



Hezbollah

Hezbollah (“Party of G-d”) is a terrorist organization, based in Lebanon, whose goal is the destruction of Israel. In that pursuit it has attacked Israeli and Jewish targets worldwide. It is also responsible for infamous attacks against American military installations in Lebanon in the early 1980s. Hezbollah was declared a terrorist entity by the United States in 2004. Syria and Iran support Hezbollah with money and weapons and have long used Hezbollah as their proxy to directly challenge and battle Israel.

Hezbollah, a Shi’ite Muslim group, is financed and armed by Iran and has enjoyed full backing from Syria. Hezbollah was founded with the help of Iranian Revolutionary Guards who traveled to the Bekaa Valley in Lebanon in 1982 to fight Israel following the [Israeli incursion](#) into south Lebanon. According to its 1985 platform, Hezbollah advocates the establishment of an “Islamic Republic” in Lebanon. It also states: “The conflict with Israel is viewed as a central concern. This is not only limited to the IDF presence in Lebanon. Rather, the complete destruction of the State of Israel and the establishment of Islamic rule over Jerusalem is an expressed goal.”

In recent years, Hezbollah has attempted to reinvent itself as a political party. The party enjoys solid support from the country’s Shi’ite community (which comprises 40 percent of Lebanon’s population).

Hezbollah is also an active combatant in the Syrian conflict, fighting to support Syrian President Bashar Assad against anti-regime Syrian rebels and ISIS and

other Islamic extremist forces.

In the early and mid-1980s Hezbollah was responsible for numerous attacks against U.S. installations in Lebanon, most infamously the 1983 attack on the U.S. Marines barracks in Beirut, which killed 241 servicemen. Hezbollah is responsible for scores of attacks against Israeli forces in south Lebanon and civilians in northern Israel.

Since Israel's unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon in May 2000, Hezbollah has continued its unprovoked attacks on Israel. On July 12, 2006, Hezbollah terrorists attacked Israel in a cross-border raid, killing eight Israeli soldiers and kidnapping two others – Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev. The assault sparked a month-long conflict, known as the Second Lebanon War, with Hezbollah launching thousands of Katyusha rockets at Israel's northern cities and Israel targeting Hezbollah positions throughout Lebanon with air strikes and, eventually, ground forces. A cessation of hostilities was declared after the U.N. Security Council adopted Resolution 1701, which called for a phased withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon and the deployment of an expanded international UNIFIL force working alongside Lebanese troops to re-assert security control of south Lebanon. The resolution required Hezbollah to completely disarm and called for Lebanon to assert its sovereignty over the entire nation. (The bodies of Goldwasser and Regev were returned to Israel by Hezbollah as part of a prisoner exchange in July 2008.) Hezbollah's continuing operations in Lebanese civilian centers violate international humanitarian law and previous U.N. Security Council resolutions. On December 4, 2018, Israel announced it had launched a military campaign, Operation Northern Shield, targeting a network of Hezbollah tunnels that were uncovered along Israel's northern border with Lebanon. The tunnels, which were reportedly dug from a civilian home in Southern Lebanon and financed by Iran, were intended to be used by Hezbollah to cross into Israel and murder Israelis.

Hezbollah, with Iranian support, is believed to be responsible for a number of terrorist incidents in the wider Middle East, Western Europe, Latin America and

Asia. Hezbollah is responsible for two bombings in Buenos Aires – the 1992 bombing of the Israeli embassy and the 1994 bombing of the [AMIA-DAIA Jewish community building](#). Most recently, members of Hezbollah were implicated by Bulgaria in the July 2012 bombing of a bus of Israeli tourists in the resort city of Burgas. Hezbollah and its main international sponsor, Iran, have also been linked to a spate of attacks and attempted attacks on Israeli diplomats and other targets abroad in 2012.

Hezbollah also maintains an extensive support operation in Latin America that helps fund its terrorist activities both in Lebanon and abroad through the drug trade and other criminal activity.

Hezbollah runs a satellite television network, Al-Manar (“The Beacon”), which broadcasts Hezbollah’s messages of hate and violence worldwide. Hezbollah owns and operates the station, staffing it with members of Hezbollah and directing its programming and communications. Al-Manar is more than Hezbollah’s mouthpiece – it is its tool for incitement to terror against Americans and Israelis. It broadcasts images of Iraqi devastation attributed to the U.S.-led action with voiceovers calling for “death to America,” glorifies suicide bombings and calls for the recruitment of Palestinian “martyrs” to kill Jews. Al-Manar appears to be the source of the conspiracy theory that claimed that 4,000 Israelis (or Jews) were absent from their jobs at the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001 thereby implying that Israel was in some way behind the attack. The story was posted on its Web site on September 17, 2001 and picked up by extremists around the world. Al-Manar’s messages of hate and violence are also often accompanied by anti-Semitic themes, such as the medieval blood libel. Al-Manar is also a conduit to channel money to Hezbollah – openly and actively soliciting funds on the air and on its Web site. Since 2004, the European Union, France and other countries have taken steps to ban Al-Manar from transmitting within their borders.