



July 31, 2006

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

## **News of the Israeli-Hezbollah confrontation**

**(as of noon, Sunday July 30)<sup>1</sup>**



**The IDF in action on land and at sea (Photos courtesy of the IDF spokesman)**

### **Overview**

◆ The confrontation between Israel and Hezbollah, unprecedented in extent and intensity since the end of the war in Lebanon, entered its 18<sup>th</sup> day.

◆ So far, the **IDF has concentrated on** intensive air strikes against Hezbollah targets in Beirut, the Beka'a Valley and south Lebanon, and against Lebanese infrastructures. The objective is to hinder Hezbollah from firing rockets into Israel and

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<sup>1</sup> [Follow-up July 20 Bulletin.](#)

to destroy the operational capabilities Hezbollah built during the past several years. The air strikes are accompanied by **artillery fire and naval attacks**.

✦ At the same time, the IDF is carrying out **a limited ground offensive** to wipe out the strongholds which have formed the basis for the Hezbollah infrastructure since the IDF left Lebanon (especially around the villages of **Bint Jbail and Maroun al-Ras**) and to push Hezbollah terrorists away from the vicinity of the Israeli-Lebanese border.

✦ **Hezbollah** has made unprecedented use of its enormous rocket arsenal, which it has stockpiled with the **aid and support of Iran and Syria**, particularly since the IDF withdrew from Lebanon in May 2000. Since the beginning of the current confrontation, an average of 90-100 rockets a day, or **a total of almost 1,600 rockets** have been fired at northern Israeli cities, towns, and other populated areas (as far south as the Haifa-Afula-Tiberias line). Even after 18 days of fighting, and despite the losses and damage done to Hezbollah weapons and infrastructures, the organization **continues firing rockets at the same rate**, even though it apparently does so from a **greater and greater distance** from the Israeli-Lebanese border.



**An RPG found by the IDF in Lebanon bearing the imprint of Iran's military industry (Photo courtesy of the IDF spokesman). The Iranians (with Syrian aid and support) are behind the stockpiling of Hezbollah's arsenal in Lebanon.**

✦ In the past few days, the **international community has made tentative stabs at diplomatic activity to bring about a ceasefire and create a "new reality,"** in which Hezbollah presence will be removed from the Israeli-Lebanese border. A proposal have been made for a multi-national force to be sent to south Lebanon. It would work

with the Lebanese army and support the Lebanese government in its efforts to enforce its authority in the area on the basis of UN Security Council Resolution 1559.<sup>2</sup> The large number of Lebanese civilian casualties (Hezbollah operates from within the civilian population) and the many killed in Kafr Qana (See below) are accelerating diplomatic action to push for an immediate cessation of hostilities.

## Hezbollah's method of fighting

✦ Even after 18 days of fighting, and despite the losses of operatives and the damage done to its infrastructures, Hezbollah continues firing **an average of between 90 and 100** rockets at day of various types at population centers in northern Israel. The leaders of the organization have also **threatened to use long-range rockets** to hit cities in the center of the country.

✦ The following is a description of the rocket fire so far:

✓ **Number:** So far about **1,600** have been fired into Israel (Hezbollah's arsenal is estimated at 12,000 rockets of various types). Usually, barrages of rockets are fired at several sectors at the same time.

✓ **Areas attacked:** In general, the entire northern region of Israel has been attacked, from the Israeli-Lebanese border south to the **Haifa-Afula-Tiberias** line. Most of the rockets were fired at the **centers of Israel's large northern cities with the clear intent of killing civilians**. Most of the rockets fell in the areas of **Ma'alot** (20%), **Safed** (19%), **Haifa** (17%), **Nahariya** (16%) and **Kiryat Shmona** (15%). The most lethal attacks were in the **Haifa region**.

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<sup>2</sup> For further information see our Information Bulletin entitled "Disarming Hezbollah and extending the sovereignty and authority of the Lebanese government to south Lebanon, in accordance with Security Council Resolution 1559 (2004) and the Taef Accord (1989) ," at [http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam\\_multimedia/English/eng\\_n/pdf/taef\\_e.pdf](http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/pdf/taef_e.pdf).

✓ **Types of rockets:** Most fired so far have been 107 mm and 122 mm rockets with a range of up to 20 km (almost 12 ½ miles). Long-range Syrian 220 mm rockets have also been used, primarily to attack Haifa and Tiberias. Long-range Iranian Fajr-5 rockets were used to attack Afula.

✓ **Launch times:** Hezbollah launches its rockets **during the day**. It usually starts in the morning and increases the number toward noon and the afternoon hours.

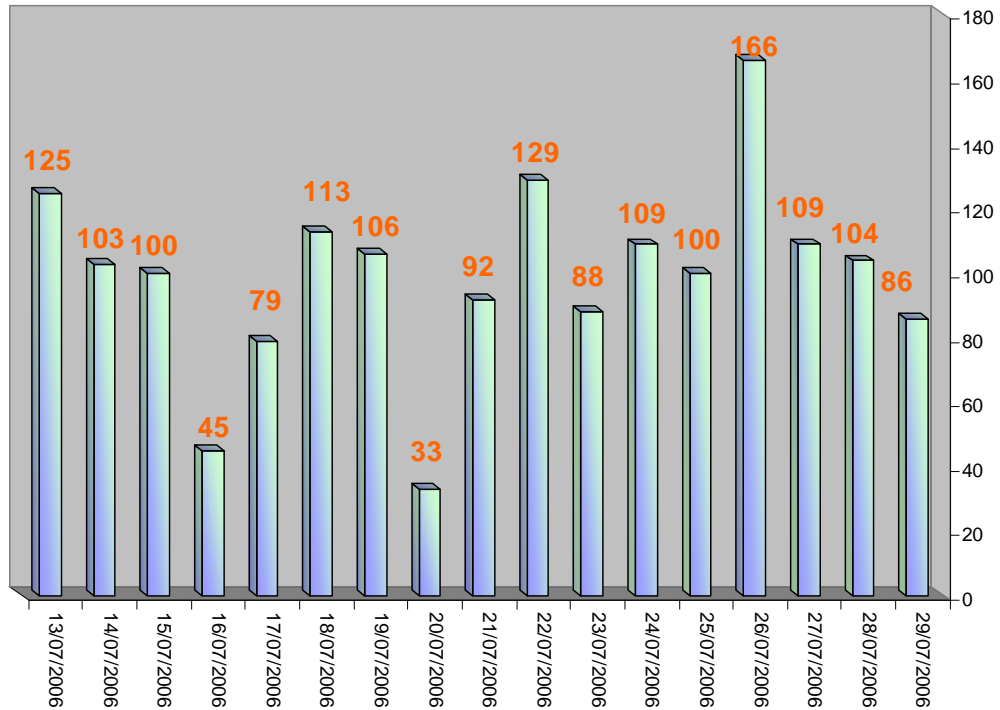


A long-range rocket launched at Afula (Al-Manar TV, July 28).

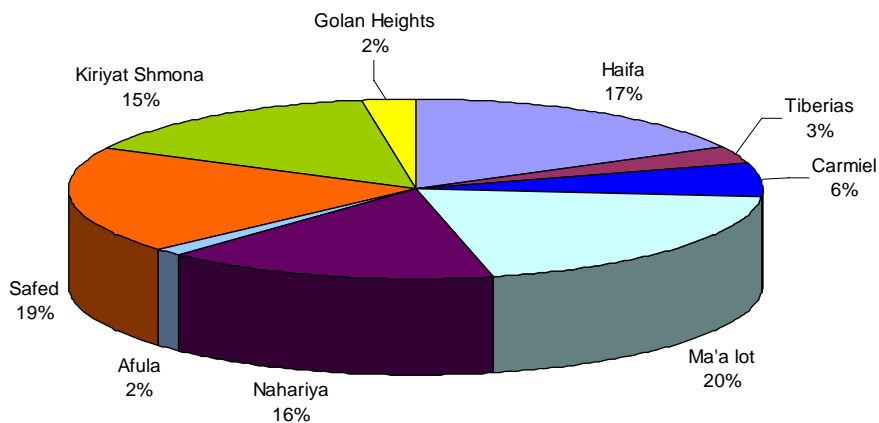


Apartment buildings damaged by rocket fire in Carmiel (left) and Nahariya (right) (Photographs courtesy of the Israeli Police Department).

## Estimated daily distribution of Hezbollah rocket fire<sup>3</sup>



## Distribution of rocket attacks according to geographical area



<sup>3</sup> As of July 30, 2006.

## IDF activity

✦ IDF activity has centered around **intensive air strikes in Beirut, the Beka'a Valley and south Lebanon**. The objective has been to hamper Hezbollah's rocket-launching capabilities, to destroy its infrastructure and to damage the Lebanese infrastructures used by the organization. In addition, the IDF has carried out broad artillery attacks at rocket launching sites, squads of Hezbollah terrorists, and structures and strongholds along the border. The **Israeli Navy** has also attacked Beirut and other sites along the shore.

✦ **During the confrontation the Israeli Air Force has attacked the following:**

✓ **Targets serving Hezbollah terrorist-operative apparatus**, emphasizing mobile and stable rocket launchers, weapons stores, vehicles used in launching rockets, supply trucks, headquarters, bunkers, tunnels, buildings sheltering terrorists, communications systems, radar, etc.

✓ **Hezbollah targets in the Shiite neighborhoods of south Beirut** (where Hezbollah headquarters and infrastructures are located) and in **Sidon and Tyre**. Targets are organization headquarters and offices, the residences and hiding places of the leaders, communications systems, etc.

✓ **Lebanese infrastructures such as roads** leading to south Lebanon and Syria, **bridges and installations in airports**. That was done to hinder Hezbollah fighting and to damage its operational capabilities.



**A building in a southern suburb of Beirut after an Israeli Air Force attack  
(Al-‘Arabiya TV, July 27).**

✦ While the Air Force has carried out attacks, the IDF has carried out **limited ground operations** within Lebanon along to the border in order to **destroy the strongholds built by Hezbollah after the IDF withdrew from Lebanon in May 2000**. Armored and infantry forces and engineering corps have been involved, and since July 20 the activity has focused on the village of **Maroun al-Ras** and the town of **Bint Jbail**, two prominent Hezbollah strongholds in the south. After a number of days of fierce fighting and having suffered losses, the IDF managed to take control of the Hezbollah strongholds in the two settlements.

✦ Since the beginning of the confrontation, the Air Force has carried out 6,800 missions and attacked 3,000 targets in Lebanon. IDF artillery batteries have fired more than 25,000 shells at rocket launching sites in south Lebanon.

## **Hezbollah activity within the Lebanese civilian population**

✦ During the battle against Hezbollah the IDF has encountered operational difficulties caused by the fact that in Beirut as in the south Lebanon, **Hezbollah constructed its infrastructures in the midst of the civilian population, and from within the very center of that population it has fired its rockets at Israel**. Insofar as is possible, to prevent civilian casualties, the IDF has repeatedly **distributed leaflets calling upon the population from within whose midst Hezbollah operates to get as far away as possible from Hezbollah terrorists**.

✦ It should be noted that because rocket fire from populated areas in south Lebanon has continued, the IDF has distributed leaflets calling upon residents of villages south of the Litani River (**including** the residents of the **Kafr Qana**) to leave for the area north of the Litani because the IDF has been forced to act immediately against the terrorist activities carried out from within their villages.



Left: An Al-Arabiya TV reporter holding an IDF leaflet (Al-Arabiya TV, July 26).  
Right: A leaflet distributed by the IDF in south Lebanon calling upon residents to leave their houses.



[A video clip documenting Katyushas fired at Israel from behind a three-story residential building in south Lebanon \(Click to view\).](#)

## Losses on both sides

✦ During the 18 days of fighting, **53 Israelis** have been killed, **33 soldiers and 20 civilians**. Approximately 560 Israelis have been wounded, 231 of them **soldiers** (12 of whom were critically wounded) and the rest **civilians** who were wounded by rocket fire.

✦ According to the Lebanese minister of health, there have been 410 killed and 1,850 wounded (Lebanese News Agency, July 27, 2006). To that number can be added the dozens of Lebanese killed when a building was blown up in Kafr Qana on July 30 possibly as the result of an Israeli Air Force strike.<sup>4</sup>

✦ **In our assessment, 200 Hezbollah terrorists have been killed during the confrontation.** The Lebanese media have reported several dozen Hezbollah deaths but **the real number is far greater**, because as in many other areas, Hezbollah is not reliable in reporting its losses. Amal, the Shi'ite movement, announced that it, too, had casualties among its ranks (Agence France-Presse, July 25). In addition, the IDF mistakenly killed **four UN observers**.

### **The civilian population which fled from the embattled areas**

✦ In the wake of the fighting, **hundreds of thousands of Lebanon have fled.** The UN under secretary for humanitarian affairs reported that there were more than half a million uprooted Lebanese (Reuters, July 22). Many of the foreign residents in Lebanon have been evacuated by their countries. In addition, **in our estimation, tens of thousands of Israelis living in areas hit by rockets have left their homes.**

### **The two abducted Israeli soldiers and the efforts to return them**

✦ So far, no reliable information has been released about the condition of the two abducted Israeli soldiers. On July 23, the Lebanese foreign minister announced that

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<sup>4</sup> The first reports on the morning of July 30 stated that dozens of civilians had been killed in Kafr Qana when, according to a Lebanese news report, a building allegedly hit by an Israeli Air Force strike collapsed. At a press conference, the head of staff of the Israeli Air Force stated that there was a gap of approximately eight hours between the time the building was hit and the reports from Lebanon that it had collapsed. At the time of this writing, it is not clear what caused the explosion that caused the many casualties. At the same press conference, the IDF head of operations reported that since the current confrontation began, Kafr Qana has served as a safe harbor for Hezbollah terrorists and that approximately 150 rockets have been fired from there at Haifa and the populated areas of the Western Galilee.

the two “were in good health and in a safe place.” Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah said, possibly in response to the statement, that no one in Lebanon had been authorized to give information about the abducted soldiers.

✦ Lebanese Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Michel Faroun said that it had still not been decided who would mediate between Israel and Lebanon regarding the exchange of prisoners. He claimed that Hezbollah had agreed that the Lebanese government maintain contacts with Israel through a third party (Radio Cairo, July 24). Nabih Berri, chairman of the Lebanese Parliament and head of the Amal movement claimed that negotiations for the exchange of prisoners would be carried out by the Lebanese government through a third party and that that was acceptable to Hezbollah (Al-Arabiya TV, July 25).

### **Nasrallah’s statements during the confrontation: distress and threats**



**Hassan Nasrallah threatens to strike the center of Israel  
(Al-Manar TV, July 29).**

✦ Hassan Nasrallah has kept a low profile and made only three televised speeches and given only one interview (to Al-Safir). His statements have been relatively short, he seems tired and his apologetic tone shows signs of distress. In his statements to the media he has attempted to deter Israel from continuing the confrontation and to support the Lebanese government’s demand of an **immediate ceasefire, which would**

**prevent a further erosion of his status and of Hezbollah's operational capabilities.**

✦ The following are the main issues revealed by Nasrallah to Al-Safir on July 24 and in Al-Manar broadcasts on July 26 and 29:

✓ **He accused Israel for the deterioration of the situation.** It was his (completely false) claim that Israel had planned a military action against Hezbollah and that Hezbollah had only frustrated the Israeli-American "plot" concocted against it.

✓ **He tried to create the image of a "firm stance" and a "victory in the confrontation,"** while facing the growing criticism of Hezbollah heard in Lebanon.

✓ **He tried to claim that Israel was being deterred from continuing the battle.** According to Nasrallah, the IDF's ground activity would not bring about a cessation of rocket fire into the north of Israel. He even promised to launch missiles "further south than Haifa" and noted that if Israeli "aggression" continued, many cities in the center of the country would join the circle of destruction (in one instance, he mentioned Netanyahu).

✓ **He sent a threatening message to the Lebanese government lest it accept the American conditions for a ceasefire.** He said that Hezbollah would not agree to a ceasefire under "humiliating" terms and if the interests and national sovereignty of Lebanon were affronted: "Regardless of who the victim is, honor is the most important thing."

✓ He agreed that the Lebanese government conduct indirect negotiations regarding the two abducted soldiers (Al-Safir, July 24), implying that Hezbollah would remain behind the scenes.

## **Accelerating diplomatic activity**

### **Overview**

✦ During the past few days, diplomatic activity **has gone into high gear** to end the fighting and formulate an outline for an political arrangement. **While the**

**objectionable images of wounded Lebanese civilians and the events in Kafr Qana have created increasing pressure for an immediate cessation of the fighting**, the international community – mainly the United States, Britain, France and the UN – is aware that **a basic change must be effected in the situation that has prevailed in south Lebanon for the past six years.**

✦ The main source of reference for the diplomatic action is **Security Council Resolution 1559, adopted in 2004**, which calls for the disbandment of Hezbollah and the enforcing of the control of the Lebanese government over the south. The creation of a multi-national force has been suggested to implement the resolution, which would be deployed in south Lebanon along with the Lebanese army (despite the ineffectiveness of UNIFIL, the “temporary” international force set up after Operation Litani in 1978.

## **Israel**

✦ **Israel is trying to buy time** to continue destroying Hezbollah’s terrorist-operative capabilities.

✦ In its contacts with the international community, which views Hezbollah as responsible for the outbreak of the crisis, Israel has stressed that diplomatic activity is **parallel** to military activity and that the diplomatic contacts **are not, at this time, intended to stop the military activity.** Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni has also made it clear that any political solution must include the **unconditional release of the abducted soldiers and the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1559.**

✦ At their July 24 meeting, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and American Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice agreed that Security Council Resolution 1559, like the latest decision of the G-8 countries, would be the basis for any solution to the current crisis.

## The Lebanese government

✦ The Lebanese government again demanded an immediate ceasefire as a condition for negotiating a political arrangement. At the same time, Lebanese Prime Minister Fuad Siniora proposed the following plan:

- ✓ The Shebaa Farms would be returned to Lebanon (despite the fact that the international community **does not recognize** Lebanese sovereignty over that region).
  
- ✓ “The exchange of prisoners” (i.e., concession to the Hezbollah demand that Lebanese prisoners in Israeli jails be exchanged for the two abducted soldiers).
  
- ✓ The enforcing of full Lebanese governmental sovereignty on all of Lebanese territory (i.e., on south Lebanon).

## The international community

✦ International diplomatic activity is being carried out principally by the **United States, France, Britain and the UN**. The main points of that activity are the following:

- ✓ **The G-8 countries** have stated that Hezbollah and Hamas must release the abducted soldiers and stop rocket attacks on Israel. They have also called upon Israel to avoid harming civilians and damaging infrastructures in Lebanon while realizing its right to defend itself. In addition, they have asked the Security Council to formulate a plan for implementing its resolutions.
  
- ✓ **American Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has spoken in favor of a ceasefire, of strengthening the sovereignty of the Lebanese government and of preparing the ground for a settlement that will change the situation from the ground up.** So far she has had two rounds of talks in

Lebanon and Israel, where she is staying at the present moment. It would seem that the United States (in coordination with Britain) is now trying to get Israel and the Lebanese government to agree on conditions for a cessation of hostilities and the establishment of a multi-national force.

✓ **French President Jacques Chirac** noted that France would press the **Security Council** to adopt a draft of a decision calling for an immediate ceasefire based on a political agreement between the sides and supported by the deployment of a multi-national force with a mandate from the UN.

## The Arab world

✦ On the eve of the conference in Rome the Arab states as well tried to formulate a diplomatic initiative for ending the confrontation and finding a solution for the crisis. Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan issued a seven-point plan: an immediate ceasefire, a “full” IDF withdrawal from Lebanon (i.e., from the Shebaa Farms), the deployment of international forces along the Israeli-Lebanese border, strengthening the role of the Lebanese army, an exchange of prisoners, the disbandment of Hezbollah and turning it into a political movement by implementing Security Council Resolution 1559 (Al-Gumhouria, July 23).