



**Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center
at the Center for Special Studies (C.S.S)**

September 7, 2005

Hezbollah has no intention to disarm: in a TV interview, Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah once again expressed the organization's refusal to disarm, as stipulated in the Taif Accord (1989) and UN Security Council Resolution 1559. Nasrallah described his fundamental (familiar) position that Hezbollah needs its weapons to "protect" Lebanon from Israel's "aggression" by assisting the Lebanese army. The refusal was made under the cover of a seemingly positive, moderate approach.



Hassan Nasrallah: the Lebanese army and the "resistance" (i.e., Hezbollah) are those that protect Lebanon (Al-Arabiyya Television, September 2, 2005). **This notion is completely contrary to UN Security Council Resolution 1559**, which calls for complete "disbanding and disarmament" of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias (i.e., Hezbollah and the Palestinian terrorist organizations) and views the **Lebanese government** as the **sole** sovereign throughout the entire Lebanese territory.

Hassan Nasrallah on Hezbollah's disarmament

☒ In an interview granted to the **Al-Arabiyya** TV channel (September 2, 2005), Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah addressed a series of current issues on the internal Lebanese scene, including the international community's demand from the Lebanese government to disarm the organization (according to UN Security Council Resolution 1559, dated September 2, 2004¹).

☒ What follows are the main points brought up by Nasrallah on the issue of the organization's disarmament:

- ☒ **Hezbollah holds on to its weapons ("the weapons of resistance")** based on its fundamental position that the organization needs the weapons to protect itself from Israel's continuing aggression: "The resistance is a reaction to the aggression; when the aggression ceases, so will the reaction."
- ☒ **Hezbollah is willing to hold a dialogue**, or rather a debate,² **with the international community** over this fundamental position. When asked whether he would be willing to receive guarantees **from the US** that Israel would withdraw from the Shab'a Farms and not attack Lebanon (implying that in return, Hezbollah would disarm), **Nasrallah responded in the negative**. He claimed American guarantees could not be trusted since the US had proved time and again its support of Israel.

¹ The Taif Accord, dated November 22, 1989, includes a clause stipulating the disbanding and disarmament of all the Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias, and reinforcing the Lebanese security forces. See Information Bulletin titled: "[A comparison of the main points of the Taif Accord and those of Resolution 1559 shows that in principle there are no significant differences between the two documents](#)" (March 2005).

² Originally: "Holding on to our arms is not a result of fanaticism... or impulsiveness... it is a result of vision and perception. We say to the entire world: we are ready for a dialogue, come hold a debate with us on this vision and this perception."

- ❑ **The international community did nothing to liberate the land of Lebanon.** The international community does not possess the capability to handle “threats” on Lebanon and therefore there is no use in international guarantees for Lebanon’s security. In the interview, Nasrallah detailed the nature of the threats and problems that still remain, in his view, between Lebanon and Israel: the occupation of the Shab’a Farms by Israel, the penetration of Israeli aircraft into Lebanese airspace, the unfairness toward Lebanon in the Wazzani springs dispute, the issue of the Lebanese terrorists held captive in Israel.

- ❑ **The existence of the “resistance” (i.e., the Hezbollah terrorist organization) is the guarantee for liberating Lebanese territory** that remains occupied and deterring Israel from attacking Lebanon. Nasrallah claims that **Lebanon’s army is weak** and unable to protect Lebanon, **and therefore it needs the assistance of the “resistance” (i.e., Hezbollah).**

- ❑ Nasrallah’s formula for defending Lebanon is “the [Lebanese] army plus the resistance [Hezbollah]”. According to Nasrallah, this is the one and only formula that may preserve Lebanon’s security (“give me another formula that protects Lebanon”). According to him, however, this does not mean that Hezbollah replaces the Lebanese government: Hezbollah does not meddle in Lebanon’s internal affairs, it does not have authority in South Lebanon nor anywhere else in Lebanon, and it is not an alternative for the Lebanese government. According to Nasrallah, Hezbollah keeps a low profile: the “resistance” is “not public, not extravagant. It is a covert, withdrawn resistance, hidden and defensive.”

Summary and assessment

☒ Nasrallah's interview clearly shows that **Hezbollah remains firm in its refusal to disarm**, justifying it by the familiar claims of the need for protection from Israel and deterring Israel from attacking Lebanon.³ **Nasrallah obscures Hezbollah's refusal to disarm with a vague cover of "responsibility" and "moderation"**: his willingness to hold a dialogue, or rather a debate, with the international community on the need to keep the "resistance" and its weapons (and on the same occasion, obviously, to gain international legitimacy), his emphasis that the organization makes sure to keep a low profile of its forces on the ground, raising the (false) claim that his organization is not a threat to the Lebanese government, not even in South Lebanon, and that it does not intend to impede on Lebanon's sovereignty.

☒ Nasrallah's **central claim that the arms held by the organization are used for protection from Israel** is anything but new and was brought up in the public debate held in recent months in Lebanon over disarming Hezbollah. In the course of the extensive debate on this issue, that was somewhat pushed aside in favor of the disengagement, **Nasrallah once again expressed his objection to disarm Hezbollah**. He put forth the claim that UN Security Council Resolution 1559 **was not relevant to the organization since Hezbollah was not an armed militia**. UN Security Council Resolution 1559 is, according to Hezbollah, nothing but foreign meddling in Lebanon's affairs that takes place with Israel's encouragement.

³ Nasrallah's verbal acrobatics may mislead commentators on Hezbollah's true intentions. Thus, for example, in the opening paragraph of an editorial published in Israeli daily Haaretz titled "Movement in Syria and Lebanon", it was stated: "Hezbollah Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah delivered a surprise this weekend when he declared that his organization would agree to disarm if it received guarantees of security in Lebanon from an international party (other than the United States). Although it conditioned its disarmament on the end of Israel's occupation of "Lebanese territory," that is, the Shab'a Farms, this is the first time that Nasrallah has made such a declaration" (Haaretz, September 5, 2005). When asked to comment, a Hezbollah spokesman dismissed the Haaretz article as "just someone's opinion" (**Daily Star**, Lebanon, September 6, 2005).

☒ The façade of “responsibility” and “moderation” Nasrallah attempts to assume is a result, in our assessment, of the **coming publication of the Mehlis Committee report conclusions** on the murder of Prime Minister Rafik Hariri. The Hezbollah organization anxiously follows the progress of the investigation committee and considers it yet another expression of the deepening outside intervention in Lebanon’s internal affairs. In our assessment, Hezbollah fears that on “the day after”, even if the conclusions of the committee do not lay the blame at the organization’s door, **they might serve its domestic as well as foreign opponents to increase the pressure to disarm. Therefore, even now Hezbollah attempts to present its standpoint on the issue as part of the campaign to hold on to its arms, which the organization intends to wage against its opponents.**