MINTEL WORLD

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GLOBAL SECURITY AND DEFENSE DEVELOPMENTS DAILY

Region: Middle East | Europe | Indo-Pacific | Global
Date: 13 March 2026
Scope: Security | Energy | Diplomacy | Defence Industry
Classification: Client Confidential

Executive Assessment

The United States and Israel have expanded the scale and intensity of their military campaign against Iran, conducting sustained air strikes against ballistic missile infrastructure, radar networks, and Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps command centers. U.S. strategic bombers operating from both forward locations and the continental United States have participated in strike missions, with RAF Fairford emerging as a central hub for bomber operations. The concentration of B-1B and B-52H bombers at the base indicates a significant forward deployment designed to sustain long-range strike capacity against Iranian targets. At the same time, the operational tempo of the campaign has been supported by extensive logistical and refueling activities, although the crash of a U.S. KC-135R tanker aircraft in western Iraq highlights the operational risks associated with sustained high-intensity air operations.

Operational indicators suggest that the ongoing air campaign is significantly degrading Iran's ballistic missile launch capabilities. The number of daily missile launches has declined substantially since the beginning of the conflict, reflecting the impact of continued strikes on missile launchers and related infrastructure. At the same time, Iran continues to pursue retaliatory operations through missile and drone attacks targeting Israeli territory as well as U.S. and allied military facilities across the Gulf region. Iranian strategy increasingly appears to focus on expanding the conflict into maritime and energy domains by threatening commercial shipping and energy infrastructure in the Strait of Hormuz and surrounding Gulf waters.

The broader regional security environment is becoming increasingly unstable as attacks on commercial shipping and military facilities expand and the risk to energy infrastructure grows. Since the beginning of the conflict multiple commercial vessels have reportedly been attacked in the Gulf and near the Strait of Hormuz, while Iranian authorities have openly warned that shipping linked to the United States, Israel, or their partners could be targeted. The war is also driving a redistribution of global military resources as the United States shifts certain air defense systems and other capabilities from Europe and Asia toward the Middle East to sustain regional operations.

U.S. ATTACK ON IRAN - MIDDLE EAST DEPLOYMENT

- The U.S. Air Force has begun conducting strike missions against Iran using bombers deployed to RAF Fairford in the United Kingdom. Four B-1B strategic bombers reportedly carried out strike missions and subsequently returned to RAF Fairford.

- The U.S. Air Force conducted a bombing mission against targets in Iran using three B-52H and two B-2A strategic bombers that departed from bases in the continental United States. After completing the mission, the B-52 bombers landed at RAF Fairford Air Base in the United Kingdom, while the B-2 bombers returned to their home bases in the United States.

- Three additional B-52H strategic bombers were deployed to RAF Fairford, bringing the total number at the base to 12 B-1B and 6 B-52H bombers. This means approximately one-quarter of the U.S. Air Force's B-1B bomber fleet is currently forward-deployed at RAF Fairford.

- A U.S. Air Force KC-135R Stratotanker aerial refueling aircraft crashed in western Iraq. The incident occurred during aerial refueling operations conducted as part of Operation Epic Fury, the U.S.–Israeli campaign against Iran.

- The crash reportedly resulted from an aerial accident involving two KC-135 tanker aircraft. According to U.S. Central Command, one aircraft crashed while the second aircraft sustained damage but managed to conduct an emergency landing at Ben Gurion Airport in Israel.

- Four of the six crew members on board the crashed aircraft were confirmed dead, while search-and-rescue operations are ongoing for the remaining two personnel.

- Iran-backed Iraqi militia groups claimed responsibility for shooting down the aircraft, although U.S. officials have not confirmed this claim.

- Preparations began to transfer elements from a THAAD battery deployed in South Korea to the Middle East, intended to replace AN/TPY-2 radar systems damaged by Iranian kamikaze drone attacks.

- Transportation of Patriot air defense system components for the NATO deployment to Turkey continues. Components are being airlifted from Ramstein Air Base in Germany to Malatya Erhaç Air Base.

- U.S. and Israeli operations continue to degrade Iran's ballistic missile launch capabilities. A decline in daily Iranian ballistic missile launches has been observed since the first day of the conflict, reflecting the impact of ongoing comprehensive strikes on Iran’s missile launchers by U.S. and Israeli forces.

Day	Date	Estimated Ballistic Missiles
Day 1	Feb 28, 2026	~350
Day 2	Mar 1, 2026	~175
Day 3	Mar 2, 2026	~120
Day 4	Mar 3, 2026	~50
Day 5	March 4, 2026	~40
Day 6	March 5, 2026	~32+
Day 7	March 6, 2026	~28
Day 8	March 7, 2026	~35+
Day 9	March 8, 2026	~55
Day 10	March 9, 2026	~25
Day 11	March 10, 2026	~45
Day 12	March 11, 2026	~30
Day 13	March 12, 2026	~25

GLOBAL SECURITY DEVELOPMENTS

- The United States and Israel continued large-scale air strikes against Iran. Iranian ballistic missile infrastructure, military radar networks, and Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) command centers were targeted, while numerous explosions were reported in Tehran. Since the beginning of the war, more than 1,200 people are reported to have been killed in Iran.

- The Israeli Air Force continued conducting strikes against military targets inside Iran, while also maintaining air operations against Hezbollah infrastructure in Lebanon.

- Iran carried out new missile and drone attacks against Israel. Ballistic missiles and kamikaze drones launched from Iran targeted northern Israeli regions and several military installations, while Israeli air defense systems reportedly intercepted a significant number of incoming munitions.

- Iran appears to be pursuing a strategy aimed at expanding the conflict through energy and trade routes. Iranian authorities have openly declared that commercial shipping traffic in the Strait of Hormuz and across the Gulf could be targeted.

- Iran’s regional attacks are also placing oil infrastructure at risk. The possibility that Iran-linked elements could target ports and energy facilities is being assessed as a critical threat to regional energy security.

- Attacks against commercial shipping around the Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz have increased rapidly. Since the beginning of the war, at least 16 commercial vessels have reportedly been attacked.

- Iran continued attacks against U.S. and allied military facilities in the Gulf. Iranian missile and drone strikes have posed a direct threat to U.S. bases located in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates.

- A French soldier was killed during an attack in the Erbil region of Iraq

- The war in the Middle East has triggered a redistribution of global military resources. The United States has redeployed certain air defense systems and military assets from Europe and Asia to the Middle East.

- Gulf countries are reportedly seeking technical assistance from Ukraine to counter Iranian drone attacks. Ukraine's defensive methods developed against Iranian-made Shahed drones are becoming increasingly relevant for regional states.

GLOBAL DEFENSE DEVELOPMENTS

- The U.S. has ordered 23 additional SM-3 Block IB missile interceptors under a $267M contract modification awarded to Raytheon, raising the total to 78 missiles and restarting the production line.

- Lockheed Martin conducted the first flight test of the Precision Strike Missile Increment 2 from an M142 HIMARS launcher, testing systems designed to track moving land and maritime targets.

- The U.S. Air Force has awarded Boeing a $2.34 billion contract modification to support the development of the E-7A Rapid Prototype Airborne Mission Segment, part of the service's effort to field the Boeing E-7A Wedgetail airborne early warning and control aircraft.

- The Defense Innovation Unit (DIU) and the U.S. Navy have selected Anduril to address the persistent operational gap beneath the waves through participation in the Combat Autonomous Maritime Platform Project (CAMP).

- Indra Group and Diehl Defence have signed an agreement to jointly promote the development and production of air and missile defence systems aimed at strengthening Europe's industrial base and technological sovereignty.

- Israel is moving to purchase up to 5,000 Boeing GBU-39 Small Diameter Bombs in a reported $289 million deal aimed at rebuilding precision-strike stockpiles for the Israeli Air Force.

- The Brazilian Navy formally received the first Tamandaré-class frigate as part of the replacement of Niteroi-class frigates.

- The Polish Armed Forces have launched a training cycle for operators of the AS-3 MEROPS drone interceptor.

- Lockheed Martin announced the delivery of the second Aegis System Equipped Vessel (ASEV) shipset of AN/SPY-7(V)1 radar equipment to Japan.

- Patria and Latvia have signed a life cycle support agreement for the Common Armoured Vehicle System (CAVS) 6×6 fleet operated by the Latvian Armed Forces.

- Britain places order for 37 Remote Controlled Howitzer (RCH) 155, part of the service's long-term replacement for the AS90 self-propelled gun. A GBP 53 million contract has been awarded awarded by the Organisation for Joint Armament Co-operation (OCCAR) on behalf of the British Army, will see ARTEC GmbH manufacture 37 weapon systems for the Boxer-based artillery platform.

FORWARD LOOK – NEXT 7 DAYS

• Monitoring the operational tempo of U.S. and Israeli air strikes against Iranian military and energy infrastructure

• Monitoring the potential deployment of naval mines by Iran in the Strait of Hormuz and the corresponding increase in U.S. Navy mine countermeasure readiness.

• Tracking the targeting of Iranian naval vessels capable of mine-laying operations to mitigate threats to global energy and trade routes

• Tracking additional deployments of U.S. strategic bombers and logistical airlift flights supporting operations in the Middle East

• Indicators of further degradation in Iranian ballistic missile launch capacity and changes in retaliation patterns

• Potential expansion of Israeli military operations against Hezbollah infrastructure in Lebanon

• Deployment and operational use of additional air and missile defense systems across the Middle East

• Monitoring counter-drone deployments aimed at intercepting Iranian Shahed-type attack drones

• Diplomatic engagement between the United States, Russia, and other actors regarding possible conflict de-escalation