



The Guardians of the Cedars issued the following communiqué:

The recurring wave of terror that has lashed out at targets in Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and Israel, and that plans further attacks across the globe proves that the anti-terrorism campaign led by the United States remains insufficient, uneven, stumbling, and very much in its early phases. It is therefore imperative to undertake a reassessment of the response to this dangerous evil in order to eliminate it from its roots and before the task becomes impossible.

In this context, and with our long experience in combating terrorism, we offer the following suggestions to the American administration :

First, the administration's military campaign should not stop at the Iraqi border and should not be limited to removing the Iraqi regime to the exclusion of other identical Arab regimes, namely the Saudi regime known for being the source of fundamentalist terrorism, and the Syrian regime known to sponsor and support it. Otherwise, the administration would have addressed the symptoms instead of the disease itself, and would have dealt with the tributaries instead of the sources of the terror.

Second, the administration ought not to fight terrorist regimes with diplomacy, political pressures, or economic sanctions, all of which have proven so far to be futile. In fact, these measures have given the terrorists a feeling of reassurance and an opportunity to recoup, pick up their forces, reorganize their ranks, and launch new attacks. The administration should focus on military methods, including severe and unrelenting preemptive strikes because terrorism is like a cancer that cannot be cured with ointments but which requires radical surgery.

Third, the administration should immediately shut down all religious schools established over decades by the Saudi regime all over the globe with the goal of disseminating radical Islamist ideology, and which have graduated thousands of fundamentalists and prepared them as volunteers ready to serve terrorism.

Fourth, the administration should pay special attention to Lebanon, which the Syrian regime has transformed into a haven for a horde of diverse fundamentalist killer movements and a terrorist breeding ground par excellence that is capable of igniting war not only in Lebanon but all over the region. Any delay in addressing the specific case of Lebanon is likely to make the remedy that much more difficult. The events we are witnessing today inside the Ain El Helwi camp are only a prototype of what could happen in the near future outside the camp.

Finally, we remind the administration that the free Lebanese are an essential partner in the war on terrorism and are more concerned by it than anyone else. They and the administration share one common enemy, one common objective, and one common destiny.

Lebanon, at your service,

Abu Arz,

May 24, 2003.