



Israeli Attack in Beirut Eliminates Hassan Nasrallah

September 30, 2024

Overview¹

- ▶ On September 27, 2024, the IDF eliminated Hassan Nasrallah, secretary general of Hezbollah, in an attack on the organization's headquarters under a residential building in the southern suburb of Beirut. Other senior Hezbollah terrorists were killed, including Ali Karaki, commander of the "southern front." Lebanese authorities claimed that hundreds of people were trapped under the rubble.
- ▶ Hezbollah confirmed the death of Nasrallah, nicknamed "Master of the Resistance," calling him "one of its greatest leaders," and its leadership promised to continue the jihad in support of the Gaza Strip and in the "defense of Lebanon," and also confirmed the death of Ali Karaki. Meanwhile, Hezbollah continued attacking Israel, mostly civilian targets, but did not link the attacks to Nasrallah's death. **At this stage, Hezbollah continues attacking and expanding its firing range.**
- ▶ The Hezbollah-affiliated media outlets reported that Israel's escalation had ended the possibility of diplomatic settlement in south Lebanon, adding that Hezbollah would not stop attacking Israel as part of the "front supporting the Gaza Strip."
- ▶ Senior Iranian figures condemned the killing of Nasrallah, saying they stood with Hezbollah and Lebanon, but did not threaten a direct military response, although they are probably considering one. Other organizations in the "resistance axis"² expressed condolences on Nasrallah's death and praised his role in "the struggle" against Israel. The pro-Iranian militias in Iraq intensified their attacks on Israel.
- ▶ Lebanese politicians, even his political opponents, eulogized Nasrallah, and the Shi'ite community in Lebanon mourned his death and expressed their willingness to continue fighting Israel. However, opponents of Hezbollah in Lebanon and across the Middle East took to the social media to rejoice, while asking whether the Lebanese authorities would use the

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 Iran, Syria, Hezbollah, the Palestinian terrorist organizations, the Shi'ite Houthis in Yemen and the pro-Iranian militias in Iraq.

opportunity to enforce their authority. In Syria, opponents of the regime celebrated the death of Nasrallah, who had been a close ally of President Assad.

► **In ITIC assessment, eliminating Nasrallah and the Hezbollah senior military leadership in recent weeks, along with the IDF's ongoing and increasing damage to the organization's chain of command and its military and strategic capabilities throughout Lebanon, has damaged Hezbollah's ability to carry out intensive attacks on Israel, at least in the short term. However, field-level commanders will try to attack more distant targets in Israeli territory, including the greater Tel Aviv area and strategic sites.**

► **Nasrallah's most probable successor is Hashem Safi al-Din, the chairman of Hezbollah's Executive Council, who is close to Iran. Apparently Hezbollah will reorganize its ranks with Iranian coordination and assistance and will continue fighting against Israel, partly for survival, and will continue to connect its fighting to the fighting in the Gaza Strip. Hezbollah may also seek to intensify the fighting and expand its firing range after Nasrallah's funeral to exact a price from Israel and be able to present a "victory narrative," and may attack an Israeli target abroad.**

► **In ITIC assessment, any Hezbollah decision regarding a coordinated and extensive response, independently or in coordination with the other "resistance axis" organizations, depends on Iran. So far, Iran has not announced its intention to respond directly to the deaths of Nasrallah and the commander of the Qods Force in Lebanon, since it has to process events and prepare accordingly, while trying to avoid a regional war. In addition, the president of Iran wants to renew talks with the West regarding the nuclear issue to ease international sanctions. Iran still has not responded to the killing of Isma'il Haniyeh, head of Hamas' political bureau, on its territory, and if it also delays its response to the killing of Nasrallah, who is considered the second most important "resistance" leader, its influence within the "resistance axis" may be compromised and its other organizations might respond independently. Those organizations can be expected to increase their attempts to attack Israel, continuing the current policy and in support of Hezbollah.**

► **In ITIC assessment, Nasrallah's absence, after 32 years as leader of Hezbollah, can have far-reaching consequences throughout the Middle East. For Lebanon, it can mean an opportunity for the government and military to reinstate their authority (with international assistance) in south Lebanon. It may also have an impact on Lebanon's**

political system, after Hezbollah prevented the country from electing a new president for more than a year. In the Gaza Strip, it might influence Yahya al-Sinwar, head of the Hamas political bureau in the Gaza Strip, to reach an agreement for a ceasefire and release the hostages.

►Meanwhile, international efforts, led by the United States continue for a ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah, alongside efforts to convince Israel not to carry out a land maneuver in south Lebanon.

Israel Attacks Nasrallah and Hezbollah Headquarters

►On September 27, 2024, at around 6:27 p.m., Israeli Air Force aircraft struck the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia, Beirut's southern suburb (al-Manar, September 27, 2024). According to the latest update from the Lebanese ministry of health (September 28, 2024, as of 4:11 p.m.), 11 people were killed and 108 wounded in the attacks (NBN Lebanon, September 28, 2024). According to another report, more than 400 people were trapped under the rubble (NNA, September 28, 2024).



Right: The attack on Hezbollah's central headquarters in Beirut (Manshoor's X account, September 27, 2024). Left: A crater resulting from the attack (Rkzasafari's X account, September 29, 2024)

IDF announcement

►The IDF spokesperson confirmed that Hassan Nasrallah, secretary general of Hezbollah, was killed in an Israeli Air Force strike in Beirut on September 27, 2024. The attack targeted Hezbollah's central headquarters under a residential building in the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia, where the organization's leadership was meeting to coordinate terrorist activity against Israel. According to the IDF spokesperson, during Nasrallah's 32 years as head of Hezbollah, he was responsible for the murder of large numbers of Israeli civilians and soldiers and the planning and execution of thousands of terrorist acts against the State of Israel and around

the world. He added that Nasrallah either made or approved of all strategic and internal decisions, and sometimes tactical decisions as well, and that Hezbollah's joining the fighting against Israel on October 8, 2023, dragged Lebanon and the entire region into an escalation of the hostilities (IDF spokesperson, September 28, 2024).



Nasrallah's "IDF card" (IDF spokesperson, September 28, 2024)

► Ali Karaki, Hezbollah's commander of the "southern front" [i.e., the Israeli border], was also killed in the attack. He joined Hezbollah in the 1980s, was one of the leaders of its terrorist activity in south Lebanon. Appointed commander of the front in 2007, he was also a member of Hezbollah's Jihad Council. According to the IDF, he stockpiled munitions in south Lebanon and stationed thousands of terrorist operatives along the border, while leading the efforts to establish Hezbollah within the civilian fabric in south Lebanon, turning local residents into human shields. From the beginning of the fighting he commanded rocket fire and the launching of anti-tank missiles and UAVs into Israeli territory, killing civilians and soldiers. On September 23, 2024, he escaped from an Israeli Air Force strike on an apartment in the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia (IDF spokesperson, September 28, 2024).



Hezbollah's chain of military command after the elimination of Nasrallah (IDF spokesperson, September 28, 2024)

►The attack on Hezbollah headquarters killed more than 20 other terrorist operatives of various ranks (IDF spokesperson, September 29, 2024):

- ◆ Ibrahim Hussein Jazini, head of Nasrallah's security unit.
- ◆ Samir Tawfiq Dib, advisor to Nasrallah for many years, including in matters of terrorism.
- ◆ Abd al- Amir Muhammad Sablini, responsible for Hezbollah's military buildup.
- ◆ Ali Na'af Ayyub, responsible for ballistic management.



The location of Hezbollah's central headquarters, near schools (IDF spokesperson, September 29, 2024)

►The attack on the Hezbollah headquarters followed an increase in Israeli Air Force attacks on Hezbollah targets in Lebanon: on September 20, 2024, Ibrahim Aqil, the head of Hezbollah's operations and commander of the Radwan Force, and high-ranking Radwan Force officers, were eliminated in an attack on the Dahiye al-Janoubia. On September 23, 2024, the IDF launched Operation Northern Arrows, which included attacks on Hezbollah's military infrastructure in various areas throughout Lebanon and targeted attacks on senior Hezbollah terrorist operatives.³

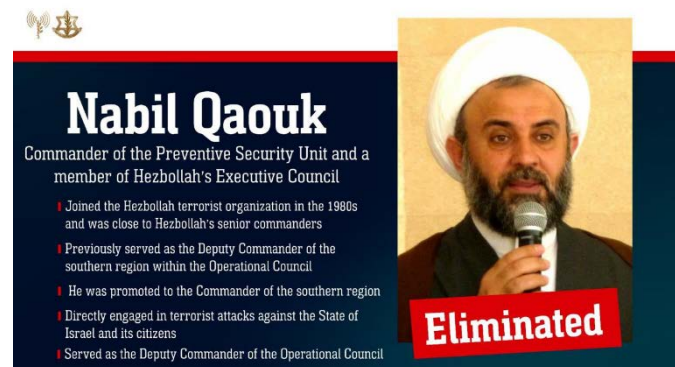
►After the elimination of Nasrallah, the Israeli Air Force continued attacking Hezbollah targets in the Dahiye al-Janoubia and throughout Lebanon:

- ◆ The Air Force attacked warehouses housing Hezbollah's strategic shore to sea missiles hidden under six civilian buildings in the southern district of Beirut. The IDF spokesperson reported that the Iranian-made missiles had a range of hundreds of kilometers and were intended to threaten the freedom of international navigation and Israel's strategic assets (IDF spokesperson, September 28, 2024).
- ◆ Hassan Khalil Yassin, a senior member of Hezbollah's intelligence headquarters, was killed in an attack on the Dahiye al-Janoubia. He was responsible for marking military

³ For further information, see the September 2024 ITIC report, "[Operation Northern Arrows](#)."

and civilian targets in Israeli territory for Hezbollah attacks and worked closely with the organization's rocket and missile units (IDF spokesperson, September 28, 2024).

◆ Nabil Qaouk, in charge of Hezbollah's preventive security, was killed in an attack on the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia. He joined Hezbollah in the 1980s and was previously responsible for operations in south Lebanon, was a member of Hezbollah's Central Council and of its Jihad Council, and was one of Hezbollah's most prominent spokesmen (IDF spokesperson, September 29, 2024).



Nabil Qaouk's "ID" (IDF spokesperson, September 29, 2024)

Hezbollah announcements

►After the attack on Hezbollah's headquarters, a "source close to Hezbollah" claimed that Nasrallah "was in good condition" (Agence France-Presse, September 27, 2024). Iranian media quoted "security sources" claiming Nasrallah was "in a safe place" (Tasnim, September 27, 2024).

►On September 28, 2024, at 2:30 p.m., Hezbollah officially announced the death of Hassan Nasrallah. The announcement called him the "Master of the Resistance," the highest title given to one of the Hezbollah casualties since the beginning of the current conflict on October 8, 2023, claiming he was a "great martyr" and a "martyr on the way to Jerusalem and Palestine," similar to the other Hezbollah casualties in the conflict, with the exception of the word "Palestine." He was called "a brave, wise and sensible leader who joined the shaheed convoy from Karbala" and was "one of its greatest leaders," adding that his leadership promised that "Hezbollah would continue the jihad, in support of Gaza and in the defense of Lebanon." Hezbollah offered its "condolences to Ali Khamenei, the leader of Iran, to all the organization's activists [sic], to the Lebanese people as well as to the noble family of Nasrallah." However, exceptionally, a poster with Nasrallah's picture was not published (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, September 28, 2024).

بيان صادر عن حزب الله:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 (قُلْتُمْ لَنْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يَخْتَارُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا بِالْآخِرَةِ وَمَنْ يُقَالِ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فُتِنًا أَوْ يُغْتَابَ
 مَشْرُوفًا لِيُزَيِّجَهُمْ الْوَلَدَ عَظِيمًا)
 صلى الله عليه وسلم
 سعادة السيد سيب المصطفى، العبد المتواضع، العبد المتواضع، انتقل إلى جوار ربّه ورضوانه شهيداً حقيقياً في يومه
 الثلاثاء 28 من شهر ربيع الأول سنة 1446 هـ، بقائه شهيداً، إرثاً الثورية العظيمة في المسيرة الأبدية
 الإيمانية على خطى الأئمة والشهداء العظماء.
 لقد التحق سعادة السيد محسن نصر الله الأمين العام لحزب الله برفاقه الشهداء العظام المحاضرين الذين
 قاد مسيرهم نحو من تأسس بمثلهم، فإذ ظهر عليه من تميز إلى عدم صفتهم سيّد الشهداء الطامعة
 الإنسانية عام 1992 حين تخرج من لبنان، وفي العام 2000 وفي اليوم الأخير من 2006 وسار بخلاف الظروف
 والظلم، وحرباً إلى معركة الإسراء والبطولة دعا للثقلين جزة والشعب الفلسطيني المستلهم.
 إننا نعتز صاحب العزم والزميل (رحم) وولي أمر المسلمين الإمام السيد علي الخامنئي دام ظلّه
 والمراجع العظام والمجاهدين والمؤمنين وامة المقاومة وشعبنا اللبناني الصابر والمجاهد وائمة
 الإسلامية جمعاء ونية الأحرار والمستضعفين في العالم، وثالثه الطريقة المباركة، وفكرت لسياسة
 الأمن العام لحزب الله السيد محسن نصرالله رضوان الله عليه، فله أربع الأوصاف الأربعة: وسام الأمان
 الحبيب، عليه السلامي، محققاً أعلى آمانيه وأسمى مراتب الإيمان والكفيلة الخاصة، شهدنا على طريق
 القدس والسلمين، وعزى وداراه برفاقه الشهداء الذين انتقروا بركة الظاهر والمقدس إلى العزة
 الجمهورية العذراء على التضحية الجهورية.
 إن قيادة حزب الله تعاهد الشهيد الأسمى والأقدس والأعلى في مسيرتنا المليئة بالتضحيات والشهداء
 أن نواصل جهادها في مواجهة العدو وأساتذ الثورة فلسطين، ودفناً عن لبنان وشعبه الصائم
 والشريفة.
 وإلى الشاهدين الشرفاء وأبطال المقاومة الإسلامية المنظرين والمؤمنين وأتمن أمنية السيد الشهيد
 العزيم، وقاتل يوفيه الذي تميز بجمعة المحمية برواج المقاومة، ونعتنا أن قائدنا سعادة السيد محسن
 نبينا بكارة وورثه ووجهه ووجهه المقاسب، وأنتم على عهد الأوفاء والألزام بالمقاومة والأصحية حتى
 الانتصار.
 السبت 9-28 2024
 24 ربيع الأول 1446 هـ

Hezbollah's mourning notice for Hassan Nasrallah (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, Sept. 28, 2024)

- On September 29, 2024, a "source close to Hezbollah" confirmed that Nasrallah's body had been retrieved from under the rubble the previous day, had been purified and wrapped in a shroud for the funeral. According to the report, the body was not hit directly, but was probably killed by the force of the explosion (al-Jazeera, September 29, 2024).
- On September 29, 2024, Hezbollah announced of the death of "the commander of the great jihad," al-Hajj Ali Karaki, aka Abu al-Faisal, who was killed along with "the greatest of leaders," Hassan Nasrallah, and a group of his "brother jihad fighters." According to the announcement, Karaki had commanded the "southern front" since 1996 and fought against Israel until the IDF withdrew from south Lebanon in 2000, and during the war in 2006. He was "directly responsible and on the ground" for leading the "southern front" with all the "resistance units" as part of the "support front" since October 8, 2023 (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, September 29-30, 2024).
- Hezbollah announced the death of Sheikh Nabil Qawak, prefacing his name with an Islamic honorific. According to reports, he "had many organizational responsibilities in the various units of Hezbollah, was been trusted, was a scholar and a great jihadist, and was always present in the jihad arenas " (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, September 29, 2024).
- Since the September 27 attack on the Dahiye al-Janoubia, Hezbollah has claimed responsibility for attacking 26 targets in Israel, most of them civilian. According to Hezbollah, the attacks were in support of the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and in response to Israeli attacks on civilians in Lebanon, but no mention was made of the elimination of Nasrallah and the organization's other leaders (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, September 27-29, 2024).

Nasrallah's successor

► Hezbollah has not yet announced Nasrallah's successor, but the most logical candidate would be Hashem Safi al-Din, Nasrallah's cousin, who has headed the organization's Executive Committee since 1994 and is one of the seven members of Hezbollah's Shura Council. He oversaw Hezbollah's day-to-day civilian administrative operations, especially managing institutions and finances, while Nasrallah handled strategic and military issues. He is also very close to the Iranian regime and his daughter is married to the son of the late Qassem Soleimani, commander of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps' Qods Force (Sky News, September 28, 2024).

► According to the lone precedent, when Abbas Mousawi, Hezbollah's previous secretary general, was eliminated by Israel in 1992, Hassan Nasrallah was appointed as his replacement while he headed Hezbollah's Executive Council.

► According to reports on September 29, 2024, Shura Council chose Hashem Safi al-Din as Hezbollah's new secretary general (al-Hadath, September 29, 2024). Hezbollah added that official announcements from the organization regarding the organization's leadership should be awaited (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel September 30, 2024).



Hashem Safi al-Din (al-Manar, November 30, 2023)

Probable and possible consequences

► After the attack on the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia and before Nasrallah's death was officially announced, the Hezbollah-affiliated Lebanese daily *al-Akhbar* published a series of articles entitled, "This is total war." According to one, "Israel has taken another step towards total war, even disregarding the latest attack, and the enemy has continued to escalate its aggression out of a desire to push the conflict towards a level similar to the Gaza Strip." It was also stated that the Israeli escalation in the last two weeks, and especially the attack on Hezbollah headquarters, "closed the door to any kind of future settlement," whether directly

or through American mediation, and "Lebanon and the region have entered a new phase in the conflict which will change the face of the entire region" (*al-Akhbar*, September 28, 2024).

► Ibrahim al-Amin, *al-Akhbar's* editor-in-chief, who was considered close to Nasrallah, published an article entitled "We will continue!" in which he stated that Nasrallah "knew all along the price and the sacrifice required of him," and that he "wasn't worried about himself nor did he tremble at any talk of his death at any time." According to al-Amin, Nasrallah followed the events on October 7, 2023, from the first minute, immediately deciding that "the Gaza Strip must not be left alone" and ordered the opening of the "aid front." Al-Amin claimed Nasrallah had prevented his operatives from using the weapons they were keeping for a total war against Israel, even though he knew that "the price would be high." In his assessment, the meeting during which Nasrallah was killed had dealt with Hezbollah's response to the Israeli escalation of the past two weeks. He wrote that "the resistance" was facing unprecedented challenges in its civil-organizational and operational-military fields, and "the enemy will not be deterred from carrying out more massacres [sic] unless the resistance is effective." He called on Hezbollah operatives to be patient, saying, "the Great Master has friends in Lebanon, in the region and in the world, and now they have only one slogan: We will continue" (*al-Akhbar*, September 29, 2024).

Reactions in Lebanon

Formal reactions

► Najib Mikati, prime minister of the Lebanese interim government, ended his visit to the UN General Assembly prematurely and returned to Lebanon. He declared three days of mourning, between September 30 and October 2, 2024 (Lebanese News Agency, September 28-29 2024).

► After his return to Lebanon, Mikati convened an emergency meeting of the government and the heads of the security establishment. The meeting began with a minute of silence in memory of Nasrallah "who died in the genocidal war [sic] started by the Zionist enemy in Lebanon." Mikati noted that in light of the "horror imposed on our homeland, this is not the time to talk, we must confront the events, we have a national responsibility," and called to "put aside the differences and unite to defend the nation." He apologized for "the government's limited ability to meet all the needs of the residents in the areas where the attacks exceeded all expectations" (Lebanese prime minister's X account, September 28, 2024).

►Nabih Berri, the speaker of the Lebanese Parliament and head of the Shi'ite Amal Movement, called Nasrallah "my brother" and said "this was the first time you broke a promise and left us without setting a date." Berri, who did not hide that emotions were "choking" him, referred to their long acquaintance and said that "no mountain separated us [sic]." He added that "the words that can be said in farewell to you remain small compared to your stature and your turban and cannot describe your love for your homeland" (al-'Ahed, September 28, 2024). According to the Amal Movement mourning notice, "the loss of Nasrallah will not harm the will of the resistance fighters to continue to defend Lebanon from Zionist terrorism and we will continue to work shoulder to shoulder in the defense of Lebanon" (*al-Nashra*, September 28, 2024).

►The Lebanese army called the Lebanese to "maintain national unity and not be dragged into actions that could harm civil peace," adding that "the enemy army is promoting plans and working to divide the Lebanese people." The army said that "it will continue to take necessary security measures and fulfill its duty in defending the Lebanese" (Lebanese army X account, September 29, 2024).

►Michel Aoun, the former president of Lebanon, called Nasrallah "an extraordinary leader, a man of truth, on the path of victory and liberation." He added that he had lost "an honorable friend whom I met many times" (*al-Nashra*, September 28, 2024)

►Saad al-Hariri, former Lebanese prime minister, whose father Rafik al-Hariri was murdered by Hezbollah in 2005, said that killing Nasrallah was "a completely cowardly act that ushered Lebanon and the region into a new phase of violence." He admitted that he and Nasrallah had disagreed many times, but said that "Lebanon has always been a home for everyone." He added that only through unity would it be possible to preserve Lebanon as a homeland for all its inhabitants, and therefore everyone had to rise above their differences of opinion and sectarian interests (*al-Nashra*, September 28, 2024).

►Walid Jumblatt, the veteran Druze leader, said that Nasrallah and his companions had joined "the long convoy of martyrs on the way to Palestine" (al-Manar, September 28, 2024).

►Al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya, the branch of the Muslim Brotherhood in Lebanon, issued a mourning notice stating that he had completed "a full journey of jihad and resistance." The movement called on all Lebanese to show compassion and solidarity and to be vigilant against attempts at incitement and rebellion and to let "our unity and solidarity be our

weapons in the confrontation with aggression" (al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya Telegram channel, September 29, 2024).

The Shi'ite community

►The announcement of Nasrallah's death sparked outpourings of grief among the Shi'ites in Lebanon, especially in their strongholds in south Lebanon and in the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia in Beirut. Shiite residents called him a "father figure" and said they would continue "to fight to overthrow Israel because, that was always his wish" (al-Jazeera, September 28, 2024).



Lebanese Shi'ites mourn Nasrallah at the scene of the attack in Beirut (refighe_khoda's X account, September 28, 2024)

Hezbollah's opponents

►Hezbollah's opponents in Lebanon did not hide their satisfaction, but wondered how much the dramatic event would affect the future of the country and if the authorities in Lebanon could now take advantage of the opportunity to fulfill their role:

- ◆ Raymond Hakim, an activist for implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1701, posted to his X account (107,000 followers) that nothing would change if the resolutions regarding Lebanon were not implemented, if the militias were not disarmed of their illegal weapons and if the Lebanese army did not extend its authority to all parts of Lebanon. He uploaded a photo of the head of Yahya al-Sinwar, head of the Hamas political bureau in the Gaza Strip, under which he wrote, "Imagine Lebanon being destroyed for this creature!!" (Raymond Hakim's X account, September 29, 2024).
- ◆ Maria Maalouf, a Maronite Christian TV presenter and Hezbollah opponent, posted a video to her X account (249,500 followers) calling on the commander of the Lebanese army to bang his fists on the table and demand that Hezbollah be stripped of its weapons. She said the Lebanese army was able to protect Lebanon "after the death of the head of the dragon and his security arm, led by Ali Karaki" (Maria Malouf's X account, September 29, 2024).

- ◆ Hajar Knio, a Lebanese journalist, posted a video to her X account (8,200 followers) in which she said that Nasrallah's blood "was not more precious than that of the Lebanese." She wondered if the Lebanese could save the country from actual death because "no one was bigger than their country" (Hajar Knio's X account, September 29, 2024).
- ◆ An Internet user named "Beirut," who identifies himself as a supporter of Rafik al-Hariri, uploaded a post to his X account (4,400 followers) expressing joy at the killing of Nasrallah. One of them showed Nasrallah and Khamenei dancing, and "Beirut" wrote, "I declare through my humble account that September 28 was a blessed day" ("Beirut"'s X account, September 28, 2024).



Nasrallah dances with Khamenei ("Beirut"'s X account, September 28, 2024)

- ◆ An account called "No to the Iranian Occupation" posted a picture of Nasrallah with the caption, "The day of your assassination was a holiday." The post read, "Nasrallah, the day of your assassination was a holiday and joy filled our hearts" (X account of "No to the Iranian Occupation," September 28, 2024).



Announcement of the "holiday" commemorating the death of Nasrallah (X account of "No to the Iranian Occupation," September 28, 2024)

Iranian, Palestinian and "Resistance Axis" Reactions

Iran

►The Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) announced that Abbas Nilforoushan, deputy commander of the Qods Force in Lebanon, was killed in the attack in Beirut in which Nasrallah was killed. The IRGC condemned the "crimes of the Zionist regime against Lebanon" and expressed their condolences on Nilforoushan's death. The announcement did not include an explicit threat to retaliate for his death (snn.ir, September 29, 2024).



Abbas Nilforoushan (snn.ir, September 29, 2024)

►Following the death of Hassan Nasrallah, a black flag was raised in mourning over the shrine of Imam Reza in the city of Mashhad. Iranian leader Ali Khamenei announced five days of mourning in Iran (Tasnim, September 28, 2024). Senior Iranian officials published messages condemning the Israeli attack in the Dahiye al-Janoubia in Beirut and paid tribute to Nasrallah:

- ◆ Ali Khamenei, the leader of Iran, said that the entire "resistance force" in the region stood with and supported Hezbollah. He claimed the "Zionist criminals" had to know they were too small to inflict significant damage on Hezbollah's "solid structure." He added that all Muslims had to stand with the people of Lebanon and Hezbollah with all the means at their disposal, and assist them against the "Zionist regime," adding that the fate of the region would be determined by the Hezbollah-led "resistance" forces (Tasnim, September 28, 2024).
- ◆ Masoud Pezeshkian, president of Iran, said there were "not enough words" to describe Nasrallah's "courage," adding that he "fulfilled his life-long dream of achieving the highest level of martyrdom." He claimed that the deaths of Nasrallah and other senior figures strengthened the "family tree of the resistance" and Hezbollah would shine "like the sun, more than ever." He also accused the Americans of being "partners

in crime," since the order to carry out the attack came from New York [where Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had gone to address the UN General Assembly] (Tasnim, September 28, 2024).

◆ Javad Zarif, vice president of Iran, and Esmail Qaani, commander of the IRGC's Qods Force, went to the office of the Hezbollah representative in Tehran to offer their condolences on Nasrallah's death. Zarif said Tehran's response would be made at the appropriate time, chosen by and accepted at the leadership level (Mashriq News, September 29, 2024).

◆ Ali Larijani, advisor to the Iranian leader and former secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, said that there was a replacement for every "resistance" leader who became a shaheed. He said Israel had crossed Tehran's "red lines" and the situation was becoming serious, adding that Iran would stand with the "resistance" in every situation (Iranian TV, September 27, 2024).

◆ Ahmad Vahidi, former Iranian defense minister, who also commanded the Qods Force, said that Hezbollah had had given birth to many commanders and that every commander who became a martyr was replaced on the battlefield by another (Iranian TV, September 27, 2024).

◆ Abbas Araghchi, Iranian foreign minister, called Hassan Nasrallah a "brave and influential person [who] played a unique role in training the resistance to fight against the Zionist enemy." He added that the attack on Nasrallah inside a civilian residential area in Beirut "represents a blatant attack on Lebanon's sovereignty and is another example of a war crime" (IRNA, September 28, 2024). In a conversation with his Abdallah Bou Habib, the Lebanese foreign minister, Araghchi offered his condolences on the death Nasrallah. He called it "a great loss for Lebanon, the residents of the region and the Islamic world, and his blood will strengthen the tree of resistance" (Iranian foreign ministry website, September 28, 2024).

◆ Araghchi also sent a letter to Hossein Salami, IRGC commander, offering his condolences on the death Abbas Nilfroushan, a senior IRGC operative, in an attack in Beirut. He claimed that the "criminal and cowardly act is clear proof of the terrorist and criminal character of the "Zionist regime," claiming that the "horrible crime" would not go unanswered and Iran would use all its political, diplomatic, legal and international

capabilities to take legal action against the "criminals" and their supporters (Tasnim, September 29, 2024).

- ◆ Amir Saeed Iravani, Iran's ambassador to the UN, demanded that the UN secretary general and the president of the Security Council convene an emergency meeting to discuss the issue of "Israeli aggression and the 'assassination' of Hassan Nasrallah." He also called on the Security Council to unequivocally condemn the "crimes" and take action immediately to stop the "aggression" and prevent the region from being dragged into total war (Tasnim, September 29, 2024).

► "Four Iranian officials" stated that there were differences of opinion in Tehran's upper echelons regarding the nature of the response to the killing of Nasrallah. According to the report, more conservative elements in the Supreme National Security Council, including Saeed Jalili, supported a sharp response to renew deterrence against Israel. On the other hand, Masoud Pezeshkian, president of Iran, warned against a harsh, swift reaction and urged Iran not to fall into a "trap," which he claimed Israel was setting to cause a regional war. Other pragmatic elements in the council expressed concern that if Iran attacked Israel, its own critical infrastructure could suffer a direct attack. "Two sources in the IRGC" said that restoring Hezbollah, finding a successor to Nasrallah, establishing a new command structure and rebuilding a secure communication network in the organization were among Iran's priorities. They added that Tehran planned to send a senior Qods Force commander to Beirut via Syria to lead the organization's rehabilitation (*New York Times*, September 29, 2024).

The Palestinians

► The Palestinian terrorist organizations in the "resistance axis" paid tribute to Nasrallah and praised him for his contribution to the Palestinian "resistance" over the years, and especially since October 7, 2023:

- ◆ Hamas offered its condolences on the death of Nasrallah, claiming he "died hand in hand along with his brother leaders in Operation al-Aqsa Flood on the way to Jerusalem, while supporting our Palestinian people and their courageous resistance in the confrontation with the Zionist enemy." The announcement stated that "the Zionist occupation bears full responsibility for this heinous crime and its dangerous consequences for regional security and stability," adding that the American administration was also responsible for "its continued support for the occupation and its continued silence" (Hamas Telegram channel, September 28, 2024). In a statement

issued after the attack in Beirut, Hamas accused Israel of increasing the attacks due to the Lebanese people's support for the Palestinians and their struggle against "the genocide that was taking place in the Gaza Strip." Hamas called on Arab countries and Muslims to end their silence and take action in the international arena against American support for Israel (Hamas Telegram channel, September 27, 2024).

◆ The Izz al-Din Qassam Brigades, Hamas' military wing, called Nasrallah a "great warrior commander" and praised his leadership, which had led to the strengthening of Hezbollah and close cooperation with the Palestinian "resistance," especially during the "struggle for al-Aqsa Mosque." According to the Brigades, Hezbollah would overcome the loss and new leaders would continue in Nasrallah's footsteps. The Brigades also warned that in the future Israel would find itself facing complete defeat at the hands of the "resistance fighters" (Hamas in Judea and Samaria Telegram channel, September 28, 2024).

◆ Ziyad al-Nakhalah, Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) secretary general, said that Nasrallah "spent his life as a jihad leader at the front and Palestine was a neighbor in his heart and mind," adding that "Jerusalem was the destination of his jihad and he became the master of the martyrs on the way to Jerusalem" (al-'Ahed, September 28, 2024). The PIJ said they felt "sorrow and pain" at the loss of "such an important Arab and Islamic personality." The organization expressed confidence that Nasrallah's death "would strengthen the resistance in Lebanon, 'Palestine' and the entire region" (PIJ media information office Telegram channel, September 28, 2024).



Nasrallah and Ziyad al-Nakhalah, PIJ secretary general, in the Jenin refugee camp (Quds Agency, September 28, 2024)

► Mahmoud Abbas, Palestinian Authority chairman, sent his condolences to Hezbollah on the death of Nasrallah. He also offered his condolences to the Lebanese government and the Lebanese people for "the deaths of civilian victims who were killed as a result of brutal Israeli aggression." He called it "a continuation of the war of extermination [sic] against the Palestinian people and the Lebanese people" (Wafa, September 28, 2024). The PLO Executive Committee sent its "deepest condolences" to Hezbollah for the "martyrdom" of Nasrallah. It also called for an urgent end to the "war of genocide against the Palestinian and Lebanese people" (Wafa, September 28, 2024).

The pro-Iranian militias in Iraq

► In response to Nasrallah's elimination in Beirut, the militias of the Islamic Resistance in Iraq increased their attacks on Israel. On September 28, 2024, they claimed responsibility for ten UAV attacks on targets in Israel, including on a "vital target" in Tel Aviv, the highest number of daily strikes since the beginning of the war in October 2023. On September 29, 2024, they claimed responsibility for an attack on Eilat (Islamic Resistance in Iraq Telegram channel, September 29-28, 2024). The IDF spokesperson said that an Israeli Navy missile ship had intercepted a UAV flying towards Israeli territory (IDF spokesperson, September 29, 2024).

► The pro-Iranian militias issued messages of mourning for Nasrallah's death and expressed confidence that Hezbollah and the entire "resistance axis" would continue fighting:

- ◆ Akram al-Kaabi, secretary general of the Nobles Movement, who was close to Nasrallah, said that "the entire loathsome Zionist enemy has to know that the martyr, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, raised the flag of glory and honor of Abu Faisal al-Abbas⁴ in Lebanon and in the entire resistance axis." He added that Hezbollah's fighting force was

⁴ Epithet of Abbas, Hussein bin Ali's brother, both of whom were killed in the Battle of Karbala in 680 CE and are considered Shi'ite heroes.

"huge," and could continue and even escalate the campaign (Akram al-Kaabi's X account, September 28, 2024).

- ◆ The Hezbollah Brigades called Nasrallah "a brave leader, master and knight of the resistance" and said the "resistance front" has once again lost a "great and brave leader." They claimed that the "pure blood" of Nasrallah and the other dead would strengthen the momentum of battle and that Hezbollah would now be more determined to continue the "resistance that has never been absent from their hearts" (Hezbollah Brigades website, September 28, 2024).

- ◆ Qais al-Khazali, Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq secretary general, described Nasrallah as someone who "devoted many years as a jihad fighter and victorious commander, and inflicted the most bitter defeats on the Zionists" (Qais al-Khazali's X account, September 28, 2024).

The Houthis

- ▶ Yahya Sarieh, Houthi military spokesman, claimed responsibility for launching a "Palestine 2" ballistic missile at Ben-Gurion International Airport during the landing of Prime Minister Netanyahu's plane. He called it a response to the "crimes of the Zionist regime in the Gaza Strip and Lebanon," but he did not refer directly to the elimination Nasrallah (Yahia Sarieh's Telegram channel, September 28, 2024). The IDF spokesperson stated that a surface-to-surface missile launched from Yemen was intercepted by Israeli aerial defense fighters outside the country's borders. There were no casualties (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, September 28, 2024).

- ▶ The Houthi leadership declared three days of mourning. Senior Houthi figures condemned the killing of Nasrallah and threatened to "annihilate" the State of Israel:

- ◆ Abd al-Malek al-Houthi, leader of the Houthi movement, called Nasrallah "a shining star in the sky of the mujahideen and a great and successful leader who embodied the values and morals of Islam, and was precious and noble." He noted that the most important mission was to "obstruct the efforts of the Jews and criminals to break morale and weaken Hezbollah in dealing with the Zionist enemy." He added that the "support fronts, the jihad axis and the flag of Islam" would endure and continue to rise despite the actions of the "Israeli enemy," which he called "an enemy of Islam and Muslims and a danger to humanity" (Houthi media office X account, September 28, 2024).

- ◆ The Houthi Supreme Political Council said that the death of Nasrallah "would increase the flame of sacrifice, the fervor of enthusiasm, the strength of determination and the

will to continue. The inevitable result will be victory and the elimination of the Israeli enemy and its temporary existence" (Houthi media office X account, September 28, 2024).

◆ The Houthi "change and construction" government called Nasrallah "a symbol of jihad and resistance who had strategic vision and action in dealing with challenges." The government promised that "the blood of the martyred leaders will not be in vain" (Houthi media office X account, September 28, 2024).

Syria

▶ Three days of mourning were announced following the killing of Nasrallah. Bashar al-Assad, president of Syria, sent a letter of condolence to Nasrallah's family, and said that "the resistance is not weakened by the death of its leader, because during their lives great leaders build the idea of the struggle, its plan and its path, and leave behind a wise mechanism and a practical approach." He expressed confidence that the "resistance" in Lebanon would continue "on the path of struggle and justice against the occupation," and would remain the shoulder supporting the Palestinian people (Syrian president's Telegram channel, September 29, 2024).

▶ The Syrian foreign ministry accused Israel of "committing all types of war crimes against humanity" and warned that it would "drag the entire region towards a dangerous escalation, the consequences of which were difficult to predict." Syria denounced the silence of the world "in view of the horror of these crimes, the likes of which humanity has not seen for decades" (SANA, September 28, 2024).

▶ Spontaneous celebrations were held by the opponents of the Syrian regime in the north of the country after the Israeli attack on Hezbollah headquarters in Beirut, even before the official announcement of Nasrallah's death, because of the aid Hezbollah provided to the Assad regime during the Syrian civil war. In videos posted on social media, residents were seen handing out candy and pastries to drivers and passers-by on the streets, while gunmen fired into the air in celebration (al-Mashad News, September 28, 2024).



Distributing sweets in northern Syria (Rasad News Agency Facebook page, September 28, 2024)

International and Arab Reactions

- ▶ Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, the president of Egypt, spoke with Najib Mikati, prime minister of the Lebanese interim government, and expressed his "full support for Lebanon." El-Sisi said that the security, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon should not be harmed and that a comprehensive ceasefire was also required in the Gaza Strip. He warned against deterioration into a regional war (Egyptian presidential spokesman Facebook page, September 28, 2024).
- ▶ Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the president of Turkey, said that Lebanon and the Lebanese people were "the new target of Israel's policy of annihilation, occupation and invasion, which it has been pursuing since October 7 [2023]." He accused the Western powers of providing Israel with weapons and thus "indulging it [and allowing it] to carry out the massacres [sic]," and called on the international community and the UN Security Council to take "swift action" (Erdogan's X account, September 28, 2024). The headline of the September 29, 2024 issue of *Yeni Şafak*, a conservative, Islamist newspaper belonging to the ruling Turkish party and close to President Erdogan, was, "The world will not be safe until Israel was destroyed" (*Yeni Şafak*, September 29, 2024).



The front page Yeni Şafak, September 29, 2024

- ▶ American President Joe Biden said Nasrallah and Hezbollah were responsible for killing hundreds of Americans during four decades of a reign of terror. He added that Nasrallah's

death in an Israeli airstrike was "a step towards justice for his many victims, including thousands of Americans, Israelis and Lebanese civilians (White House website, September 28, 2024). According to reports, the American administration continues its efforts for a ceasefire, including attempts to convince Israel not to conduct a ground operation in Lebanon, which is liable to lead to further escalation (*The Washington Post*, September 29, 2024).

►The Russian foreign ministry strongly condemned Nasrallah' killing. Its official announcement stated that the " forceful action" had even more dramatic consequences for Lebanon and the entire Middle East. It added that "the Israeli side could not help but recognize the danger, but took the step of killing Lebanese civilians, which would almost inevitably trigger a new outbreak of violence. Therefore, it bears full responsibility for the escalation that will follow" (Reuters, September 28, 2024).

►Hezbollah's opponents in the Arab world used the social media to express satisfaction with the killing of Nasrallah:

- ◆ Faisal Sayid al-Saibi al-Anasi, a Saudi Arabian Internet influencer who opposes Iran and Hezbollah, posted a picture to his X account (13,700 followers) of Rafik al-Hariri, the former prime minister of Lebanon, who was assassinated in 2005 by Hezbollah, with the caption "Built Beirut," alongside a picture of Nasrallah with the caption "Destroyed Beirut" (Faisal Sayid al-Saibi al-Anasi's X account, September 27, 2024).



Al-Hariri vs. Nasrallah (Faisal Sayid al-Saibi al-Anasi's X account, September 27, 2024)

- ◆ Dijwar Ibrahim, a Kurdish cartoonist, published a cartoon of Nasrallah rushing towards a pickup driven by the Angel of Death, anxious to join Qassem Soleimani, commander of the IRGC's Qods Force, and Fuad Shukr, Hezbollah's military

commander, calling, "Take me with you.." (Dijwar Ibrahim's X account, September 28, 2024).



"Take me with you.." (Dijwar Ibrahim's X account, September 28, 2024)