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Hezbollah, the Party of Terror Why it should be included in the EU terrorist list

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Hezbollah – Arabic for ‘party of God’ – is a Lebanese Shi’a Islamic movement established in 1982, around the time of the Israeli invasion of southern Lebanon.

Since its establishment, Hezbollah, a militia-cum-social and political movement, quickly rose to fame and infamy. Richard Armitage, the former U.S. deputy secretary of state, dubbed the group “the A-team of terrorism” in the Middle East.¹ Though the group is Lebanese, it is a wholly owned Iranian franchise.

In Europe, Hezbollah is not designated as a terrorist entity on account of two facts – it is a political party represented in Lebanon’s freely elected parliament; and it runs a network of welfare programs for Lebanon’s Shi’a civilian population that cannot be defined as being part of military or even terror activities. This brief seeks to address the reasons why this distinction is not a valid one.

Hezbollah – Lebanon’s Iranian Franchise

Hezbollah is led by a senior Shi’a cleric who abides by the principle of *Velayat-e Faqih* – the rule of the jurisprudent. Thus, its leader, Hassan Nasrallah, is not the most senior Shi’a authority in Lebanon – Lebanon’s most senior Shi’a cleric, Grand Ayatollah Hussein Fadlallah, who died in July 2010, refused to embrace this principle. The rule of the jurisprudent is the foundational principle of revolutionary Iran – the notion that an Islamic society

will be governed by a learned Islamic jurist who will ensure that its rules conform to Islamic justice. Hezbollah's leaders have thus always paid allegiance to Iran's Supreme Leader, and not to a higher Shi'a cleric in Lebanon, as the ultimate guide for their movement.

In its short and violent history, Hezbollah has carried out some of the deadliest and most spectacular terror attacks of record. It has also exported its mastery of suicide operations by training other Islamic movements around the world – most notably Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad in 1992, al-Qaeda in 1995, and al-Qaeda in Iraq after the U.S. led invasion of Iraq in 2003. It has frequently cooperated with Iran – or acted on Iran's behalf – to carry out terror operations across the world. It has used terrorism against Israeli forces in southern Lebanon; against U.S. and French peacekeeping troops in Beirut; against American targets in the region; against Israeli diplomats and Jewish institutions globally – including most recently on European soil; against Saudi diplomats; and against Lebanese political opponents, including the late Lebanese Prime minister, Rafiq Hariri.

Since its chief security figure and terror mastermind, Imad Mughniya, was killed in a car bomb in downtown Damascus, in February 2008, Hezbollah has vowed to avenge his death – signaling that it will continue to use terrorism as an option for the pursuit of its goals.

As other Islamic movements, Hezbollah has sought to advance its social and political agenda by providing a strong network of welfare organizations to the community it caters for. This network serves the goals of expanding its influence and indoctrinating its community of reference through services and benefits. Hezbollah also depends on charity organizations abroad, whose goals are to funnel support to the organization back at home and finance its activities – which include schools, orphanages, medical centers, media outlets and other services. Finally, Hezbollah profits from drug smuggling networks out of Lebanon and, reportedly, in Latin America. This revenue serves to fund its political activities and military operations.

Since the end of the Civil War in 1989, Hezbollah has sought political representation both locally and nationally, much like other Lebanese sectarian organizations, as a way to advance the interests it represents and protect its gains. At the same time, as Iran's front line military organization involved in the struggle against Israel, Hezbollah maintains an extensive military force which is arguably better trained, better armed and more numerous than Lebanon's national army.

In many ways then, Hezbollah is very similar to other Lebanese sectarian organizations – all ethnic and religious communities in Lebanon eventually developed their own militias and made recourse to terrorism during Lebanon’s civil war. What stands out for Hezbollah is its organic link to Iran– ideologically, financially and militarily, Hezbollah is an integral part of Iran’s ideological shock troops, the Revolutionary Guards. As such, it continues to operate on behalf of Iran’s interests and overarching goals of pursuing the Islamic revolution beyond Iran’s borders. Hezbollah’s extensive network of charitable and welfare activities, alongside its quest for political influence through parliamentary representation and coalition building must therefore be understood as part to this effort – they are not separate from military and terror activities but integral to it.

Hezbollah’s Origins

Hezbollah’s origins and the exact date of its creation are a matter of some controversy. Critics of Israel usually emphasized that Hezbollah emerged as a resistance force to Israel’s invasion. While Israel’s invasion of Lebanon no doubt acted as a catalyst for Hezbollah’s creation, the Shi’ite community in Lebanon was already armed and mobilized at the time.

Nor did Hezbollah get established in one day – its formation occurred over time, as a number of already existing violent militias eventually merged into a coherent military and political formation under the military training, political-religious doctrine and spiritual guidance of the newly formed Islamic Republic of Iran. To understand Hezbollah’s origins one must therefore look at the convergence of two unique sets of circumstances – the ideological ambitions of Iran in Lebanon and their impact of the circumstances of the Lebanese Shi’a community at the time.

As the founder of revolutionary Iran, the late Ayatollah Ruollah Khomeini remarked, in early 1980:

We must strive to export our revolution throughout the world, and must abandon all idea of not doing so, for not only does Islam refuse to recognize any difference between Muslim countries, it is the champion of all oppressed people... Know well that the world today belongs to the oppressed, and sooner or later they will triumph. They will inherit the earth and build the government of God.²

Lebanon was a natural place to start, due to the longstanding ties between its Shi'a community and Iran.

Even as Iran was bogged down in a bloody war against Iraq, Iran's most ideologically committed forces, the Revolutionary Guards (IRGC) were tasked with establishing a foothold for Iran in Lebanon by organizing the Shi'a community and creating an Islamist counterpoint to the country's other armed factions. As early as 1979, Iranian emissaries started making their way back to Lebanon—a place Iranian revolutionaries had come to know in their days in exile during the 1970s.

Back in the days when the Shah ruled Iran, its Islamic opposition had sought military training in Lebanon. The PLO under Yasser Arafat's leadership had welcomed them in its training camps which, in the 1970's hosted militants from terror groups all over the globe. During the time in Lebanon, Iranian fighters developed local connections which, once they gained power in Iran, would become useful to export their revolutionary ideals back to Lebanon.

Under the guidance of a newly created office tasked to export the Revolution—the Bureau of Assistance to the Islamic Liberation Movements in the World—Iran sought to co-opt the Lebanese Shi'a party, Amal, to its cause.

Amal was a Lebanese, Shi'a militia, which emerged as an armed force to defend Lebanon's Shi'a community as the country disintegrated into civil war in the 1970's. Its social and political precursors were aligned to and inspired by the religious leader of Lebanon's Shi'a community, the late Ayatollah Musa al-Sadr. Al-Sadr came from a prominent Iranian family of clerics (he is the cousin of Iraqi Shi'a firebrand, Moqtada al-Sadr) and, after his studies in Najaf, Tehran and Qom, he was dispatched to lead the Shi'a's in the Lebanese city of Tyre. Quickly recognized as the leading Shi'a cleric in Lebanon, he galvanized his community and became their tireless advocate, also promoting recognition of the Syrian Alawites as integral members of the Twelver Shia community. As the country slid into civil war, Al-Sadr became the reference point for Amal, the militia that emerged out of the 'Movement of the Deprived', which Al-Sadr had helped establish in 1974 to advance Shi'a socio-economic grievances in Lebanon. However, Musa al-Sadr disappeared during an official visit to Libya in 1978. Deprived of its charismatic religious leader, Amal became increasingly secular under the leadership of Al-Sadr's successors. This move alienated the more conservative elements of the Shi'a community, thereby facilitating the rise of a more Islamic movement.

Under the increasingly secular leadership of Nabih Berri, Amal refused to embrace the doctrine of the guardianship of the jurist. Seeing its initial efforts frustrated, in early 1982 Iran decided to create its own organization, and tasked the Iranian ambassador to Damascus, Ali Akbar Mohtashemi-Pour, with coordinating the effort. Eventually, Mohtashemi-Pour managed to gather all the Shi'a factions outside Amal and bring them together under a new umbrella. By the summer of 1982, as Israel entered into a war with Lebanon, an embryonic Hezbollah was born, and 1,500 IRGC instructors began training its fighters in Baalbek.³

It is thus erroneous to assume that Hezbollah emerged as a response to Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon alone. Hezbollah was born from the confluence of many factors, where internal dynamics to the Shi'a world, the imperial ambitions of revolutionary Iran and the descent into chaos of Lebanon played a more significant role than Israel's military campaign to uproot the PLO in southern Lebanon – against which, Shi'a forces bitterly fought intermittently during the civil war.

Hezbollah's record as a terror organization

Critics of efforts to designate Hezbollah as a terror organization point to Hezbollah's activities in the realm of the political – it has elected representatives in Lebanon's parliament – and its social endeavors – Hezbollah runs schools, orphanages, hospitals, day-care centers, and other social services which would suffer as a consequence. Yet, there is nothing unusual about doing the latter while being the former. Social work gains political influence which in turn enables Hezbollah to pursue its worldview of building an Islamic society. Violence is central to this goal – it is integral to the ideology of resistance against Western forces and a reflection of the Shi'a doctrine of martyrdom as reinterpreted by Iran's revolutionary thinkers.

Indeed, Hezbollah introduced the tactics of suicide terrorism based on the ideological inspiration of Revolutionary Iran. Having developed expertise in carrying out complex and coordinated suicide missions, Hezbollah exported the trade to other Islamic fundamentalist groups across the region.

The most innovative of these was human bombs, men trained to use explosives—first in a truck or a car, then later, strapped onto themselves—to carry out suicide terror attacks. The notion of human sacrifice as an act of defiance is central to the narrative of Shi'a Islam, through the figure of Hussein ibn

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Ali, grandson of the Prophet. Hussein's epic death on the plains of Karbala in 680 CE at the hands of an army sent by the Umayyad Caliph Yazid was not only the trigger for the schism between Sunni and Shi'a Islam. It is also the most defining event of Shi'a tradition and it is central to the ideology of martyrdom that in many ways defines the Islamic Republic.

Hussein's martyrdom symbolizes defiance in the face of injustice, a readiness to sacrifice and the surrender of one's own survival instincts to a greater cause. Every generation of Shi'a Muslims has internalized the story of Hussein through poetry, theater, and rituals. Ali Shariati, whose work was in many ways a precursor of the Islamic Republic's ideology, offered a theoretical framework for martyrdom in his writings, which politicized the notion of martyrdom as an instrument to fight oppression. Mixing French philosopher's Frantz Fanon's "cult of purgative and curative violence... with Shiism's cult of worshiping Imam Hussein as the quintessential martyr"⁴ Shariati rationalized martyrdom as a rational act aimed at advancing a specific goal.⁵

Similarly, Iran's clerical revolutionaries cleverly exploited and manipulated this culture of martyrdom, first against the Shah and then against Saddam Hussein once he invaded Iran in 1980.

Those who manned the human waves launched to clear minefields and to overpower Iraqi trenches were mostly young, untrained, and unarmed Iranian recruits to the Basij—the popular militia responsible for indoctrination, paramilitary training, and crowd control. These 20th-century Shi'a martyrs of the Iran-Iraq War became the symbols of the Revolution and an ideological rallying point. The fanatical zeal with which Iran sent its young into battle—not only with little chance of survival, but with the explicit purpose of seeking death as a tactic to overcome the enemy—revealed to the regime that indoctrination could greatly enhance a man's ability to defy natural survival instincts. As thousands upon thousands went willingly to their deaths, it occurred to Iran's leaders that such instruments could serve their purposes well beyond the killing fields of southern Iraq. Through Hezbollah, they introduced Shahadat, martyrdom, to Lebanon's killing fields.

The first recorded Hezbollah attack of this kind targeted the Israel Defense Forces headquarters in Tyre, Lebanon, on November 11, 1982, killing 75 Israeli soldiers and almost 30 Lebanese prisoners inside the compound at the time. The Tyre attack was Hezbollah's maiden voyage, but it had a precedent—the bombing of the Iraqi embassy in downtown Beirut in December

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1981, which killed 27 people and injured 100. The culprit was al-Dawa, another Iranian-backed Shi'a organization.⁶

In 1983, Hezbollah suicide bombers struck the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, killing 60; the barracks of the U.S. Marine peacekeepers in Beirut, killing 241; and the barracks of the French peace-keeping paratroopers, killing 63.

In April 1984, Hezbollah was behind the bombing of a restaurant in Spain, near a U.S. air force, which caused the death of 18 U.S. servicemen and the injury of 83.

In September 1984, Hezbollah hit the U.S. Embassy in Beirut for a second time, killing 11.

In 1985, Iran-backed Hezbollah militants were responsible for kidnapping, torturing and murdering William Buckley, the CIA's chief of station in Beirut.

Hezbollah was also responsible for hijacking TWA flight 847 and murdering an American passenger on board, U.S. Navy diver Robert Dean Stethem. In the midst of the hijacking, the attackers killed him and threw his body onto the tarmac of the Beirut airport.

U.S. Marine Corps Lieutenant Colonel William R. Higgins met a similar fate three years later; in February 1988, Hezbollah kidnapped and murdered him while he served with the United Nations Truce Supervisory Organization (UNTSO) in southern Lebanon.

Three Saudi diplomats were also murdered in March 1988 in Nigeria. Hezbollah was a prime suspect for their murder as well as the murder of one of their colleagues in Bangkok in January 1989 and three more Saudi diplomats, also in Bangkok, in February 1990.

In April 1988, a car bomb exploded outside a USO club in Naples, killing five, including one U.S. sailor, Angela Santos. A group called the Organization of Jihad Brigades, which the U.S. State Department considers an affiliate of Hezbollah, claimed responsibility for the attack. Responsibility was later attributed to the Japanese Red Army (JRA), which had a history of cooperating with Middle East terror groups and carrying out missions on their behalf, against a background of shared ideological grievances against the West.⁷ That one of its members carried out the attack does not rule out the possibility of an Iranian-Hezbollah connection.

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Hezbollah murdered Ehud Sadan, the security chief of Israel's embassy in Ankara, in March of 1992. Ten days later, it helped Iran carry out an attack against Israel's embassy in Buenos Aires, which claimed 29 lives.

In January 1993, its hit men tried, and failed, to murder the head of the Istanbul Jewish community, Jak Kamhi.

A car bomb attack failed to target Israel's embassy in Thailand, in March 1994 but succeeded, in July, to destroy the AMIA Jewish cultural center in Argentina, thereby killing 85 people.

Hezbollah was very likely behind a wave of attacks against American targets in Saudi Arabia. The first attack struck a U.S. military complex in Riyadh on November 13, 1995, killing five U.S. servicemen, and the second destroyed the Khobar Towers U.S. Air Force barracks in Dhahran on June 25, 1996, killing 19. Though some assume the Islamic Movement for Change (which claimed responsibility) to be an affiliate of al-Qaeda, other sources have linked it to Iran. In his 2008 book, *The Devil We Know*, former CIA case officer Robert Baer argues that Hezbollah's current leader, Hassan Nasrallah, complied with Iran's request to train the operatives who eventually carried out the attack.⁸

Hezbollah was an accomplice in the murder of Rafiq Hariri, the late Lebanese prime minister, in April 2005. Four of its operatives were indicted by the special tribunal charged by the UN to investigate the murder.

It was also likely to be behind the assassination of Lebanese journalist Gibran Tuani, in December 2005, of Lebanese Christian MP Pierre Amine Gemayel, in November 2006, of Lebanese MP Walid Eido, in June 2007 and his colleague Antoine Ghanem, in September 2007.

Hezbollah was also likely behind the assassination, in 2008, of Wissam Eid, a Lebanese police investigator in charge of the Hariri murder case.

In the 1980's, Hezbollah engaged in high profile diplomatic kidnappings – some of which, like the case of CIA station chief in Lebanon, William Buckley, ended in murder. But in other cases, Hezbollah kidnapped diplomats for ransom and diplomatic leverage (or both).

Throughout the 1990's and until Israel's 34-day operation in Lebanon in July-August 2006, Hezbollah launched hundreds of random missile and rocket attacks aimed at Israel's civilian population centers.

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Since 2003, Hezbollah has dispatched operatives to Iraq in order to help its IRGC brethren from Iran train Shi'a militias in Iraq. This involvement has contributed not just to the continuation of Iraq's civil war since the U.S. led invasion of Iraq toppled Saddam Hussein, but also to the death of coalition forces.

As of March 2011, Hezbollah has actively taken part in the repression of Syria's civil unrest alongside the Syrian regime. No conclusive evidence has emerged as of yet of direct responsibility in war crimes for Hezbollah operatives. However, given the gruesome and ongoing nature of repression in Syria, Hezbollah is, in all likelihood, an accomplice to crimes against humanity, and acts of wonton and random ferocity against civilians in Syria.

Finally, since its chief of security operations, Imad Mughniya, died in a car bomb in Damascus in 2008, Hezbollah has been actively seeking revenge. It has thus launched a number of terror attacks and will likely continue until it feels it has exacted the right price of its enemies. These include the attempted assassination of Israel's Consul General in Istanbul (May 26, 2011); a failed IED attack on a tourist site in Bangkok usually frequented by Israeli tourists (January 2012); a foiled plot to attack Israel's embassy in Azerbaijan, alongside two Jewish missionaries in Baku (January 24, 2012); coordinated attacks against Israeli diplomats in India and Georgia (13 February 2012) and Bangkok (February 14) on the anniversary of Mughniya's death and reportedly struck at an Israeli tourists' bus in Bulgaria, in July 2012, killing five Israeli and the Bulgarian bus driver.

In short, Hezbollah's terror activities have not been limited to Israeli forces on Lebanese soil. Hezbollah has not just fought enemy combatants with unconventional means. It has engaged in the willful murder at random of civilians, on account of their faith, nationality, or political affiliation. It has not interrupted these activities from its inception until the present. It has not denounced or renounced terrorism and refrained from engaging in acts of terror, unlike other terror organizations who abandoned political violence in favor of political participation.

Regardless of the social and charitable side of Hezbollah's activities, its record shows that it deserves to be treated as a terror group.

Hezbollah – terror exporter

As if its terror record was not enough, Hezbollah has exported its terror franchise to other groups, thereby enabling them to dramatically improve their rate of deadly success.

When Osama bin Laden's group was based in Sudan, in the early 1990's, it benefited from the help and training of Imad Mughniyah, Hezbollah's Lebanese terror mastermind. Not only was Mughniyah the man behind the 1983 slaughter of U.S. soldiers and officials in Beirut, he also carried out the task of exporting Iran's newly developed martyrdom techniques to the Sunni world. With the full blessing of Iran's Supreme Leader, he was dispatched to Sudan to train al-Qaeda, in all likelihood, offered his advice to Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad when their leaderships were briefly stranded in South Lebanon in late 1992 as a result of a decision by Israel's late prime minister, Yitzhak Rabin, to deport 415 of their senior figures in response to a wave of terror attacks against Israeli civilians.¹⁰

The successive waves of terror attacks that hit Israel in early 1996 and which cost Shimon Peres his election bid against Benjamin Netanyahu in May of the same year, occurred thanks to Hezbollah training. The interaction between Hezbollah and the Salafists in Sudan enabled Osama bin Laden's holy warriors to dramatically upgrade their deadly skills and wreak havoc. Had it not been for Hezbollah's training, al-Qaeda might never have learned to carry out operations such as the September 11, 2001 in New York or the March 11, 2004 attacks in Madrid.

During its entire existence, Hezbollah has used terrorism as a weapon against its enemies and as an asset to create alliances. It has also put its terror skills to the service of Iranian interests and to defend its patrons. It continues to do so to this day.

Is the political and social welfare Hezbollah distinct from Hezbollah's military wing?

Given Hezbollah's extensive record in the fields of political activism and social welfare; given that many Hezbollah leaders and activists are engaged in innocuous activities such as construction, social work, medical assistance, teaching, or broadcasting, can one draw a clear distinction

between Hezbollah's military and terrorist activities on the one hand, and its social, economic and political endeavors on the other?

First, Hezbollah has a unified political leadership and command. Hassan Nasrallah is both in charge of directing terror operations and political indoctrination of the masses. He has decisional responsibility over political strategy inside Lebanon's political system alongside operational oversight when Hezbollah hit men set out to murder Israeli diplomats, conduct surveillance on Jewish institutions in a foreign country, or plot to kill a Lebanese politician who stands in the way of Hezbollah's goals.

Second, Hezbollah uses its social welfare network to gain political influence, which in turn enables it to sustain its military activities and shield them from domestic criticism.

Third, its charitable network serves the goal of amassing financial resources for the continuation of its military, as well as its non-military activities.

Fourth, its agents and supporters abroad do not limit their activities to fundraising and promotion of charitable causes. They provide the organization a reliable network for proselyting among potential supporters and conducting surveillance of potential targets.

Fifth, like organized crime, Hezbollah uses various seemingly innocent and entirely legitimate activities to both fund its criminal conduct and to launder money.

Finally, its social welfare programs are integral to its goal to export Iran's Islamic revolution, a goal that is inimical to freedom and tolerance, especially in Lebanon's fragile multi-ethnic and multi-religious mosaic, and which has been periodically sustained and reinforced through the systematic recourse to violence. But most importantly, all its activities combined – terrorism and welfare – are different tools in the same toolkit Hezbollah has to establish an Islamic society in Lebanon while at the same time cooperating with Iran in the goal of advancing its Islamic revolution.

Both tools – random violence aimed at maximizing political goals and charitable work – serve the same coherent political purpose. Hezbollah's social network and terror activities emanate from the same organization – and therefore Hezbollah as a whole must be put on Europe's terror list *regardless of its political and social programs.*

Conclusion: why now?

Until now, Europe has been hesitant to designate Hezbollah as a terror entity. Arguments against designation went from the philosophical to the expedient, but gave mainly four reasons against such step:

- The organization's military and political wings were distinct – punishing Hezbollah as a whole would hurt those innocuous or legitimate activities the political wing of the movement was engaged in;
- Military operations focused on Israel only and thus could not be qualified as 'terrorism';
- The political wing of Hezbollah had joined Lebanon's national dialogue, entered parliament, and was part of the ruling coalition – and therefore a designation would have adverse consequences for Lebanon and reduce Europe's ability to impact Lebanon's internal dynamics constructively; and
- Hezbollah's evolution from guerrilla to political party and its proximity to power would have a moderating influence on its ideology – which should be encouraged through engagement rather than thwarted through isolation and condemnation.

This essay has already addressed the reason why the military-political distinction is artificial.

As the list of Hezbollah operations over the years show, much of their violent activity – including kidnapping for ransom and political blackmail, murders of diplomats, targeting civilians at random through rocket barrages, suicide missions against peacekeepers, and car bombs against civilian targets overseas, all fall outside the purview of what could be considered legitimate military engagement by a non-state militia against a sovereign adversary.

When one considers Hezbollah's victims over the years – Argentinian citizens, U.S. servicemen, and Israeli or Saudi diplomats – it is obvious that Hezbollah's violent activities cannot thus be defined as legitimate warfare under the Geneva Convention. They squarely fall under Western definitions of terrorism.

The more expedient argument regarding concerns about creating an impediment to Lebanon's national dialogue should also be discarded. Despite Europe's high hopes that after the 2006 summer war between Israel and

Hezbollah, Hezbollah's entry into government would move the organization to more conciliatory positions, the Lebanese political system has experienced the opposite.

Hezbollah's gradual takeover of the Lebanese state and now the spillover effect of the Syrian civil war are both signs that this hope turned out to be a pious illusion. There is little if any national dialogue. Hezbollah has not turned into a more moderate force – to the contrary, it has used its rising influence to kill opponents with impunity while penetrating the state and serving the interests of its patrons, Iran and Syria. Hezbollah has continued to pursue violent confrontation with Israel; it has conducted terror activities overseas; and it is now acting on Iran's and Syria's behalf in helping Bashar al-Assad's regime quell the popular uprising in Syria.

Europe has clearly failed to nudge Lebanon into the right direction by favoring engagement with over isolation of Hezbollah. Clearly, it is time to reassess Europe's approach.

There are obvious advantages to a change of policy now.

The collapse of national dialogue and the precarious domestic situation in Lebanon means that a Hezbollah complete takeover of Lebanon is a distinct possibility. Isolating Hezbollah and drying up its foreign sources of funding would weaken it domestically.

Hezbollah remains the first line of defense of Iran's nuclear program against Israel and Iran's main instrument of influence in the Levant. There are no signs that the UNIFIL-2 mission has in any way checked Hezbollah's military rearmament efforts or reduced Hezbollah's grip of southern Lebanon. But there are signs that Iran's financial support of Hezbollah is dwindling due to Iran's economic distress and that Iran's military supplies to Hezbollah are suffering as a consequence of the military embargo levied both against Syria and Iran. Designating Hezbollah would further damage its supply lines as it would trigger stricter scrutiny of shipments to Lebanon from both Iran and Syria and it would put Lebanon's banking system under more controls.

Additionally, weakening Hezbollah financially and isolating it politically at a time when a larger confrontation with Israel is possible may help avoid this confrontation altogether.

Hezbollah continues to act as a proxy of Iran and Syria – its assistance to Syria’s repression of its own civilian population is evidence of this. Targeting Hezbollah would undermine Syria’s efforts to continue its repression and would harm Iran’s efforts to prop up Syria’s beleaguered regime.

Last, but not least, if the Burgas attack in Bulgaria, last July, is confirmed to have been carried out by Hezbollah, there is now an additional compelling national security rationale for European designation.

By murdering five Israeli tourists and one EU citizen on EU soil, Hezbollah has conducted its first attack within European territory since 1984. This alone should be cause for designation, since Hezbollah now poses a direct threat to European domestic security.

There are no compelling political, national interest, or tactical reasons to continue postponing or avoiding the inclusion of Hezbollah in the EU terror entity list. The EU should proceed to do so at the earliest possible date.

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Notes

1. Richard Armitage, *America's Challenges in a Changed World*, remarks at the United States Institute of Peace Conference, September 5, 2002.
2. Hamid Algar, *Islam and Revolution Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini (1941-1980)*. (North Haledon, NJ: Mizan Press, 1981), pp. 286-287.
3. Shimon Shapira, "The Fantasy of Hezbollah Moderation," *Jerusalem Issue Brief*, Vol. 10, No. 2, May 23, 2010, www.jcpa.org/JCPA/Templates/ShowPage.asp?DBID=1&LNGID=1&TMID=111&FID=283&PID=0&IID=3983.
4. Abbas Milani, *Eminent Persians*. Vol. 1, (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2008), p. 365.
5. Ali Shariati, "Jihad and Shahadat. A Discussion of Shahid," www.shariati.com/english/jihadand.html. Cf. Ali Shariati, "Red Shi'ism: The Religion of Martyrdom, Black Shi'ism: the Religion of Mourning," (available at www.shariati.com/english/redblack.html): "bears witness to those who are martyred by the oppression in history, heir of all the leaders of freedom and equality and seekers of justice from Adam to himself, forever, the messenger of martyrdom, the manifestation of the blood revolution."
6. Assaf Moghadam, *The Globalization of Martyrdom*. (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), p. 20.
7. According to the Federation of American Scientists' database, "The group had a history of close relations with Palestinian terrorist groups—based and operating outside Japan—since its inception..." The JRA carries responsibility for a number of attacks, including the 1972 Lod Airport massacre in Israel. One of its perpetrators, Kozo Okamoto, found refuge in Lebanon and was eventually granted political asylum there. According to the FAS, the JRA reportedly trained in Lebanon and Syria, making the Hezbollah connection plausible. See: www.fas.org/irp/world/para/jra.htm.
8. Robert Baer, *The Devil We Know*. (NY: Three Rivers Press, 2008), p. 163. Former FBI Director, Louis J. Freeh, claimed, in his memoirs, that the evidence trail pointed to Iran, but the Clinton Administration, then in power, did not wish to thwart prospects of rapprochement with the reformist Iranian President, Mohammad Khatami; see Louis J. Freeh, *My FBI Bringing Down the Mafia, Investigating Bill Clinton and Fighting the War on Terror*. (Waterville, ME: Thorndike Press, 2006). As Bruce Riedel commented in a recent U.S. Institute of Peace *Iran Primer* contribution that "Intelligence indicated the bombing was the work of Hezbollah al Hijaz, a Saudi Shiite group with close links to Iran's Revolutionary Guards and Lebanon's Hezbollah." See: <http://iranprimer.usip.org/resource/clinton-administration>.
9. Lawrence C. Wright, *The Looming Tower Al-Qaida and the Road to 9/11*. (NY: Alfred Knopf, 2006), p. 173.
10. No conclusive evidence exists of Mughniyah's personal involvement; regardless, the deepening of relations between Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Iran date back to this same period. Such connections are discussed in the next pages.

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