



June 17 2011

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

The Lebanese people will not celebrate the advent of the new government unless they see tangible and bold patriotic stances, as well as real achievements on the ground. Making grandiose promises no longer fool them, nor will they be fooled by resounding ministerial policy statements that are cloned wholesale from previous statements. Particularly that the Lebanese people have completely lost faith in the entire existing system, no longer distinguishing between improvised majorities and minorities that do not represent the will of the people or between one party or another; they all have come, ruled and gone, as if they never came, never ruled, and never left!

As long as the formation of Lebanese governments, both previous and existing ones, remains subservient to the approval of foreign actors and to sectarian and religious balancing acts, and to the interests of failed political leaderships, without regard for merit and competence and at the expense of the national interest, the people will not put much hope into this government. The aspirations of the Lebanese people are much more attuned to the winds of change blowing through the region, in the hope that, perhaps, they may reflect positively on the Lebanese scene and bring with them the much-needed change.

Naturally, not all members of the new government should be lumped into this categorization, as there are new ministers whom we respect and trust. But the overall political climate in the country is pestilent to say the least, which might shackle their hands and prevent them from accomplishing the reforms they seek to accomplish, as has unfortunately happened with the previous government.

What matters is that the new government is today facing major challenges, three of which might be the conduit to success or failure.

The first challenge lies in the government's stance vis-à-vis the illegal weapons and the manner with which it deals with this issue, in a transparent, decisive and unambiguous manner on the basis of UNSCR 1559, without prevarication, adulation and hiding behind meaningless slogans that are no more than semantics and distorted language, such as the slogan of "The people, the army and the 'resistance' "

The second challenge lies in the government's stance vis-à-vis the country's international obligations and commitments, specifically the Special Tribunal for Lebanon, and the manner in which it deals with it, again with the transparency, the boldness and the clarity it deserves, in order to prevent any dispute with the international community. Such a dispute may enable an evasion from this critical milestone and its substitution by the so-called "National Dialogue Committee", exactly as happened with the issue of the illegal weapons.

The third challenge lies in its stance vis-à-vis the longstanding corruption that is corroding the state and its institutions. The government must show the determination to attack it front and center and eradicate it from its roots, without any consideration for the bosses who stand behind it and protect it. Without such a bold risk, there won't be any reform or change or progress or prosperity, no matter how embellished and recycled are the slogans, the last of which is "All for the homeland, all down to business".

As we hope that the government will pass this test, its success or failure will respectively earn it our praise or our contempt.

Lebanon, at your service

Abu Arz

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