



**Introductory Statement**

by

**H.E. Mr. Tammam Salam**  
**President of the Council of Ministers**  
**of the Republic of Lebanon**

**At the**  
**General Assembly**

**Round Table 3: "*International action and cooperation on refugees and migrants and issues related to displacement: the way ahead*".**

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Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me first, to commend the Secretary General for taking the initiative to organize this high-level meeting and for preparing substantial background documentation that takes into account the various specific national realities.

For example, it is vital in our view to strengthen the resilience of communities hosting refugees to avoid social tension that sow the seeds of instability.

It is also essential to reinforce international concerted action to address a problem of this magnitude, ensure synergies and optimize aid flows.

Recognizing that the refugee issue is everyone's concern and that it should be a shared responsibility, is a step in the right direction that needs, however, to be translated into plans of action and tangible moves, which we hope, will be the main outcome of this Summit.

The international community has, this time, to go beyond commitments and start implementing concrete steps to address the consequences of the massive demographic shifts we have witnessed. Lebanon is a case in point with a 25 per cent increase of its resident population in less than 2 years. It has yet to benefit, however, from an effective and visible flow of aid and support in consonance with the pledges we have heard in the various conferences. The whole aid process loses much of its potency if it is not significant enough and if it is not implemented in a perfectly transparent fashion and according to rigorous governance criteria.

Addressing the consequences of the crisis is not enough. It is now imperative to mobilize the necessary means to solve the root cause of the problem, by, in our case, stopping the violence in Syria and reaching a political solution that allows a safe and dignified return of the refugees to their country.

Some of the countries attending this Summit can most certainly influence this process.

One of the main concerns for countries with large refugee population is insecurity and its potentially destabilizing effect. It is proven that one of the aggravating factors of insecurity is xenophobic tendencies which tend to increase with unemployment, poverty and dire economic conditions.

Such tendencies also exist because of uncertainty concerning the return of refugees and the fear of their permanent settlement. In Lebanon, we have made it clear, time and again, that integration, naturalization, or any form of permanent stay, was absolutely excluded.

It would greatly help, as a measure of countering xenophobia, if a detailed and clear plan for the return of the Syrians to their country is made public by the United Nations, giving some perceptibility to the tangible steps to be taken when conditions allow it.

Much remains to be done.

It has to be done jointly.

It has to be done lastingly because the crisis is of a long-term nature, and it has to be done efficiently, by devoting enough resources to make a significant impact on both the humanitarian and development aspects of the problem.

Thank You.