

**Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale**

|                                    |                                             |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <b>Bilagsnr.:</b>                  | <b>622</b>                                  |
| Land:                              | Libanon                                     |
| Kilde:                             | US Department of State                      |
| Titel:                             | Country Report on Terrorism 2018. Hizballah |
| Udgivet:                           | 1. november 2019                            |
| Optaget på<br>baggrundsmaterialet: | 19. december 2019                           |

Document #2019433

USDOS – US Department of State

## Country Report on Terrorism 2018 - Chapter 5 - Hizballah

**Aka** the Party of God; Islamic Jihad; Islamic Jihad Organization; Revolutionary Justice Organization; Organization of the Oppressed on Earth; Islamic Jihad for the Liberation of Palestine; Organization of Right Against Wrong; Ansar Allah; Followers of the Prophet Muhammed; Lebanese Hizballah; Lebanese Hezbollah; LH; Foreign Relations Department; External Security Organization; Foreign Action Unit; Hizballah International; Special Operations Branch; External Services Organization; External Security Organization of Hezbollah.

**Description:** Hizballah was designated as a FTO on October 8, 1997. Formed in 1982 following the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the Lebanon-based radical Shia group takes its ideological inspiration from the Iranian revolution and the teachings of the late Ayatollah Khomeini. The group generally follows the religious guidance of the Iranian Supreme Leader, which in 2018 was Ali Khamenei. Hizballah is closely allied with Iran and the two often work together on shared initiatives, although Hizballah also acts independently in some cases. Hizballah shares a close relationship with the Syrian regime of Bashar Assad, and like Iran, provides assistance – including fighters – to Syrian regime forces in the Syrian conflict.

**Activities:** Hizballah is responsible for multiple large scale terrorist attacks, including the 1983 suicide truck bombings of the U.S. Embassy and U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut; the 1984 attack on the U.S. Embassy annex in Beirut; and the 1985 hijacking of TWA flight 847, during which U.S. Navy diver Robert Stethem was murdered.

Hizballah was also implicated, along with Iran, in the 1992 attacks on the Israeli Embassy in Argentina and in the 1994 bombing of the Argentine-Israelite Mutual Association in Buenos Aires.

In 2000, Hizballah operatives captured three Israeli soldiers in the Shebaa Farms area and, separately, kidnapped an Israeli reserve officer in Dubai. In an exchange between Israel and Hizballah in 2004, the Israeli reserve officer abducted in Dubai as well as the bodies of the three Israeli soldiers were returned to Israel.

Hizballah assisted Iraq Shia militant and terrorist groups in Iraq, and in January 2007, attacked the Karbala Provincial Joint Coordination Center, killing five American soldiers.

Hizballah is believed to have carried out two attacks against UN Interim Force in Lebanon peacekeepers: an attack in late May 2011 that wounded five Italian peacekeepers and a second attack in July 2011 that wounded six French soldiers.

In July 2012, a suspected Hizballah operative was detained by Cypriot authorities for allegedly helping plan an attack against Israeli tourists on the island. On March 21, 2013, a Cyprus court found the operative guilty of charges based on his surveillance activities of Israeli tourists. The group was also responsible for the July 2012 attack on a passenger bus carrying 42 Israeli tourists at the Sarafovo Airport in Bulgaria, near the city of Burgas. The explosion killed five Israelis and one Bulgarian, and injured 32 others.

In May 2013, Hizballah publicly admitted to playing a significant role in the ongoing conflict in Syria, rallying support for the Syrian regime of Bashar Assad. Hizballah's support for Syria's Assad regime continued into 2018. As of 2018, there were reportedly about 7,000 Hizballah fighters in Syria; several senior Hizballah military commanders and hundreds of fighters have died in the Syrian conflict.

In May 2013, Nigerian authorities arrested three Hizballah operatives who had stored weapons and a large quantity of ammunition and explosives. In October 2014, Peruvian authorities arrested a Hizballah operative who had been planning to carry out attacks against Israeli and Jewish targets. In May 2015, Cypriot authorities arrested and convicted a Hizballah member after finding 8.2 tons of liquid ammonium nitrate in the basement of a residence in Larnaca. In August 2015, Kuwaiti authorities arrested three Hizballah operatives who had stored weapons and explosives under a residential house. In 2017, Bolivian authorities identified a Hizballah-affiliated warehouse, seizing explosive precursor materials and a VBIED.

In June 2017, two Hizballah operatives were arrested in the United States. One operative arrested in Michigan had identified the availability of explosives precursors in Panama in 2011 and surveilled U.S. and Israeli targets in Panama as well as the Panama Canal from 2011-2012. Another operative arrested in New York had surveilled U.S. military and law enforcement facilities from 2003-2017.

In September 2018, Brazil arrested a Hizballah financier, and in December 2018, tunnels reportedly built by Hizballah were discovered on Israeli territory along the boundary with Lebanon.

**Strength:** The group has tens of thousands of supporters and members worldwide.

**Location/Area of Operation:** Hizballah is based in the southern suburbs of Beirut, the Bekaa Valley, and southern Lebanon, but the group operates around the world. Since 2012, Hizballah fighters have assisted Assad regime forces in many areas across Syria.

**Funding and External Aid:** Iran continues to provide Hizballah with most of its funding, training, weapons, and explosives, as well as political, diplomatic, monetary, and organizational aid. Iran's annual financial backing to Hizballah – an estimated \$700 million per year – accounts for the overwhelming majority of the group's annual budget.

The Assad regime has furnished training, weapons, and diplomatic and political support. Hizballah also receives funding in the form of private donations from Lebanese Shia diaspora communities worldwide, including profits from legal and illegal businesses. These include smuggling contraband goods, passport falsification, narcotics trafficking, money laundering, and credit card, immigration, and bank fraud.

### ecoi.net summary:

Brief description of Hizballah (Excerpt of chapter 5 of the country report on terrorism 2018)



### Countries:

Lebanon, Syrian Arab Republic

### Source:

USDOS – US Department of State  [\(/en/source/11558.html\)](/en/source/11558.html)

### Original link (no longer valid):

~~<https://www.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2018/#Hizballah>~~

### Document type:

Periodical Report

### Language:

English

### Published:

1 November 2019

### Document ID:

2019433

### Austrian Red Cross

Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation (ACCORD)

Wiedner Hauptstraße 32, 1041 Wien

T (Telefon) +43 1 589 00 583

F (Fax) +43 1 589 00 589

info@ecoi.net

ecoi.net is run by the Austrian Red Cross (department ACCORD) in cooperation with Informationsverbund Asyl & Migration. ecoi.net is funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Austrian Ministry of the Interior and Caritas Austria. ecoi.net is supported by ECRE & UNHCR.

