

Iran Update



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May 4, 2024, 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. 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.

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.

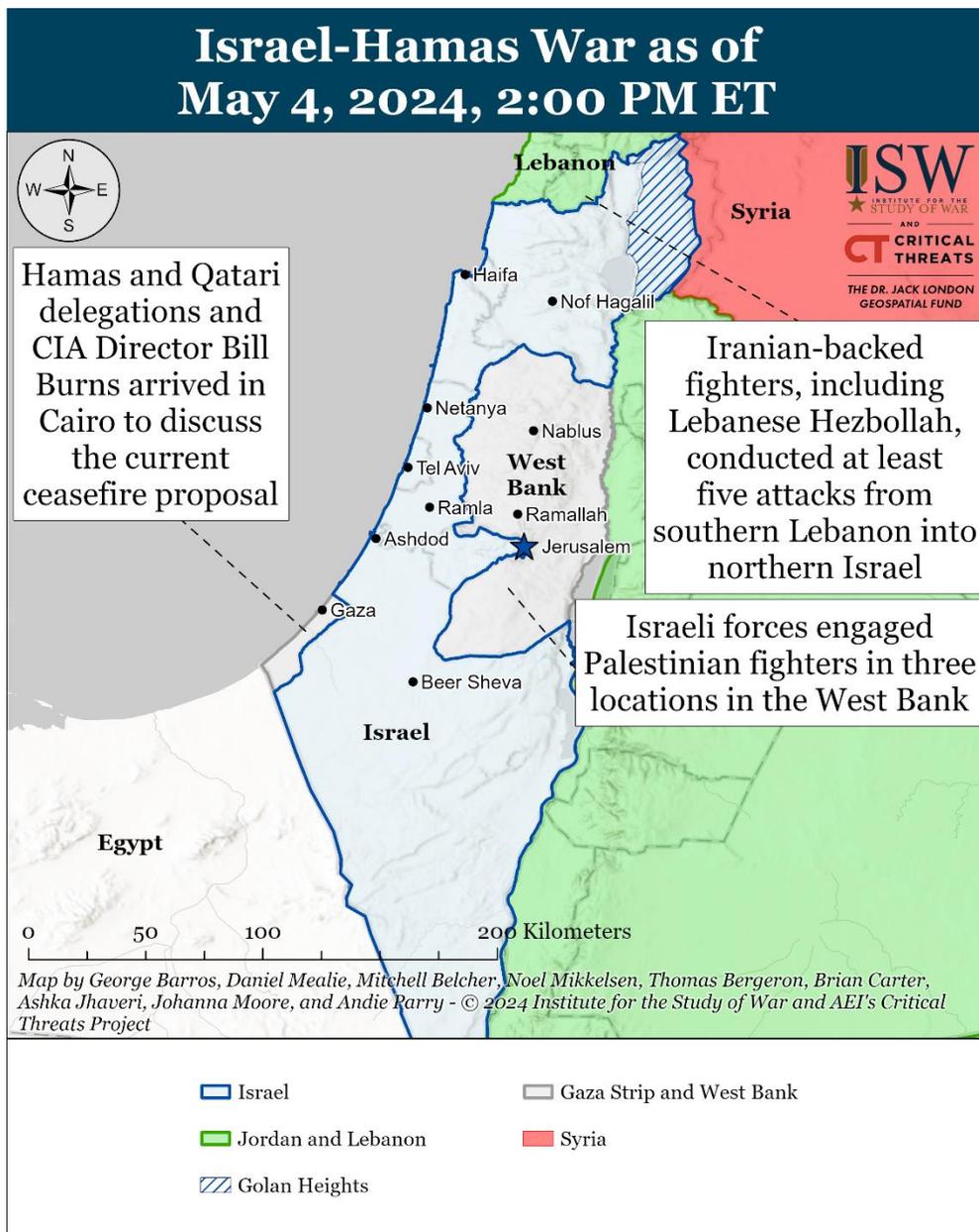
We do not report in detail on war crimes because these activities are well-covered in Western media and do not directly affect the military operations we are assessing and forecasting. We utterly condemn violations of the laws of armed conflict and the Geneva Conventions and crimes against humanity even though we do not describe them in these reports.

CTP-ISW will publish abbreviated updates on May 4 and 5, 2024. Detailed coverage will resume on Monday, May 6, 2024.

Hamas and Qatari delegations arrived in Cairo to discuss the current ceasefire proposal on May 4. [1] Hamas is expected to present an official response to the proposal during the discussions. [2] Arab mediators told the *Wall Street Journal* that the head of Hamas in the Gaza Strip, Yahya Sinwar, said on May 3 that the proposed deal is the closest deal to Hamas' demands so far, but Sinwar raised several conditions. [3] Hamas Political Bureau member Ghazi Hamad said that the group is still considering the proposal and considering its response. [4] Senior Hamas official Mahmoud Mardawi told Palestinian media on May 3 that Hamas is skeptical that Israel will implement the ceasefire deal given internal Israeli politics. [5] Israel has not sent a delegation to participate in the talks, but an unnamed Israeli official said that Israel will send a delegation to Cairo if there is “positive movement” on the Hamas side regarding a deal. [6]

Key Takeaways:

- **Gaza Strip:** Four Palestinian militias conducted at least eight indirect fire attacks targeting Israeli forces along the Netzarim corridor on May 3 and 4.
- **Ceasefire Negotiations:** Hamas is expected to present an official response to the proposal during the current ceasefire talks. A senior Hamas official said that Hamas is skeptical Israel will implement the ceasefire given internal Israeli politics.
- **West Bank:** Israeli forces have engaged Palestinian fighters in at least three locations in the West Bank since CTP-ISW's last data cutoff on May 3.
- **Lebanon:** Iranian-backed fighters, including Lebanese Hezbollah, have conducted at least five attacks from southern Lebanon into northern Israel since CTP-ISW's last data cutoff on May 3.



Gaza Strip

Axis of Resistance objectives:

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

Four Palestinian militias conducted at least eight indirect fire attacks targeting Israeli forces along the Netzarim corridor on May 3 and 4.^[7] Israeli forces have established forward positions along the Netzarim corridor to facilitate future raids into the northern Gaza Strip.^[8] Palestinian militias have claimed almost daily attacks targeting Israeli forces near the Netzarim corridor since April 18.^[9]

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) struck Palestinian militia infrastructure in the central Gaza Strip on May 4. The IDF Air Force, in coordination with the 215th Artillery Brigade (162nd Division) conducted airstrikes targeting mortar launchers in an unspecified area in the central Gaza Strip.^[10] The IDF Navy struck unspecified targets in the central Gaza Strip to support the IDF 99th Division there.^[11]

The IDF Air Force struck Palestinian militia infrastructure and other unspecified targets in the southern Gaza Strip on May 4. The IDF Air Force conducted airstrikes targeting a Hamas rocket launcher in an unspecified area in the southern Gaza Strip.^[12] The IDF Air Force struck unspecified targets near a launch site in Khan Younis.^[13] The IDF said that it conducted the strikes after it identified an unspecified launch from the area towards Ein Hashlosha, which fell in an open area.^[14]

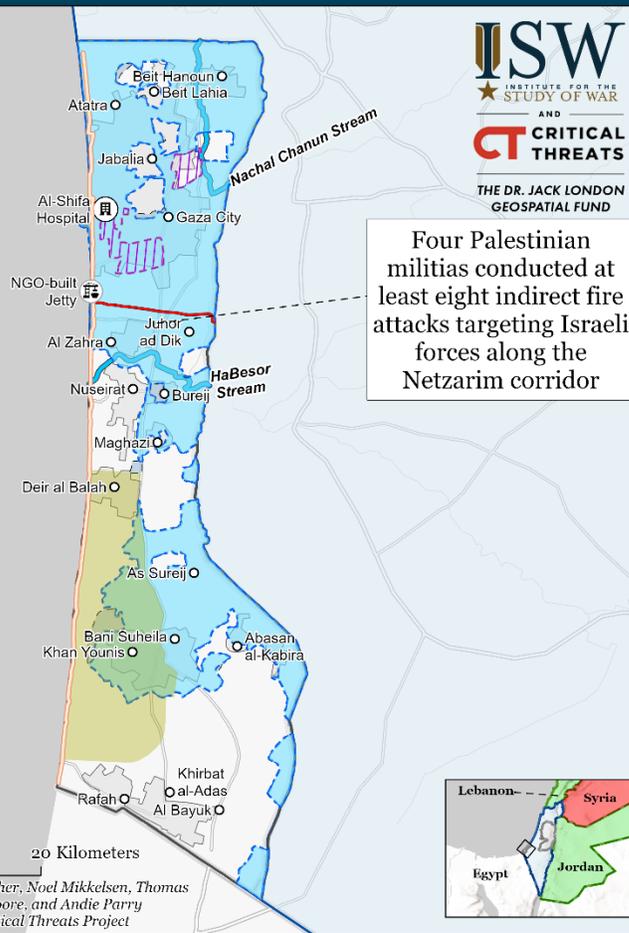
Reported Israeli Ground Operations in the Gaza Strip as of May 4, 2024, 2:00 PM ET



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Four Palestinian militias conducted at least eight indirect fire attacks targeting Israeli forces along the Netzarim corridor

The IDF Air Force struck a Hamas rocket launcher in an unspecified area in the southern Gaza Strip



Map by George Barros, Daniel Mealie, Mitchell Belcher, Noel Mikkelsen, Thomas Bergeron, Brian Carter, Ashka Jhaveri, Johanna Moore, and Andie Parry
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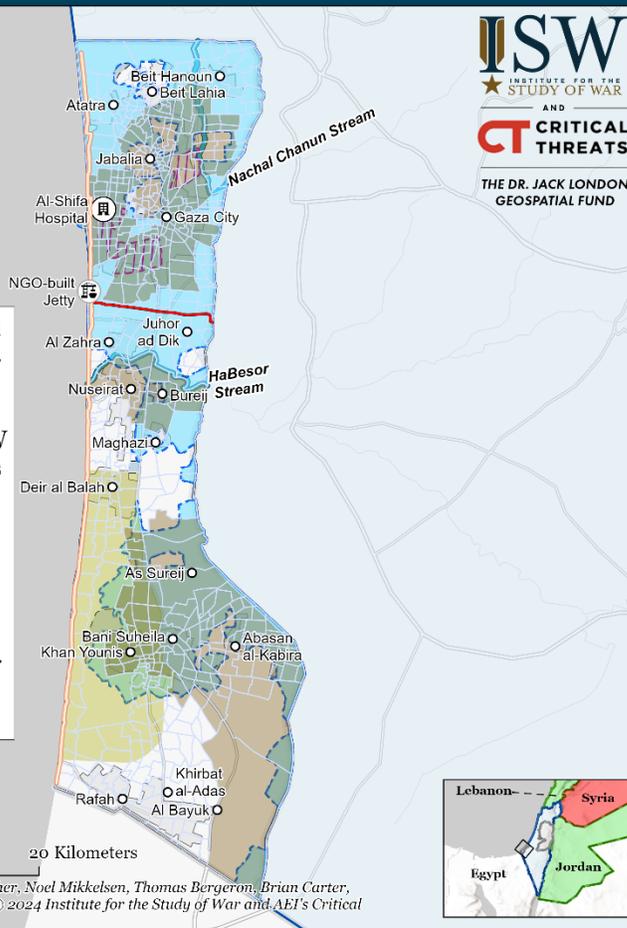
- Israel
- Jordan and Lebanon
- Syria
- Reported Israeli Clearing Operations*
- Claimed Furthest Israeli Advances
- Areas Reportedly Infiltrated by Palestinian Militias
- Al-Mawasi Humanitarian Zone
- IDF-Declared Humanitarian Corridor on Road 230
- Israeli-Built Highway Route 749
- Significant Water Obstacles
- Densely Urban Areas
- 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 May 4, 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)



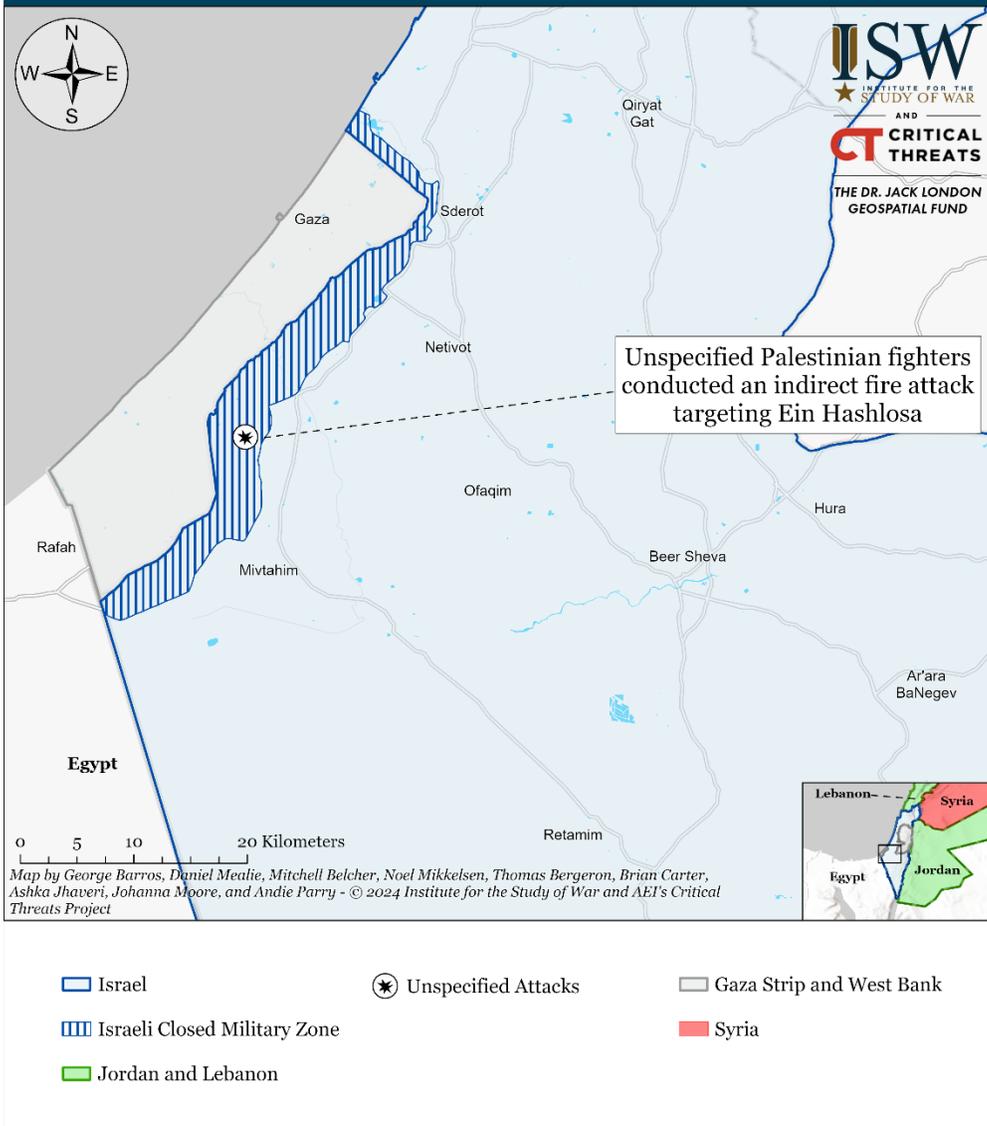
Map by George Barros, Daniel Mealie, Mitchell Belcher, Noel Mikkelsen, Thomas Bergeron, Brian Carter, Ashka Jhaveri, Johanna Moore, and Andie Parry - © 2024 Institute for the Study of War and AEI's Critical Threats Project

- Israel
- Gaza Strip
- Jordan and Lebanon
- Syria
- Reported Israeli Clearing Operations*
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- IDF-Declared Humanitarian Corridor on Road 230
- Israeli-Built Highway Route 749
- Israeli Announced Evacuation Zones
- Densely Urban Areas
- Significant Water Obstacles

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Unspecified Palestinian fighters conducted an indirect fire attack targeting Ein Hashlosha.[15]

Attacks into Israel from Gaza as of May 4, 2024, 2:00 PM ET



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

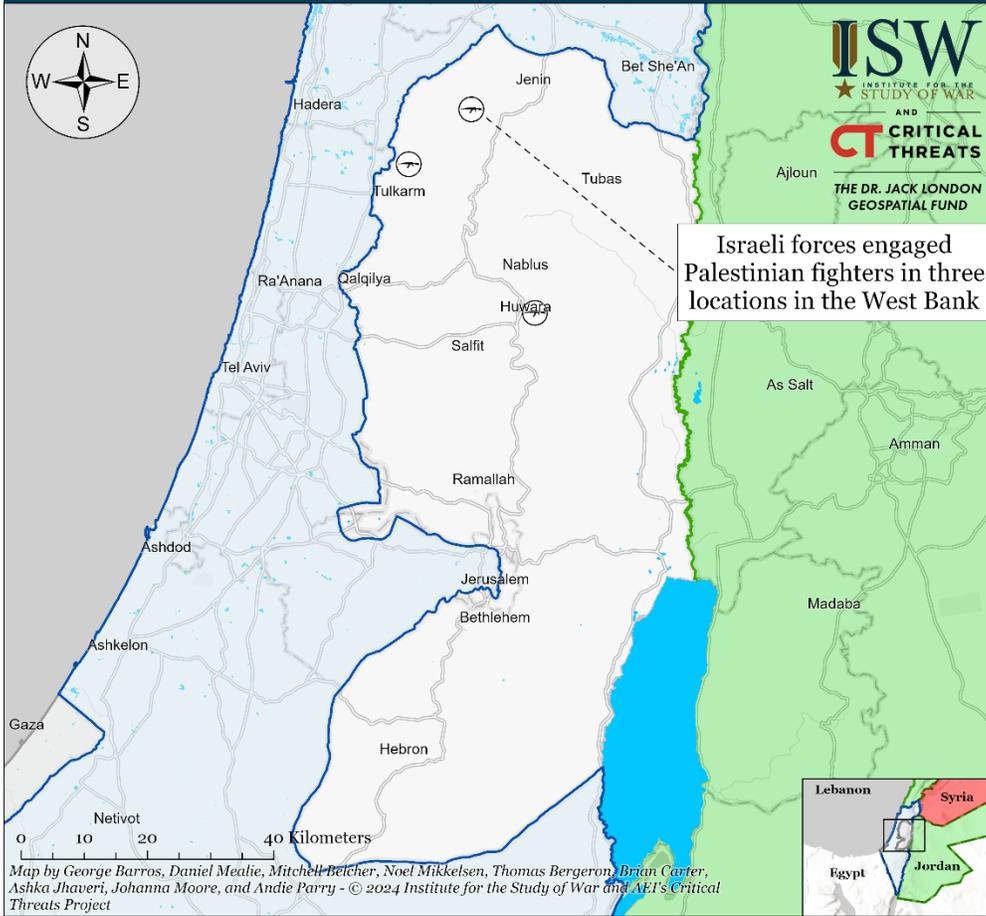
West Bank

Axis of Resistance objectives:

- Establish the West Bank as a viable front against Israel

Israeli forces have engaged Palestinian fighters in at least three locations in the West Bank since CTP-ISW's last data cutoff on May 3.^[16] Israeli security forces conducted an overnight raid in Deir al Ghusoun targeting a militia cell barricaded in a building.^[17] Israeli forces fired on the building and demolished it.^[18] Local footage showed Israeli forces raiding the building and the arrest of at least one individual.^[19] The al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade targeted Israeli forces with "machine guns" and improvised explosive devices (IED) during the raid.^[20] The IDF killed five Palestinian fighters.^[21]

Clashes in the West Bank as of May 4, 2024, 2:00 PM ET



- Israel
- Jordan and Lebanon
- Gaza Strip and West Bank
- Syria
- Clash (Small Arms Combat)

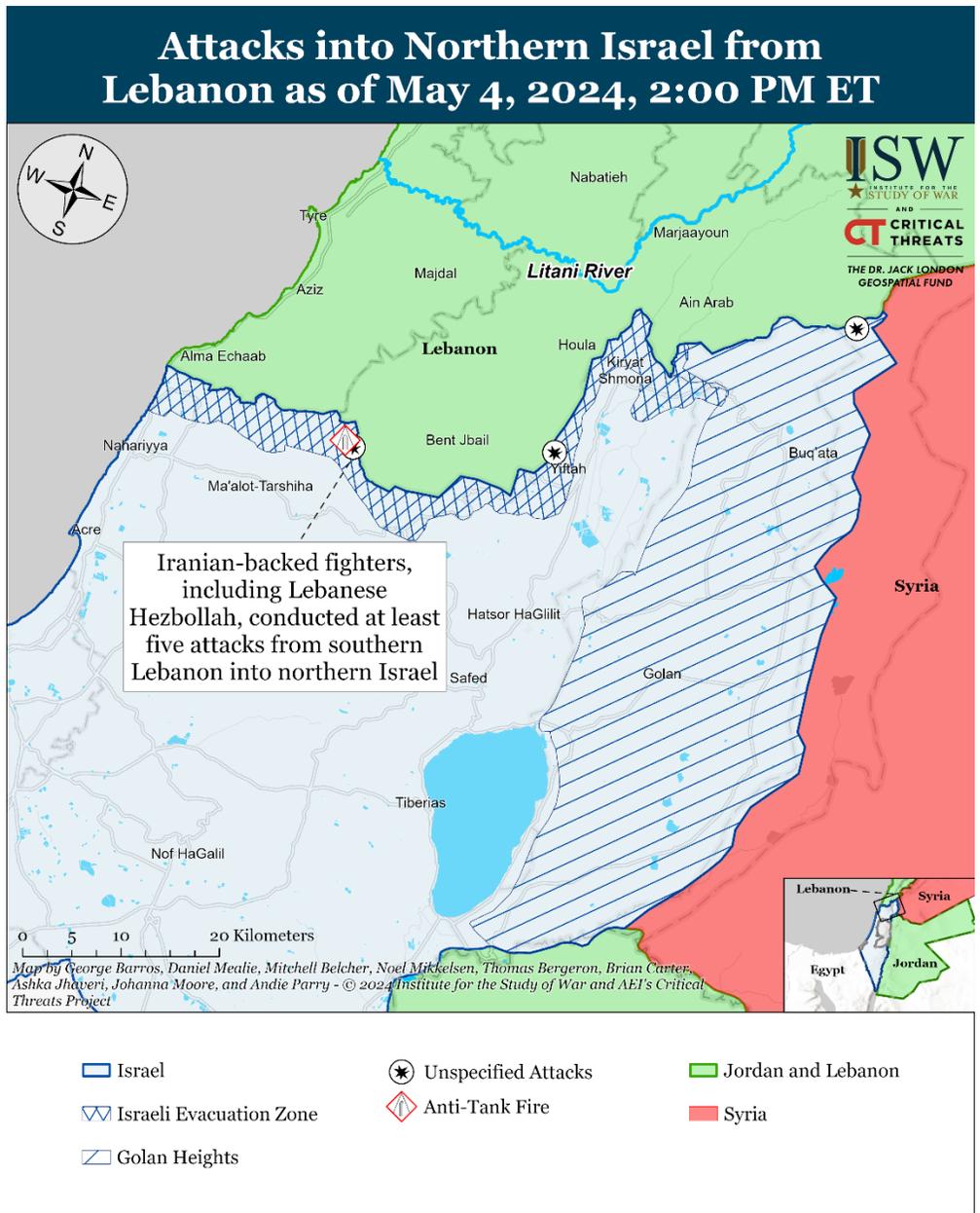
This map is not an exhaustive depiction of clashes and demonstrations in the West Bank.

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 fighters, including Lebanese Hezbollah, have conducted at least five attacks from southern Lebanon into northern Israel since CTP-ISW's last data cutoff on May 3.[22]



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

Iran and Axis of Resistance

Nothing Significant to Report.



- [1] https://www.wsj.com/world/europe/gaza-cease-fire-talks-come-down-to-the-wire-in-cairo-7b8a5f51?mod=middle-east_news_article_pos1; <https://t.me/hamasps/20126>
- [2] <https://www.axios.com/2024/05/03/cia-director-hostage-ceasefire-talks>
- [3] https://www.wsj.com/world/europe/gaza-cease-fire-talks-come-down-to-the-wire-in-cairo-7b8a5f51?mod=middle-east_news_article_pos1
- [4] https://www.wsj.com/world/europe/gaza-cease-fire-talks-come-down-to-the-wire-in-cairo-7b8a5f51?mod=middle-east_news_article_pos1
- [5] <https://t.me/QudsN/400743>
- [6] https://www.wsj.com/world/europe/gaza-cease-fire-talks-come-down-to-the-wire-in-cairo-7b8a5f51?mod=middle-east_news_article_pos1; https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/israel-will-send-delegation-to-cairo-if-theres-positive-movement-on-deal-official/
- [7] <https://t.me/AymanGouda/6127>; https://t.me/kataeb_moqawma/4217; https://t.me/elaqsa_1965/6345; <https://t.me/AymanGouda/6129>; https://t.me/kataeb_moqawma/4218; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/1951>; <https://t.me/nedalps/4086>; https://t.me/khalaya_almujahidin/14637
- [8] <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-update-april-26-2024>
- [9] <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-update-may-1-2024>
- [10] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1786667923328631247>
- [11] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1786667926117875906>
- [12] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1786667923328631247>; <https://twitter.com/GLZRadio/status/1786667615609360517>
- [13] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1786667920203854307>
- [14] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1786667920203854307>
- [15] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1786667920203854307>
- [16] https://t.me/elaqsa_1965/6342 ; <https://t.me/QudsN/400740> ; <https://t.me/QudsN/401020>
- [17] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1786783047028822467> ; <https://twitter.com/manniefabian/status/1786674694701093371> ; <https://t.me/jeninqassamm/6886>
- [18] <https://t.me/jeninqassamm/6911> ; <https://twitter.com/manniefabian/status/1786674694701093371>
- [19] <https://t.me/jeninqassamm/6915> ; <https://t.me/jeninqassamm/6939> ; <https://twitter.com/manniefabian/status/1786674694701093371>
- [20] https://t.me/elaqsa_1965/6342
- [21] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1786783047028822467>
- [22] <https://t.me/mmirleb/3639> ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/3641> ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/3643> ; <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1786787758284919208>