

# LEBANON: DEVELOPMENTS AND PROSPECTS



May 5, 2005

Briefing of the  
Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

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The Helsinki process, formally titled the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, traces its origin to the signing of the Helsinki Final Act in Finland on August 1, 1975, by the leaders of 33 European countries, the United States and Canada. As of January 1, 1995, the Helsinki process was renamed the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The membership of the OSCE has expanded to 55 participating States, reflecting the breakup of the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia.

The OSCE Secretariat is in Vienna, Austria, where weekly meetings of the participating States' permanent representatives are held. In addition, specialized seminars and meetings are convened in various locations. Periodic consultations are held among Senior Officials, Ministers and Heads of State or Government.

Although the OSCE continues to engage in standard setting in the fields of military security, economic and environmental cooperation, and human rights and humanitarian concerns, the Organization is primarily focused on initiatives designed to prevent, manage and resolve conflict within and among the participating States. The Organization deploys numerous missions and field activities located in Southeastern and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. The website of the OSCE is: <[www.osce.org](http://www.osce.org)>.

## ABOUT THE COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

The Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, also known as the Helsinki Commission, is a U.S. Government agency created in 1976 to monitor and encourage compliance by the participating States with their OSCE commitments, with a particular emphasis on human rights.

The Commission consists of nine members from the United States Senate, nine members from the House of Representatives, and one member each from the Departments of State, Defense and Commerce. The positions of Chair and Co-Chair rotate between the Senate and House every two years, when a new Congress convenes. A professional staff assists the Commissioners in their work.

In fulfilling its mandate, the Commission gathers and disseminates relevant information to the U.S. Congress and the public by convening hearings, issuing reports that reflect the views of Members of the Commission and/or its staff, and providing details about the activities of the Helsinki process and developments in OSCE participating States.

The Commission also contributes to the formulation and execution of U.S. policy regarding the OSCE, including through Member and staff participation on U.S. Delegations to OSCE meetings. Members of the Commission have regular contact with parliamentarians, government officials, representatives of non-governmental organizations, and private individuals from participating States. The website of the Commission is: <[www.csce.gov](http://www.csce.gov)>.

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# LEBANON: DEVELOPMENTS AND PROSPECTS

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May 5, 2005

## Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe Washington, DC

The briefing was held at 10:10 a.m. in room 2360, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC, Chadwick R. Gore, Staff Advisor, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, moderating.

*Panelists present:* Chadwick R. Gore, Staff Advisor, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe; Joe Bains, President, World Lebanese Cultural Union; and Dr. Walid Phares, Senior Fellow, Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, Delegate, Lebanese Diaspora to the United Nations.

Mr. GORE. Well, good morning, and welcome to this Helsinki Commission briefing on Lebanon: Developments and Prospects.

My name is Chadwick Gore. I'm a staff advisor for the Commission, and I'll be your moderator this morning.

Today's briefing is being held due to continuing interest in the developing situation in Lebanon. The Commission held a hearing in March that addressed the Russia-Syrian connection and its effect on Lebanon.

This political situation, especially regarding Syria's compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559, which calls for complete withdrawal of Syria's troops from Lebanon, was a key component of that hearing, as it will be today.

Lebanon, by the way, was an original 1973 Non-Participating Mediterranean state of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe produced by the Helsinki Final Act.

In that capacity, Lebanon participated in the Belgrade Follow-up Meeting from 1977 to 1978; the Vienna Follow-up Meeting of 1986 to 1989; the 1990 Palma de Mallorca meeting; and the 1993 meeting in Valetta.

That status was redefined by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in 1995, as Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation and Lebanon was effectively dropped from the group.

But the new status was not applied to Lebanon at that time. So while Lebanon's current status with the OSCE is technically unclear, practice assumes that Lebanon has had no relationship with the OSCE since the establishment of the Mediterranean Partners.

With the evolving political situation in the country, it is possible, however, that in the not-too-distant future Lebanon could once again affiliate with the other Mediterranean Partners, which include Jordan and Israel, and become reinvolved in the Helsinki process.

Now, today's topics will include the complete withdrawal of Syrian troops and intelligence services from Lebanon; disarming of Hezbollah; democratic elections, including the right of émigrés to vote; release of all Lebanese detainees by Syria; and such other topics as arise.

Our guests are extremely well qualified to discuss these matters. Mr. Joseph Bains was born in north Lebanon in 1944—and I know he's not shy about his age. A Christian Maronite, he migrated to Australia in 1956 at age 12.

He's an Australian property developer and investor and has been involved throughout his life in Lebanese Diaspora affairs through the Australian-Lebanese Association and the World Lebanese Cultural Union, which he currently serves as president.

Dr. Walid Phares was born and raised in Lebanon, educated at the Jesuit and Lebanese Universities of Beirut, where he obtained degrees in law and political science, as well as a certificate in sociology. He obtained a Master's in International Law from the Université de Lyon in France and a Ph.D. in International Relations and Strategic Studies from the University of Miami.

Currently, he is Professor of Middle East Studies, Ethnic and Religious Conflict at Florida Atlantic University, and is an expert on political Islam, jihad, and the clash of civilizations.

He has published numerous books and articles, has been interviewed by all major networks here and abroad, and is a frequent contributor to U.S. and international radio programs.

He's currently a terrorism analyst and shares his Mideast expertise on MSNBC, CNBC, and NBC.

Before we start with your testimony, I'd like to acknowledge two of our Commissioners who are here. Hon. Alcee Hastings of Florida, who currently serves as President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, and Hon. Mike McIntyre. Thank you both for coming.

Mr. Bains?

Mr. BAINS. Thank you very much, Mr. Gore, members of the Commission. I have the honor to appear in front of your Commission today to testify on the current situation in Lebanon, after the declared Syrian military withdrawal.

My name is Joe Bains, and I'm an Australian from Lebanese descent, and I'm currently the president of the World Lebanese Cultural Union. We are an international non-governmental organization founded in 1959 with the full support of the foreign ministry in Lebanon as the sole legitimate representative body of the Lebanese Diaspora worldwide.

There are between 12 and 15 million people from Lebanese descent around the world and communities established in more than 50 countries. About 2 million Americans are from Lebanese descent.

As Lebanese around the world, we have been very concerned about the Syrian occupation of our mother country for more than a quarter of a century. And also about the presence of terrorist organizations, such as Hezbollah, Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and other similar groups.

The Lebanese Diaspora was and remains very much concerned about the fate of Lebanese detainees in Syrian jails. The 12th and the 13th World Congresses, held in Mexico City in 2001 and in Miami in 2003, called on the international community to intervene in Lebanon, to evacuate the foreign forces, including the Syrian occupation army, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, and foreign terror networks.

We hereby thank the U.S. Government for the passing of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559 of September 2004 and for the signing of United Nations Security Presidential letter which endorsed the resolution.

We, however, call the immediate attention of the U.S. Congress and the Helsinki Commission to the dangerous developments which have occurred in Lebanon since the voting of the said resolution, which dangers intensified since February 14th, when the former Prime Minister of Lebanon, Mr. Rafiq Hariri, was assassinated, along with his companion in a barbaric manner.

The Syrian regime ordered its troops to withdraw from Lebanon and declared it has accomplished the pullout by the end of April. But we do not believe that United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559 has been fully implemented.

First, the disarmament of militias, such as Hezbollah and the Palestinian jihadist organizations, such as Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and others, haven't taken place yet.

Second, we have grave concerns that the legislative elections decided for this month won't be held in a democratic context. The gerrymandering of electoral districts by a pro-Syrian Government, even in the presence of international monitors, will lead to a misrepresentation of Lebanon's democratic trends, which were expressed to the world this winter through the popular demonstrations in Beirut. And I think anybody who saw it on television would have seen about 1.5 million people gather in Martyr's Square, or Freedom Square.

Hence, the Lebanese Diaspora, which count in numbers at least five times the size of the Lebanese population inside the homeland, calls on the U.S. Government and the international community to do the following—or for the following.

Ask the Syrian regime to free all Lebanese prisoners detained on Syrian territories.

We're requesting from the Syrian forces a list of all Lebanese citizens or residents who have died while in their custody or with their knowledge since June 1976, both on Lebanese and Syrian territories.

We request an accounting of all public treasure in archive taken from the Lebanese Republic, such as artifacts, moneys, government files, et cetera, to be returned to the new Lebanese Government under the auspices of the United Nations.

We are requesting a full report from Syrian authorities as to their knowledge of all or any illegal military material hidden in Lebanon by their personnel or by organizations with direct ties to the Syrian Government.

We are requesting the formation of an international commission of investigation for all war crimes committed by the Syrian forces and security services from June 1976 until this date.

And we are requesting the dismantling of all paramilitary networks established by, or supervised by, or funded by the Syrian occupation army, including, but not exclusively, the military installations and weapons of Hezbollah, the Syrian Baath Party, the Syrian National Social Party, the Palestinian paramilitary units in Lebanon, as well as the smaller militias armed and trained by the Syrian intelligence.

And finally, as Mr. Gore indicated earlier, we're looking to extend the right to vote for all Lebanese overseas so that the legislative elections would represent the will and the aspirations of the entire Lebanese people.

Thank you.

Mr. GORE. Thank you very much.

Dr. Phares?

Mr. PHARES. Thank you very much.

I am honored to be given the opportunity today to brief you and the Commission on the developments in Lebanon since the declaration by the Arab Syrian Republic that it has indeed completed its withdrawal from the Lebanese Republic last April.

The evolution of events and the various political steps made in Lebanon since the March 14 Cedars Revolution's demonstration shows that despite some positive steps that we do recognize, the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559 was not yet fully implemented.

Furthermore, the nonimplementation of the said resolution may lead to a crisis even more dangerous than the previous stage with regard to Lebanon's freedom, the region's stability, international relations and U.S. interests.

Here are the main sketches.

With regard to the Cedars Revolution, as defined by the U.S. administration and perceived by the international community, the democracy movement that rose against Syrian occupation as of last February and produced several demonstrations, including the 1.5 million men and women rally on March 14, 2005, was indeed a Cedars Revolution.

It showed the world without any doubt that an overwhelming majority of Lebanese, from various religious and ethnic backgrounds—Sunni, Christian, Druze, Shi'a, and others—wanted the Syrian withdrawal, the disarming of militias and of terrorist organizations, and, of course, wanted democratic elections.

The people of Lebanon not only want the full implementation of 1559, but has shown its clear intention for self-determination. All that was imposed by the Syrian occupation, as was the case with the Israeli occupation, must follow the Syrian withdrawal.

The Cedars Revolution, which was recognized by the international community as a response by Lebanon civil society to 1559, will be fulfilled only with the full implementation of the said resolution.

So where is the resolution now?

The Syrian regime states that it has fulfilled its obligations toward 1559. But the United States, France, the United Nations, and many other countries have stated that the resolution wasn't fully implemented.

Many civil society organizations in Lebanon, such as human rights groups, educational associations, and popular movements, as well as the Lebanese Diaspora's official institution, the World Lebanese Cultural Union, believe that the resolution wasn't fully implemented yet.

Moreover, they believe that the steps that were made aim at creating a wider mechanism of obstruction to freedom and sovereignty, and therefore to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559.

I do believe that less than 20 percent of the resolution was implemented. 1559 called for three matters. One, for the full withdrawal of the Syrian occupation. Two, for the disarming of the militias. Three, democratic election.

In fact, as of today, only one segment of the first obligation was implemented. The Syrian regime pulled out its regular troops, no doubt about it, hardware, and the visible infrastructure of the intelligence service. I repeat, the visible infrastructure of the intelligence services.

The Mukhabarat networks are still present in Lebanon with their sleeper cells and other underground networks. All armed militias and/or terrorist organizations which are under Syrian auspices, and therefore falls under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559, are still omnipresent.

And finally, because of the presence of the Syrian intelligence, the presence of paramilitaries and foreign terrorist networks, and because of the influence of the current government, the current pro-Syrian Government, democratic elections slated for the end of May won't be fulfilled unless changes would occur.

We do believe that there are Syrian plans to obstruct 1559.

A, the Syrian Government indeed pulled out the regular forces, but not in implementation of Resolution 1559, but under the Cooperation and Brotherhood Treaty [Treaty of Brotherhood, Cooperation and Coordination] signed in 1991. Makes a big difference. Which means that a future pro-Syrian Government in Lebanon will be able to ask for these forces to come back again.

What is needed is the abrogation of the treaty of 1991 that allows Syrian forces to deploy at their discretion, anywhere, any time, in Lebanon, back into Syria, and into Lebanon. That's the core problem, the treaty of 1991.

B, maintaining intelligence services, militias, and networks such as Hezbollah in Lebanon, which would intimidate and put pressure on civil society—not the political organization of Hezbollah, but the weapons, the Iranian weapons that are in the custody of Hezbollah.

C, forming, instead of a national unity cabinet that should have been the case, a repeat of the previous government, a pro-Syrian Government to oversee the legislative elections.

D, therefore, we do fear that the upcoming elections will be impacted by the above elements, hence producing another pro-Syrian, potentially jihadist majority in parliament.

This, in turn, would bring back a pro-Syrian, Hezbollah-influenced government.

Recommendations. In order to upset the return of potential Syrian Baathist influence and the maintaining of Hezbollah's military power in Lebanon, and as a way to help the democracy movement express itself freely, we recommend the following emergency guidelines:

First, election security in Lebanon. The United Nations must ask for the rapid deployment of the Lebanon army at all polling stations in Lebanon, with the assistance of U.N. observers. This is under Lebanese law, and it's under international law.

This deployment of the Lebanese army will ensure the security and the freedom of the voters, especially in the areas controlled by the armed militias.

The Lebanese army deployment must be under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559 and protected by the United Nations. Any obstruction of that deployment

and/or any aggression against the Lebanese army should be considered as an aggression against the United Nations.

This measure can ensure a minimal guarantee for the implementation of a third segment of 1559, that is fair and free elections.

Two and finally, as it was indicated by Mr. Baini, Lebanese votes overseas to be counted. As was the case with the Iraqi precedent, Lebanese citizens living abroad must be able to vote in the upcoming legislative election. We're not talking about immigrants at large. We are talking—I am talking about holders of Lebanese nationality outside Lebanon. They must be enabled to cast their ballots under United Nations supervision.

Lebanon will supervise their counting. This is a condition sine qua non for free and fair elections in Lebanon. In sum, and in an interim status, the deployment of the Lebanese army all over the Lebanese territory to protect the elections, and the overseas votes, both under the auspices of 1559, both measures will give a minimum, will give Lebanon's civil society a minimum chance for participation in the democratic process, as a second step toward the full implementation of the said resolutions and in fulfillment of the Cedars Revolution.

Mr. GORE. OK. Thank you. I think this is pretty comprehensive for a snapshot of where we are today.

I'd like to welcome any questions from the floor.

Ms. ALAMEN. OK. My name is Lara Alamen. I work for Chairman Henry Hyde, Chairman of the House Committee on International Relations. I was wondering if the both of you could be more specific about steps that can be taken between now and May 29th to ensure democratic elections.

Specifically, I was hoping you could address the election law and the difference between the 2000 election law that could be used or something else.

And then also, my last question is, what are your contacts on the ground in Lebanon, and when was the last time that you were there?

Thank you.

Mr. BAINI. Dr. Phares will answer that. Thank you.

Mr. PHARES. Last time I visited was in 1996.

My connections in Lebanon are, as one could imagine, municipalities, members of parliament, heads of political parties, heads of student unions, editors-in-chief—civil society, the entire civil society.

With regard to the question of elections in Lebanon and the choices, the constitutional choices and electoral laws, there are two options, just to oversimplify. And the Lebanese themselves are debating it.

One, which is the law of 2000, would consider the unit, the electoral unit, as a mohafazat, which means a province, mohafazat or province, which is a large entity—that would be the equivalent probably of a state in the United States or a province in Canada.

Then the electoral units would be very large.

The other option, which is raised by the opposition, is to draw the lines at the level of qada'a, which will be equivalent of a county here in the United States.

Now, obviously the pro-government political forces would prefer the mohafazat because it would, for a variety of reasons, project a majority of pro-government people or

candidates, while the opposition—or at least most of the opposition—wants the system of the qada'a or of the smaller entities, smaller units, which would ensure them a victory.

Now, the arguments here that Mr. Baini has presented are coming from the Lebanese Diaspora. So the choice, the final choice of which system, is basically the choice that the Lebanese themselves will have to make.

And my remarks are about the fairness of the elections regardless of what system, should it be qada'a or should it be mohafazat.

The concerns are two. And to answer your first, most important question, especially in the United States and international community, there are two issues that have to be ensured by the outside intervention, by the outside supervision, to ensure that there will be fair elections.

One is that voters are not afraid to vote. I repeat, voters should not be afraid to vote. That's regardless of qada'a or mohafazat.

What are the reasons for that fear? The presence of armed organizations. That's basic.

Now, to discuss the disarming of the militias or Hezbollah, let's be realistic: It cannot be done, not even practiced between now and May 29.

So an interim solution, which is very practical, that could be done in 10 days, even less than that, is to deploy the actual Lebanese army, 60,000 troops, and the security forces around every single electoral site.

That would ensure—and we have the case of Iraq, very clear to us—that would ensure that voters, regardless of the system, will be able to go.

And second, which is of concern for the Lebanese Diaspora, is to allow Lebanese voters outside who are registered citizens to be able to vote. And we're talking about probably 20 percent of Lebanese citizens, nationals, at least 20 percent—I don't have the data—all over the world.

So if we ensure participation and if we ensure security for elections, I believe this will be the interim—the basic interim solution for a fair election for May. And then the next parliament will basically discuss the bigger questions—future relations with Syria, disarming of Hezbollah, and so on and so forth.

Mr. DAVIDI. I'm Avi Davidi. My question is in a few parts. What role do you see does Iran play in this new environment in support of Hezbollah, Islamic Jihad, and Hamas?

Mr. PHARES. With regard to the Iranian regime, you have the declared law and then what we assume as being a nondeclared law.

Most of it is in the declared realm. You don't need to do a lot of research. The actual Iranian leadership states that it obstructs 1559—it's against it to start with.

No. 2, it is a direct ally of the former/current occupier of Lebanon, the Syrian regime. And there is a formal alliance.

No. 3, it's an ally of the armed Hezbollah, and it's a supplier in weapons and other logistics to Hezbollah.

On that ground alone, I think Iran is basically in a position of obstruction for the implementation of 1559 in Lebanon.

Now, on different ground, does the Iranian regime have plans, along with the Syrian regime, to obstruct the implementation of 1559?

Just by relying on the role of Hezbollah and on the pro-Syrian elements, Iran would be considered as a strategic death for the obstruction of 1559—until they state otherwise, until they accept the implementation of 1559.

Mr. GORE. With regard to some of these objections that you have to the current situation for the elections, particularly the diaspora voting issue, which is, right now, not being considered—is there a move within Lebanon to in fact change that and allow the diaspora to vote?

And second, if the situation continues to be such as it is, would it be better not to have an election at all and to delay the election until such changes come about that you would find acceptable or that would be found acceptable by the larger community?

Or is it better to go ahead and hold the election under the current circumstances and then try to change things?

Mr. BAINI. Thank you.

Basically, there are people—Lebanese citizens—who are holding identity cards, who were being forced to leave Lebanon during the war years and under the occupation of Syria and the others. These people would like to have the opportunity to have a say in rebuilding a new Lebanon.

We're going to call on them to return to Lebanon once Lebanon is a stable and safe place for them to come back and live. And we're going to call on them to help rebuild the new nation.

We can't ask them to go back and rebuild a nation in which they are not entitled to have a say simply because the government decides they're not going to exercise a policy.

The constitution permits every Lebanese throughout the world who holds a Lebanese identity card to vote at an election.

As to whether we should delay the elections altogether, we have constitutional problems which could lead to delicate and problematic situations, that if we call for a delay of the elections by 2 weeks or a month today, it might give other people and other parties the opportunity to call for them to be delayed for 12 months and 2 more years and so forth.

So essentially, we don't want to play around with the constitutional position of holding the elections by the end of May. Of course we would be forced to go into an election in any case, with or without that privilege.

However, that privilege, having stymied the opportunity of Lebanese in the diaspora to vote, is playing straight into the hands of the people who don't want to change the status in the Middle East and in Lebanon today.

Lebanon is a vital cog in the change of the structure of governments, of the expansion of democracy, as President Bush puts it, in the Middle East.

It is a vital cog because it has constitutional, democratic constitutional institutions—and it has a democratic constitution. The people of Lebanon are accustomed to democracy.

What has happened is that democracy in Lebanon has been put to sleep by the occupation of a totalitarian regime. We need to remove all the forces of that regime to allow the people to practice democracy.

There are probably no more lovers of democracy on the face of the earth than those of the Lebanese people. And I think that would be in line with what we enjoy here in the United States and in Australia and in other democratic nations.

The elections are vital. We would like the privilege to be returned to the people who hold an I.D. to be able to vote throughout the diaspora.

It's been a difficult process. Just open the ballot boxes in the diplomatic missions around the world. The United Nations can deliver unto the responsible authority in Lebanon and a count could be done just the same as we handle absentee votes here or in Australia and elsewhere.

Is there anything else you'd like to add to that, Walid?

Mr. PHARES. Just to clarify one technical matter about the votes. These are the crucial questions. I'm sure many are confused about: What do we mean by allowing Lebanese overseas to vote?

That's two questions. One is: citizens from Lebanese descent. That's an issue which will have to be decided between Lebanon's parliament—huge parliament—and representatives of the Lebanese Diaspora.

We're not talking about that right now. There are about 14 million from Lebanese descent around the world, versus 3.8 million Lebanese in Lebanon.

What we're talking about specifically are those Lebanese citizens who left Lebanon, mostly because of the circumstances.

Tomorrow, Mr. Bains, myself, and others will be at the United Nations Security Council to discuss this issue. And we're going to be very technical.

The mere fact that the Security Council issued a resolution item defining Lebanon as occupied by a foreign force—that's Resolution 1559—means that the United Nations will have to assume the consequences of that occupation, meaning any of the thousands of citizens who had to leave.

Therefore, what we're talking about is an obligation for the United Nations, in fulfillment of the third segment of that resolution, which is "fair elections for the Lebanese."

Since the United Nations cannot specifically transport half a million Lebanese voters or so to Lebanon to at least transport their ballots.

And they've done it with the Iraqi case.

If this is done, that would give more chance for more Lebanese to express themselves.

With regard to the delay. That's a very big and difficult question. But I'll try to shed more light on it.

If we're heading toward these elections right now without taking into consideration the problems, or without solving them—meaning between now and May 29th, I don't see the possibility of removing all remainder of the Syrian forces and disarming the militia.

We know that.

So if we head toward these elections without allowing the outside Lebanese votes to come in—or allowing all Lebanese who could be afraid to participate—then we would be heading toward a second pro-Syrian, pro-Hezbollah parliament.

That has to be very clear.

So either the United Nations, the United States, and its allies in the international community—including the Arab world—would help at least on those two grounds—that would allow some fairness.

Or, then the consideration of postponing should only come—and we will stress this tomorrow at the Security Council—if another Security Council resolution will come and outline clearly a schedule saying by the end of June, Hezbollah will have to be disarmed

by the end of July, all the networks have to be out. We will have to deploy a multinational force with the Lebanese army.

If there is such scheduling firm—capped in stone—then the technicality of postponing these elections, only under a United Nations Security Council resolution, may be considered.

That will be the other option.

Ms. ALAMEN. If you could just address the issue of Palestinian refugees inside Lebanon, I think it's kind of hard to talk about stability and building a new nation when you have 200,000 refugees that have absolutely no legal living status inside the country.

I understand that, given the confessional nature of the political system, it would be difficult to give them any much more than that.

But without just blaming the Palestinian Authority for everything, could you give a very specific answer as to how Lebanon could really create stability in the country with this situation there?

Thank you.

Mr. BAINI. That question was directed at you, Walid. You can share.

Mr. PHARES. I know. I will.

The subject of today's presentations was about implementation of Resolution 1559 and was about the elections to come. But I would accept that the existence of the Palestinian refugee problem and the Palestinian armed problem in Lebanon will have an influence, certainly, on the implementation.

If I was to engineer a series of solutions, I wouldn't start addressing all problems at the same time, because that would be an obstruction.

Meaning, with regard to immediate implementation of Resolution 1559, what is to be done is ensuring that I would consider those enclaves as an interim status.

We proceed first with all of Lebanon, minus these enclaves, and make sure that all foreign forces are out, all the terrorist organizations are disarmed.

The Palestinian presence in Lebanon is regulated through agreements between the Lebanese Government and these Palestinian centers.

The issue of concern in the Palestinian centers for now is the armed class defined as terrorist organizations, which were mentioned by Mr. Baini. Those are the ones that have to be dealt with under Resolution 1559—meaning Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and the others.

The presence of the Palestinian population in Lebanon will be determined by the next elected parliament under international law.

May I add that the difference between the future solution to the refugee problem and the previous stage was the nonexistence of an elected authority in Palestine. I mean, the Palestinians now have a government.

And I—that's a personal opinion—believe that the next parliament in Lebanon will produce a government which would basically discuss and negotiate these matters with, currently, Mr. Mahmoud Abbas's government, under the auspices of the United Nations and of the Arab League.

Practically speaking, we all know that the Palestinians who are living in Lebanon do not want to become Lebanese citizens. And the overwhelming majority of the Lebanese do not want them, basically, to be inserted into the national tissue of Lebanon.

But at the same time, a massive return of these refugees, outside the solution between the Israelis and the Palestinians, is also impossible.

So that would reduce it to the fact that the next government in Lebanon will have to do its utmost best to accommodate all the right socio-economic rights for these Palestinians, while waiting for the regional solution to be accessible.

It has to be done, as I said—and I repeat—under international law, in consensus with both Israelis and Palestinians, once they decide what to do with the question of refugees.

Will most of them return to Palestine to exist? Will there be choices other than this one?

This has to do with the Israelis and Palestinians. They will have to tell the world what is the agenda—what's the menu—and the Palestinians in Lebanon, when the Lebanese Government will have to decide what to do with them.

Mr. BAINI. Just another comment on that—and more of a humane nature comment.

It is not easy for people to live in refugee camps. It's not easy to raise children and families in refugee camps.

There are a lot of services available to the people. But their dignity is not of a status that it should be.

For their dignity, they need to be resettled in their own homeland. They need to feel that they are where they belong.

And also, from Lebanon's point of view, for the preservation of Lebanon's sovereignty, it ought to have the right to determine who comes and lives in Lebanon and who doesn't.

So these things are vital in the process of trying to analyze where the Palestinians should be.

There's nothing to say that Lebanon hasn't been hospitable. They've been a law and order situation unto themselves within their camps—something that is not acceptable to any nation that welcomes refugees.

But it has been in Lebanon.

So for their dignity, to be resettled in their own homeland, and for Lebanon's sovereignty, there should be a solution for them. When and how will become the responsibility, as Dr. Phares said, of the new parliament. But certainly it's something that needs to be addressed urgently.

Thank you.

Ms. GRIDDINE. Hi, I'm Vanessa Griddine. I work for Mr. Hastings. I, too, was in Lebanon when he was there recently. We met with opposition leaders, we met with Mrs. Harawi, and we met with the Speaker of Parliament Nabih Berri.

But when we were in Martyr's Square, we talked with some of the protesters who expressed excitement and fear. So my question to you is: The overriding sentiment among them was that the United States didn't have enough involvement. I wanted to know what you felt about that.

And my second question is, if you believe that the Syrians troops have withdrawn. And if they haven't, how will that impact the upcoming elections?

Mr. BAINI. From the excitement and fear of the Lebanese people, I want to go back to the point that the people of Lebanon are a freedom-loving people. They're enterprising. They love freedom. They enjoy life.

Lebanon is not a warring nation. It's not a military nation.

So its greatest product is its people. And the export of something five times the population of Lebanon is indicative of the type of people it exports. Sure, once in a while we have a problem. But predominantly—predominantly—the export of Lebanon is the people of Lebanon.

The fears that we have and the concerns that are perhaps applicable to the United States is that in past experiences, just when we have needed somebody to stand up and support the people of Lebanon, there's been an inclination to leave the process to other people to solve.

That is the fear that the people of Lebanon live with today. Really, the impact that the United States has made in the last 12 months in calling for the withdrawal of the Syrians and disarmament of the terrorist groups in Lebanon has been absolutely fabulous. And we are extremely grateful, and I think I alluded to that in my statement, we're very grateful for that support and we need that support to continue.

What we need to reassure is for the people of Lebanon to be able to continue to stand up and reclaim their sovereignty, their freedom and their democracy.

They need to know that the superpower United States is standing with them all the way until the final decision is made that Lebanon has been liberated completely.

This is absolutely vital for the people of Lebanon. They need this kind of support. We need this kind of support in the Diaspora to be sure that we can say to them, "You are being given the opportunity with support and protection."

From that viewpoint, it is absolutely essential for the United States to stay with the people of Lebanon. And we will be—Lebanon will be the example that President Bush is looking for in the Middle East to be able to work on for the expansion of democracy in the Middle East.

And I'm sure Dr. Phares has more to add to that.

Mr. PHARES. Just a few thoughts.

Thank you for the excellent question, because it has to do with what Lebanese want. And you and the Congressman, my Congressman, visited Martyr's Square. It's very important.

The two questions you've asked are crucial. One is how Lebanese perceive the role of the United States in this process. And, what would a non-full withdrawal of the Syrians do, what would the consequences of that matter?

First of all, most elements in civil society in Lebanon do understand that Resolution 1559 wasn't possible hadn't the U.S. Government—not just the administration, but Congress, first—voted a series of legislation, including the Syria Accountability Act.

The Lebanese component, at least, of that act was a basis upon which the U.S. Government introduced the draft, along with the French Government, to the Security Council, a matter that Mr. Biani and myself were witness to, because we've been trying to help in that direction last year.

When Security Council Resolution 1559 was issued, the United States' role was to make sure that it would be carried out. And it is a fact that we—all of us—admit that this is the first withdrawal which was implemented in the Middle East without one shot, without one person killed. This is amazing.

And I believe the reason behind that is the American determination, which created a French determination, a European, and even an Arab determination.

We visited many members of the Security Council, including the representatives of the Arab League, several times. And we saw that they were determined to see the Syrian occupation withdrawn from Lebanon.

So, in the future, historians and political scientists are going to study this withdrawal of an occupation force with not one shot.

We hope now that the next stage will continue to be in this direction.

So the real question is, what would a Syrian non-full withdrawal do. It will basically invite a crisis, which I personally in my testimony, in my remarks, warned about, seriously.

If those elections to come aren't fair, meaning won't reflect the opinion of the Lebanese civil society, we know that in Lebanon there are many people who are pro-Syrian. This is not a secret. And many more are pro-Hezbollah, politically speaking.

Now if these tendencies are reflected in the next parliament, that is fine. The point is that they should not be reflected in the parliament as a result of military coercion, of military presence.

Hence, the problem is that those networks and the military forces of the militias are present right now. And the elections are on May 29.

I do repeat that in the interim, the most rational way to carry out these elections on time would be to go by those two requests or guidelines, allowing all Lebanese in Lebanon to vote, secured by the Lebanese army, under the observation of the United Nations, and allowing all Lebanese who have the right to vote overseas, their ballots to count.

If this happens, then what you're going to get is a parliament that reflects really the views of Lebanon. That parliament will produce a government which would be able to carry on the rest of Resolution 1559.

Mr. GORE. I have two brief questions.

One is, are you comfortable that the Lebanese army is in fact capable of providing the kind of security that you're requesting? Does the command structure allow for that?

And the other thing is, could you elucidate the Arab community's pressure on Syria to comply with Resolution 1559? What exactly have they done? Where have they done it? Who are the major actors in this?

Mr. PHARES. With regard to the Lebanese army, certainly this is an army which has been, I have to admit, under the influence of a government which has been under the influence of the Syrian presence for the last 15 years at least.

But civil society in Lebanon—and that's the most important indicator—tells us, tells the Diaspora, or experts around the world, that they do trust the Lebanese army. And we've seen it on TV actually. Wherever the Lebanese army went, naturally Lebanese masses came around and were able to communicate with them.

The segment of the Lebanese armed forces or the military institution that were in doubt, and it was mentioned by the international community, are the Mukhabarat or the intelligence services, the military intelligence service, the political intelligence services. The commanders have been changed, have been replaced, there are new directors.

So to ensure a fair handling of the elections by the Lebanese army—not handling, actually protection—we need to have two things.

No. 1, to have onsite the United Nations observers or international NGO—or NGO observers. No. 2, the United Nations can, in implementation of Resolution 1559, have an

oversee organization of how the Lebanese army would withdraw. Meaning, this has to be done with the United Nations.

A Lebanese army, to put it that way, under the interim command of the United Nations in implementation of Resolution 1559, will be able to proceed in the protection of the elections, in my estimate.

With regard to the Arab reaction, well, without ensuring a global Arab support to Resolution 1559, I don't think the resolution would have been voted to start with. I mean, I do remember back in September that on the first votes the representative of the Republic of Algeria, who represented the Arab League, abstained; but so did six others. Abstention doesn't mean that they are against.

However, the representative of the Arab League at the end of September signed the Presidential letter of the United Nations, the United Nations Security Council Presidential letter, that basically recognized the United Nations Security Council.

Furthermore, when we visited the Security Council back in March, the representatives of the Arab League were very clear to say that they do want to see the implementation of Resolution 1559.

Public statements by countries such as Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and other mainstream countries have been very clear: They want to see the implementation done. They want to see the Syrian army out. They want to see, most of them, democratic elections.

There is the one issue of Hezbollah which basically they would defer to the Lebanese. Everybody defers to the Lebanese when it comes to Hezbollah, because one component of Hezbollah is Lebanese, which is the membership.

Now, the weapons are Iranian, the strategy is Iranian-Syrian Hezbollah, all declared, but the membership is Lebanese.

So the Arab League will support the full withdrawal of the Syrians from Lebanon and did so, the elections, and of course will defer to the Lebanese parliament, the next parliament, to decide what to do eventually with regard to Hezbollah.

Mr. BAINI. Excellent.

QUESTIONER. My name is John Hajjar from the World Lebanese Cultural Union. I serve in the USA under our president from Australia, Mr. Baini.

Dr. Phares, are there any foreseen wider implications by this multilateral approach that's been taken, largely led by the USA and France, toward supporting the Cedar Revolution?

And by that, I mean in the war on terror and the spread of democracy, the stated goals of President Bush, throughout the region.

Mr. PHARES. When the world saw the demonstrations in Lebanon, the first demonstrations, then Hezbollah demonstration, then the Cedars Revolution demonstration, they were surprised to see how many thousands of Lebanese had the courage to come down the streets and then protest the occupation.

When the Hezbollah demonstration came, people around the world realized how many people do support this political party, this movement.

But Syria has supporters in Lebanon, for sure. When the 1.5 million Lebanese came to downtown Beirut—that's more than 20, 30 percent of the Lebanese population—the international community understood one thing: that for this to happen, an automatic majority of the Lebanese people wants the implementation of 1559.

Let me explain.

When you demonstrate in support of a regime, you have the backing of one regime, like Fidel Castro's regime, when they call for a demonstration, they get 1 million. Obviously, they are supported logistically and politically by a regime. So was the case in the Soviet Union. If Iran's regime would call for a demonstration, you have large numbers.

The measurement in comparative politics of the health of a democracy movement is if you demonstrate against a regime and against an occupation.

So look at the balance. The demonstration that was supportive of Hezbollah had three regimes supporting it, not one—the then pro-Syrian Government in Lebanon, the Syrian regime, and the Iranian regime—with logistics. It produced significant numbers.

But the demonstration, the Cedars Revolution demonstrations which put on the ground 1.5 million people—almost a third, I think 28 percent—a third of Lebanon was against three regimes, against occupation, formed by not just one community, but at least three communities and more.

This indicates that the Cedars Revolution, as it was dubbed by the United States, is one that represents the future views—the current and future views of Lebanon.

This is a referendum. If you take the United Nations institutions today, or you would hold any elections—I mean, of course, one has to wait for the end—but you could project the victory of that movement, there is no doubt about it.

Now, the issue is how to allow those people who took to the streets to have a mechanism of representation. Referendum, plebiscite, elections, counting all the votes. All roads lead to Rome.

And in this case, all what the international community will have to do—and it's not just the duty of this administration, but of governments around the world, in the same case they behaved in Afghanistan and/or in Iraq—is to allow all Lebanese to express their will.

There will be many Lebanese who will say, "Well, we like Syria," or, "We like Hezbollah." But from a democratic perspective, all Lebanese will have to express themselves. What they are trying to do is make sure that, without violence, the Lebanese will be able to express themselves. And by doing so, I think this will be the beginning of the long-term solution in Lebanon of integrating all forces into the political system and getting all weapons out of the political system.

QUESTIONER [Mr. Hajjar]. Thank you, Dr. Phares. Are there any wider implications beyond just Lebanon? Are there any implications wider than just Lebanon. I mean, are there any benefits to accrue to the Western World or to the world at large by what's taking place in Lebanon?

Mr. PHARES. Each political change in the region is unique. But Lebanon's political change would be unique, if we can use that term. It would be even more unique, in a sense.

The Afghani model showed us that, despite the fact that the radical fundamentalist regime was ruling the country, the response by the voters—including by female voters—was clear. The Iraqi model showed us that, despite the rule of the Baath regime for so many years in brutality, that 8.5 million voters, mostly women, expressed the fact that most Iraqis want to go forward. They don't want the return of the Baath. They don't want the establishment of a Taliban-like regime. They don't want the establishment of a Khomeini-like regime.

What do they want to establish? They will have to figure that out. It doesn't mean that they have reached the Swedish model or the Swiss model of democracy. They're on their way.

Lebanon, in contrast with the other countries, has had a previous democratic experience. From at least 1943, not to say 1926, there were democratic elections in Lebanon—multi-ethnic, multi-religious democratic elections in Lebanon.

So the political culture is ready if helped.

But beyond the borders of Lebanon, what success of democracy would mean in Lebanon would be a tidal wave of influence in the region, because of the peculiar cultural position of Lebanon.

It has five major universities. It has one of the most successful network of TV stations. Imagine, each one of these TV networks is the equivalent of Al Jazeera or others.

It has a very healthy intellectual debate. It has democratic values being shared by people on different sides of the political culture in Lebanon.

It will have an impact on the Arab world.

Actually, Beirut was called—still is, in terms of publication, books, debates, forums—the capital, the cultural capital, of the Arab world. So if that sensitive place of the Arab world turns democratic, it would certainly have tidal wave effects in the region.

And it is not a secret. If you read the literature of most Arab thinkers, intellectuals, from Cairo to Baghdad, they will say—and they have said so—that a change in Lebanon, a change in Beirut, will affect the global change.

I don't want to call it the war of ideas, but it may be a success in the war of ideas in the entire region.

QUESTIONER. Hi. Joanne Faulkner with IFES.

I have a followup question on the election law. There is, of course, a certain momentum now to amend the election law before the elections. But, we're getting closer and closer to the election date. And some of these amendments that are being debated and considered might not actually be approved in time.

So my question for both of you is, do you think there will be momentum after the election, particularly if there is a pro-Syrian Parliament, to continue to debate the election law and essentially change it?

Mr. PHARES. To be honest and direct, the debate about the election law is not a debate between two political currents who want to enhance democracy the best way they can. That's my opinion at least.

It's a debate between two political currents, one of which wants to enhance the democratic expression and representation, and the other one, the other current, which is trying to use any system to obstruct the rise of democracy in Lebanon.

Currently, as you well said, between now and the other end of May, 29th or afterwards, I don't think that the current majority in this parliament will accept to make concessions seen by them as empowering the opposition, to put it bluntly.

It's still under negotiations.

The Lebanese maze is very complex, meaning, if the opposition will make concessions on other issues, will moderate its position, they're not going to be very pleased about it.

If the opposition says, "We are not abiding by 1559, we had enough from what we got from 1559," and make deep concessions to the loyalists, there may be chances that

the loyalists would say, “OK, we’ll give you then a different type of distribution of vote.” It may not be exactly the qada’a. It may be a complex package.

But to simplify it, if the regime in Lebanon feels that by making concessions to the opposition they would lose, they’re not going to make those concessions. It’s about the regime.

Now, your question is after the election. If the current election will not allow the Lebanese opposition, democracy movement, to obtain its natural majority—which we’ve seen on March 14th, I mean, there’s not much to add to it. If those present in Martyr’s Square will vote for what they stood for, it’s over. I mean, the Lebanese opposition will become the government. That’s why the government is obstructing it.

So your question is pertinent, because if these elections won’t give the opposition enough freedom, you’re going to get the loyalists taking over that government in June.

And if they do, it’s less likely—it’s not likely at all—that they’re going to restructure the electoral system in a way that would allow the opposition, 4 years after, to win these elections.

So I don’t know if my answer’s clear. But these are the projections I can see.

Mr. BAINI. Just to add to that just a little bit. I think that it will tighten the control of Syria over Lebanon. It will completely have the reverse effect than allowing democracy to grow.

And it will take away the opportunity of what those who consider themselves to be leaders in the opposition today may not necessarily be around to consider themselves in any capacity in the future.

And I’m not making willy-nilly statements. We have political leaders who are young, middle-aged and senior who no longer live simply because the current regime and their supporters felt that they were going to obstruct their total control over Lebanon.

So it’s not as easy as going into the process immediately after the elections and saying, “Let’s study the electoral law and let’s see how we can improve on democracy in this country.” It is not that at all. It means how can we take control if the democratic processes are not practiced and the people who want freedom in Lebanon do not succeed.

And that’s the opposition at the moment, and the people who showed up at Martyr’s Square, 1.5 million people, in a demonstration probably not witnessed anywhere else in the world.

This is why we’re calling for the points that we have called for this morning, to ensure that these people have the opportunity to go to the polls in security in their own country, with freedom and the ability to vote for the people for whom they wish to represent them in government, and to allow the possibly million or whatever people living in the Diaspora who hold I.D. cards to also have a say in the reshaping of the political structures in Lebanon.

This is why we are here this morning. This is why we’re making the call today: To be clear, to be emphatic, to be direct, because time is short and there’s so much to be done.

Thank you.

Mr. GORE. Well, I think—unless there are some really urgent questions out there—I think that’s a really perfect note on which to end this briefing.

And so I want to thank all of you for coming, and our gentlemen here for presenting their comments. I'll just remind everyone that, within the next 24 hours, the transcript of this briefing will be available on our Commission's Web site, at [csc.gov](http://csc.gov).

Thanks very much.

[Whereupon the briefing ended at 11:12 a.m.]

# APPENDICES

## PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOE BAINI, PRESIDENT, WORLD LEBANESE CULTURAL UNION

Senator Brownback, Members of the Commission:

I have the honor to appear in front of your commission today, to testify on the current situation in Lebanon after the declared Syrian military withdrawal

My name is Joe Baini, I am Australian from Lebanese descent and I am presently the President of the World Lebanese Cultural Union (WLCU), an international non-governmental organization founded in 1959, with the full support of the Foreign Ministry in Lebanon as the sole legitimate representative of the Lebanese Diaspora worldwide.

There are between 12 and 15 million people from Lebanese descent around the world, and communities established in more than 50 countries. About 2 million Americans are from Lebanese descent. As Lebanese around the world, we have been very concerned about the Syrian occupation of our mother country for more than a quarter of a century, and also about the presence of Terrorist organizations such as Hizbollah, Hamas, Islamic Jihad and other similar groups. The Lebanese Diaspora was and remains also concerned about the fate of Lebanese detainee in Syrian jails.

The 12th and 13th World Congresses held in Mexico city in 2001 and in Miami in 2003, called on the international community to intervene in Lebanon to evacuate the foreign forces including the Syrian occupation army, the Iranian revolutionary guards and foreign Terror networks.

We hereby thank the US Government, for the passing of UNSCR 1559 of September 2004 and for the signing of the UNSC Presidential letter which endorsed the resolution,

We however call the immediate attention of the US Congress and the Helsinki Commission to the dangerous developments which have occurred in Lebanon since the voting of the said resolution, and which dangers intensified since February 14th when the former Prime Minister of Lebanon M. Rafiq Hariri was assassinated along with his companions in a barbaric manner.

The Syrian regime ordered its troops to withdraw from Lebanon, and declared it has accomplished the pull out by the end of April. But we do not believe that UNSCR 1559 was fully implemented: First, the disarmament of militias, such as Hizbollah and the Palestinian Jihadist organizations such as Hamas, Islamic Jihad and others didn't take place yet. Second, we have grave concerns that the legislative elections, decided for this month won't be held in a democratic context. The gerrymandering of electoral districts by a pro-Syrian Government, even in the presence of international monitors will lead to a misrepresentation of Lebanon's democratic trends, which were expressed to the world this winter through the popular demonstrations in Beirut.

Hence, the Lebanese diaspora, which count in numbers at least five times the size of the Lebanese population inside the homeland, calls on the US Government and the international community to the following:

1. Ask the Syrian regime to free all Lebanese prisoners detained on Syrian territories
2. Requesting from the Syrian forces a list of all Lebanese citizens or residents who have died while in their custody, or with their knowledge since June 1976, both on Lebanese and Syrian territories

3. Requesting an accounting of all public treasure and archive, taken from the Lebanese Republic, such as artifacts, monies, Government files, etc. To be returned to the new Lebanese Government under the auspices of the United Nations

4. Requesting a full report from Syrian authorities as to their knowledge of all or any illegal military material hidden in Lebanon by their personnel or by organizations with direct ties to the Syrian Government

5. Requesting the formation of an international commission of investigation for all war crimes committed by the Syrian forces and security services from June 1976 till this date.

6. Requesting the dismantling of all paramilitary networks established by, or supervised by or funded by the Syrian occupation army. Including but not exclusively the military installations and weapons of Hizbollah, the Syrian Baath Party, the Syrian National-Social Party, the Palestinian Saika units in Lebanon, as well as the smaller militia armed and trained by the Syrian intelligence.

7. Extend the right to vote to all Lebanese overseas so that the legislative elections would represent the will and aspirations of the entire Lebanese people.

**PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. WALID PHARES, SENIOR  
FELLOW, FOUNDATION FOR THE DEFENSE OF  
DEMOCRACIES, DELEGATE, LEBANESE DIASPORA TO THE  
UNITED NATIONS**

I am honored to be given the opportunity today to brief you and the Commission on the developments in Lebanon since the declaration by the Arab Syrian Republic that it completed its withdrawal from the Lebanese Republic last April. The evolution of events and the various political steps made in Lebanon since the March 14 Cedars Revolution's demonstration, shows that, despite some positive steps, UNSCR 1559 was not yet fully implemented. Furthermore, the non implementation of the said resolution, may lead to a crisis, even more dangerous than the previous stage with regards, Lebanon's freedom, the region's stability, international relations and US interests. Here are the main sketches:

**THE CEDARS REVOLUTION**

As defined by the US Administration, and perceived by the international community, the democracy movement that rose against Syrian occupation as of last February and produced several demonstrations, including the 1.5 million men and women rally on March 14, 2005, was indeed a "Cedars Revolution." It showed the world, without any doubt that an overwhelming majority of Lebanese, from various religious and ethnic backgrounds wanted the Syrian withdrawal, the disarming of militias and terrorist organizations, and democratic elections. The People of Lebanon, not only wants the full implementation of UNSCR 1559, but has shown its clear intention for self determination, including with regards the pro-Syrian regime. All that was imposed by the Syrian occupation must follow the Syrian withdrawal: Military forces, intelligence, paramilitary forces, militias, imposed treaties, and imposed institutions. The Cedars Revolution, which was recognized by the international community as a response by Lebanon's civil society to UNSCR 1559, will be fulfilled only with the full implementation of the said resolution.

**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNSCR 1559**

The Syrian regime alleges that it has fulfilled its obligations towards UNSCR 1559. The US, France, the UN and many other countries have stated that the resolution wasn't fully implemented. Many civil society organizations Lebanon, such as Human Rights groups, educational associations, and popular movements, as well as the Lebanese Diaspora's official institution, the World Lebanese Cultural Union (WLCU) believe that the resolution wasn't implemented. Moreover, they believe that the steps that were made, aim at creating a wider mechanism of obstruction to freedom and sovereignty, and therefore to UNSCR 1559. I do believe, that less than 20% of the resolution was implemented.

UNSCR 1559 calls for three matters: 1) Full withdrawal of the Syrian occupation. 2) Disarming the militias. 3) Democratic elections. In fact, as of today, only on segment of the first obligation was implemented. The Syrian regime, pulled out its regular troops, hardware, and the visible infrastructure of the intelligence service. The Mukhabarat networks are still present in Lebanon with their sleeper cells. All armed militias and Terrorist organizations, which are under Syrian auspices—and therefore falls under UNSCR 1559—are still omnipresent. And finally, because of the presence of the Syrian intel-

ligence, the presence of paramilitaries and Terrorist groups, and because of the influence of the current pro-Syrian Government, democratic elections slated for the end of May won't be fulfilled unless changes occur.

#### SYRIAN PLANS

The Syrian strategy to undermine the implementation of UNSCR 1559 is clear:

a. Pulling out of the regular forces, not in implementation of 1559 but under the Cooperation and Brotherhood Treaty signed in 1991: Which means that a future pro-Syrian Government in Lebanon will be able to ask for these forces again.

b. Maintaining intelligence, militias and terror networks such as Hizbollah, in Lebanon: Which would intimidate and put pressure on the civil society

c. Forming a pro-Syrian Government to oversee the legislative elections

d. Therefore, the upcoming elections will be impacted by the above elements, hence producing a pro-Syrian, Jihadist, majority in Parliament. This, in turn would bring back a pro-Syrian, Hizbollah influenced Government.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to upset the return of Syrian Baathist influence and the maintaining of Hizbollah's military power in Lebanon, and as a way to help the Democracy movement express itself freely, we recommend the following emergency guidelines:

##### 1. ELECTIONS SECURITY IN LEBANON:

The United Nations must ask for the rapid deployment of the Lebanese Army at all polling stations in Lebanon, with the assistance of the UN observers. This deployment will insure the security and the freedom of the voters, especially in the areas controlled by the armed militias. The Lebanese Army deployment must be under UNSCR 1559 and protected by the United Nations. Any obstruction of that deployment and or any aggression against the Lebanese Army should be considered as an aggression against the United Nations. This measure can insure a minimal guarantee for the implementation of the third segment of UNSCR 1559, that is fair and free elections.

##### 2. LEBANESE VOTES OVERSEAS COUNTED

As was the case with the Iraqi precedent, Lebanese citizens living abroad must be able to vote in the upcoming legislative elections. All holders of Lebanese nationality outside Lebanon, must be enabled to cast their ballots under UN supervision. The UN will carry their ballots to the respective ballot centers in Lebanon and would supervise their counting. This is a condition sine qua non for free and fair elections in Lebanon.

In a sum, the deployment of the Lebanese Army and the overseas vote, both under the auspices of UNSCR 1559, will give Lebanon's civil society a chance for participation

in the democratic process, as a second step towards the full implementation of the said resolution and in fulfillment of the Cedars Revolution.



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