

**The Hezbollah-Salafist memorandum of understanding**

*On August 18, the Hezbollah-affiliated Al-Manar website carried the following report:*

This morning, a memorandum of understanding was signed between Hezbollah and the Salafist movements in Lebanon in the As-Safir Hotel on the Beirut Corniche. From Hezbollah's side, the paper was signed by the head of the political council, Sayyed Ibrahim Amin al-Sayyed, and from the Salafist movement by the representative of the Salafist forces in Lebanon, Sheikh Dr. Hassan al-Chahhal, in the presence of leaders from both sides and a media crowd.

The Hezbollah-Salafist Memorandum of Understanding stated:

In light of the major challenges faced by our Arab and Islamic nation, the most angry of which being the instigation of sectarian and religious strife to attack the region and pillage its wealth and serve the interests of Israel and America, and in light of what is happening on the Lebanese scene in terms of the dangerous repercussions serving the Israeli enemy, since Israel wants to take from the Lebanese what it could not take by use of arms - especially after the July War - and with respect to our Islamic duty, we have tried to eliminate strife and contain the dispute between the Sunnis and the Shia within the intellectual and scientific context that is handled by scholars from both sects and the exploitation of which is prohibited to the public.

Among the most prominent factors in the management of this dispute are the protection of the specifics of each sect and the respect of their principles... while bearing in mind that the acute political disputes between the different sides bear negative repercussions affecting the people, the Lebanese arena in general and the Islamic arena in particular. It is based on the aforementioned that the Salafist forces and Hezbollah's leaders met and agreed on the following points:

Firstly, based on the sacredness of Muslim blood, we ban and condemn any attack carried out by any Muslim group against another Muslim group. In case a group is attacked, it has the right to resort to the legitimate means to defend itself.

Secondly, we abstain from instigating the public, since that contributes to fueling strife and takes the decision out of the hands of the wise and places it into the hands of the enemies of the Islamic nation.

Thirdly, we will stand in the face of the American-Zionist project, the most prominent tools of which being strife and division.

Fourthly, we will exert all possible efforts to eliminate the Takfiri ideology of the Sunnis and the Shia, since accusing all Shia of being infidels is rejected by the Salafists, and accusing all Sunnis of being infidels is rejected by Hezbollah.

Fifthly, if Hezbollah or the Salafists are ill-treated by domestic or foreign sides, the other party should stand by it with force and determination as much as possible.

Sixthly, a committee of senior Salafist and Hezbollah scholars is formed to look into the points of dispute between the Shia and the Sunnis, in what would contain the disputes within the context of the committee and prevent them from reaching the street.

Seventhly, each side enjoys the freedom of belief, and no side has the right to impose its ideology on the other.

Eighthly, both sides believe that the understanding will deter strife between Muslims and enhance peaceful living and coexistence between all the Lebanese.