



Lebanese Forces

Foreign Affairs Department

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Statement by the Foreign Affairs Department

Hezbollah Military Drill Violates the Arab Summit Declaration

Two days after the Jeddah Declaration, which was unanimously approved and endorsed by all the Arab member states taking part of the Arab summit, including Lebanon, Hezbollah showcased a military drill in a southern town contradicting this declaration and thwarting the prospective Arab and regional positive impacts that prevailed at the summit.

To begin with, Hezbollah has never obtained any mandate from the Lebanese people to unlawfully bear arms, or to have military activities, parades and drills. These practices are not subject of any consensus among the Lebanese, but rather a controversial issue that led to dangerous consequences on Lebanon, one of which was faceted in the current economic crisis. Yet, these drills will not defeat the will of the Lebanese people seeking stability and salvation through establishing a sovereign, uncorrupt and reformist authority through the presidential elections, obstructed and hijacked by Hezbollah itself.

Second, the Lebanese strategic decision, as well as the foreign and defense policies, are the exclusivity of the state and the legitimate government. This government itself participated in the Arab summit in Jeddah two days ago, and Hezbollah military drill was held against the will of the government and violated its *raison d'être*, credibility and its commitments and engagements towards the Arab and international community.

Third, it is worth noting that Hezbollah's military drill came as a response to the prospective positive atmosphere and openness prevailing on the Arab and regional levels, and violated the decisions of the Jeddah Declaration, particularly Article 6 calling for "categorical rejection of all support for the formation of armed groups and militias outside the scope of state institutions."

Therefore, we call upon the Lebanese government to assume its responsibilities and fulfill its obligations towards the Arab summit as well as towards the Lebanese people. Lebanon is at a critical juncture and it is the government's responsibility to prevent Lebanon from falling further into futile and destructive scenarios.