



# Iran Update, April 21, 2024

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Information Cutoff: 2:00 pm ET

*The Iran Update provides insights into Iranian and Iranian-sponsored activities abroad that undermine regional stability and threaten US forces and interests. It also covers events and trends that affect the stability and decision-making of the Iranian regime. The Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute and the Institute for the Study of War (ISW) provides these updates regularly based on regional events. Click [here](#) to see CTP and ISW's interactive map of Israeli ground operations. This map is updated daily alongside the static maps present in this report.*

*CTP-ISW defines the “Axis of Resistance” as the unconventional alliance that Iran has cultivated in the Middle East since the Islamic Republic came to power in 1979. This transnational coalition is comprised of state, semi-state, and non-state actors that cooperate with one another to secure their collective interests. Tehran considers itself to be both part of the alliance and its leader. Iran furnishes these groups with varying levels of financial, military, and political support in exchange for some degree of influence or control over their actions. Some are traditional proxies that are highly responsive to Iranian direction, while others are partners over which Iran exerts more limited influence. Members of the Axis of Resistance are united by their grand strategic objectives, which include eroding and eventually expelling American influence from the Middle East, destroying the Israeli state, or both. Pursuing these objectives and supporting the Axis of Resistance to those ends have become cornerstones of Iranian regional strategy.*

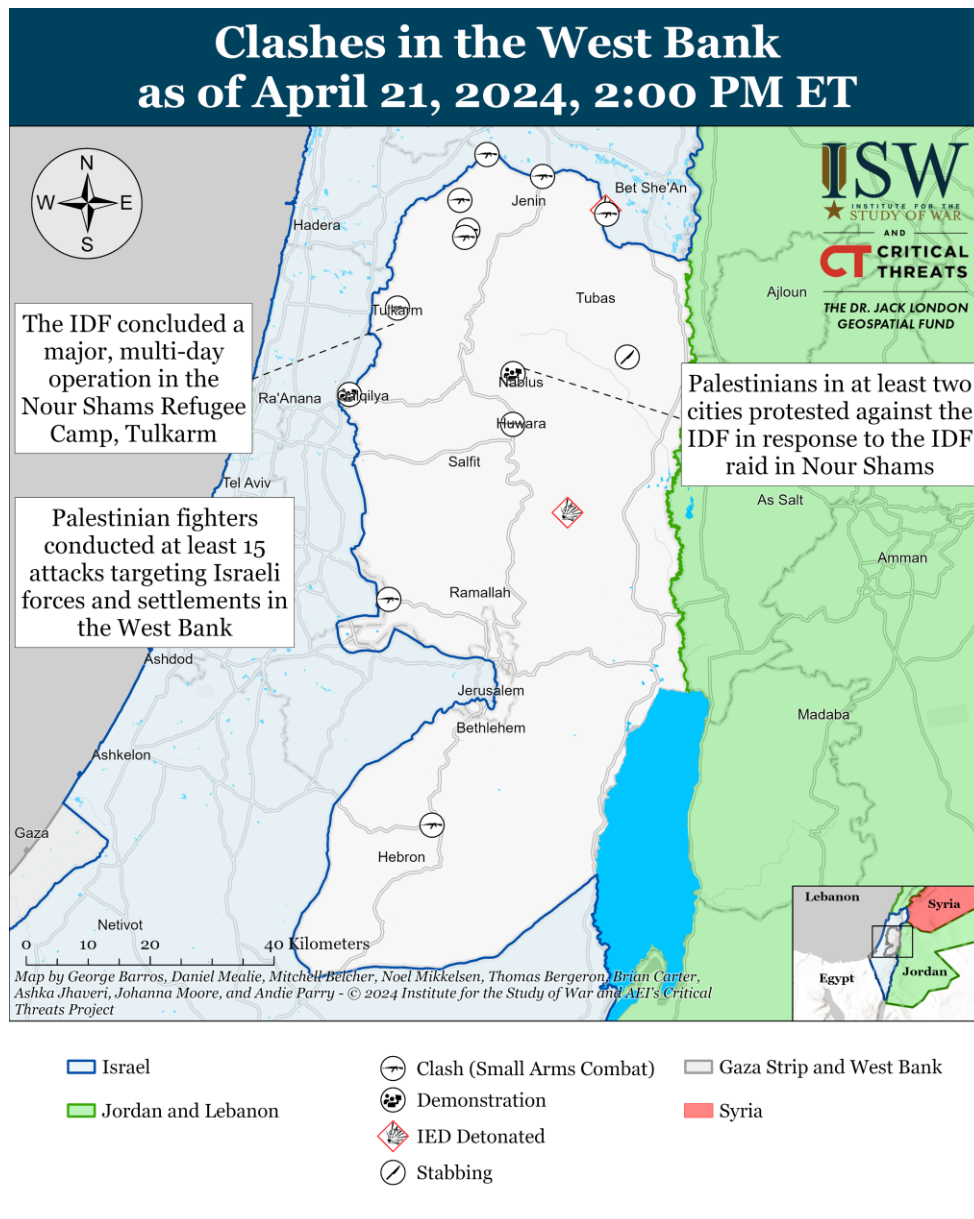
*We do not report in detail on war crimes because these activities are well-covered in Western media and do not directly affect the military operations we are assessing and forecasting. We utterly condemn violations of the laws of armed conflict and the Geneva Conventions and crimes against humanity even though we do not describe them in these reports.*

**The IDF concluded a major, multi-day “counterterrorism operation” in the Nour Shams Refugee Camp, Tulkarm, on April 21.** Israeli forces engaged Palestinian fighters in Nour Shams, killing 14 Palestinian fighters.<sup>1</sup> The IDF Duvdevan unit arrested 15 wanted persons, destroyed two improvised explosive device manufacturing facilities and dozens of explosives, and seized ammunition during operations in the camp. Palestinian fighters wounded ten Israeli soldiers in the operation.<sup>2</sup> Palestinian journalists reported that the IDF had killed a Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) commander in Tulkarm on April 19.<sup>3</sup> The same PIJ commander attended the funeral of other Palestinian fighters killed in fighting in Tulkarm, confirming that the commander survived the Israeli operation.<sup>4</sup>

**Several Palestinian militias called for the mobilization of armed Palestinians across the West Bank in response to the IDF’s Nour Shams operation.** Hamas, the Lions’ Den, the Palestinian Mujahideen Movement, and the al Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades published statements calling for a mass uprising and armed retaliation against the IDF.<sup>5</sup> Those Palestinian

militias and others claimed 15 attacks on Israeli forces, Israeli settlements in the West Bank, and Israeli border towns on April 21.<sup>6</sup> PIJ's Jenin Battalion conducted nine of the 15 attacks.<sup>7</sup> PIJ said that they were responding to the Israeli raid in Nour Shams.<sup>8</sup> Palestinians also conducted unclaimed attacks targeting Israeli checkpoints near Hebron and in the Jordan Valley.<sup>9</sup> The timing of these unclaimed attacks suggests that they are in response to the calls for mobilization. An unspecified group planted an improvised explosive device near Ramallah on April 21. The fighters had connected the IED's detonator to a Palestinian flag so that when an Israeli attempted to remove the flag, the IED detonated.<sup>10</sup>

Palestinians also participated in marches and a general strike on April 21 in response to the IDF's Nour Shams operation.<sup>11</sup> Hamas called for a general strike on April 21.<sup>12</sup>



*This map is not an exhaustive depiction of clashes and demonstrations in the West Bank.*

## Key Takeaways:

- **Gaza Strip:** The IDF did not publish information about Israeli operations in the Gaza Strip on April 21. Palestinian militias claimed only one attack targeting Israeli forces in the Gaza Strip.
- **West Bank:** The IDF concluded a major, multi-day “counterterrorism operation” in the Nour Shams Refugee Camp, Tulkarm, on April 21. Several Palestinian militias called for the mobilization of armed Palestinians across the West Bank in response to the IDF’s Nour Shams operation.
- **Lebanon:** Lebanese Hezbollah has conducted at least six attacks from southern Lebanon into northern Israel since CTP-ISW’s last data cutoff on April 20.
- **Iraq:** The Islamic Resistance in Iraq—a coalition of Iranian-backed Iraqi militias—claimed one drone attack targeting an unspecified site in the Golan Heights on April 20.



## **Gaza Strip**

### **Axis of Resistance objectives:**

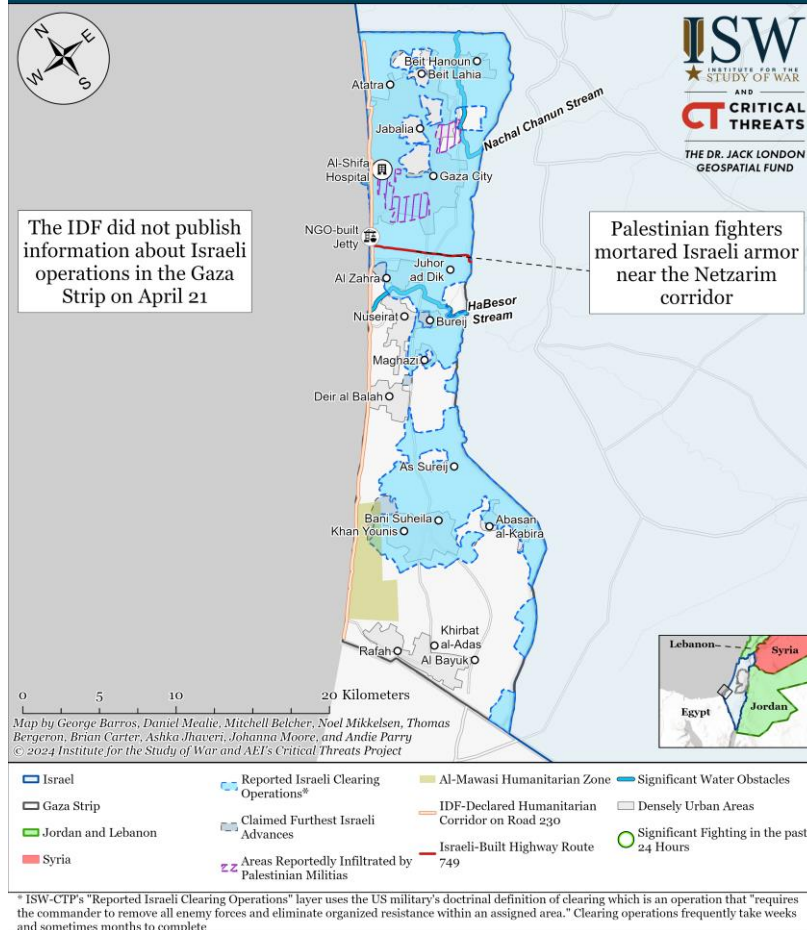
- Erode the will of the Israeli political establishment and public to sustain clearing operations in the Gaza Strip
- Reestablish Hamas as the governing authority in the Gaza Strip

**Local Palestinian media reported the Israel Defense Force (IDF) Air Force conducted airstrikes in several areas of the Gaza Strip on April 21.** The strikes targeted sites in Gaza City, the central Gaza Strip, and Rafah.<sup>13</sup>

**The IDF did not publish information about Israeli operations in the Gaza Strip on April 21.**

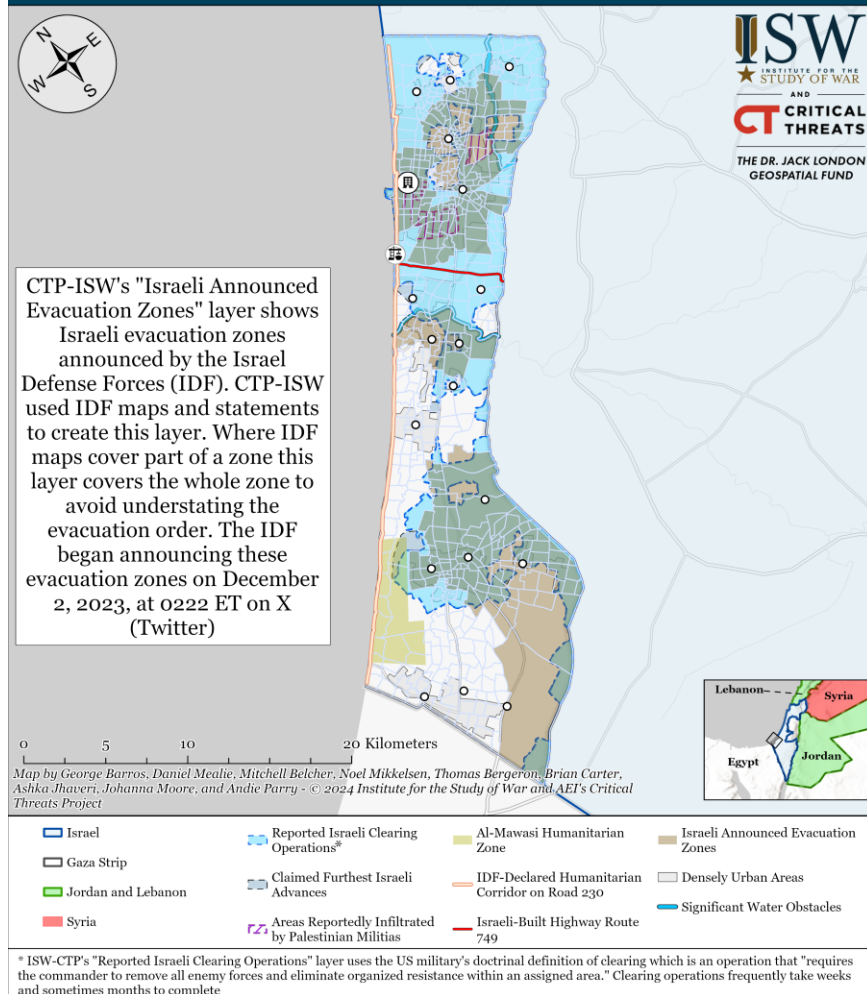
**Palestinian militias claimed only one attack targeting Israeli forces in the Gaza Strip on April 21.** The National Resistance Brigades mortared Israeli armor near the Turkish Hospital in Mughraqa, near the Netzarim corridor.<sup>14</sup>

## Reported Israeli Ground Operations in the Gaza Strip as of April 21, 2024, 2:00 PM ET

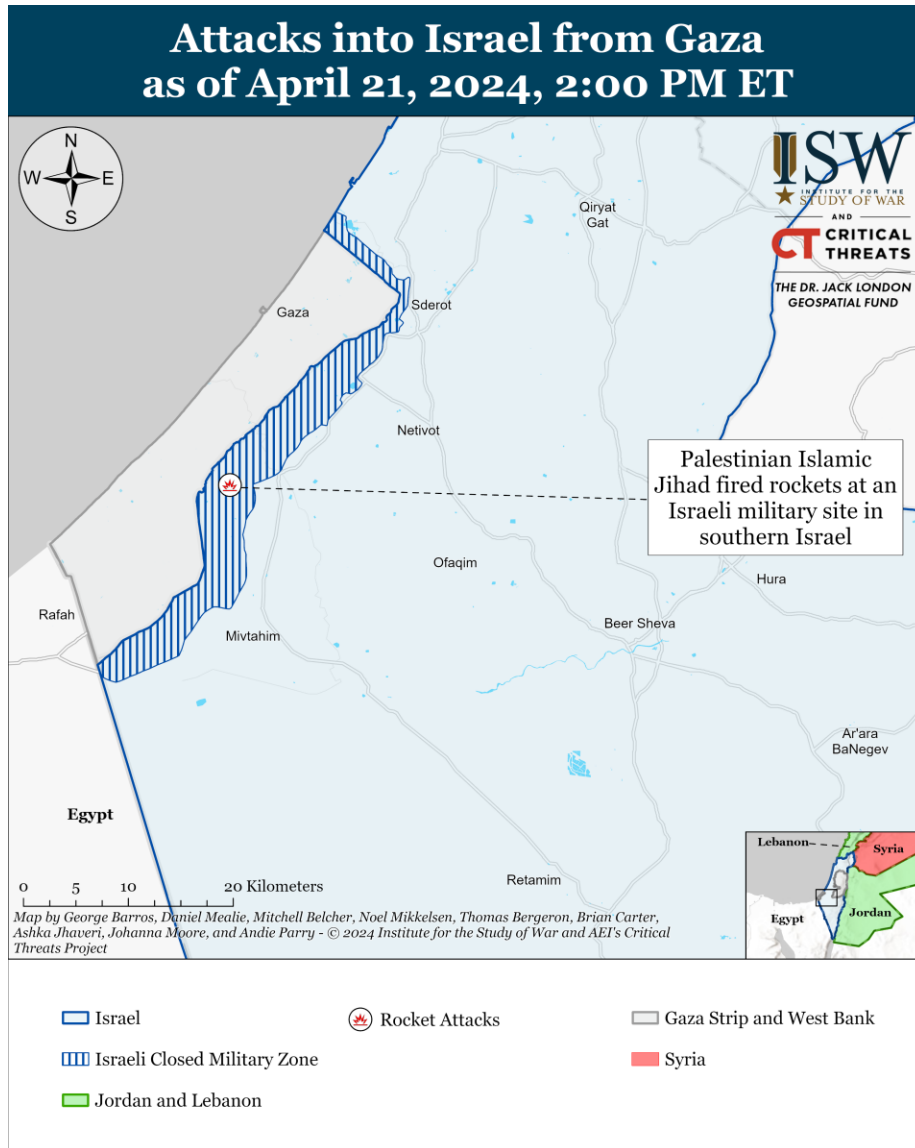


IDF Chief of Staff Herzi Halevi and IDF Southern Command commander Yaron Finkelman approved plans for future operations in the Gaza Strip on April 21.<sup>15</sup>

## Israeli Announced Evacuation Zones in the Gaza Strip as of April 21, 2024, 2:00 PM ET



**Palestinian Islamic Jihad launched rockets targeting an Israeli military site in southern Israel on April 20 after CTP-ISW's data cut-off.**<sup>16</sup>



*Recorded reports of attacks; CTP-ISW cannot independently verify impact.*

### **West Bank**

#### **Axis of Resistance objectives:**

- Establish the West Bank as a viable front against Israel

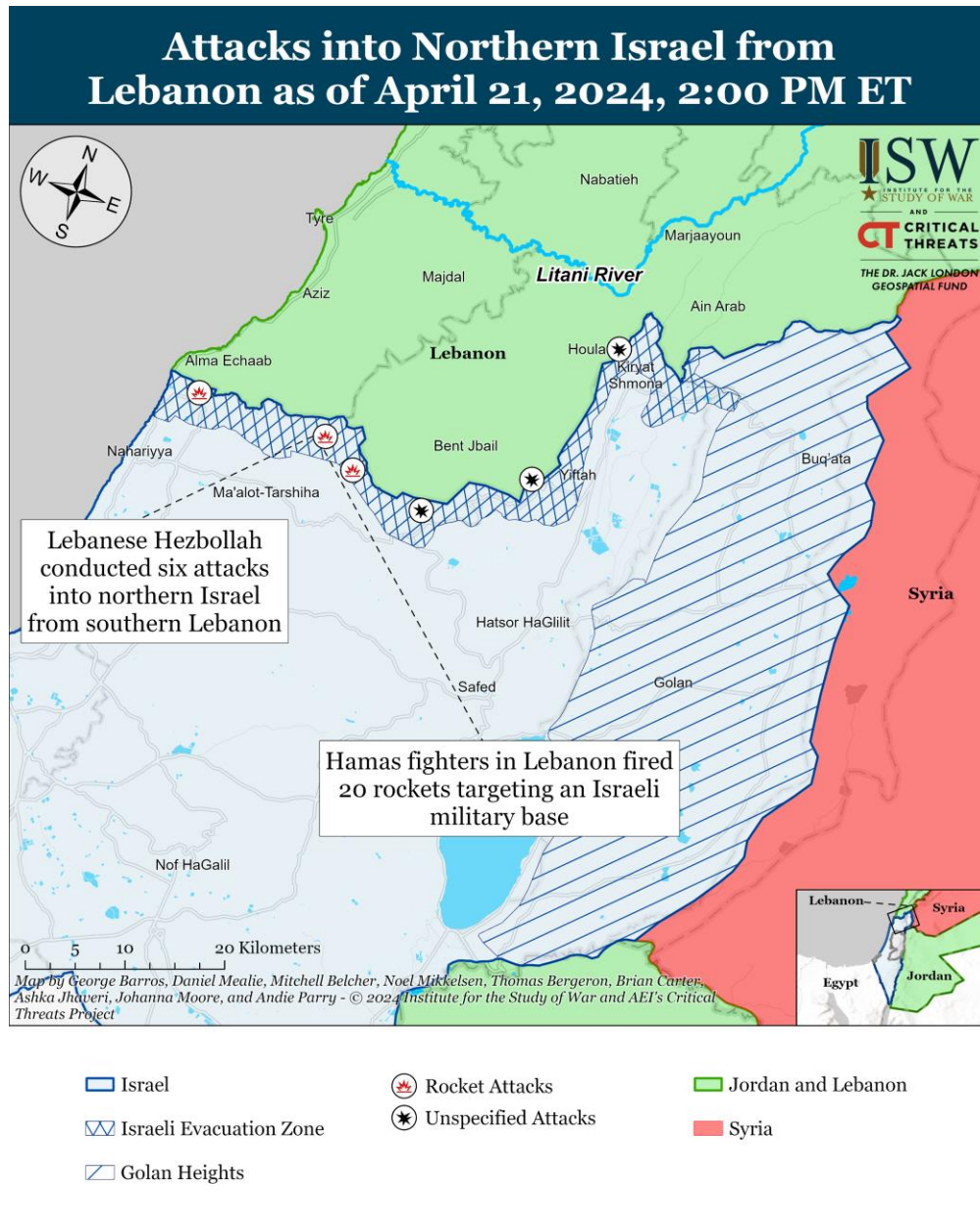
See topline.

### **Southern Lebanon and Golan Heights**

**Axis of Resistance objectives:**

- Deter Israel from conducting a ground operation into Lebanon
- Prepare for an expanded and protracted conflict with Israel in the near term
- Expel the United States from Syria

**Lebanese Hezbollah has conducted at least six attacks from southern Lebanon into northern Israel since CTP-ISW's last data cutoff on April 20.**<sup>17</sup> Hamas fighters in Lebanon targeted an Israeli military base in northern Israel with 20 122mm Grad rockets.<sup>18</sup>



*Recorded reports of attacks; CTP-ISW cannot independently verify impact.*



## Iran and Axis of Resistance

**The Islamic Resistance in Iraq—a coalition of Iranian-backed Iraqi militias—claimed one drone attack targeting an unspecified site in the Golan Heights on April 20.**<sup>19</sup> CTP-ISW cannot verify this attack claim. Israeli officials and media have not commented on the attack at the time of this writing.

POWERED BY:



BABEL STREET

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.idf.il/193364>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.idf.il/19336>

<sup>3</sup> <https://twitter.com/ytirawi/status/1781319844534624693> ; <https://t.me/hamza20300/232330>

<sup>4</sup> <https://t.me/newpress1/72618> ; <https://twitter.com/ytirawi/status/1782036528497123741> ;

[https://twitter.com/Doron\\_Kadosh/status/1782034555605549225](https://twitter.com/Doron_Kadosh/status/1782034555605549225)

<sup>5</sup> <https://t.me/hamasps/20036> ; <https://t.me/mojahdeenpal/4447> ; <https://t.me/hamasps/20040> ; <https://t.me/areennabluss/293> ; <https://t.me/kataebaqsapalestine/3117>

<sup>6</sup> <https://t.me/sarayajneen/1248> ; <https://t.me/sarayajneen/1249> ; <https://t.me/sarayajneen/1251> ; [https://t.me/alqassam\\_jenin/662](https://t.me/alqassam_jenin/662) ; <https://t.me/jeninqassamm/6618> ;

<https://t.me/jeninqassamm/6619> ; <https://t.me/kataebaqsapalestine/3118> ;

<https://t.me/kataebaqsapalestine/3119> ; [https://t.me/khalaya\\_almujahidin/14614](https://t.me/khalaya_almujahidin/14614) ;

[https://t.me/elaqsa\\_1965/6306](https://t.me/elaqsa_1965/6306)

<sup>7</sup> <https://t.me/sarayajneen/1249> ;

<https://t.me/sarayajneen/1251> ; <https://t.me/sarayajneen/1248>

<sup>8</sup> <https://t.me/sarayajneen/1249> ;

<https://t.me/sarayajneen/1251> ; <https://t.me/sarayajneen/1248>

<sup>9</sup> <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1781914554974228622> ;

<https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1781966327793492078> ;

<https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1782027086439288992>

<sup>10</sup> <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1781954365407818184> ;

<https://twitter.com/GLZRadio/status/1781937514346860640> ;

<https://twitter.com/GLZRadio/status/1781930571007926324> ; <https://t.me/newpress1/72574> ;

<https://twitter.com/manniefabian/status/1781933413487841541>

<sup>11</sup> <https://t.me/jeninqassamm/6618> ; <https://t.me/jeninqassamm/6619> ;

<https://t.me/hamza20300/232942> ; <https://t.me/hamza20300/232937>

<sup>12</sup> <https://t.me/hamasps/20040>

<sup>13</sup> <https://t.me/hamza20300/233046> ; <https://t.me/hamza20300/233039> ;

<https://t.me/hamza20300/232960> ; <https://t.me/hamza20300/232909> ;

<sup>14</sup> [https://t.me/kataeb\\_moqawma/4201](https://t.me/kataeb_moqawma/4201)

<sup>15</sup> <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1782081489359749498>

<sup>16</sup> <https://t.me/sarayaps/17693>

<sup>17</sup> <https://t.me/mmirleb/3409> ;

<https://t.me/mmirleb/3415> ;

<https://t.me/mmirleb/3416> ;

<https://t.me/mmirleb/3419> ;

<https://t.me/mmirleb/3421> ; <https://t.me/mmirleb/3424>

<sup>18</sup> <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/1905>

<sup>19</sup> <https://t.me/ElamAlmoqawama/1057>