

Dr. Walid Phares' Assessment and Strategy for Lebanon

The status quo is not working.

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, March 22, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On the eve of Secretary Pompeo's visit to the Middle East and to Lebanon, AMCD advisor, Dr. Walid Phares gave his assessment of the present US strategy and made suggestions for changes going forward.

The traditional US strategy toward Lebanon is to continue support for the Lebanese army with the understanding that they help us in the fight against terrorism. During this visit, Secretary Pompeo will likely request that the Lebanese government distance itself from Hezbollah and put financial pressure on the terrorist organization to force it to disarm and eventually to withdraw from Lebanon entirely.

Dr. Phares believes this strategy will not work. He believes the US would be better off engaging the civil society of Lebanon and lift up the opposition. Said Phares, "The government of Lebanon is hopelessly entangled with Hezbollah now and is, in essence, controlled by it. Hezbollah intimidates the leadership of the armed forces and at the same time has an influence within its ranks. Asking the Government and the Army to disarm Hezbollah is a futile request."

Dr. Phares would rather see the Venezuelan model extended to Lebanon. He continued, "The US should by-pass the government of Lebanon and directly engage with the civil opposition, which does not want to be dominated by Iran. A similar strategy might also work

in Iraq, as it too is coming increasingly under Iran's thumb. Our strategy should be to support those elements in both societies who desire to live free from Iranian tyranny."



Dr. Walid Phares at the UN Security Council

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