

Government Formation Awaits Suleiman's Return from Spain

Contributed by Naharnet
Sunday, 18 October 2009

Suleiman Travels to Spain

Government Formation Awaits Suleiman's Return from Spain

A wind of optimism is blowing on Lebanon following positive statements by the president, the speaker and the prime minister-designate on cabinet formation.

Media reports said Sunday that the government could be formed after President Michel Suleiman's return from Spain on Wednesday.

An Nahar daily said that the positive stances of Suleiman, Speaker Nabih Berri and PM-designate Saad Hariri on Saturday were a sign that the cabinet could be formed soon.

Baabda circles quoted Suleiman as saying following his meeting with Hariri on Saturday that "the atmosphere is better. It is good and positive."

Opposition sources also described the atmosphere as positive and told An Nahar that the approach to deal with obstacles is being taken "with a positive spirit from both sides."

The sources, however, insisted that discussion is still underway between the two sides to find a solution that satisfies everyone.

Al-Balad newspaper said Hariri is now dealing with the details and portfolios of the cabinet lineup and that negotiations with the opposition are on a basket of proposals and not each portfolio on its own.

Pan-Arab daily al-Hayat, meanwhile, quoted diplomatic circles in Beirut as saying that the Syrian leadership informed Spanish Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, who visited Damascus last Thursday, that it expected the Lebanese government to be formed within 10 days.

Beirut, 18 Oct 09, 11:11

<http://www.naharnet.com/domino/tn/NewsDesk.nsf/getstory?openform&B985722A90F32996C2257653001DC52C>

Suleiman Travels to Spain

President Michel Suleiman traveled to Madrid on a three-day visit for talks with King Juan Carlos and top Spanish officials, the National News Agency reported Sunday.

During his stay in Madrid, Suleiman will meet with Juan Carlos, Spanish Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero and heads of the Congress and Senate.

Foreign Minister Fawzi Salloukh, Defense Minister Elias Murr and Tourism Minister Elie Marouni are part of Suleiman's delegation.

First lady Wafaa is also accompanying the president.

Beirut, 18 Oct 09, 13:34

<http://www.naharnet.com/domino/tn/NewsDesk.nsf/getstory?openform&B985722A90F32996C2257653001DC52C>