

for the Palestinian cause, and the implementation of UN Resolution 425.¹⁸ For a variety of reasons, largely the continued polarization of players on the left and the right, this programme failed to move the situation closer to a settlement. The Fourteen Points neglected to specify mechanisms that would advance the reforms they advocated. Nafhat Nasr argued that qualified support from Syria and the PLO, as well as Israeli obstruction in South Lebanon added to the stalemate.

Unlike many participants who found both domestic and external reasons for the breakdown of peace settlements, Hafez believed that the failure of all the peace plans proposed between 1976 and 1982 could be traced exclusively to events in the Middle East. He considered these proposals simply knee-jerk reactions to external events rather than serious plans. Most participants agreed that this period represented the consolidation of the war system in Lebanon.

1982 -- 1989 (Pre-Ta'if)

The Israeli invasion in June 1982 and the massacres at the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila in August of that year marked a fundamental turning point. After 1982, the Israeli presence on the ground and the growing power of the militias created tremendous upheaval inside Lebanon. Amal Shamma' described the change at street level: "Before 1982, the dialogue was political and about the political system -- the debate was between those who wanted to change the political system and those who wanted to protect the status quo. But after 1982, the dialogue was less about the protection or reform of the system, and more about the protection of various sects. Instead of representing political platforms, leaders were now representing sectarian groups. The secular tone of reformist discussions was replaced with factional/militia concerns." This period also witnessed an acceleration in the use of Lebanon as a battlefield for foreign powers, the interests of those powers being reflected in the reform proposals.

¹⁸ Resolution 425 called for the complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon and the deployment of a UN force in the south.