Summary

- Israel and Lebanon have signed a far-reaching framework agreement.
- The goal of the agreement is to end the decades-long conflict between the two countries.
- To this end, Hezbollah and all other non-state armed groups in Lebanon are to be disarmed.
- As the disarmament of terrorist forces progresses, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) will gradually withdraw from Lebanon.
- The agreement recognizes the right of both states to peaceful coexistence.
- It documents that Israel and Lebanon have successfully opposed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the United States and Iran.

From the Editorial Staff

The agreement, signed late Friday evening Washington time with U.S. mediation, marks a significant diplomatic step: For the first time, Lebanon and Israel have explicitly committed to ending the conflict once and for all and formally overcoming the current state of war. The agreement states that both sides recognize the right of the other state to exist in peace and security. Furthermore, both countries express their willingness to establish peaceful relations as sovereign neighboring states in the future.

Disarming Hezbollah as a Prerequisite for the IDF’s Withdrawal

A central component of the agreement concerns the security framework in Lebanon. The Lebanese government commits to fully restoring the state’s monopoly on the use of force. This means that only the country’s official security forces shall have the right to bear arms and exercise military force. As part of this, the “complete and

verifiable disarmament” of all non-state armed groups is to take place. This includes, in particular, Hezbollah, but also all other militias operating independently of the Lebanese state. At the same time, the agreement stipulates that these organizations may no longer perform any military or security-related functions within the country. The United States, which brokered and co-signed the agreement, commits to supporting the Lebanese Army in this task.

These commitments are to be implemented in stages. The Lebanese Armed Forces will gradually assume full responsibility for security in previously designated pilot areas. This process will take place in close coordination with the Israeli Defense Forces and is directly linked to verifiable progress in the disarmament of the militias and the dismantling of their military infrastructure. Only once these conditions are met will additional areas currently under Israeli military control be transferred to the control of the Lebanese Armed Forces.

In the agreement, Israel states that its military presence and operations in Lebanon were solely a response to the threat posed by Hezbollah and other armed groups. With the elimination of this threat and the establishment of new security mechanisms, there is no longer any need for further military operations or a permanent presence of Israeli troops on Lebanese soil. Israel expressly emphasizes that it makes no territorial claims against Lebanon.

Rejection of the MoU – Hezbollah Vows Resistance

The agreement makes it clear that Israel and Lebanon do not feel bound by the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed last week between Iran and the United States. That document made no mention of disarming Hezbollah or of Iran ceasing its support for the group. Instead, the aim was to pressure Israel to withdraw from Lebanon without such assurances.

The government in Jerusalem, which is not a party to the MoU, had rejected this from the outset. This is because, in recent months, Hezbollah had once again terrorized about one million people in the north of the Jewish state with its constant rocket attacks. The Lebanese government, too, expressed dissatisfaction with the memorandum of understanding between Iran and the U.S., which, without consulting them, also addressed the future of their country and would have effectively guaranteed Hezbollah’s continued existence. In contrast, the agreement now signed between Lebanon and Israel—with the U.S. as a third party—contains clear provisions aimed at preventing Iranian interference in Lebanon.

If the agreement currently being negotiated between Israel and Lebanon is successfully implemented, Hezbollah’s status as a “state within a state” in Lebanon will come to an end. However, this will not happen without a fight. Hezbollah has already rejected the agreement and announced its resistance. The terrorist group has warned that any attempt to disarm it will lead to a civil war. It is therefore quite possible that the Israeli army will have to take action in Lebanon once again and assist the Lebanese government in disarming Hezbollah. In reality, it has already done so in the past.