



Spotlight on Terrorism: Lebanon and Hezbollah April 21 – 28, 2025

Overview¹

- ▶ IDF forces continued operations against Hezbollah's presence in south Lebanon in violation of the ceasefire and against the organization's renewed attempts at a military buildup. The IDF eliminated Hezbollah operatives and a senior operative affiliated with Hamas, and a warehouse for precision missiles in the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia in southern Beirut was attacked.
- ▶ Hezbollah expressed its dissatisfaction with the functioning of the Lebanese authorities in light of the continuing Israeli attacks and called for a reassessment of the ceasefire monitoring committee.
- ▶ Lebanese government officials claimed the Israeli "violations" were hindering the deployment of the Lebanese army in the south and said Lebanon remained committed to the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1701.
- ▶ The Lebanese army seized Hezbollah military facilities in the south of the country and military intelligence identified key persons, suspected of being Hamas terrorist operatives, of responsibility for the rocket fire targeting Israel.
- ▶ Regarding Hezbollah's disarmament, senior figures said a dialogue on the future of the weapons could only take place after Israel withdrew from Lebanon. Lebanese President Aoun reiterated that the State of Lebanon would have sole authority over weapons. A source in the Lebanese government claimed the armed Palestinian "factions" would also be disarmed.
- ▶ A senior Hezbollah figure admitted that the organization had undergone a "massive earthquake" in the war against Israel but noted it was not certain that the conclusions of its internal investigation of the war would be made public.

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The Ceasefire

The IDF

- ▶ The IDF continued to attack Hezbollah targets in south Lebanon violating the ceasefire agreement of November 27, 2024, which prohibited the organization's presence south of the Litani River. Hezbollah operatives working to rebuild the organization's facilities were eliminated (IDF spokesperson, April 21–28, 2025). The Lebanese ministry of health reported two fatalities in IDF attacks in south Lebanon (al-Nashra, April 21–28, 2025). Channels affiliated with Hezbollah confirmed that the two fatalities were Hezbollah operatives (South Lebanon – Watching the Enemy Telegram channel, April 21–28, 2025).
- ▶ Hezbollah facilities intended to enable the organization's renewed military buildup were attacked, including a structure used for storing precision missiles in the al-Hadath neighborhood in the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia in Beirut (IDF spokesperson, April 21–28, 2025). Many civilians, fearing harm, evacuated the area after an Arabic-language warning from the IDF before the attack (Lebanon 24, April 27, 2025). "Lebanese sources" claimed that the site attacked was the Victory Tent, a compound used for Hezbollah's Ashura² celebrations (Sky News Arabic, April 27, 2025).
- ▶ On April 22, 2025, an IDF aerial attack eliminated Naamat al-Fouqa Hussein Izzat Muhammad Atwi, a senior operative in the al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya.³ According to the IDF, he was involved in firing rockets at Israel, attempted to infiltrate Israeli territory, promoted terrorist activity against IDF forces and against Israeli targets worldwide, and acted in coordination with Hamas' branch in Lebanon (IDF spokesperson, April 22, 2025). The al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya confirmed that "the commander" Hussein Izzat Atwi was killed in an attack on his car (al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya Telegram channel, April 22, 2025).

² Ashura: The tenth day of Muharram, the first month of the Islamic calendar. Shiites observe this day as a period of mourning for the death of Imam Hussein bin Ali and many other members of the family of Ali bin Abi Talib at the Battle of Karbala in 61 Hijra (680 CE).

³ The Lebanese branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, which maintains close relations with Hamas.



Right: The Israeli attack on Beirut (Lebanon 24, April 27, 2025).

Left: The Victory Tent (LBCI, April 27, 2025)

Hezbollah

► Hezbollah continued to condemn IDF attacks on Lebanese territory, especially the attack in the Dahiye al-Janoubia, and increased its criticism of the Lebanese government institutions which, according to Hezbollah, did not fulfill their role in protecting the residents and confronting Israeli "aggression:"

◆ Ali Fayyad, a member of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament, claimed the committee overseeing the implementation of Resolution 1701 "no longer existed" and warned against underestimating "the strength of the resistance⁴ and Hezbollah." He claimed Hezbollah was still considered the largest political party in the country and "the resistance" had done what was required regarding the area south of the Litani (al-'Ahed, April 27, 2025). After the attack in Beirut, Fayyad declared that "this frozen government's surrender to Israeli escalation is unacceptable." He added that the work of the ceasefire monitoring committee should be reassessed and that the state had to assume its responsibilities. He also said that "what the state is doing is absolutely not enough" (Radio al-Nour, April 27, 2025).



Ali Fayyad (al-Ahed, April 27, 2025)

⁴ Iran, Syria, Hezbollah, the Palestinian organizations, the Shi'ite Houthis in Yemen and the pro-Iranian militias in Iraq.

◆ Ibrahim al-Mousawi, a member of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament, said the Lebanese had to condemn the "aggression." He said that if countries claimed they were Lebanon's friends, they had to provide the Lebanese army with appropriate defensive weapons. He also said the Lebanese foreign minister had to summon the ambassadors of the great powers and file a complaint with the UN Security Council (al-Manar, April 27, 2025).

◆ Hassan Fadlallah, a member of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament, criticized the Lebanese authorities following the continued Israeli attacks. In a speech delivered a few hours before the IDF attack in Beirut, he said a "real" state was necessary, one which took responsibility for its citizens. He said "silence, hesitance, indifference to what is happening in the south and negligence regarding reconstruction" were creating a gap between the people and the state. He also questioned how the state could seek to be the sole authority when it did not meet its responsibilities (al-Manar, April 27, 2025).

The Lebanese leadership

► Senior Lebanese leaders condemned Israel for the continued attacks on Lebanese territory and called on the international community, especially the United States and France, which are guarantors of the ceasefire agreement, to exert pressure on Israel to stop the attacks and withdraw its forces from Lebanese territory:

◆ The president of Lebanon, Joseph Aoun, condemned the attack in the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia and said the United States and France had to take responsibility and "force" Israel to immediately cease its attacks. He warned that the ongoing destabilization posed a real threat to regional security (Lebanese presidential office X account, April 27, 2025). Earlier this week, Aoun held contacts with representatives of the American administration on the issue of "continued Israeli violations." He claimed that practical dialogue with Hezbollah could not be conducted as long as Israel was not committed to the ceasefire agreement (al-Joumhouria, April 23, 2025).

◆ In a meeting with a delegation from the French Senate, Aoun said Israel's withdrawal from the five points it holds in south Lebanon was necessary in order to expedite the full deployment of the Lebanese army along the border so the state alone would bear responsibility for border security (Lebanese presidency X account, April 28, 2025).



**Aoun and the delegation of senators from France
(Lebanese presidential office X account, April 28, 2025)**

- ◆ The prime minister of Lebanon, Nawaf Salam, condemned the attack in Beirut and said the countries overseeing the agreement between Lebanon and Israel had to stop the attacks and accelerate the Israeli withdrawal from Lebanese territory. He also claimed Lebanon was committed to Resolution 1701 and the security arrangements agreement, and that "the Lebanese army continues its work and is expanding its deployment in south Lebanon and throughout all Lebanese territory" (Lebanese government X account, April 27, 2025).
- ◆ At the Arab League foreign ministers' meeting in Cairo, the Lebanese foreign minister, Yousef Rajji, said that while Lebanon fully complied with the ceasefire agreement conditions, Israel "insists on undermining it and continuing its daily violations against Lebanon's sovereignty." He noted Lebanon's commitment to Resolution 1701 and added that all institutions in Lebanon, especially the Lebanese army, were determined to carry out their tasks (Lebanese News Agency, April 23, 2025).

The Lebanese army

- ▶ The president of Lebanon, Joseph Aoun, met with UNIFIL Commander Aroldo Lázaro and reported that the Lebanese army continued to deploy in the villages and towns evacuated by Israel in south Lebanon and was handling the removal of mines and ammunition. Aoun added that the continued "Israeli occupation" of the five points in south Lebanon had to end as soon as possible to ensure stability and security along the southern border and pave the way for the residents to return to their villages. According to Aoun, in accordance with a government decision, the army was recruiting 4,500 new soldiers who would deploy in the south with the forces already there to ensure security and implement Resolution 1701 in cooperation with UNIFIL forces (al-Nashra, April 24, 2025).



Aoun and Lázaro (al-Nashra, April 24, 2025)

- ▶ “Lebanese sources” reported that a large force of the Lebanese army soldiers, accompanied by an American delegation, raided a Hezbollah post containing tunnels in the village of Yohmor al-Shuqayf, located north of the Litani River (Janoubia, April 24, 2025).
- ▶ The Lebanese army seized military sites, weapons and missiles belonging to the al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya in south Lebanon after its operatives had completely evacuated the sites (al-Jadeed X account, April 24, 2025). Al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya denied any connection to the weapons and claimed they had "no military bases in the area or anywhere else" (Lebanese News Agency, April 24, 2025).
- ▶ The Lebanese army's intelligence directorate reportedly identified five key suspects involved in the rocket fire targeting Israel in March 2025. The five, residents of Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, are suspected of being linked to Hamas. Hamas was informed that it had to hand over the operatives involved. It was also noted that Hamas leader "abroad," Khaled Mashal, approached a “senior Lebanese authority” requesting intervention to prevent friction between the movement and the Lebanese army. “Senior sources” in Hamas claimed that the group that fired the rockets had acted “independently” without informing its commanders. The report stated that Hamas was taking action to transfer four suspects to the army, but “Palestinian sources” said it was “difficult” for Hamas to hand over “resistance fighters”⁵ who did not attempt to harm the Lebanese people or security institutions (al-Nahar, April 28, 2025).

UNIFIL

- ▶ Hezbollah's daily newspaper, the Lebanese al-Akhbar, claimed the United States would attempt to change UNIFIL's mandate because of disagreements between the United States

⁵ Terrorist operatives.

and France regarding the border issues between Israel and Lebanon, and UNIFIL forces' entering the five points held by the IDF inside Lebanese territory. According to the report, the Americans want to reduce UNIFIL's mission, downsize personnel and decrease the amount of resources America invests in the agency. The Lebanese government, backed by the Lebanese army, prepared a request to extend UNIFIL's mission according to Resolution 1701 (al-Akhbar, April 24, 2025). As the Lebanese army and UNIFIL forces searched for Hezbollah weapons, a unit from the French contingent was reportedly seen looking for Hezbollah facilities in Wadi al-Hujayr in south Lebanon (al-Akhbar, April 24, 2025).

► A UNIFIL patrol, engaged in searching for Hezbollah facilities, was reportedly expelled from the town of Tirdna in south Lebanon by two young men in civilian clothes. According to reports, the two parked a motorcycle to block the road and forced the UNIFIL vehicles to retreat. Following the incident, UNIFIL filed a complaint with the Lebanese army (al-Akhbar, April 25, 2025).

Disarming Hezbollah

► Hezbollah's weapons continue to preoccupy the political system in Lebanon. Senior government officials and Hezbollah opponents continue to emphasize the need to disarm the organization and ensure that the monopoly on weapons would belong solely to the state. Hezbollah expressed willingness to discuss the matter under conditions that included the withdrawal of IDF forces from Lebanon, the cessation of Israeli attacks and the release of "prisoners."

Hezbollah

► Hassan Fadlallah, a member of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament, said the organization's position regarding the government's priorities included the cessation of Israeli attacks, the withdrawal of IDF forces from Lebanon, the release of prisoners, and the reconstruction of villages damaged in the war. He claimed that once all of the above had been achieved, it would be possible to discuss a national defense strategy for the protection of Lebanon (Radio al-Nour, April 21, 2025).

► Hassan Ali al-Din, a member of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament, said that the president of Lebanon, Joseph Aoun, had been correct when he said that the issue of Hezbollah's weapons and their dismantlement should be resolved through dialogue. Al-Din claimed that Hezbollah's weapons were "completely different" from the weapons of militias

because “the resistance” was the backbone of Lebanon and an integral part of its security strategy (al-Nashra, April 27, 2025).

The Lebanese Government

► Meeting with a delegation of French senators, the president of Lebanon, Joseph Aoun, noted his commitment to the issue of disarmament. He said the decision had been made that control of weapons would belong to the Lebanese state and stated that “there can be no return to the language of war” (Lebanese presidential office X account, April 28, 2025).

► “High-ranking sources” said no date had been set for the presidential dialogue with Hezbollah regarding the organization’s disarmament. The “sources” claimed that interest in the issue of Hezbollah’s weapons was declining within the political and media systems. They claimed the increased focus on the issue of weapons embarrassed the president of Lebanon and disrupted his effort to secure the state's monopoly over arms through dialogue with Hezbollah (al-Joumhouria, April 24, 2025).

► “Well-informed sources” reported that the “discourse” regarding the disarmament of the “resistance” consisted of limited messages passed from those close to the president to Hezbollah, and no negotiation or dialogue were taking place. Rather, there was a clarification of general questions which could eventually lead to dialogue. They said Hezbollah completely refused to deal with the matter and as far as it was concerned, there was no such thing as disarmament, only organizing according to a strategy for Lebanon’s security and sovereignty (al-Akhbar, April 24, 2025).

► The speaker of the Lebanese Parliament, Nabih Berri, said Hezbollah would not give up its weapons until what was demanded of Israel had been implemented. He added that “the weapons are our [trump] cards and we will not give them up without the actual fulfillment of the ceasefire agreement and a dialogue regarding their fate.” Berri said he supported the dialogue the Lebanese president wanted to have with Hezbollah, but added that “it is important to exert pressure on the 'enemy' to meet its obligations under the ceasefire agreement.” He claimed Lebanon had fulfilled its part of the agreement, the Lebanese army was deployed in the south, Hezbollah had withdrawn from the area, but Israel had not fulfilled its part, and that was the responsibility of the United States (Asas, April 25, 2025).

► The Lebanese foreign minister, Yousef Raji, summoned the Iranian ambassador to Lebanon, Mojtaba Amani, and said Lebanon’s sovereignty had to be respected. Public statements, he added, which could be interpreted as interference in internal Lebanese affairs should be

avoided (Lebanese foreign ministry X account, April 24, 2025). The conversation took place after Amani expressed strong opposition to Hezbollah's disarmament, claiming that the "disarmament project" was clearly a "conspiracy," Iran was aware of the danger it posed and warned others not to fall into the trap (Mojtaba Amani's X account, April 18, 2025). Before the meeting with Rajji, Amani tried to ease tensions and said Hezbollah's disarmament was an internal Lebanese affair in which Iran did not interfere. He called on the Lebanese government to conduct a dialogue and reach an agreement with Hezbollah (al-Jadeed, April 23, 2025).

Criticism of Hezbollah

- ▶ The head of the Lebanese Forces Party, Samir Geagea, called the position of senior Hezbollah figures refusing to dismantle the organization's military wing "unacceptable," said it damaged Lebanon's credibility and image, and was interpreted as non-compliance with the ceasefire agreement (al-Nashra, April 23, 2025).
- ▶ Independent Lebanese Parliament member Paula Yacoubian attacked Hezbollah, saying that the organization's weapons had brought complete destruction and disaster whose effects the Lebanese people still felt. She added Hezbollah leader Na'im Qassem's statement that the organization would not hand over its weapons and would remain part of the "resistance" was intended to improve Iran's bargaining position in its negotiations with the United States over the nuclear issue. She expressed hope that 2025 would be a year without illegal weapons [of Hezbollah] and that Lebanon would embark on a new path and the country's rehabilitation (al-Arabiya, April 27, 2025).
- ▶ Lebanese parliament member and head of the Independence Movement Party, Michel Moawad, said that there would be no foreign investments in Lebanon or reconstruction before Hezbollah and the Palestinian militias handed over their weapons (LBC, April 25, 2025).
- ▶ Lebanese parliament member from the Lebanese Forces Party, Pierre Abu Assi, demanded that Hezbollah immediately disarm for the sake of the State of Lebanon. He called on Hezbollah to hand over its weapons within six months and said that if they did not want to, "they should take a piece of land and leave us alone." Abu Assi added that Lebanon was not connected to a religious party whose ideology was tied to Iran, adding that the Lebanese wanted to rebuild the country and live their lives (al-Jadeed, April 27, 2025).



**Pierre Abu Assi, Lebanese parliament member from the Lebanese Forces Party
(al-Jadeed, April 27, 2025)**

Hezbollah Reconstructs Itself

► Hassan Fadlallah, a member of the Hezbollah faction in the Lebanese Parliament, admitted that the organization had suffered a significant loss and been exposed to a "massive earthquake," but it would not lead to Hezbollah's collapse or surrender. He said the organization was conducting an internal investigation to examine how and why events during the war occurred as they had, but noted it was not certain that the conclusions would be made public. The goal, he said, was to learn the lessons of the past and avoid further risks in the future. He added that sometimes "the resistance" had victories and achievements, but sometimes there was also pain and suffering. Fadlallah claimed that "the resistance" in Lebanon, especially in south Lebanon, was strong and that no one would overcome it, it would continue to "stand against Israel to help liberate the country, it will not break, and it will work to rebuild what was destroyed" (al-Manar, April 27, 2025).



Hassan Fadlallah (al-Manar, April 28, 2025)

Lebanon

The Lebanese army

► The president of Lebanon, Joseph Aoun, met at the Baabda Palace with the head of the Peace Division and the head of the Diplomatic Division at the United Nations Institute for Training and Research. Representatives of the Institute told Aoun they would provide €17

million to support Lebanese army units to be deployed in south Lebanon in accordance with Resolution 1701 (Lebanese presidency X account, April 24, 2025).

► A "source in the Syrian defense ministry" reported that "Hezbollah militias" had fired rockets from Lebanese territory at Syrian army positions in the al-Qusayr area in western Homs. Five rockets were fired afterward from Lebanon, and Syrian forces attacked the sources of the fire (SANA news agency, April 24, 2025). Meanwhile, the Lebanese army announced that there had been an exchange of fire in the al-Hermel area on the Lebanon-Syria border after shots were fired from the Lebanese side at Syrian territory "as a result of disagreements over smuggling." The Syrians responded to the source of the fire and there were casualties on both sides. As a result, army units deployed in the area took unusual security measures to locate the source of the attack inside Lebanese territory, and a civilian "belonging to an armed group active in smuggling operations" was arrested on suspicion of involvement in the shooting. The Lebanese army conducted contacts with Syrian authorities which led to defusing tensions (Lebanese army X account, April 25, 2025).

Reconstructing Lebanon

► After a delay of about five months, reportedly due to "slow governmental processes and lack of funding," the first phase of reconstruction began. According to a report, the phase includes clearing rubble from houses and buildings which were destroyed, with preliminary data indicating that about 150,000 housing units either completely or partially destroyed. According to the five tenders for debris removal in Nabatieh and south Lebanon, the cost of clearing will amount to about \$11.4 million, which will be covered by government funds due to the absence of international aid (al-Akhbar, April 25, 2025).

► The Lebanese ministry of finance reported that the World Bank had granted the country a \$250 million loan to ease the ongoing electricity problems following the war. Lebanese Finance Minister Yassin Jaber said Lebanon had received preliminary approval from the World Bank to raise the amount of the loan to \$400 million. Last month the World Bank said Lebanon needed \$11 billion for the country's reconstruction and recovery (Reuters, April 24, 2025).

The Palestinians in Lebanon

► A "source in the Lebanese government" said "armed factions" in the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon would be disarmed and Lebanese territory would not be allowed to be used to attack any other country or drag Lebanon into a new war (al-Hadath, April 23, 2025).

► Senior officials from the al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya in Lebanon met with a delegation of senior officials from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). According to reports they discussed the Palestinian issue in general, the fighting in the Gaza Strip and the “struggle against the displacement and Judaization of Jerusalem and the West Bank.” The participants reaffirmed their shared commitment to security and stability in Lebanon, respecting the sovereignty of the state and considering “the living, political, social and political conditions of the Palestinian people residing within its territory” (Lebanese News Agency, April 27, 2025).