

MEMMO

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Iran and Syria Rearming Hizballah

Hizballah, backed by Iran and Syria, is violating the key provisions of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1701, which calls for the terrorist group's disarmament. While Israel has met its obligations under the resolution, Syria and Iran continue to provide arms to Hizballah, which is actively rebuilding its infrastructure. The international community, led by the United States, must ensure that a rebuilt Hizballah is not allowed to spark renewed conflict with Israel or undermine the sovereignty of the Lebanese government.

Hizballah, backed by Iran and Syria, is rearming and undermining Lebanese sovereignty.

- The Lebanese government has informed U.N. Special Envoy Terje Road Larsen that arms from Iran and Syria to Hizballah are continuing to come across the border into Lebanon.
- Hizballah is actively rebuilding its network of tunnels and bunkers under the guise of civilian reconstruction efforts,
- The Bush administration, citing intelligence reports, warned that Hizballah, Syria and Iran are preparing to topple the democratically elected government of Prime Minister Fouad Siniora.
- Hizballah has also refused to implement the resolution's call for the unconditional release of the two kidnapped Israeli soldiers—the unprovoked attack that started the fighting this summer.

U.N. forces have failed to take strong measures to reign in Hizballah.

- The U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) has failed to take steps to confront or disarm Hizballah terrorists, saying, according to its commander, that “the disarmament of Hezbollah is not the business of UNIFIL. This is a strictly Lebanese affair.”
- While nearly 10,000 U.N. troops have been deployed in southern Lebanon and along the Lebanese coast, they have been ineffective in preventing Iranian and Syrian arms shipments to Hizballah.
- UNIFIL has not pressed the Lebanese government to authorize the deployment of international forces along the Lebanese-Syrian border to prevent the weapons smuggling.

Israel is meeting its obligations under Resolution 1701.

- Israel has fully implemented the main provision of the resolution, withdrawing its forces from the territory it controlled during the war.
- Israel lifted its air and sea blockade of Lebanon after international forces assumed responsibility for inspecting cargo for weapons intended for Hizballah.
- Israel provided the U.N. with maps of minefields in southern Lebanon, as called for in the resolution.

- Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has offered to open discussions on a permanent peace treaty with Lebanon, but Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora spurned the offer, saying, “Lebanon will be the last Arab country to sign a peace agreement with Israel.”

American leadership is needed to ensure that Hizballah cannot threaten Israel or the stability of Lebanon.

- The United States must ensure that the international forces are effectively implementing the Security Council’s mandate to prevent Hizballah from rearming and rebuilding its terrorist infrastructure.
- The United States should encourage the Lebanese government to ask for international assistance in monitoring its borders for illegal weapons shipments.
- The United States must hold Syria and Iran accountable for violating the resolution’s arms embargo against Hizballah by bringing the full force of U.S. sanctions to bear against both nations.

Basic Facts Summary

- Hizballah, backed by Iran and Syria, is rearming and undermining Lebanese sovereignty.
- U.N. forces have failed to take strong measures to reign in Hizballah.
- Israel is meeting its obligations under Resolution 1701.
- American leadership is needed to ensure that Hizballah cannot threaten Israel or the stability of Lebanon.