

Spotlight on Terrorism: Hezbollah and Lebanon

September 7-15, 2026

Trending

- **Lebanese authorities attempt to reinforce their presence in south Lebanon after residents in Hezbollah strongholds call for the deployment of the security forces.**
- **Following the destruction of Hezbollah's underground facility on the Ali al-Taher Ridge, the Lebanese government is under increased pressure to implement the decision on the state monopoly on weapons.**
- **Hezbollah adapts its military deployment to the erosion of its deterrence model against Israel.**

Overview¹

- The IDF destroyed Hezbollah's underground facility on the Ali al-Taher Ridge and continued attacks on Hezbollah targets in various areas of south Lebanon.
- Senior Hezbollah figures downplayed the significance of the facility's destruction but promoted the narrative of the "heroic battle" of the operatives who had been trapped on the ridge. Hezbollah reportedly changed the deployment of its forces and weapons because of the IDF attacks, but fearing an Israeli response, took no action.
- Residents of Hezbollah strongholds in south Lebanon called on the state authorities to expand their authority and deploy the security forces out of concern of an expansion of IDF activity. The Lebanese army deployed in al-Nabatieh and increased its activity in the pilot zones.
- Hezbollah's opponents demand that the organization's military infrastructure be dismantled throughout Lebanon.
- Direct talks between the Lebanese and Israeli delegations are expected to resume in October 2026, but the United States is currently promoting a meeting between the countries'

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.

ambassadors in Washington and considering additional coordination mechanisms, including military ones. Hezbollah called for an end to the talks, claiming they achieved nothing and allowed the Israeli attacks to continue.

► The council of Arab League foreign ministers condemned Hezbollah's activity, held it responsible for the war with Israel and expressed support for the position of the Lebanese government.

► A Hezbollah plot to assassinate individuals in Argentina was exposed. The United States imposed sanctions on facilitators of Iranian financing for Hezbollah, while Britain imposed sanctions on Hezbollah's financial arm.

► The Lebanese prime minister said the cost of the two most recent wars had reached more than \$20 billion.

The Military Situation in South Lebanon

Israel Blows Up the Ali al-Taher Ridge²

► On September 10, 2026, the IDF announced it had completed the destruction of Hezbollah's underground facility on the Ali al-Taher Ridge by detonating more than 1,100 tons of explosives. According to the IDF, two tunnels with a total length of more than two kilometers were destroyed. They had served as a central compound of Hezbollah's Badr Unit and included command rooms, weapons depots and facilities for extended stays, in which dozens of rockets, missiles and UAVs, anti-tank weapons, mines and explosives were found. The IDF said it completed the destruction of a broader underground facility in the Ali al-Taher and Beaufort Castle area, which included eight tunnels with a cumulative length of approximately 5.4 kilometers (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, September 10-12, 2026). Lebanese media reported that the force of the explosions was felt in the al-Nabatieh area, created large craters and caused a significant change in the contours of the ridge (*al-Diyar* and *al-Nahar*, September 10-11, 2026). However, according to reports, the entire underground compound was not destroyed, only the section between the village of Tebnine and Ali al-Taher, while on the other side, between al-Nabatieh al-Fawqa and Dawhat Kafr Rumman, facilities still existed, and therefore the file was still open from the military perspective. The United States informed the Lebanese government that the IDF would

² See the August 2026 Amit Institute report [Dismantling the Hezbollah Infrastructure at the Ali Taher Ridge to Advance the Ceasefire Agreement](#) and the September 2026 report, [IDF Announces Operational Control of the Ali al-Taher Ridge – Reactions in Lebanon and Iran](#)

remain in the same positions and with similar deployment, and the possibility of transferring the ridge to the Lebanese army would be discussed in the direct negotiations in October 2026 (*Nidaa al-Watan*, September 15, 2026).



Right: The explosion on the Ali al-Taher Ridge (IDF spokesperson, September 10, 2026).

Left: The ridge after the explosion (*al-Nahar*, September 11, 2026)

► Hezbollah did not issue an official statement regarding the explosion, claiming members of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament were "surprised" by the loss of the ridge when their information about events proved inaccurate (MTV Lebanon, September 14, 2026). However, in public, members of the faction tried to downplay the significance of the destruction of the facility and said the "resistance"³ would continue the struggle:

◆ Ibrahim al-Moussawi, member of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament, claimed the "enemy" was using psychological warfare to promote an image of victory and military achievement at Ali al-Taher. He said the "resistance equation" was firm and "not undermined by geography, but rather strengthened by faith and determination" (Ibrahim al-Moussawi's X account, September 11, 2026).

◆ Hassan Ezzeddine, also a member of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament, condemned the explosion of the ridge and claimed it exposed Israel's disregard for the rules of wars. He accused the government of not only ignoring the attack but also being complicit in the bloodshed because it had legitimized the IDF presence through the framework agreement (*al-Nashra*, September 12, 2026).

◆ Hezbollah propagandist Ali Barro of al-Manar claimed there were other facilities which were more important, such as those in Majdal Zoun and Srifa. In response, the Srifa municipality condemned a statement by a media figure in a television interview

³ Hezbollah and the other terrorist organizations operating in Lebanon.

and protested that such remarks could lead to a distortion of the image of the town and its residents (*al-Nashra*, September 11, 2026).

► According to a report in Iran, 48 Lebanese Hezbollah operatives were in the tunnels attacked on the Ali al-Taher Ridge, eight of whom were killed. Iran denied the presence of representatives of the Revolutionary Guards at the site (Fars News Agency, September 14, 2026). Accounts affiliated with Hezbollah echoed the narrative of the heroic battle of the organization's fighters who had barricaded themselves at the site and prevented the IDF from taking control of the ridge for weeks while refusing to surrender (SIMIA, Tariq [Road] 82 and Electronic Hezbollah Telegram channels, September 10-14, 2026).



Right and center: The heroic on the Ali al-Taher Ridge (Tariq 82 Telegram channel, September 11-12, 2026). Left: Hezbollah sarcasm. "We finally got rid of Ali al-Taher." Hezbollah loses the ridge and the "fighter" is freed of responsibility for it, while the IDF remains in the area (*al-Akhbar*, September 11, 2026)

The IDF

► IDF forces continued routine activity in the security zone with extensive airstrikes on Hezbollah targets in various areas of south Lebanon. The forces destroyed a shaft containing launchers with 32 rockets aimed at Israeli territory which had been left in the area before the ceasefire (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, September 7-15, 2026). Hezbollah-affiliated media outlets accused Israel of violating the ceasefire agreement because of airstrikes, artillery shelling and the demolition of buildings, including on the slopes of the Ali al-Taher Ridge, in al-Nabatieh al-Fawqa, Tebnine, Zawtar al-Sharqiyah and al-Mansouri (SIMIA and Hezbollah in the Field Telegram channels, September 7-15, 2026).

► A security source in south Lebanon claimed that Israel was creating an area more than three kilometers deep isolated from the civilian surroundings, and the objective of increasing attacks in al-Rihan, Deir al-Zahrani, al-Mansouri and other areas was to expand the forces' freedom of action and isolate the area from residents. Allegedly, a similar pattern was

evident in the al-Nabatieh area and around Wadi al-Saluki and Wadi al-Hujeir (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, September 7, 2026).

Hezbollah

► According to Lebanese security sources, Hezbollah is changing the deployment of its forces and weapons in view of the Israeli attacks. According to the reports, part of the rocket array, air defense systems and additional military equipment were moved from the mountainous area of Iqlim al-Tuffah and al-Rihan toward Armata, Mleeta and Jabal Safi, dispersed among longstanding facilities and posts, some of them underground. Operatives were removed from posts and permanent concentrations, and dispersed among villages and towns, and some returned to their civilian occupations while maintaining their affiliation with the organization and availability for mobilization. The "military-security command"⁴ echelons continued to operate from hiding places, moving frequently and restricting the use of technological means which could expose their locations (Erem News, September 8 and 10, 2026).

► Hezbollah has so far not responded militarily to the expansion of Israeli activity in the south. Sources said a response could provide Israel with a reason to expand the confrontation and Hezbollah currently wanted to place responsibility for dealing with the escalation on the Lebanese government. However, it was also claimed that Hezbollah's "restraint" did not indicate it had abandoned the "option of response," adding that logistical preparations had been completed for the resumption of extensive military activity, the activation of which depended on a decision by the Shura Council. According to the sources, the organization's considerations were also influenced by developments between the United States and Iran (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, September 7, 2026; *al-Diyar*, September 10, 2026).

► Imad Marmal, a Hezbollah-affiliated political commentator, said the organization recognized that its previous deterrence model against Israel was no longer valid and the rules of engagement which existed between 2006 and 2023 had changed. He said Hezbollah would not respond in a way to give Israel a pretext for escalation and was examining new patterns of action which would enable it to change the situation in the south at the lowest possible cost, while taking regional developments and its alliance with Iran into account (*al-Joumhouria*, September 11, 2026).

⁴ Terrorist.

► Former Lebanese Hezbollah-affiliated director of general security director Abbas Ibrahim said the organization had been weakened by the war but still retained the ability to take action against Israel. According to him, Hezbollah no longer operated as an organized army and had returned to guerrilla warfare, where it could still act against Israeli forces (Lebanon Debate, September 14, 2026).

Strengthening State Presence in South Lebanon

Local Calls to Strengthen State Authority

► The IDF takeover of the Ali al-Taher Ridge raised concerns in Lebanon about increased military pressure on the al-Nabatieh area, one of the largest cities in south Lebanon and a major Hezbollah stronghold north of the Litani, and had led to Shi'ite unrest. More than 400 residents and activists from al-Nabatieh and the south, including doctors, engineers and members of the education and media sectors, signed the second Nabatieh appeal, which criticized Hezbollah for rejecting the proposal to transfer the ridge to the Lebanese army. The residents called for the immediate deployment of the Lebanese army and security forces, the transfer of responsibility for the city's security to the state and the restriction of declaring war or peace to its institutions. Some warned that the presence of weapons depots and military sites in the city exposed it to attacks and made it difficult for the state to exercise its authority. The imam of al-Nabatieh, Sheikh Abd al-Hussein Sadiq, called on humanitarian organizations and the media to visit the city accompanied by the army to see for themselves, claiming there it held no military infrastructure (MTV Lebanon and al-Nahar, September 8, 2026).⁵

► Similar calls to strengthen the presence of the state and the army were published in other communities in the south. The second Tyre appeal demanded that the state exercise its authority in areas where there was no Israeli presence and restrict weapons to the state; residents of Arabsalim called for an increased army presence and the establishment of checkpoints at the entrances to the village; and representatives of the Kafr Rumman municipality asked Prime Minister Nawaf Salam to reinforce the deployment of the army and security forces in the area. Salam stated that increasing the presence of the army and security services in the south was continuing (Janoubia and *al-Nahar*, September 8, 2026; Lebanese prime minister's office X account, September 11, 2026).

⁵ See the June 14 Amit Institute report, [Criticism of Hezbollah Increases among the Shi'ites in Lebanon](#).

► Hezbollah supporters reacted to appeals in al-Nabatieh and Tyre by launching a campaign on social media with the slogans "Thank you, Hezbollah" and "We will not abandon you." Statements of support for the "resistance were" circulated, questioning the authenticity of some of the appeals attributed to residents of communities in the south. The dispute surrounding the appeals developed into a confrontation on social media between critics of Hezbollah's continued military presence and organization supporters who noted its contribution to "defending and assisting" the population (*al-Madan*, September 8, 2026).



An al-Nabatieh resident welcomes a Lebanese army soldier with flowers
(*al-Nahar*, September 8, 2026)

► Sheikh Ali Daamouh, head of Hezbollah's executive council, and Dr. Mustafa al-Fouani, chair of the Amal Movement executive committee, held a joint meeting of the leaderships of the two Shi'ite organizations, where they called for national unity, coexistence and the preservation of civil peace in Lebanon, which they described as a red line, while rejecting any attempt at incitement or political division. They said Hezbollah and Amal demanded state institutions take full responsibility for resolving the economic and social crises; placed the reconstruction of the destruction, compensation of those affected and the return of displaced residents to their villages at the highest and most urgent level of national priority, while relying on Arab and international support; and called on all political forces in Lebanon to demonstrate responsibility, set aside narrow interests and cooperate to defend the state, rebuild it and ensure the functioning of its institutions (*al-Manar*, September 14, 2026).

Lebanese Army and Security Forces Activity

► Sources said the Lebanese army had begun to increase its deployment in al-Nabatieh and the surrounding area following a decision by President Aoun and army commander Rodolphe Haykal, in coordination with Prime Minister Nawaf Salam. The internal security forces increased patrols and checkpoints, along with activity by the army, general security and state security, and the investigative police branch in the city resumed operations and

began receiving requests from residents. However, it was noted that the purpose of the move was to strengthen the security presence and prevent further escalation, not to begin disarmament or turn al-Nabatieh into a demilitarized zone, and the army had not been instructed to act to restrict weapons in the area (Lebanese News Agency, *al-Madan*, *al-Diyar* and *Nidaa al-Watan*, September 8-11, 2026; *al-Nahar*, September 14, 2026).



Lebanese security forces in al-Nabatieh (Lebanese News Agency, January 11, 2026)

► The Lebanese army said it had begun measures for operational control in the pilot zones where it had assumed responsibility under the framework agreement, in coordination with the special military coordination group for Lebanon, although full agreement had not yet been reached on the plan's implementation. According to the Lebanese army, in Zawtar al-Gharbiyeh, Froun and Srifa, the army established six permanent checkpoints and 13 observation posts, conducted patrols around the clock and searched homes with the consent of their owners. The army reported it had removed and confiscated 1,818 weapons and ammunition items, including rocket launchers, rockets and UAVs, enabling it to achieve operational control and prevent unauthorized armed activity in the area (Lebanese army X account, September 9, 2026).

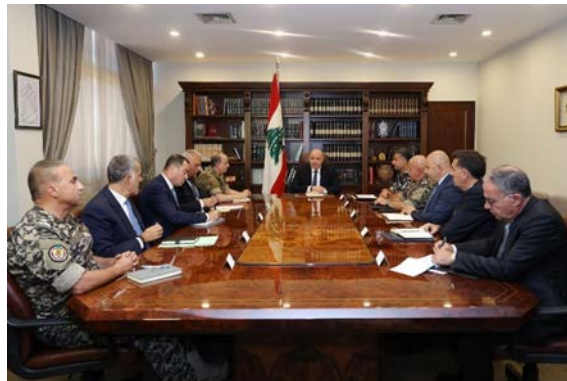
► According to the Lebanese army, approximately 70% of the residents of Zawtar al-Gharbiyeh, which was included in the pilot zones plan, returned to the town to inspect their property, but only about 60 of approximately 450 families returned to live there. It was also reported that 85 % of the town's homes had been destroyed and the rest had been partially damaged, and the army was working to clear rubble, open roads and assist the residents' return (Lebanese army X account, September 9, 2026).

► American Ambassador to Lebanon Michel Issa said Washington was aware that the army had no practical ability to confront Hezbollah, but expected it to make full use of the capabilities at its disposal. According to him, the United States was not demanding that the

army open fire or merely establish checkpoints in the pilot zones, but rather ensure that the homes in the area were free of weapons (*al-Joumhouria*, September 11, 2026).

The Lebanese Government

► Lebanese President Joseph Aoun called a meeting of the heads of the army and security forces to discuss the situation in the south. Later, at a government meeting, he related to residents' appeals and said that the authorities had heard their demands and would act to assist them. Aoun said the time had come for the state to return to the south and called on government ministries to strengthen the residents' ability to remain in the area (Lebanese presidency X account, September 9-10, 2026).



**Aoun meets with the heads of the army and security forces
(Lebanese presidency X account, September 9, 2026)**

► Aoun also visited al-Nabatieh and Zawtar al-Gharbiyeh, accompanied by the commanders of the security forces, and met with security officials and representatives of the local authorities. They discussed reinforcing the security presence, rebuilding homes and infrastructure and assisting the local authorities. Aoun said the south was at the heart of the state and the Israeli withdrawal, the return of the "prisoners" [Lebanese held by Israel] and the displaced residents, and reconstruction were "national objectives" (Lebanese presidency X account and *al-Diyar*, September 12, 2026).



Right: Aoun visits al-Nabatieh, accompanied by the city's mayor, the Lebanese army commander and other officials (Lebanese presidency X account, September 12, 2026). Left: The return of legitimacy to the south. Aoun's visit as an expression of the deepening presence and authority of the state in the area (*al-Liwaa*, September 14, 2026)

► Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam met with the officials responsible for rebuilding the south to discuss the restoration of basic services, rubble removal, opening roads and rebuilding infrastructure. The council for the south continued to rebuild schools and infrastructure to make it possible to begin the school year and for the displaced to return. Salam said the council's activity should be carried out in coordination with state institutions and serve all residents of the area (Lebanese prime minister's office X account, September 10, 2026).

Hezbollah's Opponents

► Lebanese Forces Party chairman Samir Geagea called on the government to implement its decision on the state monopoly on weapons in al-Nabatieh and its surroundings. He said deploying the army was not sufficient, illegal armed operatives had to be removed from the area, military and security infrastructure dismantled and state authority enforced (Samir Geagea's X account, September 9, 2026).

► Kataeb Party president Sami Gemayel submitted a parliamentary question to the government demanding details of the measures taken to implement its decisions on the state monopoly on weapons and the timetable for their completion. He called for the implementation to be expanded to areas outside the south and warned of the possible existence of military sites similar to Ali al-Taher in the Beqa'a Valley, Beirut and other areas. He said residents' appeals in al-Nabatieh showed the need for the government to move from decisions to implementation (Kataeb website, September 10, 2026).

► Walid al-Baarini, a member of the Lebanese Parliament, following his meeting with President Aoun, called for weapons to be handed over to the state. He said the step was unavoidable in order to protect Lebanon and the south, and there should be "neither

arrogance nor talk of imaginary victories" (Lebanese presidency X account, September 7, 2026).

► Waddah Sadek, also a member of the Lebanese Parliament, called for the south to be declared an area free of weapons and Hezbollah "fighters," and for security responsibility to be transferred to the Lebanese army. He said decisions and future commitments were insufficient and immediate action had to be taken to remove illegal weapons from the area (Waddah Sadek's X account, September 8, 2026).

► Maronite Patriarch Bechara al-Rahi called for weapons to be concentrated in the hands of the state and said it was not a matter of one side's victory over another or a confrontation with a particular community, but rather the establishment of a single national authority which would be responsible for protecting all citizens, and the south in particular (Lebanese News Agency, September 13, 2026).

► Former Lebanese President Michel Suleiman praised Aoun's visit to the south and the deployment of the army in al-Nabatieh, and called on Hezbollah not to repeat what he called the "great sin" of not handing over the Ali al-Taher Ridge to the army. He said the president and state institutions should be supported in order to establish the state's sovereignty and prevent further opportunities from being missed (Lebanese presidency X account, September 14, 2026).

Direct Negotiations for the Israel-Lebanese Agreement Framework

Direct Talks Continue

► The American embassy in Beirut reported that the next round of direct talks between Lebanon and Israel would take place in Rome during October 2026, after the talks planned for mid-September had been postponed. The Lebanese and Israeli ambassadors in Washington are supposed to meet at the State Department to discuss developments and the continued implementation of the framework agreement. An American official said the agreement was the only mechanism which could be restore Lebanese sovereignty and Israeli security (*al-Akhbar*, September 12, 2026; *Nidaa al-Watan*, September 13-14, 2026).

► The United States reportedly promoted a meeting at CENTCOM headquarters in Tampa, Florida, at which a future coordination mechanism for activity in the south would be examined. According to military sources, direct coordination between the Lebanese army and the IDF was proposed but the Lebanese army wanted the contacts conducted by a

civilian delegation rather than through direct military coordination. The move was reportedly related to preparations for the day the UNIFIL mission ended, but the details of the mechanism and the identities of the participants had not yet been agreed upon (*al-Akhbar*, September 12 and 14, 2026).

The Lebanese Government

► Lebanese sources said Beirut still adhered to the framework agreement and was acting, primarily with the United States, to accelerate its implementation. Lebanese President Joseph Aoun defended the decision to hold negotiations with Israel, calling it a "sovereign decision made in accordance with the Lebanese interest." He said the objective of his call to end the state of hostility with Israel was to end the wars (*al-Joumhouria*, September 8, 2026; Lebanese presidency X account, September 9, 2026). However, during his visit to al-Nabatieh, Aoun said there would currently be no negotiations with Israel (*al-Jadeed*, September 12, 2026).

► Speaking in the Lebanese Parliament, Prime Minister Nawaf Salam said the direct talks with Israel were "not easy" and did not produce rapid results, their success or failure could be determined only by the final results of the negotiations. He said Lebanon was committed to achieving sovereignty throughout Lebanese territory and that required an Israeli withdrawal, the extension of state authority with all its forces and ensuring the state monopoly on weapons. He added that Lebanon was not a pawn in the hands of others in negotiations in which it had no participation [i.e., between Iran and the United States], and any decision on war and peace was solely in the hands of the state (*al-Nashra*, September 15, 2026).

► Nabih Berri, speaker of the Lebanese Parliament and a Hezbollah ally, was pessimistic regarding the diplomatic track, claiming the framework agreement had collapsed and the possibility of reaching a solution had become more remote. He said the continued attacks in the south and the possibility of expanded Israeli control on the ground made it impossible at present to identify a near-term solution to the crisis (*al-Joumhouria*, September 11, 2026).

► Lebanese Foreign Minister Youssef Rajji reportedly presented a draft resolution to the council of Arab League foreign ministers which condemned Hezbollah and its "military" activity, supported the Lebanese state's decision to prohibit its military activity, condemned Iranian intervention and the activity of the Revolutionary Guards and adopted the framework agreement between Lebanon and Israel. The draft was prepared by Ambassador

Ibrahim Assaf, who is close to the Lebanese Forces Party, which opposes Hezbollah and to which Rajji belongs (*al-Akhbar*, September 7, 2026). It was subsequently reported that the Arab League resolution adopted in Cairo included condemnation of Hezbollah and held it responsible for the war with Israel, and supported the Lebanese government's position regarding the negotiations and the state monopoly on weapons. The move was promoted by Saudi Arabia and the United States and prompted disagreement among the Lebanese leadership. Nabih Berri, speaker of the Lebanese Parliament, protested to President Aoun about the "escalation" against Hezbollah, while Prime Minister Nawaf Salam claimed the position reflected the government's decisions (*al-Akhbar*, September 11, 2026).



Rajji at the foreign ministers' meeting (*al-Nahar*, September 7, 2026)

Hezbollah's Stance

► Hezbollah and its affiliates criticized the existence of the talks and the benefits they had produced so far. Opponents claimed that the negotiations had not ended the attacks or led to an Israeli withdrawal, and they were being conducted under American pressure as Israel continued to expand its activity in the south:

◆ Hassan Fadlallah, a member of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament, claimed that the seven rounds of talks had not liberated Lebanese territory and had taken place as Israel expanded its activity. He rejected President Aoun's remarks about ending the state of hostility with Israel and said hostility toward it was rooted in the national outlook and in Lebanon's legal and constitutional framework (*al-Diyar*, September 10, 2026).

◆ Hassan Ezzeddine, also a member of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament member, claimed that the direct negotiations between Lebanon and Israel had reached a dead end and failed to end the attacks or lead to an Israeli withdrawal. He said there could be a solution within the framework of a regional arrangement in

which Iran would play a central role, adding that developments in future negotiations between Tehran and Washington would make it possible to formulate a "new equation" which would result in an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanese territory. He added that the next phase could lead to an arrangement or to a war that would impose a "new equation," but developments were tending toward a regional arrangement in which Lebanon would be a central part (*al-Diyar*, September 12, 2026). Commentator Ibrahim Bayram said such remarks reflected a change in Hezbollah's discourse, in which the organization was giving increasing weight to a diplomatic-regional arrangement and relying less exclusively on the weapons of the "resistance" to restore the territories under Israeli control (*al-Nahar*, September 14, 2026).

◆ Shi'ite mufti Sheikh Ahmad Qabalan accused the Lebanese government of acting in accordance with American interests and damaging Lebanon's sovereign and economic capabilities. He claimed government policy threatened the "national partnership" and internal stability, while the weapons of the "resistance" and the activity of Hezbollah and Amal were the main guarantee for the defense of the south and Lebanon. He called on the Lebanese to raise a "popular cry" and warned that continuation of the current policy would lead to further damage to state institutions and stability (*al-Joumhouria*, September 9, 2026; *al-Diyar*, September 13, 2026).

► The falling-out between Hezbollah and the presidency continues. Raed Berro, a member of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament, said the sides were currently not in contact, while commentator Imad Marmal said the disagreement over how to deal with Israel had caused a crisis of confidence between them. He said people who maintained contacts with both sides were working to renew the dialogue, including through Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, but so far without success (*al-Diyar*, September 12, 2026; *al-Joumhouria*, September 15, 2026).

► Michel Issa, the American ambassador to Lebanon, met with Sheikh Ali al-Khatib, deputy chairman of the Islamic Shi'ite council, to discuss the situation in the south and the issue of Hezbollah's weapons. According to reports in the Lebanese media, the meeting took place as part of an American effort to maintain contacts with Shi'ite figures who had access to Hezbollah, although Issa later denied that its purpose was to open a direct channel to the organization. Al-Khatib supported the deployment of the Lebanese army and the expansion of the state's presence in the south, but claimed the "resistance" had to keep its weapons as

long as the Israeli presence on Lebanese territory continued, and after its withdrawal it would be possible to discuss a national defense strategy (*al-Akhbar*, September 8, 2026; Lebanon Debate, September 10, 2026; *al-Diyar*, September 11, 2026).

Challenges for Hezbollah

International Activity against Hezbollah

► Media outlets in Argentina reported the exposure of a Hezbollah plot to assassinate important Argentineans, including a senior official in the national intelligence agency. According to the information published, in April 2026 an alert was received from a European intelligence service, based on a source in Lebanon, stating that Hezbollah was planning to assassinate five people, including Diego Kravetz, undersecretary in the State Intelligence Secretariat, Argentina's intelligence service. Two weeks later, another alert was received from Saudi intelligence, stating that there were three assassination targets, including Kravetz. As a result, security for him and his family was reinforced and the information was conveyed to a committee of the Argentine Chamber of Deputies and Senate, which met with senior intelligence agency officials to discuss the situation. The background for the plot was not specified (*Ámbito*, September 8, 2026).

► As part of increased American economic pressure on Iran, the United States Treasury Department imposed sanctions on individuals who enable the Revolutionary Guards and the Qods Force to assist Iran's proxy organizations in the Middle East, including Hezbollah. Two Lebanese money changers involved in laundering proceeds from Iranian oil sales to finance Hezbollah and a courier who collected the money from the exchange businesses for senior Hezbollah figures were added to the sanctions list. Sanctions were imposed on the sister of a Hezbollah financier and two currency exchange agencies where she worked, and on the owner of a gold exchange agency who operated from Syria with branches in Turkey and assisted in exchanging money for Hezbollah (United States Treasury Department website, September 10, 2026).

► Britain announced the imposition of sanctions on the al-Qard al-Hassan Association, which it described as an entity run by Hezbollah and the organization's financial arm (*al-Diyar*, September 8, 2026).

Hezbollah and Syria

► According to a report, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan was involved in conveying messages and opening previously closed channels of communication between Hezbollah and the Syrian regime. Ankara was encouraging Damascus to hold a dialogue with Hezbollah as a means of reducing the risk of sectarian violence on the Lebanon-Syria border, while contacts were also taking place between representatives of the organization and international mediators. However, figures close to the Lebanese Forces claimed no direct contacts had yet taken place between Damascus and Hezbollah (*al-Akhbar*, September 11, 2026).

► The Lebanese prosecution completed the initial investigation of five detainees suspected of membership in a security network linked to remnants of the former Syrian regime and Hezbollah and transferred the case to the military prosecution. A search and arrest warrant was issued for a man known as al-Hajj Alaa, who according to the investigation was linked to Hezbollah and had managed the network and supervised its training (Lebanese News Agency, September 12, 2026).

The Lebanese Army

► Preparations continued for the preparatory meeting in Paris ahead of the international conference in support of the Lebanese army and its internal security forces, expected to take place on September 17, 2026, during which a summit will be held with the participation of Lebanese President Joseph Aoun, French President Emmanuel Macron and King Abdullah II of Jordan. Reportedly, between 15 and 20 countries had already confirmed participation in the conference, including the United States and Arab and Persian Gulf states (*al-Jadeed*, September 10, 2026; *Nidaa al-Watan*, September 14, 2026).

► The objective of the meeting in Paris is to map the needs of the army and security services and is not yet expected to include decisions on the extent of aid or equipment. According to diplomatic sources, the United States and Saudi Arabia were linking expanded support to tangible progress in implementing the state monopoly on weapons, and Saudi Arabia had told France that the requested aid would not be provided before Hezbollah was disarmed (*al-Nahar*, September 14, 2026; *al-Joumhouria* and *al-Madan*, September 15, 2026).

► Lebanese army commander Rodolphe Haykal met with UN Special Coordinator Jean Arnault to discuss the latest developments in Lebanon and the region and preparations for the aid conference in Paris (Lebanese army X account, September 11, 2026).

Preparations for the Day After UNIFIL

► Lebanese President Joseph Aoun said that during his visit to Paris he would discuss the future of the international presence in the south of the country with President Macron, adding that he supported the French-Italian initiative to establish a European force which would operate after the end of the UNIFIL mission. Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam also noted the need to prevent a vacuum in the south after the end of the mission and to support the Lebanese army in extending state authority (Lebanese presidency and Lebanese prime minister's office X accounts, September 7, 2026).

► However, European diplomatic sources said Italy had reservations about committing to participation in the new force because of the lack of clarity regarding the mandate, rules of engagement and guarantees for the safety of the soldiers. According to the sources, it did not constitute an Italian withdrawal from the idea, but rather a demand for clarification of the conditions of operation as a condition for its participation (*al-Diyar*, September 10, 2026).

The Civilian Situation in South Lebanon

► Speaking to the Lebanese Parliament, Prime Minister Nawaf Salam said the cost of the two most recent wars in Lebanon, which began in October 2023 and in March 2026, had reached more than \$20 billion. He estimated that the cost would reach more than \$27 billion after all the losses from the most recent war were calculated, but the amounts did not include additional consequences such as lost investment, the impact on education and damage to the value of land and property. He said about 9,000 people had been killed, more than 30,000 had been wounded, more than one million displaced persons had been recorded at the height of the most recent war, with a quarter of a million still displaced, and 91,000 housing units had been destroyed (*al-Nashra*, September 15, 2026).

► The municipalities of the Christian villages of Rmeish, Ain Ebel and Debel in south Lebanon complained of difficulties in movement for more than 10,000 residents, who were forced to rely on convoys coordinated with the Lebanese army and UNIFIL. According to the statement, four convoys planned during the week had been canceled, and in other cases residents had been forced to wait more than ten hours. The authorities demanded a permanent mechanism which would permit movement and access to essential services (*al-Diyar*, September 11, 2026).

► Christian figures were reportedly promoting decisions by local authorities to restrict the purchase of property by Shi'ites in certain areas, particularly in villages and neighborhoods

which had served as lines of contact during the civil war. According to the report, the move was linked to the claim that the Shi'ite environment provided a support network for Hezbollah, but there were also reservations among Christian figures who opposed turning it into general policy (*al-Akhbar*, September 9, 2026)

The Palestinians in Lebanon

► Radical Islamist groups reportedly continued to operate in the Palestinian refugee camps of Ain al-Hilweh in Sidon and Shatila in Beirut. Ahmad Ghandi al-Sahmarani was appointed ISIS emir in Ain al-Hilweh and several operatives in the camp swore allegiance to him after he met with an ISIS operative in Syria in July 2026. In Shatila, Islamist armed groups were reported to be active and weapons were being brought into the camp, and there were also links between some operatives in the camps and figures in Syria (*al-Akhbar*, September 9, 2026).

► The Hamas popular action headquarters in Lebanon complained of possible reductions in UNRWA services for Palestinian refugees, including the consolidation of schools and reductions in health and welfare services. Hamas claimed the measures could lead to the transfer of some services to other international organizations or to responsibility being imposed on the Lebanese government, and called on the Palestinian organizations to oppose the move (Lebanese News Agency, September 11, 2026). Following the protest, UNRWA announced that it had withdrawn its intention to consolidate the schools in the Burj al-Shemali refugee camp (Palestinian Refugees Portal, September 14, 2026).