

“If Israel attacks Lebanon, most Christians will support Hezbollah,” Interview with Rawad Daher

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[The German media, Bild](#), reports that Israel will begin a war on Lebanon beginning about July 15. Israel knows that Hezbollah will not stop its attacks on Israel until Israel stops its attacks on Gaza, and Israel has no intention of stopping until their war goals are met, including the destruction of Hamas.

Hezbollah has said they would suspend their attacks if Israel does likewise in Gaza, but that is seen as impossibility given that the Biden administration has given Prime Minister Netanyahu the green light, and all the weapons he needs to continue the genocide in Gaza.

Most of the population of Israel’s north has left, and the south of Lebanon has similarly seen evacuations as Israel has destroyed many villages.

The German airline Lufthansa has suspended night flights to Beirut until the end of July as fears grow of an impending war, which may be disastrous for both Israel and Lebanon. Hezbollah is quite comparable to Israel in military might, and in the 2006 war between the two, Hezbollah would not give up any territory, and Israel pulled back having been defeated by the Lebanese resistance group.

A number of countries have urged their citizens to leave Beirut ahead of July 15. They are: the US, Germany, Kuwait, Russia, North Macedonia, Canada and the Netherlands.

The root cause of the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah lies in the brutal occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, which has stripped the Palestinian people of all human rights. The final solution must be a two-state solution which grants the Palestinian people their freedom.

In an effort to understand this newest threat to the Lebanese people, [Steven Sahiounie](#) interviewed [Rawad Daher](#), a well-known Lebanese journalist.

Steven Sahiounie (SS): We have heard airline companies contacting passengers scheduled to depart Beirut International Airport. These airlines are re-directing flights earlier than July 15. The German media Bild has said they have information that Israel has taken a decision to attack Lebanon on July 15. In your opinion, is this credible?

Rawad Daher (RD): There is no doubt that the factors for pressure and war threats are many, and if we review the news of the past 9 months, since October 7, 2023, until the moment, we monitor more than 9 serious threats and dates for war with Lebanon, some of whom said mid-March, others in May, and others in June as a deadline, until we reached the newest of mid-July. In fact, all of these dates passed by, just as the expectations of those who considered that war would occur within 48 hours in April, and within 72 hours a few weeks ago, also were not true. Therefore, I consider what airlines are taking to be precautionary measures, while what is reported in the newspapers falls within the framework of exaggeration at times and expectation at other times. If the war were to occur, it would not be linked to a timeframe, but rather to an event that violates the equation that has been in place for 9 months.

SS: After the escalation between Hezbollah and Israel, and the continuous Israeli threats for an Israeli ground invasion into Lebanon, if a ceasefire happens between the Palestinians and the Israelis, would it include Lebanon?

RD: Here we must distinguish between two points of view according to the two parties involved in the war. As for Hezbollah, it has announced and repeated that it is fighting a major front for Gaza, and any ceasefire in the Gaza Strip will automatically be reflected on the Lebanese war zone and it also rejects any settlement on the border with Lebanon before reaching an agreement in Gaza. As for the Israeli side, it is divided between those who believe that the Israeli army is exhausted in Gaza and is not ready to fight a fiercer war with Hezbollah after the Gaza war stopped, and therefore, Israel does not want war. On the other side, there are those who believe that the equation imposed by Hezbollah is considered a loss for Israel, and that this entity must fight a battle in the North to restore the strategic balance.

SS: If Israel does begin a war on Lebanon, in your opinion, how do you see the Lebanese army response?

RD: The Lebanese army doctrine and according to the Lebanese constitution, without any doubt, the army acts with Israel as an enemy, even though its military capabilities are limited and its armament is linked to several Western conditions and warnings, specifically American, which prevent it from engaging in the war. Therefore, as a result of this equation, there is no doubt that the performance of the Lebanese army could be similar to their performance during the July 2006 war.

SS: Israel has so far destroyed south of Lebanon from continuous bombing. In your opinion when this conflict is over, who will fund the rebuilding effort?

RD: There is no serious talk yet regarding the issue of reconstruction. Some leaked information promoting that Qatar can play a role in this framework similar to the year 2006, but nothing concrete yet since the war continues. Officially in Lebanon, there is no talk

about this issue except through political objections from anti-Hezbollah parties that refuse the government of Lebanon to provide any compensation to the people of the south. I am also reminded of President of the Parliament Nabih Berri's statement last April, when he said: "In my turn, I will bear alongside Lebanon, all of Lebanon the burden of compensation for the southerners, even if I had to move between the capitals of diaspora in order to fulfill these good people's rights."

SS: We have seen Sunni leaders in Tripoli come out pledging support for Hezbollah should a war begin. In your opinion, will we see Lebanese support for the resistance?

RD: Since October 7 until today, there has been a completely different behavior in the Lebanese street, according to the sectarian distribution in this country. The Shiite support for the resistance did not change, and great Sunni support was added to it in a phenomenon that constituted a surprise, as support came instead of conflict between these two streets, until we heard supportive statements from Sunni figures, such who was known for opposing Hezbollah. The Druze street is also supportive, especially in light of the biggest Druze leader Walid Jumblat's position. As for Christians, there is a group that absolutely opposes Hezbollah, such as "the Lebanese Forces" for example, and a group that supports it in its resistance work, such as the Marada, for example, and a group that opposes the principle of unity of areas, but stands by "Hezbollah" in the event of war on Lebanon, which is what the Free Patriotic Movement announced, and therefore, the majority of Christians will be firmly on the "Hezbollah" side.

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