



The Guardians of the Cedars issued the following weekly communiqué:

The release from prison of the leadership of the Party on the eve of Independence Day gave the commemoration a special quality and returned a certain glimmer to freedom that was missing for 30 years.

But real independence, the one to which all the Lebanese aspire, remains out of reach and requires a lot of effort and a continuous national struggle to achieve it.

From a regional perspective, independence remains truncated, if not violated, so long as the Syrian regime remains capable of penetrating Lebanese society and destabilizing it whenever it can through local and outside agents. Not to mention the constant interferences by Arab regimes in Lebanese internal affairs, and the blatant and effective interference by Iran in the political, ideological, and social life in Lebanon, as well as in the country's security and political parties.

Internally, independence falls short of complete so long as there are Palestinian camps that are fortified military zones, and fundamentalist groups that have turned into a parallel army, established their own statelet in defiance of the Lebanese State, in whose hands rests the decision of war or peace, and which alternately ignite and turn off the southern front according to the interests of Syria and Iran and in response to international pressures on both those countries. This exposes the very existence of the country to serious threats and makes a joke of independence.

Independence remains incomplete so long as the pirates of politics continue in their monopoly of the political stage and their bickering over the bodies of the Lebanese people; the public debt continues to rise each day with only lip service paid to it; ninety percent of Lebanese families are below the poverty line, which means they are unable to meet their basic needs without the help of the Diaspora; the State is oblivious to the pain of the Lebanese people; emigration continues to grow apace; the culture of corruption remains pervasive form the labyrinths of the State and throughout the far corners of the Republic; the era of political rottenness is at its zenith, and the citizen has lost every last bit of hope in a possible change or a promised reform.

Independence remains incomplete so long as the present government is deceitful on resolution 1559 and hides behind the lie of "dialogue" to avoid implementing what is left of that resolution, and as long as it is requesting a postponement, instead of an earlier convening, of an international conference in support of Lebanon, and as long as the government believes in the illusion of economic and financial reforms before political reform.

In short, independence remains incomplete as long as the traditional political mindset remains intact and the general political tendency is counter to the March 14 movement.

The question that begs an urgent answer is: When will the Lebanese earn a complete, absolute and genuine independence like all the other peoples. When?

Lebanon, at your service

Abu Arz
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