

Daily



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MAX - MENA Region Daily Summary - August 4, 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:** President Trump threatens Iran with 'decapitation' if no deal reached in August 3 statement; escalation risk to persist
- **Iraq:** US conditions release of frozen funds on progress toward militia disarmament, per August 2 reports; reflects continued economic leverage
- **Libya:** Armed clashes between GNU-linked militias in Zawiyah prompt closure of coastal road on August 4; avoid all travel
- **Syria:** IED explosion targets ISF member's vehicle in Daraa's Namer on August 2; interrupts lull of such attacks in Daraa

Actionable Items

Libya: Armed clashes between GNU-linked militias in Zawiyah prompt closure of coastal road on August 4; avoid all travel

Current Situation - Armed clashes were recorded between the Government of National Unity (GNU)-linked 103 Battalion (Sal'a Battalion) and Zawiyah's First Support Force led by Mohammed Bahroun (also known as "al-Far") in Surman and al-Harsha areas on the outskirts of Zawiyah. The clashes reportedly prompted the closure of the Coastal Road toward Tripoli. The Surman Municipality announced the suspension of official work and urged residents to shelter in place and avoid travel to the conflict areas.

Assessments & Forecast - Such clashes are recorded periodically in Zawiyah, where rival militias continue to compete for control over illicit fuel, arms, and irregular migration networks. As such, the latest fighting likely stems from localized territorial or influence disputes. However, the spread of clashes from Zawiyah to nearby Surman highlights the potential for localized confrontations to expand rapidly and underscores the fragile security environment across western Tripolitania. The closure of the Coastal Road and suspension of official work in Surman demonstrate the broader impact of such violence on transportation, business activity, and public security. Overall, the security situation in the Zawiyah-Surman corridor is likely to remain volatile over the coming hours and days.

Recommendations - Those operating or residing in Libya on August 4 are advised to avoid all travel to the vicinity of Zawiyah and Surman due to the ongoing clashes and potential for further security incidents in the coming hours.

Source: [Libya Observer](#); [Surman Municipality](#)

Oman: Authorities introduce 14-day tourist visa for designated nationalities, per August 2 reports; remain abreast of authorities' updates

Current Situation - According to reports, the Royal Oman Police amended the Executive Regulations of the Foreign Residence Law to introduce a 14-day tourist visa for nationals of designated countries. A corresponding entry sets the visa's cost at zero Omani rials. Holders may convert the visa to another tourist visa category before its expiry, subject to applicable fees and requirements. However, authorities have not yet published the list of eligible nationalities.

Recommendations - Those intending to travel to Oman are advised to confirm eligibility through official ROP channels before booking travel and remain cognizant of authorities' updates regarding the release of the eligible-nationality list.

Source: [Times of Oman](#)

Saudi Arabia: NCM warns of ongoing heatwave in Riyadh Province until 19:00 on August

4; maintain heightened vigilance

Current Situation - Saudi Arabia's National Center for Meteorology (NCM) issued a heatwave warning for several areas of Riyadh Province, including Riyadh city, until 19:00 (local time). The NCM forecasts temperatures in the affected areas are expected to reach between 47 and 48 degrees Celsius. These conditions are expected to affect Riyadh city, Diriyah, Thadiq, Huraymila, Rumah, Dhurma, Marat, al-Hariq, al-Kharj, ad-Dilam, Hawtat Bani Tamim, al-Muzahimiyah, ad-Dawadmi, ar-Rayn, al-Quwayiyah, Afif, al-Aflaj, and al-Sulayyil.

Recommendations -Those operating or residing in the Riyadh Region on August 4 are advised to maintain heightened vigilance due to the ongoing heatwave and remain abreast of weather developments to ensure prior notification of extreme heat conditions.

Source: [SPA](#)

Notable Events

MENA: OPEC+ announces production increases on August 2; intended to leverage oil pricing dynamics amid conflict aversion

Current Situation - The seven OPEC+ countries announced that the collective would adjust its cumulative production by 188,000 barrels per day (bpd) from September 2026, from voluntary adjustments announced in April 2023. OPEC+ claimed that the measure is intended to provide an opportunity to accelerate their compensation.

Assessments & Forecast - In effect, the decision marks the sixth consecutive month of increases to OPEC+ oil production quotas and completes the phased rollback of voluntary production cuts introduced in 2023. The relatively modest 188,000 bpd adjustment suggests that OPEC+ remains focused on gradually increasing supply while limiting the risk of a sharp decline in oil prices. The decision is also likely influenced by changing market expectations surrounding US-Iran tensions, particularly as oil prices have begun to decline following the reduced likelihood of imminent conflict on [August 2](#). The increases are likely intended to prioritize near-term production revenues over maximum price support amid continued [uncertainty surrounding the trajectory of the US-Iran conflict](#). The adjustment may also bring overproducing members' output closer to agreed levels, demonstrating institutional flexibility while potentially strengthening compliance with the organization's production-cut framework in subsequent phases.

Source: [OPEC](#)

MENA: President Trump threatens Iran with 'decapitation' if no deal reached in August 3 statement; escalation risk to persist

Current Situation - US President Donald Trump stated that he wants to give Iran “every last chance before decapitation.” He affirmed that talks are ongoing, following Tehran’s [public denial](#) that negotiations were underway. Concurrently, senior Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) Major General Mohsen Rezaei announced that Iran will block any alternate transit routes in the Strait of Hormuz. Meanwhile, the UK Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) reported that a vessel was struck by a projectile 37km northeast of Oman’s al Khasab on August 3.

Assessments & Forecast - Contradictory statements regarding the status of negotiations, paired with military threats from both Washington and Tehran, reinforce the sustained escalatory trajectory in the region. Major General Rezaei’s warning and the latest attack on a vessel in the Strait of Hormuz reflect Iran’s emboldened stance and underscore the very limited likelihood that it will make concessions in the waterway, which remains the primary escalation flashpoint currently. This reduces the prospects of a breakthrough in talks, which will compound the reputational costs incurred to President Trump amid the perception that he has repeatedly walked back on threats to escalate in recent weeks, eroding US deterrence. This may push Washington to escalate its campaign.

Source: [Reuters](#); [IRNA](#); [UKMTO](#)

Iraq: US conditions release of frozen funds on progress toward militia disarmament, per August 2 reports; reflects continued economic leverage

Current Situation - Two unconfirmed reports stated that Washington has linked the release of nearly 30 billion USD in funds to Baghdad’s progress in bringing all weapons under state control, including disarming Iraqi militias. One report further stated that Washington had also linked the release of the funds to improving the investment environment for US companies operating in Iraq.

Assessments & Forecast - If confirmed, this reflects Washington’s use of economic pressure to expedite Baghdad’s efforts to disarm non-state armed groups ahead of the [September 30 deadline](#), with the gradual release of funds tied to the government’s progress, as previously evidenced by the resumption of dollar shipments in [July](#). In this context, the latest reported development further underscores that Washington continues to prioritize the disarmament initiative, which could in turn improve the security environment for US companies operating in Iraq. Given Baghdad’s interest in securing the release of the funds, the government will intensify efforts to advance the disarmament process, particularly as the assets would help ease pressure on the state budget. However, the [hardline stance](#) of the militias will likely impede meaningful progress and pose challenges to meeting the September 30 deadline.

Source: [Shafaq](#); [Middle East Online](#)

Israel: Defense Minister Katz dismisses IDF Central Command on live TV on August 2; highlights attempted politization

Current Situation - Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz announced that the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Central Command chief, Avi Bluth, would be replaced by the Chief of the IDF Personnel Directorate, Dado Bar Kalifa. The dispute was reportedly triggered over Bluth's recommendation to renew an administrative order against a settler accused of violence against Palestinians, contrary to Katz's position. The IDF reportedly stated that the decision was not coordinated with Chief of Staff Eyal Zamir. Subsequently, Katz reportedly backtracked on the earlier statement, stating that Bluth will remain in his position.

Assessments & Forecast - This statement comes amid [heightened tensions in the West Bank](#) and ahead of August 17 Likud Party primary elections. The public announcement, made without coordination with the IDF Chief of Staff, underscores friction between the political and military leadership over the West Bank policy and reflects efforts to politicize security institutions. The timing of the announcement, together with the underlying dispute, suggests it was likely intended to bolster Katz's hardline image among right-wing voters, particularly on issues relating to settler violence and the West Bank. However, the subsequent criticism likely prompted Katz to backtrack, reducing the likelihood of Bluth's removal in the near term.

Source: [C14](#)

Syria: IED explosion targets ISF member's vehicle in Daraa's Namer on August 2; interrupts lull of such attacks in Daraa

Current Situation - Unidentified perpetrators reportedly targeted the private vehicle of an Internal Security Forces (ISF) member in Daraa's Namer with an IED. He sustained injuries. No group claimed responsibility.

Assessments & Forecast - The attack interrupts a sustained lull of IED attacks in southern Syria's Daraa Province in recent months. However, it comes amid a nationwide [uptick](#) in both attempted and successful IED attacks targeting security forces, and a broader [surge](#) in Islamic State (IS)-perpetrated acts of militancy in recent weeks. The group retains organizational and operational capabilities in southern Syria, as underscored by the Syrian security forces' dismantling of several IS networks in the region in [July](#). This renders it plausible that IS sleeper cells are responsible for the latest attack. That said, it is also possible that criminal elements possessing explosive-making capabilities targeted the ISF member. Such targeted attacks against security personnel are not unprecedented, as shown by a July 23 incident in Daraa city, wherein gunmen reportedly attacked an ISF detention facility housing individuals charged with assassinations. Regardless, security forces will likely conduct raids in the region to identify and apprehend suspected perpetrators.

Source: [Syria TV](#)

Other Developments

- **Iran:** On August 3, Iran's state-affiliated news agency stated that the judiciary executed two nationals on charges of providing Israel's intelligence agency, Mossad, with intelligence on military and security sites in Iran during the recent conflict.
- **Israel & Palestinian Territories:** A Hamas commander and four other Palestinians were reportedly killed in an IDF airstrike targeting a vehicle in Gaza City's Rimal neighborhood on August 3. Separately, an IDF airstrike killed a commander of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) in Deir al-Balah.
- **Israel & Palestinian Territories:** On August 3, the US-led Board of Peace (BoP) stated that Israel Defense Forces' (IDF) withdrawal beyond the Yellow Line will occur only after Hamas' disarmament, reversing an [earlier plan](#) for the two processes to proceed simultaneously.
- **Morocco:** On August 3, Morocco's Interior Ministry attributed the [mass exodus](#) of Moroccan migrants to Spain's Ceuta and Melilla to social-media misinformation, human trafficking networks, and the misconception that they could access Europe without consequences.

Notable Dates

12 AUG	Iran Holiday: Death of Prophet Mohammad/Martyrdom of Imam Hasan
13 AUG	Tunisia Holiday: Women's and Family Day
13 AUG	Iran Holiday: Martyrdom of Imam Reza
14 AUG	Morocco Holiday: Oued Ed-Dahab Day
15 AUG	Lebanon Holiday: Assumption of Mary
15 AUG	Egypt Holiday: Flooding of the Nile