



Statement

by

**Mr. Hassan Abbas
Chargé d’Affaires, a.i. of Lebanon
to the United Nations**

**at the
Security Council**

"Maintenance of international peace and security"

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Check Against Delivery

*Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations
866 United Nations Plaza, Suite 531, New York, NY 10017*

Mr. President,

Lebanon welcomes the introduction of this important topic for open debate at the Security Council this month. Conflicts, within and among countries, have proliferated in the past couple of decades in many parts of the world.

We agree with the notion advanced in the concept note of this meeting that conflicts have become more complex in the modern world, aggravated by driving factors such as climate change, underdevelopment, poverty, forced displacement, cyber warfare and espionage, terrorism and violent extremism conducive to it. However, this should not distract from addressing the root causes of conflict, many of which have become of a protracted nature, such as foreign occupation and aggression.

Today, Lebanon is facing many of these complex humanitarian, economic, social, political and security challenges. In addition to the almost daily Israeli violations to our sovereignty and to UNSC resolution 1701 which continue to threaten Lebanon's stability and security, since 2011, Lebanon has been host to more than 1.2 million refugees from neighbouring Syria adding to more than 400 thousand Palestinian refugees who have come to the country at different intervals since 1948.

This has compounded many of the challenges facing my country, and led to a significant decrease in the country's GDP growth, higher unemployment and poverty levels, and an overstretched infrastructure in multiple sectors, including health, education, housing, electricity, water, sanitation and transport. The World Bank estimates that the cumulative cost to Lebanon's economy of the ongoing crisis in Syria stood in 2015 at around 18 billion dollars in terms of lower GDP growth, plus 4.2 billion dollars in terms of lower revenues.

Furthermore, Lebanon is at the forefront of the global fight against terrorism, a challenging menace that has undermined the security and stability of my country for many years, but against which the Lebanese government and people stood firm and steadfast, and were able to achieve a series of resounding victories last summer.

The United Nations has been an important partner in these efforts, whether through UNIFIL or UNRWA or UNDP and other entities of the UN Development System. It is worth sharing the experience of Lebanon in this context. The Lebanese Government and UN System have signed in October 2016 a pioneering United Nations Strategic Framework (UNSF) for the period 2017-2020 to replace the previous UNDAF (UN Development Assistance Framework).

The new framework recognizes that in view of the multi-dimensional challenges facing Lebanon, and the multiple mandates under which the UN is operating in the country, the UN needs to follow a "Whole of Lebanon" approach that leverages and integrates the UN's diverse expertise, capacities and resources to support the Government of Lebanon to meet its priorities and manage security, political, governance and socio-economic challenges to stability. The approach also aims to support Lebanon on the path to longer term sustainable development in accordance with the vision, principles and goals of Agenda 2030.

Thank you.