



The Guardians of the Cedars Party - The Movement for Lebanese Nationalism issued the following communiqué:

We read in the newspapers that the President of the Republic held a meeting last week in which he discussed with the relevant Ministers the issue of the right of emigrants to vote in elections and regain their Lebanese citizenship, and what mechanisms to use to implement these projects. Two positive observations may be noted: First, the use of the term "Emigrants rights", and second, a discussion of the means of implementation.

On the first observation, a national right is more than a right, it is a duty, given the favors that Lebanese emigrants have bestowed on their mother country. They are indeed the economic lung through which all of Lebanon breathes during its many crises of livelihood; they are the political umbrella that protects it through its thorny crises and fends off the foreign conspiracies against it, due to their good standing in the world and their active presence in decision-making countries; they are the human reservoir where the numbers of Lebanese is four-fold the number of resident Lebanese, and God knows, many of them would love to return to the country to live and work when stability returns to that tormented country; they are the moral force in which Lebanon finds a source of pride because they have carried the banner of learning, knowledge and human development in every far-flung corner of the world where they settled; they have enriched the heritage of the countries that hosted them, and have contributed to the advancement and prosperity of world civilization in all fields of human activity. We would not be exaggerating by saying that resident Lebanon, today sinking in misery, waywardness, despair, and waning, is indebted to a great extent to emigrant Lebanon for its resistance, steadfastness and survival.

Hence, we believe that neglecting the rights of emigrants by the political establishment is additional evidence of the latter's failure, shortsightedness, and their distractions with petty political bickering to the expense of the great national issues of our time. This neglect, whether deliberate or derelict, must be placed in the context of a large-scale national treason against the sacred cause of Lebanon, particularly when – just recently – the political establishment put a priority on securing the "rights" of the Palestinian refugees over the rights of the Lebanese emigrants.

On the second point, we wish that the President intensifies his efforts to speed up the adoption of these two proposals and issue the necessary decrees so they become enforced before the end of his term. In so doing, he would have delivered on some of what he promised during his swearing-in speech and made a priceless service to Lebanon. Otherwise, the opportunity would have been lost, perhaps for good, and his term would end like many others, without any significant achievements other than manage a crisis instead of solving it.

We also wish that the President amend the bill granting the right to vote so it becomes a right to both vote and run for office, thus opening the way to the world of emigrants to participate fully in the country's political life and to bring brilliant names from around the world into Parliament, which in turn would raise its otherwise declining caliber and limit the existing political decadence we witness every day.

Lebanon, at your service
Abu Arz
September 9, 2010