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Demands in Congress for war with Iran after drone kills 3 US soldiers in Jordan



US Marines conduct a live-fire exercise during Intrepid Maven in Jordan, July 10, 2023. [Photo: Marine Corps Cpl. Khalil Brown]

US Central Command claimed Sunday that three US soldiers were killed and 25 injured in a drone strike against a US base in Jordan near the Syrian border. US officials told the *New York Times* that the strike hit a barracks housing troops at a US base known as Tower 22.

The Islamic Resistance in Iraq claimed credit for the attack, stating it was retaliation for US support for the genocide in Gaza.

US politicians seized upon the deaths of the American soldiers to call for a direct US attack on Iran, which would greatly intensify the sprawling war throughout the Middle East triggered by Israel's genocide in Gaza.

Republican Senator Lindsey Graham called on the United States to strike “targets of significance inside Iran.”



A map showing the location of the US Tower 22 airbase inside Jordan, where US troops were attacked. [Photo by mapchart.net / [CC BY-SA 3.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/)]

“Hit Iran now, hard,” Graham declared. “The only thing the Iranian regime understands is force,” said Graham, adding, “Until they pay a price with their infrastructure and their personnel, the attacks on US troops will continue.”

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, a Republican, called on the administration to impose “serious crippling costs” on Iran.

Republican Senator Dan Sullivan called for “a clear, lethal and overwhelming response.”

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Republican Senator Tom Cotton called for a “devastating military retaliation against Iran’s terrorist forces, both in Iran and across the Middle East.”

Some Democrats also joined the clamor for war. Retired US General and former NATO Commander Wesley Clark, once a candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination, said, “The US should stop saying ‘we don’t want to escalate.’ This invites them to attack us. Stop calling our strikes ‘retaliation.’ This is reactive. Take out their capabilities and strike hard at the source: Iran.”

President Joe Biden, in announcing the deaths, declared, “We will hold all those responsible to account at a time and in a manner of our choosing.”

Bloomberg News reported, citing unnamed sources, that the US was contemplating direct attacks inside Iran. “One possibility is covert action that would see the US strike Iran without claiming credit for it but sending a clear message regardless,” the news service wrote. “The Biden administration could also target Iranian officials directly, as former President Donald Trump did when he ordered the killing of General Qassem Soleimani in Baghdad in 2020.”

A direct US attack inside Iran would massively inflame what is already a regional shooting war throughout the Middle East.

In an article headlined “The Ever-Expanding Middle East War,” *The Economist* explained: If you drew a diagram of who is shooting at whom in the Middle East, it would look increasingly like a bowl of spaghetti. What began in October as a war between Israel and Hamas has now drawn in militants from four other Arab states. In addition, Iran, Israel, and Jordan all bombed Syria this month. Iran also unexpectedly bombed Pakistan, which must have wondered how it got dragged into this mess.

In the past two weeks, the United States has carried out strikes inside Syria, Iraq and Yemen, while its ally Israel is exchanging daily fire across its northern border with Lebanon, struck at alleged Iran-linked targets in Syria, and had military clashes with the Egyptian armed forces. Two US Navy SEALs were killed earlier this month during a raid on a ship the US alleged was carrying weapons to be used by Houthi rebels in Yemen.

The escalating war throughout the Middle East takes place as the United States is deepening its complicity in the genocide in Gaza.

On Friday, the Biden administration announced that it would suspend funding for United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). The organization is the main lifeline for food and medical aid getting into Gaza, whose population is facing widespread starvation due to a deliberate Israeli blockade. The UK, Finland, Australia, Canada, Italy, the Netherlands and Switzerland also announced that they would suspend funding for the organization.

The US claimed that the action, which would only further mass death throughout Gaza, was in response to allegations that a dozen UNRWA employees took part in the October 7 attack on Israel. UNRWA employs 13,000 people in Gaza.

World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus declared, “We appeal to donors not to suspend their funding to @UNRWA at this critical moment. Cutting off funding will only hurt the people of #Gaza who desperately need support.”

Last week, the International Court of Justice ordered Israel to suspend its blockade of Gaza in response to a case brought by South Africa alleging Israel was carrying out genocide in Gaza.

Agnes Callamard, the secretary-general of Amnesty International, condemned the move in a statement on Twitter. “Sickening heartless decision of the richest countries in the world to punish the most vulnerable population on earth because of the alleged crimes of 12 people. Right after the ICJ ruling finding risk of genocide. Sickening.”

Israel has responded to the ICJ ruling by intensifying its forcible displacement of Palestinians. In a statement published Sunday, the Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor warned,

Less than two days after the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruled that Israel would be subject to temporary measures as a result of its military operations infringing upon its obligations under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide, including mass forced displacement to unsafe locations, thousands of people were forcibly evacuated from the Khan Yunis refugee camp and several other parts of the governorate to the Strip’s western coastal areas.

To date, 32,000 Gazans have been killed, including those both confirmed dead and who have been missing for more than two weeks, according to the monitor. These include 115 journalists, 675 healthcare workers and 165 civil defense workers. The vast majority of the dead are either women or children; 1.95 million people have been internally displaced.

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