



## Weekly



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## MENA Weekly Summary - April 1-7, 2026

### Highlights of the Week

This report reviews notable events in the Middle East and North Africa this week. These include the ceasefire between US, **Israel** and **Iran**, the extended economic impacts of the ongoing conflict on **Egypt**, the release of a kidnapped American journalist by the Kataib Hezbollah in **Iraq**, developments regarding Hamas' disarmament in the **Gaza Strip**, and a militant incident recorded in front of the Israeli consulate in **Turkey's** Istanbul.

### MENA











#### Current Situation

1. [During the overnight hours of April 7-8](#) (Iran time), US President Donald Trump announced a two-week suspension of US strikes against Iran, describing it as a “double-sided [mutual] ceasefire.”
2. President Trump further indicated that Iran's ten-point proposal would form a “workable basis” for negotiations scheduled to take place in Islamabad on April 10.

3. Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi confirmed Iran's acceptance of the ceasefire, which includes facilitating safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz, subject to coordination with Iran's Armed Forces.
4. Meanwhile, the Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, stated that while he supports the ceasefire with Iran, the ceasefire does not include a cessation of hostilities against Hezbollah. The IDF subsequently announced ceasing operations against Iran.
5. On April 8, Iranian attacks were recorded across Gulf states, including Kuwait and UAE, with one of the projectiles impacting the Habshan gas-facilities in Abu Dhabi despite the ceasefire.

**Assessments & Forecast:** The ceasefire signals a shift from previously maximalist positions, with both sides showing willingness to operationalize the arrangement, evident from the US's openness to Iran's ten-point proposal and Tehran's commitment to secure transit through the Strait of Hormuz. Given that the cessation of hostilities in Lebanon forms part of Iran's ten-point proposal, Israel is likely to accelerate operations against Hezbollah in the near term to consolidate gains ahead of potential pressure to de-escalate. As such, while US/Israeli operations against Iran are likely to cease, Israeli operations in southern Lebanon are expected to persist. While the US and Iran are likely to suspend military operations in the coming hours to demonstrate commitment, some strikes are still likely to be recorded, particularly given Iran's decentralized command structure, under which ceasefire orders may be delayed in reaching ground commanders. Volatility is expected to persist despite stated commitments to the ceasefire.

## IRAN'S TEN-POINT PROPOSAL TO END WAR

 <p>Complete cessation of the war on Iraq, Lebanon, and Yemen</p>	 <p>Full payment of compensation for reconstruction costs to Iran</p>
 <p>Complete and permanent cessation of the war on Iran with no time limit</p>	 <p>Release of Iranian funds and frozen assets held by the United States</p>
 <p>Ending all conflicts in the region in their entirety</p>	 <p>Full commitment to lifting sanctions on Iran</p>
 <p>Reopening the Strait of Hormuz</p>	 <p>Iran fully commits to not seeking possession of any nuclear weapons</p>
 <p>Establishing a protocol and conditions to ensure freedom and security of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz</p>	 <p>Immediate ceasefire takes effect on all fronts immediately upon approval of the above conditions</p>

**Source:** [Truth Social](#) ; [Abbas Araghchi](#); [PM Netanyahu](#)

# Egypt

## Current Situation

1. On April 2, the Central Bank of Egypt (CBE) kept its key interest rates unchanged, citing “prevailing inflation dynamics.”
2. Israel’s Energy Ministry reportedly announced on April 2 that the offshore Leviathan gas field would resume operations, with an April 6 report indicating that flows to Egypt had returned to pre-conflict levels of around 1.1 billion cubic feet per day.
3. The Egyptian Ministry of Electricity and Renewable Energy (MoEE) announced on April 4 that it would raise electricity prices for higher-consumption households and commercial consumption.

## Assessments & Forecast:

The CBE’s decision is aimed at containing inflationary pressures stemming from the regional conflict, which has disrupted energy markets and raised import costs. Notably, this marks the first time interest rates have been held since November 2025, reflecting Cairo’s assessment of the urgent need to maintain a tighter monetary stance. The MoEE’s electricity price increases, alongside earlier fuel hikes and consumption restrictions, similarly underscore a pattern of tightening measures intended, in this case, to manage rising energy costs by partially passing them onto consumers. While the resumption of operations at Israel’s Leviathan field and increased natural gas flows to Egypt will likely stabilize supply and ease immediate pressures in the near term, it is unlikely to offset Cairo’s exposure to external shocks and import dependence. Hence, inflationary pressures are likely to persist, exacerbating socioeconomic stability in the country. Additional price adjustments and tightening measures are expected as long as the regional conflict continues, and potentially even after it subsides, which will also heighten grievances among the general populace.

Source: [CBE](#)

# Iraq

## Current Situation:

1. On April 7, Kataib Hezbollah (KH) stated that it would release the [kidnapped American journalist, Shelly Kittleson](#), “on the condition that she leaves the country immediately.”
2. The group indicated that this initiative [of purported good will] will not repeat itself, especially amid the “war waged by the Zionist-American enemy against .”
3. KH also released a video in which Kittleson admitted that she had been trained by US personnel and collected intelligence for the US Embassy in Iraq.
4. On April 8, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio confirmed that Kittleson was released by KH.
5. According to April 8 reports, Kittleson was released in exchange for several imprisoned KH members.

**Assessments & Forecast:** KH’s statement confirms the militia’s involvement in

Kittleson's kidnapping. While it remains unclear what pressure led to the decision to release the journalist, the reported release of several KH members likely factored into the outcome. This was likely enabled by existing communication channels, with security officials reportedly using a representative from the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) to engage with KH. Nevertheless, Kittleson was held by the group for over a week without any indication of a federal government operation to secure her release. This underscores the group's ability to operate with impunity and its access to intelligence on foreign nationals operating in Baghdad. Despite her release, the footage showing Kittleson confessing to having been trained by "US officers" and to collecting intelligence reinforces the Iran-led Axis of Resistance's narrative that soft American targets support their government, thereby rendering them legitimate targets. As such, US nationals are likely to remain exposed to an elevated risk of arbitrary kidnapping and detention in Iraq, particularly as powerful Iran-backed militias continue to exert significant influence.

**Source:** [KH](#)

## Israel & Palestinian Territories

### Current Situation:

1. An Israeli April 3 report citing Israel Defense Forces (IDF) officials indicates that Hamas is using the Iran war to reconstitute itself and potentially plan the kidnapping of soldiers.
2. Per April 6-7 unconfirmed reports, the Gaza Board of Peace has given Hamas until the end of the week to accept a disarmament proposal.
3. On April 6, the Gaza "Free Homeland Forces" militia claimed responsibility for a military operation conducted in central Gaza. According to reports, the operation resulted in the killing of Mousa al-Aidi, identified as a commander of Hamas's Sahn unit, along with six of his fighters. The group stated that retaliatory fire by opposing forces resulted in civilian casualties. According to reports, an Israeli UAV assisted the militia.

**Assessments & Forecast:** Although the Gaza front has been relatively calm amid the wider regional escalation, recent reporting nevertheless highlights the recurring cycles of violence between Israel and Hamas. These reports also underscore the persistence of tensions related to Hamas's disarmament, to which Hamas refuses. As has been repeatedly indicated in Israeli security assessments, Israel not only believes that Hamas is unwilling to disarm, but it also believes that Hamas is rebuilding its capabilities and becoming stronger, eroding the gains that Israel achieved during the active phase of the Gaza war. Amid this process, April 3 reports citing IDF officials highlight concerns that Hamas may resort to actions that would disrupt the existing status quo, including the kidnapping of soldiers. Such actions would immediately collapse the overall stability that had been gained through the negotiation truce plan led by US President Trump. These factors are likely to further incentivize Israel to take greater initiative and coordinate with local anti-Hamas militias that it has been backing to degrade Hamas within the enclave. Volatility in Gaza is likely to persist.

Source: [N12](#)

## Turkey

### Current Situation

1. On [April 7](#), Turkey's Minister of Interior (MoI), Mustafa Ciftci, confirmed that police neutralized three individuals who had engaged in an armed clash with security forces in front of Yapi Kredi Plaza in Istanbul, which houses the Israeli Consulate. The Israeli Consulate is currently not manned by Israeli diplomatic personnel.
2. He also corroborated that two police officers were also slightly wounded.
3. Authorities confirmed that the perpetrators had traveled from Kocaeli Province's Izmit, and one of the assailants had "ties to an organization that exploits religion."

**Assessments & Forecast:** Although Turkish authorities have not officially confirmed the intended target, the attack was likely aimed at the Israeli consulate located within the plaza. Initial details indicate that the incident was a premeditated terrorist attack. Ciftci's reference to one perpetrator's ties to an "organization that exploits religion" is likely an allusion to a jihadist group, most plausibly Islamic State (IS), which maintains a clandestine network and demonstrated attack capability within Turkey. IS involvement is further bolstered by the fact that the attackers originated from Izmit, an area reportedly associated with a higher concentration of IS sympathizers. Although the Israeli consulate was not staffed at the time, the perpetrators likely assessed that police officers securing an Israeli diplomatic facility constituted a legitimate target. Such an attack would serve to amplify the group's visibility by striking Israeli-linked assets amid heightened public anger toward Israel across Turkey in the context of ongoing regional hostilities. In light of this, over the coming days, security forces are expected to heighten counter-militancy efforts across Istanbul and Kocaeli.

Source: [Anadolu Agency](#)

## Other Developments

- **MENA:** On April 2, the foreign ministries of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, Indonesia, Pakistan, Qatar, Turkey, and the UAE condemned Israel's passing of a death penalty law for Palestinians convicted of deadly acts of terror.
- **MENA:** On April 5, eight member states of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC+), namely Saudi Arabia, Russia, Iraq, UAE, Kuwait, Kazakhstan, Algeria, and Oman, announced that they will increase oil production by 206,000 barrels per day in May.
- **Egypt:** On April 4, the Ministry of Electricity and Renewable Energy (MoEE) announced electricity price increases for higher-consumption brackets due to a "severe and unprecedented" global energy crisis.
- **Israel & Palestinian Territories:** Abu Ubaida, the spokesperson for Hamas' armed wing, on April

5 dismissed calls for disarmament and said Hamas would not hold such discussions without guarantees of a complete Israeli withdrawal from Gaza.

- **Saudi Arabia:** The Ministry of Interior on April 1 announced the execution of a Saudi citizen for committing terrorism-related crimes, including joining a “foreign terrorist organization,” establishing a terrorist cell within the Kingdom, financing terrorism, possessing weapons, manufacturing explosives, and intending to harm Saudi forces.
- **Saudi Arabia:** On April 6, the Saudi Space Agency announced the successful launch of its new satellite, Shams, and established contact with it as part of the NASA-led Artemis II mission.
- **Syria:** On April 3, protesters vandalized the UAE Embassy in Damascus during protests denouncing Israel’s passing of a death penalty law for Palestinians convicted of deadly acts of terror. Syrian authorities denounced the incident, vowing to prosecute those involved.
- **Turkey:** On [April 7](#), security forces neutralized three assailants who attacked police personnel in front of Istanbul’s Israeli Consulate. This likely constituted a jihadist-linked terror attack.

## The Upcoming Week

- **April 8-10:** Multiple commemoration ceremonies are slated to occur across **Iran**, particularly in major cities, to mark the conclusion of the 40-day mourning period for slain [Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei](#).
- **April 9:** Martyrs’ Day will be marked in **Tunisia**. It commemorates protesters who were killed when French troops suppressed demonstrations against colonial rule in 1938.
- **April 11:** **Iraq’s** Parliament is slated to hold a session to elect a President. This is part of efforts to resolve an ongoing [deadlock](#) in government formation efforts.
- **April 13:** **Egypt** will celebrate Sham El-Nessim (Spring Festival) as a national holiday to mark the start of the spring season. It falls on the same day as Coptic Easter Monday.
- **April 13-14:** Holocaust Remembrance Day (Yom HaShoah) will be observed in **Israel**. At 10:00 (local time) on April 14, a two-minute siren will be activated to commemorate the Holocaust’s victims.
- **April 13-15:** Pope Leo XIV will make an official visit to Algeria. He is slated to visit Algiers and Annaba.
- **April 14:** Iran will mark the Martyrdom of Imam Sadeq. This is a National Day of Mourning to commemorate the death of Imam Sadeq, the sixth Shiite Imam, around 13 centuries ago.