

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	570
Land:	Libanon
Kilde:	United States Department of State
Titel:	Country Reports on Terrorism 2017 – Lebanon
Udgivet:	19. september 2018
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	7. januar 2019

Country Reports on Terrorism 2017 - Lebanon

Publisher [United States Department of State](#)

Publication Date 19 September 2018

Cite as United States Department of State, *Country Reports on Terrorism 2017 - Lebanon*, 19 September 2018, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5bcf1f9813.html> [accessed 3 December 2018]

Disclaimer This is not a UNHCR publication. UNHCR is not responsible for, nor does it necessarily endorse, its content. Any views expressed are solely those of the author or publisher and do not necessarily reflect those of UNHCR, the United Nations or its Member States.

Overview: Lebanon was a committed ally in the defeat-ISIS fight during 2017, and its ground forces represented one of the most effective counterterrorism partners in the region. The United States provided security assistance and training to the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF), and worked with Lebanon's defense and law enforcement organizations, such as the Internal Security Forces (ISF), to build its counterterrorism capabilities.

Terrorist groups operating in Lebanon included U.S. government-designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations Hizballah, ISIS, Hamas, and the Abdullah Azzam Brigades. Hizballah remained the most capable terrorist organization in Lebanon, controlling areas in the Bekaa Valley, southern Lebanon, and south Beirut. Even though the Lebanese government reaffirmed its official policy of disassociation in 2017, Hizballah continued its military role in Syria in support of the Syrian regime and admitted that it has a military presence in Iraq. Lebanon's 12 Palestinian refugee camps, particularly the largest, Ain el-Helweh, remained outside the jurisdiction of local security forces and posed a security threat due to potential militant recruitment and terrorist infiltration.

In 2017, the Lebanese security forces sought to impede Sunni foreign terrorist fighter flow to and from Syria and Iraq via border security and counterterrorism operations, including increased security measures at airports, border crossings, and ports to prevent the flow of ISIS and al-Nusrah Front (ANF) fighters to Syria and Iraq. In August, the Lebanese government was involved in an arrangement that led to the departure of 4,800 al-Qa'ida-affiliated Syrian fighters from Aarsal, Lebanon to Idlib, Syria, and 670 ISIS fighters from Raas Baalbek, Lebanon into Syria. Lebanese President Michael Aoun declared "victory over terrorism" following an August 2017 LAF campaign to expel ISIS militants along the Lebanese-Syrian border near Aarsal. It was the LAF's largest and most successful military operation in over a decade.

Lebanon is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, and participates in all four of the Coalition's civilian working groups.

2017 Terrorist Incidents:

- On January 21, Lebanese security forces thwarted an attempted suicide bomber at a coffee shop in Beirut.
- On May 26, an ISIS-affiliated suicide bomber detonated an explosive vest, wounding several Lebanese soldiers during a raid by Lebanese soldiers in Aarsal.
- On June 30, five suicide bombers and a sixth militant killed one civilian and wounded seven Lebanese soldiers during a LAF raid on two Syrian refugee camps near Aarsal.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Lebanon does not have a comprehensive counterterrorism law, but several articles of Lebanon's criminal code are used to prosecute acts of terrorism. Lebanon's confessional power-sharing system and Hizballah's restriction of access to areas under its control hinders implementation of these articles.

Hizballah's political power make consensus on any anti-Hizballah legislation impossible.

The LAF, ISF, Directorate of General Security, and General Directorate of State Security are the primary government agencies responsible for counterterrorism. The law enforcement capacity of these agencies was overstretched due to the magnitude of terrorism-related threats. Although inter-service cooperation was inconsistent, services took steps to improve information sharing and were receptive to additional capacity building.

Department of State Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) in 2017 focused on border security and building law enforcement's investigative and leadership capabilities. The Department of State also provided assistance to improve ISF capabilities through a program that includes construction of training facilities, establishment of a secure radio communications system, and the provision of vehicles and protective gear. In 2017, the Department of State's Counterterrorism Partnerships Fund program planned to build on the ATA program and provide ISF with assistance to further enhance its digital investigative capabilities.

The LAF has primary responsibility for securing Lebanon's borders and worked collaboratively with other Lebanese security services to do so. Security services increased border security measures to prevent the flow of ISIS and ANF fighters to Syria and Iraq, with an emphasis on detecting counterfeit passports. The Directorate of General Security, under the Ministry of Interior, controls immigration and passport services and collects biographic data for travelers at the airport, but it does not collect biometric data at land borders. Lebanon collects and disseminates Passenger Name Record data for commercial flights, and in 2017, began collecting Advanced Passenger Information.

In addition to the major military victory in August to clear ISIS militants from the Syrian-Lebanese border, the Lebanese security services disrupted multiple terrorist networks and made several high profile arrests in 2017. On April 22, the LAF killed an ISIS leader and detained 10 other suspected militants in Aarsal. On November 15, the army arrested Mustafa al-Hujeiri, a senior Sunni extremist figure and cleric involved in the 2014 kidnapping of 30 Lebanese soldiers and policemen.

The United States maintained close ties with the Lebanese security services, both receiving and providing support. Several individuals on the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation's most wanted list and the Department of State's Rewards for Justice are reportedly located in Lebanon.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Lebanon is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF), a Financial Action Task Force-style regional

body. The Central Bank of Lebanon's financial intelligence unit, the Special Investigation Commission (SIC), is a member of the Egmont Group. The SIC Secretary is the Vice-Chairman worldwide of the Egmont Group. Lebanon is a member of the Counter-ISIS Finance Group (CIFG), a working group of the Defeat-ISIS Coalition.

The Central Bank of Lebanon and members of the Association of Lebanese Banks reasserted their commitment to fully implement the U.S. Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act (HIFPA) of 2015, in accordance with Central Bank directives. They met frequently with U.S. government officials to understand compliance and potential new auditing and reporting requirements related to the proposed 2017 amendments to HIFPA.

Cooperation between the SIC and local enforcement authorities on terrorist financing cases improved in 2017. During the first nine months of 2017, the SIC received 12 terrorism and terrorism financing cases from local sources. During the same period, the SIC referred seven terrorism financing cases to the General Prosecutor.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the [*2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report \(INCSR\), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes*](#).

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Several government institutions and civil society organizations conducted CVE programs and messaging platforms. The UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon continued to work with the prime minister's office on advancing a "National Action Plan to Prevent Violent Extremism." The LAF developed a comprehensive counter-messaging strategy that amplifies moderate voices and uses television spots, social media, billboards, and SMS texts to counter terrorist narratives. The Lebanese cities Madjal Anjar, Saida, and Tripoli are members of the Strong Cities Network.

International and Regional Cooperation: Lebanon supported counterterrorism efforts in regional organizations and participated in counterterrorism finance programs as a member of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Arab League, and the Union of Arab Banks. In the framework of MENAFATF and the Egmont Group, Lebanon offered training to regional peers in international standards to combat terrorist financing. Lebanon voiced its commitment to fulfilling relevant UNSCRs, including 1559 (2004), 1680 (2006), and 1701 (2006). The Special Tribunal for Lebanon, an international body investigating the 2005 assassination of former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri, received Lebanon's annual contribution of approximately US \$32.5 million in June. The LAF also partnered on security assistance initiatives with several nations, most regularly with the United Kingdom.

Search Refworld

Countries

- [Lebanon](#)

Topics

- [Terrorism](#)