



Office of the Special Coordinator
for Lebanon

Bureau du Coordinateur Spécial
pour le Liban

**Statement by the UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon
on Behalf of the International Support Group for Lebanon**
(Delivered in Arabic)

Baabda, Lebanon
Friday, 18 October 2013

At the invitation of the President of the Republic, General Michel Sleiman, the International Support Group for Lebanon met today in the Presidential Palace to review developments since its inaugural meeting under the chairmanship of the United Nations Secretary-General in New York on 25 September. The heads of mission or delegation of the Arab League, China, the European Union, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States attended as did the UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon and representatives of UNHCR and the World Bank.

Participants reiterated their appreciation for President Sleiman's leadership in seeking to uphold Lebanon's sovereignty, unity, stability and the continuity of state institutions. The impact of the Syrian crisis – including the huge burden imposed by the influx of refugees – becomes more acute by the day, underlining the need for strong and coordinated international support.

Participants welcomed the momentum generated by the 25 September inaugural meeting for efforts to mobilise support for Lebanon. The high-level meeting organised by UNHCR in Geneva on 30 September had focused on the need for greater burden-sharing, including resettlement: UNHCR continue to encourage commitments additional to the USD 530 million already received for Lebanon this year. At a meeting convened by the World Bank on 12 October in Washington, the Government of Lebanon had submitted a “roadmap for priority interventions for stabilisation from the Syrian crisis” prepared in conjunction with the Bank and the UN which was positively received. A proposed coordination mechanism to support the Lebanese Armed Forces' five-year capabilities development plan is under consideration, and the LAF and UNIFIL have agreed a coordination mechanism to facilitate assistance with equipment and training offered in the framework of the Strategic Dialogue.

Participants again underlined the urgency of government formation, and its importance if the security, humanitarian and development challenges facing Lebanon are to be met

effectively. They looked for the resumption of dialogue and stressed again the importance of commitment by all Lebanese parties to the Baabda Declaration. They emphasised that Lebanon's security and stability were dependent not just on material support, but required the positive engagement of the country's leaders and all of its friends in the region and beyond.

Participants stressed the vital contribution made by the calm presently prevailing across the Blue Line, and the effective implementation of resolution 1701, to Lebanon's security and stability.

The International Support Group will continue to be a strong advocate for assistance for Lebanon. Participants looked forward to working together on an ongoing basis as partners in the Group, and also to engaging with a broader range of stakeholders on ways forward, including with regard to the possibility of a more broad based high level meeting to rally support for Lebanon once work in the various support areas is further advanced.
