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# **Lebanese Security and the Hezbollah**

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**Working Draft, Revised: July 14, 2006**

Please note that this document is a working draft and will be revised regularly. To comment, or to provide suggestions and corrections, please e-mail the author at [acordesman@aol.com](mailto:acordesman@aol.com).

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## Introduction

Lebanon is more played against in the current Arab-Israeli balance than a player. It is a small country caught in the middle between Israel and Syria. It has a total area of some 10,400 square kilometers, a 375-kilometer border with Syria, a 79-kilometer border with Israel, and a 225-kilometer coastline on the Mediterranean.

Lebanon has never been a meaningful military power, but it has been caught up in several Arab-Israeli conflicts. It has long experienced sectarian violence, and sometimes serious intra-sect violence, particularly among the leading families of its once dominant Maronites. Its population in 2006 was approaching four million. It was 95% Arab (4% Armenian and 1% other), but Lebanon officially recognized some 17 religious sects and had deep sectarian divisions. The CIA estimated that its main religious groups were: Muslim 59.7% (Shi'ite, Sunni, Druze, Isma'elite, Alawite or Nusayri), Christian 39% (Maronite Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Melkite Catholic, Armenian Orthodox, Syrian Catholic, Armenian Catholic, Syrian Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Chaldean, Assyrian, Copt, Protestant), and other 1.3%.<sup>1</sup>

Lebanon is still recovering from a long period of religious civil war between these factions that began in the 1970s, and from the Israeli and Syrian occupations that resulted from Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982. It suffered from repeated Syrian interventions in Lebanon's civil war before 1982, and Syria effectively dominated Lebanon once its troops and intelligence services moved into Lebanon as part of the Taif Accords peace settlement in 1990.

It is still far from clear whether Lebanon will remain united and avoid future civil conflicts. There are still serious tensions between virtually all factions and Lebanon's Shi'ite have become more assertive in recent years. The Taif Accord did, however, create a political system that gave Muslims and other non-Maronite groups a larger role in the political system that more accurately reflected their share of the population while ensuring that all major sectarian groups would have some representation at the top of the government by requiring that given posts be held by a representative of given groups.

There have been several elections since the end of the civil war in 1990, and a major drop in civil violence. Many sectarian militias have been weakened, partially disarmed, or disbanded, although every major group retains arms and some militia capability. However, key Shi'ite militias like Amal and the Hezbollah have never been disarmed. Syrian forces have officially left Lebanon, but Syria and the Syrian security services still play a major political role in Lebanon. Both Syria and Iran continue to arm and support the Hezbollah and use it as a proxy, and both use Lebanon to funnel arms and money to anti-Israeli Palestinian factions.

Lebanon's "unity" is still more a shell than a reality. Its leadership and politics remain divided along sectarian lines. The prime minister and deputy prime minister are appointed by the president in consultation with the National Assembly. However, the president must be a Maronite Christian, the prime minister must be a Sunni Muslim, and the speaker of the legislature must be a Shi'ite Muslim.

The Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) have gradually been rebuilt as a unified or "national force" (although troops retain strong sectarian loyalties), and Syria allowed the LAF to

exert central government authority over the northern two-thirds of the country by 2005. Hezbollah still exerts a major degree of control over southern Lebanon Beka Valley, although the LAF is present in the area.

These problems are compounded by tensions between Israel and the Hezbollah. Israel left South Lebanon in 2000, after years of low intensity civil conflict with Shi'ite militias like Hezbollah and Amal. While Israel viewed this withdrawal as a strategic choice and part of its effort to create a peace process with Syria and the other Arab states, it had failed to secure the area, and Hezbollah was largely credited in Lebanon and much of the Arab world with "defeating" the IDF in asymmetric warfare. Hezbollah forces remain in the Israel-Lebanese border area and Hezbollah has shown it retains the ability to strike across the border at Israel and inflict damage to Israel forces at the border.

## **The Syrian Factor**

Lebanon has faced far more serious problems in recent years with Syria, however, than it has with Israel. The Arab League effort to settle the civil war through the Ta'if Accord led to the deployment of some 30,000 Syrian troops. These forces suppressed Lebanese resistance, particularly from Maronite-led forces. They then remained in Lebanon, with some 16,000 Syrian troops based mainly east of Beirut and in the Beka Valley.

Syrian political pressure, the presence of Syrian forces, and the permeating presence of Syrian intelligence then allowed Syria to continue to dominate Lebanon. Syria justified this by arranging Lebanese government request for its forces to stay and claiming that the Lebanese government failed to implement all of the constitutional reforms in the Ta'if Accords.

Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon in May 2000 did, however, encourage some Lebanese factions to demand that Syria withdraw its forces. They slowly gained significant foreign support, and the UN Security Council passed UNSCR 1559 – which stated that Syria should withdraw from Lebanon and end its interference in Lebanese affairs -- in early October 2004. This resolution passed largely because of the support provided by US, France, and then prime minister Rafik Hariri.

Hariri was killed in a car bomb in Beirut in February 2005, along with 20 other people. It soon became apparent that the Syrian government had played a major role in this assassination, and almost certainly with the knowledge and consent of President Asad. The UN investigated and issued a Report of the International Investigation Commission, established pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1595 (2005).<sup>2</sup> The Report found evidence that pointed conclusively to the involvement of both Syrian and Lebanese officials in Hariri's death.<sup>3</sup>

Syria attempted to limit its reaction to a partial withdrawal, but failed. Largely as result of the political turmoil following the investigation of its role in Hariri's assassination, Syria withdrew the remainder of its forces from Lebanon in April of 2005 after 29 years of occupation.<sup>4</sup>

Lebanon held its first legislative elections free of the Syrian presence in May-June 2005 since the end of the civil war in 1990. These elections, however, were scarcely free of major sectarian divisions and did not unite the country. Hezbollah remains a major

independent force, with Iranian and Syrian support, and the risk of new civil clashes remains all too real. President Emile Lahud remained in office, although it was Syrian pressure to extend his term to six years that was the key to Hariri's clash with Asad and Hariri's assassination. A more independent prime minister, Fuad Siniora took office on June 30 2005, but the elections for a new national assembly in May and June 2005 produced an assembly divided in terms of both sect and ties to Syria.<sup>5</sup>

Elements of Syrian intelligence stayed in Lebanon despite Syrian declarations otherwise, and Syria continued to finance and put pressure on Lebanese political factions. The UN investigation, however, continued to put Syria in a problematic situation in both the international community and within the Arab world. These pressures are compounded by the fact the US is militarily active in Iraq and views Syria as playing a hostile and uncooperative role in Iraqi politics and in supporting the Iraqi insurgency.<sup>6</sup>

## **Lebanese Security after Syrian Withdrawal**

The Lebanese government has authorized deployment of a small joint force army commandos and military police to join its internal security personnel already in the south since the Israeli pullout from Southern Lebanon in May 2000. Lebanon has been subjected to criticism from the UN concerning its inaction in disbanding Syrian- and Iranian-backed Hezbollah since the Israeli pullout. Lebanon has replied that it has chosen to act against the militant groups through dialogue and not more violence.<sup>7</sup>

The Lebanese government has tried to assert more control over its other borders since the Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon. In late October 2005, Lebanese commandos blocked smuggling routes along the Syrian border, established guard-posts and deployed tanks along the border with Syria. In addition, the Lebanese set up positions close to Palestinian militant bases to keep a closer watch on their activities.

The pullout of Syrian forces has also put more pressure on the Lebanese to disband the militias, including the Palestinian militias within the refugee camps. The Lebanese government, at the urging of the UN, said it would disband the militias through national dialogue and not through confrontation. The United Nations Interim Force In Lebanon (UNIFIL) has said that it would cut the number of its forces down by half, the second reduction in size since the Israeli pullout in May 2000.

Reducing the number of UN peacekeepers in southern Lebanon could bring about a situation in which the Lebanese army will have either to deploy more forces to the south or see the region come further under Hezbollah control and see an increased risk of clashes with Israel. The government, however, has shown great caution in attempting to actively control Southern Lebanon and bring Hezbollah under its control. The Lebanese government must still evaluate every use of military force in the context of Lebanon's history of civil war, and the risk of dividing its military forces if they are used for any mission that major factions do not perceive as being in Lebanon's national interest.

Furthermore, as a UN report issued in October of 2005 recounts, Hezbollah is still receiving arms from Iran. Not only are Hezbollah and Palestinian organizations receiving weapons and materials from Iran, the equipment is still being transported through Syria with no apparent Syrian objection.<sup>8</sup> There are concerns that this continued support by Iran and implicit support from Syria will destabilize the situation in Lebanon. The Syrian

pullout could destabilize Lebanon, and possibly bring about a clash between the Israel and Lebanon and/or even involve the US in a direct way.<sup>9</sup>

## The Trends in Lebanese Forces

Lebanese forces are lightly armed, poorly organized for maneuver warfare, and lacked both a meaningful air force and modern land-based air defense assets. The recent trends in Lebanese forces are shown in **Figure 7.1**, and then explained by military service in **Figures 7.3 to 7.6**. Lebanon's recent arms imports are summarized in **Figure 7.2**. Lebanon's military forces remain small and totaled some 72,100 actives in 2006, including some 22,600 conscripts. It was unclear, however, that all this strength was actually present. It is also clear from Figure 7.2 that Lebanese forces have lacked the resources to make many major moves toward modernization and recapitalization in recent years.

Lebanese forces have moved towards a higher degree of unity, and many Lebanese officers are deeply committed to avoiding any further civil conflict, Syrian interference in Lebanese affairs, or clashes with Israel that could affect the country's recovery and development. Nevertheless, the Lebanese command structure reflects the nation's serious religious divisions. The President is the commander of the army and is Maronite Christian, the Deputy Commander is a Muslim (Shi'ite), and the Army Council had Druze and Sunni members.

**Figure 7.1**

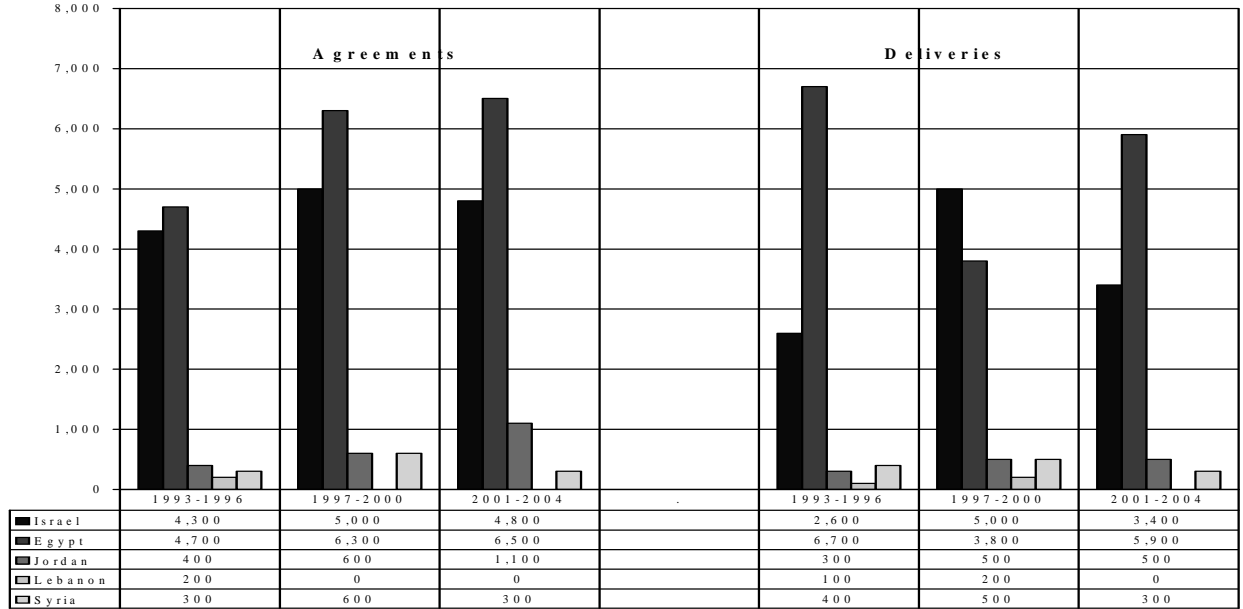
### Lebanese Military: Force Structure

	1990	2000	2005	2006
<b>Manpower</b>	70,000?	80,900	85,100	85,100
<i>Active</i>	~30,300	67,900	72,100	72,100
<i>Conscript</i>	0	27,400	22,600	N/A
<i>Army</i>	21,000	65,000	70,000	70,000
<i>Navy</i>	500	1,200	1,100	1,100
<i>Air Force</i>	800	1,700	1,000	1,000
<i>Paramilitary</i>	8,000	~13,000	~13,000	~13,000

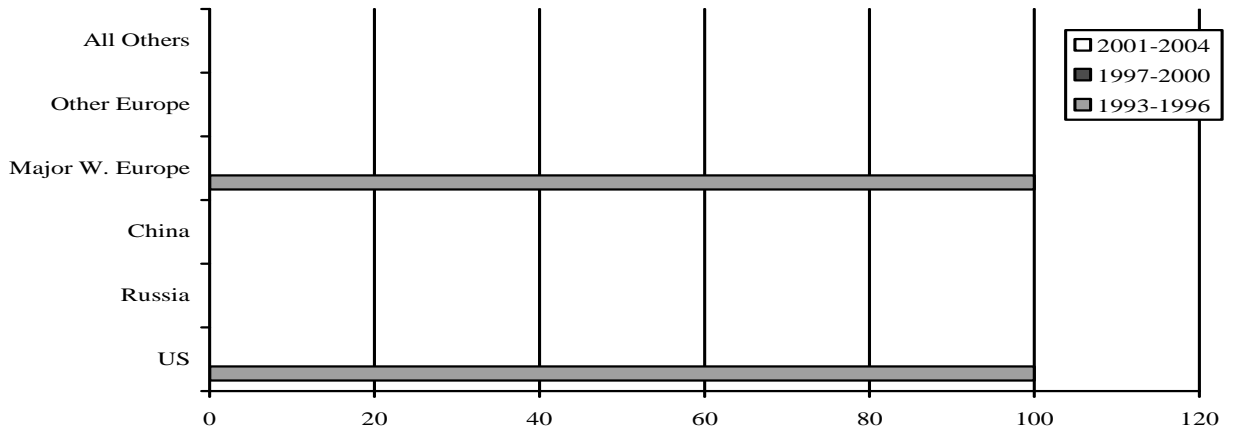
Source: Various editions of the IISS Military Balance, US, British and other experts

**Figure 7.2**  
**Recent Lebanese Arms Sales**

**Lebanese New Arms Agreements and Deliveries: 1993-2004 (in \$US Current Millions)**



**Lebanese Arms Orders by Supplier Country: 1993-2004 (Arms Agreements in \$US Current Millions)**



0 = less than \$50 million or nil, and all data rounded to the nearest \$100 million.

Source: Adapted by Anthony H. Cordesman, from Richard F. Grimmett, *Conventional Arms Transfers to the Developing Nations*, Congressional Research Service, various editions.

## The Lebanese Army

The army had an authorized strength of about 70,000 men in 2006. Its order of battle had 11 mechanized infantry brigades, a Presidential Guard Brigade, a commando/Ranger Regiment, five Special Forces regiments, an air assault regiment, and two artillery regiments. The trends in the Lebanese Army are shown in **Figure 7.3**.<sup>10</sup>

The army is the only element of Lebanon's military forces with any serious potential war fighting capability against a well-organized military force. There was strong public and Lebanese Army support for the Syrian withdrawal. Since the first parliamentary election after the Syrian withdrawal the Lebanese has Army begun to be more active, it surrounded Palestinian bases in the Beka Valley, detained, and deported Palestinian infiltrators.<sup>11</sup> It has played a steadily more important internal security role since the final battles of the civil war in October 1990. It has deployed south from Beirut and occupied Lebanese territory as far south as Sidon and Tyre, north to Tripoli, and in the Shuf Mountains.

While Hezbollah remains a major problem, and Amal has not been disarmed, most militias have been contained to their local territory, and most are largely disarmed. Some militias have been integrated into the Army, and most have turned over or sold their heavy weapons. Although some members of the Army's command structure may still have covert links to Syria, it is doubtful they would take any overt action in support of Syria or at Syrian direction. As a result, Hezbollah is the only armed force within Lebanon that might deploy in support of Syria if it came under intense pressure to do so.<sup>12</sup>

### *Major Combat Equipment*

The Lebanese Army has a relatively large pool of major combat equipment for a force its size, although much is of low to moderate capability, and consists of worn transfers from other countries. Since the end of Lebanon's civil war in 1990, the army has benefited from its relationship with the U.S. military. The US either donated, or sold at minimal prices, sixteen Huey helicopters, and earmarked another sixteen for future delivery, comprising the entirety of Lebanon's air force. The U.S furnished a large portion of Lebanon's ground transportation, including 850 armored personnel carriers, 3,000 trucks and jeeps, and 60 ambulances. The Pentagon also provided much equipment, labeled as "excess defense articles," which had included small weapons, spare parts, grenade launchers, night-vision goggles, and communications equipment.

Much of the army's inventory is worn or obsolete, however, and is useful largely for internal security purposes. The Lebanese army is far too lightly equipped, and its equipment is too old or limited in capability, to engage either Israeli or Syrian forces.

In 2006, its holdings included 310 tanks -- with an estimated 110 M-48A1 and M-48A5 tanks and 200T-54 and T-55 tanks. The army had phased out its Ferret, and Staghound light armored reconnaissance vehicles. It did, however, have 125 other armored fighting vehicles: (?)AMX-13 light tanks, (?) and an unspecified number of Saladins. It had some 1,275 APCs, including the operational portion of an inventory of 1,164 M-113s, 81 VAB-VCI, 81 AMX-VCI, and 12 M-3/VTTs. This was a relatively high level of mechanization for such a small force, but significant numbers had limited or no operational readiness and/or sustainability in combat.

The Lebanese army had 147 towed artillery weapons – many of which are operational: 13 105mm M-101A1s, 32 M-1938, and 24 D-30 122mm weapons, 16 130mm M-46s, and 15 Model 50, 15 M-114A1, and 32 M-198 155mm weapons. It also had 25 BM-21 rocket launchers, and over 370 81mm, 82mm, and 120mm mortars.

Anti-tank holdings were limited for a force that might have to engage Syrian on Israeli armor. The army had 24 BGM-71A TOWs 16 Milan and 30 ENTAC anti-tank guided missiles, plus large numbers of light anti-tank weapons – including 60 M-40A1 106mm recoilless rifles.

Lebanon has only token land-based air defenses. In 2006, the army had 20 SA-7A/B fire units, and some 20mm and 23mm AA guns, plus 10 M-42A1 40mm guns.

### ***Training and Readiness***

The Lebanese Army does seem, however, to be shifting its force structure to put more emphasis on mortar and light anti-tank weapons. This may be driven by the problems it has in maintaining heavy weapons, but may also be affected by plans to slowly take Hezbollah's place as the armed force in southern Lebanon. Lighter weapons and disperse infantry forces are useful in both border security and in defending against incursions by the Israeli forces across the border. They are able to inflict damage but not enough so that a massive retaliation from Israel would be in order.

More broadly, the Lebanese army underwent a massive reorganization in 1997, integrating Muslim and Christian brigades in an attempt to end factional rivalries and bias. Units became subject to rotation to prevent any regional bias from forming and commanders within units are rotated regularly to ensure that religious prejudice does not create informal hierarchies. Although these changes cannot compensate for Lebanon's weaknesses in materiel or its client relationship with Syria, many hope they will insulate the military from the religious tensions that plague the country.

In spite of these improvements, the army is still emerging from the chaos of civil war. Lebanon may have some excellent individual officers and some good combat elements, but there are still ethnic and sectarian divisions within its forces. Its "brigades" and "regiments" are often undermanned. Conscripts train for only one year. Career soldiers still tend to be politicized, are generally low in quality, and receive limited training for anything other than defensive infantry combat. The Lebanese Army's seemingly impressive equipment pool is worn, often obsolescent, and much of it is inoperative.

The army is seeking to recreate itself as an independent national force and many Lebanese officers are struggling hard to maintain the army's independence. The fact the army was under heavy Syrian influence is no longer such a hurdle, but even the best leaders cannot quickly overcome the military's heritage of incompetence, corruption, and ethnic divisions. It will be years before the Lebanese Army can emerge as an independent fighting force that could engage Israeli or Syrian forces in anything other than well-positioned defensive combat.

**Figure 7.3**  
**Lebanese Army: Force Structure**

	1990	2000	2005	2006
<b>Manpower</b>	704,000	80,900	85,100	85,100
<i>Active</i>	~30,300	67,900	72,100	72,100
<i>Reserve</i>	?	?	?	?
<b>Combat Units - Army</b>	10	23	28	28
<i>Regional command</i>	N/A	N/A	5	5
<i>Mechanized Infantry Brigade</i>	?	11	11	11
<i>Marine Commando Regiment</i>	?	1	1	1
<i>Special Forces Regiment</i>	1	5	5	5
<i>Commando/ Ranger Regiment</i>	1	1	1	1
<i>Air Assault Regiment</i>	?	1	1	1
<i>Artillery Regiment</i>	?	2	2	2
<i>Presidential Guard Brigade</i>	?	1	1	1
<i>Mountain Infantry Coy</i>	?	1	?	?
<i>Military Police</i>	0	?	1	1
<b>MBT</b>	105	304	310	310
<i>T-54/-55</i>	N/A	212	200	200
<i>M-48</i>	105	92	110	110
<i>M-48A1</i>	?	?	?	?
<i>M-48A5</i>	?	?	?	?
<b>RECCE</b>	70	67	85	60
<i>AML</i>	?	67	60	60
<i>Ferret</i>	5	0	0	0
<i>Saladin</i>	65	?	25	N/A
<b>APC</b>	320	1,281	1,338	1,275
<i>APC (T)</i>	300	1,164	1,164	1,164
<i>M-113A1/A2</i>	300	1,164	1,164	1,164
<i>APC (W)</i>	20	117	174	174
<i>VAB-VTT</i>	20	0	0	0
<i>M-3/VTT</i>	0	37	12	12
<i>VAB-VCI</i>	N/a	80	81	81
<i>AMX-VCI</i>	0	N/A	81	81
<b>Artillery</b>	579	486	541	541
<i>TOWED</i>	~69+	151	147	147
105mm	15	13	13	13
<i>M-101</i>	15	13	13	13

<i>M-101A1</i>	15	13	13	13
122mm	18+	62	56	56
<i>D-30</i>	Some	?	24	24
<i>M-102</i>	18	0	0	0
<i>M-30 M-1938</i>	Some	?	32	32
130mm	?	11	16	16
<i>M-46</i>	?	11	16	16
155mm	36+	65	62	62
<i>M-114A1</i>	Some	18	15	15
<i>M-198</i>	Some	35	32	32
<i>Model-50</i>	36	12	15	15
<b>MRL</b>	N/A	23	25	25
122mm	N/A	23	25	25
<i>BM-21</i>	N/A	23	25	25
<b>MOR</b>	25+	312	369	369
81mm	Some	93	158	158
82mm	0	111	111	111
120mm	25	108	100	100
<i>Brandt</i>	?	?	100	100
<i>AT</i>	~20+	~20+	~120+	~130+
<b>MSL</b>	?	~20+	70	70
<b>ENTAC</b>	?	Some	30	30
<i>Milan</i>	?	Some	16	16
<i>TOW</i>	20	20	24	24
<b>RCL</b>	Some	Some	50	60
<i>106mm</i>	Some	Some	50	60
<i>M-40</i>	Some	Some	50	60
<b>RL</b>	Some	Some	Some	Some
73mm	0	0	N/A	Some
<b>RPG-7 Knout</b>	0	0	N/A	Some
85mm	Some	Some	Some	N/A
<b>RPG-7</b>	Some	Some	Some	N/A
89mm	Some	Some	Some	Some
<b>M-65</b>	Some	Some	Some	Some
<b>AD</b>	15+	~10+	~50+	~50+
<b>SAM - MANPAD</b>	N/A	N/A	20	20
<i>SA-7</i>	N/A	N/A	20	20
<i>SA-7A Grail</i>	N/A	N/A	?	?

<i>SA-7B Grail</i>	N/A	N/A	?	?
<b>GUNS</b>	15	10	~10+	10+
20mm	?	?	Some	Some
23mm	?	?	Some	Some
<i>TOWED</i>	?	?	Some	Some
ZU-23-2	?	?	Some	Some
40mm	15	10	10	10
<i>SP</i>	15	10	10	10
M-42A1	15	10	10	10

~ Estimated amount; \* combat capable; + more than the number given but not specified how much more; Some – unspecified amount; ? unspecified amount, if any; N/A not available; { } serviceability in doubt

Source: Various editions of the IISS Military Balance, US, British and other experts

## **The Lebanese Air Force**

Lebanon had no real air force or navy. The trends in its small air force are shown in **Figure 7.4**. In 2006, the LAF had 1,000 men on paper, but its real strength was much lower. It only had six worn, obsolete, low-capability Hunter light attack and 5 Fouga fixed-wing aircraft, all in storage.

It also had two SA-342 attack helicopters armed with obsolete short-range AS-11 and AS-12 missiles. It had no significant surface-to-air missile defenses. The only significant assets of the Lebanese air force are its transport helicopters, which consist of about 24 UH-1Hs, 1 SA-318, 5 Bell-212s, and 3 SA-330s. A substantial number of these helicopters need major overhauls or are only semi-operational.

**Figure 7.4**  
**Lebanese Air Force: Force Structure**

	1990	2000	2005	2006
<b>Manpower</b>	800	1,700	1,000	1,000
<i>Air Force</i>	800	1,700	1,000	1,000
<b>Total Aircraft</b>	51	19	51	54
<b>FGA</b>	12	?	11	6
<i>Hawker Hunter</i>	6	?	6	6
<i>F-70</i>	5	0	0	0
<i>T-66</i>	1	0	0	0
<i>Fouga</i>	0	?	5	?
<i>MK9 in store</i>	0	?	N/A	Yes
<b>Training</b>	8	3{}	3	8
<i>Bulldog</i>	5	3+	3	3
<i>(Bulldog in store)</i>	?	?	N/A	127
<i>CM-170 Magister (in store)</i>	3	0	N/A	5
<b>Helicopter</b>	31	16	37	40
<b>Attack</b>	4	?	2	2
<i>SA-342 Gazelle</i>	4	?	2	2
<b>Support</b>	9	?	2	3
<i>SA-330 Puma</i>	9	?	2	3
<b>Utility</b>	16	?	33	35
<i>Bell 212</i>	7	?	5	5
<i>R-44 (utility/training)</i>	0	?	N/A	2
<i>SA-313</i>	2	?	0	0
<i>SA-316 Alouette III</i>	7	?	3	3
<i>SA-318 Alouette II</i>	0	?	1	1
<i>UH-1</i>	0	16	24	24
<i>UH-1H Iroquois</i>	0	16	24	24
<b>Transport</b>	2	0	0	0
<i>Dove</i>	1	0	0	0
<i>Turbo-Commander 690A</i>	1	0	0	0

Source: Various editions of the IISS Military Balance, US, British and other experts

## Lebanese Naval Forces

Lebanon has some 1,100 men assigned to its navy, including 100 marines. The trends in its small naval forces are shown in **Figure 7.5**. All of its ships are based in Beirut and Jounieh. In 2006, it had seven coastal patrol craft, including five British-made, 38-ton, Attacker-class inshore patrol craft with radars and twin 23mm guns. These are aging 38-ton vessels dating back to the early 1980s. Their maximum speed is 21-knots, and is slow for anti-terrorist and infiltration missions.<sup>13</sup>

It had two British-made, 31-ton Tracker-class inshore patrol craft with radars and either twin 23mm guns or 12.7 mm machine guns. They have a simple I-Band surface search radar. Their 20-knot maximum speed again is slow for anti-terrorist and infiltration missions.

The US transferred 27 M-boot river patrol boats to the navy in 1994. These are small six-ton vessels used for inshore coastal patrol. They have 5.56mm machine guns and a relatively slow 22-knot maximum speed. Some 10-12 are operational. The rest are laid up.

The navy also had two 670-ton Sour-class (French Edic-class) landing craft built in the mid-1980s. They can carry about 96 troops each, 11 trucks, or 8 APCs. They were damaged in 1990, but have been repaired and are fully operational. They are used by Lebanon's marines.

The navy had other small-armed boats in inventory, including 13 6-ton inshore patrol craft and two more Tracker-class boats in the Customs service for a total of 25 armored boats/crafts. It is not clear how many are operational.

The Lebanese Navy had a coastal patrol capability, and some troop lift capability, but no war fighting capability against Israel or any neighboring state. It can perform a surveillance role, inspect cargo ships, and intercept small infiltrating forces along a limited part of Lebanon's coastline.<sup>14</sup>

**Figure 7.5**  
**Lebanese Navy: Force Structure**

	1990	2000	2005	2006
<b>Manpower</b>	500	1,200	1,100	1,100
<i>Navy</i>	500	1,200	1,100	1,100
<b>Facilities</b>	1	2	2	2
<i>Jounieh</i>	1	1	1	1
<i>Beirut</i>	0	1	1	1
<b>Patrol and Coastal Combatants</b>	4	7	7	32
<i>Misc boats/craft</i>	N/A	27	25	25
<i>Armed boats</i>	N/A	27	25	25
<b>PCI</b>	4	7	7	7
<i>Tarablous</i>	1	0	0	0
<i>Byblos</i>	3	0	0	0
<i>Attacker (UK, under 100 tons)</i>	0	5	5	5
<i>Tracker (UK, under 100 tons)</i>	0	2	2	2
<b>Amphibious</b>	2	2	2	2
<i>LCT</i>	2	0	0	0
<i>LS, LST</i>	0	2	2	2
<i>Sour (capacity 96 troops)</i>	0	2	2	2

Source: Various editions of the IISS Military Balance, US, British and other experts

## Lebanese Paramilitary Forces and the Hezbollah

The trends in Lebanon's paramilitary forces are shown in **Figure 7.6**. In 2006, they included a large 13,000 man internal security force that was part of the Ministry of the Interior, and which included the regional and Beirut Gendarmerie and Judicial Police. It was armed with automatic weapons and had 60 Chaimite APCS. There was a small customs force, equipped with 7 light patrol boats.<sup>15</sup>

The effectiveness of these forces, Lebanese intelligence, and the Lebanese military has been severely hampered by the ethnic and religious divisions in Lebanon, and the role Syria played while its forces occupied the country. Many Lebanese Shi'ites see local movements like the Hezbollah as a guarantee to their security, and even many non-Shi'ites see it as the force that defeated Israel and forced it to end its occupation of Southern Lebanon. Other movements have remained in Lebanon because of Syrian pressure, or because the Lebanese government was not willing to confront them. At the same time, the Lebanese security and intelligence forces have been heavily penetrated by Syria and many other Lebanese have good reason to distrust them.<sup>16</sup>

The State Department summarized Lebanon's overall efforts to deal with extremist and terrorist groups as follows in its report on terrorism in April 2005,<sup>17</sup>

The Lebanese Government recognized as legitimate resistance groups organizations that target Israel and permitted them to maintain offices in Beirut. Lebanon also exempts what it terms "legal resistance" groups, including Lebanese Hezbollah, from money laundering and terrorism financing laws. Lebanese leaders, including President Emile Lahud, reject assessments of Lebanese Hezbollah's global terror activities, though the group's leadership has openly admitted to providing material support for terror attacks inside Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza. Hezbollah, which holds 12 seats in the Lebanese parliament, is generally seen as a part of Lebanese society and politics. The Lebanese Government has failed to comply with numerous UN resolutions to extend sole and effective authority over all Lebanese territory. The Lebanese security forces remain unable or unwilling to enter Palestinian refugee camps, the operational nodes of terrorist groups such as Asbat al-Ansar and other Palestinian terror groups, and to deploy forces into areas dominated by Lebanese Hezbollah, including the Beka'a Valley, southern Beirut, and the south of the country up to the UN-demarcated Blue Line.

Its updated report of April 2006, which was issued after Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon, summarized Lebanese activity in more detail,

In April, Syrian military forces and overt intelligence agents departed Lebanon after 29 years of occupation. Terrorist activities were still carried out in Lebanon, however. Israeli positions in the Blue Line village of Ghajjar in the Israeli-occupied Golan region were attacked on November 21, probably by Hizballah. Al-Qa'ida in Iraq claimed responsibility for a rocket attack on Israel from Lebanese territory on December 27, but some analysts suspected "rejectionist" Palestinian groups or Hizballah as the perpetrator and, thus far, a clear determination of culpability has not been possible. Throughout the year, Hizballah continued to claim the right to conduct hostile operations along the Blue Line on the premise of a legitimate "resistance" to the occupation of Lebanese territory.

Since October 2004, when a protracted campaign of domestic political violence began, there have been 15 bombings and assassination attempts that resulted in more than 30 deaths, including that of former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri. More than 230 people have been injured. The attacks have targeted Lebanese journalists and politicians critical of Syrian interference in Lebanon, including Telecom Minister Hamadeh, MP Gebran Tueni, journalist May Chidiac, Defense Minister Elias Murr, and journalist Samir Kassir. These attacks remain unsolved, but the UN International Independent Investigation Commission (UNIIC) is investigating the Hariri assassination and the

Lebanese Government, assisted by the UNIIIC, is investigating the other acts of political violence.

Since July, when the government of Prime Minister Fouad Siniora took office, Lebanon has taken small but important steps against several terrorist groups, specifically the PFLP-GC and Fatah al-Intifada. Under Prime Minister Siniora, the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) surrounded several Palestinian terrorist militia bases and restricted access to them. Similarly, since late 2005, the Lebanese Armed Forces strengthened border control posts and increased patrols along the Lebanese-Syrian border to prevent the flow of weaponry to terrorist groups.

Even with the advances Lebanon has made against terrorism, considerable work remains. The most significant terrorist group in Lebanon is Hizballah, because of its power and influence in Lebanon's Shi'a community, which makes up about one-third of Lebanon's population. The Lebanese Government still recognizes Hizballah as a "legitimate resistance group." Hizballah maintains offices in Beirut and elsewhere in the country and has elected deputies in Lebanon's Parliament and a minister in Prime Minister Siniora's Council of Ministers (Cabinet). Hizballah also operates a comprehensive system of health and education services in several regions of the country. Although Syria withdrew its military forces in April, it continued to maintain a covert intelligence presence in Lebanon. In addition, Syria continued to offer support for, and facilitated arms smuggling to, Hizballah and Palestinian terrorist groups. Given that the Government of Lebanon does not exercise authoritative control over areas in the Hizballah-dominated south and inside the Palestinian-controlled refugee camps, terrorists can operate relatively freely in both locations.

The Lebanese and Syrian governments have not fully complied with UNSCR 1559, which calls for respect for the sovereignty and political independence of Lebanon, the end of foreign interference in Lebanon, and the disarming and disbanding of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias, including Hizballah. The Government of Lebanon, however, has indicated it will abide by its international obligations, including UNSCR 1559's call to disarm all militias. The Lebanese Government and its political leaders maintain that implementation of Hizballah's disarmament should be accomplished through "national dialogue" rather than force. This position complicates the process of implementing UNSCR 1559, because under Lebanon's "consensus" political system, all the country's sectarian communities, including the powerful Shi'a community, have to agree on a course of action on matters of national security.

A number of Lebanese leaders, including pro-Syrian President Emile Lahoud, reject categorizing Hizballah's activities as terrorist, even though the group's leaders openly admitted to providing support for terrorist attacks inside Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza. Hizballah, which holds 14 seats in Parliament as well as a seat on the Council of Ministers, is widely considered a legitimate participant in Lebanese society and politics. Some government officials and members of Parliament attended the annual militaristic Hizballah parade in southern Beirut on October 28, known locally as "Jerusalem Day."

Lebanese authorities maintain that their provision of amnesty to Lebanese individuals involved in acts of violence during the civil war prevents Beirut from prosecuting many cases of concern to the United States. These cases include the 1985 hijacking of TWA flight 847, during which a U.S. Navy diver was murdered, and the abduction, torture, and murder of U.S. hostages in Lebanon from 1984 to 1991. U.S. courts brought indictments against Lebanese Hizballah operatives responsible for a number of those crimes.

Despite evidence to the contrary, the Lebanese Government has insisted that Imad Mugniyah, wanted in connection with the TWA 847 hijacking and other terrorist acts, and placed on the FBI's list of most-wanted terrorists in 2001, is no longer in Lebanon. Mohammad Ali Hamadi, who spent 18 years in a German prison for his role in the TWA hijacking, was released in December and is now believed to be in Lebanon. The United States continued its efforts to bring him to trial before a U.S. court and has formally requested his return. The Lebanese Government's legal system failed to hold a hearing on a government prosecutor's appeal in the case of Tawfic Muhammad Farroukh, who, despite the evidence, was found not guilty of murder for his role in the killing of U.S. Ambassador Francis Meloy and two others in 1976.

The Lebanese Government took judicial action on two terrorist incidents that occurred in 2004: an attempted bombing of the Italian Embassy, and an attempt to bring a bomb onto the U.S. Embassy grounds. Two Lebanese citizens, Mehdi Hajj Hasan and Abed Karim Mreish, were tried and convicted for the U.S. Embassy incident; they are serving sentences of five and two years at hard labor, respectively. Other members of the terrorist cell involved in these actions were freed as part of an amnesty law passed in June, but a judicial investigation is still taking place.

On terrorism finance, Lebanon's Special Investigation Commission (SIC), an independent legal entity with judicial status that is empowered to investigate suspicious financial transactions, investigated 165 cases involving allegations of money laundering and terrorist financing activities. Lebanon assumed a leadership role in the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force.

The Lebanese government decided in February 2006 to avoid a political crisis with Hezbollah by designating it a "resistance" force against Israel, rather than a militia, and allowing it to keep its arms. Lebanon's problems with irregular and terrorist forces, however, go beyond the problem of Hezbollah. The Lebanese government has been willing to take action against various Sunni neo-Salafi and other Sunni extremist groups, including those similar in ideology to al-Qa'ida. However, Lebanon has been the location of a number of Palestinian groups that the US designates as terrorist organizations. These include the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC), the Abu Nidal organization (ANO), and elements of HAMAS. This could prove to be more important in the future, now that Hamas has emerged as the dominant political force in Gaza and the West Bank.

### ***Non-State Forces: Hezbollah***

Virtually every ethnic and religious faction in Lebanon still has some form of militia and conceals arms in spite of the supposed disarming of most such movements. The main threat to Lebanese internal stability, however, now consists of two Shi'ite militias: Amal and the Hezbollah.

Syria and the Lebanese army have allowed both to retain significant numbers of weapons, but Hezbollah (also Hezbollah, Party of God, Islamic Jihad, and Islamic Jihad for the Liberation of Palestine) is clearly most important independent paramilitary element in Lebanon. The US State Department describes Hezbollah as follows:<sup>18</sup>

...Formed in 1982 in response to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, this Lebanon-based radical Shi'a group takes its ideological inspiration from the Iranian revolution and the teachings of the late Ayatollah Khomeini. The Majlis al-Shura, or Consultative Council, is the group's highest governing body and is led by Secretary General Hasan Nasrallah. Hezbollah is dedicated to liberating Jerusalem and eliminating Israel, and has formally advocated ultimate establishment of Islamic rule in Lebanon. Nonetheless, Hezbollah has actively participated in Lebanon's political system since 1992. Hezbollah is closely allied with, and often directed by, Iran but has the capability and willingness to act independently. Though Hezbollah does not share the Syrian regime's secular orientation, the group has been a strong ally in helping Syria advance its political objectives in the region.

...Known or suspected to have been involved in numerous anti-US and anti-Israeli terrorist attacks, including the suicide truck bombings of the US Embassy and US Marine barracks in Beirut in 1983 and the US Embassy annex in Beirut in 1984. Three members of Hezbollah, 'Imad Mughniyah, Hasan Izz-al-Din, and Ali Atwa, are on the FBI's list of 22 Most Wanted Terrorists for the 1985 hijacking of TWA Flight 847 during which a US Navy diver was murdered. Elements

of the group were responsible for the kidnapping and detention of Americans and other Westerners in Lebanon in the 1980s. Hezbollah also attacked the Israeli Embassy in Argentina in 1992 and the Israeli cultural center in Buenos Aires in 1994. In 2000, Hezbollah operatives captured three Israeli soldiers in the Shab'a Farms and kidnapped an Israeli noncombatant.

... Hezbollah also provides guidance and financial and operational support for Palestinian extremist groups engaged in terrorist operations in Israel and the occupied territories. In 2004, Hezbollah launched an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) that left Lebanese airspace and flew over the Israeli town of Nahariya before crashing into Lebanese territorial waters. Ten days prior to the event, the Hezbollah Secretary General said Hezbollah would come up with new measures to counter Israeli Air Force violations of Lebanese airspace. Hezbollah also continued launching small scale attacks across the Israeli border, resulting in the deaths of several Israeli soldiers.

...In March 2004, Hezbollah and HAMAS signed an agreement to increase joint efforts to perpetrate attacks against Israel. In late 2004, Hezbollah's al-Manar television station, based in Beirut with an estimated ten million viewers worldwide, was prohibited from broadcasting in France. Al-Manar was placed on the Terrorist Exclusion List (TEL) in the United States, which led to its removal from the program offerings of its main cable service provider, and made it more difficult for al-Manar associates and affiliates to operate in the United States.

... In 2005 Hizballah's status quo changed due both to the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanese territory and Hizballah's broadened role in Lebanese politics following the Lebanese legislative elections that spring. Hizballah has actively participated in Lebanon's political system since 1992. The party now claims 14 elected officials in the 128-seat Lebanese National Assembly and is represented in the Cabinet for the first time, by the Minister of Water and Electricity. Hizballah maintains a military presence in southern Lebanon, a presence it justifies by claiming to act in defense of Lebanon against acts of Israeli aggression, such as regular Israeli overflights of Lebanese airspace. Hizballah alleges that Israel has not withdrawn completely from Lebanese territory because, in Hizballah's view, the Sheba'a Farms area belongs to Lebanon. Hizballah and Israel clashed twice in this disputed part of the Golan Heights in 2005.

...Several thousand supporters and a few hundred terrorist operatives....Operates in the southern suburbs of Beirut, the Beka'a Valley, and southern Lebanon. Has established cells in Europe, Africa, South America, North America, and Asia. ...Receives financial, training, weapons, explosives, political, diplomatic, and organizational aid from Iran, and diplomatic, political, and logistical support from Syria. Hezbollah also receives funding from charitable donations and business interests.

Hezbollah's role has evolved over time. When Hezbollah was established in 1982, its primary goal was to force Israel to withdraw from southern Lebanon. When it achieved this goal in May 2000, its focus began to broaden, although it still challenged Israel over disputed territories like the Shebaa Farms region in the foothills of Mount Hermon. Since September 2000, following Ariel Sharon's visit to the Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem and the subsequent Palestinian uprising, Hezbollah became more outspoken in its support for the Palestinian cause. It has repeatedly said that it sought Israel's withdrawal from all territory it considers occupied and as rightfully belonging to Arabs. In the wake of the February 2005 assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and the subsequent pullout by Syria, many believe that Hezbollah will seek to expand its influence and roll in Lebanese politics.

Hezbollah engages in both political and military activity, and its structure is hierarchical, disciplined, and secretive. Its central decision-making body is the seven-member Majlis Shura al-Qarar ("Decision-making Consultative Council"), which is presided over by Sheik Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah. Though he is clearly recognized as Hezbollah's leader, Nasrallah shares power with the other members of the council. Their decisions are

generally reached by consensus or a vote. There are also a number of other bodies and committees below the Consultative Council, including the Politburo, which provides advice to the Council, and the General Convention, which implements Council orders and plans day-to-day operations in Lebanon.<sup>19</sup>

Other elements influence Hezbollah decision-making. High-ranking resistance fighters are influential, due in part to their privileged status in the General Convention and the fact that their former commanders are often elected to the Consultative Council. In addition, the security and intelligence agencies play an important role in the group, particularly Amn al-Hizb (the “Party’s Security”), which is believed to protect Hezbollah leaders, preserve discipline and monitor all levels of Hezbollah’s hierarchy, including the Consultative Council. Moreover, Iran and Syria, due to their financial and political support, also significantly impact Hezbollah decisions.<sup>20</sup>

Hezbollah reacted strongly to the outbreak of the Israeli-Palestinian War in September 2000. An official statement from the group referred to Sharon’s visit as “a deliberate desecration of Muslim holy places in Jerusalem, a criminal act and an insolent provocation of the feelings and dignities of the Arab and Muslim people.” The group further described Sharon’s visit as a crime and “...a declaration of war on Muslim sacred places in Jerusalem...”<sup>21</sup>

In October 2000, Al Manar broadcast speeches by Sheik Nasrallah that were clearly designed to incite Palestinian hostility. One such speech included a call to stab Israelis to death: “If you don’t have bullets, who among you doesn’t have knives? Hide the knife, and when he comes close to the enemy let him stab him. Let the stab be fatal.”<sup>22</sup> In another instance, Sheik Nasrallah appeared on the independent al-Jazeera and addressed the Palestinians as “holy war comrades-in-arms,” and proposed a strategy of gradually escalating the uprising from stones to daggers to firearms and other means of military combat.<sup>23</sup> He also reportedly encouraged Palestinians to fight Israelis using suicide operations.

Hezbollah has since offered continued political support and guidance to Palestinian fighters. In October 2000, Nasrallah stated that Hezbollah was concerned with all Israeli prisoners, “whether Lebanese, Palestinian or Arab.”<sup>24</sup> He also exhorted Arab leaders to protect the Palestinian struggle “by providing support and assistance to Palestinians fighting Israeli troops.”<sup>25</sup> Then in January 2001, he pledged to Palestinian families that he would work to secure the release of their loved ones from Israeli jails.<sup>26</sup> Later that year in August, he told his fighters to prepare to join the Intifada (although they have yet to participate actively in the uprising).<sup>27</sup> Finally, in April 2002, Nasrallah made public overtures to the Israeli government to bargain for the lives of Palestinian fighters threatened by IDF forces. However, a framework for an Israeli-Hezbollah prisoner release agreement was not reached until late 2003 and no exchanges took place until early 2004.<sup>28</sup>

Hezbollah is also suspected of providing significant material assistance to Palestinian militants, probably with Iranian and Syrian encouragement and support and the tolerance of the Lebanese government. There have been a number of reports since October 2000 that the Hezbollah has smuggled arms to Fatah and the Palestinian security services, as well as to Hamas and the Islamic Jihad.<sup>29</sup> In February 2002, following the Israeli seizure

of a shipment of arms on board the freighter *Karine-A* in the Red Sea, Arafat accused Hezbollah of attempting to ship the arms to the Palestinian Authority illegally. Within a matter of days, he retracted his comments and instead blamed the Israeli government, which he accused of framing the Palestinians and Hezbollah.<sup>30</sup> Just over a year later, on May 22, 2003, the Israeli navy captured a fishing vessel off the coast of Haifa carrying weapons and evidence of plans for terrorist attacks. Israeli authorities suspected the items were being smuggled by Hezbollah, but there was no conclusive evidence that they were bound for Palestinian territory.<sup>31</sup>

In addition to suspected arms smuggling, there is evidence that Hezbollah actively trains Palestinian fighters. On April 21, 2002, Hezbollah official Mohammed Raab acknowledged that Hezbollah provides Palestinians with military intelligence and suggestions for stockpiling supplies, trench building, and destroying tanks.<sup>32</sup> In addition, a December 2003-January 2004 investigation by the Israel Security Agency uncovered a Hezbollah-financed and guided terrorist infrastructure within the state of Israel. On February 8, 2004, two Arab Israeli citizens, brothers Jassan and Sirhan Atmallah, were indicted in Israel's Northern District Military Court for attempting to establish "a terrorist infrastructure among Israeli Arabs that would be financed by Hezbollah and under its military guidance," and for "preparing a list of candidates for military training, types of war material that [they] would need, etc."<sup>33</sup> The Shin Bet claimed that Hezbollah provided the individuals with "military training ... and ... large sums of money to prepare terrorist attacks."<sup>34</sup>

On July 20, 2004, Hezbollah leader Sheik Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah publicly acknowledged that Hezbollah provided covert assistance to Palestinian militants for the first time. At the funeral of Ghaleb Awwali, a senior Hezbollah official killed by an allegedly Israeli-planted car bomb in Beirut on July 19, Nasrallah said that Awwali was "among the team that dedicated their lives in the last few years to help their brothers in occupied Palestine." Adding that "we [(Hezbollah)] do not want to hide this truth. We want to declare it and boast about it."<sup>35</sup> According to a senior Israeli intelligence official, ten Hezbollah "controllers" in Beirut manage forty-four cells of Palestinian militants throughout the West Bank and Gaza.<sup>36</sup>

Moreover, although Hezbollah has traditionally restricted its support of Palestinian militants to Islamic-based groups such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad, evidence suggests that it has also provided assistance to secular resistance groups as well. For instance, leaders of the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades in Nablus claimed in July 2004 that they "speak to their Hezbollah handlers by telephone almost daily."<sup>37</sup> Specifically, they stated that Hezbollah "was transferring \$50,000 every two or three months to [their] operatives in Nablus," and that "one cell in the nearby Balata refugee camp received \$1,000 a month [from Hezbollah] for ammunition and cell phone calling cards, plus \$10,000 to \$15,000 to help plan specific attacks." And a Brigades' leader, who identified himself as Abu Mujahed, suggested that "we are receiving funding from Hezbollah because we have no other option."<sup>38</sup>

Hezbollah has also engaged in a number of low-intensity attacks on Israeli military outposts and civilian settlements since the Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon in May 2000.<sup>39</sup> There is an ongoing possibility that Hezbollah could further expand its use of

armed violence to create a “Northern Front” that might significantly influence the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

If such a “Northern Front” were to emerge, it might start in the Shebaa Farms region. The conflict over the area dates to the French and British Mandates’ post-World War I division of territory, which placed the Shebaa Farms in Syria. Following World War II, United Nations cartographers accepted this position. The Israeli seizure of the Golan Heights from Syria during the 1967 Six Day War included the seizure of the Shebaa Farms as well. When Israel withdrew from Lebanese territory in May 2000, Israeli forces remained in Shebaa, considering the land part of annexed Syrian territory. However, Hezbollah and the Lebanese and Syrian governments claim that Shebaa belongs to Lebanon, arguing that the Syrian government gave the territory to Lebanon in 1951. Thus, in Hezbollah’s view, Israel has not yet completed its withdrawal from Lebanon. This makes the Shebaa Farms a major point of contention.<sup>40</sup>

On October 7, 2000, Hezbollah seized three IDF soldiers—Staff Sergeant Binyamin Abraham, Staff Sergeant Adi Avitan, and Staff Sergeant Omar Sawaid—in the Shebaa Farms region, and kidnapped Israeli reservist Elhanen Tennenbaum, suspected by Hezbollah of being a Mossad agent, a few days later. The three soldiers were seized by Hezbollah forces that allegedly were disguised as UN soldiers, using a mock UN vehicle. Sheik Nasrallah clearly stated the reason for the October 2000 kidnappings. “We took Israelis prisoner in order to trade them— there is no other solution,” he said in a public statement on the day the soldiers were kidnapped.<sup>41</sup>

These kidnappings threatened to expand the Israeli-Arab conflict beyond Israel’s northern borders within weeks of the outbreak of open hostilities in the Palestinian territories. It prompted Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak to issue an ultimatum to the Palestinians on October 7, 2000, and to demand Hezbollah to halt its assaults on Israeli military outposts and civilian settlements. Barak warned, “We shall direct the IDF and the security forces to use all means at their disposal to halt the violence.”<sup>42</sup>

This ultimatum did not halt Hezbollah activity but within a few months, the group did begin to negotiate with the Israeli government for an exchange of prisoners. In December 2000, Israel offered to exchange the bodies of slain south Lebanese guerrillas for information concerning the missing Israelis. Hezbollah insisted on a trade of prisoners for the Israelis, with no other concessions. On April 6, 2001, Israeli Defense Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer stated that he would consider the release of the Lebanese guerrilla Mustafa Dirani if it led to the release of the Israeli prisoners.<sup>43</sup> A month later, he said he was willing to pay “any price” for information concerning the hostages’ whereabouts.<sup>44</sup> In late October 2001, the Israeli government publicly stated that it believed the three soldiers were dead, though negotiations for the release of their bodies continued.<sup>45</sup> In July 2003, Hezbollah representatives insisted they still held the Israeli prisoners, and pledged to capture more if Israel did not negotiate a prisoner exchange with them.<sup>46</sup>

On November 9, 2003 a German-brokered deal was reached for Hezbollah to turn over Elhanen Tennenbaum and the bodies of the three IDF soldiers (who by that time had been confirmed dead) in return for the release of 430 Hezbollah, Lebanese Shi’ite, Jordanian and Palestinian security prisoners and administrative detainees, and the re-internment of the remains of 60 Lebanese decedents and members of Hezbollah from the IDF’s

Cemetery of the Fallen Enemy to Lebanon. The exchange took place on January 29, 2004.<sup>47</sup> The agreement was widely criticized by many Israeli political leaders and defense analysts who warned that because the exchange was so unbalanced, it would “simply serve to encourage yet more kidnapping of Israeli citizens, particularly military personnel, as a means of putting pressure on the Israel authorities.”<sup>48</sup> Nevertheless, as of mid-June 2004 the four seizures of October 2000 are the only reported Hezbollah kidnappings since the start of the war. Yet Nasrallah has stated on at least two occasions that the group would consider doing so again to secure the release of Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners still being held in Israel.<sup>49</sup>

On April 14, 2001, another incident that killed an IDF soldier in the Shebaa Farms area demonstrated how quickly the Israeli-Palestinian War could escalate and broaden to a regional conflict. Israel responded to the Hezbollah’s attack by firing at least 40 tank and artillery shells into suspected Hezbollah hideouts in the Lebanese hills near Israel’s northern border. The Israeli Air Force (IAF) then dispatched planes that struck targets in southern Lebanon. It was the first time that fighter jets attacked Lebanon since Ariel Sharon assumed office.<sup>50</sup>

This incident too provoked an international reaction. The day after the attack, Kofi Annan’s representative in southern Lebanon, Staffan de Mistura, characterized the incident as “very regretful” and as having occurred “in a way and place that represent a clear violation of Resolution 425 and the Blue Line as far as the UN is concerned passes there.”<sup>51</sup> The Bush administration accused Hezbollah of causing a new wave of violence in the region.<sup>52</sup> The Lebanese newspaper Al-Mustaqbal was also critical, questioning the timing of the operation.<sup>53</sup>

In November 2004 and April 2005, Hezbollah successfully flew a UAV, the Misrad, over Israeli communities in the northwestern portion of the country, allegedly in response to frequent flights of Israeli aircraft over Lebanon. Hezbollah was able to pilot the UAV safely back to Lebanese territory in the second incident, sparking fears that the organization may try to arm UAVs for future attacks.

Hezbollah has been the cause of a number of other incidents in the Israel-Lebanon border area and occasional IDF reprisals against Syria and Lebanon. On June 8, 2004, the IDF claimed that 14 infiltration attempts and 105 anti-aircraft attacks, 42 anti-tank missile attacks, 5 Katyusha rocket attacks, 7 shooting attacks, and 10 explosive device attacks had been made against Israeli targets since the Israeli pullout from Southern Lebanon in May 2000. In total, the IDF reported that eleven IDF soldiers and six Israeli civilians were killed and 53 soldiers and 14 civilians were wounded in these attacks.<sup>54</sup> In March 2004, Hezbollah and Hamas signed an agreement in which they stated that the two organizations would work together more closely to bring about a greater number of attacks against Israel.

Long before the Israeli-Palestinian War began, Israeli officials claimed that Iran financed and armed Hezbollah and that the Syrian and Lebanese governments claimed responsibility for Hezbollah attacks, accusing the former of supplying the group and permitting them to operate from Lebanese territory, while charging the latter with refusing to deploy Lebanese troops along its border with Israel, and thus giving

Hezbollah free reign in the southern part of Lebanon. It also threatened to attack interests of both countries.

On April 16, 2001, Israeli warplanes attacked Syrian radar sites in Lebanon's central mountain region, Dar al Baidar. The attacks killed one Syrian soldier and wounded four others. These were the first strikes against Syrian military installations in five years. The previous attack was in 1996, when Israeli gunships hit Syrian Army positions near the Beirut airport during a bombing campaign against Lebanon.

The Israeli attack against Syrian positions led to more criticism of Israel by Arab and Islamic leaders, as well as fears of an escalation of the Israeli-Palestinian violence into a possible regional conflict. The Syrians and Hezbollah, while refraining from immediate retaliatory measures, vowed to respond in due course. Hezbollah's deputy leader, Sheik Naim Kasseem, pledged vengeance against Israel at an "appropriate time and manner...contrary to Israeli expectations," while Syrian foreign minister Farouk al-Sharaa pledged that Israel would "pay a heavy price...at the convenient and appropriate time."<sup>55</sup>

Neither Syria, nor Lebanon, retaliated for the Israeli attacks, at least in an overt manner. On July 1, 2001, Israeli jets again attacked a Syrian radar position, this time in Sarin Tahta in eastern Lebanon, injuring three Syrian soldiers and one Lebanese. The assault was in retaliation for a Hezbollah attack in Shebaa Farms two days earlier.<sup>56</sup> On October 22, 2001, Israeli aircraft fired on a Lebanese border position, in response to a Hezbollah attack that same day.<sup>57</sup>

Hezbollah activity did decrease between October 2001 and July 2003. Indeed, there were only seven major reported altercations between Israel and Hezbollah during that time. It seems likely that Syrian president Bashar al-Asad applied pressure on the Hezbollah to reduce its number of attacks, in particular when such attacks were perceived to increase the likelihood of a military confrontation against Syria and/or Lebanon. Syria may want tension and clashes to maintain the pressure on Israel, but it is doubtful that Syria perceives an escalation from a low-intensity Israeli-Palestinian intra-state conflict to an interstate war against a militarily and economically superior Israel to be in its interest.

Tensions between Hezbollah and Israel flared again in August 2003. On August 2, the Hezbollah leader Ali Hussein Saleh was killed in a car bomb in Beirut. Hezbollah blamed Israel for the assault, saying that, "All information available...proves beyond a doubt complete Israeli responsibility for this heinous crime."<sup>58</sup> Hezbollah retaliated against Israel on August 8, when militants fired rockets, anti-tank missiles, mortar shells and light weapons at Israeli military positions in the Shebaa Farm region. Israeli warplanes and artillery quickly responded with attacks on suspected Hezbollah positions in Shebaa Farms and southern Lebanon.<sup>59</sup> Hezbollah shelled Israeli positions again two days later. Israel destroyed the cannon that launched the shells, but took no other action against the group.

The Hezbollah is far more than a Lebanese resistance movement, but Hezbollah maintains a large militia and sizeable arsenal that, if used in conjunction with coordinated Palestinian attacks, could pose a serious threat to Israel and the resumption of peace. By most accounts, Hezbollah reportedly has between 2,000 and 5,000 "conventional"

fighters based in Lebanon that have received special operations training from Iranian, Syrian, and mercenary military instructors.<sup>60</sup> They also allegedly field 500 to 1,000 operatives that have received special training and are capable of carrying out various types of terrorist attacks. Such operatives are stationed throughout the world. Furthermore, Israeli and Western military sources believe the group has between 8,000 and 10,000 Katyusha rockets, with an estimated range of 12 miles.<sup>61</sup>

Israeli intelligence believes Hezbollah possesses wire-guided TOW missiles, artillery, and 57mm anti-aircraft guns.<sup>62</sup> Some Israeli officials have warned that Iran is providing them with 240mm Fajr-3 missiles, with a 25-mile range, and 333mm Fajr-5 missiles, with a possible 45-mile range.<sup>63</sup> There also are reports that Syria is providing rockets to the group. And on October 25, the Lebanese newspaper Al-Mustakbal reported that Sheik Nasrallah had recently vowed that, “in the current situation, the resistance [(code name for Hezbollah)] must be stronger than in the past, and if there is a possibility to acquire stronger weapons, we should acquire them because the national interest requires it.”<sup>64</sup>

In April 2005, Israeli President Moshe Katsav alleged that Syria had transferred an unspecified quantity of additional anti-aircraft missiles to Hezbollah that same month. Katsav expressed his concern with Russian President Vladimir Putin during a visit to Israel when it became apparent that Russia would sell Syria a number of short-range anti-aircraft missiles.<sup>65</sup>

Although Hezbollah has yet to play a major direct role in the Israeli-Palestinian War, the group is capable of playing a considerably larger role in the conflict in the future. At least publicly, Hezbollah members perceive the Palestinians’ situation as an extension of their own. And while the Hezbollah’s independence is constrained, it still has more flexibility to fight against Israel in ways that states such as Syria, Lebanon and Iran do not have.

Estimates differ regarding Hezbollah’s current force strength, but it seems likely that its core strength of full-time trained fighters could be as low as 500 and is no higher than 1,000, and that any large-scale operation would require it to draw on a reserve of up to several thousand reserves and part time fighters with limited training and experience. Its equipment holdings are unknown and probably include major amounts of stored, concealed, and dispersed weapons.

**Figure 7.7** provides a rough estimate of its current military capabilities. Hezbollah had already defeated the South Lebanese Army and was the force that drove Israel out of Lebanon. It would have far more difficulty in attacking across the Israeli border or infiltrating into the country, but it does have rockets and other weapons that it can fire into Israel and had shown it can conduct small border raids and shown it could kidnap Israeli soldiers in the Shebaa Farms area as in October 2000. In late November 2005 IAF flew north to Beirut and dropped pamphlets denouncing Hezbollah and explaining that Hezbollah was “causing enormous harm to Lebanon.” This came after two days of intense fighting on the border between the IDF and Hezbollah fighters.<sup>66</sup>

Hezbollah is believed to have acquired 10,000 or more short-range rockets from Iran and significant numbers of longer-range rockets capable of hitting targets throughout northern Israel. The Hezbollah strike on Haifa on July 13, 2006 demonstrated such a long-range

strike capability. This strike was part of an attack that fired some 150 rockets at Israel between July 12 and 14, 2006.<sup>67</sup>

Iran can supply the Hezbollah from a massive inventory of some 700-900 multiple rocket launchers.<sup>68</sup> It is difficult to estimate Iran's inventory, but its holdings include roughly 10 M-1989 240 mm multiple rocket launchers, 500-700 Chinese Type 63 107 mm multiple rocket launchers, and 50-100 Soviet BM-21 and 5 Soviet BM-11 122 mm launchers. Iranian exercises indicate that Iran understands such weapons are useful largely in the suppression, harassment, and interdiction roles unless an enemy chooses to expose infantry forces in predictable and vulnerable areas.<sup>69</sup>

Iran has also produced at least 50 of its own multiple rocket launchers. These include the 122 mm 40 round Hadid rocket launcher system, which mounts the launcher on a 6 X 6 truck, and the entire load can be salvo-fired in 20 seconds. Its maximum range is about 20.4 kilometers, and a hydraulic crane is fitted so the launcher can be re-loaded in about 8-10 minutes. It is not clear how many Hadid launchers are currently deployed among Iranian forces.

Iran has also exhibited a 240 mm artillery rocket with a range of up to 40-43 kilometers called the Fadjr 3. This system has been used against Israel by the Hezbollah, and seems to be adapted from a North Korean design. Iran has shown the system mounted in a 12 rocket launcher on a Japanese Isuzu 6 X 6 truck. It has wrap-around fins at the rear which unfold after launch. It is 5.2 meters long and weighs 408 kilograms. The warhead weighs 90 kilograms, of which 45 kilograms is high explosive.<sup>70</sup>

In addition, Iran is producing variants of Chinese and Russian 122 mm rockets called the Arash and Noor, as well as variants of the Chinese 107 mm rocket called the Fajer and Haseb. Some of these rockets have chemical warheads.

Iran's land forces also operate a number of long-range unguided rockets, including the Shahin 1 and 2, Oghab, and Nazeat:<sup>71</sup>

- The Shahin 1 is a trailer-launched 333 mm caliber unguided artillery rocket with a solid propelled rocket motor, a maximum range of 13 kilometers, and a 190 kilogram conventional or chemical warhead. The Shahin 2 is an improved version of the Shahin 1 with a maximum range of 20 kilometers, and a 190 kilogram warhead. The Shahin evidently can be equipped with three types of warheads: a 180 kilogram high explosive warhead, a warhead using high explosive submunitions, and a warhead that uses chemical weapons.
- The Oghab is a 320 mm caliber unguided artillery rocket which is spin stabilized in flight, has a maximum range of 34 kilometers, and a 70 kilogram HE fragmentation warhead -- although chemical warheads may be available. While it may have a chemical warhead, it lacks the range and/or accuracy to hit anything smaller than large area targets like assembly areas and cities. It has an operational CEP that has proved to be in excess of 500 meters at maximum range.<sup>72</sup> Further, Iran has no way to target accurately the Oghab or any other long range missile against mobile or point targets at long ranges, other than a limited ability to use RPVs.<sup>73</sup>
- The Nazeat is a TEL launched system with conventional and possibly chemical and biological warheads. The full details of this system remain unclear, but it seems to be based on Chinese technology and uses a solid fuel rocket, with a simple inertial guidance system. Nazeat units are equipped with communications vans, meteorological vans, and a global positioning system for surveying the launch site. There are two variants of the Nazeat solid-fueled rocket system -- a 355.6 mm caliber rocket with 105 kilometers range and a 150 kilogram warhead, and a 450 mm caliber rocket with a reported range of 130-150 kilometers and a 250 kilogram warhead. Both

systems have maximum closing velocities of Mach 4-5, but both also appear to suffer from poor reliability and accuracy.<sup>74</sup>

All of these long-range rocket systems lack the accuracy and long-range targeting capability to be used against anything other than populated areas and static rear area targets. All would have to use chemical or biological weapons to achieve significant lethality, although all could inhibit operations in the target area and potentially force an enemy to don protective gear and take chemical-biological defense measures. Iranian exercises indicate, however, that they may offer Iran a relatively survivable way to strike at US forces invading an island or shore area, and could also counter Iraqi attacks on Iranian towns and rear areas.<sup>75</sup>

The Hezbollah has had significant Iranian and Syrian support in the past, and is helping to train anti-Israeli Palestinian groups. Hezbollah forces now have modified AT-3 Sagger anti-tank missiles reworked to carry tandem warheads designed by an Iranian engineer, thousands of Katushya rockets that have been upgraded to 30km range, and Al-Fajr 3 surface-to-surface and Al-Fajr 5 that can deliver a 200kg payload up to a 75km range, and an Iranian Mohajer unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) that they have used for surveillance over the north of Israel.<sup>76</sup>

Hezbollah's UAVs have flown over northern Israel at least twice: once in November 2004 and again in May 2005. This brought about an increase in the level and intensity of Israeli surveillance flights over southern Lebanon.<sup>77</sup> One of the UAV sorties reached the coastal town of Nahariya and the other Hezbollah claims reached Akko. Israel disputes this claim asserting that the second UAV flight reached just south of Nahariya before turning back. The Israeli Air Force did not initially detect either of the two UAV flights, explaining that the air defenses do not pick up on such small, low-flying, slow-moving objects. Should the UAV missions continue to be undetected for the first few minutes of their flight over Israel, it is feared in Israel that Hezbollah will use the UAVs to carry chemical, biological agents or even small bombs.<sup>78</sup>

Hezbollah has also succeeded in forcing the Lebanese government to allow it to keep its arms in spite of all the political turmoil in 2005, and the expulsion of Syrian forces. When Prime Minister Fuad Siniora threatens to raise the issue of disarming Hezbollah by calling for a full examination of all the activities that led to Hariri's assassination, Hassan Nasrallah removed Hezbollah's five ministers from the Lebanese cabinet, and made it clear that Lebanese political stability was at stake. As a result, in early February 2006, the Lebanese government designated Hezbollah as a "resistance movement" to Israel, allowing it to operate as a paramilitary force and keep its arms.<sup>79</sup>

### ***Non-State Forces: Asbat al-Ansar***

While Lebanon does not extend official tolerance to Islamist extremist terrorist groups, there is at least one such group operating in Lebanon with ties to Al-Qa'ida.<sup>80</sup> This movement is Asbat al-Ansar, or the League of the Followers or Partisans' League. US State Department reporting on terrorism describes it is a Lebanon-based Sunni extremist group, composed primarily of Palestinians with links to Usama Bin Ladin's al-Qa'ida organization and other Sunni extremist groups. It provides the following details:<sup>81</sup>

The group follows an extremist interpretation of Islam that justifies violence against civilian targets to achieve political ends. Some of the group's goals include overthrowing the Lebanese Government and thwarting perceived anti-Islamic and pro-Western influences in the country.

...Asbat al-Ansar has carried out multiple terrorist attacks in Lebanon since it first emerged in the early 1990s. The group assassinated Lebanese religious leaders and bombed nightclubs, theaters, and liquor stores in the mid-1990s. The group raised its operational profile in 2000 with two attacks against Lebanese and international targets. It was involved in clashes in northern Lebanon in December 1999 and carried out a rocket-propelled grenade attack on the Russian Embassy in Beirut in January 2000. Asbat al-Ansar's leader, Abu Muhjin, remains at large despite being sentenced to death in absentia for the 1994 murder of a Muslim cleric.

Suspected Asbat al-Ansar elements were responsible for an attempt in April 2003 to use a car bomb against a McDonald's in a Beirut suburb. By October, Lebanese security forces arrested Ibn al-Shahid, who is believed to be associated with Asbat al-Ansar, and charged him with masterminding the bombing of three fast food restaurants in 2002 and the attempted attack on a McDonald's in 2003. Asbat forces were involved in other violence in Lebanon in 2003, including clashes with members of Yassir Arafat's Fatah movement in the 'Ayn al-Hilwah refugee camp and a rocket attack in June on the Future TV building in Beirut.

In 2004... operatives with links to the group were believed to be involved in a planned terrorist operation targeting the Italian Embassy, the Ukrainian Consulate General, and Lebanese Government offices. The plot, which reportedly also involved other Lebanese Sunni extremists, was thwarted by Italian, Lebanese, and Syrian security agencies.

... Asbat al-Ansar remained vocal in its condemnation of the United States' presence in Iraq ...the group urged Iraqi insurgents to kill US and other hostages to avenge the death of HAMAS leaders Abdul Aziz Rantisi and Sheikh Ahmed Yassin. In October, Mahir al-Sa'di, a member of Asbat al-Ansar, was sentenced in absentia to life imprisonment for plotting to assassinate former US Ambassador to Lebanon David Satterfield in 2000. Until his death in March 2003, al-Sa'di worked in cooperation with Abu Muhammad al-Masri, the head of al-Qa'ida at the 'Ayn al-Hilwah refugee camp, where fighting has occurred between Asbat al-Ansar and Fatah elements.

...The group commands about 300 fighters in Lebanon.

...The group's primary base of operations is the 'Ayn al-Hilwah Palestinian refugee camp near Sidon in southern Lebanon.

...Probably receives money through international Sunni extremist networks and possibly Usama Bin Ladin's al-Qa'ida network.

### ***The Role of the Lebanese Security Forces***

As is typical of internal security and paramilitary forces in the region, Lebanon's internal security forces have serious problems that go far beyond their sectarian differences and penetration by Syrian intelligence. The human rights report the US State Department issued in February 2005 summarized the role – and limitations -- of Lebanese paramilitary and security forces as follows:<sup>82</sup>

The security forces consist of the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) under the Ministry of Defense, which may arrest and detain suspects on national security grounds; the Internal Security Forces (ISF) under the Ministry of the Interior, which enforce laws, conduct searches and arrests, and refer cases to the judiciary; and the State Security Apparatus, which reports to the Prime Minister and the Surete Generale (SG) under the Ministry of the Interior, both of which collect information on groups deemed a possible threat to state security. These security forces committed numerous, serious human rights abuses, sometimes acting independently, and other times on instruction of senior government officials.

... Members of the security forces used excessive force and tortured and abused some detainees. Prison conditions remained poor. The Government also arbitrarily arrested and detained persons who were critical of government policies. Lengthy pretrial detention and long delays in trials remained problems. The courts were subject to political pressure, seriously hampering judicial independence.

... The Government acknowledged that violent abuse usually occurred during preliminary investigations conducted at police stations or military installations, in which suspects were interrogated without an attorney. Such abuse occurred despite laws that prevented judges from accepting any confession extracted under duress.

Methods of torture reportedly included beatings and suspension by arms tied behind the back. Some former Southern Lebanese Army (SLA) detainees reported that they were abused or tortured. Amnesty International (AI) and other human rights organizations reported that some detainees were beaten, handcuffed, blindfolded, and forced to lie face down on the ground.

...Abuses also occurred in areas outside the Government's control, including in Palestinian refugee camps. During the year, there were reports that members of the various groups that controlled specific camps detained their Palestinian rivals. Rival groups, such as Fatah and Asbat al-Nur, regularly clashed over territorial control in the various camps, sometimes leading to exchanges of gunfire and the detention of rival members.

...The law requires the ISF to obtain warrants before making arrests; however, the Government used arbitrary arrest and detention. Military intelligence personnel made arrests without warrants in cases involving military personnel and those involving espionage, treason, weapons possession, and draft evasion. The 2004 report by the Parliamentary Commission for Human Rights estimated that of the approximately 5,000 persons being held in prison, one third had not been convicted of any crime.

...Defendants have the right to legal counsel, but there was no state-funded public defender's office. The bar association operated an office for those who could not afford a lawyer, and the court panel on many occasions asked the bar association to appoint lawyers for defendants.

Security forces continued the practice of arbitrary arrest and detention. On several occasions during the year, security forces detained and arrested citizens on grounds of national security. Protestors were also arbitrarily detained and arrested.

... The Military Court has jurisdiction over cases involving the military as well as those involving civilians in espionage, treason, weapons possession, and draft evasion cases. Civilians may be tried for security issues, and military personnel may be tried for civil issues. The Military Court has two tribunals--the permanent tribunal and the cassation tribunal--the latter hears appeals from the former. A civilian judge chairs the higher court. Defendants on trial under the military tribunal have the same procedural rights as defendants in ordinary courts.

... The Government and Syrian intelligence services used informer networks and monitored telephones to gather information on their perceived adversaries. The Army Intelligence Service monitored the movements and activities of members of opposition groups. The Government conceded that security services monitored telephone calls but claimed that monitoring occurred only with prior authorization from competent judicial authorities.

... Syrian and Palestinian security forces operated independently of Lebanese security forces and also committed numerous, serious human rights abuses. There were credible reports that Lebanese security forces personnel detained individuals on the instruction of Syrian intelligence agencies.

...Syrian military and Lebanese and Palestinian militias, particularly Hezbollah, retained significant influence over much of the country. Approximately 15,000 Syrian troops were stationed in locations throughout the country, excluding the area bordering on Israel in the south of the country. In September, Syria claimed to have carried-out a redeployment of its troops in the country, withdrawing approximately 3,000; however, the actual number is believed to be less than 1,000.

...An undetermined number of Syrian military intelligence personnel in the country continued to conduct their activities independently. In 2000, following the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) withdrawal from the south, the Government deployed more than 1,000 police and soldiers to the former Israeli security zone. However, the Government has not attempted to disarm Hezbollah, a terrorist organization operating in the region, nor have the country's armed forces taken sole and effective control over the entire area. Palestinian groups, including armed factions, operated autonomously in refugee camps throughout the country.

This report did not change significantly in the update that the State Department issued on March 8, 2006.<sup>83</sup>

**Figure 7.6**  
**Lebanese Paramilitary and Security Forces: Force Structure**

	1990	2000	2005	2006
Manpower	8,000	~13,000	~13,000	~13,000
<i>Active</i>	8,000	~13,000	~13,000	~13,000
Internal Security Force	8,000	~13,000	~13,000	~13,000
<b>Force By Role</b>	N/A	3	3	3
<i>Police (Judicial) Unit</i>	N/A	1	1	1
<i>Regional Coy</i>	N/A	1	1	1
<i>Paramilitary (Beirut Gendarmerie) Coy</i>	N/A	1	1	1
Equipment By Type	30	30	60	60
<i>APC (W)</i>	30	30	60	60
<i>V-200 Chaimite</i>	30	30	60	60
<b>Customs</b>	2	7	7	7
Patrol and Coastal Combatants	?	?	?	7
<i>PCI</i>	2	7	7	7
<i>Aztec (less than 100 tons)</i>	N/A	5	5	5
<i>Tracker (less than 100 tons)</i>	2	2	2	2
Foreign Forces	37,500	26,646	17,994	17,995
<i>Fiji (UNIFIL)</i>	Some	Inf bn	?	?
<i>Finland</i>	Some	?	0	0
<i>France (Army and 1 logistic battalion) (UNIFIL)</i>	Some	Spt unit	Spt unit	204
<i>Ghana (UNIFIL)</i>	Some	Inf bn	Inf bn	652
<i>India (UNIFIL)</i>	Some	Inf bn	Inf bn	648
<i>Iran (Revolutionary Guard)</i>	2,000	~150	~150	N/A
<i>Ireland (UNIFIL)</i>	Some	Inf bn	Spt unit	5
<i>Italy (UNIFIL)</i>	Some	Spt unit	Spt unit	53
<i>Nepal</i>	Some	?	0	0
<i>Norway</i>	Some	0	0	0
<i>Poland (UNIFIL)</i>	0	Spt unit	Inf bn	236
<i>Sweden</i>	Some	0	0	0
<i>Ukraine (UNIFIL)</i>	0	?	Inf bn	197
<i>Syria (until the pullout in 2005)</i>	30,000	22,000	16,000	N/A

Note: Lebanese combat aircraft shown in parenthesis are in storage or are for sale.

Source: Various editions of the IISS Military Balance, US, British and other experts

**Figure 7.7****Developments in Hezbollah Military Forces in Lebanon in 2004-2006**

- Roughly 2,500-3,500 men, heavily dependent on part-time and irregular forces. Many are now highly experienced, often well-educated forces.
- Composed of a core of around 300 guerrillas. Has deliberately cut its force over the past years to prevent infiltration and leaks.
- Hezbollah fighters are old by comparison to Israeli fighters. Any age up to 35, usually married, often university students or professional men.
- Still seems to have Iranian Revolutionary Guards as advisors. Heavily supplied and financed by Iran, but Syrian personnel seem to be involved in training and in coordinating with Iran. Iranian and Syrian coordination of support for military supply and possibly operations of Hezbollah seems to occur at the general officer, deputy minister level.
- Conflicting intelligence reports estimate Iranian aid to Hezbollah to involve tens of million dollars a year.
- Equipped with APCs, artillery, multiple rocket launchers, mortars, anti-tank guided missiles (including AT-3 Sagger, AT-4 Spigot ATGMs, and captured TOWs), recoilless rifles, SA-7s, anti-aircraft guns.
- Guerrilla mortar strikes have improved in both accuracy and range, indicating better range-finding systems, low signature weapons, and the use of mortar boosters that enable consistent hits for 2 to 3 miles.
- Supply of rockets is estimated to have risen to 1,000. These include Iranian produced 240mm rockets with a range of 40 km, according to Israeli intelligence reports. Most of the rockets are 120mm and 127mm variants with a maximum range of 22 km. Types include the Katyusha, Fajr 3/5, and Zelzal-2.
- Has great expertise in using improvised explosive devices like the improved radio detonated roadside bombs that proved effective against the Israelis. Some are disguised as large rocks. These rock-like explosives are reportedly produced in Iran.

Source: Various editions of the IISS Military Balance, US, British, Lebanese, and other experts

## Lebanon's Continuing Strategic Challenges

Lebanon's major security challenge has long been national unity, and this challenge is likely to remain its key security problem indefinitely into the future. Lebanese forces can only be as effective as Lebanese political unity and the ability of its various sects to compromise and live in peace. If its political system fails, there are no lasting military solutions, and Lebanese attempts at warlordism have done far more to provoke further division and outside intervention than provide even authoritarian security.

At the same time, Lebanon needs to develop forces that can secure its borders, and act as a deterrent to any further Syrian and Israeli incursions. It needs forces that can bring the Hezbollah and Palestinian paramilitary and terrorist elements under control and fully disarm them, and that can ensure that Iran, Israel, and Syria cannot use Lebanon as a proxy in their conflicts and struggles. Once again, this requires national unity from a nation that has been self-inflicted sectarian wound for more than half a century.

Lebanon also faces the following more detailed strategic challenges:

- Continuing to train and organize truly integrated and national military, paramilitary, and security forces.
- Removing officers and elements penetrated by Syrian intelligence and subject to Syrian influence.
- Establishing full military and security control over both the Syrian and Israeli border areas.
- Disarming Hezbollah and Amal, seizing the hidden military assets of other militias.
- Preventing Palestinian military or terrorist activities from being planned and supported in Lebanon, and infiltration across Lebanon's borders with Israel.
- Organizing and modernizing its military forces to deter Israeli and Syrian military incursions, including air and naval forces capable of deterring incursions into Lebanese air space and waters.
- The risk Jordanian territory or air space could be involved in any exchange between Iran and Israel, and that if Iran develops nuclear armed missile, Jordan might have to deal with an inaccurate missile or fall out.

Lebanon cannot prepare for large-scale conventional war, or even play a significant military role on the periphery of a broader Arab-Israeli conflict. It can, however, become involved in such a war if Iran, Syria, and or the Hezbollah involve the Hezbollah in a serious proxy war with Israel or missile attack on northern Israel.

If Lebanon is to be a player, rather than simply played, it must develop equal capabilities to deal with internal security threats and to deter a limited expansion of a conflict between its neighbors into Lebanese territory, waters, or air space. The key to such success is bringing the Hezbollah under central government control, disarming the Hezbollah and the concealed weapons stashes in other militias, and putting Lebanese central government forces truly in control. It must also be to fully expel the remaining Syrian and Iranian intelligence and security presence in the country, and stop the expansion of Sunni Islamist extremist activity before it becomes yet another threat.

It cannot be stressed too firmly, however, that Lebanese military success is totally dependent on political unity and compromise. Whether or not nature abhors a vacuum, the Middle East abhors a political vacuum. Disunity and internal political conflict not

only risk tearing Lebanon apart from the inside, they are an open invitation to some from of outside action – as Iran, Israel, and Syria have already shown.

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<sup>1</sup> CIA, World Factbook 2006, <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/le.html>.

<sup>2</sup> “UN: Terrorists in Lebanon Won’t be Allowed to Jeopardize Calm,” The Associated Press, September 29, 2005, <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/630509.html>. Accessed September 29, 2005.

<sup>3</sup> Detlev Mehlis, “Report of the International Independent Investigation Commission, established pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1595 (2005),” Beirut, October 19, 2005, p. 53.

<sup>4</sup> Riad Kahwaji, “Lebanon Seeks New Aid Source,” Defense News, August 15, 2005, p. 6.

<sup>5</sup> The election was held in four rounds on 29 May, 5, 12, 19 June 2005 (next to be held 2009), Election results in seats by group - Future Movement Bloc 36; Democratic Gathering 15; Development and Resistance Bloc 15; Loyalty to the Resistance 14; Free Patriotic Movement 14; Lebanese Forces 6; Qornet Shewan 5; Popular Bloc 4; Tripoli Independent Bloc 3; Syrian National Socialist Party 2; Kataeb Reform Movement 2; Tachnaq Party 2; Democratic Renewal Movement 1; Democratic Left 1; Nasserite Popular Movement 1; Ba’th Party 1; Kataeb Party 1; independent 5. Source” CIA, World Factbook, 2006, <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/le.html>.

<sup>6</sup> Colum Lynch, “US Urges Continuation of UN Probe,” The Washington Post, December 2, 2005, p. A20.

<sup>7</sup> Associated Press, “Lebanon Tightens Syrian Border,” Baltimore Sun, October 28, 2005.

<sup>8</sup> John Kifner, “UN Reports Rising Flow of Arms from Syria into Lebanon,” The New York Times, October 27, 2005, p. A6.

<sup>9</sup> Warren Hoge and Steven R. Weisman, “UN is Expected to Pass Measure Pressuring Syria,” The New York Times, October 31, 2005, p. A1.

<sup>10</sup> The data in this section draw heavily from a number of basic source documents on the balance IISS, Military Balance, various editions, Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, Military Balance in the Middle East, various editions; Jane’s Sentinel Security Assessments, “Lebanon,” various editions.

<sup>11</sup> John Kifner, “UN Reports Rising Flow of Arms from Syria into Lebanon,” The New York Times, October 27, 2005, p. A6.

<sup>12</sup> Warren Hoge and Steven R. Weisman, “UN is Expected to Pass Measure Pressuring Syria,” The New York Times, October 31, 2005, p. A1.

<sup>13</sup> The data in this section draw heavily from a number of basic source documents on the balance. Jane’s Fighting Ships, various editions; IISS, Military Balance, various editions, Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, Military Balance in the Middle East, various editions; Jane’s Sentinel Security Assessments, “Lebanon,” various editions.

<sup>14</sup> Jane’s Fighting Ships, various editions; IISS, Military Balance, various editions.

<sup>15</sup> The data in this section draw heavily from a number of basic source documents on the balance IISS, Military Balance, various editions, Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, Military Balance in the Middle East, various editions; Jane’s Sentinel Security Assessments, “Lebanon,” various editions.

<sup>16</sup> This analysis draws heavily on the declassified intelligence analysis of country efforts to deal with terrorists and extremist movements, and the nature of terrorist and extremist movements, provided in the US State Department country reports on terrorism, specifically on the revised edition issued in April 2005, Chapters 5 and 6, <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/c14813.htm>.

<sup>17</sup> US State Department, Country Reports on Terrorism, Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, April 2005, Chapter 5 -- Country Reports: Middle East and North Africa Overview, <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/c14813.htm>

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<sup>18</sup> Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, Country Reports on Terrorism, April 28, 2006, Chapter 8 -- Foreign Terrorist Organizations, file:///State%202005-%20Foreign%20Terrorist%20Organizations.webarchive.

<sup>19</sup> International Crisis Group, "Hezbollah: Rebel without a Cause?", Middle East Briefing, July 30, 2003, p. 2.

<sup>20</sup> International Crisis Group, "Hezbollah: Rebel without a Cause?", Middle East Briefing, July 30, 2003, p. 3.

<sup>21</sup> United Press International, September 28, 2000.

<sup>22</sup> John Kifner, "Whose Holy Land? Lebanon," New York Times, October 15, 2000, p. 13.

<sup>23</sup> New York Times, October 15, 2000, p. A-11.

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<sup>25</sup> United Press International, October 20, 2000.

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<sup>29</sup> John Kifner, "Whose Holy Land? Lebanon," New York Times, October 15, 2000, p. 13.

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<sup>72</sup> Iran publicly displayed the Oghab at a military show in Libreville in 1989. It is 230 mm in diameter, 4,820 mm long, and weighs 320 kilograms, with a 70 kilogram warhead. Iran also displayed another rocket called the Nazeat, which is 355 mm in diameter, 5,900 mm long, weighs 950 kilograms and has a 180 kilogram warhead. Jane's Defense Weekly, February 11, 1989, p. 219; Lora Lumpe, Lisbeth Gronlund, and David C. Wright, "Third World Missiles Fall Short," The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, March, 1992, pp. 30-36.

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<sup>82</sup> <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2004/41723.htm>.

<sup>83</sup> US State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - 2005, "Lebanon," Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, March 8, 2006, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61693.htm>.