



## For Immediate Release

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### ISW Publishes New Report: Hezbollah in Syria

This week the Institute for the Study of War released a comprehensive report on Hezbollah's growing involvement in Syria from 2013 to the present.

As of early 2013, Hezbollah's engagement in Syria has become one of the most significant factors of the conflict. Syria is critical to both Iran and Hezbollah as an element of the "Axis of Resistance," serving as a key Arab ally and as a logistical hub for Hezbollah. Hezbollah's presence in Syria has not only enabled the regime to gain control of rebel strongholds, but also enhanced the ability of pro-regime forces to carry out operations. They have transferred valuable expertise in urban and guerrilla warfare to the developing Syrian National Defense Forces (NDF) and have bolstered Syrian Arab Army units strained by years of conflict. The capacity of Iranian, Hezbollah, and Iraqi fighters to deploy beyond borders and conduct continuous operations has given the Axis of Resistance an important tool by which to advance its interests. According to statements made by Hezbollah's leader, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, any fall of the regime seems unlikely. "The danger of the Syrian regime's fall has ended," Nasrallah commented in a recent interview. Nasrallah appears confident in the regime's ability to defeat the opposition and maintain dominance on the battlefield.

Despite statements made in late 2012 by Nasrallah, claiming the organization was not fighting alongside the regime, public burials of Hezbollah fighters killed in Syria bolstered U.S. and opposition claims of the group's growing presence. "**Hezbollah in Syria**," by Marisa Sullivan, analyzes Hezbollah's increasing involvement in Syria from its leading role in the assault on al-Qusayr in April 2013 to its continued support in Damascus and the Qalamoun mountain region bordering Lebanon. As Sullivan states in her report, "Hezbollah's offensive in al-Qusayr also marked an important rhetorical shift. Hezbollah no longer defended its activities as those solely in defense of Lebanese Shi'a communities, but openly committed to ensuring Assad remained in power." With Hezbollah's open commitment to the regime and the sizable presence of Iraqi and Iranian fighters in Syria, the Axis of Resistance has become a more integrated and experienced fighting force.

[\*\*Read the report here.\*\*](#)

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