



Speech by Monika Borgmann Slim

Dear Excellencies, dear friends, dear all,

Thank you so much for joining us today. I don't believe it, but it is already the fourth commemoration, and justice has not been done.

During the last two days, the decision of judge Bilal Halawi to close the file of Lokman's assassination has been leaked to the Hezbollah friendly press, and most probably he did it himself. We are still waiting for the Al-Akhbar article....

But: a lot what he wrote is wrong, and therefore allow me to go back in time.

Four years ago, on the third of February, Lokman left our house in Hara around noon. He went south to have lunch at the home of a friend in Niha. But he never returned.

The next morning, we learned that his body was found inside his car, in Addousieh, executed by six bullets shot from a short distance, one in his back and five in the back of his head.

The investigation undertaken by Maaloumat, the intelligence of the ISF, showed that Lokman had been followed from the moment he left our house in Hara until he reached the home of his friend in Niha.

The investigation showed that five cars were implicated, cars that have been clearly identified, even with the names of their owners.

The investigation showed that those who were tracking Lokman stayed around the house in Niha until he left at 8:30 pm.

The investigation showed that his car was intercepted by two of the five cars and he was kidnapped. Three cars, including Lokman's, drove to Addoussieh, south of Saida.

The investigation showed the exact timing when the three cars, Lokman's and the kidnapers arrived in Addoussieh.

And the investigation showed the exact time when Lokman was shot in the back and in the head, from behind. It was between 9:20 and 9:27 PM.

The investigation led by Maaloumat showed almost every detail of the tracking, the kidnapping and the assassination, everything except the names of the killers. Those

who shot Lokman in the head, those who did not have even the guts to look at his eyes when following the execution order they got from their superiors.

Also, Maaloumat stated the places where the cars headed to after perpetrating the assassination. Places that Maaloumat described as forbidden access places.

Maaloumat remitted their investigation to the General Prosecutor who, in turn, sent it to the Investigating Judge for him just to identify the killers. All remaining details were already there. Details like cameras footage, DNA prints, fingerprints, even photos of the cars. More than what Maaloumat have discovered in any investigation of a political assassination, everything, except the names.

This is what we have been told.

The file was sent to the investigating judge in September 2021, three years and a half ago. What has been done since? Nothing.

It took us a very long time to convince the first investigating judge, Charbel Abu Samra to seek international technical assistance for forensic questions.

Charbel Aby Samra finally accepted. The former General Prosecutor, Ghassan Oueidat, also accepted. A request for international technical assistance was therefore issued and sent through the Ministry of Justice to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and then to Germany which had offered their technical support.

Then, in November 2023, Charbel Abu Samra retired and was replaced by a new investigating judge, Bilal Halawi.

Bilal Halawi, told us at the first hearing: I will lead the investigation to show you that those who did it are not those you are accusing.

The tone was set...

The purpose of the investigation was switched from identifying the killers to exonerate the party that we are accusing, Hezbollah.

Since that hearing, Bilal Halawi has made no investigation whatsoever. What he did nevertheless was to reverse the decision of his predecessor about seeking international technical assistance.

His reason to do so? Seeking such international assistance is an abandonment of the Lebanese sovereignty.

Last November, Bilal Halawi decided that he had no way of identifying the killers and therefore, he wants to park the file. He gave us two weeks to bring new evidence.

As we understood that he could park the investigation for no other reason than protecting the perpetrators, we filed two requests to remove him from the case. One to the Court of Appeal, and one to the Court of Cassation.

Except that as soon as he knew about our requests, Bilal Halawi issued his order to suspend the investigation indefinitely.

Impunity... This is the message said to the killers and their masters. And one judge,

one judge alone, may decide at any time to suspend the investigation.

Don't let Lokman be killed twice. The first time when he was shot from behind by six bullets in his back and in his head, and the second time when he was shot from the front by the decision taken by Bilal Halawi.

Fight with us for justice, for Lokman and Lebanon.