

Iran Update, April 25, 2024

Johanna Moore, Peter Mills, Amin Soltani, Alexandra Braverman, Kelly Campa, and Brian Carter

Information Cutoff: 2:00pm ET

Hamas and Palestinian factions are targeting and threatening to target the humanitarian pier in the central Gaza Strip that is meant to distribute aid to the northern Strip. Israeli media report that unspecified Palestinian fighters mortared construction facilities for the US-built pier in the central Gaza Strip on April 25.[1] The mortars struck engineering equipment close to the pier. The World Health Organization (WHO) director general said on April 22 that WHO aid missions to hospitals in northern Gaza have been only “partly successful” due to delays at checkpoints and ongoing fighting in the Gaza Strip.[2] Hamas Political Bureau Deputy Chairman Khalil al Hayya separately implied that Hamas would attack any non-Palestinian presence in the Gaza Strip “at sea or on land.”[3] The US-built pier will be off the coast of the Gaza Strip.[4] The decision by Hamas and other Palestinian militia factions to target the pier will further constrict international aid organizations’ ability to distribute aid in the Gaza Strip.[5]

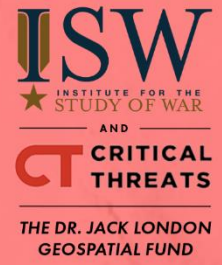
Iraqi National Security Adviser Qasim al Araji met with two senior Russian officials in St. Petersburg, Russia, on April 24 and 25 after meeting with Iranian Supreme National Security Council Secretary Rear Adm. Ali Akbar Ahmadian on April 23. Araji discussed intelligence cooperation and “the situation in the Middle East” during two separate meetings with Russian Security Council Secretary Nikolai Patrushev and Russian Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs Sergei Vershinin on April 24 and 25 respectively.[6] The Iranian Supreme National Security Council Secretary Rear Adm. Ali Akbar Ahmadian met with Patrushev on April 24, one day after Ahmadian met with Araji.[7] Araji and Ahmadian discussed expelling US and international coalition forces from Iraq.[8] The Russian ambassador to Iraq has repeatedly met with senior Iraqi military and political figures, including Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammad Shia al Sudani, in 2024 to discuss expanding security cooperation and Russian investment into Iraq.[9] CTP-ISW assessed on February 20 that Russia may be setting conditions to supplant the United States as a security partner in Iraq in anticipation of the United States possibly reducing its military presence there.[10] Araji is a member of the Iranian-backed Badr Organization.[11]

The IDF conducted a relief-in-place/transfer of authority in the Netzarim corridor on April 25. The Nahal Brigade transferred responsibility for its area of operations to the IDF 2nd Reservist Infantry Brigade and 679th Reservist Armored Brigade on April 25.[12] An Israeli Army Radio journalist reported on April 15 that the IDF 2nd Carmeli Brigade and 679th Armored Brigade will secure the Netzarim corridor and the temporary US-built pier in the central Gaza Strip.[13] The Nahal Brigade will rest to prepare for Israeli operations in Rafah.[14]

Key Takeaways:

- **Humanitarian Aid in the Gaza Strip:** Unspecified fighters targeted the humanitarian pier in the central Gaza Strip that is meant to distribute aid to the northern Strip. Unspecified Palestinian fighters mortared construction facilities for the US-built pier in the central Gaza Strip on April 25.
- Hamas Political Bureau Deputy Chairman Khalil al Hayya separately implied that Hamas would attack any non-Palestinian presence in the Gaza Strip “at sea or on land.” The US-built pier will be off the coast of the Gaza Strip.
- **Iraq in Russia:** The Iranian-linked Iraqi National Security Adviser discussed intelligence cooperation and “the situation in the Middle East” during two separate meetings with senior Russian officials in St. Petersburg. Russia may be setting conditions to supplant the United States as a security partner in Iraq in anticipation of the United States possibly reducing its military presence there.
- **Rafah:** The IDF Nahal Brigade transferred responsibility for its area of operations in the Netzarim corridor to the IDF 2nd Reservist Infantry Brigade and 679th Reservist Armored Brigade on April 25. The Nahal Brigade will leave the Gaza Strip and rest to prepare for Israeli operations in Rafah.
- **Iran:** The Iranian judiciary confirmed the death sentence of 33-year-old dissident Iranian rapper Tomaj Salehi on April 25.

Israel-Hamas War as of April 25, 2024, 2:00 PM ET

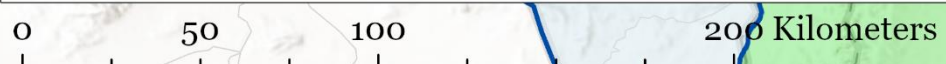


Two IDF reservist brigades replaced the Nahal Brigade in the Netzarim corridor in the central Gaza Strip

The IDF reportedly conducted an airstrike targeting a Syrian Arab Army building along the Syrian border with the Golan Heights

Israeli forces engaged Palestinian fighters in at least four locations across the West Bank

The Houthis claimed drone and ballistic missile attacks targeting a US destroyer and US and Portuguese-flagged commercial vessels



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- Israel
- Gaza Strip and West Bank
- Jordan and Lebanon
- Syria
- Golan Heights

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

The IDF reported on April 25 that the Nahal Brigade (162nd Division) continued clearing operations near the Netzarim corridor in the central Gaza Strip.^[15] This IDF report is probably referring to Nahal Brigade operations prior to April 25, given that the IDF also announced on April 25 that two reservist brigades replaced the Nahal Brigade in the Gaza Strip. The Nahal Brigade directed an airstrike targeting two fighters who had attempted to launch rockets or mortars into Israel.^[16] The strike also targeted a nearby weapons storage facility. The IDF Air Force struck unspecified Palestinian militia infrastructure along the central Gazan coast after Palestinian militias shelled Israeli forces in the Netzarim corridor.^[17] The al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades claimed that its fighters mortared Israeli forces operating in an unspecified area of the Netzarim corridor.^[18] Hamas fighters mortared an IDF "surveillance site" in an unspecified location east of Juhor ad Dik.^[19] Hamas claimed its fighters ambushed Israeli forces in al Mughraqa, south of the Netzarim corridor, using multiple improvised explosive devices (IED), including one IED made from a dud F16 missile that had been recovered by Hamas forces and re-built into an IED.^[20]

The IDF conducted a relief-in-place/transfer of authority in the Netzarim corridor on April 25. The Nahal Brigade transferred responsibility for its area of operations to the IDF 2nd Reservist Infantry Brigade and 679th Reservist Armored Brigade on April 25.^[21] An Israeli Army Radio journalist reported on April 15 that the IDF 2nd Carmeli Brigade and 679th Armored Brigade will secure the Netzarim corridor and the temporary US-built pier in the central Gaza Strip.^[22] The Nahal Brigade will rest to prepare for Israeli operations in Rafah.^[23]

The 215th Artillery Brigade and IDF Air Force struck a Hamas cell in Nuseirat on April 24.^[24]

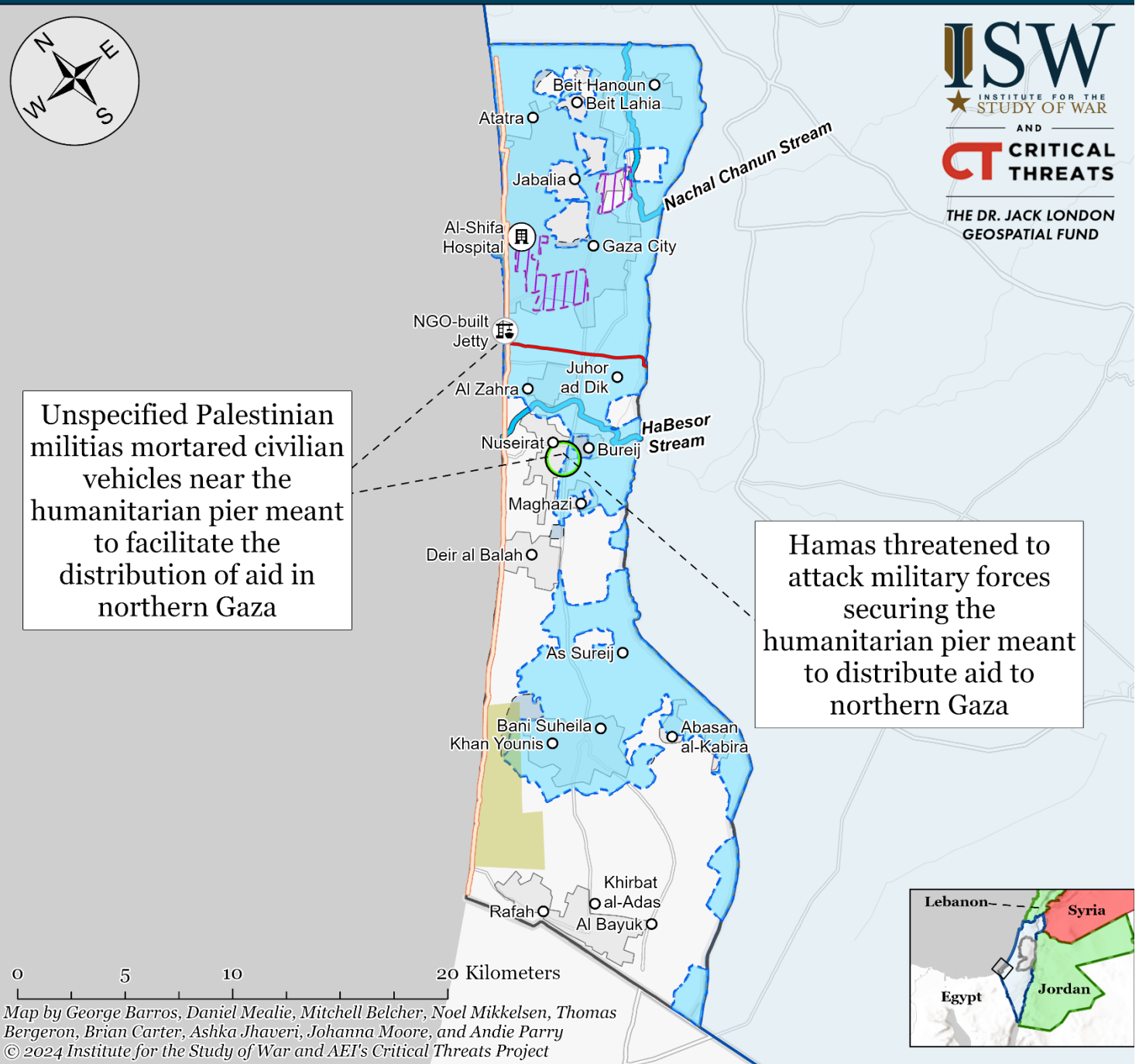
The al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades claimed one mortar attack targeting Israeli forces in an unspecified area east of Khan Younis.^[25]

Reported Israeli Ground Operations in the Gaza Strip as of April 25, 2024, 2:00 PM ET



Unspecified Palestinian militias mortared civilian vehicles near the humanitarian pier meant to facilitate the distribution of aid in northern Gaza

Hamas threatened to attack military forces securing the humanitarian pier meant to distribute aid to northern Gaza



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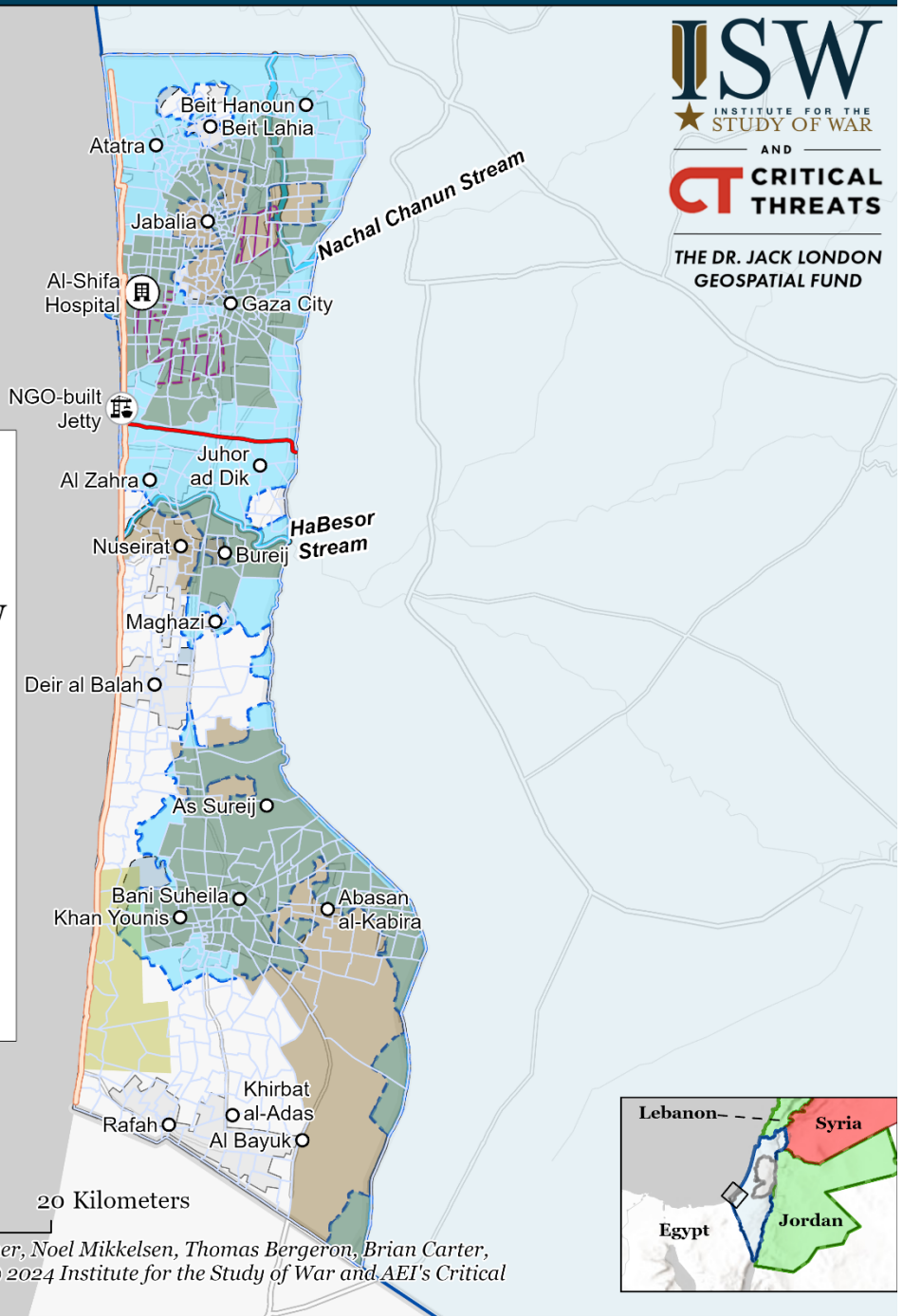
- ▭ Israel
- ▭ Reported Israeli Clearing Operations*
- ▭ Al-Mawasi Humanitarian Zone
- ▭ Significant Water Obstacles
- Gaza Strip
- ▭ Claimed Furthest Israeli Advances
- ▭ IDF-Declared Humanitarian Corridor on Road 230
- Densely Urban Areas
- ▭ Jordan and Lebanon
- ▭ Areas Reportedly Infiltrated by Palestinian Militias
- ▭ Israeli-Built Highway Route 749
- ▭ Syria
- Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours

* ISW-CTP's "Reported Israeli Clearing Operations" layer uses the US military's doctrinal definition of clearing which is an operation that "requires the commander to remove all enemy forces and eliminate organized resistance within an assigned area." Clearing operations frequently take weeks and sometimes months to complete

Israeli Announced Evacuation Zones in the Gaza Strip as of April 25, 2024, 2:00 PM ET



CTP-ISW's "Israeli Announced Evacuation Zones" layer shows Israeli evacuation zones announced by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). CTP-ISW used IDF maps and statements to create this layer. Where IDF maps cover part of a zone this layer covers the whole zone to avoid understating the evacuation order. The IDF began announcing these evacuation zones on December 2, 2023, at 0222 ET on X (Twitter)



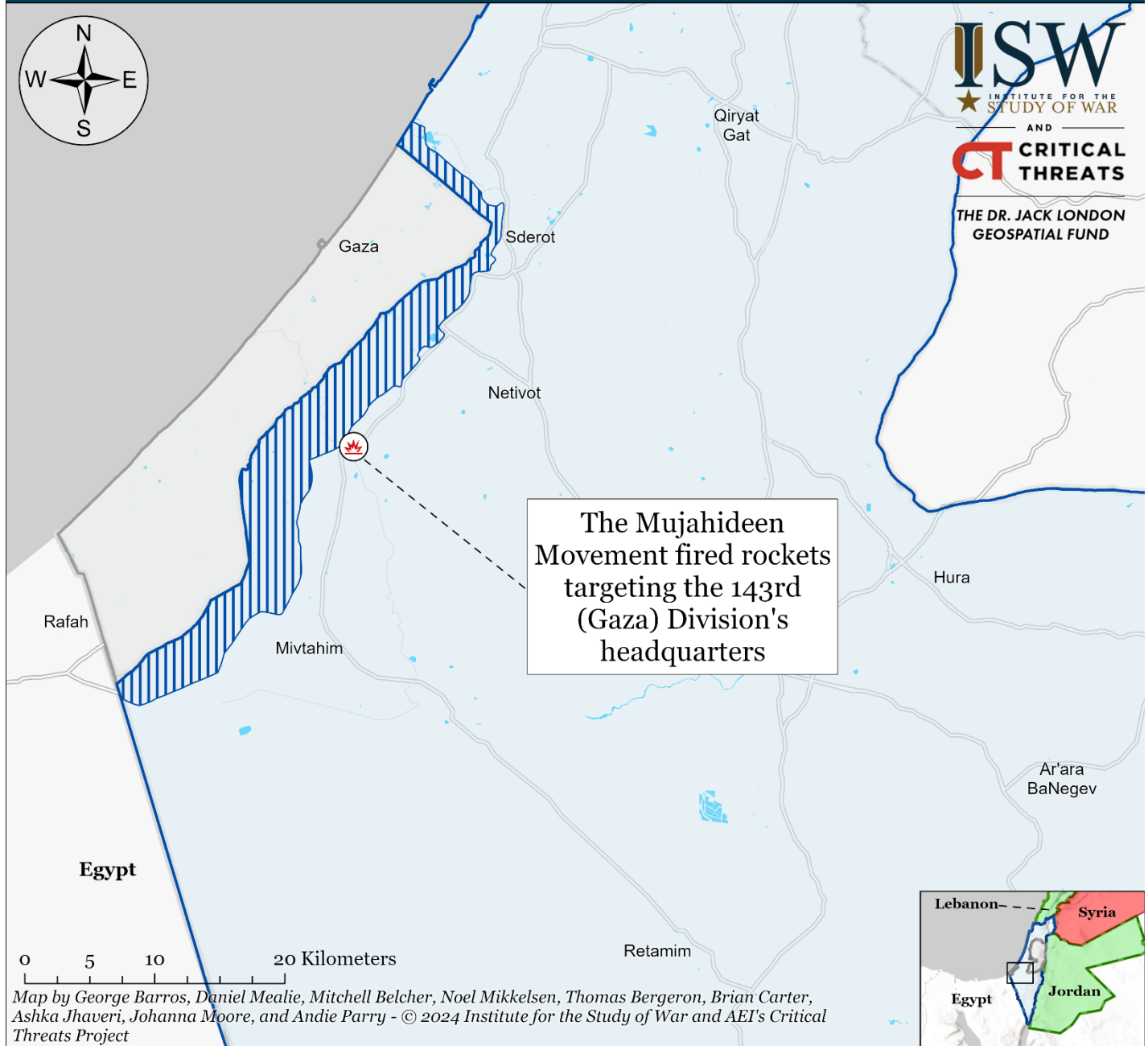
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Israel	Reported Israeli Clearing Operations*	Al-Mawasi Humanitarian Zone	Israeli Announced Evacuation Zones
Gaza Strip	Claimed Furthest Israeli Advances	IDF-Declared Humanitarian Corridor on Road 230	Densely Urban Areas
Jordan and Lebanon	Areas Reportedly Infiltrated by Palestinian Militias	Israeli-Built Highway Route 749	Significant Water Obstacles
Syria			

* ISW-CTP's "Reported Israeli Clearing Operations" layer uses the US military's doctrinal definition of clearing which is an operation that "requires the commander to remove all enemy forces and eliminate organized resistance within an assigned area." Clearing operations frequently take weeks and sometimes months to complete

Palestinian fighters conducted one indirect fire attack from the Gaza Strip into southern Israel on April 25.[26] The Mujahideen Movement launched one rocket targeting the 143rd (Gaza) Division headquarters in Reim.

Attacks into Israel from Gaza as of April 25, 2024, 2:00 PM ET



- Israel
- Israeli Closed Military Zone
- Jordan and Lebanon
- Rocket Attacks
- Gaza Strip and West Bank
- Syria

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

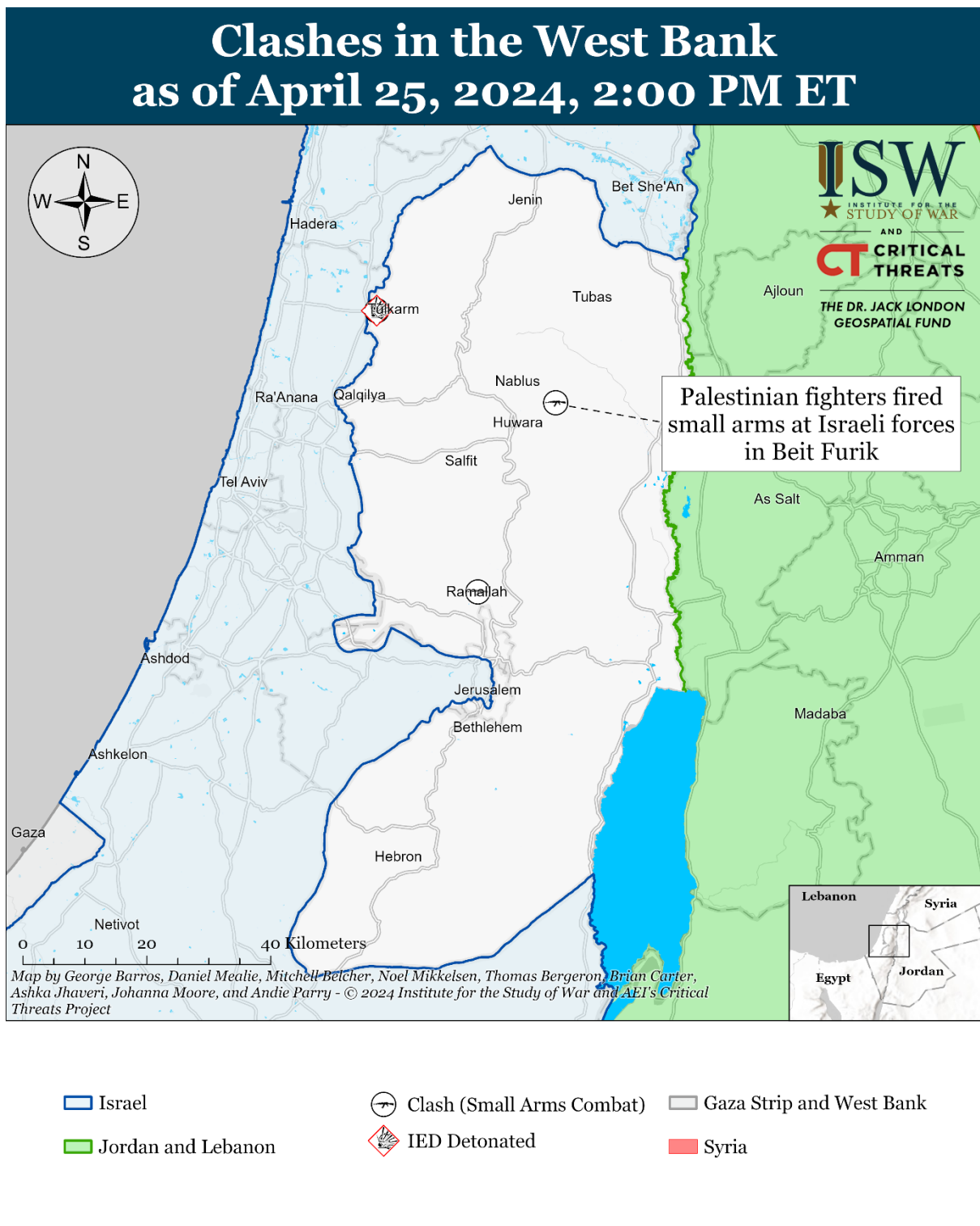
West Bank

Axis of Resistance objectives:

- Establish the West Bank as a viable front against Israel

Israeli forces have engaged Palestinian fighters in at least four locations across the West Bank since CTP-ISW's last information cutoff on April 24.^[27] The al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades fighters fired small arms and detonated IEDs targeting Israeli forces during Israeli operations in Tulkarm.^[28]

Israeli forces detained eight individuals and confiscated weapons across the West Bank during overnight raids on April 25.^[29]



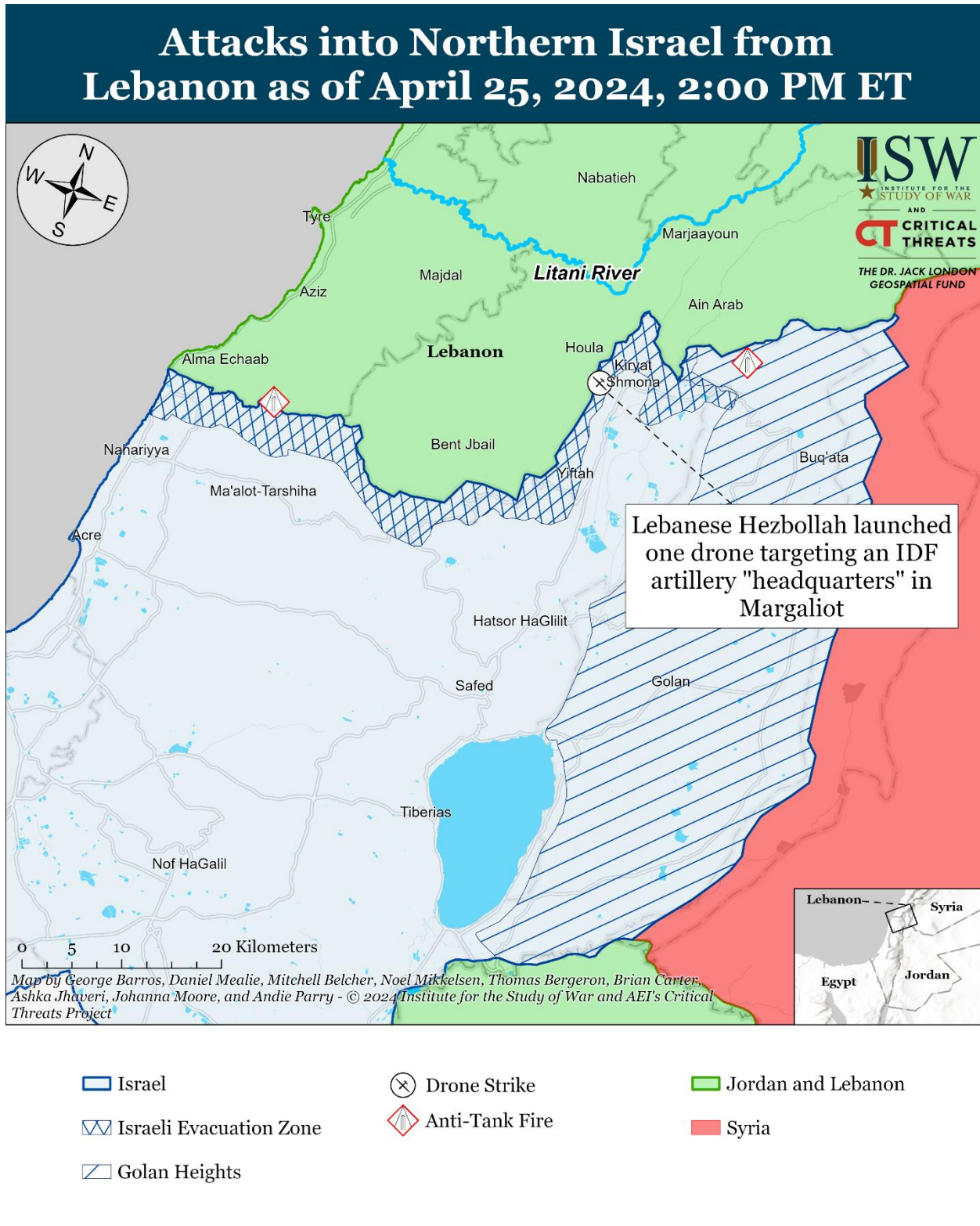
This map is not an exhaustive depiction of clashes and demonstrations in the West Bank.

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 three attacks from southern Lebanon into northern Israel since CTP-ISW's last data cutoff on April 24.[30]



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

Syrian media reported that the IDF conducted an airstrike on April 24 that targeted a Syrian Arab Army (SAA) building near al Rawadi, Quneitra Province, along the Syrian border with the Golan Heights.^[31] The IDF dropped leaflets over Quneitra on April 25 that said that the IDF conducted the strike on the SAA building because the SAA was present in the demilitarized zone between the Israeli-controlled Golan Heights and Syria.^[32] The leaflets warned that the IDF will not allow the SAA to violate “existing agreements.”^[33] Israeli media reported on April 25 that the IDF **created a closed military zone over** a large section of the Israeli-controlled Golan Heights on an unspecified date.^[34]

Iran and Axis of Resistance

An Iranian Supreme National Security Council-affiliated outlet said that Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi’s recent visit to Pakistan aimed to signal that Iran and Pakistan “will not submit to the policies of the United States.”^[35] Supreme National Security Council-affiliated Nour News Agency said on April 25 that Raisi’s meetings with senior Pakistani officials and new Iranian-Pakistani political, commercial, and security agreements sought to signal that Iran and Pakistan “will not submit to the policies of the United States.”^[36] Nour News’ report followed a US State Department warning that Pakistan could face sanctions were it to engage in business and commercial relations with Iran.^[37] Raisi met with the Pakistani prime minister and foreign minister on April 22 and signed eight memoranda of understanding (MOU) aimed at increasing cooperation in areas such as security, free trade, judicial proceedings, and the media.^[38] This trip was Raisi’s first to Pakistan since Iran and Pakistan exchanged cross-border strikes against each other in January 2024.^[39]

The Iranian judiciary confirmed the death sentence of 33-year-old dissident Iranian rapper Tomaj Salehi on April 25.^[40] The judiciary added that Salehi is entitled to a sentence reduction and that Salehi can appeal his sentence within 20 days. The judiciary’s announcement coincides with international media reports condemning Salehi’s potential execution.^[41] This ruling coincides with the regime’s decision on April 13 to renew its crackdown on women for failure to adhere to the mandatory hijab law.^[42]

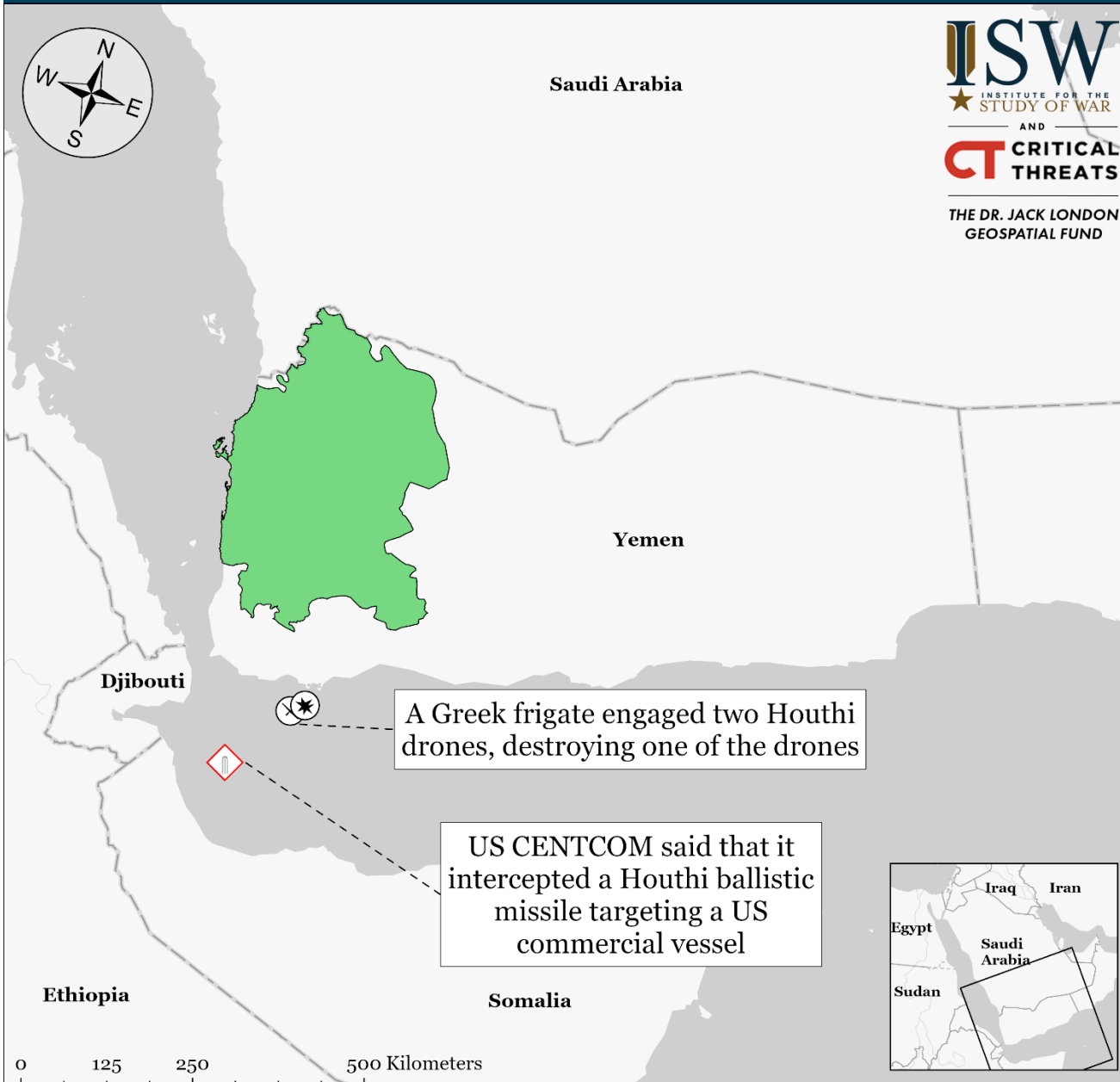
The US Treasury Department Office of Foreign Asset Control (OFAC) sanctioned at least 12 entities, individuals and vessels on April 25 for facilitating and financing the sale of Iranian drones.^[43] The sanctioned individuals and entities conducted sales for the Iranian Ministry of Defense and Armed Forces Logistics (MODAFL). OFAC stated that the Iranian MODAFL provides financial support to Iran’s IRGC and Russia’s war in Ukraine.^[44]

The United Kingdom and Canada concurrently imposed sanctions against several individuals and entities involved in Iran’s UAV procurement on April 25.^[45]

The Houthis claimed drone and ballistic missile attacks targeting a US destroyer, a US-flagged commercial vessel, and a Portuguese-flagged commercial vessel on April 24.^[46] US CENTCOM reported that it intercepted a Houthi anti-ship ballistic missile targeting the US-flagged MV Maersk Yorktown on April 24.^[47] The Houthis claimed that they launched an unspecified attack targeting the Portuguese-flagged MSC Veracruz in the Indian Ocean on April 24.^[48] CENTCOM also reported that it destroyed four Houthi drones over Houthi-controlled Yemen. The Houthis had not claimed an attack since April 10 prior to these attacks.^[49]

A Greek frigate operating in the Gulf of Aden as part of the European-led Operation Aspides engaged two Houthi drones on April 25. The frigate destroyed one of the two drones on April 25.^[50] The second drone retreated. The UK Maritime Trade Operations said that there was an explosion close to an unspecified commercial vessel 15km southwest of Aden on April 25.^[51]

Houthi-controlled Territory in Yemen as of April 25, 2024, 2:00 PM ET



Map by Daniel Mealie, Mitchell Belcher, Noel Mikkelsen, Thomas Bergeron, Brian Carter, Ashka Jhaveri, Johanna Moore, and Andie Parry
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- Houthi-controlled Territory in Yemen
- ✖ Drone Strike
- ★ Unspecified Attacks
- ♦ Surface-to-Surface Missile

Note: This notional map is not a definitive assessment of areas under Houthi control in Yemen. This map is primarily an illustrative reference material and does not adhere to the very high level of spatial precision that ISW and CTP uses for our Israel-Hamas and Ukraine control of terrain maps.



- [1] <https://www.i24news.com/en/news/israel-at-war/artc-exclusive-u-s-humanitarian-pier-attacked-during-construction-work-off-gaza-coast>
- [2] <https://twitter.com/DrTedros/status/1782350211647459547>
- [3] <https://apnews.com/article/hamas-khalil-alhayya-qatar-ceasefire-1967-borders-4912532b11a9cec29464eab234045438>
- [4] <https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/israel-at-war/artc-exclusive-u-s-humanitarian-pier-attacked-during-construction-work-off-gaza-coast>; <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/us-military-starts-pier-construction-off-gaza-2024-04-25/>; <https://www.wsj.com/world/middle-east/u-s-to-begin-construction-of-gaza-pier-as-rafah-invasion-looms-df1368b6>
- [5] <https://www.who.int/news/item/15-01-2024-preventing-famine-and-deadly-disease-outbreak-in-gaza-requires-faster--safer-aid-access-and-more-supply-routes>
- [6] <https://tass.com/politics/1780163>; <https://oanews.org/node/681172>
- [7] <https://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-april-23-2024>; <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/iran-update-april-24-2024>
- [8] <https://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-april-23-2024>
- [9] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/iran-update-february-20-2024>; <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/iran-update-february-21-2024>; <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/iran-update-march-6-2024>; <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/iran-update-march-12-2024>
- [10] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/iran-update-february-20-2024>
- [11] <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/profile-badr-organization>; <https://twitter.com/JasonMBrodsky/status/1780690492860056003>
- [12] <https://twitter.com/GLZRadio/status/1783451549173203365>; <https://twitter.com/manniefabian/status/1783452804276732213>
- [13] https://twitter.com/Doron_Kadosh/status/1779760222740845050
- [14] <https://twitter.com/GLZRadio/status/1783451549173203365>
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- [17] <https://twitter.com/AvichayAdraee/status/1783379818018427098>
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- [21] <https://twitter.com/GLZRadio/status/1783451549173203365>; <https://twitter.com/manniefabian/status/1783452804276732213>
- [22] https://twitter.com/Doron_Kadosh/status/1779760222740845050
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- [30] <https://t.me/mmireb/3527>; https://t.me/C_Military1/49347; https://t.me/C_Military1/49350
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- [34] https://twitter.com/kann_news/status/1783495428563960124
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- [37] <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/4/24/cost-of-doing-business-with-iran-us-warns-pakistan-of-sanctions-risk>
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- [40] <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/irans-judiciary-confirms-rapper-toomaj-salehi-death-sentence-2024-04-25/>
- [41] <https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-april-24-2024/>; <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20240425-savetoomaj-iran-urged-to-spare-rapper-after-grotesque-verdict>

- [42] https://www.entekhab_dot_ir/fa/news/775776/; <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-update-april-15-2024>
- [43] <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy2295>
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- [45] <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy2295> ; <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-targets-irans-ability-to-launch-drones-through-new-round-of-sanctions> ; <https://www.canada.ca/en/global-affairs/news/2024/04/canada-imposes-further-sanctions-against-iran.html>
- [46] <https://twitter.com/army21ye/status/1783217630700044702>
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