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UAE SITREP DOCUMENT

DAY 238, THE 213TH EDITION: THE WEEK TO 23 OCTOBER. US AND ISRAELI PLANS FOR A "SHORT AND INTENSIVE" OPERATION AFTER 3 NOVEMBER ARE REPORTED; IRAN ANNOUNCES AN "OFFENSIVE" DOCTRINE AND THREATENS GULF UNDERSEA CABLES. A TUG IS STRUCK BY TWO PROJECTILES NORTH-EAST OF KHOR FAKKAN (AT SEA, CAUSE UNCONFIRMED, NOT A STRIKE ON UAE TERRITORY). THE US ORDERS NON-EMERGENCY STAFF OUT OF SAUDI ARABIA AFTER AN ATTACK ON DAMMAM AIRPORT. BRENT ABOVE $114. NO CONFIRMED STRIKE ON UAE TERRITORY. MAXIMUM HELD, HIGH READINESS

Prepared for the CEO

Westminster Security Group Ltd

23 October 2026 (0900 GMT). Weekly edition: 16 October (0900 GMT) to 23 October (0900 GMT)

Subject: The Security Situation in Dubai, the UAE, and the Wider Middle East

Classification: STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

⚠️ **MAXIMUM ALERT:** THE WEEK BROUGHT THE MARITIME WAR TO THE UAE'S EAST COAST AND MOVED THE MAIN FRONT CLOSER TO A DECISION. THE ALERT REMAINS AT MAXIMUM. On 18 October UKMTO reported that a tug sailing south north-east of Khor Fakkan was struck by two projectiles of unknown origin, causing damage and one minor injury; the tug continued its voyage. This was a vessel at sea off the UAE's east coast, with the cause unconfirmed, and not a strike on UAE territory, but it is the closest reported incident to the UAE in this phase. The New York Times reports that US and Israeli militaries have planned a "short and intensive operation" against Iran after the 3 November US midterm elections; the White House repeats that the US "will not be attacking Iran at any time prior to the midterm elections". Iran's IRGC has announced an "offensive and asymmetrical" doctrine and has said Gulf undersea cables could be targets. The US has ordered non-emergency staff and families to leave Saudi Arabia after an attack on Dammam airport, and Brent has risen above $114. There is NO CONFIRMED STRIKE on UAE territory, ports or infrastructure. Westminster Security MAINTAINS MAXIMUM ALERT, keeps both phases suspended, holds readiness at a high level, and advises clients to complete departures, protect energy and water resilience, and suspend all Strait transits.

⚖️ **MIXED SIGNALS:** FEW EASING SIGNALS AGAINST CLEAR PREPARATIONS ON BOTH SIDES. On the easing side, Foreign Minister Araghchi said on 18 October that if the US meets Iran's conditions the Strait would reopen on the sixth day and negotiations would start on the seventh; Iran has offered to mediate between Saudi Arabia and the Houthis; the White House's pre-3 November commitment stands; Riyadh airport has reopened to limited traffic; and CENTCOM says it escorted about 400 merchant vessels through the Strait in a week. On the harder side: President Trump says the US is "not negotiating" with Iran and that "something one way or another will happen, fairly soon"; reported US-Israeli plans for a post-election operation; Israeli jets reportedly flew toward Iran in a drill; the IRGC's new doctrine, its threat to US bases over naval escorts and its threat to undersea cables; continued ship attacks and unverified Iranian mine claims; and attacks on Saudi airports and ministries. The preparation signals dominate.

⚠️ **ASSESSMENT:** THE RISK PROFILE FOR THE UAE HAS RISEN THIS WEEK. THE ALERT STAYS AT MAXIMUM. Three changes bear directly on the UAE. First, the tug struck north-east of Khor Fakkan shows that attacks on shipping now reach the UAE's east coast, the approaches to Fujairah and Khor Fakkan on which the UAE relies to bypass the Strait. Second, Iranian threats now name targets that matter to the UAE: undersea cables in the Strait and, in remarks by Iran's security chief on 11 October, digital infrastructure in the UAE, together with the ship-to-ship oil transfers Iran says it is targeting. Third, the reported US-Israeli planning gives the main front a likely decision window after 3 November, and Iran's stated doctrine now includes offensive action against countries that attack it. None of these is a strike on UAE territory, and there is NO CONFIRMED STRIKE on UAE territory. But the period from 3 November should be treated as one of acute risk for the UAE. The posture remains MAXIMUM with high readiness.

1. SITUATION SUMMARY: DAY 238, THE WEEK IN REVIEW, 16 TO 23 OCTOBER

Over the seven days to 09:00 GMT on 23 October, preparations on the main front became more visible and the maritime war reached the UAE's east coast. The New York Times reports that US and Israeli militaries have developed plans for a "short and intensive operation" against Iran after the 3 November midterm elections, and that Defense Secretary Hegseth has met Prime Minister Netanyahu; the White House says the US will not attack Iran before the elections, and President Trump says the US is "not negotiating" with Iran and that something will happen "fairly soon". Iran's IRGC has announced an "offensive and asymmetrical" doctrine, warned that US naval escorts could trigger action against US bases, and said undersea cables in the Strait could be targeted. At sea, UKMTO counts 23 attacks this month and says most ships now decline to report them. On 18 October a tug was struck by two projectiles north-east of Khor Fakkan, with one minor injury; this was at sea, cause unconfirmed, and not a strike on UAE territory. Iran claims further mine strikes, which the Joint Maritime Information Centre found unsubstantiated. In Saudi Arabia, an attack on Dammam airport killed one person and injured eight, the US ordered non-emergency staff to leave the kingdom, and Riyadh airport reopened to limited traffic. Brent rose above $114. There is no confirmed strike on UAE territory, ports or infrastructure. Westminster Security MAINTAINS MAXIMUM ALERT with readiness at a high level, keeps both phases suspended, and advises clients to complete departures, protect energy and water resilience, and suspend all Strait transits.

Where Things Stand

Element	Status (as of 0900 GMT Friday 23 October; week from 16 October)
Alert level	**MAXIMUM (held), high readiness.** Both phases suspended. Post-3 November operation reported planned; attacks at sea reach the UAE's east coast. Complete departures; high readiness; suspend all Strait transits.
US decision-making	**PLANS REPORTED; NO ATTACK BEFORE 3 NOV (STATED).** NYT: US-Israeli plans for a "short and intensive operation" after the midterms. White House: no attack before the elections. Trump: "not negotiating"; something will happen "fairly soon".
US force posture	**BLOCKADE AND ESCORTS.** CENTCOM: blockade has kept about $25bn of Iranian oil from export; about 400 merchant vessels escorted in a week. US ordered non-emergency staff out of Saudi Arabia (21 Oct). Reports of US strikes near Sirik are unconfirmed by CENTCOM.
Diplomacy	**NO NEGOTIATION UNDER WAY.** Araghchi (18 Oct): Strait would reopen on day six, talks on day seven, if US meets Iran's conditions. US position: no deal that could allow a nuclear weapon. No formal Iranian reply reported.
Iran's posture	**"OFFENSIVE" DOCTRINE.** IRGC: will "both respond and launch an offensive" if attacked; threatens US bases over escorts; names Strait undersea cables as possible targets. Conditional threats against Gulf airports and infrastructure stand.

Strait and Gulf incidents	**ATTACKS NEAR THE UAE.** Tug struck by two projectiles NE of Khor Fakkan (18 Oct), one minor injury. Tankers struck off Jubail and Saudi coast (17 Oct). IRGC claims 4 vessels hit and 3 mine strikes (21-22 Oct), unverified. At sea, not strikes on UAE territory.
UAE	**NO STRIKE; EXPOSURE RISING.** Closest maritime incident of this phase off Khor Fakkan. Iran's security chief named UAE digital infrastructure as a possible target (11 Oct). US travel advisory for the UAE at Level 3. UAE carriers' Saudi routes cancelled to 24 Oct.
Saudi and Yemen front	**ATTACKS CONTINUE.** Dammam airport: 1 killed, 8 injured (21 Oct). Houthis claim attacks on Yanbu, Abha, Dammam and the Defence Ministry in Riyadh. Riyadh airport reopened to limited traffic. Houthis gain on the Taiz-Aden road. Truce not agreed.
UAE territory	**NO CONFIRMED STRIKE.** No confirmed strike on UAE soil, ports or infrastructure. DXB, DWC and AUH operating; UAE-Israel flights suspended; Iranian airlines suspended.

WS Assessment: The week moved the UAE closer to the front line in two ways: attacks at sea now reach its east coast, and Iran's stated targets now include infrastructure the UAE depends on. The decision window on the main front appears to open after 3 November. Nothing has touched UAE territory. The alert stays at MAXIMUM with high readiness.

2. THE DIPLOMACY: NO NEGOTIATION UNDER WAY, AND PLANS REPORTED FOR AFTER 3 NOVEMBER

- **The state of talks:** President Trump said on 22 October that the US is “not negotiating” with Iran and that “something one way or another will happen, fairly soon” (Times of Israel). White House spokesperson Anna Kelly said: “The United States will not be attacking Iran at any time prior to the midterm elections” (ABC). Secretary of State Rubio says the US will reject any deal that could allow Iran to build nuclear weapons; Iran says its enrichment rights are protected under the Non-Proliferation Treaty (Al Jazeera). No formal Iranian reply to the US response has been reported.
- **Iran’s terms:** Foreign Minister Araghchi said on 18 October that if the US meets Iran’s conditions, the Strait would reopen on the sixth day and negotiations would begin on the seventh (CBS). Iran’s army spokesman said on 16 October: “If the United States leaves the region, the Strait of Hormuz will reopen.” Iran’s proposal ties reopening to the lifting of the blockade, sanctions relief and the release of frozen assets.
- **Reported planning:** The New York Times reported on 21 October that US and Israeli militaries have developed plans for a “short and intensive operation” against Iran after the 3 November elections, and that Defense Secretary Hegseth met Prime Minister Netanyahu to discuss renewed strikes. Fox News reported Israeli jets flying toward Iran through Syrian and Iraqi airspace in a drill on the night of 19 to 20 October; there has been no official comment. Israel holds elections on 27 October.
- **Regional mediation:** Foreign Minister Araghchi backed a “political process” to resolve the Saudi-Houthi conflict and repeated Iran’s offer to mediate; Iran’s foreign ministry rejects Saudi statements that it is involved in the Houthi attacks. Egypt’s President Sisi said Egypt would defend Saudi Arabia “if requested”, subject to parliamentary approval.

WS Assessment: There is no active negotiation, and both sides are describing military options. The stated US commitment holds until 3 November, and the reported planning points to the period after it. Hold posture until a sequence is agreed and implemented.

3. THE STRAIT AND THE GULF: ATTACKS REACH THE UAE'S EAST COAST, AND IRAN ANNOUNCES AN OFFENSIVE DOCTRINE

- **A tug struck off Khor Fakkan:** On 18 October UKMTO reported that a tug sailing south north-east of Khor Fakkan was struck by two projectiles of unknown origin; it was damaged, one person suffered a minor injury, and it continued on its route (UKMTO via Arab News and CBS). No distance from the coast was given, and no party has claimed the attack. This was a vessel at sea off the UAE's east coast, cause unconfirmed, and not a strike on UAE territory. It is the closest reported attack to the UAE in this phase.
- **The tempo and the mine claims:** UKMTO says October is the busiest month for attacks since March, with 23 attacks recorded by 18 October, and that it is "struggling to accurately report" the true number because most ships now decline to report. Tankers were struck off Saudi Arabia on 17 October, one by a rocket-propelled grenade from a small boat off Jubail. The IRGC claims further mine strikes (17, 20 and 21 October) and four vessels hit in the north-central Gulf on 21 to 22 October; the Joint Maritime Information Centre found no substantiation for the 17 October mine claims, and CENTCOM attributes the sinking of GFS Pride to a projectile. Hormuz traffic is about 70 per cent below pre-war levels (gCaptain).
- **Iran's stated doctrine and threats:** IRGC spokesman Hossein Mohebi said on 22 October: "Now we say that if a country attacks us, we will both respond and launch an offensive," describing an "offensive and asymmetrical" doctrine (Al Jazeera). The IRGC has warned that continued US naval escorts could prompt action against US bases, and IRGC officials have said undersea cables in the Strait could be targeted if Iran's infrastructure is attacked (Al-Monitor). Iran also reports missile tests and says its stockpile has grown.
- **The US position at sea:** CENTCOM's commander, Admiral Brad Cooper, says the blockade has kept about $25 billion of Iranian oil from export and that US forces escorted about 400 merchant vessels through the Strait in a week (AP, via Times of Israel). CENTCOM said no US warship was struck in the latest incidents and declined to discuss movements "for operational security reasons". Reports on 22 October of US strikes on IRGC missile launchers near Sirik, in Hormozgan, have not been confirmed by CENTCOM.

WS Assessment: The maritime threat now extends to the UAE's east coast, the area that carries the UAE's bypass exports. Iran's stated doctrine and named targets widen the risk if fighting resumes. Clients should keep all vessels clear of the Strait, the Musandam approaches, the central Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, including the Fujairah and Khor Fakkan approaches, and hold readiness.

4. THE UAE: AN INCIDENT OFF KHOR FAKKAN, NAMED THREATS TO INFRASTRUCTURE, AND NO STRIKE

- **No confirmed strike on UAE territory:** There is no confirmed damaging strike on UAE territory, ports or infrastructure, and none since the Barakah strike of 17 May 2026. We found no NCEMA alert in the period. The tug incident of 18 October was at sea north-east of Khor Fakkan; it was not a strike on UAE land or ports.
- **Threats naming UAE infrastructure:** On 11 October Iran's security chief, Mohsen Rezaei, said Iran was targeting what Al Jazeera describes as a US-coordinated oil shuttle loading at Arab ports and leaving the Strait by southern routes, and warned that US-linked cables, data centres and AI facilities in the UAE and around the Strait could be targeted if Iran's infrastructure is attacked again; he also asserted UAE military involvement, which is an Iranian claim and has not been confirmed. This was not captured in our previous edition. IRGC officials repeated the cable threat this week.
- **The UAE's position:** We found no new UAE government statement on Iran in the period. The UAE nominated diplomat Lana Nusseibeh as a candidate for UN Secretary-General. Gulf News reports no change to official guidance for residents, who have previously been told to move to a safe space during air-defence alerts. The US travel advisory for the UAE remains at Level 3, "reconsider travel"; the US departure order applies only to Saudi Arabia.
- **Aviation:** DXB, DWC and AUH are operating. Etihad, Emirates and flydubai have cancelled Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammam services to at least 24 October; Dubai to Medina is still listed as operating. Lufthansa and Air France have extended Saudi cancellations into November. The UAE's suspension of Iranian airlines and flydubai's Tel Aviv suspension remain in place. Confirm schedules directly with carriers.
- **Energy and costs:** Brent touched $110 on 16 October, its first time at that level since May, and traded near $114.6 on 23 October, with Murban near $114.4 (Gulf News). Gulf News notes that residents may see higher fuel, transport and imported-goods costs if shipping and insurance disruption continues.

WS Assessment: The UAE has not been struck. But the incident off Khor Fakkan and Iran's naming of UAE digital infrastructure and the export shuttle mean the UAE's exposure is now direct rather than indirect. Hold high readiness, and treat the east coast approaches as part of the risk area.

5. SAUDI ARABIA, YEMEN AND THE WIDER REGION

- **Attacks on Saudi Arabia:** Saudi Arabia's General Authority of Civil Aviation says an attack on King Fahd International Airport in Dammam on 21 October killed one resident and injured eight (Gulf Business). The Houthis say they launched missiles and drones at an Aramco site in Yanbu, Abha airport, Dammam airport and the Saudi Defence Ministry headquarters in Riyadh; Saudi forces report intercepting drones over Riyadh, Medina and the Shaybah oil field. A Houthi projectile injured six people in Najran on 18 October. Riyadh's Kingdom Centre has asked tenants to work remotely, and Gulf News reports that Aramco evacuated its Dhahran headquarters on 22 October (to be verified).
- **US departure order:** On 21 October the State Department ordered non-emergency US government staff and families to leave Saudi Arabia, saying that "Iranian-supported Houthis have increasingly engaged in hostilities against Saudi Arabia"; a spokesman said the order applies only to Saudi Arabia. Riyadh's King Khalid International Airport has reopened to limited traffic (AP).
- **Correction on Dhahran:** Our previous edition reported a "limited fire" at an Aramco administrative building in Dhahran on 13 October, per a Saudi energy ministry official. Reuters, citing sources, has since reported that the Aramco headquarters suffered extensive damage. The two accounts differ, and the extent of damage is to be verified.
- **Yemen:** Critical Threats assesses that the Houthis captured a segment of the Taiz-Aden road in the al-Dhabab valley on 22 October, while government-aligned forces regained the al-Aradi camp overlooking Bab el-Mandeb; the Houthis retain weapons able to reach shipping throughout the waterway. Houthi attacks hit Aden's palace compound and airport on 16 October. The Saudi-Houthi truce has not been agreed.
- **Iraq and the wider region:** Iraq has closed several border crossings with Iran, dismissed officials allegedly linked to cross-border attacks, and ordered the closure of Houthi offices in Iraq (Critical Threats). A Saudi National Guard helicopter crashed near Najran on 18 October, killing two pilots; the military cited a technical malfunction.

WS Assessment: The Saudi front continues to produce casualties at civil airports and has prompted a US departure order. Saudi energy sites and aviation remain under sustained threat. UAE-linked operators should continue to suspend all Strait transits and avoid routings through Saudi airports.

6. DUBAI AND THE UAE

Operational Picture

- **Planning reported for after 3 November, an incident off Khor Fakkan, and no confirmed strike on UAE territory.** US and Israeli plans for a post-election operation are reported, Iran has announced an offensive doctrine and named Gulf infrastructure as possible targets, and a tug was struck off the UAE's east coast. There is no confirmed damaging strike on UAE territory, ports or infrastructure. The airports threat, the infrastructure threat and the maritime risk keep the danger elevated.
- **COMPLETE DEPARTURES BEFORE 3 NOVEMBER.** DXB, DWC and AUH are operating, while UAE carriers' Saudi services are suspended. Complete any deferred non-essential departure on scheduled commercial flights before 3 November, and confirm bookings and routings directly with the carrier.
- **HOLD READINESS AT A HIGH LEVEL: THE AIRPORTS AND INFRASTRUCTURE THREAT.** Essential personnel should maintain shelter-in-place and evacuation readiness at a high level. Iran's stated doctrine and named targets mean a resumption of fighting could affect Gulf airports, ports and digital infrastructure. Review shelter locations and NCEMA guidance, keep go-bags current, plan for disruption at UAE airports and to communications, and be prepared to shelter promptly on any alert. The UAE hosts US forces at Al Dhafra.
- **PROTECT ENERGY, WATER AND COMMUNICATIONS RESILIENCE.** Brent is above $114, and Iran has named undersea cables as possible targets. Keep water, fuel and generator contingencies ready, and review backup communications (satellite or alternative routes) for critical operations. The Fujairah route continues to provide insulation but now lies within the area where shipping has been attacked.
- **Shipping: SUSPEND ALL STRAIT TRANSITS.** A tug has been struck off Khor Fakkan, attacks continue at the highest rate of the war, and Iran claims mine strikes that remain unsubstantiated. Suspend all transits through the Strait, hold vessels clear of the Strait, the Musandam approaches, the central Gulf and the Gulf of Oman including the Fujairah and Khor Fakkan approaches, report any incident or suspected mine to UKMTO, and treat UAE-linked tonnage as at elevated risk until a confirmed reopening with verified safe passage is in place.
- **Compliance and travel security.** Screen counterparties against current US designations and consult qualified counsel; this is not legal advice. Note the US departure order for Saudi Arabia and the Level 3 advisory for the UAE, and avoid non-essential travel through Saudi airports.

Return Guidance: MAXIMUM Held, High Readiness, Acute Risk Window from 3 November

Westminster Security maintains MAXIMUM alert, with both Phase 1 (essential) and Phase 2 (non-essential) returns suspended and readiness at a high level. This week US and Israeli plans for an operation after 3 November were reported, Iran announced an offensive doctrine and named Gulf infrastructure as possible targets, and a tug was struck off Khor Fakkan. Clients should complete departures before 3 November, hold high readiness, suspend all Strait transits, protect energy, water and communications resilience, note the airports threat, and plan for protracted disruption.

- **All returns, SUSPENDED:** Halt all inbound travel to the UAE until a durable, verified de-escalation and a confirmed reopening are in place; the risk outlook for the coming weeks has risen.
- **Non-essential personnel, COMPLETE DEPARTURES BEFORE 3 NOVEMBER:** Use the open airports to finish any deferred departures without delay, on scheduled commercial flights, avoiding routings through Saudi airports.
- **Essential personnel, high readiness:** Maintain shelter-in-place and evacuation readiness at a high level, review shelter locations, keep documentation and go-bags current, prepare for communications disruption, and monitor the US decision after 3 November, Iran's stated

doctrine and threats, attacks on shipping near the UAE, and any strike toward UAE territory, airports or infrastructure.

- **Business and compliance clients:** Review exposure given current US sanctions and the US restrictions on Iranian airlines, review business continuity for loss of undersea cable capacity, and consult qualified counsel. This is not legal advice.
- **De-escalation path (MAXIMUM to HIGH):** An agreed sequence, the lifting of the US blockade, the Strait reopened with verified safe passage, a confirmed ceasefire, and a durable de-escalation across all fronts would allow the alert to come down. None of these is in place; Westminster Security is ready to lower the alert to HIGH promptly once they are.
- **Further escalation, the central risk:** A resumption of major US or US-Israeli combat after 3 November or sooner, Iranian offensive action against Gulf states, attacks on undersea cables, data centres or ports, further attacks off the UAE's coasts, confirmed mining, a wider campaign against Gulf airports or energy sites, or a strike on UAE territory would deepen the emergency; Westminster Security will issue immediate updates.
- **Standing posture:** MAXIMUM, high readiness. A reported post-3 November operation, an offensive Iranian doctrine, named threats to Gulf infrastructure, and attacks at sea reaching the UAE's east coast. Protect people first, complete departures before 3 November, hold high readiness, suspend all Strait transits, protect energy, water and communications resilience, and note the airports threat.

7. WESTMINSTER SECURITY'S RECOMMENDATIONS

- **MAXIMUM ALERT HELD, HIGH READINESS. The UAE's exposure has risen.** A tug was struck north-east of Khor Fakkan on 18 October (at sea, cause unconfirmed). US-Israeli plans for an operation after 3 November are reported. Iran has announced an offensive doctrine. There is no confirmed strike on UAE territory.
- **TREAT 3 NOVEMBER AS THE START OF AN ACUTE RISK WINDOW.** Complete departures and contingency reviews before then. Plan on verified facts and capabilities rather than stated dates.
- **EXTEND MARITIME PRECAUTIONS TO THE EAST COAST.** The Khor Fakkan incident brings the risk to the Fujairah and Khor Fakkan approaches. Review the exposure of vessels, port operations and staff on the east coast.
- **PLAN FOR COMMUNICATIONS DISRUPTION.** Iran has named undersea cables and UAE digital infrastructure as possible targets. Review backup communications and data continuity for critical operations.
- **AVOID SAUDI AIRPORTS.** Attacks on Saudi airports continue, the US has ordered non-emergency staff out of Saudi Arabia, and UAE carriers' Saudi routes are suspended. Route travel away from Saudi hubs.
- **Monitor for:** (1) any US decision on renewed combat, before or after 3 November; (2) any formal Iranian reply or agreed sequence; (3) Iranian offensive action against Gulf states or US bases; (4) further incidents off the UAE's coasts or threats to Fujairah; (5) any attack on undersea cables or data centres; (6) attacks on Saudi airports and energy sites; (7) any strike on UAE territory.
- **Rising exposure. Emergency updates to follow.** Westminster Security will issue immediate updates on any US decision to resume combat, any agreement or collapse of the talks, any incident off the UAE's coasts, any attack on Gulf infrastructure, any threat to or strike on UAE territory, airports or UAE-linked shipping, or any major development, and will lower the alert to HIGH only once a durable de-escalation and a confirmed reopening are in place.
- **This is the two hundred and thirteenth edition, a weekly edition.** Day 238 of the war.

8. KEY POINTS

- **AN ATTACK OFF THE UAE'S EAST COAST.** UKMTO: a tug struck by two projectiles north-east of Khor Fakkan on 18 October, one minor injury. At sea, cause unconfirmed, not a strike on UAE territory. The closest reported attack to the UAE in this phase.
- **POST-3 NOVEMBER PLANS REPORTED.** NYT: US-Israeli plans for a "short and intensive operation" after the midterms. White House: no attack before the elections. Trump: "not negotiating" with Iran; something will happen "fairly soon".
- **IRAN'S OFFENSIVE DOCTRINE.** IRGC: will "both respond and launch an offensive" if attacked; threatens US bases over escorts and names Strait undersea cables as possible targets. Araghchi: Strait would reopen on day six if conditions are met.
- **SAUDI FRONT.** Dammam airport attack kills one and injures eight. The US orders non-emergency staff out of Saudi Arabia. Riyadh airport reopens to limited traffic. Houthis claim an attack on the Defence Ministry in Riyadh.
- **OIL ABOVE $114.** Brent touched $110 on 16 October and traded near $114.6 on 23 October. UKMTO counts 23 attacks this month; Hormuz traffic about 70 per cent below pre-war.
- **MAXIMUM HELD, HIGH READINESS. NO CONFIRMED STRIKE ON UAE TERRITORY. TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTEENTH EDITION. DAY 238.** Reported post-election plans, an offensive Iranian doctrine, named threats to Gulf infrastructure and an attack off Khor Fakkan; no UAE territory has been struck. Both phases remain suspended; complete departures before 3 November, hold high readiness, suspend all Strait transits, protect energy, water and communications resilience, note the airports threat, and plan for protracted disruption. Westminster Security will lower the alert to HIGH only once a durable de-escalation and a confirmed reopening are in place.

Prepared 23rd October 2026. Information current as of 09:00 GMT. Period covered: 09:00 GMT 16 October to 09:00 GMT 23 October 2026.

THE WEEK TO 23 OCTOBER BROUGHT THE MARITIME WAR TO THE UAE'S EAST COAST AND MOVED THE MAIN FRONT TOWARD A DECISION. US AND ISRAELI PLANS FOR AN OPERATION AFTER 3 NOVEMBER ARE REPORTED, AND IRAN HAS ANNOUNCED AN OFFENSIVE DOCTRINE AND NAMED GULF INFRASTRUCTURE AS POSSIBLE TARGETS.

A TUG WAS STRUCK BY TWO PROJECTILES NORTH-EAST OF KHOR FAKKAN ON 18 OCTOBER: A VESSEL AT SEA, CAUSE UNCONFIRMED, NOT A STRIKE ON UAE TERRITORY. THERE IS NO CONFIRMED STRIKE ON UAE TERRITORY. MAXIMUM ALERT HELD, HIGH READINESS. COMPLETE DEPARTURES BEFORE 3 NOVEMBER, HOLD HIGH READINESS, SUSPEND ALL STRAIT TRANSITS, PROTECT ENERGY, WATER AND COMMUNICATIONS RESILIENCE.

TREAT 3 NOVEMBER AS THE START OF AN ACUTE RISK WINDOW; EXTEND MARITIME PRECAUTIONS TO THE EAST COAST; PLAN FOR COMMUNICATIONS DISRUPTION; AND AVOID SAUDI AIRPORTS. PROTECT PEOPLE FIRST; EMERGENCY UPDATES TO FOLLOW. TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTEENTH EDITION. DAY 238.