

# Syrian Hegemony over Lebanon After the Lebanese Civil War

**Youssef Bassil**

LACSC – Lebanese Association for Computational Sciences  
Registered under No. 957, 2011, Beirut, Lebanon

Email: [youssef.bassil@lacsc.org](mailto:youssef.bassil@lacsc.org)

**Abstract** –This paper examines carefully the Lebanese-Syrian relations upon the end of the French mandate, and prior to, during, and after the Lebanese civil war. It systematically discusses the Syrian military intervention in Lebanon during the Lebanese civil war and its consequences on Lebanon as a sovereign country which have led to plenty of hegemonizing joint Syrian-biased agreements, accords, pacts, and treaties, in addition to a Syrian-controlled puppet regime installed in Lebanon whose impact continues to be seen to the present days, on the freedom of speech, human rights, international laws, and political repressions. This paper approaches the problem of Syrian hegemony over Lebanon from the theory of political hegemony of modern political economy which analyses and evaluates the control of wealth, the control of resources and raw materials, and the control of the market exerted by the Syrian government over Lebanon.

**Keywords** – Political Science; Hegemony Theory; Lebanese-Syrian relations; Syrian Hegemony over Lebanon

## 1. Introduction

The Syrian military invasion to Lebanon in 1976 during the Lebanese Civil war has negatively affected Lebanon in numerous ways and on different levels. There are tons of studies, reports, and books that discuss the bad impact of the Syrian intervention in 1976. Moreover, countless manifestations of this impact is obvious in the many biased, imbalanced, and hegemonic joint treaties, accords, and agreements that Syria has signed with Lebanon upon the end of the Lebanese civil war starting from 1990. This has led to a total Syrian control of the Lebanese state at the political, economic, security, judicial, legislative, and executive levels. In addition to the installed puppet regime made out of Lebanese politicians, officers, and presidents that were manipulated from the government of Damascus for the sole sake and benefit of Syria itself. Furthermore, and from a different perspective, Syria managed to exploit Lebanon's economic resources by means of bilateral agreements enacted by both the Lebanese and Syrian governments whose advantages, remunerations, and benefits all went eventually to Syria's economy.

This paper examines carefully the Lebanese-Syrian relations upon the end of the French mandate and prior to the Lebanese Civil war. In this respect, Syrian military intervention in Lebanon during the civil war, as well as after the civil conflict, in addition to the consequences of this intervention that entered Lebanon into an endless amalgam of plenty of Syrian- biased agreements and Syrian controlled puppet regime whose impact continues

to be seen in present day Lebanon, on the freedom of speech, human rights, international laws, and political repressions are all to be undertaken and explained elaborately. As a result, the question of Syrian hegemony over Lebanon is to be asked, approaching the problem from the theory of political hegemony of modern political economy. Control of Wealth, control of resources and raw material, and control of the market are few analytical tools to mention for speculating the facts, circumstances, and consequences of the Syrian hegemony over Lebanon, and its comparative advantages on the economy of Syria.

## 2. Historical Facts about the Syrian-Lebanese Relations

After the complete fall of the Ottoman Empire in 1918, France acquired the mandate over Syria and Lebanon from the Union of Nations. On September 1920 France extended the Ottoman State of Mount Lebanon by appending to it regions of the west, north, and south, and called it the new province of "Greater Lebanon". Syria refused to recognize this new situation and said that Lebanon has been taken out from its Arab identity and became a territory of France [1].

Internationally, Lebanon became a recognized and acknowledged sovereign country in 1943. Since then, Syrian government denied this new situation and refused to develop any diplomatic affairs with the Lebanese independent government claiming that this represents a great offence to the rights and historical relations between Lebanon and Syria to a degree that it is inappropriate to

call for diplomatic relations between the two countries and that the two are beyond the foundation of any embassy.

### **3. Lebanese Civil War & the Syrian Intervention**

There are two types of reasons that led to Syrian military intervention during the Lebanese Civil war: One direct and one indirect.

#### **3.1. Direct Reasons**

The Syrian military intervention in Lebanon was fulfilled during three stages: The first stage started when Syrian military troops entered into Lebanon during the very early years of the Lebanese civil war around 1976 as a peacemaking power to stop the Lebanese parties, more particularly, Christians and Muslims from fighting against each other. The second stage took place in February 1987. It was during the Israeli invasion to Lebanon in 1982, when Syria was obliged to remove its military troops from the majority of the Lebanese areas [2].

The third stage took place on October 1990 when more than 25,000 Syrian troops supported by Air Force jet fighters, attacked the Christian territory of East Beirut led by the Lebanese army commander-in-chief, General Michel Aoun. After harsh attacks, Aoun was obliged to flee to the French embassy and the Syrian troops entered the East Beirut areas and settled along with thousands of soldiers [3].

#### **3.2. Indirect Reasons**

One Syrian indirect reason is the strategic location of the Beqaa area which can be exploited by the Syrians to set up air missiles and artilleries against Israel [4]. Another indirect reason is the greater dream and goals of the Syrian Baath party in attaining "Greater Syria". Many accounts solidified this ideology, for instance, Hafez El Assad claimed many times that "Syria and Lebanon are one single territory and one single nation with two administrations and governments", and that "Lebanon cannot escape its destiny from being united with Syria, once and for all" [5].

### **4. Post Lebanese Civil War & Lebanon's Imposed Treaties**

In the last two decades, three major agreements whose purpose is to control Lebanon external relations and affairs with Syria have been signed and implemented. These are respectively: The Taief Accord in October 1989, the Treaty of Brotherhood, Coordination, and Cooperation (BCC) in April 1991, and the Defense Pact in September 1991.

#### **4.1. The Taief Accord**

The Taief Accord was typically kind of a reform text, meant at placing an end to the 15 years Lebanese civil war. The Taief Accord regulated Syria influence over Lebanon, and hence legitimizing the presence of the 35,000 Syrian military troops on the Lebanese territories [1].

#### **4.2. The Treaty of Brotherhood, Coordination, and Cooperation (BCC)**

On the other hand, the Treaty of Brotherhood, Coordination, and Cooperation (BCC) was signed on April 1991. It stated that the two countries, Syria and Lebanon, will always endeavor to realize the highest level of coordination and cooperation on all levels including politics, cultural, military, and security [3].

#### **4.3. The Defense Pact**

The Defense Pact was signed between Lebanon and Syria in September 1991. The treaty states that all activities in the areas of politics, military, and national security that can damage the other nation are forbidden. Syria and Lebanon shall not offer shelter, or grant refuge to individuals and organization who threaten the security of both countries [6].

### **5. The Taief Accord and its Effect on Lebanon's Sovereignty**

The Taief accord had many consequences and negative effects on Lebanon and its sovereignty. One consequence is in fact a violation of sovereignty and a deviation from the initial notion of sovereignty, more specifically, that a sovereign nation has the right to freely take the policy it views as suitable in a given situation, and to abide by the free will of the other nations [7].

A second consequence is that the Taief Accord makes it clear that Lebanon will not allow itself to become a hallway or a central base for any power, nation, or state, whose aim is to threaten Syria whatsoever. On the other hand, this same commitment is however not required from Syria since there is no indication in the Taief Accord of the likelihood that Syria might become such a pathway or military base.

### **6. The Taief Accord under Military Pressure**

At the time of the Taief Accord was being signed, two governments existed in Lebanon: The government of General Michel Aoun, and the government of Salim El Hoss. General Aoun and his new government refused to recognize the Taief Accord as it didn't mention anything about the withdrawal of the Syrian military troops from Lebanon. Syria then realized that Michel Aoun government was a big obstacle for the full implementation of the Taief Accord and had to be liquidated. Subsequently, on 13 October 1990, heavily armed Syrian troops attacked East Beirut supported by substantial gunfire and air fighters. General Aoun

managed to escape to the French embassy where he sought refuge [8].

In this manner, the Taëif Accord was implemented due to the Syrian military intervention. It is therefore reasonable to conclude, that the Lebanese republic, at least partially, the one administered by Aoun's government, was subject to signing a forced agreement with Syria

## **7. The BCC & Lebanon's Sovereignty Violation**

The BCC treaty was contracted during the presence of more than 35,000 Syrian military troops in Lebanon. Thus, Lebanon was a state under occupation with foreign military armed forces hampering the Lebanese decision-making process [9].

The language of the Treaty of Brotherhood, Coordination, and Cooperation (BCC) contained ideological thoughts and terms intended to reinforce and support the Baath claim of the brotherly ties between Lebanon and Syria.

The BCC treaty also stated that the two Syrian and Lebanese governments via their joint committees will decide on the re-deployment of Syrian military troops in Lebanon. Accordingly, this suggests that Lebanon alone cannot take the decision whether or not the Syrian military forces should leave Lebanon.

## **8. The Defense Pact & its Freedom of Speech Violations**

The most important part in this pact states that the military and security authorities of each state must decline and refuse to give shelter to individuals and institutions that work against the other country security. Consequently, the government had to forbid the work of certain political parties and organization that oppose the Syrian presence on the Lebanese soils, violating one of Lebanon's significant features, the freedom of speech.

## **9. Imposed Treaties & their Human Rights Violations**

The Syrian secret intelligence is known to have several facilities and headquarters in at least six areas inside Lebanon. Furthermore, public argument of "disappearances in Lebanon" was mainly forbidden and no actions were taken. In February 1998, several international human rights organizations signed a declaration about the situation of Lebanese captives in Syria and the tragedy of their families, asking Syrian government to release names and places of custody of all the Lebanese citizens captured in Syria.

## **10. Imposed Treaties & their Freedom of Speech Violations**

In 1996, the Lebanese government executed a law that restricts radio, television, and mass media from

broadcasting. Due to this prosecution, Lebanese journalists censored their press on matters related to Syria. Additionally, the Lebanese government restricted the right of freedom of assembly via new laws. Moreover, the government banned all demonstrations and assemblies of anti-Syrian organizations [10].

## **11. The Lebanese Government & the Syrian Controlled Puppets**

Four types of Syrian controlled puppets were used over the Lebanese state and government.

### **11.1. Syria-Supporting Parties and Organizations**

The first type of control puppets that Syria used in Lebanon was militias and military organizations that were faithful to the Syrian government during the Lebanese civil war. One of Syria most important allies in Lebanon was the Amal Movement. Another Syria-supporting party in Lebanon is the Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP) whose main theory is that Lebanon is part of "Greater Syria".

Another Syria-supporting organization is Hezbollah which is a highly trained and armed Shia Muslim organization. Hezbollah is reported to receive funds, artillery, air missiles, and logistical help from Iran through Syria. Another Syria-supporting party and the one that is the most faithful to Syria in Lebanon is the Lebanese Baath party. This is very understandable since the Baath party in Lebanon is a subdivision of the Baath party that rules Syria [11].

### **11.2. Syria-Supporting Individuals in the Lebanese Politics**

These individuals can be categorized into three groups: The first group identifies the leaders of the Syria-supporting organizations and parties which have been mentioned in the previous section. The second group identifies the noticeable political families who have been allies with Syria for decades and continue their political career in support of Syria. Like the Karami and the Franjiyeh family. The third group identifies the politicians who became prominent and powerful upon the end of the Lebanese civil war and the ratification of the Taëif Accord and who emerged due to their contacts with Syria, such as the former Lebanese president Elias Hrawi, Speaker of the House Nabih Berri, Prime Minister Rafic Hariri, and Vice Prime Minister Isam Fares,

### **11.3. Syria-Supporting Joint Committees**

The third type of Syrian controlled puppets in Lebanon is the establishment of joint committees to normalize the affairs between Syria and Lebanon. An important issue is that all the Lebanese representatives in these joint committees should be strongly faithful to Syria, including the president, Prime Minister, Speaker of

the House, and other notable members of the parliament. Based on these facts, one can deduce that Syria has all the means and facilities to force its will on the work and decisions of these joint committees giving Syria a considerable amount of control over Lebanon.

#### **11.4. Syria Direct Interventions**

The fourth type of Syrian controlled puppets in Lebanon is the direct intervention in the presidential and parliament elections. Many interventions can be reported, such as after the assassination of President Rene Mouawad and the election of Elias Hirawi as president. President Hirawi voyaged straightaway to Syria in order to meet with the former Syrian president Hafez El Assad to compile a list of the members of the parliament to be appointed.

Another direct intervention took place in 1995 when against what the constitution says, the parliament voted to extend Hirawi mandate for three extra years. Similarly happened when President Emile Lahoud mandate was about to end, and it was extended under Syria pressure [12].

### **12. Syrian Hegemony over Lebanon**

The theory of political hegemony, as used in the world of political economy, defines hegemony as dominance over material resources. Four groups of resources are especially important. A nation must have 1) control over raw materials; 2) control over resources of wealth; 3) control over marketplaces; and 4) control over the production of extremely valued goods, so as to be a real hegemonic power [13].

#### **12.1. The Syrian Control over Sources of Wealth**

Syria's great economic profit from its occupation of Lebanon is the employment of more than one million Syrian labors and workers in Lebanon. These employments decrease unemployment in Syria and the funds of these labors transferred from Lebanon to their families back home also bring to Syria great earnings. It is estimated that around 4.7 billion dollars leave Lebanon to Syria every year, and this money pass untaxed. The Labor Treaty signed between Syria and Lebanon in October 1991, restrictions and constraints on overland travel between Lebanon and Syria were totally removed. Overall, the reconstruction of Lebanon after the civil war can be regarded as a booming for the Syrian economy. Labors who would enjoy a \$200 per capita yearly income in Syria have fled to Lebanon where the per capita yearly income is \$1,000.

#### **12.2. The Control over the Lebanese Market**

The Mobility and Transportation of Goods Regulation Accord signed between Syria and Lebanon in 1998 forbids a truck that is recorded in one of the countries to cross the other country borders so as to deliver its load in a third country. Apparently, Syrian trucks do not need to cross through Lebanon borders to go anywhere; however,

the Lebanese trucks have, out of topographical causes, ultimately excluding Lebanese agricultural merchandises and products from that worthwhile Arab region. Moreover, Lebanon is not allowed to impose taxes or tariffs on the Syrian agricultural merchandises imported from Syria into Lebanon [14]. This has significantly declined the competitive place of the Lebanese agricultural merchandises in their own local markets and has driven many farms in the Beqaa and other regions into bankruptcy. Additionally, a chief cause of Lebanon agricultural depression is the effect of what was practiced by Syria to control over Lebanon through an economy policy called dumping or the policy of overflowing the Lebanese market by Syrian products and merchandises making it to a certain extend highly saturated.

#### **12.3. The Control over Lebanese Water Resources & Raw Materials**

Syria exploited Lebanon water resources by all means. Lebanon, because of Syrian hegemony over its land was unable to develop and improve its massive water resources. For instance, Al-Assi River, which flows from Syria to Lebanon, has been prohibited from being developed by Lebanon or adding to it irrigation plans along its banks as Syria does not want the stream of the river in its land to be interrupted or diminished in any way [15].

#### **12.4. Side Effects on the Public Sector**

Lebanon public sector, in particular the utility sector has also been affected by Syria presence in Lebanon after the Lebanese civil war. This included the National Electricity Company which experienced huge economic losses. The Lebanese mobile phone and telecommunication sector charged the highest tariffs comparing to the rest of the Arab countries in the Middle East [16]. Besides, Lebanon's water sector was also affected where in spite of the plentiful rainfall and fresh water resources in Lebanon, the Lebanese consumer and the Lebanese agriculture sector suffered from erratic services and high tariffs charges because of the lack of investment and reform in this public sector.

Furthermore, Privatization of the public sectors has always failed due to the fact that Syria-supporting politicians and members of the parliament continually blocked such moves, as privatization would yield to a loss in their business interests.

In total, the long term damage caused by Syria occupation and interference in Lebanon policy, economy, and security is estimated to be around \$30 billion over the last 30 years. The remittances that were sent by Syrian labors from Lebanon to their home country also resulted in a partial transfer of wealth from Lebanon to Syria. Around \$1 billion dollar per year was estimated as a loss and that continued for the last 15 years [16].

### **13. Conclusions**

#### **13.1. Syrian Forced Agreements**

We can conclude that the Lebanese state was subject to signing enforced agreements because:

1. The Lebanese government signed many accords, agreements, and treaties with the Syrian government whose implementation was meant a strong deviation from the essential characteristics of sovereignty.
2. The signing, execution, and implementation of the Ta'if Accord was the result of a violent and hostile Syrian military intervention carried out by Syrian troops and heavy combat machineries that supported some of the conflicting Lebanese parties against the other ones.

### 13.2. Syrian Puppet Regime

Based on the examination done in previous chapters, the Lebanese state and government after the end of the Lebanese civil war was led by a Syrian controlled puppet regime manifested by Syria-supporting parties, member of the parliament, and military officers, which altogether were acting as a very effective and systematic Syrian control instruments. Furthermore, having a controlled puppet political regime would by all means control the other institutions and political resources of the Lebanese government such as Lebanon's legislative, judicial, and executive systems as well as domestic and foreign policies.

### 13.3. Syrian Exploitation of Lebanon's Economy

As it became evident in our previous discussions, Syria fully exploited Lebanon through all its economic resources. That is including labors that were cheaper than their Lebanese counterparts which led to the bankruptcy of a major number of the Lebanese workers; the control over the market including sending cheap products in and out of Lebanon; and the control over raw material and water resources which are abundant in Lebanon compared to Syria where they are extremely scarce as to the Syrian population.

### 13.4. Syrian Hegemony

The results of Hegemony speculations done in previous chapters goes in coherence with the assumptions of the hegemony state which indicates that a hegemony larger state usually takes advantage of smaller states in all fields including military, politics, and economy without having any motive but to exploit the weaker countries. The absolute volume and the speed with which the different agreements and treaties between Syria and Lebanon were legislated and implemented combined with the total absence of Lebanese sovereignty was a clear evidence that Syria has afterwards enforced a series of joint economic, political, and security accords on Lebanon with the purpose of gradually, bit-by-bit, absorbing the latter. In fact, the Ta'if Accord, the Treaty of Brotherhood, Coordination, and Cooperation (BCC), the Defense Pact, and other collateral agreements and treaties were, on all levels, biased, unbalanced, and

unwarranted and served solely Syria economy and not Lebanon's. This clearly reveals Syria interest in hardening its control over Lebanon and hence solidifying the concept of Syrian hegemony over Lebanon.

### 13.5. Final Thoughts for a New Horizon

What is certain today with Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon is that there are now new opportunities for the Lebanese economy to develop and grow in accordance with its own interest and agenda. As for the long term future of Lebanon, it is based on the effort of both the Lebanese government and the Lebanese people to reform the politics, security, economy, and the country as a whole, so as to provide an open market for the Lebanese entrepreneurs; a secure homeland for the Lebanese citizens; a prospering economy for the Lebanese workers and companies; and a stable country for the Lebanese youth, turning life in Lebanon into non-stop flourishing success stories and an equal opportunity for all the Lebanese people to coexist without discrimination based on religion, belief, or ideology.

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## Appendix

### I. The Taef Accord, October 22, 1989

#### First, General Principles and Reforms:

##### I. General Principles

- A. Lebanon is a sovereign, free, and independent country and a final homeland for all its citizens.
- B. Lebanon is Arab in belonging and identity. It is an active and founding member of the Arab League and is committed to the league's charter. It is an active and founding member of the United Nations Organization and is committed to its charters. Lebanon is a member of the nonaligned movement. The state of Lebanon shall embody these principles in all areas and spheres, without exception.
- C. Lebanon is a democratic parliamentary republic founded on respect for public liberties, especially the freedom of expression and belief, on social justice, and on equality in rights and duties among all citizens, without discrimination or preference.
- D. The people are the source of authority. They are sovereign and they shall exercise their sovereignty through the constitutional institutions.
- E. The economic system is a free system that guarantees individual initiative and private ownership.
- F. Culturally, socially, and economically-balanced development is a mainstay of the state's unity and of the system's stability.
- G. Efforts will be made to achieve comprehensive social justice through fiscal, economic, and social reform.
- H. Lebanon's soil is united and it belongs to all the Lebanese. Every Lebanese is entitled to live in and enjoy any part of the country under the supremacy of the law. The people may not be categorized on the basis of any affiliation whatsoever and there shall be no

fragmentation, no partition, and no repatriation of Palestinians in Lebanon.

I. No authority violating the common co-existence charter shall be legitimate

## II. Political Reforms

A. Chamber of Deputies: The Chamber of Deputies is the legislative authority which exercises full control over government policy and activities.

1. The Chamber spokesman and his deputy shall be elected for the duration of the chamber's term.

2. In the first session, two years after it elects its speaker and deputy speaker, the chamber may vote only once to withdraw confidence from its speaker or deputy speaker with a 2/3 majority of its members and in accordance with a petition submitted by at least 10 deputies. In case confidence is withdrawn, the chamber shall convene immediately to fill the vacant post.

3. No urgent bill presented to the Chamber of Deputies may be issued unless it is included in the agenda of a public session and read in such a session, and unless the grace period stipulated by the constitution passes without a resolution on such a bill with the approval of the cabinet.

4. The electoral district shall be the governorate.

5. Until the Chamber of Deputies passes an election law free of sectarian restriction, the parliamentary seats shall be divided according to the following bases:

a. Equally between Christians and Muslims.

b. Proportionately between the denominations of each sect.

c. Proportionately between the districts.

6. The number of members of the Chamber of Deputies shall be increased to 108, shared equally between Christians and Muslims. As for the districts created on the basis of this document and the districts whose seats became vacant prior to the proclamation of this document, their seats shall be filled only once on an emergency basis through appointment by the national accord government that is planned to be formed.

7. With the election of the first Chamber of Deputies on a national, not sectarian, basis, a senate shall be formed and all the spiritual families shall be represented in it. The senate powers shall be confined to crucial issues.

B. President of Republic: The president of republic is the head of the state and a symbol of the country's unity. He shall contribute to enhancing the constitution and to preserving Lebanon's independence, unity, and territorial integrity in accordance with the provisions of the constitution. He is the supreme commander of the armed forces which are subject to the power of the cabinet. The president shall exercise the following powers:

1. Head the cabinet meeting whenever he wishes, but without voting.

2. Head the Supreme Defense Council.

3. Issues decrees and demand their publication. He shall also be entitled to ask the cabinet to reconsider any resolution it makes within 15 days of the date of deposition of the resolution with the presidential office. Should the cabinet insist on the adopted resolution, or should the grace period pass without issuing and

returning the decree, the decree of the resolution shall be valid and must be published.

4. Promulgate laws in accordance with the grace period stipulated by the constitution and demand their publication upon ratification by the Chamber of Deputies. After notifying the cabinet, the president may also request reexamination of the laws within the grace periods provided by the constitution, and in accordance with the articles of the constitution. In case the laws are not issued or returned before the end of the grace periods, they shall be valid by law and they must be published.

5. Refer the bills presented to him by the Chamber of Deputies.

6. Name the prime minister-designate in consultation with the Chamber of Deputies speaker on the basis of binding parliamentary consultation, the outcome of which the president shall officially familiarize the speaker on.

7. Issue the decree appointing the prime minister independently.

8. On agreement with the prime minister, issue the decree forming the cabinet.

9. Issue decrees accepting the resignation of the cabinet or of cabinet ministers and decrees relieving them from their duties.

10. Appoint ambassadors, accept the accreditation of ambassadors, and award state medals by decree.

11. On agreement with the prime minister, negotiate on the conclusion and signing of international treaties which shall become valid only upon approval by the cabinet. The cabinet shall familiarize the Chamber of Deputies with such treaties when the country's interest and state safety make such familiarization possible. As for treaties involving conditions concerning state finances, trade treaties, and other treaties which may not be abrogated annually, they may not be concluded without Chamber of Deputies' approval.

12. When the need arises, address messages to the Chamber of Deputies.

13. On agreement with the prime minister, summon the Chamber of Deputies to hold special sessions by decree.

14. The president of the republic is entitled to present to the cabinet any urgent issue beyond the agenda.

15. On agreement with the prime minister, call the cabinet to hold a special session whenever he deems it necessary.

16. Grant special pardon by decree.

17. In the performance of his duty, the president shall not be liable unless he violates the constitution or commits high treason.

C. Prime Minister: The prime minister is the head of the government. He represents it and speaks in its name. He is responsible for implementing the general policy drafted by the cabinet. The prime minister shall exercise the following powers:

1. Head the cabinet.

2. Hold parliamentary consultations to form the cabinet and co-sign with the president the decree forming it. The cabinet shall submit its cabinet statement to the Chamber of Deputies for a vote of confidence within 30 days of its formation. The cabinet may not exercise

its powers before gaining the confidence, after its resignation, or when it is considered retired, except within the narrow sense of disposing of affairs.

3. Present the government's general policy to the Chamber of Deputies.

4. Sign all decrees, except for decrees naming the prime minister and decrees accepting cabinet resignation or considering it retired.

5. Sign the decree calling for a special session and decrees issuing laws and requesting the reexamination of laws.

6. Summon the cabinet to meet, draft its agenda, familiarize the president of the republic in advance with the issues included in the agenda and with the urgent issues to be discussed, and sign the usual session minutes.

7. Observe the activities of the public departments and institutions; coordinate between the ministers, and issue general instructions to ensure the smooth progress of work.

8. Hold working sessions with the state agencies concerned in the presence of the minister concerned.

9. By law, act as the Supreme Defense Council's deputy chairman.

#### D. Cabinet:

The executive power shall be vested in the Cabinet.

The following are among the powers exercised by it:

1- Set the general policy of the State in all domains, draws up draft bills and decrees, and takes the necessary decisions for its implementation.

2. Watch over the implementation of laws and regulations and supervise the activities of all the state agencies without exception, including the civilian, military, and security departments and institutions.

3. The cabinet is the authority which controls the armed forces.

4. Appoint, dismiss, and accept the resignation of state employees in accordance with the law.

5. It has the right to dissolve the Chamber of Deputies at the request of the president of the republic if the chamber refuses to meet throughout an ordinary or a special session lasting no less than one month, even though it is summoned twice consecutively, or if the chamber sends back the budget in its entirety with the purpose of paralyzing the government. This right may not be exercised again for the same reasons which called for dissolving the chamber in the first instance.

6. When the president of the republic is present, he heads cabinet sessions. The cabinet shall meet periodically at special headquarters. The legal quorum for a cabinet meeting is 2/3 the cabinet members. The cabinet shall adopt its resolutions by consent. If impossible, then by vote. The resolutions shall be adopted by a majority of the members present. As for major issues, they require the approval of 2/3 the cabinet members. The following shall be considered major issues: The state of emergency and its abolition, war and peace, general mobilization, international agreements and treaties, the state's general budget, comprehensive and long-term development plans, the appointment of top-level civil servants or their equivalent, reexamination of the administrative

division, dissolving the Chamber of Deputies, the election law, the citizenship law, the personal status laws, and the dismissal of cabinet ministers.

E. Minister: The minister's powers shall be reinforced in a manner compatible with the government's general policy and with the principle of collective responsibility. A minister shall not be relieved from his position unless by cabinet decree or unless the Chamber of Deputies withdraws its confidence from him individually.

F. Cabinet Resignation, Considering Cabinet Retired, and Dismissal of Ministers:

1. The cabinet shall be considered retired in the following cases:

- a. If its chairman resigns.
- b. If it loses more than 1/3 of its members as determined by the decree forming it.
- c. If its chairman dies.
- d. At the beginning of a president's term.
- e. At the beginning of the Chamber of Deputies' term.
- f. When the Chamber of Deputies withdraws its confidence from it on an initiative by the chamber itself and on the basis of a vote of confidence.

2. A minister shall be relieved by a decree signed by the president of the republic and the prime minister, with cabinet approval.

3. When the cabinet resigns or is considered retired, the Chamber of Deputies shall, by law, be considered to be convened in a special session until a new cabinet is formed. A vote-of-confidence session shall follow.

G. Abolition of Political Sectarianism: Abolishing political sectarianism is a fundamental national objective. To achieve it, it is required that efforts be made in accordance with a phased plan. The Chamber of Deputies elected on the basis of equal sharing by Christians and Muslims shall adopt the proper measures to achieve this objective and to form a national council which is headed by the president of the republic and which includes, in addition to the prime minister and the Chamber of Deputies speaker, political, intellectual, and social notables. The council's task will be to examine and propose the means capable of abolishing sectarianism, to present them to the Chamber of Deputies and the cabinet, and to observe implementation of the phased plan. The following shall be done in the interim period:

- a. Abolish the sectarian representation base and rely on capability and specialization in public jobs, the judiciary, the military, security, public, and joint institutions, and in the independent agencies in accordance with the dictates of national accord, excluding the top-level jobs and equivalent jobs which shall be shared equally by Christians and Muslims without allocating any particular job to any sect.
- b. Abolish the mention of sect and denomination on the identity card.

### III. Other Reforms

A. Administrative Decentralism:

1. The State of Lebanon shall be single and united states with a strong central authority.
2. The powers of the governors and district administrative officers shall be expanded and all state administrations shall be represented in the administrative provinces at the highest level possible so

as to facilitate serving the citizens and meeting their needs locally.

3. The administrative division shall be recognized in a manner that emphasizes national fusion within the framework of preserving common coexistence and unity of the soil, people, and institutions.

4. Expanded administrative decentralization shall be adopted at the level of the smaller administrative units district and smaller units through the election of a council, headed by the district officer, in every district, to ensure local participation.

5. A comprehensive and unified development plan capable of developing the provinces economically and socially shall be adopted and the resources of the municipalities, unified municipalities, and municipal unions shall be reinforced with the necessary financial resources.

B. Courts:

To guarantee that all officials and citizens are subject to the supremacy of the law and to insure harmony between the action of the legislative and executive authorities on the one hand, and the givens of common coexistence and the basic rights of the Lebanese as stipulated in the constitution on the other hand:

1. The higher council which is stipulated by the constitution and whose task it is to try presidents and ministers shall be formed. A special law on the rules of trial before this council shall be promulgated.

2. A constitutional council shall be created to interpret the constitution, to observe the constitutionality of the laws, and to settle disputes and contests emanating from presidential and parliamentary elections.

3. The following authorities shall be entitled to revise the constitutional council in matters pertaining to interpreting the constitution and observing the constitutionality of the laws:

- a. The president of the republic.
- b. The Chamber of Deputies speaker.
- c. The prime minister.
- d. A certain percentage of members of the Chamber of Deputies.

To ensure the principle of harmony between religion and state, the heads of the Lebanese sects may revise the constitutional council in matters pertaining to:

1. Personal status affairs.
2. Freedom of religion and the practice of religious rites.
3. Freedom of religious education.

To ensure the judiciary's independence, a certain number of the Higher Judiciary Council shall be elected by the judiciary body.

D. Parliamentary Election Law: Parliamentary elections shall be held in accordance with a new law on the basis of provinces and in the light of rules that guarantee common coexistence between the Lebanese, and that ensure the sound and efficient political representation of all the people's factions and generations. This shall be done after reviewing the administrative division within the context of unity of the people, the land, and the institutions.

E. Creation of a socioeconomic council for development: A socioeconomic council shall be created to insure that representatives of the various sectors participate in



drafting the state's socioeconomic policy and providing advice and proposals.

**F. Education:**

1. Education shall be provided to all and shall be made obligatory for the elementary stage at least.
2. The freedom of education shall be emphasized in accordance with general laws and regulations.
3. Private education shall be protected and state control over private schools and textbooks shall be strengthened.
4. Official, vocational, and technological education shall be reformed, strengthened, and developed in a manner that meets the country's development and reconstruction needs. The conditions of the Lebanese University shall be reformed and aid shall be provided to the university, especially to its technical colleges.
5. The curricula shall be reviewed and developed in a manner that strengthens national belonging, fusion, spiritual and cultural openness, and that unifies textbooks on the subjects of history and national education.

**G. Information:** All the information media shall be reorganized under the canopy of the law and within the framework of responsible liberties that serve the cautious tendencies and the objective of ending the state of war.

**Second, spreading the sovereignty of the State of Lebanon over all Lebanese territories:**

Considering that all Lebanese factions have agreed to the establishment of a strong state founded on the basis of national accord, the national accord government shall draft a detailed one-year plan whose objective is to spread the sovereignty of the State of Lebanon over all Lebanese territories gradually with the state's own forces. The broad lines of the plan shall be as follows:

**A. Disbanding of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias shall be announced.** The militias' weapons shall be delivered to the State of Lebanon within a period of 6 months, beginning with the approval of the national accord charter. The president of the republic shall be elected. A national accord cabinet shall be formed, and the political reforms shall be approved constitutionally.

**B. The internal security forces shall be strengthened through:**

1. Opening the door of voluntarism to all the Lebanese without exception, beginning the training of volunteers centrally, distributing the volunteers to the units in the governorates, and subjecting them to organized periodic training courses.
2. Strengthening the security agency to insure control over the entry and departure of individuals into and out of the country by land, air, and sea.

**C. Strengthening the armed forces:**

1. The fundamental task of the armed forces is to defend the homeland, and if necessary, protect public order when the danger exceeds the capability of the internal security forces to deal with such a danger on their own.
2. The armed forces shall be used to support the internal security forces in preserving security under conditions determined by the cabinet.
3. The armed forces shall be unified, prepared, and trained in order that they may be able to shoulder their

national responsibilities in confronting Israeli aggression.

4. When the internal security forces become ready to assume their security tasks, the armed forces shall return to their barracks.

5. The armed forces intelligence shall be reorganized to serve military objectives exclusively.

**D. The problem of the Lebanese evacuees shall be solved fundamentally, and the right of every Lebanese evicted since 1975 to return to the place from which he was evicted shall be established.** Legislation to guarantee this right and to insure the means of reconstruction shall be issued. Considering that the objective of the State of Lebanon is to spread its authority over all the Lebanese territories through its own forces, represented primarily by the internal security forces, and in view of the fraternal relations binding Syria to Lebanon, the Syrian forces shall thankfully assist the forces of the legitimate Lebanese government to spread the authority of the State of Lebanon within a set period of no more than 2 years, beginning with ratification of the national accord charter, election of the president of the republic, formation of the national accord cabinet, and approval of the political reforms constitutionally. At the end of this period, the two governments -- the Syrian Government and the Lebanese National Accord Government -- shall decide to redeploy the Syrian forces in Al-Biq'a area from Dahr al-Baydar to the Hammana-al-Mudayrij-'Ayn Darah line, and if necessary, at other points to be determined by a joint Lebanese-Syrian military committee. An agreement shall also be concluded by the two governments to determine the strength and duration of the presence of Syrian forces in the above-mentioned area and to define these forces' relationship with the Lebanese state authorities where the forces exist. The Arab Tripartite Committee is prepared to assist the two states, if they so wish, to develop this agreement.

**Third, liberating Lebanon from the Israeli occupation:**

Regaining state authority over the territories extending to the internationally-recognized Lebanese borders requires the following:

**A. Efforts to implement resolution 425 and the other UN Security Council resolutions calling for fully eliminating the Israeli occupation.**

**B. Adherence to the truce agreement concluded on 23 March 1949.**

**C. Taking all the steps necessary to liberate all Lebanese territories from the Israeli occupation, to spread state sovereignty over all the territories, and to deploy the Lebanese army in the border area adjacent to Israel; and making efforts to reinforce the presence of the UN forces in South Lebanon to insure the Israeli withdrawal and to provide the opportunity for the return of security and stability to the border area.**

**Fourth, Lebanese-Syrian Relations:**

Lebanon, with its Arab identity, is tied to all the Arab countries by true fraternal relations. Between Lebanon and Syria there is a special relationship that derives its strength from the roots of blood relationships, history, and joint fraternal interests. This is the concept on which the two countries' coordination and cooperation is founded, and which will be embodied by the agreements

between the two countries in all areas, in a manner that accomplishes the two fraternal countries' interests within the framework of the sovereignty and independence of each of them. Therefore, and because strengthening the bases of security creates the climate needed to develop these bonds, Lebanon should not be allowed to constitute a source of threat to Syria's security, and Syria should not be allowed to constitute a source of threat to Lebanon's security under any circumstances. Consequently, Lebanon should not allow itself to become a pathway or a base for any force, state, or organization seeking to undermine its security or Syria's security. Syria, which is eager for Lebanon's security, independence, and unity and for harmony among its citizens, should not permit any act that poses a threat to Lebanon's security, independence, and sovereignty.

## II. The Treaty of Brotherhood, Coordination, and Cooperation, May 20, 1991

The Lebanese Republic and the Syrian Arab Republic on the basis of the distinguished brotherly relations between them which serve their strength from the roots of kinship history common affiliation common destiny and joint strategic interests; out of their belief that the achievement of the broadest cooperation and coordination between them will serve their strategic interests and provide the means for ensuring their development and progress and for defending their pan-Arab and national security be a source of prosperity and stability enable them to face all regional and international developments and meet the aspirations of peoples of the two countries; and in implementation of the Lebanese national accord which was ratified by the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies on 5 November 1989 have agreed on the following:

**Article 1.** The two states will work to achieve the highest level of cooperation and coordination in all political economic security cultural scientific and other fields in a manner that will realize the interests of the two fraternal countries within the framework of respect for their individual sovereignty and independence and will enable the two countries to use their political economic and security resources to provide prosperity and stability ensure their pan-Arab and national security and expand and strengthen their common interests as an affirmation of the brotherly relations and guarantee of their common destiny.

**Article 2.** The two states will work to achieve cooperation and coordination in the economic agricultural industrial and commercial fields as well as in the fields of transportation communications customs the establishment of joint profits and coordination of development plans.

**Article 3.** The connection between the security of the two countries requires that Lebanon not become a threat to Syria's security and vice versa under any circumstances. Therefore Lebanon will not allow itself to become a transit point or base for any force state or organization that seeks to undermine its security or that of Syria. Syria which cherishes Lebanon's security independence and

unity and the agreement among its people will not allow any action that threatens Lebanon's security independence and sovereignty.

**Article 4.** After the political reforms are approved in a constitutional manner as stipulated in the Lebanese national accord and after the deadlines specified in this accord have expired the Syrian and Lebanese Governments will decide on the redeployment of the Syrian forces in the al-Biqa' area and the entrance to western al-Biqa' in Dahr as-Baydar up to the Haammanah-al-Mudayri-'Any Dara line and if necessary in other points to be specified by a joint Lebanese-Syrian military committee. The two governments will conclude an agreement specifying the size and duration of the Syrian forces' presence in these areas and the relationship of these forces with the authorities of the Lebanese state.

**Article 5.** The two states' Arab and international foreign policy shall be based on the following principles:

1. Lebanon and Syria are Arab states which are committed to the Arab League Charter the Arab defense pact and joint economic cooperation and all agreements ratified within the framework of the Arab League. They are members of the United Nations and are committed to its Charter. They are also members of the Non-aligned Movement.
2. The two countries share a common destiny and common interests.
3. Each country supports the other in issues related to its security and national interests in accordance of the contents of this treaty. Therefore the governments of the two countries shall coordinate their Arab and international policies cooperate to the fullest extent possible in Arab and international institutions and organizations and coordinate their stands on regional and international issues.

**Article 6.** The following bodies shall be formed to achieve the goals of this treaty. Other bodies can be established by a decision from the Supreme Council.

### 1. The Supreme Council:

- A. The supreme council will consist of the presidents of the two contracting countries and a number of other members from both countries.
- B. The supreme council will meet at least once a year and more often when necessary at a venue to be agreed upon.
- C. The supreme council charts the general policy for coordination and cooperation between the two states in the political economic security military and other fields. It also supervises the implementation of this policy and adopts the plans and decisions that are made by the executive body the foreign affairs committee the economic and social affairs committee the defense and security affairs committee or any committee that is established in the future provided that the constitutional provisions of the two countries are respected.
- D. The supreme council's decisions are binding and effective within the framework of the constitutional laws and rules of the two countries except for those decisions which require the approval of the executive or legislative authorities in the two countries under their constitutional provisions.

E. The supreme council defines the subjects on which the committees concerned have the right to make decisions. Once they are issued these decisions assume an executive nature within the framework of the constitutional laws and rules of the two countries except for those decisions which require the approval of the executive or legislative authorities in the two countries under their constitutional provisions.

### **2. The Executive Body:**

The executive body will consist of the prime ministers of the two countries and a number of ministers concerned with the relations between them. This body will assume the following tasks:

- A. To follow up on the implementation of the decisions and to submit reports to the supreme council on the phases of implementation.
- B. To coordinate the recommendations and decisions of the specialized committees and to submit the proposals to the supreme council.
- C. To hold meetings with the specialized committees whenever the need arises.
- D. The executive body will meet at least once every six months and more often when necessary at a venue to be agreed upon.

### **3. The Foreign Affairs Committee:**

- A. The foreign affairs committee will consist of the two countries' foreign ministers.
- B. The foreign affairs committee will meet at least once every two months and more often when necessary in the two countries' capitals on a rotating basis.
- C. The foreign affairs committee will seek to coordinate the foreign policy of the two countries with regard to their relations with all countries. The committee will work to coordinate their activities and stands at Arab and international organizations. The relevant plans will be drawn up and submitted to the supreme council.

### **4. The Economic and Social Affairs Committee:**

- A. The economic and social affairs committee will consist of the ministers concerned in the two countries in economic and social sectors.
- B. The economic and social affairs committee will meet in the two countries' capitals on a rotating basis at least once every two months and more often when necessary.
- C. The economic and social affairs committee will be responsible for working to attain economic and social coordination between the two countries and for drawing up the recommendations that will lead to such coordination.
- D. The recommendations adopted by the economic and social affairs committee will take effect after they have been endorsed by the supreme council in accordance with the constitutional provisions of the two countries.

### **5. The Defense and Security Affairs Committee:**

- A. The defense and security affairs committee will consist of the two countries' ministers of defense and interior.
- B. The defense and security affairs committee will be responsible for studying the adequate measures needed to safeguard the two countries' security and for suggesting joint measures to confront any aggression or threat endangering their national security or any unrest that may disturb their internal security.

C. All plans recommendations and measures prepared by the defense and security affairs committee will be submitted to the supreme council for endorsement after taking into consideration the constitutional rules of the two countries.

### **6. The General Secretariat:**

- A. A general secretariat will be created to follow up on the implementation of the provisions of this treaty.
- B. The general secretariat will be headed by a secretary general who will be appointed by the supreme council.
- C. The headquarters specialization basis and budget of the general secretariat will be determined by the supreme council.

### **Closing Provisions:**

- A. Special agreements shall be concluded between the two countries in the fields covered by this treaty such as the economic security defense and other fields in accordance with the constitutional rules in each of the two countries and shall complement this treaty.
- B. This treaty shall take effect after being ratified by the authorities of the two countries in accordance with their constitutional provisions.
- C. Each of the two countries will abrogate any law or regulation which is not in line with this treaty. Such abrogation will be done in a way that does not violate any constitutional provision in either country.

## **III. Defense and Security Agreement, September 1, 1991**

Based on the Brotherhood, Cooperation, and Coordination Treaty between the Lebanese Republic and the Syrian Arab Republic signed in Damascus on May 20, 1991 and ratified by the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies on May 27, 1991 in Beirut, including its third, fifth, and sixth Articles, particularly Clause 5 of the sixth Articles, agreement has been reached on the following:

### **1. Structure**

A defense affairs committee consisting of the two countries' defense and interior ministers is to be formed. This committee will meet every three months, alternating between the capital cities of Beirut and Damascus or in any other location agreed upon, and will also meet whenever it is deemed necessary. The committee may seek assistance from any of the chiefs of the two countries' security authorities or from the chiefs of other branches of the two ministries. The army will meet every month, alternating between the capital cities and will meet whenever the need arises at an agreed upon location to implement the defense and security committees' programs and supervise their details.

### **2. Missions**

The defense and security affairs committee is charged with studying ways to safeguard the two states' security and with proposing joint plans to confront any aggression or threat against their national security and any disturbance that may upset either country's internal security.

In implementing the contents of Article III of the Brotherhood, Cooperation, and Coordination Treaty, the following must be realized:

In an effort to reaffirm the two states' pledge and ensure that Lebanon does not become a source of threats against Syria's security and vice versa, the military and security

authorities in the two countries must implement the following:

A. Ban all military, security, political, and media activity that might harm the other country.

B. Refuse to give refuge to, facilitate the passage of, or provide protection to persons and organizations that work against the other state's security. If such persons or organizations take refuge in either of the two states, that state must arrest them and hand them over to the other side at the latter's request.

C. To enable the military and security services in each of the two states to carry out their duty of implementing the aforementioned Clauses A and B, these services must meet regularly in each of the two countries to exchange information involving all issues of strategic, national, and internal security, including those related to drugs, major financial crimes, terrorism, and espionage. The military and security services will coordinate their work to follow up and resolve these issues within each country as well as abroad, and will cooperate with international institutions as necessary. All legal and procedural steps must be taken to facilitate the joint action of the two states' authorities as part of the agreement to expedite the adoption of legal prosecution and ways to solve these problems.

D. The two countries' defense ministries and their relevant departments will meet every three months, alternating between the capital cities, and as necessary, to exchange information on everything that concerns the

two countries' security and all hostile activities in an effort to reach a mutual understanding on the dangers and their dimensions, and, consequently, to draw up integrated plans at various levels to confront these dangers. In this regard, the two Defense Ministries will establish joint organs to follow up and supervise strategic coordination.

E. The two countries' Ministries of Defense and Interior will increase the exchange of officers and troops through training courses at various levels, including the exchange of military instructors in the military colleges, in order to achieve a high standard in military coordination and adequate familiarity to confront common threats.

F. The ministerial committee for defense and security affairs will draw up the necessary plans to promote exchange and development in each country's civil defense field.

### **3. Final Provisions**

In addition to its tasks, the defense and security committee will do the following:

- Follow up the implementation of all the provisions of the agreement and give the necessary instructions to ensure its progress.

Propose to the Higher Council the bases, principles, and regulations that are bound to ensure full and effective implementation of the agreement.