



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

Whenever Lebanon demands that Syria account for the missing Lebanese in its prisons, Syria's response is that it too has missing people in Lebanon, as if it was Lebanon which occupied Syria and subjugated its people by force of weapons, repressions, arbitrary arrests and detentions, and physical elimination.

And whenever we demand that Syria rectify its relation with Lebanon, it replies that "the key to change in the dealings between the two countries is contingent on a change in Lebanon," as if Lebanon is the source of the defect in the relation and is responsible for straining it.

This discourse indicates that Syria's intentions vis-à-vis Lebanon remain the same, and that the attitude of condescension and superiority continues to govern Syrian policy towards Lebanon. Any talk about opening a new page does not go beyond mere formalities and sweet-talk. The Lebanese truly fear that the French President may have rushed hastily in opening wide the doors of Europe to the Syrian regime which is known for its political trickery.

Beyond the language of adulation and appeasement that is used by Lebanon's politicians in engaging Syria, we believe that the master key to rectifying relations between the two countries lies in Syria's hands alone. If Syria is keen on drawing a line over a dark past and turning a new page, it must undertake a set of preliminary steps before embarking on the process of exchanging diplomatic missions.

First, Syria must liberate itself from its Lebanon complex by abandoning its colonialist ambitions and all the fake slogans it coined during its tutelage over Lebanon, such as: one people in two countries, two states in one country, the unity of path and destiny, etc... It must also acquiesce to abrogate the Treaty of Brotherhood, Cooperation and Coordination and dismantle the Syrian-Lebanese Higher Council which is essentially a Syrian council for all practical purposes.

Second, Syria must apologize for all the tragedies and miseries it inflicted on the Lebanese people during the tutelage period and thereafter, and close the file of the missing Lebanese nationals in its dungeons and detention camps quickly and completely before it becomes a permanent mark of shame not only

on Syria's forehead, but on the forehead of all mankind which has remained silent over this crime for many long years.

Third, agree to delineate the borders between the two countries by means of a specialized international commission, and respect those borders and stop violating them by exporting weapons, gunmen and terrorists.

As for the diplomatic relations, they must come as the culmination of the previous steps to ensure that a prospective Syrian embassy in Beirut not become a mere formality or a forward Syrian intelligence center.

Lebanon, at your service
Abu Arz

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