

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	<p>Hezbollah Movement in Lebanon - Sayyed Ibrahim Amin al-Sayyed - Head of the political council</p> <p>Salafist movements in Lebanon - Sheikh Dr. Hassan al-Chahhal - Representative of the Salafist forces in Lebanon</p>
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.

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.

Gender

Women, girls and gender No specific mention.

Men and boys No specific mention.

LGBTI No specific mention.

Family No specific mention.

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.

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.

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.

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.
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Socio-economic rights	No specific mention.
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Rights related issues

Citizenship	No specific mention.
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Democracy	No specific mention.
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Detention procedures	No specific mention.
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Media and communication	No specific mention.
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Mobility/access	No specific mention.
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Protection measures	No specific mention.
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Other	No specific mention.
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Rights institutions

NHRI	No specific mention.
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Regional or international human rights institutions	No specific mention.
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Justice sector reform

Criminal justice and emergency law	No specific mention.
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State of emergency provisions	No specific mention.
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Judiciary and courts	No specific mention.
Prisons and detention	No specific mention.
Traditional Laws	<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>

Socio-economic reconstruction

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

Land, property and environment

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

Environment No specific mention.

Water or riparian rights or access No specific mention.

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.

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.

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.
