

Background Guide

Disarmament and International Security Committee



Letter from the Executive Board

Dear Delegates,

WELCOME to committee.

You have been handed one of the oldest problems in international politics dressed in very new clothes: how do sovereign states share a narrow piece of water that the whole world depends on? The Strait of Hormuz is only about twenty-one miles wide at its narrowest, yet roughly a fifth of the planet's oil and a large share of its natural gas pass through it. When that water is contested, petrol prices move on six continents and navies move into the Gulf. Over the past year it has been contested more violently than at any time since the 1980s. This guide is deliberately written to be neutral. The events of 2025 and 2026 are recent, emotional, and told very differently depending on who is doing the telling. Our job on the dais is not to tell you who was right. It is to give you an accurate map of the terrain - the geography, the law, the sequence of events, and the positions of the major players - so that you can build the arguments. Where a fact is genuinely disputed, we say so plainly rather than pick a side. You should do the same in debate: cite the disagreement, then make your case.

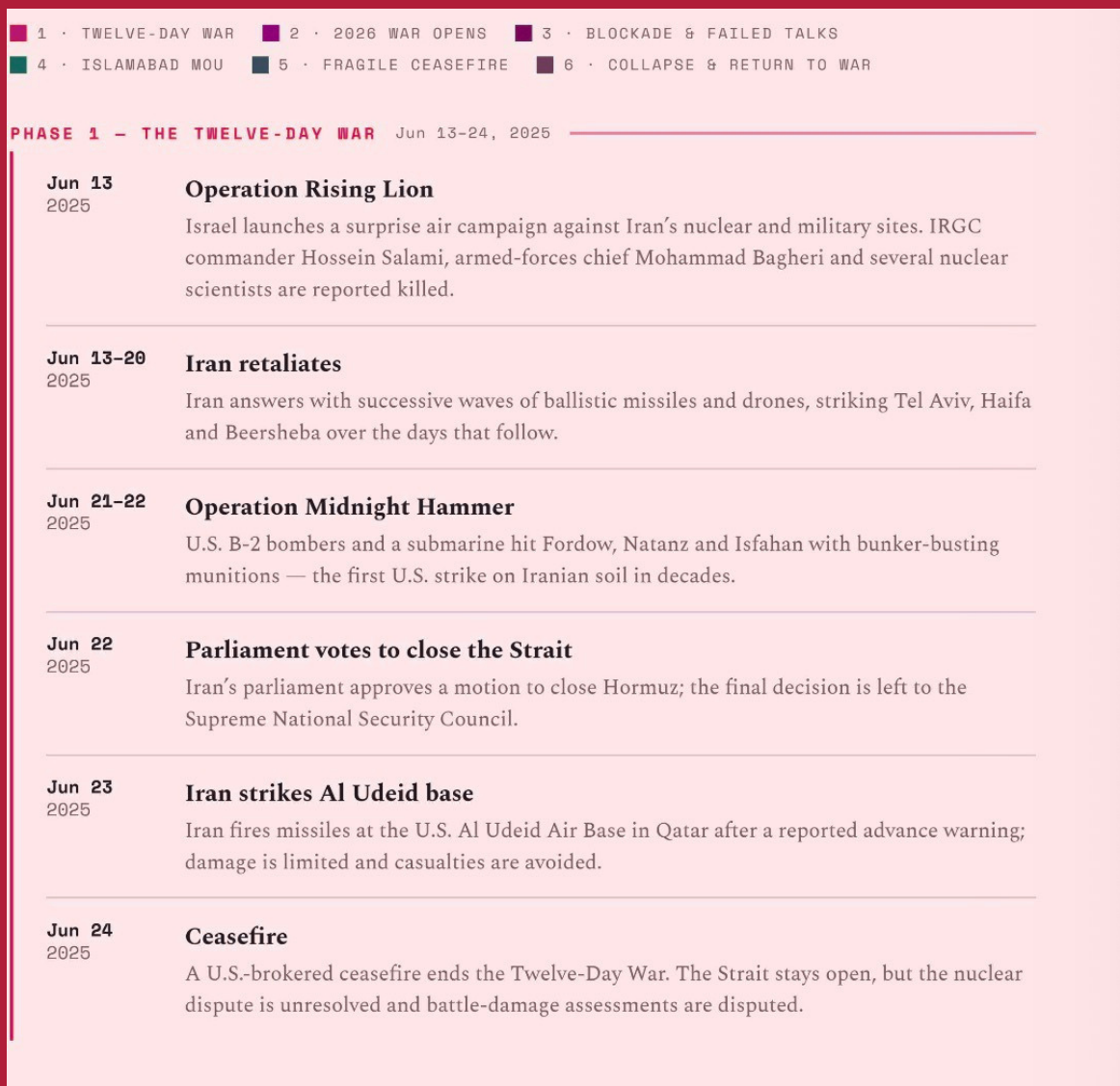
A word on our agenda. "Demilitarisation" is not the same as "ceasefire." A ceasefire stops the shooting; demilitarisation asks the harder question of what the Strait should look like afterwards - who patrols it, whether mines and blockades are permitted, how freedom of navigation is guaranteed, and what role, if any, the United Nations should play. That is the puzzle in front of you.

Come prepared with your country's actual position, not the position you wish it had. Read past the headlines. And remember that the best resolutions in a committee like this one are not the most dramatic - they are the ones that could plausibly survive contact with reality. We look forward to your debate.

- The Executive Board

How we got here: A visual Timeline

Two short wars, a naval blockade, a peace deal that collapsed within weeks, and a slide back toward open war - in under a year and a half. Follow the spine from top to bottom; the colours mark six phases of the crisis.



Feb 28
2026**A second, larger war begins**

The U.S. (Operation Epic Fury) and Israel (Operation Roaring Lion) launch surprise strikes on Iran. The opening salvo is reported to have killed Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei.

Feb–Mar
2026**Succession and retaliation**

Iran names a successor as Supreme Leader and unleashes hundreds of missiles and thousands of drones across the region, hitting Israel and several Gulf states.

Mar 2
2026**War resumes in Lebanon**

Israel–Hezbollah fighting reignites across southern Lebanon; Israel advances toward the Litani River.

Mar 4
2026**Iran declares the Strait closed**

The IRGC issues VHF warnings that “no ship is allowed to pass,” boards merchant vessels, and lays sea mines.

Mar 6
2026**Trump demands surrender**

President Trump says only Iran’s “unconditional surrender” is acceptable and threatens Iranian energy infrastructure and bridges.

Mar 10
2026**Traffic collapses**

Only about 15 ships transit Hormuz; lines such as Maersk, CMA CGM and Hapag-Lloyd suspend transits, and the IMO reports some 2,000 ships and 20,000 mariners stranded.

Mar
2026**Oil spikes worldwide**

Brent rises from roughly \$70 to above \$100 a barrel, with fuel shortages and rationing reported in parts of energy-dependent Asia.

Mar 19
2026**U.S. air campaign to reopen Hormuz**

Washington begins striking Iranian naval vessels, drones and minelayers in a declared effort to force the Strait back open.

Mar 26
2026

Iran's naval commander killed

Israel assassinates IRGC Navy chief Alireza Tangsiri, whom it accuses of overseeing the closure of the Strait.

Mar 27
2026

Selective closure

The IRGC declares Hormuz shut to vessels bound "to and from" the U.S., Israel and their allies; two Chinese ships are reportedly turned back.

Apr 7
2026

Diplomatic deadlock

China and Russia veto a Bahrain-drafted UN resolution calling for an end to attacks and coordinated protection of shipping.

Apr 8
2026

A two-week ceasefire

Pakistan brokers a conditional truce meant to reopen the Strait — but passage stays contested and attacks continue.

Apr 11–12
2026

Islamabad talks collapse

Some 21 hours of direct U.S.-Iran talks (V.P. Vance and Speaker Ghalibaf) — the highest-level contact since 1979 — end without a deal.

Apr 13
2026

The dual blockade begins

Washington blockades Iranian ports while Iran still restricts the Strait, leaving neutral shipping caught between two overlapping blockades.

Apr 17
2026

Strait briefly reopens

F.M. Araghchi declares Hormuz open during a Lebanon truce and oil falls about 11%; Iran soon re-restricts passage as the U.S. blockade continues.

Apr 19
2026

U.S. seizes the Touska

U.S. Marines and the destroyer USS Spruance board a sanctioned Iranian cargo ship; Tehran condemns it as "armed piracy."

May 4–6
2026

Project Freedom, paused

The U.S. launches, then pauses, an operation to escort merchant ships out of the Gulf, citing progress toward an agreement.

Jun 12
2026

Text agreed

Pakistan announces that the U.S.–Iran agreement text is settled after Qatari-mediated talks narrow the gaps on assets, Hormuz and the nuclear file.

Jun 14
2026

A framework is announced

PM Shehbaz Sharif announces that a memorandum of understanding has been finalised; Trump signals the lifting of the blockade.

Jun 17
2026

The MoU is signed

Trump signs at the Palace of Versailles after the G7; Pezeshkian signs in Tehran. The 14-point deal: end hostilities including Lebanon, reopen Hormuz toll-free for 60 days, clear mines within 30, lift the blockade, ease sanctions, draw down troops, and open a 60-day nuclear negotiation.

Jun 18
2026

Blockade lifted; the \$300bn debate

CENTCOM removes the blockade and transits hit a two-month high, predominantly Chinese-affiliated tonnage. A proposed reconstruction fund of at least \$300 billion for Iran becomes the deal's most contested feature.

Jun 19
2026

Israel–Hezbollah ceasefire announced

A renewed Lebanon ceasefire is brokered by the U.S., Qatar and Iran — but Israeli strikes in the south continue almost immediately.

PHASE 5 – FRAGILE CEASEFIRE Jun 20–29, 2026

Jun 20
2026

Iran re-closes the Strait

Citing continued Israeli operations in Lebanon as a breach of the MoU, Iran again restricts passage. The U.S. military denies a violation.

Jun 25
2026

Evacuations paused

A UN agency halts the evacuation of ships through Hormuz after an attack on a vessel.

Jun 26
2026

A ship is hit; U.S. strikes back

A drone strikes a vessel in the Strait; the U.S. launches retaliatory strikes on Iran. Separately, Israel and Lebanon sign a framework agreement billed as a “first step.”

Jun 27
2026

U.S. widens a Hormuz route

After striking Iranian surveillance, air-defence and minelayer sites, the U.S.-led Joint Maritime Information Center opens a broader transit lane near Oman — a direct challenge to Iran's claim of control.

Jun 28
2026

Strikes on Gulf bases

Iran says it fired missiles and drones at U.S. bases in Kuwait and Bahrain in response to strikes on five Iranian coastal sites, and insists passage still requires its coordination.

Jun 28-29
2026

Tit-for-tat continues

Strikes and ship attacks continue while indirect talks grind on in Switzerland; the Strait is open in law but contested in practice.

PHASE 6 — COLLAPSE & RETURN TO WAR Jun 30 — Jul 23, 2026

Jun 30-
Jul 3
2026

Talks stall; nuclear file untouched

Indirect U.S.-Iran rounds in Doha and Switzerland produce no breakthrough. The nuclear programme that triggered the war goes essentially undiscussed, while Iran's negotiator Ghalibaf insists the Strait "will not return to pre-war conditions" and signals transit fees once the 60-day toll-free window expires around 17 August.

Jul 4-6
2026

Khamenei's state funeral

Iran holds mass funeral ceremonies for Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, killed on 28 February; his son Mojtaba is confirmed as successor. Talks pause, and a public rift opens between the new Supreme Leader and President Pezeshkian over the MoU.

Jul 5-7
2026

Ships hit; U.S. strikes Kharg Island

During the funeral pause Iran attacks three commercial vessels in the Strait. CENTCOM answers with more than 80 strikes, hitting Kharg Island — Iran's main oil-export terminal — and Brent jumps back above \$78.

Jul 8
2026

Trump declares the deal "over"

At the NATO summit in Ankara, President Trump calls the Islamabad MoU finished — "I don't want to deal with them anymore" — and reimposes sanctions on Iranian oil sales.

Jul 9
2026

A nuclear site is struck

A second U.S. strike package of some 90 targets hits the perimeter of the Bushehr nuclear plant, the first strike on a nuclear facility in the crisis. Iran fires missiles and drones at Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and Jordan.

Jul 11
2026

Largest strike; Hormuz declared closed

CENTCOM launches 140 strikes, the biggest package of the war; Iran's IRGC formally declares the Strait "closed until further notice." Oman drafts a dual-corridor proposal to manage traffic.

Jul 12
2026

Iran strikes its own mediator

Iranian drones hit sites in Oman — days after Oman-Iran talks — damaging the most trusted back-channel of the entire crisis.

Jul 15-16
2026

First U.S. deaths; the war widens

Two U.S. service members are killed in Jordan, the first American deaths since fighting resumed. U.S. strikes expand into northern Iran, and Yemen's Houthis threaten to close the Red Sea, the main alternative route.

Jul 17-18
2026

Infrastructure war; the MoU dies

Both sides strike civilian infrastructure — bridges near Bandar Abbas, desalination plants in Kuwait and southern Iran. Iran formally suspends the MoU; with Washington having already renounced it, the Islamabad framework is now void from both sides.

Jul 19-20
2026

Nuclear and oil sites hit again

U.S. strikes hit the Darkhovin reactor site and extensively damage Bushehr; a tanker burns off Oman. U.S. pump prices near \$4 a gallon as CENTCOM completes its ninth consecutive night of strikes.

Jul 23
2026

Where the committee opens

The MoU is dead, there are no active negotiations, and the 60-day nuclear window expires on 17 August with the nuclear question never seriously addressed. The Strait is closed in practice and the region is sliding back toward full-scale war. This is your starting point.

Introduction to the Agenda

THE DEMILITARISATION OF the Strait of Hormuz is, at heart, a collision between two principles that international law holds simultaneously and never fully reconciles. The first is state sovereignty: Iran and Oman own the coastlines that form the Strait, and a state is presumed to control the waters adjacent to its territory. The second is freedom of navigation:

the world's shipping has a long-recognised right to pass through straits used for international navigation, and no single state is supposed to be able to switch that right off. For most of modern history these two principles coexisted quietly because no coastal state seriously tried to close Hormuz. The wars of 2025 and 2026 ended that quiet.

The agenda asks delegates to move from crisis management to structural settlement. It is one thing to negotiate a ceasefire that reopens the Strait this month; it is another to design an arrangement under which the Strait stays open even when the wider region is at war. Demilitarisation - the removal or limitation of military forces, the clearance of mines, the prohibition of blockades, and the construction of credible guarantees of passage - is one family of answers to that second, harder problem. It is not the only family, and parts of it are deeply contested. Some states will argue that a demilitarised Strait is the only durable guarantee of global energy security. Others will argue that demilitarisation is a polite word for stripping a sovereign state of its right to defend its own coast.

This committee convenes in late July 2026, weeks after the June Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding - the deal that was meant to end the war - collapsed. Both sides have now declared it void, U.S. strikes have run for consecutive nights into a third week, the Strait is closed in practice, and the region is sliding back toward open war. That timing is deliberate. You are not writing on a blank page; you are trying to rebuild a settlement from the wreckage of one that has already failed.

Geography and Strategic Importance

The Strait of Hormuz connects the the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman and, beyond it, the Arabian Sea and the open ocean. Iran lies along its northern shore; Oman - specifically the Musandam exclave — along its southern shore. At its narrowest the Strait is roughly thirty-four kilometres (about twenty-one miles) across. Within that span run two narrow shipping lanes, one inbound and one outbound, separated by a buffer zone, together carrying on the order of twenty million barrels of oil per day in normal times. The reason Hormuz matters so much is that it has almost no substitute. The major oil and gas producers of the Gulf - Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Iran itself - sit upstream of this single doorway. A handful of pipelines can bypass it: Saudi Arabia's roughly 1,200-kilometre East-West (Petroline) pipeline can route crude to the Red Sea at Yanbu, and the UAE has a line to Fujairah on the Gulf of Oman. But these alternatives can

absorb only a fraction of normal Hormuz volumes. When the Strait is constrained, there is simply nowhere for most Gulf energy to go.

INDICATOR	APPROXIMATE FIGURE	WHY IT MATTERS
Width at narrowest point	~34 km (21 mi)	Ships pass within range of the Iranian coast and its islands.
Share of world seaborne oil	~20–25%	No other chokepoint carries as large a share of traded oil.
Share of world LNG trade	~20–30%	Qatar, a top LNG exporter, depends almost entirely on Hormuz.
Daily oil transit (normal)	~20 m bbl/day	A disruption is felt within days in global fuel prices.
Coastal states	Iran · Oman	The deepest channels lie close to the Iranian side.

Two features of the human geography are worth holding onto. First, the deep-water channels hug the Iranian coast, which means commercial traffic naturally passes close to Iranian territory and its islands - including Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tunbs, which Iran has controlled since 1971 and which sit near the approaches. This proximity gives Iran genuine ability to threaten shipping with relatively modest means: fast attack boats, shorelaunched missiles, drones and naval mines, rather than a blue-water navy. Second, the southern lane runs through Omani waters, which makes Oman an unavoidable and often quietly influential party to any settlement.

Key Idea

Hormuz is what strategists call an asymmetric chokepoint: a relatively weak naval power can impose enormous global costs simply by making the water dangerous. That asymmetry is the heart of the demilitarisation debate - it is precisely what makes guarantees of passage so hard to enforce by force alone.

The consequence is that the Strait functions less like a normal sea lane and more like a valve on the global economy. Even the threat of closure raises insurance premiums, reroutes tankers, and pushes up prices - which is why, during the 2026 crisis, oil moved from roughly \$70 to over \$100 a barrel on disruption alone, handing windfalls to non-Gulf producers such as Russia even as it strained importers across Asia.

The Legal Architecture

ANY SERIOUS RESOLUTION on Hormuz has to be built on law, and the law here is genuinely contested — not because it is vague, but because the key players have never all agreed to the same text. Delegates who understand this section will have a real advantage, because much of the diplomatic fight is a legal fight.

3.1 Transit passage under UNCLOS The 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) created a special regime for straits used for international navigation. In such straits, all ships and aircraft enjoy the right of transit passage (Articles 37-38): they may proceed continuously and expeditiously, in their normal mode of operation, and - critically - that right cannot be suspended by the coastal state. This is a stronger right than innocent passage, which applies in ordinary territorial seas and which a coastal state can suspend

temporarily. Transit passage also permits submerged transit by submarines and overflight by aircraft.

3.2 The catch: who has actually signed Here is the complication that drives the whole dispute. Iran signed UNCLOS but never ratified it, and when it signed in 1982 it attached a declaration stating that only states party to the Convention may enjoy its contractual rights, including transit passage. The United States has never joined UNCLOS at all, though it treats the transit-passage rule as binding customary international law. Israel is also not a party. Oman, by contrast, has ratified. Iran's 1993 maritime law goes further, requiring warships to obtain prior permission before passing through its territorial sea.

THE CRUX OF THE LEGAL ARGUMENT

Iran's position: transit passage is a treaty right, so non-parties (like the United States) cannot claim it, and Iran may regulate or close passage. The prevailing Western and scholarly position: transit passage reflects customary international law binding on everyone regardless of ratification, so Iran may not suspend it. Both sides are arguing in good faith from real legal texts - which is exactly why the dispute is so durable.

3.3 What happens in wartime Neither UNCLOS nor the 1958 Geneva conventions clearly resolve what happens to passage rights during an armed conflict, and the relationship between the law of the sea and the law of naval warfare is unsettled. In an international armed conflict at sea, matters not governed by UNCLOS fall to the (largely customary) law of naval warfare, often summarised in the San Remo Manual. That body of law recognises belligerent rights such as blockade and visit-and-search - but also imposes limits, including the protection of neutral shipping and prohibitions on indiscriminate harm. Much of 2026 was, in effect, a live argument over these rules: Iran's mining and ship seizures, and the U.S. blockade of Iranian ports, were each defended by their authors as lawful and condemned by the other side as violations.

3.4 So what would "demilitarisation" mean legally? "Demilitarisation" has no single fixed definition in international law; it is a spectrum of arrangements that states have used in different places (the Åland Islands, the Suez Canal under the 1888 Constantinople Convention, Antarctica, parts of the Sinai). Applied to Hormuz, it could include some or all of the following: a binding prohibition on closing or "tolling" the Strait; a ban on laying mines and on blockades; agreed limits on naval deployments in the waterway; mandatory mine-

clearance with international verification; a neutral or multinational body to monitor passage; and a dispute-resolution mechanism to replace the use of force. Delegates should notice that each of these touches Iranian sovereignty differently, and that is where the negotiation will live.

Historical Background

THE 2025-2026 CRISES did not come from nowhere. The Strait has been a pressure point for decades, and the precedents shape what delegates can realistically propose today.

4.1 The Tanker War (1980–1988) During the Iran-Iraq War, both belligerents attacked merchant shipping in the Gulf in what became known as the Tanker War. Hundreds of vessels were hit. In response, the United States reflagged Kuwaiti tankers as American and escorted them through the Strait (Operation Earnest Will), and clashes with Iranian forces followed, including the 1988 Operation Praying Mantis. Iran's mining of the Gulf during this period later produced a case at the International Court of Justice. The Tanker War is the closest historical analogue to the present crisis and the reason naval planners speak of "escort" and "reflagging" as familiar tools.

4.2 The 2010s: threats, incidents, and brinkmanship Across the 2010s, Iran repeatedly threatened to close the Strait in response to sanctions, and a series of tanker incidents in 2019 — limpet-mine attacks, seizures, and the downing of a U.S. drone - kept Hormuz on the front pages without tipping into open war. These episodes established a pattern: Iran could impose costs and signal resolve through harassment short of closure, while the United States and its partners maintained a naval presence to keep the lane open.

4.3 The Twelve-Day War (June 2025) In June 2025 the long-simmering nuclear dispute became a shooting war. On 13 June 2025, Israel launched surprise strikes on Iranian nuclear and military targets. On 21-22 June, the United States joined directly with Operation Midnight Hammer, striking the Fordow, Natanz and Isfahan nuclear sites with bunker-busting bombs delivered by B-2 bombers and cruise missiles from a submarine. Iran's parliament voted to close the Strait, and on 23 June Iran fired missiles at the U.S. Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar. A ceasefire on 24 June ended the twelveday conflict. Two features of 2025 matter for the present debate. First, the battle-damage assessment was, and remains, disputed: U.S. officials said Iran's program was "obliterated," while the IAEA and others assessed serious but

recoverable damage, with uncertainty about whether Iran's enriched-uranium stockpile had been moved beforehand. Second, although the Strait was threatened, it was not durably closed - which lulled some observers into assuming Hormuz would always stay open. Eight months later, that assumption broke.

The 2026 War and the Hormuz Crisis

THE 2026 WAR WAS larger, longer and more economically disruptive than the Twelve-Day War, and it is the proximate cause of everything now before this committee. On 28 February 2026, the United States and Israel launched surprise strikes on Iran. Reports indicate the opening salvo killed Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and other senior figures - a decapitation that triggered a torrent of Iranian missile and drone retaliation across the region and reignited the war in Lebanon. What followed was nearly four months of fighting, blockade and brinkmanship.

5.1 Iran closes the Strait

In response to the strikes, Iran moved to shut the waterway. From around 28 February, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) issued warnings forbidding passage, boarded and attacked merchant vessels, and laid sea mines. By 4 March Iranian officials were publicly declaring the Strait "closed," and the U.K. Maritime Trade Operations Centre logged a series of attacks on ships, with crew fatalities. Tanker traffic dropped to almost nothing; major lines such as Maersk, CMA CGM and Hapag-Lloyd suspended transits. The International Maritime Organization reported that roughly 2,000 ships and some 20,000 mariners were effectively stranded in the Gulf. Iran did not apply the closure evenly. It pursued a strategy of selective passage - allowing ships from states it regarded as friendly or strategically important, notably China and India, to transit, sometimes in exchange for political or economic considerations. Critics characterised this as "tolling" the Strait; Iran framed it as a sovereign right to regulate its own waters during a war it did not start.

5.2 The U.S. naval blockade of Iran

After a brief two-week ceasefire and the collapse of direct talks in Islamabad on 11-12 April, the United States escalated. On 13 April 2026, under CENTCOM and Admiral Brad Cooper, the U.S. Navy imposed a blockade of Iranian ports, stopping ships traveling to and from Iran

while stating that it would not impede vessels transiting to non-Iranian ports. On 19 April, U.S. forces seized the sanctioned Iranian cargo vessel *Touska*; Iran condemned the seizure as "armed piracy." Washington said the blockade cost Iran hundreds of millions of dollars a day in lost oil revenue. The result was a striking and dangerous situation: two overlapping blockades - Iran restricting general passage through the Strait, and the United States choking off Iran's own ports - with neutral shipping caught in between.

5.3 The economic shockwave

The disruption rippled worldwide. Oil rose from roughly \$70 a barrel before the war to an average above \$100 in March, with fuel shortages and rationing reported in parts of Asia that depend heavily on Gulf supply. Paradoxically, the price spike enriched some of the actors least interested in calming the crisis: Russia gained an estimated windfall of well over a hundred million dollars a day, and Iran itself initially benefited from higher prices before the U.S. blockade cut into its exports. Energy security, in other words, became a bargaining chip - which is precisely why so many states beyond the immediate combatants now demand a say in how the Strait is governed.

The Lebanon Linkage

ONE OF THE MOST important and least obvious facts about this crisis is that the Strait of Hormuz could not be settled in isolation from Lebanon. Understanding why is essential to understanding why the ceasefire keeps breaking.

When the 2026 war began, fighting between Israel and Hezbollah - Iran's closest regional ally - resumed across southern Lebanon from 2 March. Israel advanced toward the Litani River; Hezbollah fired rockets and drones into northern Israel. The humanitarian toll was severe: by later in the conflict, reporting indicated more than four thousand killed in Lebanon and over a million people displaced - more than a fifth of the country's population.

The diplomatic problem was structural. Iran insisted that it would not accept a ceasefire with the United States and Israel unless that ceasefire also covered Lebanon. Israel's position, articulated by Prime Minister Netanyahu, was that the Iran ceasefire did not automatically extend to Lebanon, and Israeli forces remained inside southern Lebanon. Because Hezbollah was not itself a party to the U.S.-Iran negotiations — and the United States does not deal

directly with a group it designates as terrorist - Lebanon became a back-channel sticking point capable of sinking the entire deal.

READING THE "ISRAEL BLOCKED THE DEAL" CLAIM CAREFULLY

It is often said that Israel "prevented" the deal by continuing operations in Lebanon. The neutral version is more precise: Lebanon was the hardest clause in the package. Iran made a Lebanon ceasefire a condition; the MoU's drafters included Lebanon, which some Israeli officials viewed as a concession granted over their objections; and continued Israeli strikes in the south were cited by Iran as MoU violations, while the United States disputed that characterisation. Each of those statements is defensible; "Israel blocked the deal" is a contested interpretation, not an agreed fact.

The practical effect is that the Hormuz file and the Lebanon file are now joined at the hip. When Israeli operations continued after the June ceasefire announcement, Iran responded by again restricting the Strait, treating the two as a single bargain. For this committee, that linkage is a design constraint: a demilitarisation framework for Hormuz that ignores the conditions Iran has attached to its cooperation is unlikely to hold, yet a framework that makes Hormuz hostage to an unrelated conflict may be unacceptable to others. Squaring that circle is part of your task.

The Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding

AFTER MONTHS OF MEDIATION led principally by Pakistan and Qatar, the United States and Iran reached a framework to end the war. On 14 June 2026 Pakistan's prime minister announced that a memorandum of understanding had been finalised; on 17 June it was signed by Presidents Trump and Pezeshkian. It is an interim framework, not a final peace treaty, and it sets a sixty-day clock for negotiating the hardest questions.

7.1 What the MoU contains

PROVISION	SUBSTANCE
End of hostilities	Cessation of fighting on all fronts, explicitly including Lebanon.
Reopening the Strait	Toll-free passage through Hormuz for an initial 60 days.
Mine clearance	Iran to clear sea mines, reportedly within 30 days.
Lifting the blockade	The U.S. naval blockade of Iranian ports to be removed proportionally.
Sanctions relief	Waivers and a release of frozen Iranian assets, on a timetable to be agreed.
Troop drawdown	A reduction of U.S. military assets in the region; withdrawal from Iranian territory.
Reconstruction fund	An economic development fund of at least \$300 billion for Iran (see below).
Nuclear track	A 60-day window to negotiate enrichment and the uranium stockpile; Iran reaffirms it will not pursue a nuclear weapon.

7.2 The \$300 Billion Dollar Deal

No part of the deal has drawn more scrutiny than the proposed reconstruction fund. The framework commits the United States to work "with regional partners" to assemble a fund of at least \$300 billion for Iran, whose government has estimated its war losses in the range of \$270 billion. The politics are delicate. The U.S. administration has insisted that American taxpayers will not pay into the fund - President Trump publicly dismissed the idea that the U.S. is "paying Iran" as "fake news" - and has suggested that wealthy Gulf states, together with a release of Iran's own frozen assets, would supply the money. Critics, including some former U.S. officials, have argued that the arrangement is more generous to Tehran than the 2015 nuclear deal it echoes, that the two-page memorandum lacks the safeguards of the 159- page JCPOA, and that it does not cap Iran's nuclear activity. Iranian commentators, for their part, have framed the fund as "supervised, conditional money" rather than genuine sovereign relief - a matter of national dignity as much as economics.

Neutral Framing For Debate: Whether the fund is a "payment to Iran," a "reconstruction mechanism funded by the Gulf," or a "release of Iran's own frozen assets" is genuinely disputed and depends on details not yet public. Delegates should describe it accurately as a proposed, externally financed reconstruction fund of contested design - and then argue about whether it belongs in a demilitarisation settlement at all.

7.3 From fraying to collapse

Within days of signing, the deal came under strain - and within a month it was dead. A renewed Israel-Hezbollah ceasefire announced on 19 June did not hold, and on 20 June Iran said it had re-closed the Strait, citing continued Israeli strikes in Lebanon as a breach - a claim the U.S. denied. Indirect talks in Doha and Switzerland through early July produced no progress, and the nuclear file that caused the war went essentially untouched. During the state funeral for Supreme Leader Khamenei in early July, Iran attacked three commercial vessels; the United States retaliated with waves of strikes, hitting Kharg Island and, for the first time, Iranian nuclear sites at Bushehr and Darkhovin. On 8 July, at the NATO summit in Ankara, President Trump declared the MoU "over"; by mid-July both Washington and Tehran had formally renounced the Islamabad framework. Iran again declared Hormuz closed, struck its own mediator Oman, and the two sides began hitting each other's civilian infrastructure. As this committee opens in late July, the ceasefire is gone, U.S. strikes are in their third consecutive week, the 60-day nuclear window expires on 17 August with nothing agreed, and the region is sliding back toward the full-scale war the MoU was meant to end. This is the unstable ground on which the committee now stands.

Stakeholders and Bloc Positions

THE FOLLOWING IS A neutral sketch of where the major actors stand. Real positions are more nuanced than any summary, and delegates should research their own country's statements; treat this as a starting point, not a script.

8.1 The principal parties

ACTOR	CORE INTEREST	POSITION ON DEMILITARISATION
Iran	Regime survival; sanctions relief; sovereignty over its coast and the right to defend it.	Resists arrangements that strip its ability to respond to pressure; links Hormuz cooperation to Lebanon and to relief. May accept guarantees if paired with sovereignty protections and an end to outside blockades.
United States	Freedom of navigation; deterring Iran; protecting allies and global energy flows.	Backs an open, "toll-free" Strait and is willing to use naval power to enforce it; wary of any regime that constrains U.S. operations more than Iran's.
Israel	Preventing an Iranian nuclear weapon; degrading Hezbollah; freedom of action against Iran's network.	Skeptical of deals seen as rewarding Iran; objects to linkage that ties its Lebanon operations to a Hormuz settlement. Not a coastal party but a central actor.
Oman	The southern coastal state; long-standing neutral mediator.	An indispensable, low-key broker; favours arrangements that keep its waters calm and preserve its neutrality.

8.2 The Gulf and regional states

Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait and Bahrain are the states most directly exposed: their economies depend on Hormuz, and several host U.S. forces or were themselves struck during the crisis. They generally favour an open Strait and de-escalation, but they are wary of being battlefields and increasingly hedge between Washington and a workable relationship with Tehran. The 2026 war also pulled in the Levant, putting Lebanon — and, increasingly, Syria - into the same conversation.

ACTOR	CORE INTEREST	POSITION ON DEMILITARISATION
Pakistan	The lead mediator: it hosted the April Islamabad talks and announced the June framework. A nuclear-armed neighbour with strong ties to both Iran and the Gulf states.	Has no direct stake in Hormuz traffic but enormous diplomatic capital invested in the deal it brokered; favours a verifiable, face-saving settlement and is a natural sponsor of any monitoring or guarantor mechanism.
Qatar	Hosts Al Udeid, the largest U.S. base in the region; a major LNG exporter wholly dependent on Hormuz; an established mediator.	Was itself struck during the crisis and so favours rapid de-escalation and a guaranteed open Strait; offers good offices and channels to Iran while sheltering under the U.S. umbrella.
UAE	Trade and shipping hub (Dubai, Fujairah); some export capacity bypasses Hormuz via pipeline; deep economic ties to both the West and Iran.	Strongly favours an open Strait and stability; quietly hedges, preserving its commercial relationship with Tehran while backing freedom-of-navigation guarantees. Wary of being drawn into enforcement.
Lebanon	A fragile state whose territory hosts Hezbollah; the Israel–Hezbollah front is the linkage Iran uses to bargain over Hormuz.	Not a Gulf actor, but central: the durability of any Hormuz deal depends on the Lebanon ceasefire holding. Beirut wants the fighting on its soil ended and is caught between Hezbollah, Israel and outside guarantors.
Syria	Under its post-Assad government (Ahmed al-Sharaa / "al-Jolani"); seeking sanctions relief and reintegration; wary of Iranian influence.	A potential wildcard. The Trump administration has floated leaning on Damascus to help curb Hezbollah, which would weaken Iran's Lebanon leverage — but Syria's own stability is uncertain and its alignment is still forming.

8.3 The Major Powers

China is the largest buyer of Gulf oil and the party most economically harmed by closure; it favours stability and an open Strait but is reluctant to endorse Western-led enforcement, and reportedly nudged Iran toward de-escalation at key moments. Russia benefits from high oil prices and from Western distraction, giving it a complicated incentive structure. India, heavily dependent on Gulf energy and with its flagged vessels caught in the crossfire, wants passage guaranteed and has protested attacks on its ships. The European Union and United Nations have pressed consistently for diplomacy, restraint and the protection of navigation. Among the major powers, the central tension is predictable: they agree the Strait should stay open but disagree sharply over who should guarantee it and on what legal basis.

BLOC-BUILDING TIP

The most interesting coalitions in this committee will not be the obvious ones. Energy importers (China, India, Japan, the EU) share an interest in open passage even when they disagree on enforcement. Mediators (Oman, Qatar, Pakistan, Switzerland) share an interest in a verifiable, face-saving mechanism. Look for those cross-cutting interests.

What Could "Demilitarisation" Look Like?

THERE IS NO SINGLE template, and the menu below is meant to spark debate rather than prescribe an answer. Most workable resolutions combine several of these elements; each carries trade-offs between effectiveness, enforceability and sovereignty.

9.1 A spectrum of options

- A A no-closure / no-toll guarantee.** A binding commitment that no state will close, blockade, or charge for passage through the Strait. Simple to state; hard to enforce without a credible monitor.
- B A mine-and-blockade ban with verified clearance.** Prohibit the laying of mines and the imposition of blockades by any party, paired with internationally verified mine-clearance and a timeline. Directly addresses the 2026 tactics.
- C A monitored transit corridor.** An internationally observed passage scheme — potentially building on the existing Joint Maritime Information Center near Oman — that tracks compliance and de-conflicts naval activity.
- D Naval limitation zones.** Agreed ceilings on the type or number of warships either side may station in or near the Strait, reducing the chance of accidental escalation.
- E A UN or multinational guarantor role.** A monitoring mission, a reporting mandate, or a standing mechanism under the UN or a regional body to investigate incidents and certify passage.
- F A dispute-resolution mechanism.** A standing channel — arbitration, a contact group, or a hotline — so that incidents are adjudicated rather than answered with strikes.

9.2 Precedents delegates can draw on

History offers partial models. The 1888 Constantinople Convention keeps the Suez Canal open to all in peace and war and is the classic example of a demilitarised waterway. The Åland Islands have been demilitarised and neutralised by treaty for over a century. Antarctica is demilitarised by the 1959 treaty. The 1980s practice of reflagging and escorting tankers shows a market-and-navy response short of a formal regime. None maps perfectly onto Hormuz - Suez has no equivalent of Iran's coastal control, and Åland is far from a global energy artery - but each shows a different way states have squared sovereignty with access.

9.3 The hard constraints

Whatever delegates design must survive three realities. First, enforceability: a paper guarantee that no one will police is worthless, but heavy outside policing looks to Iran like occupation. Second, sovereignty: Iran will not sign an agreement that singles it out while leaving foreign navies unconstrained, and it has linked its cooperation to Lebanon and to sanctions relief. Third, verification: mines, drones and fast boats are hard to monitor, so any credible regime needs eyes on

the water that all parties trust. A resolution that names these trade-offs honestly will be stronger than one that pretends they do not exist.

Questions a Resolution Must Answer

- 01** **Legal basis.** On what legal footing does the committee rest its guarantee of passage — UNCLOS, customary international law, a new instrument — given that key parties have not ratified UNCLOS?
 - 02** **Symmetry.** Does your framework constrain all militarisation of the Strait (Iranian mines and gunboats and outside blockades and naval build-ups), or only one side? Why would the disadvantaged party sign?
 - 03** **Verification.** Who monitors compliance, with what authority, and how are violations established without each side simply accusing the other?
 - 04** **Enforcement.** What happens when the regime is breached? Is there a graduated response short of war?
 - 05** **The Lebanon linkage.** Does your resolution address — or deliberately decouple — the conditions Iran has attached to its cooperation? Can a Hormuz regime hold if Lebanon is unresolved?
 - 06** **Mine clearance.** Who clears the mines, on what timeline, and who verifies that the Strait is actually safe?
 - 07** **Economic dimension.** Does sanctions relief or the reconstruction fund belong in a demilitarisation settlement, or should those be handled separately?
 - 08** **Sovereignty safeguards.** What does Iran receive in exchange for accepting limits on its own coast, and is it enough to be credible?
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- 09** **Role of the UN.** Is there a mandate for a monitoring mission, a reporting mechanism, or a standing contact group — and who pays and staffs it?
 - 10** **Durability.** Would your framework keep the Strait open during the next regional war, not just this ceasefire?