



## The American-Iran Memorandum of Understanding: Ceasefire in Lebanon and the Reactions of the Resistance Axis

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

- ▶ According to the memorandum of understanding (MOU) between Iran and the United States signed on June 17, 2026, both countries and their allies will cease military operations on all fronts, including in Lebanon, and Lebanon's territorial integrity and sovereignty will be guaranteed. With the start of direct negotiations between the United States and Iran on the final agreement, a "de-escalation" cell in Lebanon was agreed on, without Israeli participation.
- ▶ Hezbollah praised the MOU, representing it as an expression of Iran's commitment to defending the country and ensuring the continuation of Hezbollah's activities in Lebanon. Senior Hezbollah figures called on the Lebanese leadership to exploit the strength of Iran's influence over the United States to demand a halt to Israeli military activity in Lebanon, and claimed that the memorandum eliminated the need for continuing direct negotiations with Israel.
- ▶ Lebanese President Aoun and Prime Minister Salam felt obligated to welcome Iran's insistence on including the issue of a ceasefire in Lebanon in the MOU, but said their commitment to the direct talks with Israel as the primary way to ensure the country's stability. Hezbollah's political opponents held a similar regarding the continuation of direct negotiations, while demanding Hezbollah's complete disarmament.
- ▶ The other members of the "resistance axis,"<sup>2</sup> including Hamas and the Houthis, supported the MOU and claimed it indicated an Iranian victory over the United States and an achievement for the entire "resistance camp."
- ▶ **In Amit Institute assessment, the MOU provided a following wind for Hezbollah's senior leadership, given their perception that Iran could enforce its positions on the United States by leveraging the Strait of Hormuz. The demand for a full Israeli**

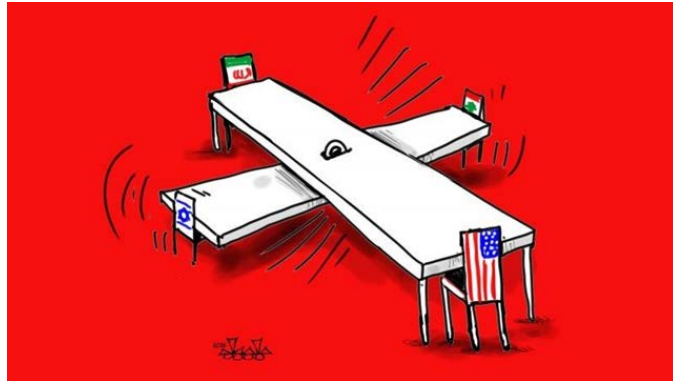
<sup>1</sup> Click <https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en> to subscribe and receive the ITIC's daily updates as well as its other publications.

<sup>2</sup> Iran, Hezbollah, the Palestinian terrorist organizations, the Houthis in Yemen and the Shi'ite militias in Iraq.

**withdrawal, together with the absence of any mention of Hezbollah or a demand for its disarmament provided the organization's leadership with a tool for continuing its campaign against the government in Beirut, which seeks to reduce Hezbollah's influence. Meanwhile the determination of President Aoun and Prime Minister Salam to advance negotiations with Israel, along with American backing for the position, is expected to continue fueling tensions in Lebanon's internal political arena, and to motivate Iran to use the leverage it now possesses over the United States to advance Hezbollah's interests in Lebanon.**

## The Lebanese Connection

- ▶ On the night of June 14, 2026, the prime minister of Pakistan announced that an agreement had been reached between the United States and Iran to end the fighting. He said both sides had declared an immediate permanent end to military operations on all fronts, including in Lebanon. The secretariat of Iran's supreme national security council also stated that the fighting and military operations on all fronts, including Lebanon, would cease completely (Reuters, June 15, 2026). On June 17, 2026, the American and Iranian presidents signed the MOU, which went into effect immediately (Reuters, June 18, 2026).
- ▶ Lebanon status in the MOU is prominent. According to the first clause of the document, the United States, Iran and their allies declared an immediate permanent cessation of all military operations on all fronts, including in Lebanon, and would not initiate any war or any military action against one another, would refrain from the threat or use of force, and would ensure Lebanon's territorial integrity and sovereignty (CNN, June 17, 2026).
- ▶ According to the statement issued following the first high-level meeting between the United States and Iran, with Pakistan and Qatar serving as mediators in Switzerland, an agreement had been reached to establish a "conflict de-escalation cell" with the participation of the United States, Iran, Lebanon and the mediators (without Israeli participation) to ensure compliance with the cessation of military operations in Lebanon in accordance with the MOU (Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs X account, June 22, 2026).



**The negotiating tables between Iran and the United States and between Lebanon and Israel are inseparable, even in the talks in Switzerland (Telegram channel of Hassan Blibel, June 21, 2026)**

## Lebanese Reactions

### Hezbollah

► Senior Hezbollah figures welcomed the MOU, praising Iran for its efforts to end Israeli "aggression" in Lebanon while noting the organization's opposition to the continuation of direct negotiations between Lebanon and Israel. According to Hezbollah, the MOU also foils efforts to weaken the organization's military power.

- ◆ Hezbollah secretary general Na'im Qassem sent a letter to the speaker of the Iranian Majlis, Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, thanking Iran for its positions, which he claimed had "forced Israel to immediately and permanently cease all military operations on all fronts." He praised the efforts of Iran's supreme leader, the President of Iran, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and the Iranian foreign minister (al-Markazia website, June 16, 2026).
- ◆ Qassem gave a speech congratulating the Iranian people and the "resistance" on the victory in the confrontation with the United States, preventing the overthrow of the Iranian regime. Qassem thanked Iran for linking the Lebanese arena to the agreement and for its "sacrifice" to force Israel to stop the "aggression." He said Iran was now a regional and global power and the balance of power was expected to change in favor of the peoples of the region (Hezbollah secretary general's website, June 17, 2026).



**Qassem delivers his speech (al-Ahed, June 17, 2026)**

- ◆ In another speech, Qassem said they were in "the most dangerous stage" in their lives in Lebanon, with the most dangerous American-Israeli-international conspiracy project, but that in light of the agreement signed by Iran with the United States, the project to eliminate Hezbollah and establish the "occupation" had failed (al-Manar, June 19, 2026). On another occasion he said Hezbollah had strong backing from Iran, since it had put ending "aggression" in Lebanon and the "protection" of Lebanon in the first clause. He added that closing the Strait of Hormuz was a powerful weapon that the Lebanese state should exploit, called on Lebanon's leaders to exploit what the "resistance" and Iran were doing, and attacked the continuation of direct negotiations with Israel, claiming it produced no achievements and only demanded concessions. He said that given the power demonstrated by Iran in its ability to force an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon through pressure on the United States, if the American president decided to use force against the prime minister of the "occupation," Netanyahu would be stopped against his will (Hezbollah secretary general's website, June 21, 2026).
- ◆ Mohammed Raad, head of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament, told the Lebanese leadership not to underestimate Iran's ability to fulfill its threat to "deter the Zionist enemy." He said that according to the MOU, the "enemy" had been allotted exactly two months to withdraw from Lebanese territory with no need for direct negotiations with it. Raad also noted Hezbollah's growing self-confidence when he referred to the organization's willingness to "forgive" the political leadership for what the organization perceived as cooperation with Israel, and claimed that the organization was ready for internal national understanding (Loyalty to the Resistance bloc website, June 18, 2026).

- ◆ Hassan Fadlallah, a member of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament, called the memorandum a "victory" for Iran, and called on the Lebanese government to rejected direct negotiations with Israel (Reuters, June 19, 2026). Later, he added that Iran conditioned the rest of the MOU on the first clause, the issue of Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon was absolute and there would be no buffer zone or zero lines. He said linking the arenas was what gave Lebanon its strength, whereas the Lebanese efforts in Washington had achieved no results. The authorities in Lebanon, he said, must not miss the opportunity and or waste the "historic moment" (Loyalty to the Resistance bloc website, June 18, 2026).
- ◆ Hussein al-Hajj Hassan, a member of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament, noted Iran's "commitment to defending Lebanon" by saying the Iranian delegation had canceled its arrival at the signing ceremony scheduled in Switzerland in light of Israeli violations of the ceasefire in Lebanon. According to him, Iran proved to the entire world that it represented a "true model of loyalty and commitment" when it said it would not sign an agreement unless Lebanon was the first clause in it (Loyalty to the Resistance bloc website, June 20, 2026).
- ◆ Mahmoud Qamati, deputy chairman of Hezbollah's political council, called the organization's adherence to an Israeli withdrawal a "supreme demand" and noted that they had no objection to the Lebanese army's entering areas from which the "occupation" withdrew, adding that Hezbollah would "cooperate" with it (al-Manar, June 20, 2026).



**Billboard in Beirut reading "Thank You Iran" (Ya Tyre website, June 17, 2026)**

- ◆ Hezbollah sources said the organization had received assurances from Iran that it would demand the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon in the next phase of talks with the United States, and there would be no nuclear agreement between Iran and the

United States without the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon (*al-Nashra*, June 16, 2026).

- ▶ In light of the escalation in exchanges of fire between the IDF and Hezbollah in the days following the MOU, Hezbollah's official media outlets claimed Israel traditionally did not honor agreements, and therefore continued fighting was expected. They claimed Israeli officials had publicly reiterated their rejection of the existing agreements and their refusal to withdraw from occupied Lebanese territories, and all countries and actors, especially the United States, had to exert pressure on the "occupying entity" to compel it to implement the agreements and cease the attacks (*al-Manar*, June 20, 2026). Hezbollah apparently seeks to shift responsibility for halting the fighting in south Lebanon onto the shoulders of Lebanon's political leadership and the American administration, while omitting Hezbollah's own responsibility for the situation in light of its overt refusal to comply with Lebanese government decisions calling on it to disarm.
- ▶ Ibrahim al-Amin, editor in chief of the Hezbollah-affiliated daily *al-Akhbar*, represented the American-Iranian negotiations to end the war as a broad regional arena in which Israel, Lebanon and Hezbollah had become central actors in shaping the agreement. He said the American president had acted quickly to reach understandings with Iran due to pressure from the markets and the Gulf States, which feared the continuation of the war and its consequences for their security and economies. Iran had insisted on including the Lebanese arena in the agreement, including a halt to Israeli attacks and a withdrawal from occupied Lebanese territories, while Israel sought to preserve freedom of action in south Lebanon and separate the fronts. He said Hezbollah and Iran viewed the continued Israeli presence and activity in Lebanon as grounds for renewing the confrontation, and Washington had been compelled to balance its commitment to Israel with its desire for an agreement with Tehran. According to al-Amin, the incident involving the launch of a Hezbollah UAV which entered Israeli territory, and the Israeli response through strikes in the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia in Beirut and in south Lebanon, showed how Lebanon could become a land mine which would blow up the entire agreement, and therefore the American president had to pressure Netanyahu to stop the escalation immediately (*al-Akhbar*, June 15, 2026).



**Netanyahu fails to stop the MOU (al-Joumhouria, June 18, 2026)**

► Senior Hezbollah-affiliated Shi'ite religious figures also thanked Iran for its efforts to stop the war in Lebanon, while demanding that the Lebanese government cease negotiations with Israel:

◆ The Ja'fari Mufti, Sheikh Ahmad Qabalan, in an open letter entitled "The message of national victory," claimed the war waged by America, Israel and their partners was "the war of the century," which had ended with the replacement of all American military commanders, the swallowing of America's pride, Netanyahu's political burial, and the victory of Iran and the "resistance axis,"<sup>3</sup> while the Strait of Hormuz had been given to Iran as a gift. He added that the Middle East was currently standing "on Iranian terms" in light of the "resounding defeat" of America and Israel and the resounding victory of Iran and its "resistance axis." He criticized the Lebanese administration and said "the authority which had chosen America and direct negotiations with Israel had lost, together with Washington and Tel Aviv, while the camp which had chosen Lebanese sovereignty and "resistance" had won the war (*al-Nashra*, June 15, 2026).

◆ Sheikh Ali al-Khatib, deputy chairman of the Supreme Shi'ite council, thanked Iran for its position and insistence on linking the ceasefire in Lebanon to the agreement with the United States. He called on the Lebanese government to draw lessons from the agreement, reexamine its positions and "correct its relations" with the Islamic Republic (*al-Diyar*, June 15, 2026).

## The Lebanese Government

► The inclusion of the Lebanese issue within the MOU posed a challenge for Lebanon's senior leadership, headed by President Joseph Aoun and Prime Minister Nawaf Salam, after they had

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

expressed reservations in recent months regarding Iran's involvement in Lebanon's affairs and sought to sever Tehran's patronage of Lebanon as part of their efforts to reestablish Lebanon's sovereignty as an independent state.

► Following the announcement of the agreement, Aoun spoke with Iranian foreign minister Abbas Araghchi and welcomed the understandings between Iran and the United States. He said he hoped it would be a positive step toward reducing tensions and opening the door to diplomatic solutions which would strengthen security and stability. Aoun stressed that Lebanon's stability, security and sovereignty remained a national priority, while Araghchi noted the importance of respecting Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial unity by all parties and said he hoped the positive atmosphere would contribute to stability in Lebanon (Lebanese presidency X account, June 15, 2026). Aoun said he had followed the announcement regarding the MOU "with interest" and appreciated the explicit reference to Lebanon and the recognition that Lebanon's sovereignty and security were an integral part of any serious initiative to achieve regional stability. He added that the Lebanese expected the understandings to be translated into practical steps which would end the cycle of violence and enable a phase of stability, security, recovery and reconstruction to begin. Aoun thanked all the countries and entities which had contributed to the MOU and all those who worked to include Lebanon in efforts to end the escalation and military operations on the various fronts, without directly referring to Iran or any other state (Lebanese presidency X account, June 15, 2026). Later, Aoun added that they were in favor of a ceasefire and thanked any country that helped, including Iran (Lebanese residency X account, June 17, 2026).

► Prime Minister Salam, while avoiding any explicit mention of Iran's role, also said he hoped the agreement would succeed in ending the war, adding that he was grateful to all those who contributed (Lebanon Files, June 15, 2026).

► Lebanese Justice Minister Adel Nassar, a member of the Kataeb Party and a fierce opponent of Hezbollah, was dissatisfied with the MOU, arguing that Iran had obtained compensation and relief from sanctions for itself and Hezbollah's supporters through the negotiations, while Lebanon sacrificed itself because of Hezbollah's actions and its entry into the war (*al-Diyar*, June 20, 2026).

► In contrast, Lebanese Parliament speaker and Amal Movement leader Nabih Berri, Hezbollah's close ally, did not conceal his satisfaction with the Iranian involvement and continued to promote it. He spoke with Iranian foreign minister Abbas Araghchi, who briefed

him on the details of the agreement and said the clause dealing with ending the war in Lebanon had to go into effect exactly as written, immediately from the first day of the agreement and throughout the entire 60-day negotiation period. Berri spoke with the speaker of the Iranian Majlis, Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, and they agreed that the United States, the Arab parties to the MOU and the international community had to assume responsibility and compel Israel to end its war, stop destroying villages, respect Lebanon's sovereignty and withdraw immediately from the territories it occupied (*al-Nashra* website, June 15–16, 2026).

► Berri said the MOU laid the foundations for security and stability throughout the region, including Lebanon. He praised the United States and Iran for their insistence on including in the memorandum a "fundamental and binding" clause to halt Israeli "aggression" against Lebanon in a manner which would preserve its sovereignty over all its territory and not contradict Lebanon's independence and freedom to make its own decisions (*al-Nashra*, June 15, 2026). Berri reiterated Lebanon's being mentioned in the memorandum more than once and said he was confident it would achieve its goals, saying that this time the American president had personally taken the matter upon himself, and Iran was present with all its weight and supervision. We are facing, he said, a major agreement, broader than Lebanon (*al-Joumhouria*, June 16, 2026).

► A Lebanese government source said the significance of the discussion between the United States and Iran regarding Iran's regional proxies, foremost among them Hezbollah, was that the issue of Hezbollah's weapons would be included on the agenda of the negotiations in Switzerland. According to the source, Hezbollah therefore faced the possibility that it could be required to integrate into the state project. That reflected an attempt, even if only declarative, by the Lebanese government to argue that the issue of Hezbollah's disarmament remained an official Lebanese objective (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, June 21, 2026).

► Despite the references in the MOU to ending Israeli military activity in Lebanon, the Lebanese government said it remained committed to continuing direct negotiations with Israel, with another round expected to take place in Washington on June 23, 2026. Aoun and Salam said Lebanon alone would conduct negotiations with Israel regarding the stabilization of the ceasefire and the assurance of an IDF withdrawal from Lebanese territory (*al-Arabiya*, June 19, 2026).

► United States secretary of state Marco Rubio spoke with President Joseph Aoun and said he appreciated the Lebanese president's determination to continue direct negotiations with

Israel and his vision of establishing a fully sovereign Lebanese state which maintained peaceful relations with its neighbors. He also emphasized the need to disarm Hezbollah (United States Department of State website, June 19, 2026).

### **Hezbollah's Opponents**

► No expression of support for Iranian involvement in the efforts to achieve a ceasefire was heard from Hezbollah's opponents. Rather, they emphasized the importance of continuing direct negotiations with Israel as an essential step toward implementing Lebanese state sovereignty:

◆ The leader of the Kataeb Party, Sami al-Gemayel, said that those authorized to negotiate on behalf of Lebanon and defend its interests were those elected democratically by the Lebanese people. Anything beyond that, he said, is none of our concern and does not commit us (Sami al-Gemayel's X account, June 16, 2026).

◆ The political bureau of the Kataeb Party called for holding accountable those who had dragged the country into a "vortex of destruction, displacement and killing," and said it was impossible to accept the continued existence of weapons outside the authority of the state, since they were the primary obstacle to stability, national unity and the restoration of the state's full role. He said Lebanon was not bound by any agreement except one in which the Lebanese state and its legitimate elected institutions were involved through those officially authorized to negotiate on their behalf in Washington to restore Lebanon's sovereignty and independent decision-making, achieve an Israeli withdrawal and end "aggression," while completing the implementation of government decisions restricting weapons exclusively to the state (Kataeb website, June 16, 2026).

◆ The head of the information department of the Lebanese Forces, Charles Jabbour, said the ceasefire gave the state an opportunity to achieve by force the objective of a monopoly on weapons and to arrest anyone who spoke of the "resistance." He said success in doing so would lead to the withdrawal of the Israeli army and restore the Lebanese people's confidence in their state (Charles Jabbour's X account, June 15, 2026). On another occasion he said the one who was defeated on the battlefield, and was responsible for the blood of the Lebanese and the destruction of Lebanon, had no right to speak. He had to remain silent, apologize and ask for forgiveness. He added that accountability would come to those who turned Lebanon into an arena for the Iranian

project, Hezbollah had to apologize for what it had done to the homeland and it would not escape the consequences of its actions and crimes (Charles Jabbour's X account, June 16, 2026).

- ◆ Fouad Makhzoumi, a member of the Lebanese Parliament, said the negotiations being conducted in Washington were essential for completing the extension of Lebanese state authority throughout all its territory. That would be achieved by reaching a mechanism and binding timetable for restricting weapons exclusively to the Lebanese state, including Hezbollah's weapons and those of all other "militias and armed organizations"<sup>4</sup> operating outside the framework of the state. He added that achieving that objective would make it possible to complete the Israeli withdrawal, secure the release of prisoners, consolidate the ceasefire until a sustainable peace was reached, rebuild the affected areas and enable the return of the displaced persons (Fouad Makhzoumi's X account, June 15, 2026).

## Reactions from the "Resistance Axis"

- ▶ Other regional members of the "resistance axis" also praised the MOU and represented it as a significant Iranian achievement which reinforced the Islamic Republic's status as a power center in the Middle East:

- ◆ Hamas welcomed the MOU between Iran and the United States and represented it as an Iranian achievement in the face of pressure and attempts to impose regional dictates upon it. Hamas praised Iran's "steadfastness in defending its rights and national interests" and said it hoped the agreement would contribute to regional stability and have a positive effect on other issues, especially the immediate cessation of "Zionist aggression" against the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, as well as an end to attacks in Lebanon and on other fronts. Hamas also claimed genuine security and stability would not be achieved as long as Israel continued current policies (Hamas Telegram channel, June 15, 2026).

- ◆ The Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) congratulated Iran on imposing a ceasefire and restraining "American-Zionist aggression" against the Islamic Republic. It said the victory had been achieved through the grace of Allah and the courage of the Iranian people and their armed forces. The PIJ said it was confident the ceasefire would have a

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<sup>4</sup> Terrorist organizations.

positive impact on the peoples of the Islamic nation, especially the Palestinian people, whom "Iran had always supported and for whose resistance it had always provided every form of assistance." The PIJ added that it hoped the agreement would be a cornerstone for building the regional national security and restrain the "Zionist entity" from continuing to commit its "crimes" (PIJ Telegram channel, June 15, 2026).

◆ The Houthis' foreign ministry claimed that the United States had failed to achieve its objectives in its "aggression against Iran." It added that the understandings reached were the result of the resilience and steadfastness of the fronts of the "resistance axis," understandings which reinforced the "unity of the arenas" and destroyed the "Zionist project" seeking to establish a Greater Israel under the guise of reshaping the Middle East. It further claimed that the armed forces on all the "resistance axis" fronts remained on alert because of the "enemy's" habit of violating agreements. The ministry praised the role of Pakistan and other countries in halting "American aggression" and said the Houthis were committed to ensuring that any agreement led to the establishment of true security and peace which would end the "aggression and the siege" on the Jerusalem Axis (Houthis' foreign ministry telegram channel, June 15, 2026).

◆ The chairman of the Houthis' supreme political council, Mahdi al-Mashat, congratulated Iran on its victory against "American-Zionist aggression," which he claimed served the entire Islamic nation and the region and contributed to their security in the face of "American and Israeli hegemonic projects." He said the recent confrontation confirmed that the era of "aggression without consequences" had ended and Iran's insistence on preserving the unity of the arenas had led to the cessation of "Zionist aggression" in Lebanon (Mahdi al-Mashat's Telegram channel, June 16, 2026).

◆ Supporters of the pro-Iranian Shi'ite militias in Iraq represented the temporary ceasefire as a clear "resistance axis" victory, forcing Washington to retreat from its demands. Supporters of Kata'ib Sayyid al-Shuhadaa held a demonstration outside the Iranian embassy in Baghdad, during which they burned American and Israeli flags (Kata'ib Sayyid al-Shuhadaa Telegram channel, June 15, 2026).



**Supporters of Kata'ib Sayyid al-Shuhadaa celebrate in Baghdad  
(the militia's Telegram channel, June 15, 2026)**

- ◆ The Islamic Resistance Front in Syria congratulated Iran on achieving its "historic strategic achievement" and forcing the United States into full compliance with the red lines of the "resistance" and an end to the war. The militia claimed Iran had imposed its conditions and brought about "the fall of the American-Zionist project and the collapse of the weapons of siege." It added that Iran had proved to the world that the "resistance fronts" were one body and had emerged from this confrontation as "a strong regional force which could not" be broken (Islamic Resistance Front in Syria Telegram channel, June 15, 2026).