



# COUNCIL OF LEBANESE AMERICAN ORGANIZATIONS

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ALI - American  
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Association – OH

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Lebanon – USA

CTALA - Central Texas  
Assoc. of Lebanese  
Americans – TX

HALA - Houston  
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LACLV - Lebanese  
American Committee  
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LACNC - Lebanese  
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Chairman

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The politically motivated closure of the Murr Television Station, MTV, in Lebanon is just another manifestation of the continuing syrianization process of Lebanon. The inability of dictatorial and terrorist regimes to tolerate any criticism has again reared its ugly head and claimed another victim. The Syrian regime in Lebanon and its secret service machinery do not comprehend the guarantees of freedom of expression mandated by the Lebanese constitution. Syria is clearly reacting to the threat to its domination over Lebanon after recent elections on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, brought victory to the unified Lebanese opposition movement. Our State Department must denounce in the strongest terms the Syrian occupation and this latest blatant attack on the basic human right for self-expression. The terrorist regime in Syria and its puppets in Lebanon have to hear a clear message that such attacks on civil liberties, the freedom of the press, and innocent civilians shall not be tolerated.

What is surprising are the statements made by US Middle East envoy David Satterfield, while in Lebanon, attacking the “Syria Accountability Act” that is being debated in Congress, at the same time as the Syrian puppet regime in Lebanon is attacking public freedoms guaranteed by the Lebanese constitution. To hold a terrorist regime accountable for the continuing protection and training it provides to a multitude of terrorist organizations in Syria and in Lebanon should be the duty of every freedom-loving person. The double standards that Mr. Satterfield is using to placate a terrorist regime and its agents must be denounced in the strongest terms.

The Council of Lebanese American Organizations, CLAO, calls upon our US Administration to lift the decades-long tacit approval of Syria's occupation of Lebanon. Syria's arsonist role in Lebanon has been finally exposed. Syria's role in Lebanon should have ended after the Israelis completed their withdrawal from the South, according to UN resolution 425, in June 2000. The terrorist regime of Syria maintains and arms terrorist organizations in Lebanon, continually endangering Lebanon's existence as a sovereign and independent nation. We raise our voices to demand that Syria be held accountable for its support of terrorism and we urge our US government to take strong actions to begin the process of liberating Lebanon from the Syrian yoke through the full implementation of UN resolution 520.

The Council of Lebanese American Organizations, CLAO