



The Guardians of the Cedars issued the following communiqué:

For the first time in thirty years the will of the international community converges with the will of the Lebanese people in rejecting the Syrian hegemony over Lebanon. External and internal conditions are afoot to extricate this country from the claws of the Syrian occupation.

However, it seems that the opposition has yet to decide to maximally exploit this historic opportunity, which may not repeat itself, and to strike at the iron while it is red hot. Simply put, the opposition has not begun elaborating a concrete working plan on the ground to force the Syrians to withdraw and to help the international community in implementing resolution 1559. For now, the opposition has limited itself to making statements, and expressing political rivalries and verbal positions, but with little action in the field. And this is not sufficient to dislodge the Syrian occupation by one bit; this is, after all, an occupation that is determined to stay on our land at any cost. The opposition has also decided to focus on preparing for the upcoming legislative elections in the belief that the elections will be the stepping stone to change and freedom.

Therefore, we reiterate one more time that relying on the elections alone is a losing wager, or at least it offers no sure outcome as long as the Syrians retain the role of overseeing the elections. The most that the opposition can hope for under the best of circumstances is a mere third of the seats in the new Parliament, while the occupation is easily able to secure a two-thirds majority that will allow it to maintain its grip on the State and direct it as it sees fit.

Thus we fear that the upcoming elections will turn from a positive factor into a negative one, from a glimmer of hope into a major disappointment, and from a tool to remove the occupation into an instrument to keep it alive. We wish that the forces of the opposition do not fall in this Syrian trap and do not participate in the elections until after resolution 1559 is implemented.

The opposition should also be aware that it is responsible for implementing resolution 1559 to the same extent that the international community is responsible, and this is because it – the opposition – stands to benefit the most from such an implementation. It therefore must immediately take the following steps on the ground:

1 – Take to the streets and lead the masses who reject the occupation, and stay there like the Ukrainian opposition did, and not withdraw until the Syrians withdraw themselves from Lebanon. This is possible now that the regime in place is unable to repress demonstrators with its Nazi practices since resolution 1559 has de-clawed it and placed it under international monitoring.

2 – Simultaneously call on the Lebanese Diaspora throughout the world to begin organizing continuous demonstrations and sit-ins in front of Syrian embassies abroad, as well as in front of governmental offices and international organizations. The only demand of these demonstrations, to the exclusion of any other call or demand, should be the implementation of resolution 1559.

3 – Adopt the option of civil disobedience as an alternate approach in case the Syrian regime refuses to abide by the demands of the opposition. This would be the coup de grace to this regime and its collaborator Lebanese regime.

The forces of the opposition are hereby called upon to stop dealing with the Syrian occupation from a standpoint of logical reasoning after the occupation has shown for the past three decades that it despises logic and reason. It has no consideration whatsoever for dialogue and is not swayed by cajoling and by the syrupy language that many continue to use in addressing it. The Syrian occupation understands one thing, and one thing only, and that is the language of force that is compatible with its predatory nature.

Finally, we must all be conscious of the fact that this present period is a critical phase of labor for Lebanon. We ought to know how to go through it with wisdom and determination so that we move from a time of evil to a time of goodness, from the rule of charlatans, crooks and brokers to the rule of decency, from the politics of improvisation and reaction to the politics of professionalism... Perhaps what we fear most, should we continue to wade in wobbling, procrastination and reliance on others, is for this rare opportunity to become yet another one of the many opportunities we missed through the past three decades.

Lebanon, at your service
Abu Arz
January 7, 2005