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LEBANON 2007

2 Presidents
2 Parliaments, **2** Governments
& **Many** Cantons, or a Temporary Compromise?

**March 8&14 Forces NOT TRUSTED
BY 57.9% OF THE LEBANESE
& "No One" is Number One**

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AWORD

Lebanon's Wars, Why?⁽¹⁾



“This is not the Lebanon that I know,” said my colleague. “Why are ‘they’ doing this to ‘us’?” she continued. An honest, spontaneous yet “benign” remark, echoing Bush’s famous why “they” hate “us”, speech. We seem to have this image of ourselves (individuals and nations), that we hold true, where only “good” is within “us” and evil is from “them.”

Lebanon is today on the edge of an abyss. However, this is not something new. Since 1943, Lebanon has been witnessing crises and wars, not to mention those of the nineteenth century. The main problem lies in the system that we have developed either by consent, force, inaptness, or by all these combined. In fact, our political and socio-economic system strives on crises.

The question is that of legitimacy and authority or the lack of them. A citizen believes that his country’s political and economic affairs are not his concern due to the absence of the state, so he delegates a politician, “Za’im” who, for the same reason, is only concerned with protecting his position and political inheritance, so he entrusts technocrats of weak political roots with daily government work and foreign powers with managing the country’s key national affairs. The 1975-1990 civil war was not about Palestinians and their weapons. Today, the dispute is not between the “March 14 and the March 8 Forces,” or about “freedom, sovereignty and independence” versus “the resistance’s arms.” It is about power sharing in a system that lives on generating fear amongst confessions. Human resources are depleted, forced to emigrate or even assassinated. Moreover, the country’s financial resources are also squandered by either corruption or destruction. It seems that the system cannot function without an “enforcer”, who is always an external force(s).

Those who are called “Zua’ama” or “Emirs of confessions” are not only the victims of this vicious circle, but also its creators, along with their followers and other citizens. It is impossible to get out of this infernal circle unless we agree on the need to identify the defects of our system and join efforts to resolve them. Two steps are required for this purpose: Reconciliation and objectivity.

The process of reconciliation was halted by a general amnesty law drafted by those who participated in the war. It is not acceptable to forget about the long 1975-1990 civil war, which is perhaps still ongoing, as if it never occurred. The subsequent, as well as the organized looting of the state perpetrated under the slogans of “reconstruction” and the “state of law and institutions” as a reward to Zua’ama does not provide for stability.

Understanding one’s history as factually as possible and reporting current pertinent facts is another prerequisite not only to achieve reconciliation but to plan for the future. It is time to understand that, in the end, everyone loses. Leaders who seek and live by power are either assassinated or go into oblivion and the people are always the ultimate victims. We hope that Information International, through its monthly magazine and other publications, would contribute to reviving the Lebanese people’s memory, and present them with facts and figures in order for history not to repeat itself.

⁽¹⁾ A new book entitled “Lebanon’s Wars, Why?” will be soon published by the Social and Cultural Development Association (INMA) in cooperation with Information International within the Bee Series for civic education.

_____ Fadi Nammar

Lebanon 2007: A Constitutional Deadlock Leading to: Two Presidents, Two Parliaments, Two Governments Or a Temporary Compromise?

Lebanon is witnessing since few months a major political crisis accompanied by severe economic conditions and atmospheres of tension and security instability.

The retreat of either the government or the opposition is now difficult to achieve following the opposition forces' decision to take to the streets and hold demonstrations and with the death and injury of several people in clashes and the strong political rhetoric. These developments do not augur well but announce a further deterioration of the country's political situation unless a breakthrough occurred. It is true that street tensions might not escalate due to the Lebanese Army's decision to maintain order and both sides' awareness of the fact that such clashes would not be productive. A breakdown of the current authority and a further polarization would perhaps lead to: two presidents, two Parliaments, two governments and cantonization.

The Distribution of Political Forces in the Government

Political sharing arrangements in the state show that the president and the speaker of the house are aligned with the opposition, while the prime minister is aligned with the March 14 Forces.

March 8 Forces (Opposition)	March 14 Forces (Pro-government)
President of the Republic	Prime Minister
Parliament Speaker	Deputy Speaker
Six ministers (resigned)	17 ministers (following the assassination of Pierre Al-Gemayel)
57 deputies	70 deputies (following the assassination of Pierre Al-Gemayel)

Both sides have various political options based on their own interpretation and manipulation of the Constitution.

The Opposition's Options (March 8 and Michel Aoun's Movement)

The options of the Opposition include the possibility that

President Emile Lahoud issues a decree considering the Council of Ministers resigned, according to the powers bestowed to him in Paragraph 5 of Article 53 of the Constitution: "He [the President of the Republic] issues, on his own authority, the decrees accepting the resignation of the Cabinet or considering it resigned."

The president can explain his decision to consider the Cabinet resigned by saying that the Shia's ministers have resigned from the Council and by quoting Paragraph J of the Constitution's preamble which states: "There is no constitutional legitimacy for any authority which contradicts the pact of communal coexistence."

However, the president cannot consider a Council resigned but in the following cases indicated in Article 69 of the Constitution:

- ⊙ "If the Prime Minister resigns;
- ⊙ If it loses more than a third of the members specified in the Decree forming it;
- ⊙ If the Prime Minister dies;
- ⊙ At the beginning of the term of the President of the Republic;
- ⊙ At the beginning of the term of the Chamber of Deputies;
- ⊙ When it loses the confidence of the Chamber of Deputies based on the Chamber's initiative or based on the Council's initiative to gain the Chamber's confidence."

Should the president consider the Cabinet resigned, he then holds parliamentary consultations that will be attended by the Opposition's deputies and boycotted by the pro-government deputies. The consultations will result in the nomination of a Prime Minister, who, in turn, will hold consultations to form a new Council. This Council of Ministers will have two choices:

- 1- Postponing the vote of confidence parliamentary session for a few months, similar to the case of former Prime Minister Amin Al-Hafez's Cabinet, which was formed on April 25, 1973 and the session of confidence was not held but on June 12. Hafez's Cabinet later resigned and became a caretaker government until the creation of a new one on July 8.

- 2-** Holding the session of confidence. Parliament will not give it its confidence and hence it will resign and become a caretaker government until an agreement is reached to create a new Cabinet.
Either option will provide the opposition with the opportunity to control the government although under questionable constitutional status.

Another option for the opposition: the March 8 Forces can also withdraw their deputies from Parliament, which would not be able to issue decisions that require the two-third of votes (such as the amendment of the Constitution and the election of a new president).

The Pro-Government's Options (March 14)

- 1-** The pro-government ministers can attend the consultation session held by President Emile Lahoud and nominate Fouad Sanioura as the new Prime Minister. Consequently, Sanioura will regain his control over the Cabinet. However, such step would contradict the March 14 Forces' stand toward Lahoud's unconstitutional term.
- 2-** Under the pretext that Speaker Nabih Berri refused to convene a parliamentary session to discuss pending issues, Deputy Speaker Farid Makari calls for a session. Such step would be unprecedented because the role of the deputy speaker and the deputy prime minister is only ceremonial. The session will be attended by the pro-government 70 deputies, who will issue a decree (that will not be signed and published by the president) stipulating the shortening of President Emile Lahoud's mandate and will elect a new president. The winner will be the one who gets the vote of the majority.
Analysts believe that such step would violate Article 49 of the Constitution which states that "the President of the Republic shall be elected by secret ballot and by a two third majority of the Chamber of Deputies (86 deputies). After a first ballot, an absolute majority shall be sufficient or half the deputies plus one (65 deputies)." The new president will hold parliamentary consultations that would be limited to the 70 deputies and will nominate a prime minister, who, in turn, forms a new Cabinet. The Cabinet will receive Parliament's confidence during a session convened by the Deputy Speaker.

At the end of this period, Lebanon will have two presidents - Emile Lahoud residing in Ba'abda Palace and the pro-government's president who might make of the palace of Beiteddine his presidential seat - a divided Parliament

and two Cabinets, one based in the Grand Serail and the other based in the Cabinet's temporary headquarters in Mathaf (the National Museum area). As to the ministers, each of them will have his/her own headquarters, especially if the security forces prevented them from entering their ministries. Consequently, Lebanon will witness the same experience of the Cabinets of 1988-1990, one presided over by former Prime Minister Salim Hoss and the other by General Michel Aoun. Edmond Naim, who was the Central Bank governor at that time, explained allocating money to both governments by saying that one enjoyed constitutional legitimacy (General Aoun's government) while the other enjoyed people's support (Prime Minister Hoss' Cabinet). Consequently, the decisions and laws issued by both sides will be considered valid. Unless they were in direct contradiction, each side implements what it finds appropriate.

In 1952, President Bshara Al-Khoury resigned although he had the support of Parliament's majority, which extended his term. Also in February 2005, Prime Minister Omar Karami resigned following mass demonstrations calling on him to step down, although he had Parliament's support (a minimum of 68 deputies).
However, the situation today is very different, as both sides are sticking to their positions.
A question lingers: how will the situation on the field develop? Will chaos prevail or will one side defeat the other and result in violent acts?

What will be the position of Arab and western states? Will they acknowledge the authority of the two governments or just one? Will cantonization become a possible or compulsory solution?

The crisis led the Opposition and the pro-government forces to a serious deadlock, which would end either with the withdrawal of one side or the escalation of political clashes until the "imaginary victory" of one party at the expense of the country. The impasse can also be temporarily resolved if the two sides acknowledge the necessity to reach an accord in order to preserve what remained of the country and its citizens.

However, resolving the crisis through a compromise would only be temporary as each leader has his own priority (i.e. the presidency for General Michel Aoun, the weapons for the resistance and the international tribunal for the pro-government Forces). The solution would also be linked to regional problems in Iran and Iraq, the relation with Syrian and Israel, USA and France's role. ●●

Creation of National Unity Cabinet through Internal Dialogue

March 8 and March 14 Forces not Trusted by Lebanese

Lebanon witnessed over the past few months major political and security developments that reshaped the country's political equations. The Lebanese people's positions were divided according to each za'im's political or confessional considerations or to personal ambitions. Of course, all pretend to be seeking national interests.

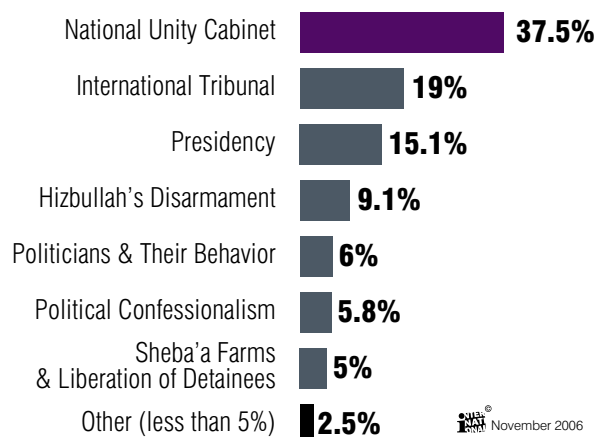
Ii Monthly conducted an opinion poll between November 15–23, 2006 on a sample of the Lebanese population about current issues and latest developments.

The Major Issue in Lebanon Today

The majority (37.5%) said the creation of a national unity Cabinet was their main issue of concern, followed by the formation of an international tribunal to try the assassins of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri (19%), the presidency of the republic (15.1%) and Hizbullah's disarmament (9.1%). On the other hand, 6% of the respondents blamed politicians and their behavior for the current situation, 5.8% said the problem was about political confessionalism, followed by the liberation of the Sheba'a Farms and the detainees (5%) - (graph no. 1). 1.3% stated that the major issue was the behavior of religious leaders, while 1.2% listed other issues.

Accordingly, the majority of the respondents (71.6%) considered that the three major issues were the national unity government, the international tribunal and the presidency.

[Graph 1] **What is the major issue in Lebanon?**



As for the distribution of answers by confessions, 60% of the Shia'a respondents were for the creation of a national unity government, followed by 33.3% Catholic, 33% Orthodox, and 31.4% Maronites. On the other hand, 34.9% of the Druze respondents were for the formation of an international tribunal followed by 33.4% Sunni (table no. 1).

The following Table no.1 shows the distribution of answers according to confessions.

Distribution of answers according to confessions						Table 1
Major Problem or Cause	Maronite %	Greek Orthodox %	Greek Catholic %	Shia'a %	Sunni %	Druze %
National unity Cabinet	31.4	33	33.3	60.4	25.3	16.9
Formation of an international tribunal	16	16.5	27	4.5	33.4	34.9
Presidency	25.4	18.3	9.5	5.6	15.2	21.7
Hizbullah's disarmament	8	8.3	9.5	9.4	9.9	10.8
Politicians and their behavior	6	6.4	7.9	4.3	6.3	7.2
Political confessionalism	7.4	4.6	11.1	5.6	3	4.8
Israeli withdrawal from the Sheba'a Farms and liberation of detainees	2.9	4.6	1.6	9.2	4.3	2.4
Religious leaders' behavior	1.4	6.4	-	0.5	0.8	1.2
Other issues	1.4	1.8	-	0.5	1.8	-

Source: Information International - November 2006

As to the distribution of answers according to the place of residence (Mohafaza), the formation of an international tribunal was the major problem for respondents from Beirut* (40%), while the creation of a national unity Cabinet was the main issue of the majority of respondents in the South** (57.4%), in the Beqa'a (40.7%) in Mount Lebanon (26.5%) and in the North (32.7%). The respondents' answers came in line with their confessional affiliation, as each area is dominated by a particular confession.

The Best Means to Resolve the Major Issue or Problem

The majority of respondents (52%) believed that internal dialogue is the best solution to the current issues. Only 15% said demonstrations and protests would achieve this purpose, while 11.9% said the problem would be resolved by holding early parliamentary elections, 8.4% said the solution resided in eliminating political confessionalism, 6.1% listed the armed resistance against Israel (graph no.2), 2.5% listed the non-interference of religious leaders in political affairs, 2.4% proposed dialogue with Israel through the United Nations, 1.1% said violence and fighting are the solution, and 0.6% said the resignation of President Emile Lahoud would resolve the problem.

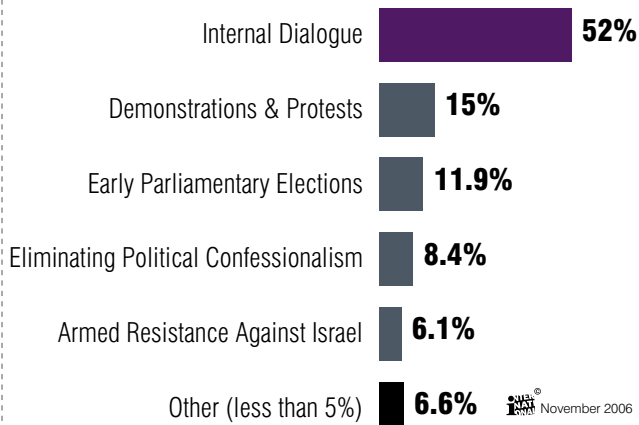
Describing the March 8 and the March 14 Forces

The overwhelming majority of Lebanon is divided into two sides: the first was called the March 8 Forces and mainly included Hizbullah, Amal Movement, Al Marada party and other political figures. Today, it is called "the opposition" after the Free Patriotic Movement joined it. The second side, the ruling power, is called the March 14 Forces and includes the Future Movement, the Progressive Socialist Party, the Lebanese Forces and other political figures.

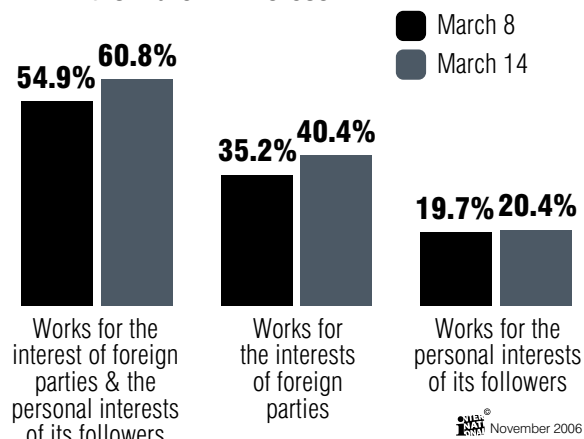
Consequently, each side is accusing the other of serving personal and foreign ambitions.

45.2% of respondents said the March 8 Forces is a Lebanese and national group, against 39.3% who attributed these qualities to the March 14 Forces. Moreover, 35.2% of respondents said the March 8 Forces is a Lebanese group that fulfills the interests of foreign parties, while 40.4% accused the other side of doing so. 19.7% of respondents said the March 8 group works for its followers' personal interests against 20.4% who believed that the March 14

[Graph 2] **What is the best means to resolve the major problems?**



[Graph 3] **Describing the March 8 and the March 14 Forces**



group is doing so. Thus, 54.9% of the respondents have a negative opinion about the March 8 Forces versus 60.8% for the March 14 group (graph no. 3). This also means that around 57.9% of the Lebanese have a negative opinion about both sides (or even do not trust them) versus 42.1%. The distribution of answers by confessions is shown in the following table no.2.

Distribution of answers by confession (%)						Table 2
	Maronite	Orthodox	Catholic	Sunni	Shia'a	Druze
March 8 is a Lebanese national group	32.9%	28.2%	34.8%	18.4%	90.5%	19.2%
Lebanese group that works for foreign parties' interests	45.4%	47.6%	39.1%	52.5%	4%	61.4%
Works for its followers' personal interests	21.7%	24.2%	26.1%	29.1%	5.5%	19.4%
March 14 is a Lebanese national group	41.3%	29.7%	46.7%	73%	2.5%	66.3%
Lebanese group that works for foreign parties' interests	37.8%	43.6%	33.3%	15.8%	72%	21.7%
Works for its followers' personal interests	20.9%	26.7%	20%	11.2%	25.5%	12%

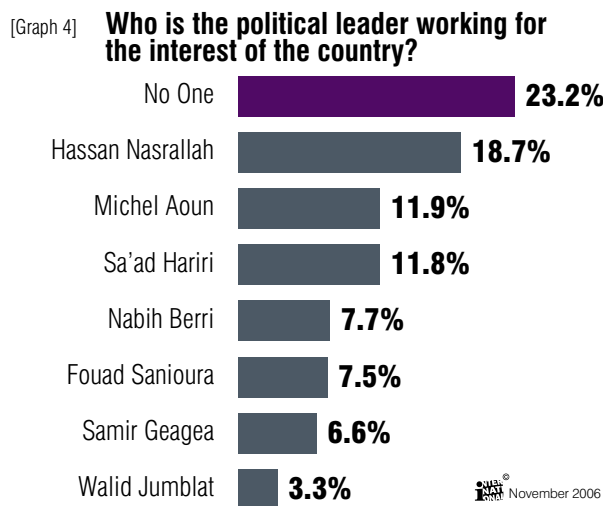
Source: Information International - November 2006

Table no.2 highlights confessional divisions, as the overwhelming majority of Shia'a supports the March 8 Forces while that of the Sunni and the Druze supports the March 14 Forces. The rate of support of the March 8 and the March 14 groups is almost the same for the Orthodox confession, while the majority of Maronite and Catholic backs the March 14 Forces.

The Political Leader working for National Interests

23.2% of respondents said that none of the Lebanese politicians is acting wisely and responsibly. 18.7% said Hassan Nasrallah is doing so, 11.9% voted for Michel Aoun, 7.7% for Sa'ad Hariri, 7.5% for Nabih Berri, 6.6% for Samir Geagea and only 3.3% for Walid Jumblat (graph no. 4). 0.5 to 0.1% of respondents named other politicians.

Despite wide confessional and political divisions, a high percentage of Lebanese people have negative opinions about both the March 8 and the March 14 forces. Moreover, a quarter of respondents do not believe any political leader to be acting responsibly. This might highlight the gap between the citizens and their zua'ama.



“No One” is the political leader working for the interest of the country.”

* Based on the voters' register in Beirut

** Based on the voters' register in the South

Description of the sample

The poll was conducted between November 15-23, 2006 on 1500 women and men in the different Lebanese areas respectively and according to the voters in each area, also respectively and the number of voters of each confession in these areas. Respondents were of different ages and different social levels and incomes.

Demonstrations in Lebanon: Internal Bickering is more Important to the Lebanese than the Israeli War and Vital Issues

Living in a democratic country, the Lebanese enjoy a freedom of expression and the right to hold demonstrations.

Beirut, as well as the other major Lebanese cities, has always embosomed demonstrations of various types, such as syndicates holding demonstrations with the objective of increasing the wages and salaries of employees. Other demonstrations have been instigated by politics, such as the March 8th and the March 14th 2005 protests which were the largest Lebanon's history has ever witnessed.

Protests to support Arab and international causes, such as the Palestinian cause and the Arab wars against Israel, have been historically numerous. However, while some Lebanese participate in public demonstrations, others believe that the nation's best interest should prevail on personal ones, according to the local proverb: "Do not open your umbrella every time it rains somewhere in the world".

The most recent demonstrations in the country were organized during the Israeli war on Lebanon, such as the protests condemning the Qana massacre in July 2006.

Information International conducted an opinion poll with a sample of 800 Lebanese citizens about their participation in demonstrations.

The March 8th and 14th Demonstrations

27.3% of the respondents affirmed that they participated in the March 14th demonstration and 16.4% said that they participated in the March 8th demonstration*. More than half of the respondents (56%) did not participate in any of the demonstrations, while 0.3% declined to give an answer. The answers are shown according to confessions in Table No. 1.

The Druze, Maronite, Greek Catholic, Greek Orthodox, and Sunni affiliations were the majority in the March 14th demonstration; the Shia'a were the majority in the March 8th demonstration.

Participation in the March 8th and March 14th 2005 Demonstrations by Confession

Table 1

Confession	Maronite	Greek Orthodox	Greek Catholic	Sunni	Shia'a	Druze
March 14 th	36.7 %	39.7 %	25.8 %	34.8 %	1.8 %	69.4 %
March 8 th	10.6 %	10.3 %	6.5 %	7.2 %	38.2 %	4.4 %
Did not participate in any of the demonstrations	52.7 %	50 %	67.7 %	57 %	59.5 %	31.2 %
No answer	-	-	-	1 %	0.5 %	-

Demonstrations Condemning the 2006 Israeli War against Lebanon

15.5% of the respondents said that they participated in a protest condemning the Israeli attacks against Lebanon, while 84.5% did not. The reason for this majority of non participants is as follows: 41.7% believe that demonstrating against the war will not yield any results, 40.3% are scared to demonstrate and 4.6% did not participate because they were convinced that the war was not against Lebanon. Table No. 2 shows the distribution of the answers by confession.

Participation in a Demonstration against the 2006 Israeli War by Confession

Table 2

Confession	Maronite	Greek Orthodox	Greek Catholic	Sunni	Shia'a	Druze
Participated	10.6 %	4.4 %	3.2 %	12.6 %	29.5 %	6.7 %
Did not participate	89.1 %	95.6 %	96.8 %	87.4 %	70.5 %	93.3 %

A comparison between the rate of participation against the Israeli attacks and the participation in the March 8th and March 14th demonstrations, shows that the Lebanese are more concerned with internal fends than by the Israeli attacks.

Moreover, the range of participation in the demonstrations is almost detained by confession. The Shia'a constituted the majority of protesters in the March 8th demonstration and in condemning the Israeli war. The Druze were the majority in the March 14th demonstration and of the minority to condemn the Israeli war. Furthermore the Lebanese did not demonstrate for vital issues like education, health, employment and environment. ●●

* *ItMonthly will discuss in subsequent issues how people's answers whether they participated in demonstrations change according to political circumstances.*

Paris 3 Donor Conference

Past Experiences, Floating Hopes and Forthcoming Taxes

Friends of Lebanon Conference (Washington D.C. 1996), Paris 1 Conference (Paris, February 2001), Paris 2 Conference (Paris, November 2002); three international gatherings were held to support the Lebanese economy and prevent the state's bankruptcy. The need to organize the Paris 3 Conference is seen by observers as a failure of the successive Lebanese governments and a testimony that international conferences do not have a magical solution. The outcome of Friends of Lebanon conference was only unfulfilled pledges, while Paris 1 was a preparation to Paris 2 and during the latter donor countries decided to grant Lebanon 3,000-3,140 million USD in soft loans and pledges of 1,280 million USD to finance projects presented by the Lebanese government. The money granted to Lebanon was mostly in form of soft loans to the Lebanese treasury bonds with low interests, which allowed the Lebanese government to cut the cost of debt but without being able to decrease the total debt. The decrease in the debt service was only for a two-year period (2004-2005) as it started to increase gradually, reaching in 2006 around 3,100 million USD, a little bit more than the amount that was paid in 2002 and 2003 and much more than the interest paid in 2004 and 2005. Paid debt interests in 2002, reached 3,066 million USD, in 2003, 3,233 million USD, in 2004, 2,667 million USD and in 2005, 2,344 million USD (Graph no. 1).

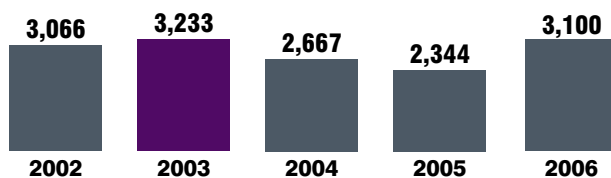
Paris 2 failed to achieve its goals because the so-called "reform plan" was sketchy, unfeasible and doomed to fail.

Paris 3

The Lebanese government endorsed a financial "reform plan" to be submitted to the Paris 3 Conference and which includes a presentation of the economic and financial situation in the country and the means to resolve it through international financial grants and the adoption of some internal measures. Among these measures:

- ⊙ Raising the rate of the Value Added Tax (VAT) from 10% to 12% in 2008 and to 15% in 2010.
- ⊙ Reforming the retirement system and the end of service without cutting the compensations of the current employees.
- ⊙ Raising working hours in the public sector from 32 hours per week to 36 hours by mid 2007.
- ⊙ Reviewing and decreasing salaries in some public institutions, in

[Graph 1] Lebanon Debt Service Costs [Million USD] (2002-2006)



Compiled by Information International from the General Budgetary

particular compensations and allowances of presidents, deputies and ministers.

- ⊙ Closing the Council of the South and the national fund for the displaced by the end of 2008.
- ⊙ Cutting down on oil consumption and telecommunication expenditures in the public sector.
- ⊙ Limiting the employment in the public sector, as it is expected that 65% of the employees would retire during the coming fifteen years. Hiring replacements for those would be achieved according to the needs of the sector. The excess of employees in state educational institutions will also be reviewed and employees will be distributed in vacant posts. For the first time, the "reform plan" did not mention expenditures of the military sector but stressed on an expected increase in security and military forces in light of the security developments and the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1701.
- ⊙ Reforming the energy sector and privatizing the electricity.
- ⊙ Raising taxes on bank interest from 5% to 7% starting from 2008.
- ⊙ Increasing the cost of gasoline gradually as of 2007 to reach 14,000 LBP in 2011 for each tank (20 liters).
- ⊙ Adopting a unified tax on the income
- ⊙ Privatizing the telecommunications sector by the second quarter of 2007. The majority or all the shares of the two mobile phones companies will be sold.
- ⊙ Selling the Central Bank's shares in the Middle East Airlines (which means selling all the company) and its shares in the INTRA Bank (35% of shares).

Most of these measures were mentioned in the general budget of 2005, which did not see the light. In fact, those measures cannot be achieved because they are not representative of the facts in Lebanon. For example, the "reform plan" states that 25% of the Lebanese people live in difficult economic conditions and only 4% live in poverty. In reality, the 4% figure is the major understatement to say the least. Furthermore, the benefits of privatisation are overstated and unachievable. ●●

Public Debt: Unholy Alliance between Banks & Government

In the midst of Lebanon's current political turmoil and lack of decision, the country's politicians have been trying to capture the public's attention with heated political disagreements. Every so often, they issue statements denouncing corruption, squandered funds, public debt and its causes, as if such problems had arisen only yesterday. Then, as if by miracle, all talk of these issues disappears, only to crop up again whenever a leader finds it advantageous to brandish it in the face of political opponents. But the staggering value of the public debt is more than just a political weapon; it is a dark cloud hanging over the whole country, waiting to unleash a storm.

Having devoted special attention to Lebanon's public debt in previous issues (April 2004 and November 2004), *Ii Monthly* tries once again to cast some light on the problem in general and on interest payments in particular, bringing previously published figures up to date.

Source of Public Debt

In the beginning of 1993, Lebanon's net public debt (excluding government deposits) amounted to 5 billion LBP (2.872 Million USD, at an average exchange rate of 1,741 LBP to the dollar at that time). The debt was made up of 4.433 billion LBP in local currency (internal debt) and 327 million USD in foreign currency (external debt). Consequently, the public debt would have increased during the first nine months of 2006 by 2,362 billion LBP.

By the end of September 2006, Lebanon's net public debt had amounted to approximately 54,922 billion LBP (36.4 billion USD), while the overall debt amounted to 60,347 billion LBP (40 billion USD).

This debt is distributed as follows

- ⊙ 30,765 billion LBP in foreign currency (an external debt of 20.438 Million USD), that is, 51.9% of the overall debt.
- ⊙ 29.582 billion LBP of internal debt, which makes up 49% of the overall debt.

It is necessary to mention the long-term and low-interest loans that have been granted to Lebanon by international committees and institutions. These loans are not taken into account in calculations of the public debt, and they amount to approximately 7.5 billion USD. Consequently, the total public debt amounts to around 45.5 billion USD.

Reasons for the Increase in Public Debt

There are several reasons for the increase in Lebanon's public debt, but they can be effectively compiled into two:

1- The first reason is the high rate of interest paid. In order to encourage banks and individuals to underwrite Lebanese treasury bonds, and thereby ensure a means of financing its budget deficit, the government resorted to issuing treasury bills with high interest rates, to the extent that between 1993 and 1995, there were times when interest rates reached around 40% (during the extension of Elias Hrawi's mandate as president). The amount of interest paid on the debt from 1993 to the end of September 2006 adds up to 48,261 billion LBP, which is 87.8% of the actual net public debt, and 80% of the overall current debt. The following table (Table No. 1) shows the evolution of the public debt and the interest paid from 1993 to 2006.

2- The second reason is the deficit in the budget, which stemmed from a policy of incurring large expenditures without ensuring necessary income. Most of the expenditure was not incurred for economic or productive ends, but rather to cover the expenses resulting from the expansion in the government's size. Large amounts were also spent to placate political leaders, especially on the regional Council of the South, on the Central Fund for the Displaced, on certain unnecessary construction plans, and on increasing wages and benefits for employees of the public sector.

The Creditors

The share of Lebanon's various creditors has varied over the past thirteen years. At times, the share of Lebanese banks has increased to 70% of the debt, while the share of the Central Bank and other institutions has decreased. At other times, the opposite has happened. At present (until March 2006), the public debt is distributed as follows:

- ⊙ 30,444 billion LBP, is the share of Lebanese banks, or 50.5% of the total.
- ⊙ 9,505 billion LBP, is the share of the Central Bank, or 15.7% of the total.
- ⊙ 4,305 billion LBP, is the share of non-banking institutions, or 7.1% of the total.
- ⊙ 2,794 billion LBP, is the share of international developmental organizations and foreign governments, or 4.6% of the total.
- ⊙ 13,300 billion LBP, is the share of foreign banks and financial institutions, or 22% of the total.

Evolution of Lebanon's Public Debt and the Amount of Interest Paid between 1993 and 2006 Table 1

Year	Internal Public Debt (billions of LBP)	External Public Debt (billions of USD)	Total Net Public Debt (billions of LBP)	Overall Public Debt (billions of LBP)	Estimated Interest on the Public Debt (billions of LBP)	Paid Interest (billions of LBP)
1993	4,433	327	5,000	7,582	1,542	325
1994	6,711	773	8,000	12,056	1,358	1,595
1995	9,287	1,332	11,446	16,130	2,278	2,115
1996	13,258	1,882	16,421	20,225	2,600	4,228
1997	18,379	2,432	22,122	23,332	2,700	4,120
1998	19,544	4,163	25,854	27,996	3,200	3,041
1999	21,377	5,540	29,729	33,735	3,900	3,905
2000	24,400	6,967	34,900	37,661	3,900	4,175
2001	26,314	9,641	40,847	42,733	4,300	4,500
2002	24,992	12,780	44,257	47,221	4,500	4,622
2003	23,824	15,490	47,177	50,196	4,000	4,878
2004	22,012	18,408	49,763	54,122	4,300	4,021
2005	23,553	19,176	52,460	58,050	3,900	3,534
Until Sep. 2006	24,157	20,408	54,922	60,347	The budget for 2006 has yet to be confirmed	3,162
Total	24,157	20,408	54,922	60,347	42,487	48,261

Source: general budgetary laws and accounts

The Beneficiaries

Government loans have been equally advantageous to both creditors and their debtor, (the Lebanese government). On one hand, the government has been able to maintain its daily existence without going bankrupt. On the other hand, its creditors have made good returns on their investment with controlled risk. Lebanese banks rank first among these privileged creditors, given that they received no less than 60% of the interest paid, an estimated 28.957 billion LBP. It is true that the largest portion of this interest was paid to the banks' depositors. Nevertheless, banks have made huge revenues, and the banking sector is estimated to have made 6,200 billion LBP in profit from 1993 to 2005, most of which resulted from the underwriting of government bonds.

As for the bank depositors, they are members of the Lebanese population. However, given that each depositor made returns proportional to his or her deposits, and that 2,000 main depositors held 60% of the deposits, it is clear that the largest share of profits actually ended up in the hands of the relatively few.

It is clear that those who have been in charge of Lebanon's political and financial affairs since 1993 must be held

accountable, since borrowing was a decision made by presidents, ministers, and members of parliament. Furthermore, it was the government's decision to switch from borrowing in local currency to borrowing in foreign currency (specifically in U.S. dollars), starting 1997, under the pretext of lowering interest rates on the public debt, and this decision became law after it was approved by parliament. Thus, the banks cannot be held responsible, except in the measure of what can be expected from socially responsible citizens or businessmen, since they are commercial companies that took advantage or were allowed to take advantage of the situation.

Every day approximately 7.7 million USD in interest have to be settled, while the overall daily revenue of the government does not exceed an average of 13 million USD.

A way out of this fix would be to decrease the deficit in the general budget. There are several means of doing so:

- ⊙ Increasing taxes and fees as a way to increase the government's income. However, this should happen only according to balanced criteria, in order to avoid a slowdown of economic activity, capital flight, lost investment, and unfairly disadvantaging the general population.
- ⊙ Limiting unnecessary expenses. This would be fully feasible should political agreement be reached. Squandering of funds in Lebanon is well-recognized, but in the absence of political agreement and with the division of the government into niches of influence, a wasteful system is perpetuated.
- ⊙ "Allowing" the government to exercise its role and authority, especially concerning maritime and other public property.
- ⊙ Removing the obstacles from the way of economic growth, creating new jobs, and expanding the volume of production. This would require a complete review of administrative and political performance, the modernization of laws and institutions, and the elaboration of plans with detailed goals, the results of which would be monitored periodically. This would require imposing taxes on deposits and regulating money transfers from foreign countries and the flow of foreign labor force. The programs that were put in place in 1993 did not, and will not, achieve any of the expected results without major changes and adjustments taking place. In fact, it seems as if, so far, the country has been following a steady course towards decline. ●●

Lebanon's Foreign Trade: US Ranks 1st in Exports and Syria 1st in Imports

The numbers of Lebanon's foreign trade in the first ten months of 2006 highlighted new facts that were different from those of the previous years whether in the volume or the classification of the countries Lebanon trades with.

Results

The value of merchandise and goods imported since the beginning of the year and until the end of October reached 7.510 million USD, while the value of merchandise and goods exported in the same period reached 1.856 million USD, or a deficit of 5.654 million USD and a rate of 304%. In the same period last year, imports reached 7.690 million USD against 1.515 million USD of exports, or a difference of 6.175 million USD and a rate of 407%. The decline of the difference is due to the decrease of imports in July and August 2006 as a result of the Israeli war on Lebanon and the land, maritime and air siege imposed by Israel for 54 days. The following table no. 1 shows a comparison between the first ten months of 2005 and 2006 in imports and exports.

Month	Imports 2005	Imports 2006	Exports 2005	Exports 2006
January	690	642	126	144
February	645	768	121	168
March	826	940	159	205
April	665	848	165	231
May	750	981	140	285
June	740	877	164	269
July	884	601	130	104
August	834	269	160	86
September	836	732	175	187
October	820	852	176	177
Total	7,690	7,510	1,516	1,856

Table no.1 shows that the month which witnessed the highest value of imports was May 2006 (981 million USD) while the month of the lowest value was August 2006 (269 million USD). Compared with 2005, July witnessed the highest value (884 million USD) and February the lowest (645 million USD).

Trade with Foreign Countries

Lebanon has a commercial exchange with 190 countries or regions in the world. While trade with some of the

countries is limited to some thousands of dollars per year, it can reach hundreds of millions with other countries.

According to table no. 2, the first ten months of 2006 witnessed the entry of a new country on the top of the list of countries Lebanon imports from: The United States. In fact, for several years, Italy has been leading the list and was followed by France, Germany and the U.S. in the fourth position. It is also important to note that in 2006, China ranked third after the U.S. and France, which means that it may reach the first or second position in the three coming years. The main reason behind this change may be the rate of USD against the Euro, as U.S. goods and merchandise arrive in Lebanon in a price of a minimum 10% less than European merchandise (despite the high prices of shipping). Consequently, if the value of Euro continued to increase against the USD and other foreign currencies, the volume of European imports will decrease around the world against an increase in the volume of U.S. or Asian imports (Japan – China).

Top Countries for Lebanese Imports and Exports from 1998 till 2006 (Amounts in millions USD)

Year	First country from which Lebanon imports	Value of Imports (USD)	First country to which Lebanon exports	Value of Exports (USD)
1998	Italy	1.233	Saudi Arabia	132
1999	Italy	1.024	Saudi Arabia	104.7
2000	Italy	1.025	Saudi Arabia	117.2
2001	Italy	1.068	Saudi Arabia	129
2002	Italy	1.045	Saudi Arabia	144.7
2003	Italy	1.017	United Arab Emirates	157.3
2004	Italy	1.403	Iraq	385
2005	Italy	975.6	Syria	187.4
Until September 2006	USA	647	Switzerland	392
	France	548	Syria	125*
	China	519	United Arab Emirates	123
	Italy	494	Iraq	116
	Germany	464	Saudi Arabia	110

Table 1 & Table 2 Source: Customs Directorate General

* This figure does not include the unofficial trade or "smuggling."

As shown in table no. 2, for five consecutive years, Saudi Arabia ranked first among countries to which the country exports but was replaced by UAE and then Iraq, then Syria and finally Switzerland in 2006.

2006 Is Over and Still No Budget*

The year 2006 is over and the 2006 budget has not been drafted. This reality reflects a major handicap in the government's strategy as well as in the institutional activities, which will necessarily have an impact on the current Lebanese situation.

This delay in setting a budget for the government is not an exception, as Lebanon has witnessed similar conditions in different periods, especially during crises and during the war and its aftermath.

However, at this juncture, the Lebanese are supposedly living in a peaceful country, in which institutions may work according to the tasks that have been allocated to them by the constitution. Yet still such delays are suffered.

Adopting the Budget

Article 83 of the Constitution states: "Each year at the beginning of the October session (the first Tuesday following October 15), the Government has to submit to the Chamber of Deputies the general budget estimates of state expenditures and revenues for the following year. The budget is voted upon article by article."

Article 86 further specifies: "If the Chamber of Deputies has not given a final decision on the budget estimates before the expiration of the session devoted to the examination of the budget (meaning, by the end of December), the President of the Republic, in coordination with the Prime Minister, immediately convenes the Chamber for an extraordinary session which lasts until the end of January in order to continue the discussion of the budget.

"If, at the end of this extraordinary session, the budget estimates have not been finally settled, the Council of Ministers may take a decision on the basis of which a decree is issued by the President giving effect to the above estimates in the form in which they were submitted to the Chamber.

"However, the Council of Ministers may not exercise this right unless the budget estimates were submitted to the Chamber at least fifteen days before the commencement of its session.

"Nevertheless, during the said extraordinary session, taxes, charges, duties, imposts, and other kinds of revenues continue to be collected as before. The budget of the previous year is adopted as a basis. To this must be added the permanent credits which have been dropped, and the

Government fixes the expenditures for the month of January on the basis of the 'provisional twelfth'."

The current government adopted the budget on January 12 but did not present it before the parliament for examination.

So far, collection of taxes and expenditures were made on the basis of the provisional twelfth (provisional allocation of expenditure on monthly basis), stipulated by Law No. 717, dated February 3, 2006, specifying that "the Government is authorized, as of February 1, 2006, and until the issuance of the 2006 Budget Law, to collect revenues and to accord expenditure on the basis of the provisional twelfth, and in comparison with the credit numbers fixed in the 2005 budget."

The Delay in Setting the General Budget

As mentioned previously, the delay in setting the budget is not happening for the first time in Lebanon. In fact, it has occurred several times before. In some cases, years have passed without having any set budget.

Judging from available information and research, the following observations can be made:

- ⦿ The budget has never been adopted on time -- before the beginning of the year -- at any point in the past 62 years. This is the case in many countries, to the extent that delay seems to be the general rule to which all budgets comply.
- ⦿ No budget was set or adopted for four consecutive years following 1986.
- ⦿ All budgets were issued according to laws adopted by parliament except for the budgets for the years 1943, 1953, 1957, 1959, and 1977, all of which were issued according to legislative decrees issued by the government after it was attributed exceptional rights by parliament to do so.
- ⦿ Budgets for the years 1958 and 1964 were issued according to decrees as stipulated and authorized in Article 86 of the Constitution, as the government transferred the project of the budget law to the parliament within the legal time limit, where it was not finalized by parliament by the end of January.

The 2005 budget was set in February 2006. The 2006 budget was also set in 2007?

The current political tension in Lebanon does not allow an agreement over the budget law, since it needs a great deal of amendments in terms of figures and structure, as Prime Minister Sanioura repeatedly mentions. ●●

The Security Council: 1,738 Resolutions in 60 Years World Peace and Security in Constant Danger

The United Nations (UN) was founded at the end of World War II in order to defend the interests of the winning countries and to establish a solid agreement preventing the occurrence of a similar war.

Between 1945 and 1949, France experienced intense political internal conflicts, while Germany needed to overcome its enormous war losses and Japan had not yet recovered from the nuclear catastrophe in Nagasaki. In addition, civil wars were on the rise throughout the British and French colonies.

At the same time, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) was growing stronger, drawing the attention of the United States of America (USA), which implemented the Marshall Plan in an attempt to contain the Soviet phenomenon. Some countries approved this plan, while others in Eastern Europe rejected it upon the request of the Soviet president Stalin.

Both the USA and the USSR were competing for the title of the “leader of the new international order”. The world was split behind what became known as the “duality of the poles” and two camps were formed: the Eastern and the Western camps, each with its own allies. On the one hand, there was the North Atlantic Alliance (NATO) led by the USA, and on the other hand the Warsaw Pact led by the USSR.

This new reality transformed the organization of the United Nations, as well as its institutions including the Security Council, into an arena for confrontation of these two poles.

In this issue, *Ii Monthly* examines the number of resolutions (1,738) adopted by the UN from 1946 until end of 2006. It includes the 1,434 resolutions dealing with conflicts between countries, and the 304 resolutions dealing with UN affairs including new memberships to the organization and the formation of international tribunals.

Ii Monthly also examines the right for veto acknowledged by the new international order and rewarded to those countries victorious from World War II.

The Security Council

Article 24 of the UN Treaty stipulates the following: “In

order to ensure prompt and effective action by the United Nations, its members confer on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and agree that in carrying out its duties under this responsibility, the Security Council acts on their behalf”.

Thus, the Security Council has been acknowledged as the sole UN institution that has full powers concerning the maintenance of international peace and security.

The Security Council is composed of fifteen members, five of which are permanent (China, United States of America, Russia, United Kingdom, and France). The resolutions prepared at the Security Council are adopted as long as nine out of ten countries approve it. However, only the five permanent countries enjoy the right for veto, which is used in order to prevent the council from adopting a resolution. The other ten members of the Security Council are elected by the General Assembly.

On December 22, 1946, the Security Council adopted its first resolution. Until the end of 2006, the Security Council had adopted 1,738 resolutions. However, the frequency of these resolutions varied according to the world conflicts and events.

The main characteristic of the so called Cold War period (1946-1985), was that the USSR and the USA abused their right of veto in the Security Council. Each was attempting to gain further political and military powers by controlling different areas of the world and each pole tried to score points against its opponent.

In brief, the veto right has been used as a tool to control the new international order. The USSR alone used its right for veto 119 times during this period.

However, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Security Council adopted many resolutions and the veto right was rarely used. The Security Council is now dominated by the USA, which attempts to adopt resolutions favoring its own interests. It uses its veto to reject resolutions, apart from those in the interest of the other permanent country members.

The Distribution of the Security Council Resolutions According to Continent, with Focus on the Case of Cyprus

118 resolutions issued by the security council concern Cyprus.

In 1960, Cyprus became an independent country with its own constitution, with equal rights and obligations to both the Turkish and the Greek communities. The two communities grew apart; the claimed reason behind this change was that the Cypriot-Greek leaders tried for many years to undermine the rights of the Turkish community. As a result, Cyprus made a complaint before the Security Council. On March 4, 1964, the first international resolution related to Cyprus was adopted, stipulating that a UN peace-keeping force should be sent to the island.

The civil war shook the country for 10 consecutive years (1964–1974) and claimed the lives of 70,000 Turkish-Cypriots, which led the Turkish army to make a military drop in the north of the island in July 17, 1974. Following this intervention, Cyprus was divided in two authorities: the Greek authority controlled Southern Cyprus, which is the largest part of the island. Northern Cyprus, which fell under the control of Turkey, declared this part of the land the Turkish Cypriot Republic. Since then, continuous efforts have been made to reunite the two parts of the island.

On April 24, 2004, the Secretary General of the United Nations Kofi Annan decided to conduct a poll amongst the Cypriot population in order to reunite the island. This poll was rejected by the Greek-Cypriots, but approved by the Turkish-Cypriots; thus the initiative failed and the problem remained unsolved.

Today, the international troops are still present in Cyprus and their term is extended every six months.

The following tables illustrate the distribution of the adopted resolutions by the Security Council according to continents and world regions.

Resolutions Issued Concerning African Countries **Table 1**

Country	Number of Resolutions
Angola	61
West Desert	54
Congo	49
Rwanda	39
Sierra Leone	33
South Africa	29
Liberia	29
Somalia	29
Namibia	25
South Rhodesia	24
Eritrea and Ethiopia	23
Ivory Coast	22
Sudan	16
Burundi	15
Angola and South Africa	13
Mozambique	11
Central Africa	9
Liberia and East Africa	9
Egypt and Israel	7
Senegal	6
Africa*	5
Egypt	4
Guinea	4
Libya	4
Zambia	4
Africa and Lesotho	4
Benin	3
Guinea Bissau	3
Chad and Libya	3
Botswana and South Rhodesia	2
Botswana and South Africa	2
Mozambique and South Rhodesia	2
Zambia and South Rhodesia	2
Zambia and South Africa	2
Israel and Tunisia	2
Chad	1
Nairobi	1
Tunisia	1

Total resolutions

552

Source: Compiled by Information International from UN official website: www.un.org

*Resolutions issued under this title are concerned with limiting the flow of weapons and armaments into African countries in order to enhance peace in the continent.

Resolutions Issued Concerning European Countries Table 2

Country	Number of Resolutions
Cyprus	118
Bosnia and Herzegovina	59
Former Yugoslavia	45
Georgia	37
Croatia	30
Macedonia	9
Greece	6
Portugal	4
Kosovo	3
Spain	3
Falkland Islands	2
Albania	2
Hungary	1
Italy	1
Lockerby	1
Turkey and Greece	1
Danube River	1
Total resolutions	323

Source: Compiled by Information International from UN official website: www.un.org

Resolutions Issued Concerning Asian Countries Table 3

Country	Number of Resolutions
Lebanon and Israel	74
Iraq and Kuwait	66
Syria and Israel	63
Palestine	44
Afghanistan	25
Lebanon	20
India and Pakistan	18
Iran and Iraq	17
Cambodia	15
Indonesia	14
Tajikistan and Afghanistan	13
East Timor	12
Iraq	12
Timor and Litchi	9
Republic Korea	7
Iran	6
Syria	4
Yemen	4
Armenia and Azerbaijan	4
Afghanistan and Pakistan	2
Bahrain	1
Jordan	1
Laos	1
Taiwan	1
Iraq and Israel	1
Total resolutions	434

Source: Compiled by Information International from UN official website: www.un.org

Resolutions Issued Concerning American Countries Table 4

Country	Number of Resolutions
Haiti	30
Central America	14
El-Salvador	7
Great Lakes	4
Dominican Republic	3
Cuba	1
Guatemala	1
Latin America	1
Panama	1
Nicaragua and Honduras	1
Nicaragua and the United States	1
Total resolutions	64

Source: Compiled by Information International from UN official website: www.un.org

Resolutions Issued Concerning Other World Countries Table 5

Country	Number of Resolutions
Israel	29
Middle East*	26
United States of America and Iran	2
Seychelles Islands	2
Pacific Ocean Islands	1
Brivalaka	1
Total resolutions	61

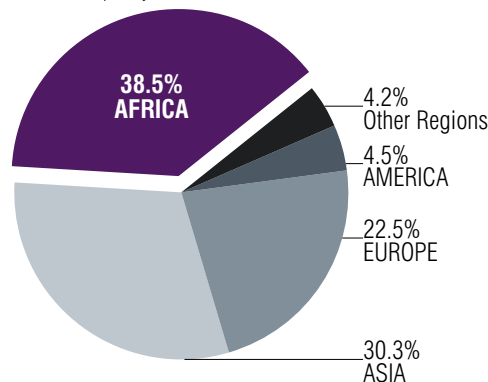
Source: Compiled by Information International from UN official website: www.un.org

* Resolutions under this title were issued in 1967 and 1973 during the war between Israel, Egypt, Jordan and Syria.

Graph 1 shows the distribution of adopted resolutions by continent.

[Graph 1] **Share of Adopted Resolutions by Continent**

Source: Compiled by Information International from UN official website: www.un.org

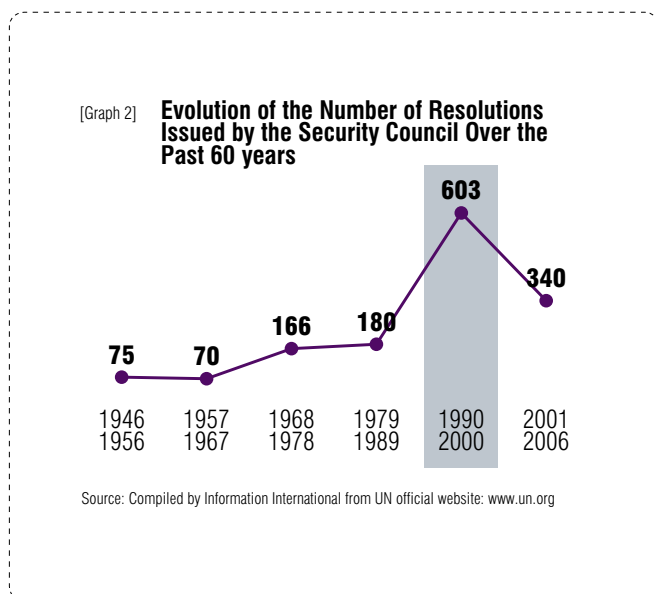


According to tables 1-5, the African continent has had the largest share of resolutions adopted in the past 60 years; it received 38.5% of the total number of resolutions. In fact, the Security Council adopted 552 resolutions concerning Africa, out of 1,434 resolutions.

Resolutions by Time Period

The Security Council adopted the most resolutions between 1990 and 2000. This was due to the many international events occurring during this period, especially in Europe, Africa and the Gulf. The Security Council issued 603 resolutions during this period of which some are: 49 concerning the conflict between Kuwait and Iraq, 48 related to the conflict between Bosnia and Herzegovina, and 48 concerning the conflict in Angola.

Graph 2 shows the evolution of the number of resolutions issued by the Security Council over 60 years.



Countries Subject to the Highest Number of Resolutions within One Year

The earliest case discussed within the International Security Council was the Palestinian Cause which emerged in 1948 and remains unsolved until this day.

Table No. 6 lists the countries with the highest number of resolutions adopted within one year with Palestine at the top of the list.

Countries with the Highest Number of Resolutions Adopted in One Year
Table 6

Country	Number of Resolutions	Year
Palestine	16	1948
Former Yugoslavia	13	1993
Bosnia and Herzegovina	12	1995
Cyprus	11	1974
Lebanon and Israel	11	1982
Former Yugoslavia	10	1992
Rwanda	9	1994-1995
Bosnia and Herzegovina	8	1992
Ivory Coast	8	2005
Angola	7	2002
Congo	7	2005

Source: Compiled by Information International from UN official website: www.un.org

The Highest and Lowest Number of Resolutions Adopted Within One Year

In 1993, the Security Council adopted 85 resolutions, the largest number of resolutions adopted regarding conflicts. 13 of those resolutions were related to Former Yugoslavia and 8 were related to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Table No. 7 lists the years when the highest number of resolutions were adopted.

The Highest Number of Resolutions Adopted by Year
Table 7

Number of Resolutions	Year
85	1993
70	1998
66	1994
60	2005
60	1992
59	2002
57	2003
56	1999
55	1995
53	1997
51	2004

Source: Compiled by Information International from UN official website: www.un.org

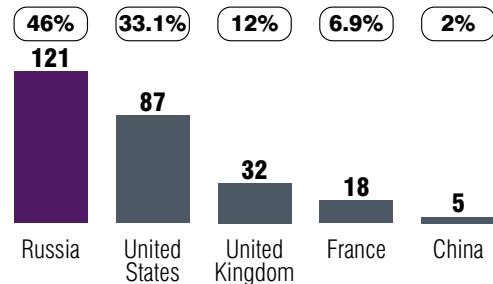
Veto: Russia Uses the Veto Right Most Frequently

The five permanent country-members of the Security Council used the veto right 263 times. Graph 3 shows the frequency of the use of the veto right by the five permanent member countries.

Graph No. 3 in the following page, shows that Russia has used its veto right 121 times (46% of the total number of veto use), followed by the United States of America (87 times), the United Kingdom (32 times), France (18 times) and China (5 times).



[Graph 3] Frequency of the Use of the Veto Right by the Five Permanent Member Countries



Source: Compiled by Information International from UN official website: www.un.org

The Veto Right Used in Favor and Against Arab Countries

The USA has used its right to veto 45 times in order to defend the interest of Israel concerning Arab-Israeli conflicts.

It used its veto right 30 times against resolution drafts supporting the Palestinian cause, 12 times against resolution drafts supporting Lebanon, twice against Syria and once against Egypt.

Table No.8 illustrates the number of times the veto right has been used against Palestine, Lebanon, Egypt, Syria, Egypt, Jordan and Libya.

The number of times the veto right has been used against Palestine, Lebanon, Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Libya
Table 8

Veto	From USA	From Russia	From United Kingdom	From France	From China
Against Palestine	30	-	-	-	-
Against Lebanon	12	3	-	-	-
Against Syria	2	1 (1946)	-	-	-
Against Egypt	1	-	2	2	-
Against Jordan	-	5	-	-	-
Against Libya	2	2	2	2	-

Source: Compiled by Information International from UN official website: www.un.org

Russia used the veto right in favor of Egypt five times (after Abdel Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal and after the “Triad Attack” on Egypt) and four times in favor of Syria.

Table No.9 shows the number of times the veto right has been used in favor of Israel, Syria, Lebanon and Egypt.

Frequency of the Veto Right Used in Favor of Israel, Syria, Lebanon and Egypt, Table 9

Veto	From United States	From Russia	From United Kingdom	From France	From China
In favor of Israel	45	-	1	1	-
In favor of Syria	-	4	-	-	1
In favor of Egypt	-	5	-	-	1
In favor Lebanon	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Compiled by Information International from UN official website: www.un.org

Conclusion

After counting the frequency and types of resolutions issued by the Security Council, as well as the number of times the veto right was used, the following can be concluded:

1 - Since its beginning as a guarantee of protection for the World War II victorious countries, the Security Council has fallen under the authority of the USA. In fact, the USA seeks to adopt the international resolutions serving its best interest and the interest of its allies (similar to the USSR before its collapse). The resolutions, supported by the USA, are centered on the Middle East region, falling into a plan of structuring a new Middle East by using international legitimacy.


2 - The USA has used its right for veto to defend the best interest of Israel concerning Arab-Israeli conflicts 45 times. In fact, the USA always comes to the rescue of Israel whenever it occupies a country, launches an attack or commits a crime against other countries of the region.

3 - There has been no resolution adopted against any of the five permanent country-members, except for two resolutions concerning the conflict between Iran and the USA; both were in the best interest of the USA. The non-issuance of such resolutions confirms that the Security Council is used to serve the best interests of the dominant country members.

4 - By examining the countries in favor or disfavor of whichever resolutions have been adopted, it appears that the majority were former French, English, Russian, or European colonies. Although independent, these countries have been dragged into civil wars and other types of conflicts in order to be kept under international custody.

5 - Most of the conflicts, which the Security Council tried to solve through resolutions, remain unsettled to this day: the Palestinian Cause and the Arab-Israeli conflict are still ongoing; the Cypriot conflict has been pending since 1964 and there has been no solution to the situation in the Western Desert.

6 - Since the foundation of the United Nations in 1945, around 20 million people have been victims of more than a hundred conflicts. The United Nations and the Security Council have been unable to solve these conflicts and have failed to provide international peace and security in the world.

7 - Observers believe that the members of the General Assembly will need to change the mission of their institution, restricted to resolving the political conflicts between countries or to reprehend attacks. They also say that the Security Council should have additional power in terms of decision-making, and in finding the root-problem of the international conflicts contributing to social, economical and cultural factors. It ought to increase its efforts on combating epidemic diseases, providing health care, and increasing health awareness in order to uphold international peace and security. 

Two Years after Hariri's Assassination: Seven Reports and the Truth is Yet to be Revealed

On February 14, 2007, the Lebanese will commemorate the passing of two years since the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and twenty other people, among them Deputy Bassel Fuleihan, in addition to the wounding of more than one hundred people. The Lebanese were shaken by this tragedy and are still suffering from its repercussions. The majority of the Lebanese want to know the truth about who killed Hariri and why. With the issuance of each report, they hope that a part of this truth would be revealed. However, they have been so far disappointed with the outcome of these reports and they are calling for the creation of an international tribunal to "stop the series of political assassinations quivering the country since two years". Meanwhile, the Lebanese are living in a state of anxiety, fearing that they might return to civil war, which claimed thousands of lives and destroyed the country for over more than 15 years. In this article, *li Monthly* will review and evaluate reports of the international investigators who are probing Hariri's assassination.

The First Report - Fact Finding Mission: Accusing Syria Politically

Few hours after Hariri's assassination, the Security Council asked United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan to "follow-up on the situation and submit a report on the reasons and the repercussions of the killing." On February 25, Kofi Annan dispatched a fact-finding mission, which was headed by Peter Fitzgerald, an Irish Deputy Police Commissioner, and included two police investigators, one political advisor, another legal advisor, as well as two explosives experts and two DNA specialists. The team concluded its work on March 16 and submitted its report on March 24, 2005. According to the report:

- ⊙ "The assassination took place in a political and security context marked by an acute polarization around the Syrian influence in Lebanon and a failure of the Lebanese State to provide adequate protection for its citizens".
- ⊙ Disagreements between Hariri and Lahoud required a daily foreign interference.
- ⊙ Syrian President Bashar Assad threatened Hariri during a meeting in August 2004. It stated: "Mr. Hariri reminded Mr. Assad of his pledge not to extend Mr. Lahoud's presidential term. Assad replied that there are changes in the policy and that the decision has been already made. He added that Mr. Lahoud should be considered as his personal representative in Lebanon; hence opposing him would mean opposing Assad."The

report also quoted Assad as saying he "would rather break Lebanon over the heads of Hariri and (Druze leader Walid) Jumblat than see his word in Lebanon broken." According to statements in the report, "Mr. Assad threatened to physically harm Mr. Hariri and Mr. Jumblat if they opposed the extension of Mr. Lahoud's term. The meeting ended in ten minutes and it was the last between Mr. Hariri and Mr. Assad."

- ⊙ Important evidence was destroyed in the crime scene and officials should be held accountable for mismanagement. "Intelligence/Government agencies intruded on the site seemingly without judicial authority and subsequently failed to coordinate findings. It is therefore the Mission's view that the crime scene was not properly managed or preserved and as a result important evidence was either removed or destroyed without record. Those responsible for the mismanagement should be held accountable," the report said.
- ⊙ The explosion that targeted Hariri was due to a T.N.T. bomb which weighs approximately 1,000 Kilograms and was most likely placed aboveground.

The team concluded its report with a recommendation that an independent international commission be entrusted with conducting an investigation considering the gap in the security bodies' system. The commission should "comprise the different fields of expertise that are usually involved in carrying out similarly large investigations in national systems, with the necessary executive authority to carry out

interrogations, searches, and other relevant tasks”.

The report politically accused Syria but did not add any information to media reports.

Mehlis' Two Reports: Lebanese-Syrian Involvement in the Assassination

On April 7, 2005, the UN Security Council issued Resolution 1595, which stipulated the creation of an international independent investigation commission that should achieve its duty within three months as of the beginning of its term, with the secretary general being allowed to extend its term for another maximum period of three months.

In line with this resolution, the secretary general formed an international independent investigation commission headed by German Investigator Detlev Mehlis who arrived with his team in Lebanon on May 26, 2005. On June 13 and following discussions, the commission signed a memorandum of accord with the Lebanese government pertaining to its work and the means of cooperation between the two sides. The memorandum said that the commission has the right to summon all witnesses and relevant people through the specialized authorities and according to the Lebanese Penal Code. When it deems necessary, the commission can also interrogate witnesses without asking for the interference of the Lebanese authorities. It also has the right to give directions to the relevant authorities.

The commission began its work on June 16 and submitted to the Security Council two reports, the first on October 19 and the second on December 10, 2005. The reports came as follows:

- On August 30, the commission's investigators and Lebanese security forces ordered raiding the apartments of former security officials (Major General Jamil Sayyed, Major General Ali al-Hajj, Brigadier Mustafa Hamdan, Brigadier Raymond Azar), who were transported to the commission's headquarters for interviews. This operation was made according to a testimony of a Syrian witness, which later became an object of suspicion and which forced Serge Brammertz to address a letter to the Lebanese judiciary saying that their release was in the hands of the latter.
- The report also highlighted Syrian President Bashar Assad's threats to Hariri about Lahoud's term extension, and was based on statements made by Walid Jumblat, Ghazi Aridi, Bassem as-Saba'a, Gibran Tueni, Sa'ad

Hariri and Marwan Hamadeh. Hamadeh quoted Hariri as saying that Assad told him that he “would break Lebanon over his head and that of Jumblat's.” Sa'ad Hariri said that his father quoted Assad as saying: “You either do as you are told or we will get you and your family wherever you are.” The investigator doubted the statements of both Rustom Ghazaleh and Walid Muallem, who said that the meeting went well and that Bashar Assad talked to Hariri “as a friend and as the prime minister of Lebanon.”

- The report was based on the testimonies of several witnesses to point the finger at Syria in the first place and then at President Emile Lahoud. The report adopted a testimony of one of the witnesses who said that Mustafa Hamdan, the commander of the presidential guard, ordered the clearing and the reopening of the road where the assassination took place. The director general of the Internal Security Forces, Major General Ashraf Rifi, who succeeded Ali al-Hajj, told the commission that “the person who gave the order to get a bulldozer or bulldozers to the crime scene to fill the hole caused by the explosion was General Mustafa Hamdan, who at the time of the incident, was the Commander of President Lahoud's security detail and therefore by Lebanese Law, had nothing to do with issues related to crime scene investigation.” Hamdan denied these allegations. The two Syrian witnesses (Hutham Hutham and Mohammad Zuhair Siddiq) told the commission that they worked for the Syrian intelligence services in Lebanon, adding that high-ranking Lebanese and Syrian officials decided to assassinate Hariri two weeks after the issuance of UN Security Council Resolution 1559 in September 2004. Siddiq also said that he saw the Mitsubishi van that was used in the crime in a Syrian base in Hammana, after it was booby-trapped in al-Zibdani military base in Syria. He added that the vehicle entered Lebanon through the military lane on January 21, 2005.
- The witness also said that members of Ahmad Jibril's brigade played a role in the assassination, along with Major General Jamil as-Sayyed, Major General Ali al-Hajj, Brigadier Mustafa Hamdan, Brigadier Raymond Azar, Brigadier Rustom Ghazaleh and Deputy Nasser Qandil. The witness' testimony meant that a large number of people knew about the assassination but remained silent about it; consequently, his testimony was an object of suspicion for many observers.

- ⊙ Investigations did not confirm that Ahmad Abu Adass (who appeared in a video recording and claimed to have assassinated Hariri) was the one who drove the truck but said that he was a fundamentalist Muslim, who left his house on January 16, 2005 and disappeared in Syria.
- ⊙ The report also highlighted telephone calls via mobile phones and prepaid cards. Relevant people who made many phone calls before and after the crime were considered involved, in particular the accused Ahmad Abdel-A'al from the pro-Syrian Islamic Ahabash Organization.
- ⊙ The commission requested interviews with 6 Syrian security officers outside Syria, which created a crisis that ended with sending those officers to Austria for interrogation.
- ⊙ The report said corruption and money laundering, mainly in Al-Madina Bank scandal, have incited some people to commit the assassination.

The Change: from Mehlis to Brammertz and the Assassination of Gibran Tueni

Mehlis' investigations arrived to a point where accusing Syria of the crime became inevitable and enriched with statements of Syrian witnesses and Lebanese politicians. However, many doubted the integrity of those witnesses. Investigator Serge Brammertz succeeded Mehlis, who, according to Prime Minister Fouad Sanioura, "returned to his country to be next to his wife". On December 12, 2005, Deputy Gibran Tueni was assassinated and the Lebanese government addressed a letter to the secretary general, calling for the creation of a court of an international character to try those found guilty in Hariri's assassination and to extend the international investigation to reach all terrorist attacks that shook the country since October 1, 2004 (the date of the attempted assassination against Minister Marwan Hamadeh). The Security Council convened and issued Resolution 1644 dated December 15, 2005, which extended the commission's term to June 15, 2006.

Brammertz: Four Reports and an Extension to June 2007

Serge Brammertz, of Belgium nationality and who serves as a general prosecutor at the International Criminal Court, submitted four reports from January 2006 till December

13, 2006. The reports disregarded evidence submitted by Mehlis because either he reached more serious evidence or due to his doubt in the facts presented by his predecessor. The first report was submitted on March 15, 2006, the second on June 10, 2006, the third on September 25, 2006 and the fourth on December 12, 2006. When Brammertz succeeded to Mehlis, the commission's members raised to 179 people, or an increase of 49%.

The fourth report included:

- ⊙ Re-inspecting the crime scene after parts of the vehicle was found.
- ⊙ The Syrian cooperation was "satisfactory". "The level of assistance provided by Syria during the reporting period remains generally satisfactory," according to Paragraph 101. Moreover, paragraph 59 of the fourth report stated that "apparently obvious motives were used by the perpetrators as a convenient cover, with the real intent being to propel other individuals into the frontline of accusation."
- ⊙ The commission did not rule out the involvement of Abu Adass in the assassination.
- ⊙ The commission said an 1,800 Kilogram bomb was placed aboveground but its content is yet to be identified. It presented two hypotheses.
- ⊙ "Of the three electronic counter-measure devices in the convoy of Rafik Hariri, two were found to have most probably been operating at the time of the explosion," the fact that canceled former theories about hampering these devices.
- ⊙ The commission nearly identified the person who perpetrated the crime and said that "the individual did not spend his youth in Lebanon, but was situated there in the last two to three months before his death."
- ⊙ There are "some states" that presented "late or incomplete responses or have not responded at all." However, the commission did not specify those countries: is it France? Israel? Brazil? Russia? Other?
- ⊙ Investigations into the 14 cases (explosions and assassinations) showed connections between each of them and Hariri's assassination but did not specify how it reached this conclusion.

- ⦿ Paragraph 96 said the commission transmitted to the Prosecutor General and the Investigative Judge an analytical report on the credibility of a witness, adding that this “process is of particular importance where the information is relevant to individuals who are detained.” It also said that the commission “may assist the Lebanese authorities in taking any steps they deem appropriate or necessary in relation to detention.” This paragraph suspects the integrity of witness Mohammad Zuhair Siddiq, according to which the four former security officials were arrested. Consequently, many observers believe that the Lebanese judiciary should take this paragraph into account and either release them or reveal evidence that explains their arrest. Although Brammertz noted a progress in the investigations, he did not determine the reasons behind killing Hariri. He presented the following presumptions that Hariri was killed:
- for his relations with other regional or western countries
 - for his stand regarding Security Council Resolution 1559
 - due to his relation with An-Nahar newspaper
 - because of Al-Madina Bank scandal and money embezzlement and laundering
 - before his possible victory in the May 2005 elections
 - for his position regarding the extension of President Lahoud's term

Hariri's assassination was a hideous crime after which the Security Council decided to form an international independent commission either due to the weakness of the Lebanese judiciary or because it suspected its neutrality.

The commission's work was extended to June 2007, its members increased from 120 to around 188 employees (the Lebanese government took charge of part of their expenses). The fact-finding mission issued one report and the commission six reports, which included 777 paragraphs. The Lebanese are still waiting for the truth about who killed Hariri and committed the series of assassinations and explosions? They want irrefutable evidence and proof and not political accusations. They are asking simple questions: If Bashar Assad had threatened Hariri, why did he order his killing knowing that he abided by Syria's demand and voted on Lahoud's term extension? Why is France still refusing to handover the key witness, Mohammad Zuhair Siddiq? If the investigation reached an outcome, why was the commission's term extended and it is still presenting hypotheses rather than facts? Why are the names of the accused not revealed before they escape or get killed? Is the investigator waiting for the creation of an international tribunal to reveal everything about the crime, as judicial experts say? Which countries did not cooperate with the investigations?

Security Council Resolutions pertaining to the Assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri

5 resolutions out of 145 in 1 year

Since the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri on February 14, 2005 and until the beginning of 2007, the Security Council issued 5 resolutions pertaining to the crime, while the overall number of resolutions on various international issues within the same period reached 145. The five resolutions are:

- ⦿ Resolution 1559 dated April 7, 2005, which included the creation of an independent international investigation commission, in line with a recommendation of the fact-finding mission to Lebanon in order to help the Lebanese authorities in probing all the aspects of the terrorist act.
- ⦿ Resolution 1636 dated October 31, 2005, which praised the arrest of the four former Lebanese security chiefs, called on Syria to stop interfering in Lebanon's affairs and cooperate with the commission; otherwise, the Security Council threatened to take the adequate measures against Syria.
- ⦿ Resolution 1644, dated December 15, 2005, which extended the term of the international investigation commission until June 15, 2006 and praised the work of Chief Investigator Detlev Mehlis. The resolution endorsed the Lebanese government's demand to create a tribunal of international character and allowed the commission to technically assist the Lebanese government in the investigations into the terrorist attacks that shook Lebanon since October 1, 2004.
- ⦿ Resolution 1664, dated March 29, 2006, which stipulated the adoption of the legal basis for the international tribunal and the preparation of the draft-agreement for its creation and holding negotiations with the Lebanese government in that matter.
- ⦿ Resolution 1686, dated June 15, 2006, which extended the term of the commission to June 15, 2007 and stressed on the commission's technical assistance to the Lebanese authorities in the investigations into the terrorists acts. ●●

The Special Tribunal for Lebanon

Is it constitutionally feasible

The Special Tribunal for Lebanon aims to try all those who are found responsible for the assassination of the former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and others and for the attacks which occurred in Lebanon between October 1, 2004 and December 12, 2005 or any later date. The Lebanese leaders claim that they agree on the creation of this tribunal but have different opinions about its statute and the constitutional mechanisms for its adoption. Disagreements over its constitutionality further escalated with the absence of the higher constitutional council.

Formation of the Tribunal

The court will consist of a pre-trial judge; a Trial Chamber comprising two international judges and one Lebanese judge; an Appeals Chamber comprising three international judges and two Lebanese judges; two alternate judges, one of whom will be Lebanese and the other will be an international judge; a prosecutor and a deputy prosecutor. The United Nations secretary general appoints the international and Lebanese judges. The Lebanese judges are chosen from a list of 12 judges. The list is submitted by the Lebanese government based on the proposals of the Higher Judicial Council. No article in the tribunal's statute restricts the appointment of a judge of any nationality, which raised concerns among many Lebanese.

1- Problem:

This mechanism restricts the appointment of judges to the secretary general and his team. The opposition says that after the experience with Detlev Mehlis, it has concerns over the independence of the commission. Moreover, the Lebanese judges in the court will not play a key role, as decisions are issued with a majority vote and the international judges form this majority.

Financing the Tribunal

The court's expenses are financed as follows:

- ⦿ 51% of expenses are covered by countries' voluntarily contributions
- ⦿ 49% of expenses are covered by the Lebanese government.

2- Problem:

The amount of these expenses has not been determined yet pending the choice of the tribunal's headquarters. For example, if the tribunal is based in Cyprus, the expenses will be less than if it is based in Belgium or Switzerland. Moreover, the period of the tribunal represents a factor in determining these expenses. Preliminary assessments estimated the tribunal's expenses for a two-year period between 300-500 million USD.

Duration of the Tribunal

The period set by the agreement is three years following which the Lebanese government and the Security Council present what has been achieved and may decide to extend the period.

3- Problem:

The opposition regards this as an open ended commitment and insists on a blocking third in the cabinet.

Applicable Laws

According to the tribunal's statute, the following laws will be applicable to the prosecution and punishment of the accused:

- ⦿ The provisions of the Lebanese Criminal Code pertaining to "the prosecution and punishment of acts of terrorism, crimes and offenses against life and personal integrity, illicit associations and failure to report crimes and offences, including the rules regarding the material elements of a crime, criminal participation and conspiracy."
- ⦿ Articles 6 and 7 of the Lebanese Law of January 11, 1958 on "increasing the penalties for sedition, civil war and interfaith struggle." (Article 6 states: "Each terrorist act is punished by life imprisonment with hard labor and by capital punishment if the terrorist act led to the killing of an individual or to the total or partial destruction of a public building, an industrial company, or a ship or any other buildings or to the hampering of means of communication and transportation." Article 7 states: "Is sentenced with life imprisonment with hard labor he who commits a conspiracy in an attempt to perpetrate one of the crimes mentioned in the previous articles").

The judges consult in their work the Lebanese Criminal Law and relevant international laws.

The Priority of the Special Tribunal

Article 4 of the statute states: “the Tribunal shall have primacy over the national courts of Lebanon”. It also states that “the national authority in question shall defer to the competence of the tribunal and refer to the Tribunal the results of the investigation and a copy of the court’s records, if any, and persons detained in connection with any such case shall be transferred to the custody of the tribunal.”

4- Problem:

This article [Article 4] cancels the role of the judicial authority in this crime, which would require a constitutional amendment since the Lebanese Constitution states that the judiciary is the third power which role cannot be canceled by any law.

Article 5 went on to say that “no person shall be tried before a national court of Lebanon for acts for which he or she has already been tried by the Special Tribunal,” while it added that “a person who has been tried by a national court may be subsequently tried by the Special Tribunal.”

Furthermore, Article 6 cancels the “amnesty granted to any person for any crime falling within the jurisdiction of the Special Tribunal”. However, canceling the particular pardon granted by the president and the general amnesty granted by Parliament would mean canceling constitutional articles and might represent a precedent for cancelling other articles.

Superior and Subordinate Relationships

Determining the criminal responsibility for Hariri’s assassination and later crimes constitute a controversial issue, particularly in light of the superior-subordinate relations as some fear that this issue would be used to accuse presidents of states (in particular Lebanese President Emile Lahoud and Syrian President Bashar Assad).

5- Problem:

Paragraph 2 of the Statute’s article 3 states: “With respect to superior and subordinate relationships, a superior shall be criminally responsible for any of the crimes set forth in article 2 of this Statute committed by subordinates under his or her effective authority and control, as a result of his and her failure to exercise control properly over such subordinates, where: (a) the superior either knew or consciously disregarded information that clearly indicated that the subordinates were committing or about to commit such crimes; (b) the crimes concerned activities that were within the effective responsibility and control of the

superior; and (c) the superior failed to take all necessary and reasonable measures within his or her power to prevent or repress their commission or to submit the matter to the competent authorities for investigation and prosecution”. In light of this text, is the responsibility limited to officials or does it extend to heads of states? Why did the authors highlighted this point, considering that the penal code holds accessories to the murder accountable.

Penalties and Imprisonment

The Statute states that the Tribunal “shall impose upon a convicted person imprisonment for life or for a specified number of years”. It added that the convicted is imprisoned in a country chosen by the head of the special tribunal from a list of countries which expressed their readiness to receive the people convicted by the court”.

6- Problem:

What happens in case countries which are enemies of the convicted people express their readiness to receive the prisoners?

The majority of the Lebanese support the creation of an international tribunal to try the assassins of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and the perpetrators of the later crimes.

However, what about the “problems” which have not been discussed despite all the confusion about this tribunal and the possibility of using it for political purposes in the conflicts of states and regimes?

How will the society and the future generations deal with the “truth” in a county that “chose” not to prosecute war criminals (except for few selected ones) due to the Amnesty law and in a country that does not know how thousands of people disappeared at militias’ checkpoints?

A large number of psychologists and social experts believe that Lebanon needs a long and intensive process of reconciliation and forgiveness, starting with its complicated history and the civil war which is apparently not over yet.

Remarks on the Agreement Published in the Official Gazette

The government issued the agreement of the international tribunal in the annex No. 59 of the Official Gazette on December 14, 2006. The annex contained the text in three languages: Arabic, French and English. The texts are copies of the original form issued by the Security Council and published on the United Nations' Website under the title of: "Agreement between the United Nations and the Lebanese Republic on the Establishment of a Special Tribunal for Lebanon".

1- Remarks on Printing Errors

Neither the government nor the official gazette proofread the texts. Consequently, several mistakes were found, in particular in the Arabic text. For example, Article 1 of the Arabic text states: "A special tribunal is established by this," without mentioning the word "agreement". While the English text states: "There is hereby established a Special Tribunal for Lebanon..."

Article 21 of the same text misspelled the word "tribunal" (Mahkama) and wrote (Hikma), which means "wisdom".

Moreover, Paragraph (a) of Article 2 in the Arabic text did not nunnate the word "Qadin", (which means judge) but wrote "Qadi".

These mistakes indicate that either the person who reviewed the text did not find any mistakes in it or that he did not read it at all and sent it directly to the official gazette.

As to the content of the agreement, *li Monthly* will not tackle questions raised by many legal experts* but will only discuss the issue of general amnesty, which is rendered invalid in the agreement.

2- Remarks on a Major Constitutional Faux-pas

Article 16 of the Agreement states: "The Government undertakes not to grant amnesty to any person for any crime falling within the jurisdiction of the Special Tribunal. An amnesty already granted in respect of any such persons and crimes shall not be a bar to prosecution". This article contradicts Paragraph 9 of Article 53 of the Lebanese Constitution, which states that the President "grants particular pardons by Decree, but a general amnesty cannot be granted except by a law". Consequently, the general amnesty is stipulated in the Constitution. Even if the Lebanese Constitution was amended and the general amnesty was canceled crimes pertaining to the Tribunal, Article 16 remains unconstitutional for several reasons:

- 1- The issuance of a general amnesty does not fall within the competence of the government. It is granted through a law passed by Parliament and issued by the President, in line with Article 56 of the Constitution which states: "The President of the Republic promulgates the laws which have been adopted within one month of their transmission to the Government. He must promulgate laws that were declared urgent by a special Decision of the Chamber within five days". Consequently, the government cannot pledge not to grant a general amnesty as it already does not have this competence.
- 2- Article 16 of the Agreement states "an amnesty...shall not be a bar to prosecution," which contradicts Paragraph 9 of Article 53 of the Constitution. Consequently, the Parliament, which will pass the Agreement of the Special Tribunal, will not be able to pass an amnesty law for a person who might be convicted arbitrarily and without any evidence for a crime that was committed on the Lebanese territories.

Art□

A quick look on the agreement highlights simple printing errors, which the government failed to correct, while a deeper study shows that some articles have violated the constitution and hence, should be amended. ●

*R□

Lebanon Confessions:

37.2% Christians and 62.8% Muslims

In the absence of official and accurate figures on the distribution of the Lebanese population based on their confessional affiliations, **Information International** has prepared this article in an attempt to specify the number of Lebanese people, registered and residents by confessions.

Population

A census of the Lebanese population remains a difficult task to achieve, due to the country's confessional structure and the allocation of key political and bureaucratic functions (presidents, number of deputies, number of ministers and number of directors), on confessional basis. The only official census in Lebanon, conducted in 1932 during the French Mandate, excluded certain regions in A'akkar and the South. Since then, newborn infants are added to the figures and deceased are cancelled. During the past three years, there were 72,000 births compared to 18,000 deaths, an increase of 54,000 individual per year.

Registered and Residents

While the total number of registered Lebanese is estimated at around 4.5 million, the number of Lebanese residents is estimated at 3.7 million. This is due to the massive emigration witnessed in Lebanon during the past century for economic reasons. Emigration reached its peak in the civil war, as well as over the past few years.


Confessional Distribution of the Lebanese

The Lebanese population is divided into 18 legally acknowledged confessions as follows:

- ⦿ **The Christian Confessions:** Maronites, Greek Catholics, Greek Orthodox, Armenian Catholics, Armenian Orthodox, Syriac Orthodox, Syriac Catholics, Assyrian Orthodox, Chaldean, Latin, Evangelists and Copt Orthodox.
- ⦿ **The Muslim Confessions:** Sunni, Shia'a, Druze, A'alawi and Isma'a'eli.
- ⦿ **The Israeli Confession**

Table no. 1 shows the distribution of the Lebanese people by confession.

Lebanon is Lebanese... Numbers don't matter.
2007



Distribution of Lebanese by Confession **Table 1**

Confession	Number of Registered Lebanese	%	Number Lebanese Residents	%
Maronite	1.000.000	22.3%	800,000	21.6%
Greek Orthodox	350,000	7.8%	280,000	7.5%
Greek Catholics	230,000	5.1%	160,000	4.3%
Armenian Orthodox	120,000	2.7%	75,000	2%
Armenian Catholics	30,000	0.6%	12,000	0.3%
Syriac Orthodox	22,000	0.5%	16,000	0.4%
Syriac Catholics	15,000	0.3%	10,000	0.2%
Assyrian Orthodox	3,200	0.07%	1,800	0.04%
Chaldean	4,300	0.09%	3,000	0.08%
Latin	18,000	0.4%	7,000	0.2%
Evangelist	25,500	0.5%	9,800	0.2%
Copt Orthodox	120	-	40	-
Sunni	1.170.000	26%	1.020.000	27.6%
Shia'a	1.200.000	26.7%	1.050.000	28.4%
Druze	260,000	5.8%	230,000	6.2%
A'alawi	32,000	0.7%	22,000	0.6%
Isma'a'eli	-	-	-	-
Israeli	8,350	0.2%	15	-
Total	4.488.470		3.696.655	

Source: Compiled by Information International from different sources

According to Table No.1, while the Christians constitute 37.2% of the residents in Lebanon and 40.5% of the registered Lebanese, the Muslims constitute 62.8% and 59.5% respectively.

It is worth noting, that while the Lebanese are now polarized, many of them look forward to the day when the structural impediments to statehood, imposed by Lebanon's political and religious leaders, under the patronage of various historical and current foreign influences, are removed.

Parliamentary By-elections in Matn: An Important Indicator

With the assassination of Minister of Industry and Deputy Pierre Al-Gemayel on November 21, 2006 a parliamentary seat became vacant, which necessitates the election of a new deputy for the Maronite seat in Mount Lebanon's second district.

Elections According to the Constitution

Article 41 of the Lebanese Constitution stipulates that "should a seat in the Chamber become vacant, the election of a successor begins within two months. The mandate of the new member does not exceed that of the old member whose place he is taking; however, should the seat in the Chamber become vacant during the last six months of its mandate, no successor may be elected." According to the aforementioned text, the by-elections should have been held before January, 20, 2007 and preceded by the issuance of a ministerial decree calling on electoral committees in Matn area to prepare for the elections and setting a date for them. The electoral committees should meet after a minimum of 30 days from the date of the issuance of the decree. Based on the decree, the Minister of Interior and Municipalities issues a decision to divide and determine the location of polling centers. (Cabinet issued a decree stipulating the holding of the by-elections on January 14, but President Emile Lahoud refused to sign it).

The Voters and their Distribution

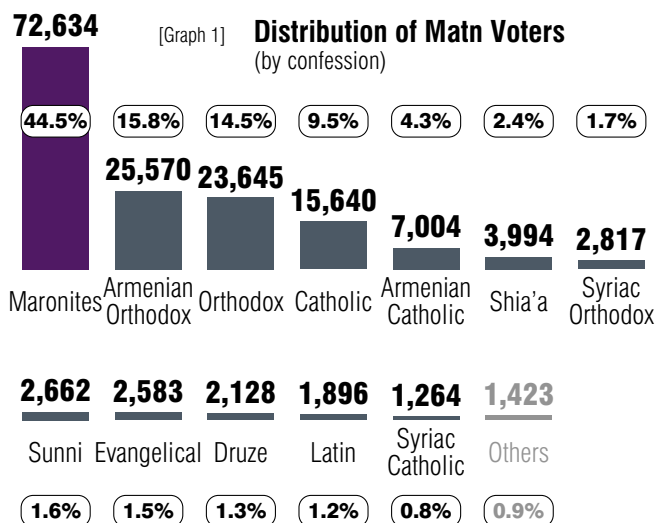
According to the 2005 voter lists, the number of voters reached 163,260, 72,311 of whom cast their votes. Voters are distributed by confessions as follows in graph 1.

In the 2005 parliamentary elections, the list supported by Deputy Michel Aoun won seven seats (3 for the Maronite, 2 for the Greek Orthodox, one for the Armenian Orthodox and one for the Greek Catholic). The eighth seat (Maronite) remained empty and was filled by Deputy Pierre Al-Gemayel. However, a big difference was noted in the number of votes, as the first winner in the list (Deputy Ibrahim Kenaan) received 56,840 votes and the last one (Michel Al-Murr) won 48,662 votes, while Pierre Al-Gemayel received 29,421 votes, or a difference of 19,241 votes.

Possibilities

There are two possibilities in the coming by-elections:

1- The Phalange Party would present its candidate, who might be former President Amin Al-Gemayel, the party's higher president. Al-Gemayel would win uncontested, as the party considers this parliamentary seat as its property. (Maurice Al-Gemayel occupied this



seat from 1960 till 1970; Amin Al-Gemayel from 1970 till 1982; and Pierre Al-Gemayel from 2000 till 2006).

2- The Phalange Party would present its candidate who would be opposed by another candidate from the Free Patriotic Movement; hence, an electoral battle would take place, such as the battle that occurred in Matn in 2002 following the death of Deputy Albert Mkheiber. Those elections, which saw Gabriel Al-Murr competing with his niece Mirna Al-Murr, resulted in the victory of Gabriel Al-Murr. However, the Constitutional Council cancelled the electoral victory of Gabriel Al-Murr, who won 34,760 votes and announced the victory of Ghassan Mkheiber, who received 1,773 votes.

Today, the Constitutional Council is hampered. Based on the 2005 elections, the candidate of the Free Patriotic Movement and its allies (the Syrian Social Nationalist Party and Michel Al-Murr) will achieve victory, unless the Matn voters have changed their political stands and voted for the Phalange Party and its allies (Qornet Shehwan, Nassib Lahoud, the National Liberal Party), which would open the doors of the presidency to Amin Al-Gemayel and decrease General Michel Aoun's chances to replace the current president. Accordingly, the Matn parliamentary by-elections will give the Lebanese the first hint about the identity of the new president. 🗳️

Lebanese Schools in Confessional Vortex: On Veil and School Weekends

Ten years ago France was engulfed in a national debate on the display of religious symbols in schools, particularly the wearing of the veil. Some school administrations requested that female students remove their veils inside the classes, or risk expulsion, resulting in a number of Muslim girls choosing to leave their academic establishments. As a result of the prolonged debate, the French Parliament issued a law prohibiting the display of all religious symbols in public schools, in accordance with the principle of secularism stipulated by the French constitution. Some argued at the time that France ought to follow the example of Lebanon, which supposedly does not face this problem, despite harboring a multitude of different sects. However this description of the Lebanese educational system is not entirely accurate. Issues such as wearing the veil and which weekdays should be days of rest have been receiving increasing attention following a series of demonstrations held, statements made, and opposing policies issued by different schools.

On the Constitutional Level

Article 10 of the Lebanese Constitution stipulates that “Education is free insofar as it is not contrary to public order and morals and does not interfere with the dignity of any of the religions or creeds. There shall be no violation of the right of religious communities to have their own schools provided they follow the general rules issued by the state regulating public instruction.” In addition, Article 9 stipulates that “There shall be absolute freedom of conscience. The state in rendering homage to the Most High shall respect all religions and creeds and guarantees, under its protection, the free exercise of all religious rites provided that public order is not disturbed. It also guarantees that the personal status and religious interests of the population, to whatever religious sect they belong, is respected.”

The constitution guarantees complete freedom for its citizens to practice their beliefs without any conditions except for those that disrupt the public order. Reality seems otherwise.

The Veil

Lebanese public schools, as well as most private schools, accept veiled and unveiled students alike in their establishments, without any discrimination. This provides

the students with a chance to interact, regardless of whether they are veiled or not. However over the course of the past five years, as the number of veiled girls increased, some private schools started rejecting them, or forcing them to remove their veils before they entered the school campus. Some of the girls accepted the schools’ rules while others refused to comply, preferring to change school. The government did not interfere despite receiving complaints from the parents on the school administrations’ new rules (6 schools in total). Separately, some private schools of Islamic orientation began forcing their students to wear the veil upon reaching the age of puberty, threatening the girls with expulsion would they not comply. Once again the government chose not to interfere, and the victims were the parents and the students who were forced to go against their convictions or change schools.

School Holidays

Weekends differ from one school to another. Most of the public schools, and the Islamic schools, observe Fridays and Sundays as the official days of rest, while most of the private Catholic schools take Saturdays and Sundays off.

Nevertheless, a large number of educational councils and students began organizing demonstrations demanding that Saturdays and Sundays be the official national weekend, so that they could improve their time management. An argument put forth was that working on Fridays does not go against the Islamic beliefs.

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education decreed that the weekends were to be agreed upon by the teachers, the school administrations, and the religious authorities of the school area. This has resulted in extensive interference by both religious and political parties in school management matters, which has not always been in the best interest of the students or teachers. Thus this issue is still a matter of conflict between the relevant parties, and remains unresolved.

The inconsistent banning of the veil across educational institutions and the ongoing dispute over which days ought to constitute the weekend are but some of the symptoms of the confessional issue which plagues Lebanon’s educational sector. Unfortunately this is occurring despite efforts made to isolate the sector from this fundamental problem which burdened the country for decades. ●●

Official Exams: The South at the Top and Public Schools Ranked Well

Lebanon witnessed in 2006 several political and security tensions, which reached its peak with Israel's July-August war. After the war broke out, some people believed that the second round of official exams would be canceled and that all students would receive certificates and would pass the academic year. However, the government and officials concerned with the education sector voiced their determination to hold the exams instead of resorting to certifications in order to preserve the reputation and the level of the country's educational sector.

The exams were finally held; some students passed while others failed, but Lebanon's education and culture were at the top of the winners and for the second consecutive year, the country was able to overcome major challenges.

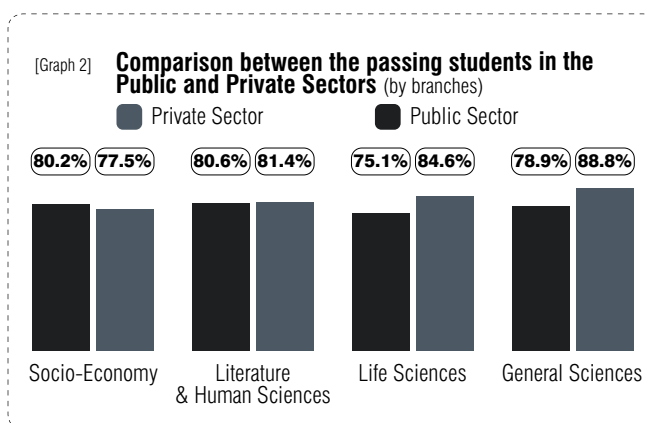
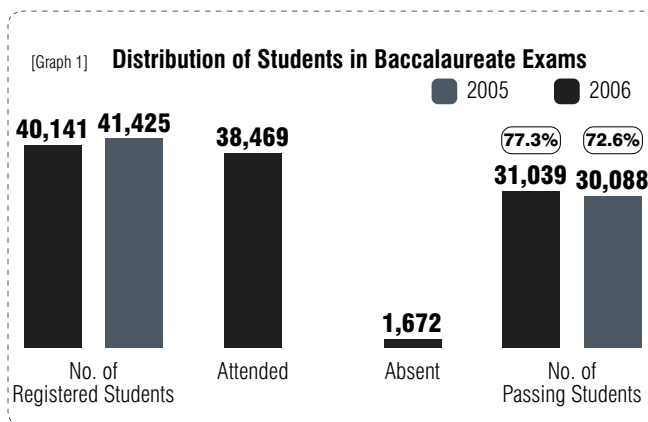
Baccalaureate Exams

According to graph 1, 40,141 students registered for the Baccalaureate exams in the four branches (against 41,425 students last year). 1,672 did not show up on the date of the exams, while 38,469 attended, 29,400 of whom passed in the first round and 1,639 in the second round, or the total of 31,039 students and the rate of 77.3% (against 30,088 students and a rate of 72.6% last year).

Table no. 1 in the following page illustrates the distribution of students who registered, attended and passed the exams by branch and Mohafaza.

Accordingly the following can be concluded:

- The Socioeconomic branch recorded the largest number of candidates (18,553 students) while the Literature and Human Sciences branch recorded the lowest rate of participants (4,211 students), or the same classification of last year's results.
- The Mohafaza of the South scored the highest rate of passing students in three branches, while the passing rate in the Literature and Human Sciences branch was approximately the same as that of Nabatiyeh, as it recorded 81% against 82.5% in Nabatiyeh.
- The rates of passing in both the general sciences' branch (81.4%) and life sciences' branch (81.1%) were almost the same. The passing rates of the branches of Socio-economy (74.4%) and Literature and Human Sciences (74%) increased and were almost similar.



Graph 2 compares the results of passing students in the public and private sectors in several branches.

However, last year, the private educational sector recorded the highest passing rates in all the four branches.

Brevet candidates reached 61,767 students (against 61,439 students last year), 60,444 students of whom participated in the first round, while 1,323 were absent and 40,786 students passed. In the second round of exams, candidates reached 14,679 students, 5,424 of whom passed. Consequently, the total number of passing students reached 46,210 students or 74.8% (against 48,127 students or 78.3% last year).

Table no. 2 illustrates the distribution of candidates and passing students by the educational sector and the Mohafaza in the first round.

Distribution of Students who Registered, Attended and Passed the Exams by Branch and Mohafaza												Table 1
Branch	General Sciences			Life Sciences			Socio-economic Sciences			Literature & Human Sciences		
	Candidates	Passing students in the 1 st +2 nd round	Rate	Candidates	Passing students in the 1 st +2 nd round	Rate	Candidates	Passing students in the 1 st +2 nd round	Rate	Candidates	Passing students in the 1 st +2 nd round	Rates
Mohafaza												
Beirut	737	486+34	71%	1,755	1,274+91	77.8%	3,077	2,095+110	71.7%	563	345+24	65.5%
North	1,177	844+34	74.6%	2,269	1,634+93	76.1%	2,810	2,025+58	74.1%	1,098	810+42	77.6%
South	305	209+1	95.4%	1,347	1,120+88	89.7%	2,029	1,655+60	84.5%	382	294+15	81%
Mount Lebanon	1,914	1,608+32	86.1%	4,668	3,620+263	83.2%	7,254	5,106+358	75.3%	1,333	891+77	72.6%
Nabatiyeh	348	298+9	88.2%	756	591+32	82.4%	1,094	796+32	75.7%	246	190+13	82.5%
Beqa'a	340	274+5	82%	1,771	1,303+85	78.4%	2,289	1,460+59	66.4%	589	391+24	70.5%
Total	4,811	3,800+115	81.4%	12,566	9,542+652	81.1%	18,553	13,137+677	74.4%	4,211	2,921+195	74%

Source: The Educational Information Unit at the Educational Center for Research and Development 2006. Brevet Exams (intermediate level)

Distribution of Candidates and Passing Students by the Educational Sector and the Mohafaza in the First Round													Table 2
Mohafaza	Public Education				Private Education				Independent Students				
	Candidates	Attendents	Passing students	Rate	Candidates	Attendents	Passing students	Rate	Candidates	Attendents	Passing students	Rate	
Beirut	1,983	1,973	1,107	56.1%	4,286	4,194	3,315	79%	469	336	56	16.7%	
North	6,058	6,022	3,695	61.4%	5,703	5,602	4,160	74.3%	461	359	28	7.8%	
South	3,173	3,165	1,921	60.7%	4,632	4,592	3,078	67%	507	442	42	9.5%	
Mount Lebanon	5,357	5,330	3,204	60.1%	16,113	15,824	12,173	77%	530	402	103	25.6%	
Nabatiyeh	2,087	2,074	1,295	62.4%	1,817	1,779	1,520	85.4%	262	216	33	15.3%	
Beqa'a	3,281	3,247	1,506	46.4%	4,607	4,557	3,500	76.8%	441	330	50	15.1%	
Total	21,939	21,811	12,728	58.4%	37,158	36,548	27,746	76%	2,670	2,085	312	15%	

Source: The Educational Information Unit at the Educational Center for Research and Development 2006

According to table no. 2, the following can be concluded:

The passing rate in the private sector increased, reaching 75.9% against 58.3% in the public sector. This difference is mainly highlighted in the Beqa'a, Beirut and Nabatiyeh.

Mount Lebanon recorded the highest passing rate which reached 77.5%; while the Beqa'a recorded the lowest passing rate (69%) and the North recorded 76.9%, Nabatiyeh (75.6%), Beirut (74.5%) and the South (70.1%).

In conclusion, some numbers and rates are worth stopping at:

- ⊙ The private sector scored excellent results in the Brevet exams, while the public sector achieved a success and almost the same results in the exams of the socio-economic and human sciences branches, which confirms the good level of the public educational sector.
- ⊙ The South rated first in the results of baccalaureate exams but last in the Brevet exams.
- ⊙ A decrease in the number of students in the baccalaureate exams by 1,284 students compared to last year, while the number of Brevet students only increased by 328 students.
- ⊙ The passing rate in the Baccalaureate exams increased while that of the Brevet decreased compared to last year's results. ●●

Jouret El-Ballout

Connecting Lebanon To The World

Etymology

The village of "Jouret El-Ballout" owes its name to its geographical position in a pit – a low point surrounded by mountains- ("Joura" in Familiar Arabic). It is also surrounded by tall pine and oak trees bearing acorns ("Ballout" in Arabic). Therefore, the name is a description of the village: The Pit of Acorns.

Location

Jouret El-Ballout, situated 20 km east of Beirut, covers an area of 169 hectares in the Qada'a of the Northern Metn, in the Mohafaza of Mount Lebanon. It is bordered by Nabay from the North, Deir Mar Cha'aya from the East, Broummana from the south and Kannaba Broummana from the west. It stands at an altitude of 640 m above sea level and can be reached via 2 different routes:

Mkalles - Beit Merry - Broumanna - Jouret El-Ballout
or Antelias - Deir As-Salib - Nabay - Jouret El-Ballout

Population

The registered population of Jouret El-Ballout is 1,200 people, although the number of residents does not exceed 700. The village counts around 170 houses.

The population is distributed among the following confessions:
Maronite 72 % - Orthodox 18 % - Catholic 6 % - Others 4 %

Voters

There were 713 registered voters in the village in 2004, distributed among the main families as follows:

Abou Jaoudeh: 410 voters	Tadros: 52 voters	Bchara: 23 voters
Al Hajj: 90 voters	Njeim: 50 voters	

Other local families include: Aznavourian, Khoury, Al Sayegh, Shamaoun, Mousalli, Wasaf, Awwad, Al Zinati, Jibrael, Semaan, Cha'aya.

Local Authorities

The village has no municipality, but instead, a mayor and an elective council made up of three members.

Educational and Social Institutions

A public school was founded in the village in 1946, but it closed in 1966.

Today, there are two private schools in Jouret El-Ballout:

- ⦿ Collège Louise Wegmann, with almost 780 students
- ⦿ Valley International School, with 200 Students

In addition to this, there is the "Haniba'al" sports club in the village, but it is currently inactive.

Archeological and Cultural Sites

Despite the relatively recent inception of the village, remains of several stone and earthen sarcophagi have been found there. The region of A'aranta in Jouret El-Ballout is in fact well-known for its archeological wealth: remains of an old fortress were discovered, as well as some Phoenicians and Romanian tombs. Excavation works also showed that wood blast furnaces going back to the Phoenician era existed on this site.

Economic Activities

Local economic life is based mainly on employment and certain tourist activities, given the village's proximity to Broummana. In total, there are around 25 commercial establishments in the village.

Although Jouret El-Ballout remains unknown to many Lebanese, the village plays a crucial role in connecting Lebanon to the world, due to its Satellite Station which has been active since 1987.



Jouret Et-Termos

Known for its Ancient Baths

Etymology

Until the end of the eighteenth century, the land known today as “Jouret et-Termos” was an arable land for the residents of Kfour. A part of the land was planted by habb el-termos (lupine), so the town was called “Jouret et-Termos” (cavity of lupine). Some people also believe that the name stems from the word “thermos” which means a vacuum that preserves temperature, referring to the presence of ancient baths in the town.

Location

“Jouret et-Termos” is situated in the region of Ftouh in Kesrouan al-Ftouh in the Mount Lebanon governorate. The town extends over an area of 112 hectares and is 40 kilometers away from Beirut. It stands at an altitude of 1,010 meters above sea level. Jouret el-Termos can be reached through the following road: Chahtoul- Ghineh- Jouret Bedran- Jouret et-Termos.

Population

The population of Jouret et-Termos is around 1,200 people, including 500 permanent residents while the others spend only the summer in the town. There are 275 houses in the town which is occupied by a majority of Maronite residents.

Voters

The number of voters registered in 2004 was 468, distributed among the following families:

There are also 5 members from the families of Mansour, Al-Shwairi and Al-Daou.

Local Authorities

The village of Jouret et-Termos has a municipal council of nine members, currently presided by Roger Qorqumaz. The village also has a mayoral council formed of three members and a mayor, Louis Neamtallah Lteif, who was elected in 1998.

Educational and Social Institutions

Qorqumaz	296 voters	Chelala	22 voters
Daccach	26 voters	Nader	29 voters
Rustom	11 voters	Dahdah	15 voters
Lteif	64 voters		

A t□

Archeological and Cultural Sites

Water pipes made of pottery were found in the villages, in addition to ancient baths.

Economic Activities

Economic activities in the town are based on free professions and employment, in addition to the cultivation of fruits, such as apples, pears, peaches and cherries. The town has wide green areas as well as various kinds of trees, mainly: pine, cypress and oak trees, in addition to several water springs.

Tourism flourishes in the summer as the village has a view on the sea and the mountain. Jouret et-Termos has two hotels: one was established by Toufik Qorqumaz in 1927 and the second, the hotel of Boulos Qorqumaz, founded in 1958. There are three restaurants and some shops where people can find food and basic needs.

Each year on the 8th of September, the village celebrates Eid Saydet al-Najat. 

"History repeats itself"

is a new section
presented by *li*
Monthly starting

with this issue and depicting events and documents from our history as they appeared in letters and dispatches of foreign ambassadors and consuls in Lebanon. In fact, past events and circumstances are often similar to our current situation except for names and places. The essence is the same: foreign tutelage, Lebanese *zua'ama* (leaders) who strive to fulfill personal ambitions under confessional and national slogans and corruption of power at the expense of the people.

Part 1: The situation in Lebanon in 1860 which paved the way for the creation of the Mutasarifia system.

Inclosure 1 in No. 1

Consul-General Moore⁽¹⁾ to Sir H. Bulwer⁽²⁾.

Beyrout, June 26, 1860.

Sir,

In continuation of my dispatch of the 23rd instant, I have the honour to report that, upon the apprehension, that day, of the supposed murderer of the Mahometan, the excitement of the Mahometan populace redoubled. They assumed an insubordinate and arrogant attitude towards the local authorities, delivered their ultimatum that they would not bury their murdered co-religionist until the Christian had been executed, and that, unless that were done by sunset, they would themselves avenge the death of the Mahometan. The authorities met these threats with servile compliance and truckling, notwithstanding the presence of Turkish military and naval forces more than adequate to make their authority and the law respected. In fact, the city was under mob-law. Meantime the trial of the accused was being proceeded with, and ended by his so-called conviction and condemnation to death. The man had been apprehended, tried, and condemned to suffer death all within two hours, and under the influence of excitement and fear of the populace. Now came the difficult part of the question. The sentence required the confirmation of the Mushir before it could be executed. Khorsheed Pasha was absent at Deir-el-Kamar, and it would take three days before his sanction could be obtained. The Acting Governor and Ismail Pasha, in their perplexity, came to my office, where all my colleagues were assembled. The Acting Governor stated the case, said the safety of the town depended upon the immediate execution of the sentence, and asked for our sanction thereto. This we of course declined to give, but told him that we considered that he had full powers vested in the Mushir and delegated to him, and that he should act as the Mushir would or could have done had he been present. Ismail Pasha said he was prepared to call out the military and bombard the town, but that that course would precipitate the crisis, and destroy Moslem and Christian alike.

These functions then left us, and the execution took place about an hour after sunset, the accused, to the last, declaring his innocence.

During the height of the Mahometan excitement, several Christians received severe blows with sticks, others were knocked down. One is seriously wounded in the head by the blow of heavy instrument. M. Bentivoglio, on going to the Serai to see the dead body of the murdered man, had a

sword flourished in his face by one of the near relatives of the deceased. One Englishman had a pistol snapped at him by a Mahometan; and another, an officer of the "Exmouth," had a pistol presented at him in the streets. A third Englishman was insulted.

On the following day, Sunday, the British and French Vice-Consuls at Sidon sent to my French colleagues and myself the most alarming accounts of an intended combined attack by Druses and Moslems of the town upon the defenceless Christians who had taken refuge at Sidon, in the French khan there, and that the "Sentinelle" had landed thirty-five men and a field-piece on an islet in the port of Sidon, as a temporary protection to French residents until the succour demanded from Beyrout should arrive. Immediately on receipt of this intelligence, Her Majesty's ship "Gannet" and "Mohawk," and the "Zenobie" frigate, left for Sidon. Later in the day, at our representations, the Turkish line-of-battle ship proceeded to Sidon with 400 troops under Aziz Pasha. Khorsheed Pasha also repaired there on the following day from Deir-el-Kamar; and by these timely measures tranquility was maintained.

The "Mohawk" returned yesterday, bringing 600 more Christian fugitives, half of them women and children from Deir-el-Kamar, and the other half from Tyre and Sidon, in addition to the 1,700 previously conveyed. Some hundreds more are waiting at the mouth of the Damour to be brought away, and Her Majesty's ship "Mohawk" is to perform that service to-morrow.

It would be difficult to describe to your Excellency the intense panic that has seized the Christians of Beyrout. They have acquired the conviction that the fate of the population of Deir-el-Kamar awaits them at the hands of the Turkish authorities and troops, the Moslems of the town, and the Druses. The arrival of troops under Ismail Pasha, the news from Sidon, the bearing of the Mahometans detailed above, the bands of armed Druses who are permitted by the authorities to promenade the streets, in spite of all our representations have raised the panic to such a pitch that numbers of Christians, comprising leading merchants and tradespeople, are departing for Malta or Alexandria. About 200 leave to-day, and hundreds more are preparing to follow. As to commerce, it is completely paralysed; the representatives of the wealth and industry for this so lately flourishing city are quitting it. Orders for merchandize have been countermanded to the amount of thousands of pounds. Two screw steamers arriving to-day from Liverpool will not land their cargoes, but take them back to Malta, and deposit them there. The

treasure of the Ottoman Bank has been embarked on board the “Exmouth” for safety.

The French dispatch-boat “Héron” arrived to-day from the “Piræus.”

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. MOORE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 1.

**Consul-General Moore to Sir H. Bulwer.
Beyrout, June 27, 1860**

(Extract)

Great apprehensions are now entertained of an attack on the Christian districts in the north of Lebanon, commencing by the Kesrouan.

The Metualis, who occupy some villages along the valley of the River Adonis in the district of Djebail, under some instigation, have provoked a serious quarrel with their Christian neighbors, and burnt some houses at Fitri³. The Christians, in retaliation, burnt other houses of the Metualis, and being more numerous, expelled them from that village.

The French frigate “Zenobie” left for Djouni Bay in Kesrouan, and returned yesterday.

The war in the Mountain is still carried on in a desultory manner. The Christians are still assembled under arms at Djouni under Youssef Bey Keram, and the Druses are likewise in a state of preparation, watching the course of events.

The Druse Beys have not replied to my last letters to them, mentioned in No. 39, inasmuch, I presume, as their contents have not been acted upon. Ismail-el-Atrash, the Chief of the Hauran Druses, has answered me in a letter full of professions of devotedness and submission, but written after the attack and capture of Zahlé.

We have addressed a collective letter to the Commander-in-chief at Damascus, and an energetic note to Khorsheed Pasha, on the state of the country. The latter is till absent at Sidon, but by Mr. Abela’s report of yesterday no effectual measures are taken by his Excellency to stop the continued Druse aggressions and attacks in the neighbourhood of that town.

The authorities here have resolved upon checking the emigration of the Christians. Teskerés (passports) are refused, and policemen placed at the landing-places to prevent embarkation. I hear that 800 Christians were to have left to-day for Alexandria and Malta by an English merchant-steamer.

Alarm and excitement prevail in the interior cities and the towns on the coast.

Inclosure 2 in No. 2

**Consul-General Moore to Lord J. Russell
(Received July 14.)
Beyrout, June 28, 1860**

My Lord,

In the rapid succession of startling events, many details have been unavoidably overlooked.

Amongst others I should mention to your Lordship my own position and the duties thereby imposed upon me towards British residents at this place.

It became advisable, owing to the circumstances detailed

in my despatches, that I should be furnished with some means of immediate communication with our men-of-war in case of a sudden emergency at night. Captain Paynter accordingly furnished me with blue lights to burn from my residence, the number of lights burnt indicating the kind of assistance required. Armed boats wait all night at a given spot, and a line of retreat is marked out, taking in the house of my Prussian colleague at his request. A Turkish guard of Regulars, in whom I have but slender confidence, is stationed at my house. We retire to rest at night not knowing what may take place before the morning: that this is all but an intolerable position your Lordship will readily conceive.

The misery and destitution of the Christian refugees have suggested the raising of a fund to relieve them. I intend to contribute a moderate sum in the name of Her Majesty’s Government, which I hope your Lordship will approve of. All my colleagues are prepared to do the same.

Your Lordship will scarcely believe that to this day the Irregulars in the employ of the Local Government are permitted to molest, plunder, and ill-treat the unoffending and panic-stricken Christians of the foot of the Mountain almost within sight of Beyrout. I have made the strongest remonstrance against such shameless conduct on the part of those who should be the protectors and not the spoliators of the Sultan’s peaceable subjects.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. MOORE



⁽¹⁾ Moore: Council General of Great Britain in Beirut

⁽²⁾ Sir Henry Bulwer: Born in 1801, Sir Henry was an English diplomat and author. His father was William Earle Bulwer. Sir Henry was married to Charlotte Mary Wellesley, niece of Duke of Wellington who defeated Napoleon in Waterloo. During the writing of those letters, Sir Henry was ambassador extraordinary to the Ottoman Porte at Constantinople. He retired from his post in 1865.

⁽³⁾ Fitri: a Maronite village in Qada'a Jbeil

Starting with this issue, *Ii Monthly* intends to address the higher education sector in Lebanon. The first institution of higher education to be examined is the Lebanese University, the only public university in Lebanon.

Students of the Lebanese University:

“Merging the Branches is not the only Pressing Problem”

The Lebanese University is a typical public institution, governed by bureaucracy and politics.

Ii Monthly met with students of the Lebanese University, listened to their problems and polled their opinions about the merge of the First and Second branches* into the “Prime Minister Rafik Hariri University Complex” (The Hadath University Complex).

In this issue, *Ii Monthly* introduces the Hadath University Complex (HUC) and the Fanar faculties and addresses logistic problems.

The Lebanese University

According to the Educational Center for Research and Development in 2005, there are 70,065 students registered in the Lebanese University. Table No.1 illustrates the distribution of these students according to faculties and branches.

The Hadath University Complex

Although the choice of the location for the Hadath University Complex dates back to 1964, the project itself

The Distribution of the Students by Faculty and Branch

Table 1

Faculty/Institute	Branch	First	Second	North Lebanon	Beqa'a	South Lebanon	Deanery	Total
Faculty of Literature and Human Sciences		5,133	3,301	4,865	4,055	7031	750	25,135
Faculty of Law, Political and Administrative Sciences		2,733	2,056	1,682	992	1,171	0	8,634
Faculty of Sciences		4,616	3,821	2,265	339	703	55	11,799
Faculty of Business Administration and Economic Sciences		1,825	1,757	665	0	479	32	4,758
Faculty of Information and Documentation		739	705	0	0	0	24	1,468
Faculty of Education		794	962	0	0	0	408	2,164
Faculty of Engineering		729	1,030	502	0	0	50	2,311
Faculty of Social Sciences		1,808	757	1,327	781	1,466	424	6,563
Faculty of Fine Arts		502	614	350	185	0	61	1,712
Faculty of Public Health		419	492	375	359	442	88	2,175
Faculty of Agriculture		0	239	0	0	0	0	239
Faculty of Medicine		0	692	0	0	0	0	692
The Institution of Applied Sciences		1,072	0	0	0	0	0	1,072
Faculty of Dentistry		0	275	0	0	0	0	275
Faculty of Pharmacy		214	0	0	0	0	0	214
The Academic Institution of Technology		0	0	0	0	461	0	461
Faculty of Tourism		393	0	0	0	0	0	393
Total		20,977	16,701	12,031	6,711	11,753	1,892	70,065

Source: Educational Center for Research and Development

was not initiated until 1973, when the Faculty of Sciences was first established. Unfortunately, war broke out two years later, preventing the completion of the project.

However, in 1997, construction works were re-launched over an area of 700,000 m². The Hadath University Complex finally opened its doors in 2004, at a cost of 224 million USD.

Today, only 9 faculties have moved to Hadath, namely

the Faculty of Fine Arts, the Faculty of Engineering, the Faculty of Law and Political and Administrative Sciences, the Faculty of Business Administration and Economical Sciences, the Faculty of Medicine, the Faculty of Dentistry, the Faculty of Pharmacy, the Faculty of Sciences and the Faculty of Public Health. At present there are only 12,000 students enrolled in the complex, despite the fact that it can contain up to 27,000 students.

The Fanar Faculties

There are three Second-branch faculties in the region of Fanar: the Faculty of Sciences, the Faculty of Literature and Human Sciences and the Faculty of Information and Documentation. Two of these faculties are ill-equipped and the buildings are totally inadequate for educational purposes.

The Main Problems

According to the students interviewed, the Lebanese University suffers from many problems which can be placed in two categories: logistic problems and educational problems.

Logistic and Maintenance Problems

- The students in the First branch of the Faculty of Fine Arts have reported that some of their classrooms have no tables or chairs, compared to the other classrooms in the complex which are well-equipped. The Second branches of the Faculty of Information and Documentation and the Faculty of Literature and Human Sciences are also ill-equipped with broken chairs and tables.
- The students in the First branch of the Faculty of Business Administration and Economical Sciences confirm that they do not have a cafeteria in the faculty. Students in the First branch of the Faculty of Fine Arts, as well as students from different faculties at the Hadath University Complex and the Second branch of the Faculty of Sciences, complained that their cafeterias have not been operating properly. This is due to the fact that the administration of the Lebanese University has not yet contracted with a caterer to manage the cafeterias. The cafeteria in the Second branch of the Faculty of Information and Documentation, is sometimes even used as a classroom, since it is the largest room in the building. The students in the Second branch of the Faculty of Literature and Human Sciences have now reclaimed their cafeteria which served as a Syrian military barrack for the past years.
- The students of faculties of applied sciences, such as the Faculty of Sciences, the Faculty of Engineering and the Faculty of Information and Documentation, complained about a lack in laboratory equipment, as well as computers and modern electrical equipment, necessary to their practical courses. In the Second branch of the Faculty of Information and Documentation there is not even a photography laboratory, an audio studio or modern audiovisual equipments. Students in the First branch of the Faculty of Engineering – the Electrical Engineering Department – reported that they have been conducting electrical experiments on a Datsun motor, dating back to 1969. Also, there is not a single computer to which the students in the Second branch of the Faculty of Literature and Human Sciences can have access.
- All the students of the Hadath University Complex have complained from the long, inconvenient walks they have to carry out every time they want to get to a classroom or a lecture room because of the vast area that the complex occupies.

- Students of both the Hadath University Complex and the Fanar faculties encounter transportation and residency problems. In fact, even though the Hadath University Complex dorms have been completed and can accommodate up to 1,300 students, they are yet to be opened to students. Thus, students coming from distant areas have to rent apartments nearby the complex in the region of Hadath or Hay El Sellom.
- The Fanar faculties suffer from major maintenance problems. For example, in the Second branch of the Faculty of Information and Documentation, the students have undertaken painting works in their faculty, because the administration refused to assign the job to professionals. The faculty also suffers from water leakage, a problem also encountered in the Second branch of the Faculty of Sciences. There is no heating or cooling system in the Second branches of the Faculty of Information and Documentation and the Faculty of Literature and Human Sciences, and only a few classrooms are equipped with such systems in the Second branch of the Faculty of Sciences. The Second branch of the Faculty of Literature and Human Sciences suffers from rust, leakage and painting problems. However, no such problems have been raised in the Hadath University Complex.
- The Hadath University Complex counts 15 different sports courts, while there are no courts in the Second branch of the Faculty of Information and Documentation, and only one basketball court and a backyard in the Second branch of the Faculty of Sciences and the Faculty of Literature and Human Sciences.
- The students have also reported a problem in the faculties' libraries. In the Second branch of the Faculty of Information and Documentation, there is neither a librarian, nor a computerized research system. The library in the Second branch of the Faculty of Literature and Human Sciences also suffers from a poor research system. The library in the First branch of the Faculty of Fine Arts closes at 2 o'clock even though the courses end at 5 o'clock; students are also not allowed to borrow books. ●●

In the next issue, “The Educational Problems” and “The Students and the Merge of Branches” will be addressed.

- * First branch: the majority of the students is Muslim
Second branch: the majority of the students is Christian



Printing Sector in Lebanon: A Bygone Glory and a Difficult Present

The printing and publishing sector is one of the most important industrial sectors in Lebanon. In fact, the country was known as the “press of the Orient” where people used to say that “Beirut publishes books and the Arabs read.”

Li Monthly interviewed the owners of three main printing companies in Lebanon in order to know about the current situation of the sector and the problems facing the owners, as well as their proposals which could contribute in developing and promoting this national industry.

A Historical Summary

Lebanon’s first printing press was created in 1585 and was named the printery of “Deir Mar Antonios Qozhaya.” At that time, only religious books written in Syriac were printed there. However, the first printery to issue books in Arabic was that of “Abdullah Al-Zakher” in the town of Khinshara in Northern Matn in 1610. A museum was later established in that town, where primitive printing tools are displayed.

Printing companies started to emerge at the end of the nineteenth century. Among them was “the Sader Printing Press,” which is considered one of the most ancient in Lebanon. Today, there are around 800 printing companies in Lebanon, where around 8,000 people work. The boom of the printing sector led to the flourishing of the publishing sector, as the country today has more than 600 publishing houses.

The Printing Sector Today

Lebanon’s printing sector witnessed a large expansion over the past years, as it did not remain limited to religious books (mainly Christian) but reached books of various kinds, encyclopedias, newspapers and magazines. In fact, before the beginning of the civil war in 1975, Lebanon was considered as the “Printery of the Arab World,” as most of the books, magazines and other publications were printed in Beirut and sent to Arab countries. However, as the war broke out, Lebanon’s printing industry started to decline and Arab countries established high-tech printing companies that outclassed those of Lebanon.

Lebanon’s printing companies can be divided into two categories: printing companies that print and export books - and which are usually the biggest companies - and the

printing companies that print only for the local market. The latter are dedicated to small businesses (invoices, scholarly books and other publications).

The Characteristics of the Sector

Despite the important printing companies that were founded in several Arab countries, mainly in GCC countries, the reestablishment of peace in Lebanon helped the sector restore part of its leading role in the Arab world, thanks to the country’s long experience in the sector and the easy communication with Lebanese printing companies, which are always open to world developments.

In fact, Lebanon is still receiving bidding invitations regarding print works from several governments and companies in Dubai, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt.

Other factors also contribute to Lebanon’s successful printing sector. Those include the freedom to publish allowing many Arabs to print books which are restricted in their countries.

The Problems Facing the Sector

The Lebanese printing sector is afflicted by several problems, which mainly include:

- ⦿ The old Lebanese press law which no longer meets today’s requirement. There were several attempts to amend the law over the past six years but did not yield any results. Furthermore, there are no particular standards for the establishment of printing companies in Lebanon, the fact that led to the large and disorganized increase in the number of companies.
- ⦿ The wide competition between companies, as the sector became an example of the Lebanese society, where the middle class disappeared and the gap increased between the rich and the poor. In fact, middle-class printing companies are now struggling to survive in the Lebanese market, where only companies with big capitals and small family-run ones can survive.
- ⦿ The increase in the costs of printing machines, which are imported from Germany, due to the increase of the value of the Euro. The price of a printing machine can reach 1.5 million USD, the fact that forces owners of printing companies to get bank loans in order to buy modern machines and compete with other companies.
- ⦿ The increase of taxes on the basic raw materials of printing companies. Those materials include paper, which is imported from Europe and ink, which is imported from Japan. These materials represent more than 70% of the expenses of Lebanese printing companies.



- The remarkable absence of the governments' role in this sector. Consequently, the sector's development can only be achieved by personal and private contributions.
- The decrease in the demand for publications due to the technological revolution which promoted the use of the internet, the television and the computer at the expense of books and publications.

Solutions

Amending and modernizing the press law in a way that meets today's requirements, as well as setting standards for the establishment of printing companies represent the main solutions that can contribute to the sector's development. Moreover, the Lebanese government should implement a strategy to develop this sector, by financially supporting it and working on the establishment of a Printing Institute to train and graduate human resources specialized in this field, especially that the syndicate of printing companies' owners had presented this project several years ago but did not receive the adequate cooperation from the government. The government should also review the country's tax system, which is imposing on owners of printing companies heavy financial burdens.

Lebanon's printing sector – like all the country's economic components – was so far able to withstand consecutive security, political and economic crises.

However, for how long will the government continue to disregard this sector and its importance in the national industry? For how long will Lebanese printing companies survive continuous challenges?

The Press Law

Printing companies in Lebanon are governed by the provisions and amendments of the Press Law, issued on September 14, 1962. The law's main articles are the following:

Section 1 – Chapter 1 – General Provisions

Article 1- “the printing, the press, the libraries, the publishing houses and the distribution are free. This freedom is not limited but within the framework of general laws and the provisions of this law.”

Section 1 – Chapter 2 – the Printing

Article 12- “No one is allowed to own or manage a printery without submitting to the ministry of guidance, information and tourism a relevant statement (...).”

Article 13- “The printery should have a director who will be held accountable for the violations it commits. That director should be an educated Lebanese, who is above 21 year-old and not indicted with indecent crimes”.

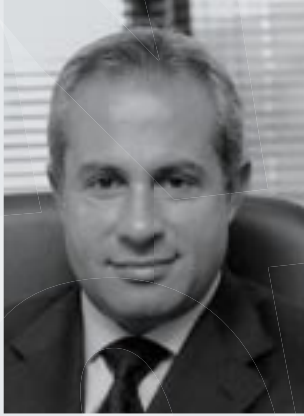
Article 14- “The statement should include the name, the surname, the residence and the nationality of the owner of the printery; the name, the residence and the nationality of the responsible director; the name and location of the printery and the types of machines used in it.”

Article 18- “The owner or the responsible director of a printery should submit to the ministry of guidance, information and tourism samples of all letters used in the printery. He should do so each time a change in the letters occurred.”

The work of printing companies is also governed by the provisions of some other decrees, such as legislative decree no. 104 and its amendments, dated June 30, 1977, and which states:

Section 1- Chapter 8- Accountability for Press Crimes

Article 27- “The writer, as the principal, and the publisher, as the accomplice, are held accountable for crimes committed through the publications which are not mentioned in the previous article (or the press publications). If the writer or the publisher was not identified, the responsible of the printery is held accountable for those crimes and the owner is a civil responsible party (...). Owners of printeries, publishing and distribution houses are civically responsible for private rights, the expenses of the courts which will prosecute their employees in press cases.”



The directorate general of roads and buildings at the Ministry of Public Works and Transport is regarded as one of the basic government directorates considering the major tasks it is assuming and which include roads and governmental buildings. *li Monthly* met with Engineer Fadi Nammar, the director general of roads and buildings, during an interview about the directorate which he has been supervising since the beginning of 2000.

liMonthly Meets Fadi Nammar: “A Limited Budget and a Duality with Other Administrations”

What are your directorate’s main tasks?

The directorate general of roads and buildings at the Ministry of Public Works and Transport is in charge of international roads that link a State to another, the main roads between the Mohafazat and roads separating the Qada’a. Internal roads fall under the responsibility of municipalities. The directorate of buildings is in charge of the establishment and maintenance of public buildings such as public hospitals, schools and ministerial and administrative buildings. Today however, there are some administrations, in particular the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR), which assume some of the directorate’s roles especially building schools. This fact leads to a duality in the roles, which we are working to resolve since the Law gives us the competence to undertake such projects.

This fact makes *li Monthly* ask about the level of duality with the work of other ministries and institutions such as the Council for Development and Reconstruction, the Council of the South and the Central Fund for the Displaced?

There is a duality or clash with CDR because the work of the council is flexible and free, as it receives foreign loans which allow it to act easily away from routine. However, we are doomed to routine because our work is monitored by the Court of Audit which was established 60 years ago and was slightly amended since then. We are also subject to the old laws of bidding which affect our work. For example, CDR builds roads. A year after their maintenance become under our responsibility knowing that we do not have a budget for them because they were not set in our plans and budget. As for the Council of the South, its work does not interfere with our projects because it is limited to towns and villages and is similar to the municipalities’ work.

The Higher Relief Committee and the Central Fund for the Displaced undertake works similar to those achieved by the Ministry of Public Works and Transport and when it comes to politics, we can clearly understand these issues. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Public Works and Transport should control the work of these committees and councils in order to avoid duality and cooperate in the success of the projects.

It is known that the Ministry of Public Works and Transport is allocating annual sums of money to maintain and rehabilitate roads and appoint supervisors to control the completion of works. However, after a while and with rain, roads are damaged again, why?

The problem resides in a lack of coordination between the relevant administrations. For example, after we finish rehabilitating and paving a road, other works start again by other administrations to place a telephone or electricity cable or to set water pipes. We cannot follow-up on such works. The relevant administrations should get a license from the Ministry of Public Works. Such works also require circulars from the Prime Minister’s office. Moreover, those administrations should submit a deposit which we use to repair the roads in case the contractors did not do so. Unfortunately, things do not happen this way. When we are informed of ongoing construction works, we have to notify the governor, who, in turn, contacts the Ministry of Interior and then the police department to stop these works; by then, works would have been completed and the contractor would have left the site.

Most of Lebanon’s roads are in bad situation. Do you have any plans to rehabilitate and maintain them?

We have a plan but we do not have sufficient funds to implement it. We have set a 10-year project plan to maintain roads but the problem is the lack of money in light of the budget deficit. We are forced to work year by year and the budget set by the government only covers 10% of the needs. Consequently, we are working according to the priorities. I wish I would be able to maintain and rehabilitate 7,000 km of roads but there is no money and the ministry’s budget has declined by 70% since 2000.

What is your role in rebuilding the bridges that were destroyed during the July-August 2006 war on Lebanon?

When the war ended on August 14, we had a two-phase plan. The first phase included the building of temporary roads to facilitate transport between the different areas. This phase was completed quickly. As for the second phase, it included the rebuilding of the destroyed bridges, which reached 78, with 60 totally destroyed and the other 18 partially damaged. In addition to those, there are 20 very small bridges, so the total of bridges to be repaired is about 100. Rebuilding these bridges falls under the duties of CDR, which in 2001 became in charge of highways and roads that were under the responsibility of the Council for the Implementation of Construction Projects after the latter merged with CDR.

Donations were allocated to rebuild 55 bridges out of 78, while France, Russia and Britain offered and built 18 bridges.

Electricity in Syria:

Consumption Surpasses Production and the Government is Selling Power to Lebanon!

Syria has been facing a serious electric power problem for years. In fact, the government has been unable to provide its people and various economic sectors with their needs in electricity.

The Ministry of Electricity in Syria has found no other solution but to implement power rationing, depriving the Syrian citizens of electricity for long hours every day.

This has not been an easy option for the country especially during the summer where equitable power distribution should be provided.

Production of Electrical Power

Power production in Syria increased from 25.5 billion kilowatt hours (KWH) in 2001 to 31 billion KWH in 2004 and it is expected to grow to as much as 35-36 billion KWH in 2006.

Electricity has many sources in Syria: 87% of the electricity production comes from the 10 electricity plants listed in table no.1; 9% comes from three dams and other power plant projects belonging to the Ministry of Irrigation; and 4% of the electricity production comes from a plant in the "Homs Fuel Refinery" which produces enough power to function and to provide additional electricity to the people.

Electricity is transferred and distributed through a 150,000 km long network and reaches 99.4% of the Syrian population.

Consumption

In 2005, the Syrian population was consuming 6,500 megawatts of electricity with an increase rate of 10% a year.

However, 25% of power production goes to waste: 16% is lost through technical problems and 9% from illegal cables and counter manipulation.

Between 52% and 55% of power production is consumed by households, 33-35% goes to the industrial sector, and 10-15% goes to the agricultural sector, irrigation and other sectors.

The increase in the household demand for power is a serious problem because its usage is unproductive. Moreover, the government supports this type of consumption as long as it does not exceed 300 KWH a month per household.

Problem

The main problem lies in the ever increasing demand for power which surpasses production.

In 2005, the Syrian population consumed 6,500 megawatts of power while production did not exceed 5,500 – 6,000 megawatts.

This imbalance has led the government to implement power rationing

Electricity Plants in Syria

Table 1

Location of Plant	Launch of Production Activity	Capabilities of Production (in Megawatts)	Number of employees
Al-Taym	1991	96	158
Techrine	1974	625	691
Halab (Aleppo)	2000	1,100	778
Panias	1989	715	877
Jandar	1995	702	504
Mehradeh	1988	660	705
Al-Zara	2000	660	590
Al-Nassiriyah	1996	336	200
Al-Souaydiyah	1989	150	169
Zeyzoun	1998	384	252
Total	-	5,428	4,924

Source: Ministry of Electricity in Syria

in many regions including industrial areas like Halab (Aleppo) and Reef Dimashq which yields negatively on the industrial sector.

There is another problem in the financial deficit that is accrued through the production process. In fact, the average cost per KWH is 191 piaster while it is sold for 142 piasters. This results in a deficit of 58 piasters. The total deficit amounts to 25 billion SYP yearly.

Other issues were raised about the yearly sale of 100-150 megawatts of electric power to Lebanon despite Syria's domestic production deficit. It is believed that Syria is profiting from the transaction as a foreign income source.

However, this operation, whether through the Tartous-Deir Nbouh electrical cables or the Dimas-A'anjar cables, might have to be interrupted to meet local demand.

In an attempt to face the Syrian Government's inability to finance the establishment of new power plants or the upgrading of existing ones, the private sector is encouraged to invest specifically in power production. The government, meanwhile, will continue its monopoly over the transportation and distribution of electricity.

However, this will lead to a more complicated situation because if the government wants to buy electricity from the private sector it will have to solve other issues. The government will either have to charge less for the power distribution which will aggravate the financial deficit, increase the rate fixed since 1991, or reduce the increasing rate of electric waste.

Meanwhile, the Syrian Government will keep on rationing electricity until other solutions can be worked out to end this crisis. ●●

Electricity in Iraq: The Dark Country

While the Coalition Forces and the Iraqi Government are talking about the reconstruction and modernization of the Iraqi infrastructure, many cities and villages are left in the dark.

Scarcity of electricity has plagued Iraq for a long time with little hope of a quick solution. The electricity sector faces significant problems ranging from the use of outdated equipment to the security situation that prevents any successful reform.

History of Electricity in Iraq

The first generator was brought into Iraq in 1917 and was placed in the "Khan Dallah" building. All other electrical power was generated by diesel generators with low capacity to provide continuous electrical power of 220 volts. During that same year, Rachid Street was the first street in the capital Baghdad to be illuminated by streetlamps.

In 1928, the Illumination and Electrical Power Company Ltd was licensed to provide the city of Baghdad with electricity and was nationalized in 1955.

In 1958, the Bureau of National Electricity was established and merged in 1964 with the Baghdad Bureau of Electricity. In 1975, the General Electricity Company was founded to handle the electricity sector but was later dissolved and all electricity-related affairs were transferred to the Iraqi Ministry of Industry and Minerals.

The current Ministry of Electricity was only founded in 2003.

Sources of Power

Iraqi power plants have the capacity to produce 9,402 megawatts of electricity. The majority of power production is generated through steam power plants and gas power plants with little production coming through hydraulic power plants. There are 28 power plants in Iraq distributed according to 6 directorates as illustrated in Table No.1.

Electricity Crisis

Iraq had a surplus of electricity until the power crisis began after the Iranian Iraqi war (1980-1988). The crisis then only hit the villages and cities along the border with Iran.

The crisis widened in 1991 to include vast regions of Iraq, especially after the Second Gulf War in 1990 when Iraq faced international sanctions which lasted until the United States invaded the country in 2003.

Since that time until today, the production, distribution and circulation of electricity deteriorated. In fact, the latest war and the subsequent daily insurgent attacks have severely damaged the plants and the circulation grid. Today, the production in Iraq amounts to 4,000 - 4,500 megawatts of a needed 7,000 megawatts. Demand has increased from the 4,500 megawatts before the U.S. troops invaded the country. This means that the power production covers only 64% of the total consumption need.

Power Plants in Iraq			Table 1
Directorate	Plant and Capacity (Megawatt)		Total
Electricity Production Directorate in the Middle Region (Baghdad, Samera, Diala and Al-Anbar)	Al-Dawra thermal plant	640	1,960
	Al-Dawra gas plant	148	
	South Baghdad thermal plant	380	
	Al-Taji gas plant	161	
	Al-Qods thermal plant	246	
	Al-Za'afaraniyah thermal plant	191	
	Haditha dam and hydraulic plant	60	
	Hamrine dam and hydraulic plant	50	
	Samera' hydraulic plant	84	
Electricity Production Directorate in the North Region (Mousel)	Mousel dam and hydraulic plant	1,050	1,254
	Al-Mousel gas plant	204	
	East Mousel Plant (out of function)		
Electricity Production Directorate - Salaheddine Biji	Biji thermal plant	1,320	3,105
	Biji gas plant	755	
	Al-Dibs steam and gas plant	212	
	Mala Abdallah gas plant	498	
	Karkouk gas plant	320	
Electricity Production Directorate - Al-Basra	Al-Haritha steam plant	800	1,384
	Al-Najibiyah steam plant	200	
	Khawr Al-Zubayr gas plant	256	
	Al-Cha'abiyah gas plant	48	
	Petrochemical gas plant	80	
Electricity Production Directorate - Al-Nassiriyah	Al-Nassiriyah thermal plant	210	210
Electricity Production Directorate - Middle Euphrates	Al-Masib steam plant	1,200	1,489
	Al-Najaf gas plant	189	
	Al-Hilla gas plant	80	
	Al-Hindiyah dam and hydraulic plant	15	
	Al-Koufa dam and hydraulic plant	5	
Total		28	9,402

Source: Iraqi Ministry of Electricity

However, electricity production can not be raised to reach its maximum capacity of 9,402 megawatts because of the old age of the plants and the high maintenance costs they require.

Therefore, generators have become the best alternative to provide electricity to the Iraqi citizens. Similar to the situation in Lebanon, generator owners began selling electricity to consumers to overcome the electricity interruptions which may last up to 20 hours per day. This is important especially during the summer when temperatures may reach 50 degrees Celsius.

However, the subscription rate to private generators ranks between 20,000 and 50,000 IQD/month (13 to 34 USD) and is too expensive for most citizens.

Also recently, the private generation businesses have faced difficulties, mainly due to the scarcity of fuel and the increase in price on the black market (one liter of diesel oil now costs between 500 and 1,100 IQD). This leaves the generator owner with higher expenses and thus obliged to increase subscription fees. In some cases, the owner is unable to obtain fuel leaving the area in complete darkness.

Solutions

The government adopted a nine-year plan from 2006 to 2015, costing roughly 2 billion USD with the aim of adding between 1,000 and 1,500 megawatts of electricity per year to production in order to meet the expected rise in demand.

Stats & Numbers

issue 55 - January 2007

800 million LBP is the amount dedicated by the Ministry of Finance to cover the expenses of Lebanon's participation in the Paris 3 conference.

200 million LBP was the cost of hosting the International Conference in Lebanon aimed at reinforcing peace and tourist security in the MENA region.

250 million LBP was paid by the Ministry of Youth and Sports to the Beirut Marathon Association in order to organize the 2006 International Beirut Marathon.

1.2 million LBP is the monthly indemnity paid for a judge of the State Shura Council (in addition to his salary) for conducting some legal studies and assisting the Ministry of Labor.

11,735 billion LBP (7,785 million USD) is the value of the Lebanese treasury bonds due for payment in 2007: 2,451 million USD, 8,040 billion LBP and 1 billion USD in euro bonds are due by February 2007; 3,000 billion LBP are due by the months of November and December 2007.

1,988 billion LBP is the overall value of hospitalization in Lebanon for 2005 handled by the following parties: the Ministry of Public Health (520 billion LBP), the National Social Security Fund (434 billion LBP), the Civil Servants Cooperative (70 billion LBP), military hospitalization (217 billion LBP), insurance companies and private hospitalization (747 billion LBP). Hence, the government is in charge of approximately 50% of the total value.

I am Lebanese, buy Pepsi
November 2006

James Billings ©



Starting with this issue and with the beginning of 2007, *li Monthly* will appear in a new look that falls within a strategy to develop and modernize the content and form of the magazine.

In content, *li Monthly* maintained its objectivity based on numbers and facts and the presentation of new subjects in a simple and concise way, which would inform the readers of accurate information regarding various issues.

In form, following the first modification of *li Monthly* in January 2005, by changing the quality of paper and the size of the pages, *li Monthly* will now increase its 24 pages to 44, change the size of pages, add pictures as necessary and introduce new colors according to each subject.

li Monthly was a private publication distributed only to subscribers, but as of January 2007, the magazine will be found in major bookstores and main superstores across Lebanon and later on abroad.

We hope you would enjoy reading *li Monthly* in its new look and we welcome your comments and suggestions at any time.

Best wishes for a happy New Year,
li Monthly team

Other publications by Information International and INMA (in Arabic):

- 1- Salaries and Remunerations in the Public Sector
- 2- Public Seaside Properties
- 3- Lebanon's Parliamentary History 1920-2000
- 4- Taxes and Fees
- 5- Lebanon in Figures 1992-2002
- 6- Lebanon in Figures 2003-2004
- 7- "I am Responsible, All of Us are Responsible"
- 8- "Our Environment is Our Home"
- 9- "My Society is My Responsibility"
- 10- "My Society is My Responsibility" Workbook
- 11- "I am a Student, I am a Citizen: Ways Towards State Building"

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Segolene Royal Meets Lebanese Students

France's socialist presidential candidate Segolene Royal, arrived in Lebanon on Thursday, November 30, 2006 upon an invitation from the president of the Progressive Socialist Party, Deputy Walid Jumblat. Royal met during her stay in the country with several Lebanese officials and political figures.

Upon an invitation from the "Observatoire des Choses Publiques," Royal met in Bristol Hotel on Saturday, December 2, 2006 with Lebanese university students who represent the country's various political parties and movements (The Future Movement, the Free Patriotic Movement, the Lebanese Forces Party, Amal Movement, the Progressive Socialist Party, the Lebanese Communist Party, Hizbullah, the People's Movement and an independent student). The discussion session, monitored by Journalist Ziad Njeim, focused on Lebanese issues related to dialogue and the future of the country.

During the session, students talked about their memories of Lebanon's 1975-1990 civil war and their experiences in living in society (school and university) with other students of different political backgrounds. Royal then asked the students to talk about their vision of a new Lebanon.

However, discussions showed that the students did not have any clear vision of the country they want or its political, social or economic systems. The dialogue also highlighted the major gap between memories of the past and expectations for the future.

In fact, Lebanese youth are able to talk about the past of Lebanon they perceive or imagine it to be (whether they witnessed it or learned about it from parents, friends or the party or association they belong to). They can also talk about their current situation and their relationship with their co-citizens with expressions that are apparently clear but which contain many symbols and views that are not always representative of facts. ●●