

## MP Shehayeb: Hizbullah Out to Change the Regime, and We'll Confront this attempt

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MP Akram Shehayeb accused Hizbullah of setting the stage to control Lebanon and change its regime, vowing that the March 14 alliance is committed to confronting such a scheme.

Shehayeb, in an interview with Naharnet at the Phoenicia Hotel Bastion that he labels "The Abu Ghreib Jail," said:

"Hizbullah is for a preemptive war to control state institutions &hellip; to torpedo the Taif accord."

Hizbullah leader Hassan Nasrallah, in his latest speech, "wanted to tell all the Lebanese political factions that ' have the veto power as long as I possess all these weapons and all the money and this strong security apparatus' this shows that Hizbullah wants a preemptive war to control state institutions in the future," Shehayeb said.

"That is why we insist on electing a strong and capable president who can prevent this march of autocracy by Nasrallah," Shehayeb added.

He accused Hizbullah of having two presidential candidates, "Their declared candidate is Michel Aoun in addition to an undeclared candidate."

However, he expressed the belief that "another faction of March 8 wants to support consensus, that is if consensus was achieved, or if the Syrian regime facilitated the consensus process."

Shehayeb referred to an "active Arab and foreign diplomatic activity &hellip; We hope this would achieve results. The Lebanese people await a settlement."

He reiterated "our support for what Patriarch Nasrallah Sfeir decides on."

Shehayeb said Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri is "in fact consulting the Syrian regime over the candidates. And if the Syrian regime hampered presidential elections, it will be held responsible for this move by the international community."

He noted that the Europeans and the Russians are holding talks with Assad's regime to facilitate the presidential election.

Shehayeb recalled that Nasrallah called in his latest address for "respecting U.N. Security Council resolutions, but there is a difference between respecting the resolutions and implementing them, that requires a mechanism adopted by the government, but Nasrallah wants veto powers."

He predicted "tough times, even after the presidential elections. Tension would persist in Lebanon as long as the Syrian regime continues to exist."

Nasrallah's address and threats made by Ahmed Jibril, leader of the Syrian-sponsored Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command mean that "as long as Iran's Nuclear programs is under pressure, Lebanon would continue to be put under pressure," Shehayeb said.

He predicted "more violence, assassinations and explosions. We expect anything from this (Syrian) regime. The problem will not end with the election of a new president, but would persist even after that."

Shehayeb stressed that Hizbullah's main target is to "have a veto power, this means they want to shake the power sharing formula, that is to torpedo the Taif accord."

The Taif accord, which ended Lebanon's civil war, is "the formula that guarantees Lebanon and we should adhere to it. We should protect the Taif accord which is rejected by Hizbullah because it restricts weapons to state institutions," Shehayeb said.

The Taif accord has failed to prevent tension in Lebanon because it was "mis-implemented by the Syrians" when they ruled Lebanon before April, 2005, according to Shehayeb.

He said Hizbullah is "not interested in Lebanon, the state and the people. Hizbullah has its own agenda which is part of a nation sponsored by Iran."

Shehayeb noted that both Hizbullah and Aoun are "against the Taif accord."

He cautioned against the threat posed by Jibril, stressing that the latter is "prepared to block the presidential election."

Shehayeb concluded by stressing that "now we have to elect a president and protect him, as well as some MPs, against death threats" by the Assad regime.

"The nation deserves sacrifices and we have taken this path by our own conviction," he stressed.

By Dalia Nehme , Naharnet, Beirut, 18 Nov 07, 22:00

<http://www.naharnet.com/domino/tn/NewsDesk.nsf/getstory?openform&5529BBE203B58EE4C2257397006DAE0D>