



## Spotlight on Terrorism: Lebanon and Hezbollah March 24 – 31, 2025

### Overview<sup>1</sup>

- ▶ Two rockets were launched at Kiryat Shmona from south Lebanon for the second time in less than a week. One rocket was intercepted and the other fell in Lebanese territory. There were no casualties. The IDF attacked Hezbollah targets in south Lebanon, including a building in the Dahiye al-Janoubia in Beirut, for the first time since the ceasefire at the end of November 2024; five people were reported killed. Hezbollah denied involvement in the rocket fire. The Lebanese army claimed suspects had been arrested.
- ▶ IDF forces continued actions to prevent Hezbollah from rebuilding its military arsenal and against its presence in south Lebanon in violation of the ceasefire agreement, eliminating terrorist field commanders and operatives. Hezbollah reiterated the claim that it was committed to letting the government handle the "Israeli violations," but warned it could lose patience.
- ▶ Hezbollah leader Qassem gave a speech for World Jerusalem Day, claiming Hassan Nasrallah's death represented the organization's genuine support for the Palestinians.
- ▶ The Lebanese prime minister said the entire state opposed the normalization of relations with Israel.
- ▶ The defense ministers of Lebanon and Syria signed an agreement for the demarcation of their border.

### Rocket Fire from South Lebanon

- ▶ On March 28, 2025, two rockets were fired at Kiryat Shmona and the Galilee Panhandle from south Lebanon. One fell in Lebanese territory and the other was intercepted by IDF forces; no casualties were reported. In response, the IDF fired artillery at the launch area and later conducted airstrikes against Hezbollah terrorist targets in south Lebanon, including operatives, rocket launchers, and military headquarters and facilities. A building was attacked

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<sup>1</sup> Click <https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en> to subscribe and receive the ITIC's daily updates as well as its other publications.

in the al-Hadath neighborhood of Dahiyeh al-Janoubia in Beirut, which the IDF reported had served as a storage facility for UAVs of Hezbollah's Aerial Unit 127. It was the first attack on Beirut since the ceasefire went into effect on November 27, 2024. Before the attack the IDF issued a warning to evacuate the area (IDF spokesperson, March 24–31, 2025).



**IDF strike in Beirut (al-Nahar X account, March 28, 2025)**

► Lebanese media reported that Israel also attacked in south Lebanon, including the village of Tebnine and the towns of al-Khiam, Houla, Yohmor al-Shqif, Shebaa, Meiss al-Jabal and al-Taybeh (al-Akhbar and South Lebanon Watches the Enemy Telegram channel, March 28, 2025). The Lebanese ministry of health reported three dead and 18 wounded, including children, in the attack on Tebnine, and two dead in the attack on Yohmor al-Shqif (al-Manar and the Telegram channel of the Younes Agency, March 28, 2025).

## Hezbollah

► Hezbollah claimed it was not involved in the rocket fire and was "fully committed" to the ceasefire (al-Mayadeen, March 28, 2025). After the attack Hezbollah postponed the World Jerusalem Day events scheduled for the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia to the following day (al-'Ahed, March 28, 2025).<sup>2</sup> Hezbollah condemned the strike on Beirut and warned that if Lebanese state institutions did not take action against Israeli "aggression," the organization might take action itself:

- ◆ Na'im Qassem related to the attack in a speech for World Jerusalem Day. He said it was the first Israeli attack on the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia since the beginning of the

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<sup>2</sup> World Jerusalem Day has been held on the last Friday of the month of Ramadan since 1979, according to a decision by the founder of the Islamic Revolution, the Ayatollah Khomeini. The objective of World Jerusalem Day is to express Iran's and the Muslim world's support for the Palestinian cause and the "liberation of Jerusalem," to vilify Israel, call for its destruction and defy the United States, the West and their regional Arab allies. For further information, see the ITIC April 2023 report, "[World Jerusalem Day events again served as a platform for incitement, threats and vilification of Israel and the United States.](#)"

ceasefire and Lebanon had to "rise and go beyond diplomatic boundaries" whenever it was necessary to confront the "occupation." He claimed "the entire world" understood that Hezbollah "fully adhered to the ceasefire agreement," whereas Israel treated all its signed conditions as "meaningless." He warned that Hezbollah could not allow Israel to attack, adding that Israel was mistaken if it thought it could change the "equation" and "run wild" in Lebanese territory. He said they could not sit idly by while Israel "killed and destroyed," and if diplomacy did not bring results there would be no choice but to "seek other options." He said he had recently received messages from members of the "resistance"<sup>3</sup> who were ready to carry out "sacrifice operations"<sup>4</sup> (al-Manar, March 29, 2025).

◆ Muhammad Raad, head of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament, gave a speech for World Jerusalem Day in which he said the "resistance" strongly condemned the "Zionist aggression" in the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia in Beirut and in south Lebanon. He claimed they were committed to the ceasefire agreement and called on the state of Lebanon to fulfill its obligation and "deter the enemy" (Radio al-Nour, March 28, 2025).

◆ Ghaleb Abu Zainab, a member of Hezbollah's political council, claimed the "goal of the attack in the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia was to pressure Lebanon to soften its positions ahead of normalization with Israel." He added that "it will not happen because the Lebanese prime minister is aware of the political issue and Lebanon will not distort itself" (al-Mayadeen, March 29, 2025).



**Ghaleb Abu Zainab (al-Mayadeen, March 29, 2025)**

◆ Hassan Ezzeddine, a member of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament, said the Israeli attack in south Beirut threatened stability and constituted "a significant act of

<sup>3</sup> Hezbollah and the Palestinian terrorist organizations.

<sup>4</sup> Suicide bombing attacks.

aggression." He demanded that the Lebanese government use all available means to stop the Israeli "aggression" and warned that Hezbollah's patience had its limits, could end at some point and make it necessary to seek "other options." He said the government should also take action against American "meddling" in internal Lebanese affairs, claiming it insulted the dignity of the Lebanese people, government and state. He added that if the Americans thought they could achieve what the Israelis wanted through diplomacy and coercion, they were "delusional." He said, "the resistance is still present, strong and ready for any option the leadership decides on when patience runs out" (Simia Telegram channel, Hezbollah social media file, March 30, 2025).

## The Lebanese army

► The Lebanese army stated that its forces had located the rocket launch site in the Qaaqaait al-Jisr-Nabatieh area and were investigating who was responsible for the rocket fire. The army claimed the "Israeli enemy" escalated its attacks under the "pretext" that two rockets had been fired from Lebanon, claiming that the attacks hit various areas in the south and reached as far as Beirut, a blatant violation of Lebanon's sovereignty and the ceasefire agreement (Lebanese army X account, March 28, 2025).



**The improvised launcher from which the rockets were fired at Kiryat Shmona  
(Lebanese army X account, March 29, 2025)**

► The Lebanese army announced that several suspects had been arrested in connection with the rocket fire at Israel. "Security sources" reported that the suspects were Syrian and Palestinian nationals. According to the report, the army had leads that could potentially help identify whoever was responsible for firing the rockets. The "source" added that the Lebanese army continued to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1701 (al-Hadath, March 30, 2025).

## The Lebanese government

► Lebanese officials condemned Israel's attacks and warned the situation could deteriorate into a new round of violence. Government representatives intensified international diplomatic efforts to prevent further escalation:

- ◆ Lebanese President Joseph Aoun held a press conference with French President Emmanuel Macron at the Élysée Palace in Paris, and accused Israel of violating the ceasefire agreement. He protested any attack on Lebanon and called on the international community to compel Israel to adhere to the agreement. He also expressed Lebanon's full commitment to implementing Resolution 1701. Macron voiced support for Lebanon and said the attacks undermined its sovereignty and security, adding that France, along with the United States and the UN, was committed to supporting the ceasefire agreement (al-Nashra, March 28, 2025).



**Lebanese President Aoun and French President Macron at the Élysée Palace in Paris  
(Lebanese president's office X account, March 28, 2025)**

- ◆ Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam condemned the Israeli attack on the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia in Beirut, calling it a "dangerous escalation." He called for an end to Israeli "violations" and for Israel to withdraw from "the occupied areas" (Lebanese prime minister's office X account, March 28, 2025). He said he had instructed Rodolph Haykal, the commander of the Lebanese army, to find the parties responsible for the rocket fire threatening national security. He stressed the need to prevent a recurrence of such attacks and said he had spoken with Arab and international parties "to pressure Israel to halt its aggression." He said Lebanon was committed to Resolution 1701, the Lebanese army was responsible for border security and only the state could declare war (al-Nashra, March 28, 2025). In response, Muhammad Raad, head of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament, said that anyone who thought only the state had the right to decide between war and peace was "mistaken" (Radio al-Nour, March 28, 2025).

► Morgan Ortagus, deputy American envoy for the Middle East, said the rocket fire attacking Israel was a violation of the agreement and Israel had the right to defend itself. She said Lebanon had not disarmed Hezbollah and the rocket fire showed that the government was remiss in its duty (al-Sharq, March 28, 2025).

## The Ceasefire

### The IDF

► Last week the IDF continued its operations against Hezbollah's efforts to rebuild its military capabilities and continue terrorist activity in south Lebanon, in violation of the ceasefire agreement which prohibits a Hezbollah presence south of the Litani River. Several Hezbollah terrorist operatives and senior field commanders were eliminated, including the commander of the anti-tank missile array for the southern front and a battalion commander in the Radwan Force (IDF spokesperson, March 24–31, 2025).



**The vehicle of Hezbollah's anti-tank missile array commander after the attack  
(al-Madan, March 24, 2025)**

### Hezbollah

► Hezbollah reiterated its position that the institutions of the Lebanese state had to lead the "resistance" to the continued Israeli attacks on Lebanese territory and against the presence of IDF forces at five points in south Lebanon, warning that Hezbollah might lose its "patience" if no progress were made:

- ◆ Hezbollah senior figure Hussein al-Nimr claimed the organization was committed to the ceasefire "from a position of wisdom, not weakness." He called on the Lebanese state "to address the occupation's violations." He said the firing of "suspicious rockets" had given Israel a reason to attack, but it did not need one (al-Alam, March 25, 2025).
- ◆ Hassan Ezzedine, a member of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament, claimed the Israeli attacks were "aggression" and not sporadic incidents. He noted the need for "harmony and understanding between the resistance, the government and the

state." He said they had to work together "to confront the enemy" and the government had to work harder to exert pressure on the United States, France, members of the ceasefire oversight committee, the Security Council and the UN to remove the "enemy" from Lebanese territory. He added that "the resistance is prepared and in place, but patience is required so it will be able to meet its commitments at the appropriate time," and "the resistance<sup>5</sup> has become a necessity, a duty and a national responsibility" (Radio al-Nour, March 27, 2025).

◆ Rami Abu Hamdan, a member of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament, said wanted diplomacy which yielded results within a defined period of time because "our enemy assassinates and kills," and therefore "effective diplomacy supported by elements of force" had to be used. He said, "We will continue to fight our enemy as long as it is on our land, and it will know when we take matters into our own hands" (al-'Ahed, March 30, 2025).

## The Lebanese government

► Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam, meeting with the Editors' Council of the country's media outlets, said the five points where Israel insisted on remaining had no military or security value, but only showed Israel's desire to exert further pressure on Lebanon. He added that international and Arab diplomatic pressure on Israel to stop its attacks in Lebanon had not yet been fully exhausted (Lebanese prime minister's office X account, March 26, 2025).

► Lebanese President Joseph Aoun called on "both sides" to respect the ceasefire and accused Israel of "initiating violations" by its very presence in the five disputed border areas. He said Lebanon was taking direct action to preserve the ceasefire through diplomatic efforts, adding that guarantees for maintaining stability should come from France, the United States and other partners. Aoun said that a comprehensive ceasefire, the release of Lebanese prisoners and Israel's withdrawal from the five points were essential before entering any negotiations. He also said Lebanon's position regarding peace with Israel remained aligned with the broader Arab position (LBC, March 27, 2025).

## The Lebanese army

► Rodolph Haykal, commander of the Lebanese army, met with a delegation from the UN Security Council's Military Staff Committee. They discussed the general situation in Lebanon

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<sup>5</sup> Anti-Israeli terrorism and attacks.

and the region, as well as the cooperation between the Lebanese army and UNIFIL (Lebanese National News Agency, March 24, 2025).

► Rodolph Haykal toured south Lebanon and met with officers and soldiers. He noted the army's role in defending Lebanon and its people, adding that the army was making tremendous efforts to carry out its missions in the south. He said they were committed to implementing Resolution 1701 and the ceasefire without delay, in accordance with the directives of President Aoun and the commitment of the Lebanese government, and to cooperate and coordinate missions with UNIFIL. He claimed the only obstacle to the final completion of the Lebanese army deployment and the consolidation of the ceasefire was the presence of the "Israeli enemy" at occupied positions and points in Lebanon, in addition to its repeated attacks. He added that firing rockets from Lebanon at Israel served the "enemy," the army was conducting investigations to identify those responsible, and had arrested several suspects (Lebanese army X account, March 29, 2025).



**The commander of the Lebanese army visits south Lebanon  
(Lebanese army X account, March 28, 2025)**

► The Lebanese Army reported that "Israeli enemy" forces had "invaded" the al-Labouneh-Tyre area to pave roads. According to the report, Lebanese army forces arrived at the scene and blocked the roads (Lebanese army X account, March 27, 2025).

## UNIFIL

► Aroldo Lázaro, UNIFIL commander general, met with Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam, Defense Minister Michel Menassa, and Lebanese army Commander Rodolph Haykal. They discussed the current situation in south Lebanon and UNIFIL's assistance in implementing Resolution 1701. It was noted that UNIFIL continued to support the Lebanese army in its



redeployment in the south of the country in order to restore security and stability (UNIFIL Telegram channel, March 26, 2025).



**The UNIFIL commander meets with the Lebanese defense minister and the commander of the Lebanese army (UNIFIL Telegram channel, March 26, 2025)**

- ▶ The UNIFIL spokesperson expressed concern that the recent Israeli attacks in Lebanon could lead to escalation and called on all sides to exercise restraint and return to the negotiating table. He urged Israel to withdraw from south Lebanon, stop "violating" Lebanese sovereignty and "respect UN resolutions." He claimed UNIFIL was operating around the clock in coordination with the Lebanese army to ensure south Lebanon remained free of unauthorized weapons (Al Jazeera, March 28, 2025).
- ▶ The UNIFIL spokesperson claimed that the Israeli army had fired warning shots at UNIFIL personnel along the Blue Line while they were conducting a routine patrol near the town of Rmeish in south Lebanon. He said there were no casualties and claimed the warning shots were "a complete violation" of Resolution 1701. He said that on another occasion, UNIFIL forces reported that IDF troops had aimed a laser beam at them, adding that "any action that endangers the safety of the teams is unacceptable" (Lebanon24, March 30, 2025).

## Hezbollah

### Na'im Qassem's speech

- ▶ On March 29, 2025, Hezbollah secretary general Na'im Qassem gave a speech for World Jerusalem Day, which had been postponed for a day because of the Israeli attack in Beirut. In addition to relating to Israel's attacks in Lebanon, he praised the "resistance" in "Palestine" and in Lebanon (al-Manar, March 29, 2025):

- ◆ **Role of the Palestinian "resistance":** He praised the existence of a "deep-rooted Palestinian resistance," which he claimed was advancing towards a point with

significant regional consequences. He claimed the "Palestinian people" could not be defeated and had the right to act, adding that the "final victory" belonged solely to them.

◆ **Hezbollah's support for the Palestinians:** He said Hezbollah believed in the justice of the Palestinian cause, as stated by the fatwa of Iranian leader Ali Khamenei, overriding all other considerations. He claimed that Hezbollah's "important assistance" to the Palestinians and the Gaza Strip was evidenced by the "martyrdom" of Hassan Nasrallah, which was a genuine expression of support for "Palestine" and Jerusalem.

◆ **Role of the "resistance" in "defeating" Israel:** Qassem said the organization's capabilities prevented Israel from achieving its objective of "annexing towns in south Lebanon," claiming that the "resistance" in Lebanon had become the key force against the "Israeli enemy."

◆ **Rebuilding the country:** He said the Lebanese people were fully entitled to see the country rebuilt after everything Israel "destroyed." He called on the government to discuss reconstruction immediately.

◆ **Tensions on the Syria-Lebanon border:** He claimed there were parties trying to blame Hezbollah for attacks targeting Syrian security forces along the border. He said, "It is not true, we have no connection to the events."



Na'im Qassem delivers his World Jerusalem Day speech (al-Manar, March 29, 2025)

## Statements from other Hezbollah figures

► Ali al-Muqdad, a member of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament, claimed Lebanon had been subjected to the "aggression of the Zionist entity" for more than seventy years and that defending the homeland was the duty of "the army, the people, and the resistance." He noted that the inaugural speech of Lebanese President Aoun in January 2025 did not call for disarming the "resistance" but rather for expanding Lebanese sovereignty and applying the strength and resilience of the state. He claimed Hezbollah was the first to call for

arming the Lebanese army and improving its capabilities so it could confront Israel and "defend the people." He added that Lebanon currently had two problems, Israel to the south and extremist armed groups to the east [i.e., Syria], saying, "we have seen the consequences of the massacre [of the Alawites]." He said more Lebanese army assistance was required for the Lebanese people along Syrian border (Lebanese National News Agency, March 26, 2025).

► Ibrahim al-Amin, editor-in-chief of Hezbollah's daily newspaper al-Akhbar, published an article claiming that the grace period for Lebanese President Aoun and Prime Minister Salam was over. He said the two were appointed only because of Saudi Arabian-American pressure for normalization between Lebanon and Israel, but normalization was not possible because Israel "has not eliminated the resistance." Al-Amin claimed there was a tacit agreement allowing Israel to continue its "aggression," while Lebanon could not "resist." He said the Lebanese were dissatisfied with the president and the government, and protests against them would rapidly increase (al-Akhbar, March 27, 2025).

### **Criticism of Hezbollah**

► Ghada Ayoub, a Lebanese Forces Party member of the Lebanese Parliament, called on the Lebanese government to give Hezbollah a six-month ultimatum to hand over all its weapons both south and north of the Litani (Lebanese Forces X account, March 25, 2025).

### **International activity against Hezbollah**

► The United States Treasury Department imposed sanctions on five Lebanese citizens and three companies owned by them because of their involvement in a network which helps Hezbollah evade American sanctions, including by selling Iranian oil for the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps' Qods Force. On the list were Muhassen Mahmoud Murtadha, the widow of Muhammad Jaafar Qasir, who was the commander of Unit 4400, responsible for transferring weapons from Iran and its proxies to Hezbollah in Lebanon until he was eliminated in an Israeli strike in October 2024; and Rashid Qassem al-Bazal, brother of Muhammad Qassem al-Bazal, one of Hezbollah's top financial operatives who has been on the sanctions list since 2018 and who has a \$10 million reward on his head (United States Treasury Department website, March 28, 2025).

## **Possible Israel-Lebanon Normalization of Relations**

► In light of American efforts to promote a dialogue between Lebanon and Israel, the Lebanese government continued to oppose any political negotiations or normalization with Israel:

◆ Nabih Berri, the speaker of the Lebanese Parliament, told Prime Minister Nawaf Salam and President Joseph Aoun in direct conversations that he and Hezbollah rejected any attempt to drag Lebanon into political negotiations with Israel. Reportedly, Aoun and Salam were surprised that Berri had made his position public in the media rather than keeping it to closed meetings. The events led Salam to tell his associates that he did not want to enter into a political adventure aimed at normalization, adding that such a scenario could cause the government to fall, and not only Hezbollah and Amal ministers would resign (al-Akhbar, March 25, 2025).

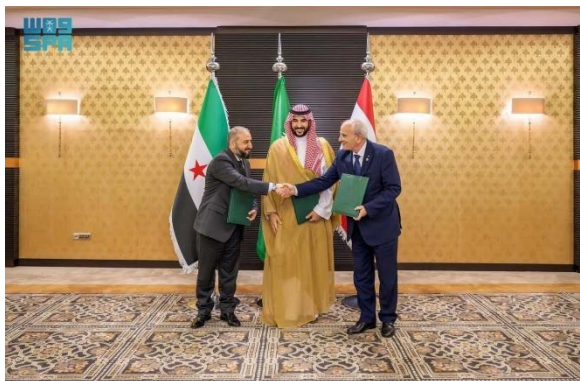
◆ Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam, meeting with the Council of Editors of the country's media outlets, said no one in Lebanon wanted normalization with Israel and that all Lebanese rejected it (Lebanese prime minister's office X account, March 26, 2025).

◆ A "Lebanese source" said the United States was pushing Lebanon to reach an agreement with Israel which would be less than normalization and more like a ceasefire. The "source" claimed the objective was to secure the border in a way which would prevent Hezbollah from using its weapons [sic]. "The source" said Washington knew Lebanon could not normalize relations with Israel. The "source" accused Israel of hindering the government's efforts to disarm Hezbollah by continuing to violate the ceasefire agreement (al-Sharq al-Awsat, March 26, 2025).

▶ Rami Abu Hamdan, a member of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament, said, "We will never allow or accept normalization." He urged Lebanon's leaders not to "waste time like what's happening in Gaza" (al-'Ahed, March 30, 2025).

## Tension Along the Lebanon-Syria Border

▶ Michel Menassa, Lebanese defense minister, met with Murhaf Abu Qasra, the Syrian defense minister, in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia; also present was Khalid bin Salman, the Saudi Arabian defense minister. They discussed Syrian-Lebanese interests to improve security and stability along their mutual border. An agreement was signed to state the strategic importance of border demarcation, under which joint committees would be established and coordination mechanisms would be activated to address security and military challenges. They agreed to hold another meeting in Saudi Arabia in the near future (Saudi Press Agency, March 28, 2025).



**Defense ministers of Lebanon and Syria shake hands at the signing of the border demarcation agreement; behind them is the Saudi Arabian defense minister (Saudi Press Agency, March 28, 2025)**

- ▶ During Lebanese President Aoun's meeting with French President Macron at the Élysée Palace in Paris, a virtual conversation was also held with Syrian President Ahmed al-Sharaa. Aoun noted the need for bilateral coordination to address current issues, including the issue of the border (Lebanese president's office X account, March 28, 2025).
- ▶ The Lebanese army reported that its forces had foiled several smuggling attempts from Syria into Lebanon. The Intelligence Directorate arrested five Lebanese citizens and one Syrian in the Ba'albek area. The army also thwarted a smuggling attempt from Syria into Lebanon in the Zahleh area and seized a large quantity of military firearms and smuggled goods (Lebanese army X account, March 24, 2025).



**Weapons seized by the Lebanese army on the Syrian border (Lebanese army X account, March 24, 2025)**