

Iran Update, October 8, 2023

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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 weekly on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. For more on developments in Iran and the region, see our [interactive map of Iran and the Middle East](#).

Palestinian militias in Gaza responded to calls from Hamas to join in fighting against Israeli security forces on October 8. Hamas and its militant wing, Al Qassem Brigade, called on fellow Palestinian militias and members of the Axis of Resistance to join in its fight against Israel on October 7 following its ground incursion into Israel from Gaza.^[1] Palestinian militias quickly pledged their support in fighting against Israeli security forces and clashed with Israeli security forces at border points and within Israeli territory.^[2] Most clashes between Palestinian militias and Israeli security forces have been concentrated in southern Israel with Hamas reporting that it rotated new forces into Israeli territory to continue the fight against Israeli security forces on October 8.^[3]

- The Al Qassem Brigade clashed with Israeli security forces in Sufa Kibbutz, Holeit Kibbutz, Ofakim, Sderot, Yad Mordechai, Kfar Azza, Kissufim, Be’eri military post, and Ezre in southern Israel on October 7 and 8.^[4] The brigade also conducted two separate rocket attacks on Sderot and Ashkelon of 100 rockets each, according to the group’s Telegram channel.^[5] Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) also fought against Israeli security forces with the Al Qassem Brigade in several towns in southern Israel.^[6]
- PIJ backfilled Hamas’s Al Qassem Brigade in Israel’s South District on October 8, which allowed the Al Qassem Brigade fighters to rest and refit. Hamas Spokesperson Abu Ubaida reported that Hamas rotated new forces into Israeli territory to continue the fight against Israeli security forces in a statement on October 8.^[7] The Al Qassem Brigade appears to be the most active Palestinian militia operating in the vicinity of Gaza.
- Non-Iranian affiliated Palestinian militias also supported the offensive. The Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade conducted rocket strikes into Israeli territory on October 8.^[8] The brigade previously coordinated attacks with Hamas and PIJ in 2008.^[9] The Popular Resistance Committees’ military wing claimed it used one-way attack drones to attack Israeli targets.^[10] ISW cannot independently verify either group’s claim.

Lebanese Hezbollah (LH) and Palestinian militias also conducted attacks on Israeli positions from south Lebanon and the West Bank, respectively, which could expand the war to a second front. Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh claimed on October 7 that the Al Aqsa Flood Operation began in Gaza and will extend to the West Bank.^[11] That the Axis of Resistance coordinated the operation with Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and through a Palestinian joint operations room suggests that LH and the Palestinian militants planned to open a second front.^[12] Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant warned on April 20 that a multi-front war with Iran and its proxies was more likely than limited conflict and emphasized the threat of a simultaneous attack.^[13]

- The Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade reported that its fighters clashed with Israeli security forces on October 7 in Bat Hefer, Hefer Valley Regional Council, Central District.^[14] Bat Hefer is located within Israeli territory, bordering the West Bank.

- Unspecified Palestinian fighters clashed with Israeli security forces on October 7 at the Salem checkpoint, Darwish Salem, Haifa District. Salem checkpoint is one of the checkpoints leading from Israel to Jenin in the northern West Bank.^[15] Unspecified Palestinian fighters targeted an Israeli military outpost on October 8 in Hebron in the southern West Bank.^[16]
- LH conducted an artillery and guided missile strike into Shebaa Farms on October 8. Shebaa Farms is recognized as disputed territory between Israel, Lebanon, and Syria.^[17] LH stated that it was not a neutral party in the current conflict and claimed that its strike on Shebaa Farms was on its path to “liberate what remains of occupied Lebanese land.”^[18] The strikes hit a radar site and two unspecified positions in Zabdin and Ruwaisat at Shebaa Farms.^[19]

[1] <https://t.me/hamasps/16296> ; [https://hamas dot ps/ar/post/18200/%D9%87%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D8%B7%D9%88%D9%81%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%82%D8%B5%D9%89-%D8%A8%D8%AF%D8%A3%D8%AA-%D9%85](https://hamasdotps/ar/post/18200/%D9%87%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D8%B7%D9%88%D9%81%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%82%D8%B5%D9%89-%D8%A8%D8%AF%D8%A3%D8%AA-%D9%85)

[2] <https://twitter.com/ajmubasher/status/1710666392855294186> ; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16170> ; [http://www dot tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/07/15/2967430](http://www.dottasnimnews.com/fa/news/1402/07/15/2967430)

[3] <https://t.me/hamasps/16360>

[4] <https://t.me/qassambrigades/28377> ; <https://t.me/qassambrigades/28372>

[5] <https://t.me/qassambrigades/28387> ; <https://t.me/qassambrigades/28380>

[6] <https://t.me/sarayaps/16185> ; <https://t.me/sarayaps/16187>

[7] <https://t.me/hamasps/16360>

[8] <https://t.me/AymanGouda/5672>; <https://t.me/AymanGouda/5673>

[9] <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/al-aqsa-martyrs-brigade>

[10] <https://twitter.com/JoeTruzman/status/1711062944455479436>

[11] [https://hamas \(dot\) ps/ar/post/18200/%D9%87%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D8%B7%D9%88%D9%81%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%82%D8%B5%D9%89-%D8%A8%D8%AF%D8%A3%D8%AA-%D9%85](https://hamas(dot)ps/ar/post/18200/%D9%87%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D8%B7%D9%88%D9%81%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%82%D8%B5%D9%89-%D8%A8%D8%AF%D8%A3%D8%AA-%D9%85)

[12] <https://www.wsj.com/world/middle-east/iran-israel-hamas-strike-planning-bbe07b25>; [https://www \(dot\) almayadeen.net/news/politics/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%8A:-%D9%86%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%83-%D9%85%D8%B4%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D8%AD%D8%B2%D8%A8-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%88%D9%85-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%85%D8%B1%D8%A9](https://www(dot)almayadeen.net/news/politics/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%8A:-%D9%86%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%83-%D9%85%D8%B4%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D8%AD%D8%B2%D8%A8-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%88%D9%85-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%85%D8%B1%D8%A9)

[13] [https://www.timesofisrael \(dot\) com/gallant-warns-multi-front-war-far-more-likely-for-israel-than-limited-conflicts/](https://www.timesofisrael(dot)com/gallant-warns-multi-front-war-far-more-likely-for-israel-than-limited-conflicts/)

[14] <https://t.me/AymanGouda/5662>

[15] https://t.me/mihwar_almuqawama/34138

[16] <https://twitter.com/QudsNen/status/1711105841883996595>

[17] <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/israel-strikes-lebanon-after-h...>

[18] [https://www\(almayadeen.net/news/politics/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%8A:-%D9%86%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%83-%D9%85%D8%B4%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D8%AD%D8%B2%D8%A8-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%88%D9%85-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%85%D8%B1%D8%A9](https://www(almayadeen.net/news/politics/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%8A:-%D9%86%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%83-%D9%85%D8%B4%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D8%AD%D8%B2%D8%A8-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%88%D9%85-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%85%D8%B1%D8%A9)

[19] [https://www\(almayadeen.net/news/politics/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%8A:-%D9%86%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%83-%D9%85%D8%B4%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D8%AD%D8%B2%D8%A8-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%88%D9%85-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%85%D8%B1%D8%A9](https://www(almayadeen.net/news/politics/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%8A:-%D9%86%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%83-%D9%85%D8%B4%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D8%AD%D8%B2%D8%A8-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%88%D9%85-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%85%D8%B1%D8%A9)