

## Travel Advisory – Middle East (16 March 2026)

**Date:** 16 March 2026

**Areas of Concern:** Middle East

**Overall Risk Level:** HIGH

### Key Developments (last 72 hours)

#### Monday 16 March 2026

- Qatar issued another elevated security threat level alert, asking residents to remain in their homes or safe places earlier today, as Qatari armed forces intercepted a missile attack.
- A fire broke out in a building in the emirate of Umm Al Quwain in the United Arab Emirates following a drone attack today. No injuries have so far been reported.
- Authorities in Abu Dhabi responded to an incident involving a missile falling on a civilian vehicle in the Al Bahyan area, resulting in the death of a Palestinian national.
- Oil loading operations have resumed at the Port of Fujairah in the UAE after they were halted earlier following a drone attack that triggered a fire in the emirate's petroleum industrial zone. The halt in loading marked the second disruption at the vital hub in recent days. Operations at Fujairah had resumed on Sunday after a separate drone strike over the weekend.
- At 14:32 local time, UAE air defences were responding to incoming missile and drone threats from Iran.
- An Iranian drone struck a fuel tank near Dubai International Airport (DXB) early in the morning, causing a fire and heavy smoke. Flights were temporarily suspended, roads to the airport closed and some aircraft diverted to Al Maktoum International airport (DWC). Emirates later announced limited operations after 10:00 local time. Authorities reported minimal damage and no casualties.
- Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Defence announced the interception and destruction of seven drones in the Eastern Province today.
- There has been a report of an explosion in the province of Nineveh in Northern Iraq.
- Iraqi security sources stated that the country's air defences are responding to drones near the US embassy in central Baghdad and near the Balad Airbase in Salah al-Din governorate.
- Donald Trump, speaking aboard Air Force One, said the US has been striking Iranian drone manufacturing sites used to support attacks. He claimed Iran's drone capability has been reduced to about 20% and its manufacturing capacity largely destroyed.
- The IRGC says it has launched about 700 missiles and 3600 drones at US and Israeli targets during the conflict so far. It stated that most weapons used are roughly ten years old, with more advanced systems still in reserve as the war enters its third week.
- Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi said Iran has not requested a ceasefire and will continue resisting in the conflict with Israel and the US. He added that any end to the war must be 'definitive' to prevent future conflict.

#### Sunday 15 March 2026

- The UAE reported a sharp drop in Iranian attacks today, stating that its forces had engaged 4 ballistic missiles and 6 drones. The Emirates had recently been targeted in dozens of strikes each day, amounting to more than 1,900 attacks since the start of the war. In contrast, Saudi Arabia has reported an increase in attacks in recent days.
- Iran's IRGC fired 10 missiles and an unspecified number of drones at US forces stationed at Al Dhafra Air Base in the UAE, near Abu Dhabi.

- An Iranian drone struck the Italian military facility at Ali Al Salem Air Base in Kuwait, destroying a remotely piloted Italian aircraft sheltered at the facility, but causing no injuries. The base hosts both Italian and US personnel and capabilities
- Saudi Arabia's Prince Sultan Air Base (PSAB) at Al-Kharj near Riyadh, which hosts US military aircraft, was targeted by Iranian missile and drone attacks. Separate reports indicate five US Air Force refuelling aircraft were damaged on the ground, though none were destroyed and no casualties were reported.
- Iran-aligned Iraqi militia Saraya Awliya al-Dam claimed to have targeted US troops stationed at Victory base, located near Baghdad International Airport with a rocket barrage. One attack sparked a large fire, and injured four airport employees and security personnel and an engineer. Iraqi authorities said the rockets also hit a nearby desalination plant.
- Saudi air defence systems intercepted and destroyed additional drones over Riyadh, the Eastern Province, and the Al-Jawf region, as part of continuing Iranian drone operations targeting Saudi territory.
- Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates warned people that they were working to intercept incoming projectiles, a day after Iran called for the evacuations of three major UAE ports, threatening for the first time a neighbouring country's non-US assets.
- A drone strike targeted an oil facility in Ruwais, Abu Dhabi (UAE). UAE authorities confirmed the fire was brought under control and no casualties were reported.
- A task force operating under the Kuwait National Guard intercepted and shot down five drones in Kuwaiti airspace while conducting operations to protect critical infrastructure.
- UAE officials are thoroughly monitoring social media and as many as 100 people have now been arrested in the UAE for filming drone or missile strikes. Penalties include imprisonment and fines of no less than Dh2000,000 (£41,000)

#### **Saturday 14 March 2026**

- US forces conducted strikes against Iranian military facilities on Kharg Island, the main terminal responsible for most of Iran's oil exports. US President Donald Trump warned further strikes could follow if Iran continued attacks on shipping in the Strait of Hormuz.
- Iran Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said Iran will target American companies and economic interests across the region if Iranian oil and energy infrastructure continued to be attacked
- Iranian authorities warned civilians to evacuate major port areas in the UAE, alleging the US used ports to launch strikes on Iran's Kharg Island oil terminal. Tehran said ports, docks and locations hosting US forces could be considered legitimate military targets.
- The UAE has rejected Iran's claim that the US strike on Kharg Island was carried out from the Gulf state. Anwar Gargash, diplomatic adviser to the UAE president, said the UAE had the right to defend itself in face of 'terrorist aggression' but continued to prioritise reason and logic.
- Iranian army warned residents in Dubai and parts of Doha, Qatar to evacuate areas where US military personnel are present ahead of possible strikes. The warning included maps identifying locations in and around Doha, including Lusail, Al Waab and Ain Khaled.
- Evacuations in parts of Doha on Saturday were triggered after an Iranian missile was launched towards a residential neighbourhood. The missile was intercepted before it could strike the area.
- Kuwait International Airport was targeted by multiple drones, causing damage to the airport's radar system. No casualties were reported, but the strike significantly disrupted air traffic control systems and led to flight delays and operational disruption.
- A task force operating under the Kuwait National Guard has shot down five drones over the past 24 hours. The drones were intercepted as part of ongoing efforts to safeguard critical infrastructure.
- Abu Dhabi authorities responded to an incident at a facility in the Ruwais Industrial Complex following a drone strike. A fire was brought under control, and cooling operations currently underway. No injuries are reported.
- A drone interception over Fujairah Port in the UAE caused debris to strike an oil facility, triggering a fire. As a result, some oil-loading operations at the port were temporarily suspended.

- A missile struck the helipad area inside the US Embassy compound in Baghdad, Iraq. Smoke was seen rising from the embassy complex, though the extent of damage and any casualties remain unclear.
- The US Embassy in Baghdad issued a security alert advising all US citizens in Iraq to leave the country immediately due to the deteriorating security situation.
- Iranian media outlets reported that Citibank offices in Dubai (UAE) and Manama (Bahrain) were targeted by drones, although these claims have not been independently verified.
- UAE emergency authorities warned the public to avoid approaching missile debris or intercepted drone fragments, after falling debris caused damage to several buildings in Dubai during recent air defence interceptions.

## Movement Status

### Airspace Restriction

Airspace across parts of the Middle East remains subject to restrictions and potential short-notice closure due to ongoing military activity. Several international airlines continue to suspend or limit flights to destinations across the Gulf and Israel.

Regional aviation hubs remain operational under contingency procedures.

### Oman

- Muscat International Airport (MCT) – Operational and continuing to handle increased traffic linked to evacuation and repatriation flights.
- Salalah Airport (SLL) – Operational though regional disruption may affect connections.
- Sohar International Airport (OHS) – Operational though regional disruption may affect connections.

### United Arab Emirates

- Al Maktoum International Airport (DWC) – Supporting cargo and limited passenger operations.
- Zayed International Airport (AUH) – Operating with reduced services.
- Other UAE airports – Operational though disruption may affect services.

### Israel

- Ben Gurion Airport (TLV) – Limited flight operations continue, including authorised and repatriation flights

## Airports with Significant Disruption

- Dubai International Airport (DXB) – Gradual resumption of some flights to and from selected destinations, following the temporary suspension implemented as a precautionary measure after a drone hit a nearby fuel tank.
- Kuwait International Airport (KWI) – Operations are severely disrupted as a result of recent drone strikes which damaged infrastructure and radar equipment.
- Hamad International Airport (Qatar) – Flight operations remain affected by the wider regional security situation.
- Bahrain International Airport – Aviation operations remain severely disrupted due to ongoing regional tensions.
- Airports in Iran, including Imam Khomeini International Airport and Mehrabad International Airport – Civil aviation operations remain heavily restricted due to the conflict.
- Major Saudi airports including King Abdulaziz International Airport (Jeddah), King Khalid International Airport (Riyadh), Prince Mohammad bin Abdulaziz International Airport (Medina), and King Fahd International Airport (Dammam) are experiencing disruption following suspended regional flight routes.

## Local Transport Conditions

Ground transport across much of the region remains generally operational, though travellers should expect varying levels of security presence and possible movement restrictions depending on local developments.

- Major urban centres across the Gulf continue to function normally, with road traffic operating and commercial activity largely continuing as usual in many areas.
- Authorities in several countries maintain increased security around airports, government buildings and critical infrastructure, which may result in additional checkpoints or temporary road closures nearby.
- Movement near international borders may be more restricted, and travellers should expect reduced traffic volumes and increased security checks in these areas.
- Ground sources operating in Saudi Arabia report no perceptible change to the normal pattern of life in Riyadh, with shops open and streets busy during Ramadan. Road traffic along major routes in and out of the capital appears normal, with reduced vehicle movement primarily observed near border crossings.

## Consular Contacts – Five Eye Countries

Travellers are advised to register with their embassy

**Australia** – The Australian Consular Emergency Centre (CEC) provides 24/7 emergency assistance to Australians overseas (+61 2 6261 3305)

**Canada** – The Global Affairs Canada Emergency Watch and Response Centre provides 24/7 emergency consular assistance to Canadians abroad (+1 613 996 8885), WhatsApp/Signal (+1 613 909 8881/8087), email [sos@international.gc.ca](mailto:sos@international.gc.ca)

**New Zealand** – Consular Emergency Line (+64 99 20 20 20)

**United Kingdom** - Provides 24/7 global support to British citizens abroad (+44 20 7008 5000)

**United States** – Provides 24/7 consular assistance to Americans abroad (+1 202 501 4444)

## Government Repatriation/Evacuation Flights

Governments are in the process of organizing evacuation assistance for their nationals across the Middle East however due to ongoing disruptions to flight and airport operations in the region, some flights have been delayed.

## Guidance for Travellers Currently in Middle East

### Best advice is to:

- Shelter in place
- Register with your embassy or consulate as soon as possible
- Follow official instructions of local authorities and your embassy
- Report any security or safety concerns through appropriate official channels
- Rely on trusted news sources for accurate and timely updates
- Conduct regular communication checks with your group and key contacts
- Keep all communication devices fully charged, including spare batteries and power banks
- Stay away from windows and keep curtains or drapes closed as a precaution

### In the event of a missile or drone alert:

- Immediately
  - Go indoors
  - Move away from windows
  - Use reinforced structures or basements

- Recommended shelter locations
  - Underground parking
  - Basement levels
  - Interior stairwells
  - Designated shelters
- Remain sheltered – Stay inside 10 – 15 minutes after final explosion or alert

**In the event of immediate evacuation**

- Ensure that you are able to move at short notice with minimal baggage
- Keep important documents and essential medications accessible
- Follow official instructions with authorities promptly

**Accountability & Documentation**

Prepare and maintain a nominal roll of all individuals in your party, including

- Full name (as per passport)
- Passport details
- Date of birth (DOB)
- Medical conditions and required medications
- Any special considerations

Also record next-of-kin details to ensure timely updates can be provided if required

Remain flexible and prepared to adapt to conditions as they evolve.