



IT'S A TOUGH WORLD.

MENA Executive SITREP

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**MAX
INTELLIGENCE**



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

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.

Operational Overview

US and Israeli military operations in Iran are still suspended since the entry into force of the 14-day ceasefire, as of April 15. Meanwhile, Iran has continued to halt its direct attacks in the region. In line with this, on April 14, the US Embassy in the UAE announced the lifting of shelter-in-place instructions for US government employees in the country.

The US blockade of the Strait of Hormuz has entered an active enforcement phase. On April 14, US CENTCOM reported full containment during the first 24 hours, with six vessels complying with orders to return to Iranian ports. However, ship-tracking data from April 14 indicated that eight vessels, including three Iran-linked tankers not bound for Iranian ports, successfully crossed the Strait. To mitigate risks to assets near the Iranian coast, an unconfirmed April 14 report suggested that the US may shift interception and quarantine operations to the Arabian Sea. Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia is reportedly pressing the US to lift the blockade to avoid Iranian escalation in the Bab al-Mandeb Strait in the Red Sea.

Negotiations-related developments:

President Trump stated on April 14 that peace talks in Islamabad could resume within 48 hours, asserting that the war is "very close to being over." However, an April 15 Israeli media report suggested that the Premier specified two conditions: the full reopening of the Strait of Hormuz and verification that the Iranian delegation has direct authority from the IRGC to negotiate. While Vice President JD Vance expressed optimism on April 14 for the prospects of talks to reach a comprehensive deal, he acknowledged that deep-seated mistrust remains a significant hurdle. From the Israeli perspective, Defense Minister Israel Katz stated on April 14 that the removal of enriched uranium is a non-negotiable precondition for ending the military campaign.

Unconfirmed reports suggest Iran is considering a temporary pause in shipments to avoid escalation. However, satellite imagery cited in reports suggests that Iran is simultaneously advancing efforts to clear access to underground ballistic missile storage facilities that were previously rendered inaccessible by US/Israeli strikes. A Pakistani official noted that the actual timeline for resuming negotiations may extend beyond the window suggested by the White House.



Other notable developments

Israel-Lebanon:

On April 14, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio hosted the first direct talks between Israel and Lebanon in Washington, characterizing the meeting as a "historic opportunity" to permanently end Hezbollah's regional influence. The US State Department described the discussions as productive, noting that both parties agreed to launch direct negotiations at an unspecified time and place in the future. While the Israeli Ambassador stated that both nations are committed to "liberating Lebanon" from Iran-backed Hezbollah, reports indicate discrepancies in the scope Israeli and Lebanese officials were permitted to discuss in the talks. Secretary Rubio emphasized that the process is ongoing and aimed at a long-term resolution rather than a simple ceasefire.

Alongside the diplomatic track, Hezbollah also continued its activities against Israel and vowed not to abide by any agreements reached at the state level. On April 14, following a security assessment, the IDF warned of a potential increase in attacks from Lebanon targeting northern Israel. This assessment materialized with an uptick in projectile fire from Hezbollah targeting Israeli border communities on April 14-15. Concurrently, the IDF continued its operations in southern Lebanon, particularly around Bint Jbeil.

Iraq:

On April 14, the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) reported that four UAVs targeted the region in separate incidents. According to reports, strikes hit a Kurdish Komala Party camp west of Sulaymaniyah, wounding three refugees, and a Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan camp near Erbil. The KRG Directorate General of Counter Terrorism announced that two UAVs were intercepted over Erbil by fighter jets, with unconfirmed reports suggesting a French Mirage 2000 was involved in at least one interception.

Travel & Security Aspects

- No notable change in Home Front Command regulations or airspace conditions was reported as of April 14-15.

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