



IT'S A TOUGH WORLD.

MENA Executive SITREP

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**MAX
INTELLIGENCE**



Executive Brief: US – Israeli Operations Against Iran and Regional Implications

Explainer: This daily report provides an executive summary of major developments related to the ongoing war in the Middle East. It complements MAX Security's more in-depth Situation Update reports. If you haven't yet received our situation updates and other reporting amid the current escalation, or would like to receive more details, join our [WhatsApp community](#). For operational support, please contact our Protection Division at operations@max-security.com.

Operational Overview

US and Israeli military operations in Iran are still suspended since the entry into force of the 14-day ceasefire, as of April 13.

On April 12, US President Trump stated that the US Navy would begin the process of “blockading any and all ships trying to enter or leave the Strait of Hormuz.” He further noted that he had instructed the Navy to interdict every vessel in international waters that has paid a toll to Iran, adding that other countries would also be involved in the blockade.

US CENTCOM announced that its forces will begin implementing a blockade of all maritime traffic entering and exiting Iranian ports from 17:30 (local time) on April 13, “in accordance with President Donald Trump’s proclamation.” It stated that the blockade will be enforced impartially against vessels of all nations entering or departing Iranian ports and coastal areas, including all Iranian ports on the Arabian (/Persian) Gulf and the Gulf of Oman. CENTCOM added that it will not impede freedom of navigation for vessels transiting the Strait of Hormuz to and from non-Iranian ports, and additional information will be provided to commercial mariners through a formal notice prior to the start of the blockade.

President Trump is also reportedly weighing a resumption of the airstrike campaign, while Israel is waiting on Trump’s green light to resume its own campaign, with reports suggesting that Jerusalem wishes to see such a green light materialize.

Iranian actions

No direct Iranian attacks were recorded over April 12-13.

On April 12, Iranian Speaker of Parliament and top negotiator Ghalibaf stated that “if they (the US) fight, we (Iran) will fight, and if they come forward with logic, we will deal with logic. We will not bow to any threats; let them test our will once again so that we can teach them a bigger lesson.”



The IRGC Navy on April 12 stated that it was monitoring the situation in the Strait of Hormuz with surveillance UAVs, and that all maritime “traffic and non-traffic” was under full control of Iranian forces. It warned that “any wrong move” would “trap the enemy in deadly whirlpools in the strait.”

Iran’s Khatam al-Anbiya headquarters stated that “security in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman is either for everyone or for no one,” and added that “If Iran’s ports are threatened, no port in the region will be safe.”

Overall, President Trump’s naval blockade announcements reintroduce an escalatory dynamic in the region following the collapse of the negotiation round. A naval blockade of Iran would be significantly detrimental to Iran, which heavily relies on seaborne exports. Therefore, while the US has still refrained from resuming its airstrike campaign against Iran, the attempted naval blockade would highly likely trigger renewed Iranian/proxy missile and UAV attacks in the region. This, in turn, would hasten the resumption of US and Israeli strike campaigns in Iran.

A US naval blockade would also likely constitute a potential trigger for a Houthi entry into the Iran-led Axis of Resistance efforts to resume maritime attacks and block the Red Sea to commercial shipping, as a way to demonstrate reciprocity to the US’s naval action.

Other notable developments

Saudi Arabia: On April 12, Saudi Arabia announced the restoration of full pumping capacity through the East-West Pipeline, amounting to 700,000 barrels per day (bpd), as well as the recovery of around 300,000 bpd of affected volumes from the Manifa field. The Ministry added that restoration work is ongoing at the Khurais field, whose production has also been impacted by Iranian attacks.

On April 12, Riyadh summoned the **Iraqi** Ambassador over “continued attacks and blatant threats targeting the Kingdom and Gulf countries” involving UAVs launched from Iraq. This constituted another indication that Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states were previously attacked by Iraqi militias.

Israel-Lebanon: On April 13, the IDF completed the encirclement of Bint Jbeil, a Hezbollah stronghold in southern Lebanon, and reported having eliminated 100 militants in the city. Israeli ground operations continue, and Hezbollah’s rocket and UAV launches toward northern Israel also persist in large numbers.

Strait of Hormuz: As of April 13, US CENTCOM has not given an update on the mine-clearance operation at the Strait of Hormuz.

Red Sea/Gulf of Aden: During the afternoon hours of April 12, the UK Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) reported that a sailing vessel approximately 54 nautical miles (NM) southwest of Hodeidah was



approached by a small skiff carrying around 20 individuals, 4-5 of whom were armed with automatic weapons. The crew of the skiff reportedly requested the vessel to stop and attempted to board after the Master refused. The skiff subsequently departed toward the southeast after the Master fired a flare.

No such incidents have been reported in recent months in the Red Sea. At the current juncture, it remains more likely that pirates were responsible for the assault rather than Houthi forces, which could have used much stronger firepower to force ships to stop. Nevertheless, the incident highlights persistent risks in and around the Red Sea, which are compounded by the presence of pirates in international waters.

Travel & Security Aspects

- As of April 13, domestic flights in Israel (between Ben Gurion Airport and Ramon Airport) have been resumed

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