



Spotlight on Terrorism: Hezbollah, Lebanon and Syria November 25 – December 2 ,2024

Overview¹

- ▶ On November 27, 2024, a ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon went into effect. Hezbollah declared "victory" and claimed it would cooperate with the Lebanese Army in implementing the agreement. IDF forces attacked Hezbollah operatives and facilities following violations of the ceasefire agreement. The Lebanese Army and Parliament Speaker Berri accused Israel of violating the agreement.
- ▶ Over the past week, Hezbollah claimed responsibility for 40 attacks (some unverified) on Israeli civilian, military and security targets, all before the start of the ceasefire. According to Hezbollah, since the beginning of the conflict on October 8, 2023, at least 4,637 attacks have been carried out against Israel, including 1,666 attacks since the escalation in mid-September 2024. Hezbollah estimates that 4,000 of its operatives have been killed.
- ▶ The Lebanese ministry of health reported that 3,961 people had been killed between the start of the fighting until the ceasefire. The minister of economy estimated economic damage at \$15-20 billion and said the reconstruction process would take about four years.
- ▶ The IDF continued strikes on crossings along the Syria-Lebanon border which were used to transfer weapons to Hezbollah, including after the ceasefire went into effect.

The Ceasefire

- ▶ On November 27, 2024, the ceasefire agreement between Israel and Lebanon went into effect, ending the fighting which began on October 8, 2023. According to the agreement, Israel will gradually withdraw its forces from south Lebanon over a period of 60 days, while the Lebanese Army will deploy its forces in south Lebanon and work to prevent armed operatives not part of Lebanon's official security forces and armed organizations, primarily Hezbollah, from maintaining a presence in south Lebanon, possessing weapons or operating military facilities south of the Litani River. Hezbollah claimed the fighting ended in "victory" despite its heavy losses, including the killing of secretary general Hassan Nasrallah and the organization's

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

military leadership. The current secretary general said the organization was committed to working with the Lebanese Army to implement the agreement.²

► As part of the agreement, a mechanism was established to monitor the ceasefire, led by the United States and involving the Lebanese Army, the IDF, UNIFIL and France. Amos Hochstein, the American envoy, will co-chair the mechanism until a permanent appointment can be made, along with United States Army Major General Jasper Jeffers (CENTCOM X account, November 28, 2024). According to reports, the committee's first meeting will take place after the general arrives in Lebanon and after the government agrees on the Lebanese Army's plan to expand deployment in the south (Lebanon Debate, December 1, 2024).

► According to "well-informed sources," there are secret clauses in the monitoring committee's mechanism. It was also reported that Nabih Berri, the speaker of the Lebanese Parliament, reached an agreement with Hezbollah and Iran on the composition of the committee. According to other "sources," the committee will convene monthly at the request of Major General Jeffers (Spot Shot, December 1, 2024).

► IDF forces halted their advance but continued activities against violations of the ceasefire. On November 30, 2024, the forces eliminated armed Hezbollah terrorists who were operating near a church where weapons were found. In addition, Israeli Air Force aircraft attacked terrorist operatives and Hezbollah terrorist facilities in south Lebanon and deeper into Lebanon territory after identifying ceasefire violations and threats to Israel (IDF spokesperson, November 27 to December 2, 2024).

► On December 2, 2024, Lebanese media reported that an Israeli UAV fired a missile at a motorcycle near a power station in Marjayoun, killing one person (al-Jadeed, December 2, 2024). Lebanese State Security stated that the deceased was one of its operatives who was hit while carrying out his "national duty" (al-Nashra, December 2, 2024). It was also claimed that two Israeli Merkava tanks entered the center of the village of Aitaroun and that soldiers fired two stun grenades (al-Akhbar, December 2, 2024).

► Nabih Berri, the speaker of the Lebanese Parliament, accused Israel of committing 52 "blatant" violations after the ceasefire went into effect. He stated that Lebanon was in contact with relevant international parties to address the "violations" and expressed hope that

² For further information, see the December 2024 ITIC report, "The Israel-Lebanon Ceasefire Agreement – The Lebanese Point of View."

France's joining the monitoring committee would lead to an end to the "violations" (al-Joumhouria, December 2, 2024).

The Fighting in Lebanon

IDF activity before the ceasefire

► **Ground operations:** IDF forces continued maneuvers in south Lebanon, mainly along the "second village line" approximately six kilometers from the border. The forces eliminated terrorist operatives from the air and on the ground, found large quantities of weapons, including rocket launchers, mortars and anti-tank missiles (ATMs) aimed at northern communities, and destroyed command centers, underground and other terrorist facilities hidden in civilian sites. On November 26, 2024, the IDF spokesperson reported that the forces had reached the Salouqi area and the Litani River, where rocket launchers were found.

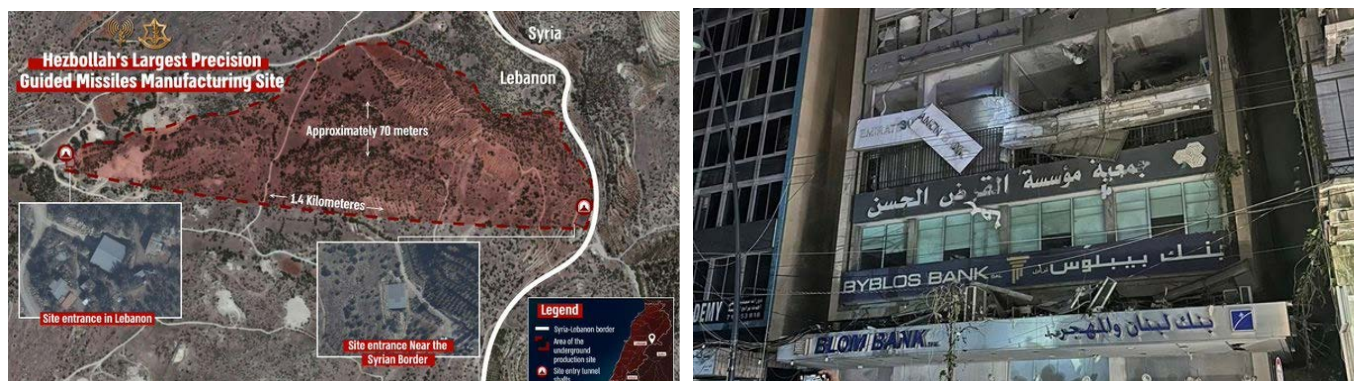


**Rocket launchers and other weapons found near the Litani River
(IDF spokesperson, November 26, 2024)**

► **Aerial operations:** The IDF continued airstrikes on Hezbollah targets in the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia in Beirut and throughout Lebanon, including command centers, launchers and facilities for the manufacture of weapons, many of which were located near civilian areas.³ Among the targets were military headquarters, facilities of Hezbollah's Executive Council, intelligence headquarters, sites of the naval missile unit, of Unit 4400 responsible for transferring weapons from Iran through Syria to Lebanon, and financial facilities of the al-Qard al-Hassan Association (Hezbollah's economic wing). In addition, the IDF attacked Hezbollah's largest precision missile component production facility, located in a 1.4-kilometer underground site in the Janta area of the Beqa'a Valley. On November 26, 2024, a strike in Beirut eliminated Jaafar Ali Samaha, the operations officer of Hezbollah's air unit (Unit 127),

³ The IDF stated that prior to all attacks, measures were taken to minimize the likelihood of harming civilians, including prior intelligence gathering, precise surveillance, and advance warnings to evacuate populations near the targets.

responsible for launching cruise missiles and UAVs into Israel. In a strike in Tyre, Ahmed Sabahi al-Zeima, who commanded Hezbollah's coastal operations array, was also eliminated (IDF spokesperson, November 25–27, 2024).



Right: The Qard al-Hassan branch in Tyre, attacked by the IDF (Sidon Online website, November 26, 2024). Left: Hezbollah's largest facility for the production of precision missiles in the Beqa'a Valley (IDF spokesperson, November 27, 2024)

Attacks on Hezbollah

► According to the IDF, during Operation Northern Arrows, which began on September 23, 2024, more than 12,500 Hezbollah targets were attacked, including more than 1,600 military headquarters and over 1,000 weapons depots, among them approximately 150 weapons storage facilities and more than 160 Radwan Force headquarters. At least 2,500 terrorist operatives were killed, including Hezbollah secretary general Hassan Nasrallah and 13 members of Hezbollah's senior leadership. During the IDF's ground operations in Lebanon, more than 25,000 explosive devices, UAVs, launchers, anti-tank missiles, rockets and anti-aircraft missiles were seized (IDF spokesperson, November 28, 2024).

Hezbollah

Attacks

► Between November 25, 2024, at 2 p.m., until the ceasefire went into effect on November 27, 2024, at 4 a.m., Hezbollah claimed responsibility for 40 attacks on Israeli military, security and civilian targets, including in the Gush Dan area, as well as against IDF forces in south Lebanon. Hezbollah used anti-tank missiles, artillery shells, UAVs and drones, precision missiles, various types of rockets, and anti-aircraft missiles targeting Israeli Air Force aircraft over Lebanon; Hezbollah also claimed attacking an IDF training base (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, November 25 to 27, 2024). On November 25, 2024, Hezbollah claimed responsibility for six explosive drone attacks on concentrations of IDF forces, four of which

occurred in south Lebanon and two inside Israeli territory (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, November 25, 2024).



An explosive drone attack on an IDF APC in the village of Yarin in south Lebanon, November 25, 2024 (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, November 30, 2024)

Hezbollah casualties

► According to the assessment of "a senior source," in the fighting since October 8, 2023, Hezbollah lost as many as 4,000 of its operatives, more than ten times the number of its casualties in the 2006 war. "Three senior sources aware of Hezbollah's activities," based on initial internal assessments within the organization, claimed Hezbollah believed the death toll would reach several thousand, most of them since the escalation in fighting in mid-September 2024 (Reuters, November 28, 2024). With the exception of a few senior figures, since the end of September 2024 Hezbollah has not issued official statements about its casualties.

Hezbollah summary of the fighting

► Hezbollah issued a summary of the fighting, declaring that after more than 13 months it had achieved a "victory over the delusional enemy that could neither undermine its resolve nor break its spirit." According to Hezbollah, it carried out 4,637 attacks over 417 days of fighting since October 8, 2023, of which 1,666 took place after the escalation on September 17 (the pager explosions). Hezbollah classified 105 of the attacks as "high-quality" operations conducted with the slogan, "At your call, Nasrallah!" They targeted strategic Israeli military and security bases using ballistic and precision missiles, as well as explosive UAVs, to a depth of 150 kilometers inside Israel. According to Hezbollah's false report, more than 130 IDF soldiers and officers were killed since the start of the maneuver on October 1, and 59 Merkava tanks were destroyed. Hezbollah claimed its "fighters" remained on alert to counter "the Israeli enemy's ambitions and attacks," with eyes watching and fingers on the trigger, monitoring the movements and withdrawals of IDF forces across the border (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, November 28, 2024).issued

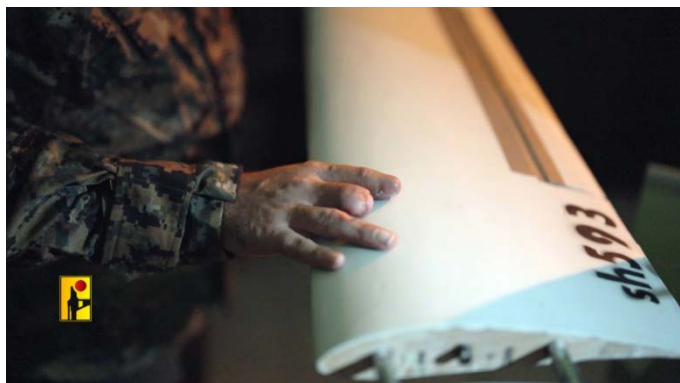
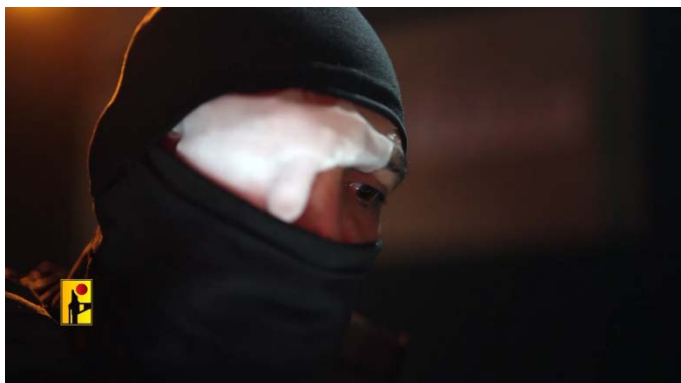
► Hezbollah also released an infographic entitled "The Hardest Battle," summarizing its operations against Israel from September 17, 2024, when the fighting escalated following the explosion of Hezbollah operatives' pagers, until November 27, 2024, the day the ceasefire agreement in Lebanon was reached. Hezbollah claimed to have carried out 1,666 attacks averaging 23 attacks per day, targeting 211 IDF bases, 111 camps, 420 positions, 147 outposts along the Israel-Lebanon border, 540 "settlements" [Israeli cities, towns and villages], 17 military factories and defense companies and ten airports. During the attacks Hezbollah fired 1,285 rockets and missiles and with 93 artillery shells, carried out 166 UAV attacks and launched 34 surface-to-air missiles. Hezbollah falsely claimed that the attacks caused over 130 Israeli fatalities, more than 1,250 injuries and the evacuation of approximately 300,000 Israeli residents from over 100 communities within 30 kilometers of the border (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, November 28, 2024).



Hezbollah infographic of the 72 days of fighting
(Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, November 28, 2024)

Psychological warfare

► On November 25, 2024, Hezbollah released a 1-minute video entitled "Despite the wounds... we are present on the [battlefield]," whose objective was to show that operatives injured in the pager explosions on September 17, 2024, had ostensibly returned to operational activity. The video began with pictures of wounded Hezbollah terrorist operatives in a hospital with partial or complete amputations of limbs and eye injuries. Subsequently, they were shown as if engaging in combat. One operative was seen attaching a wing to a UAV, while another was involved in wiring the front section of a UAV. Another operative was shown operating a rocket launch control system.



From "Despite the wounds... we are present on the [battlefield]"
(Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, November 25, 2024)

Lebanon

Casualties

► According to the Lebanese ministry of health, between the beginning of the fighting on October 8, 2023, and November 9, 2024, 3,961 Lebanese were killed and 16,520 wounded. According to data released by the ministry, 2,678 of the deceased were men, but it was not specified how many of them were Hezbollah operatives or other armed terrorists. The ministry noted that the death toll was expected to rise as bodies were recovered from under the rubble and that a comprehensive examination of all information was underway to identify the deceased through DNA testing. A final report on the number of casualties caused by the "aggression" will be published in the future (Lebanese ministry of health X account, November 28, 2024).

Economic damage

► Amin Salam, Lebanese minister of economy, stated that according to initial estimates, Lebanon's direct and indirect economic damage from the fighting amounted to \$15 - \$20 billion. He said that the losses resulted from damage to entire sectors, primarily tourism and agriculture, which had completely ceased operations. He noted that Lebanon required tens of billions of dollars in assistance to rebuild the country and the process was expected to take four years (CNBC Arabic, November 30, 2024).

The Lebanese Army

► On December 2, 2024, the Lebanese Army reported that one of its soldiers was injured by an Israeli UAV strike in the Beqa'a Valley. According to the army's statement, the strike targeted a military bulldozer conducting fortification work at the al-Abara military post in the Hawsh al-Sayyid Ali area of the Hermel district (Lebanese Army X account, December 2, 2024).

- ▶ "Sources close to the commander of the Lebanese Army" stated that General Joseph Aoun was uncomfortable with the 60-day period designated by the ceasefire agreement and feared that "Israel's conduct" would undermine the Lebanese Army's preparations in south Lebanon. According to the report, Aoun was concerned that Israeli strikes in south Lebanon would provoke a response from Hezbollah, and he called on the Americans to persuade Israel to cease the "violations" and ensure that the Israeli withdrawal was completed before the two-month period ended (al-Akhbar, December 2, 2024).
- ▶ The Lebanese Army announced that on December 1, 2024, the body of an army officer was discovered inside his vehicle in the al-Naqoura area, following an attack on the vehicle by Israel on November 26, 2024. An investigation has reportedly been launched to determine the circumstances (al-Nashra, December 2, 2024).
- ▶ The Lebanese Parliament passed a law to extend the tenure of all officers in the Lebanese Army holding the rank of Major General and above, including the commander of the Lebanese Army, Joseph Aoun (Lebanese News Agency, November 29, 2024).

UNIFIL

- ▶ UNIFIL welcomed the ceasefire and the renewed commitment of the parties to Resolution 1701. UNIFIL said it would cooperate with all relevant partners to ensure the cessation of hostilities and implement its mandate. According to reports, the force has begun adjusting its operations to the new situation and UNIFIL soldiers remain in their positions, ready to support Lebanon and Israel (UNIFIL Telegram channel, November 27, 2024).
- ▶ A "security source" reported that the number of provocations by "resistance" operatives against UNIFIL soldiers south of the Litani River increased in the days leading up to the ceasefire, following UNIFIL's decision to change its operations on the ground (Lebanon Debate, November 25, 2024).

Syria

Israel attacks along the Syria-Lebanon border

- ▶ The IDF continued attacking routes and crossings along the Syria-Lebanon border to prevent the transfer of weapons to Hezbollah:
 - ◆ According to reports, on the evening of November 25, 2024, an Israeli strike targeted several bridges in the southwest Homs region near the Syria-Lebanon border (al-Mayadeen, November 25, 2024). A "Syrian military source" stated that "the Israeli enemy" had attacked several crossing points in the al-Qusayr area near the border,

injuring two "civilians" and causing property damage (al-Watan, November 25, 2024). Videos posted to social media showed damage to the bridges (SAM SYRIA Telegram channel, November 26, 2024). The IDF spokesperson confirmed that fighter jets had attacked transit routes of the Syrian regime along the border with Lebanon. According to the statement, the routes were used to transfer weapons from Syria to Lebanon (IDF spokesperson, November 25, 2024).



A bridge destroyed in an IDF attack (SAM SYRIA Telegram channel, November 26, 2024)

- ◆ According to reports, on the night of November 26, 2024, Israel attacked three crossings on the Syria-Lebanon border, rendering all land crossings between the two countries non-operational (al-Mayadeen, November 27, 2024). A "Syrian military source" reported that the strike in the Homs area killed six people, including two soldiers, and injured 12 others, [allegedly] including children, women, and workers from the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (al-Watan, November 27, 2024). A "source" in the Syrian ministry of transportation claimed the strike had destroyed the al-Arida Bridge in Tartus, which connects the Tartus governorate to the Lebanese border (al-Watan, November 27, 2024). The IDF spokesperson confirmed that an airstrike had targeted several transit routes used to transfer weapons to Hezbollah (IDF spokesperson, November 27, 2024).
- ◆ On November 30, 2024, after the ceasefire with Hezbollah went into effect, the IDF attacked a military facility in Syria near a border crossing with Lebanon. According to reports, the facility was used by Hezbollah for transferring weapons from Syria to Lebanon and that activity had been detected at the site after the ceasefire (IDF spokesperson, November 30, 2024).