Middle East: situation update as of 12 March 2026

🔴 **Key developments over the past 24 hours** (non-exhaustive selection)

- **Continuation of US–Israeli air raids in Iran**, notably against regime forces in Kurdish cities in the **north-west**, near the **Iraqi border**. Escalation continues in the **Strait of Hormuz**, with two Iranian attacks against commercial vessels in **Iraqi territorial waters**, off **Basra**. The first written message from the new Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei signals Iran's intention, confirmed by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, to "keep the **Strait of Hormuz closed**."

- **Iranian and proxy retaliation against Israel:** a substantial joint attack by the Iranian regime and Hezbollah targeting the **North** was largely intercepted by Israeli air defences during the evening of 11 March.

- **Arabian/Persian Gulf:** Iranian attacks continue at a steady frequency since 06/03 (1–2 every 24h), leading to interceptions—mostly drones—over the **UAE** (which remains the primary target, particularly **Dubai** since tensions increased in the Strait of Hormuz): a drone crashed into a building in Dubai Creek Harbour, with debris falling along Sheikh Zayed Road and in the al-Bada' area. In **Bahrain**, another attack caused a major fire at a fuel depot in **Muharraq** (near the international airport), where warning sirens sounded; Rayya Highway was closed. In **Kuwait**, two successive drone attacks caused damage near the **international airport** and in a residential building in **al-Ahmadi**. Further interceptions without damage were reported in **Qatar** and **Saudi Arabia** (targets: **Eastern Province** and **Riyadh**).

- **Lebanon and regional spillover:** a large campaign of Israeli bombardments targeted **Beirut's southern suburbs**, alongside two new strikes in central areas of the capital (**Corniche /** Ramlet al-Baida during the night and Bachoura on the 12) outside evacuation zones. Threats of intensified strikes in **central Beirut**, notably **Zokak el-Blat**. An unprecedented evacuation order was issued for residents of southern Lebanon north of the Zahrani River, south of **Sidon**, confirming the expansion of Israeli ground operations. In **Iraq**, further drone attacks by pro-Iran militias targeted **Erbil** (city centre and the Italian military base).

✈ **Airspaces closed**

- **Bahrain**
- **Kuwait**
- **Israel** (repatriation flights to Israel)
- **Iraq** (at least until the 13th)
- **Iran**

✈ **Airspaces restricted**

- **UAE / Qatar** (limited flights - Do not go to the airports without confirmation)
- **Lebanon** (almost exclusively Middle East Airlines)

✈ **Airspaces open**

- **Saudi Arabia**
- **Oman**
- **Jordan, Syria**
- **Türkiye, Egypt**

Recommendations

Maintain regular contact with diplomatic authorities and airlines; choose reliable and official sources of information.

Gulf countries: postpone future travel. Travellers in transit in the country should prepare for departure continuing to **shelter-in-place** (home/hotel) during alerts, avoid open areas and windows indoors, and follow instructions given by the authorities. Maintain contact with your security coordinator. Ensure communication means remain active and operational at all times so you can be contacted.
➔ **Alert systems & official resources**

Lebanon: postpone travel. Within the country, avoid all travel to all regions south and east of Beirut, prepare for departure by contacting diplomatic authorities and Middle East Airlines.

Jordan: increased risk related to interceptions and falling projectiles. Limit non-essential travel and follow local alerts. Avoid the vicinity of the US Embassy.

Israel: postpone future travel. Inside the country, it is essential to take shelter at every air raid alert, also notified via the Tzofar app (Google Play & App Store).

Iraq / Syria: postpone travel (risk of strike expansion targeting US assets and indirect incidents).

Iran: major deterioration of the internal and security environment; liaise with diplomatic authorities.