

Middle East Update

Information Cut-Off: 1200h (BST), 30 July 2026

Executive Summary

The US and Iran have conducted tit-for-tat strikes, but they remain largely within the bounds of recent escalation thresholds with little indication that a widespread resumption of fighting is underway. Early this morning (30 July), the US conducted airstrikes on Iran for the first time since Friday (24 July). Iran has pledged to retaliate, with drone attacks killing one person in Kuwait and missiles being intercepted over Jordan.

Separately, a drone attack set a US-linked gas tanker on fire in the Egyptian port of Damietta yesterday afternoon (29 July). The fire spread to another nearby vessel. The perpetrator has not been confirmed.

Conflict

The US conducted airstrikes on Iran overnight (29 – 30 July), targeting military command centres, drone and missile sites, coastal surveillance and defence sites, and maritime capabilities. The strikes are the first attacks on Iran since Friday (24 July) and were in retaliation for Iran's surprise attack on US forces in the Middle East yesterday (29 July).

Iran has pledged to retaliate today: Jordan has intercepted five missiles this morning, with recent Iranian attacks targeting US military bases in the country. The Kuwaiti Defence Ministry has also announced that a drone attack on a building has killed one person. The company has not been specified, but it is reportedly based in China.

Yesterday afternoon, a drone struck the Energos Winter, a storage tanker owned by a US firm, in the Egyptian port of Damietta; the fire spread to another tanker, Gaslog Salem. Authorities have advised that the port remains operational.

Iran-aligned Iraqi militant groups including Kataib Sayyid al Shuhada and Harakat Hezbollah al Nujaba have threatened to retaliate to yesterday's US-Saudi airstrikes.

Iran

Iranian media have said that four members of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) were killed in US-Saudi airstrikes on Iran-aligned militants in Iraq yesterday (29 July). The IRGC is the most influential security body in Iran, with operations throughout the Middle East.

Israel

President Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu discussed all possible paths to limit Iran’s nuclear weapons program in a meeting yesterday (29 July), according to senior Israeli officials briefing international media.

Strait of Hormuz / Bab al-Mandeb

The IRGC has said that the Strait of Hormuz will remain closed for as long as US threats continue. However, this morning (30 July) Iranian media said that a Qatari LNG vessel sailed through the Strait with Iranian permission.

This morning, the IRGC said that two vessels with US support attempted to transit the Strait of Hormuz on the Omani side, but turned back after one of them caught fire from an Iranian attack. Iran insists that vessels must transit along its coast with prior authorisation.

Just 14 vessels transited the Strait yesterday (29 July), down from pre-war daily averages over 100. Transit through the Bab al-Mandeb Strait is also at least 22 per cent below pre-conflict levels.

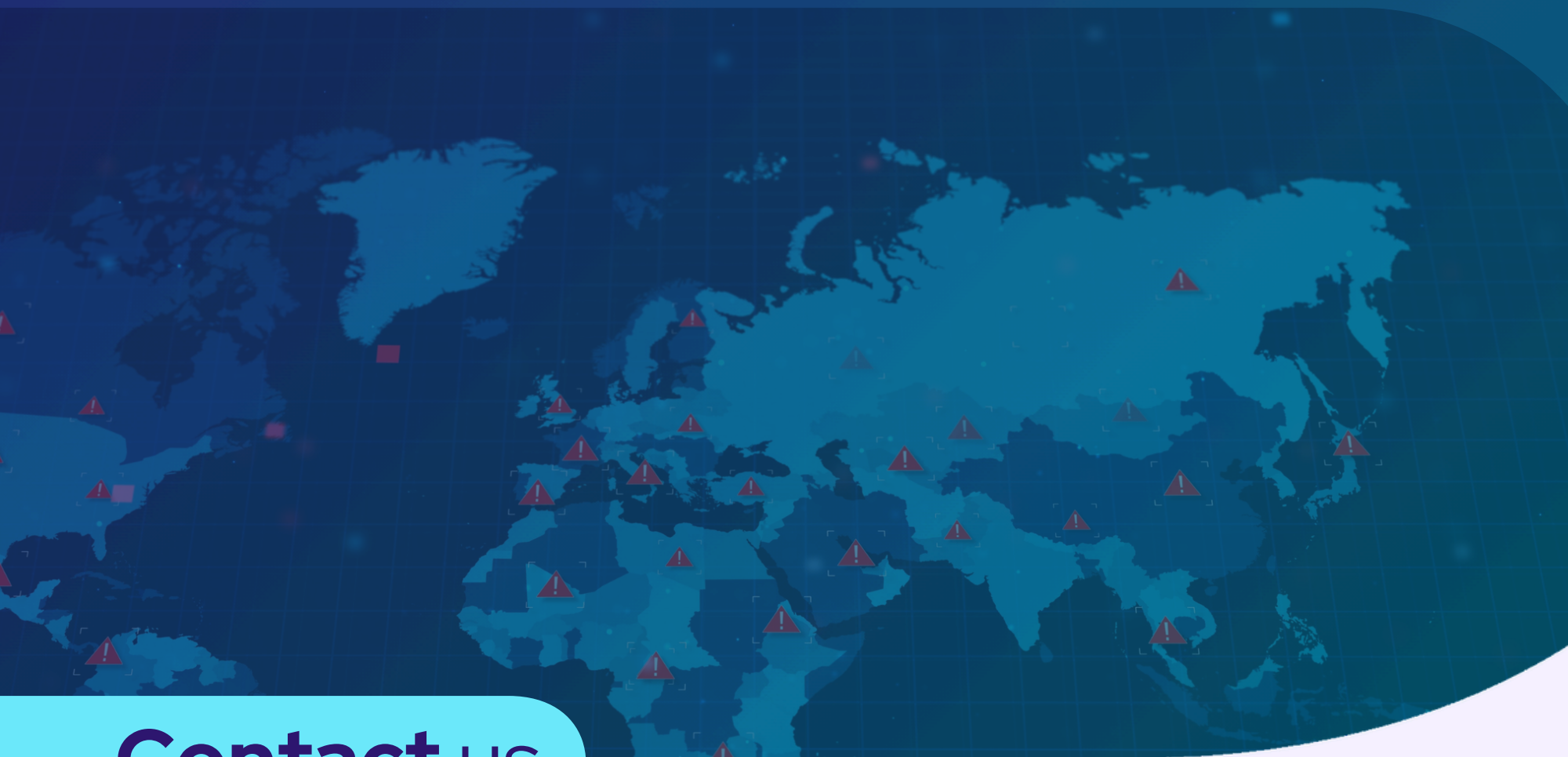
Regional Information

Syria

Israeli artillery fire was reported this morning (30 July) in Quneitra, rural areas of southern Syria, causing no confirmed injuries or damages.

Advice

- Reconsider all travel to Israel, Iran and Lebanon (especially south of the Litani River, Dahiye in Beirut, and in the Beqaa Valley).
- Be aware that US facilities throughout the Gulf are potential targets for Iranian attacks, and avoid all such sites whenever possible.
- Monitor international media and relevant embassy/diplomatic advisories to remain aware of any fresh developments and to ensure receipt of all attack warnings, and follow all guidelines.
- Ensure awareness of the nearest shelter in the event of air sirens.
- Avoid any demonstrations or gatherings in the region that appears to be linked to the US/Israel – Iran conflict.
- Globally, reconsider travel to any locations with links to Israel or Judaism.
- Aviation travellers should anticipate schedule changes and limited seat availability, should allow additional connection time and should confirm flight status directly with the operating airline before travelling to the airport.
- If you need further support, or wish to discuss options for evacuation, call NGS.



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