



Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center  
at the Center for Special Studies (C.S.S)

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## Hezbollah attacks along Israel's northern border to cover an attempted abduction of Israeli soldiers

Update No. 1 (November 23, 2005)



High-ranking Hezbollah operatives make condolence calls at the houses of terrorists killed in the attack

(Al-Manar TV, November 23)

### The Lebanese government appeals to Israel to end the incident, restore calm and return the bodies of the Hezbollah operatives

- On November 22 Dan Halutz, the Israeli Chief of Staff, stated that "in the aftermath of the incident the State of Israel received, **for the first time and although indirectly through UNIFIL , an appeal from Fouad Siniora's Lebanese government to cease fire .**" He added that "the fact that the Lebanese government understands that it has responsibility is in itself a refreshing change" (IDF Spokesman's Internet site, November 23).
- According to Agence France-Presse (November 22), the Lebanese Prime Minister contacted UNIFIL commander Maj. Gen. Alan Pellegrini and Geir Pedersen (the General Secretary's special representative in Lebanon). They reached an agreement to contact Israel in order to restore calm, discover the fate of the bodies of the Hezbollah operatives and arrange for their transfer to Lebanon . On November 22 Radio Al-Sharq reported that UNIFIL was in contact with Israel to remove the bodies from the battlefield.

### The Lebanese government's response to the Hezbollah attack

- Lebanese government top officials, even during the Fouad Siniora era, have **avoided condemning Hezbollah attacks .** They repeated the Hezbollah's fabricated and misleading story that Israel began the incident, the Foreign Minister praised Hezbollah and high-ranking government officials repeated Lebanon 's claim to the Shebaa Farms (the slopes of Har Dov) in the Golan Heights .

- After the Independence Day parades, Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora gave a speech at the grave of Rafiq Hariri and was asked for his opinion of the escalation along the Israeli-Lebanese border. He avoided directly relating to the Hezbollah attack, preferring to condemn what he claimed were Israel's "acts of aggression," including flyovers through Lebanese air space. He repeated his hope that Israel would retreat from the Shebaa Farms which were, he said, "occupied Lebanese lands."<sup>1</sup>
- **Fawzi Salloukh**, the Shiite Lebanese Foreign Minister and a Hezbollah supporter, blamed Israel for "escalation" and "aggression" in order to deflect attention from Lebanon's internal difficulties. He reiterated the claim of Lebanese sovereignty over the Shebaa Farms and **praised Hezbollah as a "respectable liberation movement" struggling to achieve the liberation of "occupied land."** He added that Lebanon maintained contact with its allies to deter Israel from continuing its "aggression" (Lebanese Foreign Minister on Radio Nur, Hezbollah's radio station)

● The Lebanese government's support of Hezbollah, after the organization carried out deliberate, provocative attacks which went far beyond Har Dov into the central and western sectors of Lebanon, was received, in our assessment, with great satisfaction by Hezbollah. **Now that Syria has pulled out of Lebanon, it is liable to be interpreted by Hezbollah as an internal Lebanese legitimization of attacks on Har Dov (the Shebaa Farms), even if they lead to an escalation of violence and the deterioration of the situation.** The Lebanese government's position is also liable to strengthen Hezbollah's refusal to disarm according to UN Security Council Resolution 1559 (with the emphasis on disarming the Lebanese militias), which is now on the agenda of the international community.<sup>2</sup>

### Israel drops leaflets into Lebanon

- On the night of November 22-23 Israeli Air Force planes dropped tens of thousands of leaflets into Lebanon warning the Lebanese that Hezbollah was a tool in the hands of Syria and Iran, which wanted to drag Lebanon into destruction and ruin.



"Syria wants to drag Lebanon into destruction and ruin." The leaflet dropped into Lebanon by Israeli planes (Photo: Al-Manar TV, November 23).

<sup>1</sup> The UN Security Council and the international community have **repeatedly rejected the Lebanese and Hezbollah claims** that the Shebaa Farms belong to Lebanon. Even the Syrians did not respond to a Lebanese request to recognize the area as belonging to Lebanon. It was recently reported that the Syrian Prime Minister suggested that the border at Har Dov should be drawn only after Israel retreated from the Golan Heights (Al-Hayat, November 22, 2005). Hezbollah has used the claim of Lebanese sovereignty over the Shebaa Farms **as an excuse to continue its attacks against Israel** even though Israel pulled out of Lebanon and fully implemented UN Security Council Resolution 425.

<sup>2</sup> Ibrahim al-Amin, a journalist close to Hezbollah, is of the opinion that the attack was meant by Hezbollah as a show of strength and to send the message that Hezbollah will not sit by idly if Syria is attacked and that Hezbollah is not a militia or a gang which has to be disarmed according to Security Council Resolution 1559 (Radio Al-Sharq, November 22, 2005).