

Moawad Accuses the Opposition of Thwarting Arab League Mediation

Contributed by Administrator
Monday, 26 February 2007
Last Updated Saturday, 23 June 2007

A Lebanese minister on Friday accused the opposition of seeking to scupper Arab League mediation efforts by demanding the formation of a national unity government before talks aimed at ending the crisis. | Video

"Parliament speaker Nabih Berri, who speaks for the opposition, made a complete about face on Thursday evening," Social Affairs Minister Nayla Moawad in the pro-Western government told Agence France Presse.

"While he accepted (league secretary general) Amr Mussa's proposal for a resumption of dialogue, he made it conditional on the formation of a national unity government," she said.

"This hardening of the opposition's stand is because of last-minute orders from Syria. Under such conditions the chances of the Arab mediation mission succeeding are diminished and impasse looms."

Moawad was speaking on the final day of the latest Arab League push aimed at getting Lebanon's feuding anti- and pro-Syrian camps to talk to each other and end more than seven months of political paralysis. According to a source within the Arab League delegation, who spoke on condition of anonymity,

Berri told the team on Thursday that any dialogue had to take place under a unity government. "It is a unity government that will become a conference for dialogue," the source quoted Berri as saying.

The anti-Syrian parliamentary majority had welcomed the league proposal for an unconditional resumption of the Lebanese national dialogue interrupted by last year's 34-day war with Israel.(AFP-Naharnet)

Beirut, 22 Jun 07, 19:25