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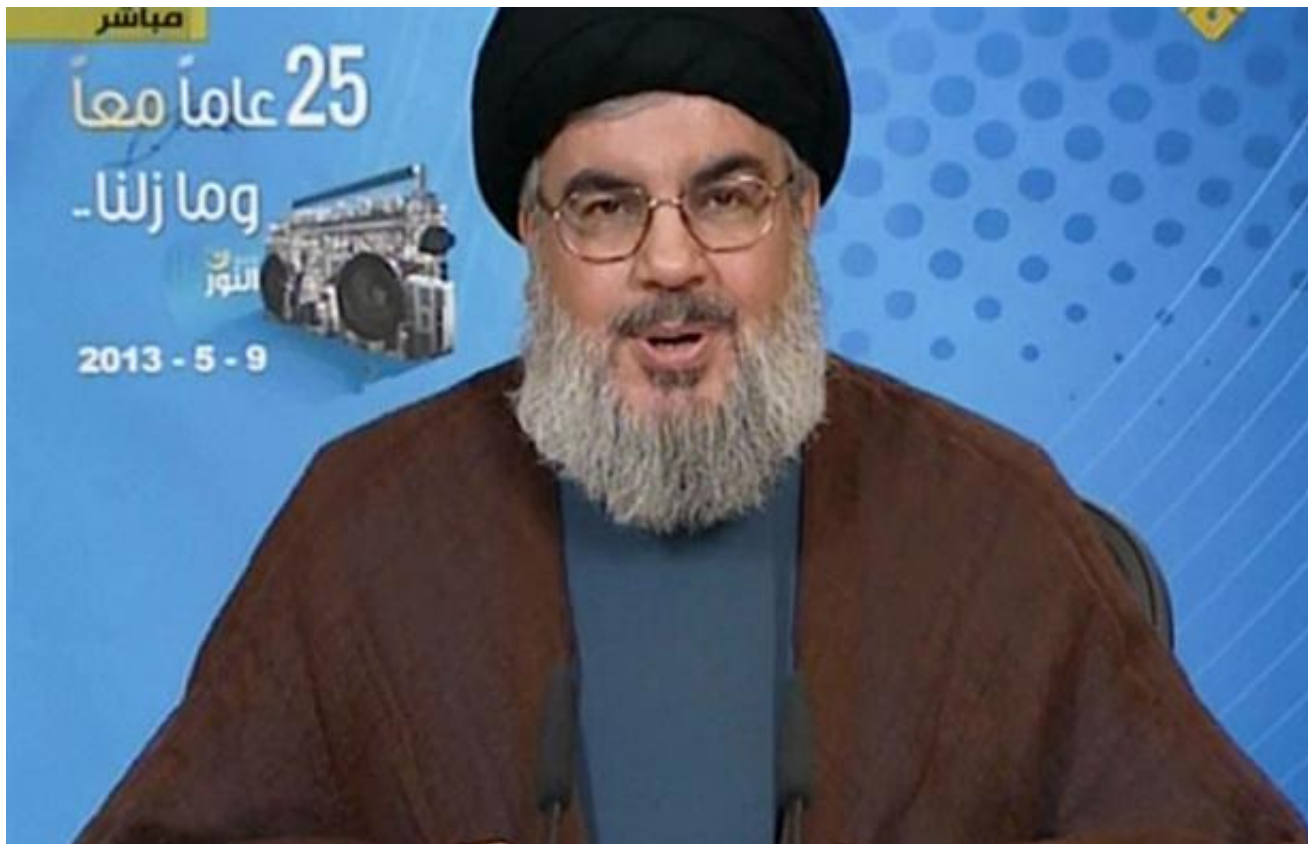
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Nasrallah defiant after Israel's Syria strikes

The leader of Hezbollah declared Syria and his party would face Israel in the Golan Heights.



Hezbollah's leader on Thursday responded defiantly to Israel's recent air strikes in Syria, saying his group would receive advanced weaponry from Syria and support the "liberation of the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights."

"Syria will give the resistance qualitative weapons, which the resistance has never received before," Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah said in reference to Israel's repeated warnings that the transfer of game-changing weapons to Hezbollah was a red line.

"We, the resistance in Lebanon, announce that we are ready to receive any sort of qualitative weapons even if it is going to disrupt the [regional] balance," Nasrallah added.

He said that Syria also responded to Israel's reported raids by "opening the Golan front" between both rival countries.

"We announce that we stand by the popular resistance in the Golan and we offer military and moral support for it to liberate the occupied Golan," Hezbollah's chief said.

"The resistance will operate freely in the Golan, which frightens Israel and [is why Tel Aviv] began to send messages [to restore] calm."

Israel reportedly targeted military sites near the capital Damascus early on Friday morning and again early on Sunday morning, with at least 42 soldiers reported dead in the second strike.

The Jewish state has repeatedly warned it will intervene to prevent the transfer of advanced weaponry to Hezbollah, and media reports have said the strikes in Syria targeted weapon transfers to the Shiite group.

The PFLP-GC announced Tuesday that it was given a "green light" by Damascus to strike Israel, after Syria's *Al-Watan* newspaper said that Syria had approved beginning "resistance" operations against the Jewish state in the Golan.

Nasrallah also tackled Lebanese politics, saying his party would vote in favor of the Orthodox law if it came to a vote in the crunch parliament session on the issue set to begin May 15.

The Future Movement and caretaker Prime Minister Najib Miqati have both said they would boycott the upcoming parliament session if the law—which calls for proportional voting along sectarian lines—came to a vote.

In remarks published Wednesday, Speaker Nabih Berri said that he will convene the parliament to meet from May 15 to May 18 to tackle a new electoral law, and if no agreement is reached on one, then existing draft laws would be put to a vote.

Nasrallah also reiterated Hezbollah's desire for parties to be represented in the cabinet based on their representation in the parliament, after Prime Minister-designate Tammam Salam announced earlier in the day that he would not grant a "blocking third" veto in the government to any coalition in the country.

Lebanon's political parties are jockeying over the composition of the new government as Salam has set to work on creating a cabinet to replace the resigned cabinet.