

Point of View No. 43

International Involvement Predicament (2) - Inverse Sequence of Actions

7.31.2006

Secretary of State Rice declared this morning that there is a broad understanding that "... an international Stabilization Force should be deployed ... and Lebanon should, as assisted where appropriate by the international community, disarm armed groups" ([US Department of State Website](#), 7/31/06).

The Reut Institute forewarns that Hizbullah's perception of the sequence of actions is inverse to that according to Israeli and American Perception. These contradicting perceptions may lead the political process into a deadlock.

What is the Issue?

- **The resistance rationale of Hizbullah** dictates that the organization will not disarm *until* the resolution of all outstanding issues between Israel and Lebanon (if it disarms at all). This rationale serves Lebanese, Syrian and Iranian interests.
- **The political rationale of Israel and the US** calls upon Hizbullah to disarm and upon the government of Lebanon to assert its sovereignty over its entire territory *during or prior to* any political arrangement that would deal with the outstanding issues.

Why is this Important? Why Now?

- These contradicting rationales may create a deadlock in the planning or implementation of the new political arrangement.
- Insisting on the disarmament of Hizbullah prior to the settlement of the outstanding issues contradicts the basic logic of the resistance and would lead to a deadlock.
- As long as these issues are not settled, Hizbullah will remain armed.

Policy Options

- Israel cannot affect the resistance rationale, according to which the outstanding issues should be resolved before disarmament, as is stems from the very nature of the resistance.
- However, delaying the resolution of these issues would serve as justification for Hizbullah to continue its struggle against Israel or any international force.
- If Israel decides to insist on disarmament *during or prior to* the resolution of the outstanding issues, it should prepare for a deadlock and avoid permanent presence in Lebanon, which would serve the rationale of the resistance.
- IF Israel is willing to accept Hizbullah's sequence (which means that it stays armed until after a comprehensive arrangement has been reached), it should work to resolve the outstanding issues either directly with the Lebanese government, or through a third party.

For additional sources see the Reut Institute website: www.reut-institute.org

End.