

Daily



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MAX - MENA Region Daily Summary - July 19, 2026

The following report reviews current events in the MENA region and their possible effect on business continuity and security.

Highlights of the Day

- **MENA:** CENTCOM completes eighth strike wave on Iran on July 19 as fighter jets deploy to region; continue to monitor regional developments
- **MENA:** State Department urges Americans in region to maintain caution, reconfirm itineraries on July 18; adhere to authorities' instructions
- **Jordan & Iran:** Two US personnel killed in Iranian attack in Jordan on July 17; reiterates vulnerabilities, prominence in Iran's target bank
- **Libya:** Political forum abroad declares 'unified Libyan government', per July 17 reports; unlikely to present challenge to existing proposals

Actionable Items

MENA: CENTCOM completes eighth strike wave on Iran on July 19 as fighter jets deploy to region; continue to monitor regional developments

Current Situation - US Central Command (CENTCOM) stated that targets included Iranian military coastal surveillance and air defense facilities, maritime capabilities, and missile and UAV storage sites. Kuwait and Bahrain confirmed on July 19 that sirens were sounded amid Iranian projectile attacks. Meanwhile, Israel's national broadcaster reported on July 18 that the US has begun deploying dozens of additional fighter jets to the region, with a squadron of US F-16 fighter jets arriving in Jordan in the last day.

Assessments & Forecast - This marks a continuation of the regional escalatory trajectory. Iran has refrained from expanding its target range over the past 24 hours and continues to exclude Israel from its strikes. This suggests some deterrence, as Iranian attacks on Israel would likely accelerate a return to full-scale war. However, the reported deployment of US fighter jets marks another sign of the military build-up necessary for further escalation. The reported positioning of US assets in Israel, including refueling tankers, and the likely deployment of US fighter jets at Israeli bases in the coming days, will place Iran in a dilemma over whether to attack Israel in the face of escalating US strikes.

Recommendations - Throughout the region, conduct timely risk assessments, refresh security protocols and business contingency plans (BCPs) for escalation scenarios, and continuously confirm travel itineraries. Monitor official alert systems and avoid all travel to military installations in the region, especially those hosting US personnel.

Source: [CENTCOM](#)

MENA: State Department urges Americans in region to maintain caution, reconfirm itineraries on July 18; adhere to authorities' instructions

Current Situation - The US Department of State issued a warning for Americans in the Middle East to exercise increased caution and stay up to date on security alerts issued by US Embassies. Authorities advised travelers to reconfirm their travel itineraries amid periodic airspace closures and flight cancellations. The State Department added that US diplomatic facilities have been targeted by groups supportive of Iran, warning American citizens worldwide to maintain vigilance.

Recommendations - US citizens operating or residing in the Middle East are advised to maintain heightened vigilance and remain cognizant of authorities' warnings due to ongoing regional tensions.

Source: [US Department of State](#)

Israel: IDF imposes military zone near Gaza border ahead of protest on July 19; maintain

heightened vigilance

Current Situation - The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) issued a closed military zone order near the Gaza Strip border from 08:00 (local time) on July 19 till 08:00 on July 20. The order extends from Yad Mordechai Junction westward along Route 34 to Sha'ar HaNegev Junction, then along Route 232 to Kerem Shalom. Only residents and employees will be permitted to enter. The closures were reportedly instated ahead of a mass march toward Gaza slated at 17:00 on July 19 to promote the "reestablishment of Jewish communities in the Gaza region before the 2026 elections." Coalition members Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich are expected to attend the protest.

Assessments & Forecast - Based on the issue's traction and government officials' involvement, turnout is expected to reach the high hundreds to low thousands. Given the highly sensitive topic, the IDF order acts as a pre-emptive measure to mitigate security breaches along the Gaza security fence. Against this backdrop, the protest carries the potential for unrest in the form of scuffles between protesters and security forces. Security will likely be bolstered around the Gaza Envelope, and localized travel disruptions may occur.

Recommendations - Those operating or residing in southern Israel on July 19 are advised to adhere to authorities' instructions and maintain heightened vigilance due to the slated protest and the associated risks of unrest.

Source: [IDF](#)

Jordan & Israel: Sirens reportedly sound in Aqaba after IDF warns of spillover from Iranian aerial threat on July 19; adhere to all safety precautions

Current Situation - The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) stated that it has identified the launch of Iranian missiles toward southern Jordan's Aqaba during the afternoon hours (local time) of July 19. It indicated that there is a possibility of a spillover into Israeli territory and that Color Red sirens may be sounded in southern Israel. The IDF called on the public to enter a protected space in case a siren is sounded and reiterated that, as of now, Israeli Home Front Command guidelines remain unchanged. Emerging reports indicate that sirens have subsequently been sounded in Jordan, with footage circulated on Israeli accounts depicting interceptions visible from southern Israel's Eilat. This followed a security advisory issued by the US Embassy in Amman, stating that Jordanian authorities had evacuated King Hussein International Airport (AQJ) and the Aqaba Port following receipt of a "credible threat." Jordanian authorities subsequently denied the advisory, stating that they had not received any threats to the sites and affirming that any warnings of potential risks will be issued by Jordanian authorities.

Recommendations - Those operating or residing in Jordan and Israel are advised to adhere to all safety precautions. In Jordan, avoid all travel to military installations, especially those hosting US personnel.

Source: [IDF](#)

Notable Events

Iran: UK designates IRGC under National Security Act on July 17; reflects hardening stance amid heightened regional tensions

Current Situation - The UK announced the designation of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and the Islamic Movement of Companions of the Right (IMCR), also known as Harakat Ashab al-Yamin al-Islamiya, under the National Security Act 2026. Anyone committing acts, including sabotage, on behalf of the IRGC or IMCR can face life imprisonment. The order also makes it a criminal offense to assist or express support for the IRGC or IMCR's actions, carrying a maximum prison sentence of 14 years. Iran's Foreign Ministry condemned the decision.

Assessments & Forecast - This reflects a hardening of London's stance toward the IRGC following its suspected support for the IMCR and involvement in at least seven attacks against Jewish and Israeli targets in the UK during periods of heightened regional tension this year. The new legislation and designation therefore aim to empower authorities to crack down on both the IRGC and front groups suspected of advancing malign activity on British soil. This is particularly amid renewed regional tensions and the prospects of similar attacks occurring. While Iran's condemnation suggests that it may deteriorate bilateral relations, UK authorities are likely to intensify enforcement in the coming months.

Source: [UK Home Office](#), [Tasnim](#)

Iraq: Baghdad signs 48 deals with US, agrees to revive Kirkuk-Baniyas oil pipeline project with Syria; effort to diversify oil export routes

Current Situation - Iraq reportedly signed 48 agreements worth up to 60 billion USD with US companies during the US-Iraq Business Summit in Washington. Key agreements included plans to develop major Iraqi oilfields and revive the crude oil pipeline between Iraq's Kirkuk and Syria's Baniyas, which hosts a port on the Mediterranean coast. The US State Department praised the agreement between Baghdad and Damascus, asserting that the "groundbreaking project" will have an initial capacity of two million barrels of crude oil per day.

Assessments & Forecast - This constitutes part of a surge in deals signed between Iraq and US firms following Prime Minister Ali al-Zaidi's visit to Washington. It reflects Iraq's reliance on US investments, particularly in its energy sector, which Iraq is seeking to diversify and develop. The proposed revival of the Kirkuk-Baniyas pipeline reflects a broader effort to develop export corridors that reduce reliance on the Strait of Hormuz, where repeated disruptions have exposed the vulnerability of Gulf energy exports. While

these projects could strengthen Iraq's long-term energy security and export resilience, implementation will require significant investment and will likely be slowed by security challenges in both Iraq and Syria.

Source: [US Department of State](#)

Jordan & Iran: Two US personnel killed in Iranian attack in Jordan on July 17; reiterates vulnerabilities, prominence in Iran's target bank

Current Situation - US Central Command (CENTCOM) on July 18 announced that the attack wounded four additional soldiers, while one serviceman remains missing. It reportedly occurred at the Muwaffaq Salti Air Base. A July 18 report citing US officials stated that the attack marked the fourth Iranian strike in five days in Jordan, with previous attacks impacting King Faisal Air Base, wounding up to five personnel, and damaging US Blackhawk helicopters at a base in eastern Jordan.

Assessments & Forecast - This reflects an intensification of Iranian attacks on bases with US presence in Jordan, with defenses intercepting eight missiles on [July 16](#) and ten on [July 18](#). However, the confirmed fatalities and reports of impact in recent days point to vulnerabilities in defense systems, which Iran is likely seeking to exploit. This is particularly given a report that Washington shifted troops from Gulf states to more secure locations in Jordan and Israel at the start of the war, increasing the strategic importance of Jordanian bases in ongoing US military operations. Iranian attacks on Jordan will therefore likely recur, primarily threatening the vicinity of bases hosting US assets, including Muwaffaq Salti, Prince Hassan, and King Faisal Air Bases.

Source: [US CENTCOM](#)

Libya: Political forum abroad declares 'unified Libyan government', per July 17 reports; unlikely to present challenge to existing proposals

Current Situation - According to reports, participants at a political forum on Libya in Geneva announced the formation of a "unified Libyan government" headed by Mustafa al-Majdoub, independent of UN sponsorship. The UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) subsequently disavowed any involvement in the forum, stating that it was neither party to the process nor its outcomes.

Assessments & Forecast - The declaration comes amid parallel efforts to determine Libya's political future, including a US-backed proposal to unify rival administrations before holding elections. The initiative likely reflects frustration with existing political tracks, which are widely perceived to have entrenched the status quo. However, limited public attention and the lack of endorsement from other political actors suggest the initiative lacks broad support and is unlikely to emerge as a credible alternative at this stage. UNSMIL's disavowal was likely intended to preserve the credibility of its own political process and further indicates that international actors are not aligned with the

proposal, viewing the appointment of a “head of government” as a unilateral step lacking legal basis. Consequently, the US-backed Boulos plan will likely remain the leading framework in the coming months.

Source: [Libya Observer](#)

Other Developments

- **Lebanon:** On July 18, the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) announced that one soldier was killed and two were wounded due to the explosion of a “suspicious object” in an army vehicle in southern Lebanon’s Mansouri.
- **Libya:** According to July 17 reports, the International Criminal Court (ICC) confirmed charges against Khaled Mohamed Ali Al Hishri, a former commander of a RADA Special Deterrence Forces (SDF)-run prison, over war crimes.
- **Tunisia:** On July 17, an NGO condemned the conviction of journalist Haythem El Mekki, a critic of President Kais Saied, to a one-year prison sentence over social media posts in which he described unsanitary conditions at a public hospital in Sfax.

Notable Dates

22 JUL	Israel Holiday: Tisha B'Av
23 JUL	Egypt Holiday: Revolution Day
25 JUL	Tunisia Holiday: Republic Day
30 JUL	Morocco Holiday: Throne Day
31 JUL	MENA Travel: Anniversary of the assassination of Hamas Political Bureau Chief Ismail Haniyeh
31 JUL	Iraq (KRG) Holiday: Yazidi Peak of Summer