



The Guardians of the Cedars issued the following communiqué:

From the first moment of the assassination of Rafik Hariri, the Lebanese people intuitively knew that Syria was behind the crime and proceeded to demand Syria's departure from Lebanon and the resignation of the security chiefs, raising their photographs during the demonstrations of Martyrs Square. All of this long before Mr. Mehlis began his investigations.

We do not say this to diminish Mr. Mehlis's role. To the contrary, we praise and commend him for his skills and honesty, the dogged efforts he exerted, and the high degree of professionalism that characterized his investigation... Rather, what we mean is that, first, the intuition of the Lebanese people and the pulse of the street do not err, and second, that the Lebanese judiciary could have led the investigation and arrive at the same conclusion without outside help, if only it had the courage, the impartiality, and the honesty that the international investigator displayed.

And if Syria is responsible for the crime of the Hariri assassination, as has been shown by the evidence and supporting inferences that are detailed in Mr. Mehlis's report, through the Syrian Security Services operating in Lebanon, this means that Syria is also responsible for all the similar crimes that took place on our soil since the assassination of Kamal Jumblatt in 1977 and up to the recent assassination attempt on May Chidiac, including the assassinations of Sheikh Hassan Khaled, Sheikh Bashir Gemayel, Mr. Rene Mouawad, and many many others. This also means that from this day forward, and after Mr. Mehlis's report, not one truth should be left dismissed or buried under the sands of oblivion in this country.

Consequently, now that the authorities have freed themselves from the yoke of Syrian domination and the international community has decided to support Lebanon in all areas, the Lebanese people now demand that the government take bold and qualitative steps as follows:

- Open the assassination files that have been closed or suspended to date, uncover the perpetrators and prosecute them to the full extent of the law, as is happening with the Hariri assassination file.
- Open the files of the pilfering, stealing and theft of public monies, and prosecute those who have impoverished the country, killed Paris II (Lebanon aid conference), and drained the Treasury to a deficit nearing US\$40Billion.
- Open the files of those who colluded with the Syrian occupation and prosecute all those who collaborated with it against the interests of Lebanon and provided the occupation with the legitimate cover to extend its stay on our soil for the longest time possible. For without these people, all those crimes would not have taken place, our children would have not have emigrated or been killed, and our people would not have suffered through this long tragedy that no other people has ever put up with.

The regime is now at a historic crossroads. Either it proves to the world that it deserves the freedom that was given back to it and is capable of building a State of Laws and Institutions in deed not in words, or it will lose the international support and become isolated like the Syrian regime.

Lebanon, at your service

Abu Arz
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