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Lebanese President Asks Iran for Military Aid

Posted By Jason Ditz

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Following the decision of US Rep. Howard Berman (D – CA) to freeze all military aid to Lebanon citing its “[provocations against Israel](#),” Lebanese President Michel Suleiman today petitioned the Iranian government to be their replacement partner.



Suleiman [requested that they help develop a modernization plan for the Lebanese Army](#), while considering the limited budget of the Lebanese government. The US had previously promised to help the modernization of Lebanon's military.

But now the US is trying to tie this modernization to [demands that the Lebanese military promise not to oppose any future Israeli invasions of Southern Lebanon](#). Since Israel is constantly threatening to invade and Lebanon has no conceivable other military opponents this seemed to defeat the purpose of the modernization, however, from the Lebanese government's perspective.

Lebanon's military came out of the 2006 Israeli invasion looking comparatively pointless, as they largely remained on base as Israeli warplanes carpet bombed parts of Beirut and seized large portions of the south.

Though one can see the value to the US and now Iran in strengthening their influence in Lebanon, the whole modernization effort seems to give little to Lebanon itself, as the best case scenario is to turn it into an ultra-militarized foil for Israel, and in all likelihood it just makes them a bigger target.