

Transatlantic Declaration

EUROPE MUST BAN HEZBOLLAH

WE, LAWMAKERS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE ATLANTIC AND UNITED ACROSS PARTY LINES,

call on the European Union to designate Hezbollah in its entirety as a terrorist organization. Following the 2012 suicide bombing in Bulgaria that killed six people, the EU banned only Hezbollah's so-called military wing, stopping short of confronting the terror group with the full force of its sanctions mechanism.

We thus urge the EU to end this false distinction between 'military' and 'political' arms – a distinction Hezbollah itself dismisses – and ban the entire organization.

HEZBOLLAH, the Iranian regime's most deadly proxy, operates a global terror network that threatens not only its neighbors but also Western democracies. In Germany alone, Hezbollah has over 1,000 members who are free to raise funds. The group's violent and antisemitic ideology is poisoning the fabric of our pluralistic societies. This is most visibly the case through Hezbollah's annual 'Quds Day' marches where calls for the annihilation of the Jewish state echo the darkest chapters of European history.

Founded and funded by Tehran and sustained through organized crime, Hezbollah holds Lebanon hostage to its Iranian revolutionary agenda. Moreover, it spreads violence and terror throughout the entire region. Hezbollah collaborates with the murderous Assad regime and is complicit in horrific war crimes that have killed, maimed and driven out millions of Syrians. The group trains and supplies weapons to Shiite militias in Yemen and Iraq. In violation of UN Security Council resolution 1701, Hezbollah has rearmed to the teeth and remains an independent militia in Lebanon. It abuses its own civilian population as human shields to hide some 150,000 missiles targeting Israeli civilians.

As the examples of the U.S., the Netherlands, Canada, the UK, the Gulf Cooperation Council, and the Arab League show, proscribing Hezbollah doesn't preclude continued political engagement with Beirut.

Banning Hezbollah also won't "destabilize" the country, as some falsely claim. The opposite is true. The only chance for real economic and political stability in Lebanon lies in the removal of Hezbollah's stranglehold on the country. The courageous Lebanese protestors taking to the streets against corruption and political violence specifically denounce Hezbollah's 'state within a state.' They deserve our full support. An EU ban against the Iranian proxy will help strengthen these democratic forces.

THE EUROPEAN UNION, which stands for democracy, human rights, and the rules-based international order, ought to use its power to put Hezbollah on notice. With nothing less than our collective security and the integrity of our democratic values at stake, now is the time to act.