



## RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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The Board		10 November 2009
About the Board	<b>ZZZ103298.E</b>	
Biographies		
Organization Chart	Lebanon and Syria: Whether Syrian intelligence infiltrates or surveys Syrians living in Lebanon	
Employment	Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa	
Legal and Policy		
References	Information about whether Syrian intelligence [also known as <i>mukhabarat</i> ( <i>Daily Star</i> 13 June 2005)] has infiltrated or conducts surveillance on the Syrian population residing in Lebanon was scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.	
Publications		
Tribunal		
Refugee Protection Division	Media sources indicate that the Syrian intelligence headquarters in Beirut was vacated in 2005, when Syrian troops left Lebanon ( <i>The Daily Telegraph</i> 22 Nov. 2006; <i>Newsweek</i> 2 May 2005). However, sources report that Syrian intelligence agents are believed to have a continued presence in Lebanon ( <i>ibid.</i> ; <i>Defence &amp; Foreign Affairs Handbook</i> 2006, 1934; <i>The Star</i> 27 Dec. 2008; <i>Mideast Monitor</i> 19 Oct. 2009). Sources report that "covert Syrian influence" in Lebanon remains strong ( <i>The Daily Telegraph</i> 22 Nov. 2006; <i>The Star</i> 27 Dec. 2008; <i>Mideast Monitor</i> 19 Oct. 2009).	
Immigration Division		
Immigration Appeal Division		
Decisions		
Forms		
Statistics		
Research		
Research Program	In a telephone interview with the Research Directorate on 19 October 2009, an editor of <i>Mideast Monitor</i> , a non-profit publication that provides political analysis on Middle East issues (n.d.), alleged that Syrian intelligence monitors "everything in Lebanon" including Syrian workers. The Editor suggested that Syrian intelligence may use Syrian workers in Lebanon as potential informers or agents ( <i>Mideast Monitor</i> 19 Oct. 2009). <i>Daily Star</i> indicates that there is public belief in Lebanon that there is a close relationship between Syrian workers and the mukhabarat, although the Syrian dissident featured in the article questioned the nature and extent of this association ( <i>Daily Star</i> 13 June 2005).	
National Documentation Packages		
Issue Papers and Country Fact Sheets		
Responses to Information Requests		
Recent Research	In his book, <i>The Invisible Cage: Syrian Migrant Workers in Lebanon</i> , John Chalcraft, a Reader at the London School of Economics, indicated that the view among pro-Lebanese groups in the early 2000s was that Syrian workers in Lebanon were "in league with Syrian intelligence," but he argues that this position was "highly misleading" (Chalcraft 2009, 143). Without providing details, Chalcraft asserted that Syrian intelligence services were a source of anxiety rather than comfort for Syrian workers in Lebanon (Chalcraft 2009, 144).	
Media Centre		
News		
Information Sheets		
Media Relations		
Proactive Disclosure	In a profile on a Syrian human rights activist living in Lebanon, the Jordanian newspaper <i>The Star</i> reported that the Syrian activist believed that Syrian intelligence was stronger than ever and that he was at risk from them (27 Dec. 2008).	

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

#### References

Chalcraft, John. 2009. *The Invisible Cage: Syrian Migrant Workers in Lebanon*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.

*Daily Star* [Beirut]. 13 June 2005. Jim Quilty. "'The Syrian Presence': More than Spies and Laborers; Syrian Dissident and Journalist Ali Atassi Sees the Syrian-Lebanese Relationship as More Multifaceted than the Stereotypes Suggest." (Factiva)

*The Daily Telegraph* [London]. Tim Butcher. "Cedar Revolution Changed Little: Syrian Influence Remains Strong in Lebanon." (Factiva)

*Defense & Foreign Affairs Handbook*. 2006. Edited by Gregory R. Copley. Alexandria, Virginia: The International Strategic Studies Association.

*Mideast Monitor* [Washington, DC]. 19 October 2009. Telephone interview with editor.

\_\_\_\_\_. N.d. "About Mideast Monitor." <<http://www.mideastmonitor.org/about.htm>> [Accessed 29 Oct. 2009]

*Newsweek*. 2 May 2005. Kevin Peraino with Leena Saidi and Dan Ephron. "The Shadow of Syria; Damascus Pulls out its Troops. But Ghosts Abide." (Factiva)

*The Star* [Amman]. 27 December 2008. Dalila Mahdawi. "Syrian Blogger Lives Precarious Life as Exile in Lebanon." (Factiva)

#### Additional Sources Consulted

**Oral sources:** Attempts to reach representatives of the Syrian Human Rights Committee were unsuccessful within the time constraints of this response.

**Internet sites, including:** *Al Bawaba*, *Al Jazeera*, Amnesty International (AI), Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), European Country of Origin Network (ecoi.net), European Strategic Intelligence and Security Center (ESISC), Human Rights First (HRF), Human Rights Watch (HRW), Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR), International Crisis Group, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Refworld, UN Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI), Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

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