



## Operation Iron Swords Updated to 1 p.m., February 1, 2024

Northern Arena	Israeli Casualties	Rocket Fire
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 747 attacks</li><li>• 176 Hezbollah operatives killed</li><li>• 24 operatives of other terrorist-organization killed</li><li>• One non-affiliated operative</li><li>• One Lebanese army soldier killed</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approximately 1,300 military and civilian dead (unofficial estimate)</li><li>• 132 hostages remain in the Gaza Strip</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approximately 11,000 rockets and mortar shells</li><li>• Approximately 9,000 rockets and mortar shells launched from the Gaza Strip</li><li>• Approximately 2,000 rockets launched from Lebanon and 30 from Syria</li></ul>

### Overview<sup>1</sup>

►**The southern arena:** Over the past day IDF activity focused mainly on west Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip. In the northern Gaza Strip and Gaza City the forces continued activities against squads of armed operatives.

►**According to an unofficial estimate, since October 7, 2023, approximately 1,300 Israeli civilians and security personnel have been killed, 561 of them soldiers and officers; 132 civilian and military hostages are still being held by the terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip; 121 hostages have been returned to Israel.**

►**Negotiations for a hostage deal:** According to reports, the Palestinian organizations are discussing the offer of the hostage deal submitted to them and have not yet formulated their position. Senior Hamas members do not broadcast optimism and claim they have many comments on the proposal. A senior Palestinian political commentator called on the Palestinian organizations to reject the proposal as a "trap to prevent the historic Palestinian

<sup>1</sup> Click <https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en> to subscribe and receive the ITIC's daily updates as well as its other publications.

victory." Hezbollah also sent a message, through commentator Ibrahim al-Amin, who warned that Israel was trying to set a trap for Hamas with the hostage deal.

► **The situation in the Gaza Strip:** The Red Crescent issued an alert regarding the condition of the two hospitals in Khan Yunis, claiming there was a shortage of food and medical equipment. Josep Borrell, the EU foreign minister, called for UNRWA's activities not to be "paralyzed."

► **The northern arena:** Hezbollah claimed responsibility for seven attacks. In response, Air Force planes attacked and artillery was fired at Hezbollah targets in south Lebanon. A Hezbollah operative was reported killed in an airstrike.

► **Judea and Samaria:** The Israeli security forces continued their counterterrorism activities. A vehicle ramming attack was carried out against an IDF force near Giv'at HaAvot in Kiryat Arba; no casualties were reported. Mahmoud Abbas presented the proposed Palestinian Authority (PA) reforms at a Fatah conference. Jordan is reportedly assisting the PA in the matter.

► **Iran:** Given the threats issued by the United States to respond to the killing of the three American soldiers in Jordan, the commander of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps' stated Iran was not interested in war but was not afraid of it.

► **The pro-Iranian militias:** The Islamic Resistance claimed responsibility for attacking Haifa Port. In reality, no such event occurred. Apparently the Iraqi prime minister managed to convince the pro-Iranian militias not to take action against United States bases in Iraq. The Houthis continue attacking ships in the Red Sea. In response to the EU's intention to establish a maritime defense force, the Houthis reiterated that any country that participated in attacks on Yemen would become a "legitimate target."

► **The United States:** The commander of the American Army Central Command (CENTCOM) arrived in Riyadh and met with the chief of staff of the Saudi Arabian Army. The British minister of defense visited the Pentagon and held several meetings with senior United States government officials, including the United States secretary of defense.

## The Southern Arena

► Palestinian media reported on a number of major fighting centers: the Beit Hanoun region of the **northern Gaza Strip**; Israeli Air Force attacks in **Gaza City**; the al-Nuseirat and Deir al-Balah refugee camps in the **central Gaza Strip**; heavy attacks in the western part of **Khan Yunis**, especially the al-Amal neighborhood; and Israeli Air Force attacks along the Rafah-

Egypt border in **Rafah**. They also reported dozens of dead and hundreds of wounded (Ma'an, February 1, 2024).



**Al-Jazeera TV maps of the IDF's activity in the northern Gaza Strip and Gaza City (right), and the IDF ring enclosing Khan Yunis and the villages east of the city (left) (al-Jazeera YouTube channel, January 31, 2024)**

► **The southern Gaza Strip:** IDF forces continued fighting in the Khan Yunis region and are now focusing on the west of the city. The forces killed several armed squads in close encounters and with air support. During the fighting, the forces identified a long-range rocket launcher and directed a fighter jet which attacked and destroyed the launcher (IDF spokesperson, February 1, 2024).



**Right: Detecting a long-range missile launcher in western Khan Yunis. Left: The launcher is attacked and destroyed (IDF spokesperson, February 1, 2024)**

► On the morning of February, 2024, the Palestinians reported IDF attacks in south Khan Yunis and the removal of bodies from the western area of the city to Nasser Hospital after the IDF forces withdrew somewhat from the area of the Khan Yunis refugee camp (Shehab X account, February 1, 2024). The Palestinian Red Crescent reported that IDF forces had entered the al-Amal Hospital complex in west Khan Yunis a third time. According to the Red Crescent, the forces shot at the hospital buildings and at the surrounding area, and later left the scene (Wafa, February 1, 2024).



**IDF attacks in southern Khan Yunis (QudsN X account, February 1, 2024)**

► **The central Gaza Strip:** IDF fighters clashed with armed squads and killed dozens of terrorists (IDF spokesperson, February 1, 2024). The Palestinian media reported heavy attacks in the west of Gaza City and heavy exchanges of fire in the area (Shehab X account, February 1, 2024).



**attacks in Gaza City (al-Jazeera YouTube channel, February 1, 2024)**

► **The northern Gaza Strip:** IDF fighters continued raiding Hamas military buildings and clashed with armed terrorists (IDF spokesperson, February 1, 2024).





Attacks on Hamas terrorist facilities (IDF spokesperson, February 1, 2024)

## Israeli casualties

►According to an unofficial estimate, since October 7, 2023, approximately 1,300 Israeli people have been killed. According to the IDF spokesperson, 561 of them are soldiers and officers (224 since the start of the ground maneuver on 27 October, 2023); 132 civilian and military hostages are still being held by the terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip; 121 hostages have been returned.

## The issue of the hostages and a ceasefire agreement

►The Hezbollah-affiliated daily al-Akhbar reported from "sources" that during the past 24 hours the "organizations" held discussions regarding the cease-fire. Hamas is expected to give Qatar its answer in the near future, stating that it rejects any proposal that does not explicitly include a ceasefire. According to "the sources," Hamas said that another necessary condition for a ceasefire was guarantees that Israel would meet all of its commitments (al-Akhbar, February 1, 2024).

►**Taher al-Nunu, Isma'il Haniyeh's media advisor**, said there was progress in the talks, but they were not close to the finish line as portrayed in the media. He reiterated that only if the war stopped would they discuss a prisoner deal (al-Manar, February 1, 2024).

►**Osama Hamdan, a senior Hamas member**, said that the reports claiming a cease-fire would begin on Saturday were untrue, as Hamas, together with the various "organizations," was still evaluating the proposed deal submitted to them and had reservations regarding its substance (al-Manar, January 31, 2024).

►**Ali Barakeh, head of Hamas' "external" national relations, and Ali Abu Shahin, a member of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) political bureau**, held a joint press conference. Barakeh said Hamas was conducting internal consultations, including with the leadership of Hamas in the Gaza Strip, and with the other "organizations" to formulate their

answer which will be transmitted to the mediators. He said they had not yet finished examining the ideas, and the position of the leadership in the Gaza Strip had not yet been decided, and he estimated that they needed several days to formulate their final position and transmit it to the mediators. He said there was a unified position formulated at a meeting in Beirut on December 27, 2023, based on the fundamental ideas of a complete cessation of "aggression" in the Gaza Strip, the withdrawal of IDF forces from the Gaza Strip, the opening of the Rafah Crossing, the introduction of humanitarian aid for the residents of the Gaza Strip, the possibility the wounded could go abroad for treatment, and Arab and international commitment to the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip. Regarding the hostage deal, they had agreed it would be "everyone in return for everyone." According to Barakeh, what had been offered so far did not meet their demands. He said Jibril al-Rajoub, secretary of Fatah's Central Committee, had received a copy of the document and that Fatah had yet to officially respond to it (al-Mayadeen Programs YouTube channel, January 31, 2024).

► Asked about the PIJ's position regarding the proposal, **Ali Abu Shahin** stated that the organization's position was that the new proposal was no different from the Egyptian document that had already been given to Hamas and the PIJ, and that they had responded to it with a joint reply. He said the only essential difference was the length of time for each phase, but there was no guarantee or serious talk about a ceasefire. He said the PIJ's position on the issue was commonly known, but the issue required a joint Palestinian position. He added that the proposal did not lead to a ceasefire, and they wanted a real guarantee for one. Moreover, he said, the proposal did not offer a political solution because it did not deal with the "siege," the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip or the opening of the crossings. He claimed it was a package deal, and the issue of the Palestinian prisoners, although it was essential for them, was only a part of it (al-Mayadeen Programs YouTube channel, January 31, 2024).

► **Abd al-Bari Atwan, a Palestinian political commentator based in London**, published an article strongly attacking the proposal for the hostage deal formulated in Paris, calling it "a trap to prevent the historic Palestinian victory achieved in the invasion on the seventh of October." He called on the Palestinian organizations to reject the agreement and insist on the demand for a serious ceasefire and the withdrawal of all Israeli forces from the Gaza Strip. He also called on them not to surrender to the Arab mediators because, he claimed, they were driven by American dictates (Ra'i al-Youm, January 31, 2024).

► **Hezbollah** sent a message through political commentator Ibrahim al-Amin, who warned that Israel was trying to set a trap for Hamas with the hostage deal. He published an article entitled, "The entrapment deal: an attempt to drag the resistance to the guillotine," in which he wrote that Israel's inability to win clear victories in the Gaza Strip, its failure to put its hands on either the hostages or the leaders of the "resistance," the expansion of the tension in the region, the American administration's entrance into the pre-election campaign period, the implications of the International Court of Justice decision against Israel and the increasing criticism of its actions, have all become means of exerting pressure on the United States and Israel and its allies, declared and undeclared. According to al-Amin, Israel and the United States are trying to enlist the support of their allies from among the Arab countries and others in the region and to cause the "resistance in Palestine" to wage a broad fratricidal war aimed at splitting its ranks and causing the residents of the Gaza Strip to turn against their "brothers in Palestine." He added that the details of the talks for the hostage deal indicated that Egypt and Qatar, the mediators, had not received a commitment from Israel regarding the withdrawal of IDF forces from the Gaza Strip or the cessation of hostilities, and Israel was also not prepared for the residents of the Gaza Strip to return to their destroyed homes. Israel, he claimed, wanted to remain in a state of unlimited war and was not prepared for anything less than the elimination of the leadership of the "resistance" in the Strip or expelling them from the Strip and neutralizing their influence. According to al-Amin, the "organizations" had held consultations and their conclusion was unanimous: there would no meaning to a deal that did not include a complete cessation of the war, the lifting of the "siege" and the beginning of the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip (al-Akhbar, January 31, 2024).

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## The Gaza Strip

### Palestinian casualties

► **The Hamas-controlled ministry of health in the Gaza Strip** reported that as of 12:45 p.m., February 1, 2024, the number of dead since the beginning of the war stood at 27,019 and the number of wounded at 66,139 (ministry of health in Gaza Facebook page, February 1, 2024).

## The situation in the Gaza Strip

► **Dr. Ashraf al-Qidra, spokesman for the Hamas-controlled ministry of health in the Gaza Strip**, reported that the situation in the hospitals in Khan Yunis (Nasser and al-Amal) continued to be difficult. He claimed they had no food and there was a shortage of medical equipment. He added that Israel was responsible for the lives of the medical staff, the patients and those sheltering in the hospitals. He called on the Red Cross and the UN agencies to protect all those in the hospitals and provide the equipment that is lacking (ministry of health in Gaza Facebook page, January 31, 2024).

## UNRWA

► **Josep Borrell, the EU foreign minister**, said that UNRWA's role in providing humanitarian aid in the Gaza Strip had to be preserved. He said an investigation into the allegations was indeed required, but it could not be allowed to interfere with the agency's "vital and important work" (Josep Borrell's X account, January 31, 2024).

► **According to Ali Barakeh, head of Hamas' "external" national relations**, the American and Western decision to boycott UNRWA was political and part of the [alleged] war of "extermination" against the Palestinians, and its goal was to force the settlement of the Palestinian refugees in their host countries. He called on the governments of Syria, Lebanon and Jordan to meet immediately and discuss options to deal with the "conspiracy." He also suggested that they announce they would send the Palestinian refugees to Israel's borders if the UNRWA budget ran out (al-Mayadeen Programs YouTube channel, January 31, 2024).

## The issue of "the day after"

► According to an article in the Hezbollah-affiliated Lebanese daily al-Akhbar, Egypt began holding extensive consultations with regional parties, led by Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Jordan, regarding the situation after the ceasefire. It was also reported that although there was currently no comprehensive Egyptian perspective, Egypt had begun formulating a proposal regarding a Palestinian government that would be responsible for negotiations with the international community (al-Akhbar, January 31, 2024).



## The Northern Arena

### Hezbollah's actions

► Hezbollah claimed responsibility for **seven attacks**, using anti-tank missiles, rockets and a Falaq-1 rocket, targeting IDF posts and forces (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, January 31, 2024).



#### **Hezbollah attack on the IDF radar post in Har Dov (Fouad Khreiss' X account, February 1, 2024)**

- In response to Hezbollah's actions, Israeli Air Force fighter jets attacked military buildings used by Hezbollah in Aita al-Shaab, Beit Lif, Rchaf and Blida in south Lebanon. Artillery was also fired the area of Alma al-Sha'b and Aitaroun (IDF spokesperson, January 31, 2024).
- Videos and photos documenting the Air Force strikes were published in Lebanese media and on social networks.



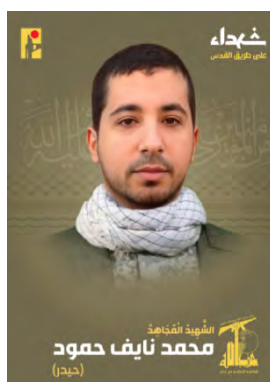
**Attacks on Beit Lif. (Right: Janoubia, January 31, 2024.  
Left: Fouad Khreiss' X account, January 31, 2024)**



**Attacks in Blida (Fouad Khreiss' X account, January 31, 2024)**

## Hezbollah casualties

►Hezbollah reported the death of Muhammad Naif Hamoud, aka Haidar, born in 1990, from Beit Lif (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, January 31, 2024). According to reports, he was killed in an Israeli Air Force attack on Beit Lif (Janoubia, January 31, 2024).



**The Hezbollah casualty (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, January 31, 2024)**

## Palestinians in Lebanon

►A delegation of Hamas representatives met with a delegation of Fatah representatives at the Palestinian embassy in Lebanon. The participants stressed their complete rejection of proposals and plans that violated the rights of the Palestinian people and its national principles. They noted the need to strengthen the united Palestinian action in Lebanon and also called on countries that had suspended their financial aid to UNRWA to reverse their decision (al-Ahed, February 1, 2024).

## The Lebanese government

►**British Foreign Secretary David Cameron** paid a visit to Lebanon where he met with **Najib Mikati**, the interim Lebanese prime minister, and with **Joseph Aoun**, commander of the

**Lebanese army**, with whom he discussed developments on the Israel-Lebanon border (Mikati's X account and the Lebanese Army X account, February 1, 2014).

► **Lebanese Foreign Minister Abdallah Bou Habib** said they did not accept Israel's view that Hezbollah had to withdraw northward without settling the issue of the border between Lebanon and Israel. He added that Lebanon was prepared to begin indirect negotiations with Israel to designate the borders in a manner similar to the negotiations conducted on the maritime border, but that it would not be possible to sign an agreement before the election of a president in Lebanon. He said the Lebanese administration was holding a dialogue with Hezbollah, noting that the latter stressed that Lebanon was responsible for the negotiations (al-Nashra, February 1, 2024).

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## Judea and Samaria

### Terrorist attacks

► On the afternoon of February 1, 2024, an attempted vehicle ramming attack was carried out against an IDF force operating near Hebron. The force responded with gunfire. The terrorist was hit, detained and taken for interrogation by the security forces (IDF spokesperson, February 1, 2024).

### Counterterrorism activities

► The Israeli security forces continued their counterterrorism activities in Judea and Samaria, detaining 41 Palestinians in the past day during their activity in Tubas, Jenin, Nablus, Bethlehem and Hebron (Wafa, February 1, 2024).

### Palestinian Authority (PA)

► Mahmoud Abbas chaired an expanded meeting of Fatah, which included members of the Central Committee, the Revolutionary Council, and the regional secretaries of Fatah in Judea and Samaria. In a speech given at the meeting, **Mahmoud Abbas, PA chairman**, addressed the issue of internal reforms, saying they were a national issue intended to serve the Palestinian people and support its national goals. He said they were aware of the preparations required for the process and that action was needed within the movement for the day after the war in the Gaza Strip. He said the current developments in the Gaza Strip were a prelude to improving all their national frameworks and that they had to hold general elections. Abbas

stressed that they were committed to changes and new processes in all areas, including the defense, justice, administration and financial systems. He further noted that they would continue to prosecute Israel in international courts for its actions in the Gaza Strip (Wafa, January 31, 2024).



#### **Mahmoud Abbas at an expanded Fatah meeting in Ramallah (Wafa, January 31, 2024)**

► The Arab daily al-Rai al-Youm, citing "sources," reported that Jordanian officials had begun assisting the PA in examining a list of candidates suitable to serve in new positions in the government. According to the officials, the Jordanian effort was an additional step in the structural reform program aimed at promoting a technocratic government that would function in the postwar phase. According to a "Jordanian source," Jordanian officials were asked to help reorganize the PA and received Mahmoud Abbas' approval. It was also noted that at a later stage, the Jordanians would also take part in the restoration of the security authorities (al-Rai al-Youm, February 1, 2024).

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## Iran

► **Hossein Salami, IRGC commander**, told a conference in Tehran that "Palestine" was on the path to victory and that Israel (the "Zionists") could not hold a small area in the war and would undoubtedly be defeated. Salami also addressed the American threats to respond to the killing of their three soldiers on the Syria-Jordan border, saying Iran was not interested in war but was not afraid of it (Tasnim, January 31, 2024).

► **Hossein Amir Abdollahian, Iranian foreign minister**, spoke with his **Saudi counterpart, Faisal bin Farhan**. They discussed relations between the two countries and regional

developments, especially the situation in the Gaza Strip and its implications (Fars, January 31, 2024).

► Reuters reported that the IRGC had significantly reduced the presence of its senior officers in Syria following the recent attacks attributed to Israel. According to the report, several senior Iranian officers and several dozen mid-level officers have left Syria, and the IRGC intends to rely more on the Shi'ite militias in Syria and on Hezbollah to maintain their influence in the country. According to the report, the decision was made to avoid being directly dragged into the regional conflict (Reuters, February 1, 2024). The Hezbollah-affiliated al-Mayadeen TV denied the Reuters report. The channel claimed, based on its "sources," that the "Iranian advisors" had been asked to continue their presence in Syria without their families (al-Mayadeen, February 1, 2024).

## Pro-Iranian militias

### Iraq

► The Islamic Resistance in Iraq claimed responsibility for a UAV attack on the Port of Haifa (Islamic Resistance Telegram channel, February 1, 2024). However, no such incident was detected.

► Al-Araby al-Jadeed reported that **Iraqi Prime Minister Muhammad Shia' al-Sudani** had reached an agreement with some of the Shi'ite militias in Iraq according to which they would stop their attacks on Iraqi soil, without reference to the attacks in Syria or "occupied Palestine." The cessation of the attacks was intended to avoid a possible American military response in Iraq that could complicate the security and political situation in the country. A member of parliament from the pro-Iranian parties in Iraq said the Kataib Hezbollah (Hezbollah Brigades) and Sayyid al-Shuhada militias had already effectively stopped their military operations against the Americans in Iraq, and the current difficulty was to convince the Nujaba movement to do so as well (al-Araby al-Jadeed, February 1, 2024).

### Yemen

► The British naval security firm Ambrey reported that a missile launched from Yemen had hit a merchant ship off the coast of the country and that the ship had reported an explosion on board (Agence France-Presse, February 1, 2024).

► **Yahya Saria, spokesman for the Houthi armed forces**, said Yemeni naval forces had attacked the American merchant ship KOI with several naval missiles while it was en route to

Israeli ports and that they hit it directly. Saria also stressed that the forces would not hesitate to launch large-scale military operations and respond to any American-British action against Yemen (Yahya Saria's Telegram channel, January 31, 2024).


► The United States Army Central Command (CENTCOM) reported that on January 31, 2024, at 3:30 p.m. (Sana'a time), United States forces attacked and destroyed a Houthi surface-to-air missile after identifying that it was ready for launch and determining that it posed an immediate threat to American aircraft (CENTCOM X account, January 31, 2024). CENTCOM later announced that at 8:30 p.m. (Sana'a time), the Houthis fired an anti-ship ballistic missile towards the Gulf of Aden, and it was successfully intercepted by the destroyer USS Carney. It was also reported that at 9:10 p.m., the destroyer shot down three Iranian drones in its vicinity and that no damage or casualties were reported (CENTCOM X account, February 1, 2024).

► The next day, CENTCOM reported that on February 1, 2024, at around 1:30 a.m. (Sana'a time), they attacked a ground control station of drones and ten Houthi drones in areas under their control in Yemen. It was also reported that the targets of the attack had posed an immediate threat to merchant ships and United States Navy ships in the area (CENTCOM X account, February 1, 2024).

► **Ali al-Qahum, a member of the Houthis' political bureau**, said their latest operation was a response to the "aggression" against the city of Saada in northern Yemen and was intended to send a clear message that they kept their finger on the trigger. He said the Houthis' continuous activity reflected their support for the Gaza Strip and willingness to defend their land. He noted that developments were pointing to a ground escalation by the United States and Britain against Yemen, and that any such movement in the al-Hudaydah province or other areas would provoke a strong response (al-Mayadeen, February 1, 2024).

► EU defense ministers met in Brussels to discuss the establishment of a naval force to protect navigation in the Red Sea (EU website, January 31, 2024). **Josep Borrell, the EU's foreign policy chief**, announced that maritime security in the Red Sea had deteriorated significantly over the past few weeks and that they were promoting the establishment of a naval force to protect navigation in the region, which would probably be launched on February 19, 2024. He stressed that the activity of the forces would be in accordance with the threat facing them and that they would not carry out any action on land, only at sea (Euronews Network, February 1, 2024).

► In response to the European Union's announcement, **Mohammad al-Bukhaiti, a member of the Houthis' political bureau**, reiterated that they had no hostile intentions towards European countries and hoped that their leaders would not take part in the attacks against Yemen, but would act to end the siege on the Gaza Strip. He noted that any country that took part in the attacks against Yemen would become a legitimate target (Mohammad al-Bukhaiti's X account, February 1, 2024).

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## The Arab Arena

### Egypt

► **Egyptian Defense Minister Mohammed Zaki** met with **David Satterfield, the American special envoy for Middle East humanitarian issues**, who heads a delegation currently visiting Egypt. The meeting discussed the current situation in the Gaza Strip and efforts to continue delivering aid to the Strip (Egyptian armed forces spokesman's X account, January 31, 2024). In another meeting between **David Satterfield** and **Sameh Shoukry, the Egyptian foreign minister**, the two discussed recent developments in the region, particularly in the Gaza Strip, and ongoing efforts to bring humanitarian aid into the Gaza Strip. They stressed that the UN and Security Council resolutions had to be fully implemented (Egyptian foreign ministry spokesman's X account, January 31, 2024).

### Saudi Arabia

► **Gen. Michael Kurilla, CENTCOM commander**, arrived in Riyadh and met with **Gen. Fayyad al-Ruwaili, chief of staff of the Saudi Army**. They reportedly discussed bilateral relations and the possibilities of cooperation and coordination between the countries in the fields of defense and military (Saudi defense ministry X account, February 1, 2024).

► At the end of the **Emir of Kuwait's** visit to Riyadh and his meeting with **Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud**, the two issued a joint statement saying they had discussed the situation in "Palestine" and expressed concern over the humanitarian disaster in the Gaza Strip. They stressed the need to halt military operations in the Palestinian territories and protect civilians in accordance with international law. Regarding the freedom of navigation in the Red Sea, they stressed the importance of protecting the security and stability of the region

and respecting the right to maritime navigation under international law (Safa, January 31, 2024).

## The International Arena

### United States

- ▶ **Grant Shapps, the British Secretary of Defense**, visited the Pentagon and held several meetings with senior American administration officials. In a meeting with **Lloyd Austin, American Secretary of Defense**, Austin stressed that they stood shoulder to shoulder against groups supported by Iran and that there was a red line that should not be crossed. He also stressed that the United States and Britain were committed to the international order. Shapps also met with **Jake Sullivan, American national security advisor**, to discuss the situation in the Middle East, the extensive security cooperation between the countries, and the continued efforts to deal with Houthi attacks alongside the need to deal with the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip (The Telegraph, February 1, 2024). **American Secretary of State Antony Blinken** met with Grant Shapps and discussed freedom of navigation and maritime security in the Red Sea, as well as the latest attack on the American forces in Jordan (Antony Blinken's X account, February 1, 2024).
- ▶ The United States Department of the Treasury imposed new sanctions on several individuals in Iran and on entities and individuals in Lebanon and Turkey for supporting the financial system of the IRGC's Qods Force and Hezbollah in Lebanon (Reuters, January 31, 2024).