

MEMMO

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Hizballah's Growing Weapons Arsenal Must Be Stopped

Similar to efforts before last summer's war with Israel, Hizballah, with the assistance of Iran and Syria, is amassing thousands of rockets and other sophisticated weaponry capable of striking a third of Israel's population. Both the Lebanese government and U.N. peacekeepers have failed to take steps to stop this arms smuggling across the Syrian-Lebanese border, which violates U.N. Security Council Resolution 1701. The U.N. Security Council needs to expand the mandate of U.N. forces to curb this illegal weapons trafficking at the Syrian border and hold Iran and Syria accountable for their persistent violation of international law.

Iran and Syria are rearming Hizballah in violation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1701.

- U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon has said illegal arms traffic across the Syrian border into Lebanon is happening on a regular basis. Ban has specifically called on Syria and Iran to comply with U.N. Security Council Resolution 1701's provision against such arms transfers.
- In response to mounting evidence of weapons smuggling across the Syrian border, the U.N. Security Council recently dispatched "an independent mission to fully assess the monitoring of the border."
- In February 2007, Lebanese authorities intercepted a truck on the Beirut-Damascus highway containing a significant number of mortars, mortar shells, rockets and flares. Hizballah acknowledged the truck was "carrying ammunition for the resistance" and demanded it be returned

Hizballah's rebuilt arsenal and preparation for further conflict is a serious threat to Israel's northern population centers.

- Hizballah chief Hassan Nasrallah has boasted that the terrorist group has amassed tens of thousands of rockets since the war against Israel last summer and said that the terrorist group "could launch between 1,000 and 3,000 rockets daily" at Israel.
- The rampant smuggling has reconstituted much of Hizballah's arsenal, as Hizballah Deputy Secretary General Naim Kassem declared during a recent interview with *Al-Jazeera*. "Hizballah has rebuilt itself," he said. "We have completed the groundwork and we have new battle plans."
- Iran and Syria have provided Hizballah with sophisticated longer-range rockets and missiles capable of striking Israeli population centers, home to a third of Israel's population. During last summer's war, Hizballah attacked cities such as Haifa, Nahariya and Tiberias.
- Hizballah fired more than 4,000 rockets into Israel last summer during just one month of fighting, killing 43 civilians and wounding several thousand others.

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- The U.N. mandate does not allow the United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon (UNIFIL) to deploy along the border with Syria without a call from the Lebanese government, which has yet to make such a request.
- Hizballah does not see UNIFIL as a threat to its operations—Nasrallah has said that the U.N. force would be unable to stop his army from attacking the Jewish state.
- While thousands of Lebanese forces have deployed along the border with Syria, they have proven unable or unwilling to curb the flow of illegal arms into Lebanon.
- The Lebanese Armed Forces have been reluctant to seek UNIFIL assistance in confronting illegal arms trafficking by Hizballah amid the ongoing political conflict between the government of Prime Minister Fuad Siniora and Hizballah.

The Security Council should expand the mandate of U.N. peacekeepers in Lebanon and hold Iran and Syria accountable for violating Resolution 1701.

- U.N. Security Council Resolution 1701 calls for the Council to reconsider “further enhancements to the mandate” in the future.
- In August, the mandate for the U.N. peacekeeper force in Lebanon must be renewed. As part of the renewal process, the United States should encourage the Security Council to expand the force's mandate to allow monitoring of the Lebanese-Syrian border in order to prevent Iran and Syria from rearming Hizballah.
- The United States also should hold Syria and Iran accountable for violating Resolution 1701's arms embargo against Hizballah by bringing the full force of U.S. sanctions to bear against both nations.
- Iran is also specifically prohibited from exporting weapons by U.N. Security Council Resolution 1747, which requires all states—including Syria—to ban the procurement of weapons from Iran.

Basic Facts Summary

- Hizballah is rearming at an alarming rate, violating U.N. Security Council Resolution 1701.
- Hizballah's rebuilt arsenal and preparation for further conflict is a serious threat to Israel's northern population centers.
- The UNIFIL peacekeeping force's mandate is inadequate to address continued weapons smuggling and terrorist activity.
- The Security Council must expand the mandate of U.N. peacekeepers in Lebanon and hold Iran and Syria accountable for violating Resolution 1701.