

# Iran Update, August 25, 2025

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**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. CTP-ISW publishes the Iran Update daily.*

*Click [here](#) to see CTP and ISW's interactive map of assessed control of terrain in Syria, and [here](#) to see CTP and ISW's interactive map of Israeli ground operations. The Syria map is updated daily alongside the static Syria maps in this report. CTP-ISW ended daily maps of Israeli ground operations in February 2025.*

*Click [here](#) to see ISW-CTP's interactive map showing the total strikes in Iran during the Israel-Iran War, as well as an interactive timelapse showing the strikes day-by-day.*

**Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei rejected recent calls by Iranian reformist officials to reform Iran's domestic and foreign policies.**[1] Khamenei delivered a speech on August 24 in which he claimed that "Iran's enemies" failed to defeat Iran during the Israel-Iran War and are now trying to do so by "creating discord in the country." [2] Khamenei claimed that agents of the United States and Israel, along with "heedless speakers and writers," are creating division. [3] Khamenei may have used the term "heedless speakers and writers" to refer to reformist officials who have recently called on the regime to reform its domestic and foreign policies. Former Iranian President Hassan Rouhani called on August 13 for the regime to make concessions to the Iranian people, strengthen societal resilience, and reduce tensions with the West. [4] The Iranian Reformist Front separately issued a statement on August 17 that called for political reforms and foreign policy shifts, including suspending uranium enrichment under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) oversight. [5] Khamenei rejected this and similar calls to engage with the United States in his speech on August 24, stating that the conflict between Iran and the United States is "unsolvable." Khamenei additionally rejected direct talks with the United States but did not explicitly rule out the possibility of indirect negotiations.

**The Iranian regime is facing increasing pressure to resume nuclear negotiations with the United States ahead of the E3's (the United Kingdom, France, and Germany) August 31 deadline for Iran to make progress toward a diplomatic solution to the nuclear issue.** An Iranian delegation led by Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister for Political Affairs Majid Takht Ravanchi will meet with E3 officials in Geneva, Switzerland, on August 26 to continue talks over potential snapback sanctions.[6] British Foreign Secretary David Lammy stated on August 22 that the E3 will activate the snapback mechanism to reimpose United Nations Security Council (UNSC) sanctions on Iran unless Iran agrees to a “verifiable, durable deal.”[7] A senior French diplomat told Saudi media on August 25 that the meeting in Geneva would be the “last window open to the Iranian side.”[8] The E3 imposed a deadline of August 31 on Iran to make meaningful progress toward a nuclear deal, such as by renewing cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and resuming negotiations with the United States.[9] The E3 offered to postpone the expiration of the snapback mechanism to allow Iran more time to negotiate with the United States.[10] The snapback mechanism is currently set to expire in October 2025. Iranian officials have rejected postponing the deadline because extending the deadline would provide the E3 with more time to trigger the snapback mechanism. The E3 would need to initiate the snapback process by September 3 in order to complete the process by the current October deadline.[11] The snapback mechanism would reimpose six UNSC resolutions on Iran, including bans on the transfer of conventional arms to and from Iran, international support for Iran's missile program, enrichment-related activities, and the testing and development of nuclear-capable missiles.[12]

**Iranian Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) Secretary Ali Larijani is reportedly trying to convince the Iranian regime to reduce Iran's level of uranium enrichment from 60 percent to 20 percent to avoid snapback sanctions and further US and Israeli strikes, according to a senior Iranian official speaking to *The Telegraph* on August 24.**[13] The senior official stated that Larijani is concerned that another war with the United States or Israel could present a major challenge to the regime.[14] Larijani reportedly faces the most opposition from Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) members.[15] The official also stated that Iranian leaders appear “willing to comply” with Larijani's call to reduce enrichment levels and re-engage with Western countries.[16] The *Washington Post* similarly reported on July 13 that there is a “consensus” among Iran's political class that Iran needs to resume nuclear negotiations with the United States, citing political observers inside and outside of Iran.[17] These reports suggest that Iranian moderates who support nuclear negotiations with the United States are continuing to prevail over Iranian hardliners who reject negotiations. Larijani replaced Ali Akbar Ahmadian as SNSC secretary on August 5 as part of a broader restructuring of Iranian defense and security institutions after the Israel-Iran War. Larijani is a moderate politician who supported the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

**Russia reportedly introduced a draft resolution to extend the snapback mechanism deadline, according to unspecified informed sources speaking to UK-based Amwaj Media on August 25.**[18] The informed sources stated that China will reportedly co-sponsor the draft resolution.[19] The draft resolution would extend the snapback deadline by six months until April 2026 and reportedly prevent the E3 from being able to trigger the snapback mechanism during the six-month extension period.[20] Iran previously rejected an offer by the E3 to extend the snapback deadline, so it is unclear whether Iran will support the Russian draft proposal.[21]

This report comes after Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and Iranian Foreign Affairs Minister Abbas Araghchi held separate phone calls with their Russian counterparts, President Vladimir Putin and Foreign Affairs Minister Sergei Lavrov, respectively, to discuss, among other issues, potential snapback sanctions.[22] Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs Kazem Gharibabadi called Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Ma Zhaoxu on August 24 to discuss a diplomatic resolution to the nuclear issue.[23]

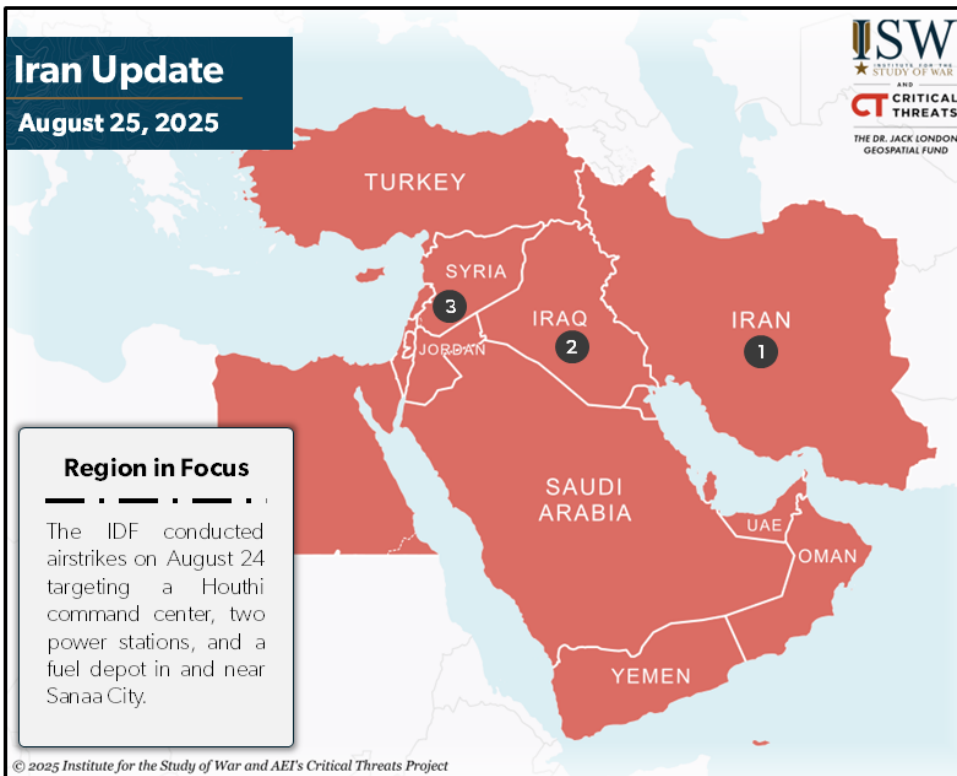
**Iranian-backed Iraqi militia Asaib Ahl al Haq leader Qais al Khazali used popular fears about an Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) resurgence to try to justify the existence of the Iranian-backed Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF).** Recent US political and economic pressure on the Iraqi federal government to curb Iranian influence in Iraq has sparked a debate in the Iraqi political space about the future and possible dissolution of the PMF.[24] The PMF was established in 2014 by “institutionalizing” pre-existing and predominantly Shia militias, including various Iranian-backed Iraqi militias like Asaib Ahl al Haq, that were engaged in the fight against ISIS.[25] Khazali argued on August 23 that unspecified current events are “more dangerous” than the situation before ISIS’s emergence in 2014.[26] He added that “takfiri” fighters are operating on Iraq’s borders. Khazali was likely referring to ISIS fighters who continue to operate in northeastern Syria. Khazali may seek to amplify the threat that ISIS poses to Iraq to prevent the PMF’s dissolution. The spokesperson for Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammad Shia al Sudani asserted on August 23 that ISIS no longer poses a threat to Iraq.[27]

It is possible that Khazali was also referring to Syrian government forces, which control territory immediately along the Iraqi border at the Albu Kamal-al Qaim border crossing.[28] Iranian-backed Iraqi actors have remained intensely distrustful of the Syrian transitional government under President Ahmed al Shara due to Shara’s historic ties to al Qaeda in Iraq, which was the predecessor to ISIS.[29] Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei’s Adviser to Iraq, Mojtaba Hosseini, similarly claimed on August 23 that the United States wants Iraq to “suffer the same fate as Syria.”[30] Iran viewed the overthrow of the Assad regime in December 2024 as part of a US effort to replace a pro-Iranian government with one led by “terrorists” under Syrian President Ahmed al Shara.[31] The Iranian regime has historically accused the United States of creating and supporting terrorist actors like ISIS to undermine Iran and its Axis of Resistance.[32]

**Khazali and Hosseini’s comments come amid continued US efforts to dissolve the PMF.** Iraqi Parliament Speaker Mahmoud al Mashhadani stated on August 24 that the United States warned several Iraqi officials, including Iraqi President Abdul Latif al Rashid, that the United States will take a “different position” if the Iraqi Parliament passes laws that oppose US laws, in reference to the Popular Mobilization Authority Law.[33] The Popular Mobilization Authority Law, which the Iraqi Parliament has not yet voted on, includes provisions to make the PMF chairmanship a ministerial position and professionalize the PMF as a fighting force.[34] An “informed source” told Iraqi media on August 23 that a senior US delegation will visit Baghdad in the coming days to discuss the US military withdrawal from Iraq as well as unspecified energy and economic issues.[35] The United States is expected to complete the first phase of its withdrawal from Iraq to the Iraqi Kurdistan Region by the end of September 2025.[36] The recent US pressure on the Iraqi federal government to curb Iranian influence in Iraq has included demands for the Iraqi government to curb Iranian oil smuggling, which could be discussed by the US delegation visiting Iraq.

**Druze leader Hikmat al Hijri’s unification of around 40 Druze militias into the “National Guard” to defend Suwayda Province on August 23 undermines the Syrian transitional government’s efforts to establish a centralized Syrian state.**[37] Hijri formed an autonomous government in Suwayda Province on August 6.[38] The militias that have merged to form the “National Guard” include prominent Druze militias, such as the Unification Shield, which includes 23 battalions, the Men of Dignity, Liwa al Jibal, the Unified Popular Resistance, the Southern Shield Forces, the Mountain Shield Forces, the Sheikh al Karama Forces, and the 164th Brigade. The Men of Dignity militia was previously open to cooperation with the Syrian transitional government but rejected government control over Suwayda Province after government forces committed atrocities against Druze civilians in July.[39] Hijri commended the creation of the “National Guard” and the “Supreme Legal Committee” and claimed that these institutions serve as the security, military, political, and legal apparatuses of Suwayda Province.[40]

**The newly-formed “National Guard” and “Supreme Legal Committee” include several former Assad-era officers.**[41] The Suwayda “National Guard” includes Brigadier General Jihad Ghoutani, who previously served as an artillery commander under Assad after his promotion in 2019.[42] Ghoutani fought for the Assad regime in battles across Syria, including artillery campaigns in Rif Dimashq, Idlib, and Homs provinces.[43] Suwayda’s “Supreme Legal Committee” appointed former Assad intelligence officer Brigadier General Shakib Ajoud Nasr, who oversaw political security in Tartous, as head of internal security on August 6.[44] The “Supreme Legal Committee” later replaced Nasr with a Suwaydawi judge on August 12.[45]



- 1 **Tehran, Iran:** The Iranian regime is facing increasing pressure to resume nuclear negotiations with the United States ahead of the E3's (the United Kingdom, France, and Germany) August 31 deadline for Iran to make progress toward a diplomatic solution to the nuclear issue. Iranian Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) Secretary Ali Larjani is reportedly trying to convince the Iranian regime to reduce Iran's level of uranium enrichment from 60 percent to 20 percent to avoid snapback sanctions and further US and Israeli strikes.
- 2 **Baghdad, Iraq:** Iranian-backed Iraqi militia Asaib Ahl al Haq leader Qais al Khazali used popular fears about an Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) resurgence to try to justify the existence of the Iranian-backed Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF).
- 3 **Suwayda, Syria:** Druze leader Hikmat al Hijri's unification of around 40 Druze militias into the "National Guard" to defend Suwayda Province on August 23 undermines the Syrian transitional government's efforts to establish a centralized Syrian state. The newly-formed "National Guard" and "Supreme Legal Committee" include several former Assad-era officers.

## Key Takeaways

- **Baghdad, Iraq:** Iranian-backed Iraqi militia Asaib Ahl al Haq leader Qais al Khazali used popular fears about an Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) resurgence to try to justify the existence of the Iranian-backed Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF). Recent US political and economic pressure on the Iraqi federal government to curb Iranian influence in Iraq has sparked a debate in the Iraqi political space about the future and possible dissolution of the PMF.
- **Tehran, Iran:** The Iranian regime is facing increasing pressure to resume nuclear negotiations with the United States ahead of the E3's (the United Kingdom, France, and

Germany) August 31 deadline for Iran to make progress toward a diplomatic solution to the nuclear issue. Iranian Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) Secretary Ali Larijani is reportedly trying to convince the Iranian regime to reduce Iran's level of uranium enrichment from 60 percent to 20 percent to avoid snapback sanctions and further US and Israeli strikes.

- **Suwayda, Syria:** Druze leader Hikmat al Hijri's unification of around 40 Druze militias into the "National Guard" to defend Suwayda Province on August 23 undermines the Syrian transitional government's efforts to establish a centralized Syrian state. The newly-formed "National Guard" and "Supreme Legal Committee" include several former Assad-era officers.

## **Iran**

**Iranian Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister for Legal and International Affairs Kazem Gharibabadi held separate meetings with senior clerics Nasser Makarem Shirazi and Hashem Hosseini Bushehri in Qom on August 21 to discuss foreign policy developments.**[46] Makarem Shirazi praised the Foreign Affairs Ministry as "awake and well aware of its duty." [47] Makarem Shirazi added that the ministry should fight Iran's adversaries on the diplomatic front just as the Iranian armed forces fight Iran's adversaries on the battlefield.[48] Bushehri separately linked diplomacy to military strength and endorsed conditional negotiations.[49] Bushehri called negotiations a "rational matter" with Islamic precedent, stressing that peace is acceptable so long as it preserves Islamic values.[50]

**Iranian security forces thwarted a terrorist plot on August 25, according to the Iranian Intelligence Ministry.**[51] The Intelligence Ministry claimed that Iranian security forces destroyed a terrorist cell that had entered Iran from its eastern border and was armed with rocket-propelled grenades, machine guns, grenades, explosive vests, and large quantities of ammunition.[52] Iranian authorities claimed that the cell planned to attack a "vital site" in eastern Iran and compared the target to military targets that Israel struck during the 12-day war.[53] Iranian authorities accused the cell of links to Mossad.[54] The Iranian regime has previously accused Israel of supporting Jaish al Adl.[55] Jaish al Adl is a Baloch Salafi-jihadi group that frequently conducts attacks, primarily targeting Iranian security sites and personnel, in southeastern Iran.[56] Iranian security forces killed six fighters and detained two others while thwarting the plot.[57] The Intelligence Ministry added that two of its officers and one Law Enforcement Command (LEC) officer were injured.[58] This announcement follows a string of attacks and counterterrorism operations against Jaish al Adl in Sistan and Baluchistan Province in recent weeks.[59]

## **Iraq**

*See topline section.*

## **Syria**

**The Syrian transitional government's Supreme Committee for People's Assembly Elections outlined criteria for the formation of provincial subcommittees on August 23.**[60] The

Syrian transitional government will hold its first parliamentary elections through provincial subcommittees between September 15 and 20, 2025.[61] The Supreme Committee separately announced on August 23 that elections in Suwayda, Raqqa, and Hasakah provinces will be postponed because the government lacks control over these provinces.[62] The committee clarified that these provinces will retain their current seat allocations and that elections will take place in these provinces as soon as possible.[63] CTP-ISW previously assessed that the new parliament is unlikely to check President Ahmed al Shara's power, given that Shara directly appoints one-third of the People's Assembly's members and indirectly influences the selection of the remaining two-thirds.[64]

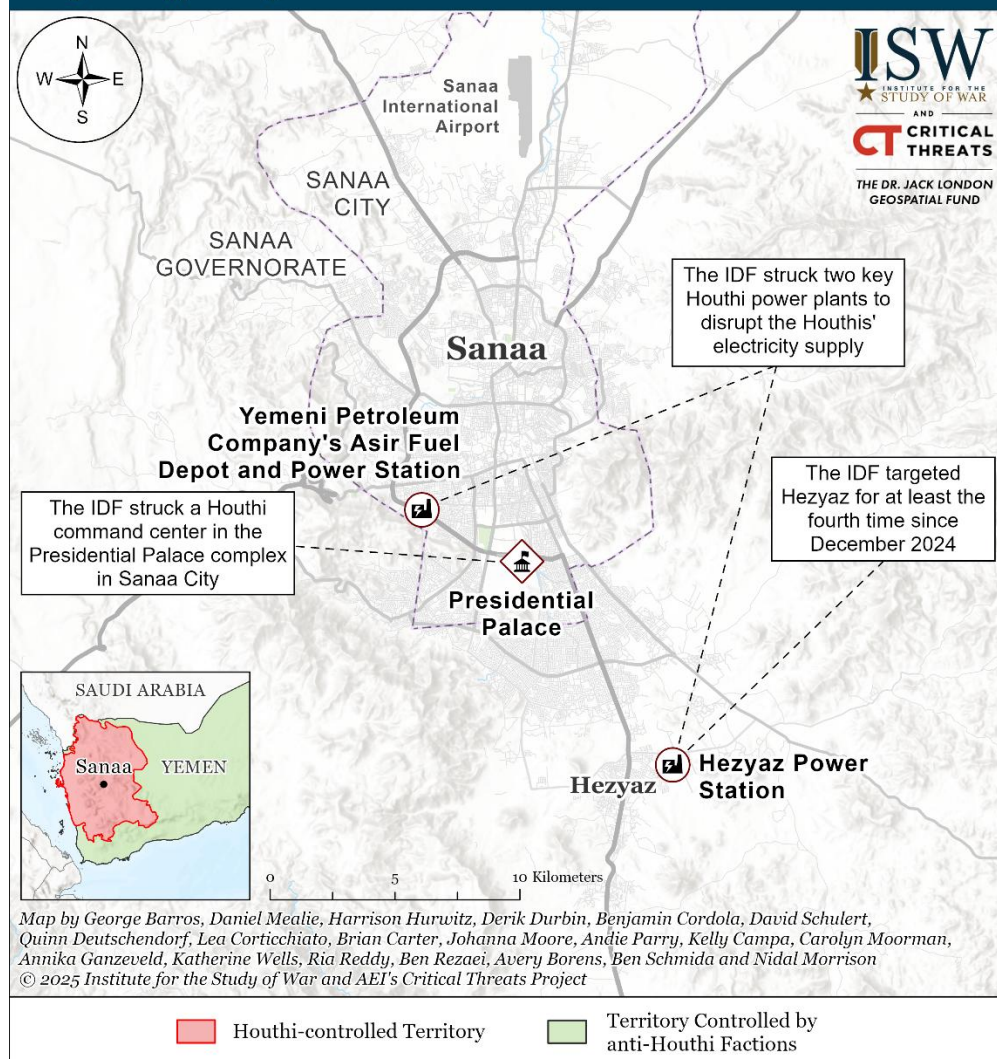
## **Arabian Peninsula**

**The Houthis launched two drones targeting military and “vital” sites in Tel Aviv and Ashkelon, as well as a missile targeting Ben Gurion Airport on August 22.**[65] The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) confirmed on August 22 that the missile “disintegrated in the air” after Israeli air defense systems made several interception attempts. Debris from the missile fell in central Israel, causing minor damage but no casualties.[66] The IDF stated on August 22 that it is still investigating the incident. The Houthis have launched hundreds of drones and ballistic missiles targeting Israel since the Houthis began their campaign to enforce an economic “blockade” on Israel in October 2023.[67]

**The IDF conducted airstrikes on August 24 targeting a Houthi command center, two power stations, and a fuel depot in and near Sanaa City.**[68] The IDF targeted the Presidential Palace complex in Sabeen Square, which reportedly houses the Houthi Defense Ministry.[69] Commercially available satellite imagery shows that at least four out of the 15 buildings at the complex were damaged before the August 24 airstrikes. The United States and the United Kingdom conducted airstrikes targeting the complex in December 2024.[70] The IDF also struck the Houthi-controlled Hezyaz power station, southeast of Sanaa City, on August 24 for at least the fourth time since December 2024.[71] The IDF recently destroyed a generator at one of Hezyaz power station's three production units on August 16.[72] The IDF also targeted the Houthi-run Yemeni Petroleum Company's power station and fuel depot near the Asir District in southwestern Sanaa City.[73] The Houthi Health Ministry reported that Israeli airstrikes on the two power stations killed at least 10 people and injured 92 others.[74] Houthi leaders stated that the Israeli airstrikes will not deter them from conducting attacks on Israel as part of the Houthis' efforts to isolate Israel and pressure Israel to stop its campaign in the Gaza Strip.[75] Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz stated on August 24 that “for every missile they launch toward Israel, the Houthis will pay compound interest.”[76]



## Israeli Airstrikes Against Houthi Targets in Sanaa August 25, 2025 at 2:00 PM EST



### Palestinian Territories and Lebanon

Israel reportedly rejected US Special Envoy Thomas Barrack's proposal to disarm Hezbollah but agreed to gradually halt its operations in Lebanon if the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) makes progress toward disarming Hezbollah.[77] The US proposal includes an Israeli withdrawal from its five permanent positions in southern Lebanon within 90 days and the full disarmament of Hezbollah by the end of 2025.[78] Israel has rejected previous proposals that would require Israel to withdraw from Lebanon before the Lebanese government disarms Hezbollah.[79] Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office stated on August 25 that Israel would conduct "reciprocal measures" if the LAF takes steps to disarm Hezbollah.[80] Lebanese officials previously stated that the Lebanese government would not implement the US disarmament proposal until Israel agrees to the US proposal, however.[81] Israeli Strategic Affairs Minister Ron Dermer similarly told Barrack on August 24 that Israel would agree to



withdraw from an unspecified number of its positions in southern Lebanon and gradually halt airstrikes.[82]

Dermer also told Barrack that Israel insists that an unspecified number of Lebanese villages on the Israel-Lebanon border remain evacuated to serve as a buffer zone between the two countries.[83] Dermer noted that Lebanon could develop factories and other industrial sites in the buffer zone.[84] The United States reportedly proposed a similar “economic zone” in southern Lebanon with Israeli officials on August 21.[85] Lebanese President Joseph Aoun noted that Lebanon is still waiting for Israel’s official response to the US proposal and has not been officially informed about Israel’s intended buffer zone in southern Lebanon.[86]

**Hezbollah will likely use the formation of a buffer zone to justify retaining its weapons.**

Hezbollah’s objective since its formation in 1982 has been to expel foreign forces, including Israeli forces, from Lebanon and remove any “colonialist entity” from Lebanon.[87] Hezbollah maintains this objective and often cites continued Israeli operations in Lebanon as justification for retaining its weapons.[88] Hezbollah Secretary General Naim Qassem reiterated on August 25 that Hezbollah will not disarm and will not allow Israel to “roam freely” in Lebanon.[89] Qassem previously noted on August 15 that Hezbollah will not surrender its weapons until Israel halts its operations and withdraws from southern Lebanon.[90] Hezbollah parliamentarians have similarly stated that Hezbollah “could not” disarm while Israel continues to operate in Lebanon.[91]

**Hezbollah is attempting to leverage regional support to pressure the Lebanese government to not implement its plan to disarm Hezbollah.** Hezbollah asked Iraqi Shia Coordination Framework leaders on August 24 to pressure Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammad Shia al Sudani to halt Iraqi trade with Lebanon in response to the Lebanese government’s decision to disarm Hezbollah, according to unspecified Iraqi political sources.[92] The Shia Coordination Framework is a loose coalition of Iraqi Shia political parties, some of which Iran backs. Sudani is unlikely to fulfill this request given his recent efforts to strengthen Iraq’s economic relations with Lebanon.[93] Iraq has several economic agreements with Lebanon, including a \$20 million reconstruction agreement and a fuel agreement.[94]

**Hezbollah called on its supporters on August 25 to protest against the Lebanese government as part of its ongoing efforts to delay or reverse the government’s plan to disarm Hezbollah.**[95] Hezbollah’s Central Trade Union and Hezbollah-allied Amal Movement’s Central Labor Office called on members to protest in Beirut on August 27 to affirm the status of Hezbollah and reject the government’s decision.[96] This statement marks the first time that Hezbollah has called for protests against the government’s decision.[97] The offices later postponed the protests to allow for dialogue.[98] Hezbollah officials have continuously threatened potential confrontation and anti-government protests if the Lebanese government attempts to disarm Hezbollah.[99] Hezbollah Secretary General Naim Qassem threatened on August 15 to “confront” the government and incite protests against it.[100] Saudi media reported on August 24 that Hezbollah informed Lebanese President Joseph Aoun and LAF Commander Brigadier General Rodolphe Haykal that the Lebanese government’s implementation of the disarmament plan would cause confrontation.[101] Hezbollah Political Council Deputy Head

Mahmoud Qamati similarly warned on August 25 that Hezbollah supporters will form a “popular tsunami” to challenge the government’s decision.[102]



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# Iran Update



**Avery Borens, Ben Rezaei, Katherine Wells, Ben Schmida, Adham Fattah, Ria Reddy, and Brian Carter**

**August 26, 2025      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. CTP-ISW publishes the Iran Update daily.*

*Click [here](#) to see CTP and ISW's interactive map of assessed control of terrain in Syria, and [here](#) to see CTP and ISW's interactive map of Israeli ground operations. The Syria map is updated daily alongside the static Syria maps in this report. CTP-ISW ended daily maps of Israeli ground operations in February 2025.*

*Click [here](#) to see ISW-CTP's interactive map showing the total strikes in Iran during the Israel-Iran War, as well as an interactive timelapse showing the strikes day-by-day.*

**The Lebanese government will reportedly attempt to persuade rather than coerce Hezbollah to disarm. Hezbollah is unlikely to disarm on its own accord and has historically evaded previous disarmament efforts.** US Special Envoy Thomas Barrack said that the Lebanese government will focus on persuasion to encourage Hezbollah disarmament after his meeting with Lebanese President Joseph Aoun on August 26.[1] Barrack announced that Lebanon will present a plan on August 31 that aims to encourage Hezbollah to surrender its weapons to the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF).[2] Hezbollah's threats to encourage violence if efforts to disarm it persist suggest that the group is attempting to test the government's willingness to disarm it. A plan based on persuasion is therefore unlikely to disarm Hezbollah successfully, because the group will face few negative consequences if it declines to disarm. Barrack is attempting to build an "economic zone" in southern Lebanon to court Hezbollah's supporters, which is an incentive for the rank-and-file of Hezbollah fighters, but would probably not court ideologically motivated Hezbollah fighters and leadership.[3] Hezbollah has used financial incentives, including jobs, salaries, pensions, and benefits, to retain its support base among Lebanese Shia civilians and to recruit young fighters.[4]

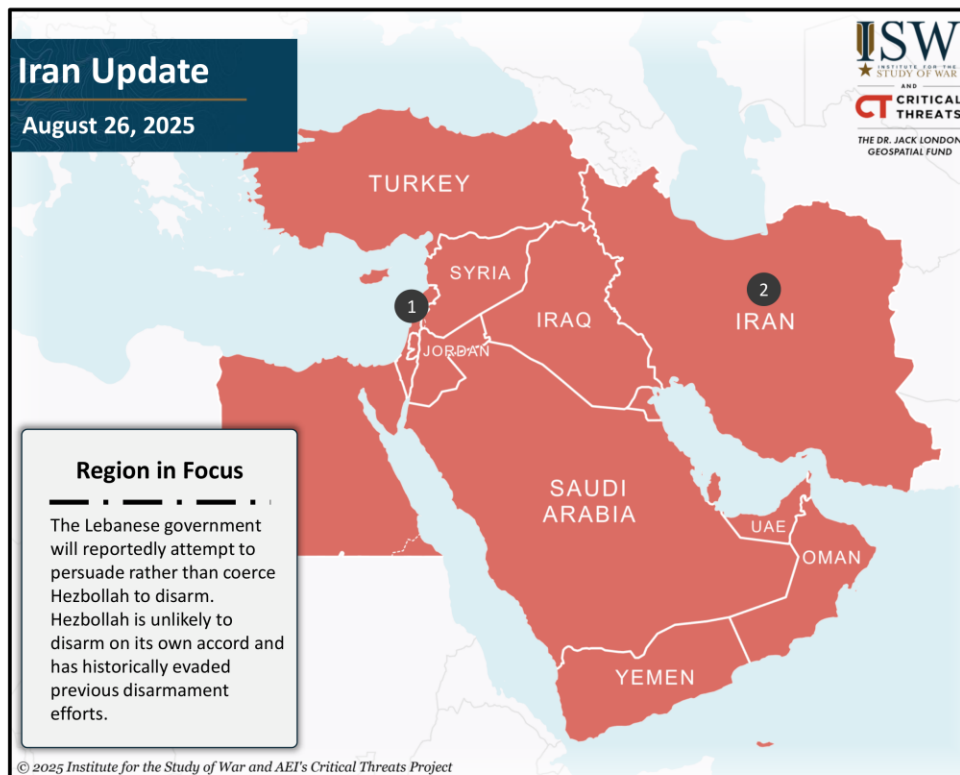
Hezbollah will likely respond to an explicitly "persuasive" approach by continuing to threaten military action if the government continues to pressure the group politically to disarm. Purely persuasive actions enable Hezbollah to threaten escalation as it needs, while rejecting government overtures because the government's resort to persuasive actions indicates to Hezbollah that it has deterred the government. Hezbollah's ability to threaten military action while the government condemns itself to a publicly political approach cedes the initiative to Hezbollah and indicates to Hezbollah that the government lacks sufficient will to disarm Hezbollah.

Hezbollah continues to view its weapons as the group's core and has previously referred to its weapons as its "soul," which further demonstrates its commitment to arms.[5] Hezbollah has consistently initiated wars against Israel while using the excuse that Lebanon needs Hezbollah to "defend" against Israel to refuse disarmament. Hezbollah refused to disarm after Israel withdrew from Lebanon in 2000, arguing that its weapons remained a critical element of national defense against any future Israeli operations.[6] Hezbollah later attacked Israel in July 2006, kidnapping three Israeli soldiers and triggering a major Israeli ground operation. Hezbollah subsequently similarly used national defense as justification to retain its arms after the 2006 war despite the Israel-Hezbollah ceasefire, which called for the disarmament of all armed factions in Lebanon under UNSC Resolution 1701.[7] Hezbollah also entered the war against Israel on October 8, 2023, by conducting offensive indirect and direct fire against northern Israeli towns. Hezbollah officials, including Secretary General Naim Qassem, have also stated that Hezbollah would "confront" whoever attempts to disarm the group.[8] Hezbollah has consistently rejected calls for disarmament, stating that it will not surrender its weapons until Israel halts operations and withdraws from southern Lebanon.[9] Hezbollah has called for negotiations on a national defense strategy once Israel withdraws, which Qassem previously suggested would entail Hezbollah retaining its weapons and acting alongside Lebanese security forces.[10]

**Hezbollah's fiery rhetoric against the government likely aims to deter the government from coercing Hezbollah into disarming while avoiding military escalation.** Hezbollah has previously launched mass protests in response to much less significant Lebanese government efforts to counter the group. Hezbollah and its ally, the Amal Movement, incited a protest in Beirut in October 2021 in response to the Lebanese government's investigation into the potential role of Hezbollah officials in the Beirut port explosion.[11] This investigation was much less significant to Hezbollah's long-term survival than government efforts in 2025 to disarm Hezbollah, which are supported by the prime minister. The 2021 protests rapidly descended into sectarian clashes between pro-Hezbollah protestors and anti-Hezbollah Lebanese Forces members, which killed at least six individuals.[12] Hezbollah has largely refrained from officially inciting protests in response to the Lebanese government's recent decision to disarm the group, however. Hezbollah and the Amal Movement only called on supporters to protest once on August 25, but later postponed the protests to allow for dialogue.[13] Hezbollah's dialogue suggests that the group fears escalation because its weaker position and the inherent unpredictability of protests or military escalation could rapidly spiral out of Hezbollah's control.

**Iran is very unlikely to meet the E3 (the United Kingdom, France, and Germany) conditions to extend the snapback mechanism deadline before the E3's end-of-August deadline.** The E3 set a deadline for Iran to reach a "substantial deal" by the end of August before the E3 triggers the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) snapback mechanism to re-impose UN Security Council sanctions on Iran.[14] The snapback mechanism is set to expire on October 18, marking the end of the ten-year period outlined in UN Security Council Resolution 2231, but the E3 would need to initiate the snapback process at the end of August in order to meet the October 18 deadline.[15] An Iranian delegation led by Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister for Political Affairs Majid Takht Ravanchi and Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister for Legal and International Affairs Kazem Gharibabadi met with E3 officials in Geneva, Switzerland, on August 26 to discuss potential snapback sanctions and a snapback mechanism deadline extension.[16] An unspecified source told an Axios reporter on August 26 that the Iranians "have [not] put tangible, detailed deliverables on the table." [17]

Another source added that Iran offered “very little to work with” to secure an extension.[18] The E3 previously proposed on July 25 to extend the snapback mechanism’s deadline in exchange for full cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), a resumption of nuclear talks with the United States, and accounting for its 60 percent enriched uranium stockpile.[19] Iran has repeatedly rejected this proposal.[20] Iran has reiterated its right to enrich uranium domestically, continued to deny the IAEA access to Iranian nuclear facilities struck in the 12-day Israel-Iran War, and set maximalist preconditions for resuming nuclear talks with the United States.[21]



- 1 **LEBANON.** The Lebanese government will reportedly attempt to persuade rather than coerce Hezbollah to disarm. Hezbollah is unlikely to disarm on its own accord and has historically evaded previous disarmament efforts. Hezbollah’s fiery rhetoric against the government likely aims to deter the government from coercing Hezbollah into disarming while avoiding military escalation.
- 2 **IRAN.** Iran is very unlikely to meet the E3 (the United Kingdom, France, and Germany) conditions to extend the snapback mechanism deadline before the E3’s end-of-August deadline. The E3 set a deadline for Iran to reach a “substantial deal” by the end of August before the E3 triggers the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action snapback mechanism to reimpose UN Security Council sanctions on Iran.

## Key Takeaways

- **Hezbollah Disarmament:** The Lebanese government will reportedly attempt to persuade rather than coerce Hezbollah to disarm. Hezbollah is unlikely to disarm on its own accord and has historically evaded previous disarmament efforts. Hezbollah's fiery rhetoric against the government likely aims to deter the government from coercing Hezbollah into disarming while avoiding military escalation.
- **Iran:** Iran is very unlikely to meet the E3 (the United Kingdom, France, and Germany) conditions to extend the snapback mechanism deadline before the E3's end-of-August deadline. The E3 set a deadline for Iran to reach a "substantial deal" by the end of August before the E3 triggers the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action snapback mechanism to reimpose UN Security Council sanctions on Iran.

## **Iran**

**Iran continues to consult Russia over mutual concerns over the southern Caucasus after the US began efforts to broker a peace deal between Armenia and Azerbaijan that would grant the United States exclusive development rights to a strategic corridor in the southern Caucasus.**[22] Iranian Ambassador to Russia Kazem Jalali met with Russian Deputy Defense Minister Alexander Fomin on August 26 to discuss security concerns in the southern Caucasus and Russo-Iranian military cooperation.[23] They likely discussed the recent US proposal to oversee a transit corridor in the southern Caucasus. This meeting comes after Iranian officials criticized a US-brokered peace deal between Armenia and Azerbaijan that grants the United States exclusive development rights to a 27-mile corridor through southern Armenia that connects Azerbaijan to its exclave, the Nakhchivan Autonomous Region. Iranian Foreign Affairs Minister Abbas Araghchi previously discussed Russo-Iranian concerns about the deal with Russian Foreign Minister Special Representative to the Caucasus Region Igor Khayev in Tehran on August 13.[24] Iranian officials have also recently held meetings with Armenian officials, likely to try to dissuade Armenia from agreeing to the proposed trade corridor.[25]

**Iranian Foreign Affairs Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei denied reports in Western media that reported that Supreme National Security Council Secretary Ali Larijani proposed lowering Iran's uranium enrichment from 60 percent to 20 percent to advance negotiations with the United States.**[26]

**Armed Forces General Staff Chief Major General Abdol Rahim Mousavi met with Pakistani Field Marshal Asim Munir on August 26 to discuss enhancing border security along Iran's southeastern border.**[27] Mousavi stated that there has been an increase in terrorist activity on the Iran-Pakistan border and expressed Iran's willingness to cooperate with Pakistan to address the issue.[28] The Iranian Intelligence Ministry announced on August 23 that Iranian security forces destroyed a terrorist cell that had entered Iran from the Pakistan-Iran border and was armed with rocket-propelled grenades, machine guns, grenades, explosive vests, and large quantities of ammunition.[29] Iranian security forces have recently conducted several counterterrorism operations against the Baloch Salafi-jihadi group Jaish al Adl in southeastern Iran.[30]

## **Iraq**

Nothing significant to report.

## Syria

**The Syrian Ministry of Defense (MoD) issued a directive on August 12 to begin to standardize MoD members' uniforms and appearance, which is a small step towards instilling military discipline and professionalism.**[31] The MoD directive prohibits all MoD personnel from “wearing or affixing any unapproved slogans on military uniforms in any form, under penalty of accountability.”[32] The directive bans the use of unauthorized banners, flags, phrases, or other symbols by MoD personnel.[33] The MoD stated that it intends to standardize its uniforms and emblems for each military division within the next three months.[34] Some Syrian MoD members have been recorded wearing patches affiliated with the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), the Uyghur Turkistan Islamic Party (TIP), and other Salafi-Jihadi insignia since the Syrian transitional government took power in December 2024.[35] Security cameras captured members of the MoD's 82nd Division wearing ISIS patches in Suwayda National Hospital when Syrian security forces executed a medical volunteer there on July 16.[36] The MoD's decision to standardize unit appearance is a small step toward the implementation of proper unit discipline and professionalism.

## Arabian Peninsula

**Israeli airstrikes on Sanaa City on August 24 destroyed a building at a Houthi command center in the Presidential Palace complex and damaged several structures at a Yemeni Petroleum Company (YPC) site in Asir District, according to commercially available satellite imagery published on August 26.**[37] Local sources claimed that one of the IDF airstrikes on August 24 targeted YPC fuel depots in Asir District.[38] The IDF stated that they struck Asir and Heyzaz power stations, as well as an unspecified fuel storage site.[39]







## Palestinian Territories and Lebanon

**Lebanese media reported on August 26 that Hezbollah will soon announce the allocation of one billion USD to begin reconstruction.[40] Lebanese media claimed that Hezbollah already has the funds on hand despite the group's widely-reported financial struggles.[41]** Reconstruction funds will reportedly focus on Beirut's southern suburbs and other affected areas, excluding towns along the Israel-Lebanon border and towns that remain under threat of ongoing Israeli airstrikes.[42] Lebanese media added that the process will proceed at a "rapid pace" and would be completed within a maximum of eight months.[43] Hezbollah, which quickly rebuilt Lebanon and provided a social safety net for Lebanese civilians after the 2006 war, has struggled to reconstruct damaged infrastructure following the Israel-Hezbollah conflict in late 2024.[44] Hezbollah has similarly struggled to maintain its financial commitments to fighters, which has contributed to growing frustration among Hezbollah supporters.[45] Frustrated Hezbollah supporters have demanded answers from Hezbollah about when they will receive reconstruction funds to rebuild businesses and homes destroyed in the war.[46] Disruptions to Hezbollah's ability to provide its support base with promised benefits may not have an immediate effect on the population's support for Hezbollah, but could diminish support for Hezbollah over time.

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# Iran Update



**Ben Rezaei, Ria Reddy, Nidal Morrison, Avery Borens, Adham Fattah, Ben Schmida, Kelly Campa, Henry Jenks, and Annika Ganzeveld**

**Information Cutoff: 2:00 PM ET August 27, 2025**

*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. CTP-ISW publishes the Iran Update daily.*

*Click [here](#) to see CTP and ISW's interactive map of assessed control of terrain in Syria, and [here](#) to see CTP and ISW's interactive map of Israeli ground operations. The Syria map is updated daily alongside the static Syria maps in this report. CTP-ISW ended daily maps of Israeli ground operations in February 2025.*

*Click [here](#) to see ISW-CTP's interactive map showing the total strikes in Iran during the Israel-Iran War, as well as an interactive timelapse showing the strikes day-by-day.*

**The E3 (the United Kingdom, Germany, and France) will reportedly initiate the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) snapback process as soon as August 28, according to three European diplomats and one Western diplomat.[1]** The JCPOA snapback mechanism allows JCPOA signatories to reimpose UN Security Council (UNSC) sanctions on Iran in the event of “significant non-performance” of JCPOA commitments.[2] The snapback mechanism is currently set to expire on October 18, 2025. The E3 imposed a deadline of August 31 on Iran to make meaningful progress toward a nuclear deal, such as by renewing cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and resuming negotiations with the United States.[3] The E3 offered to postpone the expiration of the snapback mechanism to allow Iran more time to negotiate with the United States.[4] Iran reportedly failed to make “sufficiently tangible commitments” during the most recent Iran-E3 meeting in Geneva on August 26.[5] Another source stated that Iran offered “very little to work with” to secure an extension.[6]

It is unclear if the E3 will initiate the dispute resolution process outlined in the JCPOA or directly refer Iran's non-compliance to the UNSC. The dispute resolution process can take up to 35 days and involves a series of steps that aim to resolve non-compliance issues.[7] The E3 can choose to engage in the dispute resolution process and then refer the issue to the UNSC if it believes that Iran continues to show “significant non-performance.” The E3 can, conversely, bypass the dispute resolution process and directly refer the non-compliance issue to the UNSC. The E3 would be required to include a description of “the good-faith efforts the [E3] made to exhaust the dispute resolution process” when they refer Iran's non-compliance to the UNSC.[8] The JCPOA gives the UNSC 30 days to pass a resolution to extend sanctions relief for Iran, but UNSC permanent members (the United States, the United

Kingdom, France, China, and Russia) can veto such a resolution. The E3 is reportedly hopeful that Iran will make unspecified commitments regarding its nuclear program within 30 days that will allow the E3 to avoid reimposing UNSC sanctions on Iran.[9] The snapback mechanism would reimpose six UNSC resolutions on Iran, including bans on the transfer of conventional arms to and from Iran, international support for Iran's missile program, enrichment-related activities, and the testing and development of nuclear-capable missiles.[10]



### Snapback Sanctions on Iran

United Nations Security Council Sanctions That Would Be Reimposed on Iran if the E3 Completes the Snapback Process

UNSC Resolution	Description
UNSC Resolution 1696 (July 2006)	This resolution called on Iran to cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to "build confidence in the exclusively peaceful purpose of its nuclear program" and to suspend all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities. The resolution gave Iran a one-month deadline to comply with these demands. The resolution did not include sanctions but laid the foundation for future sanctions against Iran.
UNSC Resolution 1737 (December 2006)	This resolution sanctioned 22 entities and individuals involved in the Iranian nuclear and/or ballistic missile programs, including, among others: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Atomic Energy Agency of Iran (AEOI)</li> <li>• The Defense Industries Organization (DIO)</li> <li>• The Shahid Hemmat Industrial Group (SHIG)</li> <li>• The Shahid Bagheri Industrial Group (SBIG)</li> <li>• Supreme Leader Military Affairs Adviser Major General Yahya Rahim Safavi</li> </ul>
UNSC Resolution 1747 (March 2007)	This resolution sanctioned 10 IRGC members and entities as well as 18 entities and individuals involved in the Iranian nuclear or ballistic missile programs, including, among others: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Esfahan Nuclear Technology Center (ENTC)</li> <li>• The Qods Aeronautics Industries (QAI)</li> <li>• Former Supreme National Security Council Secretary Ali Akbar Ahmadian</li> </ul>
UNSC Resolution 1803 (March 2008)	This resolution requires UN member states to inspect the cargo of Iran Air aircraft and Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines vessels if the aircraft and vessels are suspected of carrying prohibited items. The resolution sanctioned an additional 25 entities and individuals, including, among others: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AEOI head Mohammad Eslami</li> <li>• Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) Coordination Deputy Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Naghdi</li> </ul>
UNSC Resolution 1835 (September 2008)	This resolution called on Iran to comply "fully and without delay" with the provisions of UNSC resolutions 1696, 1737, 1747, and 1803 and "meet the requirements" of the IAEA. The resolution did not impose new sanctions on Iran.
UNSC Resolution 1929 (June 2010)	This resolution imposed a conventional arms embargo on Iran. The resolution sanctioned 23 individuals and entities involved in the Iranian nuclear or ballistic missile programs, 15 entities affiliated with the IRGC, and 3 entities affiliated with the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (IRISL). The sanctioned entities and individuals include, among others: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Khatam ol Anbia Construction Headquarters</li> <li>• The Ministry of Defense Logistics Export</li> <li>• The Amin Industrial Complex</li> <li>• The Armament Industries Group (AIG)</li> </ul>

Source: The United Nations Security Council  
© The Institute for the Study of War and AEI's Critical Threats Project

**Hardline Iranian parliamentarians criticized the return of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors to Iran and argued that their return undermines a recent law that parliament passed to restrict cooperation with the agency.[11]** These criticisms arose after IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi announced on August 26 that IAEA inspectors would soon resume inspections in Iran.[12] Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Spokesperson Behrouz Kamalvandi stated on August 27 that IAEA inspectors will supervise the fuel replacement at the Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant (BNPP) to ensure that electricity is produced in a timely manner.[13] The Iranian parliament passed a bill on June 25 to suspend all cooperation with the IAEA.[14]

The Iranian Parliamentary National Security and Foreign Policy Commission warned on August 26 that the AEOI and Foreign Affairs Ministry must fully comply with the law suspending cooperation with the IAEA.[15] Hardline parliamentarians separately accused the Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) on August 27 of concealing decisions from parliament and the public.[16] Hardliners warned that continued government cooperation with the IAEA would justify legal action against senior SNSC officials for undermining parliament's authority.[17] Foreign Affairs Minister Abbas Araghchi stated on August 20 that Iran cannot completely end all cooperation with the IAEA since the upcoming fuel replacement at the BNPP requires inspectors to be present. Araghchi emphasized that the return of IAEA inspectors to Iran would take place within the framework of the law that parliament passed on July 25.[18] The IAEA inspectors currently in Iran are reportedly only permitted to oversee the fuel replacement at the BNPP and cannot access or inspect damaged nuclear sites such as Natanz and Fordow.[19] These sites remain largely inaccessible to any party.

Iran may have allowed IAEA inspectors to return to Iran to show limited cooperation and ease international pressure from the E3. The E3 offered on July 25 to extend the snapback mechanism's deadline if Iran fully cooperated with the IAEA, resumed nuclear talks with the United States, and accounted for its 60 percent enriched uranium stockpile.[20] Grossi stated on August 26 that the 12-day war damaged some Iranian nuclear facilities and that he and Iranian officials have discussed steps to restart the agency's work in Iran.[21] The location of Iran's 408 kilograms of 60 percent enriched uranium is unknown, and it is unclear if Iran can access this material.[22]

**Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammad Shia al Sudani withdrew the Popular Mobilization Authority bill from parliament on August 27, reportedly due to US threats to sanction Iraq if he did not withdraw the bill.[23]** The Popular Mobilization Authority bill would likely increase Iran's influence in the Iraqi political and security spheres by formalizing key structures of the Iranian-backed Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF).[24] The PMF is an Iraqi state security service comprised of many militias, some of which report to Iran instead of the Iraqi Prime Minister.[25] The Council of Ministers, which Sudani leads, approved the Popular Mobilization Authority bill and submitted it to parliament in February 2025.[26] The Iraqi parliament completed its first and second readings of the draft bill but had not yet voted on it.[27] The Council of Ministers can reintroduce the bill to parliament at a later date, despite Sudani's withdrawal of the bill at this time.[28]

Kurdish media reported that Sudani withdrew the bill after he reportedly told Shia Coordination Framework members during a recent meeting that the United States would impose "severe" sanctions on Iraq and that "Iraq will be destroyed" if the Popular Mobilization Authority bill was not withdrawn from parliament.[29] The Shia Coordination Framework is a loose coalition of Shia political parties,



some of which Iran backs. The US State Department spokesperson confirmed on August 12 that the United States opposes the Popular Mobilization Authority law.[30] The United States has repeatedly pressured the Iraqi federal government to dissolve the PMF and reportedly threatened to sanction PMF leaders.[31]

*NOTE: A version of the following text also appears in CTP-ISW's August 27 Adversary Entente Task Force Update:*

**Iran and Belarus have continued to deepen ties, especially regarding military and military industrial matters.[32]** Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian met with Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko in Minsk, Belarus, on August 20 to discuss expanding bilateral cooperation and sanctions mitigation efforts.[33] Iranian and Belarusian officials signed 12 memorandums of understanding intended to strengthen bilateral trade, military technical cooperation, and mutual investment during Pezeshkian's visit.[34] Belarusian state media reported that Pezeshkian and Lukashenko agreed to work toward codifying a strategic partnership treaty.[35]

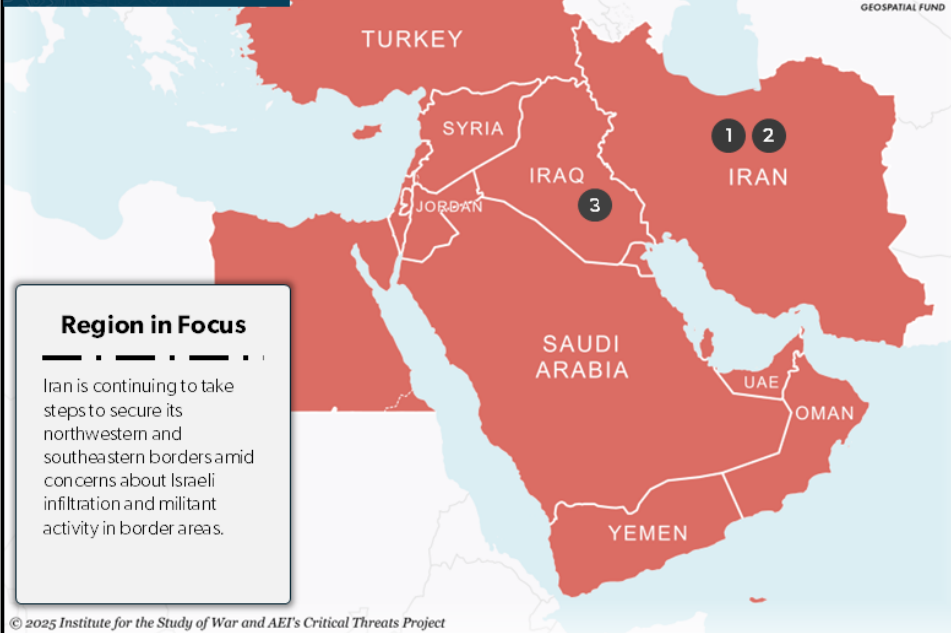
Lukashenko said during the meeting that Belarus is ready to expand “military technical collaboration” with Iran, though Lukashenko did not specify what this cooperation could entail.[36] Ukraine's Foreign Intelligence Service (SZRU) warned on August 22 that Iran seeks Belarusian help to restore Iranian air defense systems and electronic warfare (EW) equipment that Israel damaged during the June 2025 war.[37] The SZRU did not specify how Belarus could help Iran restore damaged assets, and Belarus likely lacks the domestic capabilities to do so. Russia effectively controls Belarus' air defense assets within an integrated air defense system, and Russia's delays in providing S-400 systems to Iran have been a source of friction between Russia and Iran.[38] Iran may seek to increase defense industrial cooperation with Belarus given that Israeli strikes also targeted Iranian domestic production capabilities for air defense components.[39] Belarus reportedly produces missile components for Russian air defense systems, including S-300 and S-400 systems, and Iran may hope to secure similar components from Belarus.[40] Such an arrangement would mirror the way that Russia currently uses Belarus' industrial base to source munitions and other dual-use components to augment Russian military output and sustain its war effort in Ukraine.[41] Iran and Belarus may additionally further collaborate on drone production — Lukashenko announced in March 2025 that Russia would open a drone production facility in Belarus.[42] Iranian engineers previously traveled to Belarus in May 2023 to reportedly examine modifying local factories to produce Iranian drones, like Shahed-type models, for Russia.[43]

Iran's deepening cooperation with Belarus ultimately benefits Russia and helps sustain the Russian war effort against Ukraine, given Minsk's role as Moscow's key sanctions evasion partner. The SZRU noted that looser restrictions on Belarus' military sector may make Belarus a more compelling partner for Iran compared to Russia.[44] Iranian officials have more publicly voiced discontent with Russian military support for Iran since Russia's non-response to the Israel-Iran war.[45] Iran's expansion of ties with Belarus will not sideline Russia as Iran's primary military partner, however, and will simply allow Iran to diversify the manner in which it interacts with Moscow. ISW has long assessed that Russia has de-facto annexed Belarus, and Iran may seek to benefit from this de-facto annexation without having to circumvent the same suite of sanctions that are currently levied against Russia.[46]

The United States and its European partners should view Belarus' cooperation with Iran as an extension of Russo-Iranian engagement, with similar impacts and potential consequences. Russian efforts to de-facto annex Belarus ensure that Russia reaps any benefits brought to Belarus from cooperation with Iran.[47] Expanding military technical or defense industrial cooperation between Iran and Belarus will likely directly support Russia's war effort against Ukraine, given how the Kremlin has subsumed elements of Belarus' defense industrial base.[48] Iranian economic cooperation that reinforces the Belarusian economy bolsters Russia's ability to leverage Belarus as a key sanctions evasion partner.[49] Iranian-Belarusian economic cooperation furthermore takes place within and reinforces Russian-led initiatives, including the Russian-led Eurasian Economic Union and efforts to develop the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC).[50] Russia similarly uses Belarus' relations with other Russian partners, such as the PRC, as a way to circumvent international sanctions and use engagement with these partners to support its war effort.[51] The United States and European partners should endeavor to levy the same suite of sanctions on Belarus as they do against Russia in order for sanctions on Russia to bear weight.

## Iran Update

August 27, 2025



- 1 **IRAN.** The E3 (the United Kingdom, Germany, and France) will reportedly initiate the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) snapback process as soon as August 28, according to three European diplomats and one Western diplomat. The snapback mechanism would reimpose six UNSC resolutions on Iran, including bans on the transfer of conventional arms to and from Iran, international support for Iran's missile program, enrichment-related activities, and the testing and development of nuclear-capable missiles.
- 2 **IRAN.** Hardline Iranian parliamentarians criticized the return of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors to Iran and argued that their return undermines a recent law that parliament passed to restrict cooperation with the agency. Iran may have allowed IAEA inspectors to return to Iran to show limited cooperation and ease international pressure from the E3.
- 3 **IRAQ.** Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammad Shia al Sudani withdrew the Popular Mobilization Authority bill from parliament on August 27, reportedly due to US threats to sanction Iraq if he did not withdraw the bill. The Popular Mobilization Authority bill would likely increase Iran's influence in the Iraqi political and security spheres by formalizing key structures of the Iranian-backed Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF).

### Key Takeaways

- **Snapback Sanctions:** The E3 (the United Kingdom, Germany, and France) will reportedly initiate the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) snapback process as soon as August 28, according to three European diplomats and one Western diplomat. The snapback mechanism would reimpose six UNSC resolutions on Iran, including bans on the transfer of conventional arms to and from Iran, international support for Iran's missile program, enrichment-related activities, and the testing and development of nuclear-capable missiles.
- **Nuclear Inspections in Iran:** Hardline Iranian parliamentarians criticized the return of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors to Iran and argued that their return

undermines a recent law that parliament passed to restrict cooperation with the agency. Iran may have allowed IAEA inspectors to return to Iran to show limited cooperation and ease international pressure from the E3.

- **Iranian Influence in Iraq:** Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammad Shia al Sudani withdrew the Popular Mobilization Authority bill from parliament on August 27, reportedly due to US threats to sanction Iraq if he did not withdraw the bill. The Popular Mobilization Authority bill would likely increase Iran's influence in the Iraqi political and security spheres by formalizing key structures of the Iranian-backed Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF).

## **Iran**

**Iran is continuing to take steps to secure its northwestern and southeastern borders amid concerns about Israeli infiltration and militant activity in border areas.** Deputy Law Enforcement Commander Brigadier General Qassem Rezaei announced on August 27 the deployment of aerial surveillance, smart cameras, and geographic information systems to border areas in northwestern Iran.[52] Rezaei stated that this equipment is meant to increase border security and identify potential vulnerabilities along the Iraqi-Kurdistan-Iran border.[53] Iranian officials have emphasized the need to strengthen Iran's northwestern border following Israeli covert operations during the Israel-Iran War.[54] The Iranian regime has historically accused Israel of using Iraqi Kurdistan and Kurdish opposition groups to conduct operations against Iran.

The regime also faces internal security challenges in southeastern Iran. An Iranian security officer was killed in clashes with "terrorists" in Sistan and Baluchistan Province on August 26.[55] Iranian security forces killed 13 Jaish al Adl fighters and arrested several others in a counterterrorism operation in Iranshahr, Khash, and Saravan towns in Sistan and Baluchistan Province on August 27.[56] Jaish al Adl, which is a Baloch Salafi-jihadi militant group, has conducted a series of attacks targeting Iranian security forces in Sistan and Baluchistan Province in recent weeks.[57] Iranian Armed Forces General Staff Chief Major General Abdol Rahim Mousavi discussed enhancing border security along the Iran-Pakistan border in a phone call with Pakistani Army Commander Asim Munir on August 26.[58]

## IRGC Operations in Sistan and Baluchistan Province August 27, 2025



### Iraq

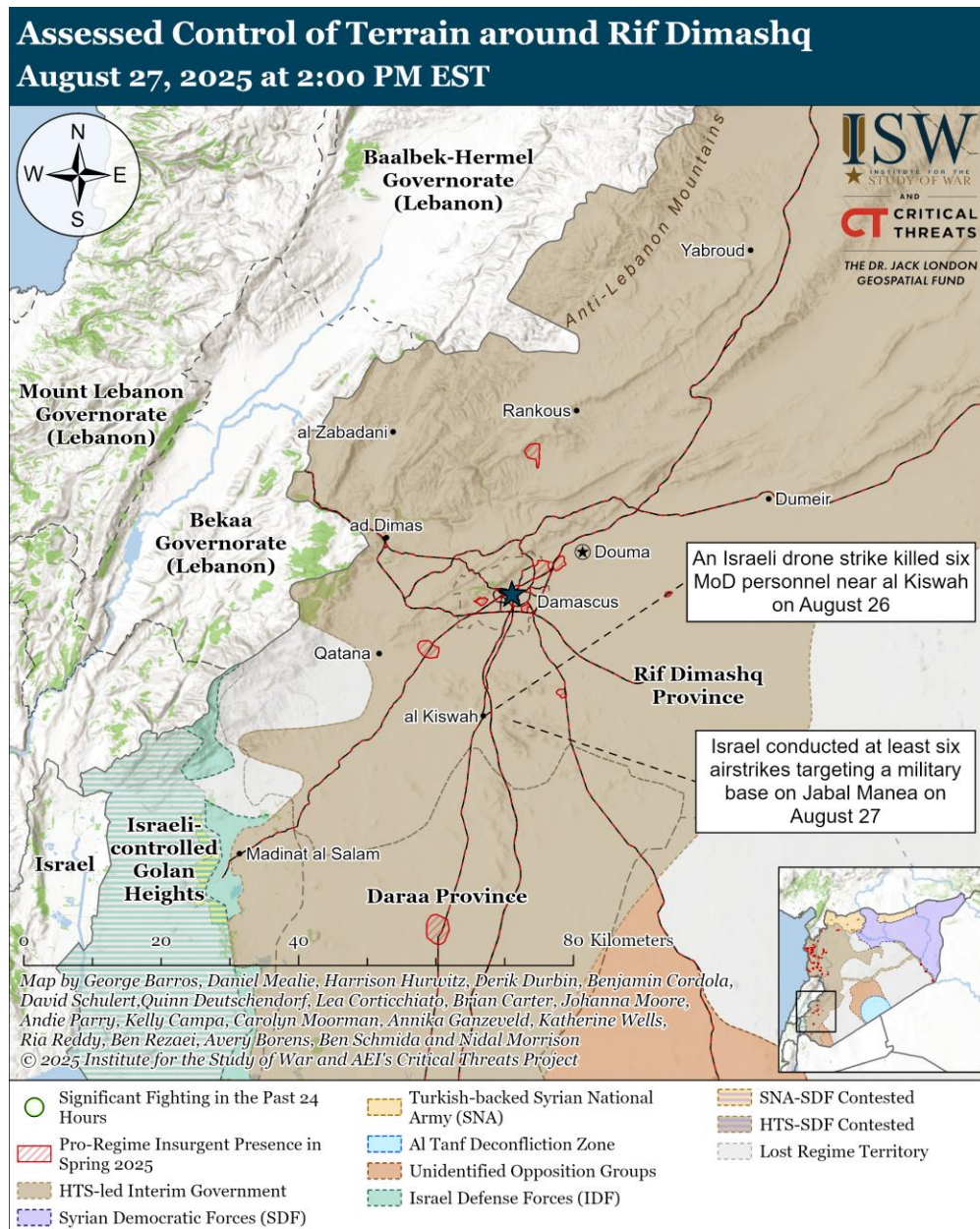
*See topline section.*

### Syria

**The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) conducted a drone strike that killed six Ministry of Defense (MoD) personnel near al Kiswah, Rif Dimashq Province, on August 26.**[59] The IDF strike occurred shortly after a landmine detonated and killed four MoD personnel during a tank training exercise at a nearby military base on Jabal Manea.[60] Syrian media reported that the IDF struck the location where the landmine detonated, which prevented the treatment and recovery of casualties from the landmine incident.[61] The Syrian Foreign Ministry condemned the Israeli drone strike, calling it a “violation of international law” and Syria’s sovereignty.[62] Syrian media reported

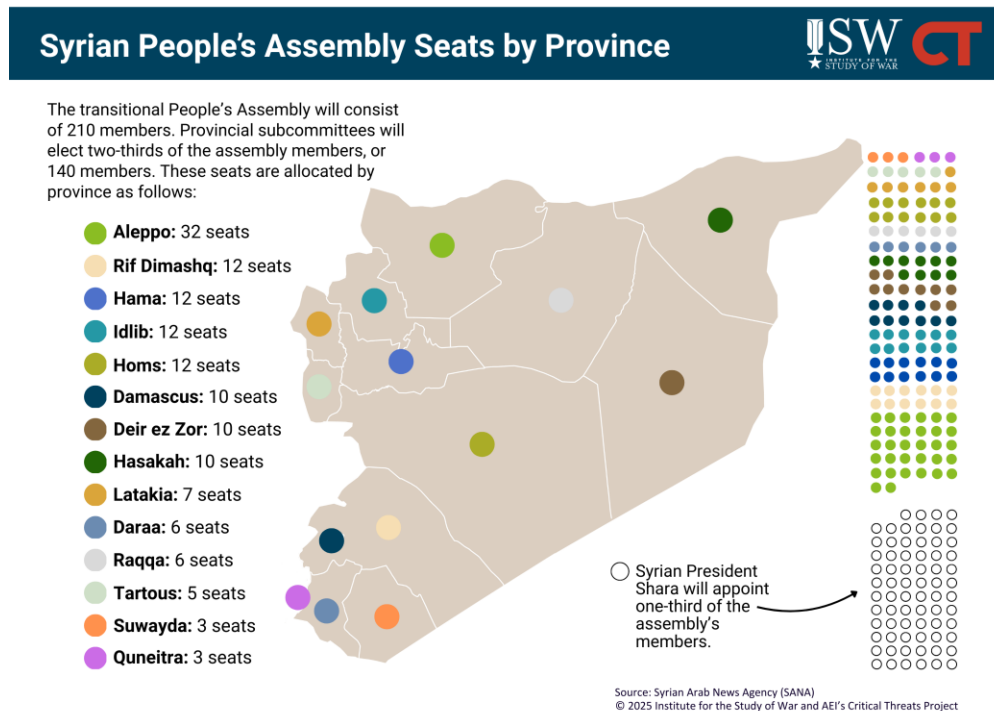


that Israel later conducted at least six airstrikes targeting the military base on Jabal Manea on August 27.[63] The IDF has not commented on the recent airstrikes at the time of this writing. Israel has previously targeted the military base on Jabal Manea before and after the fall of the Assad regime, with the most recent strike occurring in February 2025.[64] The IDF has conducted numerous airstrikes targeting MoD personnel and equipment in recent months, including during intercommunal violence in Suwayda Province in July.[65] A separate Israeli airstrike killed a Syrian civilian in Trinjeh, Quneitra Province, on August 26.[66] Trinjeh is located near the border between Syria and the Israeli-controlled Golan Heights.[67]



**The Syrian transitional government's Supreme Committee for People's Assembly Elections updated the number of People's Assembly seats for each province on August 27.[68]** The updated number of seats follows an announcement from Supreme Committee Chairman

Mohammad Taha al Ahmed on July 27 that the total number of seats in the People’s Assembly would increase from 150 to 210. Ahmed also stated that the committee would adjust the number of seats per province according to figures from the 2011 Syrian census.[69] Provincial subcommittees will elect 140 seats, while Syrian President Ahmed al Shara will appoint the remaining 70.[70]



## Arabian Peninsula

**The Houthis launched a ballistic missile targeting Ben Gurion Airport in Israel on August 26.[71]** The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Air Force intercepted the missile outside Israeli territory.[72] The Houthis have launched hundreds of drones and ballistic missiles targeting Israel since the Houthis began their campaign to enforce an economic “blockade” on Israel in October 2023.[73] Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz stated on August 24 that Israel will respond to Houthi attacks with “compound interest.”[74]

**Israeli airstrikes targeted three production units at the Hezyaz Power Station, southeast of Sanaa City, on August 24.** Commercially available satellite imagery from August 27 shows that the IDF struck a production unit that it previously struck on August 17.[75] An Israeli open-source analyst assessed on August 27 that Israeli airstrikes on August 24 rendered all three of the Hezyaz Power Station’s production units inoperable.[76]

### **Hezyaz Power Station GIF**

**The IDF struck a power station in Asir District, southwestern Sanaa City, on August 24, according to an Israeli open-source analyst.[77]** The power station is located approximately 1.6 miles northwest of the Yemeni Petroleum Company’s fuel depot in Asir District.[78] IDF airstrikes on August 24 also damaged the fuel depot.[79]



## **Palestinian Territories and Lebanon**

**United Nations Security Council (UNSC) members are reportedly discussing a revised version of the French resolution to extend the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon's (UNIFIL) mandate.**<sup>[80]</sup> UNIFIL patrols Lebanon's southern border and operates under an annually renewed mandate that is set to expire on August 31, 2025.<sup>[81]</sup> The revised resolution reportedly extends UNIFIL's mandate until December 31, 2026, after which the mandate will end and UNIFIL will withdraw from Lebanon by the end of 2027.<sup>[82]</sup> The previous version of the French resolution extended UNIFIL's mandate until August 2026 and called on the UNSC to "signal its intention" to gradually withdraw UNIFIL forces from Lebanon.<sup>[83]</sup> The UNSC was scheduled to vote on the original French resolution on August 25, but delayed the vote due to US and Israeli opposition.<sup>[84]</sup> The UNSC has not officially rescheduled the vote, but unspecified diplomatic sources told Western media on August 25 that the UNSC will vote on the resolution by the end of the week.<sup>[85]</sup> An unspecified US diplomat told Western media on August 26 that the United States would support extending UNIFIL's mandate but wants UNIFIL to immediately begin its phased withdrawal from Lebanon.<sup>[86]</sup>

**The Lebanese government has continued diplomatic efforts to secure military and economic support for the government and armed forces.** Lebanese Defense Minister Michel Menassa met with Kuwaiti Crown Prince Sabah al Khalid al Sabah, Defense Minister Abdullah Ali Abdullah al Salem al Sabah, and Interior Minister Fahad Yousef Saud al Sabah in Kuwait on August 25 and 26.<sup>[87]</sup> Menassa and the senior Kuwaiti officials discussed enhancing military support and cooperation between the two countries.<sup>[88]</sup> Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam separately met with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al Sisi, Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly, and other Egyptian officials in Egypt on August 27.<sup>[89]</sup> Madbouly expressed willingness to provide Lebanon with reconstruction assistance and logistical support for the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF).<sup>[90]</sup> The Lebanese and Egyptian officials agreed to continue discussions and potentially sign agreements in the coming months.<sup>[91]</sup> Menassa told Kuwaiti media on August 27 that Lebanese President Joseph Aoun is conducting visits to European and Arab countries, particularly the Gulf states, to "garner support for the [LAF]" and the Lebanese state.<sup>[92]</sup> Regional support is crucial for Lebanon's ability to recover from the Israeli campaign in Lebanon in late 2024, address its ongoing financial struggles, and implement its plan to disarm Hezbollah.<sup>[93]</sup> Lebanese officials have continuously called on foreign countries to support the LAF as it implements its plan to disarm Hezbollah.<sup>[94]</sup> The LAF has historically faced resource deficits, which have previously weakened its ability to successfully counter Hezbollah.<sup>[95]</sup>

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[61] <https://www.enabbaladi dot net/771317/%d9%82%d8%aa%d9%84%d9%89-%d9%85%d9%86-%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%af%d9%81%d8%a7%d8%b9-%d8%a8%d8%a7%d9%86%d9%81%d8%ac%d8%a7%d8%b1-%d9%84%d8%ba%d9%85-%d8%a8%d8%b1%d9%8a%d9%81-%d8%af%d9%85%d8%b4%d9%82/>

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[62] <https://x.com/syrianmofaex/status/1960656700504997976>

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[67] <https://x.com/QalaatAlMudiq/status/1960265743712350445> ; <https://www.enabbaladi.net/771317/%d9%82%d8%aa%d9%84%d9%89-%d9%85%d9%86-%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%af%d9%81%d8%a7%d8%b9-%d8%a8%d8%a7%d9%86%d9%81%d8%ac%d8%a7%d8%b1-%d9%84%d8%ba%d9%85-%d8%a8%d8%b1%d9%8a%d9%81-%d8%af%d9%85%d8%b4%d9%82/>

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# Iran Update



**Avery Borens, Ben Rezaei, Katherine Wells, Ben Schmida, Ria Reddy, Adham Fattah,  
and Brian Carter**

**August 28, 2025    Information Cutoff: 2:00 PM ET**

**The E3 (the United Kingdom, France, and Germany) initiated the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) snapback process on August 28.**[1] The JCPOA snapback mechanism allows JCPOA signatories to reimpose UN Security Council (UNSC) sanctions on Iran in the event of “significant non-performance” of JCPOA commitments.[2] The JCPOA gives the UNSC 10 days to initiate a resolution to continue providing sanction relief to Iran after an E3 member notifies the UNSC of Iran’s “significant non-performance.”[3] All prior UN sanctions would return 30 days after the initial referral to the UNSC if the resolution does not pass or a permanent member vetoes it.[4] The snapback mechanism is currently set to expire on October 18, 2025. The triggering of snapback sanctions comes after Iran failed to meet the E3’s conditions for extending the mechanism’s deadline by the end of August.[5] The E3 previously set an August 31 deadline for Iran to show real progress toward a nuclear deal by renewing cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and restarting negotiations with the United States.[6] Iranian negotiators met with the E3 in Geneva on August 26 but failed to “put tangible, detailed deliverables on the table,” which prompted the E3 to move forward with the snapback process before the snapback mechanism’s expiration.[7] The snapback mechanism would reimpose six UNSC resolutions on Iran, which would impose restrictions on Iran’s conventional arms trade, missile program, uranium enrichment activities, and development of nuclear-capable missiles.[8]

## Snapback Sanctions on Iran

United Nations Security Council Sanctions That Would Be Reimposed on Iran if the E3 Completes the Snapback Process

UNSC Resolution	Description
UNSC Resolution 1696 (July 2006)	This resolution called on Iran to cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to “build confidence in the exclusively peaceful purpose of its nuclear program” and to suspend all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities. The resolution gave Iran a one-month deadline to comply with these demands. The resolution did not include sanctions but laid the foundation for future sanctions against Iran.
UNSC Resolution 1737 (December 2006)	This resolution sanctioned 22 entities and individuals involved in the Iranian nuclear and/or ballistic missile programs, including, among others: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Atomic Energy Agency of Iran (AEOI)</li> <li>• The Defense Industries Organization (DIO)</li> <li>• The Shahid Hemmat Industrial Group (SHIG)</li> <li>• The Shahid Bagheri Industrial Group (SBIG)</li> <li>• Supreme Leader Military Affairs Adviser Major General Yahya Rahim Safavi</li> </ul>
UNSC Resolution 1747 (March 2007)	This resolution sanctioned 10 IRGC members and entities as well as 18 entities and individuals involved in the Iranian nuclear or ballistic missile programs, including, among others: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Esfahan Nuclear Technology Center (ENTC)</li> <li>• The Qods Aeronautics Industries (QAI)</li> <li>• Former Supreme National Security Council Secretary Ali Akbar Ahmadian</li> </ul>
UNSC Resolution 1803 (March 2008)	This resolution requires UN member states to inspect the cargo of Iran Air aircraft and Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines vessels if the aircraft and vessels are suspected of carrying prohibited items. The resolution sanctioned an additional 25 entities and individuals, including, among others: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AEOI head Mohammad Eslami</li> <li>• Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) Coordination Deputy Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Naghdi</li> </ul>
UNSC Resolution 1835 (September 2008)	This resolution called on Iran to comply “fully and without delay” with the provisions of UNSC resolutions 1696, 1737, 1747, and 1803 and “meet the requirements” of the IAEA. The resolution did not impose new sanctions on Iran.
UNSC Resolution 1929 (June 2010)	This resolution imposed a conventional arms embargo on Iran. The resolution sanctioned 23 individuals and entities involved in the Iranian nuclear or ballistic missile programs, 15 entities affiliated with the IRGC, and 3 entities affiliated with the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (IRISL). The sanctioned entities and individuals include, among others: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Khatam ol Anbia Construction Headquarters</li> <li>• The Ministry of Defense Logistics Export</li> <li>• The Amin Industrial Complex</li> <li>• The Armament Industries Group (AIG)</li> </ul>

Source: The United Nations Security Council  
© The Institute for the Study of War and AEI's Critical Threats Project

**Iran has demolished buildings at the Mojdeh site (Lavisan-2) at Shahid Rajaei University in Lavisan, Tehran Province, which Israel damaged during the 12-day Israel-Iran War. The Institute for Science and International Security assessed on August 27 that Iran is likely trying to conceal undeclared nuclear weapons research and development activities at this site.[9]** Israel damaged at least four buildings at the Mojdeh site between June 14 and 20 during the war.[10] Satellite imagery from August 20 shows that Iran has demolished two of the damaged buildings, including a building affiliated with the Iranian Organization of Defensive Innovation and Research's (SPND) Shahid Karimi Group that is involved in explosives research.[11] The Mojdeh site previously housed the SPND headquarters, which played a leading role in the Iranian nuclear weapons research program before 2003.[12] Shahid Rajaei University is affiliated with Iran's nuclear program, and some US officials believe that the university has been involved in nuclear warhead design research.[13]



**The IAEA reported on August 27 that there is no evidence Iran has moved its stockpile of highly-enriched uranium (HEU) stored underground at the Esfahan Nuclear Technology Center (ENTC) since the US strikes on June 21, using satellite imagery.[14]** IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi stated on August 27 that “there is nothing to contradict the notion that the material is where it [previously] was.”[15] Grossi confirmed on June 23 that US and Israeli airstrikes damaged tunnel entrances used for storing enriched material at the ENTC. The Institute for Science and International Security similarly reported, citing satellite imagery, that Iran “backfilled” these entrances ahead of US strikes likely to try to contain an explosion or prevent the dispersion of hazardous material.[16] Iran cannot currently access the ENTC and, therefore, likely cannot conduct a conclusive damage assessment or extract materials. Senior Israeli intelligence officials said that any Iranian

attempts to recover the material would "almost certainly" be detected.[17] The US strikes also destroyed components of Iran's nuclear program that would be necessary for further enrichment and weaponization to create a deliverable nuclear weapon.[18]

**Hezbollah is reportedly attempting to compel Lebanese politicians to support the group's efforts to delay or reverse the government's plan to disarm it.** Hezbollah officials have recently held several meetings with political leaders and the group's allies to acquire support for Hezbollah retaining its weapons.[19] Hezbollah reportedly sent letters to several independent parliamentarians promising financial and political support in return for neutrality on the government's decision to disarm Hezbollah.[20] Hezbollah allegedly told these parliamentarians to not "bet on the Arab and American positions" as Hezbollah would disrupt the "situation" with Iranian support.[21] Lebanese media reported that the parliamentarians responded negatively to Hezbollah's efforts.[22] Hezbollah has historically used its military capabilities and political influence within other state institutions to sway the Lebanese government's decision-making.[23]

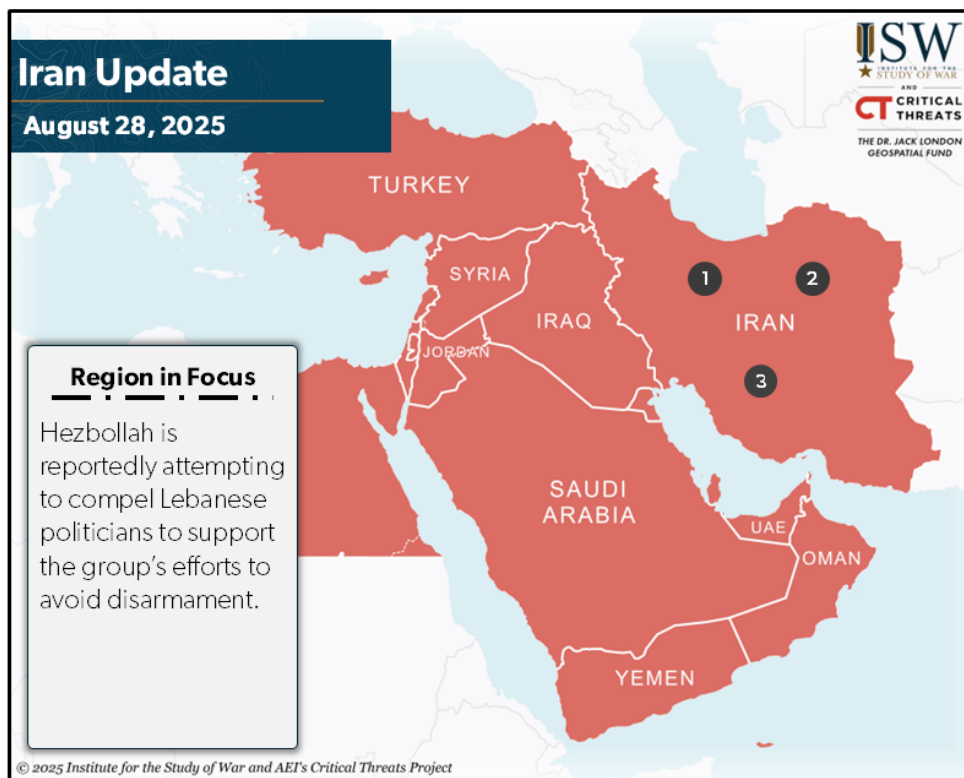
Hezbollah also appears to be exploiting Lebanese government concerns regarding the potential for internal conflict in Lebanon and Israeli compliance with the US proposal to disarm Hezbollah as a part of the group's efforts to avoid disarmament. A "well-informed" Lebanese source told Saudi media on August 28 that the Lebanese Council of Ministers' upcoming session to review the Lebanese Armed Force (LAF)'s plan to disarm Hezbollah is still on "for now." [24] The source noted that the session, which is scheduled for September 2, could be postponed if "internal matters" become complicated.[25] Saudi media reported on August 24 that Hezbollah has resorted to inflaming sectarian tensions by portraying the Lebanese government's decision as an attempt to disarm the Lebanese Shia community.[26] Lebanese officials have previously raised concerns that the government's decision to disarm Hezbollah could spark communal tensions in Lebanon.[27] Parliament Speaker and Hezbollah ally Nabih Berri told Saudi media on August 27 that the United States gave Lebanon "the opposite" of what it promised.[28] Lebanese politicians have reportedly perceived this statement as representing Berri's doubts about the US proposal.[29] The US proposal includes an Israeli withdrawal from its five permanent positions in southern Lebanon within 90 days and Hezbollah's complete disarmament by the end of 2025.[30] Lebanese ministerial sources previously told Saudi media on August 26 that Lebanese authorities were concerned after Israeli officials said in recent days that Israel would not withdraw until Hezbollah is fully disarmed.[31] The sources said that these Israeli statements are a "negative sign" and have thwarted US Special Envoy Thomas Barrack's mission to disarm Hezbollah.[32]

### **Key Takeaways**

- **Snapback Sanctions:** The E3 initiated the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) snapback process on August 28. The JCPOA snapback mechanism allows JCPOA signatories to reimpose UN Security Council (UNSC) sanctions on Iran in the event of "significant non-performance" of JCPOA commitments.
- **Iranian Damage Assessments:** Iran has demolished buildings at the Mojdeh site (Lavisan-2) at Shahid Rajaei University in Lavisan, Tehran Province, that Israel damaged during the 12-day Israel-Iran War. The Institute for Science and International Security assessed on August 27

that Iran is likely trying to conceal undeclared nuclear weapons research and development activities at this site.

- **Iranian Highly Enriched Uranium:** The IAEA reported on August 27 that there is no evidence Iran has moved its stockpile of highly enriched uranium (HEU) stored underground at the Esfahan Nuclear Technology Center (ENTC) since the US strikes on June 21, citing satellite imagery. IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi stated on August 27 that “there is nothing to contradict the notion that the material is where it [previously] was.”
- **Hezbollah Political Coercion:** Hezbollah is reportedly attempting to compel Lebanese politicians to support the group’s efforts to delay or reverse the government’s plan to disarm it. Hezbollah also appears to be exploiting Lebanese government concerns regarding the potential for internal conflict in Lebanon and Israeli compliance with the US proposal to disarm Hezbollah as a part of the group’s efforts to avoid disarmament.



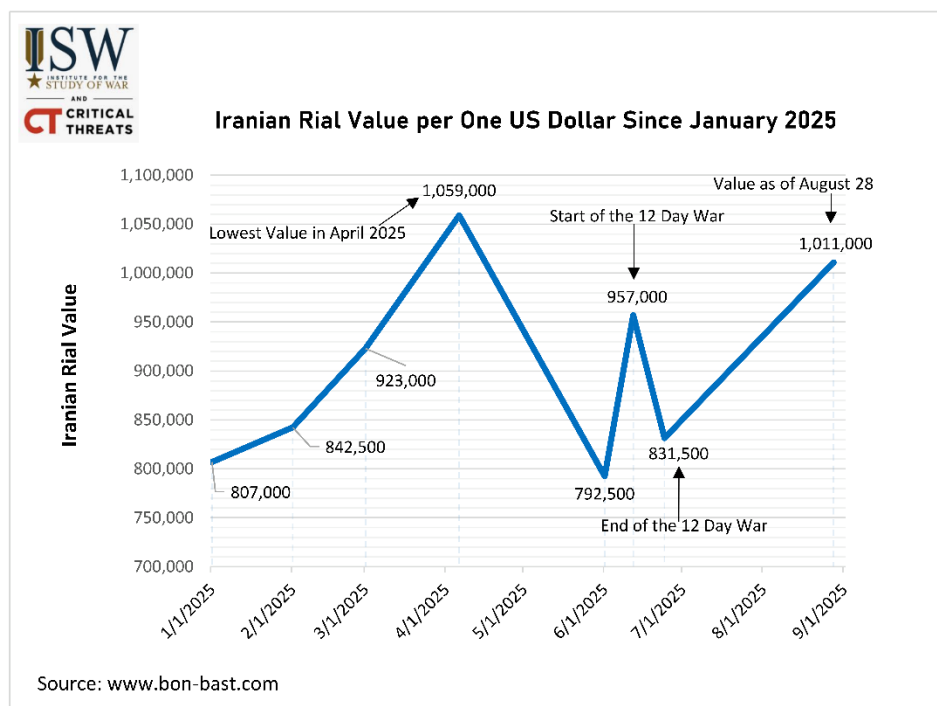
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## Iran

**Iranian security forces seized a likely Jaish al Adl weapons cache during a clearing operation in Iranshahr, Sistan and Baluchistan Province, on August 28.[33]** The weapons cache included improvised explosive device (IED) components and hand grenades. Iranian security forces found the weapons cache after an engagement in which Iranian forces killed eight Jaish al Adl fighters in Iranshahr on August 27.[34] Iranian security forces also killed five other Jaish al Adl fighters in Khash and Saravan, Sistan and Baluchistan Province, on the same day.[35] Jaish al Adl is a Baloch, Salafi-jihadi militant group that frequently attacks Iranian security forces in southeastern Iran. Jaish

al Adl has increased attacks targeting Iranian security forces in Sistan and Baluchistan Province in recent weeks.[36]

**The Iranian rial depreciated to 1,016,500 rials per one US dollar on August 28.[37] This value is close to the April 2025 record low of 1,059,000 rials per US dollar.[38]** This drop comes after the E3 (the United Kingdom, France, and Germany) triggered the JCPOA snapback process on August 28, which would reimpose UN Security Council sanctions on Iran.[39]



## **Iranian Rial Graphic**

### **Iraq**

*Nothing significant to report.*

### **Syria**

**The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) conducted a recovery operation to recover sensitive surveillance equipment discovered by Syrian Ministry of Defense personnel near Jabal Manea, Rif Dimashq Province.[40]** An Israeli drone strike killed six MoD personnel on August 26 as they attempted to remove sensitive surveillance equipment and listening devices they found at the military base on Jabal Manea.[41] An Israeli analyst said on August 28 to the *Wall Street Journal* that Israel conducted the strikes to prevent MoD forces from capturing Israeli surveillance and listening devices, which suggests that these systems were sensitive, and their capture would present a security concern.[42] The IDF then conducted at least 13 more airstrikes on Jabal Manea on August 27, causing no casualties.[43] These strikes presumably sought to destroy any remaining equipment at Jabal Manea.[44] Four IDF helicopters then inserted a ground team on Jabal Manea on August 27.[45] The



IDF ground team did not engage nearby MoD personnel during the ground-based portion of the recovery operation, which suggests the IDF sought to recover or destroy any remaining equipment.[46] This was the first Israeli ground operation this far into Syrian territory since the fall of Assad in December 2024.[47]

**The Syrian Ministry of Interior (MoI) reopened the Damascus-Suwayda Road on August 27, which will serve as a second humanitarian corridor within Suwayda Province.**[48] The MoI closed the road on July 13 after intercommunal violence began in Suwayda Province.[49] Aid providers previously opened a corridor near Busra al Harir on August 19 in response to repeated attacks by Sunni tribal fighters against civilians, which forced another humanitarian corridor to close.[50]

### **Arabian Peninsula**

**The IDF conducted an unspecified number of airstrikes targeting a Houthi "military" site in Sanaa City on August 28.**[51] Local sources circulated footage of explosions from the airstrikes in Haddah District, which is 2.9 km west of the Presidential Palace complex in southern Sanaa City.[52] Israeli media reported on August 28 that the IDF targeted and killed Houthi Chief of Staff Mohammad Abd al Karim al Ghamari and Defense Minister Mohammad Nasir al Atifi.[53] A Houthi Defense Ministry source denied that the IDF airstrikes killed Houthi commanders, however.[54] Houthi President Mahdi al Mashat also called the August 28 airstrikes on Sanaa City unsuccessful and threatened Houthi retaliation.[55]

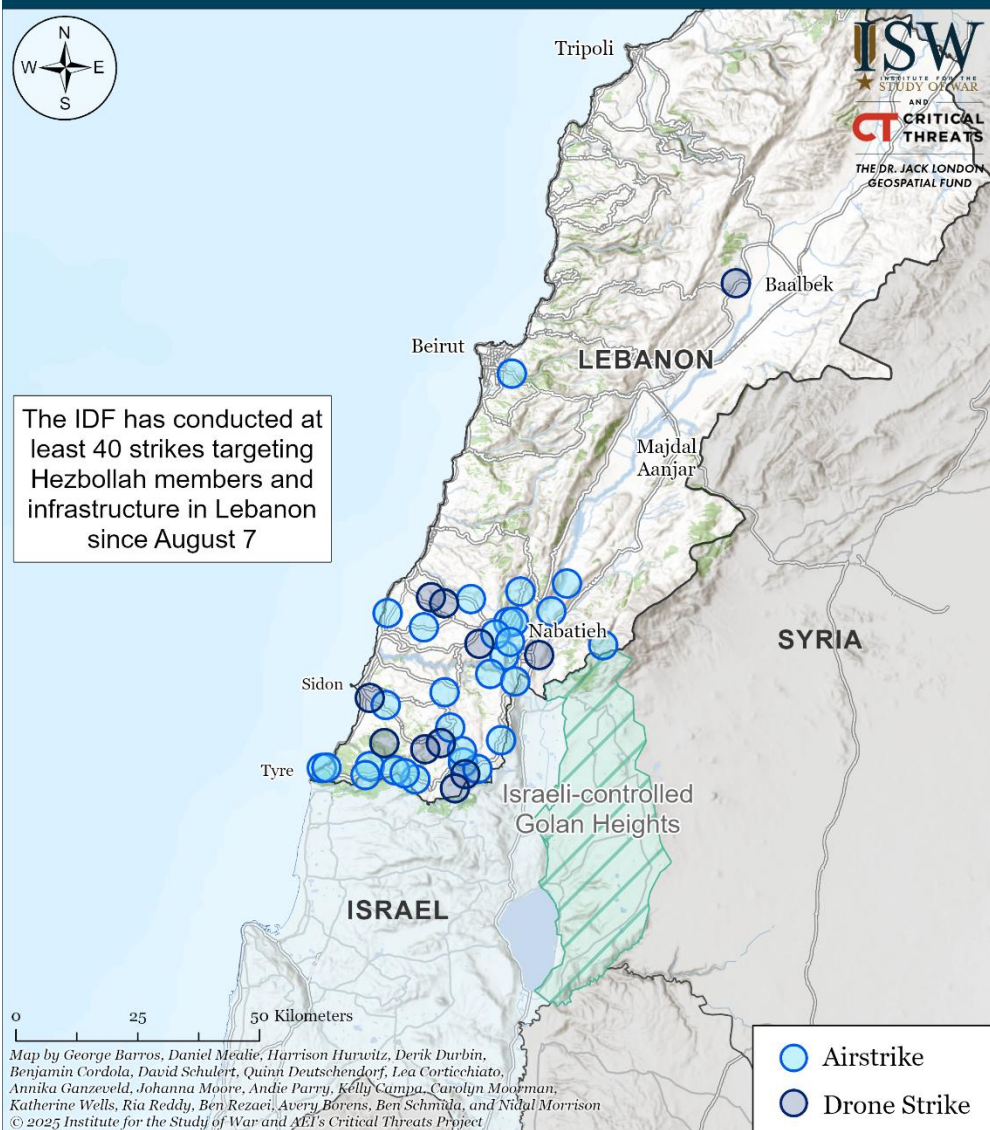
The IDF airstrikes followed a Houthi drone attack that the IDF intercepted outside of Israeli territory on August 28.[56] The Houthis have not claimed the drone attack at the time of this writing. The Houthis have launched hundreds of drones and ballistic missiles targeting Israel since the Houthis began their campaign to enforce an economic “blockade” on Israel in October 2023.[57] Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz warned on August 28 that Israel will continue to respond to Houthi attacks on Israel.[58]

### **Palestinian Territories and Lebanon**

**Israel has maintained that it will continue to operate in Lebanon until Hezbollah has been disarmed.**[59] Israel reportedly rejected US Special Envoy Thomas Barrack’s previous proposal to disarm Hezbollah on August 22 but agreed to gradually halt its operations in Lebanon if the LAF makes progress towards disarming Hezbollah.[60] An unspecified Israeli political official told Saudi media on August 26 that Israel will continue its operations to disarm Hezbollah regardless of the Lebanese government’s “internal debate” regarding Hezbollah disarmament.[61] The political official added that Israel would launch a broader operation across Lebanon if necessary.[62] The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) recently shifted to a “forward defense” posture on August 1 to maintain Israel’s “strategic superiority” in southern Lebanon and prevent Hezbollah from reconstituting capabilities that could pose a threat to northern Israeli towns.[63] The IDF had a similar objective in its campaign against Hezbollah in late 2024 due to Israel’s concern about a potential Hezbollah ground incursion into northern Israel.[64] The Israel-Hezbollah ceasefire agreement in November 2024 included an addendum that ensures Israel’s right to self-defense against any future threat that Hezbollah may pose.[65] The IDF has acted on this addendum and has continued to operate against Hezbollah since November 2024, including via airstrikes and raids targeting Hezbollah infrastructure.[66]



## Reported Israeli Operations in Lebanon Between August 7, 2025 and August 28, 2025



**The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) unanimously approved the revised version of the French-drafted resolution to extend the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)'s mandate in an August 28 vote.**<sup>[67]</sup> UNIFIL patrols Lebanon's southern border with Israel and operates under an annually renewed mandate that would have expired on August 31, 2025.<sup>[68]</sup> The approved resolution extends UNIFIL's mandate until December 31, 2026, when UNIFIL will begin to withdraw from Lebanon (see graphic below).<sup>[69]</sup> UNIFIL will completely withdraw from Lebanon by December 31, 2027.<sup>[70]</sup> The approved resolution reportedly states that UNIFIL is authorized to undertake several tasks during its withdrawal, including providing security for UN personnel and assets, conducting rescue operations, and protecting civilians.<sup>[71]</sup> The United States and Israel had opposed the previous version of the French resolution that extended UNIFIL's mandate until

August 2026 and called on the UNSC to "signal its intention" to gradually withdraw UNIFIL forces from Lebanon.[72]

## **The Revised Resolution to Extend the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)'s Mandate**

As approved by the United Nations Security Council on August 28, 2025

### **Major Components of the Approved Resolution:**

- UNIFIL's mandate will be extended until December 31, 2026.
- UNIFIL will begin to withdraw from Lebanon on December 31, 2026, and will complete its withdrawal within one year with the aim of making the Lebanese government the sole security provider. UNIFIL will be authorized to undertake limited tasks during the withdrawal period. The UN will call on the Lebanese government to respect the provisions of the UN-Lebanon 1995 Status of Forces Agreement until UNIFIL completely departs Lebanon.
- The UN will demand the full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1701. UNSCR 1701 ended the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah War and calls for the removal of Hezbollah forces south of the Litani River and an end to the supply of arms to entities in Lebanon without government authorization.
- The UN will call on the Israeli government to withdraw its remaining forces from Lebanon and lift its buffer zones located north of the Blue Line. The UN will call on the Lebanese government to backfill Israeli positions and extend control over all Lebanese territory to implement the state's monopoly on arms.
- The UN will urge the international community to increase support to the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) to ensure the LAF's "effective and sustainable" deployment to southern Lebanon.
- The UN will request that the Secretary General explore options by June 1, 2026, to ensure UNSCR 1701's implementation following UNIFIL's withdrawal.



Source: Asharq al Awsat. This is not a comprehensive list of every component in the proposed resolution.  
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# Iran Update



**Ben Rezaei, Avery Borens, Carolyn Moorman, Parker Hempel, Henry Jenks, Andie Parry, and Annika Ganzeveld**

**August 29, 2025      Information Cutoff: 2:00 PM ET**

**Iranian parliamentarians introduced a three-part bill on August 28 to withdraw Iran from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), likely to pressure the E3 (the United Kingdom, France, and Germany) to not reimpose UN Security Council (UNSC) sanctions on Iran.**[1] The bill would require Iran to leave the NPT and the Additional Protocol, end all negotiations with the United States and the E3, and terminate cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).[2] The Iranian parliament recently passed a law on June 25 that suspended Iranian cooperation with the IAEA, which makes the last clause largely performative.[3] The E3 triggered the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) snapback mechanism on August 28.[4] The JCPOA snapback mechanism allows JCPOA signatories to reimpose UNSC sanctions on Iran in the event of Iran’s “significant non-compliance” of JCPOA commitments.[5] The process to reimpose UNSC sanctions on Iran lasts 30 days, and Iran likely seeks for the E3 to reverse its decision to reimpose these sanctions during the 30-day period.

The introduction of this bill may reflect differences between various regime institutions about how the regime should respond to the E3 decision to trigger the snapback mechanism. Iranian Foreign Affairs Minister Abbas Araghchi wrote a letter to the European Union on August 29 in which he stated that Iran “remains committed” to diplomacy and is willing to resume negotiations to reach a “fair and balanced” agreement.[6] This statement contrasts with the three-part bill, which would suspend all negotiations between Iran and the United States and the E3. The difference between parliament and the executive branch’s views comes after hardline parliamentarians recently criticized the Iranian government for allowing IAEA inspectors to return to Iran. Parliamentarians claimed that the decision violated the law that parliament passed on June 25.[7] IAEA inspectors returned to Iran on August 27 to supervise a fuel replacement at the Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant. IAEA inspectors do not have access to other Iranian nuclear facilities, such as Natanz or Fordow.

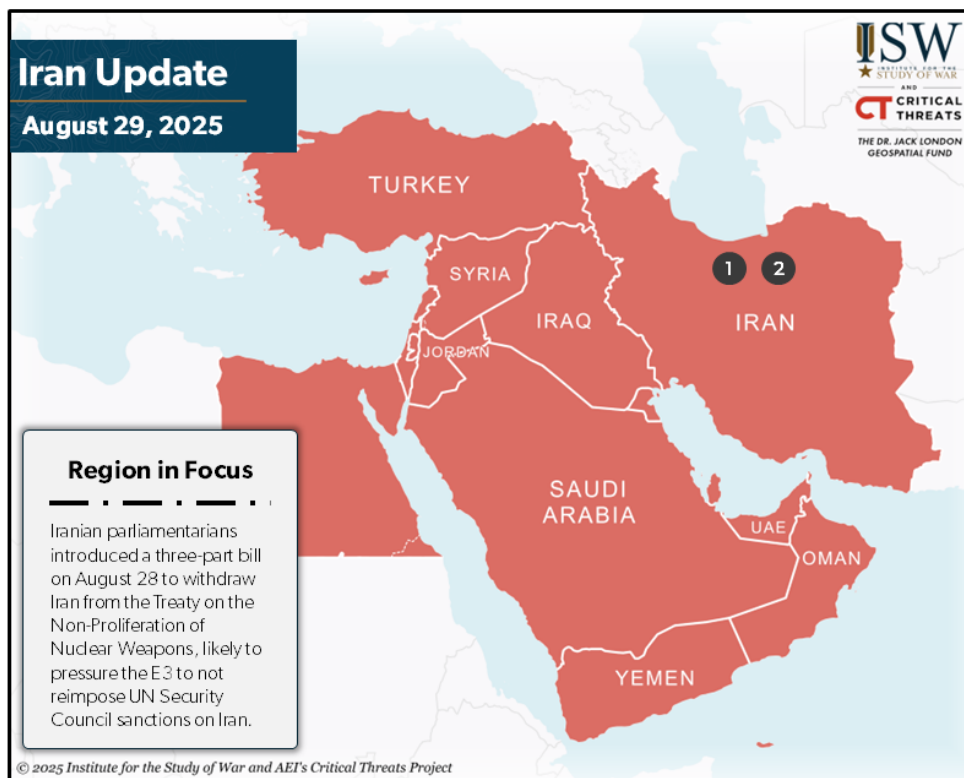
**Iran called on the UNSC to approve a Russian-Chinese draft resolution that would extend Resolution 2231 and the JCPOA until at least April 18, 2026.**[8] The snapback mechanism is currently set to expire on October 18, 2025. Iran’s Mission to the UN said on August 28 that UNSC members face a “decisive” choice between backing the Russian–Chinese resolution and preserving diplomacy or reimposing UNSC sanctions, which it claimed would cause “grave consequences.”[9] Iran previously rejected an E3 proposal to extend the snapback deadline by six months, arguing that extending the snapback deadline gives the E3 more time to reimpose UNSC sanctions on Iran.[10] The E3 offered to extend the snapback deadline in return for Iran resuming full cooperation with the IAEA, resuming negotiations with the United States, and accounting for its 60 percent enriched uranium



stockpile.[11] The Russian-Chinese resolution does not appear to include these conditions and simply urges all parties to resume negotiations, which makes this resolution much more favorable for Iran than the E3 proposal.[12] The Russian-Chinese resolution also reportedly bans the E3 from reimposing UNSC sanctions on Iran during the six-month extension period.

### **Key Takeaways**

- **Iranian response to the E3's decision to trigger the snapback mechanism:** Iranian parliamentarians introduced a three-part bill on August 28 to withdraw Iran from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), likely to pressure the E3 (the United Kingdom, France, and Germany) to not reimpose UN Security Council (UNSC) sanctions on Iran.
- **Iranian cooperation with Russia and China to avoid snapback sanctions:** Iran called on the UNSC to approve a Russian-Chinese draft resolution that would extend Resolution 2231 and the JCPOA until April 18, 2026. Iranian officials previously rejected an E3 proposal to extend the October 2025 snapback deadline by six months.



- 1 **TEHRAN, IRAN.** Iranian parliamentarians introduced a three-part bill on August 28 to withdraw Iran from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), likely to pressure the E3 (the United Kingdom, France, and Germany) to not reimpose UN Security Council (UNSC) sanctions on Iran.
- 2 **TEHRAN, IRAN.** Iran called on the UNSC to approve a Russian-Chinese draft resolution that would extend Resolution 2231 and the JCPOA until April 18, 2026. Iranian officials previously rejected an E3 proposal to extend the October 2025 snapback deadline by six months.

## Iran

**Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei's representative to Sistan and Baluchistan Province, Ayatollah Mostafa Mahami, met with Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps Ground Forces Quds Operational Base Commander Brigadier General Hassan Mortazavi on August 29.[13]** This meeting comes after IRGC Ground Forces conducted counterterrorism operations in Iranshahr, Khash, and Saravan in Sistan and Baluchistan Province on August 27 that killed 13 Jaish al Adl fighters and an Iranian security officer.[14] Iranian security forces also seized a Jaish al Adl weapons cache in Iranshahr on August 28 that included improvised explosive device (IED) components and hand grenades. Jaish al Adl, which is a Baloch Salafi-jihadi militant group, likely

intended to use this equipment to attack local security forces.[15] Jaish al Adl has increased its rate of attacks targeting Iranian security forces in southeastern Iran in recent weeks.[16]

## **Iraq**

**Iraqi National Intelligence Service Director Hamid al Shatri discussed counterterrorism, border security, and bilateral relations with Syrian President Ahmed al Shara in Damascus on August 28.[17]** Shatri is reportedly affiliated with the Iranian-backed Badr Organization.[18] Kurdish media reported that Shatri and Shara also discussed the restoration of the Kirkuk-Baniyas crude oil pipeline.[19] Syria and Iraq shut down the pipeline in 2010 after it sustained damage during counterterrorism operations against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).[20] Syria and Iraq agreed on August 12 to form a joint technical committee to assess the pipeline's current status.[21] CTP-ISW previously assessed that the Syrian transitional government may seek to reopen the pipeline to compensate for lost Iranian oil exports to Syria after the fall of the Assad regime.[22] Shatri and Shara's meeting occurred while the Special Missions Unit of the 27th Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) Brigade, which is affiliated with the Badr Organization, deployed to the Syria-Iraq border in western Anbar Province.[23] The 27th PMF Brigade typically operates in Salah al Din Province.[24] An Iraqi Border Guard officer responsible for the al Qaim-Albu Kamal border crossing told Saudi media on August 29 that the deployment of the brigade to the border was "routine" and does not have political or security implications.[25]

## **Syria**

**Syrian President Ahmed al Shara appointed members to the National Transitional Justice Commission on August 28.[26]** The 13-member commission aims to investigate former regime members, hold individuals accountable for crimes committed during the Syrian Civil War, compensate victims, and support national reconciliation.[27] Shara established the commission and appointed Abdul Basit Latif as its chairman in May 2025, but Shara did not appoint other members of the commission at the time.[28] Latif held political positions in the Free Syrian Army and the Syrian National Coalition during the civil war.[29] The appointment of members to the commission will likely enable the commission to begin its transitional justice efforts and could increase Syrian citizens' confidence in the Syrian transitional government. Charges and convictions against individuals who committed crimes and atrocities could reduce revenge killings that target former regime members because the committee would act as a formal mechanism to achieve transitional justice. CTP-ISW recorded five revenge killings targeting former regime-affiliated individuals in Syria between August 22 and 29.[30] These killings reflect that some Syrians believe that there has been no justice for the atrocities that the Assad regime committed. The National Transitional Justice Commission could alleviate some of these grievances, but the transitional government must charge, prosecute, and sentence former Assad regime members through this commission to demonstrate its commitment to transitional justice and build trust among targeted communities.[31]

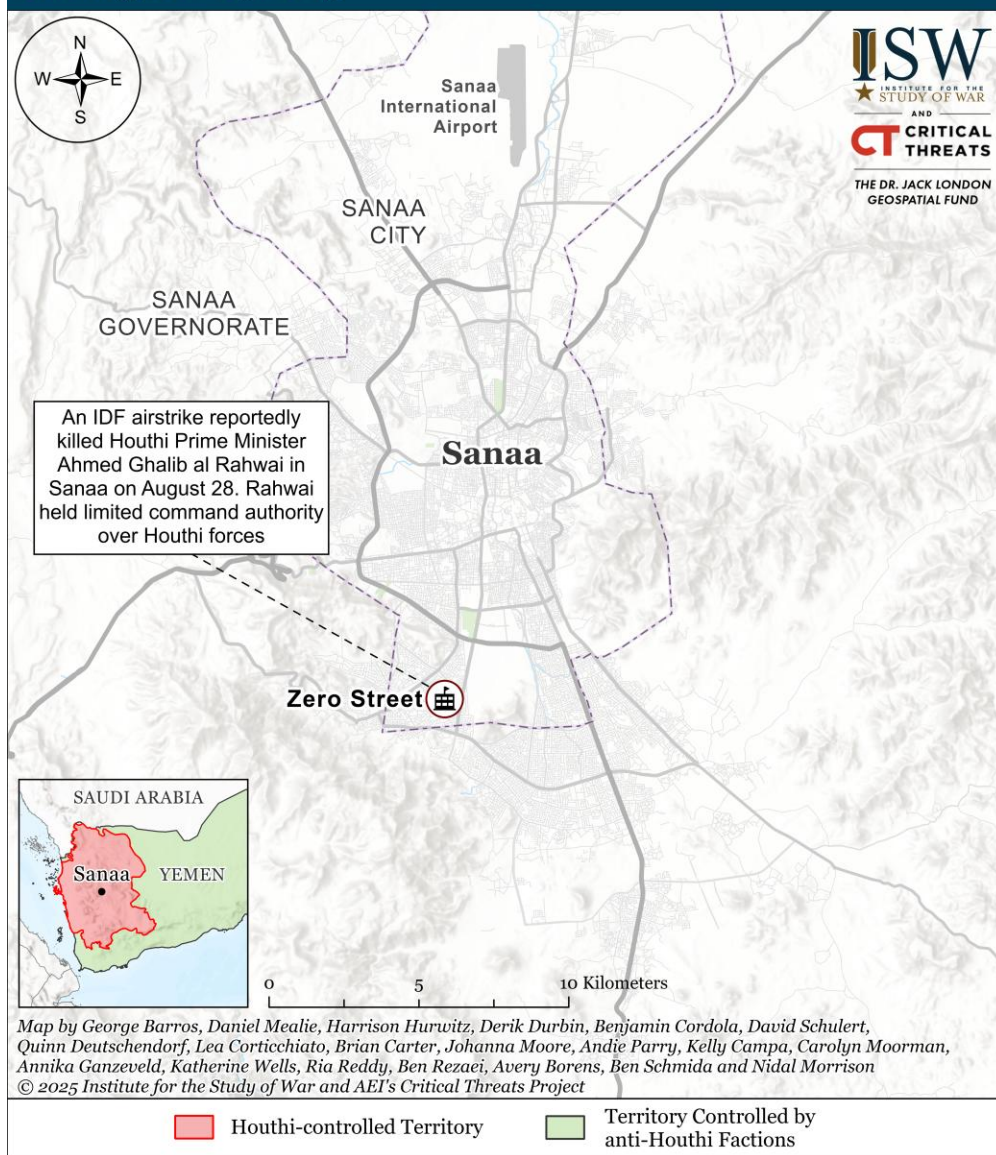
**The United States eased licensing requirements for US exports to Syria on August 28.[32]** The US Commerce Department's Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) announced that US goods and technology that have "purely civilian uses," such as consumer communications equipment and some civil aviation-related items, can now enter Syria without an export license. The BIS will review dual-use items on a case-by-case basis and continue to restrict exports to malign actors in Syria who are still

sanctioned by the United States.[33] Syrian Central Bank Governor Abdul Qadir al Hasriya said on August 29 that the Syrian Central Bank and Finance Ministry will work with the US Treasury Department to continue Syria's integration into the international financial system.[34] The easing of export license requirements follows President Donald Trump's June 30 executive order to end US sanctions on Syria.[35] The export of US technology and goods to Syria will help the Syrian transitional government recover from the 14-year civil war and grow Syria's domestic civil aviation, power generation, and telecommunications industries.[36]

### **Arabian Peninsula**

**The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) killed Houthi Prime Minister Ahmed Ghalib al Rahwai in an airstrike in Haddah District, southern Sanaa City, on August 28, according to local sources.**[37] Rahwai held limited authority over Houthi forces and largely had a “ceremonial” role, according to local sources.[38] A Yemeni journalist denied Israeli media reports that the airstrike also targeted and killed Houthi Chief of Staff Mohammad Abdul Karim al Ghamari and Defense Minister Mohammad Nasir al Atifi, citing an unspecified security source.[39] Anti-Houthi media claimed that IDF airstrikes in Haddah District killed and injured several other senior Houthi officials.[40] Other Yemeni outlets reported that the IDF conducted airstrikes targeting a Houthi weapons depot near the Presidential Palace complex in al Sabeen District, southern Sanaa City, and a Houthi military site in the Attan area of western Sanaa City.[41] CTP-ISW cannot independently verify the claims that IDF airstrikes targeted other Houthi officials and additional Houthi sites at the time of this writing.

## Israeli Airstrikes Against Houthi Targets in Sanaa On August 28, 2025



### Palestinian Territories and Lebanon

**Hezbollah and Hezbollah-aligned media appear to be attempting to sow doubt about Lebanese security forces' willingness to disarm Hezbollah.** Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) Commander Brigadier General Rodolphe Haykal reportedly told senior Lebanese officials that he would prefer to resign rather than have "Lebanese blood shed by the [LAF]," according to unspecified sources speaking to pro-Hezbollah and Saudi media on August 29.[42] The sources added that LAF leadership has refused to develop a disarmament plan that includes a list of objectives or a timeline.[43] The Lebanese Council of Ministers is reportedly set to discuss an LAF disarmament plan on September 5, however.[44] The LAF has not directly responded to these claims but did issue a statement on August 29 reaffirming its commitment to its national duties.[45] Unspecified military sources separately told pro-Hezbollah media on August 13 that external pressure to disarm Hezbollah could divide Lebanese

security forces, specifically the Lebanese Internal Security Forces (ISF).[46] The ISF is Lebanon’s police force and has largely avoided direct confrontation with Hezbollah over the past two decades.[47] The sources added that ISF members are divided over their willingness to act against Hezbollah.[48]

**Hezbollah may be amplifying reports about Lebanese security forces’ alleged unwillingness to disarm Hezbollah to capitalize on Lebanese and foreign officials’ concerns about the LAF’s capabilities and the potential for internal conflict in Lebanon.**

Lebanese Defense Minister Michel Menassa reportedly called for the LAF to not be burdened “beyond its capacity” during a previous Lebanese government cabinet session.[49] US Special Envoy Thomas Barrack stated in July 2025 that the LAF lacks the resources and manpower to disarm Hezbollah.[50] United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) Spokesperson Andrea Tenenti similarly told Saudi media on August 29 that the LAF does not have the capability to deploy to southern Lebanon to backfill Israel and UNIFIL.[51] The LAF is expected to establish fifteen border posts in southern Lebanon as part of the US proposal to disarm Hezbollah, which the Lebanese government agreed to on August 7.[52] LAF and Lebanese government officials have also continuously expressed concerns about internal conflict arising between the Lebanese state and Hezbollah during the disarmament process.[53] The LAF reportedly told senior Lebanese officials and Hezbollah that it will not take any action that could undermine internal stability.[54] Haykal also told Lebanese Parliament Speaker and Hezbollah ally Nabih Berri on August 13 that the LAF will not engage with “a key component of the country.”[55]

**Lebanese officials have continued to emphasize that the Lebanese state and armed forces need financial support to implement their plan to disarm Hezbollah.[56] Western and Arab governments have reportedly said that they will not provide financial support to Lebanon until the Lebanese government disarms Hezbollah.[57]**

Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam told the *Financial Times* on August 29 that Lebanon needs financial and military support for the government and the LAF to successfully disarm Hezbollah.[58] Lebanese officials have recently conducted several visits to European and Arab countries to secure military and economic support.[59] The World Bank estimated in March 2025 that Lebanon would need approximately \$11 billion to address its reconstruction and recovery needs following the Israel-Hezbollah conflict in late 2024.[60] The LAF has historically faced resource deficits, which have weakened its ability to successfully counter Hezbollah.[61] Western and Arab governments have reportedly indicated that they will provide financial support to Lebanon once Lebanon takes “concrete steps” to disarm Hezbollah.[62] The US proposal states that the Lebanese government will completely disarm Hezbollah by December 31, 2025, and that Lebanon will secure reconstruction funding within 90 days of the proposal coming into effect.[63] Lebanon’s economic needs and foreign countries’ stipulations on financial support could potentially push the Lebanese government to approve and implement the LAF’s plan to disarm Hezbollah.

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