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## FROM DIALOGUE TO DECISION-MAKING

Karl Marx did not know that a day would come when he would be struck down philosophically by a Lebanese trader and an “economic expert”; Adam Smith did not know that his theories would be trivialized by those who, he thought, upheld them; Warren Buffet did not know that in this tiny country there would emerge people to teach him a lesson in the fundamentals of capitalism and to challenge his conviction that he should pay higher taxes; the zu’ama of Lebanon did not know that they would become red in the face upon hearing grievances from those who, they thought, were supporting them. How could the economic committees and the banks know that one of them would cause the scandal?<sup>1</sup>

Because the Lebanese university and the public schools are withering away; because dying children are not admitted to hospitals; because there are homeless elders stranded on the streets and victims scattered in our neighborhoods and homes; because the homeless, the jobless and those working in “downtown” (could there be a word more ridiculous than this one?) know little, if any, about Karl Marx and Adam Smith, but are aware that they share a common destiny; because “no riches have accumulated except through stinginess or ill-gotten wealth” and because the rich are not better than the poor;

And although things are not as they seem; although there are demonstrators who conceal their true aims; although the problem does not lie in the Ministers of Interior and Environment nor in the government; although those cursing at the ruling class may fare far worse if there were in its shoes; although some heads of municipalities, if not most of them, are more corrupt than most ministers; although some demonstrators are deluded by thinking that they are going to change history through posts and tweets on social media and are drawn to the limelight and to TV appearances;

In order for the dialogue table to become a decision-making table capable of promptly resolving what is more important than presidential and parliamentary elections or the formation of a government, that is finding practical and sustainable solutions for the crises of garbage, electricity, water, traffic, public transport and labor and taxation systems; in order for the zu’ama to announce their willingness to be ministers in a ‘crisis’ government of seven to nine members and to lose to each other so that the country can win;

For all those reasons and more,

Because demonstrations cannot usher change unless they grow into a purposeful movement able to organize and to be organized and seek a better and brighter future and in order to immunize the demonstrations against the abuse and cunning inside and outside Lebanon and safeguard a dream that may never come true, one must join the rally on Sunday, September 20 and Thursday, October 8, 2015.

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Jawad N. Adra

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<sup>1</sup> The scandal refers to a statement made by the Head of the Beirut Merchants Association Nicolas Shammass who belittled the demonstrators by saying they were transforming the city center into a cheap bazar.

# LEBANON'S EXPERIENCE WITH DIALOGUE 1975-2015

## GENUINE DIALOGUE OR FUTILE DEBATE?

At the height of the political impasse we have been facing since the presidential vacuum, the extension of the legislature's mandate and the paralysis of the Cabinet, Speaker Nabih Berri called on the major political blocs to convene a roundtable to address the points of contention. This dialogue round is not the first in Lebanon's history. In fact, dozens of dialogue meetings have been held since the eruption of the 1975 Civil War. Some of these rounds were restricted to discussions and did not result in any kind of meaningful conclusion; some resulted in a number of agreements and understandings that remained ink on paper and others culminated in agreements that were executed in to new laws or constitutional amendments. It is noteworthy that only the dialogue sponsored by external forces, foremost of which the Taif Accord, succeeded at yielding tangible outcomes.



In this article, we recall the dialogue sessions held, the attendees of the said sessions and the outcome they yielded.

### 1- Current dialogue (September 9, 2015...)

The current dialogue session opened on Wednesday, September 9 in Parliament upon the call of Speaker Nabih Berri. The invitation to attend the session reads as follows:

In a bid to exit the impasse besetting us and to come up with a solution stemming from the will of our people

during the current institutional dysfunction, which has orphaned the State and while enemies are surrounding us from the outside and a sense of oppression and deprivation prevails inside, dialogue amongst the country's leadership has become the only way for a better future. This is a dialogue of rescue and I am therefore pleased to invite you to attend the meeting that will be held with the national dialogue committee at 12 noon on Wednesday, September 9, 2015 in Parliament-Nejmeh Square- in order to strictly discuss the following items on the agenda:

- Presidency of the Republic
- Resuming of parliamentary activity
- Resuming of Cabinet's activity
- Importance of the parliamentary elections law
- The law for the recovery of nationality
- The law for administrative decentralization
- Reinforcement of the Lebanese Army and the security forces

**Participants:** Speaker Nabih Berri invited 17 parliamentary blocs representing Lebanon's sectarian and political diversity to attend the dialogue. 16 of those attended with the exception of the Lebanese Forces.

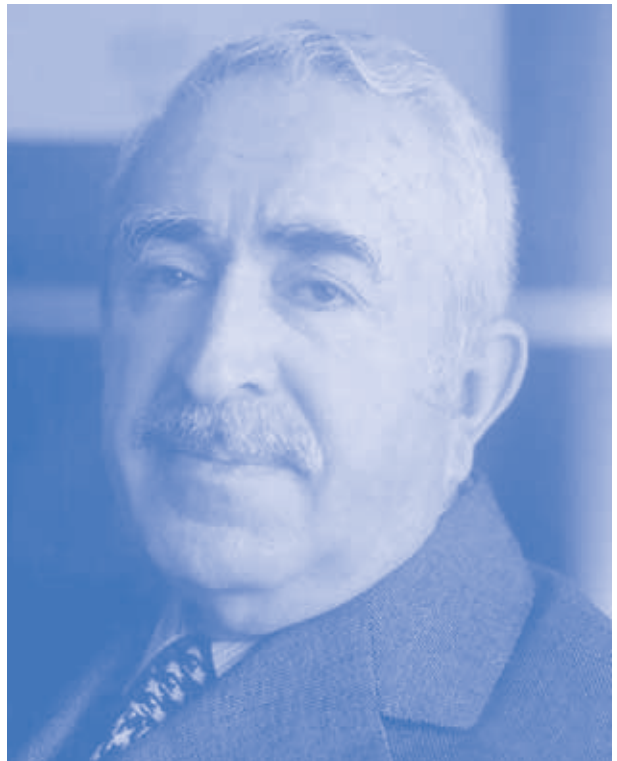
**The attendees were:**

Speaker Nabih Berri and his political aide Minister of Finance Ali Hassan Khalil- Prime Minister Tammam Salam and the Minister of Social Affairs Rashid Derbas- former PM Fouad Seniora and MP Atef Majdalani from the Future Bloc- former PM Najib Mikati and MP Ahmad Karami- MP General Michel Aoun and Foreign Minister Gebran Bassil from the Free Patriotic Movement- MP Michel El-Murr- MP Walid Jumblatt and MP Ghazi Aridi from the Democratic Gathering – MP Talal Erslan and journalist Hassan Hamadeh from the Lebanese Democratic Party- Minister Michel Feraoun and Elias Abou Hala- MP Sami Gemayyel and MP Elie Marouni from the Phalanges Party- MP Mohammad Raad and MP Ali Fayyad from Hezbollah- MP Asaad Herdan, former Minister ali Qansso from the Syrian Social Nationalist Party, MP Boutros Harb and former Minister Jawad Boulos representing the March 14 independents- Deputy Speaker Farid Makari and MP Robert Fadel- MP Suleiman Frangieh and former Minister Youssef Saadeh from the Marada Movement- MP Agop Bakradonian and Minister of Energy and Water Arthur Nazarian from the Tashnaq Party.

## 2- National Committee for Dialogue

(September 24, 1975 - November 10, 1975)

163 days after the eruption of the Lebanese Civil War, the then Prime Minister Rashid Karami announced on September 24, 1975 the formation of a reconciliation committee representing all rival parties within the context of the national dialogue. Karami said "I, hereby, announce that, thank goodness, we have been able as a result of our extensive efforts to form a national committee for dialogue representing the national unity. The committee will work on shaping up the aspirations of the Lebanese in general through an action plan



Rashid Karami

containing the principles and foundations under which we will all cooperate for the well-being of the people and the sovereignty of this country.”

### Participants

The committee consisted of 20 people:

- Kamel El-Asaad- Speaker of the House- Shia'a (He was replaced in later sessions by Adel Ousseiran)
- Rashid Karami- Prime Minister- Sunni
- Camille Chamoun- Former President of the Republic and a Minister- Maronite
- Abdullah Yafi- Former Prime Minister- Sunni
- Saeb Salam- Former Prime Minister- Sunni
- Mir Majid Erslan- Minister and MP – Druze
- Philip Taqla- Former MP and Minister – Greek Catholic
- Ghassan Toueini- Former MP and Minister- Greek Orthodox
- Kamal Jumblatt- Former Minister and MP – Druze
- René Mouawwad- MP- Maronite
- Pierre Gemayyel – MP- Maronite
- Raymond Eddé- Former Minister and MP- Maronite
- Khatchig Babikian – Former Minister and MP- Armenian Orthodox

- Rida Wahid- Former Minister- Shia'a
- Elias Saba- Former Minister- Greek Orthodox
- Abbas Khalaf- Former Minister- Greek Orthodox
- Najib Qranouh- Physician- Sunni
- Edmond Rabbat- Jurist- Syrian Catholic
- Assem Qansso- Head of a political party- Shia'a
- Hassan Awada- Retired judge and lawyer – Shia'a

The Committee convened its first meeting at the Presidential palace and then at the Grand Serail. After nine futile sessions, the dialogue was branded as the “dialogue of the deaf” as the Committee could not stop the fighting and the violence nor it could agree on political and constitutional reforms. Some believed that despite the failure of the Committee, its dialogues and discussions did pave the way for all the dialogues launched in the next ten years in Geneva, Lausanne and Taef.

One of the most notable remarks made during the above dialogue sessions was Jumblatt's belief that the main demand of the people was the elimination of sectarianism and that the gathering should be more representative so as to make way for an expansive national conference that would lead to a constituent assembly regarding the political system. The anti-Jumblatt Head of the Phalanges Party Pierre Gemayyel called for understanding, rejecting that the will of one party be imposed on the other through pressure. Gemayyel announced his adherence to the current formula and his rejection to any other alternative for Lebanon even if the alternative was a Christian State, reiterating his objection to the amendment of the Constitution.

Prime Minister Rashid Karami specified the topics to be debated:

- Security
- Finding a formula of coexistence among Lebanese families
- Democratic system
- Developing the system according to needs and the need to interpret the Constitution.

Brigadier General Raymond Eddé was of the opinion that the Committee had faltered and could not address security issues especially that the physical barriers were still there, voicing his fear that schemes were brewing to divide Lebanon.



Elias Sarkis

Dr. Edmont Najjar said “if the Committee fails, Lebanon will go downhill.”

After nine meetings culminating in the discussion of political reforms, the government announced on November 10, 1975 that it would take charge of political reform, which was seen by many as a transgression on the work of the Committee. PM Rashid Karami called on the Committee to convene a tenth session on November 24, 1975 but to no avail. Thus, the Committee was dissolved and the reform postponed while the war raged on.

### 3- National Accord Dialogue (February 16, 1980 - March 5, 1980)

On February 16, 1980, President Elias Sarkis initiated national accord deliberations through meetings with the parliamentary blocs, political events at the presidential palace and visits to spiritual authorities, all in preparation for the launch of the consensual initiative which became known as the fourteen postulates of national accord issued on March 5, 1980 and approved by the Cabinet.

### **Fourteen postulates of national accord**

President Elias Sarkis announced the postulates of national accord in his televised speech to the Lebanese. His message read as follows:

“We cling to the unity of Lebanon with its land, people and institutions and we reaffirm its independence and sovereignty. We further reiterate that the building of a strong state is the protective shield of these primary principles and it is therefore impermissible to accept whatever contradicts statehood. Therefore, we categorically reject the formation of mini states in and to the detriment of the State. We further reject the persistence of the fragmentation besetting us. The stage must be devoid of all the parasites feeding on the State in order to make room for the legitimate forces only, without the armed groups whether Lebanese or non-Lebanese. This entails the promotion of the State’s power, the elimination of whatever is against legitimacy and laws and the extension of the State’s authority over the entire Lebanese territory.

We firmly believe in the indispensability of a united and fully developed State, which is able to ensure respect for laws, defend the rights of citizens, warrant liberty and security for all Lebanese across all regions and declare Lebanon a sovereign and independent State.

We abide by a free parliamentary democracy and by promoting and improving democracy so that it remains responsive to the aspirations of the people for stability, prosperity, justice and the requirements of modern-day era. We further abide by preserving the character of Lebanon, which rests upon the respect of basic liberties within the context of rules and regulations and the openness to the world in terms of culture and civilization.

Lebanon must remain a country of liberties. These are our traditions and this is how the world sees us. The concept of freedom is inseparable from the concept of Lebanon. Freedom is an integral component of both our personality and our life and a principle inseparable from the pride we have known and without which we cannot live. Freedom is an inherent feature for the prosperity of our culture and civilization and for whatever we have accomplished in the different fields and under different skies.

We abide by the free economic system and emphasize the role of the State in organization and oversight

and the need for planning to reconstruct Lebanon and develop its productive capacities as well as to cement its economic and social soundness in the framework of a comprehensive development plan.

We reiterate the need for having regard to essentials of social stability such as addressing the social issues resulting from calamities, clinging to the principle of achieving inclusive social justice, equity and equal opportunities and working on the creation of a favorable atmosphere to address sectarianism in both the near and far future. We are keen to let justice and equality materialize as tangible facts ensuring the citizen’s rights to social services including health and education and the interests of policymakers in both private and public sectors by creating job opportunities commensurate with the scientific and practical competencies and by bringing about justice that is the foundation for every government and every rule.

Lebanon is an Arab country and an active and founding member of the Arab League. According to the Charter of the Arab League, it commits itself to promoting the role of the League in preserving Arab solidarity. We take pride in the contribution we have made and are still making to the Arab intellectual and political nahda and in the services we have offered and continue to offer in various fields in the wider Arab World.

The Palestinian cause is also our cause. We have always believed and still do in supporting the Palestinian cause and helping the Palestinian people reach its national goals and establish a state on its own land. This cause has been the center of our efforts and endeavors at the international level and because of it we have endured greatly at the local level, responding to our duty of fraternity and anchored by our belief in the legitimacy of the Palestinian cause.

Hereby, driven by our commitment to stand for every right, we rejected and continue to reject the Camp David Accords for they fail to take into account the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people to a state on its national soil and do not constitute a valid framework for a just and sustainable peace in the region. Furthermore, they eventually lead to the exclusion of Palestinians from their land and homes and their settlement where they are currently hosted.

We reaffirm solidarity with our Arab brothers at any crucial juncture and reject any kind of cooperation with the Israeli enemy.

Lebanon has been recruited for all Arab causes and has defended them faithfully and fervently, showing solidarity with its Arab brothers at every crucial juncture and rejecting all that stands at odds with their best interests. We hereby urge the mobilization of the Arab capacities in the Arab-Israeli conflict and the closing of ranks in the struggle for Arab causes.

Lebanon further emphasizes the need to respect the resolutions of all Arab League conferences and clings to its positions held in those conferences. It also reaffirms that the relations between Arab countries must be based on fraternity, cooperation and mutual respect for the independence, sovereignty, rules and regulations of each Arab State, bearing in mind not to meddle in the affairs of other states.

Lebanon will continue to stand by its international reputation and role and by the principles of and its membership in the United Nations. It is keen to fully respect and implement, by all means possible, its resolutions, particularly those issued by the UN Security Council regarding South Lebanon in order to end the Israeli occupation of the border strip and recover the State's sovereignty over the entire territory of South Lebanon until the internationally recognized borders.

The Lebanon-Syria relations are distinctive relations resting upon mutual respect for the sovereignty, independence and system of each country. Their close geographic proximity, the shared history and struggle, the kinship and the common interests of the brotherly peoples of Lebanon and Syria wield a high influence in imposing tight cooperation and full coordination between the two countries as well as common framework in favor of their reciprocal interests.

As for the relations with the Palestine Liberation Organization, all agreements must be properly implemented. Needless to say that such implementation should be without detriment to the sovereignty and safety of Lebanon and in alignment with the Security Council's resolutions regarding South Lebanon.”

#### **4- National Rescue Committee** (June 20, 1982 - June 25, 1982)

Against the backdrop of the Israeli occupation of Lebanon and the repercussions it yielded, President of the Republic Elias Sarkis called on political leaders on June 20, 1982 to form the National Rescue Committee to confront the difficult times facing Lebanon.

The Committee consisted of:

- Prime Minister Shafiq Wazzan -Sunni
- Minister of Foreign Affairs Fouad Boutros -Greek Orthodox
- Lebanese Forces leader Bashir Gemayyel -Maronite
- PSP leader Walid Jumblatt -Druze
- Amal Movement leader Nabih Berri -Shia'a
- MP Nassri Maalouf who was close to President Camille Chamoun -Greek Catholic

The Committee held its meetings at the Presidential Palace in Baabda under the chairmanship of President Elias Sarkis and with the participation of US envoy Philip Habib. The meetings broke the ice between Gemayyel, and Jumblatt and Berri. The agenda of the Committee, which convened three times, revolved around:

- Ceasefire
- The withdrawal of Palestinian militants from Lebanon
- The destiny of Palestinian refugees

On June 25, Walid Jumblatt announced his withdrawal from the Committee after accusing both President Elias Sarkis and PM Shafiq Wazzan of involvement in a conspiracy aimed at eliminating the Palestinians. The Committee's activity was thus aborted and the Israeli occupation continued. Bashir Gemayyel was elected President of the Republic after the evacuation of Palestinian militants from Lebanon but peace remained beyond reach and the war raged on.

#### **5- Geneva Conference (Dialogue)** (October 31, 1983 - November 4, 1983)

On October 12, 1983, President of the Republic of Lebanon Amine Gemayyel called for holding dialogue sessions in the presence of all political parties in order to resolve contentious matters.



### Participants

Suleiman Frangieh, Camille Chamoun, Raymond Eddé and Pierre Gemayyel (Maronite)- Adel Ousseiran and Nabih Berri (Shia'a)- Walid Jumblatt (Druze)- Saeb Salam and Rashid Karami (Sunni).

The first meeting was scheduled for October 20 and was preceded by a preparatory meeting attended by representatives of the invitees at the Ministry of Public Health. However, the dialogue was postponed a day prior to its scheduled date and deliberations held in the presence of the Saudi envoy Rafic Hariri and the Syrian representatives resulted in agreeing to hold the dialogue on October 31 in Geneva rather than Lebanon. Dialogue sessions were attended by Syrian Minister Abdul Halim Khaddam, Saudi Minister Mohammad Massoud and the Lebanese invitees and lasted until November 4.

### The Geneva Conference concluded with the following statement:

#### Final statement of the Geneva Conference on Lebanon

“Discussions were held within the context of comprehensive national accord and revolved around cooperation to liberate Lebanese territories from Israeli occupation and ensure Lebanon’s ultimate and complete sovereignty over its entire land, while resolving to promote the building of a powerful and capable state and working towards consolidating Lebanon’s relations with the Arab states and the international community.

The discussions, which were marked by a spirit of national responsibility and were held in an atmosphere of full honesty where all matters were fairly covered, resulted in the following:

**First:** acknowledging unanimously the identity of Lebanon according to the following: Lebanon is a sovereign, free, and an independent country. It is unified in its territory, people, and institutions within the boundaries defined in the Lebanese Constitution and recognized internationally. Lebanon has an Arab identity and belonging. It is a founding and an active member of the Arab League and abides by its pacts and covenants provided that the Government embodies these principals in all fields and areas without exception.

**Second:** agreeing unanimously that owing to the circumstances that accompanied the signing of the May 17 agreement of 1983 and given the international conditions that may result from the persistence of the current status quo, the conference hereby calls on the President of the Republic of Lebanon Sheikh Amine Gemayyel to take the measures and make the international phone calls necessary to end the Israeli occupation and ensure the full and ultimate sovereignty of Lebanon over its territories and in all the national fields.

**Third:** promoting the security staff to oversee the establishment of security, take the measures necessary to that end, receive and examine complaints and guarantee the proper implementation of the decisions made.

**Fourth:** submitting reformist projects in varied spheres prepared by the attendees of the conference to the Secretariat in order first to gather and coordinate them and then put them to discussion in the future sessions of the conference.

At the end of its first session, the conference extended thanks and gratitude to His Majesty King Fah Bin Abdul Aziz of Saudi Arabia and Syrian President Hafez Assad. It also thanked both local and federal Swiss authorities represented by the Swiss President Pierre Aubert for their hospitality and the efforts they exerted to facilitate the smooth running of the conference.

Appreciation was also shown to the President of the Republic of Lebanon, Sheikh Amine Gemayyel for his contribution to the success of the conference. On his part, President Gemayyel commended the spirit of national responsibility exhibited by the attendees, which helped the conference reach unified stances and decisions.

In concluding, the conference decided to resume its sessions in Geneva on Monday, November 14, 1983. They were later postponed until March 12, 1984.

### 6- The Dialogue in Lausanne (March 12, 1984 - March 20, 1984)

The dialogue meeting was not convened on time. A long period elapsed and was riddled with several political

and security turns that changed the Lebanese landscape, including first and foremost the events on February 6 and the Amal Movement's seizure of Western Beirut. Yet, the Syrian-Saudi endeavors brought the interlocutors back to a dialogue table in Lausanne on March 12, 1984. The dialogue lasted until March 20 and the following transpired in the sessions:

**First**, calling for ceasefire and drawing up a security plan based on:

- The separation of the belligerent forces
- The withdrawal of heavy weapons
- Designing a plan to bring the army troops back to their barracks
- Assigning the responsibility of security to the Internal Security Forces after transferring elements from the military service recruits and the Army reserve to the Forces.
- Forming a supreme military-political committee chaired by the President of the Republic and tasked with the execution of the security plan and with taking the proper measures and decisions in light of the aforesaid principles.

**Second**, stopping media campaigns in all their forms

**Third**, forming a constituent body in order to lay forth a new draft constitution. The members shall be appointed by the President of the Republic in cooperation with the national dialogue committee and the body shall submit a report outlining the outcome of its meetings in six months.

**Fourth**, the dialogue committee shall continue its discussions and convene at the invitation of the President.

## 7- The Tripartite Accord

After its return to Lebanon and the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the country, Syria strived to bring all the belligerent Lebanese factions into agreement and was able to achieve a major milestone in reconciling the Lebanese Forces leader Elie Hobeika with his rivals (Rafic Hariri is thought to have played a primary role in the reconciliation when he brought Hobeika and Abdul Halim Khaddam, the Syrian Minister tasked with the Lebanese dossier, together in France)



Michel Aoun

**“However, the tripartite accord was sabotaged by the anti-Hobeika Christian camp, particularly Samir Geagea and Amine Gemayyel who tightened their control over the Christian area on January 15, 1986 and expelled him from it.”**

particularly Nabih Berri and Walid Jumblatt. After a series of meetings, the parties reached on December 28, 1985 an agreement known as the Tripartite Accord. However, the accord was sabotaged by the anti-Hobeika Christian camp, particularly Samir Geagea and Amine Gemayyel who tightened their control over the Christian area on January 15, 1986 and expelled him from it.

## 8- The Taif Accord

(September 30, 1989 - October 5, 1989)

The political and military situation deteriorated in Lebanon as a result of the non-election of a President of the Republic and the emergence of an interim government headed by the then Army Commander General Michel Aoun who declared the Liberation War



Taif

against the Syrian Army. The deliberations made by the Arab committee, particularly by its envoy Al-Akhdar Al-Ibrahimi, culminated with an invitation to Lebanese MPs to go to the city of Taif in Saudi Arabia to hammer out an agreement that would yield political and security solutions to the Lebanese crisis. General Michel Aoun challenged the trip to Taif and persisted in his objection until on November 4, 1989 he decreed the dissolution of Parliament, providing several justifications for his decision.

#### **Participants in the Taif Accord**

The preliminary session of the Taif Conference was held on September 30, 1989 and was chaired by Speaker Hussein El-Husseini. Nine sessions followed afterwards lasting until October 5. On October 22, the accord was formulated and approved by 55 MPs. Three MPs- Zaher el-Khatib, Toufic Assaf and Farid Gebran-withdrew from the conference. Hassan Rifai abstained from voting and another three MPs- Anwar Sabbah, Mounif Khatib and Ali Khalil- recorded reservations.

Those who participated in the Taif conference were: Speaker Hussein el-Husseini, Zaki Mazbouidi, Farid Serhal, Hashem Hussein, Abul Mawla Amhaz, Najah Wakim, Nazih el-Bezri, Ali Abdullah, Zaher Khatib,

Khatchig Babikian, Rafiq Chahine, Chafiq Badr, Malkoun Ablightian, Boutros Harb, Nassri Maalouf, René Mouawwad, Talal Merehbi, Toufic Assaf, Mounif Khatib, Abdullah Rassi, Adel Ousseiran, Hassan Rifai, Mikhael Daher, Maurice Fadel, Hussein Mansour, Rashid Solh, Anwar Sabbah, Jamil Kebbi, Elias Hrawi, Nadim Salem, Mohammad Youssef Baydoun, Elias Khazen, Saleh Kheir, Ali Khalil, George Saadeh, Habib Kairouz, Gebran Tawq, Pierre Dakdash, Othman Dana, Sobhi Yaghi, Auguste Bakhos, Michel Sassine, Edward Hounein, Saeb Salam, Amine Hafez, Mahmoud Ammar, Surin Khamerian, Tareq Habshi, Michel Maalouli, Salem Abdul Nour, Joseph Skaf, Albert Mansour, Edmont Rizk, Pierre Helo, Fouad Naffah, Farid Gebran, Abdul Latif Zein, Youssef Hammoud and Kathem Khalil.

Those who apologized for not joining were: Raymond Eddé, Albert Mukhaiber (he suffered from a fear of flying), Emile Sakr, Rashed Khoury, Bakhos Hakim (for health reasons), Abdul Majid Rafei, Fouad Tehini, Kamel El-Assaad, Ahmad Esber, Hamid Dakroub, Abdo Oueidat, Ara Yerevanian, Raef Samara.

## Text of the Taef Accord

### First: General Principles and Reforms:

#### I. General Principles

- A. Lebanon is a sovereign, free, and independent country and a final homeland for all its citizens within the boundaries defined in the Lebanese Constitution and recognized internationally.
- B. Lebanon is Arab in its belonging and identity. It is an active and founding member of the Arab League and is committed to the League's charter. It is an active and founding member of the United Nations Organization and is committed to its charters. Lebanon is a member of the nonaligned movement. The state of Lebanon shall embody these principles in all areas and spheres, without exception.
- C. Lebanon is a democratic parliamentary republic founded on respect for public liberties, especially the freedom of expression and belief, on social justice, and on equality in rights and duties among all citizens, without discrimination or preference.
- D. The people are the source of authority. They are sovereign and they shall exercise their sovereignty through the constitutional institutions.
- E. The system is based on the principle of separation of powers and on the balance and cooperation among them
- F. The economic system is a free system that guarantees individual initiative and private ownership.
- G. Culturally, socially, and economically-balanced development is a mainstay of the state's unity and of the system's stability.
- H. Efforts (will be made) to achieve comprehensive social justice through fiscal, economic, and social reform.
- I. Lebanon's soil is united and it belongs to all the Lebanese. Every Lebanese is entitled to live in and enjoy any part of the country under the supremacy of the law. The people may not be categorized on the basis of any affiliation whatsoever and there

shall be no fragmentation, no partition, and no naturalization [of Palestinians in Lebanon].

- J. No authority violating the common co-existence charter shall be legitimate

#### II. Political Reforms

##### Parliament

Parliament is the legislative authority which exercises full control over government policy and activities.

1. The Speaker of the House and his deputy shall be elected for the duration of the chamber's term.
2. The Mohafaza shall be adopted as electoral district.
3. Until Parliament passes an election law free of sectarian restrictions, the parliamentary seats shall be divided according to the following bases:
  - Equally between Christians and Muslims.
  - Proportionately between the denominations of each sect.
  - Proportionately between the districts.
4. With the election of the first Parliament on a national, non-sectarian, basis, a senate shall be formed and all the spiritual families shall be represented in it. The senate powers shall be confined to crucial issues.

##### President of the Republic

The President of Republic is the head of the state and a symbol of the country's unity. He shall contribute to enhancing the constitution and to preserving Lebanon's independence, unity, and territorial integrity in accordance with the provisions of the constitution. He is the supreme commander of the armed forces which are subject to the power of the Cabinet. The president shall exercise the following powers:

1. Head the Cabinet [meeting] whenever he wishes, but without voting.

2. Head the Supreme Defense Council.
3. Issues decrees and demand their publication. He shall also be entitled to ask the Cabinet to reconsider any resolution it makes within 15 days of the date of deposition of the resolution with the presidential office. Should the cabinet insist on the adopted resolution, or should the grace period pass without issuing and returning the decree, the decree of the resolution shall be valid and must be published.
4. Refer the bills presented to him by the Cabinet to Parliament.
5. Name the prime minister-designate in consultation with the Speaker of the House on the basis of binding parliamentary consultation, the outcome of which the president shall officially familiarize the Speaker on.
6. Issue the decree appointing the Prime Minister independently.
6. Summon the Cabinet to meet, draft its agenda, familiarize the President of the Republic in advance with the issues included in the agenda and with the urgent issues to be discussed, and sign the usual minutes of a session.
7. Observe the activities of the public departments and institutions; coordinate between the ministers, and issue general instructions to ensure the smooth progress of work.
8. Hold working sessions with the state agencies concerned in the presence of the minister concerned.
9. By law, act as the Supreme Defense Council's deputy chairman.

### Prime Minister

The Prime Minister is the head of the government. He represents it and speaks in its name. He is responsible for implementing the general policy drafted by the Cabinet. The Prime Minister shall exercise the following powers:

1. Head the Cabinet.
2. Hold parliamentary consultations to form the Cabinet and co-sign with the President the decree forming it. The Cabinet shall submit its cabinet statement to Parliament for a vote of confidence within 30 days [of its formation]. The Cabinet may not exercise its powers before gaining the confidence, after its resignation, or when it is considered retired, except within the narrow sense of disposing of affairs.
3. Present the government's general policy to Parliament.
4. Sign all decrees, except for decrees naming the Prime Minister and decrees accepting resignation of the Cabinet or considering it retired.
5. Sign the decree calling for a special session and decrees issuing laws and requesting the reexamination of laws.

**“The Cabinet shall watch over the implementation of laws and regulations and supervise the activities of all the state agencies without exception, including the civilian, military, and security departments and institutions.”**

### Cabinet

The following are among the powers exercised by it:

1. Set the general policy of the State in all domains, draw up draft bills and decrees, and take the necessary decisions for its implementation.
2. Watch over the implementation of laws and regulations and supervise the activities of all the state agencies without exception, including the civilian, military, and security departments and institutions.
3. The Cabinet is the authority which controls the armed forces.
4. Appoint, dismiss, and accept the resignation of state employees in accordance with the law.

## Minister

The minister's powers shall be reinforced in a manner compatible with the government's general policy and with the principle of collective responsibility. A minister shall not be relieved from his position unless by Cabinet decree or unless Parliament withdraws its confidence from him individually.

Cabinet Resignation, Considering Cabinet Retired, and Dismissal of Ministers:

1. The Cabinet shall be considered retired in the following cases:
  - a. If its chairman resigns.
  - b. If it loses more than 1/3 of its members as determined by the decree forming it.
  - c. If its chairman dies.
  - d. At the beginning of a President's term.
  - e. At the beginning of Parliament's term.
  - f. When Parliament withdraws its confidence from it on an initiative by the chamber itself and on the basis of a vote of confidence.
2. A minister shall be dismissed by a decree signed by the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister, with the approval of the Cabinet.
3. When the Cabinet resigns or is considered retired, Parliament shall, by law, be considered to be convened in a special session until a new Cabinet is formed. A vote-of-confidence session shall follow.

## Abolition of Political Sectarianism

Abolishing political sectarianism is a fundamental national objective. To achieve it, it is required that efforts be made in accordance with a phased plan. Parliament elected on the basis of equal sharing by Christians and Muslims shall adopt the proper measures to achieve this objective and to form a National Council which is headed by the President of the Republic and which includes, in addition to the Prime Minister and the Speaker of the House, political, intellectual, and social notables. The Council's task will be to examine and propose the means capable of abolishing sectarianism, to present them to Parliament and the Cabinet, and to observe implementation of the phased plan. The following shall be done in the interim period:

- a. Abolish the sectarian representation base and rely on merit and specialization in public jobs, the judiciary, the military, security, public, and joint institutions, and in the independent agencies in accordance with the dictates of national accord, excluding the top-level jobs and equivalent jobs which shall be shared equally by Christians and Muslims without allocating any particular job to any sect.
- b. Abolish the mention of sect and denomination on the identity card.

## III. Other Reforms

### A. Administrative Decentralism:

1. The State of Lebanon shall be a single and united state with a strong central authority.
2. The powers of the governors and district administrative officers shall be expanded and all state administrations shall be represented in the administrative provinces at the highest level possible so as to facilitate serving the citizens and meeting their needs locally.
3. The administrative division shall be recognized in a manner that emphasizes national fusion within the framework of preserving common coexistence and unity of the land, people, and institutions.
4. Expanded administrative decentralization shall be adopted at the level of the smaller administrative units [district and smaller units] through the election of a council, headed by the district officer, in every district, to ensure local participation.

### B. Parliamentary Election Law

Parliamentary elections shall be held in accordance with a new law on the basis of provinces (Mohafazas) and in the light of rules that guarantee common coexistence between the Lebanese, and that ensure the sound and efficient political representation of all the people's factions and generations. This shall be done after reviewing the administrative division within the context of unity of the people, the land, and the institutions.

### C. Creation of a socioeconomic council for development

### D. Education:

1. Education shall be provided to all and shall be made obligatory at least for the elementary stage.
2. The freedom of education shall be emphasized in accordance with general laws and regulations.
3. Private education shall be protected and state control over private schools and textbooks shall be strengthened.

### E. Information

All the media shall be reorganized under the canopy of the law and within the framework of responsible liberties that serve the cautious tendencies and the objective of ending the state of war.

**Second:** spreading the sovereignty of the State of Lebanon over all Lebanese territories Considering that all Lebanese factions have agreed to the establishment of a strong state founded on the basis of national accord, the national accord government shall draft a detailed one-year plan whose objective is to spread the sovereignty of the State of Lebanon over all Lebanese territories gradually with the state's own forces. The broad lines of the plan shall be as follows:

- Disbanding of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias shall be announced. The militias' weapons shall be delivered to the State of Lebanon within a period of six months, beginning with the approval of the national accord charter. The President of the Republic shall be elected. A national accord Cabinet shall be formed, and the political reforms shall be approved constitutionally.
- The internal security forces shall be strengthened through:
  1. Opening the door of voluntarism to all the Lebanese without exception, beginning the training of volunteers centrally, distributing the volunteers to the units in the governorates (Mohafazas), and subjecting them periodically to organized periodic training courses.
  2. Strengthening the security agency to insure control over the entry and departure of individuals into and out of the country by land, air, and sea.

- Strengthening the armed forces

**Third:** liberating Lebanon from the Israeli occupation

**“Lebanon, with its Arab identity, is tied to all the Arab countries by true fraternal relations. Between Lebanon and Syria there is a special relationship that derives its strength from the roots of blood relationships, history, and joint fraternal interests”**

**Fourth:** Lebanese-Syrian Relations:

Lebanon, with its Arab identity, is tied to all the Arab countries by true fraternal relations. Between Lebanon and Syria there is a special relationship that derives its strength from the roots of blood relationships, history, and joint fraternal interests. This is the concept on which the two countries' coordination and cooperation is founded, and which will be embodied by the agreements between the two countries in all areas, in a manner that accomplishes the two fraternal countries' interests within the framework of the sovereignty and independence of each of them. Therefore, and because strengthening the bases of security creates the climate needed to develop these bonds, Lebanon should not be allowed to constitute a source of threat to Syria's security, and Syria should not be allowed to constitute a source of threat to Lebanon's security under any circumstances. Consequently, Lebanon should not allow itself to become a pathway or a base for any force, state, or organization seeking to undermine its security or Syria's security. Syria, which is eager for Lebanon's security, independence, and unity and for harmony among its citizens, should not permit any act that poses a threat to Lebanon's security, independence, and sovereignty.

### 9- Dialogue of Berri

After the assassination of PM Rafic Hariri, Lebanon plunged in steep political and sectarian divisions. A wave of assassinations shook the country and major political factions boycotted the then President of the Republic Emile Lahhoud. In response to the crisis, Speaker Nabih Berri called major political groups into a roundtable convened at the Nejme Square in order to iron out disagreements and forge solutions.



Doha

## 10- Doha Agreement

(May 16, 2008 - May 21, 2008)

After the presidential vacuum resulting from the expiry of the presidential term of President Emile Lahoud in September 2007 and the failure to elect a successor to the president, political disputes escalated among the Lebanese, particularly between Hezbollah and the Future Movement. These disputes culminated when the Cabinet issued a decision requesting the removal of Hezbollah's telecommunications network. Angered by the decision, Hezbollah invaded Beirut and closed the Future Movement offices in the capital. A Qatari initiative emerged to resolve the dilemma in consultation with the countries involved in the Lebanese crisis, particularly Syria, Iran and Saudi Arabia. Qatari efforts resulted in an invitation to the Lebanese political leaderships to attend a conference in the Qatari capital, Doha, to reach an agreement.

The Doha Conference was held between May 16 and May 21, 2008 and was attended by:

1. Speaker Nabih Berri
2. PM Fouad Seniora
3. Phalanges leader Sheikh Amine Gemayyel
4. Head of Change and Reform Parliamentary Bloc Michel Aoun
5. MP Michel El-Murr
6. MP Ghassan Tueini
7. Head of the Democratic Gathering Walid Jumblatt
8. Head of the Future Bloc Saad Hariri
9. Head of the Loyalty to Resistance Bloc Mohammad Raad
10. Tashnag representative Hagob Pakradounian
11. MP Boutros Harb
12. Head of Lebanese Forces Samir Geagea
13. Head of the Popular Bloc Elias Skaff
14. Minister of Public Works and Transport Mohammad Safadi



## Text of the Doha Agreement

Under the generous sponsorship of His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar; In continuation of the efforts of the Arab Ministerial Committee on the Lebanese crisis under the leadership of His Excellency Shaikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabr Al-Thani, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar and of Mr. Amr Moussa, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, and Their Excellencies the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, the Kingdom of Bahrain, the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, the Republic of Djibouti, the Sultanate of Oman, the Kingdom of Morocco and the Republic of Yemen;

On the basis of the Arab Initiative on containing the Lebanese crisis;

And in implementation of the agreement concluded in Beirut among the Lebanese parties under the aegis of the Arab Ministerial Committee on 15 May 2008, which is an integral part of the present declaration; A meeting of the Lebanese National Dialogue was held in Doha from 16 to 21 May 2008, with the participation of the Lebanese political leaders who are members of the Lebanese National Dialogue, who affirmed their desire to rescue Lebanon from the current political crisis with its dire implications for communal existence and civil peace among Lebanese, and their commitment to the principles of the Lebanese Constitution and the Taif Accords.

As a result of the proceedings of the meeting and of bilateral and group consultations conducted with the participants by the Chairman and members of the Arab Ministerial Committee, Agreement was reached on the following:

1. The parties agreed that the Speaker of Parliament will call on the Lebanese Parliament to convene in accordance with established rules within 24 hours to elect the consensus candidate General Michel Sleiman as President of the Republic, this being the best way from a constitutional point of view to elect the President under these extraordinary circumstances.

2. A Government of national unity will be formed with 30 ministers to be allocated as follows: 16 to the majority, 11 to the opposition, and three to the President. All parties pledge by virtue of this Agreement not to resign or obstruct the work of the Government.
3. In accordance with the electoral law of 1960, the district (qada') will be adopted as the electoral constituency in Lebanon, and the two districts of Marj `Uyun-Hasbayya will remain a single electoral constituency, as will Baalbek Hirmil and Western Bekaa-Rashayya.

Beirut will be divided as follows:

- **First Constituency:** Ashrafieh - Rmayl - Sayfi;
- **Second Constituency:** Bashura - Mudawwar - Marfa';
- **Third Constituency:** Mina' Hosn - Ayn Mreisseh - Mazra`ah - Musaytibah - Ras Beirut - Zqaq Blat

It was agreed to refer the reform clauses contained in the draft law submitted to Parliament, drafted by the National Electoral Law Drafting Commission under the chairmanship of Minister Fuad Butros, for debate and consideration in accordance with established procedures.

The above-referenced agreement concluded in Beirut will be implemented, and in particular paragraphs 4 and 5 thereof, which state that:

1. The parties pledge to refrain from a return to the use of weapons or violence for the purpose of achieving political gain.
2. Dialogue will be launched to strengthen the authority of the Lebanese State over all its territory, and its relations with the various organizations in the Lebanese arena to ensure the security of the State and its citizens ...”

Accordingly, dialogue was launched in Doha on strengthening the authority of the State in accordance with paragraph 5 of the Beirut agreement, and agreement was reached on the following:

- Resorting to the use of weapons or violence to resolve differences of any kind under any circumstances is prohibited, in order to ensure that there is no violation of the national contract of partnership based on the determination of the Lebanese to coexist within a democratic system. Security and military authority over Lebanese nationals and residents is reserved to the State, to guarantee continued communal existence and civil peace for all Lebanese. The parties pledge to this.
- The law is to be applied and the sovereignty of the State honored in all Lebanese regions. There will be no regions in which fugitives from justice may take refuge, out of respect for the rule of law, and anyone who commits crimes or violations will be brought before the Lebanese justice system.
- MP Michel El-Murr
- Head of the Popular Bloc Elias Skaff
- Minister of Economy and Commerce Mohammad Safadi
- Head of the Loyalty to Resistance Bloc MP Mohammad Raad
- Head of the Democratic Gathering MP Walid Jumblatt
- Head of the Future Bloc Saad Hariri
- MP Boutros Harb
- Former Minister and MP Ghassan Tueini
- Hagob Pakradounian
- Head of the Lebanese Forces Samir Geagea

This dialogue will be resumed under the leadership of the President of the Republic immediately upon his election and a national unity Government will be formed, with the participation of the League of Arab States, with a view to strengthening confidence among Lebanese.

The Lebanese political leaders reaffirm their commitment to stop using the language of treason and political and sectarian incitement immediately.

The Arab Ministerial Committee undertakes to deposit this Agreement with the Secretariat of the League of Arab States upon its signature.

### 11- National Dialogue Committee (September 16, 2008- May 5, 2014) Baabda Declaration (June 11, 2012)

At the invitation of the President of the Lebanese Republic General Michel Suleiman, a national dialogue roundtable was called into its first session on September 16, 2008, four months after Suleiman's election as President.

The session was attended by:

- Speaker Nabih Berri
- PM Fouad Seniora
- Phalanges leader Sheikh Amine Gemayyel
- Head of Change and Reform Parliamentary Bloc Michel Aoun

Mr. Amr Moussa, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, was also among the attendees who agreed on the agenda of the sessions to come, which included several topics: Defense strategy, limiting security tensions, promoting reconciliations, avoiding political and media provocations.

**“Resorting to the use of weapons or violence to resolve differences of any kind under any circumstances is prohibited, in order to ensure that there is no violation of the national contract of partnership based on the determination of the Lebanese to coexist within a democratic system”**

Six meetings were held afterwards, the last of which was on June 1, 2009 prior to the parliamentary elections, which yielded a radical change in the structure of the national dialogue committee. The committee was reformed on February 28, 2010 and included: PM Najib Mikati, Deputy Speaker Farid Makari, Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Elias El-Murr, Minister Michel Feraoun, Minister Jean Ogassapian, MP Assaad Hardan, Professor Fayez Hajj Chahine.

Elias Skaff, Michel El-Murr, Boutros Harb, Ghassan Tueini and Hagob Pakradounian did not attend. Saad Hariri continued the dialogue in his capacity as Prime Minister while Fouad Seniora replaced him as Head of the Future Bloc.



National Dialogue Committee

The Committee, as newly constituted, convened its first meeting on March 9, 2010. The defense strategy was the primary item on its agenda. Five sessions were held later, the last of which was on November 4, 2010. The Committee ceased to convene until June 11, 2012 when there was a call to resume dialogue to discuss the defense strategy, the Palestinian weapons and the disarmament of spread weapons inside and outside the cities.

The June 11 session, which was boycotted by the Lebanese Forces, saw the birth of the Baabda Declaration. Three sessions succeeded, the last of which on September 20, 2012. Later on March 31, 2014, the Committee resumed its sessions amidst boycott from Hezbollah, Suleiman Frangieh, Talal Erslan, the Syrian Social Nationalist Party and the Lebanese Forces.

A final session was held on May 5, 2014 as the term of President Michel Suleiman neared its end. Thus, the Committee held a total of 17 sessions and concluded its works with a dispute with Hezbollah and its allies over the Baabda Declaration.

### **The Baabda Declaration**

At the invitation of the President of the Republic of Lebanon, Michel Suleiman, the National Dialogue Committee met on Monday, 11 June 2012, at the residence of the President of the Republic in Baabda. The meeting was chaired by the President and attended by the dialogue teams. Former PM Saad Hariri and LF leader Samir Geagea were absent. The minister Muhammad al-Safadi was also absent owing to illness.

1. The path of dialogue should be adopted, and security, political and media issues should be approached in a spirit of serenity. The focus should be on commonalities and consensus on fixed points.
2. Parties should commit to laying the foundations of stability; safeguarding public order; preventing violence and the country's descent into strife; and intensifying the search for the political means to secure those objectives.
3. Citizens of all allegiances should be urged to cherish the conviction that any resort to weapons

and violence, whatever the fears and tensions, is inevitably a blow and a loss for all parties; it endangers the people's livelihoods, their future and the future of the next generations.

4. Action should be taken to strengthen State institutions, encourage a culture of reliance on the law and legitimate institutions for the resolution of any contention or urgent issue.

**“It should seek to avoid the negative repercussions of regional tensions and crises in order to preserve its own paramount interest, national unity and civil peace”**

5. Because the Army upholds civil peace and embodies national unity, it deserves moral and material support. Efforts should be made to enable it and the other legitimate security forces to respond to urgent security situations according to a deployment plan aimed at imposing State authority, security and stability.
6. The judicial power also deserved support in imposing the law with justice and without discrimination.
7. The implementation of a socioeconomic development plan throughout Lebanon should be encouraged.
8. All political forces and intellectuals and opinion leaders should be encouraged to avoid inflammatory political and media discourse and anything that could spark conflict, disturbances, and sectarian confessional strife. That approach would consolidate national unity and promote internal cohesion in confronting external threats, particularly those posed by the Israeli enemy. Such action would have positive implications for public opinion, the economy, tourism and the social situation.
9. It is important to reaffirm the need to comply with the code of honour previously formulated by the National Dialogue Committee with a view to ensuring restraint in political and media discourse, contributing to the creation of a serene environment

and making Lebanon a centre for the dialogue of civilizations, religions and cultures.

10. Trust in coexistence and in Lebanon as the unequivocal homeland should be reaffirmed, as should the need to comply with the principles contained in the Preamble to the Constitution, which are fixed founding principles.
11. The Taif accords must be respected, and parties must continue to implement all of its provisions.
12. Lebanon should eschew block politics and regional and international conflicts. It should seek to avoid the negative repercussions of regional tensions and crises in order to preserve its own paramount interest, national unity and civil peace, except where the matter concerns resolutions of international legitimacy, Arab consensus or the rightful Palestinian cause, including the right of Palestinian refugees return to their land and homes rather than being integrated.
13. Measures should then be taken to control the situation on the Lebanese-Syrian border. The establishment of a buffer zone in Lebanon should not be permitted. The country cannot be used as a base, corridor or starting point to smuggle weapons and combatants. At the same time, the right to humanitarian solidarity and political and media expression is guaranteed under the Constitution and the law.
14. International resolutions, including Security Council resolution 1701 (2006), should be respected.
15. It is important to continue examining ways to put in place strategies to implement the resolutions agreed by the National Dialogue Committee.
16. The next session of the Committee will take place on Monday, 25 June 2012 at 11 a.m. The Committee will resume consideration of its agenda, particularly the national defense strategy.
17. This statement shall be termed “the Baabda Declaration” and shall be respected by all parties. Copies shall be transmitted to the League of Arab States and the United Nations. ●

# PRODUCTIVITY OF LEBANON'S SELF-EXTENDING PARLIAMENT

## 8 SESSIONS AND 63 LAWS

The mandate of the Lebanese legislature, which was elected on June 7, 2009 for a four-year term of office expired on June 20, 2013. New parliamentary elections were supposed to take place but MPs took advantage of the then status quo to justify the extension of their own mandate, under the pretext that it was unfeasible to hold parliamentary elections out of concern for the national unity. Most noteworthy is that Lebanese MPs and political factions have failed over four years in office to agree upon and pass a new law for parliamentary elections law. Thus, they extended their mandate for the first time and then the second time as was the norm during the Civil War. So what did Parliament accomplish during its extended term?



### Extension laws

The Parliament's mandate was extended in two stages by four years in total, pursuant to two laws:

- Law no. 246 dated May 31, 2013 which stipulated the following: “the mandate of the current Parliament ends exceptionally on November 20, 2014, meaning that its term of office has been extended by 17 months.”
- Law no. 16 dated November 5, 2014 and put into effect immediately, which was approved amidst presidential vacuum, noting that the President of the Republic is the

one in charge of publishing laws. The law stipulated the expiry of the current legislature's term on June 20, 2017, prolonging its life by 31 months.

Thus, the Parliament's mandate has been extended by four years in total, i.e. by an entire term of office. This extension may have an impact on the calculation of the salaries and allocations of the current MPs upon the expiry of their terms and non-election to office again. The extension period shall be counted as a complete

term of office and former MPs shall be paid 55%, 65% or 75% of their salaries and allocations, depending on whether they have served one term, or two or three.

### Parliament's productivity during the period of extension

The extension of the legislature's mandate after the inability, rather the refraining from holding the elections for fear of vacuum, has failed to revive legislation. Christian forces insisted that "there can't be any legislation amidst presidential vacuum" while other political factions accepted to adhere by the "legislation of necessity" only. In both cases, Parliament remained quasi-dysfunctional.

During its extended term from June 20, 2012 until now (September 2015), Parliament has convened eight plenary sessions, including four legislative ones during which 63 laws were passed.

- A session on October 22, 2013 to elect the members of the parliamentary committees. No other sessions were held in the rest of that year.
- A legislative session on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of April 2014 during which 40 laws were passed.
- A legislative session on April 9, 2014 during which seven laws were passed.
- A session on June 19, 2014 to discuss and pass the draft law for salary scale and find ways to finance the scale. The session concluded without the salary scale being approved.
- A session on July 26, 2014 dedicated to solidarity with Gaza against Israeli hostilities.
- A legislative session on October 1, 2014 during which eight laws were passed including the law stipulating the allocation of LBP 626 billion to cover the salaries of civil servants until the end of the year. This session was classified under the "legislation of necessity" sessions, for it was convened after the presidential seat had fallen vacant.
- A session on October 21, 2014 to elect the members of the parliamentary committees.
- A legislative session on November 5, 2014 where 8 laws were passed including Law no. 16 which was put into effect immediately and stipulated the extension of Parliament's term until June 20, 2017.

### Financial Cost

Parliament has not convened any plenary session since the beginning of 2015. Yet, despite their 'idleness', so to speak, MPs continued to receive their monthly pay and allocations which amount to roughly LBP 10.9 million per MP. Some argue that MPs are doing their job through the parliamentary committees and thus deserve their pay.

The cost of the first extension of Parliament's term stands at close to LBP 24 billion and the second at LBP 62 billion, which brings a total of LBP 86 billion over four years. This cost remains lower than that of holding the parliamentary elections (LBP 24 billion) if we were add to the latter the cost of salaries and indemnities of both former and new MPs. Financially speaking, it would thus be better not to hold the elections to save public funds. ●



# DEMOGRAPHIC IMBALANCE IN LEBANON

## CHRISTIANS: FROM 60% TO 12%?

The fears, worries and frustrations of the Christian population in Lebanon are too many to count. They are not limited to the vacancy in the top political post, that of the Christian president, since 2014 or for over 470 days, nor to the electoral law which prevents Christians from selecting their representatives without any influence from the Muslim electorate or to the flagrant imbalance in civil service jobs in favor of Muslims. There is more. Lebanon, which was once a nation where Christians constituted a majority, is no longer as such. In fact, the Christian community accounts today for hardly one third of the Lebanese population.

Based on the current figures and forecasts, Christians might dwindle in the future decades into a small minority, assuming that no unpredictable prospects such as deportation or naturalization come into play.

### 1- Lebanese population in 1860 (Mutasarrifiah)

- Maronite: 101,900
- Greek Catholic: 38,625
- Greek Orthodox: 30,375
- Protestant: 500

**Total Christian population: 171,400 or 79%**

- Druze: 35,475
- Muslims: 10,510

**Total Muslim population: 45,985 or 21%**

- Jews: 290

**Grand total: 217,675**

Currently, Mount Lebanon's population is estimated at 1,180,000 of which Christians constitute 60%.

### 2- Age Pyramid by Sect

People below 40 years of age:

- Maronite: 51%
- Greek Orthodox: 46%
- Greek Catholic: 48%

- Armenian Orthodox: 33%
- Aemenian Catholic: 35%
- Evangelicals: 33%
- Christian minorities: 45%
- Sunni: 68%
- Shia'a: 69%
- Druze: 60%
- Alawis: 70%

60% of the Lebanese population is under 40 years of age. 72% of those are Muslim and 28% are Christian.

### 3- Lebanese population and its sectarian distribution according to the 1932 census

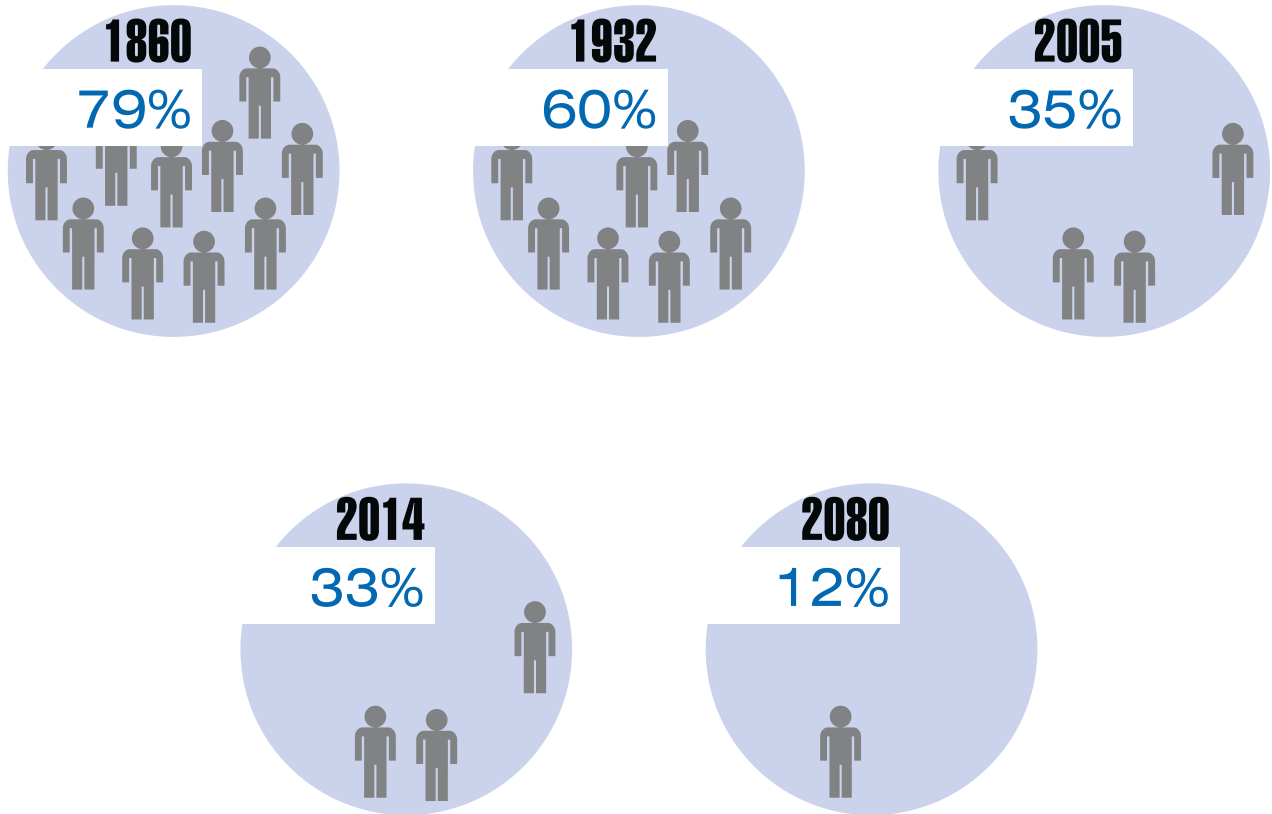
The Lebanese population amounted to 1,046,146 in 1932, 60% were Muslim and 40% Christian. The Maronite community was the largest in size accommodating 351,000 people or roughly 33% of the Lebanese.

### 4- Lebanese population and its sectarian distribution in 2005

The Lebanese population amounted to 4,571,000 in 2005, 65% were Muslim and 35% Christian. The Sunni community was the largest in size totaling accommodating 1,336,000 people or roughly 29% of the Lebanese population.

The Maronite community totaled 880,000 people, accounting for 19% of the Lebanese.

## EVOLUTION OF THE CHRISTIAN POPULATION IN LEBANON BETWEEN 1860 AND 2080



### 5- Lebanese population and its sectarian distribution in 2014

The Lebanese population amounted to 5,100,000 in 2014, 67% were Muslim and 33% Christian. The Shia's community was the largest in size totaling 1,534,000 people or roughly 30% of the Lebanese.

The Maronite community totaled 938,000 people, accounting for 18.5% of the Lebanese

### 6- Forecasts for 2080 if no prompt or exceptional patterns arise such as deportation or naturalization

First possible scenario: the Lebanese population would reach 6,000,000 people distributed among Muslims (73.5%) and Christians (26.5% or roughly one quarter of the Lebanese)

Second possible scenario: the Lebanese population would reach 6,200,000 people distributed among Muslims (88%) and Christians (12%). ●



# 1018 MUNICIPALITIES IN LEBANON

## 14 NEW MUNICIPALITIES CREATED AND 45 DISSOLVED

Municipalities have a pivotal role to play in running the local affairs of towns and villages. Their functions should cover a wider scope if administrative decentralization is to be approved. Now that the date of municipal elections in May 2016 is approaching and as the possibility of extending the mandates of the existing municipal councils begins to gain traction, we take a brief look into the current status of Lebanon's municipalities.

### Number of municipalities

Municipalities in Lebanon totaled 1018 by the end of August 2015 compared to 964 municipalities in May 2010, when the most recent municipal elections were held. By Qada'a, municipalities are distributed as illustrated in Table 1.

Qada'a	Number of municipalities (March 2015)	Number of municipalities (May 2010)
Beirut	1	1
Baabda	45	45
Jbeil (Byblos)	39	37
Chouf	74	73
Kessrouan	54	52
Matn	54	51
Aley	57	55
<b>Mount Lebanon - Total</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>313</b>
Tripoli	3	3
Bsharri	11	11
Batroun	29	24
Zgharta	31	31
Akkar	123	102
Koura	35	34
Mennieh- Dennieh	35	33
<b>North Lebanon &amp; Akkar - Total</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>238</b>
Zahle	29	29
Baalbeck	72	64
Western Beqa'a	31	30
Rashaya	26	26
Hermel	8	6
<b>Beqa'a &amp; Baalbeck- Hermel - Total</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>155</b>

Qada'a	Number of municipalities (March 2015)	Number of municipalities (May 2010)
Saida	47	46
Tyre	61	60
Jezzine	36	35
<b>South Lebanon - Total</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>141</b>
Nabatieh	39	39
Bint Jbeil	36	36
Hasbaya	16	15
Marjeyoun	26	26
<b>Nabatieh - Total</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>116</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1018</b>	<b>964</b>

Source: Official Gazette

### Newly established municipalities

The newly established municipalities that have not yet held elections and are currently managed by the Qaimaqam or the Mohafez total 14. These municipalities are: Bakaata Kanaan (Kessrouan), Wadi El-Nahle (Mennieh-Dennieh), Bayt Mshayk (Baalbeck), Aaba (Koura), Haytla (Koura), Mahmerch (Batroun), Kneisseh (Baalbeck), Beit Shlala (Batroun), Hasrat (Jbeil), Mazarib & Arasta (Jbeil), Mazraat Tout (Baalbeck), Masnaa Zahra (Baalbeck), Mtayleb (Matn), Ansar (Baalbeck),

### Dissolved municipalities

The total number of the municipalities that have been dissolved until the end of August is 45 and they are also managed by the Qaimaqam or the Mohafez. Some of the dissolved municipalities are major municipalities such as: Deir El-Qamar (Chouf), Baabda Loueizi (Baabda), Ain Wa Zein (Chouf), Baaleshmay (Aley), Kfarselwan (Baabda), Bireh (Akkar), etc. ●

# KUVENDI

## PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA

**After World War II, Albania became a Stalinist state and remained staunchly communist and isolated until its transition to democracy after 1990. The change evidently had many challenges and Albania had to make tremendous efforts to promote democracy, boost the economy, introduce electoral reforms, fight corruption and bring the country closer to the EU.**



### Parliament of the Republic of Albania

The Parliament of the Republic of Albania, known as the Kuvendi, is a 140-seat unicameral chamber elected for a four-year mandate.

### Voting age

Every Albanian citizen who has reached the age of 18 has the right to vote for elections to the Albanian Parliament.

### Candidacy age

All Albanian citizens who have reached the age of 18 and have lived permanently in Albania and fulfill the legal candidacy requirements may run for elections.

### Voting System

There was a mixed electoral system in Albania in the past. 100 members of the Albanian Parliament used to be elected directly by voters in electoral constituencies according to a majority system of two rounds and the remaining seats were distributed based on the proportional system.

Currently though, Albania's electoral code adopts a regional proportional election system with closed candidate lists in twelve multi-member constituencies, analogous to the country's twelve counties. Within the constituencies, seats are elected by closed list proportional representation, with an electoral threshold of 3% the votes for parties and 5% for coalitions of parties. The new electoral provisions introduced a gender quota dictating achievement of a minimum 30% standard for representation of women in all public-sector institutions at national and local levels. 30% of candidates should also be women.

### 2013 Elections

Albania held its most recent parliamentary elections on June 23, 2013. The result was a victory for the Alliance for a European Albania led by the Socialist Party and its leader, Edi Rama, which won by 57.7% of the votes (84 out of 140 seats). ●

# SALIM HAIDAR (1911-1980)

## A PREACHER OF REFORM AND DEVELOPMENT

**A former minister and MP Salim Haidar is one of those political and administrative figures who were well ahead of their times in the principles they laid down and the regulations and legislations they proposed. His name comes in the forefront of Lebanese reformists who believed in and pushed towards reform and development.**

### Birth

A son of Najib Haidar, Salim Haidar was born in Baalbeck in May 1911.

### Education

Salim Haidar studied at the White Fathers School in Baalbeck before pursuing his intermediate education at the National College of Aley and his secondary education in Beirut. He traveled in 1931 to France where he attended the Sorbonne University and obtained a PhD in law studies.

### Judiciary

After his return to Lebanon, he joined the judiciary and was appointed Public Prosecutor in 1938 and Investigative Judge in 1943. In 1945 he became an advisor at the Court of Appeal.

### Diplomacy

In 1946, Salim Haidar joined the diplomatic corps and became Ambassador of Lebanon to Iran in 1946, to Morocco in 1958 and the Soviet Union in 1963.

### Deputyship

Salim Haidar's engagement in diplomacy did not stop him from following Lebanon's local politics. He was elected representative of the Baalbeck- Hermel district in 1953 and then again in 1968 when he and two other candidates ran against Sabri Hamadeh's list from which four candidates won seats against three from Haidar's list. Salim Haidar amassed 15,672 votes against 15,047 for Hamadeh.

He handled several ministries under Camille Chamoun (1952-1958). He assumed ministerial responsibilities for the first time on September 30, 1952 under the government formed by Khaled Chehab where he was appointed minister of several portfolios: national education, social affairs, health and public relief and

telegraph and telephone. He remained in office until the resignation of the government on April 30, 1953.

He returned to ministerial position on September 16, 1954 under Sami Solh government. He managed the Ministry of Telegraph and Telephone and that of agriculture and remained in his position until the resignation of the government on July 9, 1955.

Salim Haidar re-assumed the same portfolios under the second government of Sami Solh and remained in office until September 17, 1955.

### Accomplishments

A minister and MP Salim Haidar contributed to several legislations such as the Illicit Enrichment Law and helped establish a supreme court to look into the constitutionality of laws and give women their right to vote. He also called for making Lebanon a single electoral district, reducing voting age to 18, cancelling political sectarianism and separating between executive and legislative powers.

Salim Haidar published many books and studies and delivered lectures. He also wrote a number of poems in the different languages he had mastered and represented Lebanon in several parliamentary conferences.

### Languages

In addition to his vast knowledge, Salim Haidar was multilingual, mastering five languages: Arabic, French, English, Persian and Russian.

### Family

He married Samiha Suleiman Haidar and had three children with her: Hassan, Hammad and Hayyan.

### Death

He died on October 3, 1980 at the age of 69. 🍀

## THE MONTHLY INTERVIEWS

# PROTESTERS IN THE MARTYRS SQUARE

## MODEST NUMBERS AND GREAT DEMANDS

*As stinky garbage flooded the streets and neighborhoods of Beirut and Mount Lebanon after the closure of the Nahmeh landfill and against the government's failure to resolve the garbage crisis predicted since the beginning of 2015, popular movements arose to demand sustainable solutions for the dilemmas marring the country, starting from the garbage crisis, passing through wretched living conditions and ending with the ultimate call for the ousting of the regime.*

Numerous campaigns urged the Lebanese to rally in both the Martyrs and the Riad Solh Squares to raise their demands. Those included the “You Stink” campaign, Badna Nhasseb (We Want Accountability) and Hellou ‘Anna (Leave us Alone) to name but a few.

On Saturday, 22<sup>nd</sup> of August 2015, these campaigns were able to mobilize close to 25,000 demonstrators. The number soon dwindled into a few thousands, then a few hundreds, stripping the civil movement of its initial momentum, despite the rightful demands it had raised. Gatherings resumed near the An-Nahar building in the Martyrs Square in parallel with the national dialogue sessions called for by the Speaker Nabih Berri as of Wednesday, September 9, 2015.

The same faces were spotted at each demonstration. New faces emerged at times and familiar ones withdrew at others. The crowds, although seemingly big, contained media reporters and crews as well as informers for the different security apparatuses including the Lebanese Army, the General Security, the State Security and the Intelligence Branch.



Taken by Mohamad mashlab



Brief interviews were held with some of the protesters to gauge the reason for their participation and whether or not they believed their demands will be met. Among them, we detected agreement over certain issues and disagreement over others. In fact, there was a quasi-unanimity over the unfeasibility of accomplishing an all-out success. Yet, this did not prevent protesters from giving it a try and laying the foundation for future attempts. Change, after all, is not an overnight occurrence or the result of one demonstration or two. Change is a long sweaty path that will eventually lead to the desired outcome.

### Rania Khoury

“I came to the Martyrs Square for change. Everything must be changed in Lebanon because everything has become useless and futile. The mentality of some people has grown sick and so has the mentality of the political class. They have grown dysfunctional and have extended their own term.” On her perception of the solution, she said “We sure cannot achieve all that we want, but we need to start the path to change through parliamentary elections according to a new electoral law that allows



Taken by Mohamad mashlab

the arrival of a new political class to power; a political class that would push towards change, fight corruption and recover the funds from those who squandered them over the past decades, no matter to which party, class or group they belonged. I do support accountability for everyone from all parties and sects without exception.”

### **Nasser Abou Esper**

Nasser Abou Esper is a retired officer who reaffirmed the peacefulness of the movement and that he had joined it to push towards parliamentary elections and towards the cancellation of the law on Parliament’s term extension because the extension is a confiscation of the votes of the people. Esper said that the new political class can proceed with accountability after the parliamentary elections.

### **Wassim Abdullah**

Wassim Abdullah joined the movement in the Martyrs Square to fight sectarianism, which, according to him, is the core problem. “Garbage, corruption, the failure to hold the elections and the extension of the legislature’s term are all rooted in sectarianism. The objective is to reach a secularist regime. Only a secularist regime can resolve the current problems, from garbage to electricity to public roads to health and education. Corruption feeds on sectarianism. If we eliminate sectarianism, we abort the livelihood of corruption.” On the few numbers gathered in the Martyrs Square, Wassim Abdullah said “the numbers are not important. What matters is our knowledge and belief that the majority of the Lebanese

support our demands but the Lebanese mentality prevents them from coming on board and taking to the streets. We do hope to change this mentality in the future and to see all the Lebanese with us, because harm spares no one and will not distinguish between regions and sects if sectarianism continues to take hold.”

### **Zeina Mansour**

“I came down to the Martyrs Square to demand job opportunities for the Lebanese youth; to put an end to their emigration. The end is what matters to me, I am not concerned about the means; whether the regime hangs on or falls, I do not care. I simply believe that those in power have failed to find solutions for unemployment and their departure may be a solution. They messed up in handling a trivial basic file such as waste management; they won’t fare any better handling bigger issues.”

### **Pascale Khalil**

Pascale said that the aim of her participation in the protests was to confront both March 8 and March 14 camps because they have failed in running the country, which must be ruled by unbiased youths not belonging to any of these camps. “We are currently a minority but our numbers will increase as days go by. We seek unity among the Lebanese because unity is the only possible way to achieve all our demands. Officials are exploiting our divisions to downplay the popular movement. At the current stage, I urge dialogue between the protesters and the authorities to forge a solution for the impasse.” ●●

# COLLECTIVE FOR RESEARCH AND TRAINING ON DEVELOPMENT-ACTION



## Establishment

With the intention of pushing towards social justice and gender equality, the Collective for Research and Training on Development-Action was registered in Lebanon in July 1999 as a non-governmental organization concerned with the social development of local communities. CRTDA is based in Lebanon and has partners across the Arab World, primarily in Egypt, Algeria Syria, Morocco, Tunisia and Yemen. The organization hopes to contribute to an active and prosperous society by ensuring quality training, building capacities and providing resources and information services.

## Activities

The organization's key areas of involvement are:

- 1- Equality and citizenship
- 2- Women's rights and economic empowerment

In line with its commitment to a thriving and egalitarian society, CRTDA accorded great attention to gender equality in order to bridge the gap between men and women and eliminate rampant gender-based biases and predominant patriarchal values. Several activities were tailored to serve this end in both Lebanon and the Arab World including first and foremost the "My Nationality is a Right for me and for my Family"- campaign. Unlike their male counterparts, the Lebanese and more broadly the Arab women married to foreigners are denied the right to pass their nationality to their spouses and children.

The campaign was propelled by: 1) the spirit of equality enshrined in the Lebanese constitution, which in its preface, stipulates Lebanon's adherence to the covenants of the United Nations, 2) the Lebanese government's ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in its entirety in 1991, 3) Lebanon's ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) pursuant to Law no. 572 dated August 1, 1996, and 4) the need for modern nationality law upheld in the Taef Accord.



The “My Nationality is a Right for me and for my Family”- campaign was able to make some breakthroughs in a number of Arab countries such as Kuwait and Saudi Arabia where women-related laws have been amended. Efforts are still under way in other countries to force a change in legislation and practices.

In the same vein, the Women’s Right to Nationality campaign was launched as part of the organization’s inclusive citizenship program during a regional meeting organized by CRTDA in 2002 in Lebanon and five Arab countries- Syria, Egypt, Morocco, Algeria and Bahrain- in order to:

- Seek and work towards equal rights to citizenship and nationality between men and women.
- Grant women the right to pass their nationality to their spouses and children by reforming and amending the applicable nationality laws in the countries in question.
- Advocate and mobilize regional and international support for the Arab women’s right to nationality.
- Raise awareness about the entitlements of women as equal citizens and eliminate all forms of discrimination against them.

### **Economic empowerment**

In cooperation with the British embassy in Beirut and the Global Fund for Women, CRTDA launched in 2000 the women’s economic empowerment project. The project provides on-going and context specific training and capacity building to local women and facilitates the sharing of experiences, thus empowering women to reach economic autonomy and start their own businesses. The project aims to:

- Provide new job opportunities for women by helping them acquire new capacities and technical skills through support and training.
- Offer social services aimed at cushioning the economic burden borne by women.



- Advocate the acquisition of skills in gender and development issues.
- Support local women and groups by honing their skills in planning, micro and macro analysis, institutional assessment and development.
- Promote economic literacy and disseminate knowledge on economic rights.
- Mainstream values such as transparency and accountability.

CRTDA was able to bring together around 40 women cooperatives from across Lebanon involved in diverse areas including but not restricted to agricultural processing and crafts and subjected them to training courses on manufacturing, packaging and marketing. It also provided in-kind assistance to improve the readiness of these cooperatives for the market and direct communication with clients. In order to engage more women, CRTDA took it a step further and set up the Namlieh store- Namlieh is the Arabic for pantry- next to the National Museum in the Mathaf area in Beirut, where one can browse and purchase the various products made by women in the countryside. The food products on sale are very diverse and are all made to help preserve traditional recipes of the Lebanese cuisine, while protecting the environment and empowering rural women. ●

## ANGUISH AND WORRY

Life darkened through my eyes. My worries intensified. Anxiety took over. God, what to do now? Should I write to my father? My father had no properties left to sell, he had already sold everything.

Milady sensed I was not myself anymore. Smile had disappeared from my face. I lost my vigor and was confined in my room longer than usual. A dreadful gloom crept into me: I might starve! I even might commit suicide!

She called on me one day and asked me to join her for coffee. I went to her reception room where a pretzel and a chocolate-milk pitcher rested on the small table.

“You are not yourself,” she said. “What is wrong with you? You are depressed. Has anything bad happened to you? Are your parents okay?”

“May I open up to you, Milady?” I said.

“This is exactly why I invited you.”

I started recounting the news from A to Z: the scholarship in Chicago, the scholarship for Germany and my correspondence. “This is not a generous behavior. A responsible man would never break his promise. Write to him. There must have been a misunderstanding,” she noted. “Do not fret. I will not charge you for rent and breakfast. You may also have lunch and dinner with us. The children love you a lot and you are like my Helmut (her oldest 16-year old son).”

She then went to the adjacent room and returned with fifty marks. “These are for cigarettes only, not for taking girls to beer parties!” she said.

“I promise,” I replied with difficulty. A lump gathered in my throat and rendered me speechless. I was on the verge of tears but I managed to compose myself.

I went down to my room and wrote a letter to Mr. Dodge, marked ‘Urgent’. I recall that I ended the letter saying “anguish is killing me. I am stranded in a strange land. I am not responsible for my presence here. I would be grateful if you could send me the rest of my scholarship by telegraph.”

After what seemed to me an endlessly long wait, I received a letter from Dodge including a USD 700 remittance. In his letter, he apologized and mentioned reasons that failed to convince me. What mattered was that I now had money to pay off my debts and return safely to my parents. ●





## DOES UNHEALTHY FOOD CAUSE ACNE?

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### Myth:

Everybody has probably heard that adopting an unhealthy lifestyle which includes eating fatty, greasy fried food and chocolate will definitely cause acne and an oily skin. Well, it does not.

### Fact:

It is true that what we eat and drink has an effect on our skin. However, it does not cause acne breakout. Dr. Neal B. Shultz, a dermatologist in New York says that chocolate and fried food do not cause acne breakouts.

Pimples appear when the hair follicles in our skin fill up with oil and dead skin cells. With the effect of bacteria that are developed at a later stage, they can result in acne. Acne appears at the age of puberty. It can start at the age of nine and sometimes goes beyond the teenage years. Most of the teenagers get acne between the ages 14 and 15. They are abundant in specific areas where the amount of functional oil glands is maximum: regions such as face, neck, chest, back and shoulders. The development of acne on the body is not limited to puberty. People in their fifties can get acne because of stress, excessive work, family problems.... Men who use steroids for body building can also get acne very frequently.

In fact, many factors cause the appearance of acne and pimples: hormones, excessive production of oil and sebum, bacteria and irregular shedding of dead skin.

Why do people insist on clinging to the myth of a wrong kind of diet causing acne? Well, studies have shown that stress or hormonal surges can propel acne. During periods of intense work and short periods of rest people rely on fatty foods and chocolates and that is why we automatically assume that it is fried food that has caused the breakouts of acne. In those situations, the production of sebum in our body increases. Sebum is a gland secreted mostly by teenagers because during puberty this gland is revived. Sebaceous glands are the reason behind acne on an oily face and forehead. We believe that testosterone activates sebum in our body and that could cause the declaration of acne on the faces of teenagers. Men who use steroids for body building get a lot of acne because testosterone increases after taking steroids leading to an increase in sebum in the male body, hence the acne.

Sometimes acne is the result of negligence by those who do not monitor their hygiene. In conclusion, many factors cause the production of acne but fried foods and chocolates are not one of them. ●

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## THE LEVANT AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

WAJIH KAWTHARANI

Wajih Kawtharani's *The Levant at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century* was published originally in 1980. The book went into three editions the last of which was published by the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies in 2013. The author obtained his PhD in History from the Sorbonne University in Paris and is currently the chair of the Beirut branch of the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies.

In his book, Kawtharani reads into diplomatic documents issued by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to unveil and interpret the different French attitudes regarding the future of Syria, which ultimately ended in divisions. The initial edition of the book touched on France's spheres of influence in the Levant in the wake of its occupation of the region and how it was able to control Levantine areas politically, economically and demographically. Thirty three years later, a third edition of the book was out, this time to examine the link established between the modern history of the Levant and the current status quo trends in Syria after the peaceful civil protests have deteriorated into armed violence. This shift led the author to summon up some of the French documents which forewarned of possible "chaos" in the Levant and to explore the difference between the talks about "chaos" in the colonial French discourse in the 1920s and the talks about chaos and civil war in Syria in the discourse of all the meddlers in the Syrian affairs today, foremost of which Russia and the United States of America.

The book consists of three sections through which Kawtharani retrieves the historical and geographical definition of the Levant as outlined in French documents, according to the Ottoman division and the states established by the French mandate which capitalized on the different sectarian identities.

The economic reports drafted by French experts at the service of the French capitalism that grew in importance following the Huvelin Mission to Syria in 1918 uncovered an immense French interest in the economic potential of Syria. Within the context of this French interest, the French capitalist programs and



approaches were laid forth along with numerous plans for both agricultural and economic investments in Syria. This capitalist plan required decisions falling under a political project that would entail the establishment of a state that encourages capital investment by controlling the situation in Syria and stamping down the opposition rejecting foreign interference.

The third section provides historic materials quoted from consular correspondences in the Levant and from those correspondences between the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the French embassies in Istanbul, London and Egypt as well as those exchanged between the High Commissariat and the Prime Ministry. The messages covered several topics including the French-British conflict and its impact on the European attitude towards Christians, the "Greater Syria" project under the French policy between 1913 and 1918, the French diplomacy and its understanding of the sectarian makeup as well as its manner of handling the particularities of this makeup through a social study conducted by the French Commissariat on the Shia'a and their leader Kamel Bek Assaad, the Druze and the Arab clans.

*The Levant at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century* reaches into the past to help readers understand the present and look ahead to the future, noting that the book was officially banned in Syria's libraries under the pretext that it contained sectarian material. ●

## OLIVE, SOAP, HAMMAM

*Olive, Soap, Hammam* is a book by Youmna Jazzar Medlej and Joumana Medlej in their famous series on Lebanese Heritage, which aims to promote public interest in, knowledge, appreciation and protection of our multifaceted national heritage. The book was written originally in French under the title *De L'olive au Hammam* and was translated into Arabic by Hala Youness. Published by Anis Commercial Printing, *Olive, Soap, Hammam* introduces readers to the benefits of the olive trees and to the steps of making olive oil soap.

The seafaring Phoenicians were aware of the health benefits of olive trees and planted them across Lebanon. The Romans were equally knowledgeable of the importance of olives and the villagers, knowing that olive oil was a natural preservative that prevented spoilage, made it a key ingredient in preparing mounch (traditional preserves for winter).

The time to harvest olives is in September. Every year, residents gather in the fields and spread wide sheets or nets underneath the olive trees to collect the fruit when it falls to the ground. Those olives which cannot be hand-picked directly from the tree are reached with a long wooden stick called *mefrat*. After picking, olives are sorted by color and size. The large olives are set aside for eating and the small ones are squeezed to produce olive oil stored in pottery jars away from the light or to make soap.

### The history of soap

Legend has it that under the Roman era, rainfall washed down the ash from the fire on the slopes of Mount Savo down to the river where they mingled with the clay deposited at the bottom of the river forming a primitive kind of soap. The French *savon* and the English word *soap* were thus derived from the name of the mountain, Savo.

Soap is made by pouring olive oil in a container boiling under hardwood fire and then adding tar to the mixture. The mixture is stirred with a long wooden shovel until it thickens and turns yellowish. Three days later, the dough is watered and flavored with herbs. It is laid afterwards on a large surface where it gets chopped and is left to dry for forty days.

Part of the book is dedicated to describe the traditions of the ancient Turkish baths (*hammam*), of which only two baths have survived in Lebanon, *Hammam El-Abd* in Tripoli and *Hammam El-Ward* in Saida. ●



# AL-RIF FAMILIES

## MARONITES MOSTLY PRESENT IN QOULAYAAT

In Arabic, Al-Rif is a term referring to those remote villages situated off the beaten track amidst beautiful scenery with small houses and narrow streets. In Lebanon, Al-Rif is also the name of a Lebanese family which made headlines in July 2015 after one of its members, George Al-Rif, was slaughtered to death by Tarek Yatim in Ashrafieh following a traffic dispute.

### Etymology

No data is available on the origins of the family. Speculators assume that its name was given because of the simple life led by its members.

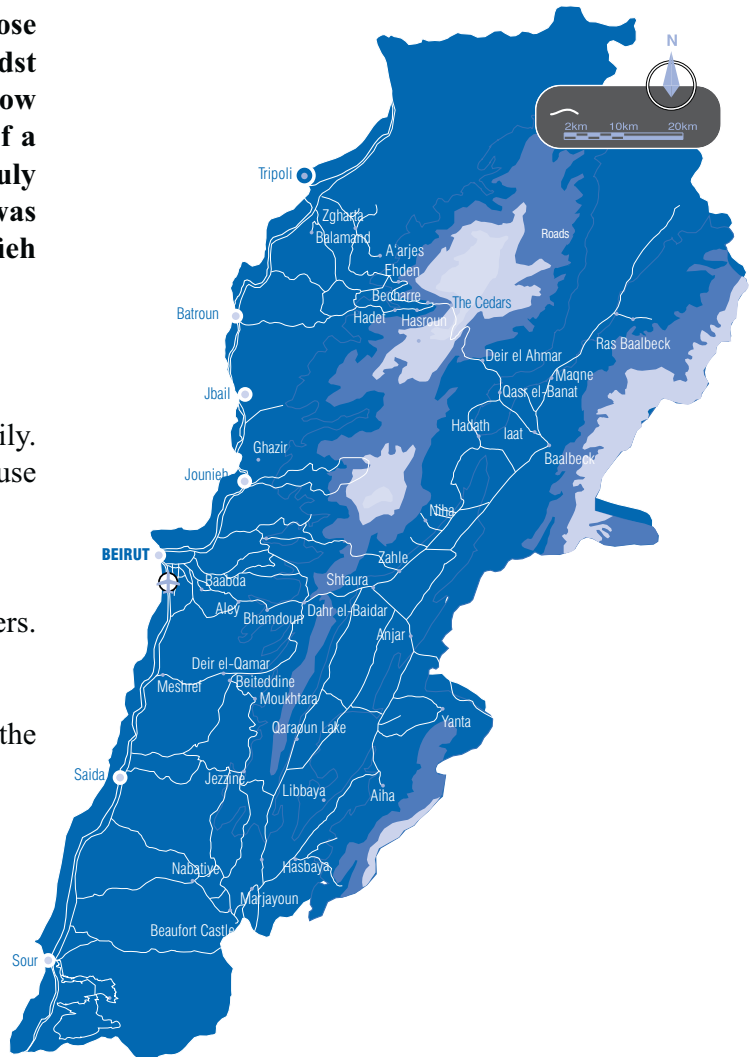
### Family Members

The Al-Rifs have approximately 350 family members.

### Sectarian and regional distribution

The Al-Rifs are strictly Maronite distributed in the following regions as per their registration records:

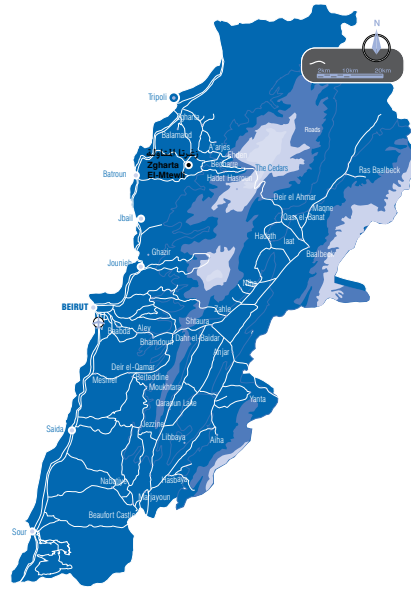
- Qoulayaat (Kessrouan): 120
- Baskinta (Matn): 45
- Bwar (Kessrouan): 39
- Zqaq Bl (Beirut): 18
- Ashrafieh (Beirut): 16
- Sin El-Fil (Matn): 16
- Mzarib (Jbeil): 15
- Riyaq (Zahle): 10 ●



# ZGHARTA EL-MTEWLI

## A SHIA'A MINORITY AMIDST A GREEK ORTHODOX MAJORITY

The key feature of Koura is that it is a 'Greek Orthodox' Qada'a hosting a predominant Greek Orthodox population and three Greek Orthodox deputies. The rest of the population breaks down as follows: 7% Sunni, 10% Maronite and 1% Shia'a scattered in a number of towns, including the town of Zgharta El-Mtewli.



### Etymology

Zgharta EL-Mtewli is a compound word where:

- Zgharta means the surrounded, fenced or barricaded place;
- Mtewli is used either to set it apart from the town of Zgharta El-Zewyi in the Qada'a of Zgharta or because it hosts a 'mtewli' community, a popular term used to refer to the Shia'a.

The meaning would thus become "the fortified town hosting the Shia'a".

### Location

Although it carries the name Zgharta, the town is not situated in the Qada'a of Zgharta. Rather, it rests in the Qada'a of Koura at an altitude of 750 meters above the sea level. It occupies a surface of only 160 hectares and is 85 kilometers from Beirut and 27 kilometers from Tripoli. It may be reached from Amioun to Deir Bella and from there to Zgharta El-Mtewli.

### Population and houses

The population registered in the town's personal status records is estimated at 270. Residents are distributed in 30 houses and belong to the Shia'a community.

### Voters

159 was the number of registered voters in the town in 2000 of which 94 went to polling stations to exercise their voting right. The number rose to 174 in 2009 with

139 casting their ballots. Voters are distributed as follows:

- Deeb: 35
- Tamer: 20
- Haj: 20
- Mohammad: 18
- Melhem: 18
- Rashid: 10
- Ibrahim: 12
- Hamad: 9
- Asaad: 8
- Hussein: 4
- Haidar: 4
- Merhi: 3
- Hamza: 3
- Salman: 3
- Sahyoun: 2
- Diab: 2
- Abidin: 2

### Local authorities

There is no municipality in Zgharta El-Mtewli. Local authority is vested in a Mukhtar and an ikhtiyariyah body.

### Educational institution

The town has neither public nor private schools.

### Economic life

Some families live off the remittances sent from overseas. Others ensure their livelihood by growing olive trees and bananas.

### Landmarks

The waterfall grotto is one of the most popular natural attractions in town. ●

# TAJIKISTAN

## WHERE THE UNIBROW REIGNS

Soon after its independence in 1991 after the collapse of Soviet Union, Tajikistan plunged into a five-year civil war that kept the country struggling with hardships, poverty and unrest for the next two decades. Since then, Tajikistan has done a remarkable job of reducing poverty. According to the World Bank, poverty rates fell from 96% in 1999 to 47% in 2009. Yet, despite the improvements, poverty and corruption remain rampant. A closer look into the profile of Tajikistan is provided below.

### Location and surface

Tajikistan is a Central Asian country bordered by Afghanistan to the south, Uzbekistan to the west, Kyrgyzstan to the north and China to the east. It spreads across 143,100 square kilometers and its capital and largest city is Dushanbe.

### Population

According to the World Bank's 2013 estimates, Tajikistan's population amounts to 8,207,834 distributed as follows: 58% Tajik, 23% Uzbek, 15% Russian and Iranian and 4% Tatars and Kyrgyz. Tajik women have gained wide popularity for their unibrows (connected eyebrows), which are viewed as a highly attractive feature.

### Religion

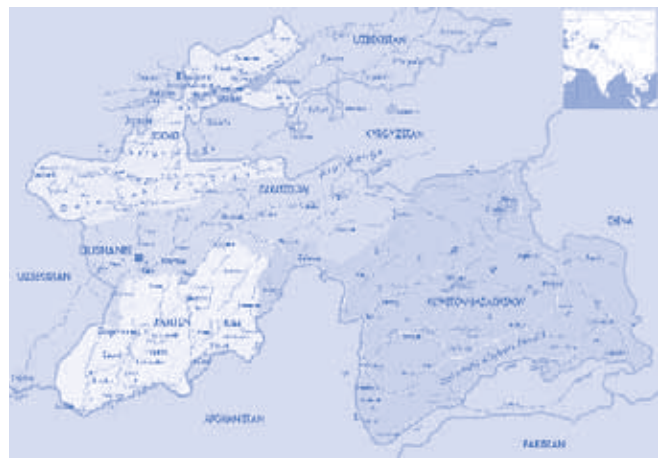
Islam is the most dominant religion in Tajikistan. The Sunni account for 97% of Muslims and the Shia'a for 3%. There are Russian Orthodox and Jewish minorities.

### Language

Persian Tajik is the official language in Tajikistan. A good number of citizens speak Russian as well.

### Economy

Tajikistan has abundant water resources. Around 65% of Central Asia's water passes through this mountainous country, which ranks second worldwide and first in Central Asia in terms of water reserves. Hence, Tajikistan's economy has relied primarily on the production of renewable energy, which has reached 527 billion kilowatts annually. The government has exploited the country's resources in building hydro-electrical plants to meet local needs for power and



export the excess to Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran and other neighboring countries. With 20% of GDP and 53% of employment, agriculture offers a solid foundation for economic development and the country is heavily dependent on revenues from cotton exports and remittances from migrant workers, primarily in Russia.

### Political system

Tajikistan gained independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. It is currently a republic with an executive power, whereby the President is head of state tasked with appointing the Prime Minister and the Cabinet. He is also entitled to run for presidency more than twice. Legislative power is vested in a bicameral parliament including the National Assembly which consists of 34 members, 25 elected by local deputies, eight appointed by the president and one reserved for the previous chairman of the assembly and the Assembly of Representatives consisting of 63 members elected directly by the people. ●

# AUGUST 2015 HIGHLIGHTS

**Governmental impasse, extension of security officials' mandates, perpetual waste crisis, arrest of Salafist cleric Ahmad El-Assir, popular protests demanding solutions for the garbage crisis and ouster of the government: those were the major highlights of August 2015. The daily digest of events broke down as follows:**

## August 1

- Ceremonies sweep across several regions on the occasion of the Lebanese Army's 70th anniversary and General Jean Qahwaji delivers a speech during a ceremony honoring Major General Fouad Shehab.
- PM Tammam Salam calls for Cabinet session on Wednesday.
- Child goes missing on a public beach in Saïda.
- General Michel Aoun challenges Hariri to a live debate and says the ties with the Future Movement are quasi-broken.

## August 2

- Roads blocked in Beirut and Saïda at night in protest of power cuts.
- Hassan Abdul Rahman shoots his son Raji dead in the town of Hrar in Akkar following a dispute over inheritance.

## August 3

- "There are no more negotiations with the kidnappers of soldiers and we are waiting until Al-Nusra Front announces its willingness to implement the agreement" says Director General of General Security Abbas Ibrahim after his visit to PM Tammam Salam.
- Speaker Nabih Berri reveals to As-Safir that he will not vote for Michel Aoun as President.
- A Syrian child is found hanged in Akkar.
- Minister of Public Health Wael Abou Faour warns of the possible spread of diseases.

## August 4

- Lebanon's heat wave is exacerbated by power outages.
- Italy's Minister of Defense Roberta Pinotti meets a number of Lebanese officials and checks the Italian

contingent in UNIFIL during her visit to Lebanon.

- The body of Mahdi Salameh who had gone missing on a beach in Saïda is found floating off the coast of Jounieh.
- A Lebanese Army's reconnaissance aircraft crashes in I'ilat in Baalbeck following a technical malfunction.

## August 5

- The Cabinet session concludes without any agreement over the security appointments or the garbage crisis.
- The Maronite bishops report after their meeting in Diman that the persistence of presidential vacuum heralds the fall of the Republic.
- Speaker Nabih Berri admonishes the Free Patriotic Movement MPs for boycotting parliamentary sessions and Minister Ali Hassan Khalil criticizes them for the same reason.

## August 6

- Speaker Nabih Berri and PM Tammam Salam head for Egypt to represent Lebanon at the inauguration of a major extension of the Suez Canal.
- National Defense Minister Samir Moqbel issues three decisions postponing the retirement of the Lebanese Army Commander, the Chief of Staff and the Director General of the Higher Defense Council by one year.
- Patriarch al-Rai begins a pastoral visit in western Beqa'a and Rashaya.
- Speaker Nabih Berri calls for a session to elect a president on August 12.
- Marc Hajj Moussa kidnapped at dawn on Thursday on the Mazraat Yachouh road and his kidnappers demand a ransom for his release.

## August 7

- A number of companies qualified to enter the tender for Lebanese waste management including three companies in Beirut and the Southern Suburbs.
- Lebanese Army Commander Jean Qahwaji visits Banque du Liban Governor Riadh Salameh.
- Labor Minister announces that citizens who want their formalities completed fast and promptly are to pay LBP 50,000.
- Telecoms Minister Boutros Harb announces the qualification of six international companies for the cell-management tender after the rejection of Orascom's offer.

## August 8

- Following the Change and Reform Bloc's meeting, General Michel Aoun lashes out at Army Commander General Jean Qahwaji warning him against the use of the army in the face of protestors. Aoun describes the government as a "government of trash" and calls on the Free Patriotic Movement proponents to hold themselves in readiness for action.
- Marc Hajj Moussa released in return for a USD 350,000 ransom paid to his kidnappers by the Ismail and Jaafar families in Brital.
- Azzam Ahmed, member of the Central Committee of the Fatah Movement, meets Lebanese officials during his visit to Lebanon and reiterates the need for security within Palestinian camps.
- Former President Michel Suleiman hosts a lunch at his residence in Lehfid for Army Commander Jean Qahwaji, Saudi ambassador to Lebanon and the Defense, Interior and Justice Ministers as well as MP Hadi Houbeish.

### August 9

- MP Walid Jumblatt says as he lays the cornerstone for the new Chahar Municipal Union Center that he had wanted to become a garbage collector in New York and now he has become the top garbage collector in Lebanon.
- Italian tourist drowns while hiking in Nahr Ibrahim.
- Patriarch al-Rai concludes his Beqa'a tour in the town of Rashaya after having visited the town of Mashghara and refuses to seek protection from any side, calling only for the protection of the Lebanese State.
- Speaker Nabih Berri reiterates that he will not give General Michel Aoun his vote for he does not recognize the legitimacy of Parliament. Berri adds that Aoun has the right to stage demonstrations without disrupting the work of institutions.

### August 10

- The standardized medical prescription goes into effect.
- Speaker of Paraguay, Hugo Velazquez, arrives in Lebanon on an official visit and meets his Lebanese counterpart as well as Lebanese PM Tammam Salam.
- Phalanges party leader Sami Gemayel calls on General Michel Aoun to retract his most recent statements against the Lebanese Army and its commander.
- Labor Minister Sejaan Azzi suspends the implementation of the memo he had issued four days ago regarding the acceleration of formalities in exchange for extra charges.

### August 11

- Iran's Minister of Foreign Affairs Mohammad Jawad Zarif meets PM Tammam Salam during his two-day visit to Lebanon and underscores his role in maintaining stability at this critical stage. Zarif says the reconstruction of the country should be what the Lebanese strive for and meets Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah in the evening.
- The parliamentary Future Bloc slams Aoun's statements against the army as shameful.

- Gunmen from the Jaafar family intercept the convoy of Bishop Khalil Alwan in Shlifa in Baalbeck and ask him to convey to Patriarch al-Rai their demand to exert pressure to release the wife of Mohammad Jaafar, arrested for involvement in the abduction of Marc Hajj Moussa.

### August 12

- Free Patriotic Movement supporters rally from Matn and Baabda towards the Martyrs' Square and speeches reiterate that these movements will continue until partnership with the Christians is recognized and Christians receive their rights.
- The Parliamentary session scheduled to elect a president postponed for the 27th time until September 2 due to lack of quorum.
- Iran's Minister of Foreign Affairs Mohammad Jawad Zarif concludes his visit to Lebanon after meeting Speaker Nabih Berri, Defense Minister and a delegation of Palestinian factions and assures that Iran does not meddle in Lebanon's internal affairs.
- PM Tammam Salam chairs a Lebanese delegation heading for Jordan to attend the meeting of the joint Lebanese- Jordanian Higher Committee and signs eight agreements with his Jordanian counterpart.
- The elections of the Editors' Syndicate result in the victory of Elias Aoun amidst objections by a number of journalists.

### August 13

- Verbal skirmishes plight the Cabinet session, which concludes without issuing any decisions. Telecoms Minister Boutros Harb suspends his participation in Cabinet sessions because "they are useless."
- MP Walid Jumblatt meets former PM Saad Hariri in Paris.
- "You Stink" campaigners pile up garbage bags in front of the house of Environment Minister Mohammad Mashnouq demanding his resignation.

### August 14

- Hezbollah's Secretary General Sayyed Hassan says on the anniversary of the July War anniversary that

General Michel Aoun represents the 'necessary' path to the presidency of the republic and the government and calls on the Christian forces to accept to return to Parliament to resume legislation.

- In an interview with Al-Manar TV, General Michel Aoun says "you either respond to my demands or expect a new Tsunami."
- "We are not seeking to isolate or break General Michel Aoun. This is a lie fabricated to pit against the Future Movement," says Former PM Saad Hariri in response to Nasrallah's statements.

### August 15

- The General Security arrests Salafist cleric Ahmad El-Assir at the Beirut airport during his attempt to flee to Nigeria via Egypt. El-Assir's wife and a number of other women protest by blocking roads and demanding his release.
- Former PM Saad Hariri calls the Interior Minister and the Director General of General Security to congratulate them on arresting El-Assir.

### August 16

- Director General of General Security, Major General Abbas Ibrahim denies any relation with Palestinian or political parties in the arrest of El-Assir.
- The Lebanese Army shoots two terrorists dead in the outskirts of Ersal.

### August 17

- Interior Minister Nouhad Mashnouq visits Speaker Nabih Berri and LF leader Samir Geagea and announces that the security plan in Beqa'a did not pay off.
- Saudi Ambassador to Lebanon Ali Awad Assiri announces after visiting the Phalanges Party leader Sami Gemayel that Lebanon needs consensus among its leaders in order to elect a president soon.
- Director General of General Security, Major General Abbas Ibrahim deems the arrest of El-Assir a great security achievement.



### August 18

- Lebanese Army Commander General Jean Qahwaji inspects army units in Eرسال and Brital and reiterates in his speech that political pushes and pulls will not affect the performance of the army.
- A statement by the Future Bloc reiterates that justice cannot be achieved unless it is holistic. The statement says Nasrallah's talk about fear and injustice is eloquent but does not match the conduct of Hezbollah.
- Prime ministers of Finland and Estonia arrive in Lebanon and inspect the Finnish and Estonian contingents in UNIFIL.
- Permanent Military Court will begin the trial of Ahmad El-Asir on September 15.

### August 19

- Opening of the financial proposals for the garbage tender postponed till next week due to mistakes made by the committee tasked with receiving the proposals.
- After Wednesday's parliamentary gathering, Speaker Nabih Berri assures that the policy of ignoring can no longer continue and that the interests of the people must be fulfilled.
- Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah renews his alliance with Aoun and continues to support his nomination.
- Lebanese Army Intelligence Directorate receives Salafist cleric Ahmad El-Assir.
- "You Stink" campaigners stage a sit-in at the Riadh Solh Square demanding a solution for the garbage crisis and engage in skirmishes with the security forces.
- Gunmen rob the Credit Libanais Bank branch in Khaldeh taking LBP 100 million and flee to an unknown destination.

### August 20

- MP Sami Gemayel says after meeting Speaker Nabih Berri that the stage we have reached is highly critical, warning of a possible collapse of the State structure.
- General Michel Aoun tells a number of MPs that he is seeking a compromise

regarding the internal elections of the Free Patriotic Movement after MP Alain Aoun has withdrawn his candidacy, which boosts the odds of Gebran Bassil's uncontested victory. "I am your guarantee but I do hope that you will be a guarantee for one another in the future," says Aoun.

- PM Tammam Salam publishes in the Official Gazette decrees signed by 18 ministers rather than 24.

### August 21

- "We shall not sacrifice our children under the pretext of fighting terrorism," says Sheikh Salem Rafei during a protest marking the anniversary of the twin explosion at the Salam and Taqwa mosques.
- After meeting LF leader Samir Geagea in Meerab, MP Ibrahim Kanaan reiterates unity among Christians adding that the Free Patriotic Movement and the Lebanese Forces support legislation concerned with urgent matters.
- In an interview with An-Nahar, Speaker Nabih Berri calls on ceasing the disruption of State institutions because it is going to harm everyone, stressing that revolutions would have been possible had it not been for sectarianism.
- Professional syndicates urge the prevention of State collapse because standing by silently means engagement in the crime.

### August 22

- "You Stink" campaigners gather at the Riadh Solh to protest the accumulation of garbage. Clashes between the protesters and the Internal Security Forces and Parliament guards results in injuries from both sides. Gunfire has been reportedly used by the security forces and political parties deplore the rigidity used against protesters.
- Clashes erupt in Ain El-Helweh camp between Fatah Movement and Jund El-Sham. Sniper gunshots block the southern highway between Saida and South Lebanon.

### August 23

- During a press conference at the Grand Serail, PM Tammam Salam says the incident at Riadh al-Solh will not pass without holding those responsible at all levels accountable adding that if the Cabinet session next Thursday is unproductive, then the government is useless.
- Justice Minister Ashraf Rifi says during the anniversary of the twin explosion in Tripoli that the ouster of the government will bring down the last legitimate constitutional entity in the country.
- General Michel Aoun brands PM Tammam Salam's conference as 'futile' and Geagea opposes the resignation of the government.
- The "You Stink" protest in Riadh Solh Square concludes with riots and the campaigners accuse the authorities of inciting the chaos by sending trouble makers to stir riots and distort the peaceful movement.

### August 24

- Clashes resume more fiercely in Ain El-Helwi camp between the Fatah Movement and Jund El-Sham leaving three dead and many injured. Residents of the camp flee the violence towards Saida.
- The unreasonably high prices proposed by bidders and the political quotas exposed in waste management contracts lead Speaker Nabih Berri to call for the cancellation of tenders.
- Interior Minister announces after inspecting Beirut's downtown that no parliamentary elections will be held before the presidential ones.
- Kuwait, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia urge their citizens to avoid travelling to Lebanon amidst the current situation.
- The 17th dialogue session kicks off in Ain tineh between Hezbollah and the Future Movement. the session's communiqué reiterates commitment to freedom and support to Lebanese institutions.
- The Internal Security Forces constructs portable concrete walls near the Grand Serail in Beirut's Riadh Solh.

### August 25

- The Cabinet convenes to discuss the garbage crisis. The session concludes with the withdrawal of the ministers of Hezbollah, the Free Patriotic Movement and the Tashnag Party who rejected the Cabinet's mechanism of work. The Cabinet cancels all tenders on garbage due to high prices and PM Tammam Salam offers to award Akkar an allocation of USD 100 million over three years in exchange for becoming the capital's garbage dump.
- The protest held by the 'We Want Accountability' campaign at the Riadh Solh Square ends with riots and vandalism.
- PM Tammam Salam orders the dismantling of the concrete walls set up earlier by the Internal Security Forces near the Grand Serail in Beirut's Riadh Solh.
- Minister of Foreign Affairs Gebran Bassil reports that PM Tammam Salam is overstepping the powers of the President of the Republic.
- NBN television slams Al-Jadeed television following the statements made by the latter's owner, Tahseen Khayyat, on the relationship with Libya and the position of Nabih Berri who protested the entry of Libyan Education Minister into Lebanon, thus depriving Lebanon of roughly USD 75 million.

### August 26

- Speaker Nabih Berri emphasizes during Wednesday's parliamentary gathering ongoing efforts to freeze the decrees that were not signed by the Free Patriotic Movement, Hezbollah, the Marada Movement and the Tashnag Party.
- Clashes resume in Ain El-Helwi's camp leaving one dead.
- Garbage piles up on the streets of Beirut and Mount Lebanon after Sukleen workers have ceased working demanding the fulfillment of their rights should the company halt its operations.

### August 27

- Ministers of the Free Patriotic Movement, Hezbollah, the Marada Movement and the Tashnag Party boycott the Cabinet session, which concludes with approving funds for the salaries of both serving and retired public employees. Speaker Nabih Berri requests PM Tammam Salam not to rush into scheduling a new Cabinet session before agreement over contentious matters.
- MP Walid Jumblatt calls General Michel Aoun to explore ways to address the current conditions.
- After checking Saida's waste treatment plant, former PM Fouad Seniora urges MP Walid Jumblatt to reopen the Naameh landfill.
- Minister Gebran Bassil wins the Free Patriotic Movement presidency uncontested after the rival list was disqualified.
- "There is no room for corruption and sectarianism in our institution" says General Security Chief Major General Abbas Ibrahim during the 70th anniversary of the General Security

### August 28

- Interior Minister Nouhad Machnouq holds a press conference stating that those who opened fire during Saturday's demonstrations were the Parliament police, the army brigade tasked with maintaining the security of Parliament and the Internal Security Forces. Parliament police denies the claims afterwards.
- General Michel Aoun holds a press conference, laying forth his reformist program, which rests upon the election of a president of the republic by the people and an electoral law based on proportionality. Aoun urges his supporters to rally on Friday against corruption, stating that the civil society has stolen the slogans raised by the Free Patriotic Movement and assuring that his ministers will not resign from the current government.
- MP Walid Jumblatt dispatches Health Minister Wael Bou Faour to Rabieh to meet General Michel Aoun.

- Army Commander Jean Qahwaji inspects the military units across the northern borders and says "we will not allow outlaws to plunge demonstrations into riots."

### August 29

- Civil society organizations rally in the Martyrs Square and give a 72-hour ultimatum to the government to meet their demands, first of which is the resignation of Environment Minister Mohammad Machnouk.
- Environment Minister assures that he will not give up his responsibilities at this stage.
- A father kills his son in Barja.

### August 30

- The Amal Movement holds a celebration marking the 37th anniversary of the disappearance of Imam Sayyed Mussa Sadr in Nabatieh. In his speech, Speaker Nabih Berri announces the call for dialogue during the first ten days of September. The topics to be discussed include the presidency of the republic, the electoral law based on proportionality and the law on the recovery of nationality.

### August 31

- The spiritual Islamic-Christian summit scheduled for today in Bkerké has been postponed. Meanwhile, a Christian summit has been held, urging speedy presidential elections and supporting the demands of the people.
- Environment Minister Mohammad Machnouk suspends his participation in a ministerial committee tasked with following up the garbage crisis. PM Tammam Salam assigns Agriculture Minister Akram Chehayeb the mission and appoints a committee of experts to handle the garbage issue.
- MP Walid Jumblatt and Hezbollah voice support to Speaker Nabih Berri's initiative.
- The Special Tribunal for Lebanon hears the testimony of Saadeddine El-Ajouz, the owner of a Lebanese telecommunications distributor Power Group. ●

# THIS MONTH IN HISTORY- LEBANON

OCTOBER 28, 1975:

ONE OF THE BLOODIEST DAYS OF THE CIVIL WAR

**The Lebanese Civil War was marked by brutal fighting that resulted in the death and injury of scores of people. October 28, 1975 was one of the bloodiest and most atrocious days with over 100 lives lost in random shelling in the Sabra and Maslakh massacres. A military expert estimated that the number of missiles that landed on Beirut, Qantari and the city center on that day was equal to the total of missiles used since the onset of the Civil War in 1975.**

## Ras Beirut and Downtown

From 1 am on Tuesday until 6 am on Wednesday, hundreds of bombs, rockets and RPGs and thousands of both heavy and light bullets were launched in the Qantari area and the George Picot and Clémenceau streets. A military expert reported that the gunfire exchanged in this battle exceeded all what had been exchanged so far amongst the different neighborhoods in Beirut.

Yesterday's battle resulted in dividing Beirut and isolating it from the city center.

The joint force formed by progressive parties and forces and their advocates was chiefly lined up in Burj el-Murr and its vicinity. The Phalanges positioned themselves at 10 pm at the Holiday Inn and the contiguous streets in Mar Elias and Hawooz el-Saatyeh, particularly in May Ziadeh's Street. They reciprocated the attack using heavy weapons and attempted to establish a cordon.

The losses incurred by both parties were estimated at 19 to 30 deaths and at least 35 injured.

The building most damaged by the shelling was the Saint Charles building hosting the Holiday Inn. The second and third floors were burnt down and the glass on most of the upper floors was shattered.

Burj El-Murr came under mortar rounds and long-range missiles. Three cars parked in front of the Vatican embassy were set ablaze and shrapnel hit a number of houses in May Ziadeh's and Mekseek streets causing glass to shatter and windows to break.



The front expanded towards Ain Mreisseh, Zaytouna and Bab Idriss. Shells landed in Sersuk and Aboun Nasr Souks and a huge fire erupted in Sersuk Souk but was soon extinguished.

### Karantina-Maslakh

The Karantina- Al-Nahr- Maslakh neighborhood was equally heated and witnessed in the morning frequent sniper operations, an exchange of rockets and a hail of bullets from heavy machine guns. Retaliation came from Jeitawi and Ashrafieh. At noon, gunmen raided the Karantina Hospital and forced security members inside the hospital to transfer some of the injured in a military armored vehicle to the Barbir Hospitals. Other gunmen seized another armored vehicle parked in front of Karantina's public school and forced Khaled Al-Ali, the soldier who was inside it, to steer it towards the Maslakh zone. A herd of armored vehicles was subsequently dispatched to where the confiscation took place and was able to encircle the militants, warning them to either free the vehicle or to bear the consequences, so they complied for fear of sustaining shelling.

In the same area, a third armored vehicle came under the militants' fire and reciprocated the same.

Unconfirmed news reported that a mortar round landed in a populated area between Karantina and Maslakh resulting in the death of 15 people and injuring at least 40 others. Fires erupted inside kiosks and a significant number of wounded was rushed to hospitals where it turned out they were more in need of food than of surgeries and wound dressing.

One of the wounded reported that the residents of Karantina and Maslakh were starving to death, not to mention the diseases threatening their lives as a result of water shortages and the spread of mosquitoes and flies. In the Martyrs' Square, exchange of fire was at its peak. Three people died in popular shops, in front of the Rivoli cinemas and near Al-Bohsali shops. Five bodies were found in Souk el-Qzaz, one in the Debbas Square and another one in Bechara Khoury's Street.

At the front of Al-Nassira- Ras Nabee- Damascus Road- Sodeco and Mono, only light machine guns were used before noon. However, the fighting escalated in the evening as militants switched to heavy weapons but no casualties were reported by the security forces.

Ashrafieh, Mar Mikhael, Sioufi and Abdul Wahab El Inglizi were caught in an exchange of fire with the Ras Nabee and Nabaa front.

### Bomb at Sabra

Tareeq Jdideh was bombed in the afternoon. A shell landed near the Al-Dana station and another fell a hundred meters away, killing 13 people and wounding another 37, most of whom were transferred to the Makassed Hospital and the Gazza Hospital. The attack was avenged by bombing Ashrafieh, Hay El-Seryen, Autostrade Al-Nhar and the Justice Palace.

A bomb exploded in the Zareef neighborhood near the Al-Sha'ar Pharmacy causing losses in life and material damage. No casualties were counted as the police could not access the scene of the incident.

At 5 pm, Phalangist militants intercepted an armored vehicle transferring troops from Mina El-Hosn's police station to a blood donation center. The militants confiscated the vehicle and kept it along with the





vehicle's leading officer and the troops at the Holiday Inn's courtyard. Intensive negotiations between the ISF Director General and Phalangist officials culminated in the release of the vehicle, the officer and the troops.

A report by the security forces stated that the shell that targeted the French Cemeteries Street in Qasqas resulted in a number of fatalities, one of which was Ali Hamieh, the municipal guard.

The body of an Egyptian national Abdul Meneem Ahmad Safwat, who died from a shot to his neck, was found in the Wigan Street.

Militants broke into the public school for girls in the Boutros Boustani Street and transformed it into a place for their meetings. Meantime, militants were opening fire at the force positioned in Bourj Al-Nassira, which retaliated fiercely and muffled the attack.

One bomb targeted Al-Basta neighborhood in Saleh Street and another hit the Abdullah Naji Street, which resulted in material damage and left three people seriously wounded.

Three unidentified bodies were also found in a car in May Ziadeh's street in Mina El-Hosn.

An 81 mm mortar round landed and exploded at the entrance of Samih Haidar's bakery in Abdul Wahab El Inglizi's Street. Shrapnel hit Samih Abdul Latif and his brother Abdul Hussein as well as Amine Ali Qelqas. Samih died immediately and it was discovered

that the bomb was launched from the western side from Ras Nabe'e.

### **Damour- Haret Nehmeh**

Clashes intensified between Damour, Haret el-Nehmeh and Nehmeh and the use of missile weapons and mortar launchers resulted in the eruption of fires, particularly in the sponge factory in the area.

### **Tripoli**

The body of Nabil George Srour was found in Bohsas at the entrance to the city of Tripoli. Nabil had gone missing five days ago along with three others, the fate of whom remained unknown. An exchange of fire between Al-Qebbeh and the road to Zgharta and the car carrying three passengers heading for Beirut never reached its destination.

### **Chiyyah- Ain Roummaneh**

The Chiyyah- Ain Roummaneh front flared up with continuous clashes and sniper operations that left eight people dead.

### **Hadath- Laylaki**

Fighting in the Hadath- Laylaki front triggered fires in the area and caused the death of five people.

### **Zahle**

Two Christians who had been abducted at a checkpoint in Teenayel were found dead in a car in the Taalbaya Valley. The bodies of another two Christians abducted last Sunday were also found and the armed clashes in Al-Kark Valley resulted in two fatalities. ●

# THIS MONTH IN HISTORY IN THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

## ASSASSINATION OF MOHAMMAD ANWAR SADAT, THIRD PRESIDENT OF THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

**Anwar Sadat was born in 1918 in Mit Abu al-Kum, al-Minufiyah, Egypt. He joined the military academy in 1935 and graduated as a second lieutenant in 1938. Anwar Sadat's days of freedom were few. The British forces tightened their grip over Egypt and subsequently over all Egyptians fighting for the freedom of their nation. After his expulsion from the army, Anwar Sadat was arrested and imprisoned several times. He seized a radio transmitter from anti-British German spies and used it to serve Egypt's struggle for freedom. After two years in prison (from 1942 to 1944), Sadat was able to escape and remained on the run until the lifting of the martial law in September 1945 when he could finally stop running from the authorities and resume a normal way of life.**

In 1946, Sadat was again arrested, this time after being implicated in the assassination of pro-British minister of finance Amin Uthman. After his acquittal and release in August 1948, he joined a secret military group which was later known as the Free Officers Movement which planned the 1952 revolution against King Faruk and the British rule in cooperation with Gamal Abdul Nasser.

From editor-in-chief of Al-Gomhuria, a daily founded by the revolutionary command council, Sadat was later appointed minister of state before he was elected member of the National Assembly for three consecutive rounds starting in 1957. In 1960, he became President of the assembly. Later in 1969, Gamal Abdul Nasser appointed him as vice-president and he remained in office until the death of Abdul Nasser on September 28, 1970. Sadat succeeded Nasser as president after the latter's death.

In 1971, he resolved to purge the establishments which were given vast powers under Abdul Nasser's rule by launching what was known as the 'Corrective Revolution'. That same year, Sadat issued a new constitution for Egypt. In 1972, he dismissed close to 17000 Soviet experts in one week under the pretext that hindered the Egyptian military operations during the War of Attrition and some of them were spying for

Israel. Sadat made a landmark decision by launching war against Israel in 1973 and led Egypt to its first military victory when the Egyptian army penetrated the Bar Lev Line and advanced into the Sinai Peninsula. Later in 1974, he introduced Egypt to political and economic reforms, reinstating a multi-party system and launching the economic policy of 'openness'.

Sadat visited Jerusalem in 1977 to advance peace between Egypt and Israel before his trip to the US where he signed the Camp David Accords under the auspices of US President Jimmy Carter. The agreement resulted in Israel's withdrawal from the Egyptian territories it had occupied, but failed to garner the desired Arab support. By the autumn of 1981, the Egyptian government had made several arrests targeting Islamic organizations, Coptic Church officials, journalists, intellectuals, leftists and liberals. Roughly 1536 people were arrested for fear of inciting popular demonstrations and riots against peace with Israel.

On October 6, 1981, thirty one days after announcing the roundup decision, Anwar Sadat was assassinated by members belonging to the Islamic Jihad Group during the annual victory parade held in Cairo to celebrate Egypt's crossing of the Suez Canal. Sadat was succeeded by his vice President Hosni Mubarak. ●

# ISLAMIC ORGANIZATIONS(9)

## THE AHMADIS: MUSLIMS OR GONE ASTRAY?

**The Lebanese media reported in September on the establishment of the “Lebanese Association for the Ahmadi Muslims”. What is this association and who are the Ahmadis?**

According to its notification of establishment, the objectives of the association are the following:

- To spread the Islamic Ahmadi thought, which calls for the revival of the values of love, tolerance, peace and patriotism.
- To raise the level of national and social awareness and to call for the acceptance of others by holding exhibitions, cultural seminars and campaigns to protect the environment (planting trees, cleaning beaches and public areas, medical awareness etc.)
- To raise the level of citizenship and encouraging people to respect the State’s rules and regulations
- To hold entertainment and cultural activities for the Lebanese youths from all regions as well as for the foreigners living on Lebanese territories to facilitate integration
- To issue and publish a cultural journal as well as books and publications associated with the goals of the association.

The association’s eight founding members are all Muslims, the most significant of whom is Ali Allam from Mrah El-Sraj. Hamza Humeid was commissioned to represent the association before the government.

Reading the goals and objectives of the association does not raise any doubts or suspicions, for they all serve national, human, social and environmental purposes. However, what has provoked Dar El-Fatwa and the Muslim scholars is that the association will work on spreading the Ahmadi thought.

**Who is the founding father of the Ahmadi thought and what beliefs do the Ahmadis hold?**

### Founder of the Ahmadi movement and his allies

The founder of the Ahmadi movement is Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, an Indian born in 1840 in Qadian, Punjab, north of India. His father was a skilled physician. In addition to the principles of Islamic studies and ethics, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad studied Arabic and Persian. He started his professional life as a court clerk but soon quit his job to handle affairs of his father’s estate, which he later abandoned for the study of the Quran, the *tafseer* and the *hadeeth*.

His work as an Islamic preacher began when he challenged the aspersions cast by the Hindus, a move that boosted his popularity among Muslims. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was also famous for fasting over long periods and holding retreats away from people.

Opponents of the Ahmadi movement believe that this da’awa was contrived and promoted by the British occupation of India in order to alienate Muslims from the obligation of jihad.

He wrote the *Proofs of Ahmadiyah* (Barahin Ahmadiyah) and claimed that the book consisted of fifty volumes of which he only published five. It is said that he mentioned the fifty volumes in order to collect massive funds and donations and spend them on his comfort and welfare.

In 1901, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad proclaimed himself the promised Messiah and Prophet of Islam. Mirza had suffered from several illnesses since his early childhood and died of cholera in 1908. After his death, he was succeeded by his follower Nouredine Bouheirdi, who served until his death in 1914. After Nouredine Bouheirdi, Mirza Bashireddine Mahmoud, son of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad carried the Ahmadi *da’awa* until 1965

before passing it to his son Mirza Nasser Ahmad who still handles missionary work today.

### Stages of *da'awa*

The Ahmadi *da'awa* has gone through four main stages:

1. The stage of preaching during which Mirza used to lecture, preach and respond to Christians and Hindus.
2. The stage of inspiration during which he said that inspiration was a blessing from God upon his subjects and that inspiration shall not be halted because the blessings of God had not been halted and He was an inspirer.
3. The stage of revival during which he proclaimed himself a reviver and announced that God had commanded him to take the pledge of allegiance for he was the promised Messiah and Mahdi.
4. The stage of claiming prophet hood during which Mirza claimed prophecy. However, Mirza's followers denied that he had claimed prophecy, arguing that the claim was spread by those Muslims challenging his *da'awa* and that his alleged prophecy was not legislative like that of Prophet Mohammad.

### Ahmadi thought

The community of Ahmadi thought was founded in India. It believes:

- That Jesus died and did not ascend into heavens after his crucifixion, as Muslims believe. Jesus died in Kashmir and was buried in Harat Khanyar.
- That Prophet Muhammad heralded the Messiah not the Jesus of Nazareth and that the Messiah is Mirza Ghulam of Qadian. Numerous miracles are reported by Mirza's followers to vouch for his truthfulness.
- That the greatest jihad is the jihad of the soul and that the jihad of the sword is of less greatness.
- That the soul of Prophet Ibrahim reincarnated into the body of Prophet Muhammad and that Mirza Ghulam is the reincarnation of both Prophet Muhammad and Jesus. It also holds that the words of Mirza are those of God almighty just like the Quran and the Torah and that Jesus will descend at the end of times in the holy town of Qadian, not in Damascus as reported.

- That Muhammad was a prophet but not the seal of prophets, for God sends messengers when the need or necessity arises. It also believes that Ghulam Ahmad is a prophet and that the term 'seal of prophets' does not mean the last of all prophets but the best and the greatest.
- It does believe in pilgrimage to Mecca but it holds that the greatest pilgrimage is to Qadian and to the site where the tomb of the founder Ghulam Ahmad is.
- It believes in the interpretation of the Quran. In parallel to the express text and the interpretation of some verses, there are different interpretations other than those agreed upon by Muslims.
- Anyone who declares Mirza Ghulam a liar or an apostate is himself an apostate.

### Apostasy of the Ahmadiyah

Despite the Ahmadi's reaffirmation that they are Muslims who believe in the tenets of Islam, the majority of Muslims, particularly the Mecca-based Islamic Jurisprudence Assembly, have labeled them as apostates gone astray based on several claims mentioned in Ghulam Ahmad's Proofs of Ahmadiyah:

- Claiming to have received revelations and to be the promised Messiah
- Claiming that prophecy did not end with Prophet Muhammad

### Whereabouts and followers

The followers of the Ahmadi *da'awa* are present primarily in India and Pakistan and also within Muslim Indian and Pakistani diaspora abroad. Efforts are under way to find followers in the Arab world and Africa.

No accurate data is available on the number of Ahmadi followers. The figure is estimated at roughly 1.5 million followers.

### Death

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad participated in many prayer duels in which he mentioned that the liar will die in the life of the honest and died himself of cholera in 1908 after a prayer with Molvi Sanaullah Amratsari. His rival died 40 years later in 1948. ●



## REAL ESTATE PRICES- AUGUST 2015

Contrary to the forecasts that predicted an increase in real estate transactions after the decline reported in July, stability marked the real estate market in August 2015. The tensions and fears marring the region, the persistence of the presidential vacuum and the dysfunction of the government as well as the protests and demonstrations staged in Beirut are likely to be the reasons for market inactivity.

Prices remained largely stable except for expensive estates, which reported a slight decline of 1% to 2%. Tables 1 and 2 illustrate the prices of some estates and apartments sold in August 2015.

Prices of some estates sold in August 2015			Table 1
Region	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Price (USD)	USD/m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Beirut</b>			
Horsh Beirut	1,250	9,375,000	7,500
Ras Beirut	300	3,000,000	10,000
<b>Baabda</b>			
Jomhour	1,100	1,265,000	1,150
Falougha	900	180,000	200
<b>Matn</b>			
Broummana (Qennabe)	700	420,000	600
Beit Mery	1,200	960,000	800
Broummana (Mar Chaaya)	550	330,000	600
Bekfayya	2,100	1,785,000	850
Monteverde	1,500	1,500,000	1,000
<b>Aley</b>			
Bhamdoun	2,000	280,000	140
Bshamoun (Madares)	1,700	1,020,000	600
<b>Kessrouan</b>			
Faraya	2,500	300,000	120
Faitroun	1,000	250,000	250
Jounieh (Malaab)	750	1,350,000	1,800
Rayfoun	920	276,000	300

Source: Compiled by Information International

Prices of some apartments sold in August 2015			Table 2
Region	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Price (USD)	USD/m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Beirut</b>			
Ashrafieh (Sofil)	200	440,000	2,200
Quraytem	150	405,000	2,700
Clemenceau	270	810,000	3,000
Dennawi	150	300,000	2,000
Saqiyet Janzir	130	325,000	2,500
Ras Nabe'e	170	391,000	2,300
Qasqas	150	360,000	2,400
<b>Baabda</b>			
Hazmieh (Mar Taqla)	120	252,000	2,100
Hazmieh (Mar Taqla)	480	792,000	1,650
Haret Hreik (Amliyah)	160	280,000	1,750
Hadath (Spanish Embassy)	175	175,000	1,000
Hadath (Hay El-Amerkan)	240	408,000	1,700
Hadath (Antouniyeh)	500	675,000	1,350
Loueizi	170	289,000	1,700
Ain Roummaneh (Chamoun Boulevard)	150	210,000	1,400
<b>Matn</b>			
Jal el-Dib	100	200,000	2,000
Monteverde	180	306,000	1,700
Mansourieh	300	540,000	1,800
Broummana	160	240,000	1,500
Beit Mery	250	400,000	1,600
Zalqa	150	210,000	1,400
Dbayyeh	200	250,000	1,250
Bourj Hammoud	140	182,000	1,300
<b>Aley</b>			
Bshamoun (Madares)	120	120,000	1,000
Aley	210	252,000	1,200
Kahldeh (Highway)	150	150,000	1,000
Doha Aramoun	130	195,000	1,500
Amrousiyeh	200	166,000	830
<b>Kessrouan</b>			
Kfarhbab	270	607,500	2,250
Adonis	280	364,000	1,300
Jounieh (Ghadir)	200	300,000	1,500

Source: Compiled by Information International

## PLASTIC SURGERIES AROUND THE WORLD

According to the global statistics issued by the International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery for 2014:

- **Over 20 million** cosmetic surgical and nonsurgical procedures were performed worldwide in 2014.
- **17 million (86.3%)** procedures were performed by women and more than 2.5 million by men.
- **4,064,571** cosmetic surgical and non-surgical procedures were performed in the United States in 2014, accounting for 20.1% of the total procedures worldwide.
- **2,058,505** cosmetic surgical and non-surgical procedures were performed in Brazil in 2014, accounting for 10.2% of the total procedures worldwide.
- **980,313** procedures were performed in South Korea, accounting for 4.8% of the total procedures worldwide.
- Eyelid surgery was the leading cosmetic surgical procedure performed in 2014 with a total of 1,427,451 surgeries. Liposuction and breast augmentation ranked second and third.



## Beirut International Airport

### Rafic Hariri International Airport Traffic- August 2015

A significant increase in traffic was reported at the Rafic Hariri International Airport in August 2015 compared to both the previous month and the same period last year. The number of users stood at 893,708 increasing from 814,800 in August 2014 and 791,067 in July 2015, i.e. up by 9.7% and 13% respectively.

The airport handled 4,796,470 passengers over the first eight months of this year compared to 4,378,471 passengers over the same period last year, i.e. up by 417,999 passengers or 9.5%.

Airport traffic in August 2015 compared to July 2015 and August 2014					Table 1
	July 2015	August 2015	August 2014	% of change July/august 2015	% of change august 2014/2015
Arriving airplanes	3,451	3,608	3,388	+4.5	+6.5
Departing airplanes	3,450	3,608	3,394	+4.5	+6.3
<b>Total no. of airplanes</b>	<b>6,901</b>	<b>7,216</b>	<b>6,782</b>	<b>+4.5</b>	<b>+6.4</b>
Arriving passengers	451,648	378,693	355,306	-16.1	+6.6
Departing passengers	336,485	510,998	458,546	+51.8	+11.4
Transit passengers	2,334	4,017	948	+37	+323
<b>Total no. of passengers</b>	<b>791,067</b>	<b>893,708</b>	<b>814,800</b>	<b>+13</b>	<b>+9.7</b>
Imported goods (per ton)	4,394	4,516.8	4,296.8	+2.8	+5.1
Exported goods (per ton)	3,641	2,967.7	2,398.3	-18.5	+23.7
<b>Total amount of goods (per ton)</b>	<b>8,035</b>	<b>7,484.5</b>	<b>6,695.1</b>	<b>-6.8</b>	<b>+11.8</b>

Source: Compiled by Information International based on figures provided by the Directorate General of Aviation

● **40,000** is the number of real estate sale transactions recorded in Lebanon from the beginning of 2015 until the end of August, down by 12% from the same period last year.

● **4000** is the average number of new cars sold per month in Lebanon in 2015.

● **287 tons** is the amount of gold reserves at Lebanon's Central Bank. Lebanon ranks 19<sup>th</sup> worldwide and 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Arab world (after Saudi Arabia at 323 tons) in gold holdings.

● **5.9 million m<sup>2</sup>** is the area licensed for construction during the first half of 2015 compared to 7.3 million m<sup>2</sup> during the same period last year, i.e. down by 23.5%.

## Publications by Information International (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
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- 6- Lebanon in Figures 2003-2004
- 7- Lebanon in Figures 2005-2006
- 8- Lebanon in Figures 2007-2008
- 9- Lebanon's MPs and Lebanese Parliamentary Elections 1960 - 2009
- 10- 2009 Parliamentary Elections by ballot box, candidate and confession-North District
- 11- 2009 Parliamentary Elections by ballot box, candidate and confession-Beirut District
- 12- 2009 Parliamentary Elections by ballot box, candidate and confession-Mount Lebanon District
- 13- 2009 Parliamentary Elections by ballot box, candidate and confession-Beqa'a District
- 14- 2009 Parliamentary Elections by ballot box, candidate and confession-South and Nabatiyeh District
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## Publications by INMA (in Arabic):

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- 12- Al Tanassot Ala Al Hatef fi Lebnan 1947-1958
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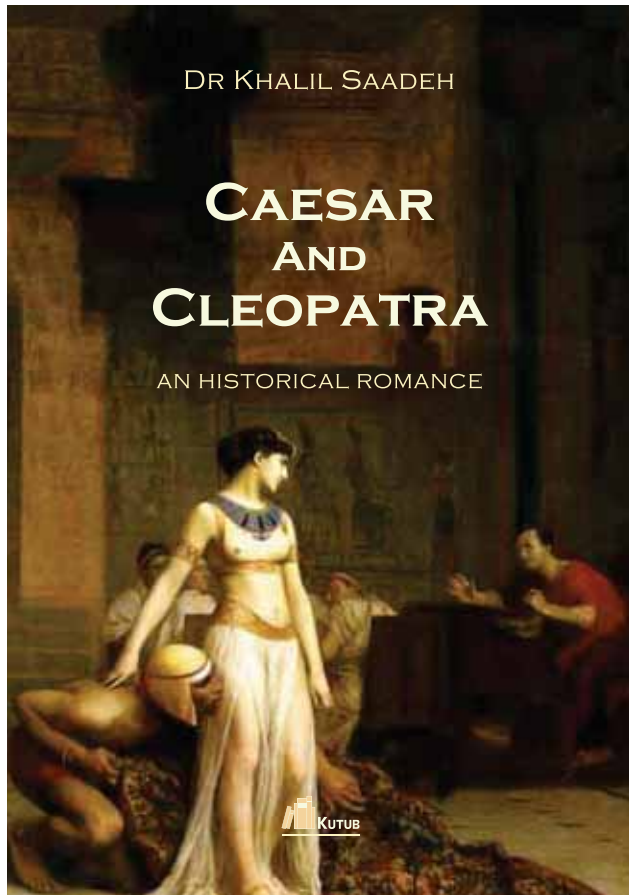
### To Subscribe:

Al-Borj Building, 4th Floor, Martyrs Square  
Beirut Central District  
Telephone: 961-1-983008/9 961-3-262376  
Fax: 961-1-980630  
info@monthlymagazine.com  
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# CAESAR AND CLEOPATRA

Caesar conquered the most powerful rivals, exposed himself in battles, overcame extreme difficulties and knew no surrender. He was truly the dictator, ruler and emperor of Rome. Women were the one thing he could not resist, making him yield and capitulate. There was one special lady, the Queen of Egypt, who swept Julius Caesar off his feet. A love that was as endless as space and as irresistible as the tides of the ocean; a pure and powerful kind of love without which the world becomes a lifeless mass of matter. It was only death that could thwart the immensity of such a love. And death it was that stood between Cleopatra and Caesar.

Khalil Saadeh's novel *Caesar and Cleopatra* was published in 1898 in London and has been out of print for more than a century. Thanks to Salim Mujais and Badr el-Hage, a scanned copy of the book was obtained from the Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, and was used to produce the present edition of the book and highlight the contribution of Saadeh to the works of literature concerned with the legendary romance that linked Caesar to Cleopatra.



© Kutub, All Rights Reserved  
Al-Borj Building, 4th Floor Martyr's Square, Commercial Center  
Beirut - Lebanon  
P.O.BOX: 11-4353 Beirut, Lebanon  
Tel: (961-1) 983008/9 Fax: (961-1) 980630  
E-mail: [kutub@kutubltd.com](mailto:kutub@kutubltd.com) Website: [www.kutubltd.com](http://www.kutubltd.com)