "requires the commander to remove all enemy forces and eliminate organized resistance within an assigned area." Clearing operations frequently take weeks and sometimes months to complete

Israeli-Announced Evacuation Zones in the Gaza Strip As of September 15, 2024 at 2:00 PM ET



West Bank

Axis of Resistance objectives:

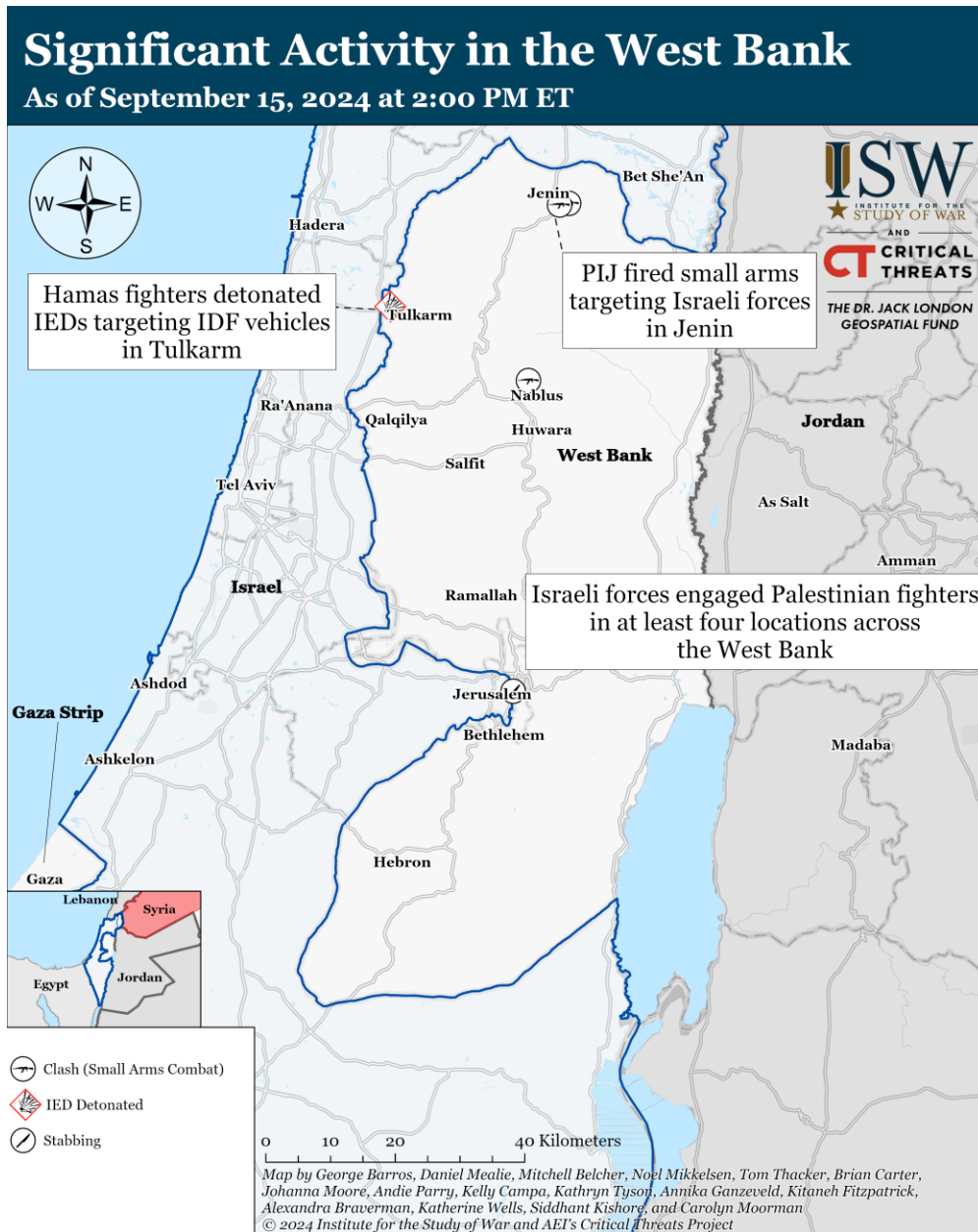
- Establish the West Bank as a viable front against Israel

Israeli forces engaged Palestinian fighters in at least four locations across the West Bank since CTP-ISW's last data cutoff on September 14.[27]

Israeli forces thwarted an infiltration attempt by a group of Palestinians from the West Bank into Israel on September 14.[28] The Israeli Army Radio reported that the Israeli forces detained 23 Palestinians at the Maccabim Security Checkpoint on Route 443 who were traveling in a

garbage truck to enter Israel illegally. The Israeli forces have not confirmed whether the infiltration attempt was related to Palestinian militia activity or not.

Israeli Police raided a compound in Yafia, a town near Nazareth, on September 15 as part of an operation to curb criminal activity in northern Israel. [29] Israeli police located a tunnel in the compound and recovered four small arms, ammunition and an unguided anti-tank rocket from the tunnel.[30] Israeli media stated that the Israeli Northern District Police has launched a "large-scale operation" in the recent days to curb violent crime near Nazareth which has a large population of Israeli Arabs.[31]



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

Southern Lebanon and Golan Heights

Axis of Resistance objectives:

- Deter Israel from conducting a ground operation into Lebanon
- Prepare for an expanded and protracted conflict with Israel in the near term
- Expel the United States from Syria

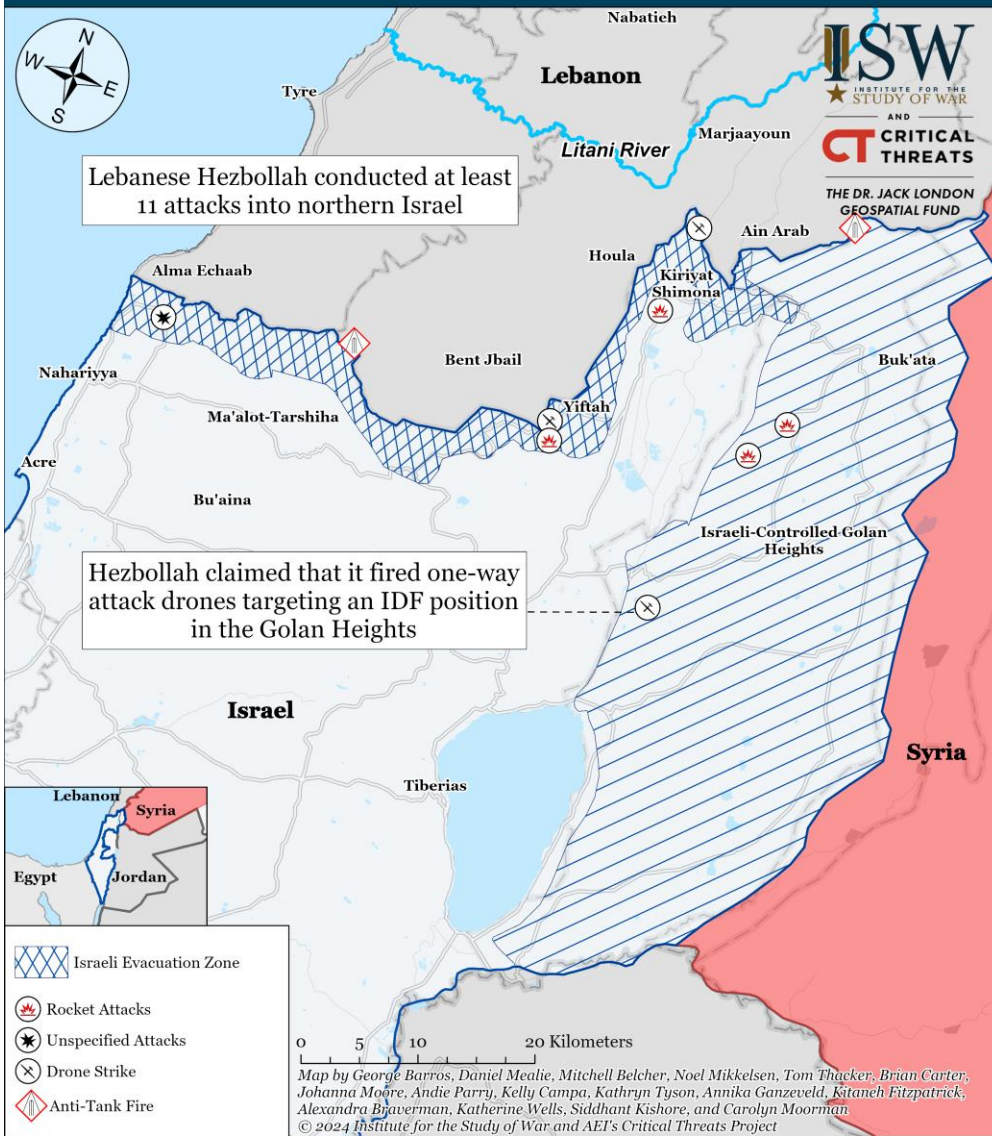
Lebanese Hezbollah has conducted at least 11 attacks into northern Israel since CTP-ISW's last data cutoff on September 14.[32] Hezbollah claimed on September 15 that it fired one-way attack drones targeting an IDF site in the Golan Heights.[33] The Israeli Army Radio reported that one of the drones flew 30 kilometers inside the Israeli territory before exploding near a kibbutz in northern Golan Heights.[34]

An IDF brigade commander in northern Israel independently issued evacuation orders for areas of southern Lebanon without coordinating with Israeli political leadership or higher IDF headquarters on September 15.[35] IDF 769th Brigade Commander Colonel Avi Marciano dropped evacuation orders leaflets by drone over the al Wazzani area of southern Lebanon.[36] Hezbollah had recently launched rockets from the area.[37] The flyers ordered residents to evacuate north to the al Hiyam area and not to return to the area "until the end of the war" or they would be considered combatants.[38] Israeli media reported that the political leadership and higher IDF headquarters did not approve the flyers and that there is no change in IDF policy.[39] The IDF opened an investigation into the commander's unilateral action.[40]

The IDF Air Force conducted airstrikes on Hezbollah weapons depots "deep" in eastern Lebanon on September 14.[41] The IDF struck sites in Baalbek and the Bekaa Valley, including a depot near the Syrian-Lebanon border that was 140 kilometers from Israel.[42]

Attacks into Northern Israel from Lebanon

As of September 15, 2024 at 2:00 PM ET



Iran and Axis of Resistance

The Islamic Resistance in Iraq—a coalition of Iranian-backed Iraqi militias—claimed a drone attack targeting an unspecified target in Haifa, Israel, on September 15.[43] Israeli media and officials have not commented on the attack at the time of this writing.

POWERED BY:



BABELSTREET

[1] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1835162146038071734> ; <https://t.me/moriahdoron/13744>

- [2] <https://apnews.com/article/israel-palestinians-tel-aviv-strike-daa70aa0f6a3248a00997a281c3731ab> ; <https://www.timesofisrael.com/in-first-idf-confirms-houthi-cruise-missile-hit-open-area-near-eilat-on-monday/>
- [3] <https://twitter.com/army21ye/status/1835236200300318723>
- [4] <https://t.me/moriahdoron/13744>
- [5] <https://t.me/moriahdoron/13744>
- [6] <https://twitter.com/manniefabian/status/1835215690623517103> ; <https://twitter.com/manniefabian/status/18351764572171698> ; <https://t.me/QudsN/464944>
- [7] <https://twitter.com/army21ye/status/1835236200300318723>
- [8] <https://twitter.com/TvAlmasirah/status/1835335065087140346>
- [9] <https://english.dot.almanar.com.lb/2184096>
- [10] <https://twitter.com/TvAlmasirah/status/1835050751779127501>
- [11] <https://twitter.com/army21ye/status/1835236200300318723>
- [12] <https://hamasinfo.info/2024/09/15/3845/> ;
<https://t.me/pflpgaza1/14567> ;
<https://x.com/TvAlmasirah/status/1835294464446738699> ;
<https://t.me/centerkaf/4581> ;
https://x.com/aboalaa_alwalae/status/1835311586250031113
- [13] <https://hamasinfo.info/2024/09/15/3845/>
- [14] https://x.com/aboalaa_alwalae/status/1835311586250031113
- [15] <https://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2024/09/13/733175/%E2%80%98Several-resistance-fronts-ready-to-execute-operations-against-Israel%2C-allies%E2%80%99>
- [16] https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/policy/army/adrp/3-90/adrp3_90.pdf, Section 5-2.
- [17] <https://twitter.com/AvichayAdraee/status/1835308688111804903> ;
<https://twitter.com/manniefabian/status/1835308249010049205>
- [18] <https://twitter.com/AvichayAdraee/status/1835308688111804903> ;
<https://twitter.com/manniefabian/status/1835308249010049205>
- [19] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1835308024535073121>
- [20] <https://t.me/nedalps/4397>
- [21] <https://t.me/QudsN/464999> ;

[22] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HH1ImQYhkOE&ab_channel=%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A8%D9%8A-%D8%A3%D8%AE%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B1

[23] <https://isw.pub/IranUpdate091224>

[24] <https://x.com/AvichayAdraee/status/1834958937759633767>

[25] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q6-G6vEw4JA&ab_channel=CBSNews

[26] [https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100067745692784&__cft__\[o\]=AZV2fcdDLpbg5QeAirxNCtzIeDOZ6R38hRhS4RE100TbeUEXZzgVAdKtslBQsXTe7YNZmtaIboO8zzwn2xBiGOLwf_6T2FX4DI8vm1VaJ_tIeE1Jukb4qY8cMmGaLVKB2y1lo8p-NY2IobkBZjlB13vGd9mSXP8oXE4JPYo7RqoWfTq8VLCBZQh52-LaCv9pPkoUPT6jHYmW_XT_THmDvcU7&__tn__=-UC%2CP-R](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100067745692784&__cft__[o]=AZV2fcdDLpbg5QeAirxNCtzIeDOZ6R38hRhS4RE100TbeUEXZzgVAdKtslBQsXTe7YNZmtaIboO8zzwn2xBiGOLwf_6T2FX4DI8vm1VaJ_tIeE1Jukb4qY8cMmGaLVKB2y1lo8p-NY2IobkBZjlB13vGd9mSXP8oXE4JPYo7RqoWfTq8VLCBZQh52-LaCv9pPkoUPT6jHYmW_XT_THmDvcU7&__tn__=-UC%2CP-R)

[27] <https://alqassam dot ps/arabic/%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A8%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%BA%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%85/8092/%D8%AA%D9%81%D8%AC%D9%8A%D8%B1-6-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A8%D8%A2%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%AF%D9%88-%D8%AE%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AA%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AD-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D8%AE%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%81%D8%B8%D8%A9-%D8%B7%D9%88%D9%84%D9%83%D8%B1%D9%85-%D9%88%D8%A5%D9%8A%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%B9-%D8%B7%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%82%D9%85%D9%87%D8%A7-%D8%A8%D9%8A%D9%86-%D9%82%D8%AA%D9%8A%D9%84-%D9%88%D8%AC%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%AD>
; <https://t.me/sarayajneen/1582> ; <https://t.me/sarayajneen/1583>
; <https://t.me/hamza20300/292843>

[28] <https://x.com/GLZRadio/status/1835043774961271130>

[29] <https://www.ynetnews dot com/article/bklfbv6r> ;
https://x.com/kann_news/status/1835208412277232084

[30] <https://www.ynetnews dot com/article/bklfbv6r> ;
https://x.com/kann_news/status/1835208412277232084

[31] <https://www.jewishpress dot com/news/israel/israeli-arabs/police-discover-tunnel-shaft-with-ammunition-shoulder-missile-near-nazareth/2024/09/15/>

[32] <https://t.me/mmirleb/6846> ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/6850> ;
<https://t.me/mmirleb/6854> ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/6858> ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/6862> ;
<https://t.me/mmirleb/6866> ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/6870> ;

<https://t.me/mmirleb/6874> ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/6878> ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/6882> ;
<https://t.me/mmirleb/6886>

[33] <https://t.me/mmirleb/6882>

[34] <https://x.com/GLZRadio/status/1835347388292042813> ; <https://x.com/GLZRadio/status/1835348807141224512>

[35] <https://t.me/moriahdoron/13736>

[36] <https://t.me/moriahdoron/13736>

[37] <https://t.me/moriahdoron/13736> ;
<https://twitter.com/GLZRadio/status/1835244776003645815>

[38] <https://t.me/moriahdoron/13732>

[39] <https://twitter.com/manniefabian/status/1835269451446444069> ;
https://twitter.com/Doron_Kadosh/status/1835243537752866821

[40] https://twitter.com/Doron_Kadosh/status/1835243537752866821

[41] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1835028712552906898> ;
<https://twitter.com/AvichayAdraee/status/1835028605757255847>

[42] <https://twitter.com/manniefabian/status/1835006087814164537>

[43] <https://t.me/s/ElamAlmoqawama>