



The Guardians of the Cedars issued the following communiqué

The National Dialogue Conference has lost the impetus of its launch, and the Lebanese people no longer care for it or its dull sessions, nor do they expect anything from it. Even the participants to the dialogue themselves go to the sessions simply because they have to go or for the photo ops in front of the cameras and the media.

The lack of interest by the Lebanese people is due to a number of reasons, of which is the following sample:

- The regular and deliberate postponement of the dialogue sessions and the ever widening time intervals between successive sessions, which make people forget what happened at the previous session, just show that the concerns of the participants are for their own self-interest before the interest of the country and the people.
- The inability to implement even one decision of those that were agreed upon, and the attempts by some to scuttle those decisions, have made the dialogue fail and lose its credibility. The dialogue is one more distraction to add to the previous farces of Lebanese politics.
- The perspicacity of the Lebanese people that the participants will inevitably fail in addressing the final item concerning the weapons of the militias, as this is the hottest of all the items on the agenda and given that the participants have utterly failed in addressing and implementing other less hot and less complex items.
- Because each party is trying to preserve its position and special gains over those of the State and the national public interest, as evidenced by their concocting a new charade similar to the Shebaa Farms which they call “The Defense Strategy”, with the goal of finding a pretext for keeping and legitimizing the weapons of the militias by reconciling between two opposites: The logic of the State and the logic of the militia.
- Because the issues that are most important to people are not on the dialogue table: The file of the squandering of public funds and corruption, the reform of the State and its institutions, stopping the emigration drain, addressing the social, financial and living problems that are choking the Lebanese people much more than the Quixotic battles of the knights around the dialogue table.

The Lebanese people are losing patience with the visits conducted by some participants in the dialogue to Syria with the goal of reducing tensions between the two countries. This is because the Syrian regime continues to deal with Lebanon from its historically condescending manner, and the Lebanese side continues to deal with the Syrian regime from a standpoint of servile bootlicking and appeasement. Recent statements by Syrian officials do not bode well: Sometimes they say the time is not ripe for diplomatic relations with Lebanon, and at other times they claim that the Syrian-Lebanese Higher Council

precludes the need for diplomatic relations. Then they say that exchanging embassies is unnecessary because the distance between Damascus and Beirut is shorter than the distance between Damascus and Homs, as if geographic distance is what determines the nature of relations between countries!

All of this implies that the Syrian regime is not ready to recognize the Lebanese entity. For what purpose, then, are the participants to the dialogue in Beirut going to Damascus? Can the knights of the National Dialogue table answer this question???

Lebanon , at your service

Abu Arz

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