**Israeli-Lebanese conflict**

The **Israeli-Lebanese conflict** describes a series of related military clashes involving Israel, Lebanon, and various non-state militias acting from within Lebanon. The conflict started in 1948 with Israel's declaration of independence and is still continuing to this day. There is no peace treaty between Israel and Lebanon. The conflict is a part of the wider Arab-Israeli conflict.

In 1948, the Lebanese army had by far the smallest regional army, consisting of only 3,500 soldiers. At the prompting of Arab leaders in the region Lebanon agreed to join the other armies that were being assembled around the perimeter of the British Mandate territory of Palestine for the purpose of invading Palestine. Lebanon committed 1,000 of these soldiers to the cause. The Arab armies waited for the end of the Mandate and the withdrawal of British forces, which was set for March 15, 1948.

Israel declared its independence on May 14, 1948. Almost immediately, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Transjordan, and Iraq declared war on the new state. They expected an easy and quick victory in what came to be called the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. The Lebanon army joined the other Arab armies in the invasion. It crossed into the northern Galilee. By the end of the conflict, however, it had been repulsed by Israeli forces, which occupied South Lebanon until an armistice agreement was signed on 23 March 1949.[2] Israel forces withdrew to the international border.

1. ***1982 Lebanon war, Israeli occupation (June 6, 1982–January 1985)***

The 1982 Lebanon war began 6 June, when Israel invaded again for the purpose of retaliation attacking the Palestine Liberation Organization. During the conflict, 14,000 Lebanese and Palestinians were killed, and the Israeli army sieged Beirut. Fighting also occurred between Israel and Syria. The United States, fearing a widening conflict and the prestige the siege was giving PLO leader Yasser Arafat, got all sides to agree to a cease-fire and terms for the PLO's withdrawal on 12 August. The predominantly muslim Multinational Force in Lebanon arrived to keep the peace and ensure PLO withdrawal. Arafat retreated from Beirut on 30 August 1982 and settled in Tunisia.

The National Assembly of Lebanon narrowly chose Bachir Gemayel as president-elect, but when he was assassinated on 14 September 1982, Israel reoccupied West Beirut and Maronite militias carried out the Sabra and Shatila massacre.

In 1983, the United States brokered the May 17 Agreement, a peace treaty between Israel and Lebanon in all but name. The agreement called for a staged Israeli withdrawal over the next eight to twelve weeks and the establishment of a "security zone" to be patrolled by the Lebanese army in southern Lebanon, but was conditional on Syrian withdrawal as well. In August 1983, as Israel withdrew from the areas southeast of Beirut to the Awali River, Lebanese factions clashed for control of the freed territory.

In February 1984, the Lebanese Army collapsed, with many units forming their own militias. The National Assembly of Lebanon, under pressure from Syria and Muslim militias, cancelled the May 17 Agreement on 5 March 1984.

On 15 January 1985, Israel adopted a phased withdrawal plan, finally retreating to the Litani River to form the 4–12 kilometer (2.5–9 mi) deep Israeli Security Zone (map at) while using the native South Lebanese Army militia to help control it.

1. ***Border clashes, Assassinations (September 2000–July 2006)***

In September 2000, Hezbollah forged an electoral coalition with the Amal movement. The ticket swept all 23 parliamentary seats allotted for south Lebanon in that region's first election since 1972.

On 7 October 2000 three Israeli combat engineering soldiers were captured within Shebaa Farms after Hezbollah guerrillas set off a bomb next to their jeep. The parents of the soldiers later suspected that the hostages were killed after the abduction and accused the United Nations and UNIFIL of cooperating with Hezbollah.

After Hezbollah killed an Israeli soldier in an attack on an armoured bulldozer that had crossed the border to clear bombs on 20 January 2004, Israel bombed two of the group's bases.

On 29 January 2004, in a German-mediated prisoner swap, one time Amal security head Mustafa Dirani, who had been captured by Israeli commandos in 1994, and 22 other Lebanese detainees, about 400 Palestinians, and 12 Israeli-Arabs were released from Israeli prisons in exchange for Israeli businessman Elchanan Tenenbaum, who had been kidnapped by Hezbollah in October 2000. The remains of 59 Lebanese militants and civilians and the bodies of the three Israeli soldiers captured on 7 October 2000 were also part of the exchange. Hezbollah requested that maps showing Israeli mines in South Lebanon be included in the deal.

In May 2004, Hezbollah militiamen killed an Israeli soldier along the border within the Israeli held Shebaa Farms.

Between July and August 2004 there was a period of more intense border conflict. Hezbollah said the clash began when Israeli forces shelled its positions, while Israel said that Hezbollah had started the fighting with a sniper attack on a border outpost.

On 2 September 2004 Resolution 1559 was approved by the United Nations Security council, calling for the disbanding of all Lebanese militia. An armed Hezbollah was seen by the Israeli government as a contravention of the resolution.[55] The Lebanese government differed from this interpretation.

Syrian troops withdrew from Lebanon in April 2005.

On 26 May 2006, a car bomb killed Palestinian Islamic Jihad leader Mahmoud Majzoub and his brother in Sidon. Prime Minister of Lebanon Fuad Saniora called Israel the prime suspect, but Israel denied involvement. On 28 May 2006, rockets were fired from Lebanon into Israel. Hours later, Israel responded by bombing suspected militant rocket launch sites and exchanging fire across the border. The United Nations negotiated a ceasefire the same day.

On 10 June 2006 the Lebanese army arrested members of an alleged Israeli spy ring, including Mahmoud Rafeh, his wife, and two children. Police discovered bomb-making materials, code machines and other espionage equipment in his home. Rafeh reportedly confessed to the Majzoub killings and to working for Mossad, and admitted that his cell had assassinated two Hezbollah leaders in 1999 and 2003 and the son of Ahmed Jibril, leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command, in 2002. Former Lebanese Prime Minister Walid Jumblatt, an outspoken critic of Hezbollah, suspected that the exposure of the spy ring was a Hezbollah fabrication.

1. ***2006 Lebanon War***

On 12 July 2006, in an incident known as Zar'it-Shtula incident, the Hezbollah initiated diversionary rocket attacks on Israeli military positions near the coast and near the Israeli border village of Zar'it, while another Hezbollah group crossed from Lebanon into Israel and ambushed two Israeli Army vehicles, killing three Israeli soldiers and seizing two.

Hezbollah promptly demanded the release of Lebanese prisoners held by Israel, including Samir Kuntar and an alleged surviving perpetrator of the Coastal Road massacre, in exchange for the release of the captured soldiers.

Heavy fire between the sides was exchanged across the length of the Blue Line, with Hezbollah targeting IDF positions near Israeli towns.

Thus began the 2006 Lebanon War. Israel responded with massive airstrikes and artillery fire on targets throughout Lebanon, an air and naval blockade, and a ground invasion of southern Lebanon. In Lebanon the conflict killed over 1,500 people, mostly civilians, severely damaged infrastructure, displaced about one million people. Israel suffered nearly 4,000 rockets being launched into northern Israel causing the death of 42 civilians and the displacement half a million Israelis.[67] Normal life across much of Lebanon and northern Israel was disrupted. These are besides the deaths in combat.

A United Nations-brokered ceasefire went into effect on 14 August 2006. The blockade was lifted on 8 September.[

1. ***Post-2006 war activity***

Since the 2006 Lebanon War, there have been only isolated incidents.

On 7 February 2007, there was an exchange of gunfire near Avivim between the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Israel Defence Forces, culminating in the firing of two IDF tank shells over the border. There were no injuries on either side. The UN Secretary-General stated it was first armed incident since the end of the last war and that the first fire was by the Lebanese army without any provocation since the IDF was operating inside Israeli territory.

On June 17, 2007, an unknown militant group fired two rockets from Lebanon into northern Israel, an action which the UN condemned as a serious violation of the ceasefire. Hezbollah denied involvement in the incident, and Israel emphasized that it would restrain itself from responding by force. Saniora pledged that "The state will spare no effort in uncovering those who stand behind this incident."