

6.2. Overview of security dynamics related to recent developments with Israel

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Hostilities between Hezbollah and Israel intensified between October 2023 and September 2024,[387] with over 10 000 cross-border attacks recorded during that period,[388] including strikes reaching Beirut by late September 2024, while Israeli airstrikes[389] killed several of Hezbollah's senior leaders.[390] Meanwhile, clashes between Israel and Hezbollah in the second half of 2024, including near Palestine refugee camps, further affected the broader security situation in southern Lebanon.[391] On 17 and 18 September 2024, coordinated blasts of thousands of pagers and handheld radios resulted in the fatalities of at least forty people, among them two children, and left over 3 400 injured.[392] This attack reportedly targeted around 4 000 Hezbollah members, including fighters and commanders, and was blamed by the group on Israel.[393]

On 16 October 2024, an Israeli airstrike struck the municipal headquarters in Al Nabatieh, during a council meeting, killing at least sixteen people including the mayor, Ahmad Kahil, and injuring more than fifty others.[394] A ceasefire agreement was reached on 27 November 2024[395] and violence declined following the ceasefire as disarmament talks with Hezbollah and Palestinian armed groups progressed.[396]

According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) report of March 2025 'The situation in Lebanon remains tenuous as continued military operations threaten the safety and protection of civilians'.[397] Conflict-related violence has killed at least 98 civilians, including more than a dozen children, since the cessation of hostilities, and recent air strikes, demolitions, and artillery shelling have contributed to a significant increase in military activity in southern Lebanon.[398] While the November 2024 ceasefire allowed border residents to return to their homes,[399] and markets and services in southern Lebanon gradually resumed,[400] Lebanon has continued to face repeated shelling and clashes along its southern border with Israel.[401] The Israel army carried out several attacks on Lebanon between December 2024 and September 2025.[402]

On 8 September 2025, Israeli warplanes conducted a series of airstrikes over northeastern Lebanon, targeting alleged training and weapons-storage sites of Hezbollah's elite al-Radwan unit across the Anti-Lebanon heights, specifically near Hermel and several areas within northern Bekaa, causing five deaths and injuries.[403] This incident reflects a notable expansion in Israel's

operational zones, which typically focus on southern Lebanon, now extending into the Bekaa amid tensions.[404]

Meanwhile, UNIFIL's mandate, initially set to expire in August 2025,[405] was unanimously extended, reaffirming its tasks of monitoring the cessation of hostilities, supporting LAF, and facilitating humanitarian access.[406] The UNIFIL noted that the LAF currently lacks full capacity in the south due to Lebanon's financial crisis and the ongoing presence of Israeli forces, emphasising that the mission's role is to support state authority rather than disarm Hezbollah.[407] With UNIFIL's withdrawal set for the end of 2026, concerns remain over a potential security vacuum and the need to reduce Hezbollah's influence to rebuild state credibility.[408]

The ongoing economic crisis has weakened Lebanon's defence and security forces.[409] Meanwhile, Hezbollah, backed by Iran,[410] continues to exert influence in the Bekaa Governorate and other Shia border areas. Although the government has proposed bringing weapons under state control[411] and integrating Hezbollah into the army,[412] the group's ideology and the army's limited capacity make full integration unlikely.[413]

Hezbollah's new leader, Sheikh Naim Qassem, stated that disarmament would only be considered as part of a nationally determined defence strategy and after a full Israeli withdrawal,[414] warning of possible violence if forced to disarm.[415] While Hezbollah and Amal split over protests against the government's weapons monopoly,[416] Israel indicated that the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) could withdraw if the LAF takes steps to disarm Hezbollah by the end of 2025 under a US-led security mechanism.[417] Meanwhile, Samy Gemayel, leader of the Kataeb (Phalange) Party, has called for all weapons to be brought under state authority.[418]

According to the Associated Press article of 8 September 2025, Hezbollah has not fired at Israel since November 2024 ceasefire and claims it no longer maintains an armed presence south of the Litani River, while continuing to reject disarmament talks until Israel withdraws from five hilltop positions captured during the war.[419] Maalouf Monneau noted that security remains particularly precarious in southern Lebanon, western Bekaa, and southern Beirut.[420]

On 28 August 2025, the UN Security Council welcomed the Lebanese government's efforts to assert sovereignty across the country through the LAF, called on Israel to withdraw north of the Blue Line, and urged deployment of Lebanese forces, with UNIFIL support, to ensure that only the state maintains authority and weapons in line with relevant UN resolutions and the Taif Agreement.[421] Between 8 and 14 September 2025, the Israel Defense Forces conducted multiple operations across 17 locations in Lebanon, mainly south of the Litani River but also reaching as far as Hermel, including airstrikes, targeted assassinations, ground activities, detonations, and leaflet drops against Hezbollah personnel and assets, while overall activity remained relatively low compared with previous weeks.[422]

On 18 September 2025, the Israeli army carried out multiple airstrikes in the southern and northern areas of the Litani River,[423] claiming to target Hezbollah positions to prevent them from rebuilding their strongholds.[424] The IDF reportedly issued evacuation notices in southern Lebanon, asking residents to leave six specific buildings, which it described as Hezbollah military sites.[425]

Meanwhile, Israel, through the United States, asked the Lebanese Army to start its disarmament plan in the Baalbek and Hermel Governorates, described as hubs for advanced missiles and drones, and after Lebanese officers expressed reservations, Israeli warplanes struck the outskirts of Hermel, claiming to have hit Hezbollah training camps and weapons depots.426 By 18 September 2025, the Lebanese army recorded over 2 500 Israeli land, air and sea attacks on Lebanon since the November 2024 ceasefire.427

On 19 September 2025, the UNIFIL considered the Israeli attacks violations of Security Council resolution 1701, emphasising that they endanger civilians, put UN peacekeepers and Lebanese soldiers at risk, and threaten the fragile stability achieved in southern Lebanon.428 As of 23 September 2025, in a meeting with UN Secretary-General António Guterres, President Aoun stated that Lebanon's disarmament plan is ready but obstructed by Israeli strikes.429 As of 27 September 2025, Hezbollah Secretary General Naim Qassem rejected disarmament, urged the government to 'correct its mistake,' highlighted the group's 'victories' and resilience during the 66-day war, and reaffirmed Hezbollah's readiness for any confrontation with Israel. He also called for parliamentary elections under the current law and the creation of a Senate as outlined in the Taif Agreement.430

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