



Hezbollah's Foundation for the Wounded: purpose, modus operandi and funding methods

April 16, 2019

Overview

► Hezbollah maintains in Lebanon **an extensive network of social foundations** engaged in health, education, welfare, and media. The main goal of these foundations is to provide **support for Hezbollah's military infrastructure**, to spread its ideology (mainly among youth) and strengthen Hezbollah's image among the Shiite sect in particular and Lebanese society in general.

Two of these foundations enjoy special importance: the one taking care of the families of Hezbollah's shahids (**the Martyrs Foundation**)¹ and the one taking care of the wounded (**Al-Jarha Foundation**, referred to in the current document as **the Foundation for the Wounded**). In the ITIC's assessment, the Foundation for the Wounded **has taken care of over 9,000 wounded** from the various arenas since 1982. The Foundation is engaged in treating their injuries and takes care of their rehabilitation and rejoining the Lebanese society. In addition, the Foundation is engaged in extensive propaganda activity whose goal is **to enhance support for Hezbollah, mainly among the younger Shiite generation, which is the source of future Hezbollah operatives.**

► In order to achieve its goals, the Foundation for the Wounded maintains **an extensive organizational system** among Shiite population centers in Lebanon. This system includes designated institutions specializing in treatment and rehabilitation, and regional branches in southern Lebanon, the Bekaa Valley, and Beirut (where the management of the Foundation is located). The system operates at least four rehabilitation and treatment centers for the wounded. The Foundation for the Wounded is conducted in collaboration with the Lebanese government (mainly the Lebanese army) and sometimes also with the European Union and UN agencies (as part of the assistance given by these institutions to Lebanon, mainly for treating landmine casualties).

¹ See the ITIC's study from April 11, 2019: "Hezbollah's Martyrs Foundation: purpose, mode of operation and funding methods"

► **The extensive activity of Hezbollah’s Foundation for the Wounded requires a great deal of resources.** In the ITIC's assessment, **the major part of the Foundation’s budget is transferred to Hezbollah by Iran** (which also funds most of the expenses of the Martyrs Foundation). Other sources of funding, of secondary importance, are **donations** and probably also aid from the Lebanese government and international institutions. Iran, where the Foundation’s main funding comes from, maintains close ties with the Foundation for the Wounded, similar to its ties with other social institutions of Hezbollah. Evidence of these ties can be found in a visit of a delegation of the Foundation for the Wounded in Iran (February 2018), to take part in a ceremony held to commemorate the anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran. The ceremony was also attended by **Qods Force Deputy Commander Liwa Qani**, who met with the members of the delegation of the Foundation for the Wounded and awarded the Foundation a certificate of appreciation. One of the wounded, glorified by Hezbollah’s propaganda, held a speech at the ceremony in which he greeted the Iranian leadership and praised jihad.

Overview

The Foundation for the Wounded and the background for its establishment

Hezbollah’s Foundation for the Wounded, or to use its full name, **The Charitable Association for Treating War Casualties and War Disabled in Lebanon**, was officially established in October 1992. Treating and caring for the wounded started with the establishment of Hezbollah in 1982, but during the first decade of Hezbollah’s existence, such activity was carried out in an unorganized manner. At the basis of establishing the Foundation for the Wounded and expanding its activity was **Hezbollah’s profound commitment to the wounded**, which is reflected in referring to them as “surviving shahids” (Baqiyyatullah, May 2017). One of the prominent slogans accompanying the activity of the Foundation for the Wounded is “Carrying on in spite of the wounds,” i.e., the wounded are integrated into society in general and Hezbollah in particular, after having undergone a successful rehabilitation process (website of the Foundation for the Wounded). **This profound commitment turns the Foundation for the Wounded into one of Hezbollah’s most important civilian institutions which support its fighting operatives.**

► **The Foundation for the Wounded takes care of Hezbollah’s wounded providing them hospitalization and treatment from the moment of their injury, in Lebanon and abroad.**

The Foundation is also engaged in **the rehabilitation of the wounded, their reintegration into society, and the improvement of their quality of life.** In addition, the Foundation is engaged in the battle for hearts and minds, in which the wounded meet with women’s organizations and with Hezbollah’s youth and tell them about the circumstances of their injury (with the addition of ideological or religious messages). The Foundation for the Wounded is also engaged in raising awareness of landmines and cluster bombs, **in collaboration with the Lebanese government (mainly the Lebanese army) and the European Union and UN officials** (who assist Lebanon in this area). The Foundation currently takes care of operatives **wounded from 1982** (the First Lebanon War), operatives **wounded since the year 2000** (the withdrawal of the IDF from the security zone), and operatives **wounded in Syria** (Hassan Nasrallah’s speech, April 10, 2019).



Logo of the Foundation for the Wounded. The text under the logo and the name of the Foundation reads, “Carrying on in spite of the wounds” (website of the Foundation for the Wounded)

► The Shiite-Islamic religious basis which inspired the Foundation for the Wounded is the story of Abu al-Fadl al-Abbas, the brother of Imam Al-Hussein, revered by the Shiites and bearer of his banner in the battle of Karbala. Al-Abbas was killed during an attempt to bring water to those besieged in the camp of Al-Hussein. The Hijri date of Sha’aban 4, the anniversary of the birth of Al-Abbas, was chosen as Hezbollah’s Wounded Day and is commemorated annually, under the sponsorship of Hassan Nasrallah, Hezbollah leader (Baqiyatullah, May 2017); Arabi Press website, April 25, 2018). **Note:** On April 10, 2019, Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah delivered a speech on the occasion of the Resistance’s

Wounded Day. In the beginning of his speech, he praised the bravery and dedication of Abu al-Fadl al-Abbas (Al-Manar, April 10, 2019).

► Similarly to the Martyrs Foundation, it appears that **the Foundation for the Wounded was also established on Iranian inspiration**. There are at least several parallel foundations which were established on Iranian inspiration with respect to other Shiite militias supported by Iran: “Wounded of the Popular Mobilization, Surviving Shahids” (an institution established by the Popular Mobilization Shiite militias in Iraq; “Treatment of the Wounded of the Sayyid al-Shuhada Brigades” (an institution established by the Iraqi Shiite militia Sayyid al-Shuhada; and the “Foundation for the Wounded” established by the Ansar Allah movement (the Houthi rebels) in Yemen (Facebook pages of various militias handled by Iran).

Structure of the Foundation for the Wounded

► The Foundation is headed by **Hajj Mohammad Dakroub**, AKA **Abu Hassan**, who serves as **the general director** (updated to July 2018). Hajj Dakroub has held this position at least since 2009 (website of the village of Jebchit, March 21, 2009; website of the Foundation for the Wounded, July 20, 2018).² **The general management** is in Beirut’s Shiite southern suburb (Al-Dahiya, Hayy Madi neighborhood, telephone 03/352809, telefax 01/544025).

► Under the director general, there are at least four designated departments:

- ◆ **Rehabilitation and Training Department:** Headed (updated to 2006) by **Dr. Ibrahim Na’im** (Sada al-Jirah magazine, May 17, 2006).

- ◆ **Information and Public Relations Department:** Since 2009, headed by **Hajj Imad Khesman**, Hezbollah operative who was wounded around 1988³ (website of the Foundation for the Wounded, April 23, 2018).

² Someone with this name was member of the Tebnine municipality in southern Lebanon in 2006 (Al-Akhbar, November 9, 2006). It is not possible to determine whether it is the same person.

³ In the program “Bouh al-Jirah (closely translated as “Grounds of the Wounds”) broadcast on the Radio Nour website (December 2018), the circumstances of Khesman’s injury were mentioned. It was reported that he was wounded in the legs, in an ambush, from shooting by “armed operatives” at the car he was in. The injury occurred around 1988. There was no mention of the circumstances and the identity of the “armed operatives” who shot at him. It can be estimated that this was part of the struggle between Hezbollah and the Amal Movement in 1987-89.



Hajj Imad Khesman, who is in charge of information and public relations in the Foundation for the Wounded (in the circle). A Lebanese army officer is seen beside him (website of the Foundation for the Wounded, December 15, 2017)

◆ **Assistance Program for Landmine Casualties:** The coordinator of the program was (updated to 2010) **Hajj Imad Khesman** (study on the removal of landmines in Lebanon, Landmine & Cluster Munition, 2010). In addition, Imad Khesman also served (updated to January 2018) as member in the National Committee for Assistance to Landmine and Cluster Munition Casualties (Lebanese Forces website, January 1, 2018).

◆ **Culture Department:** Headed by **Sheikh Nizar Kamel Sa'id** (updated to May 2017). The sheikh is a regular guest in the Iranian Al-Kawthar TV Channel,⁴ where he lectures on Islamic religious law and the Islamic Revolution in Iran. He is also (updated to January 2017) the director of the **Imam Al-Khomeini Center**⁵ (Lebanese National News Agency, January 13, 2017). He had served as the imam of the southern Lebanon village of Yuhmur (Nabatieh website, May 4, 2018).

► The Foundation for the Wounded has **regional branches in various districts in Lebanon**. Following are some of them:

◆ **South Lebanon branch:** The branch manager is **Hajj Nidal Burjawi** (website of the Foundation for the Wounded, March 31, 2018), who has served in the office at least since July 2001 (Al-Ahed, July 12, 2001). The branch is in Nabatieh (telefax 07/764477).

⁴Iranian satellite channel broadcasting in Arabic. Its main goal is to disseminate the original Islamic thought of the Prophet Muhammad and his family members in accordance with the Shiite doctrine (Al-Kawthar Channel, Wikipedia in Arabic).

⁵ Network of cultural centers engaged in preserving and disseminating Imam Khomeini's philosophy, by organizing seminars and meetings for discussion, establishing public libraries for reference purposes, and publishing of series of publications authored by senior clerics and thinkers. The network was established in 1991 and has branches throughout Lebanon (website of the Al-Ma'aref network).

- ◆ **The Bekaa branch:** Situated at the southern entrance of Baalbek (telefax 08/373813). The branch manager is **Hajj Ali Berro**. Three of his brothers were killed during their activity in Hezbollah.⁶ His subordinate who is in charge of culture is **Sheikh Mohammad Noun** (website of the Foundation for the Wounded, May 30, 2019). Sheikh Noun regularly takes part in Hezbollah events in the Bekaa Valley, including shahid funerals (Hezbollah's official website, November 30, 2011; Al-Manar TV Channel, March 23, 2015).
- ◆ **The Beirut branch:** Situated in the same building in the Hayy Madi neighborhood in the southern suburb of Beirut where the general management of the Foundation for the Wounded is located (telefax 01/544026).

Fields of activity of the Foundation for the Wounded

► The Foundation's main field of activity is **treatment and rehabilitation of wounded and handicapped among the Hezbollah fighters**.⁷ For these purposes, **the Foundation operates at least four rehabilitation centers**, dealing with various fields in the process of rehabilitation (website of the Foundation for the Wounded; Baqiyyatullah magazine, 308, May 2017):

- ◆ **Al-Abbas Center for Prosthetics and Orthopedic Systems:** The center was established in the 1990s and is situated in the Dahiya, Beirut's Shiite southern suburb, in the Hayy Madi neighborhood. It produces and installs prosthetics for wounded operatives and for casualties of landmine explosions. **The center is apparently supported by the European Union** in collaboration with the Landmine Action Center (LMAC) in the Lebanese army and with the national committee for raising awareness of the danger of landmines and cluster bombs in Lebanon.

⁶ His three brothers who were killed were Sheikh As'ad Berro, a suicide bomber who detonated a car bomb against an IDF convoy in the Marj Ayoun area (August 9, 1989); the shahid Hajj Ibrahim Berro (killed in September 1994); and the shahid Hajj Mohammad Berro (someone by this name was killed during a march of youth who protested the demolition of a mosque on the airport road in Beirut).

⁷ There is certain ambiguity as to whether the Foundation also treats civilians who do not belong to Hezbollah. In October 2011, the Foundation manager in the south, Hajj Nidal Burjawi, said that the Foundation was also treating civilians who were injured as a result of Israeli attacks (Janoubia website, October 18, 2011). In January 2016, the official website of the Foundation for the Wounded claimed that it "is treating all the wounded and disabled as a result of acts of resistance and the Zionists' acts of aggression, regardless of region, affiliation or sect" (website of the Foundation for the Wounded, January 13, 2016). However, an examination of up-to-date information regarding the Foundation for the Wounded virtually reveals no indications for treating civilians).



Sign in the Al-Abbas Center for Prosthetics and Orthopedic Systems. On top, there are logos of the organizations involved in the Center's program for the installation of prosthetics for casualties of landmines and cluster bombs, including the European Union and the Lebanese LMAC, which belongs to the Lebanese army (website of the Foundation for the Wounded).

◆ **Al-Abbas Center for physiotherapy and Rehabilitation:** The center was established in the 1990s and is situated in the building of the Foundation for the Wounded in the city of Nabatieh in southern Lebanon. It offers various kinds of natural treatments and rehabilitation through modern equipment with the purpose of preparing the wounded to return to routine life.



Poster of the Al-Abbas Center for Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation (website of the Foundation for the Wounded)

◆ **The Center for Speech and Language Therapy**

◆ **The House of the Wounded for Traditional Handicraft:** The center was established in 2001 and is situated in the building of the Foundation for the Wounded in the Hayy Madi neighborhood in the Dahiya, where the general management of the Foundation for the Wounded is located. The center sells gifts, appreciation plaques and other products made by wounded Hezbollah operatives. It holds exhibitions of its products in various regions in Lebanon. **The purpose of selling the products is to glorify Hezbollah, its leader and the Iranian leadership.**



Right: Poster of the House of the Wounded, January 2019. It offers printing on cups, shirts, pillows, smartphone covers etc. A smartphone cover can be seen with a picture of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah (Facebook page of the House of the Wounded, January 21, 2019). Left: Products of the House of the Wounded in an exhibition of the women's organizations and Hezbollah's Jihad al-Bina association, which was held in southern Beirut (May 2018). A decoration or an appreciation plaque with the Hezbollah logo can be seen in the foreground (website of the Foundation for the Wounded, May 2018).



Right: Portrait of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah (Facebook page of the Ataa al-Jirah exhibition, July 16, 2015). Left: Picture frame of Iranian leader Ali Khamenei (Facebook page of the Ataa al-Jirah exhibition, May 19, 2015)



Appreciation plaque of the Foundation for the Wounded, with Hezbollah logo, a picture of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, logo of the Foundation for the Wounded, and an inscription that reads, “Your injuries ... are the pulse of the resistance” (Facebook page of the House of the Wounded, February 22, 2017)

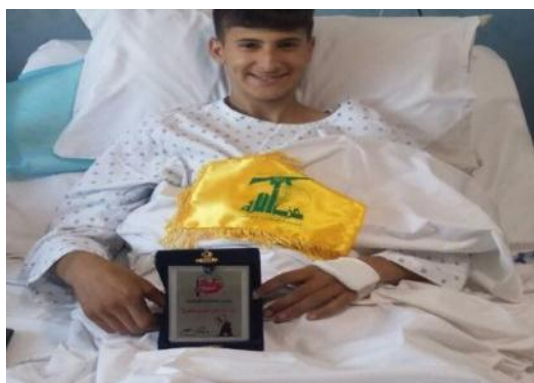
Integration of the wounded in society and their exploitation for Hezbollah’s battle for hearts and minds

As part of the medical rehabilitation, the Foundation for the Wounded is engaged in integrating the wounded and handicapped into society. The Foundation places special emphasis on integrating the wounded into Hezbollah’s social institutions and their participation in Hezbollah’s events, religious ceremonies, and visits to holy sites.



Right: Delegation of the Foundation for the Wounded at a meeting with Liwa Qani, the deputy of Qods Force Commander Qassem Soleimani, during a visit on behalf of the Foundation for the Wounded in Iran (ya Sour website, February 18, 2018). Left: A Hezbollah wounded operative visiting holy sites in Iraq (Facebook page of the Foundation for the Wounded, February 12, 2019)

► As part of the battle for hearts and minds, the Foundation for the Wounded is engaged in a variety of activities: “jihadi meetings” between wounded and students; awarding appreciation plaques from the wounded to outstanding students; meetings with members of the Hezbollah youth movement (Imam Al-Mahdi Scouts) and with activists of Hezbollah’s women organizations. Alongside stories of battles and their injuries, the wounded are required to convey messages relating to Islamic religious law and social aspects of the Shiite sect (for instance, in meetings with activists of the women’s organizations, the wounded stress the importance attached by the fighters to women wearing hijab).



Right: Wounded talking to members of the youth movement Imam Al-Mahdi Scouts (Facebook page of the Foundation for the Wounded, March 12, 2019). Left: Wounded holding a certificate of appreciation on behalf of the Islamic Resistance Support Association, signed by Hassan Nasrallah. The text under the logo of the Association reads, “Your wounds will yield victory” (Facebook).

► **The wounded take part in Hezbollah’s ceremonies and events.** For example, ceremonies marking the anniversary of the Second Lebanon War; events of appreciation for the wounded and their family members (for instance, festive breakfast for the wives of the wounded);

workshops of education and guidance for the wounded, and sports events adapted for them; and religious ceremonies and visits to holy sites (mostly in Iran and Iraq).

► The Foundation for the Wounded also engages in **producing information materials on the wounded and their lives**: The Foundation puts on plays on the lives of the wounded; It publishes a magazine called “Sada Al-Jirah” (“Echo of the Wounds”), which includes, among other things, articles written by the wounded and detailed reviews of the activities, programs and projects of the Foundation. The Foundation also participates in the production of a program called “Bouh Al-Jirah” (closely translated as “Grounds of the Wounds”) on Radio Nour; and the production of videos on the lives of the wounded for the Al-Sirat TV Channel⁸ (website of the Foundation for the Wounded).

► An example of the use made by Hezbollah of the wounded for media purposes can be seen in a Hezbollah wounded by the name of **Hussein Aasi**, whom Hezbollah has transformed into a role model and used him for propaganda purposes in Iran and Lebanon (see the section on the visit of a delegation of the Foundation for the Wounded in Iran, below). Following are several examples for handling Hussein Aasi in Lebanon for propaganda purposes:

- ◆ **Meetings with school students around Lebanon** (website of the Foundation for the Wounded, December 26, 2017; website of the Al-Mahdi schools, October 31, 2018).
- ◆ **Participation in a solidarity rally with Jerusalem and “Palestine”** following the relocation of the American Embassy to Jerusalem (website of the Foundation for the Wounded, January 16, 2018).
- ◆ **Visiting shahid families** on the occasion of Mother’s Day and the anniversary marking the birth of Sayyida Fatima (the Prophet Muhammad’s daughter) (website of the Foundation for the Wounded, March 27, 2018).
- ◆ **Taking part in the Ashura ceremonies** on behalf of Hezbollah (Huna Adloun website, October 16, 2018).
- ◆ **Meeting with female members of the Imam Al-Mahdi Scouts**, Hezbollah’s youth movement, on the occasion of the anniversary marking the birth of Set Zaynab (Saida al-Youm website, without a date).

⁸ A Shiite TV channel broadcasting programs on religion, culture and principles of the Islamic Shiite faith in accordance with the original Islam of the Prophet Muhammad (Facebook page of the Al-Sirat Channel).

Raising awareness of the danger of landmines and treating landmine casualties

► The Foundation for the Wounded is engaged in treating landmine casualties and raising awareness of this issue. As part of its activity on this issue, the Foundation is **collaborating with the Lebanese army and with institutions and agencies abroad, including the European Union and UNICEF**. Thus, for instance, the Foundation, in collaboration with the Islamic Health Organization and the University of Balamand (a large private university in Beirut), organized activity to raise awareness and express solidarity with landmine casualties. The event took place in April 2018, in the Wadi al-Hujeir nature reserve in southern Lebanon. It was held under the auspices of Hezbollah MP Ali Fayad, and with the assistance of the Jabal Amel Union of Municipalities, the Lebanese army LMAC (Landmine Action Center), **the European Union, UNICEF**, and other institutions (Sawt al-Farah website, April 19, 2018).



The event in Wadi al-Hujeir: joint activity of the Lebanese army soldiers (in the foreground) and activists of the Islamic Health Organization – Hezbollah’s health organization (in the background and on the left) (Sawt al-Farah website, April 19, 2018)



Sign showing the logos of the organizations which assisted in holding the event in Wadi al-Hujeir, including the European Union, UNICEF, and the Lebanese army LMAC (Sawt al-Farah website, April 19, 2018)

► On May 2, 2017, a landmine dismantling site in southern Lebanon was visited by two representatives on behalf of the UN and European Union, United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon **Sigrid Kaag**, and the EU Ambassador, Head of Delegation to Lebanon **Ambassador Christina Lassen**. The two diplomats met with Lebanese army officers and Lebanese government officials related to the landmine dismantling activity. In addition, a larger meeting also took place, **which was attended, among others, by representatives of [Hezbollah’s] Foundation for the Wounded** and representatives of additional institutions (including representatives of UNDP⁹ and the Norwegian association for humanitarian assistance¹⁰). The two diplomats received an elaborate explanation on the dismantling of landmines taking place in southern Lebanon (Al-Hayat newspaper’s website, May 3, 2017).

⁹United Nations Development Program

¹⁰ It is unclear which organization it is. Possibly, the name referred to the Popular Assistance Association Norway-Lebanon (NPA).



**Visit by the UN and EU representatives at the landmine dismantling site in southern Lebanon
(Al-Hayat newspaper's website, May 3, 2017)**

► On December 14, 2017, the first parliamentary conference on landmine casualties was held in the Lebanese Parliament. The conference was attended by representatives of Lebanese government agencies engaged in assistance for landmine casualties. In addition, it was attended by representatives of **the Foundation for the Wounded and Hezbollah's Islamic Health Organization**, as well as several ambassadors and representatives of international organizations. European Union Ambassador to Lebanon Francesca Pralisi (?) delivered a speech on behalf of the EU. She noted that for many years, the EU had partnered Lebanon in the struggle against landmines and in offering assistance to casualties of landmine and cluster bombs. She added that **the aid given by the EU for the struggle against landmines had reached the sum of €40 million. The speech on behalf of the UN Development Program (UNDP) in Lebanon was given by Ms. Celine Moyroud**, who stressed that priority should be given to assisting the victims of landmines and cluster bombs in Lebanon (website of the Foundation for the Wounded, December 15, 2017). **Note:** It should be taken into account that funds granted by the European Union to Lebanon for the struggle against landmines may have “spilled over” also to Hezbollah's Foundation for the Wounded, which collaborates with the Lebanese government in the struggle against landmines.



The parliamentary conference on landmine casualties held in the Lebanese Parliament with the participation of representatives of Hezbollah's Foundation for the Wounded (website of the Foundation for the Wounded, December 15, 2015)

How many wounded are taken care of by the Foundation for the Wounded

During the years, a great deal of information was received on the number of wounded taken care of by the Foundation for the Wounded. Some of this information **is not up-to-date** because **as the years passed, and mainly during the fighting in Syria, Hezbollah has had additional wounded**. In the ITIC's assessment, **the Foundation today takes care of more than 9,000 wounded**.

► Following are highlights of the information accumulated over the years: **In August 2001**, Hezbollah claimed that the Foundation was taking care of 3,150 wounded (Baqiyatullah magazine, 119, August 2001); **In October 2011**, the Foundation manager in southern Lebanon said that the Foundation was taking care of 1,985 wounded, from which 437 suffering from serious disabilities (Janoubia, October 18, 2011); **In November 2014**, a source in the Foundation for the Wounded said that up to November 2014, a total of 280 operatives were wounded in Syria sustaining disability, and 1,840 others were wounded who were treated and recovered (Janoubia, November 16, 2014); **In January 2016**, the Foundation for the Wounded officially reported that until the end of 2014, it had taken care of 7,724 wounded, of which 420 were landmine casualties and several dozens of others were cluster bomb casualties. This, in addition to 4,460 wounded who recovered (website of the Foundation for the Wounded, January 13, 2016); **In October 2018**, a website opposed to Hezbollah estimated that in light of the number of casualties in battles in recent years, the Foundation for the Wounded and the organization's medical network system were taking care of **more than 9,000 people** (Sawt al-Dar website, October 22, 2018). In the ITIC's assessment, this number seems reasonable.

Funding sources of the Foundation for the Wounded

In the ITIC's assessment, Hezbollah receives a considerable part of the annual budget of the Foundation for the Wounded from Iran. Other sources of funding of secondary importance are donations and probably also aid from the Lebanese government and international institutions (such as **the European Union and UNICEF**).

► Following are details on the sources of funding of the Foundation for the Wounded:

◆ **Donations:** In 2002-2006, **the details of an account in France Banque for donations** for the Foundation were published on the first page of the issues of the magazine of the Foundation for the Wounded, Sada al-Jirah (“Echo of the Wounds”). In January 2019, the Al-Hurra American TV channel in Arabic said that France Banque had given financial services to the Martyrs Foundation and the Foundation for the Wounded (Janoubia, January 10, 2019). In January 2010, a festive *iftar*¹¹ was held on behalf of the Foundation for the Wounded, attended also by “a group of contributors and supporters of the Foundation’s programs” (Sada al-Jirah, January 28, 2010).

◆ **Cooperation with the Lebanese government:** The Foundation for the Wounded maintains regular working relations with various entities in Lebanon, mainly with **the Lebanese Landmine Action Center (LMAC) in the Lebanese army** (website of the Foundation for the Wounded; Sawt al-Farah website, April 19, 2018). In the early 2000s, it was reported that the Foundation had ties with **the Ministry of Social Affairs in the Lebanese government**, and even participated in the internal elections to one of the ministry’s departments. The then minister As’ad Diab also sponsored a ceremony¹² of the Foundation for the Wounded (Al-Ahed, July 12, 2001; Al-Diyar, January 21, 2002; Al-Akhbar, November 2, 2012). It is possible that as part of these relations, funds are being channeled to the Foundation from the Lebanese government.

◆ **Cooperation with international agencies and NGOs:** The Foundation for the Wounded maintains working relations with international organizations **such as the European Union and UNICEF**, mainly in the field of treating casualties of landmines and cluster bombs (website of the Foundation for the Wounded; Sawt al-Farah website, April 19, 2018). In addition, in 2008, the Foundation received aid **from the Red**

¹¹ The evening meal with which Muslims end their daily Ramadan fast.

¹² The ceremony was also attended by the representative of the Iranian Embassy in Lebanon, Sheikh Fazlullah Razavi.

Crescent in the United Arab Emirates (Al-Ittihad, June 7, 2008). In 2009, **a delegation of the Foundation visited Britain** and met with journalists and Members of Parliament (the Lebanese expatriate’s website, November 5, 2009). In 2016 and 2018, senior officials of the Foundation for the Wounded met with delegations of NGOs such as the **Amel Foundation¹³ and Geneva Call** (website of the Foundation for the Wounded, November 29, 2016; June 21, 2018). In the ITIC’s assessment, the possibility of supporting the Foundation for the Wounded was examined during these meetings.

◆ **Selling products of “The House of the Wounded for Traditional Handicraft:”** The products are sold within the price range of USD 5-50 for small products such as appreciation plaques and home decorations, and up to USD 250 for bigger products such as furniture (Facebook page of the House of the Wounded; Facebook page of the Ataa al-Jirah exhibition in the village of Abba). In addition, it was reported that the Foundation for the Wounded was operating “productive foundations” (it is possible that the House of the Wounded for Traditional Handicraft was intended by this wording since no other foundations of this kind were found in the possession of the Foundation for the Wounded).

◆ **Income from a resort in southern Lebanon:** In the early 2000s, a resort named Al-Firdaws was established between the villages of Al-Duweir and Tul (in the Nabatieh area). The site is integrated into a rehabilitation center of the Foundation for the Wounded. Alongside sections of treatment and rehabilitation, physiotherapy and classrooms, the site boasts swimming pools, gardens and parks, cafeteria and vacation apartments. It was intended to open the site to visitors who are not Hezbollah’s wounded, as part of the process of facilitating the integration of the wounded into society (Al-Ahed, July 12, 2001; Janoubia, October 18, 2011). For the time being, no mention of the site was found on social media, and it is scarcely mentioned on the Internet. Therefore, it is unclear whether it yields significant financial profit for the Foundation for the Wounded.

Delegation of the Foundation for the Wounded visits Iran

¹³ Non-sectarian civil association established following the IDF’s Litani Operation in 1978. Among its declared goals, “securing the right of expression, health, education, employment, food and safe environment for all, regardless of religion, belief or gender.” “Giving an opportunity to marginal groups in the development process and encouraging local initiatives,” as well as “integrating women into the development strategy of the association and strengthening their leading role in society” (Al-Khiyam website, September 30, 2011; Amel Foundation’s website).

► In mid-February 2018, a delegation of the Foundation visited **Iran**. The delegation took part in a ceremony marking the anniversary of “the victory of the Islamic Revolution” in Iran (February 11) and the annual memorial day for the three high-ranking Hezbollah shahids, “shahid commanders” (February 16). The ceremony was attended by **Qods Force Deputy Commander Liwa Qani** (ya Sour website, February 18, 2018).

► One of the members of the delegation on behalf of the Foundation for the Wounded was a wounded operative by the name of **Hussein Aasi**, glorified by Hezbollah’s media outlets. According to them, he underwent his first military course at age 14, took part in the Second Lebanon War at age 16, and was wounded (2013) in the battle over the Shrine of Set Zaynab in Syria (Radio Nour website, December 2018). During the ceremony, which took place in the city of Qom, Hussein Aasi delivered a speech, **greeting the Iranian leadership and praising jihad** for defending the land and the holy sites (ya Sour website, February 18, 2018).



Right: Qods Force Deputy Commander Liwa Qani putting a seal ring on wounded Hussein Aasi’s finger. The Shiites strongly believe in the mystical power of seal rings to protect the believer wearing them (ya Sour website, February 18, 2018). Left: Liwa Qani awarding Hussein Aasi a certificate of appreciation. The wounded is wearing a Hezbollah uniform, with an arm badge with Hezbollah’s logo.



Right: Pictures of Iranian leader Ali Khamenei and Islamic Revolution leader Ruhollah Khomeini, alongside the flags of Lebanon, Iran and Hezbollah, at a ceremony held in the city of Qom (ya Sour website, February 18, 2018). Left: Hussein Aasi delivering a speech at the ceremony, with flags of Lebanon, Hezbollah and Iran on the stage. The setting on stage is reminiscent of a battle zone: sandbags at the background and pieces of cloth in the color of the Revolutionary Guards uniform on the podium to the right (ya Sour website, February 18, 2018)