

In Lebanon, Pushing the Ball Forward Before the May Election

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Without electoral law modifications, sanctions against pro-Hezbollah elites, prosecutions for long-delayed cases like the port explosion, and other urgent measures, the group and its allies could wind up regaining their grip in Lebanon during the next round of nationwide voting.

The following is an excerpt from testimony submitted to the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa. To read the full testimony, download the PDF on this page.

Last year, Lebanon's new president and government articulated an ambitious and positive program, which was largely welcomed inside the country and overwhelmingly applauded by the international community. Improbably, at the beginning of 2025—with Hezbollah defanged and a competent, nationalist government in place—it seemed possible that a perennially hapless and dysfunctional Lebanon might finally be turning the corner. Alas, the exuberance was premature. While diminished, Hezbollah remains dangerous. At the same time, the progress of the Lebanese Armed Forces has been insufficient, government efforts to legislate significant economic reform have largely fallen short, the judiciary remains anemic, and electoral reform—a key initiative required to meaningfully enfranchise Lebanon's enormous expatriate electorate—linguishes in purgatory on the desk of the eighty-seven-year-old parliamentary speaker Nabih Berri... ❖

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