

## Information for journalists – Exposure of the Golan terror network

### Background

1. In May of 2013 the President of Syria, Bashar al-Assad, announced the opening of the Syrian Golan Heights area to popular resistance against Israel in order to distract from the ongoing civil war.
2. As a result, elements of the Shi'ite Axis began establishing and entrenching a terror network in the Syrian Golan Heights area under the command of Samir Kuntar and Jihad Mughniyeh.
3. This network, which according to foreign reports was destroyed, was used to launch a number of attacks on the border (mortars/rockets, bombs, etc).

### End of the Syrian Civil War and establishment of the Golan terror network

1. Hezbollah maintained a presence in Syria in order to assist the Assad Regime in fighting against the rebels. Now, with the end of the war *in sight*, Hezbollah *has lost* its legitimacy to stay in Syria. Furthermore, the Russians have a growing interest in securing the stability of the Assad Regime.
2. **The leadership of the Shi'ite Axis has decided to attempt to re-establish a covert unit, with greater operational capabilities than its predecessors, which will be able to operate against Israel if ordered.**
3. **During the summer of 2018 (June-July) there was a shift in the activities of Hezbollah in the Golan Heights. Hezbollah began to establish the Golan terror network despite the severe economic crisis facing the organization.**
4. The establishment of this terror network, is being undertaken with the assistance of existing Hezbollah infrastructure in Syria as well as the Syrian Armed Forces (SAF) and the residents of the Syrian Golan Heights.
5. This network is composed of a chain of command and staff operatives from Hezbollah and Syrian field operatives. The network is new and is currently focused on becoming familiarized with the Golan Heights area and is intended to eventually control teams of Syrian operatives who will launch attacks against Israel.

## Commander of the Golan terror network – Ali Musa Daqduq

1. **Ali Musa Daqduq was appointed to command the network.**
2. Daqduq joined Hezbollah in 1983 and worked in a number operational roles in Southern Lebanon during the IDF's presence in the South Lebanon Security Belt.
3. In 2006, he was transferred to Hezbollah's Iraqi branch where he acted as head of operations. During his time in this role he led an attack on American forces in the Karbala Governorate, Iraq, during which five American soldiers were abducted and executed (January 20<sup>th</sup> 2007). He was then captured by American forces (March 2007) and imprisoned in an Iraqi prison (See attached photos).
4. On November 16<sup>th</sup> 2012, due to demands by Hezbollah's leadership, negotiations with the Iraqi government and a lack of evidence Daqduq was released and returned to Lebanon.
5. This summer Daqduq was sent to Syria by Hezbollah in order to establish the Golan terror network.

## Activities of the Golan terror network

1. Today the Golan terror network is currently focused on familiarizing with the Syrian Golan Heights area and with intelligence gathering on Israel and the *border area*. As part of this effort the leaders of the network are establishing intelligence gathering capabilities against Israel, with an emphasis on visual and communications intelligence. The field operatives are conducting observations toward Israel from **observation posts and military locations near the border**. The proximity of these communities *to Israel* is what allows the operatives to conduct observations continuously and without revealing their true goal- to convey information about the regular activities of our forces to Hezbollah and the leaders of the network.
2. **The intelligence gathering is based partly on existing observation posts that belong to the SAF.** These posts are ordinarily manned by soldiers of the SAF

who work alongside operatives of Hezbollah is Syria's "Southern Headquarters". In parallel they are regularly patrolling the border area in order to familiarize themselves with the terrain, analyze infiltration routes, *characterize* the IDF's routine activity in the area and finding concrete objectives for action.

3. As part of their preparations the field operatives have **available weaponry** from the internal fighting that was occurring in the area over the past few years and which ended in July of 2018. It is possible that **the leadership of the network will attempt in the future to transport additional weaponry from Lebanon or avail themselves of the existing arsenals kept by Hezbollah and Iran in Syria.**

**The network's operatives** (See attached photos)

1. **The field operatives** who fill the ranks of the network and act exclusively in Syria are composed of various groups and networks who previously took part in terrorist activity in the Golan Heights under the notorious network of Kuntar and Mughniyeh. Due to this, these operatives have previous experience in terrorist activity against Israel.
2. A portion of the operatives underwent courses and training on behalf of Hezbollah in sabotage, sharpshooting and firing Grad rockets. Some of them took part in or aided (2013-2015) actions against Israel including sabotage, rocket/mortar attacks and pre-mission intelligence gathering.
3. A further portion of the operatives employed by the network are locals from the Hader area, who likely joined for **financial reasons**.
4. In parallel **the network is establishing a foothold against Israel under the auspices of political parties, paramilitary organizations and Syrian civil associations**. These organization receive legitimacy from the Syrian government due to their assistance to the regime in the internal fighting. The IDF is aware of several such organizations (See attached photos):
  - a. **The armed wing of the Syrian Social Nationalist Party: Nusour al-Zawba'a** – The SSNP (Al-Hizb Al-Suri Al-Qawmi Al-'Ijtimai) is a Syrian

political party with branches across the country that is identified as a supporter of the SAF and the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party and supports the establishment of "Greater Syria". **Nusour al-Zawba'a** is composed of militias containing fighters from various communities such as Druze and Christians. **Nusour al-Zawba'a's force in Hader, numbering approximately 15 operatives is/will be used for the Golan terror network's activities.** As part of this the force is now responsible for conducting observations of Israel.

- b. **The Arab Nationalist Guard** – The ANG (Al-Haras Al-Qawmiu Al-Arabi) is a secular volunteer militia active in Syria. The leadership of the Golan terror network are aided by some of the Guard's operatives in the Golan Heights area. Thus the network is able to conduct continuous observation of Israeli activity without fear of exposure because the Guard's activity in the area is considered legitimate.
5. The operatives reside mostly on the northern part of the Golan Heights in villages such as Hader, Arneh, Khan Arnabeh and Quneitra that make up the areas in which the network is currently active.

### **The secrecy of the network**

1. The actions of groups and individuals within the network are **compartmentalized**, kept secret from each other and the local population. This way the networks leadership can act secretly **without informing the Assad Regime** and advance several projects simultaneously.
2. The network's leadership are utilizing all platforms and resources available in the area to preserve the networks of secrecy. To do this they **conceal their activity as part of known frameworks of the terrorist organization Hezbollah** (such as Hezbollah's Southern Headquarters) **and under the SAF** (especially operatives who also belong to the SAF).

**In summary, the Hezbollah terrorist organization has begun an attempt to establish and entrench a covert force in the Syrian Golan Heights that is designed**

**to act against Israel when given the order. The network is in initial stages of establishment and recruitment and is not yet operational. The IDF is monitoring the network's activities closely.**