



Spotlight on Terrorism: Hezbollah, Lebanon and Syria August 19-26 , 2024

The Northern Arena*

2,256 attacks

- 418 Hezbollah operatives killed
- 84 operatives of other organization killed
- Five non-affiliated operatives killed
- One Lebanese army soldier killed
- One Lebanese internal security operative killed

***Updated from October 8, 2023**

Overview¹

- ▶ On August 25, 2024, Hezbollah claimed responsibility for firing 340 rockets at air defense facilities in northern Israel and launching a large number of UAVs at IDF bases in retaliation to the killing of Fuad Shukr, the organization's military commander. Earlier, the Israeli Air Force carried out a pre-emptive strike on thousands of Hezbollah missile launchers. An IDF soldier was killed during the interception of a Hezbollah rocket, a woman was injured by shrapnel in Acre, and Hezbollah's attacks caused substantial property damage.
- ▶ During this past week, Hezbollah claimed responsibility for 72 attacks on military and civilian targets in Israel. An Israeli citizen was injured and there was considerable property damage.
- ▶ Israeli Air Force aircraft attacked Hezbollah terrorist targets and operatives in south Lebanon and the Lebanon Valley; Hezbollah announced the death of 16 of its operatives. One Amal operative was also killed, as was senior Fatah terrorist operative who He had worked with the Iranian Qods Force to smuggle weapons and direct attacks against Israel from Judea and Samaria.

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

► Syria: Air strikes attributed to Israel attacked sites of the pro-Iranian militias and the Syrian army in Homs and Hama. Three militia operatives were reported dead and the United States military killed a senior member of an al-Qaeda-affiliated jihadi organization.

Hezbollah Retaliates for the Killing of Fuad Shukr²

► Before dawn on August 25, 2024 about one hundred Israeli Air Force planes attacked more than 270 Hezbollah targets in south Lebanon, including thousands of rocket launchers. According to reports, the launchers were aimed mainly at northern Israel, but some of them targeted strategic areas in the center of the country. The IDF spokesperson stated that the attack was intended to prevent an extensive Hezbollah rocket attack (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, August 25, 2024).

► After the Israeli attack, Hezbollah launched rockets and UAVs at large expanses of northern Israel. Hezbollah announced that it had launched its "initial response" to the killing of Fuad Shukr, its military commander, to the death of "Lebanese civilians" in the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia in Beirut on July 30, 2024, and to mark the arba'in, the "40th day."³ Hezbollah reported launching a large number of drones into the "Zionist depth" and at "an important IDF target which would be announced later," adding that "a number of posts, camps and Iron Dome sites in the north were attacked by large numbers of rockets" (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, August 25, 2024).

► Shortly thereafter Hezbollah issued another announcement, claiming that "the first phase ended with complete success." According to the Hezbollah, the "first phase" consisted of attacking the Israeli camps and posts with 320 rockets to allow its UAVs to cross towards "their long-awaited targets in the depths of the Zionist entity," including 11 IDF bases (Hezbollah's combat information arm Telegram channel, August 25, 2024). Israeli Air Force aircraft, air defense systems and Israel Navy vessels intercepted most of the rockets. One IDF soldier was killed and two were injured by during an interception near a Navy ship. The attacks caused considerable damage to property: buildings were damaged in Acre and a chicken coop near the border was destroyed (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, August 25, 2024).

² For further information, see the August 2024 ITIC report, "[Reactions to the Deaths of Fuad Shukr and Isma'il Haniyeh.](#)"

³ Arba'in: The day of mourning for the Shi'ites, which marks the 40th day after the death of Imam Hussein bin Ali and other members of the Ali bin Abu Taleb family in the battle of Karbala' in the year 680 C.E. Traditionally, pilgrimages were made to the tomb of Imam Hussein in Karbala in Iraq on the 40th day.

- ▶ On the evening of August 25, 2024, Hassan Nasrallah, Hezbollah secretary general, gave a speech summarizing the attack, which he called the "Operation of the Fortieth Day" (al-Manar, August 25, 2024):
- ▶ Hezbollah first launched 340 rockets to paralyze Israel's air defense systems, then launched UAVs of various types, including from the Lebanon Valley region for the first time, and all of them "crossed the border safely towards their destinations."
- ▶ The two main targets were an air defense base located 72 km (about 45 miles) from the border and an intelligence base 110 km (about 68 miles) from the border near Tel Aviv. Nasrallah [falsely] claimed that many UAVs had reached their targets and accused Israel of "hiding the truth." **Contrary to Nasrallah's claim, the aerial defense and the intelligence base were not attacked.**
- ▶ Nasrallah claimed that Hezbollah had decided to "avoid harming civilians" and focus only on the military target related to the killing of Fuad Shagr, and "deep in Israel near Tel Aviv." He added that he had no intention of using strategic missiles, but they "might use them in the near future."
- ▶ He accused Israel of "aggression," not "preventive action," and denied the Israeli announcements regarding thousands of missiles and thousands of launchers which had been destroyed. He claimed that the Israeli attack had no effect on Hezbollah's operation or operatives and that no strategic or precision missiles were hit, with the exception of two positions which were hit after Hezbollah's operation.
- ▶ He explained that Hezbollah's response had been delayed because of the high alertness of Israeli and United States forces. He claimed that the "resistance axis"⁴ had had to consult and decide whether the response would be joint or if each axis member would act separately. He also claimed Hezbollah had asked that an opportunity be given for a ceasefire to be negotiated in the Gaza Strip.
- ▶ He claimed that if it turned out that the results of the attack were satisfactory it could be a sufficient retaliation for the killing of Fuad Shagr. However, he threatened that if the response were not satisfactory, the organization reserved the "right" "to respond until further notice."

⁴ Iran, Syria, Hezbollah, the Palestinian organizations, the Shi'ite Houthis in Yemen and the pro-Iranian militias in Iraq, the "resistance axis" partners seeking the destruction of the State of Israel.

South Lebanon

Hezbollah attacks

► This past week (as of 1 p.m., August 26, 2024), Hezbollah claimed responsibility for 72 attacks on military and civilian targets in northern Israel, compared to 54 attacks the previous week. Hezbollah attacked with anti-tank missiles, artillery, UAVs and various types of rockets (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, August 19-26, 1:00 p.m.):

- August 26, 2024 (1:00 p.m.): Hezbollah did not claim responsibility for attacks.
- August 25, 2024: Three attacks, two of which were in retaliation for the killing of Fuad Shukr.⁵
- August 24, 2024: 12 attacks. A UAV was intercepted in the Lower Galilee; a UAV was intercepted in the Western Galilee. Three rockets fell in open areas in Kiryat Shmona. No casualties were reported (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, August 24, 2024).
- August 23, 2024: 15 attacks. Three anti-tank missiles were launched at an aerial monitoring base. The base was hit but no damage was done to its aerial detection capabilities. More than 100 rockets were fired in various barrages at targets in northern Israel, including 75 rockets at Kiryat Shmona and 20 rockets at the Safed and Miron regions. Two houses in Kiryat Shmona took direct hits, and fires broke out in different areas. There were no casualties (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, August 23, 2024).



Right: Smoke from the attack on the aerial monitoring base (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, August 24, 2024).

Left: Direct hit on a house in Kiryat Shmona (Israel Fire and Rescue North, August 23, 2024)

- August 22, 2024: 12 attacks. Direct rocket hits on Kiryat Shmona; a fire broke out in the area. Anti-tank missiles hit Tel Hai and Metula. There were no casualties (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, August 22, 2024).
- August 21, 2024: 13 attacks. Fifty rockets were fired into the Golan Heights. Katzrin took a direct hit, one civilian was injured and there was considerable damage to property. Several

⁵ Hezbollah claimed to have launched 340 rockets at 11 Israeli military bases and UAVs at two bases, one of them an intelligence base.

UAVs hit open areas in the Upper Galilee; there were no casualties. Rockets hit the Galilee Panhandle, causing fires; no casualties were reported (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, August 21, 2024).



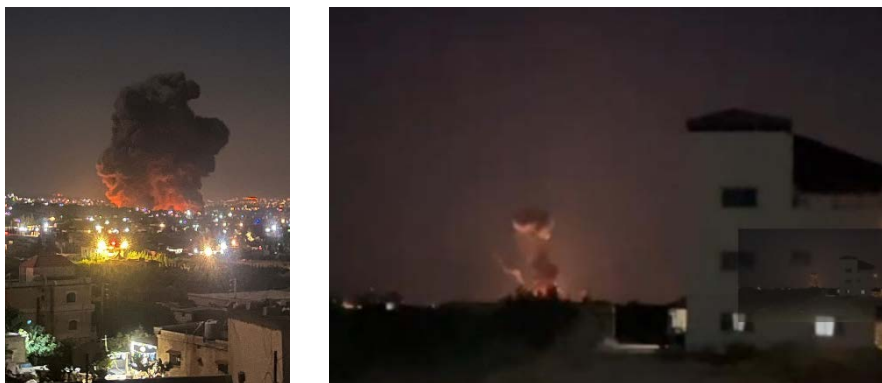
Buildings damaged in Katzrin (IDF spokesperson, August 21, 2024)

◆ August 20, 2024: 12 attacks, including the launch of an anti-aircraft missile at an Israeli fighter plane over south Lebanon. Fifty-five rockets were launched at the Upper Galilee and the Golan Heights; some were intercepted and the rest fell in open areas, causing fires. Twenty rockets were fired at the Western Galilee, causing fires. Forty rockets were fired at the Western Galilee and several UAVs were launched into the Upper Galilee and the Golan Heights. Some were intercepted and the rest fell in the Golan Heights. In all cases, there were no casualties (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, August 20, 2024).

► August 19, 2024 (from 1:00 p.m.): Five attacks. An anti-tank missile hit an open area and rockets were fired to attack locations near the border. In all cases, there were no casualties (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, August 19, 2024).

IDF response

► In response to Hezbollah's attacks, Israeli Air Force aircraft attacked Hezbollah terrorist targets and operatives in south Lebanon and the Lebanon Valley. Among the targets attacked were armed squads of terrorist operatives, terrorist facilities, buildings used for military-terrorist purposes, munitions warehouses, a compound used by Hezbollah's aerial defense system, observation posts, launching positions and rocket launchers. During the nights of August 19 and 20, 2024, the Israeli Air Force attacked munitions warehouses in the Lebanon Valley during which secondary explosions occurred, indicating the presence of munitions (IDF spokesperson, August 19-25, 2024). In addition, a facility in the Lebanon Valley used by Hezbollah's aerial defense system was attacked; it had posed a threat to Israeli Air Force aircraft (IDF spokesperson, August 21, 2024). Lebanese media reported that one person was killed and 19 injured in the second wave of attacks (al-Mayadeen, August 21, 2024).



Israeli Air Force attacks in the Lebanon Valley

(Right: MTV Lebanon News, August 19, 2024; Left: Dr. Ahmed Yassin's X account, August 21, 2024)

- ▶ Israeli Air Force aircraft carried out targeted strikes to attack senior Hezbollah operatives:
 - ◆ On August 23, 2024, Muhammad Mahmoud Najm, a key operative in Hezbollah's rocket and missile unit, was killed in an airstrike in Aita al-Zout in south Lebanon (IDF spokesperson, August 23, 2024). Lebanese media reported that an Israeli drone hit vehicles with two missiles in the Aita al-Sha'ab area. Two people were killed in the attack, including a teenager named Zulfiqar Fadi Radwan, born in 2007, who was a member of the Imam al-Mahdi Scouts Association⁶ (AlHadeel news X account; Ali Fahs' X account, August 23, 2024). Hezbollah confirmed that the organization's operative Muhammad Mahmoud Najm, aka Karar, born in 1971, was killed in Meiss al-Jabal in south Lebanon (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, 23 August 2024).



Right: The remains of Najm's vehicle (AlHadeel News X account, August 23, 2024); Center: Muhammad Mahmoud Najm (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, August 23, 2024); Left: Zulfiqar Fadi Radwan (Hanady Gerges's X account, August 23, 2024)

⁶ The Imam Al-Mahdi Scout Association is Hezbollah's youth movement, which trains a new generation of operatives who will enlist in the organization's military and civilian formations. For further information, see the June 2019 ITIC report, "[The Imam Al-Mahdi Scouts Association: Hezbollah's youth movement which indoctrinates youth with Iranian radical Shi'ite Islam and serves as a source of youngsters who join Hezbollah and fight against Israel.](#)"

◆ On August 23, 2024, Sayid Mahmoud Da'eeb, a terrorist operative in Hezbollah's rocket and missile array, was killed in an attack in the Tyre region (IDF spokesperson, August 23, 2024). Lebanese media reported that an Israeli drone hit vehicles in the al-Hamidiya area, northeast of Tyre (al-Nashra, August 23, 2024). Hezbollah announced the death of Sayid Mahmoud Da'eeb, aka Haydar, born in 1990, from Borj Rahhal in south Lebanon (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, August 23, 2024).



Right: The remains of Da'eeb vehicle (al-Nashra, August 23, 2024). Left: Sayid Mahmoud Da'eeb (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, August 23, 2024)

◆ On August 19, 2024, Hussein Ali Hussein, a key operative in Hezbollah's rocket and missile unit in the Yarin area, was killed in an attack in Deir Qanoun (IDF spokesperson, August 19, 2024). Hezbollah announced the death of Hussein Ali Hussein Suleiman, aka Malak, born in 1988, from Tarbeeha and a resident of Deir Qanoun Ras al-Ein in south Lebanon (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, August 19, 2024).

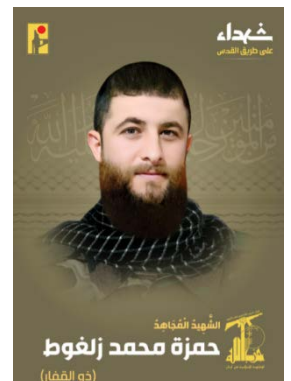
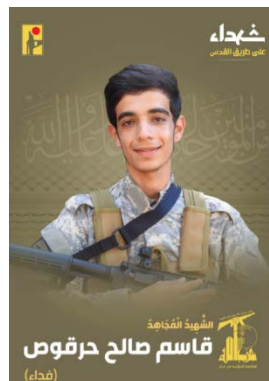
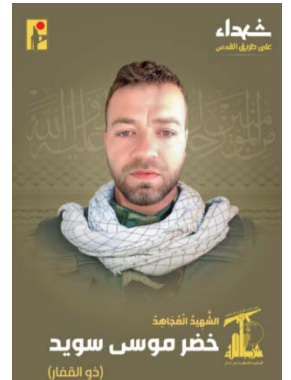


Right: The remains of Hussein's vehicle (al-Nashra, August 19, 2024). Left: Hussein Ali Hussein (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, August 19, 2024)

Other Hezbollah casualties

- ▶ Hezbollah reported the deaths of an additional 13 operatives (Telegram Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, August 19-25, 2024):
- ▶ Ra'ed Ali Khattab, aka Mahdi, born in 1995, from Aita al-Sha'ab in south Lebanon.

- ◆ Ziad Muhammad Qashmar, aka Zulfiqar, born in 1994, from al-Halousiyeh in south Lebanon.
- ◆ Ali Ahmed Duqmak, aka Yusuf Naji, born in 1999, from al-Nabatieh in south Lebanon.
- ◆ Muhammad Ghazi Shahin, aka Ali Ali, born in 1989, from Tyre in south Lebanon.
- ◆ Hussein Muhammad Mustafa, aka Diyaa, born in 1975, from Beit Leef in south Lebanon.
- ◆ Hassan Wisam Harqous, aka Abu Mahdi, born in 2005, from Toura in south Lebanon.
- ◆ Qassem Saleh Harkous, aka Fidaa, born in 2004, from Toura in south Lebanon.
- ◆ Aqeel Qassem Gharib, aka Abu Taleb, born in 1990, from Tayr Harfa in south Lebanon.
- ◆ Hussein Muhammad Shakir, aka Sajed, born in 1998, from Meiss al-Jabal in south Lebanon.
- ◆ Ali Akram al-Haq, aka Karar, born in 1998, from al-Kouah in the Lebanon Valley.
- ◆ Ibrahim Hassan Fadel, aka Jihad, born in 2003, from Toulin in south Lebanon.
- ◆ Hamza Muhammad Zalghout, aka Zulfiqar, born in 1992, from Harees in south Lebanon.
- ◆ Khader Musa Sweid, aka Zulfiqar, born in 1987, from Harees in south Lebanon





Hezbollah casualties (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, August 19-25, 2024)

Amal casualty

► On August 25, 2024, the Lebanese ministry of health announced that one person had been killed in an Israeli drone attack on a car in the town of al-Khiyam (Lebanese News Agency, August 25, 2024). The Amal Movement confirmed the death of one of its operators, Ayman Kamal Idris, aka Liwaa al-Khiyam, born in 1989 in al-Khiyam (Amal movement Telegram channel, August 25, 2024).

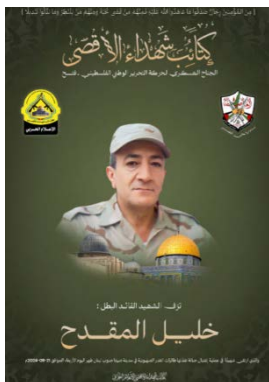


Right: Idris' vehicle catches fire in al-Khiyam (Khaled's X account, August 25, 2024). Left: Iman Kamal Idris (Amal Movement Telegram channel, August 25, 2024)

Elimination of senior Qods Force-affiliated Palestinian terrorist operative

► On August 21, 2024, an Israeli Air Force attacked Khalil Hussein Khalil al-Maqdah in the Sidon region. He worked with his brother Munir al-Maqdah, a senior Fatah terrorist who operates for Hezbollah and the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps directing terrorist attacks and transferring funds and weapons to terrorist networks in Judea and Samaria. In March 2024, a cache of weapons was exposed which had been smuggled into Judea and Samaria and transferred to squads recruited and directed by the terrorist network of Khalil and Munir al-Maqdah in Lebanon. Those responsible for delivering the weapons and directing the attacks

were Iranians, led by Javad Ghafari, head of Division 4000, the special operations division of IRGC intelligence, and Sardar Bagheri, commander of Unit 840, the Qods Force special operations unit (IDF spokesperson, August 21, 2024). The al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades confirmed the death of Khalil al-Maqdah, one of its commanders in Lebanon, in an attack on the vehicle in the Sidon area (al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades Telegram channel, August 21, 2024).



Right: Khalil al-Maqdah's vehicle catches fire in Sidon (Yousef Tawarh's X account, August 21, 2024). Left: Khalil al-Maqdah (al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades Telegram channel, August 21, 2024)

PIJ communiqué to Hezbollah

► The Jerusalem Brigades, the military wing of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), issued a statement entitled "The Palestinian Resistance," in which it thanked Hezbollah for participating in the war for the past ten months. The PIJ claimed the "enemy" had been defeated and that "every day it turns to its leadership to escape the blows of the jihad fighters" [sic]. The statement continued, "If that's the enemy's situation in the Gaza Strip, how could he fight you in Lebanon?" and, "from the heart of Gaza, where our people are suffering, we send this message at these extraordinary moments in our history, the enemy was mistaken in his assessments and calculations, he sees the actions of the 'resistance axis' from Iran, Syria, Iraq and Yemen, and now the day has come for the heroic jihad fighters to reopen the gate of Khaybar⁷ and end Israel's existence." The communiqué ended by claiming "Victory is near, as is the complete liberation of all the lands of Palestine" (Jerusalem Brigades Telegram channel, August 20, 2024). While the communiqué was signed in the name of "the Palestinian resistance," Hamas media outlets attributed it only to the PIJ.

⁷ Reference to a battle which took place in 628 C.E., during which the Muslim army led by Muhammad killed a large number of Jews who lived in the fortified settlement of Khaybar, north of al-Madinah in the Arabian Peninsula. The Jews surrendered and after the battle, Muhammad reached an agreement with them, according to which they would pay a poll tax under Islamic rule. This battle is one of the central ethos in Islam, especially regarding fighting the Jews.

► "Sources" claimed the objective of the communiqué was to beg Hezbollah to open a fighting front in Lebanon and change the nature of the conflict against Israel. Additional "sources" considered it a PIJ call of distress because the front in the Gaza Strip was exhausted (al-Anbaa, Kuwait, August 21, 2024).



The communiqué to Hezbollah (Jerusalem Brigades combat information Telegram channel, August 20, 2024)

Criticism of Hezbollah

► Following the Israeli Air Force attacks on Hezbollah's munitions warehouses in the Lebanon Valley, the internationally-known Lebanese singer Elissa posted to her X account (with 15.6 million followers) that "The Bekaa is part of Lebanon and also does not want war." She attached a photo from the Lebanon Valley with the hashtag "Lebanon_does_not_want_war." Hezbollah supporters reacted angrily and told her not to intervene, but many supported her position and joined the call against the war (elissakh X account, August 20, 2024).



Singer Elissa's tweet (elissakh's X account, August 20, 2024)

Damage to South Lebanon

► Muhammad Shams al-Din, who researches international relations, reported there were 597 dead in Lebanon after 320 days of fighting. He tallied 413 Hezbollah operatives killed, in

addition to ten dead from the Hezbollah-affiliated Islamic Health Authority, 19 Amal operatives, four members of the Amal Movement's Scouts Association of the Islamic Message, seven paramedics killed from the Health Authority in Habaria, seven dead from al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya, 89 dead civilians, three members of the media, one dead from the Lebanese army, two dead from the Syrian National Party, 29 dead Syrians, 12 dead Palestinians and one Iranian. He also stated that 145,000 people had been displaced from their homes, 1,940 buildings were completely destroyed and another 1,700 buildings were partially destroyed and minor damage was caused to 7,000 buildings, 220 industrial and commercial buildings were destroyed and 21 million square meters were burned. He estimated the direct damage of the fighting in south Lebanon at \$1.2 billion, indirect damage of \$2.7 billion (Lebanon Debate August 2024).

UNIFIL

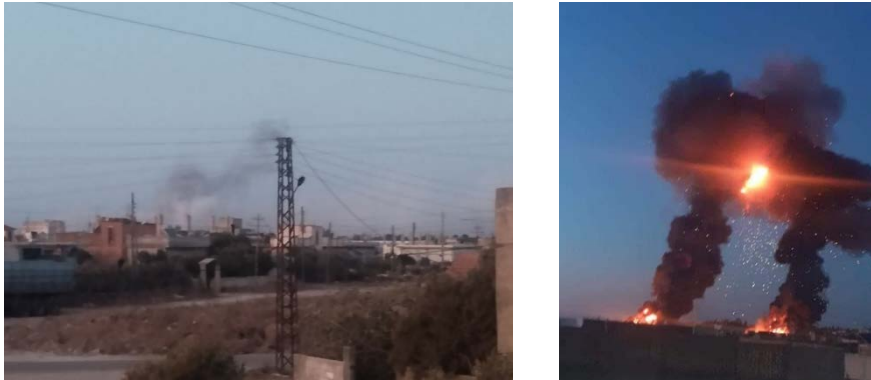
► Andrea Tenenti, the UNIFIL spokesman, said that they were increasing their activities along the border to reduce tensions, and were in contact with both sides to find a diplomatic solution to the crisis. He also called on all parties to commit to achieving peace on the border and emphasized the need to implement resolution 1701 (al-Qahera, August 20, 2024).

Syria

Attacks on Syria attributed to Israel

► On the evening of August 23, 2024, a "military source" said that Israel carried out an air strike from the direction of northern Lebanon, attacking several sites in the center of the country. According to claims, Syrian aerial defenses intercepted the missiles, several of which fell, injuring seven civilians and causing property damage (Syrian defense ministry Facebook page, August 23, 2024). Syrian media reported explosions had been heard in the city of Homs. According to reports, the attack was carried out near the village of Umm Haratayn, west of Homs, and that there were no reports of casualties (al-Watan; Saber News, August 23, 2024). Meanwhile, Syrian opposition sources and social media reported that the Israeli Air Force attacked positions of the pro-Iranian militias at the Scientific Studies and Research Center in the Maarin area, south of Hama (X account of Mujtahid al-Arak, August 23, 2024). It was also reported that the warehouses of the 47th Brigade of the 11th Division of the Syrian Army had been attacked, as well as the College of Veterinary Medicine northwest of Hama (Index Hakeem X account, August 23, 2024). According to reports, three Syrian pro-Iranian militia operatives were killed in the attacks and ten others were wounded. A Syrian woman was killed by a failed

interception attempt of the Syrian aerial defense systems (Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, August 23, 25, 2024).



Right: The explosions following the attacks in the Hama area (Mohamed619 X account, August 23, 2024). Left: Attack in the Homs area (Saberin News, August 23, 2024)

Elimination of senior ISIS-affiliated jihadi terrorist operative

► According to reports, on August 23, 2024, a UAV which apparently belonged to the international coalition attacked a motorcycle on road between the towns of Ahsan and al-Bara in the southern Idlib region, killing Abu Abd al-Rahman al-Makki, a Saudi Arabian who was previously leader of a jihadi organization and a cleric for jihadi organizations (Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, August 23, 2024). The United States Army Central Command (CENTCOM) confirmed that a targeted attack by forces killed Abu-Abd al-Rahman al-Makki, who was a member of the Shura Council of the Hurras al-Din organization, which is considered an al-Qaeda branch in Syria and which supervised terrorist activity from Syria (CENTCOM X account, August 24, 2024).