



Memorandum of Joint Understanding between Hezbollah and the Free Patriotic Movement

February 6, 2006

I. Dialogue

National dialogue, on the basis of firm principles that reflect an all-inclusive consensus, is the only way to find solutions for the crises that are overwhelming Lebanon. The following conditions are necessary to ensure its success:

- A. The participation of all parties that have a political, popular, and national status in a round-table meeting.
- B. Transparency, frankness, and the placing of national interests above all other interests, through Lebanon's independent will and free decisionmaking.
- C. The inclusion of all issues that have a national character and require general consensus.

II. Consensual Democracy

Consensual democracy remains the fundamental basis for governance in Lebanon, embodying the spirit of its constitution and the essence of the pact of coexistence. Therefore, any approach to national issues on the basis of a majority/minority formula will remain contingent on the realization of historical and social conditions necessary for real democracy, in which the citizen becomes a value in and of himself.

III. The Electoral Law

Reforming and organizing Lebanese political life require the adoption of a modern electoral law (of which proportional representation may be an effective form) that guarantees the accuracy and fairness of popular representation and contributes to the following:

- A. Activating the role of political parties, with the aim of bolstering civil society.
- B. Limiting the influence of money and sectarian extremism in politics.
- C. Providing equal access to the media.
- D. Ensuring that expatriate Lebanese can exercise their voting rights.

We call on the government and parliament to enact the required electoral law as soon as possible.

IV. Building the State

Building a modern state that enjoys the trust of its citizens and is able to meet their needs and aspirations, and provide them with the sense of security and safety as to their present and future, requires that the state be erected on strong and solid foundations that make it impervious to destabilization and periodic crises whenever it is threatened by difficult circumstances or changes. This requires adhering to the following:

- A. Adopting the standards of justice, equality, parity, merit and integrity.
- B. Recognizing that a fair and impartial judiciary is the essential condition for creating a state

of rights, law, and institutions. This is based on:

1. A fully independent judiciary and the selection of judges with recognized competence in order to activate the work of all courts.
2. Respect for the functioning of constitutional institutions; sheltering them from political influences, ensuring the continuity of their work; and preventing their paralysis, as was the case with the Judicial Council and the Constitutional Council. What happened in the Constitutional Council is an example of such paralysis, particularly with respect to the parliamentary challenges submitted to it that have not yet been decided.

C. Address corruption at the roots, because temporary and pacifying treatments are no longer sufficient and have become an exercise in circumvention by the beneficiaries of corruption at all levels, who sap the resources of the state and the citizen. This requires:

1. Activating the financial and administrative control and inspection institutions, and make them independent of the executive branch so as to guarantee that their work is not politicized.
2. Conducting a comprehensive survey of the centers of corruption, in preparation for opening judicial investigations that ensure the prosecution of those responsible for corruption and the return of embezzled public funds.
3. Enacting the necessary laws to combat corruption in all its forms and demanding the government sign the United Nations Anti-Corruption Convention.
4. Working for comprehensive administrative reform ensuring that the right person is assigned to the right position, particularly those whose competence and integrity are recognized. This can be achieved by enabling the Civil Service Council to fully exercise its prerogatives.
5. Setting deadlines to treat these problems, because the factor of time is critical. The matter requires just and rapid solutions that use the time factor to their advantage instead of the corrupt using it to theirs.

V. The Missing During the War

Turning the page on the past and enacting comprehensive national reconciliation requires that all outstanding files of the war be closed. The file of those who disappeared during the war requires a responsible stand to end this abnormal situation and give closure to families who cannot be asked to forgive and forget without respect for their right to know the fate of their missing relatives. Therefore, we ask all the forces and parties that participated in the war to cooperate fully in uncovering the fate of the missing and the locations of mass graves.

VI. Lebanese Citizens in Israel

Based on our conviction that the presence of Lebanese citizens in their homeland is better than their presence in enemy territory, a resolution of the question of the Lebanese residing in Israel requires urgent action to enable their return to their country, taking into consideration all the political, security and living conditions surrounding this issue. On this basis, we appeal to them to return promptly to their homeland, guided by the call of His Eminence Al-Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah following the Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon and the speech delivered by Gen. Michel Aoun during the first session of parliament [last year].

VII. The Security Issue

A. Political Assassinations

Political assassinations of any kind are condemned and rejected because they violate fundamental human rights, contravene the foundations of Lebanon represented by differences and diversity, and undermine the spirit and practice of democracy.

We condemn the assassination of the martyr prime minister Rafiq Hariri and all other assassinations and assassination attempts that preceded and followed it, most recently the killing of MP Gibran Tuani, and we emphasize the importance of continuing the investigation in accordance with officially approved mechanisms to uncover the truth. This is an issue that cannot be subjected to any compromise because it is a prerequisite for achieving justice, punishing criminals, and ending the continuing cycle of murders and bombings. Therefore, it is important that these issues be insulated from attempts at political exploitation, which would undermine them and the essence of justice, which must remain above any political conflicts and disputes.

B. Security Reforms

Reform of the security agencies is an integral part of the broader process of reforming basic state institutions and rebuilding them on sound and firm bases. In view of the sensitive role of the security agencies in maintaining stability and security in the country against any violations or threats, the process of building these agencies must be given special attention. Therefore, the government is urged to assume its full responsibilities as follows:

1. Draw up a comprehensive security plan based on centralized decisionmaking, clear distinctions between enemy and friend, and specification of security threats, such as terrorism and security loopholes that must be addressed.
2. Place the security agencies above all political considerations and patronage, so that their full loyalty is to the nation alone.
3. Assign responsibility for these agencies to people with recognized competence and integrity.
4. Ensure that security measures do not conflict with liberties guaranteed by the constitution, especially freedom of expression and political practice, provided they do not threaten security and public order.
5. Establish a joint parliamentary-security committee charged with monitoring and directing the process of reforming and building the security agencies.

VIII. Lebanese-Syrian Relations

The establishment of sound and normal Lebanese-Syrian relations requires a review of past experience to learn necessary lessons and draw conclusions, so as to avoid the same mistakes, flaws, and loopholes. This will pave the way for improving relations on the basis of equality, full and mutual respect for the sovereignty and independence of both states, and the rejection of a return to any form of foreign tutelage. Therefore, the following must be done:

- A. The government must take all necessary and legal measures with regard to affirming

Lebanese ownership of the Shebaa Farms enclave and present these to the United Nations, now that the Syrian state has declared it to be fully Lebanese territory.

B. Delineate the borders between Lebanon and Syria, while easing tensions that might impede this process, which both Lebanon and Syria have a long-standing need to complete as part of an agreement by the two countries.

C. Press Syria to fully cooperate with the Lebanese authorities in uncovering the fate of the Lebanese detainees in Syrian prisons, in an atmosphere devoid of provocation, tension and negativity that would hinder a positive resolution of this matter.

D. Establish diplomatic relations between the two countries and provide an appropriate climate for these relations, transforming them from relations between individuals and groups to relations between institutions, thus securing their continuity and firmness.

IX. Lebanese-Palestinian Relations

Addressing the Palestinian file requires a comprehensive approach, stressing the Palestinians' respect for the authority of the Lebanese state and compliance with its laws and, on the other hand, reaffirming of solidarity with their cause and the restoration of their rights, in accordance with the following rules:

A. The social condition of the Palestinians requires serious efforts to improve their standard of living and provide the basis for dignified human life, in accordance with the requirements of bilateral cooperation and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In addition, efforts must be made to facilitate their movement inside and outside of Lebanese territory.

B. The right of return of the Palestinians is a fundamental and fixed right. The Lebanese people unanimously reject settlement of the Palestinians in Lebanon, which cannot be conceded under any circumstances.

C. The relationship between the Lebanese state and the Palestinians must be defined within the framework of one Palestinian institution that is the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people in Lebanon, ensuring good coordination and cooperation.

D- The issue of ending the carrying of weapons outside the camps and organizing the security situation inside the camps must be addressed within a framework of serious, responsible and urgent dialogue between the Lebanese government and the Palestinians, leading to the establishment of the state's authority and laws over all Lebanese territory.

X. Protecting Lebanon and Preserving its Independence and Sovereignty

The protection of Lebanon and preservation of its independence and sovereignty are a national responsibility, guaranteed by international charters and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, particularly in confronting any threats or dangers that could harm them, irrespective of where these dangers might come from. Therefore, carrying arms is not an objective in itself, but a noble and sacred means that is exercised by any group whose land is occupied, in a manner identical to the methods of political resistance.

In this context, Hezbollah's arms must be addressed as part of a comprehensive approach that falls within two parameters. The first parameter is reliance on justifications that reflect national consensus and constitute the sources of strength for Lebanon and the Lebanese in terms of preserving these arms. The second parameter is to objectively define conditions that would eliminate the reasons and justifications for keeping these weapons. Since Israel occupies the Shebaa Farms, imprisons Lebanese resistance fighters, and threatens Lebanon, the Lebanese



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people must assume their responsibilities and share the burden of protecting Lebanon, safeguarding its existence and security, and preserving its independence and sovereignty by:

- A. Liberating the Shebaa Farms from the Israeli occupation.
- B. Liberating Lebanese prisoners from Israeli jails.
- C. Protecting Lebanon from Israeli dangers through a national dialogue leading to the formulation of a national defense strategy, which the Lebanese agree to and are involved in by assuming its burdens and benefiting from its outcomes.