

## A Message to Lebanese: Get out of the box...

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In the midst of major crises worldwide and as the US is sinking in multiple problems, every nation, country, community in the world and in the Middle East, is trying to defend its rights, secure its position and in some cases, insure its survival, until some sense comes back to international relations and the US re stabilizes itself.

And what are the Lebanese Christian politicians doing meanwhile? Circling in rounds around a Palace in Baabda, thinking that one of them will enter the building soon and the world will be amazingly better or terribly worse. Guys, the issue is not that building. Whoever goes in won't be able to perform any action outside "Dahiye's strict command." Maronite, Orthodox or Taoist, it won't matter. National security in Lebanon is designed in Tehran and marginally challenged by the Jihadists. This is it. Nothing else really counts. The best shot to get out of the box was given by the "Cedars Revolution" in 2005. Electing an "independence President", which meant a "fighting President" by 51% of the vote, was possible then. But the dominant political and religious hierarchy ran away. In 2008 a last chance to get out of the box came when Hezbollah invaded the capital. In Bashir's times, this would have been it. Resistance would have been the response. In Taef times, politicians live by "ta'2anni" (hide from the challenge) and alignment under bigger brothers in the region. They all ran to Qatar. The box was sealed off again.

The region exploded as of 2011. A last opportunity opened. 'Mashi' (nothing happened). The Jihadists are at the borders and Hezbollah is in Syria as of 2013. 'Mashi' again. "We're waiting to elect a big boss for the Baabda building." Kurds secured a country in Syria, Yazidis and Assyrians lost their valleys in Iraq, Russia is in the Alawi homeland and the region is reshaping. What are the politicians doing? Watching that building in Baabda. More than a million Syrians are already inside Lebanon. Along with the Palestinians, they have already changed the country's demography. What are the politicians doing? Choosing which one is less pro-Assad for the ultimate job on that hill.

Frustrated politicians' partisans ask me: But what can we do? Well, stop what is being done now, regroup and think strategically. You need to get out of the box before it's smashed. The politicians took wrong turns in 1990, 2005, 2008, and as of 2013. Go back to the main highway and take a better direction. Get better drivers and brand better ideas. For the same sacrifices and efforts over the past 25 years, you could have had a free country or a zone of freedom inside your country. Now you are hanging the hopes of a nation on who will be in that palace. Change