Beat: Politics

Israeli military shoots down drone from Lebanon

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USPA News - An Israeli fighter plane on Thursday shot down a drone from Lebanon over the Mediterranean Sea off northern Israel, the military said. The Lebanese militant group Hezbollah said it was not responsible for sending the drone into Israeli airspace.

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) said the unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) attempted to violate Israeli airspace from the north at approximately 2 p.m. local time on Thursday. "The UAV was tracked by IDF ground and aerial surveillance for the duration of its flight path as it attempted to approach Israel`s coast," a spokesperson said in a statement. An Israeli fighter jet intercepted the drone and successfully downed the aircraft approximately 5 nautical miles off the coast of the northern Israeli city of Haifa. Israeli officials said the drone was first detected as it flew over Lebanon, but the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah said in a statement that it had not sent any aircraft. In October 2012, the IDF downed a drone in the northern Negev desert in southern Israel after it entered Israeli airspace from the direction of the Mediterranean Sea. Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah later confirmed his group was responsible for the drone, and claimed it had flown over "sensitive sites" in Israel. Although it is extremely rare for a militant group to possess a drone, it was not the first time that Hezbollah used a drone to infiltrate Israeli airspace. The group also sent two Ababil UAVs towards Haifa during the Second Lebanon War in August 2006, but both were downed by Israeli forces before they crossed the border from Lebanon into Israel.

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483 Green Lanes
UK, London N13NV 4BS
contact (at) unitedpressagency.com
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