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STATEMENT BY SECRETARY OF STATE HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

Anniversary of Former Lebanese Prime Minister Hariri's Assassination

On February 14, 2005, killers assassinated former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri and 22 others with a car bomb in downtown Beirut. This attack represented an attempt to silence not only Hariri, but all those voices in Lebanon calling out for independence and sovereignty.

However, this tragic day had the opposite effect. The Cedar Revolution that followed amplified the voices of those seeking justice and democracy, culminating in Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon. Undeterred by continuing political violence, these forces have bravely continued their fight for a free and independent Lebanese state.

The United States is confident that the Special Tribunal for Lebanon will bring to justice those responsible for financing, planning, and carrying out the assassination of former Prime Minister Hariri. The formal launching of the Tribunal on March 1 will be an important sign of the international community's determination to see this case solved. As evidence of our continued commitment to promoting justice in Lebanon, the United States pledges \$6 million for the second year of the Tribunal's operations, subject to Congressional approval of the FY09 budget, in addition to the \$14 million already contributed.

The United States also continues its unwavering support for full implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1701 and 1559, including their calls for all arms in Lebanon to be brought under state control and the delineation of Lebanon's borders. As Lebanon prepares for important parliamentary elections this June, the United States will support Lebanese authorities' efforts to ensure that they are free, fair, transparent, and unmarred by political violence.

On February 14, the United States and the international community stand with the people of Lebanon in marking this day of sorrow. We remain firmly committed to working together for a peaceful, prosperous, and sovereign Lebanon.

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