

Lebanon – Israel bombs ambulances, clinics and bridges

by Karin Leukefeld*



Karin Leukefeld
(Picture ma)

(CH-S) Since the publication of the following report by Karin Leukefeld, the intensity of the Israeli army's military attacks on the Lebanese population has increased day by day. In the Lebanese capital Beirut alone, hundreds of civilians

– notably children, women and the elderly – fell victim to massive Israeli bombardments during the second week of April.

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On the last weekend in March, the Israeli army spokesperson issued an “urgent and serious warning” to emergency vehicles and medical facilities allegedly being used for military purposes by the “terrorist organisation” Hezbollah. Should this not cease, Israel would act “in accordance with international law”. IDF spokesperson Colonel *Avichay Adraee* is well known in Lebanon. He delivers his “warnings” in Arabic; they mean displacement, destruction and death.

28 March 2026

Israel's announcement that it would attack paramedics and clinics appeared to be a response to a press conference held by the Lebanese Minister of Health, *Rakan Nassreddine*, on Saturday, 28 March. The minister told journalists in Beirut that 46 paramedics and five clinic staff had been killed by Israel since 2 March. Nine of the paramedics killed had been killed in various Israeli at-

tacks in southern Lebanon on the day of the press conference. According to the report, four of the victims worked for Hezbollah's *Islamic Health Committee*, whilst five belonged to the Amal Movement's *Risala Scouts*, who were serving as volunteers. In most cases – including, incidentally, in Iran – the Israeli army employs so-called “double taps”. In this tactic, the first strike is directed at a target. The second strike follows when paramedics or other people who witnessed the first strike rush to the scene. Often, a third strike follows shortly afterwards.

On the same day

On the same day, the Israeli Air Force had killed three Lebanese journalists who were travelling in the Jezzine area of southern Lebanon. They received no warning. Four missiles destroyed their vehicle; a paramedic who had come to help was also killed. Two of the journalists – *Fatima Ftouni* and her brother *Mohamad Ftouni*, a freelance photojournalist – had been working for the news channel *Al Mayadeen*. The third journalist – *Ali Shoeib* – was an experienced war correspondent for the news channel *Al Manar*, which is close to Hezbollah. Shoeib's trademark was a white baseball cap, which made him easily recognisable wherever he went.

The attack was condemned internationally. The three UN Special Rapporteurs *Irene Khan* (right to freedom of opinion and expression), *Morris Tidball-Binz* (extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions) and *Ben Saul* (protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism) stated in a joint declaration that “the deliberate killing of journalists who are not taking part in hostilities constitutes a grave violation of international humanitarian law (...) and a war crime.” Journalists reporting from war zones in a professional capacity are civilians “and must not be attacked or made the target of an attack.”¹

Three UNIFIL soldiers from Indonesia killed

One day later, on 29 March, an Indonesian soldier serving with the UNIFIL peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon was killed when a projectile

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struck and exploded at the UNIFIL base in Et Taibe. A second Indonesian UNIFIL soldier was seriously injured and evacuated to a hospital in Beirut.² The following day, 30 March, two further UNIFIL peacekeepers from Indonesia were also killed in southern Lebanon and two other UNIFIL soldiers were injured. They were travelling with a logistics convoy not far from Bani Hayyan on their way to their base when an explosion – the origin of which remains officially unclear – destroyed their vehicle.

France requested a special session of the UN Security Council, which was convened in New York on 31 March.³ The French Foreign Minister, *Jean-Noël Barrot*, held Israel responsible for the attacks on the UNIFIL soldiers. “These threats to security and attempts at intimidation by Israeli soldiers against UN personnel are unacceptable,” said Barrot. There was “no justification” for this. France expressed its condolences to the bereaved families of the three UNIFIL soldiers and assured Indonesia of its solidarity. The circumstances that had led to these tragedies must be fully clarified, the French Foreign Minister demanded.

Barrot also condemned attacks on French UNIFIL soldiers in Naqoura. “Attacks by Israeli soldiers on UN personnel are unacceptable and cannot be justified, especially as the procedures for conflict avoidance were observed,” said Barrot. The condemnation had been “conveyed in no uncertain terms to the Israeli ambassador in Paris”. All parties must comply with UN *Security Council Resolution 1701* and ensure the safety of UN personnel. UNIFIL must be able to fulfil its mandate, and that also means “complete freedom of movement”.

The UN peacekeeping mission for Lebanon, UNIFIL, was established by the UN Security Council in 1978. UN *Security Council Resolution 1701* ended the war between Israel and the Lebanese Hezbollah in 2006.⁴

Israel has been attempting to end the mission for years and has repeatedly bombed UNIFIL bases during armed conflicts. At the end of March 2026, UNIFIL’s troop strength stood at 7,505 soldiers from 47 countries.⁵

Under pressure from Israel and the US, the UN Security Council decided in August 2025 to end the UNIFIL mission by the end of 2026.⁶

In the days that followed

In the days that followed, Israeli fighter jets continued to bomb civilian infrastructure: hospitals



Just imagine this: the army of a neighbouring country issues a warning and, shortly afterwards, bombs the house where our own family has lived for generations ... Israel is doing this in southern Lebanon (pictured in Khiam) – and the world stands by and watches. (Pictures Karin Leukefeld)

and health centres, ambulances and paramedics. In the south of the country, at least six bridges were bombed; over the Easter weekend, the Israeli army announced that it would destroy two further bridges in the western Bekaa Valley.⁷ A spokesperson for the Israeli army stated that the bridges at Sohmor and Mashghara, which span the Litani River, were to be destroyed.

Both bridges are vital for the transport of food, for the sick and injured, and for the population in general, who can use the two bridges to travel from southern Lebanon to the western Bekaa Valley and vice versa. Should the bridges be destroyed, it would be very difficult for the population to travel from the south to Chtoura, a key town with clinics and public facilities in the western Bekaa Valley. Chtoura is the hub between the Lebanese-Syrian border, the main road to Beirut and the northern part of the country towards Baalbek and Hermel.

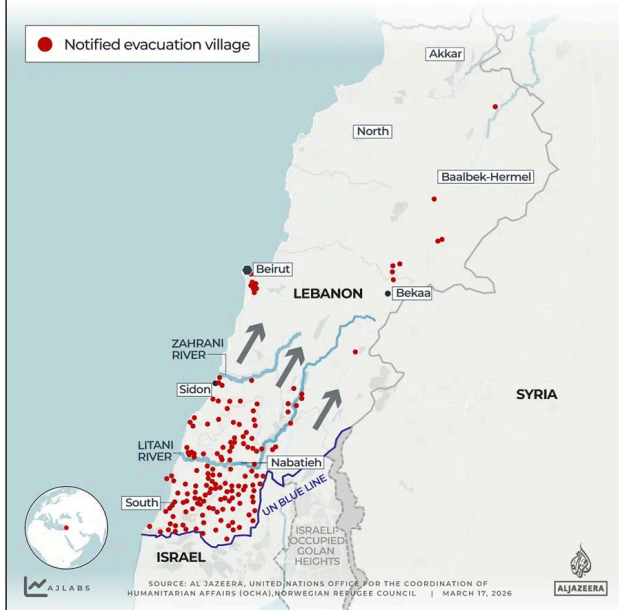
So far, Israel has destroyed six bridges over the Litani River in the south of the country. Observers believe that Israel aims to cut off and isolate southern Lebanon from the rest of the country, thereby making it easier to proceed with the planned ground offensive and occupation of southern Lebanon.

A week later

On Easter Sunday, the Lebanese Ministry of Health reported that 53 paramedics had already been killed, and 87 ambulances and medical centres destroyed. Five clinics were forced to cease operations due to repeated Israeli attacks, and patients had to be evacuated.

One in five people in Lebanon forcibly displaced

The Israeli army has expanded forced displacement orders for residents of southern Lebanon from the Litani River to north of the Zaharani River, covering 1,470sq km (568sq miles), or 14 percent of the country.



One in five Lebanese has so far been killed by Israel or driven out of the south. Israel now claims southern Lebanon up to the Zaharani River for itself – an area of 1,500 km², or around 14 per cent of Lebanon – and the whole world is standing by and watching.

According to doctors, Israel's targeted attacks on the country's medical infrastructure are intended to render the south uninhabitable for the population. Without medical care, people cannot remain in their homes, and medical staff in clinics – if they are not killed – are just as affected by the displacement as everyone else. More than 1.2 million people displaced by Israeli attacks place an additional burden on other hospitals and health centres in Beirut and the north of the country, says a doctor who wishes to remain anonymous, speaking to journalists from the news channel *Al Jazeera*.⁸ Chronically or seriously ill patients require daily treatment for diabetes, post-operative care or chemotherapy.

On Easter Monday, the Lebanese Ministry of Health reported the deaths of 36 people in the past 24 hours; 209 people were injured in Israeli air strikes during the same period. Among the dead was a family of seven. The total death toll since 2 March now stands at 1,497, including 101 women and 130 children. The number of injured is reported as 4,639. The number of paramedics killed has risen to at least 57, and 145 medical staff have been injured.

The latest war against Lebanon began on 2 March 2026. On 28 February, Israel, together

with the US, had attacked Iran, killing the Supreme Leader of Iran, *Ali Khamenei*, as its first target. In retaliation, *Hezbollah* fired rockets at military installations in northern Israel; the Israeli Air Force, ground troops and warships returned fire.

The pre-war period

Israel has been bombing Lebanon since 8 October 2023. At that time, *Hezbollah* had begun attacking the Israeli military in northern Israel in support of the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and Hamas. The aim was to force a ceasefire. After a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip had been achieved several times in the UN Security Council, *Hezbollah* also ceased its attacks.

In September 2024, an Israeli attack using radio transmitters injured more than 4,000 people and killed 42. Shortly afterwards, *Hezbollah's* Secretary-General, *Hassan Nasrallah*, and his companions were killed in a massive bombing raid on Haret Hreik, a district in southern Beirut. The ensuing open war between Lebanon and *Hezbollah* ended with a ceasefire on 24 November 2024.

From day one, Israel has failed to observe the ceasefire. UNIFIL has recorded more than 10,000 Israeli attacks since 24 November; *Hezbollah* fired only once and handed over more than 300 weapons depots to the Lebanese armed forces and UNIFIL troops, as stipulated in *UN Security Council Resolution 1701*.

Israel bombed and destroyed roads, villages, fields and orchards, and established five military bases, surrounding them with buffer zones.

When our country is attacked

Israel justifies all its attacks in Lebanon by claiming that northern Israel is threatened by the "terrorist organisation *Hezbollah*" as well as by its positions, weapons depots, command centres and launch pads (in Lebanon). However, *Hezbollah* is not a terrorist organisation, but a political opponent of the Zionist settlement and expansion project.

Marie Nassif Debs, a long-standing member of the Central Committee of the Communist *Party of Lebanon* and active for years in the women's rights organisation *Wardah Boutros*, recently stated in an open letter to the former French Foreign Minister and Prime Minister *Dominique de Villepin* that Lebanon is defending itself against Israel. This is the view of most Lebanese, regard-

less of whether they are for or against Hezbollah.

“When our country is attacked and the attackers dare to say publicly that they want to occupy our homeland, there is only one way to stop them,” said Debs. France and many other nations had done exactly that during the Second World War. “It is therefore our right, and moreover our duty, to do so.”

When the media spoke of “terrorism”, they were referring to the wrong people, said Marie Debs, recalling that Zionist militias had attempted to seize the land in the region even before the founding of the State of Israel. In 1947, the Palestinians were driven out in the *Nakba*; in October/November 1948, up to 89 boys and men were murdered in the village of Hula south of the Litani River. 250 houses in the village were destroyed. Israel occupied seven Lebanese villages south of today’s “Blue Line” and expelled their inhabitants.

Israel attacked and occupied Lebanon in 1949, 1968, 1978 and 1982 – at that time, Hezbollah did not exist.

Israel has invaded Lebanon countless times, and she wonders whether the international media representatives are aware of what Israeli children are taught about Lebanon in schools? They learn “that Lebanon is a beautiful country with magnificent forests” and that they “will soon take it over”, according to Debs. She also wonders whether international media representatives listen when *Netanyahu*, *Ben Gvir* and other Israeli politicians speak about Lebanon? They made no secret of the fact that they wanted to kill the country’s children and drive the Lebanese out of their land, “because God is supposed to have bequeathed our land to them.”

The long-standing director of the UN Human Rights Council office in New York, *Graig Mokhiber*, also recently set the record straight in an interview with “Declassified UK” regarding the view of Hezbollah propagated by Western media. It is claimed that they, as “Iranian proxies”, are somehow spreading chaos on Iran’s behalf; that is “utter nonsense”, according to Mokhiber.⁹ In countries that had been occupied, under colonial and racist rule, and subjected to systematic murder, resistance groups had developed that fought back in self-defence. “And that is their right under international law,” says Mokhiber. Hezbollah is a Lebanese group. It emerged, grew strong and today fights for Le-



A house destroyed by Israel’s IDF in Kfar Kila in southern Lebanon. The poster reads: “America, the mother of all wars”.

banon. “This group did not even exist when the Israeli occupation began.” Hezbollah is not fighting for Iran; it is fighting for Lebanon.

Lebanon is in desperate need of defence. The Lebanese army is too weak, and its patrons – including the US, Germany and France – do not want it to fight against Israel. The Lebanese government is supposed to negotiate with Israel, talk, and “normalise” relations. Many Lebanese no longer feel represented by this government, whilst Israel destroys their homes, families and livelihoods.

To understand the situation, one really ought to listen to Israeli politicians. Israeli Defence Minister *Israel Katz* recently declared on Easter Sunday that Israel would occupy the entire Lebanese territory south of the Litani River. All villages in the area along the border with northern Israel would be “completely razed to the ground”, according to Katz. Rafah and Beit Hanoun in Gaza would serve as models. The area would become a “buffer zone” and no Lebanese person would be allowed to return to this part of Lebanon.¹⁰ This would affect more than 600,000 people whom Israel has been driving out and displacing since the beginning of March with nearly 400 attacks.¹¹

The targets of the attacks are “the infrastructure of the terrorist organisation Hezbollah”, according to Katz. What is meant is the entire livelihood of the Lebanese population, their culture, their history, their life’s work. During the 2024 war, Israeli soldiers desecrated two memorials in the village of Hula commemorating the massacre of up to 89 residents in 1948.¹² The memorials had been unveiled in 2002, after the Israeli army had been forced to withdraw following 38 years of occupation. The monuments were daubed with slogans and a Star of David. “Only a

dead Shia is a good Shia” was written on one of the two monuments. Most Hula’s inhabitants were and are Shia Muslims who have lived there for centuries.

Lebanon’s history and religious culture are being destroyed by Israel, as the current Israeli attacks and the destruction in 2024 make clear. Following the “ceasefire” in November 2024, Lebanese people were able to see what Israel had destroyed in southern Lebanon. Alongside villages, cemeteries and historic burial sites lay in ruins. During the complete demolition of the village of Mhaibib, a 2,000-year-old shrine, in which the prophet Benjamin is said to have been buried, was also blown up.

The Israeli soldiers were not ashamed to cheer the demolition and film themselves doing so on their mobile phones.¹³

Source: <https://globalbridge.ch/libanon-israel-bombardiert-rettungswagen-kliniken-und-bruecken>, 7 April 2026

(Translation “Swiss Standpoint”)

¹ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2026/04/libanon-un-experts-call-international-independent-inves->

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² <https://news.un.org/en/story/2026/03/1167222>

³ <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/france-calls-for-emergency-un-security-council-meeting-after-israeli-attacks-on-peacekeepers/3885638>

⁴ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/10/1155221>

⁵ <https://unifil.unmissions.org/en>

⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qwmKrxSDMm0>

⁷ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2026/4/3/israel-threatens-to-destroy-more-lebanon-bridges-as-crisis-mounts>

⁸ <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2026/4/3/how-israel-is-destroying-healthcare-infrastructure-in-southern-lebanon>

⁹ <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DWoFKpUiabN/?igsh=b3FsY3I6ZGk5bTl3>

¹⁰ <https://www.defenddemocracy.press/israeli-dm-says-all-of-south-lebanon-will-be-occupied-villages-leveled-in-accordance-with-gaza/>

¹¹ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2026/3/17/mapping-israeli-attacks-and-the-displacement-of-one-million-in-lebanon>

¹² <https://www.arabnews.com/node/2580284/amp>

¹³ <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DBOZNfHo7Zr/>