

US violates ceasefire, launches strikes against Iranian sites in the Strait of Hormuz

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The US launched a new round of strikes on Iran on Friday in the most explicit indication yet that the recently signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has collapsed into an escalating and open conflict. U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) said its aircraft struck Iranian missile and drone storage locations and coastal radar sites near the Strait of Hormuz.

A report by Al Jazeera said the US strikes were near the Iranian port of Sirik. Al Jazeera also reported that Iran said it had “succeeded in neutralizing” the attack and pledged to retaliate in a statement shared by the ISNA news agency. The statement said, “We emphasize that this aggression will not go unanswered, and our response will be swift and decisive at a time and place of our choosing.”

An Iranian parliamentary security official, Ebrahim Azizi, accused Washington of attacking “in the middle of negotiations once again” and said the US president had shown no commitment to negotiation or ceasefire principles.

According to other reports, the US strikes were carried out in response to Iran’s launching of at least four one-way attack drones at a commercial vessel on Thursday, with one drone striking the ship’s upper deck and damaging it before the vessel continued its course.

CENTCOM confirmed the targets and presented the strikes as a limited but forceful response meant to punish the Iranian attack and deter further action. The reports indicate that the US strikes were not random but targeted the command-and-control infrastructure surrounding Iran’s maritime reach.

The exact physical damage remained unclear, and both CENTCOM and the *New York Times* noted that the full extent of the damage had not yet been determined. The news reports said the choice of targets was intended to send a message that Washington could hit the systems enabling drone operations and surveillance in the Gulf

without widening the war.

However, the response by President Trump and Vice President Vance was both threatening. Trump said Iran’s drone launch amounted to a violation of the ceasefire framework. He then portrayed the US strikes as responding to Iranian aggression rather than initiating escalation. JD Vance gave the direct warning, “... violence will be met with violence.”

Vance added that Iran had signed the ceasefire agreement and that if Tehran had disagreements over implementation, it could “pick up the phone,” but that military retaliation would follow if the agreement was challenged.

Iran said the drone strike was part of its effort to control passage through the Strait of Hormuz and warned that ships using routes outside Tehran’s approved framework would not be guaranteed safe passage or insurance coverage.

More specifically, the statement quoted by CBS said, “Any passage through routes outside the framework designated by PGSA [Persian Gulf Strait Authority] will not be covered by safe passage guarantees and will not be entitled to insurance coverage or related liabilities.”

Other reporting on the same incident says Iranian officials framed the move as a response to insecurity in the waterway and to what Tehran describes as continued US aggression, with Iran later warning vessels to use only routes authorized by Tehran.

Iran has once again rejected the American claim to maritime authority in the Strait of Hormuz. Reuters reported that Tehran insisted it had the right to control shipping there and warned Gulf states not to side with Washington after the cargo ship incident.

The Iranian line is that the strait lies within a contested security zone and that the US and its allies are using “freedom of navigation” language to mask coercive control over a vital strategic waterway. The dispute over

the strait is a key issue over whether the MOU means anything in practice.

The reported drone attack itself centered on a commercial vessel, identified in some reporting as the *Ever Lovely*, which was struck in the Strait of Hormuz near Oman. Trump said three other drones were intercepted, and the ship, while damaged, remained able to continue. AP and Reuters reported that the event led maritime authorities to pause efforts to move ships out of the area, indicating the immediate consequences for commercial traffic.

The MOU, signed only a week earlier, has now shown itself to be a piece of paper with little meaning in a war that has not ended. The language of the deal, including the phrase that Iran would “make arrangements using its best efforts” to ensure safe passage, was ambiguous from the start and left room for interpretation, and it has now become a mechanism for the collapse of the entire MOU.

Reports over the last week have shown that, far from receding, the conflict is broadening with Israeli attacks continuing in Lebanon, and Gaza remains under near-constant assault despite talk about a ceasefire and peace agreements. Just as it has in Gaza, the ceasefire framework contained in the MOU is emerging as a formal cover for the continuation of the imperialist war by other means.

On Friday, Israeli Defense Forces continued ground and aerial operations in southern Lebanon. Actions included combing operations in the border town of Ain Arab, advancing military vehicles toward Haris, a drone strike near Qabrikha and airstrikes near Nabatieh. Israel also dropped leaflets over the town of Mansouri ordering residents to evacuate. The military described this as a “reminder” to keep out of the area for civilian safety.

Despite US-led negotiations, Israeli warplanes launched two waves of airstrikes targeting the outskirts of Nabatieh al-Fawqa. Following talks in Washington D.C., Israel, Lebanon and the US signed an initial trilateral framework agreement on Friday for restoring sovereignty and establishing “pilot zones” in which the Lebanese Armed Forces will take control.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Israel Katz said Israel will not withdraw its forces from occupied security zones until Hezbollah is disarmed. Hezbollah leadership rejected prior US-brokered deals and maintained that Israel must fully withdraw unconditionally.

Taken together, Friday’s actions show that the ceasefire is highly fragile, if existing at all, and that Israel

continued to use military force to pressure villages near the border. The result was continued civilian deaths, displacement and an ongoing clash between formal diplomacy and battlefield realities.

The situation in Gaza, which has been moved off the front page of the news since the war with Iran began on February 28, is even more catastrophic. Palestinian and UN-linked reports say Israel has killed roughly 1,000 Palestinians since the ceasefire was announced, while Gaza’s Government Media Office says Israel has carried out 3,269 violations, killed 992 Palestinians and wounded 3,144 others.

Aid delivery has remained far below what was promised, with only 52,740 trucks entering Gaza out of the 147,000 required, according to the same reporting. These numbers show that the “agreement” has disguised the sustained Israeli campaign of attrition against Palestinians.

The WSWS has explained that the Gaza arrangement was designed to turn the Mediterranean coast into a site for speculative reconstruction once Israel had reduced Gaza City and other towns to rubble.

In this respect, Trump’s “Board of Peace” has served as political theater intended to legitimize a plan of conquest, displacement and future real estate plunder. The same logic now appears in the US-Iran memorandum, which functions less as peace than as an unstable pause inside a larger war project.

The contradictions at the core of the Middle East conflict remain unresolved. The US and Israel are pursuing a strategy aimed at subjugating the region through siege, bombing and occupation. The events on Friday confirm that the military conflict is moving into another stage, not away from it.

Only the independent mobilization of the working class across the Middle East and within the imperialist centers in a unified struggle against war and for socialism can break the cycles that are leading to a Third World War.



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