



The Guardians of the Cedars issued the following communiqué:

The UN Secretary General's report on Resolution 1559 was overall good and it did state several facts that we never heard before in this international forum, which gave the Lebanese people a glimmer of hope that they long have yearned for.

Mr. Kofi Annan admitted that the foreign forces mentioned in the resolution were in fact the Syrian forces, that the militias consist of "Hezbollah" and Palestinian armed groups, that the Security Council has so far not received from the Syrian and "Lebanese" governments the promised agreement specifying the number of Syrian forces remaining in Lebanon and the duration of their stay according to the Taef Agreement. Annan's report further noted that up to September 30, 2004, no Syrian withdrawal has occurred and that the latest redeployment was ambiguous, that resolution 425 has been completely implemented by Israel, and that the Shebaa Farms pretext used by Lebanon is not convincing, and the Lebanese government has not extended its control over its entire territory, in particular along the Blue Line where Hezbollah operates independently of Lebanese government control or sanction. Finally, the report stated that the extension (of Lahoud's term) took place as a result of a direct intervention by the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, that "the Syrian military presence, including a substantial component of non-uniformed intelligence officials", affords the Syrian Arab Republic considerable leverage over Lebanese domestic affairs, that the countries have never had formal diplomatic relations, etc.

However, along with the positives cited above, the report contained a number of blemishes and falsehoods that are detailed below:

1 - The Secretary General entangled himself in the narrative of the Lebanese War and its complications from its inception and up to the date of writing his report. This caused him to state misconceptions, falsehoods and other ambiguities without which he could have done better. For example, he described the War on Lebanon as a "civil war", and the entry of Syrian forces to be at the request of the "Lebanese government" to establish stability, etc., without mentioning that Syria was the sole driver for igniting the war and fanning its flames. Mr. Annan would have done better to concentrate his efforts on the essential points pertaining to resolution 1559 and to concisely and clearly address the extent of adherence of the two governments to the demands of the resolution. This suggests that Mr. Annan's objective with this long and rambling narrative was to distract his readers from the foundation of the Lebanese crisis, which is the Syrian occupation and nothing else.

2 - The Secretary General continually referred to the point of view of the Syrian and "Lebanese" governments each time he had to address sensitive issues and confront the truth, as in the issues of the withdrawal of the Syrian Army, the extension of the control of the State, the disarming of the militias, the term extension and the violation of the Constitution, etc. We cannot imagine that the Secretary is ignorant of the fact that Lebanon has no real government defined as sovereign and free in making decisions, which again suggests that the objective here is to water down resolution 1559 and void it of its substance.

3 - The report was drafted mostly in a conciliatory language that is remote from the required determination and clarity, which leaves room to interpretation and second-guessing, as each paragraph conveyed more than one meaning and interpretation. This suggests that the Secretary General deliberately wanted to appease each party to the conflict, both outside and inside Lebanon, and ignoring in the process that one cannot satisfy everyone except at the expense of the absolute truth.

4 - The Secretary General claimed that the Lebanese people were divided over the issue of the "Syrian presence", when the fact is that only a handful supports it to protect its political and financial grip, whereas the vast majority of the Lebanese people is against it, as one would expect under any occupation. He avoided referring to the Syrian army and intelligence apparatus as an army of occupation in spite of his own admission of the substantial influence wielded by that army over Lebanon. He also avoided challenging the legitimacy of the term extension of the dummy in Baabda, in spite of his own admission that it was the product of Syrian pressures. He finally declined suggesting a mechanism for implementing resolution 1559, contenting himself with an offer to "remain ready to assist the parties, as needed, in the full implementation of Council resolution 1559". We note the "as needed" phrase, without understanding its purpose in this context.

5 - The Secretary General concluded his report by saying that he "continue(s) to look forward to the ultimate achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East", which is a deliberate misuse of the obvious. Everyone is hopeful for peace, but some have interpreted this sentence to indicate a linkage between the Lebanese problem and the Middle East conflict, which is precisely the claim made by the Syrian government and its poodle, the "Lebanese government".

Still, one of the most eloquent passages in Mr. Annan's report states that: "The withdrawal of foreign forces and the disbandment and disarmament of militias would, with finality, end that sad chapter of Lebanese history". We hereby

invite the Secretary General to put his foot where his mouth is, especially since he holds the key to the resolution of the Lebanese problem now explicitly out of the custody of the Syrians and Arabs, and in the custody of the international community after the passage of resolution 1559.

In the end, we thank the Secretary General and request of him to continue his efforts for rescuing Lebanon from under the Syrian influence. The Lebanese are more than able to handle the rest.

Lebanon, at your service

Abu Arz

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