

Spotlight on Terrorism: Hezbollah and Lebanon

June 15-22, 2026

Trending

- ▶ Hezbollah is exploiting the memorandum of understanding between Iran and the United States to strengthen its position against the continuation of direct negotiations with Israel.
- ▶ The Lebanese government is attempting to use the direct negotiations with Israel to consolidate the ceasefire and bring about an IDF withdrawal.
- ▶ The American administration is increasing pressure on influential actors in Lebanon who are identified with Hezbollah.

Overview¹

- ▶ The inclusion of the ceasefire in Lebanon within the memorandum of understanding (MOU) between Iran and the United States was welcomed by Hezbollah, which noted Iran's commitment to defending Lebanon, while Lebanon's president and prime minister noted their commitment to continuing direct negotiations with Israel, which are expected to resume on June 23, 2026.
- ▶ The IDF continued operations in the security zone in south Lebanon and exposed Hezbollah underground facilities. In response to ceasefire violations, the IDF carried out extensive strikes on Hezbollah targets in south Lebanon and the Beqa'a Valley, although beginning on June 21, 2026, the forces halted their strikes. Six IDF soldiers were killed in the fighting in south Lebanon.
- ▶ Hezbollah issued five claims of responsibility for attacks on IDF forces in south Lebanon, claiming ceasefire "violations" and attempting to prevent the advance of forces on the Ali al-Taher Ridge. Hezbollah also halted its attacks beginning on June 21, 2026.
- ▶ Hezbollah secretary general Na'im Qassem said the organization had adapted its methods of warfare following the lessons learned from the previous hostilities against Israel and said "the project to eliminate Hezbollah has collapsed."

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

- ▶ Lebanese President Aoun instructed the Lebanese delegation to the talks with Israel to demand a ceasefire and an Israeli withdrawal from several areas as a precondition for any agreements. Hezbollah reiterated its position that the negotiations were intended to undermine Lebanon's sovereignty and the role of the "resistance."
- ▶ The Lebanese minister of justice requested that the prosecution investigate the activities of al-Qard al-Hassan, Hezbollah's financial arm.
- ▶ The American administration imposed sanctions on a senior Hezbollah figure and on a senior Lebanese Christian politician close to the organization because of their attempts to delay Hezbollah's disarmament.

Lebanon and the American-Iranian Memorandum of Understanding²

- ▶ According to the memorandum of understanding (MOU) between Iran and the United States, officially signed on June 18, 2026, both countries and their allies would cease military operations on all fronts, including in Lebanon, and Lebanon's territorial integrity and sovereignty would be guaranteed. With the start of direct negotiations between the United States and Iran on a final agreement, it was agreed to establish a "de-escalation cell" in Lebanon, without Israeli participation. Following the agreement, Lebanese President Joseph Aoun spoke with the American vice president, senior U.S. presidential adviser Jared Kushner and Qatari Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim about the establishment of a ceasefire in Lebanon, halting Israeli escalation and the possibility of creating such a cell (Lebanese presidency X account, June 22, 2026).
- ▶ Hezbollah praised the MOU and represented 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 Lebanon's leadership to take advantage of Iran's influence over the United States to demand an end to Israeli military activity in Lebanon and claimed the memorandum eliminated the need for continuing direct negotiations with Israel.
- ▶ Lebanese President Joseph Aoun and Prime Minister Nawaf Salam felt obligated to welcome Iran's insistence on including the issue of a ceasefire in Lebanon in the MOU, but

² See the June 2026 Amit Institute report, [The American-Iran Memorandum of Understanding: Ceasefire in Lebanon and the Reactions of the Resistance Axis](#).

emphasized their commitment to the direct talks with Israel as the establish way to ensure the country's stability. Hezbollah's political opponents expressed a similar position regarding the continuation of direct negotiations while demanding Hezbollah's complete disarmament.

The Fighting in Lebanon

The IDF

► The IDF continued operating in the security zone, which extends up to ten kilometers from Israel's border, and eliminated dozens of terrorists. The forces took control of the Ali al-Taher Ridge, where a large Hezbollah underground facility is located, and uncovered a tunnel approximately 200 meters long which had been used to launch UAVs in the Majdal Zoun area. In response to Hezbollah ceasefire violations, the IDF attacked more than 100 Hezbollah targets in south Lebanon and the Beqa'a Valley, including command centers, launch positions and weapons depots. On June 20, 2026, the IDF halted the strikes except for operations against terrorist infrastructure in the security zone and against immediate threats. Six IDF soldiers were killed in the fighting in south Lebanon, including four soldiers in a tank hit by Hezbollah fire (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, June 15–22, 2026).



**Right: The area of IDF operations in south Lebanon (IDF spokesperson, June 18, 2026).
Left: UAVs found in the underground facility in Majdal Zoun (IDF spokesperson, June 21, 2026)**

Hezbollah

► Hezbollah issued five claims of responsibility for attacks on IDF forces in south Lebanon using explosive drones, anti-tank missiles, rockets and mortar shells. According to the organization, they attacked because of Israeli ceasefire "violations," including after the MOU between Iran and the United States had been reached, and because of IDF attempts to advance in the Ali al-Taher Ridge area. However, after the IDF halted its strikes on June 20, 2026, Hezbollah stopped issuing statements regarding attacks on its part (Hezbollah combat

information Telegram channel, June 15–22, 2026). The IDF reported that during the night of June 19, 2026, more than 50 projectiles were fired at IDF forces, although Hezbollah did not issue official statements regarding them.

► Hezbollah secretary general Na'im Qassem stated in a speech that Hezbollah had adapted itself to confront the Israeli attempt to "eliminate the resistance." He said the organization had reexamined its military structure and methods of command after learning lessons during the previous hostilities against Israel, resulting in changes to its combat methods and the combat doctrine of the "resistance."³ At the same time, it developed "appropriate weapons capabilities" and UAVs, while Hezbollah's jihad fighters sought to achieve the highest degree of *shahada* (self-sacrifice) (Hezbollah secretary general's website, June 19, 2026).

In another speech, Qassem declared that during Operation Eaten Chaff, which began on March 2, 2026, Israel had [allegedly] attacked the "resistance" nearly 10,000 times, yet it remained steadfast despite the sacrifices, adding that "the project to eliminate Hezbollah and the resistance has collapsed." Qassem said Israel would not be able to remain on Lebanese territory and he would not agree to a ceasefire in which Hezbollah stopped shooting while Israel enjoyed freedom of action, as had been the case following the previous ceasefire on November 27, 2024 (Hezbollah secretary general's website, June 21, 2026).

► The mayor of Jernaya in the Jezzine District, Joe Anton, said claims in several media outlets and social media channels alleging that Hezbollah operatives were digging tunnels and establishing launch sites on land belonging to town residents were baseless. He called on the public to be accurate, objective and responsible when transmitting and publishing information (*al-Nashra*, June 16, 2026).

The Lebanese Army

► The Lebanese army said one of its soldiers had died of his wounds the day after being injured in an Israeli attack on the town of Toulina, and another had been killed in an Israeli attack while traveling on the Kfar Reman–Nabatieh road (Lebanese army X account, June 20, 2026). It was also reported that a Lebanese Army soldier died after being wounded in an Israeli attack on the town of al-Quleileh on November 24, 2024, during the previous hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah (Lebanese army X account, June 21, 2026).

³ Hezbollah and the other terrorist organizations operating in Lebanon.

- ▶ The commander of the Lebanese army, Rudolf Haykal, met with the senior command staff at army headquarters in Yarzeh to discuss the latest developments in Lebanon and the region and the military-security situation was reviewed in light of continuing Israeli "aggression." Haykal praised the army forces operating in the south despite the dangers and challenges and reported that during his visit to the Litani Sector Command and the intervention regiment in the al-Zahrani area, "he sensed the morale of the soldiers and their pride in the mission." Haykal said the army continued to carry out its duties with "determination and responsibility" to preserve civil peace, and noted that the army's strength lay in its belief in its mission (Lebanese army X account, June 20, 2026).
- ▶ Lebanese army forces continued operating in areas affected by Israeli "aggression." They neutralized unexploded aerial bombs in the towns of Harouf, al-Kfour (Nabatieh), Zarifa, Maaroub (Tyre) and Kafr Dounine (Bint Jbeil). They also dealt with munitions and suspicious objects and carried out debris removal and road-clearing operations (Lebanese army X account, June 16, 2026).



**A Lebanese army bomb-disposal expert neutralizes an unexploded bomb
(Lebanese army X account, June 16, 2026)**

The Situation in Lebanon

- ▶ The Lebanese ministry of health reported that during IDF strikes on June 19, 2026, 83 people were killed and 141 were wounded (ministry of health website, June 20, 2026). According to the ministry, 4,106 people have been killed since the beginning of the current campaign on March 2, 2026, and another 12,153 people have been wounded (*al-Nashra*, June 21, 2026).

Direct Israel-Lebanon Negotiations

- ▶ Despite the fact that the MOU explicitly referred to ending the campaign in Lebanon, the Lebanese government said it remained committed to continuing direct negotiations with Israel. President Joseph Aoun and Prime Minister Nawaf Salam said Lebanon alone would

conduct negotiations with Israel regarding the stabilization of the ceasefire and securing an IDF withdrawal from Lebanese territory (al-Arabiya, June 19, 2026).

► President Aoun held briefings following the announcement of the MOU and ahead of another round of negotiations between Lebanon, the United States and Israel in Washington on June 23–25, 2026. The president met with army Commander General Rudolf Haykal, head of the negotiating delegation former ambassador Simon Karam, members of the military negotiating delegation and the advisory team accompanying the delegation. According to a report, Aoun provided instructions to the delegation based on the five fundamental principles of the Lebanese position: a permanent ceasefire, withdrawal of Israeli forces, deployment of the Lebanese army up to the international border, the return of Lebanese prisoners and the beginning of the reconstruction process (Lebanese presidency X account, June 16 and 18, 2026).



President of Lebanon meets with the army commander and the negotiating team (Lebanese army X account, June 16, 2026)

► Subsequently, a Lebanese political-military delegation reportedly departed for Washington to participate in the fifth round of direct negotiations between Israel and Lebanon, scheduled to begin on June 23, 2026, while security and political meetings would be held at the United States Department of State. Sources said Aoun demanded the establishment of a ceasefire as a precondition for any agreements and that Israel withdraw from several areas and transfer them to the Lebanese army. A source claimed Aoun was also trying to link the work of the military delegation with that of the political delegation after Israel expressed disappointment with the military delegation's positions during the previous meeting at the end of May 2026. The sources added that the Americans wanted an outcome in the Washington talks which would help their allies in Beirut establish control on the

ground and thereby create a complete separation between the Lebanese discourse and the Iranian-American discourse (*al-Akhbar*, June 22, 2026).

► Aoun also held a telephone conversation with United States Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who noted the United States' commitment to promoting security and stability in Lebanon and said negotiations between Israel and Lebanon were the only viable path toward Lebanon's reconstruction and economic recovery. Rubio reiterated the need to disarm Hezbollah and establish control over all Lebanese territory, alongside coordination with regional allies who can assist in advancing these goals (Lebanese presidency X account, June 19, 2026)

► At the opening of a cabinet meeting Prime Minister Salam stated that since "the beginning of the war imposed on Lebanon, the Lebanese government has never ceased working to end it." He said he hoped the ceasefire declaration between the United States and Iran would end the war and halt the "killing, destruction, displacement, suffering and pain inflicted upon the Lebanese." He said Lebanon would intensify its efforts through the negotiations taking place in Washington to secure "a complete Israeli withdrawal and the release of the prisoners" (Lebanese presidency X account, June 15, 2026).



Lebanese cabinet meeting (Lebanese prime minister's X account, June 15, 2026)

► Sources in the Lebanese foreign ministry said Lebanon had "succeeded in cementing the separation between the Lebanese discourse and the Iranian discourse," in accordance with the position of the Lebanese president, prime minister and government. They added that Lebanon's participation in a new round of direct negotiations was further proof that "the Lebanese file is being managed independently," and that Lebanon negotiated in its own name and for its own national interests, and no one negotiated on its behalf (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, June 17, 2026).

- ▶ Lebanese Justice Minister Adel Nassar said the understandings between Iran and the United States did not obviate the need to continue direct negotiations with Israel because there were other issues which had to be addressed, including the demarcation of the land border and the future of relations between the two countries. He urged Hezbollah to surrender its weapons and explained that by doing so, the organization could dispel dangers threatening Lebanon and make it possible to build a state (al-Jadeed, June 21, 2026).
- ▶ Hezbollah continued to demand an end to the direct negotiations, arguing that they harmed the state's sovereignty. The organization claimed the objectives of the rounds of direct negotiations were to force the Lebanese delegation "to bow its head" and sign dictates imposed by the American administration and move to the side that supported reconciliation with the "Zionist occupation and its illegitimate entity." Hezbollah again condemned the direct talks and called them an obstacle in the confrontation with the "enemy's project" and the efforts of the "resistance." According to Hezbollah, the statement said, Lebanon's continued participation in the negotiations "implemented the daily orders of the American administration," in violation of the constitution and the laws, and in that way the United States and Israel were increasing the risks facing Lebanon (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, June 21, 2026).
- ▶ Sources within the "Shi'ite duo" [Amal and Hezbollah] claimed that Israel was pressuring the Lebanese delegation ahead of the opening of the next round of talks. They claimed Israel wanted "geographic expansion" in south Lebanon, despite the fact that, according to the sources, the area currently controlled by Israel was one Hezbollah had evacuated and in which it demonstrated an exclusive commitment to ensuring that weapons remained solely in the hands of the Lebanese state. In addition, the sources claimed that there was "an internal crisis related to the rising extremist religious mood in Israel" and that "military failure is pushing Israel to attack civilians in Lebanon" (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, June 19, 2026).
- ▶ Lebanese parliament speaker and Amal movement leader Nabih Berri, Hezbollah's close ally, said he opposed the idea of "pilot zones" from which IDF forces would withdraw and Lebanese army forces would enter, because it could take two years to agree on the geographic boundaries of such zones. He therefore proposed establishing a timetable for an Israeli withdrawal from every district in south Lebanon in parallel with the deployment of the Lebanese army to allow displaced persons to return while simultaneously demilitarizing each district. He said Israel had requested the current ceasefire, adding that he hoped

American pressure would help preserve it. Berri said he was in continuous contact with President Aoun and Prime Minister Salam despite their disagreements over the negotiations, but that they agreed on the need for an Israeli withdrawal, the deployment of the Lebanese army, the return of residents, the release of the "prisoners" and the formulation of a reconstruction plan (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, June 22, 2026).

► Sources reported that President Aoun and Berri were expected to meet soon to mend fences after they disagreed over the negotiations. Reportedly, preparations have begun for a possible visit by a Hezbollah delegation to the presidential palace and the telephone conversation between the Iranian foreign minister and the Lebanese president was meant to encourage Hezbollah to reach out to the Lebanese president and turn over a new leaf in relations, since the issue of an Israeli withdrawal will also be subject to the negotiations being conducted in Washington (*al-Nashra*, June 16, 2026).

Challenges for Hezbollah

Actions against al-Qard al-Hassan

► Lebanese Justice Minister Adel Nassar submitted a request to the public prosecutor's office at the court of appeals to begin an investigation into the financial activities of al-Qard al-Hassan, Hezbollah's financial arm. Nassar rejected claims that the decision was the result of external pressure and said it was because of an investigation conducted by the ministry of justice after sufficient grounds had been established to transfer the case to the public prosecutor's office. He added that the prosecutor's legal investigation would determine whether the activities constituted violations or offenses warranting prosecution. A legal source noted that two weeks previously a delegation of Hezbollah members of the Lebanese Parliament had committed to halt certain activities of the institution, but the issue had become a new political flashpoint between the organization and state institutions (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, June 16, 2026).

New American Sanctions

► The United States Department of the Treasury imposed sanctions on the leader of the Marada Christian-Maronite Movement, Suleiman Frangieh, and on the deputy chairman of Hezbollah's political council, Mahmoud Qamati, on the grounds that they had used their influence to disrupt the peace process in Lebanon and delay Hezbollah's disarmament.

► According to the statement, Frangieh, who had been Hezbollah's candidate for the Lebanese presidency in January 2025, used his strategic alliance with Hezbollah to advance

his political ambitions and received financial support from Hezbollah in return for supporting the organization's efforts to capture the parliamentary seats of reformist and independent members during the general elections. Qamati was accused of coordinating the smuggling of cash from Iran for Hezbollah and advancing the organization's interests (United States Department of the Treasury, June 18, 2026).

► Lebanese sources said they viewed the move as an attempt to isolate Hezbollah politically and encourage forces within the March 8 Camp, which is affiliated with Hezbollah and the "resistance axis," to switch sides. They added that Frangieh was a leading figure and the American administration was trying to send a message and preempt threats concerning changes to the composition of the government (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, June 19, 2026).

Lebanese Citizen Accused of Importing Equipment for Hezbollah

► Lebanon's public prosecutor, Judge Ahmed Rami al-Hajj, ordered the filing of charges against a Lebanese citizen named Rabi' al-Tawil after an Interpol arrest warrant was received following a request by French authorities regarding suspected involvement in the manufacture of components used in UAV production.

► A legal source said al-Tawil owned a company which sold electrical equipment and imported equipment from France to Lebanon in partnership with a French citizen and a German citizen who were arrested in France. Judge al-Hajj instructed the internal security forces to conduct a preliminary investigation. They arrested al-Tawil, who admitted that he had imported electrical equipment by sea for an individual whose full identity he did not know. However, he denied knowing that the equipment was intended for UAV production, although he added that he believed the person who imported the equipment belonged to Hezbollah (Lebanon Debate, June 2026).

► An article published in Hezbollah's daily *al-Akhbar* claimed that only after al-Tawil was arrested at Interpol's request did al-Hajj begin searching for grounds to file charges and chose to invoke Article 72 of the Weapons and Ammunition Law, which concerns the possession and carrying of weapons and ammunition. According to the article, al-Tawil had merely imported civilian electronic components and sold them to a civilian, an act not prohibited by law. The article further claimed that even if the accused had participated in importing components which could be used to manufacture Hezbollah UAVs, the purchases were made during 2022–2023, before the Lebanese government's March 2, 2026 decision

outlawing Hezbollah's military wing, and therefore the decision could not be applied retroactively to earlier events (*al-Akhbar*, June 19, 2026).

UNIFIL

► Lebanese President Joseph Aoun met with UNIFIL Commander General Diodato Abagnara and the acting United Nations special coordinator for Lebanon, Imran Riza. They discussed the situation in south Lebanon and UNIFIL's activities in light of the difficulties facing its movements within the area of operations. They also discussed the period following the expiration of the UN force's mandate in south Lebanon. Aoun again expressed his condolences for the deaths of members of the multinational force in the south and praised their sacrifice for peace in Lebanon (Lebanese presidency X account, June 17, 2026).



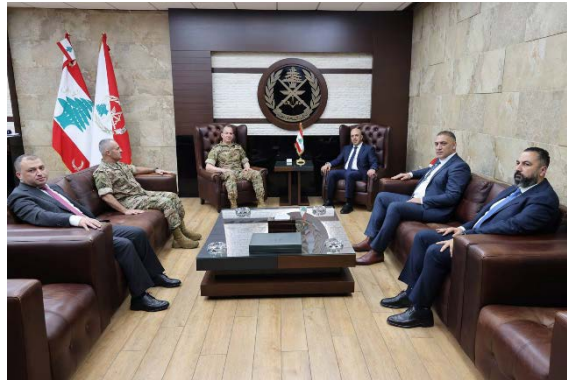
Aoun with the UNIFIL commander (Lebanese presidency X account, June 17, 2026)

► Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri hosted the UNIFIL commander and noted the importance of the continued presence of UN forces in south Lebanon in accordance with their mandate under UN Security Council Resolution 1701. He reaffirmed the necessity of their remaining until the resolution had been fully implemented and of assisting the Lebanese army in its national mission of deploying along the international border following the end of the war and the Israeli withdrawal from Lebanese territory (*al-Nashra*, June 17, 2026).

► UNIFIL said the peacekeepers continued to carry out essential daily activities to facilitate humanitarian aid deliveries and civilian movement. Their missions included clearing roads of unexploded ordnance, providing security protection for humanitarian aid convoys and reopening vital routes damaged during the recent hostilities. It noted that peacekeepers support stability and security in accordance with Resolution 1701 (*al-Nashra*, June 16, 2026).

The Palestinians in Lebanon

► The head of Palestinian National Security, al-Abed Ibrahim Khalil, met with Lebanese Army Commander Rudolf Haykal to discuss ways to advance cooperation and issues of mutual concern. Khalil reportedly praised Lebanon's historic role in supporting the Palestinian cause and noted the importance of continued cooperation serving mutual interests. They also reviewed the situation in the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon and noted the need to maintain security and stability (Palestinian national security Facebook page, June 18, 2026).



Khalil and Haykal (Palestinian national security Facebook page, June 18, 2026)

► Fatah operatives were responsible for heavy gunfire in the al-Zib neighborhood of the Ain al-Hilweh Palestinian refugee camp in Sidon following the killing of two Palestinian security personnel affiliated with the movement on June 14, 2026. Several roads were blocked, including the road leading to al-Hisba (the wholesale fruit and vegetable market) (*al-Jourhouria*, June 16, 2026). Calm returned to the camp and the al-Hisba road was reopened at the request of the families of the two deceased men, who said that preserving the unity of the camp's residents and strengthening the spirit of partnership and brotherhood among them was the best loyalty to their memory and to the values in which they believed and for which they worked (*al-Jourhouria*, June 17, 2026).