



Hezbollah's defiance, the instability of the ceasefire and attempts to promote an Israeli-Lebanese dialogue

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Overview¹

- ▶ On November 6, 2025, Hezbollah published an open letter to the Lebanese leadership and public. It claimed it had abided by the November 27, 2024 ceasefire agreement and added that the objective of demanding that Hezbollah disarm and the Lebanese begin negotiations with Israel was to weaken Lebanon. It also insisted that it would not give up the "right to resist" and was not required to obey government directives on issues of war and peace. Hezbollah secretary general Na'im Qassem and other senior figures expressed similar positions.
- ▶ The letter was prompted by IDF attacks to enforce the ceasefire, targeting Hezbollah's reconstruction efforts and Radwan Force capabilities, amid reports of the organization's rearmament. Israel and the United States also warned that if the Lebanese army did not accelerate Hezbollah's disarmament, the attacks could intensify in quality and quantity.
- ▶ To prevent escalation and resolve the disputes between Israel and Lebanon, the United States and Egypt proposed holding bilateral negotiations. Lebanese president Aoun stated that Lebanon had no choice but to engage in dialogue with Israel; Nabih Berri, speaker of the Lebanese Parliament, and a Hezbollah ally, opposed direct negotiations.
- ▶ **Hezbollah's open letter was another expression the organization's defiance of efforts to disarm it, after previously expressing vague willingness to discuss possibly disarming "under certain conditions." However, Hezbollah has not issued the Lebanese government an ultimatum or explicitly warned Israel, reflecting the organization's continued restraint despite the IDF attacks. In ITIC assessment, Hezbollah's continued military buildup, the Lebanese army's weakness in preventing it and the intensification of Israel's measures could wear down the restraint shown by all actors since the beginning of the ceasefire and increase the risk of a serious escalation toward the end of 2025, the deadline set by the Lebanese government for disarming armed militias in the country, including Hezbollah.**

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

Hezbollah's Open Letter

► On November 6, 2025, Hezbollah published an open letter to Lebanese president Joseph Aoun, prime minister Nawaf Salam, Lebanese Parliament speaker Nabih Berri, and the Lebanese public at large. It presented the organization's public positions in light of continued Israeli attacks on Hezbollah targets, the demand to disarm the organization, and international pressure on Lebanon to open direct talks with Israel:

◆ **Hezbollah abided by the ceasefire agreement:** Hezbollah claimed that both it and the Lebanese state had honored the November 27, 2024 ceasefire, including halting military operations against Israel, while "the Zionist enemy" continued to "violate" Lebanon's sovereignty by land, air and at sea. It said Israel had not taken calls to stop its "aggression" seriously and used them "to blackmail Lebanon and impose conditions and demands" aimed at "subjugating and humiliating Lebanon" so it would recognize "the legitimacy of occupation by force."

◆ **Disarming Hezbollah:** Hezbollah claimed that the government's decision on the exclusivity of arms was a "mistake," and that Israel had exploited it to "impose" the demand for the disarmament of the "resistance"² in all Lebanon as a condition for ending "aggression," not only south of the Litani. In Hezbollah's opinion, there could be discussion of state monopoly over arms only within a national consensus for a comprehensive defense and sovereignty strategy, not in response to a "foreign request or Israeli blackmail." It warned that "the Israeli enemy" directed its demands at all of Lebanon to "neutralize its ability to resist extortion."

◆ **Refusal to negotiate with Israel:** Hezbollah warned against attempts to drag Lebanon into new rounds of negotiations which were traps "serving the goals and interests of the Zionist enemy." It claimed that any negotiation would only benefit Israel, since "the Israeli enemy always takes and never carries out what is imposed on it." Seeking to portray its stance as Lebanon's official position, the letter said, "Lebanon now seeks to end the aggression by enforcing the ceasefire declaration and by pressuring the Zionist enemy to comply with it, and has no interest whatsoever in yielding to aggressive blackmail or being dragged into political negotiations with the Zionist enemy."

² Hezbollah, the Iranian-backed terrorist organization, and its allies.

◆ **Continuing the "resistance:"** Hezbollah said it viewed "resistance to occupation and aggression as a legitimate right," and would stand alongside the Lebanese army and people to defend the country's sovereignty. It claimed that the "right" did not fall within the category of a decision on peace or war, but was meant as a defense against an enemy imposing a war on Lebanon. Thus Hezbollah sought to undermine President Aoun and Prime Minister Salam's stance that only the state would decide on war and peace, while also reviving the "army-people-resistance" motto removed from the current government's founding principles.

◆ A call for a unified Lebanese position: Hezbollah called for adopting a unified national stance to uphold all ceasefire terms and to stop "the violations, aggression, and Zionist expansion," rather than be drawn into political negotiations that could lead to normalization or harm Lebanon's right to self-defense.

► Following the publication, a "Hezbollah source" said that despite the open letter, the organization did not want a war, but rather that Israel fulfill the terms of the ceasefire. "We do not want war," he said, "but we will not allow Lebanon to be subdued by force, blackmail or pressure" (al-Araby al-Jadeed, November 6, 2025).

► The points of the open letter were recently reiterated by senior Hezbollah figures:

◆ Hezbollah secretary general Na'im Qassem said the state's responsibility was to monitor Israeli "violations and aggression." In a speech at an agricultural fair, he called on the government to support the army in repelling "Israeli aggression" and said, "Everyone in Lebanon is responsible for confronting aggression and occupation, each in their role and position." He promised they would not change their position on "resistance and steadfastness despite intimidation" and called for pressure to be exerted on Israel to fulfill the ceasefire agreement, claiming that any new agreement would exonerate Israel by absolving it of responsibility for its actions (al-Manar, October 31, 2025).



Na'im Qassem (al-Manar, October 31, 2025)

◆ Mohammad Raad, head of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament, said the organization "sheds blood and remains loyal to the resistance out of concern for Lebanon's sovereignty so the enemy not think it will be easy to make us submit." He urged the state and people to continue pressuring the "enemy" to declare a ceasefire and to implement the terms of the November 2024 agreement, warning that "any concession to the enemy or justification for aggression will not stop its blackmail but will encourage it to demand more" (al-Manar, November 1, 2025).

◆ Hassan Fadlallah, member of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament, noted that they still viewed state institutions as responsible for handling Israeli "violations" of the ceasefire, even though Hezbollah "suffers and its members' blood is shed." He said that while "the enemy" continued its attacks, "the Lebanese people stand firm and engage in resistance activities that are not rockets, bullets or explosives" (al-Nashra, November 2, 2025).

◆ Mahmoud Qamati, deputy head of Hezbollah political council, called on the Lebanese authorities to fulfill their promises and meet their commitments, including stopping the "violations." He stressed that "the equation the Israeli enemy seeks to impose on Lebanon will not hold and will change." He rejected calls to negotiate with "the enemy" after Israel had failed to implement the ceasefire for a year, and urged countries supporting the agreement to "complete it and pressure the enemy to implement it" (al-Akhbar, November 3, 2025).

Hezbollah's Growing Strength and the Instability of the Ceasefire

► Hezbollah's open letter came amid intensified Israeli attacks to enforce the ceasefire agreement and warnings that Israel would escalate if Lebanon's government did not speed up Hezbollah's disarmament, as had been decided in August 2025.³ Recent reports indicated that Hezbollah was in an advanced stage of rebuilding its military capabilities and arsenal for a possible future confrontation with Israel, adapting its structure to the new reality following continued Israeli enforcement since the November 27, 2024 ceasefire. "Individuals with access to Israeli and Arab intelligence" reported that Hezbollah was stockpiling rockets, anti-tank

³ For further information, see the October 2025 ITIC report, [Hezbollah's Reconstruction Efforts Amid the IDF's Enforcement of the Ceasefire in Lebanon](#) and the October 2025 report, [Implementation of the Lebanese Army's Plan to Disarm Hezbollah: Status Report](#)

missiles and artillery, some smuggled by sea and through the Syrian border despite Damascus' efforts to curb it, and also manufacturing weapons independently (Wall Street Journal, October 30, 2025). United States envoy Thomas Barrack, visiting Bahrain stated that Hezbollah had about 40,000 operatives and between 15,000 and 20,000 rockets and missiles (al-Nashra, November 1, 2025).

► Given Hezbollah's rearmament, the IDF stepped up attacks on Hezbollah sites and operatives. In October 2025, the IDF attacked 36 times, mainly in the Nabatieh area north of the Litani River and in the Beqa'a Valley, eliminating more than 20 operatives and commanders and damaging military sites and engineering equipment used to rebuild Hezbollah's military capabilities.⁴ From early November until November 6, 2025, seven Hezbollah terrorist operatives were eliminated, six of them from the Radwan Force (IDF spokesperson and Lebanese media, November 1–6, 2025).

► Israel and the United States told the Lebanese authorities they were too slow in implementing the disarmament plan, not just south of the Litani as stipulated, but throughout Lebanon. Defense minister Israel Katz said "Hezbollah is playing with fire, and President Aoun is dragging his feet," demanding that the Lebanese government dismantle Hezbollah and remove it from south Lebanon, warning that IDF enforcement "will continue and even escalate" (Israel Katz's X account, November 2, 2025). "Israeli sources" added that Hezbollah would not be allowed to return to its October 6, 2023 status and that the IDF would intensify attacks and enter combat if necessary (N12, November 5, 2025). United States envoy Barrack admitted Lebanon was "a failed state" and said it was unrealistic to expect the government to forcibly disarm one of its political parties, warning that doing so could trigger a civil war, adding that the United States would support Israel if it "became more aggressive toward Lebanon" (Reuters, November 2, 2025).

► However, Lebanese officials stressed their determination to complete Hezbollah's disarmament south of the Litani by the end of the year, without addressing other regions, particularly Hezbollah's strongholds north of the Litani, in the Beqa'a Valley and the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia, Beirut's southern suburb. Interior minister Ahmed al-Hajjar demanded Israel withdraw from its positions in south Lebanon and stop its "aggression," saying "it is the state's duty to extend its control over all Lebanese territory and declare itself the sole authority in the

⁴ For further information, see the November 2025 ITIC report, [Spotlight on Terrorism – October 2025](#)

area, so weapons must be subordinate to it." He claimed the army had made "significant and positive progress" in disarmament in the south (al-Sharq, November 2, 2025).

► On November 6, 2025, the Lebanese army was supposed to present its second monthly report to the government on the disarmament plan. A "military source" said the October report would describe "significant progress" in confiscating weapons south of the Litani, dismantling military facilities, sealing tunnels, and discovering over ten weapons caches. The source added that the army was acting "despite major risks and challenges" and urged the international community to exert pressure on Israel to stop its attacks (al-Araby al-Jadeed, November 5, 2025).

Efforts to Promote Negotiations between Lebanon and Israel

► Along with the continued Israeli attacks and disputes over Hezbollah's disarmament, international pressure on Lebanon to agree to talks with Israel has grown, with the objective of preventing further escalation and resolving bilateral disputes.

► United States envoy Thomas Barrack said it was "inconceivable" that no dialogue existed between Israel and Lebanon, adding that Israel was ready to reach a border agreement and "Beirut has no time to waste." He offered to mediate between the sides in any capital city they chose (Reuters, November 2, 2025). According to al-Akhbar, the Americans opposed any option other than direct negotiations, reportedly telling Lebanese leaders that the only way to avoid "Israeli punishment" was to "take concrete steps to dismantle the 'resistance' and hold direct talks with Israel" (al-Akhbar, November 5, 2025).

► Egyptian intelligence chief Hassan Rashad, who visited Lebanon in late September 2025, reportedly presented a four-stage Egyptian initiative: a ceasefire of over three months during which all "Israeli hostile actions" would cease and Lebanese prisoners be released in exchange for Hezbollah's full withdrawal south of the Litani; Egypt would initiate direct contact with Hezbollah leadership and craft a "political-security formula under international auspices" to address the group's weapons north of the Litani; Israel would begin withdrawing from "occupied points" in south Lebanon as Hezbollah was disarmed in the north; and the land border would be demarcated (al-Liwaa, November 1, 2025). Egypt was reportedly willing to

mediate, drawing on its experience from indirect Israel-Hamas negotiations (Lebanon24, November 1, 2025).



Aoun (right) and Rashad (al-Watania, September 28, 2025)

- "Arab diplomatic sources" said Aoun had accepted the Egyptian offer to mediate. They reported that during Rashad's visit, a "security figure" from Egypt had also met with Hezbollah officials, including Mohammad Raad and a Lebanese-Iranian-linked security official. The sources said Egypt urged Lebanon "to adhere to its conditions, particularly rejecting talks under fire and demanding Israeli withdrawal, so it would not enter negotiations in a position of capitulation" (aliww.com.lb, November 5, 2025).
- President Aoun acknowledged that Lebanon had no choice but to negotiate. He said politics had three pillars, diplomacy, economy, and war, and when war lead nowhere, one had to turn to negotiations. He noted that negotiations were not held between friends or allies, but between enemies (Lebanese presidency X account, November 3, 2025).
- Nabih Berri, speaker of the Lebanese Parliament and a Hezbollah ally, claimed that "the resistance fulfilled all its commitments under the ceasefire agreement," asking, "When, where, and how did Israel adhere to any of its clauses?" Regarding possible talks with Israel, he said "Lebanese will not agree to normalization" (NBN network, November 4, 2025). On another occasion, he said he believed there would not be a new war and opposed any direct negotiations, saying a "proven mechanism" already existed, a reference to his indirect talks with United States envoy Amos Hochstein which led to the 2022 maritime border deal (al-Jumhuriya, November 6, 2025).
- Samir Geagea, leader of the Christian Lebanese Forces party, said in response that even if Hezbollah had once acted as the "resistance" in the distant past, at other times it served as an arm of Revolutionary Guards, serving Iranian interests "at the cost of thousands of Lebanese deaths and the state itself." He said Israel's continued presence in south Lebanon was caused

by the presence of Hezbollah fighters there in violation of the agreement (Samir Geagea's X account, November 5, 2025).

Tensions in South Lebanon: The Incident in Blida

- On the night of October 29, 2025, an IDF force operated to destroy Hezbollah terrorist facilities in the Lebanese town of Blida, near the Israeli border. The soldiers identified a suspect inside a building and, after instituting the procedure for detaining a suspect and issuing warnings, shot and killed him. The IDF spokesperson said the building had recently been used by Hezbollah for terrorist activity under civilian cover (IDF Arabic X account, October 30, 2025).
- Lebanese reports claimed the IDF force, including armored vehicles, entered the town and shot Ibrahim Salameh, a Blida municipal employee, while he slept in the municipal building (al-Manar and the Lebanese News Agency, October 30, 2025).
- The Lebanese army stated that upon receiving information about the shooting, a patrol was dispatched to Blida and identified a "hostile ground force" which had entered the town, shot at the council building, killed one employee, and violated Lebanon's sovereignty and UN Security Council Resolution 1701 (Lebanese army X account, October 30, 2025).



The scene of the incident in Blida (al-Akhbar, October 31, 2025)

- President Joseph Aoun met with army commander Rodolf Haykal to discuss the incident, instructing him "to resist any Israeli incursion into south Lebanon in order to defend the state and its citizens." Aoun said the mechanism monitoring the ceasefire had to exert pressure on Israel to comply and stop "violations" (Lebanese presidency X account, October 30, 2025). Justice minister Adel Nasser said the army would confront any Israeli incursion as part of the president's directive, adding that Lebanese diplomacy would complement the army's efforts to counter "Israeli aggression" (Al Jazeera, October 30, 2025).
- Hezbollah condemned the incident in Blida, accusing "the Zionist enemy of continuing its crimes on Lebanese soil." The organization "welcomed the president's decision to instruct the

army to resist any Israeli incursion" and called for full support of the army to strengthen its capabilities (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, October 30, 2025). Ali Fayyad, member of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament, said Aoun's stance was "an important development in confronting the Zionist enemy and Lebanon's official position" (al-'Ahed, October 31, 2025).

► "Sources" claimed that President Aoun received messages from the United States expressing dissatisfaction with his order for the army to "confront the enemy." They said several parties urged Aoun "to fulfill his commitments and instruct the army to disarm Hezbollah, not seek confrontation with Israel" (al-Akhbar, November 4, 2025).