Hegseth Says There's No Shortage of American Will, Resources in Operation Epic Fury

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Secretary of War Pete Hegseth today said there is no shortage of American will, nor is there a shortage of materiel, when it comes to U.S. kinetic engagement against the Iranian terrorist regime during Operation Epic Fury.

While providing an update on the conflict for the second time in as many days, and joined by the commander of U.S. Central Command, Navy Adm. Brad Cooper, Hegseth said the Iranian regime would be foolish to think that the U.S. isn't completely committed to accomplishing the mission in Iran.

"Iran is hoping that we cannot sustain this, which is a really bad miscalculation for the [Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps] in Iran," Hegseth said during a press briefing at Centcom headquarters in Tampa, Florida.

He added that there is no shortage of American will to execute the mission, and that there is no shortage of U.S. munitions to facilitate that execution.

"Our stockpiles of defensive and offensive weapons allow us to sustain this campaign as long as we need to. … Again, our munition status only increases as our advantage increases. [And] our capabilities? We have only just begun to fight and fight decisively," Hegseth said.

Contrary to the notion that there is a shortage of U.S. material, the secretary said that even more offensive

firepower is headed to the region.

“The amount of combat power that’s still flowing – that’s still coming – that we’ll be able to project over Iran is in multiples of what it currently is right now, when you add up our capabilities and those of the Israeli defense forces,” Hegseth said.

“Our munitions are full up, and our will is ironclad, which means our timeline is ours and ours alone to control as long as it takes, to ensure the United States of America achieves these objectives,” he added.

Cooper thanked Hegseth for authorizing Centcom to use overwhelming kinetic force against the Iranian regime.

“If I could channel my inner Navy officer, we are at ‘full speed ahead’ in executing orders given by leadership in Washington,” Cooper told the media.

The admiral concurred with Hegseth’s assessment that U.S. combat power is growing in the region while Iran’s continually declines, citing the last 72 hours as an example.

During that time, America’s bomber force has struck close to 200 targets deep inside Iran, including around the capital city of Tehran.

Cooper also said that, in just the one hour prior to the start of today’s press conference, U.S. B-2 Spirit stealth bombers dropped dozens of 2,000-pound penetrator bombs that targeted deeply buried Iranian ballistic missile launchers.

“Notably, we have also struck Iran’s equivalent of [U.S.] Space Command, which degrades [Iran’s] ability to threaten Americans,” he said.

As to the decline in Iran’s combat capability, Cooper said that Iran’s ballistic missile attacks have decreased by 90% since the first day of the conflict, and that Iranian drone

attacks have decreased by 83% in the same timeframe.

At sea, Cooper said the count of sunken Iranian navy ships has surpassed 30.

“And in just the last few hours, we hit an Iranian drone carrier ship, roughly the size of a World War II aircraft carrier. And as we speak, it’s on fire,” he added.

Under orders from President Donald J. Trump, Centcom forces are working to destroy Iran’s missile industrial base.

“We’re not just hitting what they have, we’re destroying their ability to rebuild. And so, as we transition to the next phase of this operation, we will systemically dismantle Iran’s missile production capability for the future, and that’s absolutely in progress,” Cooper said.

He added that Centcom and Israel’s combined joint forces have “relentlessly destroyed” Iran’s air defenses during the conflict, and that those forces will continue hunting for more systems to attack.

“Our air defenders are at the top of their game, [and] I couldn’t be prouder, shoulder to shoulder with our partners in the region – in many cases – providing the most integrated air defense network in Middle East history,” Cooper said.

Following their formal remarks, Hegseth addressed reports that a U.S. F-15 Eagle fighter jet had been shot down, calling the reports false.

“As you can imagine, Iran is doing everything it can to peddle in lies, deception and inflation of numbers, in reality, mostly to propagandize to their own people,” he said, adding that Iran had floated another false report that 500 Americans have been killed in the conflict.

The secretary also addressed concerns about the operation expanding beyond Iran’s borders to other nations throughout

the Middle East, saying that nothing could be further from the truth, and that Iran’s targeting of countries throughout the region is actually encouraging those countries to side with the U.S. and Israel in the conflict.

“It’s actually firming up the unity of resistance in order to focus exactly where we need to,” Hegseth said. “So, this idea that [the conflict] is expanding – no, it’s actually simplifying, in a number of ways – exactly what we need to achieve and how we’ll achieve it.”