



The Alarm of General Grynkewich: We Do Not Have Enough Ships to Protect Israel

Published on 02/08/2026

The strategic situation related to the ongoing conflict with Iran has imposed heavy constraints on the U.S. armed forces. According to the *Washington Post*, General [Alexus Grynkewich](#) — **Commander of U.S. Forces in Europe** (Eucom) and **Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) of NATO** — has sent a written notification to the Pentagon leadership to issue an urgent alarm: the availability of naval forces is no longer sufficient to continue protecting Israel from incoming ballistic missiles.

Without the assignment of an additional Navy destroyer, the general will be forced into a drastic choice highlighted by the U.S. newspaper: prioritizing the defense of the U.S. homeland over that of Israel. As specified by a defense official to the *Washington Post*, the communication is part of the normal risk reports made by top generals when commanders compete for limited resources and weapons.

The Causes: The Blockade of Iranian Ports and Fleet Wear

The conflict, now in its fifth month after the collapse of peace negotiations between Washington and Tehran, has drained defensive weapon stocks and severely tested the Navy:

- **The Naval Blockade and the Strait of Hormuz:** Under the directive of the Trump administration, the fleet is engaged in blocking Iranian ports in response to Tehran's closure of the Strait of Hormuz, an action that has halted the movement of oil and raw materials in the Middle East, disrupting the global economy.
- **Maintenance Issues:** The intense pace of the war has led to accumulated maintenance problems for the ships, as highlighted in reports by the *Washington Post*. The Navy deploys five destroyers based in Rota, Spain (including the *USS Arleigh Burke*, the *USS Bulkeley*, and the *USS Oscar Austin*), while two units, the *USS Paul Ignatius* and the *USS Roosevelt*, operated in the eastern Mediterranean.
- **The Burden of Interceptions:** Assessments conducted by the Pentagon and reported by the newspaper had already shown that U.S. forces — through systems like the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (Thaad) and naval interceptors — have borne the main burden of defending Israel from Iranian ballistic missiles.

An Extended Front and Political Discontent in the United States

The responsibilities of the European command led by Grynkewich remain central also to maintaining readiness against any Russian incursion into NATO territory and to countering Moscow's missile threat against the U.S. mainland. Meanwhile, the military deployment detailed by the *Washington Post* is spread across multiple theaters:

- In the Arabian Sea and the Gulf, two aircraft carriers (the *USS George H.W. Bush* and the *USS Abraham Lincoln*) operate along with 15 other warships (including 11 destroyers), engaged in the blockade and the *Freedom* project to protect ships in the Strait of Hormuz.
- In the Red Sea, the *USS Gonzalez* counters the commercial blockade attempts imposed by Yemen's Houthi rebels.

The war against Iran is, however, fueling growing discontent among the U.S. public and lawmakers from both parties. As reported by the *Washington Post*, among Republicans, there is particular concern that the impact of the conflict on gas and food prices could weigh on the party ahead of the midterm elections in November.

As summarized by Tom Karako, director of the *Missile Defense Project* at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Grynkewich's warning highlights the scope of the challenges: *"Being on a war footing comes at a cost in terms of readiness and ammunition stocks. The question now is: what is the strategy?"*.

News link: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2026/08/01/general-warns-pentagon-he-lacks-sufficient-forces-protect-israel/>