

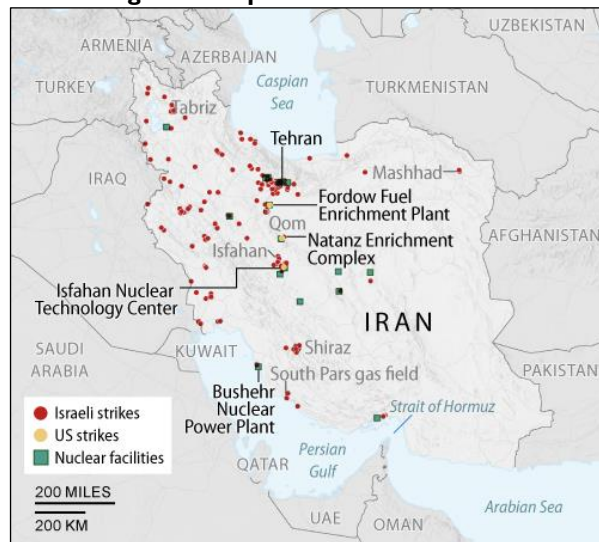
Updated June 26, 2025

Israel-Iran Conflict, U.S. Strikes, and Ceasefire

On June 13, 2025, Israel began a major military operation against Iran, including air strikes and reported covert action. Iran retaliated by launching waves of ballistic missiles against Israel. See **Figure 1** and **Figure 2** for maps depicting strikes on both countries. Israel has procured most of its fighter aircraft and large munitions from U.S. suppliers, financed to date by nearly \$4 billion of U.S. aid annually.

On June 22, the United States carried out strikes against three key Iranian nuclear sites (see **Figure 1**), including a deep underground uranium enrichment facility at Fordow. Israeli officials reportedly may have sought direct U.S. involvement in targeting certain Iranian nuclear facilities with specific “bunker buster” bombs and aircraft (the United States used GBU-57 Massive Ordnance Penetrator weapons and B-2 Spirit bombers in its air strikes). In a notification to Congress that President Donald Trump said was “consistent with the War Powers Resolution” (P.L. 93-148), President Trump stated the strike “was taken to advance vital United States national interests, and in collective self-defense of our ally, Israel, by eliminating Iran’s nuclear program.”

Figure 1. Reported Strikes on Iran



Source: CRS, adapted from CNN (citing The Institute for the Study of War with AEI’s Critical Threats Project, U.S. President Donald Trump, International Atomic Energy Agency), as of June 24, 2025.

Notes: All areas and notations are approximate.

Central Intelligence Agency Director John Ratcliffe has stated that some intelligence indicates “several key Iranian nuclear facilities were destroyed and would have to be rebuilt over the course of years.” An Iranian official observed that “our nuclear installations have been badly damaged.” The director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency said that “very significant damage is expected to have occurred” at Fordow. Broader details

regarding the impact on Fordow and other sites may remain unclear. The whereabouts of Iran’s uranium stockpiles appear uncertain. It is unclear how the strikes may affect Iran’s technical capabilities. It is also unclear whether the strikes may have altered Iran’s political decision-making regarding its nuclear program and aspirations toward weaponization.

Figure 2. Reported Strikes on Israel & the West Bank



Source: CRS, adapted from CNN (citing Reuters and CNN analysis of social media), as of June 24, 2025.

Notes: All areas and notations are approximate.

Some Members of Congress expressed support for Israel’s military actions and called its operations “understandable and justified.” Some have expressed support for H.Res. 521 in favor of U.S. assistance for Israel. Others called the Israeli strikes “alarming” and “reckless.” Some introduced resolutions or legislation (S.J.Res. 59, H.Con.Res. 38, S. 2087) emphasizing the role of Congress in authorizing the use of U.S. force. A range of opinions surrounded the U.S. strikes as well, with some Members praising them, and some expressing concern that the strikes raise risks of broader conflict, may not have been as effective as initially asserted, or were based on assessments or decisions that did not sufficiently involve Congress.

On June 23, Iran fired ballistic missiles at Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar, in what may have been a largely symbolic retaliation; no U.S. casualties were reported. Hours later, President Trump announced that Israel and Iran would end hostilities on June 24. After some additional salvos, Israel and Iran indicated intentions to comply with the ceasefire, but reserved the right to defend themselves. President Trump said another U.S. strike could happen if Iran resumed uranium enrichment.

Israeli attacks reportedly degraded several Iranian military, government, and energy facilities, among other targets in Iran, and killed a number of high-level Iranian military and government officials and nuclear scientists. Reports indicate that Israel may have destroyed a significant portion of Iran’s ballistic missile launchers. Strikes and other

attacks by Israel and Iran have reportedly killed over 600 people in Iran and 29 in Israel.

Historical Background

During Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's tenure after 2009, Israel has threatened multiple times to act militarily to destroy or set back Iran's nuclear program. Israel, which for decades has reportedly maintained a nuclear arsenal but has not officially acknowledged it, has taken preemptive action against nuclear programs in the region—destroying an Iraqi facility in 1981 and a Syrian one in 2007. In the 2010s, Israel, reportedly with U.S. help in at least one instance, apparently executed a number of covert actions against Iranian facilities and personnel to disrupt and delay the program. Alongside U.S. sanctions on Iranian oil exports, the Obama Administration led international efforts to reach a 2015 agreement (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA), which placed new physical constraints, as well as inspection and monitoring provisions, on Iran's nuclear program. In 2018, President Trump (with strong support from Netanyahu) ended U.S. participation in the JCPOA, citing what he described as the accord's defects, and increased sanctions on Iran. Approximately a year later, Iran began nuclear activities that exceeded JCPOA-stated limits.

Hamas-led attacks on Israel in 2023 were followed by broader regional conflict between Israel and Iran's "axis of resistance." Direct clashes between Israel and Iran in April and October 2024 and Israel's large-scale degradation of Hezbollah (a key Iranian ally) in Lebanon prompted serious discussion in Israel about whether and when to act against Iran's nuclear program. Having seemingly mostly neutralized Hezbollah's missile threat and ostensibly weakened Iran's air defenses and ballistic missile production capacity, Israeli leaders reportedly explored plans, including with U.S. officials, to strike Iran's nuclear program amid increasingly public discussion in Iran of the once-taboo subject of weaponization. Some of President Trump's public comments discouraged attacks while U.S. officials engaged in diplomacy with Iran after April 2025.

Issues Facing Congress

The conflict with Iran and subsequent events have implications for U.S. Middle East policy. Congress may consider whether or not to take action concerning military assistance, arms sales, sanctions, defense appropriations, authorization of or limitations on use of military force, diplomacy and negotiated agreements, or oversight of the Administration's past and ongoing policies and programs.

Resumption of conflict and/or follow-on diplomacy. It is unclear under what conditions Israel or Iran might resume their conflict or enhance the truce's durability. Israel's leaders are likely to monitor developments in relation to Iran's nuclear program, ballistic missile arsenal, support for armed groups in the region, and other activities that might pose threats to Israeli citizens, strategic assets, and interests. During the June conflict, Israel struck various targets in a way that could be interpreted as an effort to pressure or weaken the Islamic Republic regime, and reportedly considered targeting Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Prime Minister Netanyahu also said during the conflict that regime change was a possible outcome. On June 24, Netanyahu said that Israel had removed the threat of annihilation by nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles.

In considering military and diplomatic options, Iranian leaders may assess their regime's residual strength, as well as the capabilities Iran and its regional allies maintain to threaten Israel, U.S. assets and personnel based in the region, other U.S. partners, and the flow of energy commerce through the Strait of Hormuz. Iran's nuclear program, military assets, political leadership, economy, and infrastructure all took blows during the conflict. While Iran might seek to avoid additional conflict for the time being, it is unclear which of the following is more likely, or whether both may occur at some point: (a) Iranian diplomatic concessions with respect to its nuclear program or other strategic capabilities, to avoid further strikes or reach a deal; and/or (b) Iranian efforts to develop a nuclear weapon or otherwise bolster its capacity to deter or threaten Israel, the United States and other potential adversaries.

U.S. officials and lawmakers may assess the benefits and drawbacks of various diplomatic, military, and economic options. These could include efforts to incline Israel, Iran, and other regional actors toward certain outcomes—regarding both the issues underlying the June conflict, and potentially related matters with respect to broader regional order and stability—such as:

- newly agreed limits on Iran's nuclear program, military activities, or regional relationships;
- a possible ceasefire in the Gaza Strip and hostage-prisoner exchange between Israel and Hamas; and
- arrangements aimed at establishing stability and/or potential diplomatic normalization involving Israel, Palestinian actors, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and other regional countries.

It is uncertain whether Russia and the People's Republic of China (PRC) may be willing to support multilateral diplomacy and/or increase political, economic, or military support to Iran. Neither Russia nor the PRC appears to have directly involved itself in the conflict on Iran's behalf. Russia and Iran engage in various types of strategic partnership. The PRC reportedly buys some 90% of Iran's oil exports, which are about 14% of the PRC's oil imports.

U.S. security assistance for Israel. U.S. officials and lawmakers may receive requests from Israeli counterparts for additional military aid and/or expedited arms transfers, including to help replenish aerial munitions and missile defense interceptors. As the conflict entered its second week, reports surfaced of Israeli interceptor scarcity. U.S.-Israel discussions and congressional deliberations over arms sales and aid authorizations and appropriations may influence and be influenced by various factors, such as:

- U.S.-Israel cooperative efforts to develop more cost-effective solutions to counter missiles and drones; and
- assessments of and possible updates to U.S.-Israel security cooperation arrangements, including bilateral agreements and joint or coordinated military action.

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