



IMPACT ANALYSIS

Israel-Iran Conflict

13 August, 2024



TABLE OF CONTENTS

SITUATIONAL AWARENESS: IRAN-ISRAEL CONFLICT	3
KEY DEVELOPMENTS	3
U.S. and Israeli Warnings	3
Iran's Retaliation Strategy	3
Hezbollah's Role	3
International Reactions and Military Deployments	3
Impact on Diplomatic Efforts	3
Potential Consequences	4
TRAVEL ADVISORIES, RESTRICTIONS, AND FLIGHT DISRUPTIONS	5
SUMMARY	5

SITUATIONAL AWARENESS: POTENTIAL IRAN-ISRAEL CONFLICT AND REGIONAL STABILITY CONCERNS

U.S. and Israeli intelligence assessments indicate that Iran is poised to launch a retaliatory strike against Israel in the coming days, following the assassinations of key figures linked to Hamas and Hezbollah. This potential escalation could significantly destabilize the region, jeopardize ongoing ceasefire negotiations, and potentially draw the U.S. into deeper military involvement. Domestically, the U.S. may face protests and increased political pressure, particularly if the conflict leads to further American military deployments, additional aid packages to Israel, or is perceived as exacerbating regional instability. Any associated protests are likely to be most pronounced in Washington, DC, and other major urban centers.

Overview: The geopolitical landscape between Iran and Israel has reached a critical juncture, with the potential for significant escalation in the coming days. This tension follows the assassinations of key figures: Ismail Haniyeh, the political leader of Hamas, in Tehran, and Fuad Shukr, a senior Hezbollah commander, in Beirut. The U.S., alongside European allies, has issued warnings about the possibility of imminent retaliatory attacks by Tehran or its proxies, signaling a volatile period ahead.

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

U.S. and Israeli Warnings: The U.S. government has issued a stark warning about potential attacks from Iran or its proxies against Israel, with the White House and Israeli officials both indicating that a significant assault could be imminent. This is in response to the recent targeted killings, which Iran attributes to Israeli actions. The specificity of these warnings suggests that both nations are preparing for a potential escalation.

Iran's Retaliation Strategy: Israeli intelligence assessments indicate that Iran is likely to launch a direct attack on Israel in retaliation for the assassination of Haniyeh. There is a consensus among experts that Hezbollah, backed by Iran, might initiate the attack, with Iran joining in afterward. The scope of the anticipated retaliation could involve missile and drone strikes targeting central Israel, including areas near civilian population centers—a notable escalation from previous conflicts.

Hezbollah's Role: Hezbollah has been engaged in ongoing tit-for-tat attacks with Israel, mostly in areas along the shared border with Lebanon, targeting military facilities and border areas. However, a strike on an urban center or one that targets civilians would mark a significant escalation. With the assassination of Shukr, Hezbollah's involvement in a larger retaliatory strike becomes more likely, especially considering its historical pattern of responding to perceived provocations.

International Reactions and Military Deployments: The international community, particularly the UK, France, and Germany, has urged Iran and its proxies to refrain from further attacks, reflecting a shared concern over the potential for a broader regional conflict. The U.S. has also reinforced its military presence in the region, deploying additional resources to support Israel and deter further aggression. As the international community reacts, protests may also arise in countries that oppose US or Israeli actions, as well as countries with historical ties to Palestine or those critical of US foreign policy may see protests advocating for peace and denouncing violence.

Impact on Diplomatic Efforts: The timing of these developments is critical, as they come just ahead of ceasefire negotiations scheduled to take place in Egypt or Qatar on 15 August. There is a palpable concern that any preemptive strike by Iran could derail these talks, jeopardizing a potential peace deal and further destabilizing the region.

IMPENDING IRAN-ISRAEL CONFLICT AND REGIONAL STABILITY CONCERNS (CONTINUED)

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Potential Consequences: If Iran proceeds with a large-scale attack, particularly one that targets civilian centers, it is likely to provoke a significant military response from Israel, which could escalate into a wider conflict. Such an escalation would almost certainly draw the U.S. more deeply into the conflict, both militarily and diplomatically. The situation could also spark protests within the U.S., especially if there is a perception that the administration's support for Israel, including additional aid packages or resource deployments, is contributing to further instability. These protests could be particularly intense in Washington, DC, and other major urban centers.

Pro-Israel groups may organize counter-protests to express Israel's right to defend itself, which could lead to tensions and confrontations between opposing groups, escalating tensions in urban areas. Concurrently, following any U.S. military support for or military retaliation by Israel, pro-Palestine groups are likely to mobilize quickly to protest perceived injustices and military aggression. This could lead to mass demonstrations in urban centers globally, particularly in cities with large Muslim or Arab populations.

Notable Palestine-Israel Planned Protest Action:

- **Not Another Bomb – National Day of Action** - On 18 August from 9 am to 7 pm, numerous pro-Palestine activist groups, including Shutdown DC, IfNotNow, the Democratic Socialists of America, the U.S. Campaign for Palestinian Rights, Jews for Racial and Economic Justice, Jewish Voice for Peace, and more have called for a National Day of Action to demand the US enact and immediate arms embargo on Israel. GRI observed a planned protest scheduled for 12 PM at the White House. Additionally, the campaign is also encouraging groups to host related Not Another Bomb events during the Democratic National Convention
- **F*** the GNC** – Between 17 to 23 August, the activist group Chicago Dissenters plans to host events in connection with the upcoming Democratic National Convention. The group plans to "March on the DNC" on 19 August at 12 pm, 21 August at 4 pm, and 22 August at 5 pm. Notably, the group has an event titled "Great Like '68" occurring on 20 August at 7 pm. It's unclear if this is intended to be a march to or near the convention; however, the event title references the 1968 Democratic National Convention, during which violent altercations occurred between police and protesters
- **Democratic National Convention – March on the DNC** - The upcoming Democratic National Convention is anticipated to attract various groups of protesters seeking to garner attention from the Democrats, particularly Vice President (VP) Harris. Organizations such as Codepink and ANSWER have expressed intentions to join a coalition in Chicago to protest VP Harris's alleged involvement in war crimes and to advocate for a ceasefire in Gaza. ANSWER was involved in organizing the "unwelcome Netanyahu" protests in D.C. that resulted in vandalism, altercations, and arrests

TRAVEL ADVISORIES, RESTRICTIONS, AND FLIGHT DISRUPTIONS

In response to the escalating tensions, several countries and international organizations have issued travel advisories and restrictions:

- **Evacuations:** Israel has evacuated tens of thousands of its citizens from northern Israel near the border with Lebanon as a precautionary measure.
- **Government Advisories:** Countries including the United States, Belgium, Britain, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden have urged their citizens to leave Lebanon immediately due to the increasing risk of conflict. France has also advised its citizens in Iran to leave as soon as possible and to avoid travel to Israel and the Palestinian territories. Canada has issued a similar advisory, urging Canadians to avoid all travel to Israel due to the "unpredictable security situation."
- **Flight Disruptions:** Several international airlines, including Delta, United, the Lufthansa Group, and Aegean Airlines, have suspended flights to and from Israel and Beirut. These suspensions have resulted in significant travel disruptions, leaving many Israelis and foreign nationals stranded, unable to return home. Additionally, many flights to and from Beirut have been canceled or sold out, exacerbating the travel difficulties in the region.

SUMMARY: The current tensions suggest that Iran may be seeking to assert its position through a limited yet symbolic attack, aiming to save face and de-escalate afterward, in line with the historical pattern of reciprocal violence between the two adversaries. However, there is a genuine risk that this could spiral into a more extensive and uncontrolled conflict, particularly if civilian targets are involved. Such a scenario would not only challenge regional stability but also strain international relations and further elevate the threat of attacks on US interests by Iran or its proxies in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Yemen..

The situation remains fluid, with significant risks of escalation. Both Israel and Iran appear poised for potential confrontation, which could broaden into a conflict with far-reaching implications beyond the immediate region. The next few days will be crucial in determining whether diplomatic efforts can prevail or whether the region will descend into further violence.



IMPACT ANALYSIS

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