



Hezbollah Issues Video of Its Imad 4 Underground Facility: Reactions and Implications

August 22, 2024

Overview¹

- ▶ On August 16, 2024, Hezbollah released a video of "Imad 4," an underground facility for storing precision missiles and heavy rockets, claiming it missiles could hit any target in Israel, from the north to Eilat.
- ▶ Hezbollah-affiliated media outlets affiliated with Hezbollah stated the objective of the video was to inform Israel of Hezbollah's accurate long-range missile capabilities, the extent of the organization's fortified underground system, and to warn Israel not to start an all-out war.
- ▶ Lebanese opposition politicians, social activists and journalists criticized Hezbollah after the video was released, claiming it was mostly based on artificial intelligence and accusing Hezbollah of making all of Lebanon a target for the Israeli attacks.
- ▶ Revealing the facility underscored Hezbollah's perception of the importance of its tunnel system for storing weapons, protecting terrorist operatives, fighting and attacking Israel.
- ▶ In ITIC assessment, the video was released for purposes of psychological warfare to glorify its military capability and deter Israel from escalation and initiating an all-out war.² Releasing the video during negotiations for a ceasefire in the war in the Gaza Strip may be regarded as part of Hezbollah's "support front" for Hamas and an attempt to put pressure on Israel to accept Hamas' demands.

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

² For further information, see the July 2024 ITIC report, "[Hezbollah's Policy for the Use of Force against Israel](#)."

The Imad 4 underground facility

The Hezbollah video

- ▶ On August 16, 2024, Hezbollah released a 4:36-minute video subtitled in Hebrew and English, entitled "Our mountains, our warehouses," revealing Imad 4, an underground facility for storing precision missiles and heavy rockets. The video, showed a wide tunnel with trucks carrying missile- and rocket-armed launchers. The over voice is from the speech of Hassan Nasrallah, the Hezbollah secretary general, about the organization's precision missiles, which he claims can hit any sire in "in occupied Palestine," from the north to Eilat. The video ends with Qur'an Sura 44 (al-Dukhan), verse 10, when reads, ("Watch for the coming of a day when the sky will be covered with smoke," a verse sometimes quoted as a threat (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, August 16, 2024).



Pictures from the Hezbollah Imad 4 video (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, August 16, 2024)

Commentaries on the video

- ▶ A "source" in Hezbollah claimed the precise missiles shown in the video "proved" the organization's firepower could reach any chosen target. The "source" also said calling the site Imad 4 indicated it was one of many such facilities (al-Arabi TV, August 16, 2024).
- ▶ "Sources" close to Hezbollah said the site was named Imad 4 in homage to Imad Mughniyeh, Hezbollah's military commander who was killed in 2008, and who personally supervised the site with a team chosen by Hassan Nasrallah. The "sources" also claimed the facility proved the "failure" of Israel's strategy of preventing weapons from reaching Hezbollah and confirmed the organization could hide its capabilities from Israeli intelligence. Revealing the existence of the facility was also supposed to encourage Hezbollah's supporters, and tell its opponents in Lebanon not to wait for Hezbollah to be defeated, because "that will not

happen, we are able of defending ourselves, are prepared for a war and can start one, but we are biding our time to preserve Lebanese national unity and internal sensitivities" (al-Nahar, August 17, 2024).

► Hassan Izz al-Din, a Hezbollah member of the Lebanese Parliament, said the video again showed the "enemy" that Hezbollah was ready for any scenario, any surprise, any "thoughtless act" that Israel might commit. He claimed Hezbollah did not want an all-out war, but was prepared for "everything the enemy could think of" if he was planning to lead the Middle East into a war. He added that issuing the video during the ceasefire negotiations in Doha was tantamount to a challenge and informed Israel that Hezbollah was in fact being truthful when it referred to its military capabilities and the balance of power (al-Markaziya, August 17, 2024).

► Hezbollah's al-Manar TV reported that the video had several aspects (al-Manar, August 16, 2024):

- ◆ It showed Hezbollah's missile capabilities.
- ◆ It informed viewers that the facility was as big as a city, and it as impossible to tell where began or ended or what it was connected to.
- ◆ It demonstrated the "extremely high level of secrecy" surrounding Hezbollah's missile capabilities.
- ◆ It showed facility located deep underground, not only beyond the intelligence capabilities of the "enemy," but also providing protection against "enemy attacks".
- ◆ It showed that the facility's secrecy and "immunity" neutralized preemptive Israeli strikes on Hezbollah's missile capabilities.
- ◆ Calling the facility Imad "4" meant it was one of many facilities whose exact number is unknown.
- ◆ The "resistance" will have a second strike capability, in accordance with the strategic literature.
- ◆ It showed that the capabilities, especially missile capabilities, of the "Islamic resistance" were fully prepared "to defend" Lebanon.

► A "source" in Hezbollah said that the precise missiles shown in the video "proved" the organization's firepower and its ability to reach its chosen targets. The "source" added that calling the facility Imad 4 indicated it was one of several facilities (al-Araby TV, August 16, 2024).

► Hezbollah-affiliated al-Mayadeen TV reported the facility was equipped with dozens of launchers for 220 mm and 303 mm missiles which carry heavy warheads, as well as other missiles. According to the report, the facility included munitions and ammunition storage areas, and could receive an encrypted order from the Hezbollah leadership to launch missiles within a few minutes. It also claimed the facility had logistics, development, security, reserve and firing teams, which receive orders to launch missiles at pre-determined coordinates. In addition, the facility reportedly has a field hospital and it can meet the needs of operatives staying there for a period ranging from eight months to a year. The report claimed Imad 4 was one of several facilities for larger, heavier and more accurate missiles (al-Mayadeen, 16 August, 2024).

► Ali Haidar, a reporter of the Hezbollah-affiliated Lebanese daily al-Akhbar, claimed that by revealing Imad 4, Hezbollah had provided "the enemy" with a glimpse of its strategic capabilities and their protection, a deterrent move that "shuffled the cards" and which was meant to keep Israel from "any error in judgment that would lead to broad military possibilities." According to the article, the video was also meant to show Israel that Hezbollah's military capabilities were fortified, which was a challenge for the Israeli army. It was also meant to indicate that Hezbollah could preserve its capabilities before and after the shooting. In addition, the video was released while Amos Hochstein, the American envoy, had come to de-escalate the situation and keep Hezbollah from retaliating for the death of its military commander, Fuad Shukr. Hezbollah wanted to show it had already moved to the stage of operational preparation to carry out its response, while making Israel wonder what other "surprises" the organization had in store (al-Akhbar, August 17, 2024).

► Hezbollah's al-'Ahed news site noted that although the video was short, it had a lot to say, the result of decades of planning, execution and preparation. First, the name of the facility, Imad 4, showed that at least three other facilities existed, and possibly more. Second, Hezbollah showed its defensive deterrence by presenting a model of a specific and "extraordinary defensive structure," making it possible to conduct a long, continuous conflict, with dozens of similar facilities over a large area. Third, Hezbollah's military installations provided the Palestinian "resistance" with vital support in its position and future at a sensitive time while facing Israeli "inflexibility" in the negotiations for a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip (al-'Ahed, August 18, 2024).

► A launcher was photographed near an opening covered with iron door carried M302/B302 rockets, known as Khaibar-1. They have a diameter of 302 mm, carry a warhead weighing 150 kg, have a range of between 100 and 150 km and are manufactured by the Syrian ministry of defense's Center for Scientific Research. Hezbollah first used them during the Second Lebanon War in July 2006 (Nashab_32, X account August 16, 2024).



Right: Khaibar-1 rockets on a launcher inside Imad 4. Left: A launcher with Khaibar-1 rockets at the launch opening of the tunnel (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, August 16, 2024)

► Munir al-Rabi', from the independent Lebanese daily al-Modon, reported that the size of Imad 4 facility and its many branches showed Hezbollah's tunnels or "underground cities" can link different regions and districts. He added that the facility's fortifications were designed to protect it from attacks with conventional weapons, after three days previously the Israelis had attacked Kafrkila and claimed to have used fortification-penetrating bombs for the first time. In addition, Hezbollah sought to deter Israel from causing the ceasefire negotiations to fair and to make it clear to Israel that threats conveyed by international proxies did not worry them (al-Modon, August 17, 2024).

► Mazen Ibrahim, director of al-Jazeera in Lebanon, said the objective of the video was to show Hezbollah's stockpile of precision missiles, indicate that the organization was prepared for any future combat, and Israel knew next to nothing about Hezbollah's missile capabilities. He added that the video was also meant to keep Israel from a preemptive strike, because Hezbollah "dozens" of bases which could not be reached. He also claimed Hezbollah had completed its bank of targets since the missiles in Imad 4 could hit all the targets in Israel photographed by the Hudhud³ UAV (Lebanon24, August 16, 2024).

³ Hezbollah issued three videos of security and civilian sites in northern Israel, claiming they were recorded by an intelligence-gathering Hudhud UAV. The first was issued on June 18, 2024 and showed

Criticism of Hezbollah in the Wake of the Video

► Lebanese politicians, social activists, journalists and residents, mainly from the Christian community, attacked Hezbollah after the release of the video, accusing the organization of using artificial intelligence to show non-existent capabilities and for prioritizing its interests at the expense of the security of the Lebanese people:

- ◆ Charles Jabbour, head of media and communications apparatus for the Lebanese Forces Party, said the objective of the video was to inform Israel of the price of an open war, but it was also intended to frighten the Lebanese public and leave them only the possibility of surrendering to Hezbollah's weapons. Jabbour said, "we are not afraid, we will not surrender, I refuse to live with Imad 4" (Charles Jabbour's X account August 20, 2024).
- ◆ Raymond Hakim, and activist for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1701, claimed in his X account on the X network (about 100,000 followers), that foreign experts had conducted an in-depth examination of the Hezbollah video and came to the conclusion that 80% was the product of artificial intelligence, while only 20% was real. What was real was filmed in tunnels 30 meters underground which led to the Natanz nuclear facility in the Ispahan Province of Iran. He wrote: "Look at the gang, they tell lies not only above ground, but below ground as well" (Raymond Hakim's X account, August 18, 2024). On another occasion he posted a video of the Israeli Air Force attack on Hezbollah's munitions warehouses in the Lebanon Valley on August 19, 2024 and wrote: "[Hezbollah] officially presented them [the Israelis] with the Imad 4 video and told them to 'come and destroy Lebanon' ... and that is what in fact happened." He added the hashtags "#Imad_4", "#Biqaat HaLebanon" and "#Baalbek" (Raymond Hakim's X account, August 20, 2024).
- ◆ Mariam Majdoline al-Lahham, a Lebanese journalist, issued a video on her X network account (about 19,500 followers) in which she severely criticized Hezbollah and accused it of giving Israel an excuse to enlarge its target bank in Lebanon. She claimed that Hezbollah used artificial intelligence and sophisticated techniques to produce the video. She also challenged Hezbollah's claim that there were targets not only under the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia in Beirut, but its claim that all of Lebanon was a "security complex

Haifa and its immediate suburbs; the second was issued on July 9, 2024 and focused on IDF bases in the Golan Heights; the third was issued on July 24, 2024 and focused on an Israeli Air Force base.

that belongs to [Hezbollah]" and therefore the Lebanese had no place where they were safe. She mocked Hezbollah for responding to the Israeli penetration bomb attack on Kafrkila, "shelled" Israel with a video coordinate to the cadence of a Hassan Nasrallah recording and further invested "in the minutiae of the interior design" of the underground facility more than in "the resistance" itself. She was furious that Hezbollah could finance the construction of underground canals and hotels, but could not finance the construction of shelters or protect the Lebanese displaced from south Lebanon or pay compensation to the families of the dead (Mariam Majdoline al-Lahham's X account, August 16, 2024).



Miriam Majdoline al-Lahham criticizes Hezbollah Mariam Majdoline al-Lahham's X account, August 16, 2024)

◆ Johny Matar, a Christian who opposes Hezbollah, posted a video to his X account (68,000 followers) of the Israeli Air Force attack in the Lebanon Valley. He mocked Hezbollah's slogan "We will defend and build" and claimed that it meant "We will defend the missile array between the homes of the defenseless and build Imad 4 under their rooms" (Johny Matar's X account, August 19, 2024).

Hezbollah's Tunnels - Background

► The Imad 4 video showed a sample of Hezbollah's underground tunnel system. According to an investigation published in the French daily Libération, digging tunnels in Lebanon was begun by the Palestinian terrorist organizations in the 1960s, but Hezbollah took over in the 1980s and enlarged the excavations, partly with North Korean assistance. Hezbollah's tunnel system was further enlarged after the Second Lebanon War in 2006 and is hundreds of kilometers long, apparently stretching as far as Syria, with a depth of between 40 and 80 meters. The paper also reported that the tunnels in south Lebanon were dug manually using jackhammers and other hydraulic devices, at a rate of 15 meters per month. The report added that after the fighting began on October 8, 2023, Israel dropped white phosphorus bombs in

south Lebanon. and identified and attacked at least 12 tunnel openings (Libération, February 18, 2024).

- On December 4, 2018, the IDF began Operation Northern Shield following the discovery of a Hezbollah tunnel which began in a residential building in the southern part of Kafrkila in south Lebanon and penetrated about forty meters into Israeli territory. During the operation, which lasted until January 13, 2019, six Hezbollah tunnels entering Israeli territory were located and neutralized Israel. The largest one penetrated tens of meters into the territory of Israel and was itself hundreds of meters long, two meters high, and dug to a depth of 55 meters; it has tracks for removing excavated earth and electric and lighting systems.⁴



Right: A Hezbollah operative photographed in a tunnel (IDF spokesperson's website, December 4, 2018). Left: Hezbollah tunnel 55 meters under the ground (IDF spokesperson website, May 29, 2019)

- The United States Department of the Treasury imposed sanctions on the Green Without Borders association which helps Hezbollah in disguise its military activities in south Lebanon. The Department stated that positions of Green Without Borders, which was supposedly established to protect the environment in Lebanon, provided cover for Hezbollah's underground warehouses and for its tunnels where weapons were stored, thereby preventing the UNIFIL force from verifying the implementation of Resolution 1701 (United States Treasury Department website, August 16, 2023).⁵

⁴ For further information, see the January 2019 ITIC report, "[End of Operation Northern Shield to expose and neutralize Hezbollah tunnels on Israel's northern border.](#)"

⁵ For further information, see the February 2020 ITIC report, "[Green Without Borders: a Lebanese environmental organization that collaborates with Hezbollah and supports its activity near the Israeli border.](#)"