



| Flash |

Israel-Iran War Updates

F-2025-06-20a

Classification: TLP:CLEAR

Criticality: High

Intelligence Requirements: Geopolitical

June 20, 2025

Scope Note

ZeroFox Intelligence is derived from a variety of sources, including—but not limited to—curated open-source accesses, vetted social media, proprietary data sources, and direct access to threat actors and groups through covert communication channels. Information relied upon to complete any report cannot always be independently verified. As such, ZeroFox applies rigorous analytic standards and tradecraft in accordance with best practices and includes caveat language and source citations to clearly identify the veracity of our Intelligence reporting and substantiate our assessments and recommendations. All sources used in this particular Intelligence product were **identified prior to 11:30 AM (EDT) on June 20, 2025**; per cyber hygiene best practices, caution is advised when clicking on any third-party links.

| Flash | Israel and Iran Updates

| Key Findings

- Israel has likely inflicted significant damage on Iran's military capabilities so far, but its success against the country's nuclear facilities has been more limited.
- Comments from both U.S. and Israeli government leaders suggest the conflict could move beyond destroying the nuclear weapons program to their greater involvement with the aim of changing the Iranian government. However, as long as the United States avoids joining the conflict, Israel will unlikely be able to fully destroy Iran's nuclear weapons program.
- The United States has moved military assets in the region, which, in addition to directly supporting the Israeli campaign, could also be used to disincentivize greater Iranian military action against both U.S. positions in Iraq and allied positions in places like Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), as well as the closing of the Strait of Hormuz (SoH).
- The Iranian government remains secure in power, likely precluding retaliatory measures beyond those directly impacting Israel.
- There is a roughly even chance of a negotiated end to the remaining parts of Iran's nuclear weapons program not already destroyed by Israel that precludes U.S. military involvement while preserving the Iranian government.

| Analyst Commentary

Updates Since June 13

In the last week, Israel's established air superiority enabled the successful targeting of Iran's nuclear facilities, military infrastructure, and senior leadership. After days of targeting Iranian air defense systems, Israeli warplanes largely have aerial control over Iran, whose ability to target Israel using conventional military means has been greatly diminished. Israel has continuously targeted Iranian missile launchers and air defense batteries. According to officials from the Israeli Defense Force, Israel has destroyed between 50 and 66 percent of Iran's missile launchers, but more than 100 Iranian launchers remain.¹

- The expansion of Israel's air superiority has allowed Israeli airplanes to circle over Tehran and expand attacks on Iranian nuclear facilities, military sites, and other targets with a lower risk of retaliation.²³

As long as the United States stays out of the conflict, Israel is unlikely to be able to fully destroy Iran's nuclear weapons program. The remaining Iranian nuclear facilities—mainly the Fordow Fuel Enrichment Plant—are located deep underground. Reaching them very likely requires utilizing the Massive Ordnance Penetrator (known as the bunker-buster bomb), which only the United States possesses and would need to be delivered by U.S. B-2 bomber planes flown by U.S. pilots.⁴ However, their use in the conflict would make targeting of U.S. assets in Iraq and elsewhere much more likely.

While Israel initially focused its attacks on nuclear facilities and ballistic missile bases, the conflict has escalated to include targets that are beyond the initial scope, like energy facilities and residential buildings.⁵

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[hXXps://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/idf-estimates-it-has-hit-two-thirds-of-irans-missile-launchers-official/](https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/idf-estimates-it-has-hit-two-thirds-of-irans-missile-launchers-official/)

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[hXXps://www.reuters.com/business/aerospace-defense/israeli-air-power-reigns-over-iran-needs-us-deeper-impact-2025-06-17/](https://www.reuters.com/business/aerospace-defense/israeli-air-power-reigns-over-iran-needs-us-deeper-impact-2025-06-17/)

³ [hXXps://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/iran-update-special-report-june-19-2025-evening-edition](https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/iran-update-special-report-june-19-2025-evening-edition)

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[hXXps://www.rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/challenges-involved-military-strikes-against-irans-nuclear-programme](https://www.rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/challenges-involved-military-strikes-against-irans-nuclear-programme)

⁵ [hXXps://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2025/06/12/world/middleeast/iran-israel-maps.html](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2025/06/12/world/middleeast/iran-israel-maps.html)

- On June 14, 2025, Israel struck the Shahrn oil facility and the South Pars oil gas field—the world’s largest natural gas field. The attacks resulted in major damages and disruptions to the facilities.⁶
- Israel also targeted an Iranian television broadcasting station and a 14-story residential building in Tehran.⁷ Additionally, the attacks could initiate an overall expansion of the conflict, from initially targeting only nuclear facilities to broader warfare, such as the targeting of additional energy sites, infrastructure, civilian targets, or key political and military figures.

After several successful days of Israeli military attacks, Prime Minister Netanyahu called for the people of Iran to rise up against Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei.⁸ Israel’s recent bombing of non-nuclear sites also suggests that changing the government may be among Israeli goals.

- Israel’s clear military superiority increases the likelihood of Iranian government collapse or capitulation on the nuclear weapons program, although both remain more unlikely than likely for now.

Possible U.S. Involvement

The degree to which the United States is prepared to assist Israel in any future military actions against Iran remains unclear. In the days following June 13, U.S. officials distanced themselves from the Israeli action, stating that Israel acted unilaterally and making it clear that Iran should not attack U.S. forces in response.⁹ For now, there are no concrete developments to suggest the United States is changing its June 13 stance.

- The U.S. Navy continues to assert it is only helping Israel intercept missiles launched against it by Iran.¹⁰
- The United States continues to call on Iran to re-enter diplomatic negotiations to end its nuclear weapons program.¹¹

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⁶ [hXXps://www.aljazeera\[.\]com/news/2025/6/15/which-iranian-oil-and-gas-fields-has-israel-hit-and-why-do-they-matter](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/6/15/which-iranian-oil-and-gas-fields-has-israel-hit-and-why-do-they-matter)

⁷ [hXXps://www.nytimes\[.\]com/interactive/2025/06/12/world/middleeast/iran-israel-maps.html](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2025/06/12/world/middleeast/iran-israel-maps.html)

⁸ [hXXps://www.cnn\[.\]com/2025/06/16/middleeast/israel-operation-iran-regime-change-netanyahu-intl](https://www.cnn.com/2025/06/16/middleeast/israel-operation-iran-regime-change-netanyahu-intl)

⁹ [hXXps://www.whitehouse\[.\]gov/briefings-statements/2025/06/statement-from-secretary-of-state-marco-rubio](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/2025/06/statement-from-secretary-of-state-marco-rubio)

¹⁰ [hXXps://taskandpurpose\[.\]com/news/navy-air-defense-israel-iran/](https://taskandpurpose[.]com/news/navy-air-defense-israel-iran/)

¹¹ [hXXps://richardhaass.substack\[.\]com/p/on-strikes-june-13-2025](https://richardhaass.substack[.]com/p/on-strikes-june-13-2025)

However, multiple news reports and comments from the U.S. President Donald Trump suggest the United States is considering direct action.

- On June 17, President Trump told reporters that he wants “a real end” to Iran’s nuclear program, and he called for Iran’s “UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER” on Truth Social.¹²
- The next day, Trump said, “I may do it. I may not do it” when asked about whether the United States might strike Iran and encouraged Israel to keep attacking Iran.¹³
- Trump also implied that the United States might consider assassinating Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei at some point in the future.¹⁴

What is more certain is that the United States is moving military assets across the region; there is a roughly even chance this is in preparation for joining the conflict, discouraging Iran from attacking U.S. or Arab assets, or getting concessions out of Iran concerning its nuclear program.

- The *USS Nimitz* aircraft carrier strike group is currently sailing to the Middle East from the Pacific region.¹⁵ The fleet is likely capable of defending Israeli airspace from Iranian drones and missiles, as well as assuming an offensive role if U.S. involvement deepens.
- B-2 stealth bombers have previously been spotted at the U.S. airbase on the island of Diego Garcia, within striking distance of Iran.¹⁶ They are one of the few aircraft capable of carrying the bombs believed capable of damaging Iran’s Fordow subterranean nuclear facility. More recently, B-52 bombers, also capable of deploying the bombs, have been spotted at the base.¹⁷

¹² [hXXps://truthsocial\[.\]com/@realDonaldTrump/posts/114699621000737127](https://truthsocial[.]com/@realDonaldTrump/posts/114699621000737127)

¹³ [hXXps://thehill\[.\]com/homenews/5356908-trump-dodges-iran-strike-question/](https://thehill[.]com/homenews/5356908-trump-dodges-iran-strike-question/)

¹⁴

[hXXps://www.pbs\[.\]org/newshour/world/trump-says-the-u-s-knows-where-irans-khamenei-is-hiding-but-says-hes-safe-for-now](https://www.pbs[.]org/newshour/world/trump-says-the-u-s-knows-where-irans-khamenei-is-hiding-but-says-hes-safe-for-now)

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[hXXps://www.navytimes\[.\]com/news/your-navy/2025/06/16/uss-nimitz-heading-to-middle-east-defense-official-says/](https://www.navytimes[.]com/news/your-navy/2025/06/16/uss-nimitz-heading-to-middle-east-defense-official-says/)

¹⁶ [hXXps://www.cnn\[.\]com/2025/04/02/middleeast/us-b2-bombers-diego-garcia-intl-hnk-ml](https://www.cnn[.]com/2025/04/02/middleeast/us-b2-bombers-diego-garcia-intl-hnk-ml)

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[hXXps://www.thenationalnews\[.\]com/news/mena/2025/06/19/us-bombers-line-up-at-diego-garcia-base-as-iran-strike-looms/](https://www.thenationalnews[.]com/news/mena/2025/06/19/us-bombers-line-up-at-diego-garcia-base-as-iran-strike-looms/)

- Additionally, the United States has withdrawn its forces from two outposts in northeastern Syria, where they were engaged in anti-ISIS operations.¹⁸ While the U.S. military has been downsizing its Syrian contingent for months, the timing of this development suggests the United States is attempting to present fewer targets for Iran-backed Iraqi militias, which have sworn to attack U.S. bases if the nation enters the conflict.¹⁹

Despite signaling U.S. willingness to enter the conflict, the latest comments from the White House suggest U.S. involvement is not imminent. On June 19, President Trump said he would decide “whether to go or not go” within the next two weeks.²⁰

- President Trump likely suggested this timeline in an attempt to set a deadline for Iran’s leaders to return to negotiations with the United States regarding a ceasefire and the future of the Iranian nuclear program.
- Two weeks would also allow time for Israeli strikes to further degrade Iranian military and civilian leadership, potentially resulting in a lower risk of organized retaliation against American forces in the region.

The United States has numerous reasons not to enter the conflict, which would likely have significant effects on energy prices and regional stability more broadly.

- U.S. entry into the conflict would guarantee retaliation from Iran and its remaining regional proxies. U.S. bases in the region would very likely be targeted by Iran-backed militias based in Iraq as well as Yemen’s Houthi militia. The Houthis would also very likely resume their campaign of indiscriminately targeting commercial vessels in the Red Sea.
- Global energy markets could be majorly impacted if Iran responds to U.S. involvement by attempting to blockade the SoH, through which most of the region’s oil and natural gas exports travel.

¹⁸

[hXXps://www.reuters.com/business/media-telecom/us-pulls-out-two-more-bases-syria-worrying-kurdish-forces-2025-06-17/](https://www.reuters.com/business/media-telecom/us-pulls-out-two-more-bases-syria-worrying-kurdish-forces-2025-06-17/)

¹⁹ [hXXps://www.nytimes.com/2025/06/17/us/politics/iran-israel-us-bases.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2025/06/17/us/politics/iran-israel-us-bases.html)

²⁰ [hXXps://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cjel350eyw5o](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cjel350eyw5o)

- Within the United States, there is strong opposition to war with Iran, including among President Trump's supporters. Protests against possible U.S. involvement have already occurred.²¹

Effects of the conflict remain highly unpredictable. For example, the collapse of Iran's government will very likely lead to civil strife and refugee flows that impact energy markets and have knock-on effects on neighboring countries.

- Iran is a deeply fragmented society, with Persians making up slightly more than a majority of the population, followed by large populations of Arabs, Kurds, Baluchs, and Azeris.²² If the government were to fall, it is likely that rival groups will fracture the country and take control of its parts; simultaneously, a massive refugee flow to Turkey and then Europe would be likely, as followed the war in Syria.
- A second scenario could see the Iranian government fast-tracking the construction of new nuclear facilities similar to Fordow, which would require further U.S. involvement to target.

For these reasons, the Trump administration is likely hoping to capitalize on the Israeli campaign to draw Iran back to negotiations that would permanently limit its nuclear program. This would likely include an end to Iran's enrichment activities and regular access to its nuclear facilities by inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Iran's Response

Given the events of the last week, the prospects for Iranian retaliation have shifted somewhat from the previous assessment. With its military defenses and nuclear weapons program greatly diminished but its government remaining in place, Iran is still unlikely to take major retaliatory steps that would likely lead to the fall of its government.

So far, Iran's military response has been confined to Israeli targets. Recent Iranian missile attacks on Israeli targets have been smaller than the first days of the conflict, suggesting Israel has degraded Iran's abilities to launch such attacks.²³ Notably, Iranian regional proxies have remained uninvolved.

²¹ [hXXps://www.newsweek\[.\]com/iran-war-protests-break-out-us-cities-2087453](https://www.newsweek.com/iran-war-protests-break-out-us-cities-2087453)

²² [hXXps://www.aljazeera\[.\]com/news/2025/6/20/a-simple-visual-guide-to-iran-and-its-people](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/6/20/a-simple-visual-guide-to-iran-and-its-people)

²³ [hXXps://understandingwar\[.\]org/backgrounder/iran-update-special-report-june-17-2025-morning-edition](https://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/iran-update-special-report-june-17-2025-morning-edition)

- Even though the power of groups like Hamas and Hezbollah has been diminished, they are likely to be activated against U.S. or Arab targets in the region.

Iran and its proxies are unlikely to preemptively target U.S. forces or block the SoH unless American involvement is imminent, as doing so would all but certainly incur a strong response from the United States and regional powers that would likely jeopardize the survival of Iran's government.

- Even if the United States does become directly involved, blocking the SoH would bring great risk to Iran, as it would likely draw Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and potentially other actors into the conflict. In Iran's weakened state, this would guarantee further degradation of its military and economic assets.
- Further, President Trump has signaled that the United States will strike Iran if its assets in the region are targeted.

| Conclusion

There is a roughly even chance the United States will become directly involved in the conflict, despite media reports and comments from U.S. officials. It is just as likely White House officials instead push for a negotiated end to what remains of Iran's nuclear weapons program. While that would very likely preserve the existing Iranian government, it would also preclude the conflict from expanding beyond Israel and Iran. With U.S. military involvement, there is a far greater possibility that Iran's neighbors and U.S. assets in Saudi Arabia and Iraq are targeted, energy assets become weaponized, and Iran fractures, creating a refugee flow towards Europe.

| Appendix A: Traffic Light Protocol for Information Dissemination

	Red	Amber
WHEN SHOULD IT BE USED?	Sources may use TLP:RED when information cannot be effectively acted upon by additional parties and could lead to impacts on a party's privacy, reputation, or operations if misused.	Sources may use TLP:AMBER when information requires support to be effectively acted upon but carries risks to privacy, reputation, or operations if shared outside of the organizations involved.
HOW MAY IT BE SHARED?	Recipients may NOT share TLP:RED with any parties outside of the specific exchange, meeting, or conversation in which it is originally disclosed.	Recipients may ONLY share TLP:AMBER information with members of their own organization and its clients, but only on a need-to-know basis to protect their organization and its clients and prevent further harm. Note that TLP:AMBER+STRICT restricts sharing to the organization only.
	Green	Clear
WHEN SHOULD IT BE USED?	Sources may use TLP:GREEN when information is useful for the awareness of all participating organizations, as well as with peers within the broader community or sector.	Sources may use TLP:CLEAR when information carries minimal or no risk of misuse in accordance with applicable rules and procedures for public release.
HOW MAY IT BE SHARED?	Recipients may share TLP:GREEN information with peers and partner organizations within their sector or community but not via publicly accessible channels.	Recipients may share TLP:CLEAR information without restriction, subject to copyright controls.

| Appendix B: ZeroFox Intelligence Probability Scale

All ZeroFox intelligence products leverage probabilistic assessment language in analytic judgments. Qualitative statements used in these judgments refer to associated probability ranges, which state the likelihood of occurrence of an event or development. Ranges are used to avoid a false impression of accuracy. This scale is a standard that aligns with how readers should interpret such terms.

Almost No Chance	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Roughly Even Chance	Likely	Very Likely	Almost Certain
1-5%	5-20%	20-45%	45-55%	55-80%	80-95%	95-99%