



**The following is the official Hezbollah English translation of the speech given by Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah on 14 August 2006, marking the ceasefire of the July War.**

I commend myself to God's protection from the Evil one, the Rejected. [Koranic verse]

In the name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Merciful. Praise be to God the Lord of the universe. Praise be to God alone, who fulfilled His promise, supported His servant, and alone defeated the parties.

Peace and blessings be on the last prophet, our master Muhammad; his chaste household; virtuous companions; and all prophets and messengers.

God's peace, mercy and blessings be upon you.

On this great and revered day on which our honorable and chaste people return to their villages, towns, houses and neighborhoods, I address my message to you. I would like to emphasize some issues and matters in this message.

First of all, I do not want to assess or discuss in detail what we are currently witnessing, but I want to say briefly and without exaggeration that we stand before a strategic and historical victory for Lebanon - all of Lebanon, for the resistance, and for the whole nation.

I will leave the details of my talk, its scope, proof and facts to the coming days. This is because I want to devote my words on this occasion to the martyrs and the sacrifices of martyrs - the martyrs of the [Islamic] resistance and the martyrs of all resisting and honorable parties and forces, to the martyrs of the army, security forces, civil defense forces and the media.

I also address my words to civilian men, women, and children who were martyred - particularly the martyrs of massacres starting with Marwahin on the first days and ending with yesterday's massacres in the Brital, Sufayr and Ruways areas, as well as the residential complex of Imam Al-Hassan, peace be upon him, in Beirut's southern suburb.

My message on this occasion is devoted to the men of the [Islamic] Resistance, sacrifices, firmness, steadfastness, people, kinfolk, beloved ones, friends, patience, trust, perseverance and the faithful ones in Lebanon and outside Lebanon who stood by us throughout this war.

I do not think that I am qualified or can express what is in my mind, heart and feelings, or can explain this matter while sitting on a chair in front of a camera. The right setting for this is during a forthcoming meeting with the people, beloved ones, the mujahidin, and through direct talk with them. Therefore, I will leave what is related to this matter to that forthcoming meeting, God willing, so as to discuss all this and to talk about the issues of captives, the suffering of the occupied lands, Gaza and the suffering of its people, Palestine, about the sacrifices, injustice, the historical responsibility, the historical turning point, as well as the upcoming stage.

The second matter I would like to discuss is the displaced persons, their return to their homes and the stage after their return. First of all, I would like to greet all those who held their ground in the battlefield of confrontation and in fact, who endured what is unbearable, as the size of bombardment from the air, land and sea was unprecedented in the history of Lebanon.

The size of the destruction the Israeli enemy inflicted on the houses and infrastructure- where inflicted houses means direct harm to the families, is also unprecedented in any Israeli war on Lebanon.

The enemy left behind huge destruction and devastation, which express its rancor, brutality and powerlessness. In the past few days alone, it destroyed thousands of homes in the south, in [Beirut's] southern suburb, in the Bekaa, and in the different Lebanese areas. But there was great emphasis on the southern Lebanese areas and Beirut's southern suburb, of course the aim was hurting the people and punishing them for their position, honor, chivalry, commitment, faith, humanity and pride.

In any case, we must thank and salute those who were patient throughout their displacement and forced migration and returned today to their areas, lands and homes, even if demolished. And I wish to especially thank all the residents and people of the areas, [that welcomed the displaced] as well as all the sects, political parties, the state and its institutions, all humanitarian organizations, and all those who helped embrace our displaced people during the difficult time of the war.

I turn now to those returning to their areas, to the steadfast, and to the rest of the people to speak about the homes that were destroyed or damaged. There are two classes here, and I will only talk about residential units and homes - the other matters pertaining to the infrastructure, economics, and other areas of damage and destruction, I put discussing them at a later period, and I believe what is pressing for now is the issue of homes and houses because they provide shelter for these noble families.

Regarding the houses that were damaged but are still habitable and utilizable, starting tomorrow morning, the brothers in the towns, villages, and cities will take the initiative and will contact and visit the owners of these homes to offer direct and swift assistance in order to kick start the restoration of these homes back to a habitable state as fast as possible.

As for the demolished homes – which is the harder issue - I wish to first reassure these honourable families [whose homes have been demolished] that they need not worry. What I said in the first days of the war was not simply meant keep you steadfast. No, today is the day I keep my word and fulfill this promise. God willing, you will not need to ask for help, stand in any lines, or go to certain places; our brothers, who are your brothers and sons, in all the areas, towns, villages and neighborhoods will, God willing, come to your service starting tomorrow morning.

We will work together on this matter. We cannot of course wait for the government and its heavy vehicles and machinery because they could be a while, at any rate, the government's movements will come to light in the near future, but what we can do is work together along two simultaneous tracks starting tomorrow. The first track is securing a reasonable sum of money for each family to help it rent a house for a year and buy decent and suitable furniture for this house, because the reconstruction of houses and apartment buildings requires months, and the natural alternative for now is for people to rent and furnish houses. This will start tomorrow, and I can say that in the coming few days, all these cases, even though great in number and seriousness, will be covered. So far, the initial count available to us on completely demolished houses exceeds 15,000 residential units. We understand that this is a monumental and serious affair, but, God willing, we have enough determination for this task and achievement.

The second track is clearing the rubble and kick starting construction, with hopes that in a few months time, we would have rebuilt all the houses that have been demolished. The matter here is also one of determination - determination and faith, patience, tolerance, sincerity, planning, accuracy and hard

work, through which we were able to confront the aggression, hold out, and triumph, and through these exact same principles and feelings, we can overcome the hardships of reconstructing and triumph, God willing. In this context, I call on all engineers [rephrases] it is not enough that we secure funds, there is a need for solidarity, initiative, and cooperation on the part of engineers, construction material dealers, and furniture dealers - no one should raise prices due to the surge in demand. They must act humanely and patriotically.

We also need hands-on efforts and workers when considering this size of the construction work needed, but given the possible shortage in manual workers as a result of the circumstances the country witnessed in the past months, we must all volunteer and work alongside the owners of these homes on rebuilding them. Here, I call on all the Lebanese young men and women to volunteer with the same patriotic and moral spirit we witnessed during the confrontations, embracement [of the displaced], civil defense efforts, and in the zealously, amity, and fear for the people.

I especially call on the young men of Hezbollah, on our brothers in all institutions and sectors, on the mujahidin, on the mobilization and recruitment officers, on the students, on the union people, on the freelancers, and on everyone, and I tell them that we must all converge on the construction battlefield in every village, neighborhood and city. Let us place our personal considerations aside. We must contribute to all the requirements of this construction, even in terms of normal simple labor. I believe the large numbers and thousands we are speaking of here [rephrases] if we take a day, two days, a couple of days, or a number of hours every day from each brother or person, we would be able to organize a huge effort and secure significant financial resources. At any rate, this is a grand and monumental effort.

The expatriate donors from all over the world can always support us. They are also welcome to contribute and participate. In order to complete the victory, we should begin the reconstruction, especially building the houses exactly as they were built and even better so that those honorable people would return to them. Without the steadfastness of those people, we would not have been able to achieve this victory.

The last issue in my message is related to the controversy which began several days ago over the weapons of the [Islamic] Resistance. Of course, I do not want to talk about this controversy. However, I want to touch on this issue in a responsible and careful way.

O brothers and sisters, during the fighting, and when your beloved people from the mujahidin of the [Islamic] Resistance - were showing heroism, writing epics, and making miracles - there were discussions held in the closed rooms and in private channels on how the situation would be in the area located to the south of the Litani River. In particular, the issue of deploying the Lebanese Army there, the issue of the borders, and the Unifil. They also discussed how the status, position, and the future of the weapons of the resistance would be, in addition to the way the resistance would act if this deployment takes place.

These were responsible, serious and careful discussions held by our older brother [Parliament] Speaker Nabih Birri, who is truly a great national guarantee. I hope that all those who opened this file to the mass media to listen to him and his voice, I hope they would observe his wisdom in dealing with this sensitive, serious and decisive issue.

At any rate, these discussions were held before and after the issuance of the UN Security Council

resolution, until the last session of the Lebanese government. This issue was raised and some discussion took place over it.

We were surprised to see some government ministers leaking this story; namely the story of this discussion and the disagreement in viewpoints to some local and Arab television stations.

The discussions and arguments began to grow bigger and bigger. What should have remained a discussion behind closed doors, has become a public discussion. I believe that there is no national interest in such a discussion and it is unbecoming. Nevertheless, I call for returning this discussion to its normal and responsible channels, which are known. At the end of my speech, I will comment on how to end this discussion.

In all cases, we had preferred not to enter into this argument because we think it does not serve the national interest, but serves the interest of the enemy who began to witness internal sharp disputes inside its military institution at the political and military levels, between the government and opposition, between the left-wing and right-wing parties, in the media, and on the street. Apparently, some parties want to force Lebanon to enter into disputes that are not in Lebanon's interest.

Out of care, love, responsibility and calmness, I would like to draw the attention of some of those gentlemen and political parties - who disclosed the discussion to the media and to the public - to some issues and to their mistakes in this context.

First, there is a mistake in timing at the psychological and moral level, especially when the discussion began before the ceasefire or the so-called military operations while Lebanon was being bombarded and its infrastructures were being destroyed.

All the Lebanese areas and all the Lebanese people were targeted. Specifically, the people of the south, the residents of the Bekaa, and the residents of the [Beirut] southern suburb had the lion's share of the attacks. Those people represent a major segment of the Lebanese people.

I would like to draw the attention to the wrong psychological timing.

There is a great segment of people who, like all other Lebanese, believe in the resistance, who hold on to the weapons of the resistance, who are proud of the resistance, and who offer great sacrifices. There were approximately one million displaced people whose houses were destroyed - some 15,000 residential units were destroyed as I have just said. Most of the civilian martyrs were from the south, the Bekaa, and the southern suburb. Most of the massacres were committed against residents of the south, the Bekaa, and the southern suburb. These families, whom you saw on television screens leaving their homes, were women, children and elderly. Those who remained on the battle fronts were the youths, who were fighting gallantly, bravely and steadfastly. They were making a real legend and the Israeli enemy stood before them puzzled. The enemy was weak and cowardly. It was defeated without being able to achieve any of its goals. Meanwhile, at this difficult and decisive psychological and emotional moment, some people sitting behind their desks under air conditioners were talking calmly and advising people on the weapons of the [Islamic] Resistance and talk in their rhetorical language. They have always been saying that we are speaking a rhetorical language. They are the ones who are speaking rhetorically.

I will not touch on the essence of this rhetorical language. This is unethical, incorrect, erroneous and

unbecoming, whether this idea that they are talking about was true or not.

How could they imagine that those people - the great segment of the Lebanese society, those who embrace them, those who believe in them, and those who support them - are emotionless?

Do they think that those people and these huge segments of the Lebanese society and those who embrace them, believe in them, and support them have no feelings or emotions? Do they think that all of those are political leaders with a high sense of awareness and with no emotions or feelings? What are those people doing? What are they saying?

Are those people mere stones or slaves that have to listen and obey when some political elites in Lebanon speak? This is wrong and a big mistake.

Of course, we exerted huge efforts so as not to have reactions, because what happened was insulting. And I urge people, the masses of the resistance, and the lovers and supporters of the resistance to ignore what they heard and what they may hear because the country's solidarity and unity are the most precious things that we should care for. We endured killing, destruction, devastation, wounds, and displacement; therefore, we can endure the harm that some people might cause in this regard, although I urge those people to stop this harm. I urge them out of real concern, sense of responsibility and love, to fully understand the current psychological, emotional and moral situation.

It is true that they are talking to people whose houses were destroyed and whose children were killed, but those people emerged victorious in a battle where huge Arab armies would have been defeated. We emerged from the battle with our heads held high while our enemy was defeated. Our enemy is the one suffering powerlessness and weakness and who is going to set up investigation committees and take many measures.

For that reason, you are talking to victorious people who offered great sacrifices and paid a dear price for this victory, which Lebanon, the nation and everybody achieved. This should be taken into consideration.

On the other hand, the strange thing is that talk used to be about the condition of the weapons and the resistance in the area south of the Litani River.

Nobody now, even the enemy or the international community, is asking Lebanon to quickly disarm the [Islamic] Resistance. This issue was regarded as part of the long-term and lasting solution. But we, unfortunately, heard some voices saying that if the area south of the river should be demilitarized, then why should there be any weapons in the area north of the river, and what is the use of the resistance weapons in the whole of Lebanon, so we should start discussing the issue of all the weapons, as of now. Their intention was not to discuss this issue, but to demand an end to this issue.

Our dear and loved brothers, this matter cannot be settled hastily in this way. I advise people to avoid provocation and exaggeration, or attempting to exert pressure by invoking humanitarian and security considerations.

We know that among the most important goals of the US-Israeli war, which was launched recently on Lebanon, is disarming us and ending the presence of these weapons, but they failed. I also urge you to read or listen to what the enemy's foreign minister said. She said that even the strongest army in the

world cannot disarm Hezbollah.

Hence, this matter cannot be settled through provocation or exaggeration. It was not settled through the destruction of houses, the killing of children and women, or the launching of the fiercest battle in Lebanon's history. Therefore, we should be careful when we tackle this issue.

The issue under discussion now is the situation on the southern side of the river. We have been discussing this issue with the concerned and serious parties. Consequently, you are committing a mistake and going farther than what the Americans and the Israelis are demanding of Lebanon. This is surprising in fact.

Thirdly, in this regard some people said that they wanted Hezbollah to hand over its weapons to the state. Have those great people liberated Sheb'a Farms and secured the return of people to their lands in Sheb'a Farms? Do they ask us to hand over our weapons because they freed prisoners? Do they come to us with real guarantees of protecting Lebanon against the Israeli enemy, which is still threatening? Olmert was leveling threats before I came to have this message recorded.

Lebanon is still being threatened and might be attacked any time. Who will defend this country? Who will teach the enemy a lesson? Who will make the enemy pay a heavy price? Today, we can proudly say that if any Israeli government decides to launch war in the future, it will take into consideration that war with Lebanon will not be a picnic. War with Lebanon will be very costly in terms of human, material and economic losses, as well as in terms of the loss of dignity and image.

The Zionist enemy is carefully considering this and the next days will uncover the real losses on many levels as a result of this current confrontation.

What alternatives do you have? Is it the Lebanese Army? We support the deployment of the army in the area south of the river and we have said this before. But can the Lebanese Army, with its current conditions and capabilities, fight a war if a war is imposed on Lebanon? Is it the Unifil? Would the Unifil, even if supported by 10,000 or 20,000 or 50,000 soldiers, stand to defend and protect Lebanon if Israel attacks Lebanon? This is out of the question.

Therefore, this is an issue that is linked to the country's destiny and the protection of the country, and we should not deal with it lightly or with such haste. This is a complicated issue and we have said that we were ready, and are still ready to discuss it. On the table of dialogue, we have talked a lot about it. The persisting excuse was - and now we go back to rhetoric - spreading the state's sovereignty. We agree to the spreading of the state's sovereignty. At any rate, we are part of the state. Are we outside the state? We are members of the government and the Chamber of Deputies. We are a significant part of this country. We believe in the state, but which state? The strong, capable, fair, defiant and reassuring state that would make every Lebanese feel that it represents him. This is what we unanimously agreed upon on the table of dialogue. Is the state we have now that kind of state - a strong, capable, defiant and fair state that can reassure all the sects, sectors, and political currents in Lebanon? This needs some thinking. On the table of dialogue, we have always had this discussion, and I insist on this point. There were some people who would say that withdrawing the resistance weapons is a basic condition for building the strong and capable state. I say the opposite. The building of the strong, capable, defiant, and reassuring state is the natural beginning for this state to come to the Lebanese people and to the people of the south to tell them: O our people, we are a strong, capable, and defiant state that can protect your dignity, blood, honor, and pride, and you do not need to have any mass

structures called resistance or special weapons called the resistance weapons. The beginning should be the building of a strong, capable state that can defend the people and the country's honor. This should not be the end. This would be very wrong.

In all cases, I wish to conclude by saying, let us return the discussion to its natural place. I believe that continuing the row over this issue will make Lebanon lose its strength. Now, Lebanon's strength lies in its resistance - and I do not mean the [Islamic] Resistance as such, but its general resistance, which includes steadfastness, solidarity, and direct presence in the field, as well as the [Islamic] Resistance - and national unity. If we preserve these two factors of strength, we can build the strong, capable state with its army and security agencies and its political and civilian agencies. In that case, such a state will provide the solution to all the current problems in the country. Do not waste the current factor of strength in the country. Do not enter into matters and rows that would squander resistance and unity, because this would not help in the building of the strong and capable state, which we all agree is the solution and the only way out for Lebanon's future. All of us in Lebanon can then live under this state which protects everybody, preserves everybody's dignity, defends everybody, and reassures everybody.

Therefore, let us return this discussion to its natural circles and to the real point of discussion now. I say that through serious discussion and through the wise men we have in the country, and our feeling of responsibility and away from the media and public discussions and one-upmanship, I am certain that we can arrive at suitable solutions that can achieve the national interests from all its aspects.

Finally, I congratulate those returning to their homes on their victorious return. I assure you and I assure them that you are the people of this land, you are the owners of this land, and you are its honor and dignity. With you, homes will be rebuilt, dignity will be established, and history will be made.

God's blessings and peace be upon you.