



The Commander

The Guardians of the Cedars issued the following communiqué:

The meeting of the active opposition forces at the Bristol Hotel is a quantum leap in Lebanese political life, a serious blow to the Syrian occupation, and a step forward on the path to liberation. This is because the meeting grouped under one umbrella various sects, religions, and political colors of Lebanese society, ranging all the way from the right to the left. Which confirms two facts: First, no matter how fragmented they may appear to be, and no matter how strong the winds of division and partition may blow, the Lebanese people remain deep down one people of one nation that is complete in character and qualities, distinct from its environment and rejecting fusion with other nations. Second, the Lebanese people, by their very nature, yearn for freedom and liberties, and reject any foreign domination no matter how long it may last or how tyrannical it may become, tolerating it only until able to turn against it at the right time...

...And refutes two lies: The first, which says that the Lebanese people are divided between supporters and opponents of the Syrian occupation, when the reality has proven, even if belatedly, that the majority of the Lebanese people rejects the occupation and does not support it, except for a handful of agents, collaborators, profiteers, careerists and opportunists. The second, which says that the war on Lebanon is a civil war when the reality has shown, even if belatedly, that the essence of the war of the foreigners on Lebanon was started by the Palestinians, followed by the Syrians who continue it to this day. The Bristol Hotel meeting is prime evidence of that shining truth that so many have tried hard to denature both inside and outside Lebanon .

As to the document that came out of that meeting, we support most of its contents, especially in regard to the establishment of a free, democratic, sovereign and independent country that has friendly relations with Syria, rejection of the interference by Syrian and Lebanese Security services in the political life of the country, the independence of the judiciary, reforming the administration, combating corruption, a commitment to human rights principles and public and private freedoms, the release of political prisoners, guaranteeing the return of all the displaced and the exiled, the rejection of the settlement of the Palestinians, the adherence to international law, reforming the financial condition of the country, regulating the entry of foreign laborers according to the needs of the market, and maximizing the potential of the Lebanese Diaspora, etc...

We, however, do not support the following articles in the document:

1 – Denouncing the security agencies without denouncing the occupation and demanding its withdrawal, given that the guilty agencies, both Lebanese and Syrian, are the natural result of the occupation and not the other way around.

2 – Demanding a new fair and courageous government to supervise the elections and promulgate a new electoral law that is modern and democratic. This is mere banter that is unrealistic and impossible to achieve in the presence of an occupation that is repressive, of a predatory nature, that has a hold on every nook and cranny of the Lebanese State , and that is determined to stay on our soil. Suffice it to say that the prominent figures at this meeting have repeatedly been part of previous governments and they could not achieve anything of what they are demanding today because of the extant occupation condition.

3 – Shoving Lebanon yet again into the Arab-Israeli conflict is a flagrant and fatal mistake that should not be repeated, after it has cost Lebanon an exorbitant price in people and property, made Lebanon the spearhead of the confrontation with Israel, and transformed its southern front into an open war zone, when all other Arab fronts have enjoyed peace and tranquility since 1973. We also reject falsifying Lebanon 's identity by assigning to it the character of "Arab" and we remain attached to our authentic identity that is not tagged with any foreign label.

As to not adopting resolution 1559 and not demanding its full implementation, and not even mentioning it, is surprising and illogical, even if this to pay lip service to the occupation. For it is shameful that the international community is more keen on Lebanon than the Lebanese people are, and that the demands of the opposition are weaker than those of the international community. Is it permissible that others care more about Lebanon than we do?

We said previously and we repeat it today: Addressing the occupation with cajoling and a mentality of bootlickers has not, and will not, do any good, particularly with this type of cancerous and malignant occupation. It is incumbent on the Lebanese and, of all people, the opposition, to desist from this bad habit that has so far proven a failure and that has hurt the cause and contributed to delaying a solution to the Lebanese tragedy.

On the occasion of the holidays we extend to all our fellow Lebanese, resident and expatriate, our best wishes and sincere hopes, asking God to grant them His blessings and grant Lebanon a much-awaited genuine peace, and we remind our comrades and partisans that our celebrations remain suspended until liberation.

Lebanon , at your service

Abu Arz

December 24, 2004