



HEZBOLLAH HIDING AMONG CIVILIANS

- Hezbollah, like many of the terror groups in the Middle East, has a history of using human shields, the practice of hiding among civilians to shield its military operations and assets.

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- In the aftermath of the first Lebanon War in which Hezbollah was founded, the group started consolidating its military build-up within Shi'ite population centers in Beirut, south Lebanon, and the Beqa'a Valley. This build-up was further accelerated by the IDF withdrawal from South Lebanon in 2000. As the intensity of conflict dropped, Hezbollah used the lull to implant itself deep into Lebanon's civilian population.
- Hezbollah has embedded terrorist fighters, weapons, and infrastructure in villages, towns, and urban neighborhoods.

HEZBOLLAH EMPLOYS THIS STRATEGY FOR TWO PRIMARY REASONS:

- By operating from civilian areas, Hezbollah takes advantage of the IDF's morality in war, as Jerusalem will be reluctant to strike targets that could lead to civilian casualties. Hezbollah, which portrays itself as the defender of Lebanon, shows little regard the Lebanese.
- Using civilian infrastructure provides Hezbollah a most evil win-win situation wherein the IDF will be reluctant to strike such targets, and if they Israelis are forced to attack, any civilian casualties are used to generate propaganda, portraying the group as a victim and rallying local and international support.

Hezbollah's actions are a blatant violation of international humanitarian law, including the Geneva Conventions.



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EXAMPLES AND INCIDENTS:

➤ During the 2006 Second Lebanon War, which was triggered when Hezbollah terrorists infiltrated Israel and killed multiple soldiers while kidnaping two others. Hezbollah made full use of residential areas, and there are numerous examples of Hezbollah launching rockets and storing weapons in civilian buildings.

➤ Multiple organizations reported that Hezbollah embedded itself within the civilian population of Beirut, using schools and mosques, among other structures. In their report on Hezbollah's use of human shields, Israel's Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center noted:

"The construction of a broad military infrastructure, positioned and hidden in populated areas, was intended to minimize Hezbollah's vulnerability. In addition, it was designed to provide it with a kind of immunity to IDF attacks by using civilians as human shields, rely on the knowledge that it is IDF commitment to avoid harming civilians whenever possible."

➤ On August 4th, 2020, approximately 2,750 tons of ammonium detonated one of the most significant non-nuclear blasts in history, devastating large parts of Beirut, killing over 200 people, injuring thousands, and leaving many more homeless. Soon after the blast it became clear that Hezbollah was storing the ammonium at the port to be used for explosives. Predictably, Hezbollah denied responsibility and has blocked investigations into the blast.

➤ In June 2024, whistleblowers at Rafic Hariri airport in Beirut revealed that Hezbollah has been storing weapons from Iran in the airport. To debunk the story, Lebanon invited ambassadors and journalists to the airport; however, they were denied access to the air cargo center, and the tour was abruptly halted.

➤ Hezbollah has shown time and time again its absolute disregard for human life, both Israeli and Lebanese. Hezbollah has repeatedly engaged in provocations against Israel while it hides among the Lebanese population. Its iron grip over Lebanon goes unchallenged, as the Lebanese Armed Forces refuse to prevent Hezbollah from acting with impunity.