

Presidential Election in Lebanon: The Constitutional Problem

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Sources in Lebanon and in the West are concerned about the possible constitutional crisis to explode as a result of the projected Presidential election. According to the Lebanese Constitution for a sitting Commander of the Lebanese Army to be elected as President, a constitutional amendment has to take place beforehand. And for such amendment to take place the Lebanese Cabinet must send a bill to the Assembly.

The Lebanese Cabinet didn't meet yet to sign a bill. Hezbollah is not accepting that the departing Seniora Government would meet and send such a document. This means that on Sunday, the Constitution won't be amended constitutionally. Hence, if a vote takes place without a bill from the Lebanese Cabinet, the vote won't be constitutional.

It is important that the sole candidate, General Michel Sleiman, refuses the current process before the Lebanese Cabinet of Fuad Siniora initiates it. For the election could be deemed unconstitutional by future parties. If that is the case, the Parliamentary election of the next President could be taken to courts, both internal and international.

To remedy this crisis, the Seniora Cabinet should meet and issue a bill to the Parliament askign for amendment. The Parliament would meet only as a voting assembly to amend the constitution, then meet again to elect. If these steps are not achieved, a large mass of Lebanese citizens may engage in a legal action inside the Republic and overseas.

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