

Iran Update



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Information Cutoff: 2:00pm ET

Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) Quds Force Commander Brigadier General Esmail Ghaani has traveled to Iraq, Lebanon, and Syria in recent days to meet with unspecified Axis of Resistance leaders, according to Iraqi media.[1] An anonymous Iranian source told Baghdad Today that Ghaani met with Iranian-backed officials from Iraq, Lebanon, the Palestinian Territories, Syria, and Yemen during his travel. The source reported that Ghaani met with militia leaders in Iraq on July 9, which is the same day that Iranian-backed Iraqi and Palestinian militias met in Baghdad to discuss military and political coordination.[2] Ghaani may have attended this meeting given his role in coordinating and planning Axis of Resistance activity. This flurry of activity across the Axis of Resistance could in part reflect preparations for a possible major Israeli military offensive into Lebanon.

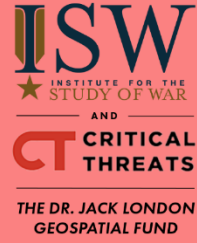
Some senior IRGC commanders have emphasized in recent days the need for the Iranian political establishment, particularly hardliners, to accept and support Iranian President-elect Masoud Pezeshkian in order to preserve political stability. Former IRGC Commander Major General Mohsen Rezaei said on July 10 that Pezeshkian should be considered part of “the revolution front,” which is a reference to parts of the hardline camp.[3] Rezaei further stated that those who support the regime and Islamic Revolution must also support Pezeshkian. IRGC Aerospace Force Commander Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajji Zadeh similarly on July 11 called on supporters of runner-up presidential candidate Saeed Jalili to respect Pezeshkian’s victory and avoid criticizing the electoral process.[4] Hajji Zadeh described Pezeshkian as “the president of the entire nation and of every Iranian.” Hajji Zadeh also noted that former President Ebrahim Raisi’s death could have triggered a “major crisis” but that the regime averted such a crisis and conducted two rounds of voting within a week “without the smallest problem.” Rezaei’s and Hajji Zadeh’s statements are consistent with CTP-ISW’s previous assessment that Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei prioritized regime legitimacy and stability over installing his preferred candidate in the election.[5]

Key Takeaways:

- **Iran:** IRGC Quds Force Commander Brigadier General Esmail Ghaani has traveled to Iraq, Lebanon, and Syria in recent days to meet with unspecified Axis of Resistance leaders, according to Iraqi media
- Some senior IRGC commanders have emphasized in recent days the need for the Iranian political establishment, particularly hardliners, to accept and support Iranian President-elect Masoud Pezeshkian in order to preserve political stability.
- **Gaza Strip:** International mediators are reportedly considering using 2,500 US-trained PA supporters from the Gaza Strip as an interim governing force in the Gaza Strip.
- **Russia:** Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf attended the BRICS parliamentary forum in St. Petersburg, Russia.

Key Takeaways in the Israel-Hamas War

As of July 11, 2024 at 2:00 PM ET



□ Gaza Strip and West Bank ▨ Golan Heights

Map by George Barros, Daniel Mealie, Mitchell Belcher, Noel Mikkelsen, Thomas Bergeron, Tom Thacker, Brian Carter, Johanna Moore, Andie Parry, Kelly Campa, Kathryn Tyson, Annika Ganzeveld, Kitaneh Fitzpatrick, and Alexandra Braverman
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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 99th Division continued clearing operations in Tal al Hawa, southwest Gaza City, on July 11.[6] Israeli forces continued to operate around the UNRWA headquarters that Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) have used to detain and interrogate individuals, hide fighters, and store weapons.[7] The IDF Commando Brigade located attack drones, improvised explosive devices (IED), rockets, rocket-propelled grenades, grenades, mortar shells, sniper rifles, and other unspecified weapons near the UNRWA headquarters.[8] Palestinian militias continued to defend against Israeli forces operating in the area.[9] The IDF directed an airstrike targeting a combat compound that Palestinian fighters used to fire at Israeli forces during clashes.[10] Hamas fighters targeted IDF personnel and armor with shoulder-fired thermobaric rockets and tandem-charged shells.[11] PIJ, the al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, and the National Resistance Brigades mortared Israeli forces in Tal al Hawa.[12]

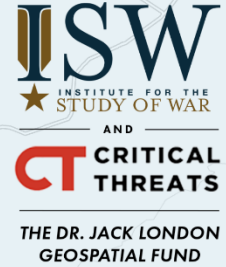
The IDF Air Force struck and killed Hamas central camps security operations head Hassan Abu Kwaik in the central Gaza Strip.[13] The IDF said that Kwaik was part of Hamas' internal security apparatus and the Hamas emergency committee. The IDF also said Kwaik led numerous attacks against Israel.[14] Israeli aircraft also struck and killed Hamas military intelligence team lead Nasser Mahana.[15]

Hamas fighters mortared Israeli forces along the Netzarim Corridor on July 11.[16]

The IDF 162nd Division continued clearing operations in Rafah on July 11. The IDF Nahal Brigade destroyed rigged-to-detonate infrastructure and underground tunnels in the Rafah area.[17] This is consistent with IDF reporting that Palestinian fighters have rigged hundreds of houses with explosives throughout Rafah.[18] Israeli forces directed airstrikes against dozens of Palestinian fighters in the area.[19] The IDF 401st Brigade located tunnel shafts and weapons, including rocket propelled grenade launchers, in Tel al Sultan, west of Rafah.[20] Hamas and PIJ fighters fired rocket propelled grenades targeting IDF armor in a combined attack.[21] The National Resistance Brigades targeted an IDF soldier with sniper fire.[22]

Reported Israeli Ground Operations in the Gaza Strip

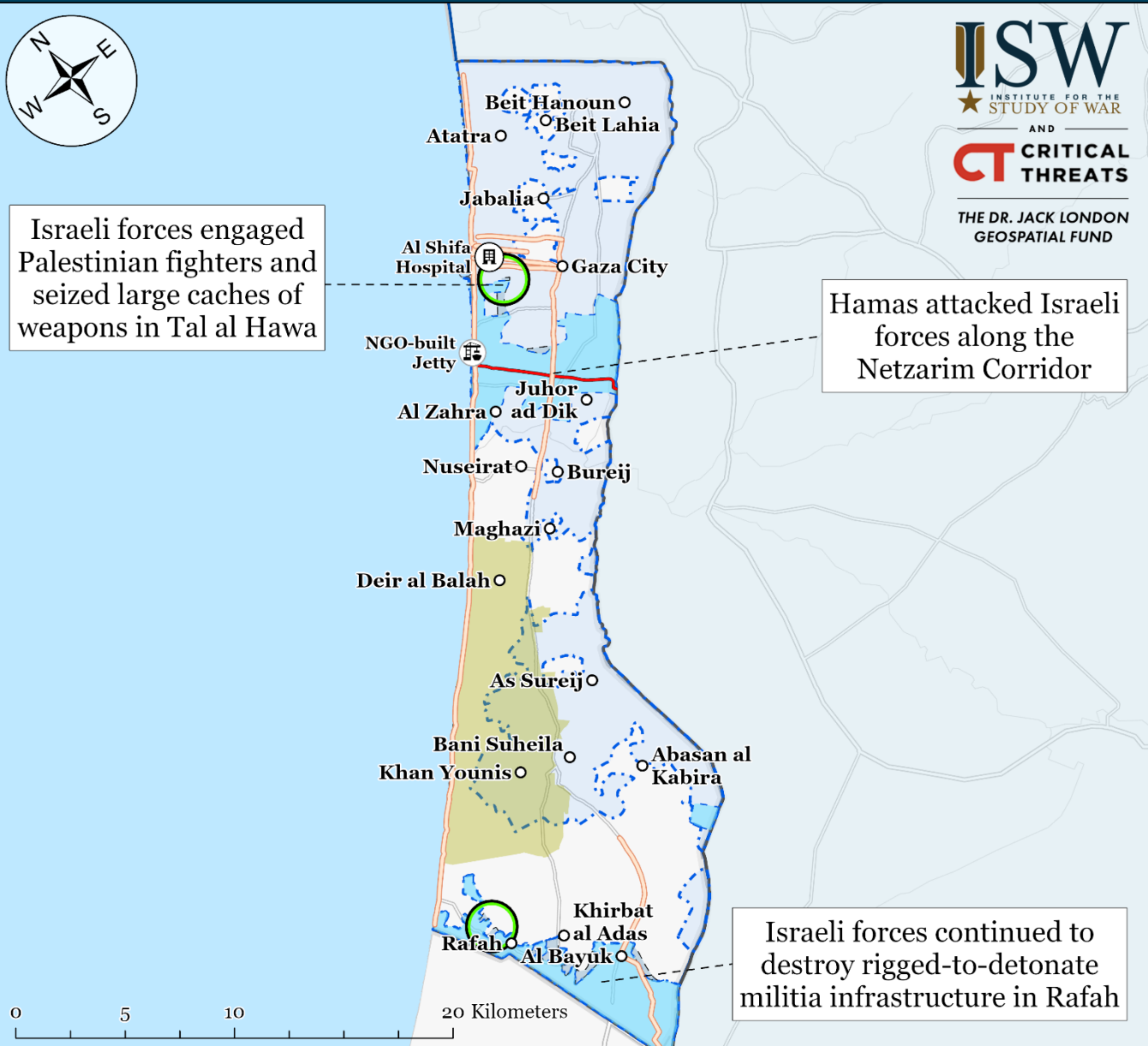
As of July 11, 2024, 2:00 PM ET



Israeli forces engaged Palestinian fighters and seized large caches of weapons in Tal al Hawa

Hamas attacked Israeli forces along the Netzarim Corridor

Israeli forces continued to destroy rigged-to-detonate militia infrastructure in Rafah



Map by George Barros, Daniel Mealie, Mitchell Belcher, Noel Mikkelsen, Thomas Bergeron, Brian Carter, Johanna Moore, Andie Parry, Kelly Campa, Kathryn Tyson, Annika Ganzeveld, Kitaneh Fitzpatrick, and Alexandra Braverman
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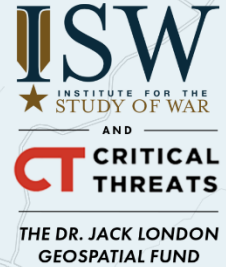
- Reported Israeli Clearing Operations*
- IDF-Declared Humanitarian Corridors in Gaza
- Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours
- Claimed Furthest Israeli Advances
- Netzarim Corridor
- Al-Mawasi Humanitarian Zone
- Assessed Furthest Extent of Israeli Clearing Operations



* 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 July 11, 2024 at 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)



- Reported Israeli Clearing Operations*
- Israeli Announced Evacuation Zones
- Claimed Furthest Israeli Advances
- IDF-Declared Humanitarian Corridors in Gaza
- Al-Mawasi Humanitarian Zone
- Netzarim Corridor



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

* 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

Israel and international mediators continued ceasefire talks on July 7. The Israeli Prime Minister’s office confirmed that Israeli negotiators met with mediators in Doha and would travel to Egypt on July 11.[23] Hamas claimed that it had not received a new proposal or additional information from the international mediators’ talks with Israel.[24]

International mediators are reportedly considering using 2,500 US-trained Palestinian Authority (PA) supporters from the Gaza Strip as an interim governing force in the Gaza Strip.[25] It remains unclear how the United States would train the Gaza Strip–based PA supporters. The governance force plan is notable given that Hamas reportedly said it is “prepared to relinquish authority to the interim governance arrangement” in the event of a ceasefire.[26] This force would enable the implementation of the long-negotiated three-phase ceasefire plan that orders the staggered release of hostages, an interim ceasefire, an IDF withdrawal, and the eventual reconstruction of the Gaza Strip. A US official said that Israel and Hamas have agreed to “the framework” but that details on implementation still need to be negotiated.[27] Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that Israeli negotiators spoke to mediators in Qatar about “ways to implement the outline,” which supports the US official’s statement that the parties have agreed to a framework.[28]

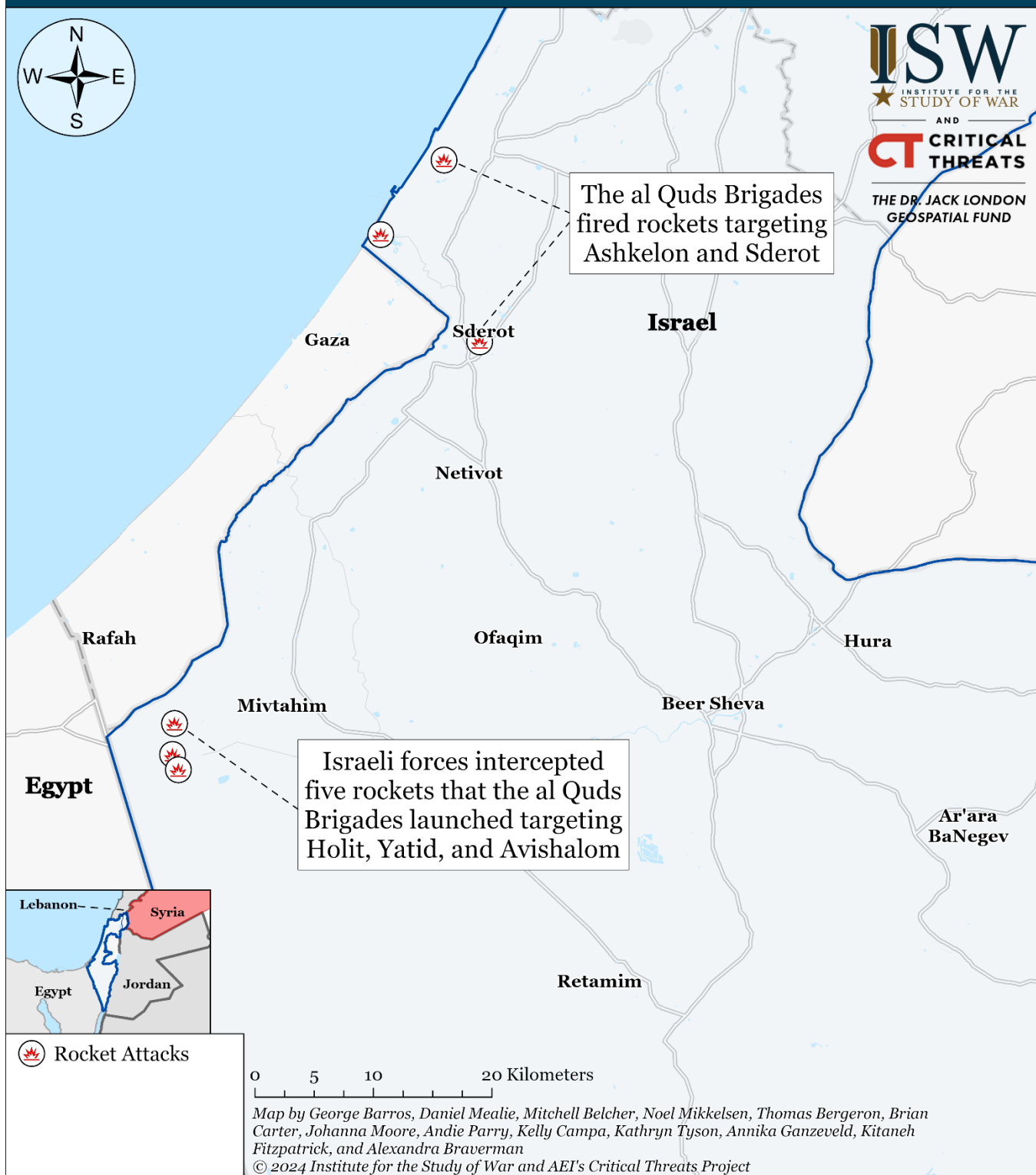
Hamas has previously undermined Israeli attempts to set up alternative governance structures in the Gaza Strip and will likely continue to suppress Israeli-organized political alternatives. The lack of security for Palestinians involved in Israeli-organized alternatives to Hamas makes establishing a non-Hamas governing authority more difficult. Hamas has a long history of killing and suppressing dissidents and political alternatives, including members of local Gazan clans.[29] An attempt to set up an alternative governance structure will necessitate the provision of security to protect the members from Hamas. The Israeli national security adviser said on June 25 that the IDF will replace Hamas in the northern Gaza Strip “in the coming days,” suggesting confidence that an unspecified force will take over despite Hamas’ continued presence.[30]

Palestinian militias in the Gaza Strip conducted at least seven rocket attacks targeting towns and IDF sites in southern Israel on July 11.[31] The al Quds Brigades fired a barrage of rockets targeting three sites east of Rafah.[32] The IDF intercepted five rockets launched from Rafah targeting southern Israeli towns.[33] The IDF 162nd Division shortly thereafter directed strikes targeting the Palestinian fighters who launched the rockets.[34] The IDF 215th Fire Brigade later directed airstrikes and fired artillery targeting other Palestinian fighters in the area of the launch site.[35]

The al Quds Brigades, al Nasser Salah ad Din Brigades, and Abdul Qadir al Husseini Brigades claimed rocket attacks targeting four sites north of the Gaza Strip.[36] The al Quds Brigades fired a rocket barrage targeting Ashdod.[37] Israeli Army Radio reported that a red alert was issued in Moshav Nir, near Ashkelon, for the first time since January 2024.[38]

Attacks into Israel from the Gaza Strip

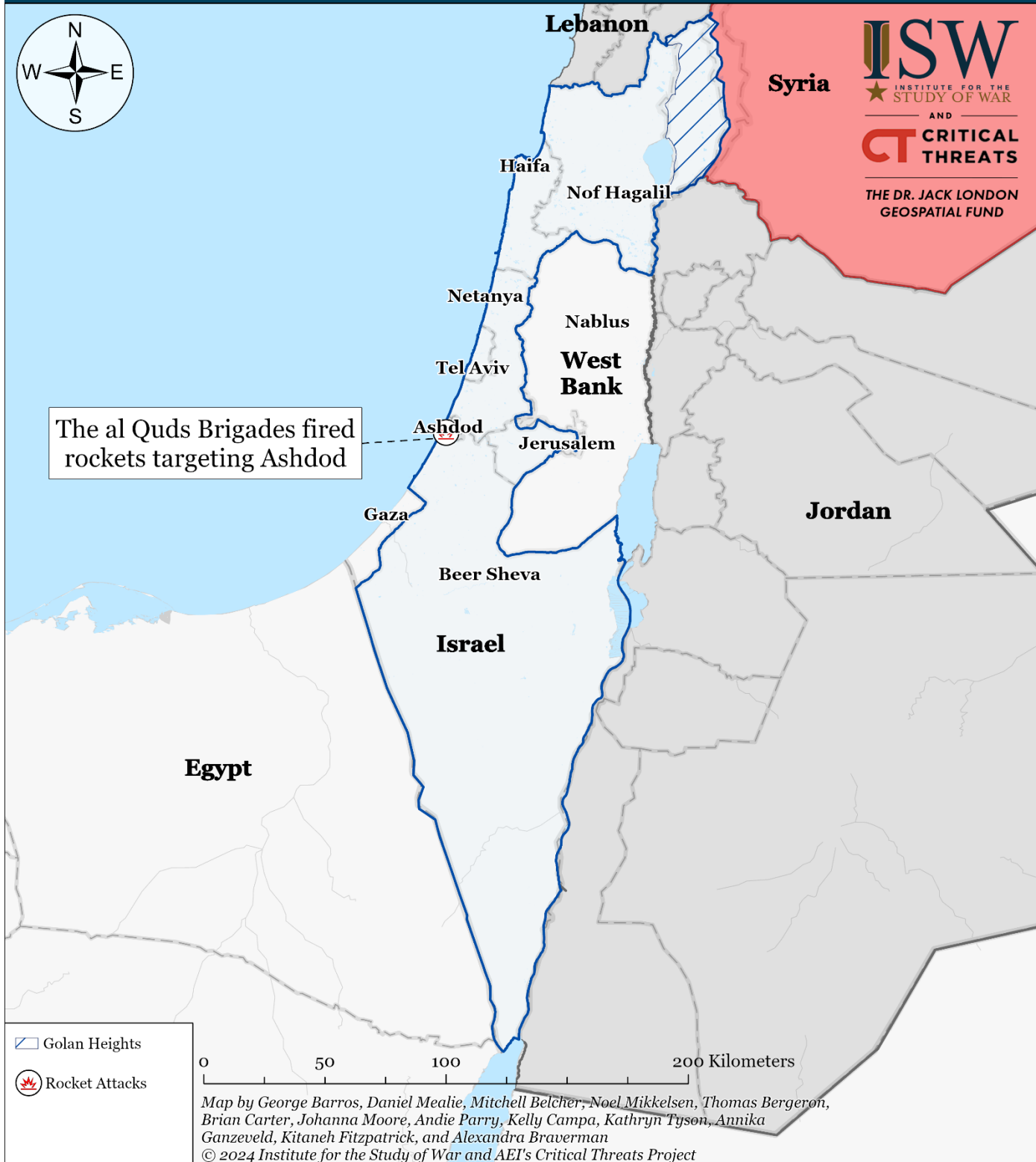
As of July 11, 2024, 2:00 PM ET



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

Indirect Fire Attacks into Israel from Gaza

As of July 11, 2024, 2:00 PM ET



West Bank

Axis of Resistance objectives:

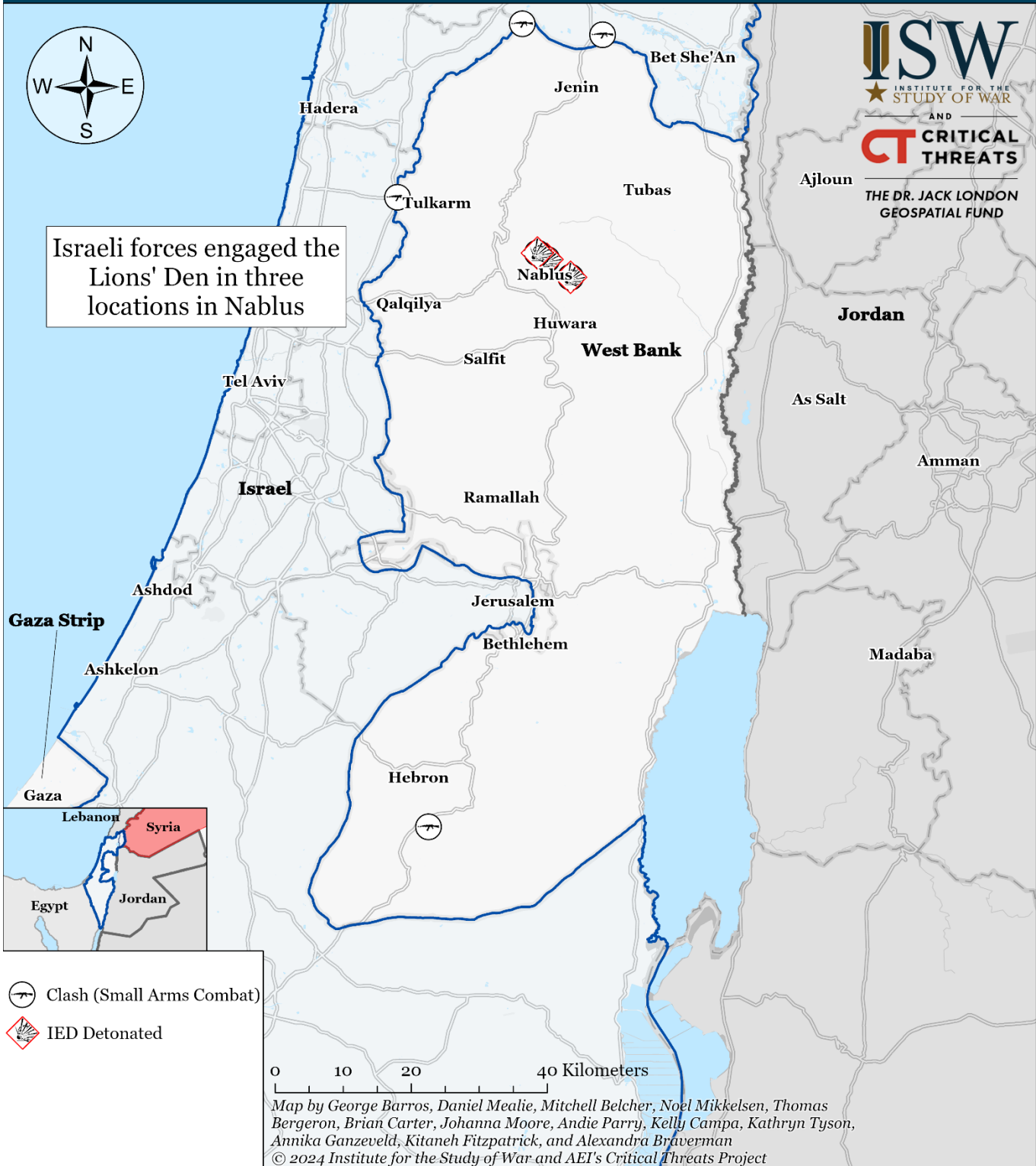
- Establish the West Bank as a viable front against Israel

Israeli forces have engaged Palestinian fighters in at least seven locations in the West Bank since CTP-ISW's last data cut-off on July 10.[39] Hamas-affiliated media reported that the Lions' Den conducted small arms and improvised explosive device (IED) attacks targeting Israeli forces in three locations in Nablus on July 11.[40] The Lions' Den—a West Bank militia based in Nablus—last conducted a small arms attack targeting an Israeli checkpoint in Nablus in April 2024, according to Palestinian media.[41]

The US Treasury Department imposed sanctions on eight entities for undermining security in the West Bank on July 11.[42] The sanctions targeted an “Israeli violent extremist organization, three Israeli individuals, and four outposts connected to violence” in the West Bank.[43] Three of the Israeli outposts are owned by Israelis whom the United States previously sanctioned for violence in the West Bank.[44] The US Treasury Department said that settlers from the outposts have engaged in acts of violence against Palestinians or dispossessed local Palestinians from their land. Two of the sanctioned individuals are leaders of Tsav 9, which is an Israeli extremist organization that has blocked humanitarian aid convoys traveling toward the Gaza Strip. The United States sanctioned Tsav 9 in June 2024.[45]

Significant Activity in the West Bank

As of July 11, 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

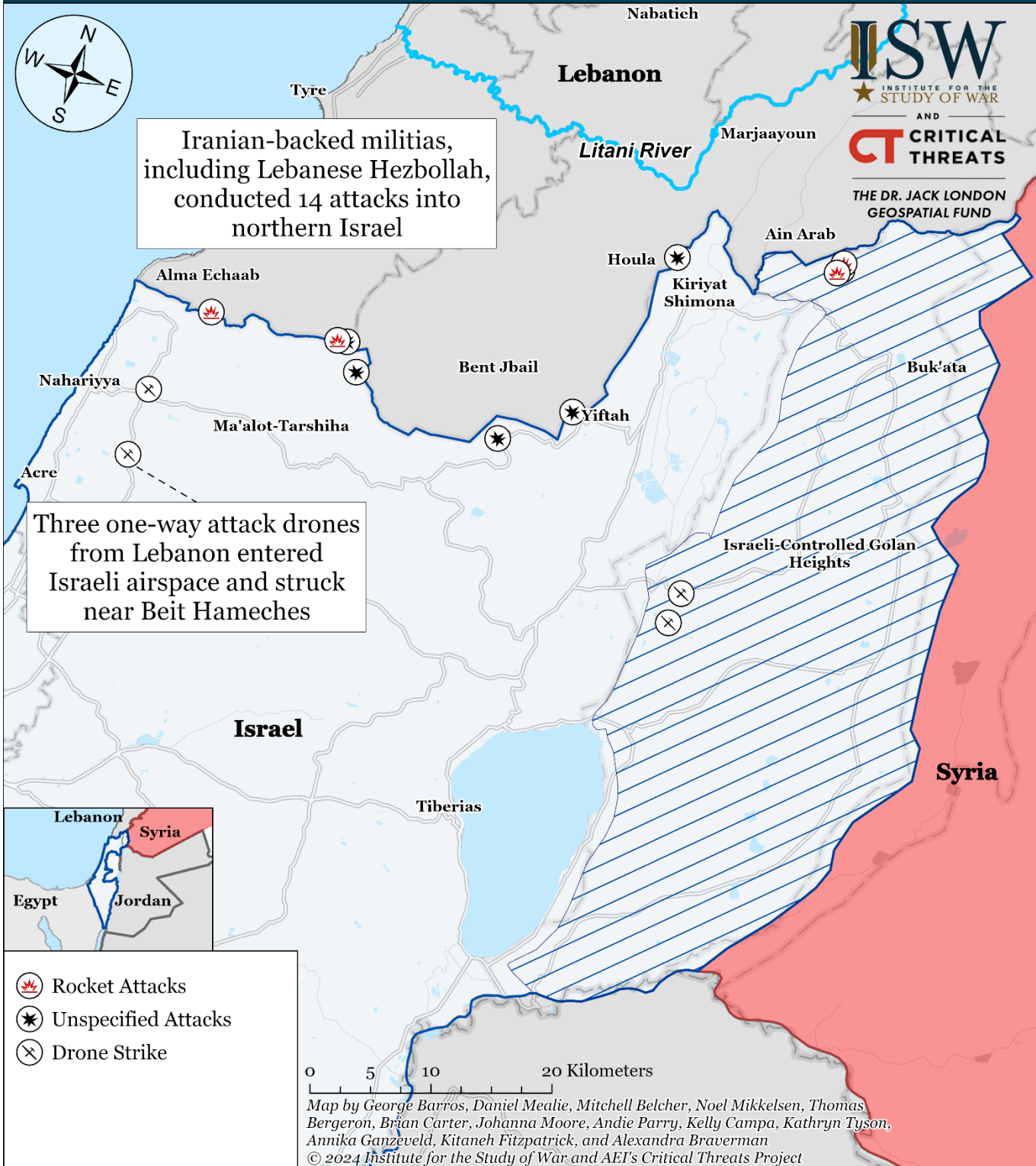
Iranian-backed militias, including Lebanese Hezbollah, have conducted at least 14 attacks into northern Israel since CTP-ISW's last data cutoff on July 10.[46] The IDF reported that approximately three one-way attack drones from Lebanon entered Israeli airspace and struck near Beit Hameches.[47] The drone attack injured an IDF soldier.[48] An Israeli military correspondent separately reported that a one-way attack drone struck an unspecified target in Kabri.[49]

Golani Regional Council head Uri Kellner requested on July 11 that the IDF expand air defense coverage in the Golan Heights to include territory surrounding IDF bases and main roads currently defined as “open areas.”[50] Kellner’s request comes after Hezbollah rocket fire killed a couple driving through the Golan Heights on July 9.[51] The Iron Dome air defense system is designed to only target munitions that it has determined will impact within its defined area of coverage.[52] An initial investigation published by the IDF Home Front Command found that IDF GPS jamming, intended to disrupt Hezbollah attacks, reportedly interfered with the couple’s ability to receive attack warnings.[53] The IDF Northern Command proposed revisions to the current attack warning system to allow users to receive notifications for a selected area of interest versus the location of the phone itself, bypassing the GPS jamming error.[54]

IDF Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Herzi Halevi met with the IDF Northern Command Commander Major General Uri Gordin, the Galilee Formation Commander Brigadier General Shay Clafar, and other Galilee Formation commanders on July 10 to hold a situational assessment of the Israel-Lebanon border.[55] Halevi urged Israeli forces on the border to increase the “difficulty” on Hezbollah.[56] Halevi separately met with the head of Metula’s town council David Azoulai.

Attacks into Northern Israel from Lebanon

As of July 11, 2024 at 2:00 PM ET



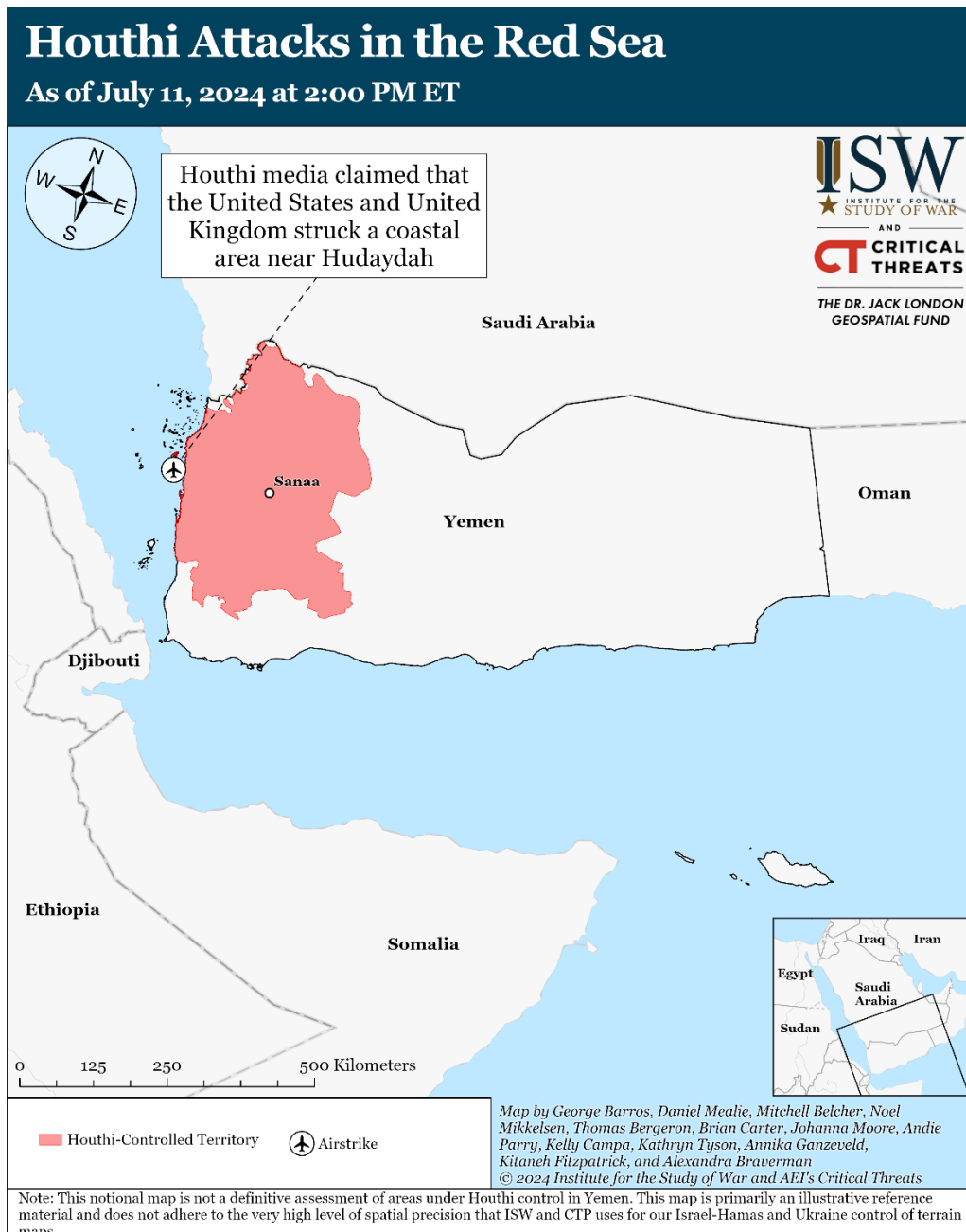
Recorded reports of attacks; CTP-ISW cannot independently verify impact.

Iran and Axis of Resistance

The Houthis issued renewed threats against Saudi Arabia for continuing “economic aggression” against Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen. Houthi supreme leader Abdulmalik al Houthi gave a speech on July 11 claiming Saudi Arabia is conducting acts of economic aggression “as a result of American pressure” and that the Houthis remain steadfast in their resolve to respond to any Saudi escalation.[57] The Houthis threatened to strike sensitive Saudi infrastructure on July 8 by publishing aerial photographs of major Saudi airports and maritime ports.[58]

US Central Command (CENTCOM) intercepted two Houthi drones and one Houthi unmanned surface vessel in the Red Sea on July 10.[59] CENTCOM determined that the drones and the unmanned surface vessel threatened US, coalition, and merchant vessels in the area.

Houthi media claimed on July 11 that the United States and United Kingdom conducted five airstrikes targeting Ras Issa village in al Salif district, Hudaydah, Yemen.[60]



Iran's Law Enforcement Command Border Guard Commander Brigadier General Ahmad Ali Goudarzi attended the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Border Guard Organization's 10th summit in Shanghai on July 10. [61] Goudarzi reaffirmed Iranian commitment to the Shanghai treaty on "Deepening Military Trust in Border Regions," with other member states, most notably China and Russia.[62] SCO members states also discussed counterterrorism and anti-trafficking measures.[63]

Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf attended the BRICS parliamentary forum in St. Petersburg, Russia, on July 11.[64] The parliament speakers discussed alternative currencies to the US dollar for trade, and inter-BRICS banking, transportation, and energy deals. Ghalibaf referred to the recent financial agreement between Iran and Russia as "one of the successful examples of cooperation to de-dollarization." [65] Ghalibaf also met with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Russian State Duma President Viacheslav Valodin separately on the sidelines of the forum to confer on bilateral relations.[66]

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[9] <https://t.me/sarayaps/18302>; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/2672>; https://t.me/elaqsa_1965/6790; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/2673>; https://t.me/elaqsa_1965/6792; https://t.me/kataeb_moqawma/4348

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