

## HEZBOLLAH—THE PARADOX OF INFLUENCE

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This study examines the origins and maturation of Hezbollah from a loose confederation of street fighters to a political force that is able to adapt, transform and expand in one of the most unstable regions of the world. Labelled a terrorist organisation by some of the world's most powerful nations, this paper argues that Hezbollah's influence cannot be confined to a reputation born in the violence that gripped Lebanon during its civil war and occupation by Israel. So, what is Hezbollah? Is it a terrorist group, a political party, a social movement, an international power broker? This paper examines its evolution and metamorphoses into its present state of being. Regardless of the general world view, this study finds that Hezbollah has not completed its metamorphoses, for it is still evolving.

**Keywords:** Hezbollah, terrorism, counterterrorism, organisational change, Lebanon

### INTRODUCTION

Responsible for some of the most notorious acts of terror in the 1980s, Hezbollah proved to be an innovator of mass casualty, suicide terrorism and kidnapping in its formative years. However, the last decade has seen Hezbollah evolve into a military and political machine, capable of influencing and participating in national politics and regional conflicts at the tactical, operational and strategic levels. As the organisation expanded into civic and social welfare and organized criminal activities, a paradox emerged, as well as a problem of definition.

### BACKGROUND

Since its inception, Hezbollah has branched beyond its terrorist roots. As an organisation, Hezbollah relies on pragmatism, strategic thinking and long-term planning as it endeavours to expand its influence and power. Militarily, Hezbollah could be viewed by the wider public and mostly by its supporters through the prism of its capability to survive major confrontations with a

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regional hegemon that has vanquished regional states in past wars, the State of Israel.

Hezbollah has demonstrated a level of sophistication and has created an image that transcends a terrorist profile, by acting as a lifeline for the Lebanese-Shia community. It has maintained a multi-layered strategy in the course of its evolution that blends the military, social and political. It is perceived as the proxy of Iran and Syria (El Husseini, 2010), and persists with its hard-line criticism of the legitimacy of Israel (Hezbollah, 1985). It simultaneously presses on with its national agenda, embedding itself deeper into the political functions of the Lebanese state. This, in turn, gains it popular support, as it becomes the main arbiter of social welfare in south Lebanon (Ahmad Nizar Hamzeh, 2004).

This contemporary image is the product of its evolution, its international relationships and the actions these relationships produce. As a group it emerged from the ranks of a side-lined, marginalised, impoverished and deprived faction of the Lebanese society. It has been a major figure in the Levant in general and in Lebanese society in particular for three decades. Influenced by the Iranian revolution and supported by its apparatus, it was formed in the 1980s in direct response to Israel's invasion of Lebanon (Flanigan & Abdel-Samad, 2009).

#### A MOVEMENT BORN FROM CHAOS

The Shia in Lebanon is the fastest growing community (Norton, 1991), which for years, lived in dire economic circumstances, was under-represented within the political realm and was reportedly ignored by the state. Hezbollah became a protector of the Shia, a means which advanced Shia interests. Revolting against their social status and affected by the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in southern Lebanon, the Shia mobilized and were radicalized. In 1969, a political program presented by the Shia leadership in Lebanon encompassed a call to support the Palestinian resistance and to effectively take part in the liberation of Palestinian land (Alagha, 2006). In the 1970s the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) used southern Lebanon as a launch pad to perpetrate attacks against Israel.

At the time, fighting led to a Shia exodus within the county to East and South Beirut, exacerbating existing economic problems for the Shia there (Haddad, 2006). These poor conditions became the perfect incubator for a growing resistance movement, especially in the aftermath of the 1979 Iranian revolution which provided the Shia with inspiration and leadership (Norton, 1987). According to Bruce Hoffman, these Palestinian fighters and their actions

may be credited with initiating, inspiring, fostering and encouraging the modern era of international terrorism (B. Hoffman, 2007). The Israeli-PLO tug of war influenced Hezbollah in its target selection, whereby the Israeli Defense Forces, their proxies as well as international elements became legitimate targets in the eyes of the group (Jaber, 1997).

Despite its national agenda, Hezbollah became internationally prominent following the 1983 suicide attack it perpetrated against the American Marine barracks in Beirut. A 12,000 pound high explosives ridden truck was employed causing the death of 241 US Marines. FBI investigators described it then as the largest non-nuclear blast ever detonated on the face of the earth (Hammel, 2010). This catapulted to the fore the disparate elements of what came to be known as Hezbollah today (Byman, 2003) and marked the beginning of two following campaigns which allegedly included eleven suicide attacks perpetrated against Israel between 1982 and 1985, and twenty more against Israel and its proxy, the South Lebanon Army, between 1985 and 1986 (Pape, 2005). Hezbollah is considered one of a few Islamic Groups that conducted the most significant and deadly attacks against international entities. It has been influenced by the self-martyrdom tactic of the medieval Assassins and introduced suicide bombing with surprising results to expel foreign troops from Lebanon (Rapoport, 2004).

Hezbollah takes pride in the development and effective use of this most deadly tactical innovation which inspired and was adopted by other groups worldwide (Braun & Genkin, 2011). Regardless of its roots, Hezbollah today has an astounding structure and is headed by a charismatic Secretary General who, over the years, was capable of asserting himself and leading with authority and credibility. As an organisation, it is said to be hierarchical (Berti, 2011). It is governed by a seven member Council which represents its military, social, political, and judicial functional arms (Jackson, 2006). It is also described as robustly centralized, in that control emanating from the governing Council is exercised through the three regional ones based in Beirut, Southern Lebanon and the Bekaa Valley (Qassem, 2005).

In 1989, national Lebanese factions met in Ta'if, Saudi Arabia and purportedly reached an agreement to end the civil war that erupted in Lebanon in 1975. One of the items on the agenda was the dissolution of all militias. Hezbollah rejected the idea distancing itself from the "Militia" label by branding itself as a "Resistance Movement" (Alagha, 2006). Central to triggering an Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon, Hezbollah did not demobilize its military

wing post-war national reconciliation in Lebanon (Krayem, 1997). At the time of this writing, Hezbollah still considers at least one Lebanese village, namely the Shebaa Farms, as still occupied by Israel, hence the necessity to maintain a resistance posture (Salem, 2008).

#### THE MOVEMENT FINDS ITS PURPOSE

On numerous occasions, Hezbollah's leadership indicated that 1982 was the year the group was founded (Shatz, 2004). However, it is only in February 1985 that Hezbollah formally introduced itself and its ideology to the world through its infamous "Manifesto" as part of a nation led by the Iranian Supreme leader Ayatollah Khomeini (Hezbollah, 1985). Hezbollah's "Open Letter" denoted three main objectives; firstly, to expel foreign entities from Lebanese soil in order to end a colonialist era, secondly, to bring the Phalanges, a Christian Militia to justice in order to atone for crimes they committed in country and thirdly, called upon other Lebanese, mainly Christians to willingly adhere to Islam (Alagha, 2011). Hezbollah identified America as an enemy and stated that the Lebanese political system should be opposed as it was beyond reform. Regarding Israel, Hezbollah adamantly stated that its resistance will only end once this entity is annihilated.

#### TERROR APPLIED

Labelled as having a terrorist nature, where does Hezbollah fit in the realm of global terrorism? Terrorism is not a new phenomenon. It originated in Russia in the 1880s and thus far has witnessed four major cycles of activity known as "Waves." Rapoport indicated that modern terrorism started with the "Anarchist Wave", followed in the 1920s by the "Anti-colonial Wave" which lasted until the emergence of the "New left Wave" in the 1960s and then to the "Religious wave" beginning in 1979 and continuing. At the heart of the "Religious Wave" is Islam and in it religious and ethnic identities overlap. Hezbollah was inspired and assisted by the 1979 Iranian Revolution which in itself was a major factor in providing a turning point to launch the fourth wave.

While Hezbollah is anchored and has fully developed under the fourth wave of modern terrorism, one cannot deny that it has been influenced by the PLO which thrived and developed under the third wave. Similarly to the PLO supporters in the 1970s, Hezbollah argues that only terror could remove Israel (Rapoport, 2004).

To this day, and despite numerous United Nations conventions on terrorism, the international community remains divided lacking a common approach and a recognized scale by which to define terrorism. In this context, Hezbollah's designation has been a point of contention at the international level (Berti, 2011). Countries differed in their perception vis-à-vis the organisation and their willingness to label it in its entirety as terrorist has varied thus far.

For the State of Israel, there is absolute clarity that Hezbollah's ultimate goal is its total destruction (Alagha, 2011). Moreover, Hezbollah has proved the single most effective adversary Israel has ever faced (Byman, 2003). To this end, Israeli leaders recurrently call upon the international community and especially the European Union to urgently add Hezbollah to their respective terrorist lists.

Likewise, the United States of America which still carries the psychological impact of Hezbollah's 23 October 1983 terrorist attacks against its US Marine barracks in Beirut adamantly labels Hezbollah as terrorist in nature and denounces it as a sponsor of terrorism (US Department of State, 2006). In 2003, the CIA director stated that as an organisation with a worldwide presence Hezbollah is al-Qaeda's equal if not far more capable.

### TERROR SHEATHED

Tempered in the flames of Lebanon's civil war, Hezbollah emerged with a cadre of battle hardened fighters with a vision to expand capabilities beyond a network of cells relying on terrorism to apply their will. The pragmatism of the Movement's leadership allowed Hezbollah to relegate terror as merely a method and not its essence. This paved the way for the introduction of its most renowned, contemporary component, its military wing.

It is manned by highly trained, dedicated, motivated and well-disciplined fighters. Having honed their skills under the guidance of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard (Pasdaran), they have created a well-developed intelligence capability of their own and a depth of military power necessary and sufficient to withstand and survive long-term confrontations with professional armies (Ranstorp, 2006). It has been ascertained that religiosity is the most influential factor in triggering support for Hezbollah from the Shia community (Haddad, 2006) and religiously-motivated elements have a deeper commitment to their cause than nonreligious elements, they fight longer wars, engage in riskier behaviour and are more intense than their nonreligious counterparts (Horowitz, 2009).

Religion is a unique motivator that enhances group structural integrity, as well as cohesion and discipline (Kenny, 2010). In addition, the religious values of Hezbollah's leadership permeate the organisational structure protecting its ranks from potential schisms and ensuring unity despite having had to adapt to shifting national and regional dynamics. The group's recruitment strategy is shaped in a way to weed out those unwilling elements that are not highly committed to the cause (Blanford, 2011). While Hezbollah's structure is extremely hierarchical (A Nizar Hamzeh, 1993) it still contains some decentralization at the levels of its mobile command-and-control and its field and special units. The militancy focuses on irregular warfare tactics such as insurgency and terrorism (Gleis & Berti, 2012).

While accurate data on Hezbollah numbers is lacking, it could be argued that the Islamic Resistance of the group is the most professional armed faction in the Middle East region. There is a little more information as to its arsenal, which was reported by its leader, Hasan Nasrallah in May 2005 to include over 12,000 rockets. The group possesses sophisticated weapons including C802 anti-ship cruise missiles (F. Hoffman, 2006), 107mm and 122mm Katyusha rockets, mobile Noor, Hadid, and Awash multi-barrel rocket launcher systems which fire heavier rounds with warheads weighing over 100 pounds capable of reaching targets up to 20 miles away, Fajr-3 (range of 25 miles) and Fajr5 (range of 45 miles) rockets and Syrian reproductions of Soviet BM-27 220mm rocket systems (range 30–45 miles) (Devenny, 2006).

As Canada and the Netherlands followed the US lead in declaring Hezbollah as a terrorist organisation, other European countries were less strict in their approach (Phillips, 2007). They regard Hezbollah as a political entity which possesses a military wing. Along those lines, the United Kingdom and Australia view Hezbollah as a political organisation operating within the Lebanese society and only designated the group's military wing as terrorist (Horne & Douse, 2010).

In contrast, the majority of the Arab world hails Hezbollah's actions and view the organisation as a legitimate resistance movement (Ajemian, 2008). Such admiration emanating from the wide Arab society, especially after Hezbollah's perceived success in its confrontation with Israel in 2006 has antagonized the leadership of core al-Qaeda. This was reflected in many statements by the late al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden and his successor Ayman Al Zawahiri. The Sunni born al-Qaeda views the flourishing Shia entity

as a threat and a physical barrier that stands between them and their ultimate goal which is Al Quds-Jerusalem (Zawahiri, 2009).

#### INTERNATIONAL BRANCHES FROM A LEBANESE ROOT

Hezbollah is Lebanese by nationality, but its loyalty and actions, more often than not, transcend nationalism. The group is labelled as Iran and Syria's proxy. Both allegedly provide it with guidance, weapons, logistical support and financial aid (Byman, 2003). The group is viewed by many as the extended arm of Iran and is allegedly used by the latter as leverage against Israel and a tool to be activated to further Iran's interests (Byman, 2003). Having benefited for decades from the dedicated support of Iran and Syria, open media suggests that the group has been called upon by its state-sponsors to return the favour on many occasions.

Once more, the investment is reaping dividends in that reports indicate that Hezbollah elements are actively supporting the Syrian regime in the Syrian civil war (Nasrallah, 2013). The victory of the Syrian regime in Al Quseir, robbed the Syrian opposition of a major foothold in central Syria (Fielding-Smith, A. 2013, May 21). Hezbollah's interference in general antagonized the Syrian opposition (Blanford, N. 2013, Feb 20) and the extremist components within its ranks, namely Al Nusra Front (ANF) which pledged allegiance to al-Qaeda and its leader Al Zawahiri in April 2013 (Al-Manar, 2012, Apr 10). The opposition issued direct warnings to Hezbollah to cease and desist or suffer the consequences in its own abode, Lebanon.

This mutual relationship is the embodiment of a marriage of convenience through which the so-called "Shia Crescent" allegedly expanding from Beirut to the Persian Gulf will remain strong. While some view Iran's attempts in the region as ideological, other argue that Iran's attempt to create a coalition of Shia friendly governments is mostly pragmatic and based on a strategic rationale (Barzegar, 2008).

In addition to the above linkages, Hezbollah has also formed ties with Hamas rendering the group part of the "rejectionist axis" in the Middle East originally formed to oppose imperialism in the region (El Hussein, 2010). It could be argued that with the second Palestinian Intifada in 2000, the group armed and trained Palestinian elements and that at the regional levels, Hezbollah operatives went to Iraq to strengthen historic ties with the Shia there (Byman, 2003).

Hezbollah has a wide global reach with its apparatus operating in Europe, North and South America, East Asia, parts of the Middle East and Africa. These internationally deployed cells actively raise funds to support the organisation (Levitt, 2007). Some of its active operatives were allegedly intercepted in France, Spain, Cyprus, Singapore, the tri-border area of Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay in South America, several countries in the Middle East including Egypt and in 2001, US federal investigators dismantled a fundraising cell in North Carolina. The cells have also been accused of preparing for attacks abroad and for widening Hezbollah's propaganda (Levitt, 2007).

It is said that an international Hezbollah cell has three main components:

- 1) A Daawa and recruitment arm which relies on clerics, mosques, Internet sites and broadcasts by Hezbollah's television, Al Manar;
- 2) A financing arm which purpose is fundraising through all means, legal and illegal through organized crime; and
- 3) An operational arm which collects Intelligence and conducts Hostile Reconnaissance and Surveillance against potential targets (Azani, 2009).

#### A MILITARY ENGINE FUELLING A POLITICAL AND SOCIAL MACHINE

Hezbollah's early history remains ambiguous and it is difficult to know whether the group's political or social operations began first (Harik 2006), nonetheless, the group meticulously and fully developed them both. Hezbollah has built an imposing posture within the Lebanese municipal, parliamentary and governmental sectors. Having become an important actor within the political system, Hezbollah is part of that government and in many social areas, replaced it, or is working on its behalf to support the Shia community (Flanigan & Abdel-Samad, 2009). It has been suggested that Hezbollah gained votes in return for providing social services to the Shia community (Usher 1997). In reality, the good reputation that Hezbollah's political actors have garnered as being far removed from corruption is what solidified the support of the community in their regard (Saad-Ghorayeb, 2002).

Whereas the social welfare system existed in an embryonic form since the 1970s when Shia leaders provided aid to the community, when Hezbollah came to be, it elevated this mechanism, expanded and refined it. It was the catalyst behind the creation of health clinics, youth camps, Islamic education programmes, food distribution, and health and housing aid (Haddad, 2006).



Hezbollah's expanding social welfare and health systems continue to divide opinion worldwide. Some view this expansion as a cover for illicit and violent activities (Philippon, 2008). However, the Shia community in Lebanon, and other beneficiaries, regard it as their only lifeline. While Hezbollah's social work is not unique, it is distinguished from other examples by the wide variety of services it provides through proximity, efficiency and constancy.

An overlap persists between Hezbollah's social and political party endeavours. Its motive in providing social support was aimed at building and consolidating political legitimacy that could be utilized by the group to affect domestic change without resorting to military action. This idea was further emphasized when social services were labelled as a form of patronage (Abdel-Samad 2007), an essential element to the political process. In the social arena, Hezbollah has secured a monopoly over an expanse of national Lebanese territory as a main provider of social services (Flanigan & Abdel-Samad, 2009). As such, it cannot be bypassed or ignored by other humanitarian entities that aim to operate in its area of control. This reality forces local and international non-government organisations to engage and cooperate with Hezbollah's social sector.

Based on their names and their purpose, every non-government organisation created under the Hezbollah's service sector was designed to respond to and compensate for direct consequences related to its military operations, influencing the acceptance and resilience of the constituency. Hezbollah's service sector is composed of three units; The Social Unit, the Islamic Health Unit and the Education Unit. The organisations under the Social Unit have specific support functions which compensate for the resulting effects of Hezbollah's military actions. For instance, the Jihad Construction Foundation was crucial in rebuilding southern Lebanon following the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah war. The Martyrs Foundation supports the families of those who were martyred in combat as for the Foundation for the Wounded, it assists civilians who were wounded during hostilities (Flanigan & Abdel-Samad, 2009).

The consideration is that Hezbollah's real motivation for establishing its social activities is to create a society of resistance (Fawaz M. 2000). However, running a considerable social welfare system with such efficiency requires a steady flow of large sums of monies. Albeit readily available, the source of these funds remains a cause of debate. While the US accuses Iran of providing a large amount of funds and accuses Hezbollah of raising the remainder through illegal

activities conducted abroad, (US Treasury Department, 2004), Hezbollah itself maintains that the money is purely the product of donations by the widespread Shia diasporas (Jaber, 1997). According to a recent study produced by the US Naval War College, it is estimated that Hezbollah raises in that area close to \$10,000,000 per year (Taylor, Cirino, Elizondo, Wawro, & Delamer, 2004). As to reports, they indicate that money is generated in the tri-border area in Latin America, an area that is especially important to Hezbollah (Levitt, 2007).

Services provided have a two-pronged benefit, they appear to instil loyalty among the Shia community, and have provided Hezbollah's social volunteers with a platform through which they view themselves as an integral part of the resistance movement that is Hezbollah (Flanigan & Abdel-Samad, 2009). This entrenched investment in the social arena is aimed at creating a strong resistance community that will support the group's military aims. Hence, the social and political aspects of Hezbollah's operations are interlinked with its paramilitary functions. The Shia constituency has become reliant on Hezbollah for survival to an extent that it may face difficulties if it steps away from it. This choice is further limited when considering the alternative; a weak governmental service system. Social welfare seems to be a stop-gap measure—a mitigation plan that pushes the constituency to accept Hezbollah's military actions and survive resulting consequences (Flanigan & Abdel-Samad, 2009).

#### CONTEMPORARY MEDIA FOR CONTEMPORARY TIMES

Supporting the organisational structure of Hezbollah is a crucial element embodied in the form of its media arms. They are considered the backbone of the group and an integral part of the Resistance movement. The Secretary General of Hezbollah, Hassan Nasrallah personally proclaimed to the world that, if it was not for Al Manar Television, the victory would not have been achieved (Nasrallah, 2000).

There are conflicting views on Hezbollah's Media but common agreement that the group's media outlets have been used as an operational weapon. Some view the creation of this sophisticated media apparatus as a machination by Hezbollah to shape public perception and sway it in its favour. While it is very popular in the region, the US reportedly considers it anti-American as it has employed against it the same propaganda methods it usually reserves for Israel. The group's satellite television Al Manar transmits 24 hours a day and reaches people across the world (Khatib, 2009). It has offices in Beirut

and numerous Arab countries and has correspondents in different corners of the globe (Jorisch, 2004).

Another perspective came to light through the work of Zahra Harb, a Lebanese journalist and academic who provided an intimate understanding of Hezbollah's media arms and their purpose when she shared the findings of numerous interviews conducted by those behind the structure itself. She brought to the fore that Hezbollah's affiliated media outlets include Al Manar television, Al Nour radio station, Al Intiqad the magazine and an official internet website (Dukmak, Personal Communication, 2004). Reportedly, Hezbollah had a media plan since the early 1990s and was only reinforced in 1996 (Mohsen, Personal Communication, 2004). Then, Hezbollah became cognisant that it had to address an audience wider than its own constituency and convince them to support the resistance.

The organisation's media strategy underwent a preparatory phase that lasted from 1982 to 1986. It employed an antiquated propaganda method by distributing flyers, leaflets, affixing banners, signs, wall pictures, and conducting political and religious festivals. By the end of the 1980s, a Military Media Unit was formed and a camera crew member became an integral part accompanying resistance fighters during combat, filming and documenting for propaganda purposes (El Hourri & Saber, 2010). This enabled Hezbollah to gain credibility from the wider public including the Israeli populace.

Many of the journalists operating the media structure spoke Hebrew and some even were detained for years in Israeli prisons. Therefore, they well acquainted with the strength and weakness of the messages Israel disseminated to the international community and they started drawing up plans and strategies on how to counter them. In following that course of action, Hezbollah's media allegedly applied organised and defensive counter-propaganda policies (Harb, 2011).

A Hebrew monitoring unit is heavily relied upon as Al Manar television used to broadcast news flashes in Hebrew (Cua, 2007) after every resistance operation against Israeli soldiers in south Lebanon (Erlich & Kahati, 2007). The propaganda entailed that every commentary the Israeli television or press presented on the failures of the Israeli army and abilities of the resistance be re-broadcast. The group also broadcast what the Israeli television had retrieved from Al Manar in Hebrew, such as clips and films of military resistance

operations. The aim was to target the Lebanese audience and the mothers of the Israeli soldiers, show the enemy admitting to the abilities of the resistance and to raise the morale of the fighters and boost recruitment. The credibility of its message is what essentially characterized Hezbollah's propaganda. By revealing footage demonstrating losses denied by the enemy, Hezbollah's media outlets undermined the credibility of the enemy and heightened theirs (Harb, 2011).

#### CONCLUSION—THE PARADOX OF INFLUENCE

Following the agreement reached in Ta'if, Hezbollah softened its hard stance at the National level (Gleis & Berti, 2012). It toned down its Islamist aims and rhetoric (Alagha, 2011) and became an integral part of the so-called 8 March coalition which combines other faith-based political factions namely Christian, thus creating a strong political front opposing the Sunni led 14 March coalition. Hezbollah has successfully woven its multiple facets including the political, social, and military while using effective media tools to enhance and expand its influence.

Regardless of its roots or its original form, Hezbollah today has a remarkable structure which is designed to effectively support its ideology and goals. Hezbollah has perfected its function as a State within a State which has ultimately served to legitimize its image. Hezbollah is simultaneously viewed as a terrorist organisation and a legitimate State within a State. This perceived duality is a product of the reflexive pragmatism needed by it to adapt to a shifting environment in order to survive while remaining relevant.

As long as Hezbollah maintains the position that the state of Israel must cease to exist, and is perceived to be actively pursuing that agenda, it will continue to carry a terrorist label. In order to survive and remain relevant to its constituency, it therefore needs to maintain a steady flow of funding to keep its welfare programs viable. Only the future will tell how strong Hezbollah will remain with weakened state sponsors and a potential dwindling of fundraising amongst the Shia diasporas in a deteriorating global economy.

Today, through its involvement in Syria, Hezbollah is once again, actively taking pre-emptive actions to ensure survival. It may also yet demonstrate proficiency in self-financing through illicit trade activities in the tri-border area of Latin American in order to keep its operations afloat. Hezbollah's hitherto resilience may also be tested by the regional Shia-Sunni sectarian

struggle that itself is a microcosm of the broader struggle between regional powers.

It could further be tested if it loses many of its operatives while fighting alongside the Syrian regime, this may trigger retaliations by the Free Syrian Army and its affiliates against the group in Lebanon. Overflow from the Syria conflict into Lebanon could change the demographic balance of the country that, in turn, would impact the position of Hezbollah and push it to evolve further to ensure survival. The possibility of future confrontations between Hezbollah and Israel cannot be ruled out and a repeat of its 2006 success is by no means guaranteed. Historical trends demonstrate that Hezbollah's leadership practices strategic planning, and the past is not an accurate and sufficient predictor of the future.

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