

LEBANON BORDER

Israel's border with Lebanon has long been an area of conflict. The Palestine Liberation Organization used territory in southern Lebanon as its base of operations in the 1970s until Israel expelled them from that land in 1982. By 1985, Israel had withdrawn the bulk of its forces from the area and subsequently withdrew its small buffer force from southern Lebanon in 2000. During the early 1980s the world saw the rise of one of the most powerful terrorist armies in the world: Hezbollah. In 1983, Hezbollah bombed barracks housing American and French military personnel, killing 241 American and 58 French service members. With Iranian support, Hezbollah presently controls southern Lebanon and is the dominant military force in the country. Recently, Hezbollah and its allies gained control of the Government in Beirut. Today, Hezbollah has well over 100,000 rockets aimed at Israel. Hezbollah's terrorist attacks and Iran's efforts to strengthen the terrorist organization have resulted in skirmishes along Israel's northern border - most notably the 2006 Lebanon War. Though Hezbollah knows it cannot defeat Israel militarily, its primary goal in a future conflict with Israel will be to see as many civilians as possible killed. While Israel discovered Hezbollah's terror tunnel network, Hezbollah's rockets still pose a significant threat to Israel. In a future conflict, the terrorist organization will use their large rocket arsenal to target Israeli civilians. Moreover, they have hidden those rockets amongst Lebanese civilian population centers, thus compelling a counterattack that will cost Lebanese non-combatants their lives.

