



DAME LOUISE ELLMAN MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR LIVERPOOL RIVERSIDE

Tuesday, 22nd October 2019

Rt Hon Dominic Raab MP
Secretary of State
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
King Charles Street
London, SW1A 2AH

Ref: HoC/JEF

Dear Dominic,

I write to express my extreme concern in relation to Hezbollah's efforts to obtain precision missiles.

In 2006, UN Security Council resolution 1701 brought an end to the terrible Second Lebanon War. The terms of that resolution were clear. It required "no sales or supply of arms and related materiel to Lebanon except as authorised by its Government".

Iran has repeatedly breached these terms in supplying arms to its proxy army, Hezbollah. In defiance of UNSCR 1701, Hezbollah has been allowed not simply to rebuild, but also to vastly strengthen its arsenal. Hezbollah held around 15,000 rockets and missiles on the eve of the 2006 war. Today, it is estimated to possess between 100,000-130,000 missiles, many hidden in houses and among civilian infrastructure in villages in southern Lebanon. Hezbollah fired an average 118 missiles indiscriminately at Israel during the 2006 war, it is estimated it could now fire at least 1,200.

A recent BICOM report shows that, whilst in 2006, Hezbollah was able only to deploy short-range, unguided missiles, it is now enhancing its capability. It already possesses 14,000 Zelzal 2 and scud missiles with a range of 200-400km and in recent years has been working with Iran to upgrade this weaponry to have precision capability, principally by fitting GPS guidance packs on to medium-range missiles.

Hezbollah has so far converted between 20 and 200 of its missiles. However, even a small number of precision missiles could do serious damage to Israel, given its size and the density of its population. Israel's most populated cities, power stations, international airport and two of its three commercial ports are located in an area 20km wide and 80-100km in length.

Hezbollah has previously vowed to attack Israel's nuclear reactor, power stations, Haifa oil refinery, as well as military targets, and neither it nor Iran have made any secret of the precision missile project. Hezbollah has also repeatedly made clear that its goal is nothing less than the destruction of Israel. As the terror group stated in 1992: "The war is only until Israel ceases to exist and the last Jew in the world has been eliminated. Israel is completely evil and must be erased from the face of the Earth." Similarly, Iran has for more than 40 years called for the annihilation of Israel, which its Supreme Leader, Grand Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, has termed a "cancerous tumour of a state" that "should be removed from the region".

The prospect of a conflict between Israel and Hezbollah caused by Iran's aggressive expansionism is terrifying. It could lead to a huge number of civilian deaths both in Lebanon and Israel.



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I would therefore urge that Britain works with the United States and our European allies to help prevent such a conflict. This should initially include a public warning to Hezbollah and the government of Lebanon that the precision missile project is a direct violation of UNSCR 1701. If unheeded, this warning should be followed by a comprehensive package of tough sanctions against those involved in the project from Hezbollah and Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.

I would be grateful for the government's response and I look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Louise".

Louise Ellman MP
Chair, Labour Friends of Israel