

Parliament Finishes First Day of Confidence Vote Debate

Contributed by Naharnet
Tuesday, 08 December 2009

The Lebanese Parliament on Tuesday concluded its first day of debate on a vote of confidence in Prime Minister Saad Hariri and his 30-member Cabinet. The debate is expected to end on Thursday by granting the government the Parliament's vote of confidence with a massive number of trust votes.

The first session had started at 10:30am of Tuesday's morning. PM Hariri opened the session by presenting his cabinet's Policy Statement to MPs.

Free Patriotic Movement leader MP Michel Aoun was the first to speak after PM Hariri.

Former premier MP Najib Miqati then considered that the national unity government was "in form a partnership government, but in content a government of opposites."

Miqati expressed his sorrow for not reaching the formation of the government before almost half a year due to the hindering practiced by some parties and their overruling of the powers of the premier.

"This government was formed without the least consideration for the major headline of democracy: parliamentary elections," added Miqati.

Deputy Speaker Farid Makari was the next MP to debate the vote of confidence, he declared that he does not approve article six of the Policy Statement, considering it as derogation to the State and contradictory to Taef Accord and the Constitution.

Makari stressed that the right to arms should be in State's hand exclusively, not inside the Palestinian camps or outside them. He considered that the inclusion of the resistance and its arms article in the Policy Statement was an attempt to bypass the national dialogue table in order to "deep-root the duality of army and resistance."

"Political sectarianism should be abolished only after the elimination of all reasons that create fears for every sect on the issue," added Makari.

MP Tamam Salam said that the ministerial Policy Statement is the first settlement among many coming settlements in the coming stage, expressing his optimism.

FPM's MP Alain Aoun stressed the will to cooperate with PM Hariri.

"I hope that the priorities of the people will be fulfilled, and here I salute the government for the promises included in the article about citizens' priorities," said MP Robert Ghanem.

The second session kicked off at 6:00pm of the same day by the speeches of Al-Mustaqbal bloc MPs Mohammed Qabbani and Ammar Houry.

Next on the list of speakers were MPs Walid Sukkarieh, Robert Fadel, Gilbert Zoueïn, Elie Marouny, Marwan Fares, Nawwar al-Sahili, Assem Araj, Emile Rahmeh, and Bader Wannous.

Speaker Nabih Berri adjourned the evening parliamentary session till 10:30am of Wednesday morning and announced that 52 MPs are yet to speak.

Beirut, 08 Dec 09, 17:34

<http://www.naharnet.com/domino/tn/NewsDesk.nsf/getstory?openform&75D32BE1344F0CC1C2257687003DEEED>