



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

#### The Syrian Revolution in Its Second Year: A Balance Sheet

A year after the outbreak of the Syrian Revolution and its stunning resistance against the regime and its criminal military machine, many things have changed. First, the expansion of the popular demonstrations to reach the capital Damascus and the city of Aleppo, after being limited to the provinces and the countryside, even though the regime has confronted them with unprecedented repression. Second, the decay of the regime from within as a result of the increase in the daily numbers of dissidents and army deserters who now number in the tens of thousands, including high-ranking officers. Third, the increasing tightening noose on the regime with escalating international diplomatic, political, and economic sanctions, which has compounded the regime's domestic isolation to the point that it is impossible for the regime to remain in power, even if it succeeds temporarily in defeating some of the opposition's strongholds, as happened in Bab Amro and Idlib. The fact is, though, that the regime's leader has earned the unchallenged title of Butcher of the 21st Century on account of the blood he has spilled and the atrocities he has committed against children, women and the elderly, after his own father deservedly earned the title of Butcher of Lebanon during the last quarter of the past century. It is our belief that Assad the son, unlike his father, will not escape punishment, and it won't be long before he and his entourage are fugitives from international justice.

What has not changed is, unfortunately, the cowardly, bland, and disgraceful position of the international community which continues to watch this ongoing massacre without any stirring of anger or will to stop it. It is even impotent at delivering any humanitarian aid to a people besieged by hunger, the regime's tanks and international silence, or military aid that helps them defend themselves, using false pretexts to justify its impotence, such as the need for the opposition to unite first, or the claim that the militarization of the uprising will lead to civil war and the handover of weapons to Al-Qaeda, etc. The international community has replaced action with a flood of statements of condemnation and denunciation, or sending clueless Arab and foreign observers and envoys, or holding ridiculous conventions bearing the title of "Friends of Syria" with yet more words and no action, all the while knowing that all this tentative activity and political drivel will not deter the Syrian regime, but will wet its appetite for more killing and massacring of innocent people.

The misfortune of the Syrian people is that the UN Security Council was never as sharply divided as it is today concerning the Syrian crisis. Also, the Western world seems to be mentally paralyzed for the past four years as a result of President Obama's weak, hesitant, and defeatist positions that have, for the first time, relegated the United States' pioneering role in leading the free world to Britain and France, as happened with the Libyan situation. As for French President Sarkozy, who could be counted on to support the Syrian people as he did the Libyan people, he too is preoccupied with his election campaign whose results are up in the air, something which has precluded him from adopting tough and decisive stances vis-à-vis the Syrian crisis, as he fears negative repercussions on his already declining popularity, particularly that French voters, and Western voters in general, are more concerned with domestic livelihood issues than with the foreign affairs of their

country. Furthermore, voters favor less military solutions than peaceful diplomatic solutions, without realizing that the latter are futile with dictatorial regimes founded on the culture of killing, the deification of the leader, contempt for the people, and disdain for freedom.

There is no doubt that time is on the side of the Syrian Revolution, should it maintain this level of its splendid defiance. It is akin to the game of who will cry uncle first, and we think the Revolution is far from ready to do so.

Lebanon, at your service  
Etienne Sacre – Abu Arz  
March 20, 2012