

Hezbollah will not lay down arms, even if Shebaa is liberated

Contributed by Deutsche Presse Agentur (DPA)
Thursday, 04 September 2008

Beirut_(dpa) _ The leader of the Lebanese Shiite movement Hezbollah said Thursday his group would not lay down its weapons even if the disputed Shebaa Farms in southern Lebanon was liberated from Israeli occupation.

"Even if Shebaa is liberated the weapons of the resistance are staying. The resistance is a defence project for Lebanon," Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah said during a Ramadan dinner in Nabatiyeh town, south Lebanon.

Shebaa was captured from Syria during the 1967 Six-Day war with Israel. Israel says Shebaa is Syrian territory and its fate should be determined in future peace talks with Damascus.

Lebanese and Syrian officials claim that Syria had officially given the territory to Lebanon in 1951. Lebanese officials said several residents have land deeds stamped by the Lebanese government.

Israel officially ended its 22-year occupation of southern Lebanon in May 2000.

Referring to the mounting war of words between Israel and Hezbollah, Nasrallah accused Israel of threatening Lebanon and said his group will destroy "the five (Israeli) brigades in the south, Western Bekaa and everywhere."

Last week, Israeli officials warned that Lebanon's civilian infrastructure could become a legitimate target if Hezbollah attacked Israel.

The warning came after the formation of a unity government in which the Hezbollah-led opposition has 11 ministries as well as veto power over cabinet decisions. dpa wh ar

Copyright (c) dpa Deutsche Presse-Agentur GmbH