



The Guardians of the Cedars Party issued the following communiqué:

If, as it seems, the issue of the International Tribunal is behind all this political bickering and the buildup of tension between opposing groups on public squares, the bus bombings, the assassinations of political figures and the paralysis in both private and public institutions, then the international community, keen as it is on helping Lebanon, must speed up the approval of this tribunal under Chapter 7 without any further delay and without consulting with Lebanese constitutional authorities. The reasons are:

1. The international community knows very well that Lebanese institutions are not only paralyzed, but they are in conflict with each other, and consequently there is no hope that they can approve any program, let alone the International Tribunal which is the centerpiece of the conflict between the opposing factions.
2. Any delay in approving the formation of the Tribunal means a further delay in untangling the crisis, and therefore, further political decay, economic paralysis, security deterioration and an increased vulnerability of innocent Lebanese to wanton killing similar to what took place in Ain Alaq this week.
3. This Tribunal is the only institution that has the ability to remove the mask off the face of the criminals and deter them, thus rescuing the country from this horrifying cycle of terror which threatens to set Lebanon ablaze as a prelude to a fiery unraveling of all the countries of the region.

As for those who doubt the integrity of the International Tribunal, they know better that this is a ridiculous argument meant only to deceive people and confound the truth. Every last citizen in Lebanon knows that the judiciary in advanced societies is above and beyond politics and politicians and cannot be subjected to their whims, as is the case with the judiciary and justice in backwards societies. Unless, of course, those who express these doubts are accomplices in the crimes and are trying by any ways and means to obstruct the creation of this Tribunal in order to avoid blame and responsibility.

Therefore the solution is in exerting pressure on the Security Council to approve the International Tribunal under Chapter 7 sooner rather than later. Otherwise, the crisis will remain refractory to a solution and more likely to evolve into open strife. The bloody cycle will go unchecked and the

maddening race to collective suicide will remain afoot. All the fiery speeches, the Quixotic macho displays and the insult-trading, as well as the denunciations and mourning over the victims, won't raise the dead, won't deter the criminal and won't bring an end to the crisis.

Lebanon, at your service

Abu Arz

February 16, 2007