



The Guardians of the Cedars Party issued the following weekly communiqué:

We too welcome the Syrian decision of establishing diplomatic relations with Lebanon, and we believe this to be a first step towards rectifying Syria's relationship with Lebanon. We are not talking about rectifying the relationship between the two countries, since Lebanon never intended to harm Syria, while the reverse is true.

This step would be a positive and historic one, as everyone is reiterating, if the following conditions are met:

1 – That it be coupled with sound intentions, stemming from a Syrian conviction in the finality of the Lebanese entity and its complete and unqualified independence, based on the recognition of the distinct character and national identity of the Lebanese people, and on the recognition that the Lebanese and Syrian peoples are two distinct peoples, each with their unique character, traditions and customs.

2 – That the Syrian regime be convinced that its return to Lebanon, militarily or under a security guise, is rejected by Lebanon, the region and the international community, and that the regime accepts the abrogation of all treaties of surrender that the regime imposed on Lebanon during the period of its tutelage over the country, including the Higher Syrian-Lebanese Council, and be content with diplomatic channels via the two embassies.

3 – That the Syrian regime desist from interfering in Lebanon's internal affairs, stoking tensions in its security situation, undermining its stability, and inciting one party against another under the pretext of backing its supporters in Lebanon, and consequently to stop using the country as an arena to settle scores with the opponents of the regime and as a blackmail card to barter in its negotiations with Israel.

4 – That this step not be limited to formalities whereby its objectives would be to please the Western capitals in order to evade the sanctions and international isolation that are imposed on the Syrian regime. Instead, this step must be followed by other steps, including a rapid and final closure of the file of the Lebanese missing in Syrian jails, the delineation of the land borders, allowing the UN forces to bolster their

capabilities in order to control those borders and close all unofficial border crossing points through which arms and gunmen are continuously smuggled – one way – from Syria into Lebanon.

It should be noted that the issue of the border delineation should not be limited solely to the recovery of the Shebaa Farms, but also to protect Lebanon's historic rights in recovering all the areas located along the Anti-Lebanon mountain chain.

Last but not least, the Syrian regime ought to change its usual approach of dealing with Lebanon, which is from an attitude of condescension, superiority and self-aggrandizement. Instead, it should replace this attitude with one based on friendliness and respect because the Lebanese are keen to protect their dignity and pride before anything else.

Lebanon, at your service

Abu Arz

October 17, 2008