



**IT'S A TOUGH WORLD.**

# **MENA Executive SITREP**

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

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**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](mailto: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 the morning hours of April 12.

As of April 11, US forces have been operating to clear sea mines in the Strait of Hormuz (See Strait of Hormuz section).

### Truce negotiations

The US and Iran held negotiations in Islamabad on April 11. Talks lasted 21 hours, involving US Vice President (VP) JD Vance, US Special Envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad-Bagher Ghalibaf, and Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi. In a subsequent press conference, VP Vance stated that despite "substantive discussions," the US and Iran "have not reached an agreement," which he described as "bad news for Iran much more than it is bad news for America." VP Vance emphasized that Washington "made very clear what [its] red lines are" and that "Iran has chosen not to accept [the] terms." VP Vance further stated that the US needs to see an affirmative commitment that Iran would not seek to develop a nuclear weapon and not seek to develop the tools that would enable them to quickly achieve a nuclear weapon, not just now, but in the long term. "That is the core goal of President Trump, and that is what the administration tried to achieve through this negotiation."

Iranian state media reported that Tehran had agreed to participate in negotiations after Israel scaled back its attacks in Lebanon, which it described as "partial progress." It also reported that Tehran conveyed its "red lines" to the Pakistani PM prior to the talks commencing, including: the Strait of Hormuz, war reparations, the release of frozen Iranian [financial] assets, and a regional ceasefire.

On April 12, Israel's public broadcaster stated that Jerusalem assesses the ceasefire may be extended to allow for further negotiations.

President Trump shared an article on his social media on April 12 suggesting that the US could impose a naval blockade on Iran to halt its oil revenues if Tehran "won't bend" to Washington's demands. The



article referred to Washington's strategy in Venezuela, prior to the capture of then-President Nicholas Maduro.

### **Iranian actions**

No direct Iranian attacks were recorded over April 11-12. During the negotiations, Tehran retained its hardline position and did not cave in to Washington's demands.

In response to a question on whether the diplomatic track had ended, the Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesperson stated on April 12 that "diplomacy never ends" and affirmed that it was only natural that "very complex issues" could not be resolved within 24 hours. He indicated that the parties reached agreements in some areas, while gaps existed in others, including the Strait of Hormuz and "regional issues."

On April 12, an IRGC-affiliated outlet reported that the US aimed to "achieve concessions they failed to gain in the war," including on the Strait of Hormuz and the removal of Iran's nuclear material, which the Iranian delegation prevented.

**Overall, the collapse of the talks does not necessarily suggest an immediate-term return to fighting, amid some signals that further discussion may be made. Nevertheless, it increases its prospects and highlights the truce's fragility.**

### **Other notable developments**

**Israel-Lebanon:** During April 11-12, hostilities between the IDF and Hezbollah continued in Lebanon, and Hezbollah continued to launch rockets and UAVs against northern Israel. Israel reportedly gave a concession to reduce the intensity of its strikes in Lebanon, with an emphasis on Beirut as a trust-building measure to facilitate the April 14 meeting between Israeli and Lebanese government officials regarding a peace agreement between the states. Jerusalem is reportedly intending to demand the disarmament of Hezbollah as a condition for an agreement between the countries. Nevertheless, hostilities, at least in southern Lebanon, will persist together with Hezbollah's rocket and UAV attacks against Israel, which may increase against the backdrop of Hezbollah's opposition to peace negotiations between Jerusalem and Beirut.

**Strait of Hormuz:** President Trump claimed on April 11 that the US is in the "process of clearing out the Strait of Hormuz." CENTCOM confirmed that it had begun mine-clearance operations in the Strait, with two guided-missile destroyers, the USS Frank E. Peterson and USS Michael Murphy. CENTCOM commander Admiral Cooper stated that "we began the process of establishing a new passage and we will share this safe pathway with the maritime industry soon to encourage the free flow of commerce." CENTCOM has also used unmanned underwater vessels (UUVs) in the operation.



Iranian forces reportedly issued warnings to the vessels before the crossing. A report citing CENTCOM indicated that the US vessels “operated in the Persian Gulf and departed as planned without any security incidents.” According to an Iranian state-affiliated media report, the Iranian Armed Forces conveyed a warning to the US through Pakistani mediators that it would attack the US Naval ships conducting the operations if they were not withdrawn. The US reportedly denied receiving this warning.

Meanwhile, according to an April 12 report, two empty supertankers, the Greek-owned “Agios Fanourios I,” destined for Iraq, and the Pakistan-flagged and owned “Shalamar,” destined for the UAE’s Das Island, were forced to turn back near Iran’s Larak island, as US-Iran negotiations collapsed. The South Korea-owned Very Large Crude Carrier “Mombasa B” was able to pass. A Greek, Malaysia-bound supertanker, the “Serifos” and two Chinese supertankers, the “Cosppearl Lake” and the “He Rong Hai,” reportedly transited the strait on April 11.

**The collapse of the talks and the current opacity regarding the US operation to clear mines in the Strait of Hormuz will likely continue to undergird a safety and confidence deficit for vessels to cross the Strait without approval from Iranian authorities, as of the time of writing. This highlights the Strait of Hormuz as a persistent flashpoint for tensions over the coming hours.**

### Travel & Security Aspects

- On April 11, Israel’s Home Front Command (HFC) announced an [update](#) in defense guidelines effective between 20:00 on April 11 and 18:00 on April 13. In the Tel Aviv metropolitan area and Jerusalem, no restrictions are imposed on workplaces and educational establishments, and gatherings of up to 1000 people are permitted.

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