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GLOBAL SECURITY AND DEFENSE DEVELOPMENTS DAILY

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Executive Assessment

U.S. operations against Iran are intensifying through a combination of sustained strategic strike activity and expanded force deployment across multiple domains. Bomber missions involving B-1B, B-52H, and B-2A aircraft demonstrate a persistent long-range strike capability capable of targeting hardened and high-value sites from both forward bases and the continental United States. The deployment of additional A-10C aircraft, continued high-volume airlift operations, and the positioning of aerial refueling assets indicate preparation for prolonged and scalable operations. The movement of the USS George H.W. Bush to replace USS Gerald R. Ford, alongside the activation of USS Tripoli and the deployment of elements from the 82nd Airborne Division, reflects a layered force posture combining airpower, naval presence, and rapid ground force readiness. At the same time, Italy's denial of basing access highlights emerging constraints within allied support structures, suggesting potential friction in coalition logistics and operational flexibility.

Strategic signaling between the United States, Iran, and Israel reflects a calibrated escalation dynamic with overlapping military and political objectives. U.S. leadership is maintaining a dual-track approach that combines coercive pressure with conditional openness to de-escalation, including explicit threats to expand targeting to Iran's critical energy infrastructure. Iran has rejected negotiations under pressure while reinforcing a deterrence posture that emphasizes its capacity to target U.S. and allied assets across the region. Israeli operations are shifting toward sustained targeting cycles designed to prevent regeneration of Iranian capabilities, with continued strikes across Syria and Lebanon expanding the operational theater. Controlled Iranian missile and UAV activity against Israel indicates a measured response strategy focused on signaling rather than immediate large-scale escalation.

Regional stability is increasingly shaped by maritime insecurity and energy market vulnerability. The Strait of Hormuz remains a central leverage point, with disrupted shipping patterns, rising insurance costs, and heightened uncertainty affecting global energy flows. Gulf states are elevating military readiness and reinforcing defensive measures around critical infrastructure, while external actors including European states, Russia, and China are prioritizing de-escalation and energy security through diplomatic and strategic messaging. Indirect mediation efforts continue despite public denials of formal negotiations, and information domain activity has intensified through cyber operations and narrative control measures.

U.S. ATTACK ON IRAN - MIDDLE EAST DEPLOYMENT

- The aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush (CVN-77) has departed Naval Station Norfolk for a scheduled deployment. The carrier is expected to deploy to the Middle East to support ongoing Operation Epic Fury against Iran and replace USS Gerald R. Ford.

- The U.S. Air Force has begun conducting strike missions against Iran using bombers deployed to RAF Fairford in the United Kingdom. Two B-1B and two B-52H strategic bombers reportedly carried out strike missions and subsequently returned to RAF Fairford.

- Two U.S. Air Force B-2A strategic bombers conducted strike missions against targets in Iran after taking off from the continental United States and later returned to base.

- Reports indicate that elements of the U.S. Army's 82nd Airborne Division have begun deploying to the Middle East.

- U.S. Air Force logistical airlift operations to the Middle East and the Gulf continue. C-17 and C-5 cargo aircraft are conducting regular flights to support regional deployments.

- The U.S. Air Force has deployed 18 A-10C attack aircraft from the continental United States to RAF Lakenheath in the UK. The aircraft are expected to be deployed to the Middle East in the coming days.

- Additional aerial refueling tanker aircraft have been deployed to multiple bases across the Middle East and Europe.

- U.S. Central Command announced that the amphibious assault ship USS Tripoli has begun operations within the CENTCOM area of responsibility.

- Italy denied U.S. Air Force bomber aircraft permission to land at Naval Air Station Sigonella after discovering the base had been included without authorization as a staging point for missions linked to Operation Epic Fury.

GLOBAL SECURITY DEVELOPMENTS

- U.S. President Donald Trump stated that military operations against Iran could be expanded to include critical energy infrastructure if no rapid progress is achieved toward a ceasefire framework, explicitly referencing power generation and oil export systems as potential targets.

- Trump simultaneously signaled conditional openness to de-escalation, indicating that the United States may halt strike operations without fully restoring freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz, reflecting a dual-track coercion and negotiation strategy.

- Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei declared that Iran would not accept negotiations under military pressure, emphasizing that continued U.S. and Israeli strikes would be met with “proportionate and regionally widespread responses,” without specifying immediate escalation timelines.

- Senior Iranian military officials reiterated that U.S. bases, naval assets, and allied economic infrastructure across the Gulf remain within Iran’s target set, reinforcing a deterrence posture based on regional reach rather than immediate retaliation.

- Iran’s Foreign Ministry stated that disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz are a “direct consequence of foreign military aggression,” framing maritime instability as a reversible pressure tool contingent on cessation of strikes.

- Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu confirmed that operations against Iran will continue “for as long as necessary,” with an emphasis on degrading strategic capabilities rather than achieving rapid battlefield effects.

- Israeli defense officials indicated that recent operations have shifted toward sustained targeting cycles, including repeated strikes on previously hit facilities to prevent reconstruction and reconstitution.
- Iranian missile and UAV activity against Israeli territory continued at a controlled tempo, with launches assessed to prioritize signaling and system saturation rather than mass-casualty effects.

- Reports indicate continued Israeli strikes on Iranian-linked positions in Syria and Lebanon, expanding the operational theater and targeting logistics corridors associated with the IRGC and affiliated groups.

- The United States and Israel maintain operational coordination at the strategic level, though U.S. officials continue to emphasize non-involvement in certain Israeli tactical strike decisions.

- Maritime security conditions in the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman remain degraded, with multiple commercial vessels rerouting or delaying transit due to elevated threat perceptions and unclear rules of engagement.

- Insurance premiums for tankers operating in the region increased further, reflecting sustained risk associated with drone attacks, naval harassment, and potential mining scenarios.

- Energy markets remain highly sensitive to developments in the Strait of Hormuz, with continued volatility driven by uncertainty over supply continuity and escalation risks.

- Several Gulf states have elevated military readiness levels, including enhanced air defense postures and increased naval patrol activity around critical energy infrastructure.

- European governments called for immediate de-escalation while avoiding direct military involvement, prioritizing diplomatic channels and energy security contingency planning.

- Russia called for restraint while continuing to frame U.S. actions as destabilizing, maintaining its broader strategic messaging aligned with opposition to Western military interventions.

- China emphasized the need to secure maritime trade routes and called for multilateral dialogue, reflecting concern over energy imports and supply chain stability.

- Pakistan and Oman remain engaged in indirect mediation efforts, facilitating limited communication channels between Washington and Tehran despite public denials of formal negotiations.

- Information domain activity intensified, including cyber operations, disinformation campaigns, and restrictions on domestic communications within Iran, aimed at controlling escalation narratives.

- Global military posture adjustments continue, with multiple states reviewing force protection measures for deployed personnel and assets across the Middle East.

GLOBAL DEFENSE DEVELOPMENTS

- The U.S. Army awarded Leonardo DRS a $44.9 million contract to deliver 20 Joint Assault Bridge systems.

- The United States approved a $3.16 billion sale of up to 450 AIM-260 JATM missiles to Australia to extend allied air combat reach.

- U.S. Air Force F-15EX Eagle II assigned to Eglin Air Force Base flew a training mission over the southeastern United States as the service continued a combined developmental and operational test campaign on its newest Eagle variant.

- The U.S. Department of War announced a $1.356 billion contract modification for Lockheed Martin Space tied to the Conventional Prompt Strike program for advances USS Zumwalt destroyer hypersonic strike role.

- The U.S. Navy expanded SEWIP Block 3 production with Northrop Grumman, adding up to nine new electronic attack systems and the first carrier-bound unit.

- The U.S. Navy, acting through Naval Air Systems Command, has awarded Collins Elbit Vision Systems LLC (CEVS) a $585 million contract for the production and delivery of Lot 18 and Lot 19 F-35 helmet-mounted display hardware, covering U.S. services, international program partners, and Foreign Military Sales customers.

- The U.S. Air Force advances C-130H Hercules avionics modernization program to sustain global mission capability.

- The U.S. Air Force F-35A aircraft crashes near Nellis Air Force Base range in Nevada, pilot ejects safely with minor injuries.

- Boeing and the U.S. Department of War have agreed to a seven-year framework to expand production of PAC-3 seekers, aiming to meet growing global demand for air and missile defense systems.

- France has delivered 39 VAB armored personnel carriers to the Lebanese Armed Forces.

- A French Navy Suffren-class nuclear attack submarine deployed and recovered a U.S.-built Razorback unmanned underwater vehicle.

- China tests new Changying-8 autonomous cargo drone built to carry 3.5 tons over 3,000km.

- South Korea has deployed its first MH-60R Seahawk helicopters at Jinhae, activating a new anti-submarine warfare capability.

- Norway has awarded Kongsberg Defence & Aerospace and Salt Ship Design a contract to design a new standardized fleet of up to 28 naval vessels. The contract launches Project P1118, one of Norway's largest naval recapitalization efforts, with the first delivery targeted for 2030.

- Japan detected China's survey ship Xiang Yang Hong 22 deploying seabed sensors inside its EEZ near the Senkaku Islands.

- Honeywell Aerospace has announced a collaboration with Odys Aviation to develop an airborne counter-unmanned aerial system designed to protect critical infrastructure and strategic assets from evolving drone threats.

- NATO Multinational MRTT fleet reaches Full Operational Capability, strengthening refuelling and support capabilities.

- OHB Sweden has secured a €248 million contract to develop and manufacture 20 small satellites for the EUMETSAT Polar System – Sterna programme.

- Saab UK has received an order from the United Kingdom's Ministry of Defence for its Giraffe 1X compact radar systems, with a total value of approximately £24 million.

FORWARD LOOK – NEXT 7 DAYS

• Continued U.S. and Israeli air operations targeting Iranian missile, drone, and military infrastructure across the country.

• Expansion of U.S. and allied naval operations in the Gulf focused on mine countermeasure missions and protection of maritime routes in the Strait of Hormuz.

• Possible further decline or disruption in commercial shipping traffic through the Strait of Hormuz depending on the security situation.

• Ongoing Iranian drone and missile operations targeting regional military installations and maritime infrastructure.

• Additional allied naval contributions or escort missions for tanker convoys in the Gulf region.

• Further announcements of defense procurement and military modernization programs linked to emerging operational requirements.