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Israel's Operation Swords of Iron Update April 17, 2024

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 conflict between Israel, the Iranian regime, and the regime's proxies. JINSA will release the Swords of Iron Update on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. An update with the latest information and analysis about the war is below.

Analysis

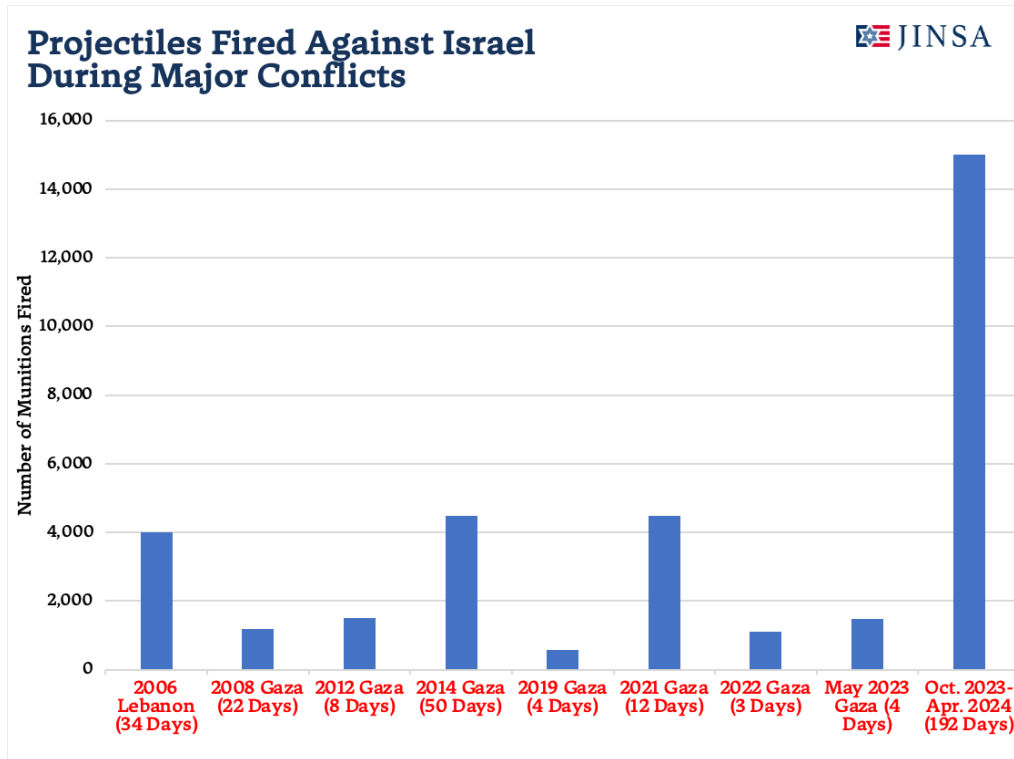
- During a JINSA [webinar](#) on April 16, Senator Rick Scott (R-FL) argued, “the Prime Minister [of Israel] and his war council need to do what's best for Israel. So I'm hoping they go in and destroy every member of Hamas ... It's not just good for Israel. It's good for Saudi Arabia. It's good for everybody.”
 - » JINSA President and CEO Michael Makovsky explained, “we saw really an unprecedented, it seems like, [level of] cooperation in the last couple days with [U.S. Central Command], with the U.S. military, working with Israel.”
- During a JINSA [webinar](#) on April 15 about the Iranian regime's attack against Israel on April 13-14, Gen Kenneth F. McKenzie, Jr., USMC (ret.), the former commander of U.S. Central Command and JINSA's Hertog Distinguished Fellow explained, “Iran has about 3,000 ballistic missiles of various kinds ... yesterday, there were about 150 that could reach Israel. They expended the vast majority of those missiles. If tonight, Iran had to generate an attack on Israel, I am not certain they would be able to pull enough ballistic missiles together to do that.”
 - » IDF MG (ret.) Yaakov Amidror, a JINSA distinguished fellow, argued, “from the Israeli point of view, the involvement of Jordan [in Israel's air defense] was the most important one. The fact that we can cooperate with the Jordanians ... for us, this buffer is a very important one. It just shows the importance of relations between Israel and Jordan ... it's not just about water, it's not just about gas, it's about security of the Hashemite Kingdom.”
 - » IDF MG (ret.) Yaacov Ayish, JINSA's Julian and Jenny Josephson Senior Vice President for Israeli Affairs, stated that “it's not a secret that if [Iran wants], they can initiate one of their proxies ... however, they decided to [attack] from Iran. And I think the elephant in the room is the fact that they are preserving Hezbollah for a different opportunity.”

- » JINSA President and CEO Michael Makovsky noted, “there were two things that I think stood out ... one was the fact that Israel was part of CENTCOM’s Area of Responsibility ... JINSA was the only organization that has also been pressing for this since 2018 ... also [cooperation between Israel and the Arab countries on air defense] was something Israel had pushed.”

Last 48 Hours

Attacks Against Israel

- At least 15,000 rockets, mortars, drones, and other projectiles have been fired at Israel from all fronts combined during the war, according to JINSA data.



Gaza

- Sirens [sounded](#) in the Nir Am shooting range.
- On April 16, terrorists in Gaza [launched](#) two rockets from northern Gaza toward southern Israel, triggering sirens at the Nir Am shooting range before impacting unpopulated areas and inflicting no injuries or damage, the IDF said.

Lebanon

- Sirens [sounded](#) in Meron, Kiryat Shmona, [Idmit](#), Hanita, and Shlomi.
- On April 17, Hezbollah [launched](#) a drone that struck a building in Arab al-Aramshe in northern Israel, [injuring](#) at least 18, according to Magen David Adom.
- On April 16, terrorists in southern Lebanon [fired](#) five rockets toward the Hanita area of northern Israel. The rockets struck open areas, causing no injuries.
- According to an April 16 [report](#) from Israel’s *Maariv* outlet citing unspecified Middle East intelligence sources, Iran was disappointed in Hezbollah’s relative restraint during Iran’s April 13-14 attack.

- The report notes that though Hezbollah launched dozens of rockets at Israel as part of the attack, this did not represent a significant escalation, considering Hezbollah has launched near-daily rocket attacks against Israel since October.
 - » The report alleges that Iran anticipated a much more forceful involvement by Hezbollah compared to the terror group’s “symbolic” rocket attack.
 - » On April 16, the IDF [said](#) that two one-way drones from Lebanon struck Beit Hillel in northern Israel. Three people were lightly hurt in one of the strikes, according to media reports.

IDF Operations

- On April 16, Israel’s *Ynet* news outlet [reported](#), citing an Israeli military official, that Jordan allowed the IDF to use its airspace to intercept Iranian missiles and drones during the April 13-14 Iranian projectile attack against Israel.

Iranian Regime

- On April 16, *CBS News*’s David Martin [reported](#), citing a senior U.S. official, that “some Biden administration officials are expecting Israel to make a limited strike inside Iran,” but that since “Israel is not sharing its targeting with the U.S.,” the United States “does not know what form the Israeli retaliation will take or when it will happen.”
- On April 16, Israel’s *Israel Hayom* outlet [reported](#) that as the IDF’s Regional Cooperation Department worked with other regional countries to defend Israel during Iran’s April 13-14 attack against Israel, “the language used in those hours was Arabic, and the content of the conversations was intelligence updates based on developments before, during, and after the attack. More than one country was on the line with the Israeli officers – and not all have formal ties with Israel.”
 - » The outlet also reported, citing other foreign reporting, that “in addition to Jordan, Egypt, Bahrain, Morocco, and the United Arab Emirates, there was also close contact with Saudi Arabia that night.”
- On April 16, Israel’s *Ynet* news outlet [reported](#), citing an Israeli official, that Israel’s cabinet has agreed that a “military response” to Iran’s attack is “needed to show deterrence,” but that the response should seek “to prevent a regional war.”
- On April 16, Israel’s Minister without portfolio Benny Gantz [said](#), “Iran is a global and regional problem, and also a threat to Israel. Therefore the world should act against it militarily and impose sanctions on it in order to stop its aggression,” and “I discussed this with senior officials in the American administration in the last day, and Israel will work together with them to promote this.”
 - » He added, “in this context, promoting the normalization processes, which will create the strategic reversal in the region against the Iranian axis, will serve that purpose. Israel will act out of strategic wisdom, and will respond in the place, time and manner it chooses. And this is not the place to elaborate.”
- IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Herzi Halevi [said](#) in an April 15 statement, “Iran wanted to harm the strategic capabilities of the State of Israel—that is something that had not happened before. We were prepared for the ‘Iron Shield’ operation—preparation that brought Iran to also meet air superiority.”

- » He added, “last Monday, we saw what was being organized, and we think that the State of Israel is very strong and knows how to deal with it alone, but with a threat so numerous and so far away, we are always happy to have [the United States] with us.”
- » He said further, “we are looking ahead, we are considering our steps, and this launch of so many missiles, cruise missiles, and UAVs into the territory of the State of Israel will be met with a response.”
- On April 15, Halevi [said](#) in a recorded statement, “over the weekend, Iran launched a large-scale attack on Israel. Over 350 ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, armed drones and rockets were fired from Iranian soil—as well as Iraq, Yemen, and Lebanon—towards the State of Israel.”
 - » He added, “across the skies of the Middle East—a coalition was activated to counter this attack, marking the start of the IDF’s Operation: ‘Iron Shield,’” and “The Israel Defense Forces—together with the United States Central Command; the British Armed Forces; the French Armed Forces, and other partners—operated together in real-time—in the air, on the ground, and at sea.”
 - » Halevi said further, “defense systems were activated; the threats were intercepted—and Iran’s attack on Israel failed. Operation Iron Shield proved the strength of our iron-clad cooperation,” and “[thank you to] all our international partners who stood up to Iran’s aggression. Iran’s attack has created new opportunities for cooperation in the Middle East.”
 - » He also said, “we are closely assessing the situation. We remain at our highest level of readiness. Iran will face the consequences for its actions. We will choose our response accordingly. The IDF remains ready to counter any threat from Iran and its terror proxies as we continue our mission to defend the State of Israel.”
- On April 15, Barak Ravid of *Axios* [reported](#), citing a U.S. official, that Israel’s Defense Minister Yoav Gallant told U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin on April 14 that Israel has no choice but to respond to Iran’s missile and drone attack.
- *The Times of Israel* [reported](#) on April 15 that “Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told Likud ministers during a private meeting earlier today that Israel will respond to Iran’s weekend attack, but must do so wisely and not from the gut,” according to Israel’s *Kan* broadcaster. In addition, Netanyahu reportedly told the ministers that Iran should be forced to anxiously await the attack.
- On April 15, IDF Spokesman Daniel Hagari [said](#) during a press briefing, “we are in a war on multiple fronts. The threats change in their scale and frequency,” and “in accordance with that, instructions [to the public] change too. The instructions could change in the coming days as well, and we will continue to update you immediately.”
- Hagari [said](#) on April 15 that the Nevatim Airbase, which Iran struck with its massive projectile attack against Israel on April 13-14, is operating normally and that damage at the base was “minor.” He also said that “[Iran’s] attack was foiled almost without [any of the projectiles] entering Israeli airspace.”

Gaza

- On April 17, the IDF [said](#) that the Israeli Air Force launched strikes against more than 40 terrorist targets in Gaza during the past day. Strikes impacted rocket launchers in central Gaza prepared to attack Israel, booby-trapped buildings, structures in which terrorists hid, and underground infrastructure. In addition, the IDF said that soldiers killed several gunmen near Nuseirat.

- On April 15, Israel's Defense Minister Yoav Gallant's office [said](#) that during a meeting, he assessed the "necessary civilian operations" to enable an IDF operation in Rafah, which will focus on the "evacuation of the civilians from Rafah, and the expansion of the methods to bring food and medical equipment into the Gaza Strip."
- On April 15, *CNN* [reported](#), citing two Israeli officials, that Israel was slated to begin preparations for initiating major combat operations in the southern Gazan city of Rafah that day but had to postpone doing so because of Iran's attack over the weekend.
 - » The sources stated that Israel had planned to begin dropping leaflets into parts of Rafah, likely to inform Palestinians sheltering in Rafah how and when to evacuate the city, on April 15.
 - » According to the report, "one Israeli official said Israel remains determined to carry out a ground offensive in Rafah, although the timing of civilian evacuations and the coming ground offensive remains unclear at the moment."

Lebanon

- On April 17, the IDF [conducted airstrikes](#) against several Hezbollah targets in southern Lebanon, including military compounds and installations in the towns of Aalma ash-Shab, Khiam, Mansouri, and Yater.
 - » That day, the IDF also shelled Hezbollah rocket launch sites in response to an earlier Hezbollah projectile attack.
- On April 17, the IDF [carried out](#) airstrikes against a Hezbollah installation where terrorists had congregated in the southern Lebanese town of Ayta ash-Shab.
- On April 16, the IDF [said](#) it carried out [strikes](#) against buildings used by Hezbollah and locations where its operatives were gathered in the southern Lebanese towns of Ain Baal, Aalma as-Shab, Hanine, Yaroun, Markaba and Majdal Zoun, and conducted artillery shelling against terror targets near the town of Jabal Blat.
- The IDF [said](#) on April 16 that it killed "Commander of Hezbollah's coastal sector and senior official in several positions of Hezbollah's military wing, Ismail Yusuf Baz."
- On April 16, the IDF [said](#) that it had eliminated a senior commander in Hezbollah's Radwan force in an airstrike in Kfar Dounine in southern Lebanon. The commander was Muhammad Shahouri, the commander of Radwan's western district rocket unit.
 - » According to the IDF, the strike also killed Mahmoud Fadlallah, a member of Hezbollah's rocket unit.
 - » The *Times of Israel* [reported](#) that the terror group's death toll since the beginning of the war in the Gaza Strip is 278.

West Bank

- On April 17, Israel's *Ynet* news outlet [reported](#) that Israel's security forces conducted over 900 counterterrorism raids across the West Bank during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan (March 10-April 19), which yielded over 300 arrests.
 - » The raids reportedly led to the deaths of dozens of terrorists, including 15 who were en route to conduct terrorist acts.
 - » In addition, forces reportedly seized over 40 firearms, additional military equipment, and over \$26,000 in funds intended to sponsor terror activity.

- On April 16, the IDF Spokesperson's Unit [announced](#) that the IDF, Israel's internal security agency Shin Bet, and Israel Border Police launched a counterterrorism operation overnight, leading to the arrests of 23 terror suspects.
 - » The security forces operated in Jenin, Hebron, Qalqilya, and other locations across the West Bank, and seized funds intended for use in terrorist activity.

Humanitarian Efforts

- According to Israel's Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories ([COGAT](#)), from the beginning of the war to April 15, there have been 439,970 tons of humanitarian aid that entered Gaza on 23,316 trucks.
- On April 16, the European Union's top diplomat, Josep Borrell, [said](#) that there must be an "immediate and sustainable ceasefire" in Gaza, and "if [Israel] wanted to make Gaza a place where human life is not possible, in the north, they managed to succeed," noting that Israel has not opened the Ashdod Port and Erez Crossing. *The Times of Israel* noted that Borrell did not mention Hamas.
- From April 15-16, 553 aid trucks [traveled](#) through the Kerem Shalom and the Nitzana crossing into Gaza, and 56 food packages were airdropped into Gaza.

Ceasefire and Hostage Negotiations

- On April 16, Israel's minister without portfolio, Benny Gantz, [said](#) that securing the hostages' return "is not only moral duty [sic] of the first order, but a leading strategic objective in the war."
- On April 15, *The Times of Israel* [reported](#), citing Israel's *Channel 12*, that Hamas is prepared to release fewer than 20 hostages in exchange for a six-week truce and the release of a large number of Palestinian prisoners in Israel.
 - » The report alleges that Hamas has also increased the number of Palestinian prisoners that it is demanding be freed from Israeli prisons as part of a deal.
 - » According to the report, Hamas is continuing its demand that the international community guarantee that Israel withdraw its troops from Gaza and halt the war as part of a deal. Hamas is also reportedly demanding that, as part of any deal, Palestinians must be permitted to return to northern Gaza.
- During a press conference on April 15, U.S. State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller [said](#), "there's a deal on the table that would achieve much of what Hamas claims it wants to achieve, and they have not taken that deal," and "the bottom line is that they have rejected it, and if they did accept it, it would allow for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza of at least six weeks, which would benefit the Palestinian people whom they claim to represent. It would also allow us to continue improvements in the delivery of humanitarian assistance."
 - » He added, "the bottom line is Hamas needs to take that deal, and they need to explain to the world and to the Palestinian people why they aren't taking it because it is Hamas right now that is the barrier and the obstacle to a ceasefire in Gaza."

Post-War Planning

- On April 16, Israel's *Channel 12* [reported](#), citing officials from Arab countries, that the United States and several regional countries are in discussions for the creation of an international task force to take control of the Gaza Strip after the war.
 - » According to the report, the task force would involve Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. The report did not specify the extent to which the United States would participate in the task force.
 - » The report alleges that the plan would involve three main stages.
 - In the first phase, the international community would first recognize a Palestinian state, after which the United Nations Security Council would appoint the international task force.
 - In the second phase, lasting roughly five years, the task force would work to rehabilitate Gaza's physical infrastructure and its political institutions. The task force would reportedly also involve unspecified coordination with NATO.
 - In the third phase, following the roughly five-year rehabilitation period, elections would be held in Gaza.
 - » If the international task force model is successful in Gaza, it will also be applied in the West Bank, according to the report.

Casualties and Hostages

- Over 1,200 people were [killed](#) in Israel, and 13,000 Israelis have been [injured](#) in the war.
 - » 604 Israeli soldiers have been [killed](#).
 - 260 IDF soldiers have been [killed](#) during ground combat in Gaza so far.
 - As of March 15, 1,480 IDF soldiers have been [injured](#) during ground combat in Gaza, including 310 who have been severely injured.
 - » Numerous foreign nationals have been killed in the war, including at least 34 [American nationals](#), 34 [Thai](#) nationals, 39 [French](#) nationals, 19 [Russian](#) nationals, 12 [British](#) nationals, 10 [Nepalese](#) nationals, 9 [Argentinian](#) nationals, 6 [Canadian](#) nationals, 4 [Philippines](#) nationals, 4 [Austrian](#) nationals, 4 [Romanian](#) nationals, 4 [Portuguese](#) nationals, 4 [Chinese](#) nationals, 3 [Brazilian](#) nationals, 3 [Belarusian](#) nationals, 3 [Italian](#) nationals, 3 [Peruvian](#) nationals, a [Cambodian](#) national, a [Chilean](#) national, an [Irish](#) national, a [Spanish](#) national, an [Australian](#) national, an [Azeri](#) national, a [Honduran](#) national, a [Swiss](#) national, a [Tanzanian](#) national, and a [Turkish](#) national.
- According to unverified figures from the Hamas-controlled Gaza Health Ministry, at least 33,899 people have been [killed](#) in Gaza, and 76,664 have been injured during the war.
 - » On October 25, 2023, 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."
 - » On March 21, Senator Josh Hawley (R-MO) [said](#) that during a virtual meeting that day with Senate Republicans, Israel's Prime Minister Netanyahu assessed that the number of people killed in Gaza was approximately 28,000.

- » Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu [said](#) on March 10 that Israel has killed approximately 13,000 Hamas operatives over the course of the war.
- According to the Palestinian Authority-run Palestinian Ministry of Health, at least 466 people have been [killed](#), and an additional 4,800 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.
- So far, [105](#) hostages in Gaza have been released, [three](#) have been rescued by the IDF, [eight have](#) been [found dead](#), three have been [mistakenly](#) killed by the IDF, and one was [killed](#) during an IDF attempt to rescue him.
 - » 81 Israeli hostages have been released.
 - » 46 hostages with foreign nationalities—some also holding Israeli citizenship—have been released.
 - Thus far, 23 [Thai](#) nationals, 6 [Argentinian](#) nationals, 5 [German nationals](#), 3 [French](#) nationals, 4 [Russian nationals](#), 1 [Dutch](#) national, 1 [Filipino national](#), 1 [Mexican](#) national, 1 [Uruguayan](#) national, and 1 [American](#) national have been released.
 - Hamas has released [36 children](#) and still holds two as hostages.
- Israel has said that terrorists in Gaza currently [hold](#) 134 hostages and deceased hostage bodies.
 - » Israeli officials have confirmed the [deaths](#) of at least [35](#) of the 134 hostages captured on October 7, as well as two additional hostages who were abducted prior to October 7.
 - » Many of the hostages are foreign or dual nationals, including up to 5 [American](#) nationals, 6 [German](#) nationals, 13 [Thai](#) nationals, 4 [Portuguese](#) nationals, 3 [British](#) nationals, 2 [Italian](#) nationals, 4 [Romanian](#) nationals, and 2 [Mexican](#) nationals.

Iranian Involvement and Response

- On April 17, Iran staged a [military parade](#) to celebrate what it deemed was a successful attack against Israel. Speaking at a military base outside of Tehran, Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi claimed that the attack "brought down the glory of the Zionist regime (Israel)." He added, "This operation showed that our armed forces are ready."
- On April 17, Iran's Naval Commander Shahram Irani [indicated](#) that "the Navy is carrying out a mission to escort Iranian commercial ships to the Red Sea and our Jamaran frigate is present in the Gulf of Aden in this view."
- On April 17, Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi [warned](#) that the "tiniest invasion" by Israel would trigger a "massive and harsh" retaliation.
- On April 17, media outlets reported that [graffiti](#) on Iranian buildings supported an Israeli strike on Iranian territory, with writing declaring, "hit them, Israel. Iranians are behind you," "strike Israel, we'll do the rest on the streets," and "war is the ace card for governments in crisis," and another encouraging Israel to bomb Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's home.
- On April 16, Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Ali Bagheri Kani [claimed](#) that if Israel attacks Iran, there will be a "resolute and hard response," and "there will not be a 12- or 13-day gap between a Zionist regime move and Iran's powerful response anymore. The Zionists must now reckon in seconds, not hours."

U.S. and International Response

- On April 17, U.S. National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan [said](#), “in the coming days, the United States will impose new sanctions targeting Iran, including its missile and drone program” and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and Iran’s defense ministry.
 - » He also said, “we anticipate that our allies and partners will soon be following with their own sanctions,” and “these new sanctions and other measures will continue a steady drumbeat of pressure to contain and degrade Iran’s military capacity and effectiveness and confront the full range of its problematic behaviors.”
- On April 17, the U.S. House of Representatives [passed](#) a resolution condemning the pro-Palestinian chant “From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free” as antisemitic. The resolution passed by a vote of 377 to 44.
- On April 17, in response to a United Nations Security Council (UNSC) [resolution](#) currently under consideration to give the Palestinian Authority full UN membership, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Linda Thomas-Greenfield stated that pursuing a resolution through the UNSC will not “necessarily get us to a place where we can find ... a two-state solution moving forward.”
 - » The Palestinian Authority is reportedly aiming to push the UNSC to vote on the resolution, whose draft text was circulated by Algeria, later this week.
- On April 16, U.S. Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro [testified](#) before the Senate that the U.S. Navy has expended nearly \$1 billion in missiles while intercepting Iran-backed projectile attacks since October.
 - » Del Toro also noted that the United States has “countered over 130 direct attacks on US Navy ships and merchant ships” in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden since October.
- On April 16, between 10:50 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. local time, the United States [struck](#) two Houthi drones in Yemen that were prepared to target ships in nearby waters.
- On April 16, White House National Security Communications Advisor John Kirby [argued](#) that the Biden administration does not “support a standalone bill that only funds Israel because Ukraine needs munitions too.”
- On April 16, the U.S. State Department indicated that it would request clarification from Israel after a *Washington Post* [report](#) blamed Israel for the death of a six-year-old Palestinian girl in Gaza who was traveling in an ambulance along a safe passage route.
- President Joe Biden [said](#) to reporters on April 15, “Iran launched an unprecedented aerial attack against Israel. And we mounted an unprecedented military effort to defend Israel. Together with our partners, we defeated that attack,” and “the United States is committed to Israel’s security.”
- Kirby [said](#) on April 15 that “[President Biden] is certainly not looking for a war with Iran and I am confident that Prime Minister Netanyahu is aware of the president’s concerns.”
 - » Kirby also [said](#) that day that Iran’s April 13-14 attack against Israel underscored that Israel enjoys partnerships with allies that will act to defend it.
- Kirby [noted](#) on April 15 that the United States seeks to meet again with Israeli officials this week to discuss an IDF operation in Rafah.
- On April 15, U.S. State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller [said](#), “we strongly condemn the murder of 14-year-old Israeli Binyamin Achimeir and extend our sympathies to his family and friends.”

- » He added, “we are also increasingly concerned by the violence against Palestinian civilians and their property that ensued in the West Bank after Achimeir’s disappearance, resulting in dozens of injuries, property damage, and the killing of two Palestinians, 25-year-old Jihad Abu Aliya and 17-year-old Omar Ahmad Abdulghani Hamed. We strongly condemn these murders, and our thoughts are with their loved ones.”
- On April 15, U.S. House of Representatives Majority Leader Steve Scalise (R-LA) [said](#) in a phone call with Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that he supports Israeli retaliation against Iran’s massive April 13-14 projectile attack in whatever manner that Israel deems fit. Netanyahu responded that Israel will “do whatever is necessary to defend itself.”
- On April 16, *The Wall Street Journal* [reported](#), citing officials in unspecified Arab countries, that Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates “shared intelligence that contributed to an overwhelmingly successful defensive response” to Iran’s attack, but denied the United States and Israel use of their airspace to intercept projectiles.
 - » According to Saudi officials cited in the report, “Iranian officials briefed counterparts from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries” prior to the projectile attack on the “outlines and timing of [Iran’s] plan so that those countries could safeguard airspace.”
 - The information was reportedly passed on to the United States and provided the United States and Israel the ability to prepare for the attack.
 - » Additionally, the report asserts, citing Saudi officials, that following the April 1 airstrike that killed several IRGC leaders in Syria, “Gulf states were worried that Iran might strike Israeli embassies in the region and that the U.S. might not muster a strong response.”
 - » The report also alleges that Saudi and Emirati officials have conducted discussions in recent weeks with Hezbollah in an attempt to de-escalate the situation along Israel’s northern border.
- On April 16, Israel’s *Maariv* outlet [reported](#), citing Turkish security sources and unspecified diplomatic sources, that Iran informed Turkey in advance of its plans for the strike on Israel and that the United States sent Iran a warning via Turkish intermediaries.
 - » According to the report, Turkey informed the United States about the impending attack. The report states that U.S. officials told Turkish officials to pass a message to Iranian regime leaders to the effect that Iran’s attack must be within certain unspecified parameters.
- On April 16, Iraq’s Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani [claimed](#) that no drones or missiles were launched at Israel from Iraqi territory during the Iranian regime’s attack on April 13-14.
- On April 16, Spain’s Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez [said](#), “Spain will strive for Palestine to become a full member of the UN.”
- On April 16, Saudi Arabia’s Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan [said](#) in Islamabad, “we are now actively discussing the potential for famine in Gaza, and it means people are starving to death because humanitarian assistance is not getting to them,” and “this is an unacceptable situation.”
 - » He added, “we are already in an unstable region, and the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza is already inflaming the region. We do not need more conflict in our region, we do not need more confrontation in our region, so it is our position that the de-escalation must be everybody’s priority.”

- On April 16, Jordan’s Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi [claimed](#), “we are against escalating. Netanyahu wants to draw attention away from Gaza and focus on his confrontation with Iran.”
- On April 16, Turkey’s President Recep Tayyip Erdogan [said](#) Prime Minister Netanyahu and the Israeli leadership are solely responsible for the recent escalations in the Middle East, saying, “Israel is trying to provoke a regional conflict, and its attack on Iran’s embassy in Damascus was the last drop.”
- On April 16, U.K. Prime Minister Rishi Sunak [spoke with](#) Prime Minister Netanyahu by phone and “stressed that significant escalation was in no one’s interest and would only deepen insecurity in the Middle East,” according to a readout from Sunak’s office.
- On April 16, the Kremlin [released](#) a statement on behalf of Russia’s President Vladimir Putin that said, “Vladimir Putin expressed hope that all sides would show reasonable restraint and prevent a new round of confrontation fraught with catastrophic consequences for the entire region.”
 - » The statement adds that in a phone call between Putin and Iran’s President Ebrahim Raisi, “both sides stated that the root cause of the current events in the Middle East is the unresolved Palestinian-Israeli conflict.”
 - » It also said, “in this regard, the principled approaches of Russia and Iran in favor of an immediate ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, easing the difficult humanitarian situation, and creating conditions for a political and diplomatic settlement of the crisis were confirmed.”
- On April 15, Canada’s Foreign Minister Melanie Joly [said](#) to journalists, “we are clearly pushing for de-escalation and we need to make sure that the conflict doesn’t extend to the region. So that is why I’ve been clear to my counterpart in Israel—please take the win, and make sure that we can work together to bring back peace in the region.”
- France’s foreign ministry [said](#) on April 15 that when it summoned Iran’s ambassador, “he was reminded, with the greatest firmness, of France’s condemnation of the attack [against Israel].” Similarly, Belgium’s foreign minister, Hadja Lahbib, said, “this attack endangers regional stability and the population, and takes us further away from peace. I call on all parties to exercise the greatest restraint,” and the country’s foreign ministry also noted that it summoned the Iranian ambassador.
- Reuters [reported](#) on April 15 that “Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan spoke by telephone with Qatar’s Emir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani about increasing efforts of the Muslim world to stop attacks by Israel,” according to Erdogan’s office.
- On April 15, *The Times of Israel* [reported](#) that according to an unnamed senior Israeli official, the United Arab Emirates did not contribute to regional air defense efforts that largely frustrated Iran’s April 13-14 projectile attack against Israel.
- Reuters [reported](#) on April 15 that “top Russian security official Nikolai Patrushev has discussed the rising tensions in the Middle East with [Israel’s] National Security Council chairman Tzachi Hanegbi, Russian news agency Interfax reports.”

Rising Antisemitism, Protests, and Attacks

- On April 16, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) [released](#) a report that said that in 2023, antisemitic incidents hit an all time high in the United States since the group began tracking incidents in 1979.

- » According to the report, there were 8,873 incidents recorded last year, with over 5,200 occurring in the wake of Hamas’s October 7 massacre.
- » The report said this represents a 140% increase compared to 2022.
- » The report also [said](#) that, compared to 2022, harassment incidents increased by 184%; acts of vandalism increased by 69%; and physical assaults jumped by 45%.
- On April 16, several Google employees who are members of the anti-Israel worker’s group, “No Tech for Apartheid,” were [arrested](#) after barricading themselves in the office of Google Cloud CEO Thomas Kurian’s office for over eight hours.
- On April 15, anti-Israel protesters [blocked](#) a highway leading to Chicago’s O’Hare International Airport, obstructing traffic flow to one of the busiest airports in the country.
- On April 15, anti-Israel protesters [blocked](#) traffic on the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, California, trapping vehicles for nearly five hours.
 - » A separate group of anti-Israel protesters also blocked all of the lanes on the I-880 in Oakland, California, chaining themselves to concrete barrels.
 - » California Highway Patrol said that 28 people were arrested in total in both incidents.
- On April 15, an Israeli security official [told](#) *Army Radio* that Israeli settlers were “likely” responsible for shooting dead two Palestinians in a clash near Aqrabah in the West Bank.

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