

Air Strike

**23**NOV
13:54 UTC

Lebanon & Israel Alert (UPDATE): IDF strike in Beirut's Dahiyeh on November 23 targeted Hezbollah Chief of Staff; increases prospects of retaliatory attacks in northern Israel

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Current Situation:

- The Israeli Prime Minister's Office on November 23 announced that the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) strike in southern Beirut's Dahiyeh neighborhood targeted Hezbollah's Chief of Staff Haytham Ali Tabatabai
- He is reportedly considered the group's de facto Chief of Staff, and its second most senior leader after Secretary General Naim Qassem.
- Conflicting reports indicate that the US was informed of Israel's intention to conduct the strike before it was carried out.

Source: [Israeli Prime Minister's Office](#)

Assessments & Forecast:

1. This comes amid an [uptick](#) in reported IDF strikes and warnings from Israeli officials in recent weeks based on the assessment that Hezbollah is regrouping amid the Lebanese Armed Forces' (LAF) failure to disarm the Iran-backed group. However, the targeting of a senior Hezbollah figure in Beirut marks an escalation and increases the onus on Hezbollah to respond, which it has refrained from doing despite the increased Israeli operational activity in recent weeks. This is particularly if the identity of the target as Hezbollah's Chief of Staff is confirmed.
2. **FORECAST:** It is therefore likely that Hezbollah will attempt to retaliate for the strike over the coming hours or days. Given the group's significantly reduced capabilities in the immediate vicinity of the border on the ground, following the Israeli ground campaign in Lebanon in September-November 2024, **Hezbollah's retaliation is more likely to materialize in a kinetic aerial attack.** However, in light of its weakened position, the response is likely to be calibrated to avoid further escalation. This **reduces the prospects for larger-scale attacks toward central Israel or major Israeli cities in northern Israel such as Haifa.** Such an attack is therefore **more likely to involve limited rocket or mortar fire closer to the Israel-Lebanon border, potentially up to 20km from the frontier.**
3. **FORECAST:** Should Hezbollah be successful in its retaliation, the IDF is highly likely to respond with airstrikes against the group's infrastructure in southern and northeastern Lebanon at least. It may also view such action as an opportunity to trigger a broader campaign that could entail strikes against other senior Hezbollah officials in Beirut. This scenario would likely prompt more extensive Hezbollah aerial attacks against the Israeli home front.

Recommendations:

Lebanon

1. Those operating or residing in Lebanon are advised to refresh and retain business contingency plans (BCPs) and security protocols to initiate in the event of further armed hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah.
2. Avoid all travel to Beirut's southern Dahiyeh neighborhood, which is a Hezbollah stronghold, due to the elevated risk of Israeli airstrikes during periods of hostilities, civil unrest, and heightened anti-Western sentiments which could result in arbitrary detention.
3. Avoid all travel to the Lebanon-Israel border and areas south of the Litani River due to the risk of Israeli airstrikes.

Israel

1. Those operating in Israel are advised to avoid all travel to the Israel-Lebanon border region over the coming hours and days in light of the elevated risk for retaliatory Hezbollah attacks.
2. Adhere to all Home Front Command (HFC) notifications promptly. Ensure that the HFC or other "Color Red" alert applications such as "Tzofar", "Tzeva Adom", or "Cumta-Red Alerts" are downloaded to receive timely alerts.

During Color Red sirens:

1. Prefer reaching a shelter if possible. In "Mamads" (residential secure spaces), ensure that the room's steel door and outer steel window are both locked to maintain safety.
2. Remain in the shelter following the sounding of Color Red sirens until a follow-up "all-clear" notification from the HFC due to the risk of falling shrapnel and fragments.
3. Approach the safe area calmly and remain cognizant of the fact that many injuries occur when people are running to the shelter panicked.
4. If such a designated Mamad does not exist:
5. Go to a room with as few external walls, windows, and openings as possible, sit on the floor below the window line, and near an internal wall.

6. In an open area, lay down on the ground and cover your head with your hands.
7. When driving, safely pull over and check your surroundings before vacating your vehicle and following the above instructions.