



3 March 2026

Title: US-Israel Conflict with Iran

Date: 3 March 2026

Risk Level: **CRITICAL**

SUMMARY

On 28 February 2026, the US and Israel launched coordinated attacks against Iran. The move comes following an inconclusive result of indirect talks between the US and Iran on Thursday. In response, Iran has targeted Israel in a series of kinetic attacks. Other countries in the region including Qatar, Kuwait, the UAE and Bahrain have also been targeted in Iranian strikes.

This ongoing US-Israel conflict is a massive escalation in longstanding regional tensions. The event has created a highly volatile and fluid maritime security situation, with vessels inevitably facing a variety of threats. **All vessels are advised to avoid transit in the Arabian Gulf, the Strait of Hormuz, the Gulf of Oman, and the Northern Arabian Sea. Spillover events are also expected in the Red Sea, the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, and the Gulf of Aden, and these areas should also be avoided.**

SITUATIONAL OVERVIEW

Kinetic Activity

There have been several confirmed reports of incidents involving kinetic weapons in the Arabian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman. Reports indicate that these incidents have occurred so far in the waters of Oman and the UAE. Vessels have been hit directly by drones and missiles and hit by fallen debris from intercepted weapons. These incidents have caused casualties and damage. ***On Monday evening, the IRGC claimed responsibility for directly targeting a vessel it believes to be linked to the US. This suggests that attacks on commercial vessels will be part of Iran's retaliation strategy moving forward.***

Ports have also been targeted in these attacks, and reports of port incidents in the region have increased. Logistic and energy infrastructure remain key targets for Iranian forces, and therefore such attacks are likely to continue throughout this conflict. Ports in the Arabian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman are particularly exposed to attack, but attacks reported at Duqm and Salalah in Oman indicate that Oman's ports in the Northern Arabian Sea may also be vulnerable.

The following port-related developments have been reported:

- The Port of Jebel Ali in the UAE has started limited operations. Operations were briefly suspended after the port was targeted in strikes.
- Operations were reportedly suspended at Zayed Port in Abu Dhabi, UAE after an explosion was reported near port facilities.
- Storage operations at the Port of Fujairah in the UAE have reportedly suspended operations.
- Oman's Port of Duqm has resumed operations after a temporary suspension, but the port is operating on high alert. Oman's Khasab port is operating with restrictions.
- Operations at all Bahrain's ports are still suspended. Crew changes are also suspended at Bahrain's ports until further notice.



Recommendation: Kinetic activity is expected to continue in the region for the next few days. The threat of incidents involving kinetic weapons – including direct hits and collateral damage – is high in the Arabian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, both at ports and in territorial waters. The threat is particularly high in the waters of countries that host US military bases, including the UAE, Oman, Bahrain, Kuwait, and Qatar. This applies to all vessels regardless of affiliation.

The Strait of Hormuz

According to a commander of Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), the Strait of Hormuz is closed as of Monday night. The commander stated that any vessels that attempt to transit through the Strait would be attacked. In contrast to Iran's warnings, US Central Command (CENTCOM) reportedly stated on Tuesday that despite comments from the IRGC, the Strait remains open.

The comments by the IRGC are the most explicit warning issued after years of threats that the Strait would be closed in retaliation for any attacks against Iran. Moves toward closing the strait also follow news of vessels receiving VHF transmissions barring ships from transiting through the Strait on Saturday. The IRGC's stern warnings should therefore be taken seriously. The threat level in the Strait is critical and the waterway is effectively closed, contrary to the comments by the US military.

Several major shipping companies have already suspended transits through the Strait of Hormuz, and AIS data shows that the Strait has been virtually empty as of Tuesday afternoon. As transit through the Strait has been deemed unsafe, hundreds of vessels have now been stranded in the Arabian Gulf and in the Gulf of Oman. This has caused a considerable amount of congestion near ports and anchorages in the area, particularly near the entrances to the Strait. The congestion has increased the risk of collisions.

Recommendation: It is recommended that vessels do not attempt to transit through the Strait of Hormuz as the risk of attack is high. This applies to all vessels, but particularly vessels affiliated with the US and/or Israel or carrying cargo from either of these countries. Due to the risk of collision brought on by vessel crowding, vessels that are currently located on either side of the Strait are advised to exercise caution whilst navigating in the area.

War Risk Insurance

Reports indicate that in response to the conflict, shipping companies are moving to implement war risk surcharges. War risk premiums have increased significantly in the last two days, with some reports stating an increase as high as 1% of the value of a vessel. Insurance companies have also announced the cancellation of war risk cover effective between 3-5 March 2026 for vessels in the Arabian Gulf. These developments will inevitably lead to a surge in insurance costs and will make vessels currently in the Middle East's key waterways uninsurable.

Electronic Interference

Electronic interference is affecting navigational instruments in the Arabian Gulf, the Strait of Hormuz, and the Gulf of Oman. The issue is affecting more than 1,000 vessels in the region. Electronic interference has been a long-standing problem in the region as a result of elevated tensions, but it has worsened due to this latest escalation. Merchant vessels are not usually the direct target of electronic interference but are typically indirectly affected by efforts to compromise military equipment.

Challenges with navigational equipment pose a serious threat to vessels, elevating the risk of unintended diversions and collisions. This is of particular concern near ports in the Arabian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, where congestion is a growing concern. Electronic interference is likely to worsen in the Red Sea as well, given the Houthis' intention to resume attacks against vessels.



Recommendation: *Vessels in the Arabian Gulf, the Strait of Hormuz, the Gulf of Oman, and the Red Sea are advised to monitor all electronic navigational aids for interference. Non-electronic methods of position fixing should be used to confirm positioning.*

Houthi Attacks in the Red Sea

In response to the attacks against Iran, the Houthis in Yemen have announced that they will immediately resume attacks targeting maritime traffic in the Red Sea. Since the announcement the Red Sea is still quiet, with no reports of any kinetic activity in the area. Attacks are still assessed to be imminent given the Houthis' declaration of solidarity with Iran.

The Houthis have not specified a target profile for attacks as they have in previous campaigns against shipping, but it is highly likely that vessels with US and Israeli links will be targeted. Still, the threat of attack applies to all vessels in the Red Sea, the Bab el-Mandeb, and the Gulf of Aden given the Houthis' track record of attacking vessels based on incorrect or outdated information.

Recommendation: *Transits through the Red Sea, the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, and the Gulf of Aden should be avoided. This applies to all vessels, but particularly vessels affiliated with the US and/or Israel or carrying cargo from either of these countries.*

INCIDENTS

The following incidents were reported in the Arabian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman since our last report:

- **UPDATE: 2 March 2026. Kinetic Attack. Port of Bahrain.** A tanker was hit by two unconfirmed projectiles whilst in the Port of Bahrain. The incident caused a fire on board. The crew was safely evacuated shortly afterwards but the vessel is still in port. One shipyard worker was killed, and two others were injured. Updated reports stated that the vessel was also hit by an uncrewed surface vehicle (USV).
- **2 March 2026. UAV Attack. Abu Dhabi, UAE.** Emirati media reported that the Musaffah fuel tank terminal in Abu Dhabi was targeted in a drone attack. The impact of the drone caused a fire, which was quickly contained. No casualties were reported.
- **2 March 2026. UAV Attack. NE of Khor Fakkan, UAE.** Iran has claimed responsibility for a drone attack targeting a tanker in the Gulf of Oman, shortly after exiting the Strait of Hormuz. According to Iran's Revolutionary Guards, the vessel was targeted for links to the US. Iranian media reports alleged that the vessel had been providing fuel to US Naval vessels, but this has not been confirmed.
- **3 March 2026. UAV Attack. Port of Duqm, Oman.** Omani media has reported that a fuel tank at the Port of Duqm was hit by a drone. The port area was reportedly targeted by several drones in the incident. The attack caused damage to port infrastructure, but no casualties were reported. Reports state Iran denied targeting Iran.
- **3 March 2026. UAV Attack. Port of Salalah, Oman.** Drone attacks were reported in southern Oman. Two drones were reportedly intercepted in the Dhofar Governorate, and one landed near the Port of Salalah. No casualties or damage were reported. This is the furthest south an incident has been reported since conflict broke out on Saturday.
- **3 March 2026. UAV Attack. Port of Fujairah, UAE.** A fire was reported after debris from an intercepted drone fell at Fujairah Port. The fire reportedly affected storage facilities at the port. No casualties were reported, and the fire has been contained.

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