

MEMMO

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Hezbollah Defies U.N. Security Council Resolution 1701

Ten years ago, on August 11, the United Nations Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 1701, calling for the full cessation of hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah, and for the disarmament of all non-state armed groups in Lebanon. Israel complied with the resolution, withdrawing its forces from southern Lebanon. Hezbollah, on the other hand, rejected key provisions of the resolution. The failure to ensure Hezbollah's compliance with Resolution 1701 creates a high likelihood of future conflict. The United States should reinforce Israel's deterrent posture and clarify that Washington will hold Hezbollah responsible for casualties in a future conflict that result from the placement of arms in civilian areas.

U.N. Security Council Resolution 1701 Required the Disarming of Hezbollah

- Resolution 1701 called for:
 - Making southern Lebanon into a zone “free of any armed personnel, assets and weapons” other than the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) and the U.N. Interim Forces in Lebanon (UNIFIL);
 - Disarming all armed groups so that there are no weapons in Lebanon other than those of the Lebanese State;
 - Banning foreign forces from Lebanon;
 - Banning arms sales or arms transfers except as authorized by the Lebanese government; and
 - Enabling UNIFIL to ensure that southern Lebanon is not used for hostile activities.
- Hezbollah and its state sponsor, Iran, have defied and disregarded all of these provisions.



Hezbollah rocket launcher in southern Lebanon during the 2006 war. (AP/Yaron Kaminsky)

Hezbollah continues to arm itself at an alarming rate.

- When Resolution 1701 passed, Hezbollah had less than 15,000 rockets. It has since expanded its arsenal up to 150,000 missiles and rockets, of which many are more destructive and capable of precisely targeting any location in Israel.
- Israeli defense officials now estimate that the terrorist group is capable of launching more than 1,500 rockets per day at Israel, compared to 120 per day in 2006.
- Hezbollah reportedly now possesses advanced surface-to-air missile systems, including Russian-designed, shoulder-mounted SA-16, SA-17 and game-changing SA-22 mobile platforms. It also now has drones for intelligence collection and possible use for direct attacks, as well as advanced P-800 Yakhont anti-ship cruise missiles—capable of striking Israel's offshore gas platforms.

- Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah continues to [boast](#) that the group's "weapons and rockets come from the Islamic Republic of Iran," and that it will continue to receive Iranian arms shipments.
- In February 2016, Nasrallah issued a threat to target ammonium tanks in Haifa— an attack which could release a chemical cloud capable of killing tens of thousands.

Hezbollah has embedded its military infrastructure within civilian areas.

- Hezbollah has built a vast military network throughout civilian areas in southern Lebanon, placing its terrorists and weapons into mosques, homes, hospitals and schools.
- Two years ago, [reports](#) emerged revealing that Hezbollah offered reduced-priced housing to poor Shia on the condition that it be allowed to store rocket launchers in their homes. Over 200 Shiite villages, situated between the Litani River and the Israeli border, have since been converted into military strongholds.
- The New York Times [revealed](#) in May 2015 that Hezbollah had established command posts, rocket-launching sites, and underground tunnels in the small village of Muhaybib, while fortifying an additional 400 military sites and facilities in the larger village of Shaqra. According to an Israeli defense official, "The [Lebanese] civilians are living in a military compound."



UNIFIL soldiers patrol the border between Israel and Lebanon as a Hezbollah flag waves in the background. (AP/Mohammed Zaatari)

The U.N. peacekeeping force's mandate and practices do not enable it to thwart weapons smuggling and terrorist activity.

- Resolution 1701 expanded UNIFIL from 2,000 troops to as many as 15,000 in order to prevent Hezbollah's rearming. The resolution authorized UNIFIL to take "all necessary action" in cooperation with Lebanon's army to stop Hezbollah attacks on Israel.
- However, due to intimidation by Hezbollah, UNIFIL does not routinely patrol population centers in southern Lebanon, allowing Hezbollah to use these unmonitored areas to hide its weapons in underground tunnels, bunkers, and private homes.
- According to the U.N. Secretary General's June 2016 [report](#), "UNIFIL does not proactively search private property for weapons in the south, unless there is credible evidence of a violation of resolution 1701."
- Beyond restricting movements in their permitted area of operations, U.N. forces are not authorized to patrol north of the Litani River. This gives Hezbollah and other terrorists free rein there and in the Bekaa Valley. The area between the Litani River and Israel's border is as narrow as four kilometers at some points.
- The U.N. mandate does not allow UNIFIL to deploy along the border with Syria unless requested by the Lebanese government. Such a request has never been made by the Lebanese government— nor has it ever requested UNIFIL action against Hezbollah—largely due to Hezbollah and Iranian intimidation. And the porous border has allowed Hezbollah to import significant arms from both Syria and Iran.

The United States must reinforce Israel's deterrent capabilities against Hezbollah and highlight the dangers the group poses to Lebanese civilians.

- U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said in July 2015 that the United States will enforce Resolution 1701. “There is a U.N. resolution, 1701, that prevents the transfer of any weapons to Hezbollah. That will continue, and what we need to do is make sure we're enforcing it.”
- The United States must increase its efforts to intercept weapons destined for Hezbollah and find an effective means of stopping the flow of weapons across the Lebanon-Syria border.
- The United States must work to deter future conflict by:
 - Making clear that it will hold Hezbollah and Iran to blame for any future conflict and that Israel is not at fault for loss of life resulting from the placement of weapons in civilians areas.
 - Highlighting Hezbollah's violations of Resolution 1701 and international law by placing arms amongst Lebanon's civilian population.
 - Ensuring Israel has the means to defeat Hezbollah and protect Israeli civilians.
 - Reinforcing Israeli deterrence by making clear it will back the Jewish state politically, morally and militarily.