

**Commentaries & Reactions related to the ‘Democratic Gathering’ (PSP) Draft Bills
presented at the 2nd Parliamentary Session**

Press Correspondents reported on June 15, 2010 that the Parliament voted during its Second Parliamentary Session on the ‘Democratic Gathering’ draft bill – presented by MPs Walid Jumblatt, Elie Aoun and Alaeddine Terro - concerning granting civil rights to Palestinian refugees in Lebanon (amendment of labour, social security and foreign property ownership laws, to the benefit of Palestinian refugees). This second parliamentary session witnessed heated debates with MPs failing to reach an agreement: MPs from the ‘Loyalty to the Resistance’ Bloc voted in favour of the draft bill, while the Phalange Party, the Lebanese Forces and the ‘Change and Reform’ blocs voted against based on “fears that “rushing” the amendments would eventually lead to the ‘naturalization’ of Palestinians in Lebanon. The Head of the House of Deputies, Mr. Nabih Berri referred the PSP draft law on Palestinians to the Parliamentary Commission of Administration & Justice for further study. MP Robert Ghanem told reporters “We will resume studying on July 5 those suggestions and determine on one hand what is acceptable from a humanitarian perspective to improve the inappropriate living conditions of our brothers, but on another hand the state has rights...and should be able to spread its authority over all Lebanese territories.”

A series of talks among March 14 Forces resulted in the formulation of a joint proposal. MP Nouhad El Mashnouk was delegated to coordinate with opposition parties and MP Walid Jumblatt.

Party	Post	Draft Bill	Commentaries
A. On the Lebanese Side			
Mr. Michel Suleiman	President of Lebanon		<p>“Our firm rejection of the settlement/naturalization (of Palestinians) does not entail a refusal to host our Palestinian brothers and to look after their humanitarian rights, it is rather prelude/to lay the foundation for the Right to Return until the establishment of a State that is capable of living/that makes life safe. That’s why Lebanon stresses on what was stipulated by the Arab Initiative”, a statement by President Michel Suleiman dated May 26, 2008.</p> <p><i>(Al-Akhbar, 4 proposals divided Lebanon and did not unify the Palestinians, June 28, 2010)</i></p>
March 14 Bloc	Secretariat General	v (undergoing study)	<p>-The March 14 General Secretariat insisted in its regular meeting on June 23 on the adoption of the ‘humanitarian’ rights that improve the refugees’ living conditions rather than ‘civil’ rights from a political and administrative perspective. And released a statement pointing out: “What is being proposed is not the civil rights of Palestinian refugees from a political and administrative perspective but rather some humanitarian and social measures that guarantee the refugees a decent living without alerting domestic balances.” The Secretariat General’s statement also called on Lebanese parties to discuss the issue rather than politicize it. (The Daily Star, <i>Parliament discusses granting basic rights to Palestinians:</i></p>

		<p><i>Draft law would improve refugees' plight but not grant citizenship, June 24, 2010)</i></p> <p>-The Secretariat General for the March 14 Forces released a statement following its meeting on June 30: "The issue of humanitarian and civil rights for Palestinian refugees was evoked in a very pressing manner, "and it aimed at highlighting the Lebanese division, more than it aimed at according the refugees their legal rights. What was required instead was pursuing the constructive effort carried out by the former Lebanese government, in cooperation with the Palestinian Liberation Organization, on the basis of the two-legality relationship..." (Posted on the 'March 14' website, June 30, 2010)</p> <p>-A meeting was held on July 1 at the office of the Head of The Future Bloc in the Parliament, Mr. Fouad Siniora: Attendees discussed the issue of Palestinian refugees 'humanitarian' rights, noting that this is the first time that the Forces of March 14 and the Future Movement engage in a serious discussion on the possibility of drafting a draft bill related to those rights in order to present a unified proposal to the Parliament, with the possibility of their benefiting from services in the Health & Labour sectors. It was also noted that attendees agreed 1) on the topics of the right to work and the health guarantees; 2) to discuss the issue of the right to property in another meeting; 3) to broaden their contacts to include all the members of 14 March – deputies and non-deputies – to ensure that all members will participate in the discussions; 4) to select a sub-committee to formulate the final version of the topics of work & social security which will stress the Palestinian identity of every Palestinian refugee by stipulating the condition of the work permit and the responsibility of the international community through pushing UNRWA to contribute in the social security funds. (<i>An-Nahar, Coordination amongst the March 14 Forces on a draft bill to grant Palestinian refugees' rights, July 02, 2010</i>)</p> <p>-A series of talks among March 14 Forces resulted in the formulation of a joint proposal. MP Nouhad El Mashnouk was delegated to coordinate with opposition parties and MP Walid Jumblatt. Mr. El Mashnouk remarked to <i>An-Nahar</i> newspaper on July 11 that MP Jumblatt expressed his understanding to postpone discussions on granting Palestinian refugees the right of property ownership and restrict talks to work and social security rights.</p> <p>-MP Jumblatt expressed to <i>An-Nahar</i> that he has not heard anything about the new proposal and that he is waiting to see the proceedings of the forthcoming parliamentary session scheduled to be held on Thursday July 15)</p> <p>-Minister Boutros Harb noted to <i>An-Nahar</i>: "Ongoing contacts made a big progress that led to a new proposal that takes into consideration all stances as well as that of the Labour Ministry with regard to granting refugees a work permit but exempt them from fees." (<i>An-Nahar, An Opportunity to a Parliamentary Consensus on the Proposal related to Palestinian rights, July 11 & The Daily Star, Consensus nears over Palestinian social, work rights, July 12, 2010</i>)</p>
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Premier Saad Hariri	Prime Minister		<p>-“We will not accept a daily blood test to affirm that we are against naturalization...There is in Lebanon a group of people who go on maritime trips, to break the siege on the Palestinians living in Gaza, however there will come a day we will witness the World heading for Lebanon to break the siege on its Palestinian residents...Depriving the Palestinians from their rights will constitute an investment in the biggest terrorist project in the coming future...” (As-Safir, <i>'Palestinian rights' divide 'Allies': Dangerous Partition amongst supporters...and the 'fearful'</i>, June 16, 2010)</p> <p>-“There are humanitarian, social and ethical duties, and the Lebanese state should assume the responsibility of providing them to the Palestinian brothers....Lebanon will not dodge these duties, which must be crystal-clear, and not be subject to any misinterpretation.” The Prime Minister went on to express his commitment to obtaining a cross-party agreement in exchange for security cooperation from various Palestinian factions, responsible for upholding law and order in the country's 12 refugee camps. Premier Hariri openly rejected the granting of citizenship: “In Lebanon's duties towards the Palestinians there is no window of naturalization...The international community has to bear also the responsibility that those Palestinians will have the right to go back to their homeland: Palestine, with Jerusalem as its capital... (If not) all of us in this region will pay the price and all of you around the world will pay the price.” (The Daily Star, <i>Hariri calls for national unity on granting rights to Palestinians: Premier voices commitment to cross-party agreement on issue</i>, June 30, 2010)</p> <p>-During the LPDC Press Conference, Premier Hariri stated: “The Palestinian rights are the Lebanese state's duty towards brothers who were expelled from their homeland...As concerns Lebanon's duties towards our brothers, there is no window for the consecration of naturalization or any procedure that contradicts the Right to return, or the expropriation of Palestine's identity. (Al-Akhbar, Hariri: <i>The Rights' issue is not subject to back and forth debates and discussions</i>, June 30, 2010)</p>
Mr. Fares Souaid	Head of the Secretary		<p>-“We are committed to what the Cabinet policy statement noted regarding the Palestinian</p>

	General		refugees' humanitarian rights". (The Daily Star, <i>Parliament discusses granting basic rights to Palestinians</i> , June 24, 2010)
Dr. Atef Majdalani	Member of Parliament		MP Majdalani stated that Palestinian rights should come in exchange for state sovereignty "over all Lebanese territories," in a possible reference to the Palestinian refugee camps. "The proposal to grant Palestinians civil rights should be discussed calmly." MP Majdalani added that UNRWA is responsible for helping Palestinians, but added that its services have receded lately. The Lebanese are ready to give a helping hand. He criticized the way the law was proposed, saying it was hasty. (Now Lebanon, <i>Majdalani: Palestinian rights</i> , June 29)
Mr. Farid el Khazen	Member of Parliament		Called for a roadmap for the Lebanese-Palestinian relationships, and welcomed the revival of the Lebanese Palestinian Dialogue Committee, asking for "the distinction between easy issues and other issues that need funding which is a direct responsibility of the international community, while there are issues that touch Lebanon's sovereignty." (As-Safir, <i>March 14: To discuss the refugees' rights with the "Palestine Liberation Organization"</i> July 7, based on an Interview on the "Voice of Lebanon" Radio Channel)
Mr. Oukab Sakr	Member of Parliament		"Not one MP was against the draft proposal in itself, but against its being presented as 'Mu'aajjal Mukarrar' (Accelerated/Pressing-Reiterated)." (OTV Channel, 'Al Haq Youkal', Episode on <i>Palestinian Refugees</i> , June 23, 2010)
Mr. Nouhad El Mashnouk	Member of Parliament		Commenting on the draft bill that is being prepared by Forces in the March 14 and the Future Movement, MP Nouhad el Mashnouk told Al Akhbar newspaper that the proposal is intended to be a humanitarian draft on a clashing and ambiguous issue; and all the info that is being circulated concerning the draft is not at all precise..." (Al Akhbar, <i>The Rights of Palestinians: A futuristic attempt towards a unified "March" stand</i> , July 08.2010)
Mr. Michel Pharaon	Former Minister of State in the Fouad Siniora Government		-Stressed on the need to avoid outbidding or giving the impression that the Christians are against taking decisions and steps towards granting Palestinians civil rights, however these steps should be approached gradually within a consensual context in view of the sensitive nature of the issue vis-à-vis the public. (An-Nahar, Pharaon: <i>The Cabinet is the right place to discuss the refugees' issue</i> , June 26, 2010) -Minister Pharaon told the Voice of Lebanon radio station that there is no need to exaggerate the issue of granting Palestinian refugees in Lebanon civil rights. "Some believe the Christian (parties) are against (granting Palestinians civil rights), but this is not true...the Cabinet is the right place to address the issue." He reiterated that no one will accept Palestinian naturalization in Lebanon. (Now Lebanon, <i>Pharaon: No need to exaggerate Palestinian rights issue</i> , June 25, 2010 – based on a statement to the Voice of Lebanon radio station)
Mr. Nouhad el Mashnouk	Member of Parliament		During the second parliamentary session, MP Mashnouk stated: "We are discussing a humanitarian facet related to the Palestinians, and we support the proposal." He then stressed that all people reject naturalization, most specifically the Palestinians, noting that between 1948 and 2002, Palestinians were allowed the right to ownership, nevertheless

			there was no connotation of ownership on the basis of naturalization: ownership in Mount Lebanon amounted to 2% and in the North 1% only. (As-Safir, 'Palestinian rights' divide 'Allies': Dangerous Partition amongst supporters...and the 'fearful', June 16, 2010)
The Lebanese Forces		v (undergoing study)	The Draft Bill proposed by the Lebanese Forces to simplify the lives of Palestinians in Lebanon is still undergoing extensive study (preliminary three-article draft was published in Al-Diyar, <i>The Lebanese Forces' Draft Bill to simplify the lives of Palestinians in Lebanon</i> , June 24, 2010)
Mr. Antoine Zahra	Member of Parliament		"The Lebanese Forces acknowledges the need to discuss the Civil rights of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, but we are against the hasten nature of the proposal 'Mu'ajjal Mukarrar'/Pressing Reiterated)" (MTV Channel, 'Bi-Maoudouiyeh', Episode on <i>Palestinian Refugees</i> , June 22, 2010)
Mr. Fadi Zarifeh	Leading member, Consultant of the party's Legal Directorate		"Draft bill is still under extensive study & discussions; the Lebanese Forces stresses on the 'Humanitarian' rights." (Mr. Fadi Zarifeh's feedback on the Lebanese Forces Draft Bill, phone conversation with the CEP coordinator, June 25, 2010)
The Progressive Socialist Party (PSP) – Democratic Gathering Bloc		v	Arabic & English versions of the Full text posted on http://www.cep-lb.org/news.htm
Mr. Walid Jumblatt	Head of the PSP		Addressing the Parliament during the second parliamentary session, MP Jumblatt stated: "You want to postpone the discussion, to postpone the problem? The siege has failed in Gaza and Hamas was reinforced, and likewise in Lebanon..." MP Jumblatt reminded the parliament of the "160 army martyrs who fell in the clashes of Nahr el-Bared..." Addressing the MPs who were against the proposals, he said: "What will you lose?" ...and concluded: "I have never seen anyone in my whole life more stupid than the Lebanese Right-Wing." (As-Safir, 'Palestinian rights' divide 'Allies': Dangerous Partition amongst supporters...and the 'fearful', June 16, 2010)
Mr. Wael Abu Faour	Minister of State		- Minister Abu Faour stated to An-Nahar newspaper that "the 'Palestine Pact' was delivered from Bkirki. We do not wish to administer the issue on the basis of conflict and division..." (June 26, 2010) -Minister Abu Faour emphasized to reporters in Rashayya that there was nothing political about the timing of the PSP draft bills: the timing is procedural and the file has been for a while on a heated fire. The 'Democratic Gathering' had forwarded the Draft Bills to the House of Deputies months ago; it was a coincidence that it ended up on the agenda of the 2 nd Parliamentary Session....Contrary to what certain people would like to imply, the Head of the PSP does not wish to trigger a division amongst the Lebanese, we support reconciliation, and we do not want that the Palestinian issue becomes again an internal conflict amongst the Lebanese." MP Abu Faour added that he believes that "the

		<p>reconciliation with the Palestinians is part of the Lebanese reconciliation, not division”, stating that “referring the draft bills to the Parliamentary Commission of Administration & Justice is an opportunity to a real national dialogue, and we call for granting the civil rights to Palestinians within the context of reconciliation and not Lebanese division because the era where the Palestinian was an element for partition and hounding is gone. We hope that the discussion that will take place at the Commission of Administration & Justice and in the Parliament be a national one, fair to the Palestinians and secures their dignity, but at the same time reassures the Lebanese – or a considerable fraction of the Lebanese – and secures its stability because keeping the camps in their current situation is not in the best interest of the Lebanese. MP Abu Faour then emphasized “the PSP’s rejection of ‘tawteen’, there’s no relationship between what we are proposing and ‘tawteen’, and we do not have any political agenda for ‘tawteen’ which we reject as do the Lebanese and the Palestinians”, criticizing the failure of the Lebanese government in regulating the Lebanese-Palestinian relationships.” (An-Nahar, <i>Abu Faour: We want to grant/pass the Palestinians’ rights within consensus and reconciliation, not within division</i>, June 28, 2010)</p> <p>-Denied being assigned the Palestinian File (Al Diyar, <i>Abu Faour denied being assigned with the Palestinian File</i>, June 28, 2010)</p>
Mr. Akram Shouhayib	Member of Parliament	<p>-Urged the Parliament to approve the amendment/draft bills: “I believe that this matter is essential in the Arab world, it is not acceptable not to grant social rights for the Palestinian individual.” (The Daily Star, <i>Parliament divided on granting Palestinian rights</i>, June 16, 2010)</p> <p>- MP Akram Shouhayib stated at Aley’s gathering stated that what the PSP & the deputies of the ‘Democratic Gathering’ have proposed is a clear draft bill requesting the granting of the fundamentals of a dignified living to people who refused to negotiate their Cause, and who insist on the right to return to their homeland Palestine. It (the proposal) is firstly only a part of the national Lebanese duty, secondly an Arab duty, & at all times a humanitarian duty for Lebanon, the country that believes in human rights and the justice of the Palestinian cause...” (Al Diyar, <i>Gathering in Aley in support of the Palestinians</i>, June 28)</p>
Mr. Alaeddine Terro	Member of Parliament	<p>Stated that the “we (PSP) stress on the right to return to Palestine and the establishment of the independent State of Palestine with Jerusalem as its capital, we also stress on our rejection to naturalization (tawteen) – as you (Palestinians) do – whereas some people want it as a scarecrow for the Lebanese, or at least a group of Lebanese....We are with you (Palestinians) and support granting you civil and humanitarian rights. Some say that our pace is hasty...With the Lebanese reconciliation being established, we do not want any discord on the Palestinian issue, in the same manner we do not want for this issue to constitute a controversy between the Palestinians and some Lebanese...”</p> <p>(An-Nahar, <i>The PSP organized a gathering in support of the Palestinian Rights – Terro: Some people are using the naturalization as a scarecrow</i>, June 28, 2010)</p>
Mr. Ghassan Jardali	Member of Parliament	<p>“Any people enduring the conditions faced by the Palestinians in Lebanon will not preserve his innocence.” (Al-Akhbar, <i>Palestinians placed in the status of 1969</i>, June 18, 2010)</p>

Mr. Antoine Saad	Member of Parliament		MP Saad considered that the debate that is currently taking place with regard to the humanitarian and civil rights of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon has to be objective and constructive. He stressed that the draft bill presented by MP Jumblatt to the Parliament is not directed towards any group or party, instead it was formulated for the Lebanese-Palestinian best interest. MP Saad then rejected the exploitation of the naturalization (tawteen) as a scarecrow to abolish the draft bill presented by MP Jumblatt. (As-Safir, <i>Meetings and Reactions to Granting Civil Rights for Palestinian refugees</i> , June 23)
Mr. Rami el-Rayess	PSP Media Officer		In answer to the comments on the 'hasten nature' of the PSP Draft bill, Mr. El-Rayess replied that since the beginning of 2010, the PSP had organized a roundtable to discuss the Civil rights of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon: "All the Lebanese political parties were represented at the roundtable, and expressed their openness to the draft bill. The roundtable was followed by consensus-building meetings wherein the PSP received positive feedback on the draft bill. The next logical step was the presentation of the Draft Bill at the Parliament. (MTV Channel, 'Bi-Maoudouiyeh', Episode on <i>Palestinian Refugees</i> , June 22)
Change & Reform Bloc		v	
Mr. Nematallah Abi Nasr	Member of Parliament	Proposed draft bill: "A Green Card" to provide the husbands and children of Lebanese women married to foreigners with a renewable (every 5 years) residency status that would grant them all civil rights except political rights. The card allows to work in public and private institutions (without a work permit; be exempted from visas, be part of public private schools and universities and benefit from social welfare). The 9-article proposal stipulates the condition of reciprocity	- "The Settlement has begun. 62 years have passed and we haven't accomplished one step ahead towards the return of Palestinians. The U.S., Israel and some of the Arab Countries see the solution to the Palestinian 'problem' in their settlement in Lebanon. MP Abi Nasr added that a reconciliation/compromise between Israel and the Palestinians is most likely to happen – one that will eventually lead to "They will consequently throw on us the refugees of 1948". He then referred to the ultimate solution outlined by the 'Beilin-Abu Mazen Document': "An International entity, other than UNRWA, will take over the rehabilitation of Palestinian refugees, and will collaborate with the Host Countries towards granting the Palestinian Refugees the Citizenship of those countries...We are in a 'Demographic Race' and we have come to realize that we cannot follow the pace of this race." (MTV Channel, 'Bi-Maoudouiyeh', Episode on <i>Palestinian Refugees</i> , June 22, 2010) -MP Abi Nasr stated that he supports the slogan "Lebanon comes First" (advanced by the March 14 Bloc – in their pre-elections ads), and expressed his fear that the extended presence of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon would lead to their naturalization; "Keeping the Palestinians in Lebanon kills the country and grants Israel a favour". He added that the issue of granting foreigners property rights in Lebanon should be well-studied: "It is not acceptable to grant the Palestinians civil rights while there are still armed Palestinian factions in the country." (Now Lebanon, <i>Abi Nasr voices fear against Palestinian naturalization</i> , June 26, 2010) -Stated that "a certain community might benefit from naturalization, since it is still engaged in a demographic race." (The Daily Star, <i>Phalange MP raps bid to grant Palestinians rights</i> , July 05, 2010)
Mr. Alain Aoun	Member of Parliament		Stressed the sensitive nature of the issue (Palestinian refugees' rights), criticizing the hasten

			nature of the PSP proposal “Accelerated/Pressing-Reiterated” (Mu’aajjal Mukarrar); the draft bill should undergo extensive study. He then stated that what was more dangerous than the presentation of the proposal in such a hastened manner was the instigation that occurred later. A solution should be formulated – without recourse to political and sectarian outbidding – noting that the solution of the status of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon should be the shared responsibility of the International Community, Arab States, and Lebanon. (OTV Channel, ‘Al Haq Youkal’, Episode on <i>Palestinian Refugees</i> , June 23, 2010)
Mr. Nabil Nicolas	Member of Parliament		At the second parliamentary session, MP Nicolas stated: “To whip ourselves today is a wrong discourse. We have to address ourselves to the International Community – being at the origin of the problem. All of us, Lebanese, agree on the fact that Palestinians should be granted their rights. We have to wait for a week or two to have unanimity on that issue.” (As-Safir, ‘ <i>Palestinian rights’ divide ‘Allies’: Dangerous Partition amongst supporters...and the ‘fearful’</i> ’, June 16, 2010)
Mr. Ibrahim Kanaan	Member of Parliament		At the second parliamentary session, MP Kanaan noted: “As concerns the content (of the PSP proposal), we are with the rights because it contributes to the limitation of terrorism, however this does not refute the fact that the Government needs to formulate a comprehensive proposal/draft bill taking into consideration work and health. And our natural/expected right is to discuss these issues with all the parliamentary blocs.” (As-Safir, ‘ <i>Palestinian rights’ divide ‘Allies’: Dangerous Partition amongst supporters...and the ‘fearful’</i> ’, June 16, 2010)
Ms. Gilberte Zouein	Member of Parliament		Defended votes against amending the laws: “We should not legislate for the rights of any people inside Lebanon while the Lebanese state is absent and does not care about the rights of women and children.” (The Daily Star, <i>Debate flares after failed bid to grant rights to Palestinians</i> , June 17, 2010)
The Phalange Party			
Mr. Amine Gemayel	Head of the Party		-“The File of the Palestinian Rights is a Masked Settlement... We all know that the U.S. wants ‘tawteen’ even if this came on the account of Lebanon.” Our neutral position vis-à-vis the Palestinian issue does not mean that we are against it, on the contrary we are all with the Palestinian issue and our neutrality serves Lebanon better.” (Al Balad, Gemayel: <i>The File of the Palestinian Rights is a Masked Settlement</i> , June 24, 2010) -On Monday June 28, the Phalange Party issued a statement criticizing the “challenge, compulsion, and intimidation” in the discussions on Palestinian civil rights...” such talk “reminds the Lebanese of past practices and violations, whose consequences we are still dealing with today.” The statement added that such practices will not shake the party’s “opposition to every step paving the way for naturalization (of Palestinians),” and also obstructed the government’s attempt to guarantee Palestinians a dignified stay in Lebanon. -Following his meeting with Mr. Salvatore Lombardo, the Director of UNRWA Affairs in Lebanon, Mr. Gemayel expressed his skepticism concerning the timing of the proposal on

		<p>the Palestinians' civil rights, noting that it comes in line with certain talks to resolve the Palestinian issue. He stated that "the right to property is a very advanced step towards naturalization, so is the right to work in professions that are not regulated by laws – an issue that ought to be discussed seriously with the syndicates as it is not feasible to pass decisions without conferring with these authorities – in addition to the fact that certain demands (included in the draft bills) will result in financial burdens to the Lebanese state, at a time when the government falls short of answering the Lebanese demands; an international responsibility that even UNRWA, as stated by its officials, became incapable of fulfilling its duties." Mr. Gemayel noted that "the Phalange Party had presented draft bills to improve the situation of the Palestinians." (<i>As-Safir, 14 March to discuss the refugees rights with the Palestinian Liberation Organization, July 01, 2010</i>) & <i>L'Orient-Le Jour, Gemayel: Le droit de posséder un logement est un pas avancé vers l'implantation, July 01, 2010</i>)</p> <p>-President Gemayel warned against any attempt to pass Jumblatt's proposed law through an absolute majority vote if consensus over the issue failed, noting that such a step would overthrow the national pact and the basis of national coexistence: "If they want a revolution, let them take such a step and if they are looking for a problem, then this is the perfect way, to create one." He added that if Palestinians were granted the rights that Jumblatt proposed, the international community would neglect their right of return. (<i>The Daily Star, Christian MPs drafting law to give Palestinians limited rights, July 08, 2010</i>)</p>
<p>Mr. Sami Gemayel</p>	<p>Member of Parliament</p>	<p>-Told Al-Manar Television on June 15 that he is concerned about the 'Democratic Gathering' Bloc leader MP Walid Jumblatt's proposal to the Parliament to grant Palestinian refugees in Lebanon civil rights. He criticized MP Jumblatt saying that his behavior "is not normal." (<i>Now Lebanon, Sami Gemayel says he is concerned about Jumblatt's positions, June 29</i>)</p> <p>-MP Gemayel tied the refugees' rights to the disarmament of Palestinian groups outside and inside refugee camps: "In return for rights being asked from the Lebanese state, responsibilities should be assumed". He called on Arab states and the international community to assume their responsibility and expressed his party's opposition to grant Palestinian refugees rights: "We cannot permit Palestinian refugees to be granted rights that the Lebanese lack, given the deficit in the National Social Security Fund, a shortage in hospitalization services and a lack of job opportunities amid the state's growing public debt." MP Gemayel highlighted "the importance of the Phalange Party's stance in line with other Christian parties" praising "their unity against a project that has been sought for the past 75 years in different ways...particularly with regard to selling land and the naturalization of Palestinians..." (<i>The Daily Star, Phalange MP raps bid to grant Palestinians rights, July 05, 2010</i>)</p> <p>- Insisted that any reform would have to be conditioned on Palestinian groups first giving up their arms, which are used to keep security in the country's 12 camps. (<i>The Daily Star, Palestinian groups urge civil rights reform, July 06, 2010</i>)</p>

Mr. Sij'an El Azzi	Member of the Political Bureau at the Phalange Party		<p>Pointed out that he is with granting Human Rights to Palestinian refugees, however he is strongly against granting them Civil Rights – a procedure that will lead to the ‘Settlement’/Tawteen of the Palestinians in Lebanon. He added that he is always ‘annoyed’ with any discussion debating the status of Palestinians in Lebanon: It is a conflict between two rights – the Lebanese rights & the Palestinians’. “Today the Palestinians are no longer refugees: The camps constitute a safe haven for fanatic factions...The way the PSP/Democratic Gathering’s draft bill was proposed was provokingly instigatory, as if it was presented to be refused.” El Azzi noted that the Draft Bill was intended to instigate Shiite-Palestinian sedition: If the Draft Bill was to be ratified, granting the Palestinians the right to work will jeopardize the employment of the Shiites in the South.</p> <p>El Azzi wondered about the timing of the presentation of the draft bill and the real intention behind it, and called upon Palestinians not to fall in the hands of ‘manipulators’ that will use them to achieve their goals.</p> <p>(OTV Channel, ‘Al Haq Youkal’, Episode on <i>Palestinian Refugees</i>, June 23, 2010)</p>
Mr. Nadim Gemayel	Member of Parliament		<p>Following his visit to Patriarch Elias Audi (Orthodox): “We dealt with this issue (Palestinian civil rights) in an extremely hasten manner, whereas the issue needs utmost precision and extensive discussions since we all know its highly sensitive nature. Lebanon cannot deal with this issue by itself: We should find a solution jointly with the United Nations and the Arab states – one that does not negatively affect Lebanon.” (Al Diyar, <i>Nadim Gemayel following his meeting with Audi: The situation creates frustration</i>, June 26, 2010)</p>
Mr. Fadi el-Habre	Aide of the Head of the Phalange Party		<p>“President Amine Gemayel and MP Walid Jumblatt share ‘sacred’ issues, in spite of the drastic divergences on particular issues that do not affect in anyway the strategic relationship even in the case of highly sensitive files such as the Palestinian file – we agree on the ‘humanitarian’ issues in that file and disagree on certain ‘civil’ issues.”</p> <p>(Al Diyar, <i>El Habre: Gemayel and Jumblatt share sacred issues</i>, June 26, 2010)</p>
Mr. Massoud el Achkar	Member of Parliament		<p>Mr. El Achkar was puzzled by the discourse on granting civil rights to Palestinian refugees in the current situation, demanding to keep this file away from outbidding, to retrieve it from the media, and to discuss it technically with the concerned stakeholders.</p> <p>(As-Safir, <i>Meetings and Reactions to Granting Civil Rights for Palestinian refugees</i>, June 23)</p>
Mr. Michel El Murr	Member of Parliament & Former Minister		<p>-During his meeting with the Head of the ‘Ba’ath (Resurrection) Arab Socialist’ Party in Lebanon in el-Amara MP El Murr stated: The position of the Christian Lebanese (vis-à-vis the PSP draft bill) shows cleverness and not stupidity If what is demanded is to own an apartment, membership in the NSSF, and other new burdens, what else is left? The Nationality, so that they would be able to vote? (Al-Diyar, <i>El-Murr met Shakar in el-Amara</i>, June 24, 2010)</p> <p>- Also noted: “Improving the Palestinian living conditions does not come via a hastened and dangerous proposal... The Parliamentary Commissions have to study the draft bill prior to taking an accelerated step ...”(An-Nahar, June 24, 2010)</p>

Dr. Tarek Mitri	Minister of Information	H.E. praised Prime Minister Hariri's response to the PSP proposal saying that it showed the Premier's commitment to the Cabinet's policy statement: "Granting Palestinians human right is the responsibility of everyone. We cannot hide behind fighting naturalization or raising tensions...everyone's credibility is at risk." (The Daily Star, <i>Debate flares after failed bid to grant rights to Palestinians</i> , June 17, 2010)
Loyalty to the Resistance Bloc		Called for dealing positively with the issue of granting civil rights to Palestinian refugees. (As-Safir, June 24, 2010)
Mr. Ali Fayyad	Member of Parliament	Mr. Fayyad noted that "all the excuses that are being presented to justify the delay in granting rights to the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon are unacceptable and rejected...We at Hezbollah have been demanding civil rights to the Palestinian people since 28 years, and it's about time to settle this issue. Mr. Fayyad added endorsing naturalization (tawteen) is in favour of Israel and against the resistance and the Lebanese national interests....When the issue was discussed in the Parliament, sectarian alignments surfaced resulting in the transfer of the draft bills to the parliamentary commission of Administration & Justice, in an attempt to provide a new opportunity for a wider national consensus on that matter." He then stated that all the Parliamentary Blocs – whatever their views might be – should deal positively and dutifully with the issue of Palestinian civil and humanitarian rights, under the umbrella of the Lebanese Constitution and the spirit of commitment to the National Unity. (As-Safir, <i>Granting Civil Rights will reinforce the Lebanese-Palestinian relationship</i> , June 26, 2010)
Mr. Hussein Musawi	Member of Parliament	Stated in the second parliamentary session: "We understand the fears from naturalization, however, do remember that we were convinced forty years ago – as was Imam El Sadr – that facilitating naturalization is an assault on the Palestinian people." (As-Safir, <i>'Palestinian rights' divide 'Allies': Dangerous Partition amongst the supporters...and the 'fearful'</i> , June 16, 2010)
The Liberty Front Mr. Fouad Abu Nader	Head	Visited Patriarch Sfeir and stated: "There is more than one question-mark on all these draft bills that have emerged suddenly on the Lebanese scene and triggered discussions in various directions", adding that "we consider the timing of the proposals very suspicious, ill-intended, and it has caused confusion on the Lebanese and Arab scenes. Since the very start of the Palestinian issue – 60 years ago – the Christian Lebanese were the ones who stood by the Palestinians, and opened their doors to them." (An-Nahar, June 26, 2010)
The National Dialogue Party Mr. Fouad Makhzoumi	Head of the party, Member of Parliament	MP Makhzoumi stated in a Press release that granting legislated civil rights to Palestinian refugees in Lebanon is the Lebanese state's duty: the subjugation that they are enduring is not related to the justified fears of their naturalization, but to Lebanon's Arab and civilized profile. (As-Safir, <i>Meetings and Reactions to Granting Civil Rights for Palestinian refugees</i> , June 23)
The Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee	Head	"Symbols and slogans are not enough; we must turn them into reality." (The Daily Star, <i>Hariri calls for national unity on granting rights to Palestinians</i> , June 30)

Ms. Maya Majzoub			
The Popular Bloc Mr. Elias Skaff	Former Member of Parliament		Visited Druze 'Sheikh el-Akl' (Druze Religious Authority): "We want to collaborate with everyone. There are regional circumstances which entail holding on to the principles and the political conviction, in the face of the problems surrounding Lebanon because of the Israeli politics which imposes itself on Arab nationalism, Palestine and the Palestinian rights. We, as Lebanese, have a broad role – having this extensive number of Palestinians on our territory. They have the right to return – a right that is denied by the Israelis so that Palestinians remain in their current place of residence, and to distract us with sectarianism and other issues. Regrettably these attempts are well received in certain instances." (An-Nahar, <i>Skaff visited Sheikh el-Akl: We want to collaborate with everyone</i> , June 26, 2010)
Ambassador Khalil Makkawi	Former Head of the Lebanese Palestinian Committee (LPDC)		H.E. stated that the discourse on the Palestinian refugees should be re-directed from discussing 'their' right to work to their right to return. During the coming two years, Lebanon should invest in its status at the Security Council to propagate the Right to Return of the Palestinian refugees. H.E. added that "he does not see a problem in the employment of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon: UNRWA is employing around 3,500 Palestinians." (MTV Channel, 'Bi-Maoudouiyeh', Episode on <i>Palestinian Refugees</i> , June 22, 2010)
Mr. Nasri el-Sayegh	Writer		"It is the Lebanese habit that whenever faced with a dilemma they redirect their attention and that of the people to another dilemma." Mr. el-Sayegh added that the Civil Rights are rights that should have been granted to Palestinian refugees in Lebanon a long time ago. Replying to El Azzi's comment on the fact that the camps are harboring fanatics, he pointed out that it is precisely for that reason that the civil rights should be granted. A solution has to be sorted at the earliest convenience – before the Regional Will imposes on Lebanon a more drastic solution. (OTV Channel, 'Al Haq Youkal', Episode on <i>Palestinian Refugees</i> , June 23, 2010)
Archbishop Beshara El Rahi	Maronite Archbishop		"We do not deny the need to grant Palestinians their civil rights; however there should be precautions to prevent 'Settlement'/Tawteen...The stand of the Christian deputies is that "granting these rights should be linked to conditions – to begin with improving the economic situation so that the Lebanese would be able to enjoy their civil rights, in the sense that job opportunities should be secured for the Lebanese to limit unemployment and migration. The Social Security should also be secured, as well as protecting the right to property for the Lebanese in the face of the prevailing wave of selling lands." Mr. El Rahi wondered "how can the Government grant civil rights to 500 thousands of Palestinians, while it cannot secure these rights to its citizens?" He hoped that analogous to the rights, there are duties to be demanded from the Palestinians, namely that camps be placed under the state's sovereignty, and seize the light & heavy arms, and monitor its use inside & outside the camps." Archbishop el Rahi hoped that "granting civil rights to Palestinians will not come on the account of the Lebanese, and called for taking the necessary precautions in order to prevent that the civil rights will be a prelude to impose their 'tawteen' in Lebanon,

			in view of Israel's refusal to carry out/abide by Security Council's Resolution 194." (An-Nahar: <i>El Rahi: We do not deny the Palestinian rights, but what is demanded are precautions to prevent naturalization</i> , June 24, 2010)
Sheikh Mohamed Rashid Kabbani	Mufti Lebanon		Sheikh Kabbani called on the Lebanese Government & the Parliament to embrace the Civil Rights of the Palestinian refugees who are residing temporary on its territory, and help them to exit the miserable life they endure inside the Palestinian camps. Mufti Kabbani stressed on the endorsement of the socio-economic rights for Palestinian refugees, and their rights to own a home & to legal inheritance. "We are entrusted with the Palestinian people in Lebanon until their return to their homeland Palestine is made possible." (Al Diyar, June 26, 2010)
The Maronite Bishops' Council			Following their July 6 th meeting, the Maronite Bishops Council stated: "Rights are tied to responsibilities, particularly to controlling weapons inside and outside refugee camps and placing them under the control of the Lebanese state..." The bishops stressed that the humanitarian rights of Palestinians should be addressed by the Lebanese state to ameliorate the refugees' living conditions. They also expressed fear that humanitarian demands would turn into a political domestic issue and lead to the settlement of refugees as permanent residents: "We fear denying (Palestinian refugees) the right to return and forcing their naturalization at times when the Lebanese are emigrating because of the economic and social crisis as well as Lebanon's small surface." (The Daily Star, Christian MPs drafting law to give Palestinians limited rights, July 08, 2010)
Mr. Youssef Salameh	Member of Parliament		Questioned "the timing of the presentation of the issue of the Palestinian refugees' rights to the Lebanese community", calling on MP Jumblatt to "build camps in the <i>mountain</i> to alleviate the Palestinian demographic congestion." Mr. Salameh voiced his fear against the fact that "the timing is a prelude to fierce security incidents, which will initially erupt inside the camps, aiming at a second stage to bait Hezbollah to take part in these clashes in order to weaken the party and the Palestinian rifle – in alignment with an international scheme that is not inclined for Iran's presence in the Orient Arab." (An-Nahar, <i>Salameh: The timing of the Palestinian rights may pave the way to fierce security incidents</i> , July 01, 2010)
Al-Jamaa Al-Islamiyya – Mr. Imad el Hout	Member of Parliament		- "It is wrong to think that granting rights to the Palestinian people is a favour from one people to another, and that the Palestinian people – our guests in Lebanon – are a burden on the country...A number of statistics has proven that the Palestinian expatriates send substantial amounts of money to their relatives, money that is spent in the Lebanese market and is part of the economic cycle... It is no longer appropriate to see that the whole world is trying to end the Gaza siege while we continue our siege of the camps." (As-Safir, <i>Granting Civil Rights will reinforce the Lebanese-Palestinian relationship</i> , June 26) -Warned that "fears about bolstering Sunni Moslem numbers would not be erased with

			unjust policies...True protection for the existence of Christians in Lebanon is the honest desire for Moslems. It is this desire that Christian leaders should protect from partiality and sectarian radicalism..."(The Daily Star, <i>Debate flares after failed bid to grant rights to Palestinians</i> June 17, 2010)
The Union of Democratic Lebanese Youth (ULDY)			The ULDY condemned the Parliament's indecision as "nil at dealing with a humanitarian issue, nil at viewing Palestinians as humans with rights, nil at escaping from political hatred toward a fraction of society, nil at dealing with racism that has surpassed the limits of reason."(The Daily Star, <i>Debate flares after failed bid to grant rights to Palestinians</i> June 17)
Campaign aimed at the rejection of the PSP draft bill			Christian sources, following closely the Campaign for the rejection of MP Jumblatt draft bill titled "Civil Rights for Palestinians", explained that this rejection was not based on a denial of the humanitarian rights for Palestinians but rather upon information which revealed Arab & International steps in the direction of imposing 'tawteen' as 'un fait accompli'. Based on this information, the Head of the 'Change & Reform' Bloc, General Michel Aoun, discussed with Syrian President Bashar El Assad that the repercussions of the Palestinian file go beyond Lebanon, and leniency with regard to the so-called Civil rights will mean approval of the Political rights: A matter which will eventually lead to the dismissal of the right to return hence imposing 'tawteen'. (Al Diyar, <i>Campaign aimed at the rejection of the PSP draft bill</i> , June 29, 2010)
The Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP)			
Mr. Hamelkart Ataya	Mu'tamad Palestine at the SSNP, Attorney	v (by Mu'tamaddiyate Palestine in the SSNP)	The Syrian Social Nationalist presented in a Press Conference a Draft Bill proposed by the Palestinian Commission (Mu'tamadiyyate Palestine) in the party. The draft bill prepared by Attorney Hamelkart Ataya, leading member of the Political Bureau of the SSNP, was developed and ratified by the Committee representing the SSNP at the Parliament – it represents both Lebanese & Palestinian CSOs. (Arabic & English version of the full text are posted on http://www.cep-lb.org/news.htm) (As-Safir, <i>The Socialist presents a new draft bill on civil rights</i> , June 17, 2010) -The Draft Bill includes in its first article a clear definition of "settlement" in order to de-link the civil and social rights (mentioned in the Lebanese Ministerial Statement) from the rejection of settlement mentioned in the Constitution. In parallel it is categorical that this does not conflict with the 'right of return' of Palestinians. The proposal bases its premise on International human rights instruments. It calls for access to all employment and social security rights and the de-linking of the reciprocity principle in the Labour Law with regards to Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. It also includes in article 2 a legal definition of the Palestinian refugee; facilitating thus the settling of the case of people without ID cards, family gathering claims and non- registered Palestinian claims (Arabic & English version of the full text are posted on http://www.cep-lb.org/news.htm)

			-“The Palestinians residing in Lebanon are not a tribe...the Lebanese state should ratify their rights.” (As-Safir, <i>Granting Civil Rights will reinforce the Lebanese-Palestinian relationship</i> , June 26, 2010)
Mr. Marwan Fares	Member of Parliament	v (by MP Fares himself)	Proposed a draft bill aiming to accord the right to work and the civil & socio-economic rights to Palestinian refugees in Lebanon – with the signatures of MPs Assaad Hardan, Assem Kanso, and Kassem Hashem. “The draft bill deals with the Palestinian refugees’ issue while emphasizing the right to return for the Palestinian people. “ MP Fares added that, as Speaker of Parliament, Mr. Nabih Berri promised, the draft bill will be discussed along with all the other draft bills (4) to be able to resolve the Palestinian matter. Mr. Fares noted that “the proceedings of the second parliamentary session were shameful to Lebanon and the Parliament. We witnessed a sectarian division as never before, one that is not appropriate: the issue is not about refugees but normal rights to people residing on Lebanon’s territory. He then addressed the Palestinians saying: “consider the SSNP deputies as Palestinians in the Parliament.” (As-Safir, <i>Between granting civil rights or human rights to Palestinian refugees</i> , June 24, 2010)
The Ba’ath (Resurrection) Party – Mr. Kassem Hashem	Member of Parliament		“The Party has and still is, since 62 years on, supporting our Arab people on the grounds of fraternity prior to the talks on any right – civil or humanitarian... the discourse about civil and humanitarian rights for the Palestinian people – according to the criterion of certain figures – is nothing but a racist, discriminatory discourse – one that is beyond fraternity and humanity.” Mr. Hashem noted that granting the Palestinian his rights is the thing that will embellish Lebanon’s image vis-à-vis the international Human Right organizations whose reports always condemned Lebanon’s violations to the rights of the Palestinian people.” (As-Safir, <i>Granting Civil Rights will reinforce the Lebanese-Palestinian relationship</i> , June 26)
‘The People’s Movement’ – Mr. Najah Wakim	President & One of the founders		Stated that the proceedings of the 2 nd Parliamentary Session “resembles to a large extent Similar parliamentary sessions convened during the pre-Civil War period”; asking “Does the Lebanese State approve that the Lebanese Expatriates be treated in the same manner as the Palestinians are subjected to in Lebanon?” (Al-Akhbar, <i>Palestinians placed in the status of 1969</i> , June 18, 2010)
Nasserite Nationalist Organization – Mr. Samir Charkass	Head		“The Palestinian situation is painful, and we would not be exaggerating when we say that depriving the Palestinian from the right to property is similar to a discriminatory act par excellence... Granting the Palestinian his civil and humanitarian rights will consolidate the economic situation and reduce the negative repercussions of unemployment...” (As-Safir, <i>Granting Civil Rights will reinforce the Lebanese-Palestinian relationship</i> , June 26)
Labour Democratic Party Mr. Elias Abou Rizk	Head		“---Here we are today discussing the Palestinian issue and granting them civil and socio-economic rights. This issue dates from 60 years; and today, all of a sudden we want to grant them their rights. Why? Nobody knows. These issues are being discussed today not to be granted/passed, but to distract people and camouflage other issues.” (An-Nahar, <i>Abu Rizk inquired about the rent of the House of Deputies</i> , June 26, 2010)

B. On the Palestinian Side			
H.E. Dr. Abdallah Abdallah	Ambassador of the State of Palestine in Lebanon		<p>-Stressed that the Palestinian wants to be able to live in dignity, and be productive. A statement which triggered the reply of MP Sij'an El Azzi "Lebanon cannot secure this for Palestinians". H.E. automatically replied "Then, expel us". (OTV Channel, 'Al Haq Youkal', Episode on <i>Palestinian Refugees</i>, June 23, 2010)</p> <p>-H.E. denied any intent to obtain political rights or granting access to state-funded social services: "What the Palestinians want is the right to work like any other foreign nationals...There are 136,000 permits of non-Lebanese in Lebanon but there are only 261 work permits for Palestinians." (The Daily Star, <i>Hariri calls for national unity on granting rights to Palestinians</i>, June 30)</p> <p>-At the LPDC Press Conference held on June 29, H.E. stressed that "the Palestinian is only asking for the preservation of his dignity. The Palestinian leadership has carried out a number of steps to reassure the Lebanese that the demand for rights does not entail any political, security or military scheme." H.E. called for a "consensual Lebanese" decision on granting Palestinians rights – the right to property, the right to work and to health guarantees, with all the "limitations that the Lebanese legislator deems necessary..." (Al-Akhbar, Hariri: <i>The Rights' issue is not subject to back and forth debates and discussions</i>, June 30, 2010)</p> <p>-An-Nahar, <i>The Representative of the Palestinian Liberation Organization at Geagea's: Hariri proved his commitment to Human Rights</i>, July 01, 2010)</p> <p>-"No accurate statistics on the number of refugees in Lebanon exists...the number provided by UNRWA is exaggerated...The Palestinian statistics department is in the process of conducting an accurate survey that could be completed in few months to reveal the true numbers." H.E. pointed out that many Palestinian refugees registered with UNRWA have left the country and moved to Arab states looking for job opportunities but were not crossed off the UNRWA's register.</p> <p>Commenting on the Maronite Bishops' Council stance tying the refugees' rights to the disarmament of Palestinian factions, H.E. stated that "the issue of rights is an essential one that should not be tied to other matters."</p> <p>H.E. voiced support for the Lebanese National Dialogue Committee's decision to disarm Palestinian groups outside refugee camps, and expressed the Palestinian Authority's readiness to discuss any issue with the Lebanese Cabinet. (The Daily Star, <i>Christian MPs drafting law to give Palestinians limited rights</i>, July 08, 2010)</p>
Fatah			
Mr. Azzam el Ahmad	Head of the 'Fatah' Bloc at the Palestinian Parliament, member of the 'Central		<p>During his visits to President Suleiman, Prime Minister Hariri, Amine El Gemayel and Aoun, Mr. Azzam el Ahmad: "The Palestinians are temporary guests falling under the care/patronage of the Lebanese Law, and not above it. Henceforth, we are certain of the Lebanese Legislator's understanding/thoughtful consideration of the situation, and their</p>

	Committee' at the Palestinian Liberation Organization, and the Head of the Palestinian File in Lebanon		efforts towards preventing the magnification of the consequent dangers." (An-Nahar, El Ahmad: <i>The Palestinians are temporary guests</i> , June 24, 2010)
Mr. Fathi Abu el Aradat	Representative of Fatah in Lebanon		Referring to the promise that was advanced to the late Palestinian President, Mr. Yasser Arafat – when he was under siege in Ramallah – concerning a draft bill securing the civil rights to Palestinians, MR. Abu el Aradat pointed out that with the promise still not fulfilled, "I feel that there is a standardized persecution towards Palestinians."
Sheikh Mohamed Nimr Zamout	Head of the Islamic Palestinian Committee in Lebanon		"We, Palestinians, do not seek any substitute to our Land, nor do we seek the allowances of the Lebanese. The Palestinian worker is the only worker who works in Lebanon and spends his salary in Lebanon." He then mentioned the contributions of the Palestinian entrepreneurs in the fields of Commerce and Construction in Lebanon; and the contributions of the expatriates to their families who are residing in Lebanon. "All we are asking for is to be able to live as Humans". (OTV Channel, 'Al Haq Youkal', Episode on <i>Palestinian Refugees</i> , June 23, 2010)
The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)			"The Democratic Gathering's initiative was aimed at reinforcing confidence between the Palestinians & Lebanese." The PLO confirmed in a statement that the Palestinians respected Lebanon's sovereignty, saying "approving Palestinian rights is a private Lebanese concern before being a Palestinian necessity and it is in no way linked to settlement/tawteen." (The Daily Star, <i>Debate flares after failed bid to grant rights to Palestinians</i> , June 17, 2010)
Hamas			
Mr. Ali Baraka	Representative of Hamas in Lebanon		Mr. Baraka called on the Parliament to accord the civil and humanitarian rights to Palestinian refugees in Lebanon by passing laws and regulations that ease their suffering and grant them the natural rights of which they have been deprived. He then pointed out that "the rights shall permit the Palestinians to access all non-syndicated/non-governmental professions and jobs, the right to property (equally as Arabs), and the right to be involved in activities encompassing politics , media, culture and socio-economic, beneficial to the Palestinian issue in general, and the refugees' issue in particular." Mr. Baraka stressed that the approval of the demanded amendments will "reinforce the Lebanese-Palestinian relationship and support the Palestinian refugees' issue." (As-Safir, <i>Granting Civil Rights will reinforce the Lebanese-Palestinian relationship</i> , June 26)
Mr. Oussama Hamdan	Representative of Hamas in Lebanon		Recognized and appreciated the "Lebanese National Forces for their efforts towards granting Palestinians their rights", hoping that the draft bill will be approved.
Mr. Raafat Murra	In Charge of the Lebanese Relations		-Valued Prime Minister Hariri's response on the role of the Lebanese state in granting the Palestinian refugees their rights and the need to resolve this issue, stating that it was "a step forward in the exerted efforts towards adjusting the Palestinian-Lebanese bi-lateral

			<p>relationships, and promoting them.” (As-Safir, <i>March 14: To discuss the refugees’ rights with the “Palestine Liberation Organization”</i>, July 07, 2010)</p> <p>-Following his meeting with President Gemayel on June 24, Mr. Murra stated: “We, as Palestinians residing inside and outside Palestine, we cling to the right to return to Palestine, and reject any form of naturalization, known or masked. Let no one outbid us in our rejection to naturalization. We are enduring a lot on the political, security, and economic levels because of our clinging to our homeland and our resistance to occupation...We hold on to our right to return and reject categorically naturalization.” (Al Diyar, <i>Gemayel discussed the Palestinian situation with Hamas</i>, June 25, 2010)</p>
The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine			
Mr. Ali Faysal	Head		<p>Noted that the Front reiterated that naturalization/tawteen was rejected by both Palestinians and Lebanese, and called on MPs to stop viewing Palestinians as a sect because it was an “insult” to their daily struggle against the Israelis. Mr. Faysal presented a historical overview of the Lebanese regulations and laws that deprive the Palestinian from his right as a human being, starting with the one-sided annulment of the Cairo Agreement “a procedure which reinstated the Civil situation of the Palestinians to what it used to be back in 1969 with regard to their deprivation from the most simple rights.” He then added that “the postponement in granting civil rights to the Palestinians constitutes a prolongation of the policy of subjugation and deprivation”, calling on the Parliamentary Commissions who are supporting the draft bills to “pursue this issue – either through the Parliamentary Commissions, or through the Prime Minister & the Speaker of the House of Deputies and as stated by the latter, through the presentation of draft bills to the Parliament for ratification.” (Al-Akhbar, <i>Palestinians placed in the status of 1969</i>, June 18)</p> <p>-“We are doing this (demonstration of the Democratic Palestinian Front on July 05) for justice, for the human rights of the Palestinian people without division, without politics...We are not involved between the Christians and the Muslims. We hope they will all take the right way for justice...We are hopeful that the latest negotiations will bring change for our people.” (The Daily Star, <i>Palestinian groups urge civil rights reform</i>, July 06, 2010)</p>
Mr. Marwan Abdel Aal			<p>Redirected the granting of civil rights from being a Palestinian concern to a Lebanese one, because it reflects the manner in which Lebanon is dealing with Human rights.”</p>
Mr. Salah Salah			<p>Mr. Salah commented that he’s optimistic in respect of the current developments: “The Palestinian issue, in all its dimensions, is being presented for the first time – and in a serious manner – at the Parliament, and this is being done through defined draft bills proposed by strong and active parliamentary blocs – blocs that have an impact in passing laws. Even the opposing parties – in spite of the sectarian alignment that gathered them – show leniency, contrary to what used to happen in the past when these blocs used to categorically oppose and reject merely considering the Palestinian rights. However, these blocs are not opposing</p>

			the principle but the content and the timing..." Mr. Salah then gave a brief historical overview of the status of Palestinians in Lebanon and their relationship with their Lebanese compatriots. (As-Safir, <i>Palestinian refugees under the dome of the Lebanese Parliament...Get to know us first - by Salah Salah</i> , July 06, 2010)
'Alliance of Palestinian Forces' Mr. Khaled Abu el Shamates			"Granting Civil Rights will reinforce the Lebanese-Palestinian relationship". Mr. Abu el Shamates wondered "What would the Palestinians have to do to dissipate the fears related to 'tawteen'.
The Union of Democratic Palestinian Youth (ASHAD)			ASHAD warned against postponing the parliamentary session, saying it would harm the Lebanese-Palestinian relations. ASHAD also urged all political authorities to separate Palestinian rights from internal Lebanese strife. (The Daily Star, <i>Debate flares after failed bid to grant rights to Palestinians</i> June 17, 2010)
Popular Committees of the Camps in Tyr area - Mr. Mohamed Abu Rashid	Member		Mr. Abu Rashid spoke - at a demonstration in support of the Palestinians 'humanitarian' rights held in Tyr on June 27 - on behalf of the Palestinian organizations calling for the passing of the legislative amendments ASAP to keep danger away from the Palestinian people and the camps until their return to their homeland is made possible. (Al Diyar, <i>A demonstration in Tyr in support of Palestinians' 'humanitarian' rights</i> , June 28)
The Palestinian Youth Union (PYU) Mr. Mohammad Rabid	Member of the Secretariat & a keynote speaker		"The issue of security and society are the same, they are not divided – when we get our right to work and we can live right there will no longer be any need for extra security" (The Daily Star, <i>Palestinian groups urge civil rights reform</i> , July 06, 2010)
C. UNRWA			
Mr. Filippo Grandi	Commissioner General		-“It is good for Lebanon to have a more stable, less marginalized Palestinian refugee community...We welcome the debate currently going on in Lebanese politics...This has nothing to do with tawteen (naturalization); refugees will stay refugees even if their conditions improve... We shall sustain our services even if the Palestinians are granted their rights.”(The Daily Star, <i>UNRWA praises debate on Palestinian refugees in Lebanon</i> , June 24) -Mr. Grandi stated: “We shall sustain our services even if the Palestinians are granted their rights” (Al-Akhbar, <i>Grandi: We shall sustain our services even if the Palestinians are granted their rights</i> , June 25, 2010)
Mr. Salvatore Lombardo	Director of UNRWA Affairs in Lebanon		-Mr. Lombardo noted that “the legislation was only about granting Palestinians human rights, not promoting their naturalization– an explosive issue which raises fears of upsetting a delicate sectarian balance.” In answer to whether the proposed law would reduce militancy, Director Lombardo replied: “I have no doubt about that. I have no doubt if you give an example to the camps that people can live in dignity and that people can have wishes and dreams and aspirations for their lives, then you will have a population which will be committed to the principle of tolerance, human rights...Let’s not forget that this will have a huge impact on Lebanon’s stability. Lebanon will gain; it will have a workforce that will invest here.” He then praised Prime Minister Saad Hariri’s government for being committed

			<p>to putting the issue of Palestinian rights on the agenda and including it in a policy statement last year..." (The Daily Star, <i>Proposed refugee law will reduce militancy – Lombardo</i>, June 26)</p> <p>-Commenting on the March for Palestinian Civil & Socio-Economic Rights in Lebanon, Mr. Lombardo praised Lebanese Civil Rights Groups noting: "Participation is...important for Lebanese themselves to explain to their own compatriots that this is not about politics, this is not about having Palestinians forever in this country." (Alwatan Daily, <i>Lebanon march for refugees rights</i>, June 28, 2010)</p> <p>-At the LPDC Press Conference held on June 29, Mr. Lombardo pointed out to the "need to distinguish between supporting granting rights to Palestinians and engaging in debates on Palestine's political issue. (Al-Akhbar, Hariri: <i>The Rights' issue is not subject to back and forth debates and discussions</i>, June 30, 2010)</p>
D. Network for the 'March for Palestinian Socio-Economic Rights in Lebanon'		√	<p>The Network for the March for Palestinian Civil & Socio-Economic Rights in Lebanon mobilized Lebanese & Palestinian Parties & NGOs to participate in a March on June 27. The March's main slogan was <i>Civil, Social and Economic Rights and Living in Dignity are an Essential Step in the Journey of Return</i>. "There is a need to re-frame the debate. The humanitarian approach looks at Palestinian refugees as a group of people that need to be fed and sheltered by international relief agencies and charitable organizations, denying their agency as participatory actors in their state of affairs. Instead, we need to adopt a rights-based approach centered on the right to human dignity, out of which all basic human rights stem (the right to work, the right to ownership, healthcare, education, freedom of movement and speech and the right to form and register organizations, etc). These rights are inalienable and need to be looked at as an organic whole, despite the fact that some of them, such as the right to work and the right to ownership, are currently a priority to Palestinian refugees. The March culminated in the delivery of a petition to the Secretary General of the Lebanese Parliament, Mr. Adnan Daher. The petition calls for the right to property, the right to mobility and the elimination of Article 59 of the Labour Law. (full text of the petition posted http://www.cep-lb.org/news.htm)</p> <p>-H.E. Abdullah Abdullah, Ambassador of the State of Palestine to Lebanon, stated: "this day is vitally important. Firstly it shows how much Palestinians are determined to live with dignity. Secondly, it gives assurances for all those who have concerns that granting us our rights will not impact on the politics in Lebanon. It does not upset the balance and it will not take anything from the economy of the country." (The Daily Star, <i>Beirut rally demands Palestinian rights</i>, June 28, 2010)</p>
E. Human Rights Watch – Mr. Nadim Houry	Director of Beirut Office		<p>"Lebanon has marginalized Palestinian refugees for too long... Parliament should seize this opportunity to turn the page and end discrimination against Palestinians." (Human Rights Watch Press Release, <i>Lebanon: Seize Opportunity to End Discrimination against Palestinians</i>, June 17 – posted on http://www.cep-lb.org/articles3.htm)</p>
F. Issam Fares Center for		√	<p>(Issam Fares Center for Lebanon website and published in As-Safir, <i>Practical Proposals for the solution of the dilemma of the Palestinian camps in Lebanon</i>, June 22, 2010)</p>

Lebanon			
G. The Civil Campaign for the support of Palestine & Iraq			Called for keeping the ongoing efforts on all levels in order to ensure the passing of the legislations that will be discussed at the Parliament, stressing the “need to distinguish between the basic humanitarian rights of Palestinians and the naturalization scheme that is rejected by the Palestinians and the Lebanese, a scheme that is considered as sedition.” (As-Safir, <i>The Distinction between the Rights and Naturalization should be drawn</i> , July 01)
H. Mr. Ramzy Baroud	Arab American Commentator & Author		(Khaleej Times, <i>Righting a Perpetual Wrong</i> , June 23, 2010)
I. Dr. Sari Hanafi	Associate Professor, Department of Social And Behavioral Sciences, AUB		“...After taking my time to reflect on the proceedings of the parliamentary session, I can say that the implications of the discourses delivered during & following the second parliamentary session, go beyond the Palestinian issue, showing the scope of division amongst the Lebanese community and the political elite...” (As-Safir, <i>I accuse</i> , July 02)
J. Mr. Nadim Shehadi	Former LPDC Consultant/Associate Fellow, MENA Programme at Chatham House		<i>Talking to Nadim Shehadi: Palestinian Civil Rights in Lebanon</i> , June 30, 2010 http://www.globalpost.com/webblog/lebanon/talking-nadim-shehadi-palestinian-civil-rights-lebanon

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