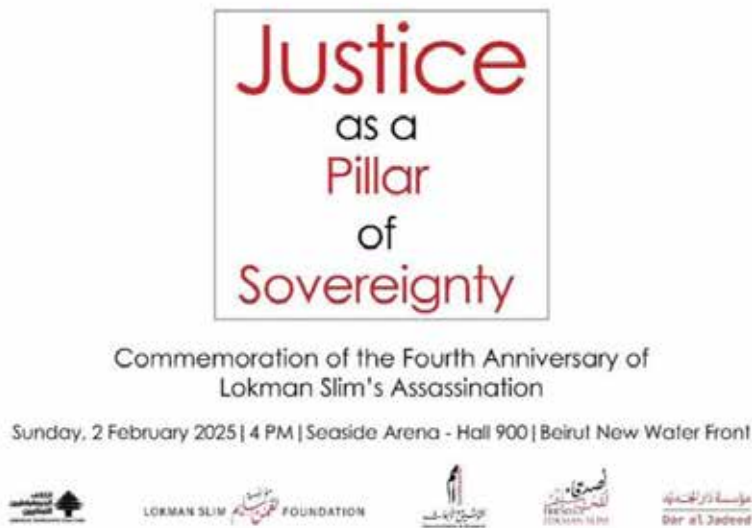


NOW

Remembering Lokman Slim: A Call for Justice Amid Turmoil - Nowlebanon



The commemoration of Lokman Slim four years after his assassination highlights the ongoing struggle for justice, political accountability, and reform in Lebanon amidst the country's complex challenges

Four years after the assassination of Lokman Slim, his family, activists, and public figures will gather in Beirut this Sunday to commemorate the life and legacy of the late intellectual and political activist. Slim, a vocal critic of Hezbollah and advocate for free expression, was found murdered in South Lebanon in February 2021, with no resolution in the investigation. The event at the Beirut Waterfront, seaside Arena, will honor Slim's contributions and highlight the ongoing challenges of political violence and impunity in Lebanon.

For his wife, Monika Borgmann, this is an ongoing effort to maintain his legacy.

"Lokman was not afraid to speak out against injustice. We are here today because we continue to fight for what he believed in," she told NOW. Borgmann expressed her frustration with the lack of progress in the investigation. "For me, it's unbelievable that it is already four years... nothing has happened in the end. I'm completely frustrated with this fact," she said. She explained that, although some efforts have been made, including two requests sent by the former judge to UNIFIL and Germany, no meaningful evidence has been provided. "UNIFIL said the cameras filmed inside, not outside," she added, underscoring the ongoing lack of transparency.

The call for justice was also made by a lawyer representing the Slim family, Moussa Khoury. He noted that the fight for justice is not only about the assassination of Lokman Slim but also about all political assassinations in Lebanon. “The issue is much larger than one assassination. It is about the ongoing impunity for political crimes in Lebanon,” Khoury said. He added that the continuing failure of investigations in cases like Lokman’s assassination highlights the broader problem: “Lebanon has witnessed many political assassinations over the last three decades, and none have led to real justice.” Khoury stressed that political violence has become normalized, with figures involved in politics frequently subjected to threats of violence, including assassination. “The case of Lokman Slim is a clear example. All those who engage in politics in Lebanon today are exposed to these dangers. It is as if they have to accept the possibility of being assassinated as part of their political engagement. This is unacceptable,” he emphasized.

The political situation in Lebanon remains complex and unstable. The country is still recovering from the effects of the war with Israel in 2024, which left much of the nation damaged and hindered efforts for reconstruction. Lebanon is also entering a new political phase with the recent election of President Joseph Aoun and the appointment of Prime Minister Nawaf Salam, following over two years without a president. While some view Aoun’s election as a sign of potential progress, others are more cautious. Borgmann expressed hope that the new leadership will address long-standing issues, including the fight for justice. “There is an opportunity for change,” she said. “But it must be backed by real actions.”

The country’s economic situation remains dire, with tourism and agriculture severely impacted, and inflation continuing to rise. Unemployment is at a high, and the purchasing power of Lebanese citizens has significantly declined. Despite the challenges, some remain hopeful that the change in leadership could lead to meaningful reforms. Borgmann noted the importance of holding the government accountable: “If there is to be a change in Lebanon, justice for Lokman and other victims must be part of it.”

The commemoration event is one of several efforts to maintain focus on Slim’s legacy and push for accountability regarding his death.

“It’s not just about remembering Lokman; it’s about keeping the issue of political violence in the public eye. If we don’t do this, it risks being forgotten” Borgmann said adding that these events are of utmost importance for a reason broader than just Slim himself.

“Lokman was a public figure. It’s not just about remembering him, but keeping the topic of political assassination alive. We can’t let people forget, otherwise we give the impression that there is no hope for justice,” she said. She added that it is not possible to “expect somebody else to do it if I’m not ready to do it myself.”

In line with this commitment to keeping Slim’s memory alive, writer and documentary filmmaker Muhammad Ali Al-Atassi told NOW that keeping his memory alive is a strong form of retaliation.

“The deepest response to those who wanted to silence Lokman Slim through murder and assassination is that we keep his memory alive among us. Lokman was a man of thought,

culture, and the pen before he was a political figure. Ideas and writings do not die with their author, and this is why it is important for his writings to remain present among us, just as his memory does,” Al-Atassi said.

As a close friend of Slim, Al-Atassi reflected on how he continues to preserve Lokman’s ideas and spirit. “Honestly, the thing I miss most about Lokman is his playfulness and his constant challenging nature. Lokman was my fierce friend with whom I enjoyed disagreement and debate, because it was a civilized disagreement that respected the other, invested in love and friendship in differences, discussions, and exchanging ideas.”

Al-Atassi also offered his perspective on what Lokman hoped to see in the political and social landscape of Lebanon today: “Lokman always dreamed of a free, democratic, independent, and sovereign Lebanon. Every step in this direction is a step toward Lokman’s dream.”

He adds that “those who wanted to silence Lokman aimed to plant fear and terror in our hearts. Lokman’s restoration today serves as a reminder to all of us that kingdoms built on fear, terror, and injustice will eventually disappear.”

As Lebanon faces ongoing political, economic, and social challenges, the unresolved murder of Lokman Slim continues to symbolize the broader struggles for justice and reform in the country. The commemoration will serve as a reminder that Lebanon’s future stability is tied to transparency, accountability, and political change.

