



By: Tomorrow's Affairs Staff

Hezbollah and the state - the conflict that will decide the future of Lebanon



The Lebanese government meeting on 5 September raised a question that has been hanging over Beirut for decades: can the state finally regain its monopoly on arms and put an end to the parallel power structures?

The government **declared** that it "welcomes" the army's plan to disarm Hezbollah and that the army will begin implementing it.

The details were not made public, and the deadlines were not mentioned, but the decision itself carries weight because for the first time in a long time, it speaks of a clear state intention to begin the process.

The meeting lasted three hours, the generals presented the plan behind closed doors, and the moment of their entry was **marked** by the departure of all Shiite ministers, including representatives of Hezbollah and the Amal Movement.

This publicly showed that the plan is not unanimously supported but also that the government is willing to open up the most sensitive issue in Lebanese politics.

A process without a deadline

Information Minister Paul Morcos **emphasised** that the army would "begin implementing the plan within its available resources."

This formulation is not just a bureaucratic phrase but an acknowledgement of reality: the army is multi-confessional and for decades has avoided becoming an instrument of division.

Its strength lies precisely in balance, which at the same time means that its operational potential is limited. This is why the plan is presented as a process without a deadline, the pace of which depends on external conditions and the development of the situation in the south.

This doctrine of "conditional resistance" now clashes directly with the government's demand for a state monopoly on the use of force

Hezbollah responded with rhetoric that reflects the ambiguity of the moment. The movement **said** it saw the plan as an "opportunity to return to wisdom and reason", but at the same time, it insisted that its implementation be suspended until Israeli operations cease and troops are withdrawn from the south.

According to Hezbollah's logic, weapons are not an internal issue of legitimacy but a foreign policy issue of threat.

As long as the Israeli air force **attacks** targets in the Bekaa and the army occupies a dominant position in the border region, there is no incentive for Hezbollah to give up its arsenal of weapons.

This doctrine of "conditional resistance" now clashes directly with the government's demand for a state monopoly on the use of force.

Disarmament as the currency in negotiations

The economic context also reveals the political significance of this decision. The estimated cost of reconstructing the country following the months-long border conflict exceeds ten billion dollars.

Donors are openly stating that they will only invest once it is certain that the state is the sole bearer of weapons. Thus, disarmament becomes a key factor in the negotiations: the greater the state monopoly on weapons, the more financial aid will be provided.

The government is aware of this condition and uses it as leverage both for internal actors and for Hezbollah. An arms monopoly is not an

idealistic demand here but a necessary prerequisite for international reconstruction funds to reach the country at all.

The plan is not only aimed at Hezbollah but is based on the principle that weapons cannot exist outside the framework of the state

That the government is not naïve is also shown by a parallel step – the **start** of the disarmament of Palestinian factions in the camps, which is based on the agreement between President Joseph Aoun and Mahmoud Abbas.

This signals that the plan is not only aimed at Hezbollah but is based on the principle that weapons cannot exist outside the framework of the state.

If the state succeeds in removing the weapons from the camps where there is no Israeli front, this could serve as an example of what the process can look like in more complex circumstances in the south.

From declarations to concrete steps

The most important thing at this moment is speed. Too fast an implementation, without Israeli steps and without internal consensus, could put the army in a situation where it has to choose between political loyalty and institutional neutrality, risking an internal conflict.

Moving too slowly, on the other hand, undermines the government's credibility and pushes the country back to the status quo, in which Hezbollah continues to act as a parallel army and guarantor of the resistance and the state as a powerless observer.



The signal from Beirut is important for Israel: the willingness to involve the army and take responsibility opens up the space to reduce its presence and stop the attacks – Benjamin Netanyahu

The government is therefore trying to link the plan to measurable external parameters – the **cessation** of Israeli attacks, the withdrawal from the disputed areas and a stronger **presence** of the army and UNIFIL in the south.

The signal from Beirut is important for Israel: the willingness to involve the army and take responsibility opens up the space to reduce its presence and stop the attacks.

Lebanon must not miss this moment, but it must translate it into concrete steps – public patrols, joint checkpoints, and a transparent arms control system.

Only when such steps become visible can Hezbollah consider redefining its role from a military actor to a primarily political force.

The importance of these decisions lies in the fact that they do not remain at the level of declarations. After a low-intensity war that has devastated the south of the country over the past two years and destroyed an already fragile economy, Beirut is trying to set a precedent: to replace private deterrence with public order.

The weapons that have been Hezbollah's mainstay for decades are now becoming the greatest obstacle to international aid and a return to stability.

The question is no longer one of ideological debate but of pragmatic calculation – either

the state consolidates its arms monopoly, or
Lebanon remains hostage to an endless
shadow war.