

# Timeline of the Lebanese Civil War

While it is impossible to include all of the developments, below are some of the events surrounding the bombing of the Beirut Barracks.

- **May 14, 1948** - The state of Israel is established. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians are displaced to the surrounding nations of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria.<sup>1,2</sup>
- **1964** - The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), a military and political organization that represents the Palestinian people, forms.<sup>3,4</sup>
- **1965** - The PLO launches an attack on Israel from Lebanese territory.
- **1975** - The Lebanese Civil War begins.<sup>5</sup>
- **1978** - Israel briefly invades Lebanon and increases attacks in Beirut and southern Lebanon. A ceasefire is reached in 1981.
- **June 1982** - Israel launches an invasion of Lebanon<sup>6</sup> to eliminate the PLO<sup>5</sup> and install a friendly Lebanese government<sup>7</sup>.
- **August 1982** - After the evacuation of PLO fighters from Beirut, Lebanese Christian militiamen massacre Palestinian refugees in the Sabra and Shatila camps<sup>8</sup>. Western powers respond by sending a Multinational Peacekeeping Force (MNF), composed of troops from France, Italy, the U.S., and the U.K.<sup>5,4</sup>
- **1982** - Hezbollah is founded and funded by Iran to resist the Israeli occupation of Lebanese territory. Iranian advisers to Hezbollah arrive in the Beqaa Valley to support efforts to expel Israeli and Western forces<sup>9,5,4</sup>.
- **April 18, 1983** - The U.S. embassy in West Beirut is bombed, killing 63 people. A pro-Iranian Shiite group, the Islamic Jihad, claims responsibility for the attack, but many suspect Hezbollah was also involved.
- **October 23, 1983** - The American marine barracks and French paratrooper barracks, part of the Western MNF, are bombed in two separate but simultaneous attacks. 241 American servicemen and 58 French paratroopers are killed.<sup>10,11</sup> The Islamic Jihad also claims responsibility, but many also suspect Hezbollah, Iran, and Syria's involvement. The U.S. does not respond with a retaliatory attack.
- **February 7, 1984** - After a rift between White House advisers, President Reagan orders Marines to withdraw from Lebanon. The U.S. bombards Druze and Syrian forces in the Beqaa Valley. By the end of the month, the rest of the MNF also withdraws.
- **October 13, 1990** - The Lebanese Civil War officially ends. Approximately 150,000 have died and 300,000 have been injured throughout its course. Additionally, the conflict has displaced more than one million people in Lebanon.<sup>12</sup>
- **2001-Present** - The families of the U.S. peacekeepers file a lawsuit against Iran and the Ministry of Information and Security. Iran is later found guilty of providing Hezbollah with support to carry out the attack. Additionally, numerous memorials have been erected throughout the U.S, including a Lebanese cedar tree and plaque in Arlington National Cemetery next to the graves of the victims.

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<sup>1</sup> Biger, Gideon. "The Boundaries of Israel—Palestine Past, Present, and Future: A Critical Geographical View" in *Israel Studies*, vol. 13, no. 1, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> Ben-Youssef, Bishara, S., & Rosenberg, R. (2013). *The forced displacement of Palestinians*. In OpenDemocracy (London). OpenDemocracy.

<sup>3</sup> Hudson, M. C. "The Palestinian Factor in the Lebanese Civil War" in *Middle East Journal*, vol 32, no. 3, 1978

<sup>4</sup> Mireille Rebeiz. "Beirut barracks bombing of 1983: Is justice possible after 40 Years?" in PennLive: Patriot News (March 12, 2023).

<sup>5</sup> Haugbolle, S.'s "The historiography and the memory of the Lebanese civil war" in *Online encyclopedia of mass violence*, (Online Encyclopedia of Mass Violence, 2011)

<sup>6</sup> Blight et al. "Becoming Enemies: U.S.-Iran relations and the Iran-Iraq War, 1979-1988" Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. (2012)

<sup>7</sup> David K. Shipler, "For Israel, A Mixed Balance Sheet on Lebanon" in *New York Times*, Nov. 14, 1982.

<sup>8</sup> Paul Pierpaoli & Sherifa Zuhur's "Sabra and Shatila Massacre" in *Encyclopedia of Terrorism* (Encyclopedia of Terrorism, 2013)

<sup>9</sup> Lara Deeb, "Hizballah: A Primer" in *Middle East Research and Information Project: Critical Coverage of the Middle East Since 1971*, (MERIP, 2006)

<sup>10</sup> Quandt, W.'s "Jordan, the United States and the Middle East Peace Process" in Cambridge Middle East Library, (Cambridge University Press, 1993)

<sup>11</sup> T.J. Geraghty *Peacekeepers at War: Beirut 1983- The Marine Commander Tells His Story* (Potomac Books Inc. 2009)

<sup>12</sup> Florence Gaub. "Lebanon's Civil war: seven lessons forty years on" in European Union Institute for Security Services. (April, 2015).