Hezbollah leader’s message shows the terror group is under pressure

written by Dr. Yossi Mansharof | 13.11.2025
However, action must also extend to the social and ideological arenas, not just the military (prevention efforts) and economic (sanctions) fronts.

Hezbollah weakened, not defeated: If war returns, Israel aims to finish the job

written by Prof. Kobi Michael | 13.11.2025
Jerusalem, Beirut and Damascus now share the goal of defeating the terror group and curbing Iran – cooperation that could pave the way for closer ties and eventual entry into the .Abraham Accords

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The Solomon-Hiram Solution: How Peace Can Unlock Lebanon’s $100 Billion Banking Crisis

written by Carlos Abadi | 13.11.2025
A comprehensive Israel-Lebanon accord offers the most viable path to restoring frozen deposits while achieving lasting regional stability.

The dangerous ultimatum hidden in Hezbollah leader's speech

written by Dr. Yossi Mansharof | 13.11.2025

Hezbollah secretary-general Naim Qassem's latest speech on Monday signals the organization's growing willingness to threaten Lebanon with civil war. This comes amid continued pressure from Lebanese authorities to disarm Hezbollah of its weapons. Qassem declared that the Lebanese government's decision to disarm Hezbollah represents acceptance of American dictates, and called on the government to cancel it.

Ahead of the protest rally that Hezbollah and other organizations plan to hold on Wednesday at Riad al-Solh Square, near the parliament building in Beirut, Qassem emphasized in his speech Hezbollah's firm position, with its main points being that the organization refuses to surrender its weapons, and is even prepared to confront Lebanese authorities to preserve the weapons, which are "our spirit, our honor and the future of our children," according to Qassem's words in his speech.

The clear address in Qassem's words is to President Joseph Aoun and Prime Minister Nawaf Salam. Hezbollah propagandists are already calling both of them on social media by the dubious title "Yazid" after the Umayyad Caliph Yazid, hated by the Shiites, who was responsible for the murder of Imam Hussein in the Battle of Karbala in 680. Alongside them, other Hezbollah propagandists on social media are calling for violent confrontation during Wednesday's protest rally. In this context, it should be noted that recently security around President Aoun and Prime Minister Salam has been increased, out of fear that their fate will be similar to that of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, who was eliminated by Hezbollah in 2005.

Will the country be torn apart again?

Hezbollah is not interested in civil war. Such a war would cause severe image damage to the organization, which seeks to stick to its worn-out slogan, "the

army, the people and the resistance," which Qassem repeated in his speech, even though Lebanese state leaders have made it clear that its validity has expired. A civil war would drag Lebanon back to the well-remembered territories from the not-so-distant past, in which the country was torn apart in a bloody internal war, and would clarify the righteousness of the authorities in Beirut, according to which Hezbollah prefers its weapons over stability in Lebanon.

Hezbollah is pushed into a corner, and therefore seeks to exert counter-pressure on Lebanese state leaders through a series of shows of force, the closest of which will take place on Wednesday. The significant support that the organization still enjoys among its social base, the Shiite community in Lebanon, allows it to express a firm position against the historic decision of the Lebanese government to disarm it of its weapons by the end of 2025.

Alongside this, despite the political revival of the Lebanese state, its army and security mechanisms are still weak and will not be able to force Hezbollah to disarm. The Iranian backing also instills confidence in Naim Qassem's policy and encourages him to resist pressures from the Lebanese government and the Trump administration.

The cards that Israel might lose

However, the fundamental disagreement that is shaking the political arena in Iran these days – around the regime's policy in the post-war era against Israel –also spills over to Tehran's position in light of the crisis in Lebanon. In contrast to the firm support that conservatives in Iran express for Hezbollah's position, in recent days, some of the reformist circles are calling on the regime to change its policy. According to these circles, Tehran should not intervene in the internal Lebanese issue; in their approach, Hezbollah should respect the decision of the Lebanese government, which is the sovereign in the country, since weapons should be held exclusively by it, and the existence of an armed organization in Lebanon is unacceptable. The reformist camp even questioned the usefulness of the visit that the secretary of the Supreme Council for National Security, Ali Larijani, made to Beirut. They even warned that Tehran's intervention in Lebanon could harm the regime, that it could serve as a pretext for the US and Israel to act again against Iran. Therefore, the proposed solution that emerges from them is to integrate Hezbollah into the Lebanese army.

However, the regime's support for Hezbollah's position was well expressed in the statement by the deputy coordinator of the Quds Force, Iraj Masjedi, according to which the Lebanese government's decision to disarm Hezbollah is an "American-Zionist plan that is not acceptable to the Lebanese people, and will never be realized."

Qassem called in his speech on the government, of which Hezbollah is still a member, to hold intensive discussions in which it will examine how to restore its sovereignty, which was damaged in the shadow of the continued Israeli presence in the five outposts penetrating southern Lebanon. He also called on parties, elites, and influential figures in the country "to help the government in the way of thinking and implementing plans," and alongside this, also presented the solution that Hezbollah proposes. Israel should withdraw from southern Lebanon, stop the attacks against Hezbollah, and release its prisoners, and in parallel, the Lebanese state should begin the reconstruction of the south. In return, after completing these moves, which would remove from Israel its strategic cards, Hezbollah would be ready to discuss the "defense strategy" of Lebanon, according to Qassem's words.

In recent contacts with the American government's envoy to Lebanon and Syria, Tom Barrack, Israel offered, according to reports in the Lebanese media, to turn the contact villages strip in southern Lebanon into an uninhabited and disarmed economic zone. In return, Israel offers a gradual cessation of attacks and assassinations, gradual withdrawal from several occupied areas, and "completing the issue of Lebanese prisoners." Such an agreement between Israel and Lebanon could indeed accelerate the return of northern residents to their homes. However, it does not address the need to deliver a severe blow to Hezbollah also in the political sphere, in the shadow of the new reality. Therefore, Israel might give up important cards and leave Hezbollah as a popular force among the Shiites in the country, who make up its power base.

It seems that in the struggle against Iran's multi-year investment in Lebanon, there are no shortcuts. Israel and the US should strive to undermine Hezbollah among the Shiites, through establishing a competing network to the organization's propaganda apparatus, and political support for its opponents from within the community. Until then, it is almost certain that Hezbollah will dare to threaten Lebanon's stability, based on the extensive support from the Shiites in the country.

Published in Israel Hayom, August 28, 2025.

A Strategic Plan to Disarm Hizbullah

written by Dr. Yossi Mansharof | 13.11.2025

Among Lebanese Shi'ites there is a widespread perception that their community must not return to the era of persecution and oppression that lasted hundreds of years under the Ottoman Turks and continued under the French Mandate and modern Lebanese state (until the founding of the first Shi'ite political movement, Amal, in 1975 followed by Hizbullah in 1982). Though they have long constituted the largest community in Lebanon (with estimates of up to 40 percent of the country), Shi'ites were at the bottom of the social, economic, and political ladder.

Today, the harsh scenes of sectarian violence in Syria reinforce the Lebanese Shi'ites' perceived need to maintain an armed force to protect their community. Hizbullah also portrays itself as the defender of the Lebanese nation against Israeli military incursions. Hizbullah views its weapons as an existential need and will continue to reject pressures to disarm.

A comprehensive strategic plan must be formulated, with the participation of the Lebanese state, US and Israel, in order to undermine Hizbullah's deep influence within the Shi'ite community in Lebanon, an influence achieved through extensive Iranian patronage for over four decades.

Hizbullah's Current Crisis

Hizbullah faces a deepening crisis since the November 27, 2024 ceasefire between Lebanon and Israel. Militarily, Israel continues to target Hizbullah operatives, including Radwan Force commandos, and to destroy military infrastructure, focusing especially on missile production bases. According to the Alma Research Center, Israel has killed 136 Hizbullah operatives between the November 2024 ceasefire and August 2025.

Economically, the United States is expanding sanctions against Hizbullah's financial network, at a critical time when the organization needs funds to rebuild its damaged social base. Under pressure from the Trump administration, Lebanon's central bank has prohibited financial institutions in Lebanon from dealing with Al-Qard Al-Hassan, Hizbullah's quasi-bank.

Politically, Lebanese leaders are publicly declaring the need to disarm Hizbullah. On March 21, Prime Minister Nawaf Salam declared, "The *army, people, resistance* equation [a Hizbullah slogan] has become a thing of the past," and he demanded that the state hold sole control over weapons. On August 13, during the visit to Beirut of Iran's National Security Advisor Ali Larijani, Lebanese leaders made blunt statements to him opposing Tehran's interference in Lebanon's debate over Hizbullah's disarmament.

The United States has conditioned comprehensive economic aid to Lebanon on Hizbullah's disarmament. Recently, the Lebanese government attempted to negotiate with the Trump administration a condition whereby Hizbullah's disarmament would occur only after an Israeli withdrawal from the last five Israeli positions inside southern Lebanon. This move appeared designed to convince Hizbullah that its weapons were no longer necessary; however, the Trump administration rejected the proposal. When Iran's ambassador in Beirut, Mojtaba Amani, claimed that the calls to disarm Hizbullah were part of an American conspiracy, the Lebanese foreign ministry issued a public reprimand of him in April 2025.

Hizbullah's Continuing Popularity Among Shi'ites

A survey by the Arab Barometer project, published in July 2024, found that 15 percent of the Shiite community in Lebanon expressed distrust or limited trust in Hizbullah, while 85 percent expressed strong confidence in the organization. The survey, conducted before Hasan Nasrallah's assassination, aligns with a Washington Institute of Near Eastern Policy survey in Lebanon in late 2023, which found that 89 percent of Shi'ites held a positive opinion of Hizbullah.

In the Lebanese municipal elections of May 2025, Hizbullah candidates won in Shi'ite-majority districts (in southern Lebanon, Baalbek, and Beirut) in alliance with the Shi'ite political party Amal, thereby passing the first political test since the demise of Hasan Nasrallah in 2024. The results reflect Hizbullah's continuing

popularity among Lebanese Shi'ites, whether out of ideological motives or economic dependence or both.

To challenge Hezbollah's vast political and social network among Lebanese Shi'ites, under Iranian auspices, the Lebanese state should consider, with international support, establishing a competing structure to rival Hizbullah's broad institutional network, to include medical, educational, financial, humanitarian and other services that would, over time, reduce the Shi'ite community's economic dependence on Hizbullah. Among the possible donors to such an effort could be individuals in the large Lebanese diaspora in Europe and the Americas, as well as countries like France and the US.

Conclusion

Hizbullah's armed militia forces are a core concern that dominates Lebanon's political landscape and lies at the center of US policy toward the country. Alongside the American and Lebanese pressures to disarm Hizbullah, significant economic investment is required; the Lebanese government should take the lead role in organizing such an effort with international support. The goal of three parties – Israel, the US and Lebanon – should be to work on parallel tracks to undermine Hizbullah's standing among its social base and thereby weaken its political influence in the Shi'ite community.

Published in The Jerusalem Stratrgic Tribune, August 20, 2025.

Hezbollah in crisis as pressure mounts in Lebanon

written by Dr. Yossi Mansharof | 13.11.2025

The terrorist organization rejected Lebanon's historic August 7 government decision. The Lebanese prime minister sought to condition disarmament in talks with the Trump administration on an Israeli withdrawal from it's outposts, but was rebuffed. Israel is benefiting from Hezbollah's weakening under Naim

Qassem’s leadership, while its ties with Iran have been damaged. Despite this, most of the country’s Shiites have remained loyal.

The massacre of the Druze is a moral test: Israel acted, the world failed

written by Arsen Ostrovsky | 13.11.2025
The international community cannot continue treating President al-Sharra as a legitimate partner, while turning a blind eye to the atrocities that are being committing in Sweida.

Hezbollah at a Crossroads

written by Dr. Yossi Mansharof | 13.11.2025
On the Anniversary of Israel’s Withdrawal From Southern Lebanon in May 2000.

Hezbollah’s violations justify Israeli buffer zone

written by Dr. Raphael BenLevi | 13.11.2025
Hezbollah has been dealt a great blow but it is by no means defeated. The

indefensible topography of the Blue Line means only a forward Israeli presence can prevent Hezbollah’s rearmament.

Israel is missing a golden opportunity

written by Dr. Yossi Mansharof | 13.11.2025

As long as Iran, which directs the proxy network with Hezbollah as its “crown jewel,” is not addressed, the regime is likely to continue its subversion into Lebanon.