

Agreement in December 1985 by leaders of three Lebanese militias: Walid Joumblatt of the PSP, Nabih Berri of Amal, and Elie Hobeiqa of the Lebanese Forces. The key regional element of the accord referred to the "strategic complementarity of Syria and Lebanon," which was intolerable to the Israelis and threatening to certain Lebanese communities. The key proposals for internal reform called for a more equitable distribution of political power and rapid deconfessionalization, proposals that proved too radical for certain armed components of the Lebanese Christian community. The accord was annulled two weeks later when Samir Geagea ousted Hobeiqa as leader of the Lebanese Forces.

It was noted that the Tripartite Agreement demonstrated the inconsistency of the warring factions. On the one hand, the Maronite establishment believed that the sovereignty of Lebanon was protected in the May 17th Agreement, but violated in the Tripartite Agreement. Yet Muslim and leftist leaders, who traditionally opposed allowing an outside power to assume any control of Lebanon, were clearly giving the upper hand to Syria by endorsing the Tripartite Agreement. In fact, both agreements gave the advantage to outside powers. Regional powers played a direct role in pressuring the Lebanese to come up with agreements, and to a great extent formulated the content of the accords.

Obstacles to Conflict Settlement: Summary Observations

An examination of the attempts at conflict resolution between 1975 and 1989 yields a number of general observations about the failure of the various plans.

1. The international arena was not promising. The Cold War was at its height, particularly after 1982, when the United States and Soviet Union were vying for superpower dominance over the Middle East. Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982 further contributed to the difficulties in resolving the conflict. Workshop participants recommended that in future agreements, the United Nations should play a larger role.