Negative: Lebanon

By “Coach Vance” Trefethen

***Resolved: The European Union should substantially reform its immigration policy***

The AFF plan removes EU aid to refugee camps in Lebanon that are serving migrants evacuated from the civil war in Syria. Their theory is that this aid is being diverted to support the terrorist group Hezbollah, which is a political party in the Lebanese government and is also classified as a terrorist organization. This NEG brief shows Hezbollah isn’t really a threat. Keep in mind that the politics of the Middle East are so complex that sometimes the US and Hezbollah and the Lebanese government have common enemies (e.g. ISIS). If EU aids Hezbollah while fighting ISIS, is that really a bad thing? In addition, Lebanon is on the brink of collapse right now. If we cut off aid, Lebanon will probably collapse.

Negative: Lebanon 3

TOPICALITY 3

1. No immigration policy to reform 3

Definition of EU “immigration policy”: Partnerships with countries of origin, common EU asylum system, fair treatment of 3rd country nationals, management of migration flows 3

The EU has no immigration policy regarding Syrians in Lebanon. This is foreign aid to the poor, not immigration 3

Violation: AFF isn’t reforming immigration policy 3

Impact: No Affirmative team 3

MINOR REPAIR 4

Minor reforms to Lebanese aid would reduce tensions and risk of exploitation of Syrian refugees. Past experience shows it worked in Jordan 4

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE 4

1. Not funding terrorism 4

EU aid is funding hospitals, water treatment and schools in Lebanon 4

EU cash funding goes to the needy refugees 4

EU is funding schools for Syrian children in Lebanon 5

2. Harm to the poor outweighs AFF’s concerns about Lebanese government 5

Lebanon’s government is corrupt. But EU should still continue refugee aid because the alternative is a humanitarian crisis 5

3. A/T “Refugees wrongly being kicked back to Syria” 5

If you’re really worried about that, the solution is more aid to Lebanon – not cancelling it! 5

4. No violence against Syrian refugees 5

No recorded incidents of violence or aggressive behavior against refugees since protest movement began (Oct 2019) 5

5. A/T “Hezbollah big terror threat to US / EU” 6

A/T “Killed more US citizens than any other group before 9/11” - Critics are counting incidents they didn’t do 6

Secretary of State John Kerry admitted in 2016: Hezbollah is not plotting against America 6

Hezbollah aren’t our friends, but they aren’t much of a threat to America. They’ve got their hands full with other enemies 6

Hezbollah has evolved significantly – many of them are renouncing violence and turning to legitimate political process 7

No threat to the EU: Hezbollah is turning away from terrorism toward political activity, and not staging attacks in Europe 7

6. Hezbollah isn’t controlling Lebanon 7

No, Hezbollah doesn’t control the Lebanese government. New government (as of 2020) is more of the same old thing 7

It’s false to classify the Lebanese government as a Hezbollah state 8

Majority of Lebanese reject Hezbollah’s agenda, and foreign media exaggerate Hezbollah’s influence 8

Hezbollah’s power is limited because they’re a political party and opposition will develop if they go too far 8

Lebanese government is Hezbollah’s greatest enemy, and Hezbollah knows it has to moderate to avoid conflict 8

7. Hezbollah weakening, losing support 9

Hezbollah is suffering major setbacks. Many Lebanese are turning against it 9

Hezbollah under pressure from high casualties and is now under attack by other jihadists 9

Arab world has massively turned against Hezbollah 9

8. War with Israel unlikely 9

Hezbollah and Israel have mutual fear of massive losses, so peace breaks out 9

Hezbollah reputation is collapsing and they’re busy fighting other jihadists – bigger threat to them than Israel 10

9. Hezbollah is net beneficial in Lebanon 10

Hezbollah is the only one capable of fighting ISIS and the only one helping poor Lebanese citizens 10

DISADVANTAGES 10

1. Civil war with Hezbollah winning 10

Link & Brink: Any further pressure against Hezbollah right now would bring aggressive response. 10

Link: Confrontation with Hezbollah = civil war in Lebanon. And Hezbollah would win! 11

Impact: Turn the harms 11

2. Failed state / Lebanon collapses 11

Link: Syrian refugees in Lebanon cost the country billions. Foreign aid is key because they’re in economic crisis 11

Link: Reverse advocacy. Lebanon can’t afford it - aid for Syrian refugees should be INCREASED 11

Brink: Lebanon is extremely vulnerable. More pressure leads to Lebanon becoming a “failed state.” 12

Link & Brink: Lebanon is in deep economic crisis, sinking into poverty 12

Impact: Failed State = massive violence , conflict, and starvation 12

3. Masking or Justifying Israeli Abuses 13

Link: AFF sanctions Lebanon in the name of opposing Hezbollah 13

Link: Equating Lebanon with Hezbollah is a propaganda ploy to turn Lebanon into a legitimate target of Israeli aggression 13

Impact: Civilian casualties mount and war crimes are justified. Israel bombs thousands of civilians in Lebanon under the false claim that everyone is Hezbollah 13

Works Cited 14

Negative: Lebanon

TOPICALITY

1. No immigration policy to reform

Definition of EU “immigration policy”: Partnerships with countries of origin, common EU asylum system, fair treatment of 3rd country nationals, management of migration flows

Christine Adam and Alexandre Devillard 2009. (Adam - International Migration Law and Legal Affairs Department, International Organization for Migration. Devillard, International Migration Law and Legal Affairs Department, IOM) (no month of publication give in the article) Laws for Legal Immigration in the 27 EU Member States <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/?action=media.download&uuid=2A9B9EFA-C53A-E13A-1685AA1EBF044E03>

The Tampere European Council of 15 and 16 October 1999 created a five-year programme for Justice and Home Affairs, including a common immigration and asylum policy to facilitate the realization of the goal of the Treaty of Amsterdam to create an area of freedom, security and justice. The Tampere Conclusions organized immigration, borders and asylum into four policy categories: a) partnerships with countries of origin; b) a common European asylum system; c) fair treatment of third-country nationals; and d) management of migration flows (Tampere Conclusions 1999).

The EU has no immigration policy regarding Syrians in Lebanon. This is foreign aid to the poor, not immigration

Delegation of the European Union to Afghanistan 2019. “Syrian Refugees in Lebanon” 29 Nov 2019 <https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/afghanistan/71235/syrian-refugees-lebanon_en>

The European Union reiterates its position that it has never advocated for a settlement or integration of Syrian refugees in Lebanon. We agree with our Lebanese counterparts that their stay in Lebanon is temporary. We also agree that returns should happen in so far as they are voluntary, dignified, safe, and in line with international law. It is not the decision of the European Union for Syrian refugees to stay in Lebanon or to leave the country.  
   
**END QUOTE. THEY GO ON LATER IN THE CONTEXT TO WRITE QUOTE:**  
It is our common responsibility to cater for the needs of the refugees, while supporting the communities hosting them. This is why, in order to mitigate the impact of the refugee presence on the country's economy and infrastructure, the European Union has considerably stepped up its support to Lebanon.

Violation: AFF isn’t reforming immigration policy

Funding refugee camps in Lebanon while doing nothing about the immigration status of the refugees there, and declaring they don’t have any policy on their immigration status is clearly not an immigration policy. The quote above explicitly says the EU is doing this as an economic aid package to Lebanon, not an immigration policy. It also doesn’t fall into any of the 4 categories the EU defined for itself as what it means by immigration policy in its own documents.

Impact: No Affirmative team

If no one showed up in the room to affirm the resolution, then no matter who wins, you should vote Negative.

MINOR REPAIR

Minor reforms to Lebanese aid would reduce tensions and risk of exploitation of Syrian refugees. Past experience shows it worked in Jordan

International Crisis Group 2020 (research organization providing independent analysis and advice on how to prevent, resolve or better manage deadly conflict) 13 Feb 2020 “Easing Syrian Refugees’ Plight in Lebanon” <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/page/file/1248836/download>

To mitigate the likelihood of increasing public hostility toward Syrian refugees, international donors should embrace a pragmatic approach to their assistance in Lebanon that builds on the experience of the Jordan Compact. By supporting highly visible, labour-intensive projects that benefit communities hosting large refugee concentrations, donors can proactively lessen local tensions that political forces might otherwise exploit. Simultaneously, donors should negotiate a results-based program of macroeconomic support for the Lebanese economy that includes debt refinancing, investment and trade preferences linked to verifiable indicators of refugee employment, providing a clear case for political action.

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE

1. Not funding terrorism

EU aid is funding hospitals, water treatment and schools in Lebanon

**Analysis: Money is being contracted out to various projects, and those projects are visible on the ground.**

Delegation of the European Union to Afghanistan 2019. “Syrian Refugees in Lebanon” 29 Nov 2019 <https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/afghanistan/71235/syrian-refugees-lebanon_en>

Programmes funded by the European Union in Lebanon have been decided upon in consultation with the Government of Lebanon. They are not designed to incentivise the stay of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, but to address the basic needs of all vulnerable people. Our assistance has helped build new healthcare centres and improve access to basic health services for both Lebanese and Syrians in need. It has helped improve the infrastructure and the quality of education provided by Lebanese public schools. It has helped upgrade many other kind of infrastructure such as wastewater treatment, all of which will profit the Lebanese and outlast the Syrian conflict.

EU cash funding goes to the needy refugees

European Commission 2020. (executive branch of the EU government) August 2020, EUROPEAN CIVIL PROTECTION AND HUMANITARIAN AID OPERATIONS <https://ec.europa.eu/echo/where/middle-east/lebanon_en>

EU humanitarian aid to Syrian refugees is mostly provided in the form of multi-purpose cash assistance. The remainder goes to addressing emergencies, protection and education needs. Cash assistance reduces vulnerability in the face of socio-economic hardship and protection concerns such as evictions and exploitation. In 2019, 358,000 people benefitted from this type of aid, mostly using the money to cover essential needs such as food, shelter and healthcare. In the wake of the coronavirus outbreak, the EU has further scaled up cash assistance to the most vulnerable refugees.

EU is funding schools for Syrian children in Lebanon

European Commission 2020. (executive branch of the EU government) August 2020, EUROPEAN CIVIL PROTECTION AND HUMANITARIAN AID OPERATIONS <https://ec.europa.eu/echo/where/middle-east/lebanon_en>

In 2019, more than 500,000 Syrian refugees in Lebanon were assisted through EU-supported protection services. In 2020, this has continued to be a priority given increasing reports of violence, abuse and exploitation of minors. Also in 2019, EU humanitarian aid ensured access to education for 11,600 out-of-school Syrian children, facilitating their transition into formal education. The pandemic has prompted education partners to find creative new ways to engage with the children, using messaging, new technologies and distance learning.

2. Harm to the poor outweighs AFF’s concerns about Lebanese government

Lebanon’s government is corrupt. But EU should still continue refugee aid because the alternative is a humanitarian crisis

International Crisis Group 2020 (research organization providing independent analysis and advice on how to prevent, resolve or better manage deadly conflict ) 30 Oct 2020 “How Europe Can Help Lebanon Overcome Its Economic Implosion“ <https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/eastern-mediterranean/lebanon/219-how-europe-can-help-lebanon-overcome-its-economic-implosion>

The EU and European governments cannot force the Lebanese authorities to carry out the reforms needed to secure external funding. But they can expand their humanitarian support as long as current political blockages persist to prevent a more serious humanitarian crisis. They should continue their assistance for impoverished communities (including refugees) and support for infrastructure and basic services at a small and local scale.

3. A/T “Refugees wrongly being kicked back to Syria”

If you’re really worried about that, the solution is more aid to Lebanon – not cancelling it!

International Crisis Group 2020 (research organization providing independent analysis and advice on how to prevent, resolve or better manage deadly conflict) 13 Feb 2020 “Easing Syrian Refugees’ Plight in Lebanon” <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/page/file/1248836/download>

While even a small number of successful repatriations represents positive news, conditions are too dangerous for mass organised returns. Yet the Syrian government and some Lebanese political factions increasingly insist that it is time for large-scale returns to begin. What should be done? Donors should plan for many refugees to stay for many years, and provide support to help Lebanon meet Syrians’ needs, ease the burden on Lebanon’s economy, and reduce friction between refugees and their Lebanese hosts.

4. No violence against Syrian refugees

No recorded incidents of violence or aggressive behavior against refugees since protest movement began (Oct 2019)

International Crisis Group 2020 (research organization providing independent analysis and advice on how to prevent, resolve or better manage deadly conflict) 13 Feb 2020 “Easing Syrian Refugees’ Plight in Lebanon” <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/page/file/1248836/download>

A senior humanitarian official warned that “the level of inter-communal tensions is high, especially in the north and the Beqaa amidst austerity measures, dire economic conditions and the political campaign”, pressing refugees to go home. On the other hand, and despite repeated attempts by politicians to blame the social crisis on the refugee situation, no one has recorded an incident of violence or aggressive behaviour directed at refugees in the course of the protest movement that has engulfed Lebanon since 17 October. A close observer of events in Lebanon remarked: “The people in the streets know very well who is to blame for the meltdown: the politicians, not the Syrian refugees. But the refugees are lying low, just in case”.

5. A/T “Hezbollah big terror threat to US / EU”

A/T “Killed more US citizens than any other group before 9/11” - Critics are counting incidents they didn’t do

Sharmine Narwani 2017 (commentator and analyst of Mideast geopolitics, based in Beirut) Hezbollah is Not a Threat to America” 3 Nov 2017 <https://www.theamericanconservative.com/articles/hezbollah-is-not-a-threat-to-america/> (ellipses in original)

Two weeks ago, at a State Department briefing on the Hezbollah “threat,” National Counterterrorism Center Director Nicholas J. Rasmussen tried to [paint a picture](https://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2017/10/274726.htm) of an organization that was directing “terrorism acts worldwide” and posing a threat “to U.S. interests” including “here in the homeland.” “Prior to September 11,” Rasmussen claimed, “I think everybody knows Hezbollah was responsible for the terrorism-related deaths of more U.S. citizens than any other foreign terrorist organization.” This was news indeed. A check with a State Department spokesperson confirmed that the “deaths of more U.S. citizens than any other foreign terrorist organization” claim was in reference to the following incidents: “Hezbollah is responsible for multiple large scale terrorist attacks, including the 1983 suicide truck bombings of the U.S. Embassy and U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut; the 1984 attack on the U.S. Embassy annex in Beirut; and the 1985 hijacking of TWA flight 847, during which U.S. Navy diver Robert Stethem was murdered,” explained the spokesperson in an email. The 1983 attack on the Beirut barracks took the lives of 241 Americans. The 1983 U.S. embassy bombing killed 17 Americans, and the 1984 attack on the relocated embassy facilities killed two Americans. Hezbollah has officially and consistently denied involvement in these suicide bombings and was not even established as an organization until 1985. Some write off this important discrepancy by arguing that the bombings would have been conducted by one of Hezbollah’s “precursor organizations,” albeit without providing evidence to prove the point. The U.S. secretary of defense at the time of the bombings, Caspar Weinberger, told PBS[almost two decades later](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/target/interviews/weinberger.html), in 2001: “We still do not have the actual knowledge of who did the bombing of the Marine barracks at the Beirut Airport… and we certainly didn’t then.”

Secretary of State John Kerry admitted in 2016: Hezbollah is not plotting against America

Sharmine Narwani 2017 (commentator and analyst of Mideast geopolitics, based in Beirut) Hezbollah is Not a Threat to America” 3 Nov 2017 <https://www.theamericanconservative.com/articles/hezbollah-is-not-a-threat-to-america/> (brackets in original)

“Hezbollah is not plotting against us,” former U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry told a small group of anti-government Syrians on the sidelines of the UN’s General Assembly plenary session a year ago. Kerry’s comments were caught on an audio tape acquired by the [New York Times](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/09/30/world/middleeast/john-kerry-syria-audio.html?mtrref=t.co&_r=3). Asked why the U.S. fights extremist Sunni groups and not Shia ones, he [replied](https://theconservativetreehouse.com/2017/04/04/president-trump-has-it-wrong-on-syria-assad-did-not-use-chemical-weapons-deep-state-neo-cons-misleading-the-president/):  
The reason for [airstrikes against the Sunni Extremists] is because they have basically declared war on us, and are plotting against us, and Hezbollah is not plotting against us— Hezbollah is exclusively focused on Israel, who they’re not attacking now, and on Syria, where they are attacking in support of Assad.

Hezbollah aren’t our friends, but they aren’t much of a threat to America. They’ve got their hands full with other enemies

Prof. Daniel Byman 2016 (senior fellow at the Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution; professor at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service) 17 Oct 2016 “Is Hezbollah Less Dangerous to the United States?” <https://www.lawfareblog.com/hezbollah-less-dangerous-united-states>

We should be under no illusions: Hezbollah remains formidable, and it is no American friend even though it is fighting the Islamic State and other jihadist groups. Hezbollah’s anti-Americanism, however, is tempered by the many other threats the group faces. In a turbulent Middle East, the names on its list of enemies may change in their rankings. But given that the Middle East’s Sunni jihadist problem and sectarian competition show no signs of abating, Hezbollah is likely to have its hands full. And that’s good news for America.

Hezbollah has evolved significantly – many of them are renouncing violence and turning to legitimate political process

Sharmine Narwani 2017 (commentator and analyst of Mideast geopolitics, based in Beirut) Hezbollah is Not a Threat to America” 3 Nov 2017 <https://www.theamericanconservative.com/articles/hezbollah-is-not-a-threat-to-america/>

Obama’s Deputy National Security Advisor for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism John Brennan introduced a more nuanced image of the group to a Washington think tank audience in 2009:  
Hezbollah started out as purely a terrorist organization in the early ’80s and has evolved significantly over time. And now it has members of parliament, in the cabinet; there are lawyers, doctors, others who are part of the Hezbollah organization … And so, quite frankly, I’m pleased to see that a lot of Hezbollah individuals are in fact renouncing that type of terrorism and violence and are trying to participate in the political process in a very legitimate fashion.

No threat to the EU: Hezbollah is turning away from terrorism toward political activity, and not staging attacks in Europe

NEW YORK TIMES 2012. (journalist Nicholas Kulish) 15 Aug 2012 Despite Alarm by U.S., Europe Lets Hezbollah Operate Openly <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/16/world/europe/hezbollah-banned-in-us-operates-in-europes-public-eye.html>

Skeptics here in Europe say that as Hezbollah has become more political the group has moved away from its terrorist past, if not forsaken it entirely, and that Israel is stoking fears as it seeks to justify an attack on Iran’s nuclear facilities. Some experts say that security officials on the Continent are resistant to blacklisting the group because they seem to see a tacit détente, where Hezbollah does not stage attacks and European law enforcement officials do not interfere with its fund-raising and organizational work. “There’s a fear of attracting Hezbollah’s ire and eventually inviting Hezbollah operations in their own countries,” said Bruce Hoffman, a professor of security studies at Georgetown and a terrorism expert.

6. Hezbollah isn’t controlling Lebanon

No, Hezbollah doesn’t control the Lebanese government. New government (as of 2020) is more of the same old thing

[KAREEM CHEHAYEB](https://tcf.org/experts/kareem-chehayeb/) 2020 (Beirut-based Lebanese journalist and leads investigations at The Public Source) “Lebanon’s New Government Is Bad, But It Isn’t Hezbollah” 5 March 2020 <https://tcf.org/content/commentary/lebanons-new-government-bad-isnt-hezbollah/?agreed=1>

This new cabinet is indeed a rare case in which none of the United States’ allies have called any of the shots in its formation. But do these developments, translate into Hezbollah’s dominance, or even control, of the new cabinet? Hezbollah’s current military and political clout might suggest so. However, to call this a “Hezbollah government,” where the party is the ultimate decision-maker and imposes its political platform and ideological will, is inaccurate. Hezbollah actually retains a similar amount of influence that it has had in past governments in recent years, and remains constrained by the paralyzing interests of Lebanon’s ruling political parties, including its own allies. Newly appointed Prime Minister Hasan Diab and the government he has assembled are in fact a status-quo government, just with a new face. His cabinet faces the daunting task of trying to salvage the Lebanese economy without compromising its corrupt economic system and its main benefactors: the country’s elite of warlords and business tycoons.

It’s false to classify the Lebanese government as a Hezbollah state

[KAREEM CHEHAYEB](https://tcf.org/experts/kareem-chehayeb/) 2020 (Beirut-based Lebanese journalist and leads investigations at The Public Source) “Lebanon’s New Government Is Bad, But It Isn’t Hezbollah” 5 March 2020 <https://tcf.org/content/commentary/lebanons-new-government-bad-isnt-hezbollah/?agreed=1>

Lebanon’s new government is neither a “Hezbollah government” nor is it politically impartial and technocratic. Even though none of the U.S. allies called the shots in its formation, the new government ultimately remains a status-quo regime that caters to the interests of Lebanon’s ruling parties and the banks. And while Hezbollah’s political clout has strengthened in recent years, with credit to its key Lebanese allies, it is false to classify the Lebanese government as a Hezbollah state.

Majority of Lebanese reject Hezbollah’s agenda, and foreign media exaggerate Hezbollah’s influence

Michael Young 2018 (s*enior editor at the Carnegie Middle East Center*) 8 May 2018 “Lebanon ≠ Hezbollah” <http://carnegie-mec.org/diwan/76280?lang=en>

To limit a reading of Lebanon’s elections to Hezbollah would mean missing the myriad other dimensions that came into play on Sunday. Indeed, the elections underlined precisely why Lebanon, in its sheer complexity, cannot equal Hezbollah. However, it’s also undeniable that foreign media outlets [had eyes only for what the vote meant for the party](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-lebanon-election/hezbollah-allies-gain-in-lebanon-vote-underscoring-iran-sway-idUSKBN1I804D), and that this will resonate in foreign capitals, where Lebanon’s fate is being considered. However, to assume, as Naftali Bennett did, that “Hezbollah = Lebanon,” means deleting that large proportion of Lebanese, very likely a majority, who simply reject the party’s agenda.

Hezbollah’s power is limited because they’re a political party and opposition will develop if they go too far

**Analysis: The Affirmative forgets that in addition to having some terrorists, Hezbollah is also a political party with fairly elected seats in Lebanon’s parliament. Demanding that Lebanon sanction Hezbollah is like demanding the U.S. government sanction the Republican Party.**

Michael Young 2018 (s*enior editor at the Carnegie Middle East Center* ) 8 May 2018 “Lebanon ≠ Hezbollah” <http://carnegie-mec.org/diwan/76280?lang=en>

It’s undeniable that this means the party has tremendous leverage in the Lebanese state. Yet the “Hezbollah = Lebanon” mantra fails to consider that Hezbollah has to constantly adapt to change in order to retain its dominance in the system. And the details matter when looking for ways to limit Hezbollah’s margin of maneuver. The party has the means to intimidate, but it also knows that constantly resorting to intimidation will quickly mobilize opposition to its agenda in Lebanon’s sectarian context. That is why its preferred stance is to function within state institutions when it can do so, which also means constantly keeping a lookout for ways that these institutions can somehow be used against the party.

Lebanese government is Hezbollah’s greatest enemy, and Hezbollah knows it has to moderate to avoid conflict

Michael Young 2018 (s*enior editor at the Carnegie Middle East Center*) 8 May 2018 “Lebanon ≠ Hezbollah” <http://carnegie-mec.org/diwan/76280?lang=en>

There will be no sudden victories against Hezbollah, but nor is Lebanon a branch of the party as some people continue to insist. Whether now or in the future, Hezbollah’s greatest enemy will remain the Lebanese state, and what the elections showed is that Hezbollah, paradoxically, knows it has to be a part of that state to better escape it.

7. Hezbollah weakening, losing support

Hezbollah is suffering major setbacks. Many Lebanese are turning against it

Prof. Daniel Byman 2016 (senior fellow at the Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution; professor at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service) 17 Oct 2016 “Is Hezbollah Less Dangerous to the United States?” <https://www.lawfareblog.com/hezbollah-less-dangerous-united-states>

But a closer look suggests that Hezbollah is also facing problems on every front. In Lebanon, the group’s effort to portray itself as a champion of all Lebanese against the United States and Israel has suffered major setbacks. It no longer transcends Lebanon’s sectarianism and is now squarely on one side of the region’s communal conflict. Lebanese Shi’a still see the group as its champion, perhaps even more than before given the sectarian nature of the fighting in Syria, but many Lebanese favor the Syrian opposition and see Hezbollah as tyranny’s ally.

Hezbollah under pressure from high casualties and is now under attack by other jihadists

Prof. Daniel Byman 2016 (senior fellow at the Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution; professor at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service) 17 Oct 2016 “Is Hezbollah Less Dangerous to the United States?” <https://www.lawfareblog.com/hezbollah-less-dangerous-united-states>

Hezbollah has tried to portray its war in Syria [as part and parcel of its struggle with Israel](http://www.wsj.com/articles/hezbollahs-syria-gambit-strains-local-allegiances-1471512601), but it has largely failed at this. Having lost more than 1,000 fighters in Syria, it is also [under pressure from the families of the fallen](http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2015/1004/Is-Syria-s-long-war-wearing-down-key-Assad-backer-Hezbollah) to justify the sacrifice. Meanwhile, Sunni jihadists have conducted terrorist attacks on Hezbollah neighborhoods, bringing the war to Lebanon itself and shattering the group’s sense of invulnerability.

Arab world has massively turned against Hezbollah

Prof. Daniel Byman 2016 (senior fellow at the Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution; professor at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service) 17 Oct 2016 “Is Hezbollah Less Dangerous to the United States?” <https://www.lawfareblog.com/hezbollah-less-dangerous-united-states>

If Hezbollah’s prestige is suffering at home, it is plummeting in the broader Arab world. In 2006, after Hezbollah forces fought the Israeli army to a draw, polls showed the group’s leader, Hassan Nasrallah, was the most popular man in the Arab world. Egyptian newspapers ran full-page ads comparing him to Gamal Abdel Nasser, the lion of Egyptian nationalism, using the anniversary of Nasser’s defiance of the West during the 1956 Suez Crisis to draw the connection. Today, polls in several Arab countries show that [almost 90 percent of their populations disapproves of Hezbollah](http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/hezbollah-labeled-terrorist-by-gcc-states-but-what-do-their-people-think), a staggering about-face. The [Arab League](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/03/arab-league-labels-hezbollah-terrorist-group-160311173735737.html) and the [Gulf Cooperation Council](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/03/gcc-declares-lebanon-hezbollah-terrorist-group-160302090712744.html) recently declared Hezbollah a terrorist group, prompting a storm of accusations and counterattacks. Twisting Hezbollah’s name, which translates as the “Party of God,” many Sunni critics have begun referring to it as the “[Party of Satan](http://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/Muslim-scholar-Hezbollah-is-the-party-of-Satan-316018).”

8. War with Israel unlikely

Hezbollah and Israel have mutual fear of massive losses, so peace breaks out

Prof. Daniel Byman 2016 (senior fellow at the Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution; professor at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service) 17 Oct 2016 “Is Hezbollah Less Dangerous to the United States?” <https://www.lawfareblog.com/hezbollah-less-dangerous-united-states>

The border has been mostly quiet since the 2006 war. Ten years of calm is an eternity in the Middle East, and even the last tremendous clash seems more a result of Hezbollah’s miscalculation about where Israel’s redlines were, rather than an actual desire to take on the Israeli military juggernaut. For the last decade, Israel has been preparing for another round with Hezbollah, and the group’s leaders, no fools, rightly fear [the destruction Israel threatens to unleash](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/ten-years-after-last-lebanon-war-israel-warns-next-one-will-be-far-worse/2016/07/23/58d7a6ca-4388-11e6-a76d-3550dba926ac_story.html). But Hezbollah’s military skill and rocket forces also give Israel pause: peace holds because of mutual fear, not a lessening of tensions.

Hezbollah reputation is collapsing and they’re busy fighting other jihadists – bigger threat to them than Israel

Prof. Daniel Byman 2016 (senior fellow at the Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution; professor at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service) 17 Oct 2016 “Is Hezbollah Less Dangerous to the United States?” <https://www.lawfareblog.com/hezbollah-less-dangerous-united-states>

Hezbollah’s reputation is collapsing because of its prominent role in the Syria conflict. Most of the Arab world is Sunni, and many governments are responding to popular concern for their coreligionists and their own hostility to Hezbollah’s backer Iran, which presents itself as a champion of the region’s Shi’a Muslims. Hezbollah is particularly hated by the region’s Sunni jihadists, whose forces have [clashed repeatedly](http://www.newsweek.com/war-between-hezbollah-and-isis-lebanon-404244) with Hezbollah in Syria and regularly threaten dire consequences against the group. The enmity is fully reciprocated. Nasrallah recently declared the jihadists [a more difficult problem](http://www.vox.com/world/2016/9/27/13074560/hezbollah-israel-nasrallah-wahhabism-evil?utm_campaign=jenn_ruth&utm_content=chorus&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter) than even Israel.

9. Hezbollah is net beneficial in Lebanon

Hezbollah is the only one capable of fighting ISIS and the only one helping poor Lebanese citizens

Andre Vitchek 2016 (journalist) 8 Apr 2016 “Lebanon is being forced to collapse” <https://www.rt.com/op-ed/338899-lebanon-isis-security-collapse-west/>

What seems to irritate them the most, though, is that Hezbollah (an organization that is placed by many Western countries and their allies in the Arab world on the “*terrorist list*”) is at least to some extent allowed to participate in running the country. But Hezbollah appears to be the only military force capable of effectively fighting against ISIS - in the northeast of the country, on the border with Syria, and elsewhere. It is also the only organization providing a reliable social net to those hundreds of thousands of poor Lebanese citizens. In this nation deeply divided along sectarian lines, it extends its hand to the ‘others’, forging coalitions with both Muslim and Christian parties and movements.

DISADVANTAGES

1. Civil war with Hezbollah winning

Link & Brink: Any further pressure against Hezbollah right now would bring aggressive response.

Prof. [**Massimiliano Fiore**](https://ra.ac.ae/member/dr-massimiliano-fiore/) 2020 (Assistant Professor of Homeland Security at Rabdan Academy. Before joining Rabdan Academy, he taught at the London School of Economics, King’s College London, the Defense Academy of the United Kingdom and at the University of Exeter) 25 June 2020 “Opinion – Lebanon’s Economic Crisis: An Opportunity to Contain Hezbollah?” <https://www.e-ir.info/2020/06/25/opinion-lebanons-economic-crisis-an-opportunity-to-contain-hezbollah/>

In 2008, Hezbollah gave further evidence of how it would react to any attempt to curb its power. In response to Prime Minister Fouad Siniora’s attempt to dismantle Hezbollah’s telecoms network and his dismissal of Wafic Shkeir, the pro-Hezbollah Security Chief of Beirut International Airport, Hezbollah fighters seized control of several West Beirut districts from pro-government militias in bloody street battles. With a death toll of 42 and 164 wounded, a deal was reached on 21 May 2008 that reversed the government decisions, permitting Hezbollah to preserve its telecoms network and re-instating the airport security chief. Any push for a broader disarmament in Lebanon at this stage would elicit a comparably aggressive response from Hezbollah.

Link: Confrontation with Hezbollah = civil war in Lebanon. And Hezbollah would win!

Prof. [**Massimiliano Fiore**](https://ra.ac.ae/member/dr-massimiliano-fiore/) 2020 (Assistant Professor of Homeland Security at Rabdan Academy. Before joining Rabdan Academy, he taught at the London School of Economics, King’s College London, the Defense Academy of the United Kingdom and at the University of Exeter) 25 June 2020 “Opinion – Lebanon’s Economic Crisis: An Opportunity to Contain Hezbollah?” <https://www.e-ir.info/2020/06/25/opinion-lebanons-economic-crisis-an-opportunity-to-contain-hezbollah/>

A confrontation between Hezbollah and the Lebanese Armed Forces would quickly escalate into civil war, with the inevitable chaos only benefiting Iran and Sunni extremists. The civil wars in Syria, Iraq, Somalia and Yemen have all proved to be useful vehicles for the expansion of Iranian influence as well as fertile ground for Al Qaeda’s brand of terrorism. Also, Hezbollah’s Lebanese opponents know they cannot win such a conflict. Hezbollah has a large arsenal at its disposal, an expanding military infrastructure in Lebanon, and greater combat experience. It could also count on considerable foreign assistance, along with a steady flow of weaponry and funds. Its opponents cannot match those means, and their lack of military training and organization would render external military aid futile.

Impact: Turn the harms

If Hezbollah is bad in the Status Quo as AFF claims, voting Affirmative and creating the conditions for them to win a civil war would be even worse.

2. Failed state / Lebanon collapses

Link: Syrian refugees in Lebanon cost the country billions. Foreign aid is key because they’re in economic crisis

International Crisis Group 2020 (research organization providing independent analysis and advice on how to prevent, resolve or better manage deadly conflict) 13 Feb 2020 “Easing Syrian Refugees’ Plight in Lebanon” [https://www.justice.gov/eoir/page/file/1248836/download]]`/](https://www.justice.gov/eoir/page/file/1248836/download%5d%5d%60/)+

Additionally, some politicians have stoked resentment against refugees, raising alarms about alleged plans for permanent resettlement of Syrians in Lebanon, encouraging citizens to take action against illegal Syrian labour and blaming the refugees for Lebanon’s economic crisis. The latter accusation is difficult to substantiate: Lebanon received more than $7 billion in external loans and grants between 2012 and 2018 to cope with the crisis, and pledges for another $3 billion for the period 2018- 2020. This support likely offsets the direct cost of hosting the refugees, which Central Bank Governor Riad Salamé has estimated at around $1 billion per year.

Link: Reverse advocacy. Lebanon can’t afford it - aid for Syrian refugees should be INCREASED

Edward Gabriel 2019 (was the United States Ambassador to Morocco from 1997 to 2001; President and CEO of the American Task Force on Lebanon) 16 July 2019 “Lebanese are Tired of Hosting Syrian Refugees” <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/lebanese-are-tired-hosting-syrian-refugees>

While the international community must encourage the eventual return of refugees to Syria, international donors should also join with U.S. efforts in providing aid to Lebanon to support host communities and the refugees. Such aid should reflect the actual cost incurred by the Lebanese economy, which is strapped with burgeoning budget deficits.

Brink: Lebanon is extremely vulnerable. More pressure leads to Lebanon becoming a “failed state.”

Reuters news service 2017 (journalist Lisa Barrington) 2 June 2017 “As U.S. targets Hezbollah, Lebanon lobbies against more sanctions” <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-lebanon-economy-sanctions-idUSKBN18T1S4>

“There’s one question anyone who wants to put pressure on Lebanon should remember: Do you want another failed state on the eastern Mediterranean?” Yassine Jaber, a member of parliament who led a delegation to Washington in mid-May, told Reuters. “Lebanon is very, very vulnerable economically at the moment,” added Jaber, an independent Shi’ite politician who is aligned with Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri’s Shi’ite Amal movement, which was named as a target for investigation in the draft amendments first reported by Lebanese media in April.

Link & Brink: Lebanon is in deep economic crisis, sinking into poverty

Reuters news service 2020. (journalist Edmund Blair) 17 Sept 2020 “Explainer: Lebanon's financial meltdown and how it happened” <https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-lebanon-crisis-financial-explainer/explainer-lebanons-financial-meltdown-and-how-it-happened-idUKKBN268223>

Lebanon is grappling with a deep economic crisis after successive governments piled up debt following the 1975-1990 civil war with little to show for their spending binge. Banks, central to the service-oriented economy, are paralysed. Savers have been locked out of dollar accounts or told funds they can access are worth less. The currency has crashed, driving a swathe of the population into poverty.

Impact: Failed State = massive violence , conflict, and starvation

Dr. Robert I. Rotberg 2002. (PhD; President of the World Peace Foundation (1993–2010); was director of the Program on Intrastate Conflict, Conflict Prevention, and Conflict Resolution at Harvard) Failed States, Collapsed States, Weak States: Causes and Indicators <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/statefailureandstateweaknessinatimeofterror_chapter.pdf>

Failed states are tense, deeply conflicted, dangerous, and contested bitterly by warring factions. In most failed states, government troops battle armed revolts led by one or more rivals**. [END QUOTE]** Occasionally, the official authorities in a failed state face two or more insurgencies, varieties of civil unrest, different degrees of communal discontent, and a plethora of dissent directed at the state and at groups within the state. It is not the absolute intensity of violence that identifies a failed state. Rather, it is the enduring character of that violence (as in Angola, Burundi, and the Sudan), the fact that much of the violence is directed against the existing government or regime, and the inflamed character of the political or geographical demands for shared power or autonomy that rationalize or justify that violence in the minds of the main insurgents. [**HE GOES ON LATER IN THE SAME CONTEXT TO SAY QUOTE:]** The civil wars that characterize failed states usually stem from or have roots in ethnic, religious, linguistic, or other intercommunal enmity. The fear of the other that drives so much ethnic conflict stimulates and fuels hostilities between regimes and subordinate and less favored groups.

**END QUOTE. He goes on to say later in the same article QUOTE:**

Sometimes, especially if there are intervening climatic disasters, the economic chaos and generalized neglect that is endemic to failed states leads to regular food shortages and widespread hunger—indeed, even to episodes of starvation and major efforts of international humanitarian relief.

3. Masking or Justifying Israeli Abuses

Link: AFF sanctions Lebanon in the name of opposing Hezbollah

That’s what their whole 1AC was about.

Link: Equating Lebanon with Hezbollah is a propaganda ploy to turn Lebanon into a legitimate target of Israeli aggression

Halim Shebaya 2018 (Beirut-based political analyst and multi-disciplinary researcher) 20 May 2018 “Memo to Israel: Lebanon is not Hezbollah, Gaza is not Hamas” <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/memo-israel-lebanon-hezbollah-gaza-hamas-180520122815960.html>

One clear example of such dumbed-down messages is Israeli education minister Naftali Bennett's "Lebanon = Hezbollah" [tweet](https://twitter.com/naftalibennett/status/993364596403687424) after Lebanon's parliamentary [elections](https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/lebanon-parliamentary-elections-deliver-180504124439415.html) on May 6. "Israel will not differentiate between the sovereign State of Lebanon and Hezbollah, and will view Lebanon as responsible for any action from within its territory", he said in the tweet. **[END QUOTE**] It was Bennett again who in mid-May said that unarmed Palestinians protesting near the border fence in Gaza should be treated as "terrorists". By then, the government he is part of had framed the Palestinians' [Great March of Return](https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/interactive/2018/05/palestinians-great-march-return-human-cost-180516110538165.html) as a "Hamas ploy". [**HE GOES ON TO SAY QUOTE:]** What Israel aims to achieve by promoting this type of rhetoric is to turn both Lebanon and Gaza into legitimate targets for its aggression in any conflict that might take place in the future.

Impact: Civilian casualties mount and war crimes are justified. Israel bombs thousands of civilians in Lebanon under the false claim that everyone is Hezbollah

Halim Shebaya 2018 (Beirut-based political analyst and multi-disciplinary researcher) 20 May 2018 “Memo to Israel: Lebanon is not Hezbollah, Gaza is not Hamas” <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/memo-israel-lebanon-hezbollah-gaza-hamas-180520122815960.html>

Israeli officials have made it a habit to regularly threaten the entire population of Lebanon (and not only [Hezbollah](https://www.aljazeera.com/topics/organisations/hezbollah.html)) with destruction, annihilation and blowing it back to the Stone Ages. This inflammatory language, in fact, describes war crimes, which Israel has repeatedly committed on Lebanese territory. In the 2006 war, the [Israeli army killed](https://www.hrw.org/report/2007/09/05/why-they-died/civilian-casualties-lebanon-during-2006-war) 1,000 civilians, and the Israeli government tried to blame it solely on Hezbollah. But as a Human Rights Watch report investigating war crimes committed during that conflict pointed out: "Responsibility for the high civilian death toll of the war in Lebanon lies squarely with Israeli policies and targeting decisions in the conduct of its military operations."

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