



**THE WORLD COUNCIL
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Press Release

“THE CEDARS REVOLUTION AT THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL” HELP LEBANON CONTROL ITS BORDERS WITH SYRIA

New York, May 29th, 2006

A joint delegation from the World Council of the Cedars Revolution (WCCR) and the International Lebanese Committee for UNSCR 1559 was received at the United Nations Headquarters in Manhattan by members of the Security Council and the offices of the Secretary General. The delegation was headed by Mr. Joe Baini, president of the World Council for the Cedar’s revolution, Dr. Rachid Rahme, S.G for CR in Beirut, Mr. Toni Nissi, Committee for 1559 Coordinator in Beirut and was accompanied by Professor Walid Phares, Senior Fellow at the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies (FDD). The aim of the visits was to inform the Security Council and the Secretariat General of the latest fact finding missions.

Meeting at the UN with Ambassador Terje Roed-Larson:

The delegation held its first meeting with UN Secretary General’s special envoy for the implementation of UNSCR 1559, ambassador Terje Rod Larson and his assistant at his offices. The WCCR-Committee 1559 team reviewed a special map of Lebanon’s borders with Syria and signaled 34 areas of contention between the two countries since 1975. Dr Rahme signaled that Syrian intelligence and military elements have pushed inside the Lebanese territories about 5 kilometers. Nissi, comparing the Shebaa farms with the Bekaa areas occupied by Syria, said: “Syria has taken areas at least 20 times the size of the Shebaa farms if not more.” Rahme said troops, terrorists and material are crossing these borders and connecting with networks existing inside the country already. “In the Ras Baalback area, training camps have been spotted, where FPLP-General command and local militias have been trained by pro-Syrian elements.” Commenting on the findings of the Lebanese NGOs, Professor Phares said: “It is like there are no real borders between Syria and Lebanon despite all the UNSC resolutions. There are no defense limits for Eastern Lebanon facing Baathist’ Syria, it is all open to the will of the Syrian regime. While the Damascus planners seem to discuss issues with the UN, in fact they are gaining time, a precious time till facts change on the ground.” On his part ambassador Rod- Larsen said “while we are satisfied with the new UN resolution 1680 calling for the demarcation of the borders between Lebanon and Syria, the reports by your committees and other sources are of great concerns to the UN.” The delegation asked the UN official for a new team of observers to reconfirm the withdrawal on the ground.



The CR-Committee 1559 meeting with special envoy Ambassador Terje Rod Larson



(L to R) Dr. Walid Phares with Ambassador Larson



Ambassador Larson (C) with (L-R) Mr.A. Yacoub, Mr. J. Baini, Mr. M. Douaihi and Mr. A. Hosri



Ambassador Larson (C) with (L-R) Kamal Batal, Joseph Sokhn, Rachid Rahme and Nina Rahme

At the French Mission

The delegation was received at the French Mission at the Security Council by First Secretary Mr Ludovic Pouille. The discussions focused on the borders issues and the mass graves discovered in several locations in Lebanon. The delegation praised France’s role in the monitoring of the implementation and the “diplomatic architecture” among the Security Council members.



Cedars Revolution and Committee 1559 at the French Mission

At the British Mission:

The delegation was then received at the British mission by First Secretary Mr. Nick Williams. A thorough report was discussed about the type of measures needed to stop the infiltrations across the borders.

At The Lebanese Mission:

The delegation then moved to visit the Lebanese Mission at the UN and held a meeting with Charge D'affaires - Deputy Permanent Representative Miss Caroline Ziade .



The delegation at the Lebanese Mission

At the US Mission:

Finally, the delegation was received at the US Mission by Ambassador Jackie Sanders, Special Political Affairs. The meeting focused on the nature of support the Lebanese Government and army needed to deploy enough units along the borders but also inside the country. “The Cedars Revolution is under attack,” said Joseph Baini, “and it needs the support of all its friends around the world, particularly of the United States.” Discussions also covered the various matters related to the assassinations, the terror war against Lebanon and the regional context created by the Iranian regime. Dr Rachid Rahme, Secretary General of the Council of the Cedars Revolution in Lebanon said “these meetings at the UN Security Council were very beneficial to the civil society in Lebanon as they contributed into informing the highest decision making system in the world. With the Lebanese Government under pressure by Syria and its allies, including Hizbollah, our NGOs have played the role of a bridge between the Lebanese People and the UN so that the international community is informed about the dramatic developments inside the country. We particularly thank our counterparts in the Lebanese Diaspora for their constant efforts to salvage the Cedars Revolution.”



US Ambassador at the UN, Jackie Sanders, listening to M Toni Nissi's explanations of the fact finding missions to the Lebanese borders.

The Cedars Revolution-Committee 1559 delegation held an evaluation meeting at the UN after the day long encounters. Commenting on the results the President of the Council M Joe Bains said: “we have delivered the message to the United Nations and the international community: Lebanon’s borders with Syria are not controlled by the Lebanese army and they are used by Syria to connect with Terrorist groups inside the country. The Lebanese people inside the country and in the Diaspora are calling on the UN to initiate an action to control these borders and enforce UNSCR 1559, by supporting the Lebanese Army and by stopping Syria from re-invading Lebanon via its Terror allies. We believe the Security Council missions we visited understood the message.” On his part, M Tom Harb, Secretary General of the Committee 1559 said “we do appreciate all what the UN Security Council in general and the US, UK and France in particular, is doing for Lebanon. However it is important for the international community to understand that the Syrian-Iranian alliance is on the offensive in Lebanon since last summer to obstruct UNSCR 1559, intimidate the Lebanese people and reestablish a terror regime in the country. Lebanon is not free yet; in fact it is being re-invaded.

M Toni Nissi, coordinator of the Committee 1559 in Lebanon said “Lebanon’s civil society is extremely concerned about the borders with Syria in particular. They are wide open and no one is there to stop the flow of arms and terrorists. If no action is taken by the UN, the Cedars Revolution and Lebanon’s new liberties will be extinct within a year.”

The delegation was received by the US National Council for the Cedars Revolution at a dinner in New Jersey at the “Cedars of Lebanon” restaurant. M Jean Souaid, chairman of the World Lebanese Cultural Union (WLCU) Chapter in New Jersey welcomed the delegation and encouraged them to continue their work for Lebanon’s freedom and sovereignty. M Souaid said “the Lebanese-American community is standing firmly by the Cedars Revolution and wishes to see UNSCR 1559 being implemented.” M Fady Bark, Secretary General of the WLCU in North America promised more efforts on behalf of the community activists and associations to back efforts by international Lebanese NGOs working in support of democracy and freedom in Lebanon.”