

Spotlight on Terrorism: Hezbollah and Lebanon

June 22-29, 2026

Trending

- ▶ The framework agreement between Israel and Lebanon will test the ability of the Lebanese state institutions to implement state sovereignty and disarm Hezbollah.
- ▶ The struggle over the narrative of the war's outcome between Hezbollah and the Lebanese government has begun.
- ▶ The issue of reconstruction and compensation exerts internal pressure on Hezbollah.

Overview¹

- ▶ The fifth round of direct talks in the United States between Lebanon and Israel ended on June 26, 2026, with the signing of a framework agreement which includes mutual recognition of sovereignty and conditions the withdrawal of IDF forces on the Lebanese army's ability to disarm Hezbollah and the other armed terrorist organizations. The Lebanese government and Hezbollah's opponents welcomed the agreement and said disarming the "resistance" was an essential condition for implementing state sovereignty. Hezbollah and Parliament Speaker Berri were strongly opposed and warned of a slide into civil war. Hezbollah reiterated that it would not yield to pressure and claimed the demand for disarmament served Israeli interests.
- ▶ IDF forces continued operating in the security zone in south Lebanon, destroying Hezbollah terrorist infrastructure and eliminating terrorists who posed a threat. Two IDF soldiers were killed in south Lebanon.
- ▶ Hezbollah accused Israel of "violating" the ceasefire and warned that it reserved the right to respond, but did not claim responsibility for attacks.

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

- ▶ Hezbollah is promoting a "resistance"-Iranian "victory" narrative to establish its status as an indispensable partner in any future arrangement in Lebanon. Members of the Lebanese Parliament opposed to Hezbollah called for Hezbollah and Iran to bear the costs of the war.
- ▶ Hezbollah has been criticized following reports that it directed most of the funds it received from Iran to military needs while providing only limited assistance to civilians.
- ▶ Lebanese President Aoun welcomed the announcement by France and Italy of their intention to establish a multinational coalition to strengthen the Lebanese army following the end of UNIFIL's mandate.
- ▶ As the ceasefire progresses, displaced residents return to south Lebanon.

The Israel-Lebanon Framework Agreement²

- ▶ On June 26, 2026, following three days of discussions during the fifth round of direct negotiations between Lebanon and Israel in the United States, the ambassadors of the two countries signed a framework agreement in the presence of Secretary of State Marco Rubio. The principal provisions of the agreement are the following:

- ◆ Recognition by each state of the other's sovereignty for the first time since May 1983, together with a commitment to continue negotiations to end the state of war and establish peace.
- ◆ A gradual Israeli withdrawal from pilot areas in south Lebanon, into which the Lebanese army will enter to dismantle all "non-state armed groups"³ and enforce state sovereignty. The IDF withdrawal will be completed only after the "groups" have been disarmed and the destruction of their infrastructure has been formally verified.
- ◆ A commitment by the Lebanese government to implement a state monopoly over the possession of weapons and to prevent any state or non-state actor from depriving the state authorities of the power to decide matters of war and peace.
- ◆ Preventing the transfer of funds to any entity identified with non-state "armed groups."

- ▶ In the wake of the agreement, the Lebanese army is reportedly expected to deploy to several areas in the south, including Zawtar al-Sharqiya, Zawtar al-Gharbiya, Arnoun and Yohmor al-Shaqif, under the supervision of the commander of the U.S. Central Command

² See the June 2026 Amit Institute report, "[The Israel-Lebanon Framework Agreement: Insights and Responses](#)."

³ Terrorist organizations.

(CENTCOM), Admiral Brad Cooper, and the American observer team. Lebanon continues to urge the United States to exert pressure to complete the Israeli withdrawal from the area to stabilize the Nabatieh region and reduce the potential for friction between Israel and Hezbollah (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, June 29, 2026).

► Lebanese President Joseph Aoun and Prime Minister Nawaf Salam called the agreement a diplomatic achievement and a foundation for restoring sovereignty and strengthening state institutions. Hezbollah's opponents praised the agreement and said they were confident it would reduce the Hezbollah and Iran's influence over decision-making in the country, although they believed the organization would politically and publicly oppose the agreement.

► Hezbollah and its allies rejected the framework agreement outright calling it "surrender," claiming it undermined Lebanon's sovereignty and could lead to civil war. They said they would not abandon the "resistance,"⁴ adding that the memorandum of understanding between Iran and the United States was the only document capable of ending the war. Hezbollah supporters demonstrated in Beirut and the Beqa'a Valley, while the authorities instructed the security forces to enforce public order.

► Parliament Speaker and Amal leader Nabih Berri did not obstruct the direct negotiations despite opposing the talks. After the framework agreement had been signed, Berri, who had not participated in formulating the agreement and was informed of its contents only after its publication, warned it could lead to civil war. He said the new framework agreement, which he claimed had been "dictated" by the United States, was "ten times worse" than the May 1983 Agreement on the Termination of Hostilities between Lebanon and Israel, adding that the negotiating course between the United States and Iran was currently the only way to ensure a full Israeli withdrawal. He said the order of priorities should have been an Israeli withdrawal and the cessation of attacks, the release of prisoners and the return of the displaced before any other issue. Instead, he said, the outcome of the negotiations in Washington made the withdrawal dependent on political and security conditions which would take years to implement, without requiring Israel to meet its own commitments. He said Amal's government ministers would continue to attend government meetings dealing with the agreement to voice their opposition (*al-Akhbar*, June 29, 2026).

⁴ Anti-Israeli terrorism and violence.

► President Aoun and Prime Minister Salam reportedly intend to submit the agreement to the government for approval at its next meeting. Approval requires a two-thirds Cabinet majority, and under the constitution it must also be approved by Parliament. However, sources said efforts were being made to find a legal interpretation which would allow the requirement to be bypassed. A legal source said that until all the steps had been taken, the agreement was neither valid nor binding on the state or on any political entity (*al-Akhbar*, June 29, 2026).

► At the opening of the Washington talks, Lebanese Foreign Minister Youssef Rajji met with European and Arab officials and told them that Lebanon wanted an independent political course separate from the contacts between the United States and Iran, and any arrangement concerning Lebanon had to be decided by the institutions of the Lebanese state and with Lebanon's participation. He called on the Arab League to support separating Lebanon from the broader regional negotiations and said Lebanon wanted to be a full partner in any future arrangement concerning the Middle East, rather than having decisions affecting it made through negotiations in which it did not participate (Youssef Rajji X account, June 23, 2026).



Right: The negotiating teams meet in Washington during the fifth round (*al-Liwaa*, June 24, 2026). Left: The negotiations in Washington: a choice between continued war and destruction or a future of stability, reconstruction and development. The child chooses the Lebanon 2035 Map, support for the political track and implicit criticism of continued military confrontation as an alternative for the country's future (*al-Joumhouria*, June 24, 2026)

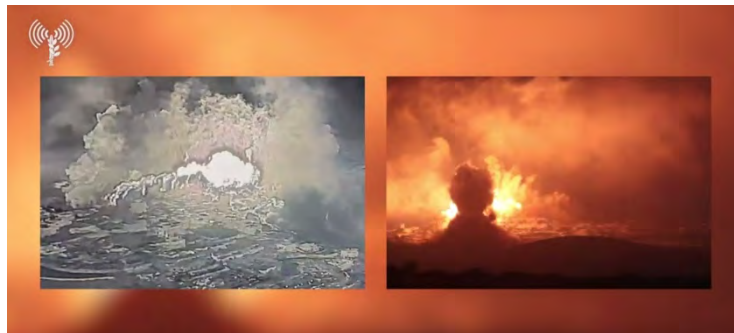
► Messages were reportedly exchanged between Lebanese Forces Party chairman Samir Geagea and the American vice president, who, according to the report, said the United States recognized President Joseph Aoun and the Lebanese government as the only legitimate authority in the country and the objective of contacts with Iran was to pressure Hezbollah to fulfill its commitments rather than to grant Tehran influence over Lebanon's future. Geagea called for continued international support for the extension of state sovereignty and the

concentration of all weapons in the hands of the state's security institutions (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, June 23, 2026).

The Fighting in Lebanon

The IDF

► IDF forces continued operations against terrorist infrastructure and terrorists within the security zone in south Lebanon while neutralizing immediate threats. The forces eliminated terrorists who approached the forces, mainly in the Ali al-Taher Ridge area,⁵ and terrorists involved in the transfer of weapons. They attacked Hezbollah command posts in response to violations of the ceasefire agreement. In the Majdal Zoun area, they destroyed a tunnel 200 meters in length and 25 meters below ground which been used to store hundreds of weapons, including dozens of UAVs ,and contained four launch shafts. One IDF soldier was killed in an encounter with a terrorist, and another soldier was killed in an operational accident in south Lebanon (IDF Spokesperson, June 22-29, 2026).



Destroying the tunnel in Majdal Zoun (IDF Spokesperson, May 28, 2026)

Hezbollah

► This past week Hezbollah again did not issue claims of responsibility for attacks on IDF forces in south Lebanon, its practice since June 20, 2026. Instead, it issued five statements accusing Israel of violating the ceasefire by attacking "civilians" who were allegedly "checking their homes" or "recovering bodies," and "residential buildings," and by demolishing structures in various towns. Hezbollah claimed it was "monitoring and documenting the violations" and "reserved the right to defend its homeland and its people," promoting the narrative that it was adhering to the ceasefire. Hezbollah categorically denied Israeli claims that the IDF controlled the Ali al-Taher Ridge, claiming the area was "free of any presence of the occupation forces and is populated by the resistance's jihad fighters,"⁶ who

⁵ An elevated area overlooking Nabatiyeh.

⁶ Terrorist organizations.

are prepared to "resist" infiltration attempts (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, June 22-29, 2026).

Hezbollah's Arsenal

► Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam said the state's exclusive control over weapons was not prompted by an Israeli demand but by Lebanon's commitments under the Taif Agreement, UN Security Council Resolution 1701 and the 2024 Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities. He said Hezbollah was also bound by the agreements, which include extending state authority over all Lebanese territory, demilitarizing the area south of the Litani River and limiting the possession of weapons exclusively to the authorized security forces (Lebanese prime minister's X account, June 24, 2026).

► Lebanese Foreign Minister Youssef Rajji told Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi that Lebanon was determined to advance the negotiations with Israel, and said implementing state sovereignty required concentrating all weapons exclusively in the hands of the Lebanese armed forces, adding that the government's decision on the matter was irreversible. Safadi said he supported the move and the Lebanese government's efforts to extend its sovereignty over the entire country (Youssef Rajji X account, June 22, 2026).

► Lebanese Justice Minister Adel Nassar said the recent understandings between the United States and Iran weakened the justification for Hezbollah's continued possession of weapons, and all security authority should be concentrated in the hands of the state and the Lebanese army, which he described as the body capable of implementing any future security arrangement (*al-Diyar*, June 24, 2026).

► Member of the Lebanese Parliament Fouad Makhzoumi, a Hezbollah opponent, said a key condition for strengthening state sovereignty was concentrating all weapons exclusively in the hands of state institutions, with completing the Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon, reconstructing the area and returning the residents to their homes (Fouad Makhzoumi X account, June 23, 2026).

► Kataeb Party chairman Sami Gemayel said Hezbollah's weapons were the main obstacle to restoring Lebanon's sovereignty, reconstructing the country and emerging from its security and economic crisis. He said Israel's withdrawal and Hezbollah's disarmament had to be completed simultaneously, adding that the sovereigntist forces in Lebanon would not agree to the continued existence of extra-state weapons. He said Hezbollah had to submit to

the state institutions, because "most Lebanese are not prepared to continue living as hostages of the organization" (Newsgate platform, June 22, 2026).

► Sources in the Lebanese Forces Party criticized Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri's attempt to represent the November 2024 ceasefire agreement as the basis for the current arrangement, stating that its failure was primarily the result of Hezbollah's continued possession of weapons. According to the sources, the agreement explicitly stipulated that weapons were to be held only by state institutions and all "armed groups" had to be disarmed, first south of the Litani River and subsequently throughout Lebanon. The sources said the failure to meet the commitments had led to the renewal of the fighting and the continued Israeli presence in the south. They placed responsibility on Hezbollah for the failure of the 2024 agreement and for the continued existence of extra-state weapons, which they said were the main obstacle to establishing Lebanon's sovereignty (*al-Nahar*, June 25, 2026).

► Lebanese Forces Party media official Charles Jabbour said Hezbollah's disarmament had to precede the Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon. He said extra-state weapons were the principal reason for the continued fighting and the Israeli presence in the south, and restoring the state's monopoly over security was the primary condition for completing the withdrawal and preventing further confrontations (Charles Jabbour's X account, June 26, 2026).

► Hezbollah Lebanese Parliament member Hassan Fadlallah criticized the Lebanese government for continuing to promote the idea of exclusive state control over weapons during the fighting, claiming it served Israeli interests and ignored the continuation of Israeli attacks. He said Hezbollah would not agree to relinquish its weapons, which would continue to "defend Lebanon," adding that political decisions and pressure would not disarm the organization (Loyalty to the Resistance Bloc website, June 23, 2026). His fellow parliamentarian, Ihab Hamadeh, claimed the "resistance" was Lebanon's "primary source of strength" and its continued role should be anchored within the framework of the national security strategy (*al-Diyar*, June 25, 2026).

► *Al-Joumhouria* commentator Imad Marmal said Hezbollah was attempting to adapt its doctrine to the post-war reality by representing its weapons as being only "defensive," intended to protect Lebanon and ensure stability along the border. He said the organization

wanted to portray itself as part of Lebanon's national security concept without relinquishing its weapons (*al-Joumhouria*, June 23, 2026).

► According to an op-ed piece published in the anti-Hezbollah newspaper *Nidaa al-Watan*, Lebanon is currently fighting a "cold civil war," manifested by a political-social confrontation over Hezbollah's status and weapons rather than by military conflict. According to the article, the Taif settlement failed to resolve the roots of Lebanon's internal conflict because Hezbollah remained the only extra-state armed actor. The article presented three possible scenarios for the future: a gradual political settlement which would regulate the weapons issue; external intervention which would impose disarmament on Hezbollah; or the continuation of the current situation, which could lead to internal escalation and the collapse of the political balance which has existed in Lebanon since the end of the civil war (*Nidaa al-Watan*, June 24, 2026).

Hezbollah Spins Another "Victory Narrative"

► With the ongoing direct negotiations between Lebanon and Israel and the negotiations between Iran and the United States, the Hezbollah leadership sought to spin a "victory narrative" of the war and define what it considered its red lines ahead of a future settlement. It emphasized four main principles: portraying the war as an achievement for Hezbollah and Iran, rejecting any possibility of disarmament, opposing any political or security gains for Israel and representing Hezbollah as an indispensable partner in any future arrangement in Lebanon.

◆ Hezbollah secretary general Na'im Qassem portrayed the war as a strategic achievement, claiming Israel had failed in its primary objective of eliminating Hezbollah. He claimed its "resilience" and Iranian assistance "broke the Israeli-American project" and made Hezbollah the "principal guarantor of Lebanon's defense." He claimed Hezbollah supported the continued implementation of the ceasefire and a full Israeli withdrawal but its weapons were an internal Lebanese matter and not subject to negotiations with Israel. He also called on the Lebanese leadership not to yield to American-Israeli pressure and represented Hezbollah as an indispensable partner in any future political and security arrangement in Lebanon (Hezbollah secretary general's website, June 23 and 26, 2026).

◆According to Hezbollah's bloc in the Lebanese Parliament, the war was part of the historic struggle between the "resistance axis" ⁷and the West. The bloc claimed Iran had imposed the ceasefire and altered the regional balance of power, and called on the government to build upon those "achievements" instead of "continuing a policy of concessions to Israel." The bloc again rejected direct negotiations with Israel, any attempt to link an Israeli withdrawal to Hezbollah's disarmament or to the establishment of pilot areas north of the Litani River, and insisted that any future arrangement had to be based on a full Israeli withdrawal, the return of the displaced, the release of prisoners and the cessation of Israeli attacks, with no concessions from Hezbollah (Loyalty to the Resistance Bloc website, June 25, 2026).



Iran embraces and protects wounded Lebanon, reflecting the pro-Iranian narrative that Iranian support enables Lebanon's survival and its ability to withstand Israel (*al-Araby al-Jadeed*, June 25, 2026)

◆Hezbollah Member of Parliament Ihab Hamadeh described the outcome of the war as a "great victory" for Hezbollah and Iran, which, according to him, altered the regional balance of power and thwarted Israel's objectives (al-Diyar, June 25, 2026).

◆According to an op-ed piece the Hezbollah-affiliated daily *al-Akhbar*, although the war damaged Hezbollah's military capabilities, it neither caused the organization's collapse nor removed it from the political system. According to the newspaper, Israel failed to achieve its political objectives, the "resistance axis" remained an important regional actor and Hezbollah would continue to be a central player in any future arrangement in Lebanon (*al-Akhbar*, June 23, 2026). *Al-Akhbar* editor in chief Ibrahim al-Amin wrote that Saudi Arabia, in coordination with the United States, continued to promote the reduction of Hezbollah's power by strengthening state institutions,

⁷ Iran, Hezbollah, the Palestinian terrorist organizations, the Houthis in Yemen and the Shi'ite militias in Iraq.

advancing negotiations with Israel and applying pressure to disarm the organization. However, he wrote, Riyadh failed to dismantle the alliance between Hezbollah and Amal or to create an anti-Hezbollah political majority, and therefore shifted from military pressure to political and economic pressure (*al-Akhbar*, June 24, 2026).

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► Twenty-eight members of the Lebanese Parliament from the opposition "sovereigntist camp" submitted a petition to the Lebanese prime minister calling for legal and diplomatic action to hold Hezbollah and Iran responsible for the damage caused by the war. The initiative was based on the claim that Lebanon did not make a constitutional decision to go to war and Hezbollah acted outside the framework of the state. It called for appointing a professional committee, the preparation of a national file documenting the war damage and consideration of claims for compensation, including through frozen Iranian assets. The initiative was prompted by the World Bank's assessment that the damage caused by the war amounted to approximately \$14 billion (*Nidaa al-Watan*, June 25, 2026).

► The Hezbollah-affiliated daily *al-Akhbar* claimed members of the Lebanese Parliament from the anti-Hezbollah camp, led by Fouad Makhzoumi, were increasing coordination with American officials to promote political measures against Iran and Hezbollah. According to the newspaper, the members of the Lebanese Parliament were in direct contact with the office of United States Senator Lindsey Graham, through which they allegedly coordinate their positions and public statements. *Al-Akhbar* claimed that the parliamentary initiative to hold Iran responsible for the war damage and to demand Lebanon's inclusion in any future

compensation mechanism was formulated following a request conveyed by Graham's office (*al-Akhbar*, June 24, 2026).

► An article published in the Lebanese daily *al-Liwaa* compared the period during which south Lebanon became the operational base of the PLO ("Fatahland") in the 1970s with the current situation, in which Lebanon has become "Iranland" through Hezbollah. According to the article, statements by senior Iranian officials that Hezbollah fighters were killed "defending Iran" reinforced the claim that the organization operated primarily to advance Tehran's interests rather than Lebanon's. The article argued that most of the Lebanese leadership and the sovereigntist forces supported restoring state sovereignty and limiting Iran's influence, while calling for an end to the Iranland model, similar to the repeal of the Cairo Agreement that ended the Fatahland era in south Lebanon (*al-Liwaa*, June 22, 2026).



Signs reading "Lebanon First" and "Lebanon Unites Us" were erected along the road to Beirut International Airport after the "Thank You, Iran" signs that Hezbollah had placed there had been removed on orders from the minister of the interior (*al-Nahar*, June 28, 2026)

Reconstruction

► Criticism within Hezbollah's own environment is increasing in light of the difficulties in reconstructing south Lebanon and providing compensation. According to reports, the organization has limited itself to modest financial assistance and the provision of basic humanitarian aid, while most Iranian resources have been directed toward "military" needs. Given the continuing distress of the displaced, it is becoming generally assumed that Iran will be unable to finance reconstruction on the required scale, strengthening calls within Lebanon to hold Tehran responsible for the damage caused by the war (*Nidaa al-Watan*, June 25, 2026).

► The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Lebanese National Council for Scientific Research said the estimate that the direct damage to buildings in south Lebanon was approximately \$1.38 billion referred solely to damage to buildings and housing units incurred between March 2 and April 29, 2026. The estimate does not include damage to

infrastructure, public facilities, electricity, water and communications networks, economic sectors or the destruction after April 29, 2026. Accordingly, the overall extent of the damage is expected to be significantly higher, and updated figures will be published upon completion of the assessment process (*al-Diyar*, June 26, 2026).

The Lebanese Army

► The leaders of Italy and France announced their intention, in coordination with the European Union and the United Nations, to launch a coalition to replace UNIFIL following the expiration of its mandate to strengthen Lebanon's sovereignty and its armed forces. Lebanese President Joseph Aoun welcomed the initiative, calling it a genuine expression of the international community's commitment to support Lebanon's sovereignty and stability. He added that Lebanon was open to any international framework which would strengthen its armed forces, preserve its territorial integrity and prevent it from becoming an arena for escalation and international tension (Al Arabiya, June 26, 2026).

► A UNIFIL spokesman said the agency continued helping the Lebanese army clear mines and unexploded ordnance but noted that operational responsibility in this field rested with the Lebanese Mine Action Center and the Lebanese army. According to the spokesman, UNIFIL focused on providing technical and logistical assistance, opening and securing transportation routes, supporting the deployment of the Lebanese army, securing humanitarian aid corridors and creating the conditions for the gradual return of residents to south Lebanon (*al-Diyar*, June 24, 2026).

► The UN Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution calling for stronger mechanisms to investigate and prosecute attacks on UN peacekeeping forces. The resolution was adopted because of an increase in attacks on UN personnel, including the deaths of seven UNIFIL personnel since the renewal of the fighting in south Lebanon in March 2026. Host countries were called on to investigate and prosecute those responsible for the attacks, the UN secretary general was tasked with appointing a coordinator for the issue and it was emphasized that deliberate attacks against peacekeeping forces could constitute war crimes (*Nidaa al-Watan*, June 23, 2026).

The Situation in Lebanon

► According to Lebanese government figures, since the beginning of the current campaign on March 2, 2026, at least 4,247 people have been killed and 12,195 wounded. Of the casualties, 14,172 were men and 2,270 were women (*al-Nashra*, June 28, 2026).

► With the ceasefire, displaced residents gradually returned to south Lebanon. The number of displaced persons in reception centers declined to approximately 73,600, about half the number at the height of the fighting. In the Akkar District in northern Lebanon the number of displaced persons fell from approximately 17,000 to 13,000 within a week, while the number of reception centers in the area was reduced from 21 to nine. Nevertheless, more than 50,000 displaced persons remain in Beirut and Mount Lebanon, with an additional 14,000 in the south. Meanwhile, new reception centers have been opened in the south for families whose homes were destroyed. Official reports showed that many families continued a "wait-and-see" approach lest the fighting resume, delaying the return of the population to the southern communities despite the improving trend (*al-Akhbar*, June 25, 2026; *al-Nahar*, June 27, 2026).