



The Organizations Assisting Hezbollah in Combat Against Israel

August 29 , 2024

Overview¹

- ▶ On October 8, 2023, following the Hamas terrorist attack and massacre carried out the previous day, Hezbollah opened a front against Israel from Lebanon "in support of the Gaza Strip." Since the beginning of the fighting, Hamas, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Amal, al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyya, the Lebanese Resistance Brigades and the Syrian Social-Nationalist Party have joined Hezbollah in the fighting, to a greater or lesser degree.
- ▶ Unlike Hezbollah, which has so far claimed responsibility for more than 2,200 attacks, the auxiliary organizations have claimed responsibility for "only" a few dozens. Most were rocket fire targeting military and civilian sites in northern Israel, along with attempts to penetrate the border and exchanges of fire with IDF forces.
- ▶ Although there are ideological and religious differences between Hezbollah and most of the other organizations, they have been cooperating since the days of the Israeli presence in south Lebanon and the Second Lebanon War.
- ▶ **In ITIC assessment, the auxiliary organizations' operations are fully coordinated with Hezbollah, and sometimes they operate in concert. As long as the fighting between Israel and Lebanon is waged within the framework of the so-called "equations," Hezbollah can be expected to limit the organizations' activities. However, in the event of further escalation and an all-out war, Hezbollah will most likely loosen the reins and give them more freedom to attack Israeli territory, IDF forces and civilians.**

The Palestinian Organizations in Lebanon

Hammas

Order of combat and deployment

- ▶ The Hamas branch in Lebanon operates mainly in the -Burj al-Shemali and al-Buss Palestinian refugee camps near Tyre in south Lebanon, but it also has a presence in the Burj

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

al-Barajneh refugee camp in Beirut and the Ein al-Hilweh refugee camp near Sidon.² According to estimates, Hamas in Lebanon has about 1,500 fighters who underwent training in Iran (al-Sharq al-Awsat, April 15, 2023).

► According to reports, since October 7, 2023, Hamas has been recruiting more fighters in the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon (al-Jazeera, December 18, 2023). Senior Hamas operatives and senior Lebanese figures stated that in recent months hundreds of new operatives from 12 Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon joined the ranks of the Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades, Hamas' military wing. However, most of the recruits apparently remain in the camps to assist with local activities, and only occasionally go to the Israeli border region, usually to fire rockets. A New York Times correspondent who visited the Ein al-Hilweh refugee camp in Sidon reported seeing recruiting posters in the streets which offered training for the "new al-Aqsa generation" (New York Times, August 24, 2024).

► In December 2023, Hamas announced a new youth movement called "Pioneers of the al-Aqsa Flood" in the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, especially in Ein al-Hilweh. According to Hamas, its objective was to establish a cadre to serve as "a resistance vanguard force which will participate in the liberation of Jerusalem and al-Aqsa Mosque." In reality, the objective is to provide an organizational framework for ideological recruitment and to train young Palestinians in the refugee camps in Lebanon as terrorist operatives to fight Israel from the Lebanese border, following the model of youth movements of other terrorist organizations.³



A boy who joined "Pioneers of the al-Aqsa Flood" ("The 2006 war is remembered and will not be repeated" X account December 12, 2023)

² For further information, see the December 2021 ITIC report, "[The explosion of a weapons storehouse in the Burj al-Shemali refugee camp east of Tyre revealed the extent of Hamas' military presence in Lebanon.](#)"

³ For further information, see the December 2023 ITIC report, "[The Al-Aqsa Flood Pioneers A new youth movement established by Hamas in Lebanon to attack Israel.](#)"

Attacking Israel

► Since October 8, 2023, Hamas' military wing in Lebanon has claimed responsibility for 13 attacks on Israel, the two first of which were firing 15 rockets at the Western Galilee on October 10, 2023 and an attempted cross-border infiltration by three nakhba operatives on October 14, 2023. Their main activity has been firing concentrated rocket barrages at civilian and military targets, mainly in the Western Galilee, but also at more distant targets, including a 15 rocket attack on Haifa Bay on November 12, 2023. Hamas operatives also made attempts to infiltrate Israeli territory and shoot at IDF forces in the border regions.



Launching rockets at IDF posts and camps on the northern border (Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades Telegram channel, May 3, 2024).

The Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)

Order of combat and deployment

► The Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) has an active presence in the refugee camps in Lebanon and Syria. The networks are closely connected, operate together and can be regarded as a single unit. Their facilities include headquarters, offices, weapons and training bases. The ITIC does not have exact data on the number of PIJ operatives in south Lebanon, but according to the PIJ mourning notices for 23 of its operatives killed in the fighting, 19 belonged to the Syrian branch of the Jerusalem Brigades, the PIJ's military wing, and therefore it can be assumed that the organization relies mainly on moving manpower from Syria to south Lebanon.

Attacks on Israel

► Since the start of hostilities, the Jerusalem Brigades have carried out at least seven attacks, most of them attempts to infiltrate into Israeli territory while firing small arms at IDF forces. The Jerusalem Brigades' only claim of responsibility was issued on October 9, 2023, following an infiltration in the north of the country in which three IDF soldiers were killed. The PIJ confirmed that two of its operatives were killed (Jerusalem Brigades Telegram channel, October 9, 2023; Quds Agency, October 10, 2023). Regarding 18 other operatives, according to

reports they were killed while performing their "combat duty" or "jihad duty" on the border of "occupied Palestine," without specifying the circumstances.

Coordination between Hezbollah and the Palestinian organizations

► Cooperation between Hamas and Hezbollah has increased since 2017, when Yahya al-Sinwar was elected head of the Hamas political bureau in the Gaza Strip and worked to restore the movement's relations with Iran, Hezbollah and Syria, which had deteriorated after Hamas supported the uprising against the Assad regime in 2011. In addition, senior Hamas figures moved to Lebanon after being forced to leave Turkey, led by Saleh al-'Arouri, deputy chairman of the Hamas political bureau, who became Hamas' main liaison with Hezbollah. He held the position until he was eliminated in the Hezbollah stronghold of Dahiye al-Janoubia in southern Beirut on January 2, 2024. Six other Hamas terrorist operatives were killed in the attack, including Samir Fendi who was responsible for Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades activities in Lebanon (New Lines Magazine, November 3, 2023).⁴ PIJ leader Ziyad al-Nakhalah has also been living in Lebanon since he left Syria in 2011, and he maintains regular and close contact with the Hezbollah leadership.⁵

► Na'im Qassem, Hezbollah deputy secretary general, confirmed the existence of intelligence coordination between Hezbollah and Hamas during Operation Guardian of the Walls in May 2021 (al-Mayadeen, July 8, 2021). On June 29, 2021, the late Isma'il Haniyeh, head of Hamas' political bureau, met in Beirut with Hassan Nasrallah, Hezbollah secretary general, to sum up Operation Guardian of the Walls, and according to reports they noted that the depth of relations between Hezbollah and Hamas was essential for the "resistance axis"⁶ (al-Manar, June 29, 2021). On April 6, 2023, Hamas fired 34 rockets at Israel from south Lebanon, simultaneously with rocket fire attacking Israel from the Gaza Strip and southern Syria. The excuse for the rocket fire was the clashes between Israeli police officers and Palestinians in front of al-Aqsa Mosque, however, according to reports, the rocket fire was coordinated

⁴ For further information, see the November 2023 ITIC report, "[Profile of Saleh al-Arouri, a Senior Hamas Terrorist](#)," and the January 2024 report, "[Reactions to the killing of Saleh al-'Arouri](#)."

⁵ For further information, see the October 2018 ITIC report, "[Profile of Ziyad al-Nakhalah, the New Palestinian Islamic Jihad Leader](#)."

⁶ 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.

between Hamas, Hezbollah and Esmail Qaani, commander of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps' Qods Force.⁷

► "Palestinian sources" reported that after Operation al-Aqsa Flood began on October 7, 2023, Hamas and PIJ operatives in Lebanon moved to the south of the country under the auspices of Hezbollah (al-Sharq al-Awsat, October 15, 2023). Ihsan Ataya, who is head of the PIJ department for Arab and international affairs, a member of the political bureau and PIJ representative in Lebanon, said there was coordination between the "Palestinian resistance" and the "resistance axis" at the highest levels, especially Hezbollah, and that joint operations rooms had been established to monitor "the progress of the fighting from all angles" (al-'Ahed, October 26, 2023). Ibrahim al-Amin, editor-in-chief of the Hezbollah-affiliated Lebanese daily al-Akhbar, and who is considered close to Hassan Nasrallah, reported that a joint operations room of all "resistance axis" members had been established after October 7, 2023 for the daily coordination of the fighting on the ground as well as to coordinate strategic and political activity (al-Akhbar, October 20, 2023).

► On September 2, 2023, about a month before the Hamas terrorist attack and massacre of October 7, 2023, Hassan Nasrallah, Hezbollah secretary general, met with Saleh al-'Arouri, deputy head of Hamas' political bureau, and Ziyad al-Nakhalah, PIJ secretary general. According to reports they discussed the "firm, determined position of all the resistance axis forces in confronting the Zionist enemy" and the importance of "permanent daily coordination" of the entire "resistance" movement, especially in "Palestine" and Lebanon, during war as well (al-Manar, September 2, 2023). On October 25, 2023, Nasrallah, al-'Arouri and al-Nakhalah met and reportedly agreed to continue coordinating and monitoring developments on a regular, daily basis (al-Nashra, October 25, 2023). On May 15, 2024, Nasrallah met with a delegation of senior Hamas figures, which included Khalil al-Haya and Muhammad Nasr, both members of the Hamas political bureau, and Osama Hamdan, the ranking Hamas member in Lebanon. They reportedly discussed the latest events and developments in the Gaza Strip and Israel, and emphasized the unity and cooperation of the various arenas (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, May 15, 2024).

⁷ For further information, see the April 2023 ITIC report, "[Rocket Fire Targeting Israel](#)"



Right: al-'Arouri (right), Nasrallah and al-Nakhalah (left) (al-Manar, September 2, 2023).

Left: Nasrallah (second from the right) and the Hamas delegation (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, May 15, 2024)

- ▶ At the beginning of the war, Israel's security establishment identified Palestinian terrorist operatives, mostly from the PIJ, who operated as an organic force within Hezbollah's Radwan Force and wore Hezbollah uniforms. According to reports, Hezbollah added hundreds of PIJ terrorist operatives to its ranks to fight on the northern border (Israeli Kan 11 TV, February 13, 2024).
- ▶ On August 28, 2024, Faras Qassem, a senior PIJ terrorist operative, was eliminated in an Israeli Air Force aircraft attack on the Syria-Lebanon border. According to reports, he was responsible for formulating the operational plans of the PIJ in Syria and Lebanon and participated in recruiting Palestinian terrorist operatives for Hezbollah. It was reported that several other PIJ operatives en route to Lebanon to join Hezbollah were also killed (IDF spokesperson, August 28, 2024). The PIJ's military wing confirmed that Faras Hussein Qassem was killed with two other operatives from the Jerusalem Brigades' Syrian branch "while carrying out their jihad duty" (Jerusalem Brigades Telegram channel, August 28, 2024). Hezbollah also confirmed that one of its operatives was killed in the attack (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, August 28, 2024).

Activity decreases as the fighting progresses

- ▶ The vast majority of Hamas and the PIJ attacks targeting Israel from south Lebanon were carried out in the first months of the fighting, and a sharp decrease began in February 2024. The last Hamas claim of responsibility was issued on May 15, 2024, and the last PIJ claim on May 8, 2024.
- ▶ Ihsan Ataya, the PIJ representative in Lebanon, said that military operations depended on the close monitoring of the Israeli army patrols, their vehicles, soldiers and officers, to ensure they were in firing range, but the IDF forces had increased their precautionary measures on the northern border. He said no decision prevented the Palestinian "organizations" from

fighting the "enemy," they were prepared to attack any "enemy military target" and were fully coordinated with the "resistance" forces in south Lebanon. However he added, the fighting also continued in other arenas. Naji Malaeb, a Lebanese military expert, pointed out that the Palestinians' "limited weapons" had little effect on the fighting compared to Hezbollah's weapons. He added that Israel's intelligence and air superiority made it difficult for Palestinian "militants" to operate in south Lebanon. He also mentioned that the Palestinian organizations wanted to avoid giving Israel a reason to attack the refugee camps (al-Jazeera, February 17, 2024).

The Amal Movement⁸

Order of combat and deployment

► According to reports, Amal has more than 17,000 armed operatives, including 2,200 operatives in elite forces trained to carry out "takeover and sabotage" operations. The Amal forces are also reportedly responsible for protecting settlements and that each group is accompanied by a company of elite fighters (al-Mahatta YouTube channel, December 28, 2023). Since October 8, 2023, Amal has deployed its fighters along the entire length of the border, from al-Naqoura in the west to Mt. Hermon in the east (al-Nahar, November 2, 2023; al-Akhbar, February 6, 2024). Muhammad Khawaja, Amal faction representative in the Lebanese Parliament, claimed the movement had a presence "in all the villages on the southern border" (al-Sharq al-Awsat, February 5, 2024).

Attacks on Israel

► Amal does not provide details about its combat activities. So far, 20 Amal operatives have been reported killed in the fighting, but the circumstances were not reported, only that they were killed "while fulfilling their jihadist and national duty in the defense of Lebanon and the south" (al-Akhbar, February 6, 2024). According to reports, Amal attacked Israel with artillery and Katyusha and Grad rockets (al-Mahatta YouTube channel, December 28, 2023). Hashem Jaber, a retired lieutenant general in the Lebanese army, claimed Amal's combat activity was "limited and symbolic" compared to Hezbollah and carried out under Hezbollah aegis (al-Nahar, November 2, 2023).

⁸ The Amal movement (acronym Lebanese Resistance Brigades. *Amal* in Arabic means "hope.") is a secular Lebanese-Shi'ite movement, established in 1975 and having both political and military wings. The movement operates mainly in Beirut, in south Lebanon and Jebel Amal (Ramat Tibnin), in the Lebanon Valley, and Mount Lebanon.

Amal and Hezbollah connections

► Like Hezbollah, Amal is a Shiite movement. However, while Hezbollah is a religious organization operating according to the concepts and perceptions of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, Amal is more secular. Nevertheless, Amal and Hezbollah were closely allied politically, and were known in Lebanon as the "Shi'ite couple." Nabih Berri, the speaker of the Lebanese Parliament, Amal's leader, said the movement stood with Hezbollah in the defense of all Lebanese territories, but admitted that it did not have Hezbollah's military capabilities (Lebanese NBN network, February 4, 2024).

► Although Berri, as speaker of the Lebanese Parliament, is supposed to represent the interests of the entire Lebanese population, he is Hezbollah's official representative in the diplomatic talks currently being held, mainly with the United States and France, to end the fighting in south Lebanon and later to demark the Lebanon-Israel border. Berri himself said he was not afraid of his diplomatic role because diplomatic resistance was an essential part of the resistance (Lebanese NBN network, February 4, 2024).



Hassan Nasrallah and Nabih Berri (al-Nashra, October 25, 2016)

Al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya (The Islamic Group)⁹

Order of combat and deployment

► Al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya operates a military wing called the al-Fajr Forces. It was established in 1982 with the outbreak of the First Lebanon War and operated against the IDF in Lebanon until 2000, when the IDF withdrew from the country. The force was concentrated in and around Sidon, and in current assessment the situation has not changed (al-Jazeera, May 11, 2024).

⁹ An Islamic-Sunni movement established in 1964 as an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood in Lebanon. The movement, which advocates the implementation of Islamic Sharia law in Lebanon, has a presence in most regions of the country (al-Jazeera, May 11, 2024).

► Al-Fajr has about 500 operatives, but its potential for recruitment is high because of the economic hardships of the Sunni population in the north of the country (al-Hadath, June 22, 2024). A "source" in al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya confirmed that dozens of young men from Aqar and Tripoli in northern Lebanon have joined the al-Fajr Forces since the beginning of the fighting (Nidaa al-Watan, May 8, 2024). Muhammad Taqoush, movement's secretary general, stated that "after the forces announced their military activity, we noticed that many young people, enthusiastic about what was happening in Palestine, wanted to be a part of defeating the occupier and resisting the enemy, so they visited our centers and met with a number of commanders to express their desire to join to our ranks" (al-Nashra, October 27, 2023).



Al-Fajr operatives (Janoub360, April 30, 2024)

Attacks on Israel

► When the fighting began on October 8, 2023, Bassam Hammoud, the al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya political bureau's deputy head, called on its operatives to "seriously prepare to intervene in the war against Israel." He reported al-Fajr operatives were on standby in the border areas to counter any Israeli "aggression" against Lebanon (al-Nashra, October 9, 2023). The movement claimed responsibility for firing five rocket barrages at the Kiryat Shmona region between October 18, 2023 and January 6, 2024 (al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya website, October 18, 2023: January 6, 2024).

► While there have been no claims of responsibility since January 6, 2024, Bassam Hammoud stated that al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya had not stopped attacking, claiming that al-Fajr operatives were in the field and continued operations as usual. He added that they would "continue to resist until the liberation of Lebanese lands and victory in the Gaza Strip" (al-Jadeed, June 25, 2024).

Relations with Hamas

► Al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya and Hamas are both branches of the Muslim Brotherhood and therefore share a close ideological kinship, but their cooperation increased significantly after

the elections for the al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya Shura Council in September 2022, won by the faction led by Muhammad Taqoush and close to Hamas. According to reports, many senior al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya figures receive their salaries directly from Hamas (Asas Media, September 20, 2022).

► A "senior al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya figure" confirmed that the movement had been carrying out "joint combat operations" with Hamas in south Lebanon since October 8, 2023 (Arab News, March 28, 2024). Bassam Hammoud, deputy head of al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya, said that "we and Hamas are two sides of the same coin in the confrontation with the Zionist enemy" (al-Jazeera, January 4, 2024). However, he also said that despite their ideological similarity, they had different opinions regarding internal issues in the Palestinian and Lebanese arenas (AWP, July 27, 2024). According to Muhannad al-Hajj Ali, a researcher at the Malcolm H. Kerr Carnegie Middle East Center, al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya in fact operates as an affiliate of Hamas (al-Sharq al-Awsat, March 26, 2024).

► The similarity between al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya and Hamas is also reflected in the mourning notices for the ten al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya operatives killed in the fighting:

- ◆ The Israeli attack in Beirut on January 2, 2024, which eliminated Saleh al-'Arouri, deputy head of Hamas' political bureau, also killed Mahmoud Zaki Shahin and Mohammed Bashasha. Al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya confirmed that the two were operatives in its rank, and that Shahin was a commander (al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya website, January 4, 2024). A senior al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya figure stated that the two had been al-'Arouri's bodyguards (Arab News, March 28, 2024). The mourning notice for Bashasha's death was jointly issued by his family, al-Jamaa al-Islamiyya and Hamas, and showed the logos of both Hamas and al-Jamaa al-Islamiyya (saidaonline.com, January 4, 2024).



The announcement of Bashasha's death with the logos of Hamas (left) and al-Jamaa al-Islamiyya (saidaonline.com, January 4, 2024)

- ◆ On May 17, 2024, Sharhabil Ali al-Sayid was killed in an Israeli Air Force attack in the Lebanon Valley. The IDF spokesperson reported that al-Sayid had been a senior al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya operative in Lebanon and led many terrorist attacks on Israel in cooperation with Hamas in Lebanon (IDF spokesperson, May 17, 2024). He death was not mentioned on the al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya website in Lebanon, but the Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades, Hamas' military wing, announced he had been a commander in the organization (Shehab, May 17, 2024).
- ◆ On July 18, 2024, Muhammad Hamed Jabara, aka Abu Mahmoud, was killed in an Israeli Air Force attack in the Lebanon Valley. The IDF spokesperson stated he was a Hamas operative and responsible for promoting attacks and rocket fire from Lebanon, some in cooperation with al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya in Lebanon (IDF spokesperson, July 18, 2024). Al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya claimed him as a senior al-Fajr commander (al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya Telegram channel, July 18, 2024). Hamas' military wing referred to him as a "commander" (Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades Telegram channel, July 18, 2024). His coffin was draped with the flags of Lebanon, the al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya, the Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades and the Palestinian flag (Muhammad Abd al-Aziz-Gaza's X account, July 19, 2024). His ID and Lebanese internal security forces' cards (valid until April 5, 2028) were made public; he was a retired officer with the rank of deputy lieutenant. It has been claimed that Lebanon disguises terrorist operatives by providing them with identification from its internal security forces (Tanzim Thuwwar Lebanon X account , July 19, 2024).



Right to left: Al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya mourning notice for Jabara (al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya Telegram channel, July 18, 2024); Hamas mourning notice (Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades Telegram channel, July 18, 2024); Jabara's flag-draped coffin (Muhammad Abd al-Aziz-Gaza's X account, July 19, 2024); Jabara's Lebanese internal security forces retired officer's certificate and his identity card (Tanzim Thuwwar Lebanon X Account, July 19, 2024)

Connections with Hezbollah

- ▶ Despite the profound ideological differences between Sunni al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya and Shi'ite Hezbollah, they have cooperated in the past. Ibrahim al-Masri, one of al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya's founders, said that al-Fajr operatives participated in the fighting against Israel in south Lebanon in 1982 and "carried out resistance operations" in coordination with Hezbollah operatives, and since then had supported the organization (al-Arabiya, August 1, 2006).
- ▶ In recent years, al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya and Hezbollah have drifted apart. After the assassination of Rafiq al-Hariri, the former Lebanese prime minister, in February 2005, al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya joined the March 8 Camp of Hezbollah opponents, like most of the Sunni population in Lebanon. After the outbreak of the civil war in Syria in 2011, al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya supported the rebels, while Hezbollah assisted the Syrian army in its repression (L'Orient Today, November 2, 2023).
- ▶ After the election of Muhammad Taqoush as head of al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya in September 2022, Hamas-encouraged rapprochement between the organizations began, and Taqoush met with Hassan Nasrallah (Carnegie Endowment, October 17, 2022). He said, "We agree with Hezbollah on many issues, including fighting the Israeli enemy, and we disagree on other issues. We and Hezbollah are similar in many matters" (al-Akhbar, December 9, 2022).
- ▶ When the current fighting in south Lebanon began, Taqoush hinted at cooperation, or at least coordination, with Hezbollah. He pointed out that "there is no harm or embarrassment in coordinating with the Shi'ite resistance faction," and added that the operations of al-Fajr operatives on the Israel-Lebanon border were not coordinated with Hezbollah, but communication at the level of senior officials and operatives in the southern arena existed and was slowly increasing in order to identify targets and attack the "enemy" (al-Nashra, October 27, 2023). He added that "coordination with the Shi'ite Hezbollah is essential to fight Israel" (Arab News, March 26, 2024). Bassem Hammoud, deputy head of al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya's political bureau, stated that fighting Israel "requires closing ranks, unifying positions and coordinating on the ground," despite the fact that there were still differences regarding internal Lebanese politics (AWP, July 27, 2024).
- ▶ On June 28, 2024, Hassan Nasrallah met with Muhammad Taqoush, and they agreed that the "resistance" forces had to continue cooperating in order to support the Gazans (al-Akhbar, June 28, 2024). According to reports, the meeting provided a basis for new relations between the movements, after for years al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya had belonged to the camp opposed to

Hezbollah in Lebanon. A "senior al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya source" said that the objective of the meeting was to establish cooperation and coordination for the purpose of managing the campaign in south Lebanon, but he had reservations regarding a future political alliance between the parties because of Hezbollah's involvement in the war in Syria and negative behavior towards Sunnis in Lebanon (al-Sharq al-Awsat, June 28, 2024).



Nasrallah meets with Taqoush (al-Akhbar Telegram channel, June 28, 2024)

► According to a "source" in north Lebanon, Hezbollah and al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya need each other, since Hezbollah needs a Sunni faction to refute the claims that it decided on its own to take Lebanon on a "combat adventure" and that the other sectors of the Lebanese population were not part of the decision. Al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyya exploited Hezbollah's decision to attack Israel from south Lebanon to regain a popular base in areas where it previously operated at the parliamentary and public level (Nidaa al-Watan, May 8, 2024).

The Lebanese Resistance Brigades¹⁰

Order of combat and deployment

► According to "sources," the Lebanese Resistance Brigades have more than 10,000 fighters, most of them Sunni. It was also reported that since the beginning of the fighting in south Lebanon, its operatives were in the rear posts on the border and worked in the field of logistical support (MTV, July 16, 2024).

Attacks on Israel

► On July 15, 2024, the Lebanese Resistance Brigades stated that since the beginning of the fighting in south Lebanon on October 8, 2023, the organization's operatives had been present in the field and carried out logistical support missions which had claimed dead and wounded. However, in view of the developments on the ground, they announced they were also engaged in "directly dealing with any threat," and wanted to convey the message that the Lebanese

¹⁰ An arm of Hezbollah established in 1997 to attract non-Shi'ite fighters to the organization.

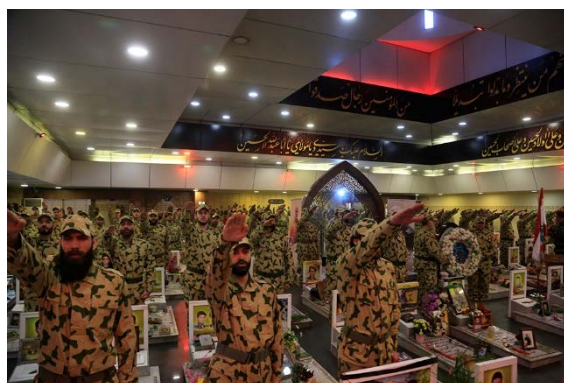
people would not waive their right to defend their land and sovereignty, and that Lebanese youth would not remain neutral to threats. The organization also claimed to be highly prepared to deal with any threat or "foolish attempt by the enemy" (al-Mayadeen, July 15, 2024).

► A "senior source" in the Lebanese Resistance Brigades stated that they joined the fighting on October 10, 2023, along with the "resistance" in south Lebanon, and that they were effectively involved on the "frontline of the confrontation with the Zionist enemy on the ground to confront and protect Lebanon." "The source" claimed the Brigades were a "parallel deterrent force" to Hezbollah, but rejected the claims that they might replace Hezbollah fighters if the latter had to retreat to the north of the Litani River after the war, with the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1701 (al-Nabā', Kuwait, July 17, 2024).

► So far, the organization has claimed responsibility for two attacks:

- ◆ July 12, 2024: A rocket attack on an IDF post. According to a Lebanese Resistance Brigades' operations room statement to the Israeli "occupation," the objective of the attack was to support the Palestinian people and protect Lebanon. It was also carried out to mark the 18th anniversary of the Second Lebanon War and the organization's commitment "to continue the resistance until victory and liberation" (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, July 12, 2024).

- ◆ July 19, 2024: An anti-tank missile and artillery attack on an IDF post (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, July 19, 2024).



Lebanese Resistance Brigades terrorist operatives
(Right: al-'Ahed, February 14, 2020. Left: al-Mayadeen, July 13, 2024)

The Syrian Social-Nationalist Party¹¹

¹¹ The Syrian Social-Nationalist Party was founded in the 1930s by the Lebanese Anton Saada under the influence of fascist right-wing circles in Europe and established itself in Lebanon and Syria. Its secular-

Order of combat and deployment

- ▶ The Syrian Social Nationalist Party operates a military wing called Eagles of the Storm, which was established in 1974 and participated in the civil war in Lebanon and in fighting against the IDF forces and the South Lebanese army. In 1985 was also responsible for the first suicide bombing attack carried out by a woman. During the Syrian Civil War, its military wing helped the Assad regime and the forces loyal to it against the rebels, and then participated alongside them in the fight against ISIS (Clingendael, January 2019).
- ▶ The Eagles of the Storm are estimated to have between 6,000 and 8,000 operative, most of them Christians but some Sunni and Shi'ite Muslims. The party is active in various areas in Lebanon and in the rural areas of Homs and Hamat in Syria (Foreign Policy, March 28, 2016).
- ▶ In March 2023, Rabi' Banat, the party president, announced a "return to the jihad arena." Maher al-Dana, head of media relations, said they had decided "to confront Israel" and accused that the previous party leadership party of "preferring political and government jobs at the expense of the resistance activity in the south" (Nidaa al-Watan, April 7, 2023). On May 29, 2023, a high-ranking delegation of the party's leadership visited an Eagles' military site in south Lebanon near the Israeli border to examine the combat readiness of its operatives (Lebanese News Agency, May 29, 2023).

Attacks on Israel

- ▶ On October 7, 2023, the party congratulated Hamas for its attack on Israel and claimed that Operation al-Aqsa Flood established an equation of "the unity of the arenas" and united the fronts of the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, South Lebanon and the Golan Heights. They noted their "absolute readiness" to participate in the fighting and announced that they were on full alert (al-Jadid, October 7, 2023).
- ▶ On October 8, 2023, the Eagles of the Storm issued a video of anti-tank missiles being prepared for launch. The caption read, "When determination combines with the will to resist, you will find our eagles soaring over the south to free Palestine together, all of Palestine, from

nationalist ideology that does not recognize the state borders of the Sykes-Picot Agreement and regards Syrians ("sons of Greater Syria") as belonging to a superior Syrian race. The symbol of the organization is a stylized swastika, and its pro-fascist operatives use the Nazi "Sieg heil" salute.

[...] the occupier." They also wrote, "We promise and pledge to you that the struggle will continue until victory and liberation" (Eagles of the Storm X account, October 8, 2023).



An operative next to an anti-tank missile (Eagles of the Storm X account, October 8, 2023)

- ▶ Rabi' Banat, the party president, claimed the "resistance" in Lebanon, including the Eagles of the Storm, was ready to "follow what the resistance started in Palestine." Amer al-Tal, head of the party's supreme council, said the party was " fully prepared to prepare the Eagles for entering the jihad arena" (Party website, October 12, 2023).
- ▶ "Senior sources" in the party claimed the Eagles had been present in south Lebanon "since the 1990s," and that the party had "centers whose sole purpose is to protect the honor of our nation" (Sada Wadi al-Tim, December 15, 2023).
- ▶ In July 2024, Rabi' Banat reported that its operatives would remain "at the forefront of the fight against the enemy" and that "the jihad arena will not lose its Eagle friends" (Party website, July 23, 2024).
- ▶ The Syrian Social-Nationalist Party and its military wing have not claimed responsibility for direct attacks on Israel, but the reports of the only two Eagles of the Storm casualties indicate that they were on the front lines in south Lebanon. According to the mourning notice for Wissam Salim, the first terrorist operative to be killed, he died "at point-blank range while performing his national duty in south Lebanon" (Party website, December 15, 2023). According to the mourning notice for Ibrahim Akram al-Musawi, the second terrorist operative to be killed, he "performed his national duty in south Lebanon in resistance at point-blank range" (the party's website, July 22, 2024).

Connections with Hezbollah

- ▶ The Eagles of the Storm and Hezbollah have had long-standing cooperation since the period of fighting the IDF in south Lebanon, then in the Second Lebanon War in 2006 and in the armed conflicts between Hezbollah and the Sunni militias in Lebanon in 2008. The cooperation continued during the Syrian Civil War, when Hezbollah operatives provided Eagles' operatives

with military training (Foreign Policy, March 28, 2016). Maher al-Dana, head of media relations, stated that the Eagles of the Storm and Hezbollah had a "partnership in blood" (Nidaa al-Watan, April 7, 2023).

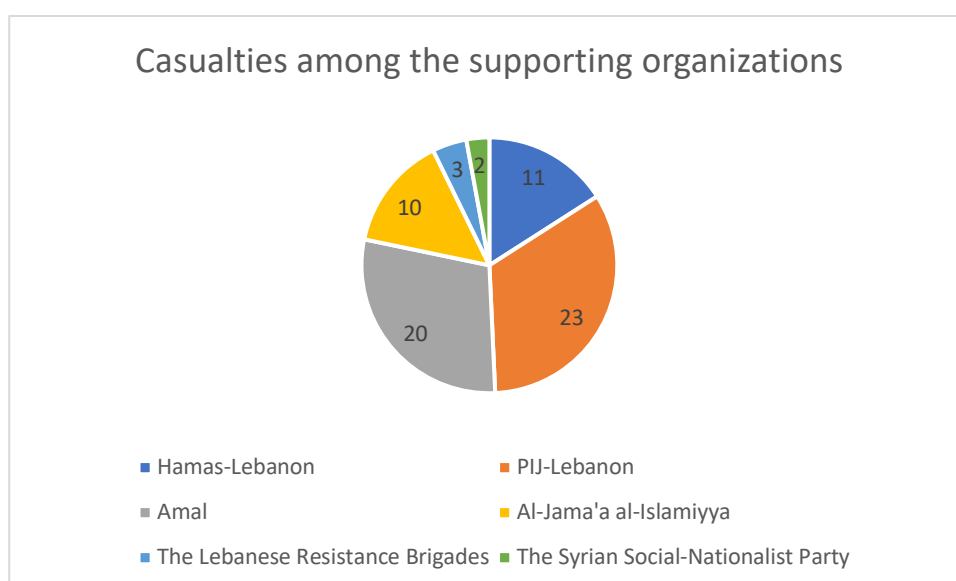
► Their coordination continues in the current fighting in south Lebanon. According to reports, Wissam Salim, the Eagles' first casualty, was killed in December 2023 by an Israeli attack on "a group of resistance fighters operating against enemy positions on the southern border," while Hezbollah also announced that one of its operatives had been killed in the same attack (al-Akhbar, December 16, 2023) .

► During Salim's funeral, Rabi' Banat, the Party president, thanked Hassan Nasrallah, calling him "the master of the resistance and the leader of the axis."¹² He praised Nasrallah for his "tremendous effort in managing this war in all its political, military, strategic, social and cultural aspects" (Party website, December 16, 2023).

► Maher al-Dana, head of media relations, said they had established a joint operations room which coordinated the activities of all the "resistance" organizations operating in south Lebanon. He called coordination with Hezbollah "great, both in details and in the whole plan" (al-'Ahed, December 19, 2023).

Appendix A: Casualties

► Between beginning of the fighting on October 8, 2023 and August 29, 2024, Hezbollah reported 419 operatives killed. The six organizations supporting Hezbollah reported 69 operatives killed:



¹² 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.

Appendix B: Claims of Responsibility

Hamas-Lebanon

- ◆ October 10, 2023: A "concentrated" launch of rockets targeting the Western Galilee (Hamas Telegram channel, October 10, 2023).
- ◆ October 15, 2023: Twenty rockets fired at Shlomi and Nahariya (Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades Telegram channel, December 25, 2023).
- ◆ October 19, 2023: A barrage of thirty rockets fired at Nahariya, Shlomi and the Western Galilee (Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades Telegram channel, October 19, 2023).
- ◆ November 2, 2023: Twelve rockets fired at Kiryat Shmona and its surroundings (Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades Telegram channel, November 2, 2023).
- ◆ November 6, 2023: Twelve rockets fired at Nahariya and northern Haifa (Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades Telegram channel, November 6, 2023).
- ◆ November 12, 2023: Rocket barrages fired at northern Haifa, Shlomi and Nahariya (Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades Telegram channel, November 12, 2023).
- ◆ December 25, 2023: Rocket barrage fired at the Western Galilee (Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades Telegram channel, December 25, 2023).
- ◆ January 17, 2024: Twenty rockets fired at the Upper Galilee (Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades Telegram channel, January 17, 2024).
- ◆ February 28, 2024: Barrage of 40 Grad rockets fired at the Western Galilee (Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades Telegram channel, February 28, 2024).
- ◆ April 21, 2024: Twenty Grad rockets fired at the Upper Galilee (Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades Telegram channel, April 21, 2024).
- ◆ April 29, 2024: "Concentrated" rocket barrages fired at the Upper Galilee (Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades Telegram channel, April 29, 2024).
- ◆ May 15, 2024: "Concentrated" rocket barrages fired at the Western Galilee (Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades Telegram channel, May 15, 2024).
- ◆ July 20, 2024: Barrage of rockets at the Upper Galilee (Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades Telegram channel, July 20, 2024).

PIJ-Lebanon

► On October 9, 2023, the PIJ claimed responsibility for the infiltration of a squad of terrorist operatives from Lebanese territory into Israel and shooting at IDF forces. Three IDF soldiers were killed; two PIJ were killed (RT network in the Arabic language, October 9, 2023).

Al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya

- ◆ October 18, 2023: Rockets fired at "the positions of the Zionist enemy in the occupied territories" (al-Akhbar, October 18, 2023).
- ◆ January 5, 2024: Two rocket barrages fired at Kiryat Shmona (al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya website, January 6, 2024).

The Lebanese Resistance Brigades

- ◆ July 12, 2024: Rockets fired at an IDF post to mark the 18th anniversary of the Second Lebanon War (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, July 12, 2024).
- ◆ July 19, 2024: Anti-tank missiles launched and artillery fired at an IDF post (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, July 19, 2024).