CEAFE
Centro de Estudios y Análisis sobre el Futuro de Europa

CONFLICTS

Sunday, 15 November 2026

- **Section:** Conflicts / Conflictos
- **Window covered:** 14 November 2026, 15:00 to 15 November 2026, 15:00 Europe/Madrid
- **Compiled from:** the Defense News list brief, plus Ukraine, Iran and Yemen reporting in the Estados, EU and industry briefs of the same window. No new entries were recorded in `shared/movements.md` for this day.

Iran strikes at Bahrain again; a tanker is attacked approaching Hormuz

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps said on Sunday, 15 November, that it had launched six drones at a US air-defence radar at Bahrain's Al-Riffa (Riffa) helicopter base, the second such claim in three days. Bahrain's defence force said its air defences intercepted and destroyed the incoming attacks "before they could achieve their objectives." The interior ministry issued nationwide shelter alerts, the first since September. There was no immediate US or Bahraini confirmation that the radar itself was hit. A Friday attempt was denied as a hit by US Central Command, which said it shot down two one-way attack drones with no injuries or damage. Saudi Arabia's foreign ministry condemned the Iranian air attacks "in the strongest terms" and pledged full solidarity with Manama; Bahrain's foreign ministry held Iran "fully responsible." The episode sits in the broader, months-long US–Israel war with Iran, in which Tehran asserts that the Strait of Hormuz is closed. US Central Command said on 14 November that US Air Force F-16s were patrolling regional waters and that "more than 1.7 billion barrels of crude oil have been shipped through the Strait of Hormuz by Gulf partners with US protection" (the period was not specified in the post).

Separately, UK Maritime Trade Operations issued Warning 205-26 after Indian shipping authorities reported an attack on a tanker transiting the Arabian Gulf eastbound before entering the Strait of Hormuz. The crew were accounted for and safe; damage and any environmental impact were unknown. UKMTO marked the incident near Khasab, Oman. IRGC and some OSINT accounts also claimed that two oil tankers struck naval mines south of the strait; those additional claims were not confirmed in the UKMTO warning.

A related front in Yemen remained active in official and factional posts. Houthi spokesman Yahya Saree claimed that at dawn on 15 November his forces shot down a Saudi CH-4 drone over Al-Jawf and that Saudi F-15s had carried out 72 air raids in 24 hours; the anti-Houthi "Yemen Army Media" account said

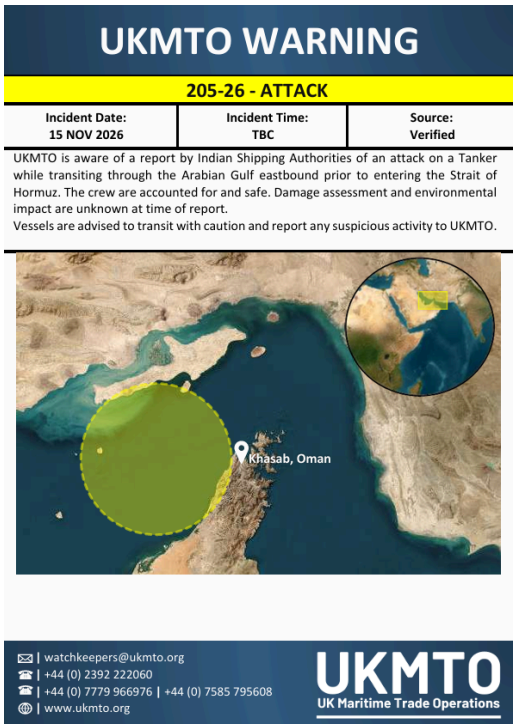
Marib air defences intercepted Houthi drones. These are competing combat claims and were not independently verified in the briefs.

Why it matters for Europe. Roughly a fifth of the world's oil and gas usually transits Hormuz. Continued attacks on Gulf bases and shipping keep energy prices volatile, raise insurance and freight costs, and complicate any diplomatic off-ramp. The Yemen track is part of the same regional war system and of European Red Sea risk.

What to watch. A US CENTCOM or Bahraini damage assessment on Sunday's raid; any second UKMTO update on the tanker (identity, flag, pollution); whether IRGC mine claims are corroborated by maritime authorities; Hormuz transit in the coming days.

Sources

- BBC, 15 November 2026
- Al Jazeera on the Bahrain claim
- UKMTO Warning 205-26 (PDF)
- UKMTO warning on X
- Saudi MFA English statement
- Saudi Gazette
- CENTCOM, 14 November
- Iran International



Official UKMTO Warning 205-26 graphic: text of the Indian-authorities report and a map with a shaded circle around Khasab, Oman.

Russia intensifies strikes on Ukrainian energy; Kyiv hits Nizhnekamsk; Starshield limits remain

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that in the past week alone Russia had used more than 2,300 attack drones, 1,590 aerial bombs and 15 missiles of various types against Ukraine. Overnight into Sunday, he said, Russia targeted energy infrastructure in Zaporizhzhia, Sumy, Odesa, Zhytomyr and Kirovohrad regions, and hit railway infrastructure in Dnipro, Kharkiv and Zaporizhzhia, with strikes also reported in Donetsk and Kyiv regions and 16 people injured. DTEK said an energy facility hit in Odesa left 41,000 households without electricity, according to Al Jazeera. Zelenskyy argued that many Shahed strikes on substations succeed because speed restrictions on Starshield terminals along the front and in occupied territory remain in place, causing interceptor drones to lose contact at 161 km/h (100 mph) and fail to catch jet-powered Shaheds. SpaceX has denied a policy change, calling the issue technical; Zelenskyy has said Ukraine does not accept that explanation.

In the other direction, Ukraine's General Staff said its forces struck the Sibur-owned Nizhnekamskneftekhim petrochemical complex — more than 1,000 km from the Ukrainian border — and the only primary distillation unit (ELOU-AVT-7) at the Nizhnekamsk (TAIF-NK) oil refinery during the night of 14–15 November, and also the Monolit aviation plant in Trubchevsk, Bryansk Oblast. Fire Point, the Ukrainian drone maker, said Ukrainian forces used its FP-1 drones against Nizhnekamskneftekhim. Nizhnekamsk's mayor reported a "massive and prolonged" drone attack that damaged industrial-zone facilities and a residential building. AFP, citing regional authorities, reported three people wounded and a fire at the petrochemical site; later reports cited local officials as saying six people were injured. Russia's defence ministry said it had shot down 533 Ukrainian drones overnight across a dozen regions and Crimea. AFP said it had not authenticated social-media footage of the fire. On a related industrial note, Fire Point also published company figures on the scale of Ukrainian deep strikes and video of an earlier (around 10 November) attack on a Russian drone base in occupied Donetsk; those company tallies were not independently audited.

Why it matters for Europe. Winter energy attacks raise the risk of a new refugee and reconstruction burden and keep pressure on European air-defence stocks and financing. A dispute over US-controlled satellite connectivity goes to Ukraine's ability to defend critical infrastructure — and to whether Europe can help close the gap without depending on a US commercial constraint.

What to watch. Whether SpaceX or the US government lifts or explains the Starshield cap; confirmed production impact at Nizhnekamskneftekhim and TAIF-NK; the scale of the next Russian energy strike package.

Sources

- Zelenskyy, 15 November
- Ukrainska Pravda on the Tatarstan strikes
- Ukrainska Pravda on the weekly tally and Starshield
- France 24 / AFP
- Al Jazeera on Starshield restrictions
- Ukraine's General Staff statement
- Kyiv Independent

- SpaceX comment, circulated via @RALee85

EU Operation IRINI boards suspected Russian shadow-fleet tanker MV MIDAG

On 15 November, EU High Representative Kaja Kallas said that forces from EUNAVFOR MED IRINI had boarded a suspected Russian shadow-fleet tanker in the Mediterranean on 13 November. The boarding, under Article 110 of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (flag verification), confirmed that MV MIDAG was sailing under a false flag. Kallas said the EU would "keep disrupting Russia's shadow fleet at sea and through diplomatic means," and that EU foreign ministers were due on Monday, 16 November, to approve new Russia sanctions listings, including on banks, buyers and companies supporting the shadow fleet. Kallas did not announce a detention.

Operation IRINI said the boarding took place in the central Mediterranean in line with its mandate, which was renewed in October through 31 March 2029 and now includes helping to constrain the shadow fleet. Italian reporting said two warships and an Italian helicopter took part. MarineTraffic and press accounts described MIDAG as a crude-oil tanker of about 241 metres and more than 106,000 dwt, displayed as flying the flag of Zimbabwe. Similar flag-verification boardings were reported earlier of MV Sun and MV Toa Payoh. Open-source reporting cited in the EU brief (The Insider, not an official EU source) said the tanker was not detained and continued west; that vessel-history point is attributed to that reporting, not to the EU statement.

Why it matters for Europe. The shadow fleet is a principal channel for sanctioned Russian oil revenues that finance the war, and a safety and environmental risk in European waters. Boardings that only confirm a false flag, without a seizure, show both the reach and the limits of the current mandate. Monday's listings are a test of whether the EU can move from documentation to disruption.

What to watch. The 16 November Foreign Affairs Council listings; any detention, diversion or flag-state follow-up on MIDAG; further IRINI boardings.

Sources

- Kallas, 15 November
- Euronews
- Kyiv Independent
- @F_CEAFE repost



Side view of the tanker with the name MIDAG on the bow, a helicopter lowering a team onto the deck (from Kallas's post).

Europe is told to prepare for a prolonged hybrid campaign; a device is made safe in Dublin

An Atlantic Council UkraineAlert essay circulated on the Defense News list (dated 10 November, posted 14 November) argued that Europe has seen a surge in suspected Russian hybrid incidents — bomb threats against airports in Rome, Copenhagen, Prague, Warsaw and Lisbon and against media organisations, plus cyberattacks on supermarket frozen-food systems — designed to stay below the threshold of open conflict and hard to attribute. The author pointed to the attempted bombing of Leipzig Airport in August 2026 as a watershed, and concluded that "Europe should prepare for a prolonged campaign of hybrid hostilities that poses a threat to civilian infrastructure of all kinds." A Foreign Policy essay of 12 November made a similar argument: adversaries are testing how much violence Europe will absorb, and "fear" is Russia's cheapest hybrid weapon. Official confirmation of Kremlin direction is in most of the cited cases still lacking.

In that context, Irish police and the Defence Forces' EOD team on 13 November made safe a "crude but viable" explosive device at an office building on Merrion Square North in Dublin — near, but not at, the National Gallery of Ireland, where the taoiseach had hosted EU leaders at dinner the previous evening during the European Political Community summit and informal EU meeting. Sources told *The Journal* the device resembled a firework attached to a can of flammable liquid. No attribution to a state actor has been announced.

Why it matters for Europe. Whether or not the Dublin device is eventually linked to a foreign campaign, the political effect of scares around an EU leaders' gathering sits squarely in the pattern European services are already investigating. Attribution difficulties are themselves part of the challenge for NATO and EU deterrence.

What to watch. The outcome of the Garda investigation; any European or NATO attribution of the early-November airport threats; further incidents around critical civilian infrastructure.

Sources

- Atlantic Council UkraineAlert
- Foreign Policy, 12 November
- The Journal on the Dublin device

Canada and the UK discuss PAC-3 missiles, F-16 ammunition and deep-strike support for Ukraine

Ukraine's defence minister, Evgeniy Khmara, spoke with Canada's minister of national defence, David McGuinty, about air defence, F-16 support and long-range capabilities, the Ukrainian Defence Ministry said (readout dated 14 November 2026). Khmara thanked Canada for contributing to the procurement of PAC-3 missiles for Patriot batteries through the JUMPSTART mechanism, and called 20 mm cannon ammunition for F-16s a "critical resource," saying "the lion's share of jet-powered drones are destroyed by our F-16s," and asked that the next delivery be sped up. The ministers also discussed deep-strike support and procuring Ukrainian drones. Figures for Canada's PAC-3 contribution were not stated in the ministry text.

Ahead of the Ramstein-format Ukraine Defense Contact Group, Khmara and UK Defence Secretary Wes Streeting discussed the next aid package, aircraft munitions, faster deliveries against jet-powered drones, and possible joint defence ventures; Khmara thanked the UK for a recent transfer of Lightweight Multirole Missiles (LMM). Poland's pause on further PURL funding for US weapons, and the wider financing debate, are covered in Current Affairs.

Why it matters for Europe. PAC-3, Patriot and the F-16 fleet sit at the centre of Ukraine's air-defence effort. Canadian financing via JUMPSTART and UK munitions transfers are concrete allied channels into that pipeline; ammunition shortages for F-16 guns directly affect the cheaper end of the counter-drone fight, just as interceptor stocks are under strain.

What to watch. Timelines for the next 20 mm shipment and any public JUMPSTART/PAC-3 quantities; the next Ramstein-format package.

Sources

- Ukrainian MoD readout on the Canada call
- Ukrainian MoD readout on the UK call
- @DefenceU on the Canada call
