



## Spotlight on Terrorism: Lebanon and Hezbollah March 2-9, 2026

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

- ▶ On March 2, 2026, Hezbollah renewed its attacks on Israel in response to the Iran-Israel War which began on February 28, 2026. IDF forces attacked Hezbollah targets throughout Lebanon and eliminated terrorist commanders and operatives, senior officials in Iran's Qods Force and commanders in Palestinian terrorist organizations operating in Lebanon. In addition, IDF forces seized additional terrain in south Lebanon and located and destroyed terrorist facilities and assets. Evacuation notices were issued for all residents of south Lebanon and for neighborhoods in Dahiyeh al-Janoubia in Beirut. Two IDF soldiers were killed in the fighting.
- ▶ Hezbollah claimed responsibility for 124 attacks on civilian, military and security targets in Israel and on IDF forces in south Lebanon, firing rockets and launching missiles and UAVs, including the first rockets fired at central Israel since the ceasefire of November 2024. The organization attacked the northern cities of Nahariya and Kiryat Shmona after issuing "evacuation notices" to residents. Hezbollah did not report the number of casualties in its ranks, however according to unofficial estimates more than 100 operatives were killed.
- ▶ Hezbollah secretary general Na'im Qassem claimed the new attacks were in response to Israel and American "aggression" to "violations" of the ceasefire agreement. He accused the Lebanese government of weakening the state, diminishing its standing and surrendering to external demands. A commentator affiliated with Hezbollah claimed that any arrangement had to include a return to the status quo ante of October 8, 2023, when Hezbollah began to "assist" Hamas.
- ▶ The Lebanese leadership announced it would implement the ban on Hezbollah's military and security activity and said the organization was responsible for the new escalation. The government also ordered the expulsion of all Qods Force operatives from Lebanon and said Iranian citizens would require a visa to enter the country.

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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.

- ▶ As part of Lebanese efforts to end the fighting, the president and the speaker of parliament were formulating a proposal for a civilian delegation which would negotiate directly with Israel.
- ▶ The Lebanese army withdrew from positions in south Lebanon and erected checkpoints to prevent the passage of Hezbollah operatives and weapons south of the Litani River. It was reported that the military court released detained Hezbollah operatives following heavy pressure from the organization.
- ▶ Lebanese authorities reported that nearly 400 people had been killed since the beginning of the Israeli attacks and that more than half a million people had been displaced. The Lebanese prime minister said the state was committed to providing shelter for all the displaced.
- ▶ UNIFIL accused Israel and Hezbollah of violating UN Security Council Resolution 1701 and reported that three of its personnel were injured in an attack on one of agency's positions.

## The Fighting in Lebanon

### The IDF

▶ This past week the IDF continued extensive aerial and ground attacks on Hezbollah targets throughout Lebanon in response to the organization's entry into the war alongside Iran and the renewal of attacks on Israel on March 2, 2026. Two IDF soldiers were killed in the fighting (IDF spokesperson, March 2–9, 2026):

- ◆ **Attacks on Hezbollah facilities and assets and the elimination of commanders and operatives:** The IDF carried out hundreds of aerial attacks on Hezbollah targets in south Lebanon, in the Beqa'a Valley and in Dahiyeh al-Janoubia. They included buildings of the al-Qard al-Hasan Association, Hezbollah's financial arm, military headquarters, weapons depots, rocket and UAV launchers, Radwan Force facilities and other military sites. Hezbollah commanders were eliminated, including the head of Hezbollah's intelligence headquarters and the commander of the organization's firepower, field commanders, Radwan Force commanders and terrorist operatives who shot at IDF forces and Israeli territory.
- ◆ **Ground activity:** IDF ground forces seized additional commanding positions in south Lebanon to push Hezbollah's attack capabilities farther from the communities of northern Israel. The forces eliminated local Hezbollah operatives and located caches of weapons.
- ◆ **Issuance of evacuation notices:** To reduce harm to the local population, the IDF spokesperson in Arabic issued evacuation notices in Hezbollah strongholds throughout

the country. All residents of south Lebanon were called upon to leave their homes and move north of the Litani River, all residents of the four neighborhoods that make up the Dahiye al-Janoubia in Beirut were required to move to other areas, and evacuation warnings were also issued for communities in the Beqa'a Valley (X accounts of Avichay Adraee and Ella Wawiya, March 2–9, 2026).



Right: The evacuation notice for the residents of south Lebanon. Left: The notice for the residents of Dahiye al-Janoubia (X account of Avichay Adraee, March 4–5, 2026)

◆ **Elimination of senior Iranian Qods Force figures:** The IDF attacked commanders in the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Qods Force who were in Lebanon and coordinated with Hezbollah and the Palestinian terrorist organizations. Eliminated were the chief of staff of the Lebanon Corps in the Qods Force, who was responsible for transferring funds to finance terrorist groups in Lebanon, Hezbollah's representative in the Palestine Corps of the Qods Force and intelligence personnel. The IDF also ordered representatives of the Iranian regime in Lebanon to leave the country or they would become targets.

◆ **Elimination of terrorist operatives from other terrorist organizations:** The IDF also attacked Palestinian terrorist operatives operating from Lebanese territory. The head of the military wing of the Lebanon branch of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) was eliminated in an attack in Beirut, and the terrorist responsible for Hamas' military training and instruction in Lebanon was eliminated in an attack in the al-Badawi refugee camp in northern Lebanon.

◆ **Special operations:** During the night of March 6, 2026, IDF special forces searched in the al-Nabi Sheet area in the Beqa'a Valley for evidence related to Israeli Air Force navigator Ron Arad, who has been missing since 1986. Exchanges of fire took place at the site with no casualties to IDF forces. According to reports, no new evidence was found (IDF spokesperson, March 7, 2026). The Lebanese ministry of health claimed that at least

41 people were killed in Israeli attacks in the al-Nabi Sheet area (Al Jazeera, March 7, 2026).

## Hezbollah Activity

► On the night of March 2, 2026, Hezbollah said it would continue fighting against Israel. According to the organization's combat information unit, all political and diplomatic efforts to stop Israeli "aggression" had failed during the 15 months since the ceasefire went into effect, and the "situation could not continue without a response." Hezbollah declared it was necessary "to put an end to the aggression by all available means, with decisive and effective action," calling confrontation "a legitimate right." Hezbollah also claimed that the rockets fired at toward Israel were "defensive," and called on all those concerned, interested and responsible to act to stop the "aggression" (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, March 3, 2026).

► Hezbollah activity during the past week (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, March 2–9, 2026):

- ◆ From the renewal of fighting until March 9, 2026 at 12:00, Hezbollah issued 124 statements claiming responsibility for attacks on military, security and civilian targets in Israel and IDF forces in south Lebanon. They attacked with anti-tank missiles, artillery shells, UAVs, precision missiles, rockets of various types, anti-aircraft missiles fired at Israeli Air Force aircraft and attacks on IDF forces in south Lebanon. Hezbollah claimed responsibility for attacks on troop concentrations, IDF bases and Northern Command headquarters, and on aerial defense installations. On March 3, 2026, rockets were fired at central Israel for the first time since the ceasefire went into effect on November 2024. Not all of Hezbollah's claims regarding attacks or damage to IDF forces were verified.

- ◆ **Hezbollah casualties:** The names of senior officials and operatives killed in IDF attacks since the beginning of the current war were not released. However, on social media accounts, including unofficial accounts identified with Hezbollah, photographs appeared of more than 100 operatives who had been killed in Israeli attacks, some of them in notices confirming their Hezbollah affiliation, including some who had political positions in south Lebanon (X account QalaatM, Telegram channels South Lebanon Watching the Enemy and Hezbollah on the Ground, March 2–9, 2026).

- ◆ **Issuance of evacuation warnings:** In response to evacuation notices issued by the IDF spokesperson in Arabic for extensive areas in Lebanon, Hezbollah issued its own

"notices" ordering the people living northern Israeli cities of Nahariya and Kiryat Shmona to evacuate immediately and move southward. The organization also claimed responsibility for firing rockets and launching UAVs at both cities and claimed the attacks had been carried out following the warnings.



"Evacuation notice" for the residents of Kiryat Shmona  
(Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, March 7, 2026)

◆ **Psychological warfare:** Hezbollah's information unit issued videos and pictures to highlight the organization's ability to attack IDF forces and Israeli territory, including with missiles, and quoted the Israeli media regarding Hezbollah's ability to attack targets inside Israel.



Hezbollah picture boasting of launching 100 rockets and UAVs at Israeli territory in one day  
(Hezbollah combat information, March 7, 2026)

► Reports indicated Hezbollah operatives were returning to the area south of the Litani River, from which the organization had previously withdrawn following Lebanese army activity to enforce concentration of weapons in the hands of the state. Sources close to Hezbollah claimed that the organization was on full alert, new field leaders had been appointed and different combat methods had been adopted. According to a source in the organization, morale among the fighters remained high despite recent developments, and the was was perceived as being "important and sensitive" (al-Sharq al-Awsat, March 4, 2026; al-Diyar, March 5, 2026).

## Hezbollah

► Hezbollah secretary general Na'im Qassem justified the renewal of attacks on Israel as a response to ongoing Israeli-American "aggression" and to "violations" of the ceasefire agreement of November 2024. He claimed that for 15 months there had been no "military" response to allow Lebanon's diplomatic efforts to halt to the attacks. Given the criticism in Lebanon accusing Hezbollah of dragging the country into another war, Qassem claimed that the fighting was a "struggle with a Lebanese character" and not as part of any regional war connected to Iran. Qassem hardly referred to Iran in his speech in an effort to represent Hezbollah's attacks as "national defense" and to continue consolidating support among its Shi'ite base in Lebanon. Qassem criticized the Lebanese government, claiming that its recent decisions, particularly the demands to disarm Hezbollah, had weakened the state and legitimized American and Israeli pressure. He again stated that the organization's weapons were not subject to negotiation and presented them as part of a "legitimate right of resistance to occupation." He called for internal unity in Lebanon and argued that the objective of the extensive displacement of civilians from the south of the country was to create a rift between the "resistance"<sup>2</sup> and Lebanese society, while representing the war as an existential defense of Lebanon and the future of the Lebanese (website of the Hezbollah secretary general, March 4, 2026).



**Na'im Qassem in a speech (al-Manar, March 4, 2026)**

► According to reports, the Hezbollah leadership instructed the organization's members of parliament and senior officials to refrain from public responses to the positions of Prime Minister Nawaf Salam and to criticism from other politicians. Senior officials were also asked to reduce media appearances which could widen internal divisions and to focus on relating to

<sup>2</sup> Hezbollah and the other terrorist organizations operating in Lebanon.

Israeli aggression and its consequences, particularly the condition of the displaced and the efforts to assist them (al-Diyar, March 6, 2026). Nevertheless, several Hezbollah officials spoke publicly and justified the importance of the "resistance" and its "right to respond to Israeli aggression:"

- ◆ The deputy chairman of Hezbollah's political council, Mahmoud Qamati, claimed Hezbollah had "restrained itself" for months to allow Lebanon's diplomatic effort to halt the Israeli attacks, but the "continued violations" of the ceasefire had ended the organization's "era of patience." Qamati represented the attacks on Israel as part of the "right of resistance and self-defense" and claimed their objective was to exert pressure which would force the implementation of the existing agreements with Israel. He denied claims of internal division within the organization or of the presence of Iranian forces in Lebanon, claiming Hezbollah's decisions were Lebanese. He criticized the Lebanese government, which he claimed had surrendered to international pressure and condemned the "resistance" without condemning Israeli attacks, stating that Hezbollah would not cooperate with the restriction its "military" activity and would not disarm (al-Jumhuriya, March 3, 2026; al-Jadeed, March 3, 2026; Al Jazeera, March 6, 2026).

- ◆ The chairman of Hezbollah's religious council, Sheikh Muhammad Yazbek, sent his condolences on the death of Ali Khamenei, whom he praised as a shaheed, a religious authority and a leader of the "resistance axis."<sup>3</sup> Yazbek pledged Hezbollah would continue to follow the Iranian concept of wilayat al-faqih<sup>4</sup> and continue "the struggle of the resistance" in all arenas until victory (al-'Ahed, March 7, 2026).

► Hezbollah's affiliated Lebanese daily al-Akhbar led the "resistance camp's" criticism of the Lebanese government. Editorials accused the government of surrendering to international pressure and of damaging Hezbollah during wartime. It said Hezbollah did not intend to retreat from its positions regarding the "confrontation" with Israel or disarmament:

- ◆ Editor-in-chief Ibrahim al-Amin represented the Lebanese government's decision to restrict the organization's "activity" as serving external pressure and claimed its objective was to satisfy the United States and its regional allies while attacking the "resistance." He said it could lead to an internal confrontation in Lebanon and to civil

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<sup>3</sup> Iran, Hezbollah, the Palestinian terrorist organizations, the Houthis in Yemen and the Shi'ite militias in Iraq.

<sup>4</sup> Rule of the Jurisprudent, the title of the supreme leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Khomeini and later Khamenei.

war, accusing the Lebanese leadership of attempting to push the army and security forces into confronting Hezbollah, which he said would serve the interests of Israel and Western groups seeking to disarm the organization. He accused President Joseph Aoun and Prime Minister Nawaf Salam of political weakness and dependence on external actors (al-Akhbar, March 3, 2026).

◆ An op-ed article entitled "The Vichy government in Lebanon: between loss of legitimacy and the charge of treason" claimed the decision to restrict Hezbollah's "military" [sic] activity had been made in the midst of military escalation and was an attempt to "persecute the resistance" instead of confronting Israel. According to the article, the decision lacked constitutional basis because issues relating to the weapons of the "resistance" and national security had to be discussed in the Lebanese Parliament and not only by the government. The article compared the government's policy to collaboration with the enemy. It claimed the current confrontation could affect the political system in Lebanon and intensify the internal dispute regarding the question of Hezbollah's weapons and its role in the "struggle" against Israel (al-Akhbar, March 6, 2026).

◆ Ibrahim al-Amin also wrote an article stating that as far as Hezbollah was concerned, any future arrangement had to at least restore the status quo ante of October 8, 2023, before the beginning of the "support front for the Gaza Strip." He said the organization's leadership regarded the current "campaign" as an attempt to "correct a mistake" following Israel's continued attacks and not merely as "an expression of solidarity" with Iran. Al-Amin claimed Hezbollah was conducting the war from an "existential perspective" and would seek to impose conditions ensuring a return to the situation that preceded the opening of the "northern front" as well as real guarantees to halt all Israeli action against it, otherwise the fighting would continue until the objective had been achieved (al-Akhbar, March 7, 2026).

### Internal Challenges

► There were reportedly signs of internal criticism from Hezbollah's support base following the scale of destruction and the extensive displacement in south Lebanon, the Beqa'a Valley and the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia in Beirut. According to the report, some of the displaced expressed frustration with the price the local population paid because of the organization's support "for regional campaigns connected to the resistance axis," and in isolated cases voices

were heard questioning the promises made by the organization's leadership. However, political groups in Lebanon noted that despite the critical voices, during times of confrontation the Shi'ite environment tended to rally around Hezbollah, perceived as the main line of defense against Israel. Therefore, the Shi'ite opposition was currently avoiding a public confrontation with the organization, preferring cautious, gradual criticism (al-Markazia, March 6, 2026).

► According to political assessments in Lebanon, the rocket fire at Israel during the night of March 1, 2026 created tension and led to a possible split within Hezbollah. The report stated that the decision to attack was apparently taken at the military level and surprised the organization's political leadership. Indications included that the claim of responsibility was issued in the name of the "Islamic Resistance" alone and not by Hezbollah's official information unit. In addition, a deleted tweet by former minister Ibrahim Bayram, who is close to the organization's leadership, claimed the attack had in fact been carried out by Israel, which was interpreted as implicit criticism of the incident (al-Madan, March 2, 2026).

## The Lebanese Government

► The Lebanese leadership noted the importance of the government's decision to ban Hezbollah's military and security activity in response to the rocket fire that began the new war against Israel, and increased efforts vis-à-vis the international community to exert pressure on Israel to halt the attacks and avoid further escalation:

◆ At the opening of the first meeting of the Lebanese government after the outbreak of the new war, Prime Minister Nawaf Salam expressed anger at accusations that the government was fulfilling Israeli demands, saying that such a statement incited agitation and was illogical. He said the sinner was the one who dragged the country into "adventures we could have done without" in the service of foreign interests. He added that accusations of treason did not show courage, courage meant apologizing to the Lebanese people for the imposition of new hardships (X account of the Lebanese prime minister, March 5, 2026).

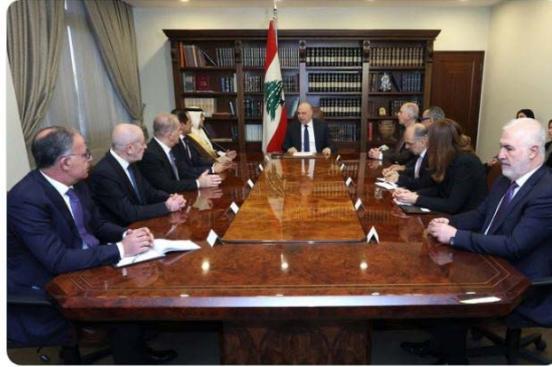
◆ Prime Minister Salam also accused Hezbollah of making a strategic mistake which had led to devastating consequences for Lebanon and for the environment the organization claimed to defend. He acknowledged that diplomatic efforts had not yet produced results due to the connection of the situation in Lebanon to the ongoing war with Iran, but it was important to end it quickly. Salam added that the government was determined to apply its recent decisions regarding Hezbollah and the army and the judicial system

were fulfilling their duty despite the difficulties created by the war (al-Sharq al-Awsat, March 8, 2026).

◆ According to Salam, mediators had brought the leadership in Beirut assurances from Israel that Beirut airport and the road leading to it would not be targeted. He said Hezbollah had promised it would not intervene in the war, and Israel conveyed a message that it would not launch an operation against Lebanon as long as Hezbollah did not fight alongside Iran, but he acknowledged that both promises has collapsed within less than 48 hours (L'Orient-Le Jour, March 9, 2026).

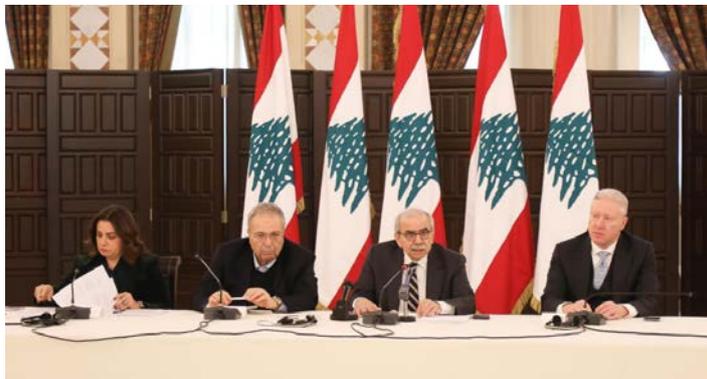
◆ Before the speech of the Hezbollah secretary general, a source in the government said the Lebanese no longer attributed importance to the speeches of Na'im Qassem. He said that the state would implement its decisions regardless of rhetoric and would not allow one sect to drag Lebanon into "suicidal adventures" (al-Hadath, March 4, 2026). Reportedly, the minister of justice, Adel Nassar, was examining the possibility of taking legal steps against Hezbollah's secretary general (MTV, March 7, 2026). It was also reported that the government's representative in the military court had issued legal orders against those responsible for firing the rockets and launching the UAVs which had initiated the current war, and the security forces had opened investigations to locate those responsible (al-Madan, March 3, 2026).

◆ Lebanon's president, Joseph Aoun, told members of the "quintet committee" (the ambassadors of the United States, France, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Qatar), that the government and only the government would to decide war and peace and would ban unlawful military activity, and had given the army and security forces the mission to enforce the decision throughout the country. Aoun called on the five countries to exert pressure on Israel to stop attacking Lebanon, stating the Beirut was prepared to renew ceasefire negotiations under international auspices. He said the rocket fire had come from north of the Litani River, an area where the Lebanese army had not yet fully deployed, in contrast to the area south of the Litani River, where the Lebanese army was deployed and fulfilling its security role (X account of the Lebanese presidency, March 3, 2026).



**Aoun meets with the "quintet committee" (X account of the Lebanese presidency, March 3, 2026)**

◆ President Aoun also met with regional and international officials to discuss regional developments. He spoke with the president of the European Council, Antonio Costa, with French president Emmanuel Macron, with King Felipe VI of Spain and with the Sultan of Oman, Haitham bin Tariq, expressing his gratitude for their support for the Lebanese state and calling for action to stop the Israeli attacks (X account of the Lebanese presidency, March 2–8, 2026). Meeting with Arab and foreign ambassadors, Prime Minister Salam called on the international community to increase diplomatic and humanitarian efforts to stop the Israeli attacks and evacuate the population from south Lebanon and from the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia, because of concern over the worsening humanitarian crisis (X account of the Lebanese government, March 6, 2026).



**Salam, second from the right, during a briefing for foreign ambassadors in Beirut (X account of the Lebanese prime minister, March 6, 2026)**

◆ Lebanese political sources said President Aoun and Lebanese Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri were trying to find a military-political initiative to end the war. According to the report, the Lebanese army would be required to take action against Hezbollah and deploy throughout the country, while a civilian delegation would be formed to conduct direct negotiations with Israel at a location outside Lebanon, most likely Cyprus. The UN coordinator for Lebanon, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, was expected to arrive in Israel to

conduct talks on the matter before meeting President Aoun in Lebanon (al-Jadeed, March 8, 2026).

◆ The Lebanese foreign minister, Youssef Rajji, met with Arab League foreign ministers. He accused Hezbollah of acting independently to serve Iran's agenda and of dragging Lebanon into a war which did "not serve the national interest." He also condemned the launch of UAVs at Cyprus from Lebanese territory and said such actions did not represent the Lebanese state, they had been carried out by actors operating outside the authority of the state and contrary to its sovereign decisions (X account of Youssef Rajji, March 8, 2026).

◆ Sources in the office of the Lebanese prime minister said the American administration had demanded clarifications after it became clear that Hezbollah operatives continued to operate in an area south of the Litani River over which the Lebanese army was supposed to exercise control. The American ambassador to Beirut, Michel Issa, said he was dissatisfied by the absence of effective state enforcement and demanded the government take steps to restrict Hezbollah's activity in the area (al-Diyar, March 7, 2026).

### **The Lebanese Government against Iran**

▶ The Lebanese minister of information, Paul Morkos, said the government had instructed the relevant ministries, the army and the security forces to ensure the expulsion of all representatives of the Revolutionary Guards from the country and to prevent them from carrying out any security or military activity from Lebanese territory, regardless of their affiliation or the cover under which they operated, and to arrest them prior to deportation from the country. In addition, all Iranian citizens would require a visa to enter the country to prevent activity which could disrupt security (al-Nashra, March 5, 2026).

▶ The government reportedly encountered opposition from ministers of the Shi'ite duo, Hezbollah and Amal, but Prime Minister Salam insisted on voting to pass the decision. Sources noted that the steps were taken because of United States instructions to increase pressure on Hezbollah, and the government might later consider additional measures regarding Iran, including limiting its diplomatic activity in Lebanon (al-Diyar, March 5, 2026).

▶ Prime Minister Salam said the decision was the result of information concerning activity by individuals suspected of belonging to the Revolutionary Guards which endangered national security. He said some of the individuals left the country after the decision was adopted. He

also said Lebanon wanted good relations with Iran but opposed the fate of Lebanese citizens being tied to the interests of another state (al-Sharq al-Awsat, March 8, 2026).

► The Lebanese foreign minister, Youssef Rajji, said the objective of the government's decision was to strengthen border supervision and protect national security. He said the council of ministers passed the decision and it was being implemented in practice, there would be no compromise regarding border control and the preservation of the state's stability (X account of the Lebanese foreign minister, March 6, 2026).

► After the government's decision and the Israeli attacks on Iranian officers in Lebanon, more than 150 Iranian citizens, including diplomats and their families, reportedly left the country. According to the report, the plane also carried the bodies of five Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps officers killed in Israeli attacks (Reuters, March 7, 2026; MTV, March 8, 2026).

► Al-Akhbar criticized the Lebanese government following the measures it took taken against Iran, claiming they were the result of pressure from the American ambassador to Beirut, Michel Issa, who claimed that Revolutionary Guards personnel were entering Lebanon under the guise of diplomats and demanded that the prime minister address the issue. The newspaper also wrote that the political atmosphere in Lebanon was becoming more hostile toward Iran and even raised the possibility that it could lead to the expulsion of the Iranian ambassador (al-Akhbar, March 6, 2026).

## The Lebanese Army

► According to reports, at the first government meeting after the outbreak of the war, the commander of the Lebanese army, General Rodolph Haykal, asked how the army should respond to the Israeli attacks. President Aoun replied that the army should avoid confrontation with the IDF even in the event of an Israeli advance or ground incursion since he was not prepared to risk the lives of Lebanese soldiers because of Hezbollah had dragged the country into war (al-Akhbar, March 3, 2026).

► According to reports, following government instructions, the Lebanese army evacuated positions in villages along the border in south Lebanon and moved to establish checkpoints on the al-Zahrani highway toward al-Nabatieh north of the Litani River, while conducting stricter inspections of civilians returning to their homes in the south (al-Nabatieh Telegram channel, March 3, 2026). It was also reported that the army began stopping weapons shipments passing through its checkpoints (al-Madan, March 3, 2026).

- ▶ Sources familiar with the matter told Hezbollah's al-Akhbar that President Aoun had instructed the army command to establish checkpoints in south Lebanon to monitor Hezbollah operatives, in accordance with an American request and with Israel's desire to empty the border areas. The newspaper accused the Lebanese army of attempting to prevent Hezbollah operatives from returning to south Lebanon by erecting checkpoints (al-Akhbar, March 4, 2026).
- ▶ Sources stated that the Lebanese army had detained 12 armed Hezbollah operatives at one of its checkpoints on the road to south Lebanon (LBCI, March 3, 2026). Later, the army reported it had detained 27 individuals at checkpoints throughout the country, including a Palestinian citizen, on suspicion of possessing weapons and ammunition without a permit, part of what were described as "exceptional measures" to preserve security and safeguard the national interest (al-Sharq al-Awsat, March 4, 2026). Sources stated that Hezbollah was exerting pressure on the president of the military court to release the detainees, alongside warnings from Hezbollah not to continue legal proceedings against its operatives (al-Hadath, March 8, 2026). Sources later reported that the military court had released some of the detained Hezbollah operatives subject to bail of \$20 dollars, equivalent to 1.9 million Lebanese pounds (al-Hadath, March 9, 2026).
- ▶ It was reported that the committee supervising the ceasefire asked Lebanese army commander Haykal to evacuate army positions south of the Litani River in preparation for possible escalation following Israeli threats and evacuation calls to the local population. In response, Haykal rejected the request and instructed sector officers not to leave their positions (al-Akhbar, March 7, 2026).
- ▶ General Haykal convened a meeting of the senior command staff to discuss the security developments in the country. He referred to the raid by IDF soldiers in the al-Nabi Sheet area in the Beqa'a Valley and claimed that the Israeli force used uniforms and vehicles similar to those of the Lebanese army and of rescue bodies associated with Hezbollah. Haykal acknowledged that the Israeli attacks were disrupting the army's activity but said the army continued its redeployment south of the Litani River, assistance to displaced civilians and reinforcement of the border with Syria (X account of the Lebanese army, March 7, 2026).

## Hezbollah's Opponents

- ▶ Opponents of Hezbollah in the Lebanese political system and media expressed support for the government's decisions against Hezbollah and Iranian involvement in Lebanon and demanded that implementation be swift and determined to ensure the state's full sovereignty:

- ◆ The chairman of the Christian Phalange Party, Lebanese MP Sami Gemayel, said he supported the Lebanese government's decisions to restrict Hezbollah's military activity, calling them courageous and historic. After meeting with President Aoun, Gemayel said Lebanon stood at a historic moment and the continuation of Hezbollah's military initiatives placed the state in serious danger. Gemayel emphasized that the central test now was the implementation of the decisions in practice and called on the security forces and the army to act decisively to enforce them. He also argued that Lebanon served as a platform for the defense of Iran and called for severing diplomatic relations with Tehran and expelling the Iranian ambassador from the country (X account of the Lebanese presidency, March 3, 2026).
- ◆ Lebanese MP Michel Moawad held separate meetings with President Aoun, Prime Minister Salam and Speaker of Parliament Berri. He supported the government's decision to ban extra-state "military activity," noting the need to restore Lebanon's sovereignty and the state's monopoly over weapons and decisions concerning war and peace. He noted that Lebanon had reached its current situation only because of Hezbollah and emphasized that the war now was not between the Lebanese themselves but between the state and Hezbollah, which implemented Iranian decisions at the expense of the Lebanese, especially the Shi'ite community. Moawad stressed that Hezbollah's continued rocket fire at Israel had to stop and those responsible had to be held accountable. He said the government decision marked a stage in which the state returned to being a state, but the current challenge was its implementation in practice (Facebook page of Michel Moawad, March 3–6, 2026).
- ◆ During a government meeting, the minister of industry, Joe Issa al-Khoury, compared the front pages of two Lebanese newspapers to illustrate the depth of the political division in the country. He said the front page of Nidaa al-Watan, known for its opposition to Hezbollah, featured a picture of Hezbollah secretary general Na'im Qassem in military dress with the headline "Wanted... arrest him," a hint of support for the government's decision to enforce the law against the organization's activity. In contrast, the headline of Hezbollah's al-Akhbar, supported the continuation of the fighting (Nidaa al-Watan, January 6, 2026).
- ◆ The daily Nidaa al-Watan issued articles critical of Hezbollah and accused it of fighting for Iranian interests while dragging Lebanon into "escalation" with Israel and ignoring

the consequences for the state and the population. The articles stated that following the blow to the organization's leadership, part of the operational management had in practice been transferred to figures from the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, indicating direct Iranian involvement in the fighting. Under the headline "Na'im al-Sinwar replicates Gaza," the paper attacked the Hezbollah secretary general and compared him to the former Hamas leader, arguing that Qassem's policy was leading to further destruction in Lebanon. The article added that Lebanon faced a political crisis due to the absence of an effective international mechanism to curb the escalation, while mediation efforts led by France had not yet produced guarantees to reduce military activity (Nidaa al-Watan, March 4 and 6, 2026).

◆ Lebanese columnist Tony Issa said the Lebanese government's decision to prohibit Hezbollah's military activity could lead the state to a dead end if the organization refused to implement it. According to Issa, Israel might view the decision as an official acknowledgment that Hezbollah's weapons were illegal and thereby justify expanding attacks on the organization's targets and even increase pressure on the Lebanese army to enforce the decision. He warned that in an extreme scenario Israel could use the government's failure as a pretext for ground action north of the Litani River, especially because of the background of a large mobilization of reserve forces. At the same time, it was argued that Hezbollah was currently facing regional and internal difficulties and even its allies in Lebanon did not fully support its position. Nevertheless, the assessment was that the organization would not easily disarm, although it might attempt to avoid further escalation in the near future (al-Jumhuriya, March 3, 2026).



**Lebanon's prime minister Nawaf Salam chases a chicken sitting on bombs. The chicken represents the Lebanese state and the explosive security situation, while the bombs hint at Hezbollah's weapons and the potential for security escalation (al-Jumhuriya, March 4, 2026)**

## The Situation in Lebanon

► The Lebanese minister of health, Rakan Nasser al-Din, said that at least 394 people had been killed since the beginning of the war, including 83 children and 42 women. In addition, at least 1,130 people had been injured, more than 520 of them women and children. He also claimed that four hospitals had ceased operating because of the "aggression" (al-Nashra, March 8, 2026).

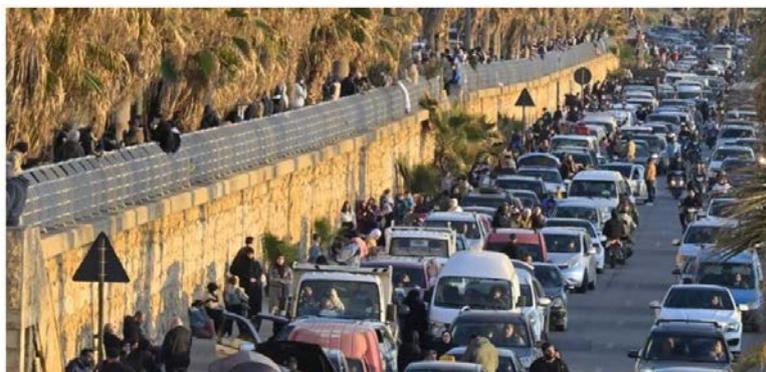
► Given the large number of evacuation notices issued by the IDF, the Lebanese minister of social affairs, Hanin al-Sayyid, said at least 517,000 people had so far been registered as displaced by the fighting since March 2, 2026. She said there were at least 117,000 displaced persons in 538 shelters established by the government across the country, and at least 500 people had been transferred to the Sports City in Beirut to ensure that no family would sleep on the street (Al Jazeera, March 8, 2026). The president of the Lebanese Red Cross, Dr. Antoine al-Zoghbi, called the humanitarian crisis in Lebanon "unprecedented" and called for urgent assistance. He said the organization did not have the capacity to assist all the residents who fled from south Lebanon and from the Dahiye al-Janoubia (al-Araby channel, March 8, 2026).

► According to reports from the villages south of the Litani River, about 90% of the residents had left their homes and most communities had almost completely emptied. Displaced residents said they were becoming increasingly fatigued by repeated displacement, the damage to personal security and the consequences of the prolonged fighting on daily life in south Lebanon (al-Mudun, March 8, 2026).

► Lebanese prime minister Nawaf Salam addressed the public in the wake of the extensive wave of displacement and claimed the state was committed to providing shelter and basic needs for the displaced. He called on citizens to show solidarity toward the displaced and warned against discriminating against or exploiting them, noting that they were not responsible for the circumstances which had displaced them (X account of the Lebanese government, March 5, 2026).

► Salam met with the relevant ministers and district governors to discuss the consequences of the fighting. He said it was unacceptable that any person or family remained with shelter and work was being done to ensure housing for every person. The minister of education, Rima Karami, said all schools were available to the governors to serve as shelters, adding that the more evacuation centers had been opened than was necessary (al-Nashra, March 7, 2026). The Lebanese minister of social affairs, Hanin al-Sayyid, reported an initial distribution of financial

assistance to 50,000 displaced families in cooperation with the World Food Programme, and the opening of an online registration system for displaced families to continue providing assistance (al-Diyar, March 5, 2026).



**Evacuation from the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia to northern Lebanon (Lebanon 24, March 6, 2026)**

► A sharp rise in rent in Beirut and Mount Lebanon was reported following the wave of displacement caused by the fighting, with prices in some cases rising by 400%. Complaints were recorded against property owners and brokers, about exploitation of the situation by as well as about the refusal of some residents to rent apartments to the displaced. It was also reported that some municipalities required registration and checks for displaced persons before renting properties, while others even opposed renting apartments to the displaced. In addition, cases were reported in which displaced persons who had arranged to rent apartments were forced to leave following pressure from neighbors or local authorities (al-Akhbar, March 6, 2026).



**A Lebanese citizen holding a rope forming the word "liquidity" while suspended between two pistols representing Iran and Israel (al-Jumhuriya, March 7, 2026)**

## UNIFIL

► UNIFIL stated that the rocket fire and missiles launched by Hezbollah at Israel and the Israeli attacks which crossed the Blue Line were a violation of UN Security Council Resolution 1701. The UN force said it was in contact with the parties in Lebanon and Israel and with the ceasefire monitoring mechanism and called for the prevention of further escalation. According to the

statement, despite the difficult conditions, the force's observers continued to carry out their missions and they were determined to bring stability and support the expansion of the Lebanese state's authority over all its territory (UNIFIL Telegram channel, March 3, 2026). The force also condemned the evacuation notices issued by the IDF to the southern Lebanese and the advance of IDF forces into Lebanese territory and warned that it was a violation of Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity. At the same time, the force reported rocket and missile fire toward Israel in violation of Resolution 1701 (UNIFIL Telegram channel, March 4, 2026).

► UNIFIL reported that three of its personnel were injured in an incident of heavy fire directed at their base in the town of al-Qouzah in southwest Lebanon. A soldier from the Ghanaian battalion was seriously injured and evacuated to a hospital in Beirut for treatment, while the two other injured personnel were treated at a UNIFIL medical facility (UNIFIL Telegram channel, March 6, 2026). It was reported that UNIFIL forces were investigating whether IDF artillery fire toward the position in al-Qouzah had been deliberate, after shell fragments struck the area of the position and caused a fire (al-Akhbar, March 6, 2026).