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First Anniversary of the Assassination of Former Lebanese Prime Minister Hariri

Secretary Condoleezza Rice

Washington, DC
February 14, 2006

As we commemorate the first anniversary of the brutal assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, MP Basil Fuleihan, seven body guards and 13 innocent bystanders, our thoughts are with the people of Lebanon and the families of the innocent victims who continue to live with the consequences of that terrorist attack. We recall today the legacy of Rafik Hariri who symbolizes Lebanon's resilience after decades of civil war and turmoil and its determination to rebuild itself into a free, democratic and prosperous nation. Those who killed Mr. Hariri and 21 others one year ago today tried to suppress that work and ensure that Lebanon remained subject to foreign domination. They have failed to do so, due to the foundation of freedom laid by Mr. Hariri and the determination of the Lebanese people.

The Lebanese people have accomplished much over the past year: They have compelled Syrian troops to withdraw from Lebanon, and they have held free and fair parliamentary elections. Much remains to be done, but the forces of repression will not stifle the voices of freedom, and the Lebanese people will prevail.

The United States and the international community remain united with the people of Lebanon in determination to bring those responsible for this heinous crime and other subsequent acts of terrorism to justice. In this regard, we reiterate our unconditional support for the UN International Independent Investigation Commission's work and the urgent need for Syria's full and complete cooperation with the investigation.

The United States, and the international community, stand with the Lebanese people as they work to reassert their independence and strengthen their democracy. We will not be deterred from supporting Lebanon's call for national dignity, truth, and justice.

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