

# Spotlight on Terrorism: Hezbollah and Lebanon

June 1-8, 2026

## Trending

- ▶ The negotiations between Israel and Lebanon became the focal point of the struggle over Hezbollah's future and the balance of power in Lebanon.
- ▶ The Lebanese government continued its firm opposition to Iranian interference in the country's affairs.
- ▶ First signs of increasing internal Shi'ite criticism of Hezbollah and the costs of the war.
- ▶ The humanitarian crisis and concerns as internal divisions in Lebanon deepen.

## Overview<sup>1</sup>

- ▶ The Lebanese and Israeli delegations met in the United States with American mediation and agreed to implement the ceasefire and establish "pilot zones" in south Lebanon where the Lebanese army would assume exclusive control. Hezbollah secretary general Na'im Qassem and senior organization figures opposed the understandings reached in Washington.
- ▶ The IDF continued extensive air and ground operations to destroy Hezbollah terrorist targets and eliminate operatives in south Lebanon, including north of the Litani River. An extensive Hezbollah tunnel network was uncovered beneath the Beaufort Ridge. Hezbollah headquarters in the Dahiye al-Janoubia in Beirut were struck in response to rocket fire targeting northern Israel. Four IDF soldiers were killed in the fighting in south Lebanon.
- ▶ Hezbollah issued more than 170 claims of responsibility for attacking IDF forces in south Lebanon and targets in northern Israel with exploding and standard UAVs, rockets and other weapons, mainly north of the Litani. Hezbollah claimed it was primarily targeting command echelons and the IDF's command-and-control systems to reduce Israel's freedom of action.

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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.

- ▶ Two officers, one a high-ranking officer, and a soldier in the Lebanese army were killed in an Israeli strike. The IDF said it did not attack the Lebanese army and was investigating the incident. A UNIFIL soldier was killed by Hezbollah mortar fire.
- ▶ Lebanese President Joseph Aoun said the only choice was to conduct direct negotiations with Israel to stop the war, and Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam said direct negotiations were the only available option, adding that they had to exploit the opportunity to implement the state's monopoly on weapons.
- ▶ Aoun and Salam criticized the Iranian and Hezbollah position against negotiations with Israel and agreement on a ceasefire. In response, the Iranian foreign minister claimed that Israel, not Iran, was responsible for the tensions in Lebanon and called on the Lebanese president to focus on "the real enemy."
- ▶ Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri rejected the understandings reached in the direct negotiations but continued to consolidate his status as the central intermediary between Hezbollah, the Lebanese government and the international mediators.
- ▶ Clashes between Hezbollah "activists" and local Amal supporters in a town in south Lebanon reflected the growing tensions within the Shi'ite community, despite attempts to present a united front.
- ▶ The Lebanese prime minister met with the son of the chairman of the Palestinian Authority, who is a special envoy to Lebanon.

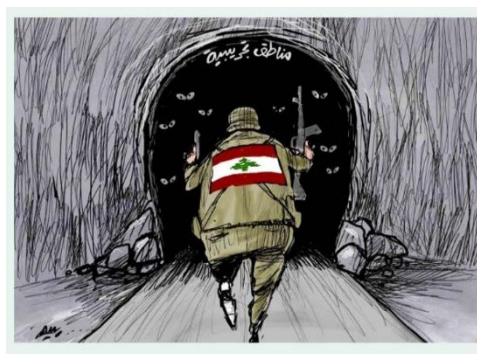
## Renewed Israeli-Lebanese Agreement on a Ceasefire

- ▶ On June 2 and 3, 2026, a fourth round of direct talks between Lebanese and Israeli representatives was held in Washington with American mediation. The State Department reported that they had agreed to implement the ceasefire, but conditioned it on a complete halt to Hezbollah fire and the withdrawal of all Hezbollah operatives from the area south of the Litani River. They also agreed to establish "pilot zones" where the Lebanese army would assume exclusive control of the territory to prevent activity by any non-state actors (United States State Department website, June 3, 2026).
- ▶ Hezbollah secretary general Na'im Qassem rejected the so-called Washington Declaration, claiming its objectives were to advance Israeli interests and force the organization to disarm. He said Hezbollah would support only a comprehensive ceasefire which included an Israeli withdrawal, the release of prisoners, the return of displaced persons and reconstruction, and

opposed any external discussion on the weapons issue, which he claimed should be discussed solely within an internal Lebanese framework *al-Akhbar*, June 4, 2026).

► Lebanese President Joseph Aoun called the results of the talks an achievement for Lebanon, a final opportunity before a definitive and permanent ceasefire agreement. He said the United States would determine the ceasefire monitoring mechanism and the president himself would be the principal guarantor of implementation. He said the talks had been "difficult" and the head of the Lebanese delegation, Ambassador Simon Karam, halted them because they did not address the complete end of the war, leading American Secretary of State Marco Rubio to intervene in support of the American position. Referring to the areas in which the "pilot zone" would be located, Aoun said the Lebanese proposal concerned the Beaufort area and the villages of Zoutar al-Sharqiya, Zoutar al-Gharbiya and Yahmar because of the area's symbolic importance to Lebanon and its proximity to Shi'ite population centers in Nabatieh (Lebanese presidency X account, June 4, 2026).

► One day after the understandings were reached in Washington, the Lebanese army announced that following the withdrawal of IDF forces its forces had begun a gradual deployment in the area of Dibbine in south Lebanon. The army removed earthen berms erected along the Dibbine axis to reopen the Marjayoun-Dibbine-Abl al-Saqi road. Engineering sweeps were conducted to locate and remove unexploded ordnance, and the army called on civilians to avoid the area until deployment and security-related work had been completed (Lebanese army X account, June 4, 2026).



**Expansion of the Lebanese army's deployment into "new areas" carries significant risks**  
(*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, June 6, 2026)

## The Fighting in Lebanon

### The IDF

► IDF forces continued large-scale operations in south Lebanon, including north of the Litani River, striking hundreds of Hezbollah targets from the air and ground and eliminating terrorist commanders and operatives, including operators of exploding drones. An extensive tunnel network was uncovered in the Beaufort Ridge area, designed to enable the prolonged deployment and combat of hundreds of Hezbollah operatives. It included weapons, command-and-control infrastructure and anti-tank and air defense capabilities, a weapons depot and a shoulder anti-aircraft missile. On June 7, 2026, the Israeli Air Force struck a Hezbollah headquarters in the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia in Beirut in response to rocket fire targeting Israeli territory. During the week, four IDF soldiers were killed in the fighting in south Lebanon (IDF spokesperson, June 1-8, 2026).



**Right: Sketch of the Hezbollah tunnel network beneath the Beaufort Ridge. Left: Hezbollah operatives inside the complex (IDF spokesperson, June 7, 2026)**

### Hezbollah

► Between noon, June 1, 2026 and noon June 8, 2026 Hezbollah issued 175 claims of responsibility for attacks involving exploding and standard UAVs, anti-tank missiles, rockets, mortar shells and anti-aircrafts missiles. Most targeted IDF forces operating in south Lebanon, with 41 attacks in the Beaufort Ridge area, 18 near Yahmar and 13 near Zoutar al-Sharqiya north of the Litani River, and there were a limited number of launches targeting the confrontation line area in northern Israel (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, June 1-8, 2026).

► The Hezbollah-affiliated daily *al-Akhbar* portrayed Hezbollah as adapting to the current fighting by expanding its use of UAVs and rockets and improving its intelligence-gathering and attack capabilities. According to the newspaper, Hezbollah focused its strategy on targeting IDF commanders, headquarters and command-and-control systems to limit the

freedom of action and operational initiative of Israeli forces. Killing an Israeli armored corps officer and the attempt to target the commander of the Northern Command were represented as examples of the systematic targeting of the command echelons (*al-Akhbar*, June 2-5, 2026).



The aerial negotiations between Israel and Hezbollah (*al-Joumhouria*, June 6, 2026)

### The Lebanese Army

► The Lebanese army reported that one of its soldiers had been killed in an Israeli strike while on the road between Nabatieh and Kafr Tebnit in south Lebanon. In another incident, the Lebanese army stated that two officers, one of them a brigadier general, and a soldier were killed in an Israeli strike in the al-Khardali-Nabatieh area. Lebanese President Joseph Aoun condemned the attack, calling it a violation of Lebanese sovereignty and international law. He claimed it was part of the "continuing Israeli escalation" in south Lebanon despite the diplomatic efforts being conducted by Beirut with the United States to end the clashes (IDF spokesperson, June 6, 2026), June 6, 2026). The IDF said a suspicious vehicle had been identified near the village of Kafr Tebnit at a time when there was an alert regarding possible fire at IDF forces in the area. The vehicle was struck and it later became clear that its passengers were two Lebanese Army officers and attacked soldier. The IDF said the incident was under investigation and that lessons would be learned, noting that IDF forces operated against Hezbollah and not against the Lebanese army.



The strike in the al-Khardali-Nabatieh area (Lebanese army X account, June 6, 2026)

## UNIFIL

► UNIFIL reported that one member of the international force had been killed and two others wounded by mortar shells which fell on a position near Marjayoun in south Lebanon. UNIFIL noted that attacks on peacekeeping forces violated international law and UN Security Council Resolution 1701 and could be considered war crimes (*al-Diyar*, June 4, 2026). The IDF said Hezbollah had fired several mortar shells from the al-Qatrani area in south Lebanon which fell inside a UNIFIL position in the Debbine area, killing a UN staff member and wounding two others (IDF spokesperson, June 5, 2026). Hezbollah rejected the IDF statement and claimed that they were fabricated accusations intended to divert attention from Israeli activity in south Lebanon. Hezbollah said it remained committed to the continued operation of UNIFIL forces within the mandate granted to them under UN resolutions (*al-Manar*, June 4, 2026).



**Illustration of the Hezbollah mortar shell fire that struck the UNIFIL position (IDF spokesperson, June 5, 2026)**

## The Direct Israel-Lebanon Negotiations

### The Lebanese Government

► Lebanese President Joseph Aoun said that in light of the thousands of deaths and more than one million displaced persons, he had to follow his conscience and do his duty to the state and the people rather than remain idle, and therefore he had to engage in direct negotiations. He said strength was not demonstrated by going to war, but by showing courage and wisdom to end a war through negotiations for the good of the state (Lebanese presidency X account, June 2, 2026).

► Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam said direct negotiations were the fastest and least costly path for Lebanon, its residents and south Lebanon. He said they were not the only available option, but were the best alternative, better than continuing the war, pursuing suits in international courts for years or appealing to the UN Security Council, which would likely

result in a veto for political reasons. He said opportunities to implement the state's monopoly on weapons had already been missed after Israel's withdrawal in 2000 and after the Syrian withdrawal in 2005, and warned that the current opportunity should not also be missed as well because the consequences would not be worth it. Referring to the agreement on the "pilot zones," he said he hoped it would be a first step toward a complete Israeli withdrawal (Lebanese prime minister 's X account, June 4, 2026).

► The Lebanese leadership also criticized Iran for its attempts to link efforts to achieve a ceasefire in Lebanon with negotiations with the United States regarding an end to the war with Iran, and criticized Hezbollah opposing the ceasefire:

◆ President Aoun accused Iran of using Lebanon as a bargaining chip with the United States and said the Lebanese people were paying the price of Iranian interests. He added Hezbollah secretary general Na'im Qassem did not represent all the Lebanese (CNN, June 5, 2026).

◆ Prime Minister Salam said Lebanon, with the assistance of Arab states and the United States, had formulated ceasefire understandings, but the Iranian Revolutionary Guards were the first to reject them. He said the current war was not Lebanon's war, but was being fought on its soil and at the expense of the Lebanese, while Iran continued to treat south Lebanon as a bargaining chip in its negotiations with the United States. He added that Hezbollah's strategic decisions were made in Tehran and not Beirut, and influencing the organization's conduct required direct engagement with Iran and the Revolutionary Guards. He added that communication with Hezbollah continued through its representatives in the government, and new Shi'ite voices were beginning to be heard in support of strengthening the state and its institutions at the expense of extra-state power centers (Lebanese prime minister's Facebook page, June 5 2026; Lebanon Debate, June 6, 2026).

◆ In response to Aoun's remarks, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi claimed that Israel, not Iran, was responsible for Lebanon's situation. He alleged that if Lebanon had truly been used as a bargaining chip by Tehran, a settlement could have been reached long ago. He called on Aoun to focus on confronting Lebanon's "real enemy," while rejecting allegations of Iran's negative influence on the country (X account of Abbas Araghchi, June 6, 2026).

◆An editorial on Aoun's remarks noted that accusing Iran of obstructing diplomatic efforts to end the crisis in south Lebanon could indicate preparedness by the Lebanese leadership to take more severe measures, such as reducing or even severing diplomatic relations with Iran. Beirut, according to the editorial, did not fear the consequences of escalation, rather viewing it as an opportunity to free itself from the image of a state under Iranian influence and to reestablish its political independence and sovereignty (*al-Nahar*, June 6, 2026).



**Right: Hezbollah as an Iranian proxy working to weaken Lebanese national identity and deepen Tehran's influence in the country (X account of Sa'er Sbeil, June 2, 2026). Left: A message from the Iranian foreign minister regarding his country's support for Lebanon following the missile fire at Israel in response to the strike in Beirut (X account of Abbas Araghchi, June 7, 2026)**

► The third pillar of Lebanon's leadership, Parliament speaker and Hezbollah ally Nabih Berri, rejected the proposed draft agreement to end the fighting because it contained "conditions harmful to Lebanon and Hezbollah." He said an agreement including a full and unconditional ceasefire together with a complete Israeli withdrawal from all occupied territories could be viewed positively, but the current text was a "booby-trap" because it required a complete halt to Hezbollah activity and the evacuation of its "personnel" from south of the Litani River, along with the creation of areas in which "armed groups" would be prohibited from operating. He said any arrangement had to be based on a comprehensive ceasefire and mutual withdrawal, and described the remaining provisions as unacceptable (LBCI, June 5, 2026). Despite his public opposition, he did not advocate closing communication channels with the mediators, signaling his desire to continue negotiations (*al-Liwaa*, June 6, 2026).

► Berri continued to strengthen his position as the principal mediation channel between Hezbollah, the United States and the other involved parties. He reportedly maintains ongoing contacts with the United States, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Qatar and France, and is

leading efforts to promote a ceasefire and a broader arrangement through the model of indirect negotiations with Israel. According to reports, the American administration views him as a pragmatic figure with genuine influence over Hezbollah and relies on him to advance contacts in light of the weakness of Lebanese state institutions (Aram News, June 2, 2026; *al-Diyar*, June 2, 2026).

### Hezbollah's Position

► Along with Hezbollah secretary general Na'im Qassem's announcement that the organization rejected the ceasefire framework reached in Washington, Hezbollah said any arrangement had to include a comprehensive ceasefire, an Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon and guarantees, and he opposed linking the end of the war to the issue of Hezbollah's weapons. Hezbollah said it viewed the existence of discussions regarding the ceasefire as recognition of the organization's status as a central actor which had to be included in decisions concerning Lebanon's future (al-Madan, June 3, 2026).

◆ Muhammad Raad, leader of the Hezbollah block in the Lebanese Parliament, criticized those in Lebanon who supported direct negotiations with Israel and the demand for exclusive state control over weapons. He said only the "resistance camp"<sup>2</sup> could defend Lebanon, whereas negotiations and concessions would not guarantee its sovereignty or security (*al-Akhbar*, June 2, 2026).

◆ Mahmoud Qamati, deputy head of the Political Council, said Hezbollah would support only a comprehensive ceasefire applying to all arenas and rejected partial or local arrangements. He said Hezbollah would continue its "military activity"<sup>3</sup> as long as Israeli attacked and the Israeli presence on Lebanese territory continued (*al-Nashra*, June 2, 2026).

◆ Ibrahim al-Moussawi, a member of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament, called the agreement "surrender" and claimed that only continued "armed resistance"<sup>4</sup> could prevent Israel from imposing conditions on Lebanon. His colleague in the bloc, Hussein al-Hajj Hassan, claimed the negotiations had not produced practical achievements. At a gathering in Baalbek, participants called for a ceasefire, a full Israeli withdrawal, the return of displaced persons, reconstruction and the release

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

<sup>3</sup> Terrorist attacks.

<sup>4</sup> Terrorism and violence.

of prisoners, while also opposing normalization with Israel (Lebanon Debate, June 6, 2026).

◆ Hassan Fadlallah, a member of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament, said the Israeli strike in the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia would not cause the organization to abandon the path of "resistance." He said Hezbollah rejected the proposals presented during the negotiations because they included conditions whose objectives were to restrict its "military activity" and allow Israel to continue "threatening Beirut." He criticized the continuation of diplomatic contacts after the Lebanese army casualties and said nothing presented so far adequately addressed the issue of the Israeli presence in south Lebanon (*al-Diyar*, June 7, 2026).

◆ Sheikh Ali al-Khatib, deputy chairman of the Supreme Shi'ite Islamic Council, called "resistance" against Israel a "legitimate national right" and warned against relying on negotiations or arrangements which did not guarantee a full Israeli withdrawal and stability in Lebanon (*al-Joumhouria*, June 2, 2026).

► Op-ed pieces published Ibrahim al-Amin, editor in chief of Hezbollah's *al-Akhbar*, were critical of the diplomatic contacts being conducted among Lebanon, the United States and Israel. According to him, Washington and Jerusalem were operating from a perception of victory in the war to impose an arrangement on Lebanon focused on dismantling Hezbollah's "military" power, restricting its "security activities" and establishing security monitoring and coordination mechanisms. He accused Lebanese President Aoun and Prime Minister Salam of adopting the American-Israeli narrative by abandoning basic Lebanese demands, including an Israeli withdrawal, the release of prisoners, the return of displaced persons and the reconstruction of the south. He said Aoun misjudged the balance of power, acted contrary to the wishes of broad segments of the Lebanese public and was leading the country toward an internal confrontation that could undermine the existing political order. He said Hezbollah and Iran [*sic*] opposed any arrangement which did not include a comprehensive ceasefire and a rapid Israeli withdrawal, and accused the Lebanese negotiating team of advancing American and Israeli interests at the expense of the national interest. He said acceptance of the proposed terms would be detrimental to Lebanon's sovereignty and establish a situation in which Israel continued to dictate the country's security rules while undermining the status of the "resistance camp" and Lebanon's ability to defend itself. He added that the struggle surrounding Hezbollah and the issue of weapons

was not merely a security dispute, but part of a broader struggle over the future of the Lebanese regime and the distribution of power within the state (*al-Akhbar*, June 4-8, 2026).

**Right: The only negotiation. The front page of al-Akhbar showed Hezbollah as the only factor bearing the burden of the struggle against Israel amid growing criticism in Lebanon of the**



**negotiations and calls for disarmament (al-Akhbar, June 5, 2026). Left: "Iran to the world: Lebanon is not alone!" al-Akhbar's front page follows the Iranian missile launches at northern Israel in response to the Israeli strike in Beirut (al-Akhbar, June 8, 2026)**

► The daily opposition paper *Nidaa al-Watan* claimed that Hezbollah's senior representative in Iran, Abdallah Safi al-Din, participated with the Iranian delegation in contacts being conducted with the United States in Pakistan. Based on the report, Hezbollah and Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri were criticized because while they opposed the negotiations conducted by the Lebanese state, they themselves were involved in indirect diplomatic channels connected to the regional talks. Thus the situation illustrated the growing dispute in Lebanon regarding the management of negotiations, responsibility for the war and the struggle over leadership of the diplomatic process with Israel and the United States (*Nidaa al-Watan*, June 8, 2026).

### Opponents of Hezbollah

► For the camp opposing Hezbollah, the negotiations with Israel were a strategic opportunity to alter the internal balance of power in Lebanon, an arrangement which would not merely be a mechanism for ending the fighting, but also a tool for promoting the restoration of sovereignty to the state, would strengthen its security institutions and limit Hezbollah's ability to possess weapons and wield independent authority:

- ◆ The Kataeb Party, headed by Samy Gemayel, supported negotiations between Lebanon and Israel and viewed them as an opportunity to end the fighting. The party placed responsibility for the war on Hezbollah, called for full implementation of the principle of exclusive state control over weapons and action against all armed organizations, and supported examining the demilitarization of the southern regions (*al-Diyar*, June 2, 2026).

◆ Charles Jabbour, head of the information unit of the Lebanese Forces Party, criticized Hezbollah for rejecting arrangement, saying the organization had missed an opportunity to end the war. He added that Hezbollah continued to subordinate Lebanese interests to Iranian considerations and bore responsibility for the outbreak of the war, its continuation and its consequences for Lebanon (X account of Charles Jabbour, June 4, 2026).

◆ The Lebanese Forces Party welcomed the Lebanese president's statements criticizing Iran for using Lebanon as a bargaining chip and Hezbollah for refusing to disarm, presenting them as part of the state effort to restore sovereignty and exclusive state control over the use of force. The Party called Iran and Hezbollah responsible for turning Lebanon into a decades-long regional conflict arena and called on Iran to stop interfering in Lebanese affairs and urge Hezbollah to surrender its weapons and dismantle its military capabilities. The party warned that if Tehran continued its policies, the government should take practical steps against it, including expelling the Iranian ambassador and fully implementing state decisions regarding the monopoly on weapons (*al-Diyar*, June 6, 2026).

◆ Lebanese Parliament member Fouad Makhzoumi said the demand to concentrate weapons in the hands of the state and advance an arrangement with Israel reflected the wishes of the majority of Lebanese citizens rather than foreign interests. He added that Hezbollah's continued existence as an armed force outside the framework of the state was a major threat to Lebanon's sovereignty and to the authority of its institutions to decide war and peace (X account of Fouad Makhzoumi, June 4, 2026).

## Challenges Facing Hezbollah

### **Criticism of Hezbollah within the Shi'ite Arena**

► Political circles in south Lebanon claimed that two appeals recently published in Tyre and Nabatieh calling for weapons to be concentrated in the hands of the state and for decisions on war and peace to be transferred to official institutions reflected an expansion of discourse critical to Hezbollah within the Shi'ite environment. Reportedly, criticism of the organization was growing among some displaced persons and residents of the south because of the costs of the war, the destruction and the damage to livelihoods, and growing questions of the war's contribution to Lebanese interests (*al-Markazia*, June 3, 2026).

► According to a Lebanese political source, Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri has become increasingly concerned about the consequences of the war for the Shi'ite community and believes that Lebanon's continued political and economic isolation could harm the Shi'ite environment no less than Hezbollah itself. According to the report, Berri is promoting a more pragmatic approach emphasizing restraint, prevention of internal confrontation and adaptation to changes in the regional balance of power (Aram News, June 3, 2026).

► Riots erupted between Amal supporters and Hezbollah "activists" in the town of al-Bissariyeh in the Sidon area because to Hezbollah activity in the town, with residents warning that it could lead to Israeli attacks. According to some reports, Hezbollah "activists" attempted to deploy rocket launchers, while according to other reports they sought to expand Hezbollah's communications network in the town. Army forces arrived at the scene to separate the sides. The town's mayor, Ali al-Nabulsi, denied that rocket launchers had been placed in homes and claimed the reports were inaccurate and the clash was between two rival families and was not directly or indirectly related to politics, Hezbollah or Amal (Janoubia, al-Jadeed, *al-Nahar*, June 5, 2026).



**A confrontation in al-Bissariyeh (X account of journalist Tarek Abu Zeinab, June 5, 2026)**

► Given the riots, Amal's central media official Rami Najm, and Hezbollah media relations official Youssef al-Zein, noted the importance of preserving national unity and adopting a "comprehensive and responsible" discourse to strengthen internal stability. They called on social media activists not to use incitement and to demonstrate awareness and responsibility, and urged media outlets to act professionally and calm tensions (*al-Nahar*, June 6, 2026).

### **Pressure on Hezbollah's Economic Infrastructure**

► According to Lebanese sources, Hezbollah views any governmental attempt to impose oversight or regulation on the al-Qard al-Hassan Association, the organization's financial arm, as a direct threat to its economic and social power base. According to the report, the

organization regards the Association as a central component of the parallel economic system it has built over the years and as an essential mechanism for preserving its influence among the Shi'ite public, particularly following the collapse of Lebanon's banking system. It was further claimed that the organization's leadership warned of a broad political and popular response if the government took measures against the institution (Aram News, June 1, 2026).

► The al-Qard al-Hassan Association reportedly stopped purchasing gold from citizens. According to the report, the Association rejected requests from Lebanese who wanted to sell gold. Its branches, particularly in Dahiyeh al-Janoubia in Beirut, were currently focused on returning gold deposits to their owners and were not transacting new purchases (Lebanon 24, June 3, 2026).

## Sectarian Tension in Lebanon

► Lebanese President Joseph Aoun said they were determined to preserve civil peace and internal stability in Lebanon and prevent a civil war, which could threaten Lebanon's existence because anyone who fueled it was serving Israel. He said civil peace could not be damaged because the Lebanese were fully convinced there was no way back and the political leadership was working to distance the problem and its destructive consequences through transparent, unifying discourse (Lebanese presidency X account, June 2, 2026).

► Senior representatives of Lebanon's religious communities called for strengthening national unity, rallying around state institutions and reinforcing the status of the Lebanese army as the legitimate body responsible for sovereignty and security. Statements issued by the religious leaders said they supported President Joseph Aoun's efforts to end the fighting, were worried by the war's impact on Lebanon's social and sectarian fabric, and called not to escalate "rhetoric" and to preserve Lebanon's stability (Lebanese News Agency, June 2-3, 2026).



**The Islamic-Christian "spiritual summit" in Lebanon (Lebanese News Agency, June 2, 2026)**

► Journalist Tony Issa said Lebanon was fast approaching a serious internal crisis because of the widening gap between the state leadership and Hezbollah regarding the negotiations and the ceasefire arrangement. He said sectarian tensions, the displaced persons crisis and the possibility of a confrontation between the state and Hezbollah increased the risk of an internal schism which that could cause Lebanon greater damage than the fighting itself (*al-Joumhouria*, June 6, 2026).

► Leading Shi'ite clerics joined the criticism of the possible ceasefire agreement between Lebanon and Israel and warned of its internal consequences. Ali al-Khatib, deputy chairman of the Supreme Shi'ite Muslim Council Sheikh and senior cleric Sayyid Ali Fadlallah said the agreement did not guarantee a ceasefire, an Israeli withdrawal or reconstruction and warned it could deepen Lebanon's political and sectarian divisions and lead to a *fitna* (civil war) (*al-Diyar*, June 5, 2026).

## The Lebanese Army

► Lebanese army Commander Rodolph Haykal visited Pakistan to promote bilateral military cooperation, which is based on long-standing security ties that include periodic training for Lebanese Army officers and previous military-related agreements (LBCI, June 6, 2026).

## UNIFIL

► UN Secretary-General António Guterres recommended that the Security Council maintain an international presence in south Lebanon even after the current UNIFIL mandate expired at the end of 2026, and presented alternatives for the continuation of the force, ranging from approximately 2,000 to more than 5,500 troops. He said a UN presence was necessary to monitor the ceasefire, support the Lebanese army and prevent a possible "security vacuum" which could develop in the event of a complete IDF withdrawal. France is leading efforts to preserve an international monitoring mechanism in south Lebanon and examine possible

frameworks for adapting the force structure to the new situation (*al-Nashra*, June 2, 2026; *al-Diyar*, June 2, 2026).

## The Situation in Lebanon

► According to Lebanese government figures, since the beginning of the current hostilities on March 2, 2026, 3,613 people have been killed, 11,072 wounded and approximately one million residents displaced from their homes, while more than 61,000 buildings have been damaged or destroyed. Reportedly, displaced persons have to cope with increases in rental prices, loss of livelihoods and depletion of savings, with some forced to return to combat zones because of economic hardship (*al-Nashra*, June 2, 2026; *al-Akhbar*, June 2, 2026; *al-Markazia*, June 6, 2026).

► Growing distress is evident among Christian communities in south Lebanon, where thousands of residents in villages and communities in the Marjayoun and Hasbaya districts have chosen to remain in their homes despite the escalation in the hostilities and humanitarian difficulties. Reportedly, residents have to deal with having electricity and water cut off, supply shortages, closure of access roads and the ongoing fear of rockets and interceptions in populated areas. According to reports, local security groups were operating in some villages to prevent the infiltration of armed elements and reduce the risk of exposing the communities to attacks (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, June 1, 2026).

► A new study by the Lebanese American University in Beirut found that an overwhelming majority of Lebanese citizens, 87%-90%, still regarded Israel as an enemy, while slightly more than half supported a diplomatic solution compared to about one-third who support armed "resistance." The study also revealed significant polarization within Lebanese society: younger people, Shi'ites and lower-income groups were more likely to support "resistance," reject peace agreements with Israel and adopt pro-Palestinian positions, while older people, Christians and higher-income groups were more supportive of diplomacy and political arrangements. The study found that hostility to Israel remained high across all sectors, although substantial differences existed among groups regarding attitudes toward the United States, Iran and the issue of peace with Israel (*al-Akhbar*, June 2, 2026).

## The Palestinians in Lebanon

► Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam met with Yasser Abbas, the son of Palestinian Authority chairman Mahmoud Abbas and a member of the Fatah Central Committee, who is a "special envoy" to Lebanon. Also present were the Palestinian ambassador to Lebanon, Muhammad al-Assad, and the head of the Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee, Ambassador Ramez Dimashkieh. Abbas noted Palestinian support for Lebanon's security, stability, sovereignty and territorial integrity and a desire to strengthen the brotherhood and historical ties. They reportedly discussed the situation in Lebanon in general and the situation of Palestinian refugees and refugee camps in particular, noting the importance of continued Palestinian-Lebanese dialogue and coordination in accordance with the principle of extending Lebanese state sovereignty over all its territory. Reportedly Salam praised the Palestinian positions regarding Lebanon (Wafa, June 5, 2026).



**Salam and Abbas (Shafa News Agency, June 5, 2026)**

► The Thabet Organization for the Right of Return and the Committee for Return and Refugee Affairs reported that between March 2 and June 3, 2026, 74 Palestinians were killed in Lebanon by Israeli strikes. Most of the deaths were in the Sidon area and its nearby refugee camps (28), followed by the Tyre area and its camps (26). Other deaths were in the Beirut area and surrounding refugee camps, the Beqa'a Balley and the Tripoli area and refugee camps in northern Lebanon (Palestinian Refugees Portal, June 3, 2026).



**Palestinian deaths in the hostilities according to geographic distribution (Palestinian Refugees Portal, June 3, 2026)**