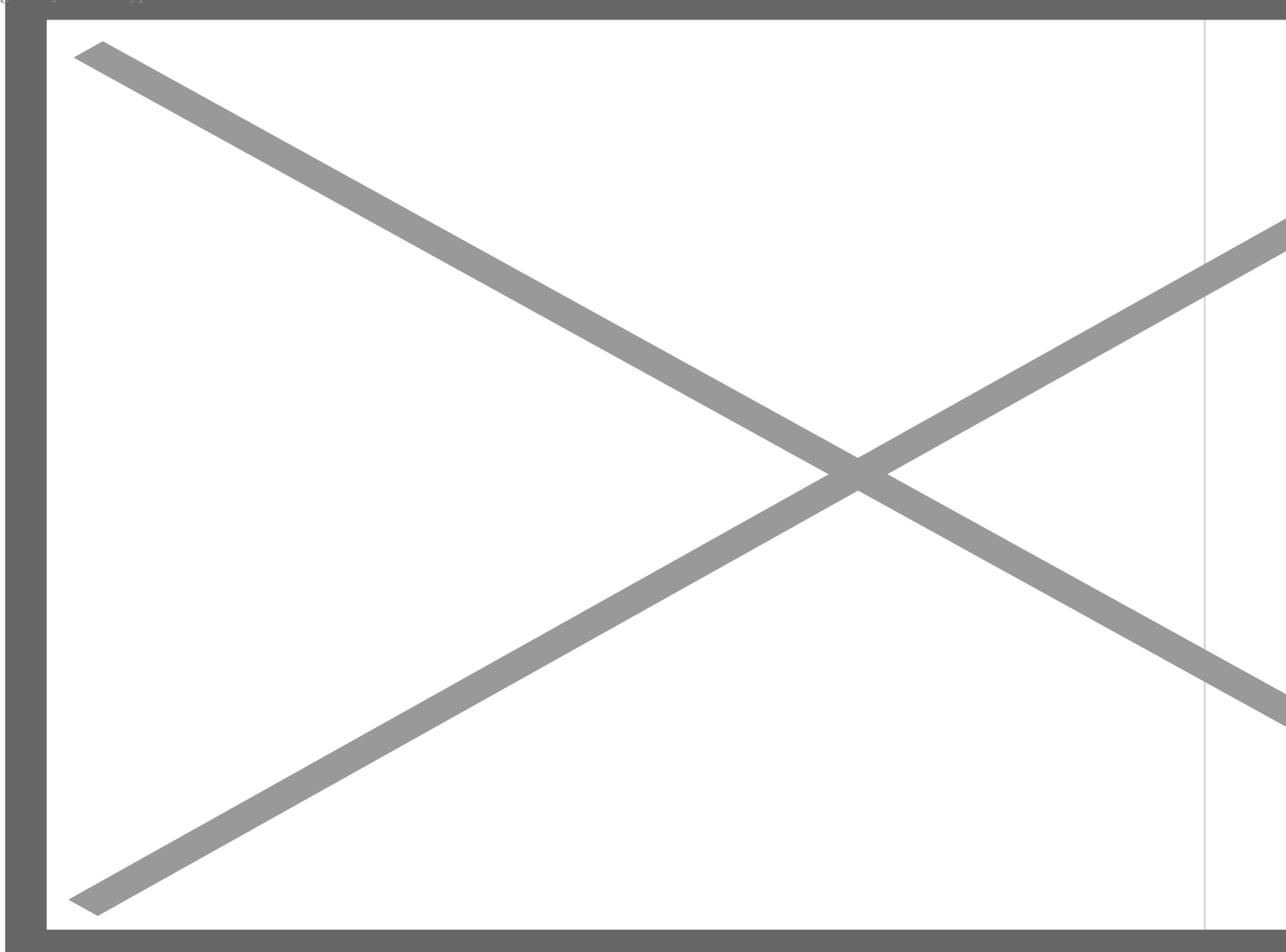


EX-CIA chief says Israel's deadly attack in Lebanon form of terrorism and warns of repercussions

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Washington, September 23 (RHC)-- A former U.S. defense secretary and director of the CIA spy agency has acknowledged that Israel's deadly attack in Lebanon involving the explosion of telecommunication devices is "a form of terrorism."

"I don't think there's any question that it's a form of terrorism," Leon Panetta said in an interview with CBS News on Sunday. "This is going right into the supply chain... And when you have terror going into the supply chain, it makes people ask the question, what the hell is next?"

On Tuesday and Wednesday, thousands of booby-trapped pagers and walkie-talkie radios belonging to members of the Hezbollah resistance group detonated across Lebanon in simultaneous blasts. The explosions took place in public places, killing 39 people and wounding 3,000 others, among them children.

A preliminary investigation by the Lebanese authorities found that the devices were implanted with explosives before arriving in the Arab country and that they were detonated via electronic messages.

Reports said the mass murder was the result of a supply-chain hack performed in a joint effort between the Israeli military and the Mossad spy agency.

Also in his interview, Panetta said that Israel's terror tactic would have repercussions. "And we really don't know what those repercussions are going to be. The forces of war are largely in control right now. What's going on?"

On Thursday, Hezbollah chief Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah said the massacre was a "declaration of war" by Israel, warning the occupying regime of a "tough retribution and just punishment."

Hezbollah and Israel have been exchanging deadly fire since early October, shortly after latter launched a genocidal war on the Gaza Strip following a surprise operation by the Palestinian Hamas resistance group.

Hezbollah has vowed to keep up its retaliatory attacks as long as the Tel Aviv regime continues its brutal Gaza onslaught, which has so far killed at least 41,431 Palestinians, mostly women and children, and injured 95,818 others.

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