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'National Day of Memory'

Activists demand a day to remember victims of the civil war. The Committee of the Parents of the Kidnapped and Missing Persons During War organized a gathering in Martyrs' Square. **Page 3**

Activists demand 'National Day of Memory' to remember victims of the civil war

Calls for publishing an official report into the whereabouts of missing persons

By Maya Abou Nasr
Daily Star staff

Activists called on Sunday for turning April 13 into a "National Day of Memory" and erecting a memorial to all victims of the civil war.

The Committee of the Parents of the Kidnapped and Missing Persons During the War organized a gathering in Martyrs Square, which was attended by women whose sons had disappeared during the war.

"This day belongs to all the

Lebanese people and that is why this memorial should be a place to remember all the victims of the war, a place that we could visit with our children in order to give birth to a common memory for peace," said Wadad Halwani, head of the committee, which has been calling on the government to determine the fate of those missing since 1975.

The Lebanese war broke out in Ain al-Roummaneh on April 13, 1975, when militiamen opened fire on a bus carrying Palestinian civilians.

Halwani also called for publishing the official report drawn up by the investigation committee.

"The committee, which was formed by the government in 2001 ... did not publish any report yet," Halwani said. The report still requires formalizing before being submitted to the Cabinet. Halwani also

called for moral and material compensation for the families of the victims.

Jamal Maarouf said that he expected the return of his son during the prisoner swap deal earlier this year. "My son was kidnapped in 1982 during the

|| 'My son was kidnapped in 1982 ... I know that he is still alive'

Sabra and Chatila massacres. I know that he is still alive," Maarouf said. Sobhie Hijazi, said that his brother was kidnapped in 1976. "We ask the government and all the parties concerned to follow up with this issue." Khadije Wehbe, whose son was kidnapped in 1976 in Achrafieh, said that she knows nothing about his whereabouts.



Mothers of the missing took part in the gathering

Photo by Afif Khair