

TOP SECRET

OPERATION CERBERUS WEST

THEATER INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

SYRIA & LEBANON

MAY 3RD, 2014

JOINT PUBLICATION

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

US interests in the Middle East run deep. The region's importance in global oil production and movement of trade are critical to the global economy, while major security interests include preventing the development of weapons of mass destruction and spread of anti-western terror organizations. Israel and its security is also a key factor in US activity in the Middle East. Close relationships are maintained with a number of nations such as Egypt, Jordan, Turkey and Saudi Arabia, with the US maintaining a strategic interest in these nation's success and security.

In the context of the present day the US supports regime change in Syria, offering military support to the SDF, while seeking to avoid direct confrontation with Russia, who are committed to supporting the Syrian Government. The rise of extremist Islamic organizations in Syria, Iraq and Lebanon also pose a significant threat to the US, Israel and NATO nations, a threat that the US will clearly not tolerate.

This stance has led to a major deployment of US forces under Operation Cerberus West, in support of the Lebanese Government and the United Nations Stabilization Force in Lebanon.

US forces on the ground as part of the UNSFL and advisers operating in Syria alongside the SDF have necessitated the deployment of further US air power to the region. USAF assets have been deployed to both Cyprus and Jordan, supported by the arrival of the Truman Carrier Strike Group in the eastern Mediterranean.

The situation in the Middle East remains a highly dangerous one, with western and Russian forces operating in close proximity as they pursue opposing strategic goals. The continued rise of extremist terror groups, insurgency in Lebanon and the ongoing war in Syria are all symptoms of a region under immense pressure.

The following briefing has been put together under a joint publication between the US Army, US Air Force and US Navy and will outline the current situation in Syria and Lebanon.

Recent History of Syria & Lebanon

Following the Arab Spring of 2011 and the subsequent crackdown from the Syrian regime, Syria became highly fractured and entered a period of civil war, with the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) emerging as the primary opponent to the Russian supported Syrian Government forces. The resulting power vacuum in areas of Syria supported the growth of the extremist Islamic organization known as the Syrian Islamic Army (SIA), who were able to spread west from eastern Iraq and lay claim to a wide swathe of territory in Eastern Syria.

As the war progressed, the escalating attacks on civilian areas in the SDF held north and the emerging SIA threat in the east became intolerable to the western powers and the Joint Syrian Task Force (JSTF) was formed. The JSTF's mission was two-fold, the defeat of the SIA, and the enforcement of no fly zones over northern Syria in order to protect civilians in SDF held territory. In reality the JSTF experienced a degree of mission creep, slowly being drawn further and further into the fighting. The SIA were quickly defeated as a conventional military threat, but disjointed asymmetric attacks have continued throughout Syria since, with a notable attack at Incirlik airbase in Turkey highlighting the potential reach and danger the SIA maintained.

With the support of the JSTF, the SDF made strong initial gains and pushed their way south towards Damascus. With the Syrian Government forces under strong pressure from the SDF and with its position looking ever more precarious, the Russians undertook a major resupply effort to help relieve the beleaguered Syrian forces. This, along with the arrival in theater of Syrian allied Hezbollah, had a significant effect on the battlefield. In turn, and with the attacks on civilian areas continuing, the JSTF was drawn further into the fighting, providing direct air support to the SDF and striking a wide range of Syrian military, government and military-industrial targets.

As Hezbollah forces continued to pour into Syria, especially in the south of the country, and with SIA elements still roaming free, Israel found the situation intolerable and launched a surprise attack into southwestern Syria from the Golan heights in late August 2013, determined to help tip the battle for Syria in favor of the SDF. The Israeli attack floundered in its early stages, met by stronger than expected resistance from the combined strength of what was later found to be Syrian, Russian mercenary and Hezbollah forces. However with the establishment of JSTF/Israeli air superiority over the battlefield the Israeli attack eventually prevailed, and a significant percentage of the Syrian army was destroyed in the ensuing battle.

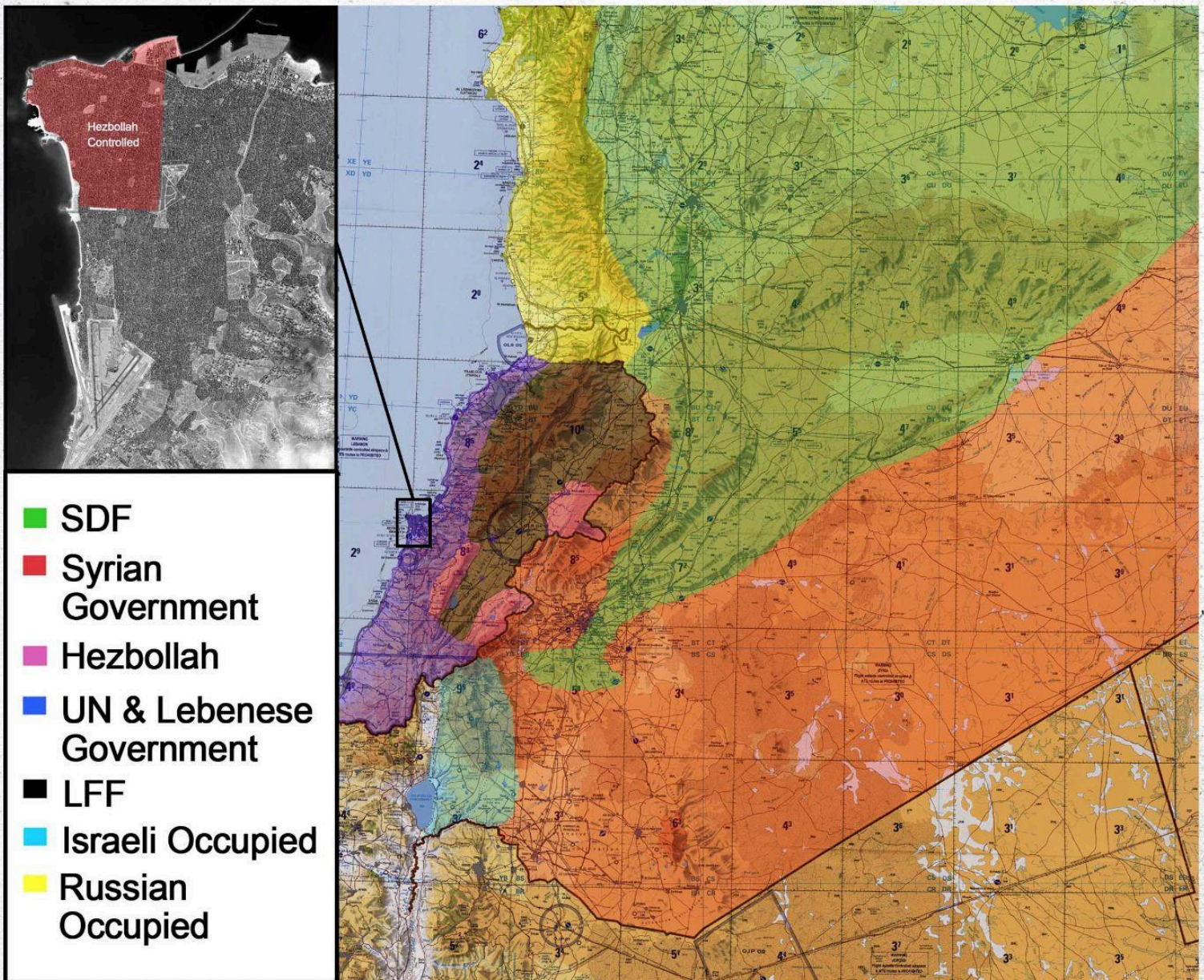
The Israeli intervention provided the breathing room the SDF needed, and by late October 2013, the SDF finally broke through to the outskirts of Damascus. This success was tempered however by the intervention of Russian ground forces in the north, putting northern SDF positions under pressure and stemming the flow of supplies south from the northern SDF strongholds. This is how the situation in Syria remains in 2014, with active fighting in and around Damascus and further north around Homs. Neither side currently appears to have the capability to force a breakthrough and decisively defeat the other, and the presence of both active Russian and NATO forces on opposing sides has been a major concern to either side, preventing both from unleashing their full support.

Hezbollah, forced to fight the IDF in open combat they are unsuited to, suffered a heavy defeat in Syria at the hands of the Israelis. Hezbollah forces retreated to their territory in Lebanon to regroup, but soon came under attack from Lebanese pro-government sectarian militia groups, seeking an opportunity to finally displace Hezbollah from its position of power within Lebanon and drawing a reluctant Lebanese government into the fighting. The situation in Lebanon was further destabilized by the large influx of refugees pouring into the country from Syria.

Amongst them were remnants of the SIA who quickly set to work on bringing some of the disenfranchised and impoverished refugees over to their cause, once again finding room to spread their ideology in the vacuum left by the fighting, eventually re-emerging as the Lebanese Freedom Front (LFF) and embarking on an insurgency of their own.

Lebanon now finds itself in the opening stages of a new civil war as conflict between the government, Hezbollah and LFF continues to grow. A humanitarian crisis has been declared, with the Lebanese economy failing and food supplies to parts of the country controlled by the LFF. Following a request from the Lebanese government and given the situation in Syria, the risk to the large number of refugees already in Lebanon and for fear of conflict continuing to spread, the United Nations has authorized a multinational operation in Lebanon to remove the LFF and help the Lebanese government stabilize the country. The US component of this operation has been named Operation Cerberus West, which commenced in April 2014.

AREAS OF CONTROL - SYRIA & LEBANON



As of April 2014, the SDF controls the majority of northern Syria, including the major cities of Homs and Aleppo. SDF control extends south as far as Damascus, encompassing the eastern suburbs of the capital.

The Syrian Government remains in control of the majority of Damascus, with its territory extending west to the border with Lebanon, as well as maintaining strong control over most of southern Syria and large parts of the east, having reclaimed territory from the SIA.

Israel continues to hold the territory it captured in its 2013 offensive, with a new frontline extending several miles out from the previous border of the Golan Heights. Syrian and Israeli forces regularly exchange sporadic fire across the frontline, but both sides seem content to maintain largely defensive postures at this time.

Although officially Syrian territory, the northwestern coastal area of Syria is under de facto Russian control, with a strong Russian military presence in this area. The Russian forces have pushed south into the tip of northern Lebanon, occupying the air strip of Rene Mouawad and using this territory to launch attacks to the east against the SDF.

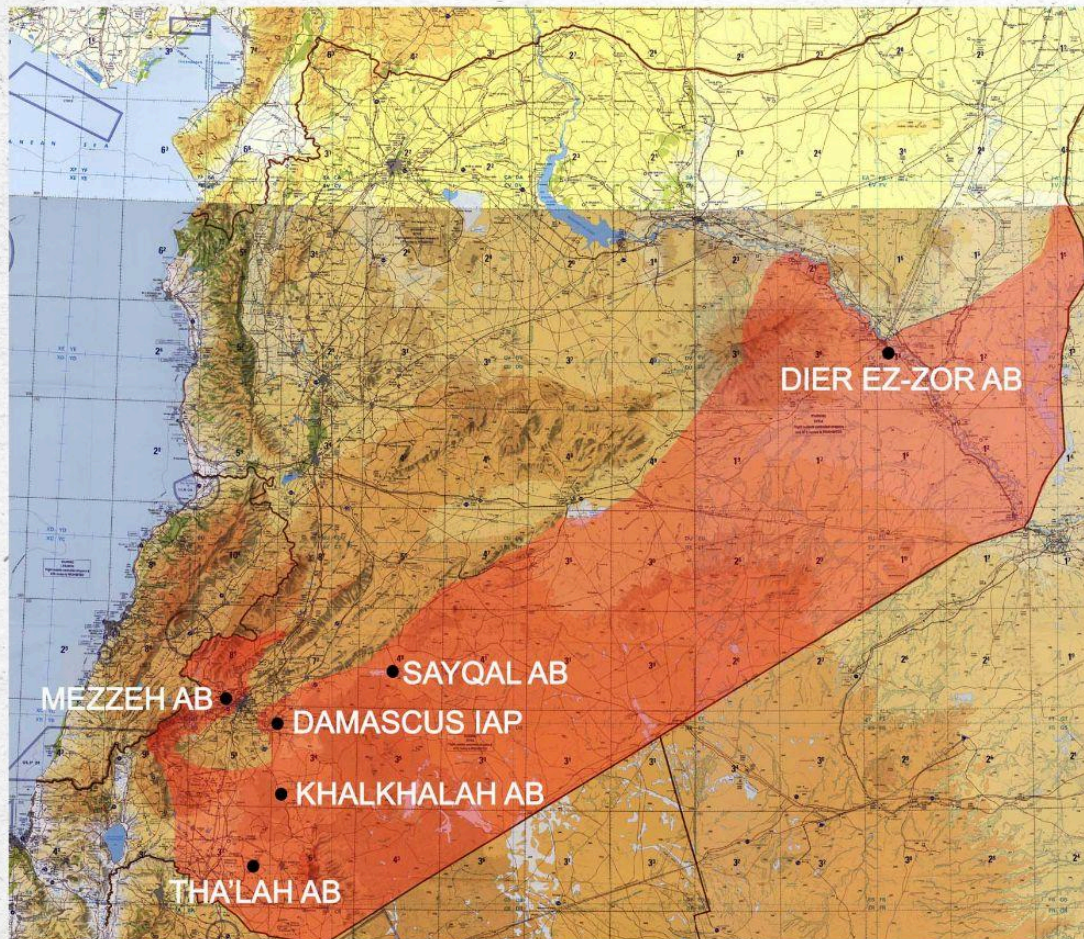
In Lebanon, the UN backed, Lebanese Government holds the western, coastal region and the south, where heavy UN intervention has forced a weakened Hezbollah out. All major, western cities remain under government control, although a large part of West Beirut is controlled by Hezbollah. The LFF controls the majority of the Bekaa Valley, with territory also extending west into the Lebanon mountains and threatening to expand further west into the coastal plains.

Syrian Government Forces

At the start of the civil war in 2011, Syria was considered to be a significant military power, boasting a well equipped army of over 200,000 soldiers and 4,000 tanks, a large air force and a sophisticated integrated air defense system. However after several years of fighting against the SDF, escalating clashes with the JSTF and Israelis, and through widespread defections, Syria has lost a considerable part of it's military capability. Estimates are a reduction in the Syrian Arab Army (SAA) of up to 75%, although precise numbers are hard to come by. However even a 75% reduction in force size still leaves a potentially large number of troops and equipment within the ranks of the SAA, with a current estimated strength of around 50,000 soldiers and potentially up to 1000 tanks and IFVs still in it's inventory.

The Syrian Arab Air Force (SyAAF) has also been hit hard, with a large number of Syrian airbases lost to the SDF and numerous shootdowns achieved by both the JSTF and IAF. The SyAAF remains in control of 5 airbases in the south, and although heavily reduced in numbers still possess a number of air to air and air to ground aircraft, such as Mig-21, Mig-23, Mig-29 and SU-24. There are no current reliable estimates on the number of active aircraft in the SyAAF. The Syrian Air Force also operates a number of rotary wing aircraft, consisting of Mi-8, Gazelle and Mi-24s.

The Syrian Integrated Air Defense System (IADS) took heavy losses during Operation Cerberus North, with the USAF's Wild Weasels destroying significant numbers of SAM sites. The Syrian IADS is now a shadow of it's former self, but following limited Russian resupply has re-established air defense capability over Syrian military positions, although this is limited to mostly older SAM systems such as SA-3 and SA-6. However Syria is still in possession of large amounts of AAA and MANPAD systems.



**SYRIAN GOVERNMENT
KEY MILITARY LOCATIONS**

Syria continues to receive military support from Russia, through both the supply of arms and through direct military action. This support has been essential in keeping Syria in the fight, and has made things extremely difficult for the SDF. The Syrian and Russian will to fight has shown no sign of abating, with relentless attacks by air and with artillery on SDF held territory.

While Russia is so strongly supporting Syria it is unlikely the SDF will have the capability of breaking the deadlock alone.

SDF

Founded in late 2011 from elements of the Free Syrian Army (FSA), the SDF is an alliance of various ethnic groups and militias, with Arab, Kurdish, Assyrian and Turkmen groups uniting to the cause of defeating the Syrian Government and securing a free, secular Syria and the formation of a new democratic government.

Following its formation, the SDF have made considerable progress in its military campaign in Syria, capturing large amounts of territory and now holding parts of Damascus. The support of the JSTF was critical in this success, and the current withdrawal of air support has been a factor in the slowing of the SDF advance.

The SDF still possesses a significant army, initially boosted by widespread defections of Syrian Government troops, but having also been heavily attrited in combat with Syrian and Russian forces. Estimates are that the SDF strength is currently around 40,000 troops, with up to 100 armored vehicles and tanks captured from Syrian inventories.

Lebanon

Lebanon is a country with a population of approximately 5.5 million people. It is a religiously diverse nation, consisting of a variety of Muslim, Christian, Jewish and Druze sects. Lebanese politics is formed around these religious sects, with the highest offices of Lebanon divided between the various Christian and Muslim communities.

A vibrant and prosperous nation in the 1950s and 60s, the modern history of Lebanon is a complicated one, defined by events such as the long running civil war (1975-1990), occupations by both Syria and Israel, the presence of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the rise of Hezbollah. The modern day conflicts of the middle east have all too often spilled over into Lebanon, with the presence of the PLO and later, Hezbollah, instigating offensive Israeli action in the country. In 1976, during the Lebanese civil war, Syria occupied parts of Lebanon, not withdrawing until 2005. Israel invaded Lebanon in 2006, in response to Hezbollah attacks on IDF soldiers. Southern Lebanon has been used by Hezbollah to strike Israeli territory often, with inevitable Israeli retaliation against Hezbollah positions.

Since it's formation in 1982 Hezbollah has played a significant role in the Lebanese state, controlling large parts of the country and being represented in Lebanese politics. With it's powerful military force, which outnumbers and outguns the Lebanese Armed Forces, it has long wielded significant power and influence in the country.

Another important element of the modern Lebanese story is that of refugees, with hundreds of thousands of Palestinians (displaced from what became Israeli territory in the 1948 and 1967 conflicts) fleeing to southern Lebanon. Refugee camps and slums still exist today all over Lebanon, with many still denied Lebanese citizenship and living in impoverished, appalling conditions. The Syrian civil war has seen a further influx of refugees, the majority of which are Syrian Sunnis fleeing the civil war and crack-down by the Syrian Government.

This complicated modern history drives the situation in Lebanon today. As the civil war demonstrated, there has been long running tensions in the country over the refugee situation along sectarian lines. The Lebanese government, divided along these same sectarian lines, has been ineffective at managing these tensions and too weak militarily to intervene when the country experiences conflict between it's more powerful neighbors. The weakening of Hezbollah in the events of the Syrian civil war opened the door to other sectarian militia groups to attempt to oust it from it's position of power. As the fighting spread across the country the Lebanese Armed Forces were drawn into the conflict and the ensuing destabilizing effect on the country gave room for the growth of the LFF in the northern Bekaa Valley and the resulting insurgency. Lebanon now finds itself at risk of a new full blown civil war, as Hezbollah, the government backed Lebanese Armed Forces and the LFF fight for control. Russian forces have also occupied the northern tip of Lebanon, using Lebanese territory to attack the SDF in support of Syria. This action was internationally condemned, but as so often is the case in modern Lebanon, it has once again become the battleground for rival powers.

Facing an insurgency and resulting humanitarian crisis, the Lebanese Government has requested the support of the United Nations in dealing with the LFF insurgency and helping to restore order to the country.

Lebanese Armed Forces

The Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) is a relatively small military force of approximately 70,000 personnel, historically operating a mix of both western and Soviet built equipment. An all volunteer force, the LFF is a competent if not underequipped and underfunded force. However with the aid of western nations the LAF is growing rapidly as it attempts to rebuild following years of civil war and occupation, a process that is now being accelerated by the west due to concerns over the emergence of the LFF in Lebanon. Within the last 6 months the LAF has taken delivery of a number of more advanced western built systems such as M2 Bradleys and the VAB Mephisto.

The LAF is split into three elements; the ground forces, air forces and the navy, with the ground forces far outnumbering the other two services.

The Lebanese Air Force operates a small fleet of Huey and Gazelle helicopters and transport aircraft, but no combat aircraft and almost no air defense capability beyond lighter anti aircraft guns and MANPAD systems.

The Lebanese Navy, numbering around 50 vessels in total, is limited to small coastal patrol boats.

As with senior government positions, the top roles in the LAF are divided along religious grounds, with the senior LAF commander role reserved for the Christian community. This has led to questions from some over the conduct of the LAF against other religious groups and the willingness of the LAF to ignore the actions of the Christian militias against the Shia Hezbollah and the predominantly Sunni LFF. This is a claim the Lebanese government strongly denies, but is nevertheless causing tension amongst the nations that constitute the UN's Lebanese deployment.

Hezbollah

Hezbollah (Party of Allah) is a Shia Islamist political body and militant group. Based in Lebanon, Hezbollah was established in the early 1980s by Lebanese clerics and based on a model created by Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini. Iran supported the formation of Hezbollah through extensive funding and training under the cause of the liberation of Lebanon from 'colonial influences' and the elimination of the state of Israel.

In the west, Hezbollah has been widely designated as a terrorist organization for some time, yet this risks greatly simplifying impressions of the organization's capabilities. Although being held responsible for many terror attacks (most significantly the 1983 bombing of US Marines in Beirut), Hezbollah actually possesses considerable *conventional* military capability and was partly responsible for driving the Israelis out of Lebanon in 2000 before fighting the IDF to a stalemate in the 2006 Lebanese War. Since 2006 the military capability of Hezbollah expanded significantly, to the point it was considered more powerful than the Lebanese Army. In fact Hezbollah's influence with Lebanon grew so much it was often referred to as a 'state within a state', holding seats in the Lebanese government and running radio and TV broadcasts.

Hezbollah's initial primary supporter was Iran, from which it received military training, weapons and financing - this support continued until the commencement of Operation Persian Freedom. Syria has also provided Hezbollah with political and military support in the past as well, but the ongoing Syrian civil war has now in fact reversed these roles, with Hezbollah intervening in the war on the side of the Syrian Government. This has subsequently raised the question of from where Hezbollah will receive the backing it has always previously relied on, given the decline of its two main sources of finance and weapons. The answer to this question may well define the future of Hezbollah.

Hezbollah's military arm is known to possess tens of thousands of rockets of various designs, modern anti tank weaponry, advanced cyber capabilities and recently even fielded more advanced equipment such as SA-6 and SA-8 SAM systems. The exact size of Hezbollah's army remains a closely held secret, but regional experts estimate around 20,000 fighters are available for Hezbollah at any one time, although following their intervention in the Syrian civil war the currently available force is likely to be smaller.

Hezbollah's involvement in the Syrian civil war has had a dramatic effect upon the organization, with many believing it was a major mis-calculation on the part of Hezbollah to become embroiled in the fighting, especially considering the demise of the Iranian regime it was primarily supported by. The combined might of both the JSTF and Israeli Defense Forces have had a serious detrimental effect on Hezbollah's capabilities, inflicting a heavy defeat on the militant group in the fighting in the Syrian south.

Considerably weakened militarily, Hezbollah forces withdrew from the Syrian civil war to regroup in its territories within the Bekaa Valley, where they soon came under attack from sectarian militia groups and the LFF. Hezbollah has since lost control of a significant portion of the Bekaa Valley to the LFF, but still holds onto pockets of territory in the southern Bekaa. Although Hezbollah is seriously weakened in comparison to its pre-war capabilities it still poses a significant threat militarily, and remains in possession of a large part of its rocket arsenal, which will continue to attract the attention of Israel, as well as of the UN forces in southern Lebanon. There is also likely to be no shortage of new fighters available for recruitment in the Shia dominated areas of Lebanon. In summary, Hezbollah may be weakened compared to its pre-war state, but is still a threat to other regional players that should not be ignored.

Lebanese Freedom Front

The Lebanese Freedom Front (LFF) is an extremist Sunni Islamic organization, formed out of an alliance of a number of Sunni militias, including the remnants of the largely defeated SIA (Syrian Islamic Army). These Militias were brought under control of the LFF leadership through a combination of violence and sharing of extremist ideology. The LFF as a coherent organization first emerged in late 2013 at the frontier town of Aarsal in the eastern Bekaa valley, aided by the now porous border with war-torn Syria. It was here where they first attacked Hezbollah controlled territory, quickly taking over and committing a number of suspected atrocities as they did so.

Since then the LFF has embarked on a large-scale insurgency across Lebanon, aiming to take over both Christian and Shia controlled territory. This insurgency has so far spread south across the Hezbollah held Bekaa Valley and west into the Lebanon mountains, from where the LFF are in a position to potentially threaten larger cities such as Tripoli and Beirut.

LFF tactics are similar to those employed by the SIA, consisting of widespread suicide attacks on both foot and by vehicle borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) and through the placement of IEDs. The LFF have also captured battlefield equipment from both Hezbollah and the LAF and are likely have a limited number of tanks and APCs available to them. LFF positions have been identified as being defended by captured AAA such as Russian made ZU-23 and S-60s, It is also highly likely that the LFF is in possession of numerous MANPAD systems.

As with the SIA before it, those populations under the control of the LFF face cruelty and barbarism as the LFF enforces it's will on those beneath it through methods such as public beheadings and widespread executions and maimings.

During it's insurgency, the LFF has taken over some of the notorious drug production sites in the Bekaa Valley, bringing in significant incomes through the export of Marijuana and Heroin to the west.

The LFF are considered to pose an extremely serious threat to the stability of the region.

Russia

A historical ally, Russia has strong links to Syria, having supported them through the Soviet era as Syria's major arms supplier. Russia has a real need to maintain Syria as a key strategic ally in the Middle East, with Russia's two major military bases in the region residing in Syria, at Bassel Al Assad airport and Tartus naval facility.

The Russians have proven to be determined to stop Syria coming under the west's sphere of influence and prop up the Syrian Government during the ongoing civil war, with escalating levels of response as the war has progressed. The Russian intervention began with air strikes against SDF held areas, including the targeting of civilian areas during their air campaign, a claim denied by Russia but widely accepted as true in the international community. As the Syrian position weakened under intense SDF and JSTF attacks, the Russians resolved to further stabilize the Syrian military through large deliveries of replacement arms.

Following the Israeli offensive and collapse of Hezbollah support in southern Syria, the Russians entered the ground war directly, deploying troops and armor into western Syria and northern Lebanon. Violating Lebanese territory, the Russians occupied the airport at Rene Mouawad, establishing a forward operating base from which it launched attacks against the SDF lines around Homs and Al Qusayr with moderate success. The Russian occupation of northern Lebanon has been roundly condemned, but with little impact on Russian actions.

The Russians are believed to have fielded up to 5,000 soldiers of the Russian Army, along with an undetermined number of modern main battle tanks and infantry fighting vehicles, as well as Mi-24 and Ka-50 attack helicopters. In addition, a number of Russian private military contractors (PMCs) are believed to be operating in Syria, with up to 15,000 mercenaries estimated to also be present in the Syrian theater. The majority of these forces belong to a large Russian PMC known as the Kazan Group, named after the city of Kazan where the company was founded. Kazan leadership is known to be highly loyal to the Russian Government, with strong anti-west viewpoints. The group has been suspected to be involved in a number of Russian military operations over the past 10 years and their presence in Syria has the potential to be a destabilising influence.

The Russian air force has deployed a variety of combat aircraft, with Mig-29, Mig-31, SU-25, SU-27 and SU-34 all present in theater.

The Russian's Mediterranean fleet has been reinforced with the addition of the battlecruiser Pytor Velikiy.

The Russian presence in Syria and Lebanon looks set to continue and there are no indications that Russia will withdraw any support from Syria in the near future. In fact the willingness of Russia so far to escalate it's actions when required suggests the opposite is far more likely. Russian involvement in the region brings a dangerous level of complication to the Syrian and Lebanese theaters, with the potential for any miscalculations with US/UN forces on the battlefield to escalate dangerously, and the need for deconfliction between western and Russian forces highly important. Russian PMCs complicate things further, who operating under a different set of rules to the Russian Army are believed to have been involved in attacks on US Special Forces supporting SDF units. Russia denies the presence of it's PMCs in theater and takes no overt responsibility for their actions and as such they are considered valid targets to UN forces. However the targeting of Russian PMCs should still only be undertaken with extreme care.

RUSSIAN BASES IN SYRIA & LEBANON



Israel

Israel has long been the dominant military force in the middle east, a position it has had to maintain to deter the very real threat to the nation's existence. Israel has a well equipped, highly trained and motivated military and has proven in numerous conflicts over the years that it is a far superior fighting force to it's Arab neighbors. Israel has also proven many times that it is only too willing to use force in defense of it's interests, either through covert means or overt military action. This was demonstrated once again when the IDF invaded Syrian territory during the Syrian civil war. The Israeli air force has also struck many targets within Syria and Lebanon during the war, concerned about Syrian, Hezbollah and SIA activity in the region.

Israeli activity in Syria has largely subsided since the retreat of Hezbollah and stabilization of the Israeli/Syrian front line. Israel continues to hold several miles of Syrian territory, extending out from the Golan Heights, this area remains heavily defended and Israeli forces show no sign of withdrawing anytime soon.

The ongoing instability in both Syria and Lebanon risks drawing Israel back into the fighting, who will not hesitate to strike when their security is threatened. The increased presence of Russian forces in theater increases the risk of potentially highly dangerous clashes between Israel and Russia.

Jordan

Jordan, a nation that is remarkably stable for this region, is so far largely unaffected by the Arab Spring. What instability Jordan does experience is often a result of it's more tolerant stance towards Israel and the US, which can clash with the feelings of some of it's population, not least the estimated 2 million Palestinian refugees residing in Jordan.

Jordan has one of the most professional and organized militaries in the region, with excellent training and support from the US, UK and France.

The country's relationship with the Syrian government has deteriorated since the start of the Syrian civil war, with the Syrian attacks on Sunni dominated areas of Syria being a major source of tension, as well as the resulting refugee crisis building on Jordans border with Syria.

Jordan had previously ruled itself out of any direct interventions in Syria or Lebanon, but has since deployed a small force to the newly formed United Nations force in Lebanon.

United Nations Stabilization Force in Lebanon (UNSFL)

The United Nations Stabilization Force in Lebanon (UNSFL) was established under a UN security council resolution in early 2014. It's mandate is to deploy a military force to Lebanon in support of the democratic Lebanese government, with the goal of defeating the LFF insurgency, securing Lebanon's borders with Syria and disarming the various militia groups across the country.

The very existence of the UNSFL is a complex political issue. The presence of Russian forces in northern Lebanon put the creation of the UNSFL in real doubt, with Russia threatening to veto any security council resolutions that may stifle it's operations in support of the Syrian government. The political compromise was an agreement that UNSFL operations would not be permitted in Russian operating areas and would be confined to Lebanon only. Russia and China ultimately abstained from the vote and the formation of the UNSFL was approved.

Assessments are that Russia is likely to ignore the actions of the UN force providing they abide by the terms of the agreement, as the fate of Lebanon is not of direct consequence to Russian goals in the region and the LFF poses as much a threat to Russian forces as to those of the UNSFL.

The formation of the UNSFL resulted in the standing down of UNIFIL, the UN peacekeeping force that was often a powerless spectator in Israeli and Hezbollah confrontations. UNIFIL itself had a complex history with the various factions in Lebanon, including Hezbollah, Israel and the various militias backed by both sides, with UNIFIL targeted by the various sides of this conflict on a number of occasions. The more powerful UNSFL, with serious backing from the majority of the world's leading military powers is expected to be a far bigger deterrent to such activities.

The United Nations deployment is a multinational force, with large contributions from the United States, United Kingdom and France, along with further contributions also made by Australia, Germany, Jordan, Turkey, Poland, Denmark, Nigeria and the UAE. The UNSFL is headquartered in Naqoura in southern Lebanon, under the control of a French commander.

Since deploying in southern Lebanon the UNSFL has rapidly moved to reinforce the LAF in Beirut and assert itself in the Bekaa Valley, coming into sporadic conflict with Hezbollah and LFF fighters. Within the opening month of UN operations several LFF suicide attacks have already been made on UN forces, resulting in over two dozen fatalities to date.

TOP SECRET

OPERATION CERBERUS WEST

GROUND VEHICLE RECOGNITION GUIDE

High Mobilty Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV)

The HMMWV, better known as the 'Humvee' is a light four wheel drive utility vehicle. Highly versatile, the Humvee comes in a number of configurations and can be used in differing roles such as troop carrier, ambulance, anti-tank platform, recon and even air defense.

OPERATORS IN THEATRE:**UNSFL, LAF****ARMOR:****Light****ARMAMENT:****Various - including .50 CAL MG, TOW ATGM, Stinger****CREW:****Up to 4 depending on configuration**

M113 Armored Personnel Carrier

The M113 is a US manufactured APC, capable of carrying 15 soldiers into battle. It's lightweight design means it is easily transportable, but has little resistance to weapons beyond small arms.

OPERATORS IN THEATRE:

UNSFL, LAF, SDF

ARMOR:

28-44mm Aluminum

ARMAMENT:

12.7mm MG

CREW:

2 plus 15 passengers

M1223 MaxxPro MRAP

The MaxxPro MRAP (Mine Resistant Ambush Protected) is an armoured fighting vehicle, designed to combat the extensive use of mines and IEDS against US & Coalition forces in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

OPERATORS IN THEATRE:**UNSFL****ARMOR:****V-shaped crew capsule mounted on chassis for enhanced mine/IED resistance.****ARMAMENT:****12.7mm MG****CREW:****2 plus 4-6 soldiers**

VAB Mephisto



The VAB Mephisto is a French built amphibious Tank Destroyer. Equipped with a quad launcher of wire guided HOT anti-tank missiles, the Mephisto is capable of engaging enemy armor at ranges up to 4km.

OPERATORS IN THEATRE:**LAF****ARMOR:**

Steel, providing resistance against small arms fire up to 7.62mm.

ARMAMENT:

Quad launcher HOT AT Missile (12 missiles)

CREW:**4**

M2 Bradley



The Bradley is a US built IFV, first fielded in 1983. Highly maneuverable, well armed and capable of transporting up to 6 troops into battle, the Bradley excels in the reconnaissance role. It's armament includes the TOW missile and offers the Bradley effective long range anti-tank capabilities.

OPERATORS IN THEATRE:

UNSFL, LAF

ARMOR:

Aluminium/Steel, protection against up to rounds of 20mm in calibre.

ARMAMENT:

Twin launcher of TOW AT Missile (7 missiles total)
25mm Chain Gun
7.62mm coaxial MG

CREW:

3 plus 6 passengers

Marder 1



The German manufactured Marder 1 IFV entered service with West Germany in 1971. Capable of carrying 6 soldiers into combat, the Marder offers mobility, protection from small arms and heavy firepower through its 20mm cannon.

OPERATORS IN THEATRE:

UNSFL

ARMOR:

Steel, protection against up to rounds of 25mm in calibre.

ARMAMENT:

20mm Chain Gun
7.62mm MG

CREW:

3 plus 6 passengers

Warrior



The Warrior is a British IFV capable of carrying up to 7 soldiers. Protection is provided by Aluminium armor, and the 30mm L21A1 cannon provides the Warrior with a heavy hitting offensive capability.

OPERATORS IN THEATRE:

UNSFL

ARMOR:

Aluminium, protection against small arms.

ARMAMENT:

30mm Cannon
Coaxial 7.62mm Chain Gun

CREW:

3 plus 7 passengers

Stryker ICV / Stryker MGS

The Stryker is a family of wheeled armored combat vehicles derived from the LAV III and LAV-25 vehicles. There are a number of variants of the Stryker in service, all of which share common hull, engine and transmission systems. Two variants of the Stryker have been deployed with the UNSFL - the Stryker Infantry Carrier Vehicle (ICV) and the Stryker Mobile Gun Sytem (MGS).

OPERATORS IN THEATRE:**UNSFL****ARMOR:**

Steel - frontal protection up to 14.5mm, all round protection up to 7.62mm.

ARMAMENT:

M151 Remote Controlled 12.7mm MG (ICV Variant)
105mm Cannon, 7.62mm MG (SPG Variant)

CREW:

2 plus 9 passengers (ICV Variant)
3 (SPG Variant)

BMP-2

The BMP-2 is a Russian produced IFV, capable of amphibious operations and able to carry 7 soldiers into battle. Equipped with both a 30mm autocannon and AT-5 anti-tank missiles the BMP-2 has a strong offensive capability.

OPERATORS IN THEATRE:

Syria, LFF

ARMOR:

Steel - frontal protection up to 23mm, all round protection up to 7.62mm.

ARMAMENT:

30mm Autocannon

AT-5 ATGM

7.62mm MG

CREW:

3 plus 7 passengers

BMP-3

The BMP-3 is a heavily armed Russian produced IFV, capable of transporting 7 soldiers into battle. The BMP-3 is equipped with a 100mm rifled gun, which can fire both shells and the AT-10 anti-tank missile, as well as carrying a 30mm autocannon.

OPERATORS IN THEATRE:

Syria, Russia

ARMOR:

Aluminium alloy/steel - frontal protection up to 30mm in caliber

ARMAMENT:

100mm cannon
30mm Autocannon
AT-10 ATGM
3 x 7.62mm MG

CREW:

3 plus 7 passengers

BTR-82

An evolution of the BTR-80 APC, the BTR-82 is an advanced 8x8 wheeled APC of Russian origin. Introduced in 2009, the BTR-82 is a modern system, equipped with GPS and advanced communications and fire control/targeting.

OPERATORS IN THEATRE:

Syria, Russia, LAF

ARMOR:

Kevlar Laminate for small arms protection

ARMAMENT:

30mm autocannon
7.62mm coaxial MG

CREW:

3 plus 7 passengers

T-55

The most produced tank in history, the T-55 is highly proliferated and can be found in service across a number of factions in the Syrian/Lebanese theater.

OPERATORS IN THEATRE:

SDF, LAF, Syria, LFF

ARMOR:

Up to 205mm frontal armor, significant armor reduction on the rear/sides

ARMAMENT:

100mm rifled gun
7.62mm coaxial MG
12.7mm AA gun

CREW:

4

T-72

The T-72 is a Russian built main battle tank, produced in high numbers and in service with a variety of armies around the world. There are two types of T-72 currently believed to be fielded in Syria, the T-72B and the T-72B3 (pictured). The T-72B was introduced in 1985, and was equipped with a 125mm cannon and explosive reactive armor (ERA). The B3, introduced just before the start of the Syrian civil war has an upgraded 125mm gun and ERA as well as the Refleks guided missile system, a new engine and a new fire control system.

OPERATORS IN THEATRE:

Syria, Russia, SDF

ARMOR:

Steel and composite, with ERA

ARMAMENT:

125mm smoothbore gun
7.62mm coaxial MG
12.7mm AA gun
Refleks guided missile

CREW:

3

T-90

Developed by Russia, the T-90 main battle tank is an evolution of the original T-72, featuring improved armament and fire control systems, an improved engine and more modern armor. Less proliferated than the T-72, the T-90 is less commonly found in the inventories of other nations. In Syria the T-90 has been deployed as part of the Russian Army/Russian PMC force.

OPERATORS IN THEATRE:**Russia****ARMOR:****Steel and composite, with ERA****ARMAMENT:****125mm smoothbore gun****7.62mm coaxial MG****12.7mm AA gun****Refleks guided missile****CREW:****3**

M-60

The M-60 series of main battle tanks are US built, first entering service in 1959. Highly proliferated, the M-60 has been fielded around the world, most notably by Israel in the 1973 Yom Kippur war and by the US in Operation Desert Storm, performing very effectively in both conflicts against Russian built equipment.

OPERATORS IN THEATRE:

SDF, LAF

ARMOR:

Steel composite

ARMAMENT:

105mm gun

7.62mm MG

12.7mm AA gun

CREW:

3

M1A2 Abrams



The M1 Abrams is a US built main battle tank. The Abrams is one of the most advanced MBTs in service today, equipped with a gas turbine engine, composite armor and modern fire control systems.

OPERATORS IN THEATRE:

UNSFL

ARMOR:

Composite

ARMAMENT:

120mm smoothbore gun

2 x 7.62mm MG

12.7mm MG

CREW:

4

Chieftain



The Chieftain is a British built main battle tank, operated by the Jordanian component of the UNSFL.

OPERATORS IN THEATRE:

UNSFL

ARMOR:

Composite

ARMAMENT:

120mm rifled gun
7.62mm coaxial MG
12.7mm MG

CREW:

4

BM-21 Grad

From the Russian word for 'hailstorm', the Grad is a Russian built self-propelled 122mm MLRS. Carrying 40 122mm rockets, the Grad can rapidly saturate an area with a devastating volley of fire. The Grad is in wide circulation in Syria.

OPERATORS IN THEATRE:

SDF, LAF, Syria, Russia

ARMOR:

None

ARMAMENT:

40 x 122mm rockets (various warhead options)

CREW:

3

BM-27 Uragan

The BM-27 Uragan (Russian for hurricane) is a Russian produced 220mm MLRS, capable of firing it's 16 220mm rockets in just 20 seconds.

OPERATORS IN THEATRE:

Syria, Russia

ARMOR:

None

ARMAMENT:

16 x 220mm rockets (various warhead options)

CREW:

6

BM-30 Smerch

The BM-30 Smerch is a Russian produced 12 barrelled, 300mm MLRS in service with the Russian Army.

OPERATORS IN THEATRE:

Russia

ARMOR:

None

ARMAMENT:

12 x 300mm rockets (HE/Cluster munitions)

CREW:

3

Scud



The Scud is a family of Russian manufactured tactical ballistic missile systems capable of hitting targets up to 700km away.

OPERATORS IN THEATRE:

Russia, Syria

ARMOR:

None

ARMAMENT:

1 x Scud ballistic missile

2S3 Akatsia

The Akatsia is a Russian produced self propelled howitzer, armed with a 152mm gun.

OPERATORS IN THEATRE:

Russia, Syria, SDF

ARMOR:

Up to 30mm armor

ARMAMENT:

152mm howitzer
7.62mm AA gun

CREW:

4

M109 Paladin

The M109 Paladin is a US produced self propelled howitzer, equipped with a 155mm gun.

OPERATORS IN THEATRE:

UNSFL, LAF

ARMOR:

Aluminium alloy

ARMAMENT:

155mm howitzer

12.7mm AA gun

CREW:

6

TOP SECRET

OPERATION CERBERUS WEST

THREAT ANALYSIS

Kirov Class Battlecruiser



THREAT SYSTEM:

S-300F SAM
S-300 FM SAM
4K33 OSA-M SAM
3M86 KORTIK CIWS x 6

THREAT RANGE:

65 NM
80 NM
6 NM
2-5 NM



NOTES:

The Kirov Battlecruiser poses an extremely high threat to aircraft. Armed with navalised versions of both the SA-10 and SA-20 SAM, the Kirov is very dangerous at ranges up to 80NM. In close the Kirov remains highly dangerous, being equipped with the naval version of the SA-8 and six CIWS stations containing the naval equivalent of the SA-19 - armed with both 30mm rotary cannons and 9M311 missiles.

The Russian battlecruiser 'Pyotr Velikiy' is currently deployed to the eastern Mediterranean.

Krivak Class Frigate



THREAT SYSTEM:

4K33 OSA-M SAM

THREAT RANGE:

6 NM



NOTES:

The Krivak class frigate is an anti-submarine platform but still poses a threat at close ranges from it's four OSA-M SAM launchers (naval SA-8).

The Russian frigate 'Rezkiy' is currently deployed to the eastern Mediterranean.

Neustrashimy Class Frigate



THREAT SYSTEM:

3K95 KINZHAL

3M86 KORTIK

THREAT RANGE:

7 NM

2-5 NM



NOTES:

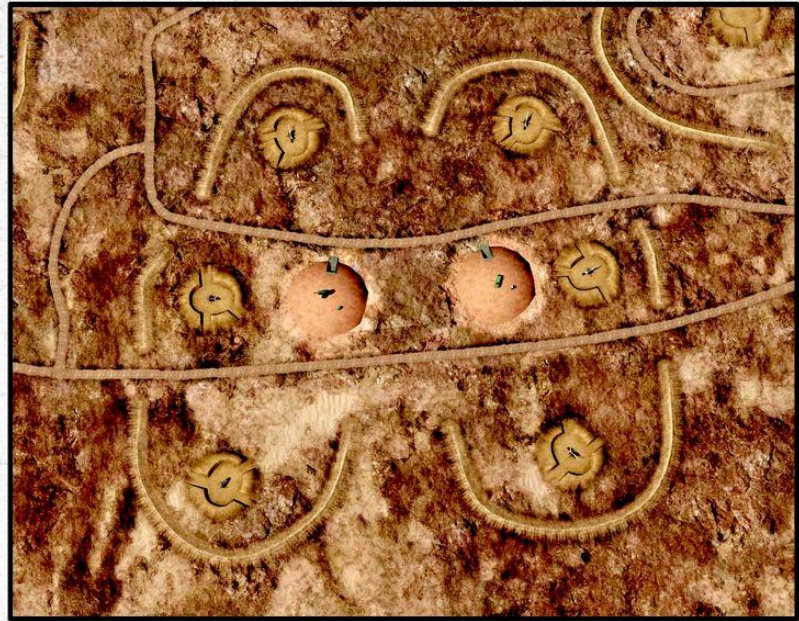
The Neustrashimy class frigate is an anti-submarine ship, initially designed to replace the Krivak, but ultimately only two were built. The Neustrashimy poses a threat in close, equipped with naval versions of the SA-15 and SA-19 .

The Russian frigate 'Neustrashimy' is currently deployed to the eastern Mediterranean.

SA-2 Guideline



'Fan Song' Engagement Radar



GUIDANCE: Command Guided Radar

AQUISITION RANGE: 55 NM

ENGAGEMENT RANGE: 23 NM

MAX CEILING: 82,000 Feet

WARHEAD: 440lb HE Frag

FUZING: Command

NOTES:

The SA-2 is typically deployed in the classic hexagonal shape, consisting of radars in the center, surrounded by 6 launchers. The SA-2 is often linked to the P-19 'Flat Face' search radar. The SA-2 is only capable of tracking a single target at a time and is incapable of tracking low flying targets.



SA-3 Goa



Low Blow Engagement Radar & V600 Missiles

GUIDANCE:	Command Guided Radar
AQUISITION RANGE:	55 NM
ENGAGEMENT RANGE:	10 NM
MAX CEILING:	59,000 Feet
WARHEAD:	132lb HE Frag
FUZING:	Proximity
NOTES:	

3

The SA-3 is often paired with the SA-2, where the SA-3's low level engagement ability compensates for this vulnerability with the SA-2. The SA-3 is often deployed with the P-19 'Flat Face' search radar.

SA-6 Gainful



Straight Flush Radar & Mobile Launcher

GUIDANCE: Semi Active Radar Homing

AQUISITION RANGE: 40 NM

ENGAGEMENT RANGE: 15 NM

MAX CEILING: 40,000 Feet

WARHEAD: 130lb HE Frag

FUZING: Proximity/Contact

NOTES:

An SA-6 battery consists of a mobile 'Straight Flush' radar and typically 3-4 mobile launchers. The SA-6 has limited ability to track more than one target at a time.



SA-8 Gecko



GUIDANCE: Command Guided

AQUISITION RANGE: 15 NM

ENGAGEMENT RANGE: 6 NM

MAX CEILING: 16,000 Feet

WARHEAD: 35lb HE Frag

FUZING: Proximity/Contact

NOTES:

Although limited in engagement range, in close the SA-8 is very dangerous, being equipped with agile and fast missiles. The SA-8 cannot track targets at very low altitudes.



SA-9 Gaskin

GUIDANCE:	Infra Red
AQUISITION RANGE:	Visual
ENGAGEMENT RANGE:	2.5 NM
MAX CEILING:	12,000 Feet
WARHEAD:	5.7lb HE Frag
FUZING:	RF Proximity

NOTES:

The SA-9 has a limited engagement range and low engagement ceiling, but remains highly dangerous within these limits. As there is no radar guidance to give an RWR warning, a visual search must be maintained to spot incoming launches.

SA-10 Grumble

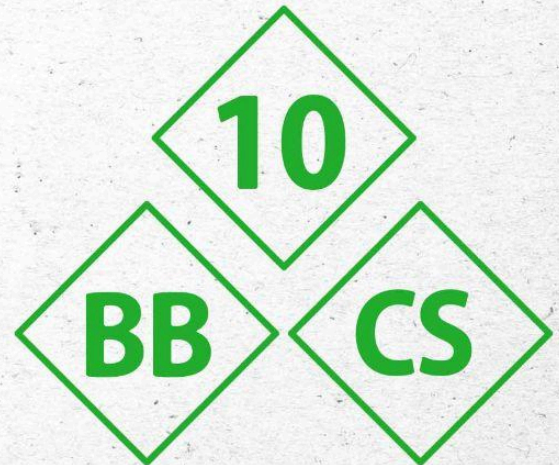


SA-10 Battery Deployed at Bassel al Assad

GUIDANCE:	Semi Active Radar Homing
AQUISITION RANGE:	90 NM
ENGAGEMENT RANGE:	65 NM
MAX CEILING:	95,000 Feet
WARHEAD:	293lb HE Frag
FUZING:	Proximity/Contact

NOTES:

One of the most lethal threats currently deployed in the Syrian theater, the SA-10 fields high speed, long range missiles, capable of hitting targets at both high and low altitudes. The Big Bird (BB) search radar handles high altitude targets, and the Clam Shell (CS) deals with lower flying targets. The Flap Lid (10) is the engagement radar. The SA-10 battery elements are mobile and can be distributed over many miles.



SA-11 Gadfly**Snow Drift Radar (fore) and TELAR (rear)****GUIDANCE:** Semi Active Radar Homing**AQUISITION RANGE:** 50 NM**ENGAGEMENT RANGE:** 20 NM**MAX CEILING:** 72,000 Feet**WARHEAD:** 150lb HE Frag**FUZING:** RF Proximity**NOTES:**

A modern and dangerous threat system, the SA-11 combines excellent tracking ability with high speed and agile missiles. Tracked and highly mobile, the SA-11 can also move rapidly with an advancing ground force. The SA-11 system consists of a mobile command post, a Snow Drift search radar (SD) and several TELARS containing the Fire Dome engagement system (11). The Fire Dome houses it's own tracking radar so the SA-11 is still dangerous even when the Snow Drift is offline.



SA-13 Gopher



GUIDANCE:	Infra Red
AQUISITION RANGE:	Visual / 4NM
ENGAGEMENT RANGE:	2.5 NM
MAX CEILING:	12,000 Feet
WARHEAD:	11lb HE Frag
FUZING:	Laser Proximity / Contact

**NOTES:**

An upgrade to the SA-9, the Gopher fulfills a similar role - that of low altitude air defense. The SA-13 is tracked and highly mobile and has more potent missiles than it's predecessor. The Gopher is also equipped with the 'Snapshot' range finding radar.

SA-15 Gauntlet



GUIDANCE: Command Guided Radar

AQUISITION RANGE: 15 NM

ENGAGEMENT RANGE: 8 NM

MAX CEILING: 25,000 Feet

WARHEAD: 30lb HE Frag

FUZING: RF Proximity

NOTES:

Armed with 8 vertically loaded missiles, the Gauntlet is a very dangerous modern SAM, capable of engaging low flying targets and incoming missiles.



SA-18 Grouse

GUIDANCE:	Infra Red
AQUISITION RANGE:	Visual
ENGAGEMENT RANGE:	3 NM
MAX CEILING:	12,000 Feet
WARHEAD:	2.5lb HE Frag
FUZING:	Contact

NOTES:

A real threat at lower altitudes, the SA-18 is man portable and can therefore pose a threat from anywhere in theater. The MANPAD is highly proliferated in Syria and Lebanon and they should be assumed to present in Cerberus West. The SA-18 can reach up to 12,000 feet above ground level, so be aware of this when flying over high ground.

SA-19 Grison



GUIDANCE: Command Guided Radar / Optical

AQUISITION RANGE: 10 NM

ENGAGEMENT RANGE: 5 NM

MAX CEILING: 16,000 Feet

WARHEAD: 20lb Continuous Rod

FUZING: Laser

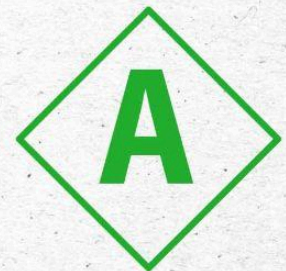
NOTES:

The SA-19 is a highly dangerous threat within it's engagement envelope. Armed with both 30mm cannons and eight missiles, the SA-19 can engage targets using it's tracking radar or with optical guidance. Optical guidance will mean no RWR warning is recieved.



ZSU-23-4

GUIDANCE:	Radar
AQUISITION RANGE:	2.5 NM
ENGAGEMENT RANGE:	1.5 NM
MAX CEILING:	7,000 Feet

**NOTES:**

The ZSU-23-4 or 'Zeus' consists of 4 radar guided 23mm autocannons mounted on a tracked chassis. The Zeus has limited range, but is highly dangerous within its engagement envelope.

ZU-23 AAA Systems



ENGAGEMENT RANGE: 2.5 NM

MAX CEILING: 7,000 Feet

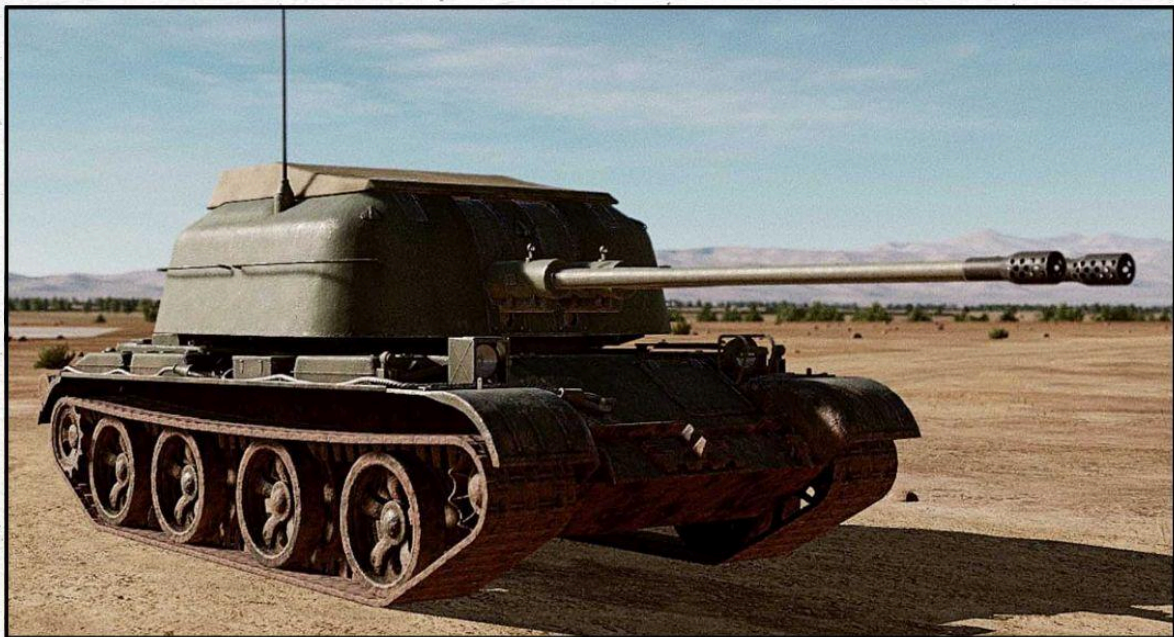
NOTES:

The ZU-23 is an unguided, twin barreled 23mm autocannon. It is widely proliferated and a common sight on the battlefield. The ZU-23 can be towed, or is at times mounted onto trucks to increase it's mobility.

57mm AAA Systems



S-60 Autocannon



ZU-57-2

ENGAGEMENT RANGE: 2.5 NM

MAX CEILING: 7,000 Feet

NOTES:

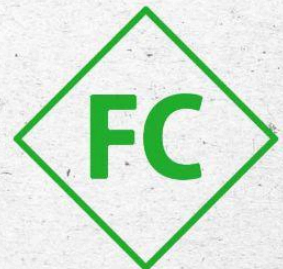
The S-60 is a 57mm autocannon, capable of firing 70 rounds a minute. It is commonly found as a towed unit, but is also often mounted in pairs as part of the ZU-57-2 mobile gun system.

KS-19 AAA & Fire Can Radar**KS-19 AAA****Son 9 'Fire Can'**

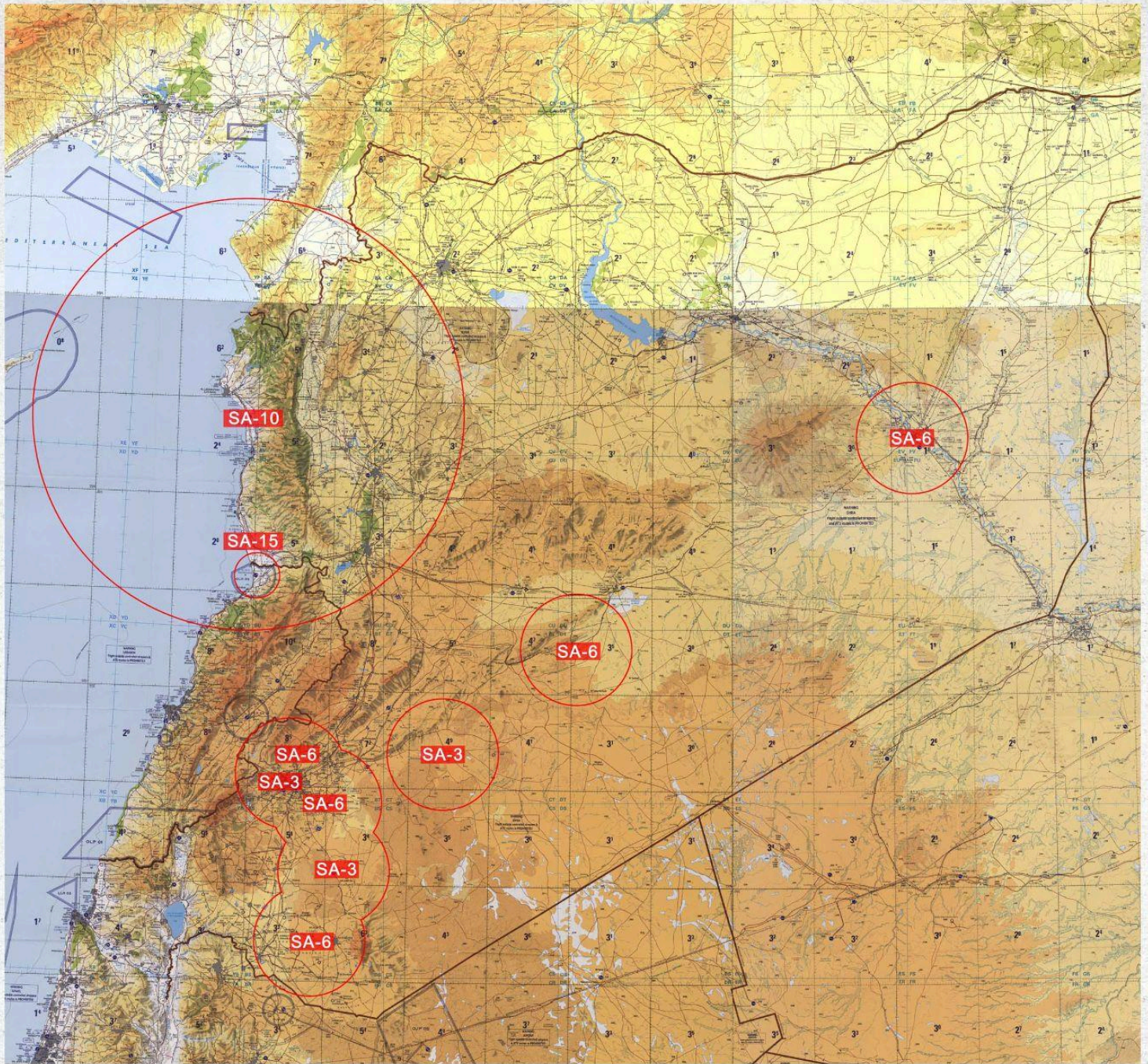
ENGAGEMENT RANGE: 10 NM
MAX CEILING: 49,000 Feet

NOTES:

The KS-19 is a 100mm towed AA gun, often paired with the Son 9 'Fire Can' radar for more accurate targeting. Radar guidance, combined with a 49,000 foot ceiling makes the KS-19 a dangerous opponent.



Confirmed SAM Locations



Current confirmed SAM locations within Syria are:

- Bassel Al Assad Airport - SA-10 (Russian operated).
- Rene Mouwad FOB - SA-15 (Russian operated).
- Damascus - x2 SA-6, SA-3.
- Khalkhalah AB - SA-3.
- Tha'lah AB - SA-6.
- Sayqal AB - SA-3.
- Sharqiyah Mines - SA-6.
- Deir ez-Zor - SA-6.