

US-Iran Conflict Briefing

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U.S. strike plans for Iran could include the mother of all bombs

- CNN reported on October 15, citing multiple U.S. officials, that the U.S. military has developed new strike plans that could include using the GBU-43/B Massive Ordnance Air Blast Bomb, known as the mother of all bombs, against Iranian energy infrastructure and nuclear sites if President Trump orders renewed combat operations. — [CNN](#)
- CNN reported that military plans for striking Iranian nuclear sites including Pickaxe Mountain also explicitly call for using the MOAB, according to a second source. — [CNN](#)
- Reuters summarized the CNN report on October 15 and said it could not immediately verify it; no strike order has been announced. — [Reuters](#)
- The Associated Press account carried by the Washington Post likewise described U.S. military plans that call for the MOAB's use on Iranian energy infrastructure and nuclear sites, including Pickaxe Mountain, if renewed strikes are ordered. — [Washington Post](#)
- On the disputed question of effectiveness, the less escalatory view leads: CNN reported that experts question the MOAB's effectiveness for deeply buried nuclear facilities. — [CNN](#)

U.S. considers easing shadow-fleet sanctions to cut freight rates

- Reuters reported that the Trump administration is considering easing sanctions on so-called shadow fleet vessels that have transported oil and petroleum products from countries including Russia, Iran and Venezuela, in an effort to reduce record-high global freight rates, according to a U.S. official speaking on Wednesday, October 14. — [Reuters](#)
- Reuters reported the discussions center on the United States potentially allowing non-sanctioned 'legal oil' to flow on previously sanctioned vessels, with companies required to apply to the U.S. Treasury Department to use the vessels. — [Reuters](#)
- Reuters reported on October 14 that Democratic lawmakers in the U.S. House sought documents on the Trump administration's oil blockade of Iran. — [Reuters](#)

Nine Hormuz attacks since Monday; oil flow below a quarter of pre-war levels

- CNN reported on October 15, citing UKMTO data, that nine attacks in or near the Strait of Hormuz have been reported since Monday, including a drone strike on a tanker. — [CNN](#)
- CNN reported on October 15, citing Kpler data, that only 4.147 million barrels of oil successfully transited the Strait of Hormuz on Monday, less than a quarter of pre-war levels, and that the seven-day average of oil flow through Hormuz has dropped sharply since early October. — [CNN](#)

Hormuz disruption hits harvests as envoy rules out a deal leaving Iran bomb-capable

- Reuters reported on October 15 that International Fund for Agricultural Development President Alvaro Lario said disruption to shipping through the Strait of Hormuz is now becoming visible in agricultural harvests, threatening lower farm yields and higher food prices. — [Reuters](#)

- Reuters reported on October 15 that Lario said Hormuz-related fertilizer, fuel and transport disruptions have led to more cautious planting and reduced fertilizer use, that agricultural commodity prices rose 13% in the third quarter, and that further increases are expected in the fourth quarter of 2026 and the first quarter of next year. — [Reuters](#)
- Reuters reported on October 14, under the headline 'Trump envoy says no Iran deal that leaves it able to build nuclear bomb,' that envoy Mendelson set that condition on any Iran deal. — [Reuters](#)

Markets

- Brent crude was at \$104.52 a barrel on October 15. — [Reuters](#)
- WTI crude was at \$93.97 a barrel on October 15. — [Reuters](#)
- The U.S. average diesel price was \$6.179 a gallon in the EIA weekly figure for the week reported on October 12. — [Reuters](#)

Shipping

- Only 4.147 million barrels of oil successfully transited the Strait of Hormuz on Monday, October 12, less than a quarter of pre-war levels, according to Kpler data cited by CNN, and the seven-day average flow has dropped sharply since early October. — [CNN](#)

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