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Hezbollah producing arms in Lebanon, says MI director

Gili Cohen

Maj. Gen. Herzl Halevi, the director of Israeli Military Intelligence, said on Thursday that Hezbollah is establishing a military industry in Lebanon, based on Iranian know-how.

The organization sends weapons that it manufactures to southern Lebanon, near the border with Israel.

Speaking at the Herzliya Conference, Halevi confirmed a report in the Kuwaiti newspaper Al-Jarida, according to which the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps had established several weapons factories in

Lebanon for Hezbollah.

“Over the last year Iran has been working to set up independent production facilities for precise weaponry in Lebanon and Yemen. We cannot remain indifferent to this and we don’t,” he said.

Referring to Iran’s recent firing of missiles at Islamic State militants, Halevi said, “Islamic State has suffered worse blows than this. If this was a show, it wasn’t that successful.”

Halevi commented on the electricity crisis in the Gaza Strip, saying “Israel has an interest in Gaza not suffering a humanitarian crisis. Despair pushes people into

bad places. The electricity dilemma reflects this well. On one hand, oxygen masks are connected to the grid but so are excavation machines in the tunnels. Hamas must be confronted with this dilemma and the world must act to improve the situation in Gaza.”

Halevi criticized the performance of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, saying: “With all due respect to the force, which does important work, it claims it isn’t seeing a Hezbollah entrenchment in south Lebanon.” The Israeli army has given the UN Security Council recordings



Herzl Halevi speaking at the Herzliya Conference on Thursday.

Hagai Frid

of Hezbollah observation posts in the guise of human rights group positions. Halevi called on UNIFIL not to bury its head in the sand, saying “Hezbollah is now within a stone’s throw from

the border under the guise of an environmental group.” He added that Lebanon appears to be suffering from Stockholm syndrome in its relations with Hezbollah. Deputy Chief of Staff

Maj. Gen. Aviv Kochavi also said that “Hezbollah, with Iran’s assistance, has hijacked southern Lebanon and other central parts of Lebanon, becoming a major threat.”