

**Country/entity** Lebanon

**Region** Middle East and North Africa

**Agreement name** The Hezbollah-Salafist Memorandum of Understanding

**Date** 18 Aug 2008

**Agreement status** Multiparty signed/agreed

**Interim arrangement** Yes

**Agreement/conflict level** Intrastate/intrastate conflict

### **Lebanon's Political Crisis (2005 – )**

The current political crisis in Lebanon is characterized by the conflation of internal and external agendas, transforming Lebanon in a proxy battle ground between other countries in the region such as Iran and Saudi Arabia, while Syria-related security concerns continue to spill over into the country.

The assassination of Lebanon's President Rafiq Hariri on the 14 February 2005, in which the Syrian government was implicated, sparked public outrage in Lebanon and fuelled protests that would eventually lead to the withdrawal of Syrian peacekeeping forces in Lebanon. This gave birth to the two oppositional groups March 14 Alliance and March 8 Alliance. Elections in May and June that year would usher in a new government, wherein March 8 Alliance, led by the Free Patriotic Movement, with support from Hezbollah, Amal and the Progressive Socialist Party would win 45 per cent of the seats. A year later, in July 2006, Hezbollah sparked a 34-day conflict with Israel following a rocket attack and the capture of three Israeli soldiers. Although both sides declared victory following the implementation of Resolution 1701, Hezbollah is widely considered to have been the relative victor. With its popularity boosted, and militarily emboldened, the parliamentary opposition announced the desire to form a unity government. Sceptical to the increased power that would grant the opposition, the Saudi-backed Lebanese government refused. In response the head of Hezbollah, Sayyed Nasrallah declared a deadlock in December 2006 to last until new parliamentary elections in 2009. Nasrallah also expressed an unwillingness to escalate the situation. Nonetheless, following a string of government crack-downs on Hezbollah, fighting broke out in May 2008 wherein Hezbollah militants took control of West Beirut. Fighting was eventually resolved with the Doha Declaration in 2008.

Uprisings against the Assad regime in Syria in 2011 further deepened the division between the two factions. In 2012, the two camps signed the Baabda Declaration, agreeing to the principle of neutrality towards Syria. However, in 2013 Hezbollah violated the agreement by giving the Syrian government military support. In 2016, Michel Aoun was appointed as president, breaking a two-year deadlock, and in May 2018 the first parliamentary elections were held in nine years. It took nine months to form the government, however, a renewed political deadlock ensued in November 2019 after the resignation of prime minister Hariri following unprecedented mass anti-government protests. Political turmoil continues to define Lebanon's internal politics with earlier mass protests breaking out in 2009, 2011 and 2015.

Close

Lebanon's Political Crisis (2005 – )

**Stage** Ceasefire/related

**Conflict nature** Inter-group

**Peace process** Lebanon peace process

**Parties** Hezbollah Movement in Lebanon - Sayyed Ibrahim Amin al-Sayyed - Head of the political council

Salafist movements in Lebanon - Sheikh Dr. Hassan al-Chahhal - Representative of the Salafist forces in Lebanon

**Third parties** -

**Description** A short eight point ceasefire type agreement which establishes a mutual 'no first strike' deal between Lebanese fighting movements. The agreement calls for no attacks by Muslim groups on other Muslims and addresses discriminatory Takfiri ideologies. The agreement commits both parties to stand by each other in the instance of aggression by other forces or conflict parties. The agreement also makes provision for a committee of senior Salafist and Hezbollah scholars to address points of dispute between Shia and Sunni Muslims.

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**Agreement document** [LB\\_080818\\_TheHezbollah-SalafistMemorandumofUnderstaning.pdf \(opens in new tab\) | Download PDF](#)

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#### **Groups**

**Children/youth** No specific mention.

**Disabled persons** No specific mention.

**Elderly/age** No specific mention.

**Migrant workers** No specific mention.

**Racial/ethnic/national group** No specific mention.

**Religious groups** Groups→Religious groups→Rhetorical  
Page 1,

Among the most prominent factors in the management of this dispute are the protection of the

specifics of each sect and the respect of their principles... while bearing in mind that the acute

political disputes between the different sides bear negative repercussions affecting the people,

the Lebanese arena in general and the Islamic arena in particular.

Groups→Religious groups→Substantive

Page 1, The Hezbollah-Salafist Memorandum of Understanding stated:

... with respect to our Islamic duty, we have tried to eliminate strife and contain the dispute between the Sunnis and the Shia within the intellectual and scientific context that is handled by scholars from both sects and the exploitation of which is prohibited to the public.

Page 1, Fourthly:

we will exert all possible efforts to eliminate the Takfiri ideology of the Sunnis and the Shia, since accusing all Shia of being infidels is rejected by the Salafists, and accusing all Sunnis of being infidels is rejected by Hezbollah.

**Indigenous people** No specific mention.

**Other groups** No specific mention.

**Refugees/displaced persons** No specific mention.

**Social class** No specific mention.

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## Gender

**Women, girls and gender** No specific mention.

**Men and boys** No specific mention.

**LGBTI** No specific mention.

**Family** No specific mention.

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**State definition**

**Nature of state (general)** No specific mention.

**State configuration** No specific mention.

**Self determination** No specific mention.

**Referendum** No specific mention.

**State symbols** No specific mention.

**Independence/secession** No specific mention.

**Accession/unification** No specific mention.

**Border delimitation** No specific mention.

**Cross-border provision** No specific mention.

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## **Governance**

**Political institutions (new or reformed)** No specific mention.

**Elections** No specific mention.

**Electoral commission** No specific mention.

**Political parties reform** No specific mention.

**Civil society** No specific mention.

**Traditional/religious leaders** No specific mention.

**Public administration** No specific mention.

**Constitution** No specific mention.

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## **Power sharing**

**Political power sharing** No specific mention.

**Territorial power sharing** No specific mention.

**Economic power sharing** No specific mention.

**Military power sharing** No specific mention.

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## **Human rights and equality**

**Human rights/RoL general** No specific mention.

**Bill of rights/similar** No specific mention.

**Treaty incorporation** No specific mention.

**Civil and political rights** Human rights and equality→Civil and political rights→Thought, opinion, conscience and religion  
Page 1, Seventhly:  
each side enjoys the freedom of belief, and no side has the right to impose its ideology on the other.

**Socio-economic rights** No specific mention.

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### **Rights related issues**

**Citizenship** No specific mention.

**Democracy** No specific mention.

**Detention procedures** No specific mention.

**Media and communication** No specific mention.

**Mobility/access** No specific mention.

**Protection measures** No specific mention.

**Other** No specific mention.

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### **Rights institutions**

**NHRI** No specific mention.

**Regional or international human rights institutions** No specific mention.

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### **Justice sector reform**

**Criminal justice and emergency law** No specific mention.

**State of emergency provisions** No specific mention.

<b>Judiciary and courts</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Prisons and detention</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Traditional Laws</b>	<p>Page 1, Firstly: based on the sacredness of Muslim blood, we ban and condemn any attack carried out by any Muslim group against another Muslim group. In case a group is attacked, it has the right to resort to the legitimate means to defend itself.</p> <p>Page 1, Fourthly: we will exert all possible efforts to eliminate the Takfiri ideology of the Sunnis and the Shia, since accusing all Shia of being infidels is rejected by the Salafists, and accusing all Sunnis of being infidels is rejected by Hezbollah.</p>

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### **Socio-economic reconstruction**

<b>Development or socio-economic reconstruction</b>	No specific mention.
<b>National economic plan</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Natural resources</b>	No specific mention.
<b>International funds</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Business</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Taxation</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Banks</b>	No specific mention.

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### **Land, property and environment**

<b>Land reform/rights</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Pastoralist/nomadism rights</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Cultural heritage</b>	No specific mention.

**Environment** No specific mention.

**Water or riparian rights or access** No specific mention.

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**Security sector**

**Security Guarantees** No specific mention.

**Ceasefire** Security sector→Ceasefire→General commitments  
Page 1,

Firstly, based on the sacredness of Muslim blood, we ban and condemn any attack carried out by

any Muslim group against another Muslim group. In case a group is attacked, it has the right to

resort to the legitimate means to defend itself.

**Police** No specific mention.

**Armed forces** No specific mention.

**DDR** No specific mention.

**Intelligence services** No specific mention.

**Parastatal/rebel and opposition group forces** Page 1, Fifthly:  
if Hezbollah or the Salafists are ill-treated by domestic or foreign sides, the other party should stand by it with force and determination as much as possible.

**Withdrawal of foreign forces** No specific mention.

**Corruption** No specific mention.

**Crime/organised crime** No specific mention.

**Drugs** No specific mention.

**Terrorism** No specific mention.

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**Transitional justice**

**Transitional justice general** No specific mention.

**Amnesty/pardon** No specific mention.

**Courts** No specific mention.

**Mechanism** No specific mention.

**Prisoner release** No specific mention.

**Vetting** No specific mention.

**Victims** No specific mention.

**Missing persons** No specific mention.

**Reparations**

No specific mention.

## Reconciliation

Page 1,

In light of the major challenges faced by our Arab and Islamic nation, the most angry of which

being the instigation of sectarian and religious strife to attack the region and pillage its wealth

and serve the interests of Israel and America, and in light of what is happening on the Lebanese

scene in terms of the dangerous repercussions serving the Israeli enemy, since Israel wants to take

from the Lebanese what it could not take by use of arms – especially after the July War – and with

respect to our Islamic duty, we have tried to eliminate strife and contain the dispute between the

Sunnis and the Shia within the intellectual and scientific context that is handled by scholars from

both sects and the exploitation of which is prohibited to the public.

Page 1,

Fourthly, we will exert all possible efforts to eliminate the Takfiri ideology of the Sunnis and the

Shia, since accusing all Shia of being infidels is rejected by the Salafists, and accusing all Sunnis of

being infidels is rejected by Hezbollah.

Fifthly, if Hezbollah or the Salafists are ill-treated by domestic or foreign sides, the other party

should stand by it with force and determination as much as possible.

Sixthly, a committee of senior Salafist and Hezbollah scholars is formed to look into the points of

dispute between the Shia and the Sunnis, in what would contain the disputes within the context

of the committee and prevent them from reaching the street.

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**Implementation**

**UN signatory** No specific mention.

**Other international signatory** No specific mention.

**Referendum for agreement** No specific mention.

**International mission/force/similar** No specific mention.

**Enforcement mechanism** No specific mention.

**Related cases** No specific mention.

**Source** On file with PA-X PI.

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