



Israel & the United States at War with Iran Special Update from Israel

March 8, 2026

Prepared by and sent from Jewish Federation of North America's Israel Office

- **Day 9 of the US/Israel War with Iran**
- **Two IDF soldiers killed on Lebanese border and five seriously injured**
- **UAE attacks Iran for the first time**
- **Schools in Israel remain shuttered, even as limited international flights begin**

**Briefing: Israel & the United States at War with Iran
Monday, March 9 at 1pm ET**

Join Jewish Federations of North America for a special briefing on the conflict between Israel, the United States, and Iran. We will be joined by Ambassador Yechiel Leiter, who will provide a timely update on the latest developments.

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Fighting Hezbollah

- **Two IDF soldiers were killed and five seriously** wounded in two separate attacks by Hezbollah. In both attacks, the terror group fired anti-tank missiles at Israeli positions on the country's northern border.

- Israel continues to hit Hezbollah targets in Lebanon, including in the capital, Beirut. Hundreds of thousands of Lebanese have followed IDF instructions to **evacuate the southern region** between the Israeli border and the Litani River. In addition, Beirut's Dahieh neighborhood, which is a Hezbollah stronghold, was evacuated for the first time as residents heeded the Israeli military's instructions.
- Later, after an overnight attack hit a seaside hotel, the IDF carried out a targeted strike on **IRGC Quds Force commanders operating from Beirut**. Lebanese officials said at least four people were killed and ten wounded, while Israel said the targets were senior operatives directing attacks on Israel from Lebanese territory. The IDF said precision weapons and aerial surveillance were used to minimize civilian harm.
- Additional overnight strikes hit **Hezbollah command centers in Beirut**, including a facility belonging to the group's aerial forces responsible for drone operations. The IDF said the sites were intended to facilitate attacks on Israeli civilians and troops. Evacuation warnings were issued to residents ahead of the strikes.
- The IDF reported that approximately **200 Hezbollah fighters have been killed** since the terror group joined the war. Israeli forces have conducted hundreds of strikes on Hezbollah in recent days.
- Israeli special-forces carried out an operation in eastern Lebanon over the weekend. It was aimed at locating the remains of **missing Israeli Air Force navigator Ron Arad**, who disappeared in 1986. The IDF confirmed that helicopter-borne troops operated near the village of Nabi Chit; they were supported by airstrikes intended to secure the area during the search. Despite intelligence pointing to that location, no findings connected to Arad were discovered. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reiterated Israel's ongoing commitment to locating missing personnel, describing the effort as a national obligation. Arad's family was briefed on the outcome, with public statements emphasizing their concern over the risks involved in recovery attempts.

Fighting with Iran

- Strikes on Iran overnight left **Tehran oil facilities** shrouded in thick smoke hours after attacks by the United States and Israel. Iranian officials said [five oil sites](#), including four depots and a petroleum transport center in Tehran and Alborz, were hit, killing two oil tanker drivers and two other workers. Fires were brought under control; Iranian authorities said fuel reserves remain sufficient, although residents reported a lingering smell of burning across the city and droplets of oil falling from the sky. The strikes appeared to mark the first confirmed targeting of a civilian industrial facility in the conflict, although Israel said the oil storage was being strategically used by Iran's Revolutionary Guards.
- The IDF confirmed **Iranian F-14 fighter jets were destroyed at Isfahan airport**, saying the US-supplied aircraft dated to before the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Additional detection and air-defense systems posing a threat to Israeli aircraft were also hit. The strikes followed earlier attacks aimed at securing Israeli control of Iranian airspace that destroyed 16 Revolutionary Guards Quds Force aircraft at Tehran's Mehrabad Airport.

- Israel **Air Force Chief Maj. Gen. Tomer Bar** [took part](#) in one of the airstrikes carried out over Iran. He flew as part of an operational sortie rather than directing the mission solely from the ground. Bar flew an F-15 fighter jet during the strike, which the IAF described as an expression of shared responsibility between senior command and frontline aircrews.
- The IDF says it has dropped approximately **6,500 munitions on Iran within a single week**. The [strikes](#) targeted regime [military infrastructure](#) and internal security forces, with Israeli officials estimating that **thousands of Iranian regime personnel** were killed, although the figures remain under review. The [scale of the bombing](#) exceeded Israel's previous high-intensity air campaign in June 2025 and was conducted alongside a similar number of US strikes on additional targets. Israeli officials noted that, unlike other fronts, casualty assessments in Iran are complicated by the absence of ground forces and limited confirmation capabilities.
- The United States is expected to add a third US carrier to the region, the **USS George H.W. Bush**, which will be deployed to the eastern Mediterranean. The Bush would join the USS Gerald R. Ford and the USS Abraham Lincoln, which are already operating in the Mediterranean and Gulf areas.
- Iran's Revolutionary Guards warned they could sustain an **"intense war" for at least six months** against Israel and the United States. A Guards spokesperson claimed Iranian forces have already targeted more than 200 sites linked to American and Israeli bases across the region.
- Concerns resurfaced that **enriched uranium at the Isfahan nuclear site** may still be accessible, despite US strikes last year. US intelligence identified a "very narrow access point" through which uranium could potentially be retrieved and said the site is under constant surveillance. Iran has refused to clarify the status of its uranium stockpile or allow IAEA inspections, while President Trump said he would not rule out sending ground troops to secure it. Some Israeli media reported that the US and Israel are considering sending in a small group of special-forces from both countries to retrieve the materials.
- Iran's clerical leadership attempted to project stability, with an Assembly of Experts' member saying **a majority consensus on the next supreme leader** has been reached. Iranian media reported disagreement over whether a formal in-person meeting is required to finalize the decision. No successor was named, although it is widely expected to be Ali Khomeini's son. The IDF also publicly commented on Iran's future leadership, warning it would pursue those involved in appointing Khomeini's successor. In a Persian-language post, the military said clerics planning to convene in Qom would also be considered targets.
- Iran's ambassador to South Korea warned that **US ground troop deployment would bring "many coffins" home**, while Israel's ambassador said the joint campaign aims to dismantle Iran's nuclear and missile programs and support the Iranian people.

Flights

- After weeks of closure, **outbound passenger flights resumed from Ben Gurion Airport** under strict security conditions. Israeli airlines El Al, Israir and Arkia began limited departures, with a restricted number of passengers per flight

and a requirement that travelers sign a declaration not to return for at least 30 days. Early check-in and short airport arrival windows were imposed to reduce exposure during ongoing missile threats.

- Israel also announced **renewed repatriation flights from the UAE** following an agreement between Prime Minister Netanyahu and UAE President Mohammed bin Zayed. Transportation Minister Miri Regev said thousands of Israelis stranded in Dubai and Abu Dhabi would be flown home in cooperation with Emirati airlines. A previous effort to repatriate about 4,000 Israelis was paused after the Dubai airport was hit in an Iranian strike.
- Israeli airlines are also continuing to operate flights to **bring home Israelis stranded abroad** as a result of the war. The flights operate around the clock but on a restricted basis, with capacity for up to 9,000 passengers per day.
- Rescue flights are also operating via Taba and Sharm el-Sheikh in Egypt and Aqaba in Jordan, with others still crossing over land borders. The airlines have committed to prioritizing passengers whose flights were canceled, with ten percent of seats on each flight reserved for humanitarian cases.

Missile and Rocket Fire

- While the number of **missiles being fired at Israel from Iran has decreased** dramatically, sirens continue to send millions of Israelis rushing to the shelters throughout the day and night. At the same time, Hezbollah has significantly increased the scale and frequency of its attacks.
- Sirens sounded repeatedly across northern Israel over the weekend amid **continued drone and rocket fire from Lebanon**, as the military chased suspected UAVs. Israeli media reported three drones were downed, including one after a prolonged pursuit; there were no injuries or damage. The IDF said Hezbollah has fired many dozens of rockets and drones since Monday.
- **Six people were injured, one seriously**, earlier today when Iranian missiles struck Tel Aviv and Petach Tikva.
- Rockets and UAVs fired from Lebanon present **additional hardships to Israel**, due mainly to the shorter distances. When missiles are fired from distant Iran, those in the target zone first receive a warning message that a siren is likely in the coming minutes. This gives civilians the opportunity to prepare and move closer to a shelter. In the case of launches from Lebanon, there is no time for an advance warning, so the population must dash to shelters as soon as the siren sounds.
- While **UAVs typically carry a smaller warhead** than rockets or missiles, they present additional challenges since they can change direction and avoid interceptions. On numerous occasions, UAVs are "[chased](#)" by the military," sometimes for more than an hour, triggering sirens in a long string of cities as they continue to fly and change direction.
- The IDF reports that most barrages from Iran include **far fewer missiles** than during the first days of the war, making the chance of successful interceptions significantly higher. The lower number of projectiles fired also likely represents considerably diminished Iranian capabilities as a result of Israeli and US airstrikes on missile stockpiles and launchers.

- Israel experienced **four Iranian missile barrages overnight**, with most missiles intercepted. Fragments fell in unpopulated areas, and no injuries were reported.
- Israel's Center for Local Government says that 2,719 Israelis whose homes were damaged have now been evacuated to hotels. Most of the evacuations were carried out from the cities of Beit Shemesh, Tel Aviv–Jaffa, Be'er Sheva, Ramat Gan, Tirat Carmel and Bnei Brak.

Israel's Home Front

- As of last night, the **Home Front Command extended its public protection guidelines** through Monday evening, March 9. The instructions remain in force nationwide and continue to vary by locality.
- The **education system** is operating entirely through remote learning. Distance learning began earlier in the week in the Arab and Druze sectors and was extended nationwide in the Jewish sector as of March 5. The Ministry of Education confirmed that remote learning would continue at least through tomorrow, March 9, with further decisions contingent on guidance from the Home Front Command. The Bank of Israel estimates that school closures and remote learning have resulted in an estimated 20 percent reduction in work productivity among parents who are trying to work at home while taking care of their children.
- In response to the security situation, Israel's Chief Rabbinate issued a special halachic ruling **permitting weddings during the Omer period** (between Passover and Shavuot) under defined conditions. Weddings are usually not permitted during this time, but many ceremonies and parties have had to be postponed during the war.
- **Transportation and licensing services** are gradually resuming and driving lessons restarted on Friday, March 6; mandatory driver courses and practical driving tests are scheduled to resume today. Public transportation inside Israel is operating under emergency conditions. Rail service has been reduced to limited frequencies on several lines, though a continuous shuttle service is operating through Ben Gurion Airport. Bus service is running at roughly 45 percent of normal capacity. The Tel Aviv light rail and Haifa cable car remain suspended, while the Jerusalem light rail has resumed partial service.
- Israeli hospitals and health clinics have **activated streamlined wartime protocols**, shifting critical services into protected and improvised facilities amid ongoing missile fire. Medical centers moved operating rooms and intensive care units into fortified underground spaces, while community doctors established temporary clinics in hotels housing evacuees. The Health Ministry instructed hospitals nationwide to transition immediately into emergency mode, drawing on experience from previous escalations. Medical staff reported that procedures for relocation and continuity of care were implemented more rapidly than in earlier conflicts. The response reflects institutional learning from prior wars, allowing the health system to maintain operations under sustained attack. Read more [here](#).
- On the labor front, **approximately 110,000 additional reservists were mobilized**, placing an added strain on families and employers. An estimated half a million workers were absent from the workforce due to reserve duty,

unemployment, or unpaid leave, representing roughly 11 percent of the labor force. Since the start of the operation, 3,560 new job seekers were registered, most of them on March 1.

- From an economic perspective, early data showed a sharp shift in consumer behavior, with overall **credit-card spending down more than 45 percent**, food purchases up by roughly 50 percent due to emergency stockpiling, and spending on clothing and footwear down nearly 90 percent. Israel's major ports in Haifa and Ashdod continue operating at full capacity under emergency protocols.
- International rating agency S&P **maintained Israel's credit rating** at A with a stable outlook, while highlighting increased fiscal pressure from rising defense expenditures and economic disruption. Daily economic losses associated with reserve mobilization were estimated at approximately **\$70–85 million**, with overall daily war costs estimated at around **\$700 million**, including both direct military expenses and lost economic output.
- **Mental-health data** indicated elevated but stable stress levels within Israel during the early days of the operation. In the first five days, resilience centers received 648 calls, averaging about 130 per day (roughly 40 percent fewer than during the opening days of the October 2024 war). The national emotional-support hotline received 4,510 calls during the same period, and health-fund support lines logged 1,159 calls, both lower than comparable periods in previous conflicts.
- A new survey by the Israel Democracy Institute found **broad public support in Israel for the current military operation** against Iran. According to the poll, support stood at 82% overall, including 93% among Jewish respondents and 26% among Arab respondents. The survey also found that 74% of Jewish respondents expressed trust in Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's handling of the operation, compared with just 16% among Arab respondents. A majority of Jewish respondents, particularly those with access to shelters or reinforced safe rooms, reported feeling protected from Iranian attacks. See more [here](#).
- A [Haaretz report](#) highlighted the **human toll of the war** through the experience of Mary Ann De Vera, known as "Michelle," a foreign caregiver who remained with the elderly Israeli woman she was caring for during a missile strike on their Tel Aviv apartment. According to the account, the two were separated by a single interior wall when the missile hit: the wall shielded the patient, who survived, while Michelle was killed. The story reflects the disproportionate risks faced by caregivers and other non-combatant workers who remain on duty during missile attacks.

First Week of War Data

- **Data compiled by the Taub Center** for Social Policy Studies in Israel point to significant human, economic, and social impacts inside Israel.
- In the first week of fighting, **11 Israelis were killed by missile strikes**, nine of them in Beit Shemesh. Since the start of the war, more than 1,563 people have been hospitalized, the vast majority with mild injuries. As of March 6, 87 injured individuals remained hospitalized, including four in serious condition, with

Tel Aviv (126 hospitalizations) and Be'er Sheva (121) recording the highest numbers.

- The report estimates an average of **260 injuries per day**, slightly lower than during Operation Rising Lion in June 2025. Missile fire also caused extensive displacement, with approximately 2,800 people forced to leave their homes, including about 1,350 residents of Tel Aviv and 660 from Beit Shemesh. As of March 5, 6,230 claims had been filed with the Property Tax Compensation Fund, primarily for damage to buildings, followed by home contents and vehicles.
- In economic terms, the Taub Center estimates the **direct cost of the current war** at approximately \$4 – 6.5 billion, driven primarily by munitions, interception systems, flight hours, and reserve mobilization. For comparison, the April 2024 missile attack was estimated at approximately \$1 – 1.3 billion, while Operation Rising Lion in June 2025 was estimated at around \$5 – 5.5 billion, roughly 1% of Israel's annual GDP. Israel's Chief Economist estimates that the economy is currently losing about \$2.4 billion per week, including roughly \$270 million per week attributable to the shutdown of the education system.
- **Consumption patterns** shifted sharply during the first week of fighting. According to Shva data, credit card spending declined by 27% compared with the preceding week, with the exception of food purchases, which rose by 21%. At the same time, aviation disruptions left more than 125,000 Israelis stranded abroad at the start of the war; by March 5, 14,200 had returned, mostly via land border crossings.
- Security indicators show a **steady decline in the number of air raid alerts nationwide** as the war progressed, alongside a growing share originating from Lebanon. By March 5, approximately 13% of alerts were triggered by fire from Lebanon rather than Iran. The report notes that while the scale of damage is so far lower than in Operation Rising Lion, none of these costs were included in Israel's 2026 state budget, implying a likely increase in the planned deficit as the government updates its fiscal framework.

Diplomatic Developments

- **Russian and Iranian leaders** held a phone call amid the war's escalation. According to the Kremlin, President Vladimir Putin reiterated Moscow's position in favor of ending military operations and returning to diplomatic channels. A statement emphasized Russia's support for an immediate cessation of hostilities and a political resolution.
- An attack that wounded UN peacekeepers in southern Lebanon prompted renewed international reaction. **French President Emmanuel Macron** publicly condemned the incident and stressed France's continued engagement in efforts to prevent further regional escalation. France reaffirmed its commitment to UNIFIL and underscored the stabilizing role of international forces along the Israel–Lebanon border. The comments followed confirmation that UN personnel had been injured during cross-border hostilities.

Fighting Spreads

- The **United Arab Emirates carried out a strike on an Iranian desalination facility**, marking its first direct offensive action in the war. The UAE is also reportedly planning to freeze billions in Iranian assets. The moves follow large numbers of Iranian drone and missile attacks on multiple Gulf states, including strikes inside the UAE in recent days.
- Earlier, Dubai's main airport saw **operations temporarily suspended** after an air-defense interception near Dubai International Airport, with witnesses reporting a loud explosion and smoke near the terminal area. Passengers inside the airport were ushered into train tunnels during the alert, before authorities announced a partial resumption of operations later the same day.
- Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian attempted to walk back earlier remarks, when he announced that the Islamic Republic would cease attacking its Muslim neighbors. Pezeshkian clarified that his earlier comments on Gulf attacks were **"misinterpreted by the enemy."** He said Iran seeks good relations with neighbors but is forced to retaliate when attacked.
- A loud blast was reported near the **US embassy in Oslo**, triggering a major police response. Norwegian police said there were no reports of injuries and that the cause remains unclear. Smoke was seen near the embassy compound amid heightened security alerts across Europe.

Jewish Federations and Partners

Jewish Federations of North America's Israel office has activated our emergency protocols and is in close contact with the government of Israel and our partners.

Some **Jewish Federations partner updates**:

American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC):

- JDC deployed emergency response activities in communities affected by recent missile strikes, working in coordination with government ministries and local municipalities. In Beit Shemesh, JDC delivered 1,700 tons of humanitarian assistance to evacuees housed in Jerusalem hotels, including essential supplies for families displaced from their homes. JDC also provided emergency medical and rescue equipment to strengthen volunteer and municipal response teams in the city.
- JDC began expanding the Ad HaBayit program in Beit Shemesh and Be'er Sheva to support families whose homes were severely damaged, with more than 100 new families already identified for assistance. The Ad HaBayit expansion supports displaced families through professional caseworkers, assisting with housing navigation, access to government benefits, and stabilization following displacement, with plans to scale support to hundreds of additional households.
- In northern Israel, seven municipalities formally requested emergency assistance in response to renewed threats; JDC is preparing to provide food, essential household items, medical equipment and community support personnel.
- JDC emergency operations are active in 24 northern locations, with capacity in place to expand support as needs increase.

- Nationwide, 200 municipal mental-wellbeing coordinators previously deployed through JDC-supported initiatives are providing immediate emotional support in communities under attack.
- JDC's Nafshi digital mental-health platform recorded over 7,000 new visits during the current escalation, indicating increased demand for emotional and psychological support.
- At the national level, JDC is coordinating emergency response efforts through a cross-sector roundtable with the Prime Minister's Office and participation in the Ministry of Economy's emergency operations center to support essential workers and municipal services.
- In Be'er Sheva, earlier JDC-supported investments in municipal information and analytics capacity enabled the city to rapidly identify affected households following a missile strike, including data on children, older adults and people with disabilities, allowing targeted assistance to be delivered within minutes.
- Emergency response kits previously provided through JDC-supported preparedness efforts were used by first responders during recent rescue operations.
- In response to a Ministry of Health directive, JDC is coordinating the replacement of 1,442 medical oxygen cylinders in municipal emergency kits, with 300 cylinders being replaced immediately, to ensure continued lifesaving capacity for volunteer teams.

The Jewish Agency for Israel:

As outlined in previous updates, the Agency continues its extensive activities on the ground as a result of the war. In particular, the just-announced Roaring Lion Fund for Victims of Terror has cycled into action and is providing rapid assistance to bereaved families, the injured, and those whose homes have been seriously damaged.

The Israel Trauma Coalition (ITC):

- ITC teams are currently operating in 10 hotels housing displaced families, providing on-site psychosocial support to evacuees.
- ITC professionals are supporting hundreds of displaced families, including in Beit Shemesh, through individual, family, and group-based interventions delivered in hotel settings.
- It has also expanded remote support beyond evacuation sites, delivering webinars and professional guidance for caregivers and families in multiple languages, including Arabic, Russian, English, French, Spanish, and Amharic.
- More than 500 households per day are participating in child-focused ITC activities designed to provide structure and emotional support, including online and in-person programming. Child-focused interventions include creative and therapeutic activities, such as story sessions and clown-therapy programs, as well as Arabic-language programming through ITC's Bedouin Resilience Center.

Jewish Federations **continue to monitor the situation** on the ground very closely and will report as needed.

For more information, please contact: Jewish Federations of North America's Dani Wassner dani.wassner@jewishfederations.org. Subscribe to this weekly update [here](#).