

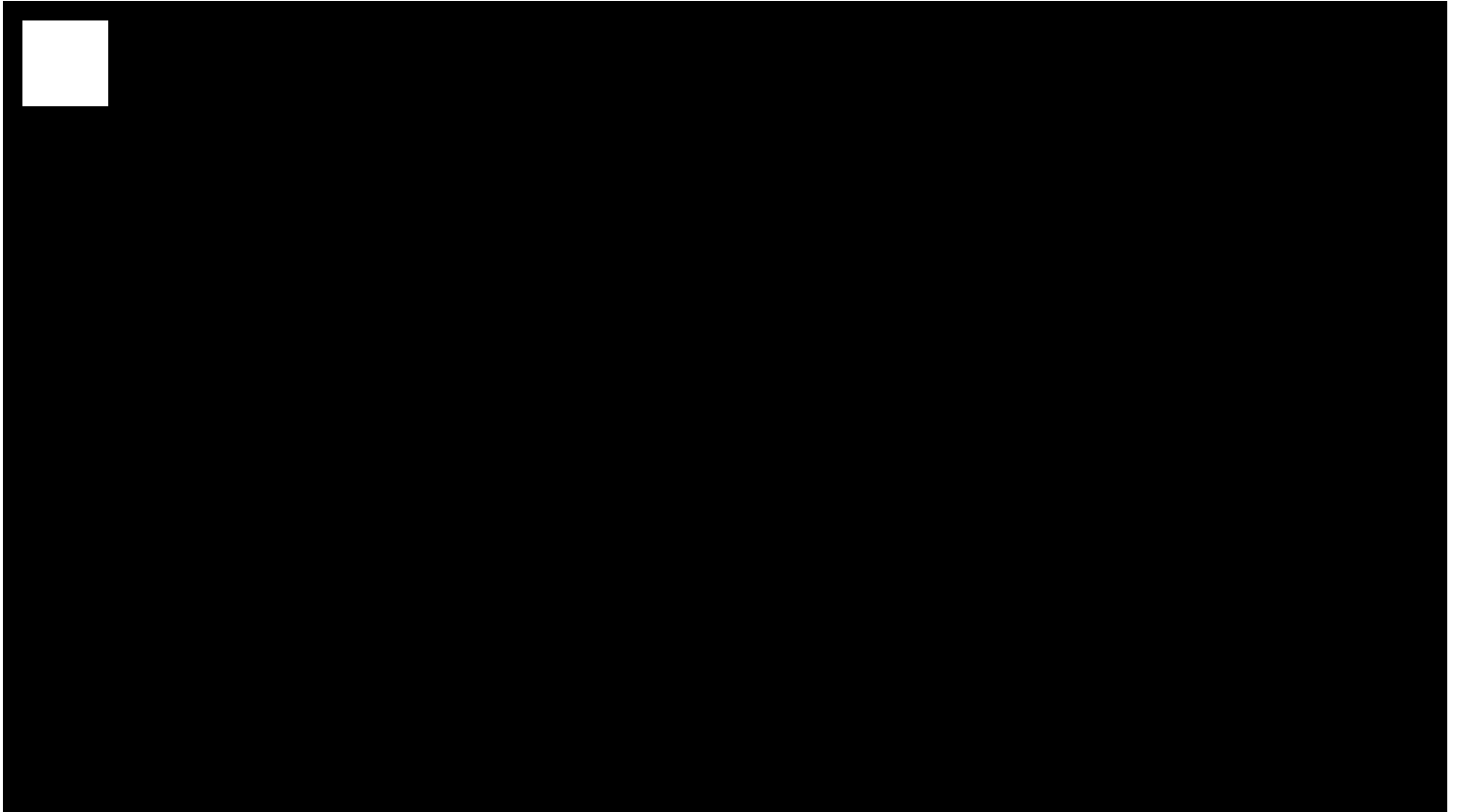
BREAKING NEWS

Updated 7 minutes ago

NATIONAL SECURITY

U.S. strikes Iranian nuclear sites, Trump says

The move is the first time the U.S. has attacked Iran and a major escalation of the conflict between Israel and Iran. U.S. involvement has divided Republicans, including Trump's closest allies.



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June 21, 2025, 5:05 PM PDT / Updated June 21, 2025, 5:42 PM PDT

By Alex Koppelman, Courtney Kube and Gordon Lubold

The United States bombed multiple nuclear sites in Iran, President Donald Trump announced in a social media post on Saturday. The airstrikes are the first time the United States has conducted a direct military attack on Iran, and they further escalated a military conflict between Iran and Israel that began on June 13.

"We have completed our very successful attack on the three Nuclear sites in Iran, including Fordow, Natanz, and Esfahan," Trump said in a social media post at 7:50 p.m. ET. "All planes are

now outside of Iran air space. A full payload of BOMBS was dropped on the primary site, Fordow. All planes are safely on their way home."



— The Isfahan nuclear enrichment facility in central Iran on June 3.

Maxar Technologies / AFP via Getty Images, file

Trump added, "Congratulations to our great American Warriors. There is not another military in the World that could have done this. NOW IS THE TIME FOR PEACE! Thank you for your attention to this matter."

Israel was able to hit some of Iran's nuclear facilities on its own, but it is not believed to be able to strike a key site at Fordo, which is believed to hold both a large amount of enriched uranium and advanced centrifuges.

The facility at Fordo, Iran's most advanced, is built inside a mountain and believed to be safe from any bomb except for the [United States' GBU-57 Massive Ordnance Penetrator \(MOP\)](#), a "bunker buster" weapon.



— Fordo, a uranium enrichment facility, south of Tehran, the capital of Iran, on Feb. 12.

Maxar Technologies / AFP via Getty Images, file

Trump did not say which type of bombs were used in the strikes, but it was widely expected that the GBU-57 would be used. Earlier in the day, American B-2 stealth bombers, which are the only plane that can carry GBU-57 bombs, which weigh 30,000 pounds, took off from bases in the United States.

The United States has provided Israel with smaller bunker busters but Israel is not known to have a plane capable of delivering the MOP, making U.S. participation necessary for any successful airstrike on Fordo.

According to Israeli officials, its attacks have killed several of Iran's top military commanders, along with at least nine scientists working on nuclear enrichment, and they have damaged several nuclear enrichment facilities across Iran.

Israel was able to conduct its initial strikes mostly with its own intelligence and forces, but it leaned heavily on U.S. intelligence, as well as U.S. munitions and defense systems that

Washington had previously provided. when Iran launched retaliatory strikes on Israel.

Two U.S. officials told NBC News that the United States used ground-based interceptors and ships to defend Israel when Iran launched retaliatory missile strikes.

Trump's shift

NBC News has reported that Trump initially opposed Israel taking military action against Iran, favoring negotiations over bombing. But in the days before Israel's strikes on Iran, he became convinced that Israel's heightened anxiety over Iran's nuclear enrichment capabilities was warranted.

After a pivotal June 8 briefing from the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Air Force Gen. Dan Caine, about Israel's plans and U.S. options for supporting its operation, Trump gave tacit approval for Israel to conduct strikes and that the U.S. would provide limited backing.

Even though many of his MAGA allies have advocated against U.S. military involvement, Trump's rhetoric about Iran has steadily escalated since Israel's bombing campaign began.



— President Donald Trump meets reporters after he signed a trade agreement with British Prime Minister Keir Starmer at the Group of Seven summit in Kananaskis, Alberta, on Monday.

Chip Somodevilla / Getty Images

On Tuesday, in [a post on his social media platform Truth Social](#), he called for Iran's "UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER!"

Wednesday morning, he [said he was still considering U.S. strikes](#).

"I may do it. I may not do it," he told reporters outside the White House. "Nobody knows what I'm going to do."

Asked what he meant with his "UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER!" post, he said, "That means I've had it. OK, I've had it. I give up. No more."

"Then we go blow up all the, you know, all the nuclear stuff that's all over the place there," he added.