

President Bush Strongly Condemns Assassination of Lebanese Member of Parliament Antoine Ghanem

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I strongly condemn today's horrific assassination of Lebanese Member of Parliament Antoine Ghanem. I extend my personal condolences to his family and the families of the innocent persons who were murdered alongside him in Beirut.

Since October 2004, there has been a tragic pattern of political assassinations and attempted assassinations designed to silence those Lebanese who courageously defend their vision of an independent and democratic Lebanon. Today's cowardly attack comes days before the Lebanese Parliament is scheduled to convene to elect a new president. The United States opposes any attempts to intimidate the Lebanese people as they seek to exercise their democratic right to select a president without foreign interference. We will continue to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the Lebanese people, as they resist attempts by the Syrian and Iranian regimes and their allies to destabilize Lebanon and undermine its sovereignty.

I call on the international community to support the Government of Lebanon in its efforts to bring to justice the perpetrators of these violent attacks, and to stand with the citizens of Lebanon who continue to struggle to protect their freedom.

Return to this article at:
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