



Spotlight on Terrorism: Hezbollah, Lebanon and Syria July 29 – August 5 , 2024

The Northern Arena*

2,071 attacks

- 380 Hezbollah operatives killed
- 81 operatives of other organization killed
- Five non-affiliated operatives killed
- One Lebanese army soldier killed
- One Lebanese internal security operative killed

***Updated from October 8, 2023**

Overview¹

- ▶ During the past week, Hezbollah claimed responsibility for 43 attacks on military and civilian targets in northern Israel, including communities attacked for the first time since the beginning of the war. A civilian was killed; an officer and an IDF soldier were injured.
- ▶ Israeli Air Force aircraft attacked Hezbollah targets and operatives in south Lebanon and the Lebanon Valley. Hezbollah announced the death of eight operatives, including its senior military commander, Fuad Shukr, who was killed in an airstrike on the southern quarter of Beirut.
- ▶ Given the killing of Fuad Shukr, Hezbollah has become concerned Israel infiltrated its ranks and the organization has begun arrests and investigations.
- ▶ Hezbollah continued making preparations to retaliate against Israel for Fuad Shukr's death. "Sources" said that the organization would attack "a sensitive strategic area." Western and Arab countries called on their citizens to leave Lebanon and airlines suspended or reduced their flights to and from Beirut.
- ▶ Hezbollah summed up 300 days of fighting and claimed responsibility for 2,500 attacks on Israel.

¹ Click <https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en> to subscribe and receive the ITIC's daily updates as well as its other publications.

► The prime minister of Lebanon's interim government accused Israel of violating Lebanese sovereignty. The Lebanese foreign ministry filed a complaint against Israel with the UN Security Council, claiming cyber-attacks.

► Syria: Attacks on a Hezbollah-controlled airport near Homs and a truck convoy on the Syria-Lebanon border were attributed to Israel. According to reports, Hezbollah opened a new UAV factory in the Homs region. According to assessments, Syria will directly join the conflict against Israel only if Hezbollah is broadly attacked.

South Lebanon

Hezbollah attacks

► During the last week (July 29 to August 5, 2024), Hezbollah claimed responsibility for **43 attacks** on military and civilian targets in northern Israel (compared to 50 the previous week), using anti-tank missiles, artillery, UAVs and various types of rockets, including heavy rockets. A civilian was killed by a rocket and an IDF officer and soldier were injured by a UAV:

◆ **Attacks on cities, towns and villages which had not been previously attacked:** on August 4, 2024, Hezbollah attacked a moshav in the Galilee Panhandle about three kilometers from the border, using dozens of Katyusha rockets. Hezbollah claimed the attack was retaliation for an IDF attack on civilians in Kafrkila and Deir Siriane in south Lebanon (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, August 4, 2024). In a speech on July 17, 2024, Hassan Nasrallah, Hezbollah secretary general, said that if Israel attacked civilians, Hezbollah would attack "new settlements."

► The attacks this past week (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, July 29 to August 5, 2024):

◆ August 5, 2024 (to 1 p.m.): Three attacks. UAVs were launched into the Galilee. An explosive UAV wounded an IDF officer and soldier and caused a fire. An explosive drone fell near the border; there were no casualties. A UAV penetrated the Western Galilee area and was intercepted; no casualties were reported (IDF spokesperson, August 5, 2024).

◆ August 4, 2024: Six attacks. Thirty rockets were fired at the Upper Galilee, most of which were intercepted. One fell near a community and the others fell in open areas; no casualties were reported. A rocket hit a factory in the industrial zone of Kiryat Shmona and another fell in an open area; no casualties were reported (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, August 4, 2024).

- ◆ August 3, 2024: Eight attacks. A rocket hit a moshav; no casualties were reported. An anti-tank missile hit a school building in Metula, no casualties were reported (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, August 3, 2024).
- ◆ August 2, 2024: Five attacks. A suspicious aerial target which penetrated the northern Golan Heights was intercepted, no casualties were reported but a fire broke. A rocket fell in an open area in the Western Galilee (IDF spokesperson, August 2, 2024).
- ◆ August 1, 2024: Two attacks, including anti-aircraft fire at Israeli Air Force planes. Rockets were fired into the Western Galilee, some of which were intercepted and the rest fell in open areas; no casualties were reported (IDF spokesperson, August 1, 2024).
- ◆ July 31, 2024: Hezbollah did not announce any attacks. A suspicious aerial target approached Israeli territory and was intercepted (IDF spokesperson, July 31, 2024).
- ◆ July 30, 2024: 11 attacks, including anti-aircraft fire at Israeli Air Force planes. A rocket hit a kibbutz, killing a civilian. Fifteen rockets were fired at the Upper Galilee; no casualties were reported. A UAV fell three kilometers from the border, no casualties were reported but fires broke out in the area. An anti-tank missile hit Metula, there were no casualties but there were power outages (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, July 30, 2024).
- ◆ July 29, 2024 (from 1 p.m.): Eight attacks. An Israel Navy warship intercepted a UAV detected in Israel's territorial waters. Approximately 20 rockets fell in an open area near Kiryat Shmona; no casualties were reported (IDF spokesperson and Israeli media, July 29, 2024).

IDF response

- ▶ In response to Hezbollah's attacks, Israeli Air Force fighter jets and UAVs struck Hezbollah targets and operatives in south Lebanon and the Lebanon Valley, including armed terrorist squads, terrorist facilities, buildings used for military purposes, munitions warehouses, observation posts, launch sites and rocket launchers (IDF spokesperson, July 29 to August 4, 2024).
- ▶ Israeli Air Force aircraft carried out targeted strikes on senior Hezbollah operatives:
 - ◆ On July 30, 2024, Fuad Shukr, Hezbollah's most senior military commander and head of the organization's strategic array, was killed in an attack in the southern quarter of Beirut. The IDF reported that he was responsible for the deaths of many Israeli civilians, including the rocket which hit Majdal Shams and murdered 12 children and teenagers on

July 27, 2024. Hezbollah confirmed the death of Shukr, aka Sayyed Muhsen, saying he was a founder of Hezbollah and responsible for leading the military operations against Israel, especially since the beginning of the current fighting on October 8, 2023.²



Hezbollah's mourning notice for the death of Fuad Shukr (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, July 31, 2024)

◆ On August 3, 2024, Ali Nazih Abd Ali, a key operative in Hezbollah's southern front, was killed in an attack on the al-Bazouriyah region in south Lebanon. According to the IDF, he participated in the planning and execution of terrorist attacks (IDF spokesperson, August 3, 2024). Lebanese media reported that an Israeli drone attacked a vehicle between Wadi Jilou and al-Bazouriyah (Lebanese MTV, August 3 2024). Hezbollah confirmed that the attack killed Ali Nazih Abd Ali, aka John, born in 1984, from the town of Aitit in south Lebanon (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, August 3, 2024).



**Right: The remains of the Ali Nazih Abd Ali's vehicle (Jamal Chaiito's X account, August 3, 2024).
Left: Ali Nazih Abd Ali (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, August 3, 2024)**

Other Hezbollah casualties

► Hezbollah reported the death of five other operatives (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, July 30 to 1 p.m., August 5, 2024):

² For further information, see the ITIC report, "[Reactions to the Deaths of Fuad Shukr and Isma'il Haniyeh.](#)"

- ◆ Hassan Hussein Malik, aka Badr, born in 1995, from Beit Lif in south Lebanon.
- ◆ Hassan Imad Karim, aka Yasser, born in 2007, from Deir Siriane in south Lebanon.
- ◆ Muhammad Hassan Farahat, aka Falah, born in 1984, from al-Luiza in south Lebanon.
- ◆ Ali Mustafa Amro, aka Abu al-Akhrar, born in 1985, from al-Mawaysara in Mount Lebanon.
- ◆ Ali Ghaleb Shakir, aka Jihad, born in 1996, from Meiss al-Jabal in south Lebanon.



Hezbollah casualties (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, July 30 to August 5, 2024)

Amal casualty

► The Amal boy scouts movement, the Scouts of the Islamic Message, announced the death of Muhammad Fawzi Hammadi, aka Abu Zeinab, born on October 12, 1982 in Meiss al-Jabal in south Lebanon, a paramedic in the south Lebanese civil defense (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, August 5, 2024). According to reports he was killed in an Israeli airstrike on Meiss al-Jabal along with Hezbollah operative Ali Ghaleb Shakir (Account X Janoub 24; al-Nashra, August 5, 2024).



Muhammad Fawzi Hammadi (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, August 5, 2024)

Hezbollah concerned Israel infiltrated its ranks

► Given the death of Fuad Shukr in an Israeli attack in Beirut, "sources" said Hezbollah's leadership was "certain" that agents working for Israel had infiltrated the organization's ranks. According to reports, Hezbollah is concerned that Israel has full data on the organization's

composition, including names, photos, phone numbers and addresses of operatives and commanders. In addition, after Shukr's death, there was a wave of arrests and investigations were opened into senior Hezbollah security operatives who were familiar with Shukr's movements. The report also stated that the prime suspect was the most senior official in the organization's security system, who knew Shukr's location and was supposed to take him and Milad Bedi, Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps military advisor, who was also killed in the attack, to meet with Hassan Nasrallah. His identity was not released; he was suspended and put under house arrest (al-Janoubia, August 3, 2024).

300 days of war

► Hezbollah published an infographic summarizing its actions against Israel between October 8, 2023 and August 3, 2024, at 4 p.m. According to the infographic, the organization attacked 2,500 military targets to a depth of 35 km on the Israel-Lebanon border [sic], including 182 IDF headquarters, 1,050 buildings in "settlements," four military factories and 12 Iron Dome aerial defense system batteries. Hezbollah's attacked with 485 artillery shells, 914 rockets, 148 UAVs, 742 anti-tank missiles and 69 surface-to-air missiles (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, August 3, 2024). Hezbollah also claimed the attacks left approximately 2,000 Israelis dead and wounded and approximately 230,000 Israeli residents were evacuated from 43 "settlements" at a distance of up to five kilometers from the border (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, August 3, 2024). The number of attacks was about 450 higher than the number for which the organization claimed responsibility in its daily publications, and the number of Israeli casualties was significantly higher than the actual number. In addition, according to Israeli assessments, about 70,000 residents left their homes near the Lebanese border.



Hezbollah's infographic of 300 days of fighting (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, August 3, 2024)

Hezbollah tunnel array

► According to a report, Hezbollah exploited the rocky terrain in Lebanon up to seven kilometers from the border to dig tunnels in the mountains and wadis, which is why Israel demands Hezbollah withdraw north of the Litani River (al-Sharq al-Awsat July 29, 2024). According to another report, Hezbollah has a network of tunnels that extends from south Lebanon to the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia in Beirut and to the Lebanon Valley. There are three types of tunnels: defensive, which allow the organization's operatives to hide from airstrikes; attack, the last of which the IDF announced it had blocked in 2019; and small tunnels for camouflaging rocket launchers. According to the report, the IDF is working to destroy Hezbollah tunnels in the border area (al-Arabiya, July 29, 2024).

Deploying for an Escalation in the Fighting

Hezbollah prepares to retaliate to Fuad Shukr's killing

► "Sources close to Hezbollah" claimed its response would be an attack on a highly sensitive strategic area of Israel, which it had so far not attacked. They also claimed Hezbollah would attack a headquarters or a military center "to restore deterrence" and not to put Beirut in Israel's crosshairs or initiate an all-out war. In addition, according to the "sources," Hezbollah received indirect messages from the United States stating it had not been informed that Israel would attack in the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia in Beirut and kill Fuad Shekar, but Hezbollah did not believe its denials, believing instead that only the American government could force Israel to stop the war (al-Jarida, August 5, 2024).

► Hezbollah published a video showing some of Fuad Shukr's activities. The video ended with pictures of Hezbollah operatives on motorcycles exiting a large tunnel and riding in a wooded area, and heavy rocket launchers and long-range rockets were seen preparing to fire, a signal of the possible retaliation for his death (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, August 4, 2024).



Right: Hezbollah operatives exit a large tunnel. Left: A double-barrel heavy rocket launcher emerging from a tunnel (Hezbollah combat information Telegram channel, August 4, 2024)

- ▶ Iran's delegation to the UN warned that Hezbollah's response to killing Fuad Shukr could include attacking "wider and deeper military and non-military targets" inside Israel. Iran claimed that Hezbollah and Israel had adhered to red lines in their "military attacks" as part of an "unwritten agreement," but the Israeli attack [on Fuad Shukr] crossed the lines (CBS, August 2, 2024).
- ▶ According to "sources" in Beirut and Tehran, representatives of the "resistance axis"³ told the mediating countries that they would do what was necessary for an "effective, efficient response" to Israel, even if it led to an all-out war. Regarding the timing, they stated that it would take place "when we are ready" (Ali Hashem's X account, August 4, 2024).
- ▶ Ali Haidar, a commentator on Israeli affairs for the Hezbollah-affiliated Lebanese daily al-Akhbar, said that the response to the attack on the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia would be "on a different level" from all the attacks carried out so far (al-Jazeera, July 30, 2024).
- ▶ According to reports, after the killing of Fuad Shukr, Hezbollah finished evacuating its civilian and "other" centers, having begun a few days earlier. It was called "a level of alert unprecedented" since the beginning of the current campaign and Hezbollah's response could escalate the campaign to "advanced levels" (Lebanon24, July 31, 2024).

Preparations for war

- ▶ A Hezbollah "official" reported that on July 28, 2024, the organization had begun moving precision missiles for use "when necessary." The "official" added that the organization's position had not changed and it did not want a war with Israel, but if one broke out Hezbollah operatives would "fight without borders" (AP, July 29, 2024).

³ Iran, Syria, Hezbollah, the Palestinian terrorist, the Shi'ite Houthis in Yemen and the pro-Iranian militias in Iraq.

► "Close associates" of senior Hezbollah figures said the organization was preparing for a long war which would last at least two years, during which about a thousand rockets and missiles of various types would be launched at Israel every day (the Kuwait daily al-Anbaa, August 4, 2024).

Evacuating foreign nationals from Lebanon

► Several countries called on their citizens to leave Lebanon immediately or not to go to the country, including the United States, Britain, France, Sweden, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Japan, Turkey and Brazil (Shafaq News, August 5, 2024).

► Several international airlines suspended or reduced their flights to Rafiq al-Hariri International Airport in Beirut, including Lufthansa, Air France and the airlines of Qatar and Kuwait. The warnings led to crowding at the airports as people tried to leave the country (Sky News in Arabic, August 4, 2024)

► According to reports, a number of international organizations in Lebanon called on their teams living in the Hezbollah stronghold [the Dahiyeh al-Janoubia] in southern Beirut or nearby to temporarily leave their homes and find safer neighborhoods. It was the first time that teams in Beirut had received such an order since the current conflict began on October 8, 2023 (Nafiseh Kohnavard's X account, August 5, 2024).

Hezbollah's Internal Lebanese Relations

► Hassan Nasrallah, Hezbollah secretary general, sent a letter of thanks to Walid Jumblatt, the leader of the Druze community in Lebanon, in appreciation for his position during the ten months of the war, and especially for his support for Hezbollah after it had been accused of firing the rocket at Majdal Shams. According to reports, Nasrallah thanked Jumblatt for his "Arab nationalism, Lebanese patriotism and responsibility" (al-Akhbar, July 30, 2024).

► According to reports, Amer al-Musawi, in charge of Arab and international relations in Hezbollah, visited the Lebanese foreign ministry and met with Abdullah Bou Habib, the Lebanese foreign minister. Al-Musawi thanked him for his recent position regarding the attack on Majdal Shams, and they agreed to increase their coordination (al-Sharq al-Awsat, July 30, 2024).

Criticism of Hezbollah

- ▶ Muhammad Ali al-Husseini,⁴ a Saudi Islamic researcher and lecturer of Lebanese origin, who lives outside Lebanon and is secretary general of the Arab Islamic Council, criticized the Hassan Nasrallah, Hezbollah secretary general. Al-Husseini said Nasrallah was acting entirely as an Iranian proxy serving Iranian interests at the expense of Lebanon's interests (Mansour Abdullah Muhammad's X account, July 30, 2024).
- ▶ Khairallah Khairallah, a reporter for the Lebanese daily ASAS Media, warned Lebanon would pay a high price for tying its fate to the Gaza Strip. He wrote Hezbollah's decision to open the southern front without understanding its consequences threatened Lebanon with annihilation (ASAS Media, August 2, 2024).
- ▶ Maronite Patriarch Bechara Boutros al-Ra'i related to the political vacuum in Lebanon surrounding the election of a new president, stating that only the president could negotiate on behalf of Lebanon, and that Nabih Berri, the speaker of the Lebanese Parliament, and Najib Mikati, prime minister of the Lebanese interim government, were not authorized to do so because of their involvement in the efforts to establish order on the border with Israel. He added that the Lebanese were the only ones working to keep the "evil of war" away from the country through "logic and calm" and therefore he called for "changing their language, because our culture was one of life, not of war and death." He claimed the Maronites were being pushed to the sidelines, but emphasized that the Christians were an important group which could not be ignored, and the Christian presence in Lebanon was in danger (al-Nashra, August 3, 2024).
- ▶ "Sources" close to the Free National Movement claimed that the Hezbollah leadership had asked the movement's leaders to stop their campaigns against Hezbollah and to be content with expressing the general national position and emphasizing the need to unite the Lebanese in the face of the Israeli attacks. The "sources" stated that the movement would act with the media to reaffirm its standing with Hezbollah (al-Diyar, August 3, 2024).

⁴ Muhammad Ali al-Husseini is a Saudi Arabian Islamic researcher and lecturer of Lebanese origin (he received Saudi citizenship on November 15, 2021), and secretary general of the Arab Islamic Council in Lebanon, who has written more than 70 books. He has unifying intellectual and non-factional political positions, which rule out civil war. He is not considered influential in Lebanon.

The Lebanese Government

► Najib Mikati, prime minister of the Lebanese interim government, met with British Foreign Minister David Lammy, and British Defense Minister John Healy, who came to visit Lebanon. Mikati accused Israel of violating Lebanon's sovereignty, attacking its land in violation of international laws and "blatantly attacking civilians every day" (Mikat's X account, August 1, 2024).



**Mikati meets with the British foreign and defense ministers
(Mikati's X account of the Prime Minister of Lebanon, August 1, 2024)**

► Before the visit, Lammy said he had spoken with Mikati to express his concern regarding the escalation, and welcomed the Lebanese government's statement calling for an end to the violence. He added they both agreed that neither had an interest in expanding the conflict in the region (David Lammy's X account, July 29, 2024).

► Nabih Berri, the speaker of the Lebanese Parliament, met with the British foreign and defense ministers. He told them Lebanon did not want war but was prepared to defend itself. He added that for months efforts had been made to establish conditions which would make it possible to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1701. He claimed that "the recent Israeli arrogance, expressed in the rejection of all proposals...and the assassinations which Israel carries out, are dragging the region into dangers with undesirable consequences" (al-Nashra, August 1, 2024).

► Najib Mikati, prime minister of the Lebanese interim government, met with the ambassadors to Lebanon the five permanent members of the UN Security Council [the United States, France, Great Britain, China and Russia], as well as with representatives of other countries. He noted Beirut's principles for the regional situation, especially the priority of implementing UN resolutions and Resolution 1701 in particular (al-Akhbar, August 2, 2024).



Mikati meets with the ambassadors (al-Akhbar, August 2, 2024)

- ▶ In talks and meetings before the killing of Fuad Shukr, Mikati said that his country condemned all violence, especially harm to civilians, demanded "an end to Israeli aggression" and called for the full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1701. He stated that "Israel's threats will not deter the Lebanese people from defending their land with all the means anchored in international law" (Lebanese prime minister's X account, July 30, 2024).
- ▶ Nabih Berri related to the situation in south Lebanon and in the Gaza Strip, saying they threatened to harm the entire region, but there was no fear for Lebanon's future. He said his country was committed to implementing Resolution 1701 and claimed it was Israel whose violations endangered regional stability, adding that the only way to keep the conflict from expanding was to pressure the Israeli government "to stop the aggression in Gaza and Lebanon" (NBN, July 30, 2024).
- ▶ Abdallah Bou Habib, Lebanese foreign minister, spoke with Badr Abdelatty, the Egyptian foreign minister, who expressed his country's concern about the "dangerous rate of escalation in the region." He said Egypt supported Lebanon in dealing with the threats it faced, adding that Cairo was intensifying contacts with all parties concerned to contain the ongoing escalation and protect the interests of the Lebanese people (Reuters, August 1, 2024).
- ▶ On July 30, 2024, the Lebanese foreign ministry sent a letter to the president of the Security Council and the UN secretary general, claiming that the circumstances of the attack which "caused the deaths" of 12 children and teenagers in Majdal Shams were "still unclear." A similar letter was sent to Josep Borrel, the EU foreign minister, regarding Lebanon's concern over Israel's threats to respond to the attack on Majdal Shams. Both letters claimed that Israel's real intentions were to extend and escalate its operations and take advantage of the "incident" to launch further attacks on Lebanon. Lebanon called on the international community to "condemn the ongoing occupation and aggression" and said that "any mistake could push the

entire region into a large-scale, destructive war whose consequences would affect everyone" (Lebanese foreign ministry X account, July 31, 2024).

► The Lebanese foreign ministry submitted a complaint to the Security Council and the UN secretary general, calling for the condemnation of Israeli cyber attacks on Lebanon. The ministry stated that the attacks posed a serious danger to civil aviation, telecommunications companies and electronic services in essential Lebanese institutions. In addition, the ministry asked its permanent representative in Geneva to submit a complaint to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) to demand that the EU take steps to stop the cyber-attacks and help the Lebanese communication networks deal with them. The ministry explained that according to a report published by the Lebanese ministry of communications, Israel's communications disruptions led to a decrease in the level of accuracy of the GPS system in Lebanon and thus affected its transportation and communications services (Lebanese foreign ministry X account, August 1, 2024).

The Lebanese army and Internal Security

► Joseph Aoun, Lebanese army commander, issued a statement for the 79th Army Day, in which he stated that efforts to achieve calm and stop the attacks in south Lebanon would continue until a permanent ceasefire was reached. He added that the military units deployed in the area continued to coordinate with UNIFIL as part of Resolution 1701 and expressed hope for the return of peace and stability to the south of the country (Lebanese army X account, July 30, 2024).

► According to reports, some of the Lebanese internal security centers near the Lebanon-Israel border were evacuated, and the forces were moved to safer locations. It was also reported that some of the internal security forces were in positions relatively far from the attacked areas and that the internal security forces were in daily contact with them to meet their needs (Lebanon 24, August 3, 2024).

UNIFIL

► UNIFIL spokesman Andrea Tenenti said he was concerned about the expansion of the Israel-Hezbollah conflict, but believed there was still room for a diplomatic solution. He added that UNIFIL activity on the ground continued, as did communication with the parties and the Lebanese army (al-Araby al-Jadeed, July 30, 2024).

► UNIFIL commander Aroldo Lazzaro hosted Jean-Pierre Lacroix, head of the UN peacekeeping department, at the UNIFIL headquarters in al-Naqoura. Lazzaro informed him about the situation along the Israel-Lebanon border, noting UNIFIL's efforts to prevent further escalation, as well as continuing the force's activities on the ground despite the challenges (Aroldo Lazzaro's X account, August 1, 2024).



Jean-Pierre Lacroix during his visit to the UNIFIL headquarters in al-Naqoura (Aroldo Lazzaro's X account, August 1, 2024)

► According to reports, a UNIFIL investigation revealed that Hezbollah had, in fact, launched the rocket that hit Majdal Shams on July 27, 2024, killing 12 children and teenagers (Sky News, August 2, 2024). UNIFIL spokesman Andrea Tenenti claimed UNIFIL was not in a position to assign responsibility for the "incident" to anyone, since Majdal Shams was outside the force's area of operation (al-Nashra, August 2, 2024).

Syria

Attack attributed to Israel

► According to reports, Israeli warplanes attacked the al-Daba'a military airport, headquarters of the pro-Iranian militias, which lies about 14 km southwest of Homs and about 11 km east of the Syria-Lebanon border (Ein al-Sha'm, August 2, 2024). According to claims, the airport, which is under Hezbollah control and is used to transfer weapons, was no longer operative. The airport was near a military city established by Hezbollah in al-Quseir (Safaa Subhi's X account, August 2, 2024). However, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR), which monitors the events in Syria, stated that the reports of an attack at the airport were untrue (SOHR, August 3, 2024).



Right: al-Daba'a Military Airport (Google Earth).

Left: Attack on the airport (Laith Albitar's X account, 3 August 2024)

► A "source" close to Hezbollah claimed that on August 2, 2024, Israel attacked a convoy of fuel tankers en route from Syria to Lebanon in the Hawsh al-Sayyid Ali region. According to the report, a Syrian truck driver was injured (Agence France-Presse, August 3, 2024). According to the SOHR, Israeli aircraft attacked a convoy of trucks in the area of the Matraba border crossing, which is controlled by the Syrian army and used by Hezbollah for the passage of trucks and fighters between the countries. In addition, a farm belonging to Hezbollah in the al-Quseir area was attacked and several trucks caught fire, but there were no casualties (SOHR, August 3, 2024).

► According to reports, an Israeli drone attacked a vehicle on the Damascus-Beirut road in the al-Zabadani region, and one person was killed (SOHR, August 3, 2024).

New Hezbollah UAV factory

► "Sources" claimed that during July 2024 Hezbollah inaugurated a new factory for the production and development of UAVs in the western countryside of Homs, near the city of al-Quseir, about eight kilometers northeast of the Lebanon-Syria border. According to the report, the factory, called Fajr Gaza ("Gaza Dawn"), is located on an area of about 3,000 square meters and is equipped with advanced protection and jamming systems, in addition to an underground warehouse for storing sensitive components. Near the factory is a 600-meter runway for UAV takeoffs and landings. According to reports, Hajj Abu Sadiq, a senior Hezbollah operative, oversaw the opening of the factory, which employs 27 workers, most of whom are Lebanese, with a minority of "carefully selected" Syrian Shi'ites, and five Hezbollah al-Radwan Lebanese experts, who were trained by Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps officers, are responsible for its activity. It was also reported that on July 28-29, 2024, the production of the first ten Zahraa 5 UAVs, with a range of 40 kilometers, was completed, and they were tested in

the presence of Hajj Abu Sadiq, Jamal Daboul, the military commander of the rural areas of Homs, and a number of military commanders, before their transfer to south Lebanon (Political Keys, July 29, 2024).



Hezbollah's UAV factory (Political Keys, July 29, 2024)

Syrian involvement in the campaign against Israel

► "Sources close to the axis of resistance" stated that so far there had been an understanding of the Syrian regime's avoidance of joining the "support fronts" in the Gaza Strip, but Syria was expected to be part of the conflict if Hezbollah was "exposed to extensive Israeli aggression." According to the "sources," the issue of Syrian intervention was discussed in the last meeting between the president of Syria, Bashar al-Assad, and the president of Russia, Vladimir Putin, in Moscow last month. The report claimed that the Syrian regime currently regarded the conflict as a war of attrition and wanted to choose the date it would join by itself. In addition, the "sources" assessed that the Syrian regime also wanted to restore its relations with the international community (al-Sharq al-Awsat, August 3, 2024).