

**Lebanon and the Syrian Refugees:
Human Dignity, Counter-Extremism and Safe Return at Stake
Maison du Futur, Bickfaya
31 May, 2017**

Overview

Syrian refugees became an additional burden for Lebanon, a country that was already suffering from the Palestinian refugees' issue. The repercussions of this exodus are catastrophic on those refugees who find difficulties surviving in spite of the Lebanese generosity and the international assistance provided to host them. In light of the absence of a political solution paving the way for the refugees' repatriation and their participation to the reconstruction of Syria, the repercussions of this crisis have started threatening the existence of hosting countries, especially Lebanon. These repercussions are also linked to the strategy of countering terrorism and extremism. Therefore, we shall deepen our analysis of the identity crisis caused by the displacement repercussions in Lebanon, the Arab region and the whole world. It would also be useful to think about an economic, social and environmental approach to avoid the collapse of hosting countries that might lead to additional threats. One should also bear in mind the need to raise awareness amongst refugees who are at risk of adopting extremist ideologies through intimidation or invitation. All these strategies shall lead to a comprehensive vision for the return of refugees and the preservation of hosting communities.

Agenda:

9:30 – 10:00 Arrival and registration

10:00 – 10:30 Opening remarks: **President Amine Gemayel**, Chairman ,
Maison du Futur

ZLATKO LAGUMDŽIJA, PRIME MINISTER OF BOSNIA AND &
HERZEGOVINA (2001-2002), CLUB DE MADRID MEMBER

10:30 – 11:30 First Session: Lebanon and the Syrian Refugees: Sustainable Humanitarian Relief or Political Solution for the Refugees' Return?

- ≈ To which extent will Lebanon be able to continue embracing the refugees in spite of the donor fatigue?
- ≈ What are the challenges that the Lebanese host communities are facing? Is there any horizon for development along with the humanitarian relief for refugees?
- ≈ Is there any clear plan for the return of the Syrian refugees should a political settlement take place?

Moderator: **Sam Menassa**, MdF executive director

Speakers: **Mouin El Mereabi**, Minister of State for displaced affairs
 Abbas Yaghi, Founder Act for Lebanon

11:30 – 11:45 *Coffee Break*

11:45 – 12:45 Second Session - Creating an identity crisis for refugees living in host communities or establishing safe zones for them?

- ≈ What are the issues linked to identity and to the societal values' scale that the refugees' population as well as the host communities are confronted with?
- ≈ What about safe zones? Is it a military solution or a way to avoid the explosion of refugees' host communities?
- ≈ Is Lebanon ready to accept the principle of establishing safe zones for the refugees on its borders? If yes, how will this affect the relocation of the Syrian refugees as a first step to ensure their return?

Moderator: **May Sayegh**, Journalist, Communication Manager at the Ministry of State for displaced affairs

Speakers: **Ziad el Sayegh**, Foundational ideas, Expert in refugee's affairs

Bahaa Abou Karroum, politician

12:45 – 14:00 *Lunch*

14:00 – 15:00 Third Session: Can the Economic and Social Solution Deal with Extremism and Terrorism?

- ≈ What is the role of relief works and socioeconomic development in shaping an anti-terrorism policy?
- ≈ How can the Lebanese host community as well as the refugees' community be protected from any extremist or terrorist penetration through social protection networks and economic development?
- ≈ How can we transform the refugees' crisis into a productive approach serving the Lebanese and Syrian interests in order to pave the way for the post war period and therefore for Syria's reconstruction?

Moderator: **Najat Charafeldine**, TV presenter

Speakers: **Philippe Lazzarini**, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Lebanon

Neemat Frem, President of the Maronite Foundation in the World

15:00 – 15:30 Closing Session: Closing Statement and Recommendations