

Indictment reveals no smoking gun in Hariri assassination

By [Global Research](#)

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Editor's Note

Syria was accused by Washington and the US withdrew their ambassador to Damascus in 2006

BEIRUT — A long-awaited international indictment unsealed Wednesday offers no direct evidence linking four Hezbollah suspects to the 2005 assassination of Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

The indictment, which relies heavily on circumstantial evidence such as telephone records to link the men to the crime, played into efforts by the powerful Iranian-backed Hezbollah to discredit a case that has divided Lebanon for more than six years.

"The text in our hands now based on analysis and not clear evidence," Hezbollah leader Sheik Hassan Nasrallah said. "Those who were indicted should not be called charged but unjustly treated."

Much information contained in the indictment had been leaked to the media over the past two years.

"The full story will, however, only unfold in the courtroom, where an open, public, fair and transparent trial will render a final verdict," said Daniel Bellemare, the prosecutor at the UN-backed Special Tribunal for Lebanon.

The suicide truck bomb that killed Hariri on Feb. 14, 2005, was one of the most dramatic assassinations in the Middle East.

Hariri was one of Lebanon's most powerful Sunni leaders; Hezbollah is a Shiite group.

Prosecutors analyzed a vast network of telephone records to link the "assassination team" to the suicide truck bombing that killed Hariri and 22 others, according to the 47-page indictment. Investigators tracked the movements of the suspects using their phones' locations as recorded by cellphone towers.

The indictment says the records showed "a co-ordinated use of these phones to carry out the assassination." There was a flurry of calls shortly before Hariri's murder, but they stopped two minutes before the explosion.

The phones were never used again.

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