

Spotlight on Terrorism: Hezbollah and Lebanon

October 26 – November 2, 2026

Trending

►The filing of indictments in the explosives truck affair tests the Lebanese government's ability to enforce its authority over Hezbollah while avoiding an internal confrontation.

►Hezbollah continues its efforts to rebuild its military capabilities with Iranian assistance.

►Hezbollah faces growing challenges in the Shi'ite arena.

Overview[1]

►The prosecution at the military court in Lebanon filed the first indictments against 13 suspects in the Hezbollah explosives truck affair. Hezbollah claimed the defendants had carried out their "national duty in the name of the resistance"[2] and warned that continuing the proceedings could lead to an internal confrontation. Hezbollah's opponents demanded the investigation be expanded to include senior figures in the organization.

►Hezbollah secretary general Na'im Qassem did not discuss the matter of the truck, but reiterated the organization's refusal to disarm the "resistance" as long as the "occupation" continued. He also claimed the framework agreement with Israel violated Lebanese laws and agreements and said only the memorandum of understanding between Iran and the United States could end Israel's "aggression."

►The Lebanese are worried that renewed fighting between Iran and the United States will lead to Hezbollah's involvement and an Israeli escalation. The possibility of a new wave of displacement from the Shi'ite strongholds keeps Hezbollah from considering military intervention in renewed fighting.

[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.

[2] Terrorist organizations whose objective is to destroy the State of Israel.

► Hezbollah reportedly received tens of millions of dollars from Iran for its military buildup. The organization is focusing on acquiring explosives, manufacturing UAVs and reconstructing its command and control systems.

► According to reports, disagreements between Hezbollah and Amal are increasing, despite statements by Na'im Qassem that their relations are solid.

► Lebanese President Joseph Aoun said his country was prepared for the deployment of a European force in cooperation with the UN if UNIFIL's mandate was not extended beyond the end of 2026.

► The Lebanese government began consultations to formulate a national plan for managing Lebanon's Palestinian refugee camps.

The Lebanese Government vs. Hezbollah for the Sovereignty of Lebanon

Affair of the Hezbollah Truck of Explosives[3]

► Judge Claude Ghanem, the government commissioner at the military court, filed charges against 13 suspects in the affair of the truck carrying explosives, including two Hezbollah operatives who were caught with the truck and other individuals reportedly linked to the organization, some of whom appeared under aliases. The charges concerned possession of explosives, membership in an illegal armed organization and activity liable to harm state security and authority. The case was transferred to first military investigating judge Ghada Abu Alwan for further proceedings and consideration of issuing arrest warrants. The Hezbollah-affiliated daily *al-Akhbar* claimed the charges did not include terrorism offenses, and political figures said that might reflect an attempt to prevent escalation (Lebanese News Agency and *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, October 30, 2026; *al-Akhbar*, October 31 and November 2, 2026).

► The handling of the affair led to controversies within the government over the degree of firmness required toward Hezbollah. Justice Minister Adel Nassar demanded the case be transferred to the Judicial Council, arguing that the gravity of the acts and their implications for national security required treatment beyond the authority of the military justice system.

[3] In early October 2026, Lebanese internal security forces seized a commercial vehicle at the Dahr al-Baidar checkpoint on the Beirut-Damascus highway en route from the Beqa'a Valley to Beirut and arrested its two occupants, Hezbollah operatives. Hundreds of kilograms of explosives used to manufacture explosive devices, including C-4 and TNT, were found in the vehicle.

After the proposal was not included on the agenda of the government meeting on October 29, 2026, the ministers representing the Lebanese Forces party announced they would boycott the meeting. Foreign Minister Youssef Rajji said there was no need to wait for the investigation to be completed before deciding whether to transfer the case and the government had to be strict in enforcing state authority (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, October 28, 2026; Lebanese News Agency, October 28, 2026; X account of Youssef Rajji, October 29, 2026).

► Hezbollah continued to reject the prosecution's claims regarding the truck and warned that continuing the proceedings could lead to an internal confrontation. Hussein al-Hajj Hassan, a member of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament, said it contradicted to the National Pact and violated Lebanese laws which give the "resistance" status, all the detainees and defendants had been carrying out their "national duty" and should therefore be honored rather than prosecuted (*al-Nahar*, October 30, 2026). An article in the Hezbollah-affiliated daily *al-Akhbar* claimed the military prosecution's decision to file indictments was a "political detonator" whose objective was to undermine internal stability. The article warned that President Aoun and Prime Minister Salam were rushing toward a direct confrontation with the "resistance," despite the agreement to postpone the decision on referring the affair to the Judicial Council. According to the article, the government's current conduct played into Israel's hands, as it sought "to complement its military aggression with a political and legal siege of the resistance within Lebanon" (*al-Akhbar*, October 31, 2026).

► Reportedly, to prevent escalation within Lebanon, an understanding was being considered which would leave the military justice system responsible for handling the incidents of the explosives seized at the Dahr al-Baidar checkpoint and on the Syria-Lebanon border, while investigations and proceedings against those involved continued. According to the report, President Joseph Aoun was likely to support a solution which would allow law enforcement to continue without undermining government stability. However, the Lebanese Forces and Kataeb parties opposed the arrangement lest it be interpreted as a concession to Hezbollah (Lebanon Debate, October 29, 2026).

The Lebanese Leadership

► Lebanese President Joseph Aoun and Prime Minister Nawaf Salam seek to establish the state's exclusive possession of weapons, while attempting to balance law enforcement with maintaining internal stability. Sources said the two would not renege on their position despite the pressure, adding that the handling of the explosives affair reflected their

approach, which was pursuing the investigation to its conclusion and holding those involved accountable, without turning the legal proceedings into a tool for political score-settling which could lead to a confrontation with Hezbollah (*al-Diyar*, October 31, 2026).

► Foreign Minister Youssef Rajji said establishing state sovereignty and reducing Iranian influence were part of an effort to renew strategic partnerships with the Gulf States. Speaking at the Manama Dialogue conference in Bahrain, he said the government's decisions to restrict weapons to the state and prohibit Hezbollah's military and security activity had been internal and not prompted by external dictates. Rajji said Lebanon would not allow its territory to be used to threaten Arab countries, and called on the Gulf States to support the Lebanese army and renew their investments in Lebanon. He added that restoring sovereignty also required a complete Israeli withdrawal, an end to the attacks and implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1701 (*al-Nashra*, October 31, 2026).

► The Hezbollah-affiliated daily *al-Akhbar* quoted political sources who claimed the American administration was considering increasing the use of sanctions against senior political and security officials in Lebanon, including figures who did not belong to Hezbollah. That was allegedly because of their role in delaying measures concerning the state's exclusive possession of weapons, the handling of the explosives affair and reforms in the banking system. The report received no official American confirmation (*al-Akhbar*, October 29, 2026).

Hezbollah's Position

► Hezbollah secretary general Na'im Qassem issued a statement regarding internal and regional developments. He did not directly discuss the truck affair, but noted the "resistance's" unwillingness to disarm while avoiding explicit threats against the Lebanese authorities. He claimed the Taif Agreement had anchored the right to "resistance"[4] and said disarming the "resistance" could not be discussed as long as the "occupation existed and the aggression continued." He added that Hezbollah was prepared to do whatever was necessary to heal the divisions within Lebanon, but pointed a finger at others, who he said had to prove that they too believed in unity (website of the Hezbollah secretary general, October 28, 2026).

[4] Attempts to use terrorism and violence to destroy the State of Israel.



Hezbollah secretary general Qassem tries to break through the barrier of Lebanese law to allow a truck full of Hezbollah's explosives to pass, opposed by civilians and soldiers (X account of Saer Sabil, October 31, 2026)

► Sheikh Ali Damoush, head of Hezbollah's executive council, claimed Hezbollah's weapons were for "liberating" the territories under Israeli control, adding that an internal dialogue on defense policy could take place only after Israel's withdrawal, the residents' return to their homes and progress in reconstruction (al-Manar, October 29, 2026). Figures affiliated with the resistance camp claimed that as long as the state was incapable of defending its territory, disarming Hezbollah would harm national security (Al Jazeera in Arabic, October 30, 2026).



Damoush at the opening of the "My Land" exhibition in the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia (al-Manar, October 29, 2026)

► Despite the continuing tension, there were signs of a tactical easing in Hezbollah's relations with Prime Minister Nawaf Salam after the Hezbollah faction of the Lebanese Parliament praised the government's conduct and faction member Ali Ammar used a relatively conciliatory tone in speaking about him. Nabih Berri, speaker of the Lebanese Parliament and head of the Amal movement, continued to play a key role in mediating between the sides, and reports suggested a meeting between President Aoun and Muhammad Raad, head of Hezbollah's faction in the Lebanese Parliament, although no progress on the weapons issue was reported (*al-Joumhouria*, October 27, 2026; Lebanon Debate and Lebanon 24, October 29, 2026).

The Position of Hezbollah's Opponents

► Hezbollah's opponents pressured the government to take practical steps to implement its decisions regarding the state's exclusive possession of weapons. Lebanese Forces member of parliament Ghada Ayoub criticized the failure to implement the government decision of March 2, 2026, which prohibited the organization's military and security activity (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, October 28, 2026). Kataeb Party chairman Sami Gemayel rejected Hezbollah's claims regarding the legitimacy of its weapons, defined its independent military activity as a rebellion against state institutions and called for legal measures against it (X account of Sami Gemayel, October 29, 2026). Progressive Socialist Party chairman Taymur Jumblatt noted the need for the state's exclusive possession of weapons, but called for advancing the measure through dialogue and avoiding an exacerbation of internal divisions (Lebanese News Agency, October 29, 2026).

► Lebanese Forces chairman Samir Geagea said dismantling Hezbollah's military and security forces was a condition for Lebanon's recovery. He said the continued existence of an independent military force linked to Iranian and regional interests prevented the restoration of stability and deterred countries and investors from helping rebuild the country. He added that the path to an Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon lay in reaching understandings with the United States, European countries and Arab countries, especially Saudi Arabia, and not in the use of force by Hezbollah, which had failed to prevent the Israeli presence even at the height of its power (*al-Nashra*, October 31, 2026).

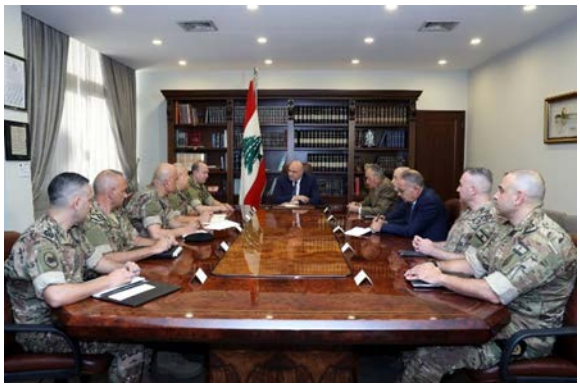
► Change Movement chairman Elie Mahfoud called for the chain of responsibility surrounding the explosives truck to be investigated up to Hezbollah secretary general Na'im Qassem. World Syriac Union Party chairman Ibrahim Murad and member of the Lebanese Parliament Fadi Karam also demanded the investigation be broadened to include those who ordered the transfer of the shipment and those who provided it with political and security backing, and the case be transferred to the Judicial Council (Lebanese News Agency and *al-Diyar*, October 31, 2026).

Israel-Lebanon Negotiations for the Framework Agreement

The Lebanese Government

► Lebanese President Joseph Aoun met with army commander Rodolph Haykal and head of the Lebanese negotiating delegation Simon Karam to discuss the results of the talks held by

the Lebanese and Israeli military delegations in Tampa, Florida, on October 20–21, 2026 (X account of the Lebanese Presidency, October 29, 2026). The Hezbollah-affiliated daily *al-Akhbar* claimed that the Lebanese delegation reported Israel had not responded to demands to halt the attacks or make progress on the issues of withdrawal and security arrangements in the south. Nevertheless, Aoun reiterated his commitment to continuing the negotiations and said the four main issues on the agenda were the ceasefire, the Israeli withdrawal, border demarcation and the issue of the captives and prisoners (*al-Akhbar*, October 30, 2026).



Aoun meet with Haykal and Karam (X account of the Lebanese Presidency, October 29, 2026)

► According to an unverified report, during the talks in Florida Israel proposed entrusting the task of monitoring the ceasefire and the implementation of the arrangements in the pilot zones to an NGO instead of a force representing states or an international body. The Lebanese delegation rejected the proposal, arguing that such a mechanism would undermine state sovereignty, while Israel objected to the countries proposed by Lebanon to participate in the mission (*Nidaa al-Watan*, November 2, 2026).

► Reportedly, the issues remaining in dispute between Lebanon and Israel might be transferred for discussion at the political level, but no date has yet been set for the resumption of the talks, since in all probability the process would be affected by the results of the elections in Israel and the formation of the new government. A Lebanese government source claimed that the United States was currently not exerting pressure on Israel. The prolonged stalemate could make it difficult for the Lebanese leadership to show it had made political achievements, and might strengthen Hezbollah's claims regarding the futility of the negotiations and hamper efforts to establish the state's exclusive possession of weapons (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, October 29, 2026).



The elections in Israel between from a Lebanese perspective. "Of course we want Lebanon's peace, but what about our land and houses?" (*al-Liwaa*, October 27, 2026)

► The stalemate in the direct talks has made Lebanon try to mobilize regional support for implementing the framework agreement and strengthening the capabilities of its army. Defense Minister Michel Menassa visited Jordan and met with King Abdullah II and officials in the Jordanian security establishment. He asked for assistance in stabilizing the situation in south Lebanon, security preparations ahead of the end of UNIFIL's mission, military cooperation and the possibility of helping determine the forces that would be entrusted with the verification process in the pilot zones (Lebanese News Agency, October 29, 2026).

Hezbollah's Position

► Hezbollah secretary general Na'im Qassem reiterated that the framework agreement between Lebanon and Israel was invalid because it violated and contradicted the constitution, the Taif Agreement, Lebanese laws, President Aoun's inaugural address and the policy guidelines of the Salam government. He accused the agreement of "giving the enemy what it is not the agreement's to give, relinquishing Lebanon's sources of strength and based on incitement to civil war and the destruction of the state." Qassem said he supported the memorandum of understanding between Iran and the United States because it was "the only available source of strength that placed Israel's withdrawal from Lebanese territory at the top of its priorities" and had reduced the "aggression." He said the results of the election in Israel did not interest Hezbollah, but the Israeli government should understand that it had to leave Lebanese territory (website of the Hezbollah secretary general, October 28, 2026).

► Sheikh Ali Damoush, head of Hezbollah's executive council, said the failure of the negotiations and the framework agreement "proved" the futility of the political process and called for reliance on internal sources of strength and on the regional arrangement Iran was promoting (al-Manar, October 29, 2026). The Hezbollah-affiliated daily *al-Akhbar* claimed

continuing the contacts without a change in Israel's position allowed it to solidify its conditions and change the security situation in south Lebanon (*al-Akhbar*, October 30, 2026).

► Abdallah Nasser, Hezbollah's official responsible for the first Jabal Amel region,[5] met with heads of local municipalities, clerics and representatives of communities in the western sector of the border and claimed that the continued possession of weapons was the result of the state's inability to protect its residents or territory. He said negotiations with Israel had to be based on Lebanon's sources of strength, including the "resistance" and popular solidarity (al-Manar, October 28, 2026).

► Shi'ite clerics also continued to criticize the political track. Sheikh Ali al-Khatib, vice president of the Islamic Shi'ite Council, claimed the negotiations and the framework agreement had failed to meet the Lebanese demands and called for non-compliance with American dictates. Jaafari Mufti Sheikh Ahmed Qabalan called on President Aoun to formulate a national consensus on defense and security issues, and claimed negotiations with Israel would achieve nothing without internal unity and deterrent capability. He called for regional understandings with Iran and avoiding the deepening of internal disputes (Lebanese News Agency and *al-Diyar*, October 30, 2026).

Other Positions

► Veteran Druze leader Walid Jumblatt responded to remarks by the United States State Department spokesperson, who accused Jumblatt of acting out of personal political interests and not thinking about the future of his country, because of his criticism of the framework agreement with Israel. Jumblatt said he had the right to express his opinion because no consultation had taken place within Lebanon before the agreement was signed, either with parliament or within the government (Lebanon Debate, October 27, 2026). Sources said that Jumblatt had received a message from the ambassador to Beirut from a regional country asking him to moderate his criticism of the framework agreement because it was already perceived as anti-American and contrary to American policy. Reportedly, Jumblatt was given no guarantees that his statements would not lead to sanctions or other measures against him (*al-Diyar*, October 29, 2026).

[5] The western and central sector of south Lebanon, mainly the Tyre District and Bint Jbeil District.

The Military Situation in South Lebanon and Preparations for Renewed Hostilities

The IDF

► IDF forces continued aerial and ground activity to remove threats and destroy Hezbollah infrastructure in the security zone in south Lebanon. They destroyed a warehouse containing explosive drones and weapons, including rockets and various firearms. During searches of a civilian home in the town of al-Khiyam, the forces found weapons and a children's room with Hezbollah-related pictures (IDF spokesperson, November 1, 2026).



Children's room with Hezbollah-related pictures on the wall (IDF spokesperson, November 1, 2026)

► This past week airstrikes, artillery fire, demolition operations and the destruction of buildings were reported, with searches, ground force movements and engineering work. The activities took place in the areas of al-Nabatieh, Bint Jbeil, Marjayoun and Tyre, focusing on the villages of Tebnine, Baraachit, Hadatha, al-Khiyam, al-Mansouri, Zawtar al-Sharqiya, Mifdoun, al-Qantara, Wadi al-Hujeir and Wadi al-Salouqi. Ground activity was also reported in the Wadi Shebaa area (Lebanese News Agency, October 27, 2026; Qatar News Agency, October 28, 2026; *al-Nashra* and al-Hadath, October 31, 2026).

► According to reports, some heads of local municipalities and local figures in south Lebanon would not speak publicly about Israeli activity in their areas lest it lead to pressure or further harm to the communities and their residents. An anonymous local source claimed that exposing what was happening on the ground could worsen the distress of the population, which already felt itself unprotected (Lebanon 24, October 30, 2026).

Hezbollah

► The daily Hezbollah-affiliated *al-Akhbar* claimed the organization had not given local and international mediators a commitment regarding its involvement in a new confrontation between Iran and the United States in order to preserve its freedom of choice in the event of

escalation (*al-Akhbar*, November 2, 2026). However, the daily *Nidaa al-Watan*, which is affiliated with Hezbollah's opponents, reported the organization had sent "reassuring" messages to President Joseph Aoun and Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, but they were not official commitments (*Nidaa al-Watan*, November 2, 2026).

►According to political source, Hezbollah's considerations involving itself in a new confrontation between Iran and the United States had changed compared with March 2026, when the organization sought to exploit the regional confrontation to ensure Lebanon's inclusion in future arrangements. According to the source, its main concern today is that Israel will exploit a possible escalation with Iran to broaden its military activity in Lebanon (*al-Joumhouria*, October 30, 2026).

►Alongside assessments regarding the possibility of renewed fighting, Lebanon is monitoring efforts to renew the dialogue between Iran and the United States. Figures close to the Shi'ite duo (Hezbollah and Amal) claimed they had received positive signs from Tehran regarding the possibility of renewed rapprochement with the United States. A source close to Hezbollah said that the organization had been briefed on the contacts through mediators, adding that the latest statement by secretary general Na'im Qassem rejecting the "legitimacy" of the framework agreement between Lebanon and Israel and supporting an Iranian-American arrangement might be related to information he received from Tehran, particularly from the Revolutionary Guards (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, October 29, 2026).

The Lebanese Government

►Lebanon reportedly received a warning from Europe hinting Israel might repeat the attacks of the most recent hostilities on Beirut, but they would not be limited to a single day (al-Jadeed, November 1, 2026). According to a different report, American warnings have been conveyed to Lebanon regarding severe consequences if Hezbollah involves itself in another war. Sources close to Hezbollah said the objective of the American threats was to exert pressure on Iran during the negotiations (*al-Diyar*, November 2, 2026).

►Lebanese Foreign Minister Youssef Rajji warned of the possibility of another war and claimed Hezbollah was preparing to participate in accordance with Iran's demand. Meeting with Helen McEntee, Irish foreign and defense minister, he reiterated the government's commitment to the state's exclusive possession of weapons and to the prohibition of Hezbollah's military and security activity, with a demand for an end to the Israeli attacks and

Israel's withdrawal from Lebanese territory (X account of Foreign Minister Youssef Rajji, October 27, 2026).

Challenges for Hezbollah

Reconstructing Military Capabilities

►A Reuters investigation, based on Lebanese security sources and a source close to Hezbollah, found that Hezbollah's efforts for a military buildup focus on acquiring explosives, manufacturing UAVs and reconstructing its command and control systems. According to the report, Iran transferred tens of millions of dollars to the organization to finance the buildup, while the explosives recently seized by the Lebanese authorities were intended, according to a Lebanese security source and a Hezbollah figure, for use in explosive-laden UAVs (Reuters, October 26, 2026).

►Despite the efforts, Lebanese security sources said the organization continued to face difficulties in rebuilding its command and control systems and coordinating between its units. It focuses mainly on rebuilding its defense systems and fortifying positions north of the Litani River, given the possibility of an increase in Israeli activity toward the area between Iqlim al-Tuffah and Jabal al-Rayhan. According to the sources, at this stage Hezbollah has not initiated a large-scale offensive because of its relative military inferiority, its lack of sufficient political backing and concern over the consequences of another campaign for its Shi'ite support base (Reuters, October 26, 2026; *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, October 27, 2026).

Challenges in the Shi'ite Arena

►Hezbollah secretary general Na'im Qassem declared that relations between Hezbollah, the Amal Movement and the allied forces supporting the "resistance"[6] were solid. He claimed the relations were based on Lebanon's sovereignty, the importance of the army's role and support for it, opposition to all forms of civil war and support for dialogue and understandings with all the Lebanese people and with the government within the framework of the fundamental principles of sovereignty and the constitution (website of the Hezbollah secretary general, October 28, 2026).

[6] Hezbollah and the other terrorist organizations operating in Lebanon.



"Hezbollah and the Amal Movement have solid relations." A quote from Na'im Qassem (Telegram channel of SIMIA, Hezbollah's social media monitoring unit, October 28, 2026)

► Despite Qassem's remarks, differences are reportedly increasing between Hezbollah and Amal regarding relations with the Lebanese government, security policy and the management of the confrontation with state institutions. Amal ministers supported the government decision of March 2, 2026, to prohibit Hezbollah's military and "security" activity, while the Hezbollah ministers opposed it. In the vote of confidence for the Nawaf Salam government held in parliament on September 16, 2026, the Amal faction supported the government, while members of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament did not vote. The disagreements were also evident in the affair of the truck full of explosives, in which Nabih Berri tried to advance a compromise with the government. Berri also objected to Hezbollah's decision to join the war alongside Iran, given the price paid by south Lebanon and the Shi'ite community (al-Modon, October 30, 2026).

► Reportedly, the Hezbollah leadership discussed the need to resolve the disagreements quickly and planned a visit by an organization delegation to Nabih Berri to restore the level of coordination of relations they had under Hassan Nasrallah (*al-Nashra*, October 29, 2026). The channels of communication between the leaderships continue to operate, including meetings between the political aides, Hussein al-Khalil of Hezbollah and Ali Hassan Khalil of Amal (al-Modon, October 30, 2026).

► The ongoing struggle of Hezbollah's Shi'ite support base with the consequences of the latest hostilities against Israel also affects the organization's freedom of action. Sources noted that concern about extensive Israeli attacks in the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia and the communities in the south, particularly another wave of displacement, were a major consideration in Hezbollah deliberations about a military response. Senior Hezbollah figure Nawaf al-Moussawi said the organization sought to spare its supporters the consequences of an Israeli response and at the current stage it did not see an opportunity to change the

balance of power through military action. At the same time, rumors spread about preparations to evacuate residents and close businesses in the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia, which were denied by sources close to Hezbollah (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, October 27, 2026).

► In response to the social and economic distress, Hezbollah is renewing its civilian aid system and maintain its ties with its support base. Reportedly, as part of the compensation and reconstruction program *waad wa-Iltizam* (The Promise and the Commitment), the organization began distributing payments to families whose homes were damaged in the war to finance alternative housing and rent. Ali Damoush, head of the executive council, noted the activity of the Jihad al-Bina Association,[7] and representatives of industrialists in Dahiyeh al-Janoubia met with the official responsible for municipal activity in the organization, Muhammad Bashir, to discuss possible reductions in fees and assistance in renewing economic activity (al-Manar, October 29, 2026; Lebanese News Agency, October 31, 2026).

Preparing for the Day After UNIFIL

► According to reports, during the military talks with Israel in Florida, the Lebanese delegation rejected a proposal to establish a bilateral security coordination committee of the Lebanese and Israeli armies. Instead, Lebanon wants to advance the deployment of a multinational European force in cooperation with the UN, which would assist the Lebanese army in carrying out its security missions in the south of the country (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, October 29, 2026).

► Lebanese President Joseph Aoun said he preferred the continuation of UNIFIL's activity, but Lebanon was prepared for the deployment of an alternative European force in cooperation with the UN, which would provide the army with logistical and technical assistance. Visiting Lebanon, Reem Alabali-Radovan, German minister of economic cooperation and development, noted the importance of continued support for the army and preventing a security vacuum in the south. Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri warned against ending UNIFIL's mission before the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1701 had been completed and Israel had fully withdrawn from Lebanese territory (X account of the Lebanese Presidency, October 27–29, 2026; Lebanese News Agency, October 29, 2026).

[7] See the June 2019 ITIC report, **Jihad al-Bina Association in Lebanon: A Hezbollah social foundation engaged in construction and social projects among the Shiite community, being a major component in Hezbollah's civilian infrastructure**.

Lebanese Foreign Minister Youssef Rajji and Helen McEntee, the Irish foreign and defense minister, discussed the continuation of the international presence in the south and the possibility of European involvement after the end of UNIFIL's mission (X account of Foreign Minister Youssef Rajji, October 27, 2026).

► Despite American opposition to the continued presence of UN forces in south Lebanon after the end of UNIFIL's mandate at the end of 2026, France is trying to preserve an international presence and warns a security vacuum may be created. The French are reportedly holding contacts with international parties and UN institutions for an alternative arrangement, but an agreed framework or defined implementation mechanism has not yet been formulated. Reportedly, UNIFIL will continue its missions until the end of its mandate, although the withdrawal of its forces might continue beyond that date (*al-Joumhouria*, October 29–30, 2026).

Consequences of the Hostilities for the Civilian Population

► Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam held a meeting to monitor projects for reconstructing infrastructure and communities damaged in the campaign against Israel. The meeting reviewed work to restore roads, electricity and water systems, bridges and schools, as well as progress on projects in the villages of the pilot program and the provision of mobile structures for families whose homes had been damaged. Salam said implementation of the projects should be accelerated and coordination between the responsible bodies improved. He also asked Reem Alabali-Radovan, the German minister for economic cooperation and development, to continue assistance for the reconstruction of the south and the return of residents to their homes. Salam met with Hanna al-Amil, the mayor of Rmeish, to discuss the needs of the community and neighboring towns, with an emphasis on the government's commitment to helping residents remain in the border communities (X account of the Lebanese Prime Minister's Office, October 29 and 31, 2026).

► The continuing economic crisis and the consequences of the war prompt concerns among Christian figures in Lebanon about long-term demographic changes. With reports of real estate transactions in Christian-majority areas of Mount Lebanon, Maronite Patriarch Bechara Boutros al-Rahi said land should not be sold under the current conditions of distress. Ghazi al-Hajj, a member of the Lebanese Parliament, asked the public prosecution to examine the sources of funding and the identities of the beneficiaries of transactions in

northern Matn, following reports of the purchase of more than 83 properties in the area. However, no evidence was presented of an organized plan for demographic change and the suspicions concerning the transactions have not yet been verified (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, October 26, 2026).

The Palestinians in Lebanon

►Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam Lebanon has launched consultations on a comprehensive national plan to manage its 12 official Palestinian refugee camps, drafted by the Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee (LPDC) under the leadership of Ambassador Ramez Dimashkie. Salam said the camps were subject to Lebanese sovereignty and law, and the government, in cooperation with the Palestinian leadership, had begun taking steps to address Palestinian weapons. He also reiterated Lebanon's opposition to the naturalization of the refugees and its commitment to the "right of return"[8] and the continuation of UNRWA's activity. The consultations are expected to continue for six months and include the Palestinian "factions,"[9] including those outside the PLO, state institutions, local authorities and UNRWA. The objective of the plan is to regulate responsibility in security, administration and services, including consideration of community policing mechanisms. Dimechkie noted that in some of the camps, the proportion of Palestinians had fallen to about 30% of the total population. According to *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, Due to significant population changes over the years, the remaining 70% of residents in the specific camps are now Syrians or people of other nationalities (Facebook page of the Lebanese Prime Minister's Office and *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, October 30, 2026).

►UNRWA's budget crisis has led to worsening living conditions for Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and raises concern about the provision of essential services. Ali Huweidi, director of Organization 302 for the Defense of Refugee Rights, said reducing the agency's activity could lead to a shorter school week and fewer operating days at clinics, increased dependence on NGOs and endanger the employment of 3,000 UNRWA employees in Lebanon. He said the crisis could impair UNRWA's ability to provide aid and a humanitarian response in the event of renewed fighting; a demonstration was held in Sidon to protest the reduction of the agency's activity (*al-Akhbar*, October 28, 2026).

[8] The so-called "right" of all the Palestinian refugees and their descendants to return to their pre-1948 places of residence, that is, the destruction of the State of Israel.
[9] Terrorist organizations.

► A Hamas delegation headed by Ahmed Abd al-Hadi, its representative in Lebanon, held a series of meetings in the Baalbek-Hermel area with Hussein al-Hajj Hassan and Melhem al-Hujairi, members of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament, Hussein al-Nimr, the Hezbollah official responsible for the Beqa'a Valley region, and Amal representatives. They discussed developments in the Palestinian arena and the situation of the refugees, including concern over reductions in UNRWA services. Abd al-Hadi Hamas' commitment to Palestinian unity and to expanding cooperation among the Palestinian parties (Lebanese News Agency, October 29, 2026).



Hamas delegation meeting with Hussein al-Hajj Hassan
(Lebanese News Agency, October 29, 2026)