

The Ministerial Statement

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We address your government through all the Lebanese to declare its commitment to ensure Lebanon's unity and the respect of the constitution, and that it is willing to solve all problems with dialogue to guarantee national conciliation and the principles of democracy

Before reading the Ministerial Statement Prime Minister Saad Hariri said, "We stand before a difficult test; the test of the citizen's confidence in the state and in the constitutional institutions. I confidently bet that we will pass the test if we improve the conditions of democratic practices and the constitutional bases in separating powers and in presenting a civilized model for discussing the Ministerial Statement."

He added, "The cabinet has a choice of succeeding in national consensus, succeeding in renewing the citizen's confidence in the state and not missing any available opportunities to Lebanon."

Hariri also said that success can be achieved in a cabinet of principles and objectives, not one of coalitions of contradictions, and added, "This is the cabinet of development and progress."

Hariri then announced the Ministerial Statement:

We address your government through all the Lebanese to declare its commitment to ensure Lebanon's unity and the respect of the constitution, and that it is willing to solve all problems with dialogue to guarantee national conciliation and the principles of democracy; based on that:

1- The Cabinet will work on all levels to enhance building state institutions and renew their trust. The cabinet is invited to overcome political and sectarian divisions and express a common will to reach real national consensus through solidarity between the ministers.

2- The government takes into consideration setting a harmonious and realistic work program to enhance the capabilities of the state away from giving free promises, and the trust granted by the Parliament and the public as well as the cabinet's accountability will be based on the constitution.

3- The government stresses on the unity, power and exclusive jurisdiction of the state in all matters related to the general politics of the country which guarantees Lebanon and protects its national sovereignty. This principle directs the decisions and commitments of the government. The government also stresses that it commits to the principles of the constitution and the President's Inauguration Speech, as well as the rules of democratic system, National Pact and the application of the Taif Accord.

4- The cabinet ensures its determination to forbid any form of manipulation in civil peace and security, without compromising. This entails placing the military authority in the hands of the state, which guarantees the formula of co-existence. The cabinet commits to maintain its support of military and security sources as well as to provide their equipments to be able to fulfill their tasks and protect the Lebanese from threats and to fight chaos and drug crimes according to the laws of the state.

5- In order to preserve Lebanon's main interest, the cabinet renews its respect for international resolutions and stresses its request to the international community to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1701 and put an end to the Israeli violations to this resolution and its continuous threats and espionage practices. According to this Resolution, the cabinet will pursue its demand for a permanent cease-fire and hold on to the truce agreement as mentioned in the Taif Accord. The cabinet will not stop demanding for Israel to pay [compensations] for the damages it caused with its excessive aggressiveness and [demand Israel] release detainees and the bodies of the martyrs.

6- Based on its responsibility to maintain Lebanon's sovereignty, independence, unity and its lands' safety, the government confirms the right of Lebanon through its people, army and Resistance to liberate and retrieve the Shebaa Farms, Kfar Shouba Hills and the Lebanese part of the Ghajar Village, as well as defend Lebanon in confronting any aggression and hold on to its right to use its water, using all legitimate and available methods. The government also confirms its commitment to the UN Security Council Resolution 1701 in all its articles and stresses its right to work on uniting the stances of the Lebanese through reaching an agreement to be approved during the National Dialogue on a defense strategy to protect and defend Lebanon.

7- The cabinet will work on enhancing relations with Arab countries, activating joint Arab work within the framework of the Arab League. The government commits to the approach of Arab solidarity, away from politics of axes to serve the interests of all the Arabs and of Lebanon, so that the country does not become a battlefield for regional and international influence, but a state, which is sovereign, free, independent and stable and standing on its own and for its people. This is both the country's right and an Arab need.

8- The cabinet will work on enhancing Lebanon's role on the international and Arab levels through an efficient presence in the United Nations Security Council as a non-permanent member. It will have the responsibility of defending Lebanese national rights, Arabic cases, justice cases, and peace in the world, with the Palestinian conflict topping the agenda, especially when it comes to its people's legal rights to face Israel and its practice of violence and occupation of Palestinian, Lebanese and Syrian territories, in addition to Israel's breach to International resolutions, including [those on] universal human rights.

9- The government looks forward to enhancing brotherly Lebanese-Syrian relations to the level assumed by historic ties and joint interests between the people and the countries and the basis of trust and respect for the sovereignty and independence of both countries so that neither of the countries pose a threat to the other's security, as stipulated in the Taif Accord. The government finds the exchange of diplomatic representation to be a step forward in that direction, which would lay the foundation to address joint causes, including controlling, delineating and demarcating the borders, as well as the issue of the missing Lebanese, in a spirit of cooperation, openness and keenness over the interests of both countries and their people.

10- The cabinet renews Lebanon's commitment to international rights and UN [Security Council] Resolutions related to the Palestinian population, which includes their right to determine their destiny and return to live in a free independent state with Jerusalem as its capital. The cabinet also renews its commitment of unity with the Arabs in defending these Palestinian national as well as humanitarian rights, and in Lebanon's efficient contribution through political and diplomatic means within the framework of Arab Initiative for Peace that took place in Beirut Summit in 2002.

11- The cabinet confirms its commitment to the Constitution's provisions, which reject nationalization. It supports the Palestinians' right of return, which requires political and diplomatic campaigns in order to be achieved, and highlight the Lebanese [people's] refusal to naturalize [the Palestinian refugees] and holds the international community responsible for [the failure of the] Palestinians to return to their home. The cabinet will pursue its work in ensuring the human and social rights of Palestinians living on Lebanese soil and in asking states and international organizations to be aware of its duty toward them and in developing UNRWA, which will minimize Lebanon's burdens and [help] continue rebuilding the Nahr al-Bared camp, in addition to inviting neighboring and friendly states to secure the funds necessary to cover its expenses in order to secure the return of its inhabitants to the camp and stay under the Lebanese state's authority until their return home [to Palestine.]

12- Based on what the National Pact states with regard to Palestinian arms and what the Lebanese have unanimously agreed on with regard to extending the state's sovereignty over all Lebanese territory and the necessity of the Palestinians to respect the state's authority and laws, the government stresses the need to implement the decisions issued by the National Dialogue committee that calls for ending the presence of Palestinian arms outside the Palestinian refugee camps and addressing the issues of security and weapons inside the camps. The cabinet also stresses on the state's responsibility to protect the camps against any aggressions and maintain the Palestinians' security within the framework of the law.

13- The government confirms, with respect to the international legitimacy and what was agreed upon during National Dialogue, its commitment to cooperate with the Special Tribunal for Lebanon, formed in accordance with the UN Security Council Resolution 1757 to uncover the truth in the assassination of late Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and his companions as well as in other assassination crimes, enforce justice and deter criminals.

14- The cabinet will double its effort in following up on the issue of the disappearance of his Eminence Imam Moussa al-Sadr and his two companions, Sheikh Mohammed Yacoub and journalist Abbas Badr al-Din in Libya, to be aware of what happened to them and free them, in addition to punish the Libyans and non-Libyans involved in kidnapping and hiding them, based on the prosecutor's claim on August 2, 2004, and the charge sheet issued by the Justice prosecutor on August 21, 2008. It also stresses the need to speed up the completion of the Judicial Council's work and take national and international actions imposed by the laws in force.

15- The government will seriously follow-up on the issue of the Lebanese missing and detainees in Syria; to uncover their destiny and work on releasing the detainees and reveal the destiny of the missing and retrieve the corpses of the dead using all political and legal methods, including putting forward a Lebanese-Syrian agreement in this regard.

16- The cabinet will work on including Lebanon in the United Nations treaty that secures people from enforced disappearance, and it will work on cases of enforced disappearances in and outside Lebanon to discover their fate to

cleanse people from the memories of the war and enhance national reconciliation and respect the parents right to know. The cabinet will consider the establishment of a national body dealing with the question of victims of enforced disappearances in all its aspects.

17- The cabinet will facilitate the return of Lebanese in Israel in accordance with the laws enforced currently.

18- The government will work on completing the procedures to prepare for the municipal and optional elections in the best conditions and propose the appropriate legislative amendments to achieve that.

19- The cabinet is dedicated to lowering the legal age of voting in the Constitution and implement Articles 104 and 114, which will allow Lebanese living abroad to vote after setting up a mechanism to ensure this procedure in a period not exceeding six months.

20- After establishing a mechanism to let Lebanese living abroad vote, the cabinet will work for a duration of 18 months on a new electoral law based on co-existence between Lebanese, and on ensuring the correct political presentation for all categories of people and all generations. Reforms will also take place at the level of organizing and supervising the elections.

21- The government seeks to adopt administrative decentralization, which is stipulated in the Taif Accord. This should be done by finding the best methods to allow for both domestic participation through the elected councils, which enjoy financial and administrative independence, on one hand; and the continuation of the centralized authority to commit to balanced development, on the other.

22- The cabinet is devoted to enhancing the role of women in public life, which includes administrative appointments in leadership positions, and implementing international agreements signed and approved by Lebanon, especially on eliminating all forms of discrimination against women. And it will work on adopting a plan to combat the phenomenon of violence against women, which includes finalizing the laws draft, which protects women from domestic violence, and in implementing and legalizing the ban on the forceful trafficking of women and children for sexual abuse. The cabinet stresses on the role of the National Council for Lebanese Women and the necessity of allowing women to be more capable of enlarging their powers and enhancing their roles to be able to suggest national strategies to the judiciary so that women won't be discriminated.

23- The government commits to finalizing the implementation of the Shura Council's decision that was issued as the result of contesting the decree of naturalization after the Interior Ministry almost finalized sorting and tabulating the files related to the mentioned decision. The cabinet will continue to finalize working on applications related to choosing nationality in accordance with law number 1967/68, which the Interior Ministry has almost finalized. The cabinet supports the law of restoring nationality, the draft which was approved by the parliamentary commission of administration and justice. In a related context, the government urges the Lebanese expatriates to register their personal statuses in the Lebanese embassies, consulates and official bureaus.

24- The government will work to join Lebanon to the international agreement to the rights of the disabled and the related protocol and stresses the significance of full respect to the rights of the disabled stipulated in the Lebanese laws, especially law 2000/220, after a quick finalization of its applied decrees.

25- [The cabinet is] looking for the progress of the national economy and achieving sustainable development for the benefit of all Lebanese, especially those most in need, and [even] under current circumstances the cabinet's policy is to provide opportunities and chances. The Lebanese economy passed through a difficult phase, during which it showed immunity and was able to receive capital and achieve high rates of growth that exceeded 8 percent in 2008, and is expected to exceed 7 per cent in 2009, which will contribute in decreasing a percentage of public debt until it is equal with the Growth Domestic Product and cutting interest rates.

26- With the availability of this chance, the cabinet is going to help all Lebanese benefit from economic growth in a proportional way that will allow all categories of society and all the Lebanese regions to profit. It means that the cabinet will control poverty and decrease economic and social gaps among Lebanese, while making sure to bring back the middle class, which are considered as an essential element to stabilize Lebanon.

27- Seeking economic development is supposed to serve Lebanon and develop its qualities. It also enhances creative partnership between the public and private sectors, which is required to achieve high levels of growth and sustainability, and takes into consideration the limitations placed on the treasury. All this liberalizes the citizen from the obstacles that hinder his potential and limit his capacity to be creative and productive.

28- Based on Article 27, the political, economic, monetary and social policies that would be generated by the cabinet will be as follows:

- First: aiming to complete the development of financial, institutional and executive infrastructures to serve

Lebanon's interests and the productive sectors, which lead to a growth to achieve higher and more stable levels, and contribute in eliminating the issue of unemployment and not enough employment, especially among the youth; stop the brain drain in Lebanon; seek to establish the pattern of growth to secure new job opportunities in urban and rural areas; reduce the deficit in Lebanon's foreign exchange and promote an economic balance of opportunities between regions through integration, interdependence and through preserving exceptional human, natural and cultural resources.

- Second: seek to maintain financial stability to decrease the public debt on the national economy to the level of the Gross Domestic Product, which is to free additional financial resources that allow the cabinet to improve the public service sector and its effectiveness. Seek to launch investment programs that will lead to growth needed by Lebanese, and that depends on all appropriate financial sources, starting with what is available.

- Third: resume in adopting the economic reform policy formulated by Lebanon during the Paris III Donor Conference and in enhancing it in order to modernize the national economic infrastructure to maintain its stability and to support opportunities for development with the donations and loans granted by states and institutions, and by implementing various programs of infrastructure and implement privatization based on applicable laws and sector policies established by the government, and encourage Lebanese to contribute.

- Fourth: Setting a social policy that contributes in ensuring the citizens' basic needs, and improving the quality of social services offered by the state to serve as many people in need as possible.

Based on these premises, the cabinet is committed to achieving the following objectives:

1. Promote growth and regional development, take a special interest in rural areas; hence encourage the creation of new job opportunities by establishing industrial zones and developing traditional, new and promising production sectors, including non-polluting light industries and creative industries, such as in the fields of craftsmanship, the arts, culture, the media and information technology.

2. Improve the field of investment by amending laws and simplifying the administrative procedure, such as those related to establishing companies and shutting them down. Strengthening the competition, forbidding monopolization, encouraging domestic and foreign investments.

3. Establishing programs for investment and public spending at a medium-term as a regulator of the cabinet's policies, starting with maintenance, completing construction and ensuring the appropriate apparatuses to provide public services. This program should match with the general economic policies that reinforce financial stability.

4. Establishing a development policy to achieve balanced development in all Lebanese regions based on the land development directives previously adopted by the cabinet and based on innovate cooperation between the public and private sectors in line with the efforts to develop the airport of [late] President Rene Mouawad and implement the projects of "Elyssar" and "Linor" after correcting them.

5. Committing to the economic and trade agreements with foreign countries as well as international and regional organizations. Enabling the production sectors to go along with the openness of international markets in order to increase the competition capabilities and to provide a better integration [in the international markets]. Continuing the process of Lebanon's participation in the World Trade Organization and speeding up the implementation of the requirements of the Arab Economic Integration Policy adopted during the Arab summits as well as the requirements of the European Neighborhood Policy. Participating in the Union for the Mediterranean and activating the cooperation with Arab and international financial institutions.

6. Structuring and liberating the communication sector according to the laws in order to increase its effectiveness in terms of its revenue on the production sectors and based on the ties between developing this sector and modernizing the economy.

7. Developing the knowledge society and economy of the information technology especially by implementing the broadband services and providing it to all Lebanese regions.

8-Setting an executive reform project for the electricity sector in order to permanently provide power to all citizens and to all production sectors. Such a project will also contribute in reducing the financial burdens on the state treasury as a result of the continuous subsidization of electricity in Lebanon.

9- Improving ties between the public and private sectors and considering the privileges of the economic and social council and activating its role in public life. Also, seeking the establishment of the necessary laws to make it possible for the Lebanese production sectors to compete with each other.

10- Developing the agriculture sector and providing more opportunities for the Lebanese agricultural produce to export abroad. Adopting laws that ensure the food safety which in its turn guarantees the high quality and safety of the national

production.

11- Developing the industrial sectors and motivating it to increase its exportation through activating the sector and improving the products' high quality which Lebanon can compete with at a regional and international level.

12-Developing the tourism sector in the country and removing all obstacles blocking its growth. Encouraging more touristic investments in all Lebanese regions.

13-Developing the tax system especially the income tax. Facilitating the administration's job and improving the tax collection process in order to strengthen the public income and to serve the tax justice.

14- Freeing the public administration from the overlapping of duties and reviving the regulations of the public institutions. Relate the revenues and expense of public administration according to its economic nature. Adopting privatization as one of the available methods to implement the sector based policies.

15- The cabinet vows to present the 2010 state budget to the parliament by the end of January 2010 at the latest, one which incorporates [the cabinet's] its orientation as stipulated on this Ministerial Statement. The State budget will be adopted after the adoption of draft laws of the previous years.

People's concerns are the government's priority:

The people's concerns will be the cabinet's priorities. The cabinet declares that it will manage responsibly key issues that are still pending. The time has come to find appropriate solutions to the current problems in order to ensure development plans that would benefit Lebanese.

1) Ensure the authority of the state and respect the law

- Support Lebanese security forces and equip them
- Fight all forms of crimes
- Make reforms in the Judiciary system

2) Confirm Lebanon's position and role

- Enhance diplomatic activities on both domestic and regional levels
- Be aware of Lebanon's tasks as a non-permanent member in the UN Security Council

3) Modernize administrations and fight corruption

- Speed up the process of reaching and implementing the electronic government project
- Enhance the role of monitoring commissions and develop them to enable them to pass laws
- Appoint employees in public administrations and institutions in leading positions based on their competence and increase the quota of women in public administrations and institutions
- Reiterate Lebanon's commitment to the UN agreement to fight corruption
- Make administrations more efficient to decrease the paperwork related to people's transactions

4) Ensure the right to have energy

- Increase energy output to no less than 600 mega watts in a period that does not exceed the end of 2010
- Insist on collecting electricity bills, contain all forms of waste and install remote-controlled generators
- Enhance the use of solar energy as well as that of lightning
- Adopt a law related to fuel [consumption and pricing]
- Continue building high-tension electricity networks

5) Deal with heavy traffic congestion

- Modernize the public transportation system and encourage people to use it
- Launch a traffic control center and increase the traffic lights
- Implement stricter punitive measures in dealing with traffic violations in order to limit traffic accidents

6) Protect the environment

- Form a national committee to follow up on climate change and desertification [practices]
- Build green spaces in cities and towns, increase natural reserves, plant two million trees annually in all areas, take precautionary measures against forest fires and limit the damage caused by quarries and sand stores
- Find quick solutions to garbage dumps and find appropriate measures to deal with garbage disposal
- Launching a practical plan with incentives to swap taxis with cars that save fuel
- Laying down a mechanism to encourage using clean technology and renewable energy

7) Preserve water

- Improve the distribution of water and build more water systems
- Benefit from surface water by building dams and artificial lakes
- End the pollution of groundwater and speed up the process of building an advanced sewage system
- Continue the execution of the Litani Project as well as the cleanup of the Qaroun Lake

8) Limit poverty and set a plan to end the homeless children phenomenon

- Deal with homeless children who beg on the streets and put an end to this phenomenon
- Implement the International Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Reduce extreme poverty in Lebanon by 50% by 2015

9) Implement reform to Social Security

- Modernize the national social security fund, hire competent employees and simplify the fund's administrative procedures
- Find a solution for the optional social security fund
- Adopt a pension scheme to replace the current end-of-service scheme
- Implement the cabinet's decision to unify medical and hospitalization fees across the board

10) Improve services and knowledge-based technologies

- Offer better internet and telephone packages to make over 50 megabytes per second available in Lebanon in 2010
- Improve Lebanon's role as a hub for electronic services
- Benefit from technology-savvy and language skilled people to provide internet services in Arabic

11) Improve ties with Lebanese diaspora

- Change the nature of relationship between the Lebanese government and its expatriates from seasonal to permanent
- Activate diplomatic action abroad in terms of communicating with expatriates
- Benefit from the expatriates' capabilities through the cabinet's guidance in terms of investment and production in Lebanon

- Granting the expatriates the right to vote in parliamentary elections from their country of residence [through Lebanese consulates]

12) Preserve and renovate touristic sites

-Work on a draft law to preserve touristic sites

13) Follow up on issue of displaced people and their compensations

- Work on finalizing the issue of the displaced people

- Resume paying compensations for the victims of the 2006 July War

The PM will call for coordination meetings with relevant ministers, representatives of civil society, experts and specialists to tackle the abovementioned articles.

Justice Ministry:

- Stress the independence of the judiciary and empower it.

- Resume the judicial appointments, activate judicial inspection and expedite disciplinary complaints

- Gradually increase the number of judges, move toward more specialized judges and modernize the Institute of Judicial Studies

- Modernize laws, including immediately working on the Landlord Tenant law, and following up on laws and drafts that were submitted to the parliament

- Continue with the implementation of the five-year plan to transfer the prisons' jurisdiction to the Justice Ministry; form a structured general directorate for this purpose

- Complete the mechanization process of the judiciary, the Justice Ministry, the commercial register and the electronic library

Foreign Ministry:

- Develop skill set of diplomats and administrators through constant training programs

- Form an institute for diplomatic training

- Reassess the structure of the Foreign Ministry

- Mechanize the ministry's processes, modernize the means of communication and establish an IT department within the ministry

- Speed up the building of a new ministry headquarters

- Unify the expatriates' committees abroad

Interior Ministry:

- Finalize drafting a comprehensive plan for applying administrative decentralization.

- Introduce the necessary reforms to the municipal law in order to hold the elections under the best circumstances possible.

- Digitalize the ministry's administration, while prioritizing the personal status and the general directorate of administrations and local councils, developing the identity workshop, and adopting biometric passports.

- Launch the control station for intercepting phone calls after finalizing the selection of its employees, in coordination with the defense and the telecommunications ministries.

- Continue with prison reform, establishing new prisons and following up on transferring its jurisdiction to the Justice Ministry.

- Recruit Internal Security Forces agents and contractual staff according to a mechanism based on competence and discipline.
- Fill the employment gaps while restructuring the general directorate upon necessity.
- Follow up on parliament's work on passing a new traffic law with strict measures and fines in order to guarantee public safety.
- Execute the mayors' mutual fund and the mayor's stamp.
- Implement the recommendations of the Conference of Arab Interior Ministers pertaining to forming an Arab Interpol office in Lebanon.
- Look into the expatriate card.
- Support the Civil Defense's human capabilities and rehabilitating the municipal police.

Finance Ministry:

- Adopt unified real estate valuation methods in order to put an end to the discretionary levying of taxes and fees in the Financial Ministry's departments, municipalities and other state administrations
- Set deadlines to finalize operations within the Financial Ministry's departments in line with the regulations in force and monitor meeting these deadlines through automation systems
- Simplify transactions within the Financial Ministry's departments to serve the interests of citizens and investors
- Conduct land survey
- Provide online services for the citizens, such as tax declarations and customs transactions, and work on allowing online payment
- Issue implementation decrees for the law related to forming a Directorate General for Public Debt and fill vacancies within the directorate general [to increase efficiency]

Enhance the procedure of preparing and implementing the state budget in an aim to strengthen monitoring mechanisms [on state spending] and to facilitate work [within the ministry]

Ministry of Public Works and Transportation:

- Approve ground-transportation policy for passengers and cargo, resolve traffic crisis, facilitate transportation for citizens, reduce transportation costs through enhancing public transportation domestically and between Lebanon and other countries through land, sea and air
- Preserve Lebanon's shores and take [appropriate] measures to resolve the problem of violations on public maritime domains to safeguard the rights of all Lebanese
- Eliminate the violations of people, private and public institutions on the [old] railroad tracks to again utilize them.

National Defense:

- Setting a temporary and long-term plan to equip the Lebanese army and provide it with the necessary funds.
- Strengthening the Lebanese army's capacities in general and those of the regiments responsible for controlling the borders and defending Lebanon against the Israeli enemy, in addition to cooperating with the UNIFIL.
- Promote the air force's capacity to train pilots and technical non-commissioned officers; increase the appropriation earmarked for fuel purchases; perform maintenance work and upgrade navy vessels and speedboats to prevent smuggling and illegal immigration, and monitor Lebanon's territorial waters.
- Developing the Staff and Command College, the Military Academy, and the Training Institute by raising their standard of education.
- Restructuring the units in line with the army's duties in the coming period, especially in countering terrorism.

- Strengthening the capacities of the [army] units deployed south of the Litani River to ensure they properly fulfill their duties to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1701 and defend Lebanon against the Israeli army.
- Developing the project of the central military hospital and modernizing the hospitals and the hospitalization process of the military personnel and their families, as well as establishing a small military hospital in each region.
- Complete the Ministry of Defense's expropriation projects and develop a plan for the expropriation of land plots seized by the Ministry of Defense in the vicinity of the Presidential Palace.

Public Health:

- Proceed with the health reform plan which was approved by the previous government, especially with regard to working on implementing compulsory health care system for citizens who do not benefit from social coverage and for residents.
- Continue enhancing the governmental hospitalization sector through enhancing government hospitals, equip them and continue to establish hospitals in accordance with health plans.
- Strengthen the role of initial health care centers throughout all Lebanese regions.
- Continue following the information technology systems and medical monitoring, after unifying medical tariffs, terminologies and contracts.
- Adopt a pharmaceutical card for chronic diseases in all health centers in Lebanon.
- Continue working with the Economy and Trade Ministry to finalize contracts with insurance companies to implement the laws and ensure health coverage to traffic and road accidents and hospitalization of foreign employees and new comers.
- Continue following work with the relevant ministries to form a committee that deals with food and medicine.
- Build a modern central laboratory and equip it.
- Continue enhancing the initial health care programs related to prevention and early detection of diseases, enhancing immunization programs, setting regulations and taking necessary procedures to resolve the problem of smoking, which is considered the number one reason for more than 50% of current diseases.
- Construct buildings for the Public Health Ministry, Central Blood Bank and ministry centers in all districts.
- Fill in the vacancies within the ministry.
- Cooperate with the Education Ministry and the concerned syndicates to develop health careers and issue implementation decrees to maintain the good standard of the medical and health careers.
- Support the hospitalization sector and follow-up on implementing the credit and investment system in the health tourism and treatment fields and cover hospitalization fees which are due on the ministry between the years 2000 and 2004.

The Economy and Trade

- Setting an economic strategy, which includes executive plans for all the production sectors.
- Strengthening the small and middle-sized enterprises.
- Expanding the high-quality project to improve the quality of Lebanese products and its competitive capacities.
- Strengthening the consumer protection apparatus throughout Lebanon.
- Improving the capacities of the committee supervising the National Social Security Fund and drafting a new law to supervise the insurance sector.
- Implementing the intellectual property.

Agriculture:

- Following up on the draft laws handed over to the parliament related to the agriculture sector.
- Improve human resources at the ministry, in terms of number and qualifications.

- Applying agricultural guidance, quarantine, supervision and laboratories.
- Intensifying the role of the Agricultural Research Institute and Green Project.
- Lowering the production cost, improving the products quality, supporting the project of exporting agricultural produce and establishing new laws to help the farmers and food products.
- Ensuring coordination among those involved in agriculture, and cooperation between the local and the international organizations.
- Evaluating and activating the role of the agriculture co-ops.
- Setting a mechanism for offering agricultural credits and enhancing the law of the national bank for agricultural development.
- Developing insurance to cover dangers and natural disasters that harm the agricultural sector.
- Separating the chamber of agriculture from the chambers of trade and industry.

Telecommunications:

- Structuring the telecommunications sector in line with the laws especially law No 431/2002 which gives the telecom sector a complete role in the development of the national economy and allows investments by the public sector on the basis of strengthening its contribution in the production.
- Speeding up the development of landlines and cellular networks, making them function so as to bring about full coverage, with better reception, over all Lebanese territory. Speeding up the internet connection to guarantee 75% of fixed networks and to prepare fixed telephone lines and cellular networks for the broadband service and strengthen international connections to this end. Improving the reception in service of subscribers, particularly in directing tariffs, the service of the centers of telecommunication and the service of conveying shared records from one network to another.
- Introducing the necessary amendments to the law 140/1999 related to tapping in a way that preserves the people's rights and privacies as well as the security and judicial system's needs to carry out their duties. Until the amendment is concluded and adopted by the cabinet, the latter maintains the same mechanism adopted by the former government.
- Establishing the call centers since they have several benefits in attracting investments, ensuring job opportunities, providing direct and indirect resources to the state treasury, and supplying all the necessary administrative facilitations.
- Controlling illegal actions in the fields of services, calls, international phone calls, television satellites and dropping their prices.

Labor:

- Ensuring the financial balance in the National Social Security Fund, especially concerning sicknesses, and family benefits.
- Adopting the necessary legislation to address the flaws in the labor law to make it in line with the international and Arab agreements.
- Developing the syndicate structure and the unity of syndicates work.

The Media:

- Setting a plan to develop Tele Liban, Radio Liban and the National News Agency.
- Setting a plan to regulate the media careers, studying the media laws, monitoring foreign publications, and adopting a law for encoded broadcasting.
- Appointing [the members of] the national media council and enhancing its role and privileges.
- Finalizing the plan pertaining to broadcast.
- Organizing the broadcast of foreign channels on Lebanese territories.

- Organizing the work of news websites.

Energy and Water

- Granting citizens their rights in obtaining electricity all hours of the day based on the principle of equality between them.
- Inaugurating a broad plan of direction for the production, transportation and distribution of electricity, which includes: establishing an electricity station for essential conveyance; protecting and diversifying the sources of production operation; discussing the incorporation of the private sector into operations of construction; activation and distribution in accordance with law 2002/462 and its binding amendments.
- Hastening to increase the productive capacity of electricity and reducing the technical waste in the networks and distribution of power, ensuring the necessary funding for it and speeding up the process of achieving a national command center and distribution stations.
- Reinforcing the capacities of Electricite de Liban, restructuring it and turning it into a [private] company.
- Lowering demand through directing energy via new energy means and finding the means to fund them and encourage investment in them, establish a wind atlas in Lebanon and utilizing, for the environment, the burning of garbage to produce energy.
- Lowering the cost of oil derivatives, diversifying their sources, improving the conditions for importing natural gas and Lebanon's connection to and supply of energy (the seven-fold connection, the Syrian connection, natural gas.)
- Reviewing the tariff on the basis of a social tariff and a production tariff which leads, on the one hand, to lessening the difference between the cost of production and the price of selling, and achieving justice and protection for both small and large-scale consumers.
- Repairing old factories and limiting their environmental damage [in Zouk and Jieh], ceasing to use the most costly of them while maintaining them for emergency situations.
- Establishing the Lebanese Center for the Preservation of Energy, creating a national road map based on modern environmental concepts (Green Energy) and based on new sources of energy to account for 12% of Lebanese consumption by 2020.
- Treating the problem of water as an integrated unit which works via an interconnected link which begins from the water storage, ensuring water sources, guiding demand, improving distribution, renewing its use through refining and treating groundwater storages.
- Putting water under one bill.
- Defining the priorities in applying the principle of the ten-fold plan and ensuring the necessary funding for it. Developing this plan through relying on land arrangements and the plan to preserve the water wealth.
- Conducting the use of water without considering it a free commodity and punishing those who pollute it.
- Preserving water wealth by achieving balance between the use of groundwater and surface water.
- Stopping the waste of water and establishing water stations and monitoring them.
- Seeking to benefit from the fresh water in the sea.
- Benefiting from Lebanon's legal shares in common waters.
- Demanding compensation for the losses Lebanon continues to suffer as a result of Israel's occupation and aggression.
- Executing the function of the Regional Center for Water Sciences.
- Organizing the oil sector and reviewing the pricing equation.
- Preparing water institutions and equipping them with human capabilities.
- Put an oil law in place.

- Bringing oil pipelines back online and establishing oil refineries in partnership with the private sector of the countries interested. Reactivating oil investments.

Tourism:

- Setting a sustainable strategy, developing the tourism ministry and enhancing its privileges.
- Expanding tourism activity throughout Lebanon and enhancing Lebanese domestic tourism.
- Attracting new categories of tourists to Lebanon.
- Focusing on developing ecotourism, rural, religious, medical, treatment, cosmetic, cultural tourisms and others.
- Enhancing human resources in the tourism sector through training.
- Improving the tourism services according the international standards and providing an adequate environment for tourists by strengthening the role of the tourist police by increasing their numbers and equipment as well as prioritizing the recruitment of women.
- Providing reception halls and services at the airport and at the land and sea border-crossings; especially at the Beirut Port and at tourist sites.
- Preparing the Jounieh port to host tourist ships and enhancing the capabilities of other ports in coastal areas.
- Encouraging investments in the tourism sector and the activities of tourism institutions.
- Activating tourism agreements between Lebanon and other countries. Strengthening Lebanon's participation in Arab and international tourism organizations.

Culture:

- Finalizing the project to enhance the National Library and establishing other public libraries.
- Building the Institute of Arts and Culture: the Lebanese-Omani Center. Establishing arts and culture institutes throughout Lebanon.
- Finishing the projects of the historical museum for Beirut and another one for Saida.
- Establishing a fund for cultural development, granting innovative cultural awards and enhancing heritage.

Displaced:

- Providing the necessary money for unresolved matters, completing reconciliation, confirming the return [of the displaced], and contributing in developing particular regions.
- Paying all the compensations for the 2006 July War.

Youth and Sports:

- Setting a national strategy for sports, youth and scouts.
- Studying the establishment of one building for the Youth and Sports Ministry; the National Olympic Committee of Lebanon; the sports, scouts and youth unions, in the Kamil Chamoun Sports City.
- Finalizing the construction of sports facilities.
- Carrying out the scouts activities in Simar Jbeil.
- Establishing sports stadiums in coordination with the municipalities and amending the pertaining law.
- Supplying the sports facilities with the adequate spaces for people with disabilities.
- Filling the full time vacancies gaps in the youth and sports ministry.

- Supporting the National Olympic Committee of Lebanon; the sports, youth, scouts unions; and the Lebanese national [sports] teams.

The Social Affairs:

- Setting plans to move from social welfare to social development. Focusing on protecting the marginalized categories [of the population], especially women, children, elderly, and disabled people.
- Studying the establishment of a higher council for social policies to plan and coordinate between the planners and the executers implementing the development programs as well as establishing a network of social information.
- Realizing social integration of marginalized and weak categories [of society]. Allowing the people benefitting from the social services in the decision making process related to those services.
- Reinforcing the partnership between the official and the civil sectors, and international organizations.
- Working to set a social pact between all those involved in the social services.

Industry:

- Strengthening the role of Colibac and establishing and administrating industrial centers.
- Establishing an apparatus of the public and private sectors to continuously work on implementing the law of protecting the national production.
- Enhancing the competitive capacities of the Lebanese products, especially those that are highly dependent on energy.

Administrative Development:

- Building the capacities of administrative and public institutions. Activating strategic planning and introducing a modern human resources administration.
- Relying on good governance, especially in fighting corruption and bribery. Strengthening the principles of accountability and supervision as well as modernizing and implementing the related laws.
- Developing the communication and information techniques and setting the standards for websites at the public administration and public institution to pave the way for the e-cabinet to improve the citizens' access to services and public information. It [e-cabinet] also contributes in increasing the supervising capacities on the financial and administrative issues as well as verifying information and providing communication between the administrations.
- Taking the necessary measures to implement the law pertaining to the republic's mediator.

Parliament's Affairs:

- Strengthening the relation between the cabinet and the parliament on the basis of the separation of powers.
- Coordination with the parliament in following up on the legislative work, supervision and accountability.
- Enhancing the capacities of the office of the minister of state for the parliament's affairs.

Mr. Speaker, fellow MPs, our cabinet, the cabinet of development and progress, looks forward to the cooperation of your parliament and based on this Ministerial Statement requests your vote of confidence.

-NOW Lebanon