

United States and Iran Conflict Drags On



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2026-08-29

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US becomes bogged down in its own “SMO” as 60-day ceasefire expires, negotiations stall, and Tehran claims it will now go on the offensive.

Details. The US-Iran interim [Memorandum of Understanding](#) (MoU) – which was signed on 17 June and provided for a 2 month ceasefire and further peace talks – officially expired, with officials acknowledging the diplomatic track has [ended](#).

► US President Trump initially stated [secret](#) backchannels were still being used to contact Iranian leadership, but now [denies](#) that there are any ongoing talks. Trump ended his conciliatory rhetoric, [stating](#) that Iran will never make the “necessary” nuclear deal to end the conflict peacefully. The president escalated with claims that the Strait of Hormuz is American territory, and stated [shipping damages](#) will be paid using seized Iranian cash controlled by Washington.

► With direct bombing seemingly losing effectiveness, Washington recently shifted to economic warfare, with additional [sanctions](#). The US Treasury [announced](#) it is “launching an economic onslaught against Iran’s financial connections around the globe,” threatening severe consequences against any country refusing to cut ties with Tehran. Iran warned that supporting American [sanctions](#) will be considered an [act of war](#).

► The Iranian military announced a shift from a defensive strategy to a “[fully offensive](#)” posture, signalling increasing commitment to the conflict instead of diplomacy. Iranian officials warned all bases utilized by the American military are valid targets, and the IRGC are [reportedly](#) planning to strike NATO bases in Europe if the conflict escalates.

► Whilst the [frequency](#) of attacks from both sides has fallen since the MoU was signed, major strikes [continue](#), and cargo traffic through Hormuz is still largely [blocked](#) despite claims of free passage. Middle East tensions are worsening as Gulf Arab states have [launched](#) strikes against Iran and [broken](#) economic ties. The Pentagon deployed an [aircraft carrier](#) to replace the previous one, as mounting American casualties now exceed [750](#) dead and wounded troops.

Context. This sits within a broader collapse of American diplomatic initiatives globally. In the Levant, despite Hamas signaling a willingness to [disarm](#), Israel formally [rejected](#) the next phase of the Gaza peace plan and continued expanding operations into Lebanon. The European “SMO” conflict remains unresolved despite last year’s Trump-Putin [Alaska summit](#).

► Trump originally negotiated the Memorandum of Understanding to pause hostilities, secure a diplomatic exit leaving the USA with a geopolitical advantage, and steer Iranian capitalists away from Chinese [influence](#). However, the agreement rapidly collapsed in July over maritime passage disputes in the Strait of Hormuz, where renewed Iranian attacks on commercial tankers provoked massive American retaliatory [airstrikes](#).

► The US initially echoed rhetoric [mirroring](#) the Russian “Special Military Operation”, selling the [strikes](#) as a quick, 4-week surgical intervention with limited objectives. Instead, the conflict has devolved into an open-ended conflict, lasting now 160+ days.

► Despite aggressive posturing, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian defended the expired memorandum as the [best path](#) out of the stalled conflict, demonstrating that Iran is also exhausted and that some regime [elements](#) still desire a diplomatic exit.

Original article