



THE EVOLUTION OF A NON-STATE ACTOR TO A “STATE ACTOR”: THE CASE OF HEZBOLLAH

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Introduction

In May 2018, Lebanon held its first parliamentary elections since 2009, and Hezbollah secured 13 out of 128 seats in parliament. It was not a remarkable change from the results of the previous elections (12 seats in 2009 and 14 seats in 2005); however, when the seats of Hezbollah’s allies are also added to that number¹, together they obtained more than half of the seats (65) in the Lebanese parliament. Everybody knows that Hezbollah is the main force within this alliance, and therefore, the results of the last general elections demonstrate that Hezbollah will be the “kingmaker” in Lebanon throughout the upcoming years.

Hezbollah has held 10 or more seats in the Lebanese parliament since the 2000 general elections. Before this, it participated in the general elections of 1992 and 1996, obtaining 8 and 7 seats respectively.²

The group’s gradual electoral improvement has been seen not only in the number of seats they secured in the parliament, but also in their share of the vote. While approximately 5 percent of the Lebanese people voted for Hezbollah in the mid-’90s, in recent elections Hezbollah won more than 15 percent of the total vote.

It is also important to draw attention to the fact that Michel Aoun, who is considered to be the group’s greatest ally and who is a former presidential candidate for the group, was able to win the presidential election in 2016 thanks to the great support of the organization.

All of the aforementioned facts demonstrate the growing influence of Hezbollah within Lebanese politics.³ Even if it seems to have been a gradual improvement rather than a sudden rise,

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Hezbollah has managed to become the main political actor and driving force on the Lebanese political stage. No doubt, this is a great achievement for an organization which was established merely as an armed non-state actor (NSA) representing and struggling for a certain sect within society, and which has been marginalized by both the international community and by many major regional players.

What are the factors behind the success and growing influence of Hezbollah within the Lebanese political system? Which steps did Hezbollah take to accommodate the current political system of Lebanon and turn from an armed militant non-state actor into a “state actor”? This article attempts to briefly shed light on these questions, arguing that the main answer for Hezbollah’s success lies in its ever-growing “state-like” (quasi-state) character in spite of its foundation as a non-state actor. To elaborate: Hezbollah is a kind of non-state actor which has been operating like a state in order to strengthen its powerbase; however, it is also a sort of non-state actor which has wielded its power to challenge the state apparatus from within, and its strategy seems to have been to accommodate itself to the current political system instead of withdrawing from the current system in order to replace it with a completely new regime. Therefore, the state-like character of Hezbollah is examined in order to understand its progress. Afterwards, the paper examines the breaking points in the history of Hezbollah in order to see the crucial decisions it made in applying its strategy.



Why Describe Hezbollah as a “State-Like” NSA?⁴

The state (by the most basic definition in international law, an entity which possesses a permanent population, a defined territory, a government and the capacity to enter into relations with the other states⁵) has been shaping the life of mankind for centuries. Especially since the emergence of the modern state, they gained a very central role in every aspect of human activity and began to influence, regulate and control almost all aspects of the life of society. Thus, we have always witnessed efforts to clarify and define the conceptual boundaries and the founding elements of the state on theoretical grounds, as it has become a great necessity to determine where the boundary between state and society lies, considering the very central role that states play in our lives.

Even though such efforts have not resulted in a consensus on one definition of the state, over time, certain parameters for “being a state” have become widely accepted. The English philosopher John Locke pointed out that one of the core functions of state is the right of “trying and punishing” its people. Accordingly, it is also a responsibility for a state to protect the essential human rights of the people and sustain the rule of law, because it is believed that only by establishing the rule of law would states be able to establish a sustainable social and political order.⁶ Along with this right, a monopoly over the legitimate use of force is also seen as another core function of the state. It is widely agreed that the core function of the state is to provide security for its people. States should be able to control their territory and borders, safeguard the security of their citizens, defend them against external security threats, and ensure public access to natural resources.

With the emergence of modern state, which brought about a high level of compartmentalization and professionalization within society, the central role of national armies as the main security force was established and the function of security began to be attributed to the national armies which were officially an extension of the state apparatus. This historical process paved the way for the state to be granted the monopoly of legitimate use of force, as Weber pointed out.⁷ Therefore, over time, a monopoly over the legitimate use of force started to be seen as one of the definitive attributes of the state. This strict definition also implies the state’s ultimate superiority and monopoly over any other kind of authority/entity within society.

Due to major developments over the 20th and 21st centuries, the idea that only the state has the ultimate and indivisible sovereignty and authority has eroded, as many nation-states around the world have either failed to establish full authority within their boundaries – in other words, not been able to gain a monopoly over the use of force – or they have not been able to sustain their authority even if they somehow established it

On the other hand, due to major developments over the 20th and 21st centuries, the idea that only the state has the ultimate and indivisible sovereignty and authority has eroded, as many nation-states around the world have either failed to establish full authority within their boundaries – in other words, not been able to gain a monopoly over the use of force – or they have not been able to sustain their authority even if they somehow established it. Meanwhile, it has become crystal clear that unless states have a monopoly of use of force practically



and effectively within its territory, the theoretical monopoly does not render those states true sovereigns. In practice, it has been repeatedly demonstrated that the concept of national sovereignty which is only granted to existing nation-states on paper does not always reflect the reality on the ground. Even if it is hard to challenge the premise that the contemporary modern/nation-state is the most prominent sovereign political unit, at least it can be said that their sovereignty, including their monopoly of use of force, is not indivisible. We can call this situation “the monopoly dilemma.”

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region has experienced the aforementioned dilemma several times and is still experiencing it. The emergence and existence of powerful non-state actors in many countries, most of which seem to fall into the categories of failed states or weak states,⁸ keep this dilemma alive: powerful armed non-state actors – almost all of which have political goals and a broad social base, and therefore political legitimacy – have continuously been challenging the authority of existing states and their monopoly over the use of force. Hezbollah is one of the best examples of this trend.

Another core state function is seen as the provision of welfare for the state’s people. Of course, in different centuries there have been great differences in the understanding of this concept of welfare. Overall, the monopoly on raising taxes and revenues have always been at the heart of this function, yet the quality, quantity and scale of expected services and the welfare distribution mechanisms have changed. Considering the fact that Hezbollah has provided social welfare mechanisms and basic public services for people in some parts of Lebanon,

especially in South Lebanon, which can be considered Hezbollah’s main social base, it is also possible to say that Hezbollah is fulfilling another core state function.

To clarify Hezbollah’s situation more precisely, we can resort to Joel S. Migdal’s definition of the state:⁹ “Three core criteria that a state must be able to engender among its citizens: Compliance, participation, legitimacy. The state is ‘a field of power’ marked by the use and threat of violence and shaped by 1. The image of a coherent, controlling organization in a territory, which is a representation of people bounded by that territory and 2. the actual practices of its multiple parts”¹⁰

Migdal’s insightful view takes the dynamic nature of the state into account. Accordingly, states are shaped by the image they project, as they create the perception that they are the controlling centers of society and that the practices they carry out are in order to fulfil their perceived obligations. Migdal also asserts that there are two boundaries in regard to the state: a territorial boundary, which defines whom the state rules and where its jurisdiction ends, and the socio-political boundary symbolized by citizens’ assent to be bound by a state’s rules in return for the security and services that it offers them.¹¹

However, “the principal obstacle that exists to a state’s ability to impose its set of rules on the populace is social organizations that are engaged in a similar pursuit.”¹² Unstable boundaries create a pervasive sense of insecurity that may push societies into ethnic self-definition and increased ethnic conflict under some certain circumstances.”¹³ For example, according to Migdal, “in countries marked by the absence of a strong state, people



are left to choose among the state entities and social organizations offering the most attractive package of benefits with the fewest sanctions.” Considering the history of Lebanon and the absence of the state in the eyes of its Shiite population, Hezbollah fits perfectly into this category of semi-state social entities.

The Brief Story of Hezbollah in Lebanon

Formed on the basis of its National Pact, signed in 1943, Lebanon is a covenant democracy based on its religious communities.¹⁴ According to the pact, confessional sects within Lebanese society exercise autonomy over their own religious and legal affairs. Also there are established quotas in the state for each sect to be represented in the political system in proportion to their population ratio. However, the 1943 National Pact was insufficient to bring the society together as a “nation.” The main reason for this failure was that the quotas determined by the pact has not reflected major changes in the Lebanese population and, over time, some sects have become underrepresented. This problem led the country to civil war in 1975. The brutal civil war took several years and led Syria to intervene militarily and politically in Lebanon on behalf of the Lebanese Shiites, who were one of the major parties of the civil war.

Meanwhile, Seyyid Abbas al Mosawi, who had come from Najaf in 1978, led the establishment of Hezbollah in Beqaa. Following his arrival in Lebanon, some other Iranian clerics, with the support of the leader of the Iranian Revolution, Ayatollah Khomeini, also came to Lebanon to start their preaching activities.

In 1982, Hezbollah was formally established by Mosawi and the people

around him in the Beqaa Valley, where their preaching activities had continued. The organization had also the support of the new Iranian regime, established following the Islamic Revolution in 1979. Hezbollah means “Party of God”, which was in fact an indication of the Islamic sentiments and motivations of its founders.

It is also important to note that in June 1979, Israel intervened in Lebanon and was confronted by Iran. Therefore, the Iranian support for Hezbollah could be considered one Iranian response to Israel’s intervention.

In a nutshell, Hezbollah was born in the aftermath of a brutal civil war during an Israeli intervention in the south of Lebanon, which is home to most of the country’s Shiite population.

During those hard times for the Shiite population of Lebanon, some groups representing Shiites were struggling to advocate their interests, including Amal and the Movement of the Deprived (MoD), both of which were founded by well-known Shiite cleric Imam Musa al-Sadr. However, in contrast to the MoD and Amal, Hezbollah was led by a collective leadership rather than by one charismatic personality, and due to this feature the organization was able to rapidly evolve a complex internal structure and professionalize its various components. For instance, the Supreme Shura Council of the organization is the highest authority in Hezbollah, in charge of its legislative, executive, judicial, political, and military affairs. Hezbollah has also established numerous subcommittees to help the group to better function in different fields.



In 1989 Hezbollah held its first general assembly to form its executive body. The position of General Secretary (the first was Sheikh Tufeyli) was established here. This post was required for Hezbollah to regularize its relations with the public.¹⁵

In conclusion, the Lebanese regime has been fundamentally shaped by the division of power along confessional (sectarian) lines. In the meantime, the inadequacy of the Lebanese state has been profoundly felt by the communities which make up Lebanese society, and the Shiite population located in South Lebanon was foremost among those communities.

If a certain confessional community feels an acute lack of state services and protection, and if the current regime, in which the division of power is carried out along sectarian lines, perpetually creates the image of incoherence within society, then that confessional community could easily disengage from the state and seek out alternative social groups ready to represent them and advocate their rights. Migdal names this a “strong society-weak state” situation.¹⁶

Footsteps Towards Becoming State-Like

Hezbollah offers security for a community; it holds territory and practically holds the monopoly of coercion on that territory, as well as collecting taxes¹⁷ within it and it has an organizational bureaucracy that oversees the management of this territory. Hezbollah as a “militia canton” seems to fulfill all of the criteria of a Weberian modern state.¹⁸ If we consider the fact that the General Secretary of Hezbollah is the ex-officio chairman of the Executive Committee, which is composed of the various heads of the districts it controls (Beirut, the Southern Suburbs, the South,

and the Biqa), we can also understand the territorial vision of Hezbollah: each district has a council called the Regional Shura Council (RSC), and they are directly linked to the Supreme Shura Council. The main function of the RSCs is to follow up on the day-to-day activities and needs of the district.

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On the other hand, Hezbollah has also generated its own institutions in many fields such as newspapers (El Ahd), think tanks (CCSD), and radio and TV channels (El Nour).

Hezbollah also became Lebanon’s largest non-state provider of healthcare and social services and operates schools of such high quality that even non-Muslims send their children to them.¹⁹

“The Reconstruction Committee of Hezbollah has repaired and maintained numerous homes damaged by Israel and other attacks.

The Water and Power Resources Committee fixed over one hundred water and power stations from the Beqaa to the South.

The Environmental Committee has been active in studying and surveying polluted areas, while the Agricultural Committee has established agricultural cooperatives selling insecticides, seeds, and fertilizers to farmers at prices below market price. The work of all these committees is supervised by a technical



and administrative committee which is part of a body called Jihad al Bina', whose main purpose is to study and provide help for the impoverished regions of Lebanon.

During the severe snow storm of March 1992, for example, the manpower and machinery of the Holy Reconstruction Organ were rushed to rescue and help people in the remote areas of Lebanon's high mountains, whereas the government promised help without actually delivering it."²⁰

All of these services have, of course, made a significant impact in a country where the government had long ceased to offer many basic social services. Considering again Migdal's criteria for being a state (*1. the image of a coherent, controlling organization in a territory, which is a representation of people bounded by that territory and 2. the actual practices of its multiple parts*), it can be said that Hezbollah could successfully fulfill these two criteria. As a result, the popularity of Hezbollah within its base increased, and it happened at the expense of both the Lebanese state and other Shiite movements like Amal. The organization has never been merely an armed resistance group. Both the political domain and the military domain were intricately connected from the very beginning of Hezbollah's existence and its impact and authority over the Shiite community in Lebanon became equivalent, if not more than that of the Lebanese regime.

An Accelerating Factor: Israel's Intervention

In the absence of the Lebanese state's willingness or ability to take care of its population in southern Lebanon during the military interventions of Israel, Hezbollah has been left as the region's

safeguard, and thus its de facto ruler.

In 1978, Israel launched its first military occupation and invaded 500 km² of Lebanon's territory. The international community, in the guise of the United Nations Security Council, could not prevent Israel from carrying out this operation, and Israel's invasion became one of the main driving factors behind the establishment of Hezbollah.

Having been encouraged by the inaction of the international community and the weak responses of regional actors, in 1982 Israel launched its second military operation with the purpose of invading other parts of Lebanese territory. The founding generation of Hezbollah fought in the frontline against Israeli forces during this campaign.

Following the 1982 occupation, on August 23, 1982, Amine Gemayel, who was the leader of the Phalangist movement in Lebanon and the Kataeb Party, was elected as the President of Lebanon. At that time, the Phalangists were a close ally of Israel. Just one week after Gemayel's election, many Shiite groups pledged their alliance to the charismatic Shiite leader and prominent cleric Musa al-Sadr, and revolted against Gemayel's government. During that outbreak, Gemayel was killed, and following his killing, Israeli forces again intervened in Lebanon. By the time of that intervention, Israeli forces already occupied one third of Lebanese territory. During this occupation and intervention, once again, Hezbollah actively struggled against Israeli forces in the name of jihad.

In fact, Hezbollah's struggle against Israeli forces has had its successes, even though they and the whole of Lebanese society have suffered massive amounts of damage. Hezbollah and some other



groups struggled and counterattacked for almost half a decade, ultimately compelling Israel to retreat from Lebanon and end the occupation of most of the Lebanese territory that it had occupied. Israel now remained only in the limited “security zones” which it had established in 1985.

It is a matter of the fact that while Lebanese state forces were unable to directly engage the militarily-superior Israel during the occupation, Hezbollah fought it effectively

Hezbollah also fought against Israel during its attacks and interventions across the 1990s, and their struggle ultimately compelled Israel to withdraw from Lebanese territory completely. By the end of 2000, Israel was completely driven out of Southern Lebanon except for two small villages.

It is a matter of the fact that while Lebanese state forces were unable to directly engage the militarily-superior Israel during the occupation, Hezbollah fought it effectively. The leading role of Hezbollah in the persistent struggle against the Israeli occupation, and its successes, provided the organization with great credibility even among the non-sectarian population of Lebanon. In the course of the 1990s, Hezbollah gained nationwide appreciation which would boost their presence and influence within the Lebanese political system later on.

The Breaking Points

No doubt, the greatest milestone in Hezbollah’s engagement with the Lebanese political system and conversion to a “state actor” was its decision to participate in elections in Lebanon. Participating in elections has allowed

the organization “to further the interests of the Lebanese Shiites that comprise it” and rendered Hezbollah as the main representative of the Shiite population.²¹

Despite the initial objections rising from Hezbollah’s ranks – including the objections of the first general secretary, Sheikh Subhi al-Tufeyli – the transformation of Hezbollah’s vision could not be stopped. Leaving behind the initial vision of “Islamic state” and participating in elections can also be called as the main step for the “Lebanonization of Hezbollah.”

The theory of the Islamic state would continue to be propagated among the Hezbollah rank and file; however, it would not be any more publicly emphasized as an immediate goal, because it was viewed with suspicion by the Sunnis and not acceptable at all to the Druzes and Christians. The Hezbollah leaders realized that it was an undeniable fact that other confessional groups too were essential components of the Lebanese society, and no political structure could be built in the country while disregarding those communities. With Hezbollah admitting that they were choosing to deal with the realities of the Lebanese political and social landscape, an evolutionary and not revolutionary approach began to characterize the backbone of Hezbollah’s new policy.²²

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alliances and NSAs might seek to engage in the current political system if it found the opportunity. The fact that Hezbollah’s military power remained untouched and was legitimized by the state paved the way for the Lebanonization of Hezbollah. Thanks to the 1990 Taif Accord, Hezbollah, as an armed organization which had successfully resisted the foreign invaders, secured a privileged position within the military system as the only factional militia allowed to retain its arms and enjoy de facto control over the southern Lebanese territories near the Israeli-occupied security zones.

Hezbollah’s success in establishing its monopoly over the representation of the Shiite population within Lebanese politics was also another milestone. As mentioned above, at the beginning of the 1980s, when Hezbollah had only recently been founded, there were other prominent Shiite organizations such as Amal. However, over time, Hezbollah came to take on Amal and the other organizations and became the most prominent organization due to their well-organized structure, clearly articulated political objectives, broad-reaching social and civil service network, effective propaganda and publication mechanisms along with their unparalleled effectiveness in battling the Israeli occupation.²³

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Hezbollah’s influence within Lebanese

society became apparent in the 1998 and 2004 local elections, in which the organization achieved great successes. Meanwhile, Hezbollah started to gain a remarkable number of seats in the Lebanese parliament following the 2000 general elections. These elections helped the organization greatly in re-establishing the social control that it had wielded before the reconstitution of the Lebanese state. Even though the assassination of the former Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri put Hezbollah under scrutiny and great pressure, they were still able to place two ministers in Najib al-Mikati’s cabinet which was formed in 2005 after the killing of Hariri. Despite all of the accusations and pressure Hezbollah faced after Hariri’s assassination, the organization did not lose its seats either in parliament or in government (i.e. Fuad Senyora’s cabinet) in the upcoming years. Over time, it even gained enough strength to force a prime minister to resign (Saad al-Hariri in 2011). Therefore, Hezbollah became one of the most powerful actors of the Lebanese political system within a short time of their founding.

Even though Hezbollah’s participation in the Lebanese political system through democratic means has never meant that the organization has embraced democracy as a central pillar of its theoretical/intellectual structure, it is obvious that their well-settled position within the political system has been leverage for the organization, as its participation in the system has provided them with many benefits such as access to state resources, a broader constituency and space to express its views and ideas, as well as additional – and much needed – legitimation as an official, democratic and civilian political party (the latter crucial since Hezbollah had frequently been labeled as a terrorist group and had been under continuous pressure to disarm.)

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Conclusion

Hezbollah's position in Lebanon blurs the traditional boundaries that separate the state from society.²⁴ Since the organization has been able to retain its armed forces, to enforce a system of laws within the territory where they have full de facto control and to provide a wide spectrum of social and civil services better than the state itself, the boundaries have become blurrier.

Hezbollah's case demonstrates that:

- An NSA can establish great authority over the territory and a part of the population within an existing state, gaining political legitimacy even in the cases where it challenges the ultimate authority of the state.
- An NSA can break the state's monopoly over the legitimate use of force, plus it can even gain greater power than the state forces on the ground, and keeping such power permanently can compel the state to agree to share its monopoly over the legitimate use of force.
- For an NSA to gain the power to challenge the state apparatus, foreign support plays a very important role. Hezbollah's affiliation with Iran and Syria over the course of decades demonstrates this fact.²⁵
- Even while challenging the state's authority, an NSA can convince a significant portion of the population that they are its constituents as long as the NSA addresses the concerns of those people and represents their segment of society.
- An NSA does not have to stick to its

initial goals forever: over time it can dramatically change its goals.

- An NSA can have great flexibility in its goals, discourse and alliances and seek to engage in the current political system as long as its military power remains untouched and is legitimized by the state.
- A state can absorb a NSA by giving some concessions. So the "statization"²⁶ of NSAs generally might be a troublesome process, but it can serve both the preservation of the nation state, or at least preservation of its name and regime and the "nationalization" of the relevant NSA.
- The best description of Hezbollah's case thus remains: "Larger than a Party, yet smaller than a state."²⁷



Endnotes

* This essay is a spin-off from a larger piece, as yet unpublished, about the MENA region's increasingly intersecting conflicts; some text may overlap. Views expressed herein are entirely my own.

1- Hezbollah and Amal - dubbed the «Shia duo» by local news media - won 29 seats, while the Free Patriotic Movement won 24 seats, and other parties aligned with this alliance won 12 seats.

2- All of the aforementioned statistics about the general elections come from Wikipedia, double-checked with media coverage.

3- For example, after the general election in 2009, Hezbollah's leader Hassan Nasrallah admitted the election defeat of their bloc against their U.S.-backed opponents, see: "Hezbollah accepts election loss, U.S. backs allies," Yara Bayoumy, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-lebanon-election-idUSTRE55609720090608> (Access: 16 June 2018)

4- NSA is an acronym for "non-state actors."

5- This is the definition of the Montevideo Convention, which is an international convention only signed by some American countries, yet its definition of the state has been widely used in international law doctrine. Also, in defining the concept of state, this convention was based on the definitions of many important state theoreticians.

6-John Locke, Two Treatises of Civil Government

7-Max Weber, Politics as a Vocation

8- For further examination of these terms please see: Robert I. Rotberg, "Failed States, Collapsed States, Weak States: Causes and Indicators"

9- Joel S. Migdal, "Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World", p.32

10- Ibid, p.15

11- Migdal, Boundaries and Belonging: States and Societies in the Struggle to Shape Identities and Local Practice, p.18

12- Bryan R. Early, «Larger than a Party, yet Smaller than a State»: Locating Hezbollah's Place within Lebanon's State and Society, p.117

13- Migdal, Through the Lens of Israel: Explorations in State and Society

14- Carole H. Dagher, Bring Down the Walls: Lebanon's Post-War Challenge, p. 169

15- Marius Deeb, Militant Islamic Movements In Lebanon: Origins, Social Basis and Ideology, Washington DC: Center for Contemporary Arabic Studies, 1986, pp.8-7

16- Migdal, "Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World"

17- Anisseh Van Engeland & Rachael M. Rudolph , From Terrorism to Politics, pp. 34–33

18- Paul Kingston & Marie Joelle Zahar, «The Rise and Fall of Militia Cantons" in States Within States: Incipient Political Entities in the Post Cold War Era" ed. Paul Kingston and Ian Spears, 98-81 (New York 2004)

19- A point worth making from Bryan R. Early: "Equating Hezbollah to al Qaeda in the war against terrorism ignores the substantial role that the organization plays within Lebanese society and the legitimate position it enjoys within the country's government says" from his article «Larger than a Party, yet Smaller than a State»: Locating Hezbollah's Place within Lebanon's State and Society".

20- We borrowed all of this detailed information from A. Nizar Namzeh's piece: "Lebanon's Hizbullah: from Islamic revolution to parliamentary accommodation" and used it in our text verbatim.

21- Early, p.121

22- Namzeh, p. 325

23- Early, p.119

24- Early, p. 125

25- "Backed by millions of dollars of Iranian financial and material assistance, Hezbollah embarked on the construction of a complete social-welfare system within the Shiite communities, including the construction of schools, hospitals and charitable relief centers." from Hala Jaber, Hezbollah: Born with a Vengeance, p.168-159

26- In inventing such a term, we mean the adoption of NSAs by the state apparatus.

27- Jaber, Hezbollah Born with Vengeance



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ABOUT ALSHARQ FORUM

The Sharq Forum is an independent international network whose mission is to undertake impartial research and develop long-term strategies to ensure the political development, social justice and economic prosperity of the people of Al-Sharq. The Forum does this through promoting the ideals of democratic participation, an informed citizenry, multi-stakeholder dialogue, social justice, and public-spirited research.

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The Evolution of a Non-State Actor to a “State Actor”:

The Case of Hezbollah

In May 2018, Lebanon held its first parliamentary elections since 2009, and Hezbollah secured 13 out of 128 seats in parliament. It was not a remarkable change from the results of the previous elections (12 seats in 2009 and 14 seats in 2005); however, when the seats of Hezbollah’s allies are also added to that number, together they obtained more than half of the seats (65) in the Lebanese parliament. Everybody knows that Hezbollah is the main force within this alliance, and therefore, the results of the last general elections demonstrate that Hezbollah will be the “kingmaker” in Lebanon throughout the upcoming years.