

Iran Update, February 25, 2024

Andie Parry, Peter Mills, and Nicholas Carl

Information Cutoff: 2:00 pm 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. Click [here](#) to subscribe to the Iran Update.

Key Takeaways:

- **Northern Gaza Strip:** The Israel Defense Forces continued clearing operations in Zaytoun neighborhood, southeastern Gaza City.
- **Southern Gaza Strip:** The Israel Defense Forces has continued to conduct clearing operations in western and eastern Khan Younis.
- **West Bank:** Israeli forces clashed with Palestinian fighters at least six times in the West Bank.
- **Southern Lebanon and Golan Heights:** Iranian-backed militias, including Lebanese Hezbollah, have conducted at least seven attacks from southern Lebanon into northern Israel.
- **Yemen:** The USS *Mason* intercepted a Houthi anti-ship ballistic missile targeting US-flagged, owned, and operated oil tanker MV *Torm Thor*.

Israel-Hamas War as of February 25, 2024, 2:00 PM ET



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.

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) continued clearing operations in Zaytoun neighborhood, southeastern Gaza City, on February 25.

The IDF Nahal Brigade (assigned to the 162nd Division) targeted Palestinian fighters, destroyed rocket launch sites, and located weapons during clearing operations in Zaytoun.^[1] IDF Chief of Staff Herzi Halevi held a situational assessment meeting in the northern Gaza Strip with the commanders of Southern Command and the

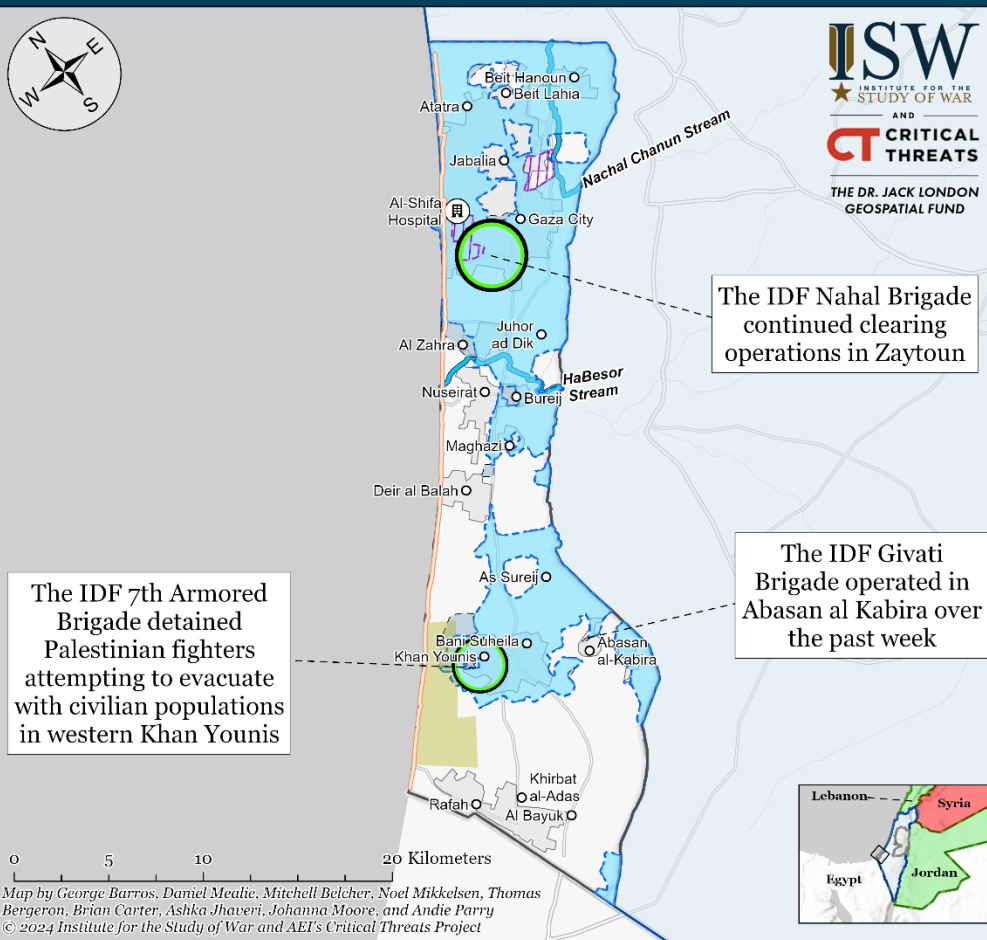
162nd Division.[2] Halevi stated that Israeli forces are returning to previously cleared areas in the northern Gaza Strip “based on better intelligence“ to ”deepen achievements“ against Hamas.[3]

Palestinian militias continued to operate in Gaza City on February 25. Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) fired rockets at an Israeli position east of Jabalia’s eastern cemetery.[4] The IDF 143rd Division directed an airstrike on a Palestinian squad operating a drone in Shati in northwestern Gaza City.[5] The 162nd Division completed a second round of clearing operations in al Shati refugee camp on February 15.[6] PIJ directed sniper fire targeting Israeli forces operating near al Dawla roundabout in Zaytoun.[7] The al Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades, which is the self-proclaimed military wing of Fatah and aligned with Hamas in the war, fired rockets at Israeli forces south of Zaytoun.[8]

The IDF has continued to conduct clearing operations in western and eastern Khan Younis. The IDF Givati Brigade (assigned to the 162nd Division) has operated in Abasan al Kabira and Abasan al Saghira in recent days.[9] The brigade seized a long-range rocket and launcher in a "medical laboratory" in the Abasan area, likely the Algerian Specialized Hospital in Abasan al Kabira.[10] The IDF’s acknowledgement of its activity in the Abasan al Kabira area is consistent with local Palestinian reports of IDF activity on February 19-20.[11] The IDF 7th Armored Brigade (assigned to the 36th Division) detained Palestinian fighters hiding among and evacuating with civilians in western Khan Younis on February 25.[12] The brigade also killed several Palestinian fighters and seized weapons.[13] IDF 98th Division forces killed a Palestinian drone squad in Khan Younis.[14]

The IDF announced on February 25 that its 98th Division commando forces ceased operations at Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis.[15] Israeli forces detained over 200 individuals and seized weapons from the hospital.[16] The IDF said it brought multiple rounds of humanitarian aid and a generator to the hospital during its operations.[17] The IDF said it will continue to abide by international law when operating in hospitals in the Gaza Strip.[18]

Reported Israeli Ground Operations in the Gaza Strip as of February 25, 2024, 2:00 PM ET



The IDF Nahal Brigade continued clearing operations in Zaytoun

The IDF Givati Brigade operated in Abasan al Kabira over the past week

The IDF 7th Armored Brigade detained Palestinian fighters attempting to evacuate with civilian populations in western Khan Younis



Map by George Barros, Daniel Mealie, Mitchell Belcher, Noel Mikkelsen, Thomas Bergeron, Brian Carter, Ashka Jhaveri, Johanna Moore, and Andie Parry © 2024 Institute for the Study of War and AET's Critical Threats Project

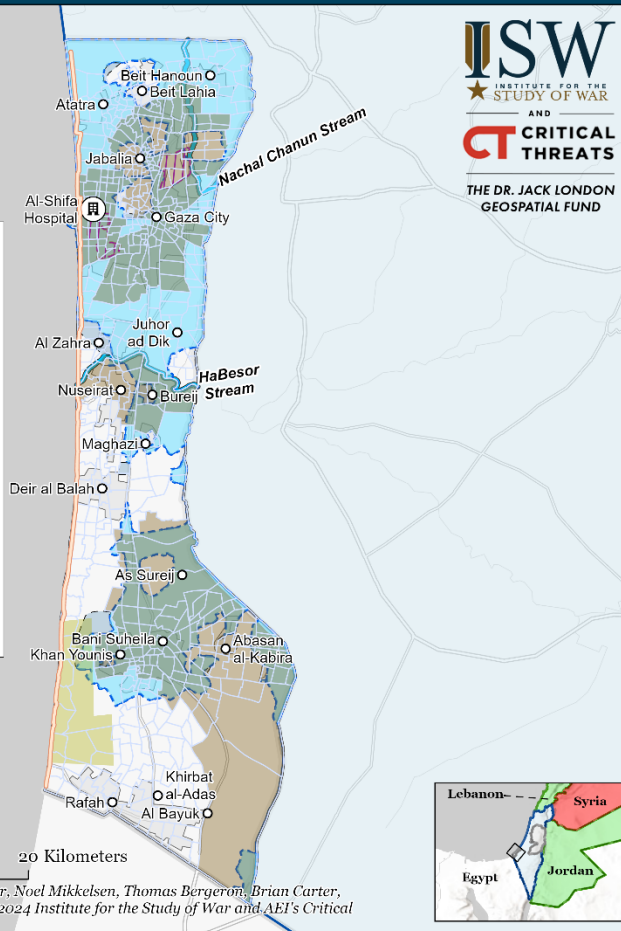
- Israel
- Reported Israeli Clearing Operations*
- Al-Mawasi Humanitarian Zone
- Significant Water Obstacles
- Gaza Strip
- IDF-Declared Humanitarian Corridor on Road 230
- Densely Urban Areas
- Jordan and Lebanon
- Syria
- Claimed Furthest Israeli Advances
- Areas Reportedly Infiltrated by Palestinian Militias
- Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours

* 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 February 25, 2024, 2:00 PM ET



CTP-ISW's "Israeli Announced Evacuation Zones" layer shows Israeli evacuation zones announced by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). CTP-ISW used IDF maps and statements to create this layer. Where IDF maps cover part of a zone this layer covers the whole zone to avoid understating the evacuation order. The IDF began announcing these evacuation zones on December 2, 2023, at 0222 ET on X (Twitter)



Map by George Barros, Daniel Mealie, Mitchell Belcher, Noel Mikkelsen, Thomas Bergeron, Brian Carter, Ashka Jhaveri, Johanna Moore, and Andie Parry - © 2024 Institute for the Study of War and AEI's Critical Threats Project

- Israel
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- Syria
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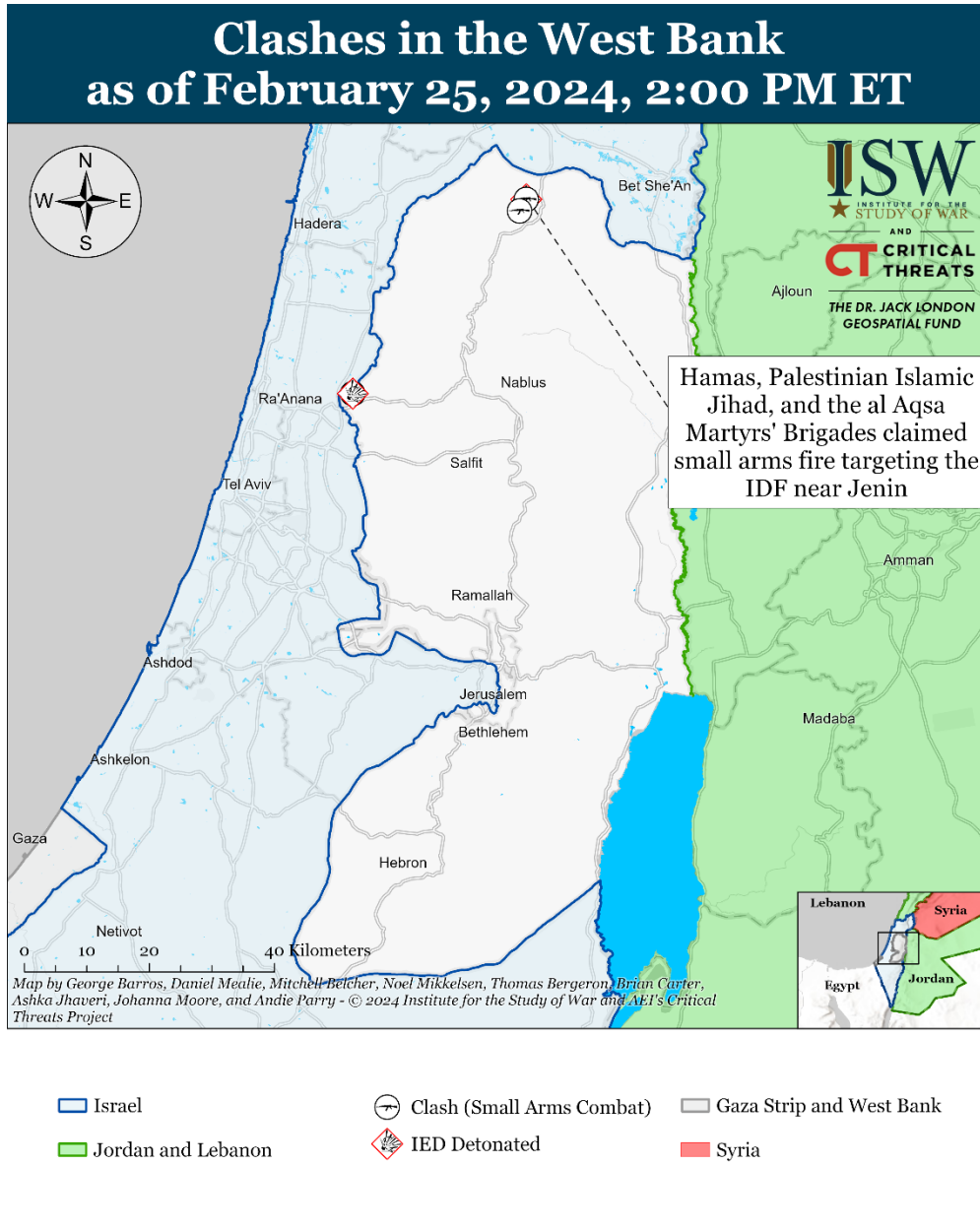
Israeli media reported that the Israeli War Cabinet approved a measure allowing the direct flow of humanitarian aid into northern Gaza Strip on February 24. Channel 12 stated humanitarian aid will begin directly entering the northern Gaza Strip “in the next few days.” [19] Aid currently enters the Gaza Strip via the Kerem Shalom crossing at the southern end of the Gaza Strip and must travel near active fighting in Khan Younis and Zaytoun. Several humanitarian organizations have halted transporting aid to the northern Gaza Strip in the past week, citing security concerns.[20]

West Bank

Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

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

Israeli forces have clashed with Palestinian fighters at least six times in the West Bank on February 25.[21]



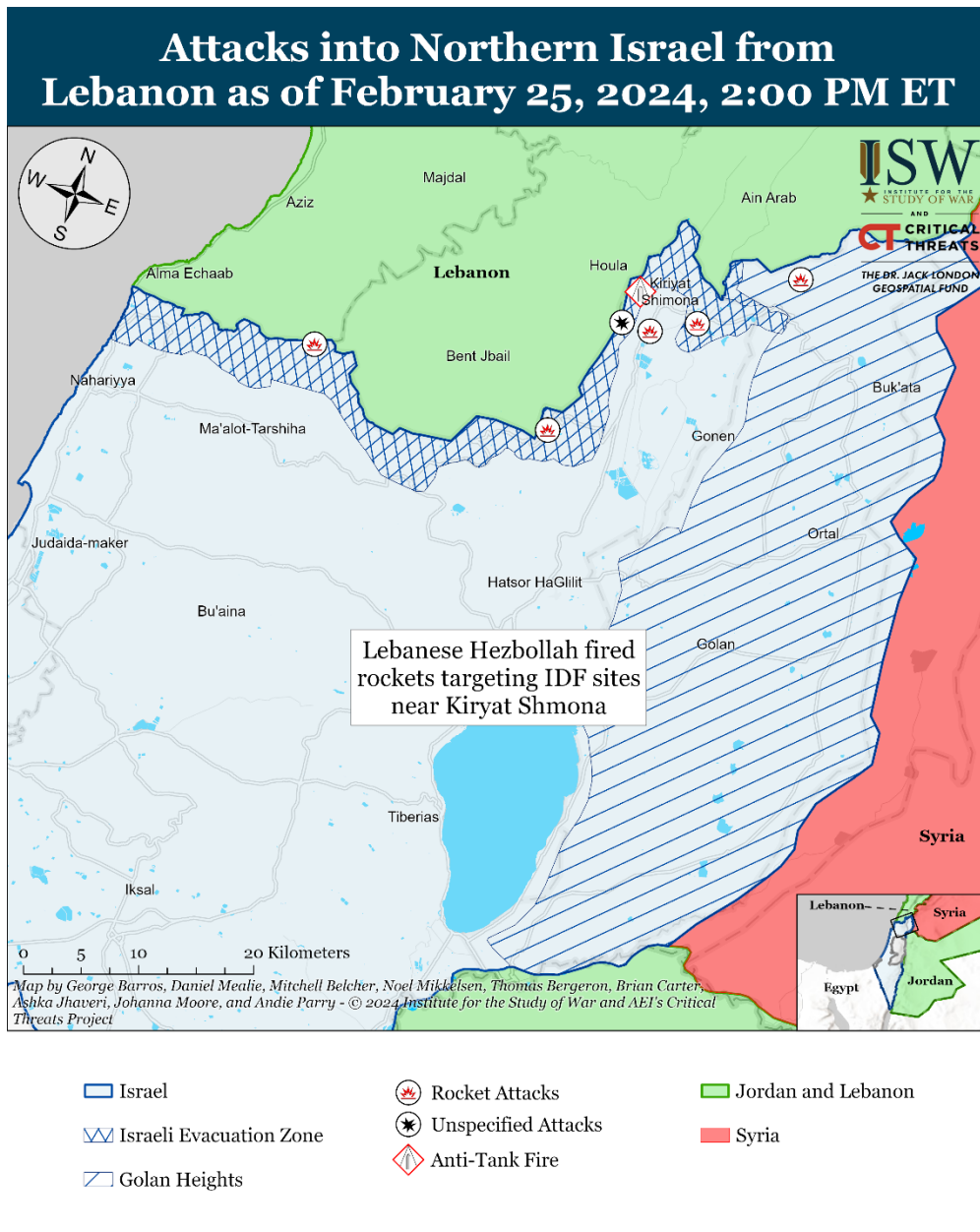
This map is not an exhaustive depiction of clashes and demonstrations in the West Bank.

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

Iranian-backed militias, including Lebanese Hezbollah, have conducted at least seven attacks from southern Lebanon into northern Israel since CTP-ISW's last data cutoff on February 24.[22]



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

Iran and Axis of Resistance

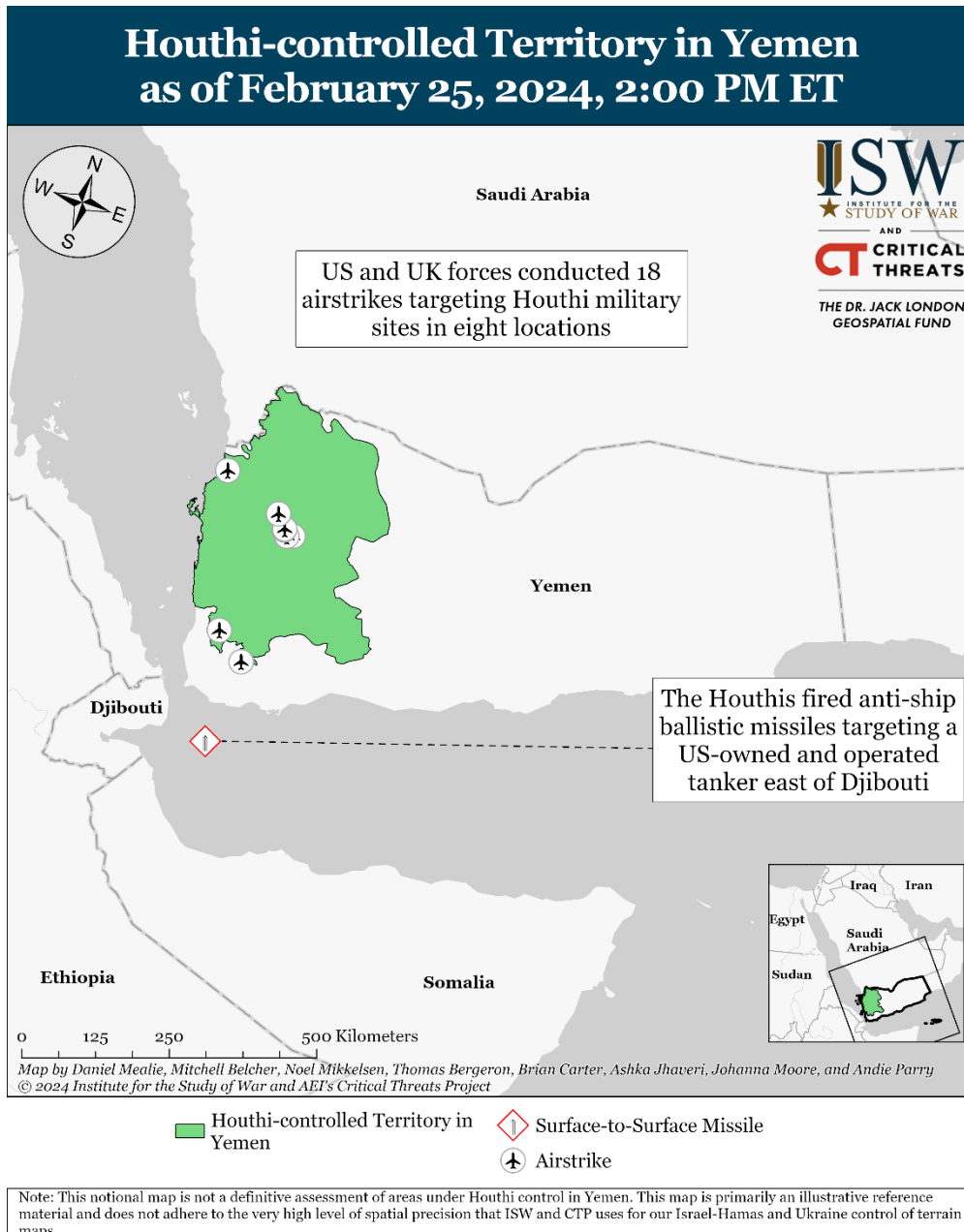
Axis of Resistance campaign objectives:

- 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

The USS *Mason* intercepted a Houthi anti-ship ballistic missile targeting US-flagged, owned, and operated oil tanker MV *Torm Thor* on February 24.[23] CENTCOM reported that neither the USS *Mason* nor the MV *Torm Thor* were damaged in the Houthi attack.[24]

The United States and United Kingdom conducted 18 airstrikes targeting Houthi underground missile storage facilities, one-way attack drones, radars, air defense systems, and a helicopter in Houthi-controlled Yemen on February 24.[25]





- [1] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1761643947200237727> ;
<https://twitter.com/AvichayAdraee/status/1761710509437460881>
- [2] <https://twitter.com/IDFSpokesperson/status/1761461996849930578>
- [3] <https://twitter.com/AvichayAdraee/status/1761466991100002401>
- [4] <https://t.me/sarayaps/17480>
- [5] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1761643949226070449>
- [6] <https://www.idf.il/180657>
- [7] <https://t.me/sarayaps/17482>
- [8] <https://t.me/nedalps/4003>
- [9] www.idf.il/182433
- [10] www.idf.il/182433 ; <https://twitter.com/AvichayAdraee/status/1761712313344651380>
- [11] <https://t.me/hamza20300/215430> ; <https://t.me/hamza20300/215442> ;
<https://t.me/hamza20300/215784>
- [12] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1761643863280591242>
- [13] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1761643863280591242>
- [14] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1761643912534385062>
- [15] <https://twitter.com/AvichayAdraee/status/1761714877293314392>
- [16] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1761710242612564041>
- [17] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1761710246265757701> ;
<https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1761710250963419174>
- [18] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1761710263001096547>
- [19] https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/direct-aid-to-north-gaza-set-to-start-in-next-few-days-after-approval-by-war-cabinet-yesterday-report/
- [20] <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-reported-impact-day-140> ;
<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/2/21/wfp-halts-food-deliveries-to-north-gaza-amid-complete-chaos-violence> ; <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/feb/24/unrwa-suspends-aid-to-northern-gaza-amid-collapse-of-civil-order>
- [21] https://t.me/elaqsa_1965/5831 ; <https://t.me/AymanGouda/6067> ; <https://t.me/QudsN/375141>
; <https://t.me/sarayajneen/1195>
- [22] <https://t.me/mmirleb/2240> ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/2242> ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/2246> ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/2248> ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/2252> ; https://t.me/C_Military1/46367 ; https://t.me/C_Military1/46369
- [23] <https://twitter.com/army21ye/status/1761520452269146416> ; <https://twitter.com/CENTCOM/status/1761456447685267826>
- [24] <https://twitter.com/CENTCOM/status/1761456447685267826>
- [25] <https://twitter.com/CENTCOM/status/1761512889230479860> ; <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/joint-statement-from-australia-bahrain-denmark-canada-the-netherlands-new-zealand-united-kingdom-and-united-states-on-additional-strikes-against-iran>
2 ; <https://www.axios.com/2024/02/24/us-uk-military-houthi-strike-yemen-iran>