

Hezbollah Aims to Keep Lebanon as Part of 'Axis of Resistance'

By: **Mohammad Mashmushi** posted on Sunday, Aug 19, 2012

In the past weeks, and in parallel with the Syrian revolution's escalation, the increasing successes of the rebels, and the beginning of the Damascus' regime disintegration from the inside, Hezbollah's discourse seems to have changed greatly with regards to the future of its arms in Lebanon. Indeed, its [discourse regarding Lebanon](#) as a whole has changed. Before then, the party's discourse — especially that employed by its [Secretary-General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah](#) — highlighted that its weapons were reserved for defensive purposes against any possible Israeli transgressions. The weapons were declared part of a “defensive strategy” — a topic which has been the subject of discussions among all Lebanese as part of the years-old national dialogue. Ultimately, the “defensive strategy” was left as governed by the equation of the “army, people and resistance,” as described by at least three of Lebanon's past governments in their ministerial statements.

About this Article

Summary:

The Syrian regime has not crumbled yet, but the "axis of resistance and opposition," which is headed by Iran, and of which Hezbollah is a member of, has devised a plan to keep Lebanon, as a land, people and state, in its grasp. Will it be a "new" Lebanon, like the one Ahmadinejad has talked about? Mohammad Mashmushi writes.

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Lately, the party has emerged with a different, even opposite discourse aimed at the Lebanese. It began talking about a “constituent congress” meant to discuss Lebanon's future; as if the country did not possess a written constitution or a national charter governing the state's affairs and regulating the relationship between Lebanese citizens or between the state and the outside world. Hezbollah also began to speak about a “liberation strategy,” to be discussed before, or in parallel with a “national defense strategy,” under the pretense that some Lebanese land remained occupied (Shebaa Farms, the hills of Kfarshouba and part of the village of Ghajar) and that liberating these lands was the state's responsibility. Meanwhile, it maintained that it was every person's right to bear arms and use them to accomplish this task were the state to be incapable of doing so.

Hezbollah's new proposal cannot be separated from the regional role it plays as well as its ideological, military and financial relationship with Iran. Nor can it be disassociated from the deteriorating situation in Syria and the start of the Bashar al-Assad regime's political disintegration. As such, the party seeks to impose a political and military fait accompli on Lebanon, that would transform it and its arms into a state with its own an identity and possessing all the required equipment (undeclared, but recognized by the de facto powers) to do so, within Lebanon, superceding the national state. In this sense, Hezbollah would also become its own state when it comes to state relations on the Arab, regional and international levels. The party would therefore be working on making sure that Lebanon remains a part of the so called “axis of resistance and

opposition,” which has included Iran, Syria, Iraq, and Hezbollah, were the regime to fall and the situation to change in Syria. Hezbollah would take advantage of its weapons, which are more powerful than those of the state, and of the political and practical conditions prevalent in Lebanon, including the spread of ethnic and religious polarization.

But how does Hezbollah envision transforming such a scenario into reality? The party, most probably, does not see itself susceptible to losing its effective domination over Lebanon, nor does it see itself excluded from

the regional “axis of resistance and opposition,” regardless of the Syrian regime’s future nature. This is especially the case given the great “achievements” that it considers itself having accomplished lately on the narrow local and wider regional arenas. Thanks to its arms and the Shiite community’s support, as well as the Lebanese state’s submission to Syrian tutelage and Iranian influence, the party has acquired a near complete deciding role in the country (domination of Parliament, changing the balance of power between majorities and minorities, besides toppling governments and appointing others). It cannot envision any kind of compromise affecting its arms or its decision-making role that resulted from their possession.

These are the reasons that pushed the party into abandoning its previous proposals concerning the “defense strategy” to escape the repercussions stemming from the rejection by most Lebanese of the fact that it retains its weapons. It chose to replace this strategy with what it called a “liberation strategy,” knowing well that Lebanon was incapable structurally, politically, economically and militarily of adopting such a methodology to liberate land, for which, by the way, the state lacked proper documentation or scientific proof of ownership. Should this maybe come from Syria?!

The fact is that after a full cycle of talks about the “defense strategy” which began in 2006, and the start of subsequent discussions about the issue of command and control of the party’s weapons — assuming that they remained in the hands of Hezbollah — and the need for the state and its legitimate forces to control these weapons, Hezbollah found it necessary to abandon its previously held position and bring the talks back to square one: no to the defense strategy, or any other similar strategy alone; what was now needed was a liberation strategy.

Moreover, Hezbollah even threatened, and again under the slogan of the “people’s desire” behind which it often hid when dealing with the UNIFIL and Lebanese army’s presence in the south, to liberate the land by itself were the Lebanese state to refuse to accept the party’s agenda and strategies for doing so.

Hezbollah’s proposition, in effect, means that it can decide, on Lebanon’s behalf, which internal policies and regional strategies should be adopted, and maybe even put them into effect, as it did in 2006 when it captured the Israeli soldiers and caused Lebanon to suffer the horrors of an all-out destructive Israeli war.

So far we’ve covered the regional issues, especially concerning the axis of “resistance and opposition,” which Hezbollah wants to keep alive and Lebanon a part of, even after the Syrian link breaks. On the internal front, no need to look further than the party’s proposal of holding a “constituent congress” for the state and Lebanese society. For Hezbollah, even if it didn’t publicly declare this, considers the country to be in its formative phase, or at least wants it to be re-formed, in total disregard to the written Lebanese constitution, the National Accord, and especially the Taif Accord which cost Lebanon more than 150,000 deaths to achieve.

The Syrian regime has not crumbled yet, but the axis of “resistance and opposition,” which is headed by Iran, and of which Hezbollah is a member of, has devised a plan to keep Lebanon, as a land, people and state, in its grasp.

The proposals that Hezbollah started to publicly talk about are but manifestations of this plan; manifestations that point us to believe that the axis of “resistance and opposition” sees Lebanon in a “new” way, in all senses of the word, after the Syrian affair is concluded — a Lebanon similar to the one that Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad talked about in Damascus with Assad and Nasrallah, when it characterized the party as an effective member in the so-called “People’s Resistance Front Against Colonialism”!

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