

# Iran Update



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**November 2, 2024, Information Cutoff: 2:00 pm ET**

*The Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute and the Institute for the Study of War (ISW) publish the Iran Update, which provides insights into Iranian and Iranian-sponsored activities that undermine regional stability and threaten US forces and interests. 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.*

*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.*

*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.*

**The Iranian regime is continuing to signal that it will respond to the recent Israel Defense Forces (IDF) strikes into Iran on October 25, although the regime does not appear to have decided how it will respond.** Western officials believe that the regime is debating how and whether it should respond to the strikes, according to the Wall Street Journal.[1] Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei warned on November 2 that Iran will give a “tooth-breaking response” to Israel and the United States.[2] This warning comes after Khamenei issued an order on October 29 to the Iranian

Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), which is Iran's highest defense and foreign policy body, instructing the SNSC to prepare a retaliatory attack on Israel, according to the New York Times.[3] Former Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) officer and Parliamentary National Security and Foreign Policy Committee member Esmail Kowsari claimed on November 2 that the SNSC agreed on a "military response" to Israel that will involve Iran and its Axis of Resistance.[4] It is more likely that Kowsari would have insight into the SNSC's decision-making due to his deep personal relationships with top IRGC commanders rather than due to his position in the Parliamentary National Security and Foreign Policy Committee.[5] Kowsari's claim is consistent with Western media reports that Iran's retaliation could include Iranian-backed Iraqi militia drone and ballistic missile attacks targeting Israel.[6] Unspecified Iranian sources speaking to Qatari-owned, London-based al Araby al Jadeed denied on November 2 that Iran will launch an attack from Iraq, instead insisting that Iran will respond from Iranian territory.[7] These differing statements from Iranian officials likely reflect current debates within the regime about how the regime should respond to the Israeli strikes.

**The United States military is increasing its presence in the Middle East ahead of the departure of the USS *Abraham Lincoln* carrier strike group from the region in the next few months.**[8] US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin ordered the deployment of an unspecified number of additional ballistic missile defense destroyers, fighter squadron and tanker aircraft, and several U.S. Air Force B-52 bombers to the Middle East. AP reported, citing unspecified US officials, that the USS *Abraham Lincoln* carrier strike group is scheduled to leave the Middle East in the middle of November and return to its home port in San Diego.[9] The United States will still maintain the deployment of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missile defense system in Israel and the Amphibious Ready Group Marine Expeditionary Unit in the eastern Mediterranean area despite the imminent departure of the USS *Abraham Lincoln*. [10] Pentagon Press Secretary Major General Pat Ryder stated that these new deployments demonstrate the "flexible nature of U.S. global defense posture" to deploy world-wide on short notice.[11]

**The IDF deployed an additional brigade to Jabalia, northern Gaza Strip, on November 2.**[12] The IDF 900th Infantry Brigade started clearing operations in Jabalia on November 2. The IDF 900th Infantry Brigade is the IDF's largest infantry brigade, consisting of five battalions.[13] The 900th Infantry Brigade specializes in operations in urban environments against "guerilla" cells in the West Bank.[14] This is notable because Hamas' military wing in the Gaza Strip has been reduced to operating in small, independent guerilla cells. This makes the 900th Infantry Brigade well-suited to the task of destroying these cells, particularly within Jabalia City and Refugee Camp.

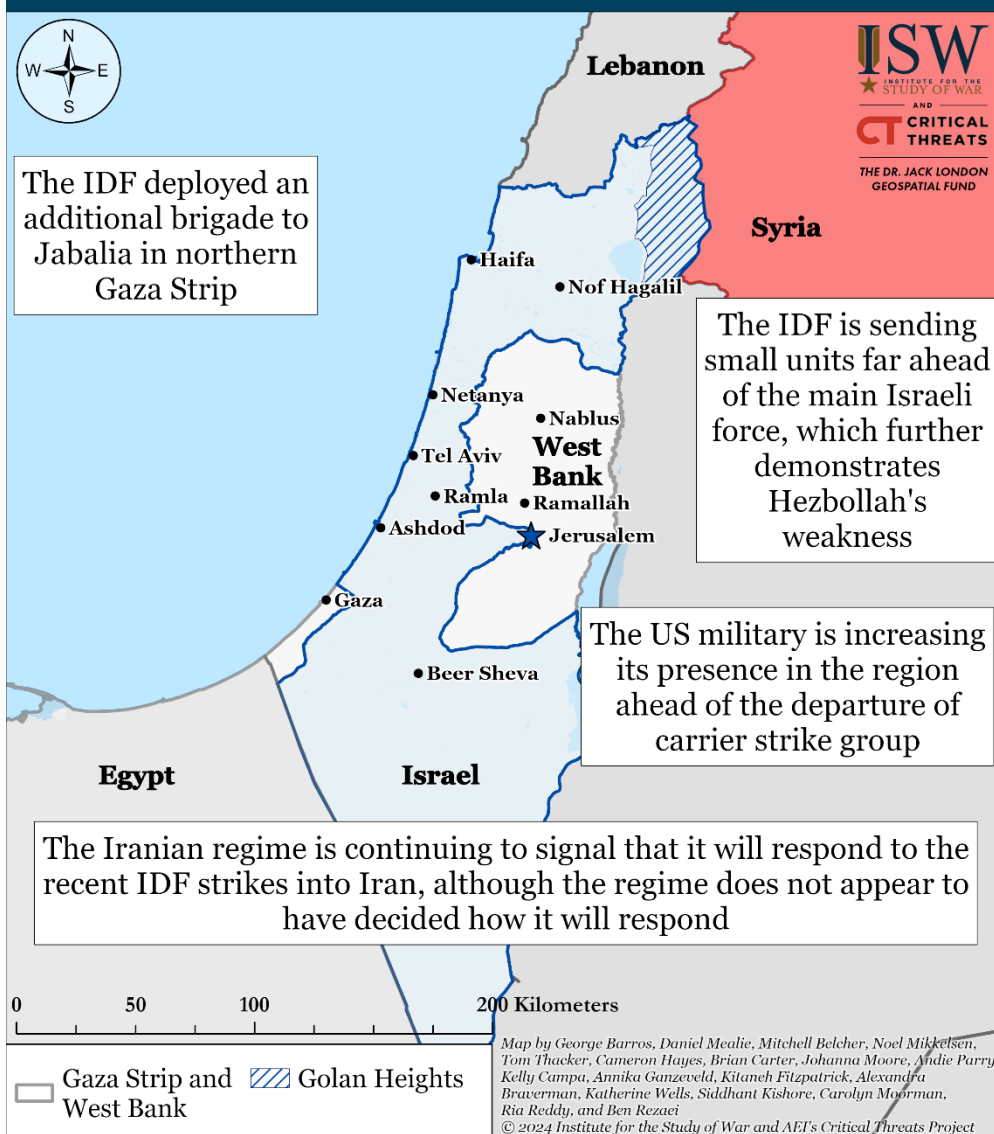
**The IDF is sending small units far ahead of the main Israeli force operating in Lebanon. That the IDF has the confidence to operate regular units in this way is a reflection of Hezbollah's relatively ineffective defense in these areas.** Israeli forces killed the commander of Hezbollah's coastal sector Mein Musa Az al Din and the commander of Hezbollah's Coastal Sector Artillery forces Hassan Majed Diab around Tyre on November 1.[15] Hezbollah previously claimed on November 1 that it blocked an Israeli reconnaissance force advancing through the Wadi Hamoul area, north of Alma al Shaab.[16] Commanders may choose to assign reconnaissance units to penetrate deeper into enemy territory due to "a decision to accept risk due to a low threat level." [17] CTP-ISW has previously observed that Hezbollah has mounted a disorganized and ineffective defense across

**Key Takeaways:**

- **Iranian Retaliation against Israel:** The Iranian regime is continuing to signal that it will respond to the recent Israel Defense Forces (IDF) strikes into Iran on October 25, although the regime does not appear to have decided how it will respond.
- **US Posture in the Middle East:** The United States military is increasing its presence in the Middle East ahead of the departure of the USS *Abraham Lincoln* carrier strike group from the region in the next few months.
- **Gaza Strip:** The IDF deployed the 900th Infantry Brigade to Jabalia, northern Gaza Strip, on November 2. This brigade, which specializes in operations against “guerilla” cells in the West Bank’s urban environments, would be well-suited to operations in Jabalia’s urban environment, where Hamas has been reduced to operating in small, independent guerilla cells.
- **Israeli Ground Operations in Lebanon:** The IDF is sending small units far ahead of the main Israeli force operating in Lebanon. That the IDF has the confidence to operate regular units in this way is a reflection of Hezbollah’s relatively ineffective defense in these areas.
- **Israeli Raids in Lebanon:** Israeli naval special operations forces captured a senior member of Hezbollah’s naval forces in Batroun, central Lebanon, according to an unspecified Israeli official.

# Key Takeaways in the October 7 War

As of November 2, 2024 at 2:00 PM ET



## Gaza Strip

### Axis of Resistance objectives:

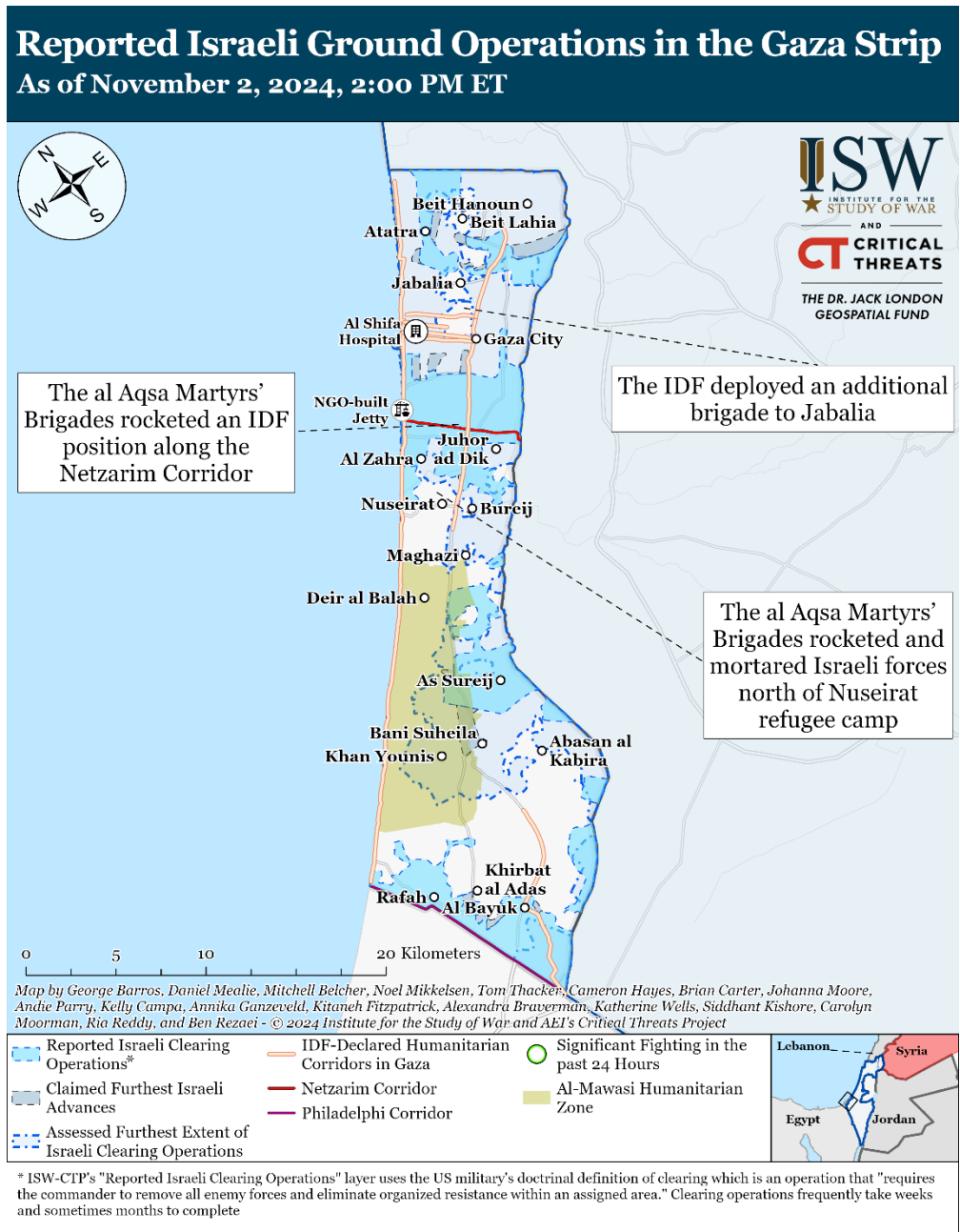
- Erode the will of the Israeli political establishment and public to sustain clearing operations in the Gaza Strip
- Reestablish Hamas as the governing authority in the Gaza Strip

**Unspecified Palestinian fighters fired a rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) targeting Israeli forces conducting clearing operations in Jabalia.[19]** The IDF identified and killed the fighters. The IDF also conducted airstrikes targeting several buildings in the northern Gaza Strip that Palestinian fighters were using for military purposes.[20]

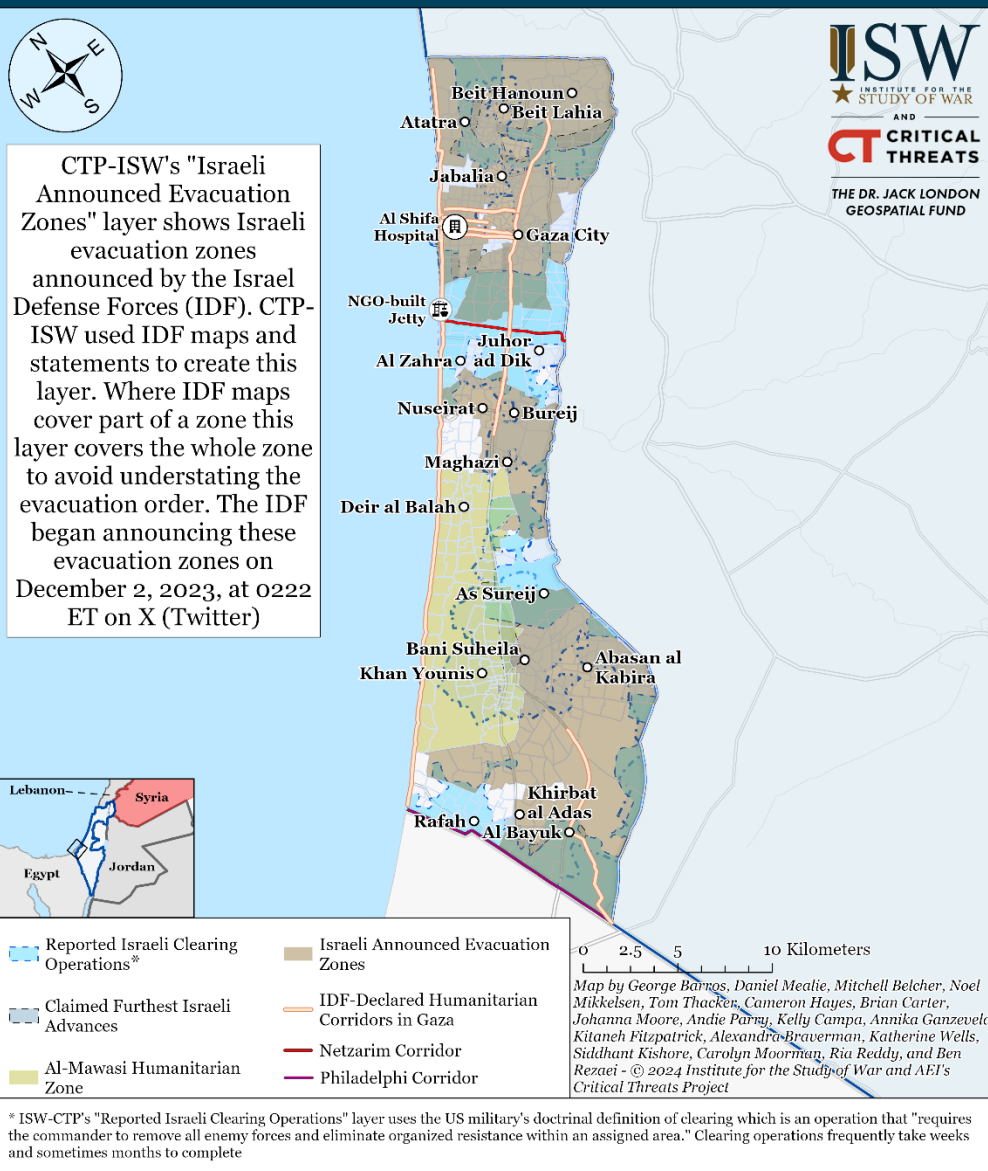
**The IDF 252nd Division continued operations in the central Gaza Strip on November 2.**[21] The al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades fired rockets and mortar shells targeting Israeli forces in two separate attacks north of Nuseirat Refugee Camp in the central Gaza Strip.[22]

**The al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades fired rockets targeting an IDF position along the Netzarim Corridor on November 2.**[23]

**Elements of the 143rd Division continued operations in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip on November 2.**[24]



# Israeli-Announced Evacuation Zones in the Gaza Strip As of November 2, 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 three locations in the West Bank since CTP-ISW's last data cut off on November 1.[25]** The Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) fired small arms targeting IDF personnel and vehicles near the border crossing between the West Bank and Muqeible, Israel, on November 1.[26] The al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades and PIJ fired small arms in two separate clashes targeting IDF personnel operating in Jaba, Jenin Governorate, on November 2.[27]

The al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades fired small arms and detonated IEDs targeting IDF special operations forces in the Balata refugee camp on November 2.[28]

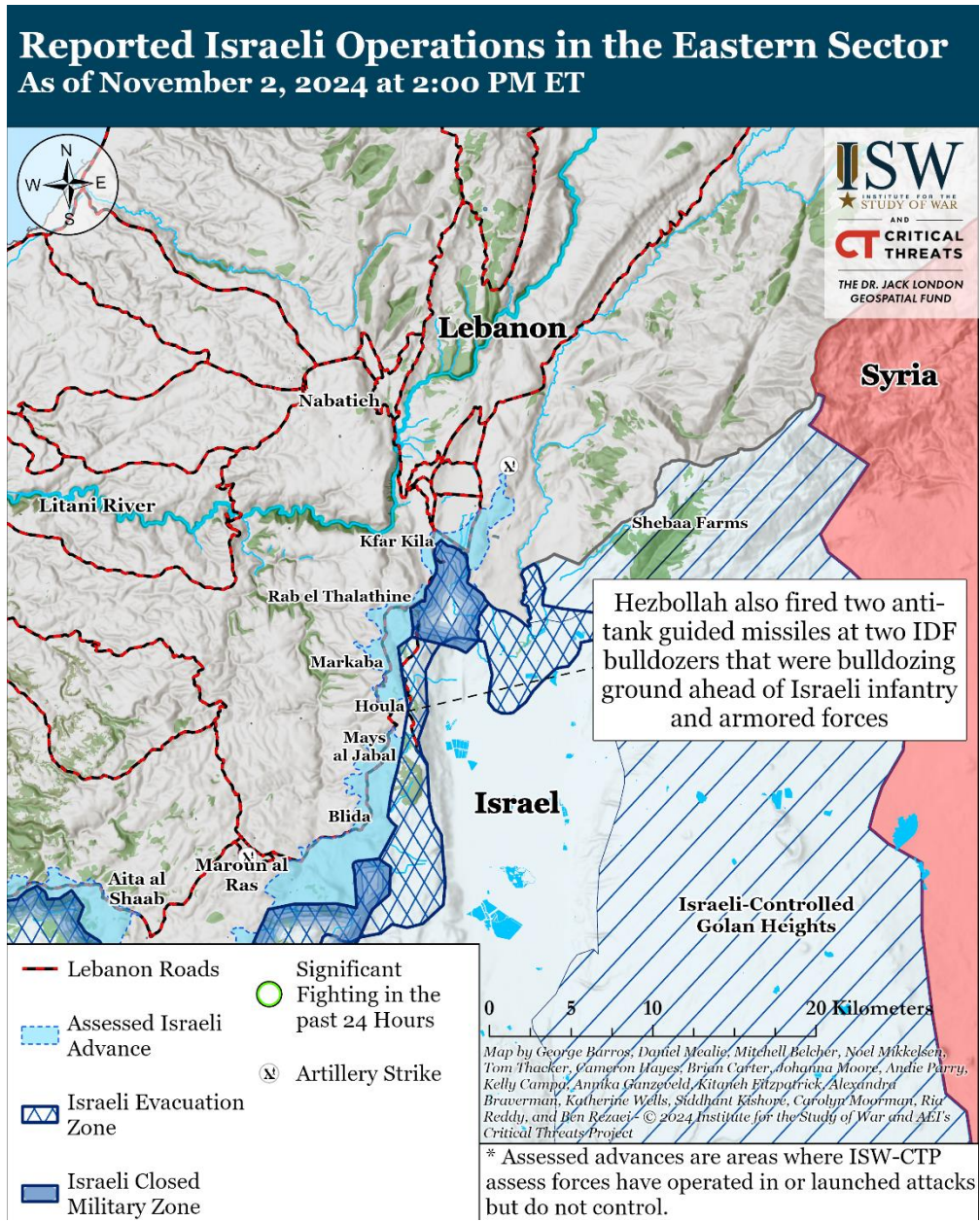


**Northern Israel and Lebanon**  
**Lebanese Hezbollah objectives:**

- End Israeli operations in the Gaza Strip
- Survive the October 7 War as a capable political and military organization with control over Lebanon

**Israeli forces continued clearing operations in southeastern Lebanon on November 2.** Hezbollah claimed two rocket attacks on November 2 targeting Israeli forces around Talat al Khazan,

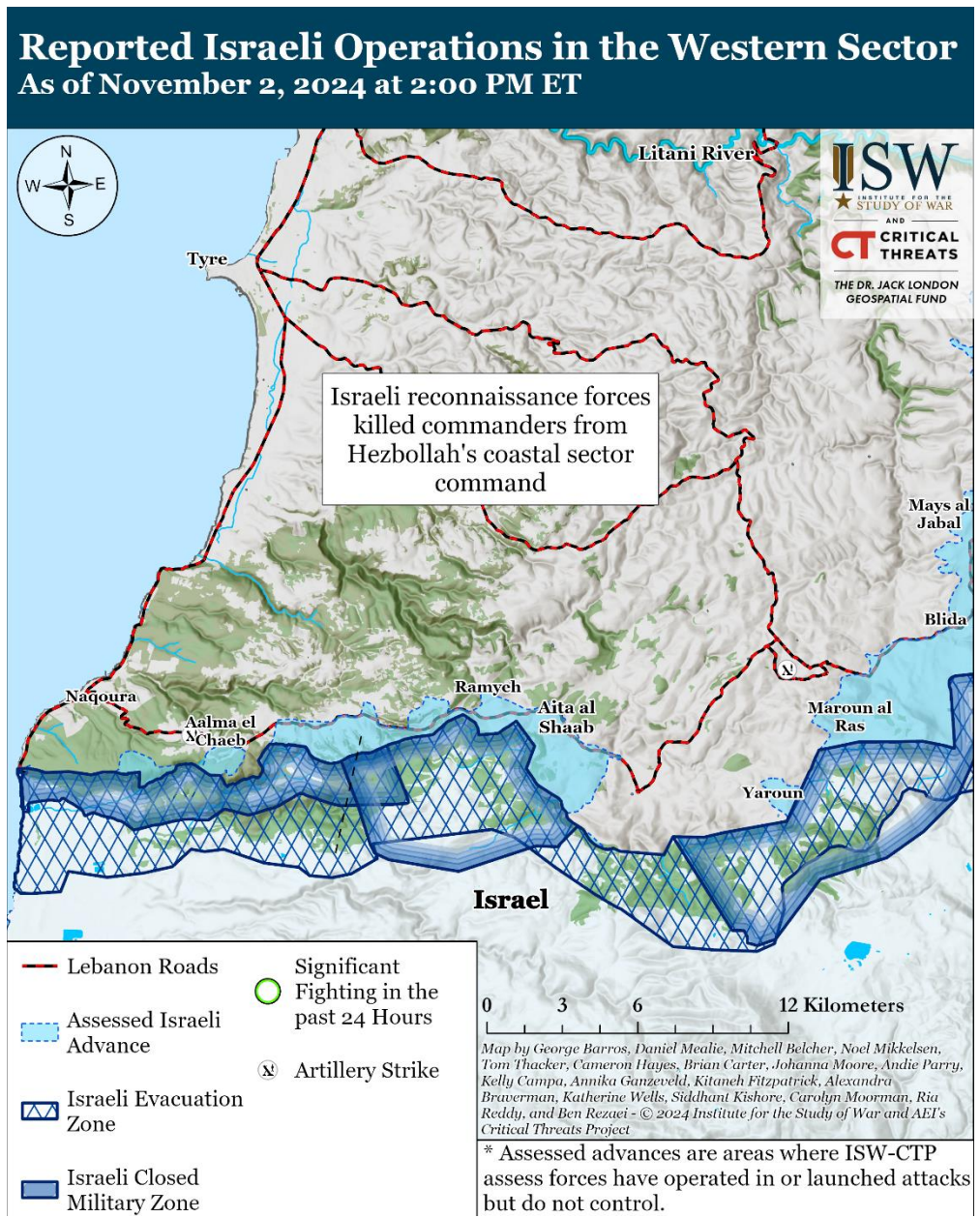
on the outskirts of Houla.[29] Hezbollah also fired two anti-tank guided missiles at two IDF bulldozers that were bulldozing ground ahead of Israeli infantry and armored forces.[30] Hezbollah claimed it forced the two bulldozers to retreat but provided no evidence to support its assertion. Hezbollah has used its media arms to claim that it is executing a coherent defense, though most evidence indicates that Hezbollah is failing to defend southern Lebanon. Hezbollah also claimed two separate rocket attacks targeting Israeli forces at Talat al Khazan.[31] The 91st Division continued clearing operations in southeastern Lebanon on November 2.[32] Israeli reconnaissance forces directed an airstrike targeting fighters operating in nearby buildings.[33]



**Israeli forces continued clearing operations in southwestern Lebanon on November 2.[34]** The IDF 146th Division directed an airstrike targeting Hezbollah fighters in an unspecified area of southwestern Lebanon.[35] The Hezbollah fighters were preparing to fire at an Israeli border town.



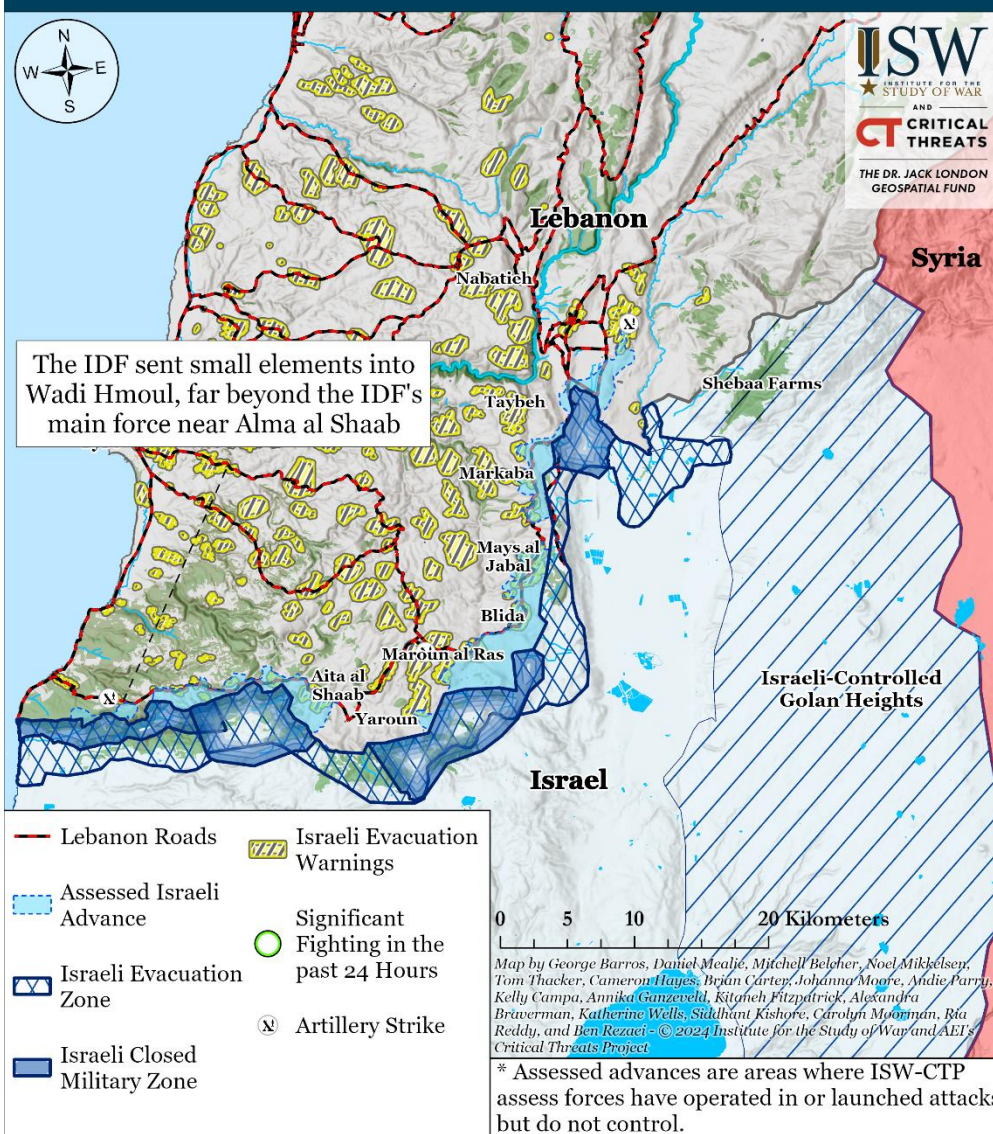
Hezbollah claimed one rocket attack targeting Israeli forces east of Maroun al Ras.[36] Lebanese media claimed Israeli forces fired artillery at an unspecified target near Bint Jbeil and Alma al Shaab.[37] Lebanese media separately reported that an IDF tank fired at an unspecified target near Jebbain and Tyre Harfa.[38]



**Israeli naval special operations forces captured a senior member of Hezbollah’s naval forces in Batroun, central Lebanon, according to an unspecified Israeli official.[39]** Israeli special operations forces reportedly captured the senior Hezbollah fighter to gather intelligence on Hezbollah’s naval activities.[40] Lebanese security footage reportedly showed the special operations forces capturing Amhaz.[41]

# Reported Israeli Operations in Lebanon

As of November 2, 2024 at 2:00 PM ET

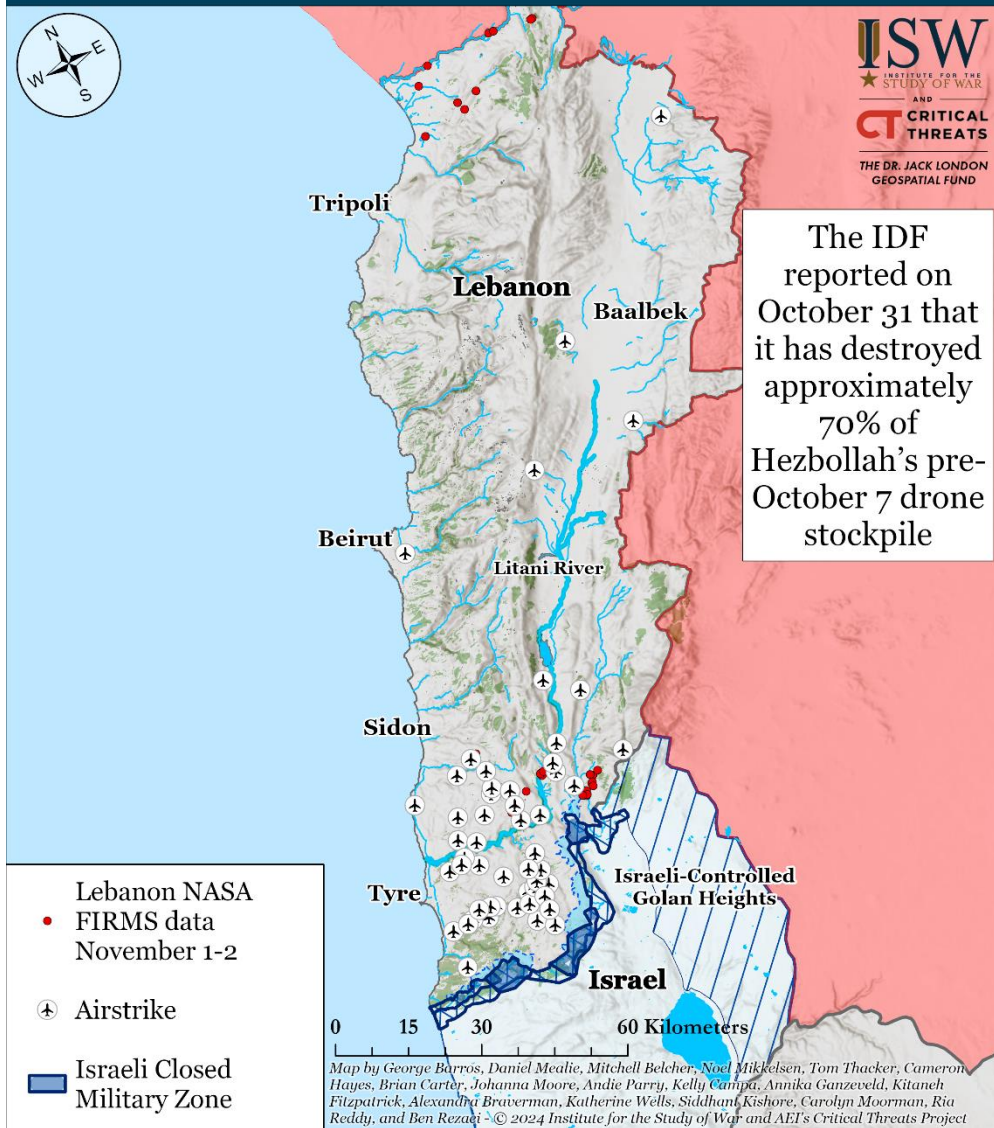


**Lebanese Transport Minister Ali Hamieh claimed an Israeli airstrike in northeastern Lebanon closed a border crossing with Syria.**[42] Hamieh claimed that the Lebanese government reopened the crossing to allow cars to pass following an Israeli airstrike in October, but added that the Lebanese government barred trucks from utilizing the crossing. The IDF has conducted airstrikes throughout the air campaign targeting border crossings and tunnels around the Lebanon-Syria border as part of an air interdiction effort designed to disrupt Hezbollah resupply.[43]

**The IDF reported on October 31 that it has destroyed approximately 70% of Hezbollah's pre-October 7 drone stockpile.**[44] The IDF estimates it has intercepted 82% of the approximately 1,300 drones Hezbollah has launched from Lebanon towards Israeli airspace.[45]

# Israeli Air Campaign in Lebanon

As of November 2, 2024 at 2:00 PM ET

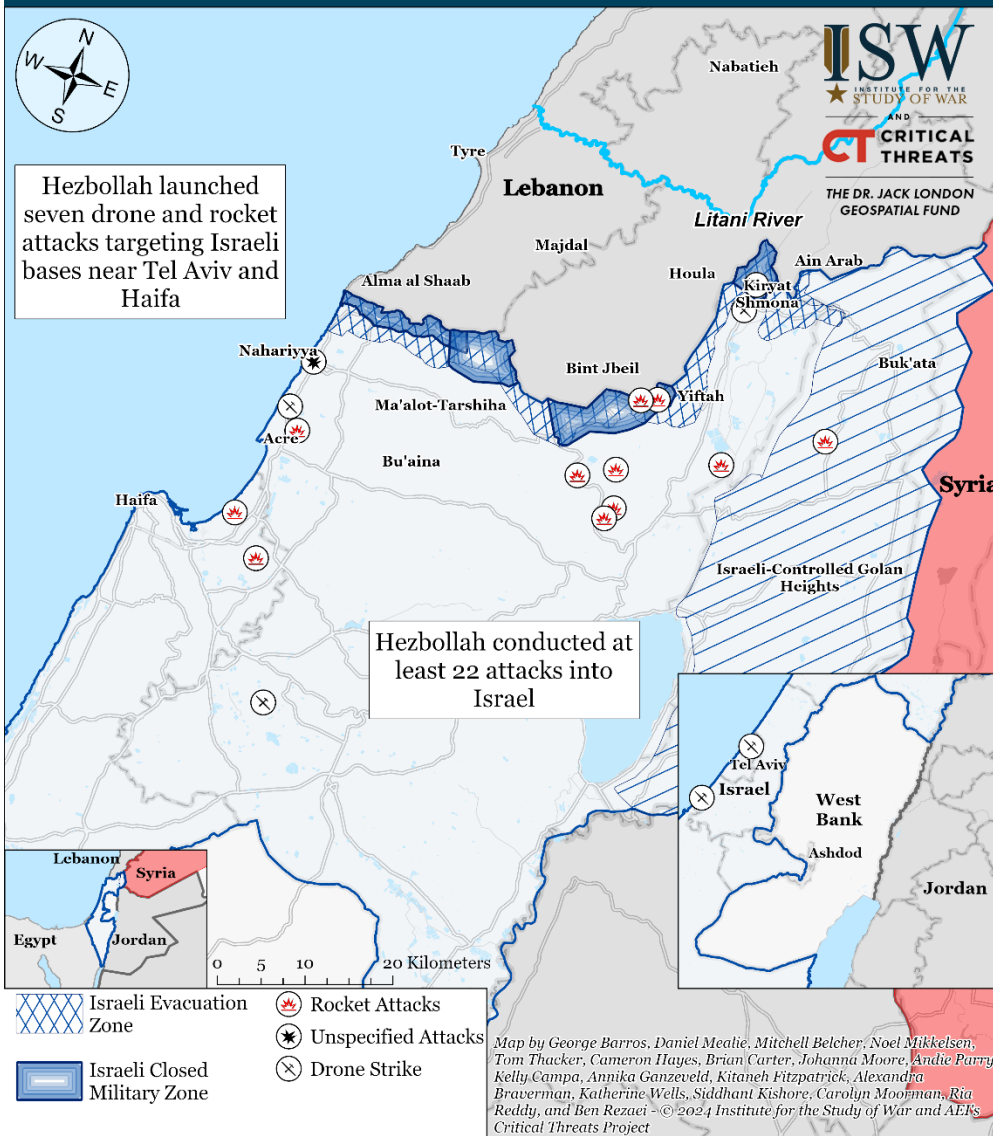


*This map illustrates individual Israeli air and artillery strikes based on local Lebanese reporting. This map depicts strikes reported from 2:00pm ET on November 1 to 2:00pm ET on November 2. This map is not exhaustive. CTP-ISW cannot independently verify the locations of Israeli strikes.*

**Hezbollah has conducted at least 22 attacks into Israel since CTP-ISW's last data cutoff on November 1.**<sup>[46]</sup> Hezbollah launched seven drone and rocket attacks targeting Israeli bases near Tel Aviv and Haifa.<sup>[47]</sup> The IDF reported that a rocket attack intended to strike the Gilot base near Tel Aviv struck a home in the Israeli town of Tira, injuring seven civilians.<sup>[48]</sup> The IDF did not report any damage at the seven Israeli bases following the Hezbollah rocket and drone attacks.

# Attacks into Northern Israel from Lebanon

As of November 2, 2024 at 2:00 PM ET



## Iran and the Axis of Resistance

**The IRGC Ground Forces killed four likely Jaish al Adl fighters and arrested eight more in Sistan and Baluchistan Province on October 31.[49]** Jaish al Adl is a Baluchi Salafi-jihadi group that operates in southeastern Iran and Pakistan. The operation was in response to the October 26 ambush in which Jaish al Adl killed 10 Law Enforcement Command (LEC) officers in Sistan and Baluchistan Province.[50] An IRGC spokesperson reported that the Ground Forces used combat drones and tested new tactical equipment.[51] Iranian authorities have also established new checkpoints on main and secondary roads in the province to inspect vehicles.[52] IRGC Ground Forces Commander Brigadier General Mohammad Pakpour said that the operation aimed to search out and “destroy terrorists.”[53] Pakpour added that the operation would continue until unspecified objectives are achieved.[54]

**The United Kingdom is “prepared” to trigger snapback sanctions against Iran due to Iranian noncompliance with the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), according to the Telegraph.**<sup>[55]</sup> The JCPOA’s snapback mechanism allows JCPOA signatories to reimpose UN Security Council sanctions on Iran in the event of “significant non-performance by Iran of JCPOA commitments.”<sup>[56]</sup> The E3 (the United Kingdom, France, and Germany) remain compliant with the JCPOA despite the withdrawal of the United States from the agreement in 2018 and therefore can trigger snapback sanctions on Iran. This report comes after Iranian Strategic Foreign Relations Council Chairman Kamal Kharazi stated on November 1 that Iran has the ability to build nuclear weapons and that the Supreme Leader’s 2003 fatwa banning nuclear weapons is the only barrier preventing Iran from doing so.<sup>[57]</sup> Kharrazi also suggested that Iran could increase the range of its missiles.<sup>[58]</sup>

**The Islamic Resistance in Iraq—a coalition of Iranian-backed Iraqi militias—has claimed five attacks targeting Israel since CTP-ISW’s last data cutoff on November 1.** The claims include the following:

- A drone attack targeting an unspecified “vital target” in northern Israel.<sup>[59]</sup>
- Four drone attacks targeting four separate unspecified “vital targets” in Eilat.<sup>[60]</sup>

The IDF reported on November 2 that it intercepted three drones launched “from the east” over the Red Sea.<sup>[61]</sup> The drones didn’t enter Israeli airspace.

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BABEL STREET

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[2] <https://www.leader dot ir/fa/content/27755>

[3] <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/10/31/world/middleeast/iran-threatens-retaliation-israel-strikes.html>

[4] <https://www.alef dot ir/news/4030812041.html>

[5] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/iran-update-august-19-2024>

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[9] <https://apnews.com/article/middle-east-us-military-bombers-warships-2a7771f67c91f521b1e4fe32074fab9a>

[10] <https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/3954442/statement-from-pentagon-press-secretary-maj-gen-pat-ryder-on-middle-east-force/>

[11] <https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/3954442/statement-from-pentagon-press-secretary-maj-gen-pat-ryder-on-middle-east-force/> ; <https://www.axios.com/2024/10/13/us-send-thaad-missile-israel>

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[13] <https://www.idf dot il/en/mini-sites/our-corps-units-brigades/kfir/kfir-brigade/>

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[15] <https://x.com/idfonline/status/1852619823676596393>

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[28] [https://t.me/elaqsa\\_1965/7785](https://t.me/elaqsa_1965/7785)

[29] <https://t.me/mmirleb/8643> ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/8649>

[30] <https://t.me/mmirleb/8648>

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- [38] <https://t.me/channelnabatieh/98650>
- [39] <https://x.com/BarakRavid/status/1852699213349478635> ;  
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- [59] <https://t.me/ElamAlmoqawama/1443>
- [60] <https://t.me/ElamAlmoqawama/1445>
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