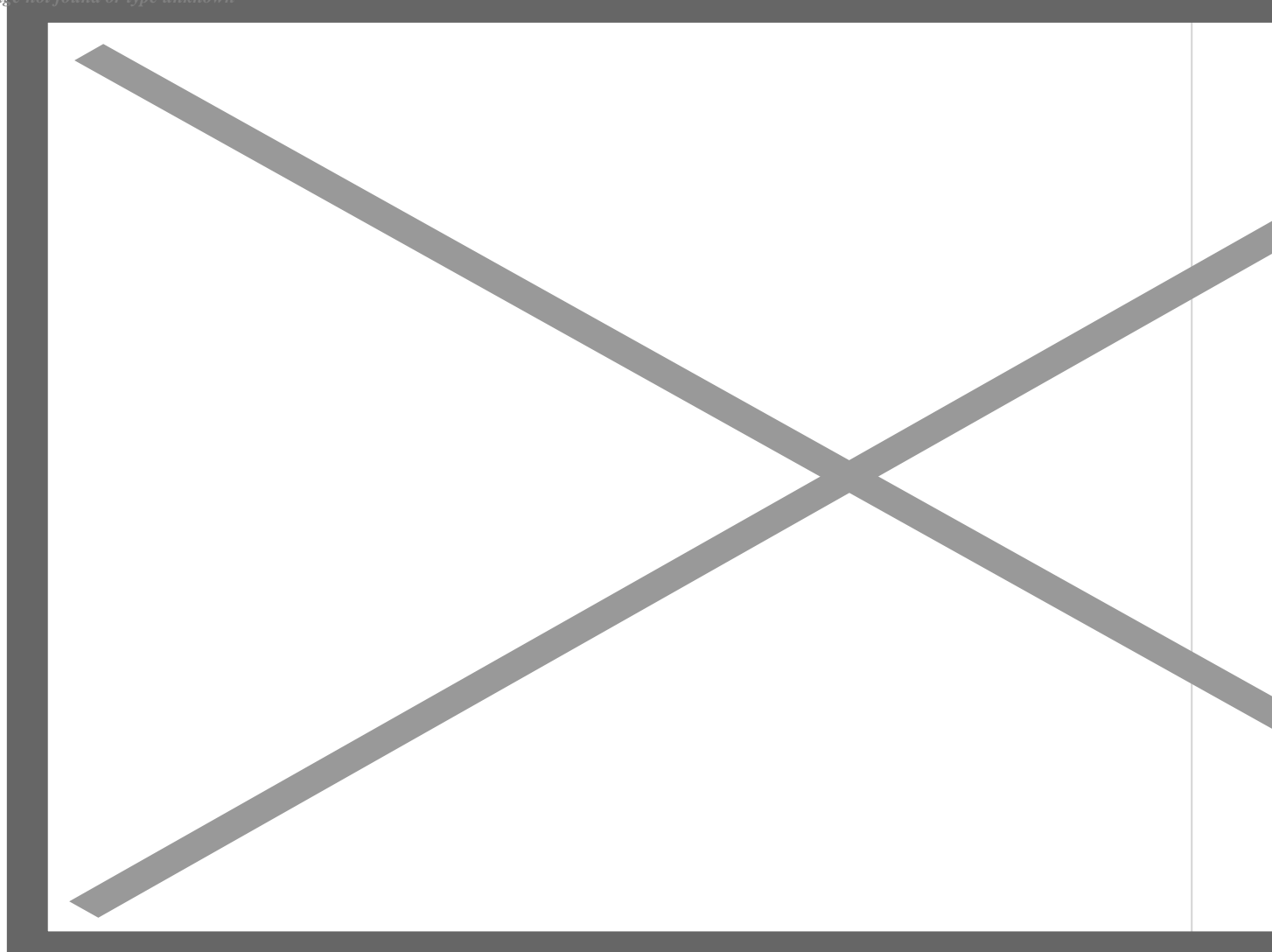


Secretary-general of Hezbollah says Israel will pay with blood for killing Lebanese civilians

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Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, the secretary-general of Lebanon's Hezbollah resistance movement,

delivers a televised speech from the Lebanese capital of Beirut on February 16, 2024.

Beirut, February 17 (RHC)-- The secretary general of Lebanon's Hezbollah says the Israeli regime will "pay with blood" the price for the recent killing of civilians in the country's south, stressing that the massacre will not force the resistance movement to back down from supporting Palestinians in the besieged Gaza Strip.

Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah made the remarks in a televised speech broadcast live from the Lebanese capital city of Beirut on Friday on the occasion of Hezbollah's Martyred Leaders Day, which annually falls on February 16th.

The speech came two days after an Israeli strike targeted a building in the southern Lebanese city of Nabatiyeh, claiming the lives of seven members of a family, including a child. In a separate attack by the illegal entity, a woman and her two children were also killed in the village of as-Sawana in southern Lebanon. Nasrallah condemned the Israeli strikes on Nabatiyeh and as-Sawana as "deliberate massacres," and said Tel Aviv must know that it "went too far" by its targeting of civilians.

"The enemy will pay the price for the killing of our women and children with blood. The price of this blood will be blood, not sites, spy devices, and vehicles, and I will leave the matter to the battlefield," the Hezbollah chief said. "The enemy is killing our leaders, fighters and families and it is destroying our homes, but this will not push us to retreat or give up on our responsibilities."

Stressing that the Israeli regime's goal from killing civilians is to pressure the resistance to stop, Nasrallah said, "We are in the heart of a real battle on a front that extends more than 100 kilometers, and the martyrdom of our fighters is part of the battle."

The Hezbollah leader said the recent targeting of Kiryat Shmona settlement in the north of the occupied territories with dozens of Katyusha rockets was an "initial response" to Wednesday's bloodshed, adding that the Lebanese resistance has enormous and accurate missile capabilities that can extend from Kiryat Shmona in the north to Eilat in the south.

Touching on the issue of resistance and its ensuing results, Nasrallah praised the sacrifices made by the resistance front's fighters in the region and said the cost of surrender is "hefty." "Some are talking about the cost of resistance and its consequences in Lebanon, and these people are calling on us to surrender. The truth is that we are before two choices — resistance or surrender — and the price of surrender is hefty, dangerous and very critical," he said.

"Surrendering means submission, humiliation, slavery, and disdain for our elders, our children, our honor, and our wealth," he added. "The price of surrender in Lebanon meant Israel's political and economic hegemony over our country."

"Despite everything the enemy and the Zionists are committing in the West Bank and Gaza, the Americans and Israelis must understand that in Palestine they are facing people who will not back down," the secretary general of Hezbollah pointed out.

Nasrallah also thanked the Yemeni armed forces for launching retaliatory strikes against US and UK ships in support of Palestinians and stressed that "The main battle is in Gaza." The Hezbollah chief censured Washington for its unswerving support for Israel in its genocidal war in Gaza and said the US officials are "primarily responsible for every drop of blood spilled in the region."

"Without American military support, the Israeli war on Gaza could have immediately stopped," Nasrallah said, adding: "Despite taking in every dollar of Western aid, Israel has failed to achieve its stated goals in the Gaza war and will continue to do so."

Nasrallah said the Israeli regime was working “to displace the Palestinians and establish a purely Jewish state,” and that the goal of the siege of the Gaza Strip was “to bring it to death in silence and without shaking the world.”

The Hezbollah leader, however, underlined that the resistance in Lebanon and Palestine “broke the balance of Israeli deterrence, shattered its image, and created a balance of deterrence and protection.” He added, “No matter what we say and explain, our words will be incapable of describing the legendary resistance in Gaza and the legendary steadfastness of the people of Gaza.”

Nasrallah also said the Israelis and the Americans did not expect that the resistance in Lebanon would have “the will and courage to open the front to support Gaza.”

Israel launched a devastating war on Gaza on October 7, 2023, after the territory’s resistance movements carried out a surprise retaliatory attack, dubbed Operation Al-Aqsa Storm, against the occupying entity.

The Israeli military has also been carrying out attacks against the Lebanese territory since then, prompting retaliatory strikes from Lebanon’s resistance movement Hezbollah in support of Gazans.

The movement has vowed to keep up its reprisal operations as long as the Tel Aviv regime continues its onslaught on Gaza. The aggression against Gaza has so far claimed the lives of over 28,500 Palestinians, mostly women and children, leaving more than 68,000 others wounded.

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