



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

From its inception in the 1970s of the last century, the Syrian regime's policies have rested on two basic principles: Biding its time until better circumstances, and playing on Lebanese, regional and international contradictions. It is hence naïve to believe that it has suddenly converted from a regime charged with abetting terrorism to a peace-maker. The endgame of the indirect negotiations ongoing between the Syrian regime and Israel in Ankara is nothing more, in our opinion, but that regime's attempt at improving its image vis-à-vis the West, and biding its time until the exit of the current US administration which harbors its extreme enmity. Moreover, it is a desperate attempt by the regime in Damascus to break through the international isolation imposed on it, something it partly succeeded in through the French diplomatic gate.

It is more naïve to believe as well that that regime has suddenly decided to change its known positions on Lebanon, namely to recognize overnight the finality of Lebanon's existence and to abandon Syria's colonialist ambitions vis-à-vis its neighbor. All that has so far taken place is, in our opinion, a bending by the Syrian regime under international pressure to replace its inimical discourse with a moderate one and hide its claws with soft gloves.

In support of our opinion is a set of evidence coming from the recent Syrian-Lebanese summit:

1 – Insist on keeping the Syrian-Lebanese High Council, which means that the Syrian regime remains determined to deal with Lebanon through that Council that is, in fact, a Syrian-Syrian council, rather than through the presumptive diplomatic channels to be established between the two countries.

2 – Invent the issue of the “missing Syrians” in Lebanon to dilute the issue of the missing Lebanese in Syria's prisons, and the decision to refer that issue to a new committee means that the Syrian regime is persisting in its policy of obscurantism, deception and stalling since, as is well known, committees are the graves where solutions are buried.

3 – Ignore the issue of the Palestinian militarized camps that are affiliated with Syria and are disseminated outside the refugee camps. These fortified camps are specifically set up to carry out terrorist and sabotage attacks on Lebanese soil, and have no relation whatsoever with the liberation of Palestine.

4 – Decline to facilitate a mechanism for a diplomatic solution to the Shebaa Farms with the goal of maintaining alive the pretext of a military resistance and enabling the Lebanese militias to retain their illegal weapons for an indefinite period of time.

This is only a sample of the depth of the problem. We believe that the ongoing attempts at many levels to tame the Syrian regime are akin to taming scorpions. For forty years, we have lived to learn.

Lebanon, at your service
Abu Arz
August 22, 2008