



H.E. Mrs. Pascale Baeriswyl  
President of the Security Council  
United Nations  
New York

30 May 2023

Excellency,

In the past year I have sent several letters alerting the Security Council to the dangerous and destabilizing behavior of Hezbollah, an Iran-backed proxy in Lebanon whose activity endangers the entire region. Hezbollah, an internationally recognized terrorist organization, continues to strengthen its military capabilities and amass new and sophisticated weaponry with the aid of Iran and Syria, in gross violation of UNSC Resolutions 1701 (2006), 1559 (2004) and others. Not only is Hezbollah funded by Iran, but its terrorist activities are also closely coordinated with Iran's IRGC and Quds force operatives based in Lebanon.

I would like to draw the Council's attention to a recent and very disturbing development in this regard. On May 21, 2023 Hezbollah conducted a large-scale military exercise at a Hezbollah camp in the village of Aramta in South Lebanon, about 20 km north of the Israeli community of Metullah. This exercise took place under the slogan "We swear we will cross [into Israel]". In this spirit it simulated various troubling scenarios – including crossing and penetrating Israeli territory, taking control of an Israeli outpost or community and abducting soldiers. About 700 armed operatives and commando fighters participated in the exercise, which included using live fire and targeting of Israeli flags, displaying weapons such as multi-barrel rocket launchers, quadcopters and machine guns and exhibiting anti-tank units, motorcyclist and infantry capabilities.

Hezbollah used this military exercise as an opportunity to resonate its repeated threats against Israel. In a speech after the exercise, Hashem Safi al-Din, Chairman of Hezbollah's Executive Council, was quoted as saying that the exercise intended to "solidify the balance of deterrence" with Israel. He further claimed that Hezbollah was prepared for any confrontation and threatened Israel by stating that "if there is anyone in the Zionist entity who wants to do something foolish to change the rules of engagement, we will rain our precision guided missiles and all our weapons on it". He also noted the importance of the "unity of the arenas" narrative which attempted to display the Iranian-led Axis as a force multiplier that together could overcome Israel (Al-Mayadeen, May 21, 2023).



The exercise received wide coverage in the media and social networks in Lebanon. Moreover, Hezbollah deliberately invited international media, including Western outlets, to attend and cover the event. Hezbollah's flagrant showcase display was widely and publicly criticized within Lebanon while simultaneously seen by both Lebanese and international actors as an infringement of Lebanon's authority and sovereignty.

The well-documented evidence of this exercise reflects a blatant violation of Security Council resolutions 1701 (2006) and 1559 (2004) and presents further strong evidence of Hezbollah's ongoing military build-up both north and south of the Litani River.

This massive show of force by Hezbollah undermines the ability of the Government of Lebanon to extend its control and exercise its full sovereignty over all Lebanese territory. It should be emphasized that Hezbollah's provocative exercise as well as its increased military capabilities and hostile activities have a growing potential for miscalculation which could lead to escalation and have disastrous consequences for the entire region. Israel expects the Lebanese Government to assert control over all its territory and to ensure that neither Hezbollah nor Palestinian terrorist groups are able to plan and execute attacks against Israel from Lebanon. I would like to reiterate that Israel will take all necessary measures to protect its citizens and its sovereignty.

I urge the Security Council to demand that Lebanon abide by its international commitments to fully implement UNSC resolutions 1701 and 1559. I therefore call on the Security Council to unequivocally condemn Iran and Hezbollah for destabilizing the region and furthermore to designate Hezbollah as a terror organization.

I would be grateful if you could have this letter distributed as a document of the Security Council. I would like to inform you that an identical letter has been sent to H.E. Mr. Antonio Guterres, Secretary General of the United Nations.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'G. Erdan', written in a cursive style.

**Gilad Erdan**  
**Ambassador of Israel to the United Nations**

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