

# CUFI BRIEFING

## HEZBOLLAH - THE PARTY OF ALLAH

HISTORY - IDEOLOGY - TERROR



## Who is Hezbollah

Hezbollah, an Arabic name that means “Party of Allah” (AKA: Hizbullah, Hezbollah, Hizbollah), is a large transnational terrorist organization founded, funded, trained, and equipped by the Iranian



government. It operates primarily in Lebanon and Syria, along Israel’s northern border, but has also conducted terror attacks in many other countries. Although it is less well known to the American public, Hezbollah’s international organization is incredibly sophisticated. Experts estimate that there are hundreds of secret Hezbollah operatives right here in the United States.



In 1982, Israel sent its soldiers into Lebanon to root out the growing terrorist army of the “Palestine Liberation Organization” (PLO). The PLO had attacked Israel from its stronghold in Lebanon hundreds of times during the 1970s and early 1980s, and when they tried to assassinate Israel’s Ambassador to Great Britain, Israel could tolerate the situation no longer. Israel successfully drove the PLO out of Lebanon, but a new terrorist organization formed to take its place.

Drawing on Lebanese anger toward Israel's presence in their country, Iran sent its elite military forces, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), into Lebanon to train thousands of terrorists. Hezbollah's original manifesto, written in 1985, explicitly pledged allegiance to Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini and the principles of Iran's Islamic Revolution. Hezbollah has been a proxy of the Iranian regime and a deadly enemy of Israel and the United States ever since.



Hezbollah is headquartered in southern Lebanon where the majority of the population consists of Shiite Muslims. Over the last 36 years, Hezbollah has built a terror infrastructure in hundreds of villages in southern Lebanon, effectively transforming that part of the country along Israel's border into a massive military compound. In violation of international law, Hezbollah intentionally uses homes, schools, businesses, and other civilian buildings to house their fighters and weapons. The purpose of this is to use innocent men, women, and children as human shields to protect Hezbollah from the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), and also to create a situation where the international media and human rights organizations will blame Israel for any civilians that are killed.

The Lebanese government, once considered a triumph of democracy and tolerance in the Middle East, was hijacked by Hezbollah in 1992. This terrorist organization masquerades as a legitimate political party within the Lebanese government, and has won political power and the loyalty of many Lebanese citizens through its official charities and supplemental social services. Yet everyone in Lebanon knows that it is deadly to oppose Hezbollah, and few take that risk.

Some international diplomats, such as the European Union, have tried to



distinguish between Hezbollah's political and military wings. However, it is impossible to separate them, and to legitimize Hezbollah's political activities is to provide relief and aid to its terrorist activities. Hezbollah's own leaders do not attempt to separate the organization's activities, and diplomatic efforts to do so are at best naïve and at worst cowardly.

It is also impossible to separate Hezbollah's objectives and activities from its entanglement with the Iranian regime. This partnership has continued for more than 35 years, and Hezbollah has been open about Iran's support in public statements just as it has been open about its goal to destroy Israel.



## Ideology

As a proxy of Iran, Hezbollah is committed to advancing Iran's religious and geopolitical agenda in the Middle East and throughout the world. At the heart of this agenda is the desire to reinstitute an Islamic caliphate, or religious empire, ruled by a supreme leader who is the religious, civil, and military authority.



As Shi'ite Muslims, Hezbollah adheres to a minority branch of Islamic theology in opposition to the much larger Sunni stream of Islam. This split between the two streams of Islamic theology goes back to the 7<sup>th</sup> century, and originated in an argument over Mohammed's legitimate line of succession after his death. Only about 15% of the global Muslim population is Shia (led by Iran), while approximately 85% are Sunni.

For the last several years, Hezbollah has helped Iran destabilize the governments of Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon in order to create a land corridor through these countries to reach the Mediterranean and Israel's northern border. Hezbollah wants to create an Iranian-ruled Shi'ite caliphate in place of the current independent nation-states in the Middle East.



This Shia-Sunni conflict is a major factor in the Syrian Civil War, where Hezbollah has been fighting against ISIS for control. ISIS is a Sunni terrorist organization whose goal is to establish a Sunni-ruled Islamic caliphate in the Middle East. The Shia-Sunni struggle between Hezbollah and ISIS in Syria appears likely to have been won by Iran and its proxies. This puts Iran one step closer to its dream of a caliphate and will make it easier to attack Israel in the future.

Attacking Israel is the primary objective and founding purpose of Hezbollah. It not only was created to remove the IDF's presence from southern Lebanon, but also to ultimately remove all traces of Jewish presence in the "occupied territories" that, by Hezbollah's definition, includes the entire state of Israel. Although it has encouraged Palestinian violence against Israel and said that Jerusalem is the eternal capital of Palestine, this rhetoric is deceitful and manipulative. Hezbollah does want to conquer Jerusalem, but for its own glory, not for the Palestinians. Hezbollah does not care about helping Palestinians establish their own state, because their goal is to bring everyone in the Middle East under the rule of Iran. Israel stands in the way of Iran's plans for its caliphate, and therefore must be destroyed.



## **Anti - Semitism**

Unsurprisingly, anti-Semitism is a core component of Hezbollah's ideology and messaging. They disseminate their hatred, conspiracy theories, and incitement to violence against Jews throughout the world via their satellite television network, Al-Manar (The Beacon). This TV network allegedly instigated the rumor that Israel was the mastermind behind the 9/11 terror attack by claiming over 4,000 Jews had been mysteriously absent from their jobs in the World Trade Center that day. This conspiracy theory has now spread around the world, and is a common belief among anti-Semites of all ideological backgrounds.



Hezbollah is anti-Semitic because Iran's regime is anti-Semitic, and the Iranian Islamic Revolution's extreme interpretation of Shia theology embraces hatred of Jews. When Ayatollah Khomeini came to power in 1979, he portrayed the Jews and Israel as the primary enemy of all Shia Muslims. Khomeini transformed the way Shia Muslims viewed their history and their future destiny. Prior to the Islamic Revolution, the Shia minority had tried to avoid Sunni persecution by quietly waiting for their prophesied savior to come, and Iran enjoyed good relations with the US and Israel. Khomeini convinced his followers that they needed to violently overthrow the government and speed up their savior's arrival through violent jihad.

Like other Islamic fundamentalists that emerged in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Khomeini taught his followers that Jews were the embodiment of satanic evil in the world. He mixed a brand of radical Islamic anti-Semitism with the elements of historical European anti-Semitism that accused Jews of heinous murder rituals, a corrupting influence on society, and sinister plots for world domination. This official policy of anti-Semitism and the destruction of Israel was passed on to Hezbollah as its divine mandate.



## Terrorism

While Hezbollah has involved itself in sectarian conflicts with Sunni Muslim groups and openly harbors enmity towards Saudi Arabia there is no doubt that Hezbollah sees Israel and the United States as its top two enemies. Its primary objective is to obliterate the Jewish state, and in 2009 Hezbollah published an updated manifesto calling upon all citizens of Lebanon to aid in the

violent “resistance” to “the Zionist entity.” In that same document, Hezbollah described the United States as a

dangerous foreign enemy whose existence must be met with “resistance” — a euphemism for terrorism. This is not an idle threat. Until 9/11, Hezbollah had killed more American citizens than any other terrorist organization.



*A smoke cloud rises from the rubble of the bombed barracks in Beirut*



*Remains of the AMIA after the AMIA bombing in Buenos Aires, Argentina*



Like Israel, America's crime in Hezbollah's eyes is its very existence, and thus there is no action either Israel or America could take to lessen Hezbollah's hatred. This hatred has inspired multiple deadly terrorist attacks against Jewish and American targets around the world.

- 1983 bombing of US embassy in Beirut – 63 killed
- 1983 bombing of US Marine barracks in Beirut – 241 servicemen killed
- 1992 bombing of Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires – 29 killed
- 1994 bombing of Jewish community center in Buenos Aires – 85 killed
- 2006 raid into Israel – 8 IDF soldiers killed, 2 kidnapped (and eventually murdered)
- 2012 bombing of Israeli tour bus in Bulgaria – 6 killed

Experts believe Hezbollah has stockpiled over 150,000 rockets and missiles inside Lebanon in preparation for a future massive assault against Israel.

These missiles, paid for by Iran and often supplied by Russia, are highly advanced and capable of hitting every part of Israel. Hezbollah's high-tech rocket launchers are capable of sending 1,000 missiles per day into Israel, which would potentially overwhelm Israel's missile defense systems. Hezbollah has also built a sophisticated network of tunnels and bunkers in the villages of southern Lebanon for the purpose of fighting the IDF.





But unlike previous wars with Israel, where the fighting took place inside Lebanon, next time Hezbollah is prepared to invade Israel and bring thousands of fighters across the border. Since the beginning of the Syrian Civil War in 2011, Hezbollah has been fighting to support the government of Bashar al-Assad. During this extended war, Hezbollah has matured into a battle-hardened army with experience in more advanced weapons, strategy, and coordination. They are now a much more serious threat to Israel than they were a decade ago. Recent reports allege that Hezbollah may now be in possession of chemical weapons, which could provoke Israel to take preventative action.





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