

Reform Program

FPM political program

May 2005



Plan

- Revitalize the constitutional institutions
- Economic recovery plan
- Administrative Reforms
- Reform the Judiciary
- Protect public freedoms
- Promote human rights and good governance
- Promote tourism
- Provide equal access to medical care
- Promote and protect the environment
- Integrate the Diaspora into the process
- Rehabilitate the educational system
- Citizenship building
- Foreign Affairs: Recapture the initiative
- Restructure armed forces

Revitalize Constitutional Institutions

- Current Situation

- Institutions handicapped and controlled by occupier
- Patron-client political system
- Three-headed State leadership: Vacuum at the helm
- Lack of genuine representation in Parliament due to unconstitutional electoral law
- Political anomalies in democratic process:
 - Loyalists and opponents cohabit in same government
 - Prime Ministers and Ministers boycott their own government at will
- No constitutional deadlines for appointing governments and resolving disputes
- MPs as brokers of services to their constituencies, rather than legislators & monitors of government
- MPs as representatives of their sects and regions, not as representatives of the nation

Revitalize Constitutional Institutions II

- Objective
 - Re-start the institutions
 - Optimize the constitutional process
- Actions
 - New electoral law
 - Small constituency, one-man vote, majority system
 - Large constituency, proportional vote, party system
 - Enforce the right to vote and run for office for expatriates
 - Cancel the naturalization decree (1994)
 - Assign constitutional deadlines for appointing governments and for submitting, debating and passing legislation
 - Adhere to the principle of separation of powers
 - Non-cumulative mandates for MPs and Ministers
 - Create a Shadow Parliament to maintain links with civil society sectors

Economic Recovery I

- Current Situation
 - National debt very high
 - Economic stagnation
 - Obligatory reserves low
 - Cost of debt extremely high
 - Instability of financial markets
 - Private sector marginalized
 - Trade deficit
 - High rate of unemployment
 - Keynesian approach to the economy gives priority to public sector and concentrates effort into one geographic area
 - No vision or strategy for an economic positioning of Lebanon in the Middle East
 - No legal or institutional framework for privatization and modernization plans
 - Archaic fiscal, financial and monetary instruments

Economic Recovery II

- Objectives
 - Halt the drain and manage the public debt
 - Increase revenues
 - Reduce expenditures
 - Remedy areas of structural imbalance in the economy
 - Create institutional framework for integrating Lebanon in world economy
- Actions
 - Global financial audit of treasuries of all public administrations & sectors
 - Fiscal Restructuring
 - Enlarge the fiscal base
 - Favor indirect taxes
 - Improve tax collection
 - Implement plan for cleansing public administrations and rationalize expenditures (Refer to Administrative Reform)
 - Accelerate Judiciary Reform as a first step in fighting corruption (Refer to Judiciary Reform)
 - Design plan for economic positioning of Lebanon in the Middle East

Economic Recovery III

- Actions

- Create appropriate legal and institutional framework for modernizing the Beirut stock and financial markets
- Urge creation of Investment Fund whose underlying assets are Lebanese bonds and equities, and market it in worldwide financial markets
- Begin developing and implementing privatization program
- Adopt initial plan for rectifying defects in privatization program institutions. Candidates for privatization are :
 - MEA
 - EDL
 - Casino du Liban
 - PTT
- Accelerate joining the WTO and signing Euromed Partnership / Association Agreements
- Implement a tourism incentives and development plan (Refer to Tourism Program)

Administrative Reform I

- Current Situation
 - Public administration is politicized
 - Administration reflects and amplifies the defects of political confessionalism and patron-client political system
 - Bloated administration
 - Bureaucratic inertia
 - Widespread corruption
 - Obsolescence of certain departments
 - Lack of oversight and control of expenditures
 - Exception has become the rule in public supply chain and human resources management (70% on contract basis)
 - Frustration and apathy among public sector employees and contractors

Administrative Reform II

- Objectives
 - Purging the administration
 - Modernizing administrative procedures
 - Bringing the administration closer citizens, enterprises and the private sector
- Role
 - Maintaining order
 - Defining and issuing standards and norms
 - Providing services and information
- Actions
 - Amending articles 60, 61, et 62 of the municipal code to grant autonomy to municipal authorities
 - Channel all contact between civil servant and the citizen to:
 - One counter to submit requests
 - One counter to receive completed procedures
 - Additional electronic (Internet) window to submit requests and delivery of completed procedures by mail

Administrative Reform III

- Actions

- Launch the “e-administration”:
 - Electronic portals for all public services
 - Computerize customs services, particularly for commercial enterprises
 - Computerize fiscal/tax documents
 - Electronic health cards
 - Electronic electoral cards
 - Administrative procurement via e-based bidding
- Establish a national Vital Statistics center to provide periodic data on household consumption, price indices, trade balance, labor market, etc.
- Reform the Government Accounting Office (GAO), including the appointment of its chairman by the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC)
- Eliminate obsolete departments (Information Ministry, The Vegetables and Fruits Office, The Green Plan Administration, etc.)
- Program for personnel reduction (starting with contractors)
- Adopt ISO 9002 specifications and standards for some services
- Compensation scheme linking salaries to performance and client satisfaction
- Internal communication plan to promote ethics in the performance of public services
- Issue a Guide to Administration, including all services, requirements and places of availability

Judiciary Reform I

- Current Situation
 - Politicized legal system used for political purposes (e.g. Fictional files as an instrument of intimidation).
 - No boundaries between judges and politics (Dangerous trend: more than a magistrate have been nominated Ministers of Justice)
 - Structural deficiencies leading to a non-independent judiciary:
 - Composition of certain entities (e.g SJC)
 - Financial dependence
 - Non-adherence with legal process
 - Widespread corruption
 - Very high cost of justice to the citizen-taxpayer
 - Poorly compensated judges are more susceptible to bribes and limit the pool of bright talent entering the profession
 - Archaic procedures in the judiciary system
 - Inefficiency: Extremely lengthy procedural deadlines
 - Lack of specialized judges and bureaus able to keep up with economic and social progress (Finance, IT, etc.)

Judiciary Reform II

- Role
 - Provide civil peace and fight corruption and criminality
- Objective
 - An independent, efficient, transparent and accountable Judiciary
- Actions
 - Introduce the idea of electing judges (Process & conditions to be determined)
 - Independent budget under the full authority of the SJC
 - Set up a watchdog entity to look into malfunctions of the Judiciary. This entity has to be fully empowered with imposing disciplinary actions where necessary
 - Raise the financial compensation package for judges
 - Implement the recently adopted professional code of ethics for judges
 - Computerize administrative procedures
 - Activate partnership agreements with countries with distinguished judicial systems such as Austria, Italy and France.

Public Freedoms I

- Current Situation

- Stifling of public freedoms under occupation and is ongoing after end of occupation.
- Rights granted on paper but not in practice.
- Media reflect sectarian-communitarian logic and patron-client political system
- Censorship and bans (1962 Printed Matter Act)

Public Freedoms II

- Objectives
 - Real laws v/s virtual laws
 - Free the media from the grip of the sects and political money
- Actions
 - Enshrine the right to demonstrate in the Citizenship Charter
 - Abrogate the Printed Matter Act of 9/14 /1962 and refer violations in the media to the Penal Code.
 - Repeal Decree 7997 (1996)
 - Reopen the MTV television channel
 - Professional Ethics Charter for the media.
 - Revise the bylaws of the Higher Media Council to grant it greater independence
 - Abolish the death penalty
 - Abolish the “Crimes of Honor” waiver of penalty
 - Abolish all types of gender discrimination

Promote Tourism I

- Diagnosis / Present Condition

- Lebanon missing from international tourism
- Poor budget and absence of any scientific planning
- Neglect of the sector by the executive and the legislative
- Lack of comprehensive strategy to develop the infrastructure
- Tourism laws that are out of date with modern developments
- Absence of standards in the industry and models of classifications
- Rising ticket prices for travel in and out of Lebanon due to monopolistic policies
- Impractical opening of Lebanese skies to charter industry
- Deteriorating communications network and deficient road and city signs
- Lack of any planning for the remediation of historical and archeological sites
- Shortage in qualified personnel
- Cumbersome and costly passport and visa process
- Costly passport costs for emigrants
- Lack of reliable and accurate statistics

Promote Tourism II

- Objectives

- Develop the tourism sector, increase its revenues and develop new markets

- Facilitate communications from and into Lebanon

- Year-round tourism programs

- Develop specialized tourism (business, cultural, health, religious, eco-tourism, sports, etc.)

- Actions

- Classify all tourism enterprises according to international standards

- Create a monitoring body from both the private and public sectors

- Issue statistics and data to assist in developing a comprehensive plan to grow the sector

- Plan for rehabilitating touristic facilities and archeological sites that encompass all regions of Lebanon

- Sign partnership contracts with international and local institutions for the development and rehabilitation of certain facilities and utilities

- Effective exploitation of facilities and installations, especially through the BOT

Promote Tourism III

- Actions

- Open new offices for tourism and conventions, and rehabilitate existing ones, in Lebanon and throughout the world.
- Promotions program in Lebanon and internationally
- Reduce visa and passport fees. Simplify procedures to obtain them
- Eliminate visas for nationals of certain countries, and grant long term visas for other countries. Simplify procedures for obtaining visas
- Develop land and sea travel and communications with help from the public and private sectors.
- Create an “Emigrant Month” to promote and encourage contacts between Lebanon and the countries of emigration.

Provide Equal Access to Health Services I

• Current Situation

- High cost of medical care
- Lack of an efficient control mechanism for public health spending
- Poor funding of public health services
- Aging population and high life expectancy
- Lack of a coherent and comprehensive health policy
- Lack of primary health care services because not covered by insurance companies
- Concentration of medical care in a few centers and unavailability in rural areas
- Oversupply of products and services that burden the public health budget
- Imbalance in human resource (too many doctors and too few nurses)
- Effort focused on building hospitals rather than fixing the structural deficiency in the health care sector

Provide Equal Access to Health Services II

- Objectives
 - Provide equal access to health services
 - Provide for adequate quality of health care
- Actions
 - Subcontract the spending management to private services companies of the TPA brand (Third Party Administrator)
 - Create a national Higher Health Council to provide for an independent management of this sector in partnership with the private sector and representatives of civil society
 - Global health care strategy and restructuring plan for the sector
 - Deregulation and rationalization of the import of drugs and medical equipment
 - Development of primary care services, family medicine and preventive medicine
 - Centralization of medical insurance funds
 - Revise the “national health account” project with a “health card” for each citizen, including dental care
 - Implement a human resources policy that aims at matching the offer with the demand

Protecting the Environment I

- Current Situation
 - Savage urbanization
 - Air pollution
 - Sea and underground water pollution
 - Fauna deterioration
 - Deterioration of the national fauna and flora
 - Lack of household and industrial waste treatment
 - No global and integrated environmental policy

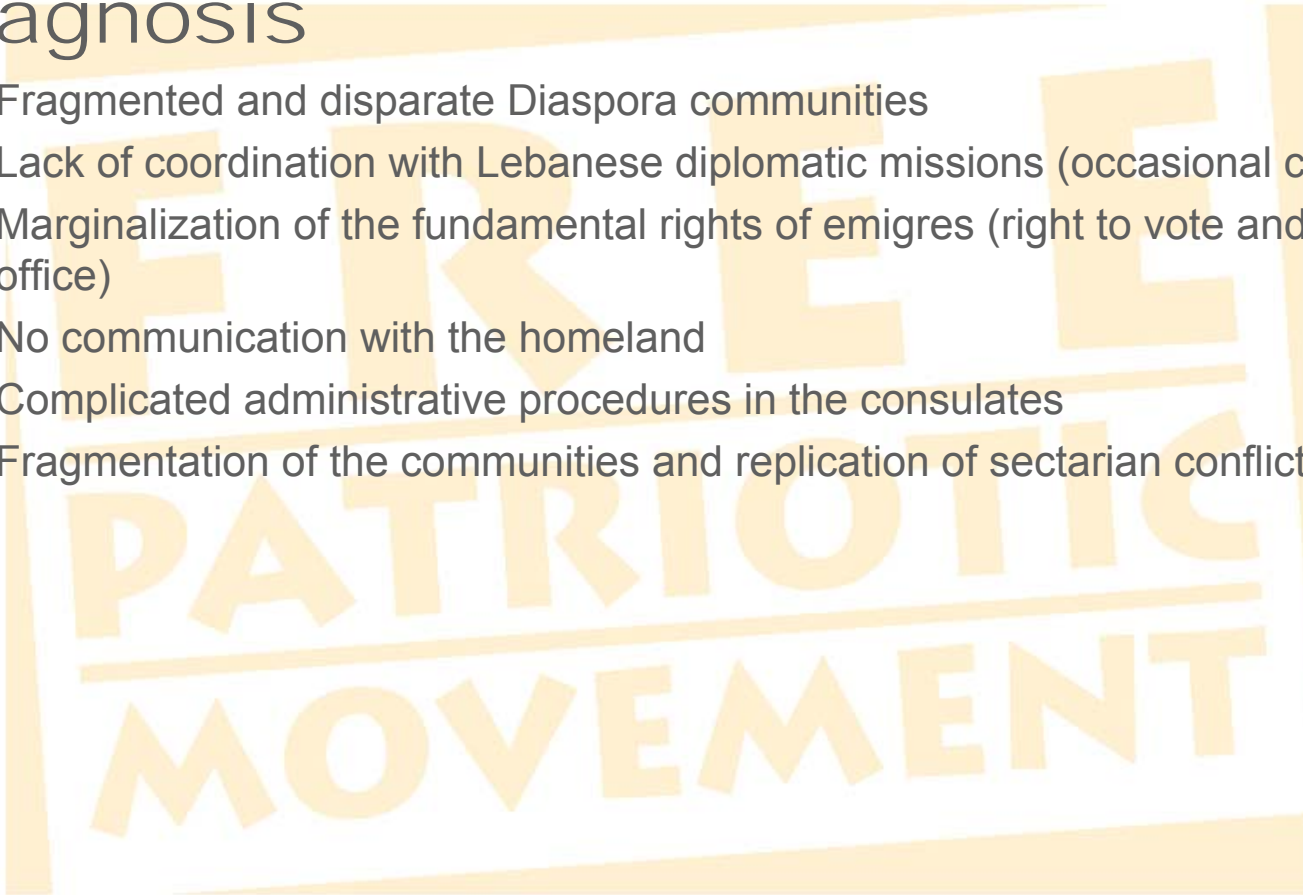
Protecting the Environment II

- Objectives
 - Preserving and protecting the sources of life: air, soil and water.
 - A holistic approach to environmental issues
- Actions
 - A comprehensive plan for preserving the environment, involving the ministries of the Interior, Public Works, Energy, Health and the Environment.
 - Plan for aquifers and rivers water purification
 - Program for cleaning the ocean floor in collaboration with international partnership agreements
 - Impose a Green Tax: The polluter must pay
 - A strict control on deforestation
 - A comprehensive reforestation program through international partnership agreements
 - Environmental education must be integrated in the school syllabus and tested at official exams
 - Declare some areas as “natural reserves” and stem savage urbanization
 - Reinstate “Tree Day” as a time of national contemplation on the threats to the environment and develop appropriate solutions

Integrating the Diaspora I

- Diagnosis

- Fragmented and disparate Diaspora communities
- Lack of coordination with Lebanese diplomatic missions (occasional cooperation)
- Marginalization of the fundamental rights of emigres (right to vote and run for office)
- No communication with the homeland
- Complicated administrative procedures in the consulates
- Fragmentation of the communities and replication of sectarian conflicts



Integrating the Diaspora II

- Objectives
 - Reinforce the mechanisms of cooperation with Lebanese in host countries
 - Integrate Lebanese immigrants in their homeland
- Actions
 - Create a new Ministry of the Diaspora
 - Create framework for cooperation with diplomatic missions on a global scale
 - Create lobbies grouping the major Lebanese political trends
 - Pass a new electoral law that asserts the right of emigrants to vote and run for office.
 - Encourage the creation of an Investment Fund based on Lebanese assets drawn on Lebanese enterprises and institutions..

Education Reform I

- Current Situation

- Dislocated educational system
- Lack of unified syllabus and comprehensive educational planning
- Inadequacy between offer and demand in the education and job markets
- Students surplus in the literary/humanities and law fields
- Weakness in some key sectors needed to drive growth:
 - Information technology
 - New technologies
 - Foreign languages
- Lack of resources and capabilities in public schools and the Lebanese University system
- Politicization of Lebanese University
- Extreme centralization of institutions and diplomas
- Deficiency in scientific research
- No match between educational system and job market
- All the shortcomings of public administration
 - Corruption, heavy bureaucracy, inability to keep up with challenges of the time

Education Reform II

- Objectives
 - Education:
 - Knowledge of the body
 - Knowledge of nutrition
 - Man and Life
 - Man in society: Dialogue, diversity, the acceptance of others
 - Informing:
 - Matching offer and demand in the labor market
- Actions
 - Delegate licensing to specialized institutions that meet the challenges of the labor market and in line with the economic positioning plan for Lebanon.
 - Develop a history textbook that adopts a scientific method for history writing and a multi-narrative approach to explain religions and sects in Lebanon
 - Involve the private sector in managing public schools (Management Contract) and in managing universities

Citizenship I

- Current Situation

- Patron-client political system
- Confessionnalism/sectarianism
- Feudalism
- Profiteering and opportunism
- Lack of a sense of belonging
- Individualism



Citizenship II

- Objectives
 - Promote liberty over all other values
 - Consolidate cultural diversity
 - Establish the right to be different
 - Emancipation of women
- Actions
 - Draft a Charter of the Rights of the Lebanese Citizen
 - Adopt optional civil marriage
 - Introduce a civil status law for managing personal status, especially in the areas of inheritance and family law
 - Introduce a system of quota for women in public administrations, public institutions, and representative councils.

Foreign Policy I: Re-capture the Initiative

- Current Situation

- Wave of democracy sweeping a new Middle East
 - Elections in Iraq
 - Elections in Palestinian territories
- Re-launch the Israeli-Palestinian peace process
- War on fundamentalism and terrorism
- Rise in oil prices
- Inward orientation of Arab world
- Lebanon not a player on the international scene
- Isolation of Syria by the West
- Weakening of Iran/Syria axis
- Hezbollah issue

Foreign Policy II

- Objectives
 - Recapture the initiative in foreign policy
 - Promote peace, convergence of religions, and dialogue between cultures in the Middle East
 - Promote Human Rights and the right to difference
 - Promote Lebanese citizenship as a model for a modern Arabism
 - Reject the settling of Palestinian refugees on the ground of maintaining Lebanon's demographic and cultural identity
 - Defend the right of the Palestinians to a state and an identity
 - Diplomacy as a tool to incentivize the economy (promote investments and tourism in Lebanon)
 - Relationship with Syria on the basis of common interests:
 - Exchange diplomatic representation
 - Revise all bilateral agreements in light of Lebanon's national interest

Restructure Military Forces I

- Current Situation

- The military is politicized
- The political regime is militarized
- Security as a substitute for democracy: A failure
- New threats : terrorism, religious fanaticism, money laundering and drug trafficking
- Overlap in responsibilities and overstepping by certain administrations of their prerogatives.
- Bureaucratic inertia
- Archaic structures and methods
- Inefficiency
- Obsolescence of certain entities

Restructuring Military Forces II

- Role
 - Defend the borders
 - Ultimate defender of the Republic's constitutional institutions
 - Consolidating national unity
- Objectives
 - Refocus the army on its primary mission
 - Restructuring the army and security forces to face new threats
 - A modern, efficient and agile army
 - An army that is part and parcel of its society
- Actions
 - Implement changes at the top of the hierarchy. Restructure the upper ranks
 - Engage into new partnerships with friendly countries for the purpose of enabling the human resources and developing best practices and processes
 - Redefine the curriculum of the officer training program (university degree as a prerequisite)
 - Adopt the concept of local brigades
 - Develop mobile units