

# Iran Update



**Alexandra Braverman, Kelly Campa, Carolyn Moorman, and Brian Carter**

**August 31, 2024, Information Cutoff: 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.*

**At least two Palestinian fighters attempted to carry out two coordinated car bombing attacks in the Gush Etzion area of the West Bank on August 30.[1] No militia has claimed responsibility for the attack at the time of writing, though the attack targeting IDF settlements is consistent with recent Hamas threats to target Israeli settlers in the West Bank.** According to an initial IDF probe, the two militants set out together from the Hebron area towards Gush Etzion—a cluster of Israeli settlements south of Jerusalem—to carry out coordinated attacks in two locations.[2] One fighter set off a car bomb at a gas station at the Gush Etzion junction.[3] The fighter shot at IDF forces who arrived at the scene.[4] IDF forces shot and killed the fighter. The second fighter breached the entrance to the Israeli Karmeit Tzur settlement, located within the Gush Etzion area, approximately twenty minutes later.[5] The second fighter tried to run over the security guard at the Karmeit Tzur settlement entrance, resulting in a car chase with Israeli security guards.[6] The IDF stated that an explosive device in the attacker's vehicle detonated during the

exchange of fire.[7] IDF forces shot and killed the second fighter.[8] Israeli media reported that the two car bombs were packed with "makeshift explosive devices" and packed with nails and screws.[9] An initial IDF probe into the attacks found that the two explosives came from the same bomb-making lab in Hebron.[10] The IDF located and destroyed an explosives laboratory in Hebron on August 31.[11] The IDF discovered the lab as part of the operation following the identification of the suspects.[12] Three Israelis were inadvertently hurt during the attacks.[13]

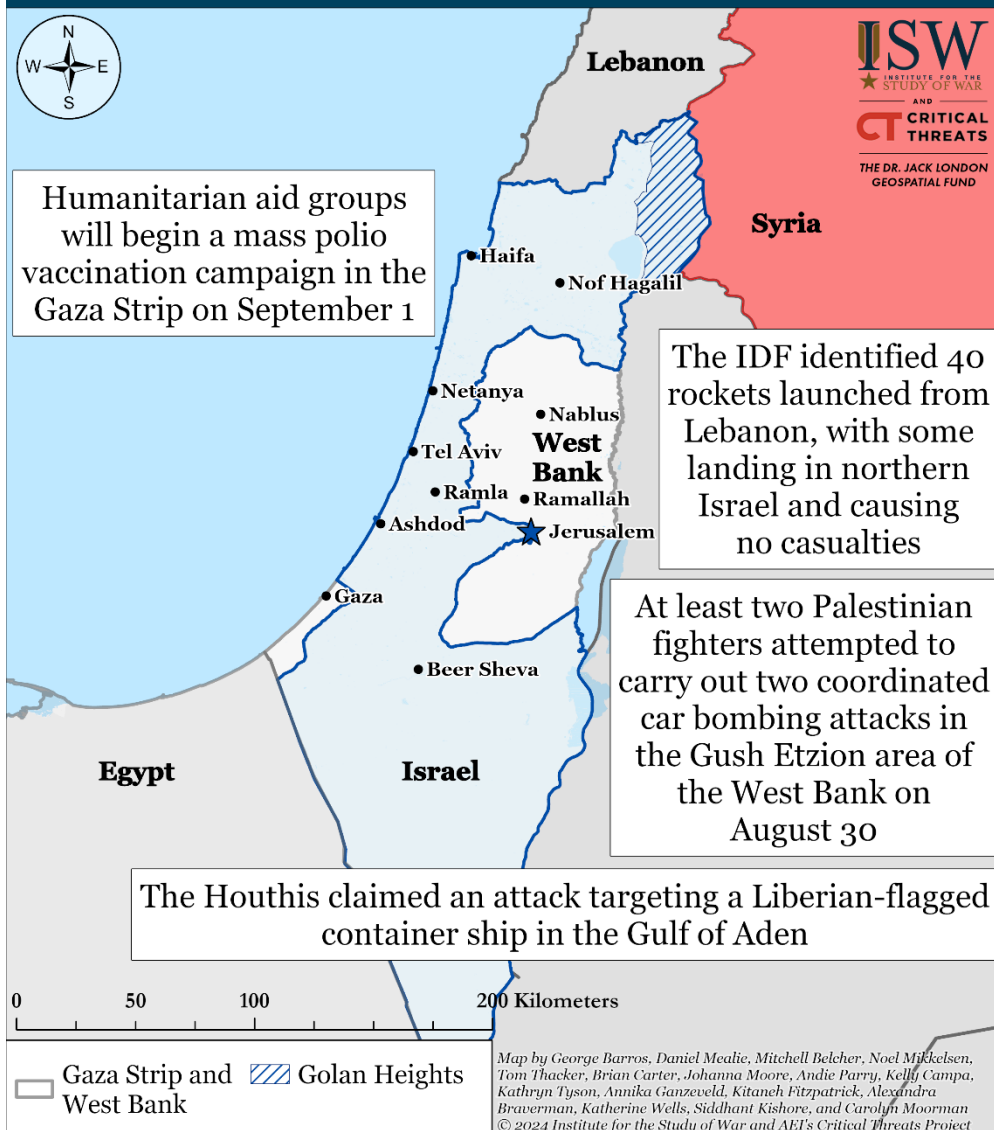
An Israeli military correspondent reported that the Palestinian Authority Health Ministry said that two Hebron residents were responsible for the attack[14] Israeli forces detained six Palestinians who are suspected to have been involved in the Gush Etzion attack.[15] Various Palestinian militias in the West Bank and Gaza Strip praised the attack.[16] The IDF and Shin Bet are investigating whether the attack was carried out by "foreign threats." [17] Israeli security officials believe a terrorist cell operating in Hebron intends to carry out additional attacks using similar tactics, which would be consistent with recent Hamas threats to conduct attacks targeting Israeli settlers and troops in the West Bank..[18] No militia has claimed responsibility for the attack at the time of writing, however. These attempted bombings follow four consecutive days of significant IDF military operations in the West Bank.[19] Palestinian militias, including Hamas, have repeatedly called on Palestinians in the West Bank to attack Israelis.[20]

### **Key Takeaways:**

- **West Bank:** At least two Palestinian fighters attempted to carry out two coordinated car bombing attacks in the Gush Etzion area of the West Bank on August 30. No militia has claimed responsibility for the attack at the time of writing, though the attack targeting IDF settlements is consistent with recent Hamas threats to target Israeli settlers in the West Bank.
- **Gaza Strip: The IDF Air Force targeted and killed PIJ's Central Camps Brigade commander Muhammad Qatrawi in the central Gaza Strip on August 30.**
- **Northern Israel: Lebanese Hezbollah conducted at least six attacks into northern Israel since CTP-ISW's last data cutoff on August 30.**
- **Red Sea: The Houthis claimed an attack targeting Liberian-flagged container ship M/V *GROTON* in the Gulf of Aden on August 31.**

# Key Takeaways in the Israel-Hamas War

As of August 31, 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 IDF 252nd Division continued to operate in Gaza City on August 31.**[21] Israeli forces identified a fighter operating out of a building in the area and the IDF Air Force struck the building.[22] Israeli forces killed Palestinian militia cells and destroyed military buildings and other

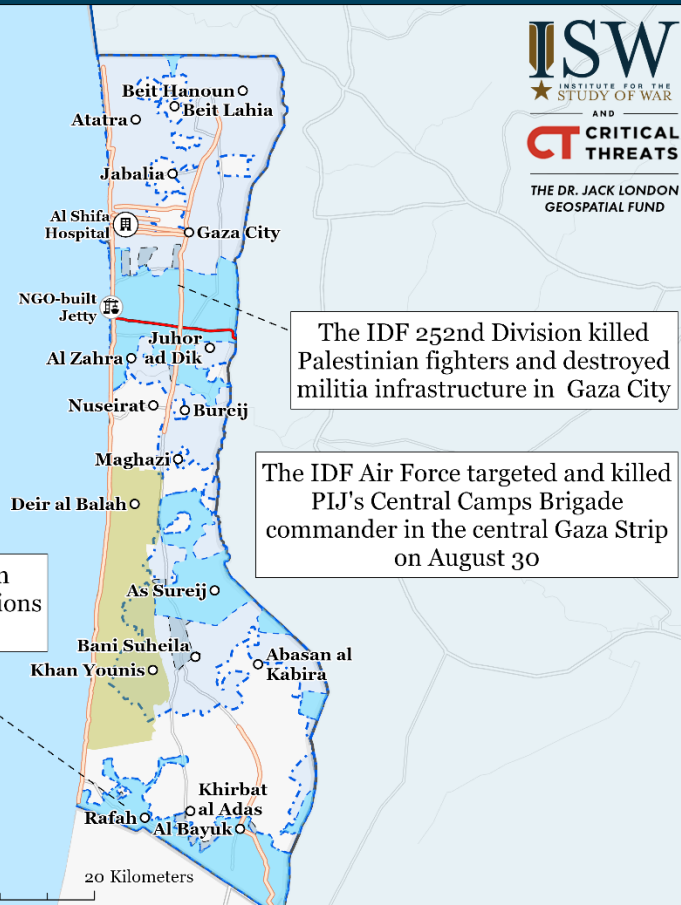
militia infrastructure.[23] Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) targeted IDF personnel with sniper fire in Zaytoun, southern Gaza City.[24]

**The IDF Air Force targeted and killed PIJ's Central Camps Brigade commander Muhammad Qatrawi in the central Gaza Strip on August 30.**[25] The IDF said that Qatrawi commanded rocket attacks targeting Israel from the central Gaza Strip and planned numerous attacks against Israeli forces and Israel.[26] Qatrawi held several positions within PIJ, including serving as a deputy brigade commander and an intelligence officer.[27]

**The IDF 162nd Division continued to operate in Rafah on August 31.**[28] The IDF 401st Brigade located large quantities of weapons and killed Palestinian militia cells that threatened Israeli forces in the area.[29] The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) mortared Israeli forces near Salah ad Din Gate in central Rafah.[30]

# Reported Israeli Ground Operations in the Gaza Strip

As of August 31, 2024, 2:00 PM ET



The IDF 252nd Division killed Palestinian fighters and destroyed militia infrastructure in Gaza City

The IDF Air Force targeted and killed PIJ's Central Camps Brigade commander in the central Gaza Strip on August 30

The IDF 162nd Division continued clearing operations in Rafah

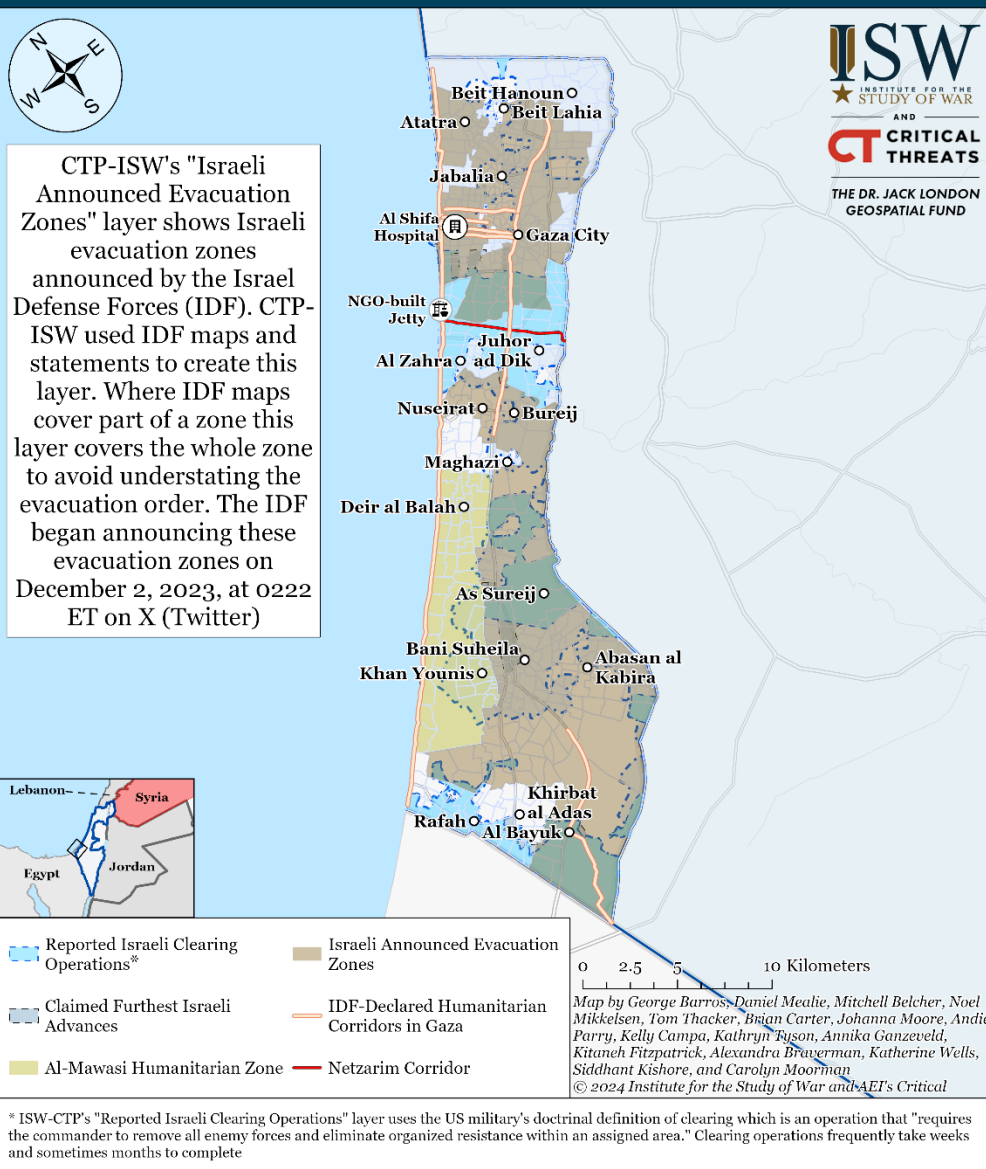
Map by George Barros, Daniel Mealie, Mitchell Belcher, Noel Mikkelsen, Tom Thacker, Brian Carter, Johanna Moore, Andie Parry, Kelly Campa, Kathryn Tyson, Annika Ganzefeld, Kitaneh Fitzpatrick, Alexandra Braverman, Katherine Wells, Siddhant Kishore, and Carolyn Moorman - © 2024 Institute for the Study 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 August 31, 2024 at 2:00 PM ET



## Humanitarian aid groups will begin a mass polio vaccination campaign in the Gaza Strip on September 1.[31]

The head of the UN World Health Organization operations in the Palestinian territories Rik Peepkorn said that the campaign will begin in central Gaza.[32] Humanitarian aid groups will administer the vaccines to Gazan children over three days during nine-hour humanitarian pauses in the area. The IDF agreed on August 29 to pause military operations in designated areas from 0600 to 1500 local time.[33] The campaign will then move to the southern Gaza Strip and vaccinate children over another three-day period before moving to the northern Gaza Strip.[34] Peepkorn said that the Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) agreed to extend the humanitarian pauses by one day or longer in each zone, if necessary.[35] Healthcare workers

administered the first polio vaccines to a small number of Gazan infants at Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis on August 31 to officially mark the beginning of the campaign.[36]

## **West Bank**

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

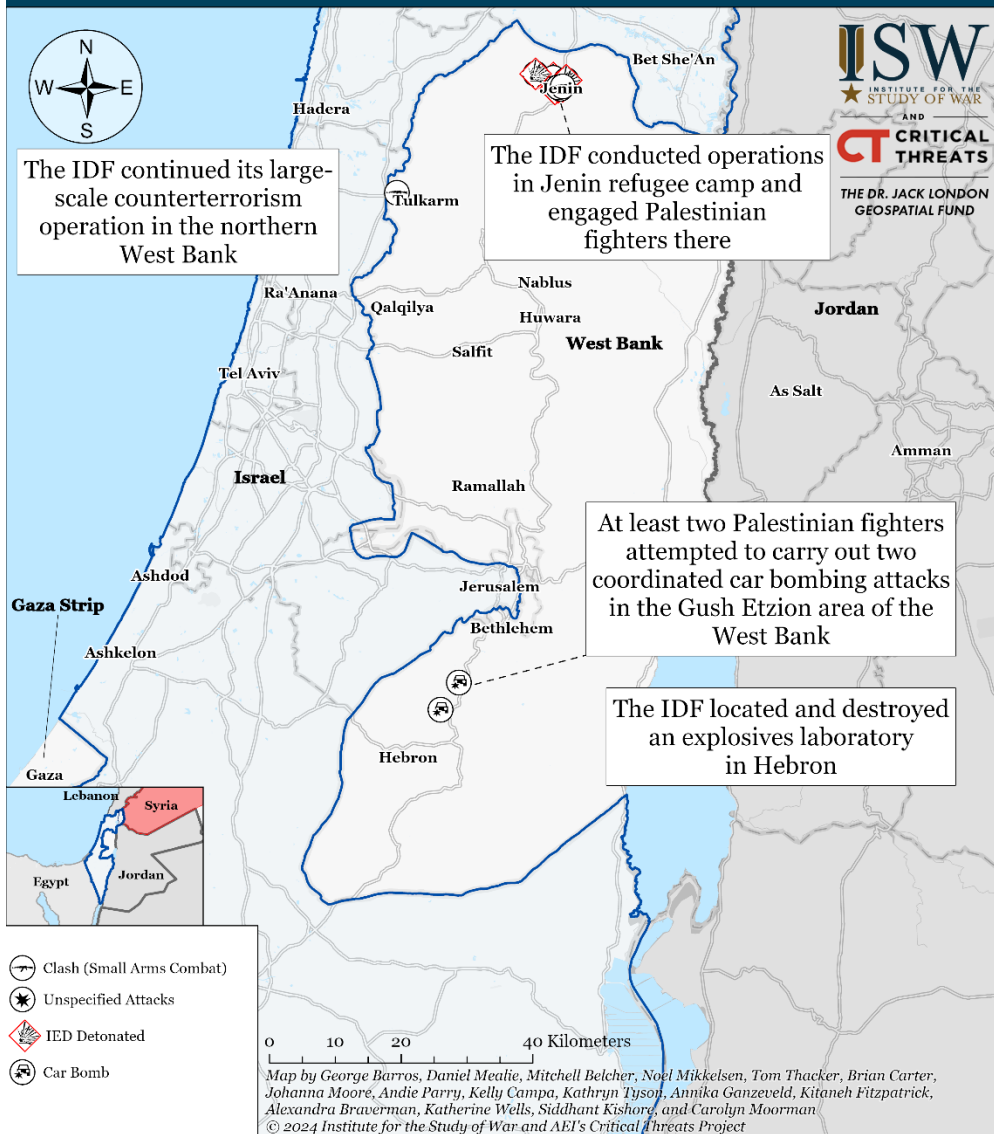
- Establish the West Bank as a viable front against Israel

**The IDF continued raids in the northern West Bank for the fifth consecutive day as part of the IDF effort to degrade Palestinian militia networks in the West Bank.** The IDF expanded its operations to Jenin refugee camp on August 31.[37] The IDF destroyed dozens of IEDs planted along the roads entering the camp.[38] Palestinian militias, including the al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, Hamas, and PIJ, engaged Israeli forces with small arms and IEDs near the camp and in several other locations in Jenin.[39] Hamas detonated IEDs targeting two IDF military vehicles near the Jenin camp. Hamas mourned the death of several Hamas fighters who have died during the IDF counterterrorism operation in engagements in both Jenin and Tulkarm.[40] An IDF Army Radio correspondent reported that the IDF have killed 26 Palestinian fighters and detained 30 wanted Palestinians since the start of Operation Summer Camps on August 27.[41]



# Significant Activity in the West Bank

As of August 31, 2024 at 2:00 PM ET



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

## Southern Lebanon and Golan Heights

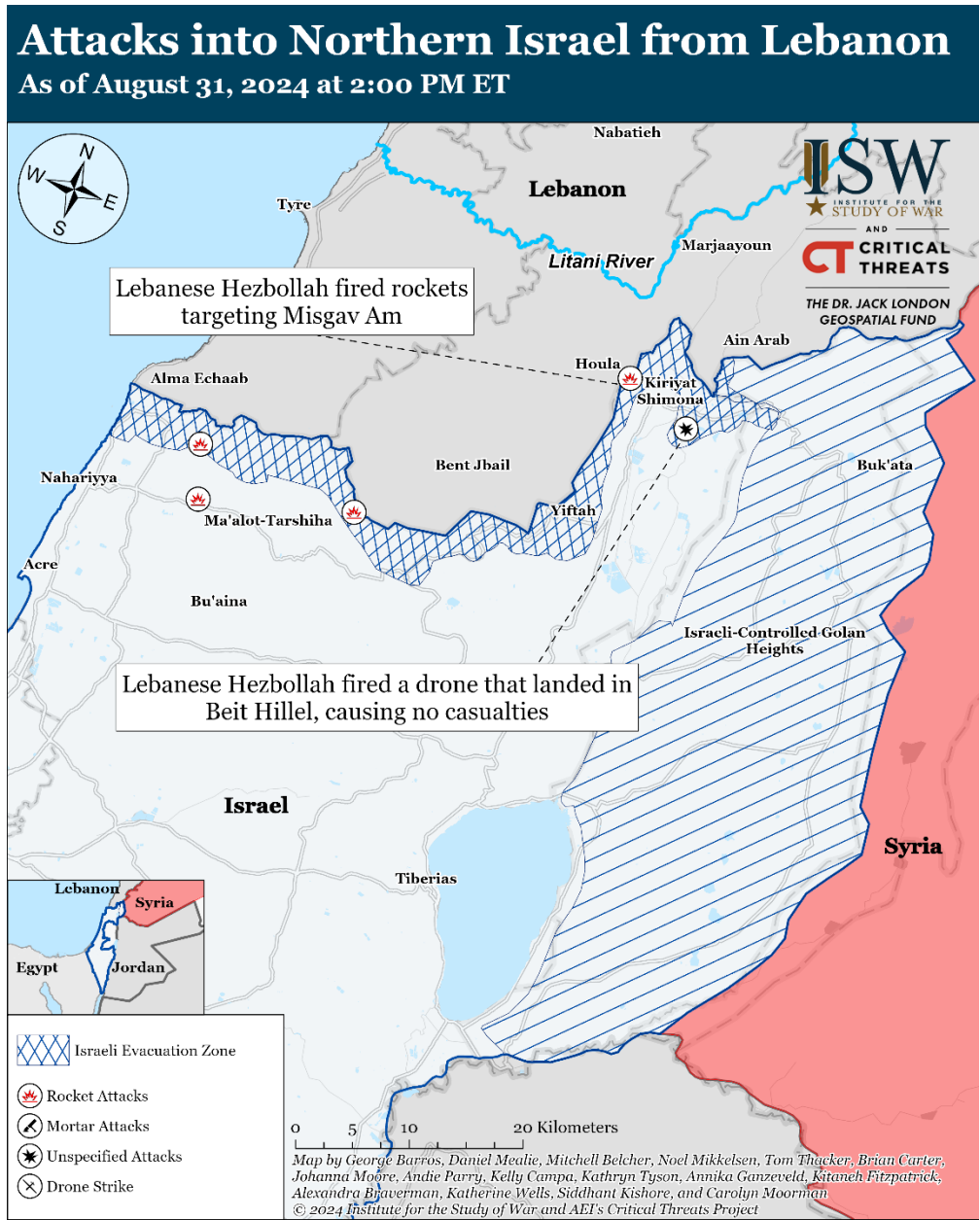
### Axis of Resistance objectives:

- 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 conducted at least six attacks into northern Israel since CTP-ISW's last data cutoff on August 30.**[42] Lebanese Hezbollah conducted rocket and mortar attacks



targeting the IDF 411th Battalion near Nave Kiv and the headquarters of the IDF 300th Brigade near Ya'ara.[43] The IDF identified 40 rockets targeting Israeli territory from Lebanon and activated warnings in Western Galilee.[44] The IDF intercepted some rockets and others landed in unspecified areas without causing casualties. The IDF attacked the unspecified launch sites with artillery.

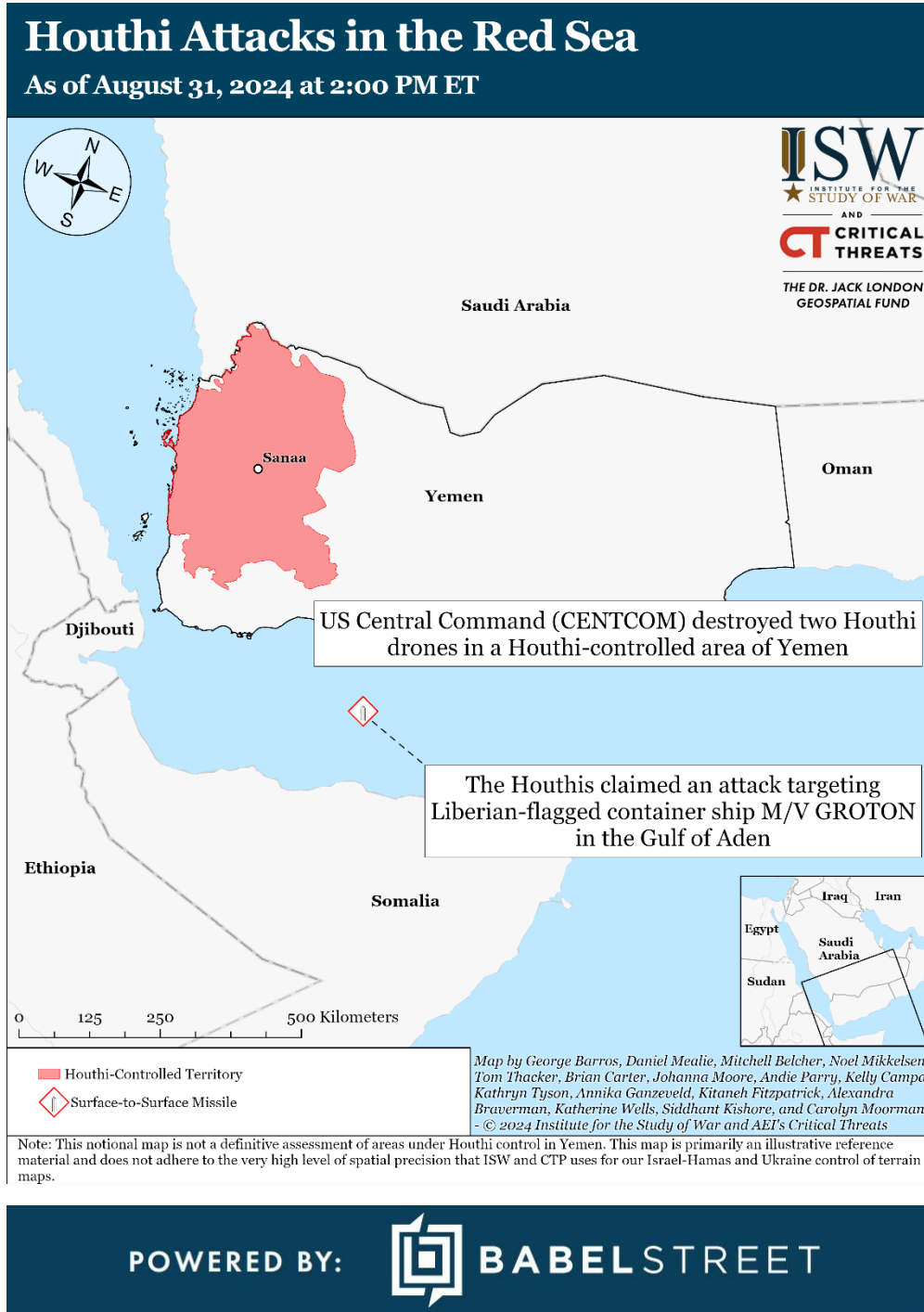


### Iran and Axis of Resistance

**The Houthis claimed an attack targeting Liberian-flagged container ship M/V GROTON in the Gulf of Aden on August 31.[45]** The Houthis claimed to target the M/V GROTON for transporting goods to Israel.[46] The Houthis claimed to launch drones and missiles at the vessel.[47] The United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) reported two missiles exploded in proximity to the GROTON 130 nautical miles east of Aden, Yemen, on August 31.[48] The

Houthis previously targeted the *GROTON* with two missiles on August 3, as CTP-ISW previously reported.[49]

**US Central Command destroyed two Houthi drones in a Houthi-controlled area of Yemen on August 30.[50]**



- [1] <https://x.com/manniefabian/status/1829819500146954271> ; [https://www.timesofisrael dot com/liveblog\\_entry/idf-shin-bet-believe-friday-night-west-bank-bomb-attacks-were-coordinated/](https://www.timesofisrael dot com/liveblog_entry/idf-shin-bet-believe-friday-night-west-bank-bomb-attacks-were-coordinated/) ; <https://t.me/moriahdoron/13358>
- [2] [https://www.timesofisrael dot com/liveblog\\_entry/idf-shin-bet-believe-friday-night-west-bank-bomb-attacks-were-coordinated/](https://www.timesofisrael dot com/liveblog_entry/idf-shin-bet-believe-friday-night-west-bank-bomb-attacks-were-coordinated/)
- [3] [https://www.timesofisrael dot com/liveblog\\_entry/idf-shin-bet-believe-friday-night-west-bank-bomb-attacks-were-coordinated/](https://www.timesofisrael dot com/liveblog_entry/idf-shin-bet-believe-friday-night-west-bank-bomb-attacks-were-coordinated/)
- [4] <https://x.com/idfonline/status/1829639954034802943>
- [5] <https://www.timesofisrael dot com/idf-says-it-killed-2-terrorists-as-car-bombs-detonate-in-west-bank-attacks-3-hurt/>
- [6] <https://t.me/moriahdoron/13336> ; [https://www.wsj.com/world/middle-east/two-attempted-car-bombings-highlight-escalating-west-bank-clashes-e84ed7c3?mod=middle-east\\_news\\_article\\_pos1](https://www.wsj.com/world/middle-east/two-attempted-car-bombings-highlight-escalating-west-bank-clashes-e84ed7c3?mod=middle-east_news_article_pos1)
- [7] [https://www.wsj.com/world/middle-east/two-attempted-car-bombings-highlight-escalating-west-bank-clashes-e84ed7c3?mod=middle-east\\_news\\_article\\_pos1](https://www.wsj.com/world/middle-east/two-attempted-car-bombings-highlight-escalating-west-bank-clashes-e84ed7c3?mod=middle-east_news_article_pos1) ; <https://x.com/idfonline/status/1829690980498292974>
- [8] <https://www.timesofisrael dot com/idf-says-it-killed-2-terrorists-as-car-bombs-detonate-in-west-bank-attacks-3-hurt/>
- [9] <https://x.com/manniefabian/status/1829828358923776358> ; <https://www.haaretz dot com/israel-news/2024-08-31/ty-article/.premium/west-bank-car-bombs-idf-says-explosives-came-from-same-hebron-lab/00000191-a7d8-dd1e-adb5-afde7d110000>
- [10] <https://www.haaretz dot com/israel-news/2024-08-31/ty-article/.premium/west-bank-car-bombs-idf-says-explosives-came-from-same-hebron-lab/00000191-a7d8-dd1e-adb5-afde7d110000>
- [11] <https://t.me/moriahdoron/13350>
- [12] <https://t.me/moriahdoron/13349> ; <https://t.me/moriahdoron/13350>
- [13] <https://www.timesofisrael dot com/idf-says-it-killed-2-terrorists-as-car-bombs-detonate-in-west-bank-attacks-3-hurt/>
- [14] <https://x.com/manniefabian/status/1829819500146954271>
- [15] [https://www.timesofisrael dot com/liveblog\\_entry/idf-detains-6-for-involvement-in-attacks-says-no-fear-of-additional-car-bomb/](https://www.timesofisrael dot com/liveblog_entry/idf-detains-6-for-involvement-in-attacks-says-no-fear-of-additional-car-bomb/)
- [16] <https://t.me/mojahdeenpal/4748> ; <https://t.me/alwya2000/6751> ; [https://t.me/khalaya\\_almuja hidin/14874](https://t.me/khalaya_almuja hidin/14874) ; <https://t.me/pflpgaza1/14540>
- [17] <https://www.jpost dot com/israel-hamas-war/article-817143>
- [18] <https://www.haaretz dot com/israel-news/2024-08-31/ty-article/.premium/west-bank-car-bombs-idf-says-explosives-came-from-same-hebron-lab/00000191-a7d8-dd1e-adb5-afde7d110000>

- [19] <https://www.wsj.com/world/middle-east/two-attempted-car-bombings-highlight-escalating-west-bank-clashes-e84ed7c3>
- [20] <https://t.me/hamaswestbank/53119> ; <https://t.me/mojahdeenpal/4732> ; <https://t.me/alwya2000/6725> ; <https://www.wsj.com/world/middle-east/two-attempted-car-bombings-highlight-escalating-west-bank-clashes-e84ed7c3>
- [21] <https://x.com/idfonline/status/1829796890445046038>
- [22] <https://x.com/idfonline/status/1829796890445046038>
- [23] <https://x.com/idfonline/status/1829796894630961242>
- [24] <https://t.me/sarayaps/18542> ; <https://t.me/sarayaps/18544>
- [25] <https://x.com/idfonline/status/1829927083377566149>
- [26] <https://x.com/idfonline/status/1829927087349674310>
- [27] <https://x.com/idfonline/status/1829927083377566149>
- [28] <https://x.com/idfonline/status/1829796894630961242>
- [29] <https://x.com/idfonline/status/1829796894630961242>
- [30] [https://t.me/kataeb\\_moqawma/4398](https://t.me/kataeb_moqawma/4398)
- [31] <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2024/08/31/gaza-polio-case-vaccine-pause-israel-war/>; <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/israeli-bombardment-kills-dozens-gaza-health-officials-prepare-polio-campaign-2024-08-31/>
- [32] <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2024/08/31/gaza-polio-case-vaccine-pause-israel-war/>
- [33] <https://www.nytimes.com/live/2024/08/29/world/israel-hamas-gaza-war/hfo-israel-has-emphasized-the-move-is-not-the-first-step-to-a-cease-fire?smid=url-share>
- [34] <https://www.nytimes.com/live/2024/08/29/world/israel-hamas-gaza-war/hfo-israel-has-emphasized-the-move-is-not-the-first-step-to-a-cease-fire?smid=url-share>
- [35] <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2024/08/31/gaza-polio-case-vaccine-pause-israel-war/>
- [36] <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2024/08/31/gaza-polio-case-vaccine-pause-israel-war/>; <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/israeli-bombardment-kills-dozens-gaza-health-officials-prepare-polio-campaign-2024-08-31/>
- [37] <https://t.me/moriahdoron/13352>
- [38] <https://t.me/moriahdoron/13352>
- [39] [https://t.me/elaqsa\\_1965/7338](https://t.me/elaqsa_1965/7338); <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/3039> [https://t.me/elaqsa\\_1965/7339](https://t.me/elaqsa_1965/7339); <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/3046>

- [40] <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/3040>; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/3040>
- [41] <https://t.me/moriahdoron/13352>
- [42] <https://t.me/mmirleb/6495> ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/6499> ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/6500> ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/6504> ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/6507>
- [43] <https://t.me/mmirleb/6495>
- [44] <https://x.com/idfonline/status/1829645374539383224>
- [45] <https://x.com/army21ye/status/1829922543354220569>
- [46] <https://apnews.com/article/yemen-houthi-rebels-red-sea-ship-attacks-879dd30efcdb00274be63d69bb9aa886>
- [47] <https://x.com/army21ye/status/1829923452834185479/photo/2>
- [48] [https://x.com/UK\\_MTO/status/1829916532094259562](https://x.com/UK_MTO/status/1829916532094259562)
- [49] <https://apnews.com/article/yemen-houthi-rebels-red-sea-ship-attacks-879dd30efcdb00274be63d69bb9aa886> ; <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-update-august-3-2024>
- [50] <https://x.com/CENTCOM/status/1829626354742022511>