

**Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale**

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## USDOS – US Department of State

### Country Report on Terrorism 2021 - Chapter 1 - Lebanon

**Overview:** In 2021, the United States provided security assistance and training to the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) and worked with law enforcement organizations, such as the Internal Security Forces (ISF), to enhance their counterterrorism capabilities and investigate and prosecute local terrorism cases.

Terrorist groups operating in Lebanon included U.S. government-designated foreign terrorist organizations such as Hizballah and ISIS.

Hizballah continued armed militia activities in Iraq, Syria, and Yemen in collaboration with the Iranian regime. Lebanon's 12 Palestinian refugee camps remained largely outside the control of Lebanese security forces and posed a security threat because of the potential for militant

**ecoi.net summary:**  
Annual report on terrorism (covering 2021)

**Country:**  
Lebanon

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recruitment and terrorist infiltration. Several individuals on the FBI's most wanted list and the Department of State's Rewards for Justice list reportedly remained in Lebanon.

**2021 Terrorist Incidents:** The following is a representative list of terrorist incidents in Lebanon:

- On February 3, civil society activist Lokman Slim was assassinated in southern Lebanon. Many local observers attributed his murder to Hizballah.
- On May 13, 17, and 19, and on July 20 and August 4, rockets were launched from southern Lebanon toward Israel. The LAF attributed the launches to unspecified Palestinian terrorist groups.
- On August 6, Hizballah claimed responsibility for launching 19 rockets from southern Lebanon toward Israel.
- On August 22, members of a suspected ISIS cell orchestrated the drive-by motorcycle shooting of a retired LAF officer in Tripoli. In September, the LAF arrested members of a suspected ISIS cell in Tripoli accused of having killed the retired LAF officer the previous month.
- On October 14, members of Hizballah and political party Amal engaged in armed clashes with members of the political group Lebanese Forces, in the Tayyouneh area of Beirut. The LAF deployed to restore order. Seven persons were killed and 32 injured in this incident.

**Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security:** Lebanon does not have a comprehensive counterterrorism law, but several articles of Lebanon's criminal code are effectively used to prosecute acts of terrorism. No new laws related to terrorism were passed in 2021. The LAF, the ISF, the Directorate of General Security (DGS), and the General

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Directorate of State Security were the primary government agencies responsible for counterterrorism. Although cooperation among the services was inconsistent, they took steps to improve information sharing. Structural limitations in the justice system remained a barrier to conducting trials on terrorism cases in a timely manner. Because of delays, some individuals suspected of terrorism were held in pretrial detention for extended periods. The Department of State funded programs to train judges and prosecutors on the skills needed to adjudicate criminal cases, including terrorism-related cases. The Department also provided virtual courtroom equipment in 23 courtrooms across Lebanon to more effectively and efficiently adjudicate criminal cases.

In January, the LAF and ISF arrested demonstrators protesting deteriorating economic conditions in Tripoli, who reportedly damaged public properties and attempted to injure security forces. In February, a military court charged 35 of the protesters with terrorism-related crimes, which some civil society groups described as an attempt to suppress political dissent.

The LAF held primary responsibility for securing Lebanon's land and maritime borders, while DGS and Customs were responsible for official points of entry. The LAF improved its ability to monitor Lebanon's land border with Syria through the Land Border Security Project funded by the United States, Canada, and the UK. This project resulted in enhanced border enforcement and an improved ability to interdict terrorist and criminal travel.

Lebanon made efforts to implement UN Security Council resolutions 2396 and 2309 by collecting biographic data for travelers at Beirut International Airport, Passenger Name Record data for commercial flights, and Advanced Passenger Information. DGS regularly updated INTERPOL watchlist information at border security terminals at Beirut International

Airport. DGS routinely shared information about falsified travel documents with foreign embassies in Lebanon. The ISF neared completion of a Department of State-funded project to increase the ISF's biometric collection and storage capabilities, which will also enable the ISF to share biometric data with other Lebanese security services. In 2021, Lebanese security services coordinated with the United States on numerous instances to investigate individuals involved in terrorism.

LAF and ISF units, including units receiving U.S. capacity building assistance, undertook enforcement actions against suspected terrorists in 2021. In January, the LAF arrested 18 Lebanese and Syrian nationals suspected of being ISIS operatives in the northeastern Aarsal region.

The presence of Hizballah in the Lebanese government continued to impede effective host government action against terrorist incidents associated with Hizballah. For instance, the ISF and judiciary were accused by Human Rights Watch of failing to fully investigate politically sensitive murder investigations during 2020 and 2021, including the suspected Hizballah assassination of civil society activist Lokman Slim.

In addition, despite repeated attempts by the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) to gain access to areas within its area of responsibility from which Hizballah is suspected to have stored or used weapons, Lebanese authorities in many instances declined to facilitate UNIFIL access to these areas. Some Lebanese security forces personnel may interact with Hizballah as part of official duties but are not beholden to the terrorist group. In domestic and international fora, Lebanese officials argued that acts taken against "foreign occupation" are not terrorism. This characterization was used to justify Hizballah's acts against Israel as resistance to occupation rather than as terrorism.

**Countering the Financing of Terrorism:** Lebanon is a member of MENAFATF. Its FIU, the Special Investigation Commission (SIC), is a

member of the Egmont Group. Lebanon is a member of the Counter-ISIS Finance Group (CIFG) and the working group of the Defeat-ISIS Coalition.

In 2021, the SIC received 22 terrorism and terrorism-financing cases. The SIC reported that there were 203 individuals and 19 entities on Lebanon's national terrorism-financing list as of year-end 2021. Lebanon did not propose any new designations to the UNSCR 1267/2253 Sanctions Committee in 2021.

**Countering Violent Extremism:** Lebanon published its national strategy for PVE in 2018. The National PVE Coordination Unit organized workshops in 2019 to solicit inputs for a PVE National Action Plan (NAP) for implementation of the strategy. Because of COVID-19 and delays in government formation during 2020-21, the Cabinet has not yet endorsed the NAP. In March, Lebanon's National PVE Coordination Unit launched a "National Exchange Platform," an online portal that facilitates CVE information sharing among civil society groups and government officials in Lebanon. Lebanese municipalities continued to engage in activities organized by the Strong Cities Network.

**International and Regional Cooperation:** Lebanon supported counterterrorism efforts in regional organizations and participated in counterterrorism finance programs.

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