

Reinforcing U.S. Diplomacy to Stop a Hezbollah-Israel War

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Only a comprehensive initiative aimed at curbing Hezbollah's influence both within Lebanon and in the region stands a chance of delivering peace for the long term.

When Hamas sparked a war with its October 7 attack on Israel, the group's leadership was counting on backup from sympathetic actors, including Hezbollah. But in remarks delivered the next month, the group's secretary-general, Hassan Nasrallah, characterized the conflict as a "purely Palestinian battle," dimming Hamas's hopes for a broader regional uprising. Nevertheless, significant exchanges of fire have occurred along the Israel-Lebanon border, requiring evacuations in Israel's north and Lebanon's south. And Hezbollah has experienced significant losses in personnel and infrastructure. As the conflict drags on, escalation from either side could be combustible, opening into full-scale war on the Lebanese front and spurring intensified attacks from the Houthis in Yemen and Iran-allied Iraqi militias.

In her timely Policy Note, former Lebanese journalist Hanin Ghaddar offers essential context for the Israel-Lebanon border negotiations now being pursued by U.S. envoy Amos Hochstein. America's proposed three-phase plan could potentially reduce current hostilities, she argues, but only a more ambitious initiative aimed at curbing Hezbollah's influence both within Lebanon and in the region stands a chance of delivering peace for the long term.

[View a PDF of the full study. \(https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/media/7219?disposition=attachment\)](https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/media/7219?disposition=attachment) ❖

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