



Statement

by

**Ms. Caroline Ziadé
Deputy Permanent Representative
of Lebanon to the United Nations**

**at the
United Nations Population Fund**

**UNFPA Country Programme
and related matters**

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Mr. President,

I would like to start by thanking Mr. Mohammad Abdel Ahad for his presentation.

In the journey towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, Lebanon adopted a coordinated approach with the UN specialised agencies and programs in particular UNFPA. As a result, Lebanon got closer to achieving a few targets of the MDGs, mainly in health, primary education, and gender equality in education. My Government remains determined to meet all the remaining goals. Nevertheless, new challenges emerged affecting these efforts including the impact of the continued influx of Syrian refugees into Lebanon.

Indeed, this humanitarian crisis has had a devastating impact on the security, development, economic activity, social progress and the environment, therefore overstressing the capacity of our social services, healthcare and education systems, housing, water and sanitation facilities, and energy infrastructure.

Moreover, poverty has increased by 61 per cent, and the average personal income of the local population has significantly decreased. Unemployment has skyrocketed totalling 25 per cent of the population, with the youth constituting 66 per cent of the unemployed.

In this context, my Government in coordination with the relevant UN agencies and other partners crafted Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2015-2016 which was adopted in December 2014, to meet humanitarian and development needs of 2.9 million vulnerable individuals from hosting communities as well as refugees.

My delegation recognizes and appreciates the work that the UNFPA has been doing to fulfil its mandate in close consultations with my Government. In this regard, my delegation would like to highlight the much needed focus on empowering youth as a factor for change and economic growth; as well as ensuring adequate health services in particular maternal health pre and post natal services.

The board decision to extend my country program for one year will allow UNFPA, UNDP and UNICEF to adjust their respective programs to respond to the increased needs. It will also enable my government to strengthen the partnership with international organizations to maintain the achieved goals, and to overcome the many hindrances in its endeavour to move forward towards a Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda.

Let me conclude by commending UNFPA, Executive Director and Staff in the Headquarter and in the field for their excellent work.

Thank you Mr. President.