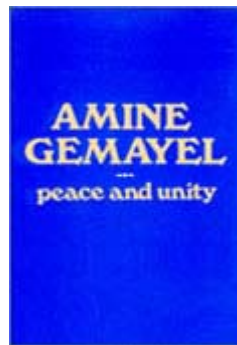


Peace and Unity

by

Amine Gemayel



Introduction

The contents of this volume represent a vision, not only of one man but of all who cherish the ideals of freedom, democracy, peace and harmonious coexistence.

These, the major speeches of President Amine Gemayel during his first year and a half in office, shed much light on the oft-misunderstood causes behind the nine-year conflict in Lebanon, and help us to appreciate the gargantuan task that faced the new President. They also evoke the remarkable resilience of the Lebanese people, an innate characteristic which has enabled them to maintain their optimism throughout the most difficult and dangerous times.

Lebanon's terrible ordeal will no doubt come to an end as all her ordeals have done throughout her history. Her people have set an example to the world in their determination to uphold democratic principles - Lebanon is perhaps the only true democracy in the Middle East - and to endure as an independent nation embracing widely varying cultural and religious persuasions. These qualities are vividly depicted in the speeches of their President, two elements of which stand out above all others: his boundless faith in Lebanon, and his genuine search for peace.

Some of the speeches were given in English, but the majority have been translated from the Arabic original. Together they form an eloquent testimony to the integrity of President Gemayel; they show also an admirable preference for plain speaking and a noteworthy adherence to the truth. They were delivered to a wide variety of audiences the world over, and consequently touch upon a diversity of subjects and issues. Some of them, in view of subsequent events, have a truly prophetic ring.

This is an historic collection in a number of ways, not least because it represents almost certainly the first book in English by a President of Lebanon. It is also one of the very few documents on recent events in Lebanon to emanate from a Lebanese source. But perhaps more importantly, these speeches go a long way towards expressing the real hopes and aspirations of Lebanon both as a state and as a people.

"I will stop at nothing, I will follow the course to the very end, I will exert every possible effort, I will talk to friend and foe alike, to further the cause of Lebanon and her people-the cause of peace, tolerance and equal-

ity among all men."

AMINE GEMAYEL
STATEMENT TO THE BRITISH PRESS
15 DECEMBER 1983

Acknowledgement

The publishers express their gratitude to President Gemayel for permitting the publication of his speeches. The selection has been left entirely to the discretion of the publishers, as has the brief summary of relevant events and information that precedes each of the speeches. These summaries are by no means complete, their sole purpose being to place each speech in its context.

FIYADIEH, 23 SEPTEMBER 1982

SPEECH BY THE NEW PRESIDENT ON THE OCCASION OF HIS INAUGURATION

Before President Gemayel took office in September 1982, Lebanon had suffered nearly eight years of continuous warring and hardship, her territory having become the surrogate battlefield for a variety of conflicts involving nations of the Middle East and beyond. The country's vital resources had been destroyed, there had been enormous loss of life, and the sovereignty of the State had totally disintegrated. The only institutions that had survived were the Lebanese parliament and the presidency. But equally intact was the iron will of the Lebanese people to resist any form of partitioning or segregation and any attempts to deprive Lebanon of her pioneering role and civilizing influence in the world.

Since the outbreak of war in 1975 there had been several unsuccessful attempts to resolve the crisis. The major landmarks were as follows:

1977, Arab summits were held in Riyadh and Cairo. The Arab Deterrent Force, made up of contingents from Syria, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and the United Arab Emirates, was despatched by the Arab League to Lebanon. All contingents except Syria's were withdrawn within eighteen months.

March 1978, Israeli invasion of South Lebanon. UN Security Council Resolutions 425 and 426 (19 March) called for immediate Israeli withdrawal and set up UNIFIL (United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon) to oversee such withdrawal and to patrol South Lebanon, where it refrains more than six years later.

June 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon, occupying territory from the southern border to a line extending from Beirut to the Beqaa, including the strategic and politically sensitive Shouf mountains. UN Security Council Resolutions 508 and 509 (5 and 6 June) called for immediate cessation of hostilities and Israeli withdrawal. Beirut came under siege.

August 1982, UN Security Council Resolution 518 (12 August) repeated the demand for Israeli withdrawal, especially from Beirut. President Reagan's special envoy, Mr. Philip Habib, arrived in the area and concluded an agreement between Israeli forces and Syrian and Palestinian forces, to be supervised by a Multi-National Force (MNF) consisting of US, French and Italian contingents. MNF supervised withdrawal of PLO and Syrian forces from Beirut, then withdrew itself on 30 August. Also during August, Sheikh Bashir Gemayel was elected President of Lebanon; support was expressed by several countries including Egypt, Jordan and USSR, and President Assad of Syria announced that Syrian forces would represent no obstacle to good relations between Syria and the new Lebanese administration.

2 September President Reagan announced his peace plan.

6-9 September The Arab peace plan was announced after its proposal at the Fez summit of the Arab League (followed by the Soviet peace plan, announced 17 September).

14 September President-designate Bashir Gemayel was assassinated in a bomb attack. The Sabra and Chatila massacres were followed by entry of Israeli forces into Beirut - an action condemned by the international community and the UN (Security Council Resolution 520). Lebanon lodged protest and demanded withdrawal of all Israeli forces.

21 September Amine Gemayel was elected President of Lebanon by 77 votes out of a possible 80, with three abstentions. His election received unanimous support from all sections of the community, and was welcomed by many Heads of State, including King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, President Reagan of the USA and President Mitterrand of France - all of whom expressed assurances of support.

Against this background of tragedy tinged with hope, the new President was sworn in on 23 September and began his search for peace.

"IT IS TIME FOR US TO BE AT PEACE
WITH OURSELVES AND WITH
OTHERS, AND TO EXPRESS A UNITED
NATIONAL WILL"

Mr. President,
Honourable Members,
Fellow Lebanese,

One month has elapsed between the 23rd of August and the 23rd of September; but in that one-month we have lived through an experience which epitomizes an era and indeed a whole history. It represents a landmark in the history of Lebanese democracy and the authentic and deep-rooted patriotism of our people, which have proved that they are more powerful than any crisis and will live on, un-conquered, for centuries to come.

Democracy and strength of character are indeed inherent in the Lebanese and their way of life. This has been vividly symbolized in the various stands taken by this House, which has withstood many challenges, thanks to the determination of its honourable members and the initiative of its Speaker.

The stands taken by this House have shown it to be the embodiment of our national conscience. Through its courageous decisions and wise deliberations it has always emphasized the paramount importance of unity: unity of the land, of the people, and of our institutions.

The consensus arrived at two days ago illustrates the commitment of the Lebanese to the integrity of their land and their firm resolve to restore the country to its former self.

In inheriting the mantle of President Sarkis, whose tenure of office has ended this morning, and in taking up the cause of the martyred President Bashir Gemayel, who was not given the chance to begin his tenure, I am fully aware of my obligations to bath, and I share with the nation the duty of honouring those obligations.

President Sarkis has suffered and persevered with the utmost patience and firmness of purpose. My brother and companion, the late President Bashir, had a vision; in his dedicated pursuit of its fulfillment he struggled even unto martyrdom. In order to honour our obligations towards him we must strive to ensure that his vision is realized, and with it all the hopes and expectations that he inspired.

I hereby confirm that I will continue what they began, as President of a country which has suffered much, but whose unity, though geographically splintered, remains a positive reality in our hearts. It is greed, hatred and alien interests that have been tearing this country apart. Beirut is divided into East and West and is, for the most part, in ruins. The situation in the Mountain is unsettled, with growing barriers being created between its people and increasing disintegration of the ties that bind its villages together. The North has been afflicted by the cyclone that has swept across Lebanon and cut off this precious part of the country from the rest, the whole of Lebanon longs for it to break out of the vortex of that cyclone, to renounce its estrangement and to return to the fold in a spirit of brotherhood and tolerance. The Beqaa, the area of fertility and rich resources, has become a battleground where foreign forces fight their private wars and consequently pose a direct threat bath to the immediate region and to the whole of Lebanon. The South has always preserved the concepts of the homeland and the State, affirming its Lebanese identity as well as the organic unity of the land.

Meanwhile, Lebanon herself is caught between the conflicting interests of states bath large and small, her institutions have been paralyzed and her resources either plundered or annexed. The entire Lebanese nation

net only opposes this erosion of national unity, refusing to be the hostage of circumstances, but insists on recovering and restoring her unique national and cultural identity.

We are now confronted by challenges, which have to be met. I myself am determined to discharge my responsibilities and give a lead in the task of restoring Lebanon's greatness. I speak as a member of this House and as a man of the people, our great people among whom I was brought up, whose sufferings I have shared and whose cause I have always defended and championed. I say to you, therefore, that I shall join with you in this great national process of restoration. I put all my faith in the future; I am convinced that there is a prosperous future for all Lebanese, a future that will bring us pride, happiness, well-being and glory.

I am deeply conscious of the aspirations of my people and the needs of my country. The country is in dire need of national solidarity and a staunch affirmation of unity which will shield us from the many dangers that threaten us. Without national unity there is no nation. Our first duty is absolute loyalty to Lebanon; dual loyalty can never be sanctioned; we shall never share our land with others.

I shall not be offering you a detailed program today because at this time I have one single concern: to bring to an end the cycle of violence and bloodshed. We must first guarantee the security of the land and the safety of our citizens. But this can be achieved only through a strong, independent State that will safeguard civil liberties and strive to bring about complete withdrawal of all foreign forces from our territory; a State whose army will be drawn from the whole of Lebanon and serve the whole of Lebanon, so that the country can again look to a powerful force to put an end to disorder and illegal acts on its soil.

Furthermore, in order to secure institutional balance in the State, the Lebanese judiciary must resume its role as the sole legal authority, dispensing justice for all. Public administration should again become the true servant of the citizen, managing his affairs smoothly and efficiently without time-wasting, obstruction or indifference to his rights. Consequently the State will welcome only those who are qualified, competent and resourceful, since it is an institution that demands pride, sacrifice and service from one and all.

We must be worthy of Lebanon if she is to be ours once more. We must put Lebanon first if we are to see her restored. We are weary of estrangement and alienation; for too long we have been exiles and refugees in our own country. It is time for us to make a collective effort to 'return' to Lebanon, to our noble and generous land, to a new and glorious renaissance. It is time for us to be at peace with ourselves and with others, and to express a united national will. It is time to take great decisions, unanimous decisions which will bring about national stability and establish the foundations of a modern state.

We intend to strengthen our friendly relations with the whole world, starting with our neighboring Arab brothers. Lebanon's sense of unity with the Arab world is not something imposed upon us; it is our free choice; it arises from our geographical location and our national interests, from our pioneering role in the area, and from our membership of the Arab League.

We are also committed to honoring the United Nations Charter and the Declaration of Human Rights. Lebanon refuses to be a party to political polarization; she is determined to be numbered among those nations who jealously guard their freedom, who conduct their affairs on the basis of democratic dialogue, who reject violence and terrorism and do everything in their power to combat these evils.

As I move from my seat in this House to the Presidency, nothing will change, so far as I am concerned, except the burden of responsibility that I shall be carrying. For I will fulfill all my responsibilities as President with the same sense of dedication that I brought to my responsibilities as a member of this House; and indeed I shall honour all my obligations to this beloved country.

Today we witness a pledge for the future. It is my solemn promise that the legitimate State shall be the only state that the army of that State shall be the only army on our territory, that Lebanon shall be a land of peace for her children and the hope of peace in our region and in the world; and that Lebanon shall continue to be the meeting point of world civilizations and of divinely inspired religions.

I further pledge myself always to put the interests of Lebanon above those of the Presidency; the President

shall always remain aloof from every kind of sectional or religious rivalry. The President shall always safeguard the unity of our land and serve the country's highest interests, protecting the independence and the sovereignty of the State and guaranteeing the rights of every citizen and the dignity of every man. For the oath I have just taken is an expression of my absolute commitment to the principles which I have cherished since my childhood, and which I will continue to uphold as long as I live.

NEW YORK, 18 OCTOBER 1982

**SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

The new President's immediate concern was to bring about peace in Beirut, safeguard all access routes to the capital and extend the authority of the State to other areas of Lebanon, aiming eventually to unify the nation and secure complete withdrawal of all non-Lebanese forces from the land. He therefore arranged for the prompt return of the MNF, whose deployment in Beirut took place between 24 and 29 September. President Reagan declared the USA to be not only a friend but a partner in the new Lebanese President's quest for peace.

24 September Israel refused to withdraw.

26 September Syria reaffirmed that her forces in Lebanon would never constitute an obstacle to good Syrian-Lebanese relations.

29 September Israeli forces withdrew from West Beirut. International assurances given concerning withdrawal of all non-Lebanese forces from Lebanon.

30 September Beirut airport reopened. Normal movement between East and West Beirut recommenced. Lebanese army began to reassume its responsibilities. President Gemayel initiated consultations with a view to forming a new government.

4 October Shafiq al-Wazzan, who had served as Prime Minister under former President Sarkis, was asked to form a new government.

6 October President Reagan urged Mr Habib to expedite the process of foreign troop withdrawals from Lebanon.

7 October A new Cabinet was formed, consisting of 5 Muslims and 5 Christians, all politically non-affiliated. President Gemayel declared the policy of his new government: the unwavering search for peace through the liberation of the land and reconstruction of all aspects of Lebanese life.

8 October The USA informed Israel of the principles governing the conclusion of a Lebanese-Israeli agreement on troop withdrawals, and refused to link such withdrawals with an overall peace treaty.

10 October The Israeli Government declared its readiness to conclude a security agreement in lieu of a peace treaty. President Assad of Syria urged the EEC to make representations to the USA with a view to a peace settlement in the Middle East.

13 October Israel declared its conditions for the conclusion of a security agreement with Lebanon:

Lebanese commitment to preventing attacks on North Israel; deployment of Lebanese army contingents without heavy weaponry over an area of within 40-50 km of Israel's border; and joint observation teams to supervise implementation of these measures.

14 October The Lebanese army continued to deploy its forces in suburbs of Beirut.

15 October Limited hostilities broke out in the Shouf mountains between local factions.

Acting on his long-held conviction that the complex nature of the crisis demanded solid international commitment to finding a solution, President Gemayel resolved to put his peace plan to the world forum. He therefore left for New York on 17 October, and at the United Nations the following day he addressed both

the Security Council and (in the speech below) the General Assembly.

"GIVE US PEACE AND WE SHALL
AGAIN ASTOUND THE WORLD"

Mr. President,

To address this Assembly is a unique privilege. I feel particularly honoured standing here before you on this rostrum, from which so many other Presidents of nations, great and small, have expressed the aspirations of their people and defended their cause.

Allow me, Mr President, while thanking you and the distinguished representatives here present for this opportunity, to congratulate you on your election. May I also address my congratulations to the Secretary-General on his first annual report to your General Assembly, a report in which the cause of peace is served with wisdom and intellectual honesty.

The fate of my country has often been debated here, and expressions of sympathy and friendship have not gone unnoticed by the Lebanese. I come to you today with a message of confidence, from a nation with renewed strength and determination, a nation active again, not in war, but in a bold enterprise of peace and reconstruction. I appreciate the meaning of peace all the more, and give it the priority it deserves, because I, like my compatriots, know the sufferings of war, and have carried arms in defence of a free, united and independent Lebanon.

I address you in the name of my people, in the spirit of a sharpened national consensus which has been developing throughout this war and which manifested itself strongly in the wake of the assassination of President-elect Bashir Gemayel. Lebanon can no longer endure the burdens of the tragic war that has been raging in our land for the past eight years. Nor can the world go on watching our destruction with morbid fascination.

Before the war, Lebanon was a stable, peaceful and prosperous country. Beirut, the capital, was the cultural and commercial centre of the Arab world. Suddenly, the democratic edifice that was Lebanon was shattered. Perhaps because Lebanon was too democratic, too free - and even free - our country became the stage for one of the bloodiest wars in recent times. The conflict of interests of third parties, the tension among states in the region, the competing ideologies of the Arab world, the armed and uncontrolled Palestinian presence in our midst, the recurring Israeli invasions and incursions into our land, the persistent violation of our sovereignty and of our fundamental human rights - all of these have converged, fermenting into a continuing state of war in Lebanon since 1975. The war has claimed the lives of more than one hundred thousand citizens. It has destroyed cities, towns and villages. It has brought foreign troops into our land. It has divided our people, and transformed Lebanon from a haven for culture and peace into an arena for terror and violence.

The war blurred many images. We could not, for example, tell who was friend and who was foe. All seemed to be bent on the destruction of our peaceful way of life. We feared that the war would lead either to partition or to annexation. Lebanon, which had been the link between East and West, became a source of danger to them both, and particularly to the states of the Arab East. The problems and conflicts of the region exploded on our land, and it was more than the Lebanese could bear. Each foreign force claimed a divine right to interfere in our affairs and denied us the right to speak for ourselves. And thus, by forces beyond their control, the Lebanese were alienated from themselves.

We are now on the verge of a new era. A new chapter of hope is unfolding before our eyes. The superpowers and the regional powers are recognizing the strategic importance of Lebanon for peace in the Middle East. The Lebanese themselves have learned a bitter lesson and are now more united than ever before. In the name of the Lebanese people, I wish to tell you this:

We have had enough,
enough of bloodshed,
enough of destruction,
enough of disorder and despair.

We have paid the high price of war. We should not pay an additional price for peace. As a member of United Nations, we want our rights to be restored to us.

Each country enjoys internal sovereignty. So should we. Each country depends on an effective army to defend its independence. So should we.

Just as we wish to live in peace and freedom in our land, So we believe the Palestinians should be allowed to live in peace and freedom and have self-determination in their land, Palestine; and just as we cherish our own independence, we also cherish the hope that Palestinians and Israelis, with the support of the world community, will reach a settlement that will allow them both to enjoy their full rights.

As for relations between Lebanon and Syria, they have always been close in the past. It is natural, therefore, that Syria and Lebanon should develop strong relations in the future in the context of independence, sovereignty and mutual respect.

With this position in mind, I call for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all non-Lebanese forces from Lebanon. I call upon the world community to help Lebanon regain her real independence and rebuild her economy.

I carry to you the promise I have made to my people: we shall all do our part, and do it well. We shall lay the foundations of a strong, independent and democratic state. And just as we hold our liberty and sovereignty to be sacred and inviolable, so shall we respect the liberty and sovereignty of others, fully conscious as we are of the responsibilities this attitude entails.

We shall maintain our cultural plurality, but within a non-compromising political unity. Cultural diversity is, to us, inseparable from political oneness. We shall build the pillars of national unity for new citizens whose loyalties are clear and unambiguous.

We shall rebuild what was destroyed, and thus enable Lebanon to appear in your midst, a few years from now, a phoenix arising victorious from its own ashes.

For all of this, and for the sake of peace and stability in the Middle East, Lebanon needs your support. I have a clear vision of a future Lebanon, and the new Government, representing the entire spectrum of Lebanese life, shares this vision with me. As we start out on our adventure of peace and reconstruction, the signs are encouraging. We applaud all positive steps taken by our friends in the international community on behalf of a united and sovereign Lebanon, steps such as the United States' initiative on Lebanon, which we shall explore to the full. We look to our Arab brethren for political and economic support in building a country which can be a source of pride, peace and progress for us and for them.

We have started the reconstruction process, and our free enterprise system, which was responsible for much of Lebanon's prosperity, is now playing a leading part. We are clearing the rubble from our cities. We are building and repairing everywhere.

We are rebuilding the army along national, equitable and rational lines, and we are strengthening it to assume full responsibility for the security of our homeland. Beirut has been reunified, and the Lebanese army is maintaining peace there in co-ordination with troops from friendly countries. We are working on plans for our army and internal security forces to assume authority in all parts of the country after the withdrawal of the non-Lebanese armies and forces.

We are receiving aid from several countries and organizations. We are receiving aid from UN agencies. We are grateful for this help, but while I speak optimistically of the future, I want you to know that the situation in Lebanon and in the Middle East is still fragile. Only a concerted effort on your part will strengthen the forces of peace in our part of the world. We now have an opportunity to arrest the cycle of war and chaos. Let us seize this opportunity. Peace in Lebanon is obviously a precondition for peace in the Middle East. Lebanon is a key to the region: if she is stable, so will the region be stable - if she is in chaos, so will the volatile East erupt into chaos.

Let us work together for peace. Lebanon is ready for peace; the people of the region are ready for peace; let us not permit this opportunity to slip from our grasp; let nations forget the passions of the past, abandon their old attitudes and rise above political ideology and sectarian differences; let them reason together in pursuit of common interests. We in Lebanon want to be part of this reasoning process, particularly in matters that concern us directly and affect our standing in the region and in the world.

In a poem written a century ago about the American West, there is a line which expresses the challenge that man faces in a rugged mountainous terrain. The line is: 'Bring me men to match my mountains.' My country, too, Mr President, is one of rugged mountainous terrain. The people are hardy and proud, like their mountains.

Today, in Lebanon, men are awakening to the historical challenge that confronts them. They are as unshakeable as their mountains, and their aspirations are as high as their cedars.

Give us peace and we shall again astound the world.

NEW YORK, 18 OCTOBER 1982

**SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE
UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL**

During his visit to the UN, President Gemayel met with a variety of representatives and groups interested in bringing about a peaceful solution in Lebanon. Foremost among these were several of the Arab ambassadors to the UN, who expressed their firm support.

At the Security Council, President Gemayel demanded the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon, affirmed the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, and emphasized Lebanon's resolve to maintain good relations with Syria in the context of independence and mutual respect.

"PEACE IN LEBANON NEED NOT
AWAIT A GENERAL SOLUTION TO
THE PROBLEM WHICH IS THE
COMMON INTEREST OF US ALL"

Mr. President,

I should like first, in compliance with the tradition of the Council, to congratulate you on your new responsibilities and to express my pleasure in addressing the Council under your presidency. The ties that bind our two countries are many, and are well established. I wish therefore to extend, through you, our gratitude to His Majesty King Hussein for his support of the Lebanese cause, and for the support that his delegation to the United Nations has given us.

Lebanon owes much to your Council and to all its member states for efforts on our behalf since 1978. My presence in your midst is not merely a formal gesture; it is first and foremost an act of faith. Our trust in the international community you represent is boundless, as is our attachment to the principles which your Council is pledged to uphold. Lebanon, never committing aggression but recurrently falling victim to it, possesses no other recourse but to seek refuge in the organization of which she was one of the joint creators, and which she believed then - as now - to be a true champion of peace and freedom.

Your Council, Mr President and honoured delegates, has neither deceived nor disappointed us. The developments, which have impeded the realization of your resolutions and obscured their true historical value should guide us all in the discussion of such practical measures under the United Nations charter as may render these resolutions more effective.

I refer especially, as you may well know, to Resolutions 425 and 426 and their consequences. I refer also to the more recent Resolutions 508 and 509, issued with such wonderful unanimity. These resolutions did not lead to the liberation of Lebanon, nor did they put an end to the continuing and recurrent invasion. However, they condemned the act of aggression, firmly established the legitimacy of our rights, supported the sanctity of our soil, and contributed to the preservation of the unity and the sovereignty of our country within its internationally recognized boundaries.

At our side in the struggle for Lebanon's independence and the freedom of the Lebanese people have been the soldiers called upon by your Council to give appropriate assistance to this endeavour in the name of peace. Their blood, shed on Lebanese soil and mixed with the blood of our martyrs, will not have been shed in vain, so long as we recognize that the cause of peace is coming into its own, and will eventually triumph over - and in spite of - those who threaten it.

You are today concerned with the fate of the peacekeeping force in Southern Lebanon. You are aware of our desire to extend the mandate of this force. We do not, however, envisage an extension of unlimited duration. The United Nations peacekeeping force in Southern Lebanon must remain an 'interim force', as its name indicates. It should be capable of restoring international peace and security in South Lebanon as well as 'assisting the Lebanese government to restore its effective authority over this area', as noted in its mandate letter (Resolution 425, 19 March 1978).

When contending with the Israeli invasion of March 1978, the United Nations peacekeeping forces in South Lebanon were shocked, as we all know, by the provocation of one party and the obstructive action of another, problems which prevented them from keeping to the letter of their mission.

The 1949 armistice agreement, which Lebanon insists should be respected and invoked, is once more in danger of collapsing owing to the persistence of the Israeli-Palestinian war. Israel violated the agreement by invading Lebanon in circumstances I need not reiterate. The withdrawal of Israeli forces today constitutes the fundamental objective called for by your resolutions, and this objective must be achieved. Lebanon awaits, moreover, the simultaneous withdrawal of all non-Lebanese forces present on her territory.

It is not customary for a head of state to take part in the deliberations of the Security Council, and it is certainly not my intention to do so. In view of the tragic circumstances in Lebanon and the threat they pose to world peace and security, I deem it imperative to consider the future of the UN peacekeeping force in South Lebanon in the light of what has happened since the original formulation of the terms of its mission. Chief among the new requirements under discussion is the need to render the peacekeeping process more credible.

You are aware that in addition to the UN peacekeeping forces in South Lebanon, the Lebanese authorities sought the support and assistance of another force, namely the 'Multi-National Force' set up by states present here. Under the supervision of this Multi-National Force, still operating with great effectiveness and courage. Palestinian and Syrian military units pulled out of Beirut as a first step towards permitting the Lebanese army to undertake its responsibilities alone and in full, and towards enabling the State, in consequence, to extend its authority throughout Lebanese territory to the exclusion of all other military presence.

Thus, in the days or weeks to come, Lebanon hopes to recover afresh her old vigour. The capital I left yesterday vibrates with a sense of regeneration. The resistance of Lebanon and her power to emerge victorious from another war - the war against the terrible effects of destruction and violence - is probably one of the greatest achievements of our times.

With great hope, pride and solemn respect, I have come to declare before your Council the determination of the Lebanese, all Lebanese, to live together, side by side, in our own indivisible and independent Lebanon. Under the wakeful protection of her friends and regardless of the malice of her adversaries, Lebanon claims the right to be free and to enjoy the trust and support of all freedom-loving nations. For this she has paid with the blood of her citizens.

I do not wish to end this exposition without telling you of our deep concern for and involvement in the Middle East problem, which is high on your agenda. Today, more than any other day in the past, the Lebanese, confident that peace in Lebanon need not await a general solution to the problem which is the common interest of us all, affirm their solidarity with the Arab world to which they belong by their free choice.

Under the aegis of the United Nations this solidarity is manifested, as you well know, in the implementation of resolutions unanimously arrived at concerning the legitimate rights of the Palestinians and the illegal acquisition of territories by force and war. The Lebanese realize the appropriateness of such a pledge, for they

have themselves been victims and hostages. Lebanon, therefore, once her powers are fully restored, will support any Middle East initiative, whether here in this place or beyond its confines, which aims to re-establish a just and permanent peace in the region and guarantee the rights of peoples and nations to live in peace.

Has not the Lebanese experience, despite all its sorrows, at least provided firm proof that the violation of rights invariably results in human tragedy and endangers world peace?

In your long deliberations, gentlemen, as well as in your resolutions, there will lie valuable lessons, which the world will long remember. This at least we hope.

May the God of Peace bless your efforts.

WASHINGTON D.C., 19 OCTOBER 1982

**STATEMENT FOLLOWING
THE WHITE HOUSE MEETING
WITH PRESIDENT REAGAN**

From the UN President Gemayel moved on to Washington, here he had fruitful talks with President Reagan. This was the first official visit by a President of Lebanon to the USA. The American initiative in the Middle East, and particularly in Lebanon, had begun long before President Gemayel took office. This meeting reinforced US commitment to the withdrawal of all foreign and non-Lebanese forces from Lebanon, the sovereignty of the Lebanese State, and continuing support for the policies of its new President. It was agreed that any negotiations with Israel for withdrawal of occupying forces should be based on three principles: preservation of Lebanon's national consensus; full restoration of Lebanon's independence and sovereignty over all her territory; and respect for Lebanon's Arab credentials.

**"WE INTEND TO BE ACTIVE IN THE
SEARCH FOR PEACE WITH ALL
NATIONS"**

Mr. President,

I am honoured to be the first President of Lebanon to make an official visit to the United States. The Lebanese people deeply appreciate and will never forget your courageous and decisive efforts to help bring an end to the suffering of my country. America's commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of a free democratic Lebanon has been fundamental to our survival.

We see the U.S. role as the indispensable ingredient in the struggle to bring peace not only to Lebanon but to the whole region. We firmly believe that President Reagan's initiative has created unprecedented opportunities for peace. We, in Lebanon, intend to be active in the search for peace with all nations of the region.

The bond between the United States and Lebanon is not only between two governments. It is between two peoples who share the same heritage and cling to the same values and principles of democracy and liberty. The two-and-a-half million native residents of Lebanon have an almost equal number of close relatives in the United States. We value enormously the unique link provided by these American-Lebanese, who are among the most loyal of all Americans and we believe they have a leading role in keeping our two countries together.

Lebanon is the most recent example - and for us the most painful - of an assault upon free men by the invading forces of darkness and occupation. We have fought to retain our freedom, and the strength of our resistance has earned for us not only a renewed pride in ourselves, but also re-entry into the ranks of the free world.

It is with equal resolve that I, together with my people, am committed to the immediate removal of all foreign forces from our soil, and to working hand in hand with all sectors of Lebanese society to build a nation in which all citizens have equal privileges, rights and responsibilities.

The historic U.S.-Lebanon relationship is the cornerstone on which this new Lebanon will be built. America's friendship and assistance are vital, not only in peacekeeping and peacemaking but also in enabling us to rebuild our armed forces. We, the Lebanese, intend to play our part in the responsibilities of this partnership

by giving our full support to the many noble endeavours of the United States in her role as leader of the free world.

PARIS, 20 OCTOBER 1982

**STATEMENT MADE TO THE FRENCH
PRESS AT THE ELYSEE PALACE**

President Gemayel flew on to France for talks with President Mitterrand, who firmly expressed his support. The role of France has always been crucial because of her very strong cultural, linguistic and educational ties with Lebanon, the legacy of the French mandate, which saw Lebanon through to independence in 1943. Like the USA, France promised to continue to make substantial contributions to the MNF.

**"TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC AID
WILL HELP TO ENSURE THE
REBUILDING AND RECONSTRUCTION
OF LEBANON"**

I have responded swiftly to President Mitterrand's invitation for me to visit France, for more than one reason.

Firstly, as you know, Lebanon is on the way to recovering her independence and her territorial integrity following years of occupation and foreign intervention, years of mourning and destruction. This recovery will not be achieved unless the process of withdrawing all foreign troops is accelerated.

Secondly, the Multi.-National Force, made up of troops provided by France, Italy, and the United States, has proved effective in assisting the Lebanese army and enabling it to be deployed progressively all over the Lebanese territory, starting from the recently re-unified capital.

Thirdly, after this long and tragic strife, the economic and social situation is such that Lebanon needs all the help she can get, in all fields, from countries which possess the technical means to afford such assistance.

These three points explain the importance of my visit to France and my meeting with President Mitterrand. French military assistance will help in the process of withdrawing foreign troops by making it easier for us to deploy our own forces; and technical and economic aid will help to ensure the rebuilding and reconstruction of Lebanon. We knew, thanks to our traditional ties with your country, that we could turn to France with every confidence.

All this, and the development of our mutual relations, particularly on the cultural level - and you know the importance of France in our cultural life - were central to our talks today. All I can say at present is that these talks have given me serious cause for optimism about Lebanon. We have agreed to pursue our talks through diplomatic channels, with the help of specialists in all the fields we have discussed. I hope that in this way we will soon realize the objectives we have set ourselves.

I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to President Mitterrand for the friendly understanding he has shown towards our problems and for his abiding interest in Lebanon.

VATICAN CITY, 21 OCTOBER 1982

**ADDRESS TO HIS HOLINESS
POPE JOHN PAUL II**

President Gemayel won the support not only of political leaders, but also of Pope John Paul II, with whom he had talks at the Vatican. The emphasis here was on the crucial issue of Muslim-Christian dialogue and reconciliation, an objective close to the President's heart since his entry into politics, with Lebanon a unique forum owing to her traditionally multi-religious society.

**"LEBANON . . . THE CROSSROADS OF
MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND
FRUITFUL COLLABORATION BETWEEN
CHRISTIANS AND MUSLIMS"**

Most Holy Father,

The Lebanese people, who less than a month ago entrusted me with the great honour and the heavy burden

of administering their affairs at a crucial moment in their history, are aware of the extreme importance of the bond between their country and the Holy See. Those of us who have remained deeply loyal, through the ages, to the teachings of the Church, and those who adhere to a different religion - do not we all believe in the spiritual values of which Your Holiness is the supreme earthly repository?

Lebanon, a haven for the Christians of the East as well as for the missions of the West, has earned the blessing of the Roman Catholic Pontiffs as the historical crossroads of mutual understanding and fruitful collaboration between Christians and Muslims. Furthermore, the numerous declarations, both public and private, the public pronouncements and recommendations made by your august predecessors and by Your Holiness, including your kind words today, all serve as unequivocal evidence of support.

Lebanon has been a source of great concern to you since your accession to the Pontificate, as it was to Pope Paul VI and Pope John Paul I. What, then, can be said of Lebanon's citizens, who for so long have suffered in every possible way, mentally, materially and spiritually, in all that they possess? During the past eight years our country has undergone what would have been unendurable for the greatest of nations: devastation, slaughter, successive spells of joint foreign domination, disruption of public life and danger threatening our citizens day and night. The number of Lebanese who have been killed, maimed or martyred can no longer be counted.

Thus it was with a purely paternal concern - while you were suffering on your sick-bed after the despicable assassination attempt on your Holy Person - that you asked about Lebanon, if I recall your words correctly:

What is left of this unhappy country?

What is left of this unhappy people?

I am here today for the purpose of reassuring you and of expressing a wish. First, no one among those who would threaten the existence of my country has succeeded in dominating the spirit of her people. Already the armies and para-military groups who nursed ambitions of settling in, annexing, taking over or dismembering Lebanon are accepting the tact that they must leave Lebanese territory.

The Lebanese capital city, the center and the symbol of the entire nation, is now reunited and has returned to the normality of a secure and increasingly active life since the withdrawal of the forces that partitioned it for seven years. The unanimity shown during my election, which brought together the lawful representatives of all the regions and communities of Lebanon, and the tact that the election was held in full accordance with the Constitution, may be regarded as proof of the restoration of national unity and as the expression of the national desire to overcome the difficulties and to re-establish willing coexistence.

To a great extent Lebanon owes her recovery to favourable international circumstances. Her ordeal, on the other hand, was the result of an opposite trend: there was no international response to what was taking place on the territory of the independent state of Lebanon - then the object of everything from aggression and interference to large-scale foreign occupation.

Our own shortcomings may well have made it easier for these events to take place within our borders; but it is through the loyalty and heroic resistance of many thousands of Lebanese that our country has been re-born to life and hope.

It was of this that I wanted to reassure Your Holiness. However, the wish that I express on behalf of all Lebanese citizens - without exception - is that you should not cease to offer us your support through your solicitude and prayers. The liberation and recovery of Lebanon are only just beginning. Much remains to be done, and my government is totally committed to fulfilling this task so that, in peace and security, our people can resume their traditional role - a role much appreciated by the Holy See - in the service of those spiritual values at the heart of the nation's inheritance.

Your solicitude and your prayers to the Almighty have never faltered in the past, and I have no doubts about their sincerity and their effectiveness in the future. These days, full of promise as they are for Lebanon, also require the exercise of great effort and caution, not only from ourselves but also on the part of our friends. And when they speak or think of their nation's friends, the Lebanese, whatever their religious beliefs, think first of Your Holiness and of the Holy See.

ROME, 21 OCTOBER 1982

**SPEECH DELIVERED AT DINNER WITH THE
ITALIAN PRIME MINISTER,
GIOVANNI SPADOLINI**

he final round of talks on this tour was with President Brintini of Italy, the other contributor to the MNF (with the USA, France and later Great Britain). Italy has long been one of Lebanon's vital allies, as one of the major Mediterranean nations. Support for President Gemayel's proposals was equally forthcoming here, and he was able to express his appreciation at a dinner given in his honour by the Italian Prime Minister.

**". . . SMOOTHING THE WAY TO
PEACE, UNIFICATION AND
NATIONAL RECOVERY"**

Mr Prime Minister,

At the conclusion of this short visit to your great and beautiful country, so plentiful in its fruits, so rich in its vistas, allow me to express my gratitude on behalf of the whole Lebanese delegation for the warm and friendly welcome afforded us by the Italian government and people. The words you have just spoken have touched me deeply, and I can assure you that, the same sentiments are felt by the Lebanese people, towards Italy and the Italian people. This spontaneous friendship should not surprise us, in the light of the many historical encounters between our two countries and the indelible imprints they have left. History made us neighbours at a time when the Mediterranean served as a sea-way for one civilization, and the centuries of Roman ascendancy are among the most enthralling in the long history of Lebanon.

These memories came happily to mind whenever we pay tribute to the efforts of your ancestors who built monuments and temples in our country, and when we remember how the ancient cities of Phoenicia contributed to the grandeur of Rome. Generations later, an eminent Prince from Mount Lebanon reminded the Lebanese of another fundamental aspect of their vocation: their maritime heritage. It can be said without any risk of historical inaccuracy that the relations established by Prince Fakhriddin with Toscana not only led to the establishment of our national vocation, but helped to lay the very foundations of Lebanon's cultural and political renaissance.

Today the Lebanese-Italian friendship, its roots firmly planted in this Mediterranean cultural heritage, finds living expression in our mutual adherence to bilateral values and to democratic institutions. Small wonder that a common bond of real confidence and understanding unites our two peoples.

Lebanon will always remember that during our country's ordeal Italy has expressed support on many occasions and in several forms, both at the level of bilateral relations and within the framework of the European Economic Community and other international organizations. The participation of your country in UNIFIL, * and more recently in the Multi-National Force, is of great benefit to us, for it will certainly assist us in smoothing the way to peace, unification and national recovery.

Finally, as we conclude this friendly and fruitful meeting, please allow me to propose a toast: to your health and success, to the prosperity of your country, and to Lebanese-Italian friendship.

BEIRUT, 1 NOVEMBER 1982

**SPEECH ADDRESSED TO MEMBERS
OF THE MULTI-NATIONAL FORCE,
DECLARING BEIRUT A UNIFIED CITY**

President Gemayel's return to Lebanon saw the reunification of the City of Beirut, deployment of the Lebanese army along all access routes and the beginning of the reconstruction process accompanied by more or less normal functioning of State institutions. The contribution of the MNF in establishing this position was duly acknowledged by the President.

**"I WILL CONTINUE TO TREAD THE
PATH OF REUNIFICATION"**

On behalf of the people of Lebanon, I wish to thank the people and President of the United States, the people and President of France, and the people and President of Italy - all of whom have responded to Lebanon's call. The people of Lebanon have suffered much in defending those ideals and values which we all hold dear and in preserving their unique civilization; for Lebanon has always striven to maintain the freedom of

the individual citizen, the freedom to lead a life of dignity and self-respect in the service of a democratic nation.

Your presence here in Lebanon is not only an expression of support for the defence and protection of this country; it pays tribute to all those ideals and spiritual values which Lebanon has always upheld and always will. For our part, we, the Lebanese, are unflinching in our resolve to sacrifice ourselves daily so that Lebanon may survive as a fitting homeland for our citizens and as a center of civilization, a country whose quality of life we have fought to preserve, at enormous human cost.

I am delighted to announce that as from today Beirut is once more the capital city of Lebanon - a unified capital and a unified city. After today, Eastern Beirut and Western Beirut no longer exist. There is only one Beirut, the capital of Lebanon. As from today, all access routes to the city will be opened up, symbolizing the unification of the capital - and the unification of hearts.

The efforts exerted by President Sarkis, with the assistance of the Prime Minister, Mr. Shafiq al-Wazzan, have now come to fruition. And here today I give my pledge that I will continue to tread the path of reunification: reunification both of the land and of the hearts of men. I give my pledge today on this historic occasion - after eight years of an artificial separation imposed on our people and our land - that Beirut will soon begin a new page in her history; we shall erase the record of the tragedy and destruction of the past. This is the beginning of a march towards the building of a new Lebanese homeland, which will combine strength and solidarity with material development, a land dedicated to the service of mankind and expressing the dreams and aspirations of the people of Lebanon.

My thanks once more to all those freedom-loving nations who have helped us. Your presence here, which we welcome, has a deeper significance, for it expresses the unified will of nations dedicated to the noblest principles, who wish to see peace, freedom and democracy flourishing in every corner of the world, for the benefit of all mankind.

RIYADH, 15 NOVEMBER 1982

**SPEECH MARKING THE END OF A VISIT
TO THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA**

Throughout his parliamentary career, Amine Gemayel has ardently pursued the ideal of a Lebanon that is unified on the home front, in harmony with her Arab environment and actively contributing to the international community in the areas of peace and understanding among all men. He established contacts and relations with Arab governments and heads of State before becoming President, and consolidated and built on these after taking office. In a visit to Riyadh he reinforced the vital link with Saudi Arabia, whose role in Arab politics became central following the Camp David agreement and the ostracization of Egypt.

"MY PEOPLE HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO
ENJOY PEACE AND STABILITY AND
TO BE ABLE ONCE MORE TO MAKE
THEIR CONTRIBUTION IN THE
REGION"

I should like to express our very special thanks to our brother, His Majesty King Fahd, and their Highnesses the members of the Royal Family of Saudi Arabia, her government and her people. Saudi Arabia has always been a true friend to Lebanon, continually lending her support to Lebanon's cause and helping to alleviate the suffering of the Lebanese people. The ties that bind my country to Saudi Arabia and her Royal Family, headed by His Majesty King Fahd, are indeed strong and sincere; the many Lebanese who work in Saudi Arabia and contribute to her great program of development and reconstruction bear witness to the importance of these ties.

With this in mind, I wish to emphasize to all those who sincerely wish us well that the presence of the Lebanese, whether in the East or elsewhere in the world, is a constructive and creative presence. And the time has perhaps come for the world to respond to Lebanon accordingly. Lebanon was never meant to be - nor shall it be - a theatre for terrorism and violence; but rather an impregnable fortress of security and peace, of justice and democracy. I have come here, as I came to New York, Washington, Paris, Rome, the Vatican and Rabat, to stress one thing above all others: that Lebanon - the whole of Lebanon - is determined to rise again and to resume her pioneering role among the nations of the world.

My people have every right to enjoy peace and stability and to be able once more to make their contribution in the region. In this context we believe it has become imperative for Arabs everywhere to join in the process of restoring Lebanon to her former self. For our part, we, the Lebanese, have spared no effort, have neglected no opportunity, to prevent Lebanon from being used as a pawn in that chess-game of nations, the balance of power in the region, so that we may begin the task of rebuilding.

Lebanon is therefore most anxious to confirm and strengthen her historic links and relations with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, even more so now, in view of present events, so that we may meet the challenges that face us. Moreover, Lebanon is firmly intent on regaining her freedom and her national sovereignty, and on forwarding the process of development and reconstruction of every kind. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, under the noble leadership of His Majesty King Fahd, has expressed support for Lebanon and her people, and for this we are deeply grateful.

BEIRUT, 18 NOVEMBER 1982

**FLAG DAY SPEECH DELIVERED TO
A GATHERING OF CULTURAL SOCIETIES**

The process of reconstruction and peace seeking in Lebanon was by no means confined to material progress. President Gemayel considered it just as vital for a programme of cultural revitalization to be initiated, underlining Lebanon's great heritage and her mission in the world, and the importance of matters of the soul and mind in forging the nation. This in turn reinforced the conviction that national unity was not a mere notion only to be voiced in public but found its roots in a unity of culture, deeply embedded in the nation's conscience.

"DIALOGUE BETWEEN MANY
CULTURES WILL BRING PEACE,
WISDOM AND PROSPERITY TO ALL
MANKIND"

I wanted to meet with you on this great national day so that together we might reaffirm Lebanon's unwavering determination to uphold her independence, a determination which is deeply rooted in her history as a civilized country. Man has always thrived in Lebanon; he has made it a homeland of happiness and enlightenment, of intellectual achievement, and of freedom and dignity.

I wanted to hold this meeting to emphasize that the reconstruction of Lebanon is the duty of each and every citizen: and that the State is anxious to ensure equal opportunities for all Lebanese to give what they can for the homeland and prove themselves worthy of it. These are exceptional and dangerous times. Let every citizen ask himself: what can I offer Lebanon? Consider how you may emulate the heroic sacrifices of our fellow-countrymen, whose blood has sanctified every grain of our native soil. Fix your eyes upon the stars, whose radiance symbolizes the pride and dignity of our land. Give of your all: your hearts, your thoughts, your strength - even your lives - so that the glory of Lebanon may never fade.

If today we are preoccupied with matters of politics and the proliferation of weapons, it is because our first priority is to work for the lebanization of security in all Lebanese territories by means of a powerful army capable of protecting the integrity of the entire nation. But no matter how bitter the ordeal which our homeland is suffering, it will not prevent us from addressing ourselves to you - the cultural, artistic and educational institutions - in a continual joint re-affirmation of a fundamental truth: that every action we take, at every level, is intended to serve the individual citizen and to provide a climate in which intellectual enquiry may flourish. I have said repeatedly that Lebanon cannot be rebuilt except by extraordinary means, by positive, sustained and creative effort.

Economic measures or military bases can ensure peace and security only if they are associated with an upsurge of cultural activity worthy of our glorious history, and commensurate with Lebanese aspirations. Any achievement, economic or political, that fails to express spiritual or cultural vigour will be valueless - and a betrayal of Lebanon's role in the Arab world and in the community of nations. We must loudly let it be known that Lebanon is the world's safety-valve. Her well-being and her shining example in discharging her great mission are proof that values are still alive in this land.

New cultural aims presuppose new cultural developments. This is where your task begins. Make every effort to restore high standards, both aesthetic and moral; open wide the doors of learning; ensure that every

achievement, every means of expression, bears the unmistakable imprint of the Lebanese character. You may be sure that the State will be unstinting in its support of efforts to regenerate education, the arts and the sciences to bring about the revival of that cultural inheritance which for so long has distinguished Lebanon among the nations of the world.

We should like to see history repeat itself: to see Lebanon inspire a new renaissance on the eve of the new century. Let us complete the task begun by our fathers and our forefathers; let the Lebanese mission touch every heart and mind, so that Lebanon herself, already the link between East and West, may unite the diverse elements of the East. It is our hope that through dialogue between many cultures we may achieve one integrated culture which will bring peace, wisdom and prosperity to all mankind.

BEIRUT, 22 NOVEMBER 1982

**INDEPENDENCE DAY SPEECH DELIVERED
AT THE HENRY SHIHAB ARMY BARRACKS**

The relationship between the Presidency and the army is always a vitally important one, since these two institutions bear the main responsibility for protecting the integrity of the nation, both as a land and as a people. President Gemayel chose to emphasize this point by delivering his first Independence Day speech from a ruined army barracks, which strongly highlighted the effort to rebuild the army itself in order to regain national sovereignty.

**"THE ARMY IN WHICH YOU SERVE
WILL BE THE ARMY THAT SERVES
AND PROTECTS YOU"**

Dear Friends,

We celebrate today the anniversary of our Independence. Although there is not much left of our independence, apart from our national flag and our will to celebrate, in the very act of celebration we declare our determination to retrieve and reinstate those principles and values that were once a part of it.

I address you on this occasion in a ruined army barracks surrounded by wreckage. I speak, however, in the conviction that if we are to move towards the realization of our dreams then we must start from the reality of our present situation.

We are now attempting to work our way out of the terrible war of the past eight years, a war that has come perilously close to destroying our people, our land and our institutions. Our society has been shattered, our state emasculated, and our citizens in every corner of the country have suffered untold miseries.

Today many flags fly over our land; indeed, many of them fly higher than our own. Today many external forces compete for the loyalty of our citizens and claim a share in our nation, in our rights and in our legitimate institutions. We are all exposed to dreadful dangers.

I address you today, soldiers and citizens of Lebanon, wherever you are, in order to share with you openly the realities of the present as well as my commitment to our future glory. We are still a battlefield. We are still the object of designs and machinations that every day take on new faces and find new pretexts for action against us. Our nation has suffered the consequences of these plots, not only because of its beauty - its unique combination of Sun, moon, air, land, mountain and sea - but because, from time immemorial, Lebanon has been a stage on which civilizations, religions, ideologies, values and all forms of creative human endeavour have played their roles.

The designs of which I speak have manifested themselves under a thousand disguises; they have taken on a thousand forms and a thousand colours. But now they have put on the ugliest of faces and employed the most evil of strategies. They now aim at dividing our people and fragmenting our national unity. They strive to subvert our sovereignty and weaken our will. They seek every opportunity to divide and control our land. To those who are masterminding these designs - be they near or far, be they brother, friend or foe - I proclaim in your name, my soldiers, that they are mistaken, disastrously mistaken, if they believe that Lebanon is weak and defenceless. To those who would enslave our people, I say: Beware! They will do well to remember that often, in history, the whip has been transferred from the hand of the persecutor to the hand of the persecuted. They will do well to remember this!

We have no ambitions for our flag or our soldiers in any country but our own. We have always acted in accordance with the law and the rights and conventions of the international community. We have not claimed in the past, nor shall we claim in the future, that our security demands our presence within the borders of other nations. Nevertheless, we have seen foreign flags and foreign armies in our land, and foreigners have made claims upon us which no international convention could sustain.

We uphold the right of our brothers to their own security. We affirm the prerogative of the countries in our region and in the world at large to enjoy security and to exercise their legitimate rights in freedom. We have never been found wanting in the performance of our duties towards other nations, nor have we violated any of their rights. We remain committed to our true duty, to our role as participant in any noble cause which will ensure a just and lasting peace in the region.

However, we never imagined in the past, nor can we agree now, that the security or the rights of this or that party need be negotiated through us or settled at our expense. This is unacceptable. Our self-evident rights to life, dignity, sovereignty and national independence can never be the subject of discussion or compromise.

In your name I declare: we will not submit. We will not compromise the unity of Lebanon. We will not surrender our right to make national decisions independently. We will not cede a handful of earth from Naqurah to al-Nahr al-Kabir. All our land, whether occupied or free, is sacred.

I hereby declare, on the anniversary of our independence, that we shall regain that independence. By every available means we shall ensure the recovery of our land. If freeing our land involves negotiations, we shall negotiate; but we will never betray the national interest, the dignity and unity of our country. Within clear guidelines, which it is for us atone to lay down, we shall negotiate fearlessly and honestly. The State will pursue these negotiations - if they fall, then the State will explore other means of regaining our sovereignty, at whatever sacrifice.

The commitment of your Government is to the national interest and to no other authority: it will not pledge the nation to any policies other than those formulated in consensus by the representatives of the people and by their legitimate institutions. No agreement or negotiations will deprive us of any part of our land or compromise our dignity. We shall not cede to others by negotiation what they have failed to get by force.

We are not alone. Our cause is gaining ground, and it is touching the conscience of mankind, not only in the Lebanon and in the Arab community, but in the world as a whole. The support of friendly nations, the enthusiasm of our fellow-Lebanese throughout the world, particularly in the West, the attitude of the United States, of its friendly people and of its great President: all of these encourage us and strengthen our determination, and confirm that we are not alone in our negotiations, in our fight for dignity, freedom and true nationhood.

Our land must be liberated: but we must also, as a matter of urgency, rebuild those national, democratic and developmental institutions which are the foundations of the modern state which every citizen desires and which every citizen deserves.

You, the army, are the pillar of the nation, the defender of its frontiers, the guardian of its unity. You are the most important of these institutions and the sine qua non of all the others. Without you there is no peace for the nation, no security for the citizen, and no hope for the state.

I promise you that the high quality of the army will be improved: it will be drawn from every part of Lebanon and it will defend every part of Lebanon; its morale will be beyond question; it will be united, strong and well equipped; it will carry its flag high. You will be proud of the army, and it will be proud of you; the army in which you serve will be the army that serves and protects you.

Military service is a right, a duty and an honour. In the coming months we shall acknowledge this fact by introducing the Law of military service for all our young men. National unity will be strengthened by this Law, which will symbolize the oneness of blood and destiny. The army will be the nation's pride, our foremost

concern and the most important of our institutions in our progress towards sovereignty and national dignity.

Just as we must build the army, we must also build the Internal Security Forces and the Sûreté Générale to enable the State, through them, to impose its authority and to enforce its laws throughout the land.

All state institutions must perform their proper roles without interference or procrastination. The Parliament, which has given proof of its capacity and its high standing, will legislate and supervise; the Government will assume responsibility for governing; the Ministries will be cells of action and productivity, and centers for the service of citizens. The Courts will be temples of justice; there will be no tyrants and no victims of tyranny; there will be no delays and no exercise of special privileges. Justice and morality, under the rule of law, will prevail.

The administrative system will now, more than ever, come under the searching eye of the State. It will serve our citizens and promote their interests. Punishment and reward will be our guiding principles. We may, in the near future, if national interest so dictates, suspend the law which guarantees security of employment, and dismiss those employees who show scant regard for the interests of our citizens and who break the laws and squander the funds of the state. Our laws and procedures must be modernized in accordance with the requirements of the modern state and in response to the growing needs of the people.

Let us affirm that the theme, of our celebrations this year, shall be resurrection not sorrow. In your name, therefore, salute all our martyrs throughout our long history and throughout our many wars and crises. I salute them wherever they fell and whatever just cause they died for. Their souls hover over us, anxious and inspiring, and urging us - the living - to put an end to the present bloodshed and to unite our ranks. Lebanon needs all her citizens. Every drop of blood that is shed is blood from the heart of Lebanon.

I call on our people throughout the country, irrespective of their convictions, their religious beliefs, their party allegiances and associations, to be alert to the dangers that face them and to the implications of these dangers for the individual, for the group, for the future of the nation and its neutrality.

I hereby declare that I shall lead you to victory in the campaign against the evils of vicious conspiracy. In this confrontation, no labour, no effort, no sacrifice, is too great. I shall not spare anyone, whoever or wherever he may be, if the unity or sovereignty of Lebanon is at stake.

Finally, let us look forward with confidence to a glorious future in which, after long suffering and separation, we shall stand united under one flag, as one army and one nation in a united Lebanon - our Alpha and Omega.

BEIRUT, 31 DECEMBER 1982

TELEVISED NEW YEAR SPEECH TO THE NATION

The President's purpose in making a televised speech at the New Year was basically twofold: to apprise the Lebanese people as a whole of the monumental task facing the Government and the nation, and the Stern challenges of the hour; and to reassure every single Lebanese citizen, in the strongest possible terms, that although the State might temporarily be confined to Beirut, not one part of the rest of Lebanon had been forgotten nor would it ever be.

**"WE HAVE NOT FORGOTTEN ANY OF LEBANON'S MANY
REGIONS, NOR HAVE WE EVER ACCEPTED THAT
LEBANON SHOULD BE CONFINED WITHIN THE LIMITS
OF ANY ONE OF THOSE REGIONS"**

On the occasion of the New Year, I want first to talk to you about Beirut, the city we all love. Beirut, the symbol, since unification, of the unity of the nation itself. Beirut, the capital we cherish for its beauty and which we love all the more for the long suffering it has endured. From that same Beirut we are forging ahead with the task of shaping out new national life.

But Beirut is not the whole of Lebanon, and this we have not forgotten. There are other places besides Beirut, which I am equally eager to discuss with you. Let us focus our attention on every area of Lebanon, the North, the South, the Beqaa and the Mountain. Let us think of Baalbek and Byblos, let us ponder the future

of Lebanon: the Lebanon we wish to see, a Lebanon that is beautiful and strong. We have not forgotten any of Lebanon's many regions, nor have we ever accepted that Lebanon should be confined within the limits of any one of those regions.

The New Year is an occasion dear to all the people of Lebanon, who look forward to it with hearts full of optimism and hope; and for that reason I want very much to join with you in your celebrations. I want to come into every one of your homes and to visit every village. Television enables me to fulfill my earnest desire to reach all of those who cannot reach me, and to go out to all those who cannot come to me. I also wish I could hear every voice which cannot speak to me directly. Yet I know that I do not listen alone, for the people of Lebanon are listening tonight, with me, to a message from other areas in Lebanon, whose voice we cannot hear.

Today we are all listening to a single voice: the voice of Lebanon, the voice of our conscience that urges us to co-operate in establishing Lebanese solidarity, the essential preliminary to a solution of the enormous tasks and challenges now facing Lebanon.

I am well aware that the demands on us are many; there has been terrible damage, and I know that there are innumerable obstacles, and problems and pressures of all kinds. I am determined to overcome every obstacle and problem and to resist the pressures exerted by those who do not wish us well.

The negotiations * we have begun today are nothing less than the affirmation of Lebanese sovereignty and of the honour and dignity of the citizens of Lebanon. All our efforts today are concentrated on building the army and on strengthening the legitimate security forces, as the first stage of a rapid reconstruction programme that will enable the army to spread its wings throughout the whole of Lebanon. The army exists for every region of Lebanon without exception, and will very soon enable us to dismiss the notion of an Eastern and a Western sector in our capital. Beirut is a unified whole, and the army will be deployed in every quarter of the city.

The State does indeed face grave problems, but we its servants are determined to discharge our responsibilities and put an end to this abnormal situation, relying on our own Lebanese potential and the support of our friends.

Turning now to other matters, I think we all know the state of our Treasury. Nevertheless, I shall single out certain facts.

I took office at a time when there was a budget deficit of 6 billion Lebanese pounds, a deficit which had accumulated over the previous twelve years. A further 5 1/2 billion pounds in debts and a deficit of one billion pounds in our Energy Fund add up to an overall deficit of 12 1/2 billion pounds in our general budget.

- 1-A live broadcast, largely extemporized
- 2-Negotiations for Israeli troop withdrawal from Lebanon

This, however, is not all. For we must add on another 10 billion pounds for losses incurred by the Israeli invasion, of which 2 billion pounds alone was forfeited by the City of Beirut. And there are also problems concerning the income of Lebanese citizens, which has fallen by 33% instead of rising by 50%; in other words, there has effectively been an 80 % decline in the income of our citizens.

These are some of the problems that confront us in the social and developmental programs which have to be swiftly implemented. But perhaps the most pressing matter before us now, which is a very difficult problem to solve, is the need for 125,000 housing units, to which must be added another 9,000 urgently needed for refugees or the unlawfully housed. The cost of all this to the State will be in the range of 30 billion pounds, in addition to the continuing cost of building 11,000 housing units every year. The State is required to invest 3 billion pounds annually in order to deal with the housing problem, which today is of the utmost urgency and, if unresolved, will create very serious social conditions with grave implications for national security.

I have made no mention of the projects which have actually been prepared ready for implementation, and which would have cost us 20 billion pounds, an amount which has now increased to 40 billion through inflation. This means that the Treasury needs at least another 20 billion pounds.

I am giving you all these details so that all the people of Lebanon may know the true state of our country's finances. As for the 1983 programme, I can promise you that we intend to spend nearly 1 1/2 billion pounds on road -building, hospitals, schools and sanitation. I mention roads, and I am sure we are all well aware how badly our roads need reconstruction. The total length of our road network in Lebanon amounts to 8 thousand kilometers, 7 1/2 thousand of which need rebuilding, since they are in a serious state of disrepair.

In addition to all this, we need to embark forthwith on the process of reconstructing Beirut itself, especially the commercial center, in view of its relevance to conditions prevailing in the country as a whole, and its vital role in the future resuscitation of Beirut, when our capital resumes its rightful place in the life of Lebanon.

This, in brief, is the present state of the country. These are the problems of finance and of development which we have to deal with; and let me assure you that the State does not underestimate the seriousness of the situation. But I am certainly not overawed by these figures; in spite of everything, Lebanon is ready to begin a new life and to overcome her difficulties, especially those of finance.

The State envisages several solutions, one of which is to expand the annual budget to meet comprehensive development targets, in which case provision should be made for a surplus of funds, with due regard to the overall programme for national development. There are also the loans and pecuniary aid promised us by the World Bank, by our Arab brethren and by other friendly countries: all this amounts to a kind of 'Marshall Plan' to revive the Lebanese economy.

Another of the State's scheduled programmes, which should prove most effective, will allow the Lebanese people to associate themselves with our plans for national salvation and economic reconstruction. We are in the process of creating a National Reconstruction Fund which, we hope, will attract generous contributions from the large Lebanese communities abroad, the friends of Lebanon and the banks that do business in Lebanon, as well as all those of us in the homeland who are in a position to give support to the fund. The organization of the programme will be entrusted to competent and worthy men, with whom we shall draw up a comprehensive programme aimed at financing specific projects, with the emphasis on development and our needs as one nation.

However, notwithstanding all the figures I have quoted, I must hasten to reassure you that the state of our economy and finances is far healthier than that of many other countries, so that we are still envied, even now, by certain countries whose apparent stability is no more than an illusion. Despite certain weaknesses, our financial position is not beyond repair; all can be put right, if we dedicate ourselves urgently to the task of providing a better life for our citizens.

These are some of the facts about our development situation which I wanted to share with you. I believe we should be optimistic, for I have faith in every one of our citizens, in their ambition, in their potential and their ability, in their determination and tenacity - qualities which have enabled them to surmount every difficulty and to overcome challenge. The people of Lebanon have demonstrated that they can transform the dark hours of tragedy, ordeals which have cost them so much in blood and sweat, into a glorious page of national history. The people of Lebanon have persevered against all odds. The heroic people of Lebanon have proved to the world that they are worthy of their country and have earned the right to live in it, with honour, dignity and verve.

My pledge to you is that the enterprise of national salvation shall continue unabated, and that the reconstruction programme will be augmented and intensified. I pledge myself to the restoration of Lebanon's independence and of her sovereignty over every inch of Lebanese territory, so that all regions of Lebanon, from the Mountain to the South, from the Beqaa to the North and Lebanon's capital, will once more enjoy complete security and freedom. And I prophesy that this time next year we shall be celebrating this occasion with Lebanon and all her people in the very best of health.

A very happy New Year to you all - and to Lebanon.

BEIRUT, 6 JANUARY 1983

**SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE TRADITIONAL
NEW YEAR RECEPTION
FOR THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS**

The traditional New Year reception for the Diplomatic Corps was seen by President Gemayel as no mere formality but an occasion on which he could strengthen Lebanon's ties with the rest of the world and thereby strongly underpin his peace efforts with international backing. In particular it was an opportunity to stress that Lebanon's problems were not confined to local disagreements, and that an international effort equal to that exerted by the Lebanese themselves must be forthcoming in order to reach a solution.

**"LEBANON'S MISSION BOTH AT
HOME AND ABROAD IS BASED ON
UNIFICATION, RECONCILIATION,
AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF
UNIVERSAL PEACE AND JUSTICE"**

Your Excellencies,

Thank you very much for the words spoken on your behalf by His Excellency, the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps. I am pleased to return your sentiments, and I hope that you will convey to your Heads of State my sincerest good wishes and my earnest hopes that the New Year will be a year of peace here in Lebanon and in the world at large.

The Lebanese people can truly be said to have experienced one of the most painful ordeals that any nation has had to face in modern times. However, we stand at the threshold of a new year and a new era, determined to establish a new Lebanon capable of finding her proper place among the peoples and nations of the world.

In the battle for reconstruction, the people of Lebanon will never forget the friends who came to their aid in time of great need. They sincerely appreciate the many contributions, both material and moral, made by friendly governments and by regional and national organizations. The efforts of UNIFIL and of the contingents of the Multi-National Force and the many constructive political and diplomatic efforts in support of Lebanon will never be forgotten. To all of these governments and organizations I express the deepest gratitude on behalf of the Lebanese people, especially to those working with us now to restore peace and tranquility throughout our country. We hope that Lebanon will soon be in a position to resume her distinctive role in the region and in the world.

It is clear that those who support Lebanon in her just cause do so not merely for the sake of her strategic geographical position but also because of her historical and cultural significance, born of her unique ethnic and religious composition. Our small country has long been a dynamic meeting-point of diverse races, religions and civilizations, and has always been a generous contributor in many fields of human endeavour. Since the dawn of history Lebanon has sent her sons and daughters abroad to enrich other cultures and nations, and through this long association with the world at large the Lebanese have helped to foster co-operation among widely differing peoples.

Consequently, Lebanon's mission both at home and abroad is based upon three ultimate goals: unification of races, peoples, nations and states; reconciliation and tolerance between religions, sects, ideologies and aspirations; and the establishment of universal peace and justice.

By their blood and their tears the Lebanese people have shown their determination to respond to every challenge and to emerge victorious. Throughout the ages this dear land has endured a succession of aggressors and oppressors, who have taken advantage of Lebanon's traditional openness and generosity. But the people have never failed to win back their freedom and to rededicate themselves to the service of Lebanon and of mankind: they have triumphed through their unswerving faith in the sanctity of their homeland and the justice of their cause.

If this meeting of ours today signifies the beginning of a new era in Lebanon and symbolizes the rebirth of a

country, the occasion is rendered all the more auspicious in that this very day marks the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of a great poet, of whom Lebanon is justly proud. I am speaking, of course, of Khalil Gibran, whose centenary is being commemorated throughout 1983 here in Lebanon as well as in many other parts of the world.

I permit myself on this occasion to quote, from our great poet, words that most poignantly express the ordeal we have suffered, the aspirations we have nurtured, and the reasons why we must survive. His anguished cry is a powerful expression of the fundamental values for which this small country stands: I have a yearning for my beautiful country, and I love its people because of their misery. But if my people rose, stimulated by plunder and motivated by what they call 'patriotic spirit' to murder, and invade my neighbours country, then upon the committing of any human atrocity I would hate my people and my country.

The poet then goes on to emphasize the conviction and the determination of the people of Lebanon: You are my brother and I love you. I love you worshipping in your church, kneeling in your temple, and praying in your mosque. You and I and all our children are of one religion, for the varied paths of religion are but the fingers of the loving hand of the Supreme Being, extended to all, offering completeness of spirit to all those anxious to receive it.

Our long history and the tragedy and distress of recent years have taught us much. Now, at last, comes the promise of peace, and we look forward with faith, hope and determination. Our faith is in Lebanon - we know that she will survive; our hope is for a glorious future; our determination, which has never faltered, will ensure the fulfillment of our dreams and national aspirations. Our mission will continue.

NEW DELHI, 9 MARCH 1983

**SPEECH ENTITLED 'LEBANON:
WAR OR PEACE' DELIVERED AT
THE SEVENTH NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT**

While negotiations with Israel continued throughout the early months of 1983, President Gemayel had an opportunity to have private talks with Arab leaders in New Delhi during the 7th Summit of Non-Aligned Nations. Among those he met, all of whom expressed their support, were President Assad of Syria, PLO leader Yasser Arafat, President Mubarak of Egypt and President Ben Shdeed of Algeria, as well as President Castro of Cuba. At the Summit itself President Gemayel emphasized Lebanon's neutrality and her desire for friendly relations with every nation of the world.

"LEBANON IS THE KEY TO WAR OR
PEACE, TO UNITY OR DIVISION, TO
PROGRESS OR DECLINE IN THE
REGION"

Madam Chairman,

I am pleased to participate in this Conference of Non-Aligned Nations, which is being held under your Chairmanship. You bring to us, Madam Chairman, not only your own distinguished name, but a historic message inspired by two of your illustrious predecessors. These leaders have significantly influenced the concepts of freedom and independence everywhere.

Madam Chairman,
Your Majesties, Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Lebanon occupies a unique position on the frontier of the Third World. This uniqueness lies in her cultural composition and her special characteristics. Lebanon is a natural member of the community of Non-Aligned Nations. This is so because non-alignment is the cornerstone of the Lebanese State, and indeed is one of the reasons for its existence. Lebanon's non-alignment, therefore, is an ontological characteristic that goes beyond the axes of political power. Non-alignment embodies the ambitions of Lebanon, ensures her security and promotes her internal unity.

Committed as it is to the principles of non-alignment, the Lebanese State is no less committed to alignment with the principles of independence, of sovereignty, of the unity of its people, and of the integrity of its land. A Lebanon so committed could play an effective role in this distinguished community of Non-Aligned Na-

tions. I do not believe that one can be neutral about the sovereignty and the freedom of nations, or about the principles of dignity and justice, or about universal humanistic values. To be neutral about such issues is tantamount to aligning oneself with the humiliation, the enslavement and the exploitation of man by man.

Of the hundred countries represented at this Conference, there is one whose territory for the past eight difficult years has been the battlefield for the wars of others. These wars have shattered the body politic of Lebanon, they have devastated the land and disrupted the life of the people. These wars have shaken the foundations of the state, but Lebanon has nevertheless withstood, with courageous determination, all the blows to which she has been subjected. We are now in the process of building the state structure, stone by stone, and of unifying the people and their land inch by inch. Lebanon will continue to grapple with the crisis, and will continue to struggle for existence and independence. Lebanon has offered a hundred thousand martyrs on the altar of self-realization to ensure for her people a life of dignity and self-respect. Such martyrdom is the price of freedom, and Lebanon willingly pays this price on behalf of all people that strive after truth, justice and peace.

The Lebanese crisis embodies two conflicting possibilities: the possibility of explosion and destruction, and the possibility of peace and stability. Thus Lebanon is the key to war or peace, to unity or division, to progress or decline in the region. If Lebanon does not emerge victorious from this crisis, the entire region is likely to degenerate into anarchy, confusion and division.

Lebanon, therefore, occupies an axial position, for good or for evil, with respect not only to the Middle East but to the Third World and, indeed, to the world at large.

Mrs Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India.

This is neither the time nor the place to consider the causes that transformed Lebanon into an arena of war and conflict. You are all acquainted with these causes. Instead, I shall talk to you about the determination of my people to live in freedom and dignity. I want to talk to you about the invincible will which spurs my people on towards the establishment of a strong and unified state, a state which enjoys independence and uncontested sovereignty over its territory. Ultimately, the will of the people is destined to prevail, and Lebanon, by the will of her people, will never again be manipulated by outside forces. Lebanon will never again be the setting for regional and international conflicts. Lebanon will never again serve as the means for the ends of others. Lebanon will never again be a laboratory for political experiments. Lebanon will never again permit any external interests to prevail over her national interest, nor any other will to prevail over her own sovereign will. In exercising these rights Lebanon will triumph over all the forces that have conspired against her and will remain firm; through the will of her people Lebanon will commit herself to building a strong and confident nation and state. A weak Lebanon is a source of danger for herself and for her region. A strong Lebanon, on the other hand, is a source of strength for both.

Whether in crisis or in good health, Lebanon remains faithful to her message and to her role in the region. Lebanon remains faithful to the Arab world, of which she is an integral part, and to which she is tied by bonds of culture, of heritage, of mutual interests and of future aspirations.

I do not believe that among brothers there are problems that cannot be solved by the positive spirit of brotherhood, and by the principles of truth and justice. We are confident that our Arab brethren appreciate the many sacrifices that Lebanon has incurred as a result of her Arab commitment, and that they will therefore come to her support. In spite of all the hardships Lebanon has experienced, including the Israeli invasion of her territory, Lebanon remains faithful to the promotion of all just causes, among them the cause of the Palestinian people seeking to attain their legitimate national rights.

I am confident that you, and the distinguished representatives at this conference, appreciate Lebanon's present situation, standing as we do at the crossroads of history. If peace is not granted to the Lebanese now, it is impossible for it to be granted to anyone anywhere in this region. To deny peace to the Lebanese is tantamount to denying the rights of others and to shattering the stability not only of Lebanon but of the whole region.

Lebanon is at present engaged in extremely difficult negotiations, and will take her decision in these negotiations in the light of her national interest. The decision is exclusively Lebanese. Lebanon's conduct in these negotiations, however, is governed by three principles to which we shall firmly adhere:

1. Lebanon must preserve her national consensus; Lebanon is committed to attitudes and policies based on the will of her people;
2. Lebanon cannot violate the principle of national sovereignty, cannot grant privileges to anyone, and cannot accept the presence of any foreign military force on her territory;
3. Lebanon cannot endanger her credibility in the Arab world, her association with the Arab community of states, or her creative role in the region.

Our brethren, our friends and our distinguished colleagues at this Summit have the right to know from us, frankly and clearly, where we stand on the fundamental objectives. We call for the withdrawal of all non-Lebanese forces from Lebanon, so that Lebanon may be restored to the Lebanese and to the Lebanese atone, and so that she will never again be mortgaged to others or manipulated by others. The principles which govern our policy are the following:

- 1 The security of Lebanon, the unity of her territory, the inviolability of her sovereignty and independence, should not be jeopardized by external or regional considerations.
- 2 Lebanon should cease to be the battleground for the revolutions and the wars of others, be they friends or foes.
- 3 Lebanon should develop a strong political system. Lebanon should build a strong national army to be deployed in every part of the country, to assume the responsibility for defending Lebanon, her people and her territory, to protect her free democratic institutions, and to promote international peace and security in the region. Thus, in the fulfillment of its responsibilities, the State will depend on its own security rather than the security provided by others.

By realizing these principles, which conform fully to the principles of non-alignment, we feel that we can avert the dangers that face us and our brethren. Through these principles Lebanon will, from her Mediterranean shore, resume her role as a messenger of peace to her Arab neighbours and to the international community. This role embodies the values which were always at the heart of her cultural heritage and which have always been the distinguishing characteristics of her existence. When I solicit your support in the realization of these objectives, I wish to reaffirm the following:

- Lebanon is not weak; for she is strong and determined in her decisions;
- Lebanon will not remain divided; for her vision is unified;
- Lebanon will not remain in ruins; for she remains steadfast;
- Lebanon will not remain occupied; for her will is free.

A people tempered by the flames, resurrected from the smoldering fires and the black smoke of violence, prouder and more determined than ever, can never be defeated: no hostile force can deprive them of their fundamental rights and freedoms.

BEIRUT, 28 APRIL 1983

**WELCOMING ADDRESS IN HONOUR
OF THE VISIT TO LEBANON OF
U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE
GEORGE SHULTZ**

The process of negotiation with Israel over troop withdrawals had begun on 28 December, with the USA as an active participant and later witness to the agreement, which meant that America guaranteed to ensure adequate measures to implement all troop withdrawals. During the negotiations, which began in earnest on 10 January after lengthy discussion of agenda and format, parallel consultations took place - with varying degrees of formality - with the Syrians and the Palestinians, in particular with regard to measures to be taken in prepara-

tion for their own withdrawals. For its part, Israel declared (on 25 March) its intention to withdraw as far as the Awali River. President Gemayel expressed fears that the negotiations might well be very difficult, and Syria also expressed misgivings about the negotiations and arrangements for troop withdrawals.

On 18 April the US Embassy in Beirut was hit by a bomb attack resulting in several deaths and over 100 serious injuries. President Reagan declared that the USA would not be intimidated, and that the MNF would remain in Lebanon. On the same day the Lebanese Government introduced conscription. The US Congress approved a 250 million dollar package of military aid for Lebanon. Meanwhile a condition of full alert was declared between Syrian and Israeli troops in the Beqaa.

President Reagan despatched Secretary of State George Shultz to Lebanon in order to finalize an agreement between Israel and Lebanon.

"LEBANON WANTS PEACE FOR HERSELF AND WITH HER
NEIGHBOURS - PEACE THAT IS REAL AND BASED ON
MUTUAL RESPECT FOR THE SOVEREIGNTY, POLITICAL
INDEPENDENCE AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF EACH
COUNTRY"

Mr Secretary,

Once again we welcome you to Lebanon. We consider your visit and your determination to spend a significant amount of time in the area to accelerate the process of withdrawals of non-Lebanese forces from Lebanon as yet another indication of the commitment of President Reagan, of yourself and of the U.S. Administration, to the restoration of Lebanon's sovereignty and independence as soon as possible.

You know very well that Lebanon wants peace for herself and with her neighbours - peace that is real and based on mutual respect for the sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of each country. We want a process of peace, therefore, which takes into consideration the country's conditions, and which does not produce 'side-effects'. In other words, we want an agreement with Israel that does not create more antagonism and violence, but which will permit us, at the right time, to establish normal relations. In order to achieve this objective we need, in the process of seeking an agreement, to ensure the preservation of our national unity and our natural relations with the Arab world.

Our position, Mr Secretary, is very clear: we cannot accept anything less than a full Israeli withdrawal which will be matched by a full Syrian and PLO withdrawal. Therefore, any security arrangements with Israel should be consistent with Lebanese sovereignty. In other words, these arrangements should not have the appearance of a residual occupation, nor should they legalize the Israeli presence through joint operations with the Lebanese army. On this basis we have rejected the notion of observation posts or joint patrols. We have, however, consented to the American proposal of joint supervisory teams, provided the mission of such teams is limited exclusively to verifying the implementation of the security arrangements. Israel is trying to transform these teams into operational units with the appearance and function of joint patrols. This is certainly unacceptable to us, as I have made very clear to Mr Habib * on a number of occasions.

We want to reach an agreement with Israel - but we want an agreement that results in withdrawals. In other words, an agreement with Israel should be acceptable to Syria. Otherwise the Syrian army will not withdraw - which means that the Israeli army will not withdraw. We shall then have an agreement - but also complete occupation. We shall have paid the political price for an agreement with Israel, endangering our internal unity and our Arab ties, without regaining our land. We cannot sign any agreement that is so expensive politically yet does nothing towards restoring our sovereignty.

The situation is becoming more complicated with the recent changes in Syria. We detect a hardening of attitude and close co-ordination with the Soviet Union. It is important to note that, for the first time, there are Soviet personnel about fifteen miles from Beirut. Syria, as you have been informed, regards any gains achieved by Israel in Lebanon as a danger to her national security and will, therefore, stay in Lebanon as long as these gains are maintained.

During the course of the tripartite negotiations we have been most responsive to the American efforts to bridge differences. We have reached our red line, and on some issues we have gone beyond it. This line is based on our national requirements and on the principles agreed upon between Mr Reagan and myself when

I met him

* Mr Philip Habib, President Reagan's Special Envoy to Lebanon and the Middle East 1982-1983.

last October - that no agreement should jeopardize our national unity or our Arab credentials.

We have negotiated with Israel in good faith - and your negotiating team can testify to that - because we have wanted the negotiations to succeed. Now we want your mission to succeed, and we build great hopes on your involvement. If the present mode of negotiations does not lead to a successful conclusion we want, together with you, to look for an alternative.

We want to assure you, Mr Secretary, that the whole country is behind your initiative. There is a general national consensus in favor of peace. Only yesterday the Lebanese Parliament, in a unanimous vote, supported the position of the Government concerning negotiations, and endorsed the principles for peace and withdrawals which I outlined to the press last Friday.

I hope and pray that your intensive efforts will be fruitful and will bring peace and stability to our land.

BEIRUT, 29 MAY 1983

**SPEECH IN HONOUR OF THE 105TH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDATION
OF AL-MAQASID ISLAMIC SOCIETY**

The Lebanese-Israeli Accord concerning troop withdrawals was agreed on 17 May, with the USA as co-signatory and full partner in the agreement. Repeated statements from Arab countries, including Saudi Arabia, in support of Lebanese independence followed conclusion of the Accord. Strong opposition to the Accord was expressed by Syria.

In a remarkable attempt to quell fears about the Accord and explain its significance to Lebanon and the future, President Gemayel made a spontaneous visit to the heartland of Muslim Lebanon. His participation in a very important Muslim occasion strongly underlined the President's continuing endeavour to bring together the various religious groups and communities in the country under the banner of one united Lebanon. This was also an occasion when Lebanon's cultural and geographic sense of belonging to the Arab world could be stressed; it also acknowledged the importance of a continued distinctive international role and cosmopolitan character.

**"LEBANON'S SENSE OF ONENESS
WITH THE ARAB WORLD IS A
MATTER OF CONVICTION AND FREE
CHOICE"**

We celebrate today more than a century of outstanding contributions to knowledge and learning by men whose love of their homeland and love of learning, founded on unshakeable faith, has been inspired by this institution.

Al-Maqasid, together with the few sister institutions of the same age, has never ceased to carry the torch of learning; it is one of the most illustrious institutions of its kind; its standards and its achievements have always been a source of national pride.

Al-Maqasid, indeed, is the embodiment of the noble heritage of Islam, of that civilization and those values which Lebanon represents, a civilization which has brought great benefits to mankind. It has achieved particular distinction through its use of the Arabic language - a language which reigned supreme for almost seven hundred years, during which time the various schools of thought in philosophy, science and literature have made rich and abundant contributions to the well-being of mankind. Moreover, the cross-fertilization and exchange of ideas between this civilization and Western civilization, in many fields, has shown that these two civilizations not only complement but complete each other. Thus al-Maqasid dedicated itself to the task of fostering the civilization of Islam, and so helped to create the distinctive qualities of Lebanon as a meeting-point of mankind, where the great religions meet in harmony to enshrine the noblest human values and the sublimest teachings in a manner unparalleled anywhere else in the East or the West.

This blend of civilizations - the way in which it has come about and what it signifies - provides a real foundation for unity and solidarity. It strengthens national feeling and brings dignity to the homeland, with all its

diverse communities, groups and regions; it is of service to each and every one of those component parts. Only among those men who do not recognize the true nature of Almighty God can He be a subject of controversy and strife.

It was perhaps Lebanon's position as the meeting-point of these great civilizations and religions which prompted her to pioneer the Arab Renaissance. Inspired by the glorious history of the Arabs and their outstanding contribution to civilization, she strove to inspire the spirit of Arab nationalism, to preserve the Arabic language, and to stress the need for watchfulness in a world of anxiety and danger. For was it not one of our poets who, less than a century ago, voiced the admonition: 'Arabs, awake and be vigilant !'?

These same words are being reiterated today from Lebanon, for the prevailing conditions are much as they were a hundred years ago, and the same voice is once again warning us to stand firm.

As the concept of Arab unity crystallized and became a rallying-point for all, Lebanon played a leading role as a founding member of the Arab League. This was an expression of Lebanon's faith in unity, her belief in common goals and a common destiny, and her determination, shared by all members of the League, to consolidate the independence of every Arab nation, so that none might be singled out for aggression or plunder.

The collapse of the old empires was followed by the independence of every country in our region. And like all these countries, Lebanon committed herself to the achievement of independence and freedom, and to full involvement in wars of liberation. But Lebanon has never been a geographical extension of any other territory, nor will she ever be.

We are now on the threshold of a decisive and critical phase in the history of our region; what is needed above all else is unity in Arab ranks - unity of purpose and unity of action - for the benefit not only of Lebanon but of the Arab cause. It is time, therefore, for us to consider the implications of this situation.

A divided and devastated Lebanon, freely used as an arena for all manner of strife and destruction, must surely have grave repercussions in the rest of the Arab world and will be damaging to the Arab cause - whereas a Lebanon which is peaceful, prosperous, united, and free will exert a positive influence, guaranteeing peace and tranquility to all our Arab neighbours and ensuring the realization of their rightful ambitions, so that their citizens may continue to enjoy peace and security.

Lebanon's sense of oneness with the Arab world is a matter of conviction and free choice; it arises naturally from her geographical environment and her pioneering role in the area. With this in mind, it is clear that the Arab-Israeli Accord which we have recently concluded was an inescapable prerequisite for liberation.

The bitter truth, however, is that this Accord has - inevitably - provided a pretext for others to interfere in our affairs, to exploit the differences and divergences existing in our society, to involve us in the quarrels of others, to neutralize Lebanon's authority, and to prevent us from fulfilling our destiny. In the absence of a joint Arab alternative, the Accord was the only available way for us to bring an end to occupation, to liberate the land, to prevent geographical, psychological and sectarian disintegration, and to avoid loss of population or territory.

Lebanon must be liberated so that she may feel free to fulfill herself, and so that she may play an effective role in her Arab environment through her social, political and economic relationship with her Arab neighbours.

How can Lebanon possibly maintain this moral integrity if she has lost her political integrity and is no longer free within her own frontiers?

How can Lebanon be an independent country exercising her own choices and developing her ties within the Arab family of nations when half or more of Lebanon is under foreign occupation?

How can the Lebanese State, founded as it is on harmony among the religious communities, be a free and impregnable State while there is fragmentation and divisiveness and bitter conflict between the different

groups?

Can we ever achieve the homeland of our dreams and hopes without unity among our people, all the people, throughout a united land?

Is the isolated North, the segregated Beqaa, or the occupied South the Lebanon we desire?

Shall we sacrifice our people in the South for the sake of a vainglorious policy of adventurism that would leave them deprived of honour and dignity in their own homeland, and turn them into second-class citizens in groups of settlements under the yoke of a foreign power?

I have sworn to protect the independence of the Lebanese homeland and to defend our territorial integrity. I shall not permit the loss of one grain of soil, nor shall I see our dignity impugned or our rights diminished. I am certain that our Arab brethren well understand the position in which Lebanon finds herself, and that they will spare no effort to help us save our land from the many dangers that threaten us. Lebanon, historically a land of many cultures and civilizations, united in the spiritual heritage of both Christianity and Islam, will then be able to continue her creative role. We shall be one people, a political unity; we shall build a homeland which will be a model for the world of the future - a sun rising in the East to be an inspiration for the West.

All this is possible with the aid of our Arab brethren. But the assurance of victory is to be found, above all, in us, the people of Lebanon, in our determination to win, in our unflinching resolve and our unshakeable unity. We shall sweep away the barriers and overcome all obstacles, regardless of the cost in blood and pain, so that we may rebuild our homeland: a free Lebanon, a Lebanon for mankind, a truly great Lebanon.

OXFORD AND LONDON, 12 & 16 JUNE 1983

**SPEECH DELIVERED AT TWO GATHERINGS MARKING THE
CENTENARY OF THE BIRTH
OF KHLIL GIBRAN**

The year 1983, being the centenary of the birth of the great Lebanese poet Kahlil Gibran, was designated 'Gibran International Year' by President Gemayel. Under his patronage commemorative events were organized in Lebanon and in many other parts of the world, most notably in England and the USA. The international celebrations in London and Oxford included poetry readings, lectures, exhibitions and a major publication, and are thought to have been outstanding ceremonial recognition of a foreign author in Britain. President Gemayel's speech in honour of the occasion was delivered on his behalf by the Ambassador of Lebanon to the Court of St James, General Ahmad el-Hajj.

"THE DISTINCTIVE CIVILIZING
INFLUENCE OF LEBANON
THROUGHOUT THE WORLD IS AS
SIGNIFICANT TODAY AS IT HAS
ALWAYS BEEN"

Dear Friends,

Warm greetings to you all! It gives me great pleasure to thank you, in the name of Lebanon and her people, for this splendid occasion which you have organized to mark the one hundredth anniversary of our great poet.

You honour the memory of a man whose every work, whether poetry or art, embodied the message of his country - a message founded on those eternal human values so steadfastly upheld by the people of Lebanon both collectively and individually.

The intellectual and human relations which exist between our two countries, Lebanon and Britain, are distinguished by a quality which is the chief inspiration of international co-operation; namely, true friendship. Gibran himself said, 'To me friendship is the only sound foundation of all human relationships'. How much more is this the case if the friendship we enjoy be one of spiritual affinity and a marriage of true minds?

The people of Lebanon are dedicated to the ideals of democracy, to freedom of thought and to the applica-

tion of reason to the problems of mankind. We share with the great British people all those human values which are represented in their intellectual and social institutions - institutions which reflect the conscience of an enlightened people anxious to reconcile passion and wisdom, body and soul, spirituality and material progress.

The long-standing cultural relations between Britain and Lebanon are epitomized by the British educational establishments which have been founded in our country, and which are as active today as they have always been in promoting friendship between our two countries and their peoples.

During the severe and bitter ordeal endured by the people of Lebanon, Britain did not hesitate to extend the hand of friendship. Her participation in the Multi-National Force now serving in Lebanon reinforces the close ties which bind us and the special relations which bring us together.

Like you in Britain, we in Lebanon profoundly appreciate the value of constitutional and democratically based institutions. During the difficult times we have faced, all such institutions in our country have suffered the onslaught of foreign forces bent on their total destruction. Notwithstanding these onslaughts, we have emerged from our ordeal with renewed faith in these irreplaceable institutions, which we have jealously preserved in the darkest hours of our nation's history.

Your great country, the 'mother of all the democracies of the world', reminds us that only by maintaining these institutions can a nation survive as a nation and retain its independence in a peaceful world.

The name of Gibran has become inseparably linked with that of your great visionary poet William Blake. It has even been suggested that 'Gibran is the William Blake of the 20th century'. The parallels between these two painter-poets are many, and Blake had no small influence on Gibran. They followed the same mystic and visionary path, and Gibran found in Blake a special source of inspiration and consolation.

Gibran also chose to write in English - your language - as well as in his own mother tongue. And thus innumerable literary, intellectual and linguistic bonds reinforce the union between our two peoples in that immortal realm: the realm of poetry and art.

Gibran gave generously of the fruits of heart and mind to his small country, Lebanon, as well as to his larger country, the world. His fame, extending far beyond the boundaries of his homeland, has spread to all mankind. He has become a poet of world-wide reputation, speaking to the peoples of the world in all languages, overcoming the barriers of time and space. He has touched and enriched the lives of countless men and women in lands far and wide, and he has rekindled the flame of life and hope in many a heart.

In his paintings and drawings, as much as in his writings, he emphasized the principle of universal love, of true fraternity, and of co-operation among men in striving for the highest goals - these he regarded as the firm foundations for a new world in whose creation all peoples and nations must share.

In his immortal work *The Prophet*, perhaps one of the most celebrated books of our time, Gibran proclaimed the nobility and dignity of man, whom he saw as alarmingly threatened by the forces of materialism. In stressing the role of faith and the spirit in our lives, he went so far as to suggest that many of the insoluble economic and political crises threatening man's existence are basically spiritual in nature.

This man from Lebanon has therefore succeeded in speaking for contemporary man and giving voice to humanity's dearest hopes and dreams. He spoke of the unity of mankind, nations, peoples and states; of the unity of religion, creeds, ideologies, visions; and of peace, justice and equality in the world. He had a vision of a new era upon which we are about to enter, whose dawn is on the horizon.

Gibran was speaking, above all, for his native Lebanon, a country enriched by many flourishing civilizations, whose sons and daughters have gone out into the world throughout the ages to enrich the cultures of many other lands.

It is indeed a source of great pride and pleasure to us here in Lebanon that 1983 is being celebrated through-

out the world as the 'Gibran International Year'. It is a fitting tribute to a man whose words and thoughts continue to have a significant influence on the minds and hearts of millions of people.

The vast number of commemorative activities being organized in Lebanon and elsewhere in the world in honour of this great poet suggests that it is a living rather than a dead man that we are celebrating - indeed, he is very much alive in our hearts and minds. It also demonstrates the distinctive civilizing influence of Lebanon throughout the world, an influence which is as significant today as it has always been.

In Gibran we hear the voice of Lebanon; and this occasion serves to remind us that love, unity, tolerance and friendship are the foundations of all human endeavour. These foundations ensure continuity and survival, and through them the true message of universal love is renewed. This is the mission of Lebanon among the peoples and nations of the world.

BEIRUT, 19 JUNE 1983

**SPEECH DELIVERED AT A BANQUET
HELD IN HONOUR OF THE
MUSLIM COMMUNITY
DURING THE HOLY MONTH OF RAMADAN**

On 14 June the Lebanese Parliament approved the text of the Lebanese-Israeli Accord by 65 votes to 2, with 4 abstentions, and on 18 June Israel announced a partial withdrawal from Aley and Shouf within two weeks. Syrian and Libyan opposition to this Accord intensified. Strenuous but unfruitful attempts were made by the Lebanese Government to bring about an Arab summit with a view to resolving the difficulties of implementing the Accord.

In another attempt to promote unity on the home front President Gemayel invited all the political and spiritual leaders in the country - especially those representing the Sunni, Shi'a, Druze, Maronite and Orthodox communities - to a special banquet celebrating the holy month of Ramadan. All Muslims fast during the daylight hours of Ramadan, and a meal after sunset thus represents a ritual 'break-fast' in the literal sense of the term.

"WE ARE ONE NATION, ONE
COUNTRY, ONE LAND, AND WE
SHARE A COMMON DESTINY"

Dear Friends

This banquet is being held not only in honour of one of the principal spiritual ramifies and essential components of the Lebanese nation, but also to emphasize the profound significance of the holy month of Ramadan.

Ramadan is the month of spiritual discipline and meditation, the month of fasting and purification, the month of vision and inspiration. It was in Ramadan that the Holy Qur'an was revealed, and its chapters, verses and sacred words laid the foundations of the true faith of Islam. The first month of Ramadan, together with the months that followed it, represented a turning-point in Arab history: idols were destroyed, base thoughts were eradicated, false creeds were rejected. It was a time of progression from ignorance to enlightenment, from simple nomadic life to civilized existence, from divisiveness to oneness, from the pursuit of narrow and limited aims to greater universal goals.

What is great and noble must perforce be born out of pain and suffering, and sometimes out of bloodshed and bitter torment. In the midst of the destruction that has come upon us, the dangers we face and the tire that rages all around us, we stand today in dire need of that infinite source of inspiration which enabled the spiritual to vanquish the material, and the worship of idols to be replaced by true love and respect for one's country and one's fellow-man. There is a strong parallel between religious belief and love for one's country, in that both are deepened by faith and intensified by application and self-abnegation, and can only endure through steadfastness, tenacity and dedication.

However, just as the Hadith tells us that 'God has his chosen men, and will act through them if they act on his behalf', so the nation, too, has her chosen men and acts through those who act on her behalf.

This nation also has her chosen men: some are martyrs who have died and yet live on in the infinite realm of God, while others are the 'living martyrs' who strive heroically and silently day by day on the home front,

setting an example by deeds rather than words. Such chosen servants of the nation, acting on the nation's behalf and willingly responding to the leadership offered by the State, are striving to create a united Lebanon from a Lebanon so unhappily fragmented; Lebanon as one state, not a Lebanon divided into numerous petty states. Their desire is for a Lebanon whose land is inviolable, whose citizens hold their heads high, whose government is just, whose system is free, and whose people and territory are for all time undivided. These men, in harmony with the leadership of the State, look upon Lebanon as their only homeland: they cannot feel loyalty to an uncertain political entity fluctuating between existence and non-existence; they demand an independent country that enjoys friendly relations as an equal with all other countries, to the lasting benefit of Lebanon and the whole region.

A sovereign Lebanon, strong and free, will be a source of pride and great joy to Arabs everywhere, as an ally in defense of their rights - whereas a divided Lebanon, without strength or freedom, would be nothing but an encumbrance to them in their forward march.

I believe the interests of the homeland and the State must always be put above those of the Presidency, and the President must always remain aloof from every kind of sectional, regional and religious rivalries. Any decision affecting the future of our homeland must be an independent decision by the Lebanese people themselves, and by no one else. Why should we be denied the right to make our own free decisions, regardless of internal and external forces who wish to influence us, when all the countries and states on our borders insist on absolute independence in their own decision-making?

It is my earnest conviction - and in this I am joined by the members of my Government - that the State should extend its authority over every inch of its territory, and that all foreign and non-Lebanese forces should be withdrawn. Furthermore I believe, with no less conviction, that such a withdrawal of forces should be accompanied by simultaneous internal action to secure the free expression of the national will. When our land is free again, we ourselves shall be free, and we can return - all of us - to the lawful and legitimate jurisdiction of the State. Partisan and para-military groups will collapse, as the State and its armed forces, atone, take over full responsibility for governing the land, and alone exercise an absolute right to take independent action on behalf of the homeland. The State will once more become the dispenser of reward and punishment before God, before the people themselves and before history.

Negotiations have taken place and will be carried on through the constitutional institutions of the State and the authorities concerned. The State has taken its decisions independently, and will continue to do so; the State has signed whatever needed to be signed, and will continue to do so. If negotiations fall, the State and no one else will lead the people of Lebanon into alternative action. No price, no sacrifice, will be too great in such a struggle. The State atone shall decide the time, the place and the means; the State atone shall decide when to make peace and when to make war. I speak in the name of the people of Lebanon and by the authority vested in me by all the regions and citizens of this country.

I too have shared, and continue to share, the suffering you have all endured. But now I make this pledge: I promise you that the State will not yield to pressure or tolerate illegal acts, wherever they may originate. Your government is fully conscious of your deeply felt aspirations in every region over which it is sovereign; it grieves for your sorrow, but it will not forget your hopes for the future, hopes which will assuredly be fulfilled. To those regions of our land which dread the threat of annexation, to our people in the North, ' the Beqaa and the South, in the Mountain and in Beirut, I say this: the State will not abandon you; it will never cease to encourage you in your longing for the restoration of a unified Lebanon; no longer will those who take advantage of your patience and perseverance remain unchallenged.

In spite of the many religious and political persuasions in the various regions, we are more united today than ever before. We are one nation, one country, one land, and we share a common destiny.

On this day of all days I renew my pledge to preserve the unity of our country, and I am renewing that pledge before you and before the generations to come. Under the leadership of the State, this country will rise again from ruin and destruction. Our buildings and our bridges have been devastated, and our institutions disrupted - but nothing can destroy our resolve, which is harder and more durable than stone, nor crush our proud and noble spirit, which is from God.

On this occasion during the month of Ramadan, which is associated with the noblest ideals and the purest values, I should like to wish all Muslims in Lebanon - and all other Lebanese and Muslims everywhere - happiness, prosperity and a glorious future. It is my earnest hope that we shall all be imbued with that spirit of trust and co-operation, positive and selfless endeavour which is at the heart of both Christianity and Islam. May God permit this spirit to direct our actions and guide us to victory. May God protect our homeland and restore its sovereignty, independence and freedom, so that we may serve our country and reassume our pioneering role among the nations of the region and the whole world.

WASHINGTON D.C., HOUSTON, DETROIT, 23-24 JULY 1983

**SPEECHES DELIVERED TO THREE
GATHERINGS OF AMERICANS
OF LEBANESE ORIGIN**

An atmosphere of extreme tension in the mountains followed the Israeli announcement of partial withdrawal from the area, which had already seen fierce hostilities in the presence of Israeli troops. In particular there was grave danger of a vacuum being created before deployment of the Lebanese army could be arranged. Fully aware of the exigencies of the situation, the Lebanese Government decided that President Gemayel and Prime Minister Shafiq al-Wazzan should visit the USA with a high-ranking delegation for talks aimed at breaking the deadlock - bearing in mind continual declarations of US support and the American contribution to the 17 May Accord itself. This also afforded an opportunity to apprise a large proportion of the five-trillion-strong Lebanese Diaspora of the situation as much as their brothers on the home front - a historic gesture, since no previous President of Lebanon has ever done this. The three gatherings that took place in major US cities were attended by thousands of Lebanese Americans representing all the various confessions, and were a remarkable and heartening show of solidarity and support for President Gemayel.

"WE SEEK A WIDER LOYALTY, A LARGER ASPIRATION, A VASTER VISION, AND WE INSIST ON ONE THING: THE SUBORDINATION OF ETHNICAL AND RELIGIOUS INTERESTS TO THE IMPERATIVE CLAIM OF A UNIFIED NATION AND TO NATIONAL LOYALTY"

1. Washington D.C.

Dear Friends,

I am delighted to be with you today to convey to you the love and affection of your fellow-countrymen in Lebanon, and to share with you their hopes and aspirations.

Lebanon, your homeland, dear friends, exists in the heart of each of you, in whatever country you may be residing, as a living, dynamic force.

As I stand here before you, I am deeply inspired by the thought that in meeting with you I am meeting with an international Lebanon whose borders embrace the whole world. Part of Lebanon's distinctive role in today's world surely lies here, in the fruitful interaction and co-operation between the people of the Lebanese homeland and the members of the far-flung Lebanese international community. Since the dawn of history, the Lebanese people have gone out into a world which has seen their national consciousness enriching, and enriched by, the culture of many lands. Today it falls to you to continue this cultural mission, and to be the chief instruments by which the process of fruitful interaction between nations may continue.

In recent years Lebanon has amply demonstrated her resilience, her determination and her courage in withstanding the onslaught of mighty forces bent on destroying her people, overturning her values, extirpating her traditions, and subverting her institutions - forces whose depredations and impious violations of territorial sanctity have impugned the country's very right to existence. I am here on Lebanon's behalf to assure you that we have survived this ordeal, and that this achievement has been the result of a joint effort. Without your support of the Lebanese people, and the assistance you have rendered them in their heroic struggle on the home front, it would have been impossible for us to meet together as we do today. We in Lebanon further assure you that we will overcome all obstacles, and that with the united efforts of all sectors of our society - religious, social and official - we will restore the territorial integrity of our sacred land, just as we have restored unity to our capital city, Beirut.

Lebanon appeals to you, dear friends, urging every one of you to place your minds and hearts at the service of your country. Your countrymen at home desire to impress upon you that the most powerful means we have at our disposal to defend our sovereignty and independence is to maintain the ties that bind us together, so that we can serve our country in unity in a loving and sacrificial spirit, striving together to ensure Lebanon's happiness and prosperity.

We are the heirs to a great - indeed unique - cultural heritage, the heritage of a peace-loving nation which has never resorted to armed force in order to impose its way of life on others. At a time when the rest of the Ancient World prided itself on military conquests and the subjugation of other peoples, Ancient Lebanon sent out her ships not to conquer the world, but to disseminate learning and the use of the alphabet, and to promote the idea of amicable coexistence between nations linked by a variety of common interests.

Lebanon has perhaps had more experience of invading armies than any other country. These armies have vanished, the states that sent them have been eclipsed - and Lebanon survives. Lebanon has survived because of her symbolic significance for mankind, as the fulcrum of the Middle East. Any disturbance to the equilibrium of this fulcrum is ultimately a threat to world peace.

I assure you, dear friends, that however great may be the difficulties, however intractable the problems, however alarming the threats, however dire the warnings, however disabling the sanctions and restrictions imposed on us - we will not barter away so much as an inch of our sacred land, nor compromise any of our countrymen's rights; we will not tolerate anyone's tutelage over us, nor will we accept any substitute for the absolute sovereignty of the Lebanese people over all their land and the expression of their legitimate patriotic aspirations.

Lebanon will remain a stronghold of freedom and human dignity, a bastion of democracy founded upon a pluralistic society united in one nation. Lebanon will remain in the forefront of the intellectual, cultural and economic life of the whole region, and will continue to exert her guiding influence on her neighbours.

We have already progressed a fair way along the difficult road to national salvation. Truly, our position today should be regarded as a substantial achievement, which we could hardly hope to have brought about had it not been for the solidarity of the Lebanese people and their spontaneous determination, in the hour of need, to act in defence of the homeland. In this connection I am moved to express, on behalf of the people of Lebanon, our profound gratitude to President Ronald Reagan for his unstinting contribution to the cause of peace and understanding between nations - a Contribution distinguished by the tireless efforts of President Reagan himself on behalf of Lebanon. Our deep gratitude is also due to every American citizen who has granted us his assistance, be he a government official, a member of the Marine Corps, or a private citizen who, inspired by his country's mission to defend and promote democracy and freedom in the world, has come forward to lend support to the Lebanon we hope to rebuild. And we must not forget those who so bravely and willingly laid down their lives in Beirut, in the cause of freedom and democracy. Their memory will be indelibly recorded in the annals of our country in letters of gold. Future generations of a free Lebanon will look back with gratitude to their sacrifice, and their names will never be forgotten.

Much has been said and written about peace in our region; but the fact is that it cannot be achieved without a restored, sovereign, free and independent Lebanon. Likewise, no American initiative can succeed without America being, on the one hand, fully aware of Lebanon's unique and distinctive role in the history of the region and, on the other hand, staunchly committed to Lebanon's cause. We may even go so far as to say that the future of peace in the area and the credibility of America and her stature in the world will, in the final analysis, depend as much upon the upholding of the American commitment to Lebanon, as upon the success of the United States in helping Lebanon to effect the complete withdrawal of foreign troops from her soil.

The Lebanese people have irrevocably pledged themselves to liberating and uniting their land and people. This is a priority which overrides all others. The goal of the Lebanese government and people is first and foremost to purge the land of all non-Lebanese military presence; thereafter we shall be in a position to restore the authority of the State in areas paralysed by foreign occupation, and to recover our sovereignty and

independence throughout our beloved country. This, dear friends, must be the basic demand of every Lebanese, a demand which admits no compromise, and to the realization of which he must apply his unremitting efforts. Any delay incurred in achieving this goal is in effect an infringement of our sovereignty and independence, and, by extension, a violation of the sanctity of the country and its territory. Neither the people nor the government of Lebanon will know a moment's tranquility or peace of mind, nor shall we cease from importuning the world, until we have succeeded in fulfilling the country's noblest hopes and aspirations.

Fellow countrymen, I offer you my hand on behalf of your dear brethren in the homeland. Take it, I urge you, and let each and every one of you give me your all, just as your brothers at home have given you their all - for Lebanon is as much yours as it is ours, and we shall never abandon her. Lebanon calls upon you at this hour to arise and perform your sacred task, to participate in the enterprise of national salvation, so that together - regardless of creed, ideology or party allegiance - we shall recover every inch of the land, alleviate the sufferings, heal the wounds, reconcile the differences, close up the divisions and rebuild our country, thereby fulfilling - each according to his capacity - the sacred trust that our country has vested in us. For myself, it is my honour, glory and pride that at this historic and critical time I have been chosen to be the faithful and devoted servant of democratic Lebanon, the Lebanese constitution and the Lebanese people at home and abroad.

The time is indeed ripe for the manifold activities wherein you are all so devoutly and earnestly engaged on behalf of Lebanon to be coordinated, in unity and harmony, to ensure the greatest efficiency. The effect of such a combined and systematized effort may thus transcend every other achievement of the past, however glorious, and may stand - now that the cause of Lebanon has become clear to the eyes of the outside world - as a convincing testimony to the indomitable spirit of our great country.

We have been hewn out of the solid rock of our mountainous land; our aspirations reach out to the soaring heights of the sacred cedars of Lebanon. We have withstood the challenge of those who want to rob us of our land - their dreams have vanished as the foam vanishes on every wave breaking against our invincible shore. I assure the heroic people of Lebanon, and I assure you all, that Lebanon shall be triumphant, her land liberated and her independence and sovereignty preserved intact.

Vague promises no longer console us; threats and warnings no longer strike terror in our hearts. We have always relied on our own strength and our own will to survive, and we have put our trust in Almighty God. After a long period of pain and tragic suffering which saw us alone and friendless, we now observe - at long last - that the conscience of our friends has awakened and that they have arisen to vindicate our rights.

May we hope that at last the dawn of a brighter day is breaking upon our people and our land?

2. Houston

Dear Friends,

This is by no means my first visit to this great city. Each time I came here I grow fonder of this beautiful and generous land.

My visit on this occasion, however, is prompted by a sense of duty. On the one hand I have come to ask you good Americans of Lebanese origin, you who love America, who cherish her ideals of justice, of freedom, of human rights - I have come to ask you to respond to Lebanon's call, to rally round her, to vindicate her cause.

You are great Americans, and because you are great Americans you cannot be indifferent to the plight of your motherland. For Lebanon's cause is the cause of every free man and every man of honour.

I have also come here to assure you that the Lebanon you love will overcome every difficulty and surmount every obstacle, so that our country may be reborn through the united efforts of the Lebanese at home and abroad. We will restore the land. We will rebuild the home. We will create a nation worthy of our great people. Yes, we will do all this together because we are free, united and therefore unconquerable. Lebanon

must at all times be the land of peace, of nobility, of brotherhood and of human dignity.

Some refer to our country as a meeting-point between the East and the West and as a bridge between the ancient and modern worlds. But for centuries Lebanon has been the meeting-point of many ethnic and religious groups. Lebanon is a country of minorities bath ethnic and religious; in fact we are a pluralistic society, and as such we must survive, in unity and harmony. This we know to be one of the indispensable elements in our national policy. In the words of the French philosopher Pascal:

Plurality which is not reduced to unity is confusion; unity which does not depend on plurality is tyranny.

As a country that has forged its character and personality through the coming together of various religions, and ethnic and social groups, Lebanon realizes that her success as a nation has always depended on the determination of all groups that each component group must be protected so that it can develop and survive. To us it is the upholding of human rights which forms a true basis for religious and ethnic coexistence and a true basis for national unity.

We do not ignore, nor do we wish to suppress, the varied ethnic and religious cultures that distinguish one group from another. We seek a wider loyalty, a larger aspiration, a vaster vision, and we insist on one thing: the subordination of ethnical and religious interests to the imperative claim of a unified nation and to national loyalty. Thus, today in Lebanon we have a unique opportunity to provide the world with a model of democracy and tolerance which may, we hope, influence others to follow her example.

As a nation we harbour no grudge against anyone; we desire no gain at another's expense. We do not question others as to the choices they make; we extend the hand of friendship to everyone and we desire the well-being of all our brethren on the face of the earth. But we are equally determined to protect our integrity as a nation, our sovereignty as a state, our unity as a people. We have undergone years of great danger, years of severe anxiety and stress, to win our freedom. We have endured the fierce onslaught of a myriad trials and tribulations that we might save our land. The days of peril, uncertainty and turmoil - the days of agony, tragedy and pain - have strengthened our resolve and instilled in us an unwavering determination to triumph.

Dear friends, beloved friends, friends of Lebanon, I entreat you and plead with you all to arise as one soul, to spare no effort, to dedicate yourselves to the task ahead of you, to seize every opportunity, to use every lawful means at your disposal, to unfurl the flag of your country, to become her chosen voice. And remember the words of your great compatriot, Ameen Rihani, spoken seventy years ago, words which seem to address themselves to every Lebanese wherever he may be, and which should fan into flame his imagination and his patriotic spirit:

Our country is just beginning to speak; I am her chosen voice, I feel that if I do not respond, if I do not come to her, she will be dumb for ever . . .

Let us then respond and let us defend and protect our beloved Lebanon.

3 - Detroit

Dear Friends,

I am delighted to be with you and to share with you the thoughts and feelings of your fellow-countrymen. It is always a great pleasure for me to be with you, especially when we meet in the name of Lebanon in order to strengthen the ties that bind us and to promote the interests of our beloved country.

The year that has recently passed its mid-point, constituting the first phase of our campaign for national salvation, must witness a development and consolidation of the dedicated efforts of the Lebanese State, bath in the domain of security and in the resumption of all public services and social amenities.

First and foremost, however, we must succeed in effecting the withdrawal of all non-Lebanese troops from Lebanon; this process must, with the help and support - nay, the full commitment - of the United States of

America, continue unabated in the weeks immediately ahead. Concurrently with this effort on our part there must be a simultaneous increase in the number of essential services restored, social amenities developed, and general reconstruction projects continued and initiated. The newly rebuilt army must be continually reinforced so that the successes achieved through the re-establishment of security and peace in areas controlled by our army may be safeguarded, however great the sacrifice involved. The strengthening and enriching of the intellectual and artistic life of the nation is yet another task which must be accomplished before long, as a prelude to Lebanon's re-assumption of her unique and distinctive role as a dynamic force for peace and progress in the Middle East.

Above all, the most careful consideration should be given to the measures required to ensure the emergence of a newly awakened sense of national identity, the formulation of a national doctrine, the inculcation of a national commitment, and the creation of a national personality - Lebanese to the core, Lebanese in spirit, Lebanese in its mode of life and thought, capable of assuming its distinguished place among the nations of the world.

We must remember, too, that there are many political traditions in our country. We cannot, and should not, seek to escape from these traditions. Rather, our responsibility is to discover how they can be developed, reinterpreted and made relevant, in the light of past experience, to the task of deepening and broadening democratic values in our country. What is suggested here is not simply change for change's sake, but a thorough examination of all our political traditions, to see how these traditions can find meaningful expression and how they can meet the needs of the future.

Parallel with this most vital and urgently needed action on the home front, a further intensification of effort is required in foreign fields, and particularly here in the United States of America. Here, my dear friends, we look to you: much will depend on your contribution, on the clarity of your visions, on the unity of your ranks, on your unflinching loyalty to a united and indivisible Lebanon. Full harmony as well as co-operation among the various Lebanese groups and communities in America is of the utmost importance, for upon it depends the unity of our cause - and we are indeed grateful and proud of the contribution so far made by our Lebanese-American community in the USA, and by their many friends throughout the great American Republic.

The success which has attended the energetic efforts of President Ronald Reagan and his administration in connection with the issue of troop withdrawals from Lebanon must not be allowed to lose its impetus or be deflected towards the solution of peripheral issues. On the contrary, these efforts on the part of the United States and Lebanon should be directed, even more strongly, towards the final establishment of the absolute authority of the democratic State of Lebanon - an authority that should permeate every inch of our land and warm the heart and inspire the soul of every Lebanese.

Dear friends, at long last we see the glimmer of a glorious dawn. We must grasp the opportunity without hesitation. We cannot evade our responsibility. We must erase, by our achievements in the struggle for national salvation, the memory of the dire fates we have suffered in the past eight years, and resist the many attempts of friend and foe alike to diminish the lustre of our achievement as a people determined to remain alive, and above all to remain Lebanese: free, sovereign, democratic and independent.

These few thoughts should give you an idea of the magnitude of the vision before your eyes. It is a vision of a glorious Lebanon, a Lebanon purged by war and suffering, a Lebanon sanctified and hallowed by the precious sacrifice and the blood of a hundred thousand martyrs, and above all reborn to assume once more a leading role in the affairs of mankind.

You may ask: 'Will our land of Lebanon be rebuilt and will it return?' And my answer is: 'Your Lebanon has never been destroyed, and when you return to your homeland you will find a Lebanon that is even more glorious than the one you have known before.' You will come back; you will come back to see for yourselves the land which, despite the rise and fall of all else, has remained loyal to her people, steadfast in her love for them, bountiful in her gifts, conferring inestimable blessings on us all.

We shall rejoice, once again, to see the smiles on the lips of our innocent children. Our hearts must be pure, so that we, like our land, may become a shining mirror for the reflection of the attributes of God.

Let us all arise as one and rebuild our home, blessed by the noble sacrifice of those who gave their lives so that we might inherit a new life. Differences should be forgotten, fear banished from our hearts, so that, united by the love of our country, we may proclaim the dawn of a new era. Let us build a nation in which each man's worth shall be measured by the love he bears for his land. Let us build a nation in which every man shall earn the honour of being called a Lebanese not by the mere accident of birth, but by the quality of his service to his country and to his fellow men. Let us build a nation in which you and I join hands to give and ask nothing in return, to serve but expect no reward. I entreat you and plead with you all to exert one more superhuman effort, to fix your steady gaze on the goals of our historic collective enterprise - the enterprise of national salvation.

It is now our duty to lay a solid foundation for the great work of peace and reconstruction to be undertaken in the future. There is no time to lose. Ours is a priceless opportunity and a unique privilege. We must neither vacillate nor falter. We must be united in our determination to persevere and labour until both our immediate and our distant goals have been attained.

Our heroic hearts have been made strong by time and fate, and with a strong will and renewed faith we are resolved 'to strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield', but to triumph.

BEIRUT, 25 AUGUST 1983

**BROADCAST
ADDRESS TO THE NATION**

As a result of President Gemayel's visit to the USA in July, and in the light of the deadlock and the difficulties facing special envoy Philip Habib, President Reagan despatched another aide, Robert Macfarlane, to take a new initiative. Opposition within Lebanon to the 17 May Accord had led to the formation of the National Salvation Front, developing hostilities in the mountain region and closure of Beirut airport. President Gemayel had not ratified the Accord, lacking receipt of assurances concerning its implementation. Israel announced plans at variance with the Accord, involving redeployment of Israeli forces in the south of Lebanon unilaterally and without consultation. The USA requested postponement of this partial withdrawal pending action to enable the Lebanese army to take over in vacated areas. The Lebanese army began to come under attack during August, and there were signs of restiveness in the Israeli-occupied areas.

Thus Lebanon was faced with a number of grim possibilities, including widespread hostilities, continued foreign occupation and collapse of the Government. These spectres had now to be faced up to and fully recognized by the people of Lebanon, and the President's address broadcast on 25 August made abundantly clear that this was the moment of reckoning for everyone without exception.

"I ASK EACH AND EVERY ONE OF
YOU TO SHARE WITH ME THE ROLE
OF TRUSTEE ON BEHALF OF THE
LAND AND ITS CONSTITUTIONAL
INTEGRITY"

As I speak to you today, our country is facing a grave moment in its history. We are bracing ourselves for some of the most critical developments that we have ever had to contend with. I feel it therefore appropriate that I should speak openly - as I have always done - in the expectation of enlisting your support and co-operation, which will enable me to fulfill my obligations and to secure the rights of our nation.

All of us are experiencing very difficult and dangerous times, and you well know that every effort has been made to confront the grave issues commanding our attention; that everything possible has been done to avert the tragic situation. The options we have considered are numerous, and the decision we are about to take is only one of many possibilities. Since the beginning of our ordeal there have been several unsuccessful attempts to resolve our difficulties: summit meetings, Arab conferences, United Nations' resolutions. All have failed. In turn, we have witnessed the arrival of Syrian forces, Arab Deterrent Forces, UNIFIL, and, now, the Multi-National Force.

The latter may seem today to offer a solution to our problems, but the only real hope for salvation must lie in the unity of the Lebanese people themselves and their legitimate military representatives, the Lebanese army. Very soon Israeli forces will begin their partial withdrawal from the Mountain, specifically the Shouf

and Aley, the region which has been - and still is - the very heartland and nerve centre of Lebanese politics. This region, in particular, has become the unwilling victim of an international conspiracy to transform it into a potentially explosive area of armed conflict - a confusing and dangerous war.

We hope the anticipated withdrawal of Israeli forces will bring about a period of renewed reconciliation and reconstruction, as well as the restoration of a precious part of our country. This is our great opportunity, especially for our brothers in the Mountain who have been longing to see the national flag of Lebanon - the vital symbol of national dignity and pride - flying over them, without rivals, without resistance. This region, which has been one of the strongest pillars of the nation and a model of creative coexistence, has provided some of the nation's finest leaders and has been the home of some of its most prized traditions and ideals.

The anticipated partial withdrawal will not satisfy us unless it includes a timetable for a complete and final withdrawal, and in any event it is being concluded outside the terms of the Accord we reached with the United States and Israel. Nevertheless, this partial withdrawal will present us with a series of challenges, which it is my duty to share with you. My constitutional responsibility is to preserve the integrity of the nation and the independence of the State, as well as to ensure the safety of our citizens - each and every one of them - and to guarantee the protection of all their rights without distinction.

The challenges that face us are: first, we must regain our occupied land, for it is clear that the most fundamental duty of the State is to liberate its soil, and to endeavour under all conditions and at any price to establish its sovereignty over every inch of the nation's territory before it becomes a prey to others.

Secondly, we must ensure the safety of our people. This is another fundamental right which all citizens may justly claim from the State, whether this protection be for individuals or for groups. The State should also be the custodian of justice, security, and equality before the law. This means that the State alone is entitled to have recourse to force of arms, not against the people but on their behalf and for their protection.

Thirdly, we must achieve national unity. The fighting that Lebanon has experienced, particularly in the Chouf, has left deep wounds which are not yet healed, and some seem to believe that this provides justification for continuing enmity between brothers. Such a view is tragic indeed, and the nation's conscience cannot support it. As one nation Lebanon will resist it, and not a single Lebanese will condone it.

You have often been told that the specter of partition - de facto or de jure - looms over us. Unfortunately, Lebanon today is a divided house, under the influence of forces alien to our traditions and identity and working against our vital interests. Now we have reached the final hour before the process of liberation begins. The time has now come for the Government and the people to co-operate, to strive together, regardless of ideologies or standpoints, for the unification of all Lebanon. The time has come to build a new Lebanon, a Lebanon for the Lebanese alone, for all Lebanese, a Lebanon free from discrimination, from hegemony and from autocratic rule.

The State cannot make distinctions among its citizens, nor can it show preference for one party over another. It cannot favour the inhabitants of one region at the expense of another, nor can it show preference for the members of one particular religious grouping over those of another. The only special recognition a citizen may claim must rest upon the degree of his commitment to a unified Lebanon and the extent of his willingness to serve the highest interests of Lebanon - an independent Lebanon, a Lebanon in harmony with her Arab environment, a Lebanon dedicated to the ideals of democracy, freedom and equality. This is what I have pledged myself to achieve ever since I took up office, and this is what I urge you to join with me in accomplishing.

You, the people, are the State - and the State is you. Whoever has anything to say, let him say it to the State and to no one else, to Lebanon and the Lebanese. He, who has a demand, let him make it to the State and to no one else, to Lebanon and the Lebanese people as a whole. The State and the State alone has the authority to negotiate with other states, and the State alone can take decisions and act on the people's behalf, because it alone represents the unified, collective will of the people. It represents your resolve to live together in harmony. This is the goal of the Government's initiative, which is designed to ensure internal security and all-embracing reconciliation.

Already we have made progress towards such an end, but there is still more to be done. At the last meeting of the Council of Ministers I called upon community leaders to come to the Presidential Palace for intensive consultations, with a view to achieving a concerted national programme for the liberation and restoration of Lebanon.

The Presidency is not mine; it is yours. It is for each and every one of you. My ardent desire is for you all to share in the process of finding an appropriate solution to our problems in true democratic fashion. In this way we may arrive at a decisive, national consensus, so that all of us may shoulder the responsibility that awaits us. This is a national responsibility that must be shared by all, lest future generations find us wanting. As far as I am concerned, the democratic process of dialogue has no limit, and the only constraints are those imposed by the Lebanese Constitution, which is designed to protect the land and its people. I have no doubt whatsoever that among our people there is complete unanimity on the principles which stem from our common Lebanese heritage; and I urge you to be true to these principles, so that we may survive the present crisis.

But what are the principles of which I speak? First, there is the need to liberate the land from all non-Lebanese forces, so that Lebanon may remain a free and sovereign state. Accords and agreements - past, present or future - can never be an end in themselves, but only a means to an end; and that end is liberation.

Secondly, there is the conviction that only constitutional foundations can provide the appropriate framework for reconciliation and the future development of Lebanon. These institutions embody our political traditions, which are based on tolerance, dialogue and mutual understanding. Furthermore, they ensure the integrity of the democratic system, without which Lebanon could not survive. It follows, therefore, that we must formulate immediate plans for Lebanon's future - political, social and economic - but by constitutional and peaceful means, involving the free expression of opinion. In this way we shall demonstrate the collective will of the Lebanese people. Complete freedom of expression, however, is possible only within a purely Lebanese context. Unless we are able to provide this context, we can never hope to restore Lebanon - our Lebanon, the land which exists for us and for us alone.

Thirdly, there is the Lebanese army, in which your children serve: it is both of you and for you. This army will safeguard your existence, your future, your country. Furthermore, it symbolizes unity and sovereignty. This army - our army - is not there to fight the Lebanese - any Lebanese - but to fight on their behalf, for their unity, freedom and independence. You long for security: the army will maintain it. You long for reconciliation: the army will ensure it, and defend it against those who wish to destroy it.

With these principles in mind, I ask you: Which of you would resist the State if it were to undertake the task of eliminating every vestige of an unauthorized armed presence, in the Mountain or elsewhere? Which of you would resist the State if it were to invoke its sovereignty, under the rule of law, to establish equality and peace? Which of you would prefer to see unauthorized military forces rather than the legitimate Lebanese army?

The army's duty is to protect every one of you, without any discrimination, so that justice and equality may be established and rights and obligations fully understood. Its mission is to create the conditions necessary for development in the Mountain, so that its renewed prosperity may once again make an energetic and useful contribution to our security.

The army is your army: you must have no other. It seems unthinkable that Lebanese weapons should be turned against the Lebanese army. The Lebanese army will certainly never turn its weapons against the Lebanese people. It will defend the land: it will be a protecting force, not an army of occupation.

I am full of hope. I have absolute confidence that an army such as I have described will enter the Shouf soon, supported by the people, legitimate aspirations in their hearts. Only this army has the inalienable right to fill the vacuum created by the withdrawal of the foreign, occupying forces which have created dissension and strife among us. The Lebanese army alone will remove the artificial barriers now separating fellow Lebanese; it will preserve the unity of the nation; it will maintain the inviolability of our frontiers against any at-

tempts by any Lebanese to alter them or to create a series of minor states within our borders.

You know, and I know, that it would be a miracle if we had emerged unscathed from eight years of civil war. There is still evidence of lawlessness; there are still breaches of security in the area under the control of the State, in Greater Beirut, which remind us of our recent unhappy past. Yet there seems to be no reason why these infringements should continue. Sometimes the illegal acts are no more than individual infringements, but if they continue they will become a serious problem, threatening the fabric of the nation and, indeed, our very existence.

It is therefore necessary to expedite the process of extending national sovereignty to cover all the areas around Beirut, beginning with the Mountain, so that all illegal acts and breaches of security may be contained. The liberation of Greater Beirut was the first step towards the liberation of the Mountain. We may also say that a liberated Mountain will consolidate security in Greater Beirut.

The measures we are about to take in the Mountain must spur us towards an ever more active effort to liberate every inch of our territory. For this reason, every Lebanese is now called upon to participate in the task of liberating our sacred land, so that Lebanon may once again be united, sovereign and independent. If we are unable to ensure national unity by the creation of a strong, united and invincible home front, in accordance with the Lebanese democratic system and Constitution, then all our efforts to liberate the land and to restore the nation will have been in vain.

This is what I ask of my countrymen: I ask each and every one of you to share with me the role of trustee on behalf of the land and its constitutional integrity. Your leaders, I know, will fulfill their historic obligations - indeed, they have been called upon to play a heroic role in the struggle to save our country before it is too late. Heroic deeds are never easy: they have always meant sacrifices. But however bitter these sacrifices, your leaders must ignore what is merely expedient and set aside local political interest in favor of long-term measures for the salvation of the nation. Now is the moment of reckoning. We must restore Lebanon. Let every one of you address himself to the task before us, accepting the historic responsibilities which we all share, so that we may be worthy of Lebanon and see her once again free from foreign domination, unified, integrated and secure, and hostage to none.

The shadow that lies over us is dark indeed. The effort demanded of us is awe-inspiring. Time is short. If we do not move forward rapidly, in our race with time, and if we are not prepared to meet, as one, the difficulties that lie ahead, then foreign invaders will drive us from our own beloved land and seize it for themselves. If this should happen, every citizen of Lebanon will be doubly enslaved: he will be absorbed into an alien environment, and he will be forced into allegiance to an alien and tyrannical authority.

I urge you to join with me in accepting the challenges that confront us. Together, united, we shall triumph. I urge you, all of you, to be both for Lebanon and with Lebanon; for when you take that stand you may be sure that Lebanon will be yours.

GENEVA, 31 OCTOBER 1983

OPENING SPEECH AT THE FIRST NATIONAL DIALOGUE AND RECONCILIATION CONFERENCE

The month of September saw wide-ranging confrontation and strife following the Israeli partial withdrawal from the mountains beginning on 2 September, especially at Behamdoun, Khaldi and Kafra Matta. Thousands of refugees were forced to flee from the raging battle, and the Lebanese army attempted to deploy its forces in the vacated areas. The Lebanese Government called for an immediate cease-fire, Robert Macfarlane shuttled between Syria, Israel and Lebanon, and Prince Bandar mediated on behalf of Saudi Arabia.

The MNF came under fire, and this culminated in bomb attacks on the US marines and the French contingent causing many casualties. The Lebanese Government demanded the intervention of the UN Security Council to achieve a cease-fire, but this was not forthcoming. Israel warned against abrogation of the 17 May Accord. Towards the end of October arrangements were finalized between President Gemayel and President Assad of Syria for a National Dialogue and Reconciliation Conference at Geneva, to be attended by representatives of all the parties concerned.

"COMMUNITY RIGHTS IN LEBANON,
NO MATTER HOW VALID, CAN
NEVER SUPERSEDE THE RIGHTS OF
MAN AND COUNTRY"

It gives me great pleasure to meet with you all here in this friendly and hospitable country, many of whose values seemed, until recently, to be exemplified in the East by our own country. Our profound gratitude is due to the President and Government of Switzerland.

It gives me equal pleasure to thank all those friendly states and distinguished figures who have worked for this historic meeting and enabled it to take place. I should like to express my heartfelt appreciation of the efforts exerted by King Fahd ibn Abdul-Aziz of Saudi Arabia, and his generosity to Lebanon and to this conference. We are also most grateful to President Hafez al-Assad of Syria, whose endeavours were instrumental both in making it possible for this gathering to be convened and in creating the proper climate for it. Nor must I forget the sentiments and the support expressed by our brethren in the other Arab states.

In addition I must not omit to express our appreciation for the friendship offered by all those in the West who have adopted our national cause as their own, at considerable cost, sacrificing their time, their energies, and - sadly - the blood of their soldiers.

To all these our brethren and our friends, the Kings and the Presidents, their representatives and their aides, I express our lasting gratitude.

You have all accepted my invitation to attend this meeting. Let us then hope that we shall all answer the call of Lebanon.

We have come here in order to restore Lebanon to her former self and to regain her sovereignty, to unify her people and strengthen the brotherly ties that bind them to each other and to their Arab brethren, in justice and dignity.

In striving for these noble aims we are ready to stand before any door, to offer the most precious of sacrifices. We shall stop at nothing to achieve our aims save what is unlawful in the sight of God or abhorrent to our conscience and our self-respect.

Our country is in agony, writhing under the oppressive weight of devastation and all-consuming hatred. Our country is crying out to us to dispel the clouds of death and destruction, and to bring deliverance from the night of darkness and desolation.

Lebanon's dark night has been long, our ordeal seemingly without end, the conspiracies of our enemies unremitting. It has touched every region of the land, affected every community, inflicted pain on every member of our Lebanese family; we have all shared these miseries; as victims, we all bear the scars.

Nothing has been left untouched: our homes, our cities, and all that we have built through the ages. Our beloved land no longer echoes to the sound of gaiety and happiness; we have all lost brothers, sons or other relatives, friends, colleagues, or comrades.

Sorrow is the great leveller. We have all had to suffer oppression, injustice and estrangement and endured the experience of being refugees; can we now hope for a future in which we may all equally enjoy justice, security, peace and prosperity?

We have suffered evil from every quarter. It is indeed painful to realize that our country's ordeal has frequently witnessed the conflict between right and right and between faith and faith. But what is sadder and more painful still is that those who were opposed to each other, the brave, the innocent, the faithful and the free in heart, who fought and died for so many causes in this epic struggle on all fronts, were all our brothers and sisters from our own communities.

If we avoid listing the causes that led to the calamities we have endured, and if we ignore the alien conspira-

cies against us, bath past and present, we still cannot be so naïve as to believe that disagreement over our own internal affairs can atone explain or justify the tragedy of Lebanon.

We are all losers. The only victories have been those won by conspiracy and suffering. We are all partners in what has befallen us, and let him who is without sin cast the first stone. None of us bears sole responsibility for the sins and the misdeeds that have been committed, nor is there anyone among us who can claim to have been in the right while everyone else was in the wrong. Only those who have done nothing and refrained from participation have avoided making mistakes; only those who have sermonized but sheltered themselves from the ordeal have escaped the test.

We meet here today in the hope that Lebanon will rise once more from the ashes of destruction. It is the task of this conference to enable Lebanon to achieve her salvation.

It is true that Lebanon has forfeited much in both human and material terms, suffering the loss of her children and of her wealth and resources. But the spirit of Lebanon herself has remained indomitable in her tragic hour, triumphing even over death itself. In this sense Lebanon has never been lost to us, nor do we await her return. For Lebanon has survived the crisis, and remains very much alive in the hearts of us all. She lives on in our national institutions: in the House of Representatives, whose Members, led by the Speaker, have honoured their obligations and preserved democracy; in the unity of the Government, which has withstood many challenges and pressures; and in the loyalty of the heroic people of Lebanon, who have proved strong enough to resist bath the fiery ordeal and the evils of conspiracy.

The conspiracy against our country and the horrors of the ordeal it has suffered have net weakened our determination to confront the challenge and to redeem ourselves. To men of iron resolve, the worst tragedies and the most dreadful catastrophes fade into insignificance.

We all share the responsibility, and it is the concern of every one of us to restore Lebanon to her former self. We are all called upon to respond to the hopes cherished by all the people of Lebanon for unification, peace and sovereignty.

My own stake in Lebanon is no more than yours, and that principle remains constant to the past, the present, and the future. I do not claim to represent a larger section of our people than you do, nor do I claim to have made any greater sacrifices or taken any greater risks than you have done. Nor am I any more accountable to God, to the nation and to future generations for Lebanon's destiny and Lebanon's liberation than any one of you. Fate has ordained - nay, the will of the people expressed through Parliament has ordained - that I should be elected to serve as President. This in no way makes my responsibility greater than yours, but merely increases my burden.

In my opinion, the only permanent legacy of this long dark night is the lessons we shall have learn, the wisdom that will act as a beacon illuminating our path towards the future. And these are:

Lebanon will only survive through the
unswerving loyalty of the Lebanese to
Lebanon;

Lebanon cannot be united without the
protection afforded by a strong and
efficient Lebanese State;

There will never be a strong and efficient State
unless its institutions are founded on justice
and its power and authority derived from
the support of the people.

Community rights in Lebanon, no matter how valid, urgent and necessary, can never supersede the rights of man and country. The limits of such community rights end where human rights and the rights of the home-

land begin. No single community can claim exclusivity in their deprivation, nor does the responsibility for such deprivation rest with any one Government or President, any one political leader, group, party or community, any more than it rests with all Governments, all Presidents, all political leaders, groups, parties or communities.

Problems have been steadily accumulating ever since the foundation of our State, and now they must be faced. The responsibility of dealing with such problems and the urgent need to find solutions to them does not devolve on one single individual or one single Government. A solution can only come from combined efforts for peace on the part of those who are determined to do what is right and just.

We refuse to be isolated from our environment and from our brethren elsewhere in the region by any consideration of matters concerning peace and the future; we likewise refuse to accept that any one individual, group, party, region or community should have the right to draw up a formula for Lebanon or decide Lebanon's future within her own frontiers; and inasmuch as we refuse to be involved in the quarrels of others, we should refuse to burden our Arab brethren and the world at large with our internal problems.

If the fire in Lebanon is allowed to rage, it will assuredly not be contained within her borders, and there will be nothing left of Lebanon for us to unify, dismember, partition or divide amongst ourselves. And if that fire is not extinguished, God atone knows how far it will spread and what horrors it will bring to the region and to the rest of the world.

This conference is a golden opportunity to lead Lebanon, the region - and the world - out of this dark abyss. It may well be our last opportunity; so let us grasp it. If we do not, then history will find us wanting, and our failure will have brought us disillusionment and regret.

This is my message to you today. I place it before you alongside all that you regard as immutable principles, valid premises, and essential truths; add it to the documents you have drawn up for Lebanon's resurgence. May it bring light to our deliberations and open the doors which lead to hope and redemption.

May God guide our steps, sustain our efforts, unite our ranks, and inspire us to seek out the true path to the salvation of Lebanon.

LONDON, 15 DECEMBER 1983

**STATEMENT MADE TO THE BRITISH PRESS,
CLARIDGE'S HOTEL**

One of the major outcomes of the Geneva conference, which was held from 31 October to 4 November, was a mandate for President Gemayel to consult with several governments, Arab and non-Arab, over ways to break the deadlock resulting from the 17 May Accord. This mandate, representing all of Lebanon, was tantamount to a vote of confidence as well as being recognition of his role as a peacemaker. President Gernayel visited a number of countries and held private talks with leaders and high-ranking officials. The crucial dual summit with President Assad of Syria was unavoidably postponed owing to the latter's ill health, but his deputy, Vice-President Khaddam, met with President Gemayel in Beirut. President Reagan despatched another special envoy, Mr Donald Rumsfeld, to Lebanon.

Bombardment in and around Beirut and the coastal areas became intensive during December, but despite increasing difficulties the MNF contributors declared that the force would terrain in Lebanon. On 13 December, Prime Minister Shafiq al-Wazzan tendered his resignation.

Meanwhile President Gemayel had visited Italy and the Vatican, and had met with President Reagan in Washington on 1 December, with the USA insisting that the 17 May Accord should terrain intact. President Gernayel then flew to London for talks with British Prime Minister Mrs Margaret Thatcher. He stressed the important role played by the representative force which Great Britain had contributed to the MNF, and received assurances of its continued presence in Lebanon.

**"WHAT IS HAPPENING IN LEBANON TODAY WILL
HAVE DIRE CONSEQUENCES FOR THE WORLD - UNLESS
THE WORLD SWIFTLY AWAKENS TO THE REALITY OF
OUR SITUATION"**

I am delighted to be making this visit to the United Kingdom, especially since it is the first visit by a President

of Lebanon to this great country. I had the honour of calling on Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, and I took equal pleasure in meeting the Prime Minister, Mrs. Thatcher, the senior members of her Government and the people of the United Kingdom through their elected representatives.

In our meetings we have primarily concerned ourselves with the situation in Lebanon and in the Middle East as a whole. I have communicated to your Government the essential details of the progress made in our efforts on the home front and abroad, and we have exchanged thoughts which serve to strengthen the ties that bind us and to reaffirm the cordial relationship that Lebanon enjoys with the United Kingdom and the great British people.

I follow with great interest the reports on Lebanon in the international news media, including the independent and free British Press. However, occasionally, some reports misinterpret events or, because of inadequate knowledge, distort the truth. Only this week the question has been asked, in one of your leading papers, whether Lebanon is 'worth the risk of British lives and indeed whether it is worth saving'. Such unfortunate cynicism cannot be attributed to anything but a very superficial understanding of the issues at stake in the Middle East and especially in Lebanon.

I hope that in the course of these short remarks I shall give the answer to this question. In Lebanon we fully understand the reasons behind such suggestions, but we know that Lebanon cannot be destroyed because the Lebanese people themselves are determined to survive. I remember a distinguished American Congressman stating, eight years ago, that Lebanon was dispensable; we have answered such misgivings by our own actions, and Lebanon survives, all the more resolute in her struggle against formidable odds. We take the same stand as did the great British people in 1940, when this country stood atone and friendless against the might of Nazi Germany. What would have become of Britain and the world had Churchill and the British people succumbed to the Nazi propaganda machine, which asked whether Britain was worth saving from destruction by the German air force during those dark days of the war?

Lebanon survives today because of the resilience and perseverance of her people. Lebanon survives also in her democratic institutions and in such newly reconstructed institutions as the Lebanese army. The army is now growing in stature and strength; conscription - now adopted for the first time in the history of Lebanon - has been an instrument of unification, drawing recruits from all sections of the Lebanese community. It will, I am sure, allow the Lebanese State within a short time to extend its authority over every inch of the national soil. It will in the fullness of time make it possible for the Multi-National Force to withdraw and for the Lebanese army to replace that force.

The army is without doubt the most eloquent expression of national unity. It represents the nation as a whole, and the members of its forces, who came from every home in Lebanon, have taken it upon themselves to serve and die for their country. Contrary to some misleading reports in the Press the Lebanese army is not a Christian or partisan army. The Lebanese army today consists of 65 % Muslims and 35 % Christians - a Muslim majority under a Christian Maronite as Commander-in-Chief and a Muslim Chief of Staff. Under enormous pressures, bath internal and international, the Lebanese Army has remained united, efficient and resolute in carrying out its duties and dealing with all contingencies as they arise.

The moral support of the Multi-National Force has helped Lebanon and her young army. We are indebted to all our friends represented in that force, of which the British contingent forms a small but effective part. I cannot over-emphasize the importance of the British contingent and the debt we owe them. They enjoy the confidence of all sections of Lebanese society, and their role is indeed crucial.

I know you would like to have some indication of how long it will be before the British contingent can return home. Indeed, if I could tell you that, there would be no need for their presence in Lebanon. We could speculate on a date for the withdrawal of the Multi-National Force from Lebanon, but in doing so we should be inviting the enemies of peace to adopt delaying tactics which could jeopardize the whole process. I do assure you, however, that we are as anxious as you are to see the Lebanese army take over the tasks shouldered by the Multi-National Force and continue to discharge its responsibilities unaided and unhindered.

The question still remains as to what would happen if the Multi-National Force were to withdraw before the

forces of occupation have themselves withdrawn. Such an untimely withdrawal, whether on account of short-term political expediency or on account of the threat posed by international terrorism, would certainly have very grave consequences in the Middle East and the world at large. It would, furthermore, undermine all the assiduous efforts that have been exerted towards continuing the promising process of reconciliation so clearly initiated at Geneva last month.

Let no one delude himself that what is happening in Lebanon today is merely the petty quarrels of a handful of local groups or the futile warring of inter-confessional communities. What is happening in Lebanon today will have the same dire consequences for the world as the Nazi threat against the independence of small nations nearly half a century ago - unless the world swiftly awakens to the reality of our situation.

We must not forget or ignore the fact that Lebanon is fighting for democracy. We have faced violence of every kind; other nations have fought their battles on our territory. I need only cite the instance of the bloody battle being fought now around the northern city of Tripoli.

The fire of the ordeal that has touched the people of Lebanon will very soon, if unchecked, spread throughout the Arab world and the Middle East; the beginnings of this have perhaps been evident in the Gulf this very week. A reference to a terrorist attack in Kuwait. The livelihood and the existence of the European nations will in turn become threatened, resulting in a wider conflict, unless something is done now to avert the danger. Taking small risks today obviates the need for greater risks to be taken tomorrow.

Much has been said and written about peace in our region; but the fact is that it cannot be achieved without a restored sovereign, free and independent Lebanon. We may even go so far as to say that future peace in the area depends on helping Lebanon effect the complete and immediate withdrawal of all the illegal foreign forces on our soil. Once the foreign pressure is removed, all the so-called ailments of Lebanon will gradually be healed, and we shall resolve our problems in our own way, as in the past.

In Geneva we were all far more impressed by the great number of aims and beliefs we had in common than by the differences which surely must exist in any human society. The immediate result of the Geneva talks was an expression of faith in Lebanon and the future of Lebanon. I was delegated by all the parties present at Geneva to make contact with the governments concerned in order to expedite the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon.

On the home front close contact has been maintained with all parties concerned, as well as with the observer governments of Syria and Saudi Arabia, again to ensure the swift withdrawal of all foreign forces from our land.

As a result of this intensive diplomatic activity and the consultations that have taken place, we hope to announce in due course the date and venue of the next National Conference - which will mark the second phase in the national reconciliation process. At this second gathering we expect to formulate the basis on which national reconciliation can be fully achieved. We also hope to define the terms of reference of a new and broadly based government of national unity that will undertake the implementation of overdue reforms touching all aspects of the political, social and economic life of the nation. Above all it will be the responsibility of this broadly based government to arrange, with the countries concerned, the withdrawal of the Multi-National Force from Lebanon after the withdrawal of all foreign forces of occupation.

Lebanon is under a moral obligation to see that all those of our friends who have come to our aid return home safe and untouched by the ordeal which the people of Lebanon have suffered as the price of their own freedom and the freedom of all honest men.

It is clear that those who support Lebanon in her just cause do so not merely for the sake of her strategic geographical position, but also because of her historical and cultural significance, born of her unique ethnic and religious composition. Our small country has long been a dynamic meeting-point of diverse races, religions and civilizations, and has always been a generous contributor in many fields of human endeavour. Since the dawn of history, Lebanon has sent her sons and daughters abroad to enrich - and be enriched by - the cultures of other lands, and through this long association with the world at large the Lebanese have helped

to tester cooperation among widely differing peoples.

Consequently, Lebanon's mission both at home and abroad is based upon the following: unification of races, peoples, nations and states; reconciliation and tolerance between religions, sects, ideologies and philosophies; and the establishment of universal peace and justice.

Our land has witnessed in its long history both aggressors and oppressors, all of whom took advantage of Lebanon's traditional hospitality and generosity. But the land was eventually restored in each case, and the people rose again victorious, proud to resume their role and to pursue their mission of service to mankind.

I have said before, and I shall say over and over again: I will stop at nothing, I will follow the course to the very end, I will exert every possible effort; I will talk to friend and foe alike, to further the cause of Lebanon and her people - the cause of peace, tolerance and equality among all men. This, in short, has always been the mission of a free, sovereign and independent Lebanon, and this mission finds its roots in those human values and moral principles which our two nations share and hold dear.

BEIRUT, 6 JANUARY 1984

**SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE TRADITIONAL
NEW YEAR RECEPTION FOR THE
DIPLOMATIC CORPS**

After London President Gemayel visited Morocco and Libya. On 2 January France decided to transfer a large number of her MNF contingent to South Lebanon, where it would supplement UNIFIL. Pressure was brought to bear in the USA for the marines to be brought home, and the Italian Government announced that its MNF contingent was to be withdrawn. Meanwhile the French garrison on the outskirts of Beirut was forced to move to other areas.

President Gemayel once more reinforced his links with the nations of the world in the traditional New Year reception for the Diplomatic Corps, with diplomacy now the keynote of the situation in Lebanon.

"THE CAUSE OF LEBANON
REPRESENTS THE CAUSE OF LIBERTY
FOR ALL NATIONS"

Your Excellency,

Thank you for the sentiments you have expressed in your speech on behalf of the Diplomatic Corps. I return your sentiments, especially the feeling that we have all been brought closer together by the tragedy of Lebanon and the severe ordeal we have undergone in the dark days of our national struggle.

Your Excellencies,

The doyen of the Diplomatic Corps.

It gives me great pleasure to meet with you today at this New Year celebration. For our part, we are most anxious to usher in the New Year by adopting a course of action that will itself usher in a complete relaxation in the present situation as well as fulfilling all our aspirations.

You yourselves have been observing - together with the people of Lebanon - our concerted efforts to establish the legal authority of the State, by deployment of the army and the Internal Security Forces in some of the areas free of foreign occupation, where the safety of the citizen is daily under threat. This will be the first step in our attempt to extend the full authority of the State over all our territory and to secure the return of all the land.

These areas must come within the jurisdiction of the legitimate State, to enable it to discharge its responsibilities towards its citizens: this means protecting them and guaranteeing their safety while regenerating civic activity and public services. Those anxiously awaiting the re-establishment of safety and security will thus be enabled to resume normal everyday life under the protection of the law.

As we return to legality we must devote equal attention to the whole process of reform in all fields. The uncertain security conditions resulting from the presence of foreign forces have not only hindered this process, but have complicated matters for the Lebanese and closed all doors leading to a solution.

Needless to say, all the people of Lebanon are urgently longing to be delivered from their ordeal; and nothing will stand in the way of national reconciliation once their internal affairs are freed from foreign intervention and interference. Indeed, the recent Dialogue and Reconciliation Conference at Geneva highlighted the determination of the Lebanese people to achieve peace once the obstacles have been removed.

Against this background National Dialogue and Reconciliation seems to us to be a quintessential principle for the survival of Lebanon as a homeland. It is founded on yet another principle: that of coexistence among groups, factions and religious communities, to the exclusion of all sectarian privileges and distinctions, whatever their form or origin.

It is the right of every community to enjoy the guarantees underlined by the Constitution:

Freedom of worship is absolute, and while recognizing its duty to Almighty God the State respects all faiths and guarantees the freedom of religious worship under its protection, provided such worship does not constitute a breach of public order.

In other words, such guarantees are secured by the State through its institutions and legislation, not through protection rackets or foreign interference. These guarantees must emanate from within, and spontaneously, allowing the State and the religious communities to interact and influence each other in order to serve Lebanon.

The complete cohesion of all communities, groups and factions in this unifying national melting-pot of Lebanon should enable us to define coexistence as something more than mere neighborliness; it should imply a relationship that permits each group to find self-fulfillment while remaining wholly in harmony with the others: in other words, achieving unity in diversity. In this way we can forge one single national personality that is fully integrated in a permanent homeland whose stability is unassailable, an everlasting homeland which will be preserved from generation to generation. No religious community, group or faction has the right to burden future generations with anxieties or bequeath to them the unhappy legacy of the past nine years.

The powers of the State must also be consolidated and reorganized in accordance with our democratic system, which is based on the principle that power is indivisible and that each area of power complements the others - thus ensuring that the State has the invulnerability necessary to safeguard the homeland, the power to apply the rule of law, and the effectiveness to be of service to its citizens. In addition we must strengthen the administration of the various regions by facilitating administrative procedures. Development projects must also be expedited and the economy revived; contrary to widespread belief, there are many positive signs that the economic life of the nation will be able to forge ahead with renewed vigour and vitality.

Lebanese democracy is not a petrified system impervious to the principle of change and growth and to the need for appropriate reforms. Our system of democracy is founded on a form of consensus arrived at in a very special and democratic way. Accordingly, all crucial and essential decisions originate in the collective will of the people, and any expression of a desire for reform or change must necessarily be an embodiment of that will.

The trials and tribulations of Lebanon were once her own, and indeed Lebanon bore the burden alone; but today these same trials and tribulations are also the concern of the world at large. We are determined to liberate and save Lebanon, and in doing so we shall be liberating our friends and brethren from their participation in our trials and tribulations. But we shall not be ungrateful to anyone who has extended a helping hand to us, and we shall keep faith with every drop of blood shed on our soil and for our just cause; for the cause of Lebanon represents the cause of liberty for all nations.

From this it follows that the members of the Multi-National Force who fell in Lebanon are martyrs to those

values and principles for which men die so that others may live.

In the past, the nations of the world saw Lebanon as a light in the darkness, like a brilliant star, a symbol of the civilization and knowledge of the East. She was admired; she needed no one's sympathy; she was free, prosperous, and hospitable. But now the horrors of war and the conspiracies of her enemies have brought tragedy, death and destruction upon her.

We are all - and by all I mean the people of Lebanon, their leaders and their Government - determined to persevere relentlessly in our quest for national salvation. Obstacles will not weaken our resolve, nor will threats and dangers prevent us from reaching our desired goal.

For nine years Lebanon has had to contend with innumerable tragic horrors, and assuredly she, with all her vitality and her indomitable spirit, would not have survived had it not been for her deep-rooted values, which are ever firm and steadfast.

This Lebanon was created not only to live but to go on living, permanently and everlastingly.

BEIRUT, 5 FEBRUARY 1984

BROADCAST ADDRESS TO THE NATION

January 1984 saw a further intensification of fighting in and around Beirut. The withdrawal of all contingents of the MNF was announced, and this was followed by the evacuation of American and other non-Lebanese citizens.

Despite all the obstacles, President Gernayel had unswerving faith in the rank and file of the Lebanese population, and was convinced that they supported his resolute search for peace and his willingness to make every possible sacrifice to obtain it. In another broadcast speech he put the facts before the entire nation with a candor that won the approval of people of every persuasion.

**"NO PROCESS OF REFORM WILL EVER
SUCCEED BY FORCE OF ARMS. IT
CAN ONLY BE ACHIEVED THROUGH
CONSTITUTIONAL INSTITUTIONS"**

Fellow Citizens,

I should like to begin my message to you by expressing my profound respect and appreciation for the continuing steadfastness of our great people in the face of an ordeal by fire; for their stubborn refusal to admit defeat in the tragedy that has befallen them; for their patience in enduring the many iniquities perpetrated against them; for the way they have clung fast to their land, their rights and their sovereignty; and for the nine long years of willing sacrifice in order that Lebanon might be saved and that we might be both worthy of her and worthy to survive.

It is no secret that Lebanon's convulsions of the past few months, which still afflict the country today, are not the outcome of present circumstances but the result and the continuing repercussions of events stretching back to 1975. In fact what we are experiencing is another manifestation of the conspiracy against Lebanon and the revelation of its far-reaching designs, which ultimately include widespread affliction of other states in the region.

And since the source of this conspiracy lies abroad, we did our utmost to circumscribe it and to minimize its effects through assiduous international action and international contacts. These attempts evoked immediate and practical support for Lebanon's independence, sovereignty and legal status, and for the integrity and security of her territory. The Multi-National Force then appeared, as a remarkable embodiment of international solidarity in support of Lebanon's assertion of her rights and of her progress towards national salvation.

But the work of evil hands has continued unabated, creating an atmosphere of unrest and disruption in order to sabotage the evident feelings of relaxation and of relief from suffering and in order to further the pernicious aims and vaulting ambition that lay behind the outbreak of war and were its true cause.

Local conditions in certain areas were manipulated to interact with regional and international conditions in such a way as to damage the interests of Lebanon and to prevent her achieving her liberation, regaining her territory, reconstructing the State, and unifying her people.

The attempt to explode the situation in the southern suburb of Beirut was the result of foreign influence; it caused the fire to spread to the Capital and threatened to revive the all-too-familiar dividing lines, to sever the city into two halves and to inflame sectarian strife.

When this attempt met with failure, another was soon under way in the mountains; the scene was set, the opportunity provided, and every effort was made to ensure its success.

We strove hard, before the Israeli withdrawal from the mountains, to replace their troops with the Lebanese army, but the hidden forces at work hindered this process by putting pressure on the Government, with the ultimate aim of forcing us to accept certain conditions which seemed to us unlawful and unpatriotic. Both the Government and the people were therefore made the victims of a campaign involving harassment and forced abandonment of homes and property in the mountains; this same campaign also involved the participation of foreign mercenaries - a far- from-uncommon occurrence in many regions of Lebanon throughout the war years - in a way that totally contravened the most fundamental human principles and human rights as well as every international code for the protection of innocent civilians.

Moreover, following the noble mediation of Saudi Arabia on the one hand and the United States of America on the other, all proposals for reaching agreement on how to handle the situation and effect a cease-tire were met by a barrage of platitudes and empty words. And all the time, as the procrastination continued, our people were dying every day, scores of them were being slaughtered and thousands forced to become refugees, as they scattered across the fields in fruitless search of shelter, under the constant threat of bombardment.

After long and arduous efforts we were finally able to meet at Geneva. The most conspicuous tact to emerge from this meeting was that when the Lebanese are allowed to come together it becomes evident to all that they are not in disagreement, and that nothing keeps them apart except foreign interference and artificially created barriers. The Geneva conference was followed by considerable Lebanese-Syrian coordination over many issues that had remained undecided and could not be resolved because of President Assad's ill health, a tact that has inevitably caused the postponement of the bilateral Summit which was fixed for this purpose.

On the home front, however, our contacts - especially with the leadership of the opposition parties - continued without a break after Geneva, with the aim of convening a second Dialogue and Reconciliation Conference. We genuinely tried to appreciate their demands, and expressed our willingness to respond positively to any suggestion, in so far as the Constitution would permit. But a host of 'conditions' prevented the promised conference from taking place. Our position nevertheless remains unchanged, in that we are always ready to hold meetings and reach an understanding, and that everything is open to discussion.

As far as the formation of a government of national unity is concerned, the delay has been entirely due to a flood of apologies, excuses and conditions. So it becomes a question of how we can possibly come to an understanding over the outstanding matters in hand without a meeting; how we can hold dialogue over decisive issues affecting our very existence without getting together; and how we can agree on reforms while we are still apart. And the question I personally wish to ask is: Can it really be for the sake of these reforms that Lebanon is now suffering such terrible violence? Is it to ensure a parliament with 50 % Muslim and 50 % Christian representation that a reign of terror has been instituted? Is it to ensure development in certain regions and the revival of certain institutions that these same institutions and regions are being destroyed, as our capital city is being destroyed? Is it in order to establish a Senate that old men, women and children are murdered?

And I ask you: How can the accusation that the Government is practicing hegemony be reconciled with the refusal of those invited to join that Government so that we may do away with hegemony? And how can the State be accused of narrowing its base when that very base is in tact narrowed by those who refuse to be a

part of it?

How can we condemn the occupation without being prepared to challenge it? How is it that we continually protest about our problems and yet at the same time seem to avoid finding solutions to them?

The pattern remained unchanged when we came to deal with the Security Plan, which was delayed and hindered by condition alter condition, despite the overwhelming importance of linking Metropolitan Beirut to the south of Lebanon so that an Israeli withdrawal could be effected from the latter region, and so that the State could tilt any resulting vacuum.

In striving to serve the best interests of a country which appeared to be threatened and whose people seemed vulnerable, we extended the hand of friendship to one and all, enduring every rejection with patience and facing every rebuff with forbearance - to the point when, if any of the parties involved raised an objection to some aspect of government policy, the Opposition interpreted such a difference of opinion as a confessional conflict between the Government and the community concerned.

From the day we took the first step towards reconstructing Metropolitan Beirut, the southern suburb of the capital has never been out of my thoughts, and indeed it is my conviction that the suburb is both an integral part of the capital and a natural extension of it. We tried to make the southern suburb our launching-pad for advances in other areas when we introduced all kinds of development projects, reconstruction -plans and social services there. In addition we formed a special branch of the army to set up a workshop designed to assist local citizens in developing the area and removing the signs of ruin and destruction.

Similar development projects were planned for the Shouf and Aley; and when it was decided that the army should be deployed in the mountains, immediately before the Israeli withdrawal, the main task of the army was restricted to guaranteeing the safety of local citizens and assisting them in all areas of public service. The army thus assumed the role of the impartial link bringing together those who are apart, unifying ranks and creating harmony and affection.

I extend my hand to all the people of Beirut, to all our people in the southern suburb, in the Mountain, in the North, in the South and in the Beqaa, regardless of their religious persuasion, assuring them that the legitimate State forces and institutions will only ever be used in the service of the citizen and for the purpose of developing the regions and promoting the public interest.

To me all the citizens of Lebanon are equal, regardless of their creed, ideology or political persuasion. But every citizen is in duty bound to be loyal to Lebanon and to commit himself to the State, which in turn has its duties towards the citizen: providing the necessary services, ensuring his security and guaranteeing his freedom within the limitations of the law.

I have committed myself to this, and I shall keep my word. So let the obstacles preventing a return to security be removed, let the tide of chaos, unrest and terror recede, so that the process of reconstruction and development may begin without delay.

This is why we must insist on the preservation of law and order, on an end to the blood-letting, and on movement towards political reconciliation, all of which will open the doors for a reform process which will ensure justice, equality and equal opportunity in all fields for every citizen, without distinction as to region or group.

No process of reform will ever succeed by threats or by force of arms. It can only be achieved through constitutional institutions; these alone protect the individual as well as the group, guarantee individual freedom as well as group freedom, and ensure the rights of all religious communities and groups. It is also obvious that the inner growth of any group or religious community cannot be realized through contraction and introspection but through social intercourse with other religious communities and groups. For the more each group is actively engaged in such relationships, the more it is able to guarantee its own rights and to develop within the more general and all-embracing framework of national growth and development.

How often I have wished, as I still do today, for all the parties concerned, without exception, to come together behind closed doors, to remain there without opening the doors for as long as is necessary, and to emerge with the glad tidings that the dark alley of despair and frustration is finally sealed off!

How often I have hoped that we might all sit down together and bring a spirit of unity to Lebanon's problems and concerns, as well as to the burdensome complexities of war; that we might consult together on what the Lebanon of tomorrow expects to achieve and how we can build a better future for a generation that has had enough of the tragic ordeal of suffering and strife!

I have also longed for the opportunity to suggest certain reforms in a conference marking the dawn of national reconciliation; this would be alter implementation of the Security Plan, for when security is uncertain no other plans can be fully realized; the immediate safety of the citizen takes precedence over our hopes for the future.

Nevertheless, in the absence of the promised National Reconciliation Conference, and in view of the delays and obstacles to the implementation of the Security Plan, I feel obliged to take the initiative and offer proposals that might well form a solid foundation for reconciliation. On this basis, and bearing in mind the political and security conditions prevailing in Lebanon, I should like to announce the following:

1. I have designed a reform programme dealing with issues related to interconfessional matters, for discussion and examination; it includes reforms of the legislative, executive and judicial powers and in the fields of security and administration. I believe these proposals are appropriate to conditions prevailing in Lebanon, and that they will find favor with the majority of those who sincerely wish Lebanon well and who do not disagree with the provisions of the Constitution. I shall submit this programme as a working paper at the National Dialogue and Reconciliation Conference, when it is convened, and I shall consult with the new Government on its contents. Furthermore, I wish to affirm here, from my position at Head of State that every aspect of reform is open to discussion, and every considered issue must in the final analysis be subject to the will of the people.
2. I hereby invite those who participated in the previous National Dialogue and Reconciliation Conference to meet for a second round of talks at Geneva on Monday 27 February. I have no doubt that this invitation will be unanimously accepted, with alacrity and without insistence on prior conditions. I should like to stress once again that I am open to all suggestions and that I am ready to talk to the Opposition about any reform proposal they may wish to put forward. However, there is - in my opinion - one issue that remains sacred, unnegotiable and beyond compromise: and that is our duty to protect the unity of the land, the people and the State, and to liberate the homeland from every non-Lebanese military presence.
3. I have accepted the resignation of the Government, and I wish to express the highest regard for the distinguished role played, as a true Lebanese, by the Prime Minister, Mr Shafiq al-Wazzan. I express my appreciation for the sincere and patriotic stand he has taken during a decisive phase in our history - and it is history which, in the end, will judge men's actions. I also wish to thank the members of the Government for their service and for their co-operation.
4. I am now in the process of inviting a new Prime Minister to form a Government. I shall consult with him on the formation of a Government of national unity which will include all those who are active in Lebanon's political life, and which will be representative of all groups, regions and points of view.
5. An order has gone out to the Lebanese army to be on the alert for deployment in the South, in anticipation of an Israeli withdrawal, in conformity with the wishes of our people in that area, so that there may not be yet another tragic threat to their safety and their unity. The army will also be deployed as far as the boundaries of the Northern province, and is determined to discharge its duty, as one united force, towards the nation.
6. On behalf of each and every one of you, and in the name of your right to live your lives in security, I call for a complete and comprehensive cease-fire. I should also welcome any similar call, provided it is not dependent on impossible or artificially created conditions. To ensure the implementation of such a cease-fire I have requested those concerned to call a meeting of the Security Committee at once, so that suitable arrangements can be made on the ground. I have also asked for a Committee of Observers to be formed, from retired military personnel, who will oversee the cease-fire and report on any breach of it.
7. Lebanese-Syrian consultations must be intensified and consolidated so that we may come to a deeper understanding of the nature of the relations that shape the destiny of our two countries - relations that stem

naturally from the bonds between brothers and neighbours. Thus we may reach a formula that guarantees the security of our two countries against any danger or threat, and enables the State of Lebanon to honour its obligations in the realm of national defense through the deployment of the Lebanese Army.

8. Our duty to liberate the land must take precedence over every other duty and must be the major priority. It was for this reason that we carried out negotiations with Israel with the full participation of the United States of America and then arrived at an Accord which ensured complete Israeli withdrawal to the internationally recognized borders. That Accord, however, was never an end in itself, but merely served the purpose of effecting a withdrawal. Now that Israeli and Syrian withdrawals have not come about, the Accord has led to a critical situation which prevented me from ratifying it. It has become clear that we must continue our ardent and ceaseless efforts to find a formula that will ensure comprehensive troop withdrawals from all Lebanese territory in order to protect Lebanon's sovereignty and independence.

When I pledged myself to the attainment of liberation and salvation, it was a solemn promise to save all our people, liberate all the land and regain complete sovereignty. Acting on your behalf and with your support, I refused to accept the idea of a divided Lebanon, a fragmented Lebanon, a Lebanon made up of petty states - even if the price was life itself. This was my pledge, and I hereby declare:

I am keeping my pledge to you and to Lebanon;
I shall never betray a pledge;
I shall never compromise over the land;
I shall never sacrifice national sovereignty;
I shall never ignore the will of the people;
I shall never surrender the legacy of our forefathers;
The hopes of our present generation for liberty and independence will never be forgotten;
We shall remain faithful to the memory of our martyrs and the blood they have shed;
And we shall remain faithful to Lebanon - the whole, absolute, independent Lebanon for which no sacrifice is too great.

LAUSANNE, 12 MARCH 1984

OPENING SPEECH AT THE SECOND NATIONAL DIALOGUE AND RECONCILIATION CONFERENCE

The bombardment and fighting continued unabated, with armed militias taking over West Beirut and the mountains during the period 6-9 February. France made a vain attempt to replace the MNF with a UN peace-keeping force. Saudi-Arabia continued to mediate.

President Gemayel announced a 28-point programme of political reform and sought a non-military solution to the problems in Beirut. Some embassies in West Beirut moved to alternative premises. The Italian contingent of the MNF withdrew, with the Lebanese army coming under increasing pressure. After the Fleet had bombarded sources of fire directed at the MNF, the USA eventually withdrew the marines and suspended American military aid to Lebanon.

On 23 February Prince Bandar of Saudi Arabia announced a cease-fire from Damascus, and the Sartre city saw the long-awaited summit between President Assad and the President Gemayel six days later. They discussed formation of a government of national unity, the withdrawal of the MNF and the problems surrounding the 17 May Accord, and President Assad subsequently declared unequivocal support for President Gemayel in his search for peace.

On 5 March the Lebanese-Israeli Accord was abandoned by the Lebanese Government as a result of continuing regional and international failure to effect its implementation, and arrangements were made for a second conference in Switzerland. This was held at Lausanne from 12 to 20 March and, as at Geneva, President Gemayel played a leading role in ensuring its success. It was followed by many of the positive steps which he had been advocating since taking office, and with these emerged the first positive signs of peace in Lebanon's nine-year conflict.

**"... THE BEGINNING OF A NEW ERA
IN A NEW LEBANON"**

Gentlemen,

At the outset of this conference I should like to express our gratitude to the President, the Government and

the people of Switzerland for their hospitality, which we enjoy for a second time, and our appreciation of the efforts exerted to create the appropriate climate in which to hold this meeting.

I should also like to thank the representatives of the Governments of the Syrian Arab Republic and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia - Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam and Sheikh Ibrahim al-Masoud respectively - as well as the other members of their delegations attending this conference in the role of aides and observers. My congratulations to Mr Khaddam on his recent appointment to the Vice-Presidency, a fitting tribute to his outstanding loyalty and capability.

The interval between our first meeting at Geneva and this our second here at Lausanne has been a short one in terms of time, but in terms of suffering and uncertainty it has seemed a long and exhausting period of continual crisis.

This historic gathering is not limited to present company and those represented here; in my mind's eye I see here among us all the people of Lebanon. I see the widows and the orphans, the wretched, the homeless and the destitute; I see faces full of mortal fear and concern for the future. I see them all anxiously looking to us to bring them the glad tidings of salvation - salvation for a people worn out by never-ending slaughter, and for a homeland incapacitated by crippling wounds. This war has been nine years of unremitting folly, during which we have had our bellyful of death, kidnappings, bombardment, destruction, terror and the loss of our homes, with all the moral, psychological and economic disintegration concomitant.

So many countries would surely have crumbled under these horrific experiences. But the Lebanese people have willingly suffered with patient perseverance; they have not been vanquished, and they have not capitulated.

I do not know who could possibly emerge victorious from a war waged against us all, against all Lebanon, against our people and our very existence - a war that soon degenerated into war among ourselves, as our differences were manipulated by others.

Nor do I know who has carried off the spoils of war, when the whole of Lebanon, every one of her regions, every one of her religious communities and groups, has suffered the bitter ordeal of tragedy and suffering, bloodshed and martyrdom.

And if in the course of the nine-year war we have lost one hundred thousand martyrs, I say that all of these gave their lives for Lebanon - whether they were combatants, or innocent victims going about their daily lives, or infants raked by gunfire in the cradle.

These are the martyrs who died for a free Lebanon, whose example still inspires those with the determination to remain free and to hold their heads high in a land whose watchwords are liberty and dignity. If there are some among them who gave their lives for the Lebanon of their dreams, we owe it to them to see that their sacrifice was not in vain; we must create a Lebanon which is truly our own.

In fact, the sacrifices of our great people will not be wasted, for they are part of the fulfillment of our national aspirations, principles and goals. It is our mission to ensure that the will of the people prevails, so that we may reap the fruits of their sacrifice by liberating the land and establishing our sovereignty, so that our united people may meet, unflinchingly, whatever tests and trials the future may bring.

In defence of the unity of our land and our people, so that we may consolidate those values that are essential to our very existence, in a homeland unassailably strong and free, there is nothing we shall not dare; we shall use every means at our disposal; and we shall seize every opportunity available to us.

When our negotiations with Israel, in which the United States of America also took part, appeared to us to be the only means of regaining our territory, we did not hesitate. And when cancellation of the 17th May Accord seemed the only possible means of unifying the people, again we did not hesitate. If we are convinced that the blood of our people is not too high a price to pay for Lebanon, then no accord can possibly be too great a sacrifice. When the choice lies between the homeland and an accord, then we must choose the

homeland.

The cancellation of the Accord should not only promote unity of purpose and unity of our ranks, but also begin the process of liberating and unifying the land, which can only take place within the framework of an integrated society capable of transcending narrow groupings and inward-looking factions. We are all only too aware of the disintegration, degeneration and fragmentation that have resulted from recent developments.

The abandonment of the Accord consequently demands of us the greatest vigilance and solidarity, which must transcend all narrow sectional interests. It is imperative that we should put an end to the present uncertainty, chaos and confusion; we must contain every threat to the safety of our people and every danger to Lebanon's security; we must eradicate all unlawful and prohibited criminal practices and terrorist acts in all their forms.

The joint talks I recently had with President Assad were positive and constructive; they were marked by a high degree of responsibility, candor and sincerity. I am quite certain that he will lend all his support to Lebanon's endeavours to achieve a measure of stability and well-being - especially during the critical time facing our region - and to safeguard the interests of our two countries and the other Arab States.

Here I must stress the noble efforts exerted by His Majesty King Fahd ibn Abdul Aziz and the effective and constructive role played by Saudi Arabia in helping Lebanon in her hour of need: we are grateful for their keen interest in our problems and their sympathy for the pain and suffering we have endured. I must also not forget to express our gratitude and appreciation for the initiatives and assistance of the international community, especially the United States of America, France, Italy and Great Britain. These countries have done much for Lebanon and have made considerable sacrifices for her people.

We have a right to expect support from our friends and brethren - and indeed from the entire international community - for the salvation and liberation of Lebanon. Their support is also vital if we are to establish an atmosphere of peace and security in which we may rebuild what has been destroyed by the war and reconstitute the structure of the State and its institutions.

There is clear evidence that a stable situation in Lebanon will in turn bring stability and peace to the Arab world and to the international community as a whole. It is equally evident that an unstable Lebanon will have a disastrous and negative effect on many other countries.

We all ask what the Lebanon of tomorrow will be like, and whether the Lebanon we once knew will be restored after the war - the old Lebanon, with her constitutional perversion, her political lurch and her various institutions, military, social, economic, administrative and cultural.

Will the Lebanon of the future be the same as the Lebanon of the nineteen-forties, for which we ventured so much? Or will the nineteen-eighties bring changes, with a new Lebanon emerging from another historic agreement among the Lebanese?

Whatever may happen, we are all committed to the achievement of a single ultimate goal, the restoration of one united Lebanon as a permanent homeland. We can envisage no alternative.

This, indeed, is the consensus of opinion of all the parties concerned, and of all the political and religious conferences that have taken place. And that consensus merely reinforces our own immutable principles and aspirations, as they have been set out in our working-papers and official documents.

Apart from one single unalterable fact - our insistence on a united Lebanon - all matters are open to discussion, and all plans are subject to modification or improvement.

Among the undoubted priorities which are not subject to interpretation or conditions are the following axiomatic principles, which I shall enumerate by way of a preamble:

1. An end to the state of war, and the implementation of a cease-tire that is binding on all and unconditionally imposed on all; this to have immediate effect and to be comprehensive and conclusive.
 2. Confirmation that we all agree on the principles and actions which will lead to the unification and liberation of Lebanon.
 3. Progress towards an understanding on reform projects, at all levels, relevant to issues affecting Lebanon's interests and involving the development of our political, economic and social systems.
- Formation of a government of national unity and national salvation to undertake the responsibilities and duties made necessary by this grave and critical phase in our nation's history.

These are the four principles which will govern our future course of action as we move towards the establishment of Lebanon as the one permanent homeland. With these as a starting-point, how do I - as President - envisage the Lebanon of the future, newly risen from the smoke and ruin of war, armed with hope and ardent aspiration, not destroyed but purified by the flames?

In my mind's eye I see before me a homeland inviolable in its sovereignty and its freedom to act, enjoying that unassailable stability and independence which are born of noble sacrifice and the blood of martyrs.

I see a people who have found life even in embrace of death, who have conquered death itself. I see their example as a bright beacon of hope to all those nations who are stubbornly resisting oppression, fighting for their rights, for their land, and for their own survival. I see a people whose ordeal by fire has taught them to be self-reliant, to seek their own salvation through dependence on their own limitless power and potential.

I see a Lebanon with an Arab sense of belonging, enriching and enriched by her environment, proud of her pioneering role and a source of pride to her region. I see a Lebanon with a mission extending far beyond her geographic boundaries and beyond the limits of her own population, serving humanity far and wide and enabling men the world over to fulfill their destiny and to live in freedom: freedom as a citizen, freedom of religion, freedom of spirit, and freedom of thought.

I see a Lebanon embodying these high principles and noble values which are natural to her and rooted in her heritage. I see a Lebanon giving intellectual and cultural leadership, as she continues to play that role in the world which, throughout history, her pivotal geographic position has always demanded of her.

I see a Lebanon of remarkable and distinctive qualities and unique characteristics, a distillation of the many civilizations that have come together so creatively within a single and unified homeland; a Lebanon that guarantees the rights, the security, and the freedom of belief and action of every group and every constituent part within her frontiers.

I see Lebanon as a free and democratic State with a parliamentary political system and growing, efficient institutions reflecting the will of the people and serving and protecting their interests.

I see Lebanon as a society with a free and flexible economy, founded on principles of justice, equality and efficiency - a society in which there is equal opportunity in all walks of life and in all regions, among all groups, communities and individuals.

I see Lebanon as a highly civilized environment, in which every citizen has a highly developed sense of civic responsibility and public duty which enables him to strike a balance between what he is entitled to and the duties he owes to society, the State, the homeland and his fellow Lebanese.

Finally, I see Lebanon as a true homeland built on strong, sure foundations; for it is the right of our young people - the generation born out of the war - to receive from us an inheritance of which they can be justly proud, so that they, in their turn, may hand it on to succeeding generations. History will then confirm that we have not failed in our duty to them.

I recall my pledge to all the people of Lebanon, and I will never fall to honour any pledge that I have made. But the responsibility for saving Lebanon and preserving untarnished, for future generations, the solemn charge entrusted to us is a joint burden which we all share.

I hope, therefore, that this gathering of ours will be remembered as the end of a road paved with blood and tears and the beginning of a new era in a new Lebanon. It is Lebanon's destiny that she should face trials and tribulations in order to emerge triumphant, and it is our destiny as Lebanese to offer up sacrifice at the altar of martyrdom so that our country may survive.

