



Israel's Operation Swords of Iron Update November 22, 2023

Yoni Tobin
Policy Analyst

Zachary Schildcrout
Policy Analyst

Anna Schaftel
Programs and Outreach Associate

JINSA's [Israel at War](#) webpage is a dedicated resource for analysis, commentary, webinars, and media coverage about the 10/7 attacks and the ensuing Israel-Hamas conflict. An update with the latest information and analysis about the war is below.

Analysis

- The Qatari government [announced](#) on November 22 that Hamas had agreed to the release of roughly 50 hostages in exchange for Israel releasing approximately 150 Palestinian women and teenagers from Israeli prisons and providing an influx of humanitarian supplies. Both sides would observe a four-day pause beginning on November 23. The deal will significantly alter the near-term, and potentially long-term, dynamics of the war.
 - » Israel's [announcement](#) that the pause would be extended by an additional day for every 10 hostages released by Hamas could effectively extend the pause up to 19 days (as up to 186 hostages will remain in captivity after the initial swap), or such pauses could continue to intermittently punctuate the conflict for an indefinite period.
 - » The pause, which also [reportedly](#) involves Israel agreeing not to fly drones over Gaza for a six-hour period each day, will likely impede Israel's intelligence collection efforts, and Hamas is also likely to use the opportunity to change facts on the ground and regroup.
 - » Hamas also may use the pause to launch ambush attacks on Israeli troops and blame other terrorist groups or lone-wolf actors inside Gaza, or other terrorist groups, such as Palestinian Islamic Jihad, may do so on their own.
- An additional two U.S. airstrikes on November 22, following a U.S. strike on November 21 targeting Iran-linked facilities—[reportedly](#) an operations center and a command-and-control node used by Iran-backed Kata'ib Hezbollah—could signal growing U.S. resolve to launch strikes on assets of greater value and inflict greater casualties on Iranian proxy forces.

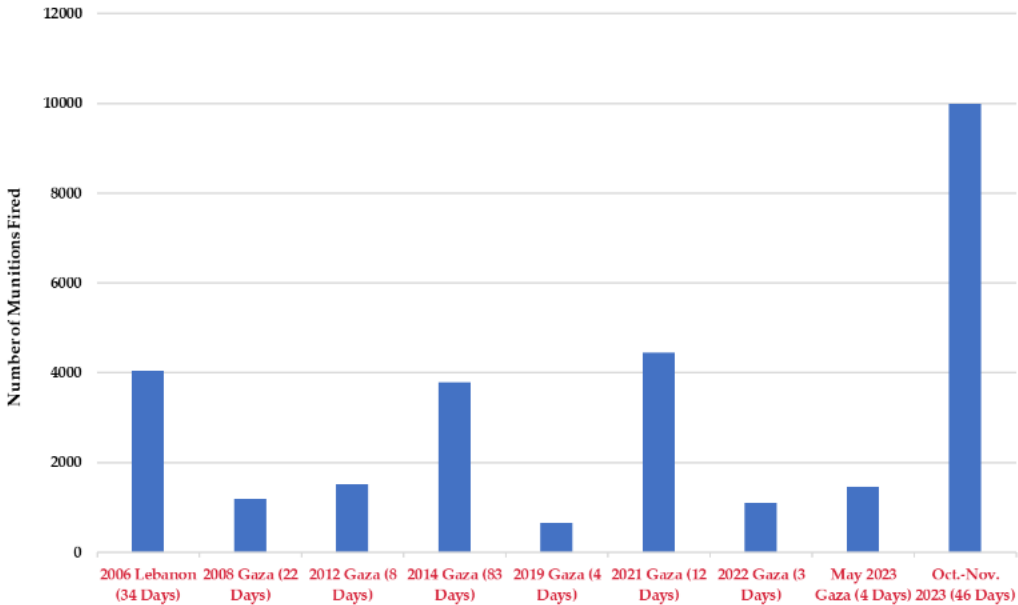
Last 24 Hours

Attacks Against Israel

- Terrorists have launched at least [10,000](#) rockets, mortars, drones, and other projectiles at Israel during the war.
 - » Sirens [sounded](#) in Sderot, Ibim, Nir Am, Netiv Ha'asara, Mefalsim, Kfar Aza, and Ashkelon, as well as other locations in southern Israel.

- Several rockets, mortars, drones, and other projectiles have been fired from Lebanon in the last 24 hours.
 - » On November 22, the IDF [said](#) several rockets were fired from Lebanon at the Israeli towns of Netu'a, Zar'it, and Yiftah. All rockets landed in open areas, causing no casualties.
 - » On November 22, the IDF [intercepted](#) a hostile aerial object near the Israeli town of Hanita that had entered Israeli airspace from Lebanon.
 - » On November 22, terrorists [launched](#) unspecified projectiles from Lebanon towards the area of Shushan in northern Israel.
 - » On November 21, a [barrage](#) of rockets was fired at the northern Israeli town of Kiryat Shmona and the Upper Galilee area.
 - » On November 21, a number of mortar shells were [fired](#) at IDF posts in northern Israel and a number of unspecified projectiles were also launched from Lebanon into Israel.
 - » Sirens [sounded](#) in Zar'it, Kibbutz Ein Hashlosa, Netu'a, and Rosh Hanikra.

Projectiles Fired Against Israel During Major Conflicts



IDF Operations

- The IDF stated that it launched a number of strikes on targets in Gaza in the last 24 hours.
 - » On November 22, the IDF [struck](#) terrorist infrastructure that was used to carry out attacks on IDF troops, killing a number of terrorists.
 - » On November 22, the IDF [conducted](#) operations in Beit Hanoun and in the Sheikh Za'id area of Jabaliya. During the operations, the IDF found weapons inside a civilian residence.
 - » On November 22, the IDF [neutralized](#) a terror tunnel shaft used in a Hamas ambush attack on troops and destroyed other infrastructure used by Hamas, killing a number of terrorist operatives.

- » On November 22, the Israeli Navy [struck](#) several Hamas military targets.
- The IDF [announced](#) on November 22 that it has exposed and destroyed roughly 400 terror tunnel shafts in the Gaza Strip since the war began.
- The IDF stated that it launched strikes on targets in Lebanon in the last 24 hours.
 - » On November 22, the IDF [shelled](#) positions along the Lebanese-Israeli border and also shelled a Hezbollah observation post in southern Lebanon in response to earlier rocket attacks.
 - » On November 22, the IDF used fighter jets to [strike](#) several Hezbollah targets in Lebanon, including infrastructure and a military site.
 - » On November 21, the IDF used fighter jets to [strike](#) Hezbollah infrastructure and an operational command center in Lebanon.
 - » On November 21, the IDF [struck](#) three terrorist cells along the Lebanese-Israeli border in response to earlier mortar launches.
 - » On November 21, the IDF [struck](#) Hezbollah targets, including military infrastructure and operational posts.
- Syrian media reported on November 22 that Israel launched strikes on targets in Syria.
 - » Syrian state-run media SANA [reported](#) on November 22 that Israel [fired](#) two missiles at a site near Damascus, with one missile reportedly downed by Syrian air defenses and the other causing “material losses.”
 - » The Syrian Sham FM radio station [said](#) earlier on November 22 that air defenses engaged “hostile targets,” likely Israeli, over Damascus.
- The Palestinian Authority-run Palestinian Ministry of Health said on November 22 that six Palestinians were [killed](#) in overnight clashes with the IDF.

Casualties and Hostages

- Over 1,200 people in Israel have been [killed](#), and another 6,900 have been injured in the war.
 - » 391 Israeli soldiers have been [killed](#).
 - 68 IDF soldiers have been [killed](#) during ground combat in Gaza so far.
 - » Numerous foreign nationals have been killed in the war, including at least 32 [American](#) nationals, 34 [Thai](#) nationals, 39 [French](#) nationals, 17 [British](#) nationals, 10 [Nepalese](#) nationals, 7 [Argentinian](#) nationals, 16 [Russian](#) nationals, 4 [Romanian](#) nationals, 4 [Chinese](#) nationals, 3 [Brazilian](#) nationals, 3 [Belarusian](#) nationals, 3 [Philippines](#) nationals, 2 [Ukrainian](#) nationals, 2 [Peruvian](#) nationals, 5 [Canadian](#) nationals, a [Cambodian](#) national, a [Colombian](#) national, an [Irish](#) national, an [Italian](#) national, a [Spanish](#) national, a [Swiss](#) national, a [Turkish](#) national, and an [Austrian](#) national.
- According to unverified figures from the Hamas-controlled Gaza Health Ministry, 14,128 people have been [killed](#) in Gaza, and approximately 33,000 have been injured during the war.
 - » On October 25, President Biden [cautioned](#) against trusting Gaza Health Ministry casualty figures, stating: “I have no notion that the Palestinians are telling the truth about how many people are killed ... I have no confidence in the number that the Palestinians are using.”

- According to the Palestinian Authority-run Palestinian Ministry of Health, 225 people have been [killed](#), and an additional 2,850 have been [wounded](#) in the West Bank.
- The IDF [claims](#) that it has killed at least 1,500 infiltrators from Gaza since the start of the war.
- According to the IDF, terrorists in Gaza currently hold [236](#) individuals as hostages.
 - » So far, [four](#) hostages in Gaza have been released, [one](#) has been rescued by the IDF, and [four have reportedly](#) died.
 - On November 21, Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) [announced](#) the death of an Israeli hostage; reports named the hostage as 76-year-old Katzir Hanna, who was kidnapped from Nir Oz.
- Foreign nationals also remain missing, including at least 11 [American](#) nationals, 9 [French](#) nationals, 15 [Argentinian](#) nationals, 9 [Ukrainian](#) nationals, 8 [Russian](#) nationals, 3 [Canadian](#) nationals, 3 [Philippines](#) nationals, 2 [Austrian](#) nationals, 3 [Italian](#) nationals, 2 [Paraguayan](#) nationals, 5 [Peruvian](#) nationals, 2 [Sri Lankan](#) nationals, 2 [Tanzanian](#) nationals, a [Chilean](#) national, an [Azeri](#) national, and a [Nepalese](#) national.
 - » At least 9 [American](#) nationals, 8 [German](#) nationals, 23 [Thai](#) nationals, 4 [Portuguese](#) nationals, 3 [British](#) nationals, 2 [Italian](#) nationals, 3 [Romanian](#) nationals, and 2 [Mexican](#) nationals have been taken hostage.

Humanitarian Efforts

- On November 22, Israel and Hamas [agreed](#) to a hostage release deal after the Israeli cabinet [approved](#) the deal overnight. The details of the deal reportedly include:
 - » A four-day pause in fighting;
 - Egyptian state-run media [reported](#) that the pause would take effect at 10 am local time on November 23, which Hamas [corroborated](#).
 - » The release of at least 50 women and children held hostage in Gaza;
 - *ABC News* [reported](#) on November 22, citing a senior U.S. official, that three Americans will be released as part of the deal, including a 3-year-old named Abigail Mor Idan.
 - Israel's *Channel 12* reported on November 21 that the release would [include](#) 30 children and 20 women.
 - According to the report, Hamas has said it cannot locate approximately 10 children that have been taken hostage and may be in the custody of other terrorist organizations like Palestinian Islamic Jihad.
 - » An [intensification](#) of the entry of trucks with humanitarian, medical, and fuel aid into all areas of Gaza;
 - » Israel [ceasing](#) its drone operations over Gaza for a six-hour period each day over Gaza, and
 - » The [release](#) of approximately 150 Palestinian prisoners, largely women and teenagers, from Israeli prisons.
 - Israel has [published](#) a list of 300 prisoners eligible for release as part of the deal. Under Israeli law, the Israeli public has 24 hours to formally object to any release.

- The prisoners [include](#) 287 males aged 18 and under—most of them held for rioting and rock-throwing, while the other 13 prisoners are adult women, most of them convicted of attempted terror stabbings.
 - » Israel said on November 22 that the pause would be [extended](#) an extra day for every additional 10 hostages released by Hamas.
- November 21 [reports](#) indicate that the hostage deal has five stages:
 - » Hamas will hand over the hostages to the Red Cross, who will transfer them to the IDF;
 - » The hostages will undergo medical examination;
 - » They will meet with their families in one of five isolated medical centers in Israel;
 - » Medical and defense authorities will decide whether some hostages can be debriefed; and
 - » If feasible, security officials will debrief hostages.
- Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu [said](#) on November 21 that any hostage deal must involve the hostages that are not being released receiving a visit and medical treatment by the International Committee of the Red Cross.
 - » The prime minister also [clarified](#) that day that “we are at war, and the war will continue until all our goals are achieved,” including securing the release of all hostages held in Gaza, which he called a “sacred priority,” and eliminating Hamas.
 - » Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant pledged that Israeli operations in Gaza will resume “in full force” following the end of the four-to-five day ceasefire.
 - » War cabinet minister Benny Gantz also endorsed the deal, arguing that the deal “is the basis for continuing the necessary operational efforts [in Gaza], including in the southern arena and possibly in other arenas.” He said further that the deal is painful but ultimately the correct decision.
- On November 22, the Almagor Terror Victims Association [filed](#) a petition to the Israeli High Court of Justice requesting a delay in the deal’s implementation, claiming it violates the terms of the 2012 Shamgar Commission report which stated only a small number of prisoners held by Israel can be released per Israeli captive being returned.
 - » The petition is very likely to be rejected, according to Israeli media reports.
- On November 22, President Biden [released](#) a statement about the finalization of the hostage deal.
 - » President Biden said, “I am extraordinarily gratified that some of these brave souls, who have endured weeks of captivity and an unspeakable ordeal, will be reunited with their families once this deal is fully implemented. It is important that all aspects of this deal be fully implemented.”
 - » President Biden added, “today’s deal should bring home additional American hostages, and I will not stop until they are all released.”
 - » President Biden also thanked Qatari leader Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani and Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi of Egypt for their role in facilitating the deal.
- On November 22, United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres [welcomed](#) “the agreement reached by Israel and Hamas, with the mediation of Qatar supported by Egypt and the United States” and added that “this is an important step in the right direction, but much more needs to be done.”

- Palestinian Authority (PA) official Hussein al-Sheikh [wrote](#) on X on November 22 that “[PA] President Mahmoud Abbas and the leadership welcome the humanitarian truce agreement, value the Qatari-Egyptian effort made and reaffirm the call for a comprehensive cessation of the Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people and the entry of humanitarian aid.”
- Russian government spokesman Dmitry Peskov [told](#) reporters on November 22 that “Russia and most countries in the world have been calling for a ceasefire and for a humanitarian pause. Because it is only on the basis of these kinds of pauses that some outlines of future attempts at a sustainable settlement can be built.”

Iranian Involvement and Response

- On November 21, Pentagon spokesperson Sabrina Singh [told](#) reporters additional details about the Iran-backed November 21 attack on U.S. troops and personnel at Al Asad Air Base in Iraq.
 - » Singh said, “I can confirm an attack last night by Iran-backed militias using a close-range ballistic missile against U.S. and coalition forces at Al Asad Air Base in Iraq, which resulted in several non-serious injuries and some minor damage to infrastructure.”
 - » Singh added that the attack was the 66th attack on U.S. troops and personnel since October 17—32 in Iraq and 34 in Syria—causing a total of 62 injuries to U.S. personnel.
- U.S. National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby [said](#) on November 21 that there has been “unprecedented defense cooperation” between Russia and Iran recently, and that the United States has information which “indicates that Wagner [Group], at the direction of the Russian government, was preparing to provide an air defense capability to either Hezbollah or Iran.”
- On November 21, *Fox News* quoted a senior U.S. defense official as [saying](#) that the November 19 seizure of a Bahamian-flagged ship *Galaxy Leader* by the Houthis was likely orchestrated by Iran.
 - » The official stated, “this has all the signs these people were trained by a professional military, which could clearly be Iran. This looks like something we haven’t seen before.”

U.S. and International Response

- On November 22, the United States [conducted](#) a new round of airstrikes against Iran-backed groups in Iraq following the November 21 attack on Al Asad Air Base.
 - » U.S. Central Command [announced](#) on X that “on the morning of November 22 in Iraq, U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) forces conducted discrete, precision strikes against two facilities in Iraq. The strikes were in direct response to the attacks against U.S. and Coalition forces by Iran and Iran-backed groups, including the one in Iraq on November 21, which involved use of close-range ballistic missiles.”
 - » *The New York Times* [reported](#), citing senior U.S. military officials, that the United States struck two facilities, an operations center and a command-and-control node south of Baghdad, both used by Iran-backed Kata’ib Hezbollah. The source said the military could not provide a casualty assessment.
- Regarding the prior U.S. retaliatory strike on November 21, Pentagon spokesperson Sabrina Singh [stated](#), “immediately following the attack, a U.S. military AC-130 aircraft in the area conducted a self-defense strike against an Iranian-backed militia vehicle and a number of Iranian-backed militia personnel involved in this attack. This self-defense strike resulted in some hostile fatalities.”

- » The Iraqi government [said](#) that eight pro-Iran fighters were killed in the U.S. strike and the Iran-backed group Hezbollah Brigades said that the strike “will not go unpunished.”
- On November 21, a group of 13 U.S. senators wrote a [letter](#) to President Biden to make an “urgent call for humanitarian assistance for Palestinian civilians in Gaza.”
 - » In addition, the letter called for “Israel [to] employ all possible measures to protect innocent civilians in Gaza,” advocated for a two-state solution as a solution to the conflict, and called on Israel to stem settler violence against Palestinian residents in the West Bank and provide humanitarian aid through its Kerem Shalom crossing with Gaza.
 - » The letter was signed by Senators Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Tim Kaine (D-VA), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Michael Bennet (D-CO), Richard Durbin (D-IL), Martin Heinrich (D-NM), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Peter Welch (D-VT), Brian Schatz (D-HI), Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Ed Markey (D-MA), and Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH).
- U.S. National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby said on November 21 that Israel [needs](#) “a clearly articulated plan for how they’re going to protect the lives of the hundreds of thousands of people that have now been added to the population because they were asked to leave by the Israelis. There’s an obligation there for [Israel] to factor that into their planning.”
- Regarding the November 19 Houthi ship [seizure](#), Kirby [stated](#) on November 21 that the United States has “begun a review” of whether or not it should re-designate the Houthis as a terrorist organization and that the United States is also “considering other options together with our allies and partners.”
- Local media in the Maldives [reported](#) on November 22 that parliament member Mohamed Nasheed Abdulla submitted a bill that would bar Israeli tourists from entry and that implores the Maldives to align its policies with Organization for Islamic Cooperation members.

Rising Antisemitism and Protests

- On November 21, a progressive Jewish synagogue in Manhattan, Romemu, was [defaced](#) with antisemitic symbols and writing, including swastikas and the letter “K” many times, symbolizing the Ku Klux Klan (KKK).
- On November 21, Australian police arrested 23 pro-Palestinian protesters for [blocking](#) roads near one of Australia’s largest container ports, Port Botany. 400 people had gathered to protest a ship owned by Israeli shipping company Zim.
- On November 21, United Airlines [suspended](#) a pilot, Ibrahim Mossallam, who praised Hamas’s October 7 terror attacks on social media, describing the attacks as “a resistance by a brave people.”
- On November 21, the Maryland attorney general [suspended](#) a member of Maryland’s Commission on Hate Crime Response and Prevention, Zainab Chaudry, for posting extreme anti-Israel rhetoric and misinformation on social media.
 - » Chaudry called Hamas terrorists “Palestinian freedom fighters,” [dismissed](#) claims Hamas murdered babies as “fake,” and [compared](#) Israel to Nazi Germany.
- On November 20, French police [discovered](#) the memorial to French politician and Holocaust survivor Simone Veil was destroyed.

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- Webinar: [War Update](#), with JINSA Vice President for Policy Blaise Misztal, JINSA Distinguished Fellow IDF Major General (ret.) Yaakov Amidror, and JINSA Senior Vice President for Israeli Affairs IDF Major General (ret.) Yaacov Ayish, November 20, 2023
- Jacob Olidort and Yoni Tobin, [Israeli Precautions Save Palestinian Lives](#), November 16, 2023
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- Michael Makovsky, [Biden’s Iran policy needs to match post-10/7 realities](#),” *The Hill*, November 7, 2023
- Webinar: [Hezbollah’s Escalation Dilemma](#), with John Hannah, JINSA’s Randi & Charles Wax Senior Fellow; Hanin Ghaddar, Friedmann Senior Fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy; IDF Lieutenant Colonel (Res.) Sarit Zehavi, founder and president of Alma; and Orna Mizrahi, senior researcher at the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS), November 7, 2023
- Yoni Tobin, [U.S. Aid to Gaza Almost Certain to End Up in Hamas Hands](#), November 6, 2023
- Thomas Trask and Jacob Olidort, [The Case for Upgrading Israel’s ‘Major Non-NATO Ally’ Status](#),” *RealClearDefense*, November 6, 2023
- Yaakov Amidror, [Initial Lessons From the October 2023 War](#),” *Jerusalem Strategic Tribune*, November 1, 2023