



# | Flash |

## U.S. Military Strikes on Iran – SITREP #4: March 3, 2026

F-2026-03-03a

Classification: TLP:CLEAR

Criticality: High

Intelligence Requirements: Geopolitics

**March 3, 2026**

## 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 4:00 AM (EST) on March 3, 2026**; per cyber hygiene best practices, caution is advised when clicking on any third-party links.*

# **| Flash | U.S. Military Strikes on Iran – SITREP #4 – March 3, 2026**

## **| Key Findings**

- After three days of U.S. and Israeli airstrikes, Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) claimed to have closed the Strait of Hormuz; however, the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) disputes this claim.
- On March 2, 2026, U.S. President Donald Trump refused to rule out the deployment of U.S. ground troops, should it prove necessary. However, he stated that the U.S.-led operation in Iran was “way ahead of schedule” and he does not think ground troops will be necessary.
- Israel continued its strikes in Lebanon against the Iranian-backed militia Hezbollah, targeting the Shia group’s stronghold in the southern suburbs of Beirut. According to Lebanon’s Health Ministry, Israeli strikes over the past two days have resulted in 52 deaths and have wounded 154. Israel also deployed an unspecified number of troops into southern Lebanon, beyond the five points it has held since the November 2024 ceasefire with Hezbollah. Military officials have characterized

this action “as part of an enhanced forward defense posture,” and not a renewed offensive.<sup>1</sup>

- Limited flights resumed in the Middle East, while the U.S. State Department warned its citizens to evacuate a dozen countries, including Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Israel.

## **| Latest Details**

After three days of U.S. and Israeli airstrikes, Iran’s IRGC claimed to have closed the Strait of Hormuz, but the U.S. CENTCOM disputes this claim. The IRGC said that it will not allow a single drop of oil to leave the region, suggesting the IRGC Navy will likely fire upon oil tankers attempting to transit the Strait.<sup>2</sup>

- Iran likely lacks the naval capability to completely stop all traffic in the Strait of Hormuz. However, the IRGC Navy is almost certainly capable of harassing shipping vessels; the mere threat from the IRGC is very likely enough to cause disruptions in international shipping.

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<sup>1</sup>

[hXXps://www.timesofisrael\[.\]com/liveblog\\_entry/idf-deploys-troops-deeper-into-southern-lebanon-as-additional-layer-of-security-amid-hezbollah-attacks/](https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/idf-deploys-troops-deeper-into-southern-lebanon-as-additional-layer-of-security-amid-hezbollah-attacks/)

<sup>2</sup> [hXXps://www.the-sun\[.\]com/news/16025150/](https://www.the-sun.com/news/16025150/)



**Regional map of the Middle East, highlighting the Strait of Hormuz**

*Source: <https://x.com/sentdefender>*

On March 2, 2026, President Trump refused to rule out the deployment of U.S. ground troops, should it prove necessary. However, he stated that the U.S.-led operation in Iran was ahead of schedule and that ground troops will not be necessary.<sup>3</sup> A ground invasion of Iran would almost certainly lead to a protracted conflict that the United States has stated it does not want, making such a deployment very unlikely at this point. If Iran mounted a significant counter offensive that caused mass U.S. or Israeli casualties, President Trump would likely deploy ground troops to the region as a show of force; however, an invasion of Iran remains unlikely.

Israel continued its strikes in Lebanon against the Iranian-backed militia Hezbollah, targeting the Shia group's stronghold in the southern suburbs of Beirut. According to Lebanon's Health Ministry, Israeli strikes over the past two days have resulted in 52 deaths and have wounded 154.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup>

<https://nypost.com/2026/03/02/us-news/trump-wont-rule-out-sending-us-troops-into-iran-if-necessary-tells-t-he-post-i-dont-care-about-polling/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/death-toll-from-israeli-attacks-in-lebanon-rises-to-52/3847178>

- Additionally, Israel has called up approximately 100,000 military reservists, indicating there is a roughly even chance it is seeking to expand the conflict beyond Iran and continuing its strategy of resetting the regional security situation from its perspective.

Global oil prices have stabilized after initial spikes following the U.S.-led operation in Iran—settling at approximately an increase of USD 5 from prewar levels. Both Brent Crude (USD 79.99) and West Texas Intermediate (USD 72.92) remain higher than last week.<sup>5</sup> Unless Iran successfully expands the conflict into a regional war—forcing its Arab, oil-producing neighbors to shut down production and exports in the long term—the oil price is not likely to spike much higher. If IRGC claims of closing the Strait of Hormuz prove true, that would very likely lead to higher prices.

- Consumer fears of rising prices will likely cause panic buying in Western countries, which will almost certainly lead to higher gasoline and diesel prices in those countries.
- In the United Kingdom, wholesale natural gas prices experienced a 50 percent increase on Monday following Qatar’s announcement that it was shutting down the largest liquefied natural gas (LNG) refinery in the world due to Iranian missile attacks.<sup>6</sup>

The U.S. Embassy in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, was struck by two Iranian drones, causing a fire; the Saudi Defense Ministry reported no injuries and only limited “material damage” to the diplomatic compound.<sup>7</sup> Iran will almost certainly continue its campaign of strikes on its Arab neighbors and prioritize U.S. targets (such as embassies and military bases) in those countries.

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<sup>5</sup> [hXXps://oilprice\[.\]com/](https://oilprice.com/)

<sup>6</sup>

[hXXps://news\[.\]sky\[.\]com/story/markets-latest-oil-prices-spike-as-key-shipping-route-disrupted-by-iran-attacks-13514091](https://news[.]sky[.]com/story/markets-latest-oil-prices-spike-as-key-shipping-route-disrupted-by-iran-attacks-13514091)

<sup>7</sup>

[hXXps://www.aljazeera\[.\]com/news/2026/3/3/us-embassy-in-saudi-capital-riyadh-hit-by-drones-fire-reported-ministry](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2026/3/3/us-embassy-in-saudi-capital-riyadh-hit-by-drones-fire-reported-ministry)

Some commercial flights in the Middle East resumed, at least temporarily, late on March 2, 2026. The UAE resumed flights from both Abu Dhabi and Dubai, but many flights were still cancelled, causing confusion among would-be travelers. The resumption of flights came on the same day that the U.S. State Department warned U.S. citizens to immediately evacuate a dozen Middle East countries, including Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Israel.<sup>8</sup>

## **| Forecast and Indicators**

The United States and Israel will almost certainly continue to conduct airstrikes in Iran, continuing to degrade Iran's ability to strike other countries in the region. The U.S.-led campaign is likely to increase its focus on Iran's nuclear program and seek to prevent the Iranian military from sprinting to nuclear capability. Thus far, the sustained air campaign appears to have inflicted significant damage on Iran's air defenses and ballistic missile stockpiles, but U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio warned "the hardest hits are yet to come," and that Iran would soon face even more punishment from the U.S. military.<sup>9</sup>

Iranian retaliatory strikes are also very likely to continue; however, Iran is likely running low on ballistic missiles due to the decrease in missile volleys and an increase in the use of drone attacks. Iran will almost certainly continue its attempts to influence Gulf nations into pressuring the United States to cease operations and will very likely continue its rhetoric indicating closure of the Strait of Hormuz.

- Any actual, physical closure of the Strait of Hormuz by Iran would very likely be met with international condemnation and would likely serve to strengthen the resolve of neighboring countries to support President Trump's stated aim of regime change in Tehran.

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<sup>8</sup>

<https://www.businessinsider.com/middle-east-flights-resume-but-confusion-reigns-etihad-iran-strikes-2026-3>

<sup>9</sup> <https://eu.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2026/03/02/rubio-iran-strikes-trump-congress/88952648007/>

## Appendix A: Traffic Light Protocol for Information Dissemination

	<b>Red</b>	<b>Amber</b>
<b>WHEN SHOULD IT BE USED?</b>	<b>Sources may use</b> <b>TLP:RED</b> 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.	<b>Sources may use</b> <b>TLP:AMBER</b> when information requires support to be effectively acted upon but carries risks to privacy, reputation, or operations if shared outside of the organizations involved.
<b>HOW MAY IT BE SHARED?</b>	<b>Recipients may NOT share</b> <b>TLP:RED</b> with any parties outside of the specific exchange, meeting, or conversation in which it is originally disclosed.	<b>Recipients may ONLY share</b> <b>TLP:AMBER</b> 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. <b>Note that</b> <b>TLP:AMBER+STRICT</b> restricts sharing to the organization only.
	<b>Green</b>	<b>Clear</b>
<b>WHEN SHOULD IT BE USED?</b>	<b>Sources may use</b> <b>TLP:GREEN</b> when information is useful for the awareness of all participating organizations, as well as with peers within the broader community or sector.	<b>Sources may use</b> <b>TLP:CLEAR</b> when information carries minimal or no risk of misuse in accordance with applicable rules and procedures for public release.
<b>HOW MAY IT BE SHARED?</b>	<b>Recipients may share</b> <b>TLP:GREEN</b> information with peers and partner organizations within their sector or community but not via publicly accessible channels.	<b>Recipients may share</b> <b>TLP:CLEAR</b> 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%