



## **STATEMENT OF LEBANON**

### **76<sup>th</sup> session of the UNHCR Executive Committee**

#### **During General Debate under item 3**

**October 7, 2025**

As delivered by H.E.Dr. Ola BOUTROS

Advisor to the Minister of Social Affairs and LRP General Supervisor

Representative of the Lebanese Republic

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

Lebanon aligns itself with the Statements of the Groups it belongs to.

At the outset, allow me to commend High Commissioner Filippo Grandi, a steadfast friend of Lebanon who has consistently shown deep understanding of our country's unique circumstances. Your leadership has fostered practical and cooperative approaches to one of the most pressing challenges Lebanon faces - the protracted Syrian displacement. We highly value your engagement in supporting the first return convoy from Lebanon, and we reaffirm our determination to continue this process until a comprehensive solution is achieved.

Lebanon, despite the absence of a formal legal framework, has spared no effort in safeguarding the protection of displaced Syrians. Together with UNHCR, we facilitated the registration of official documents, protecting thousands from the risk of statelessness. This exceptional measure—applied exclusively to Syrians—enabled the registration of births and marriages, strengthened their basic rights, and laid the groundwork for durable solutions.

The return of displaced Syrians remains an overriding national priority. The exchange of letters concluded between Lebanon and UNHCR has already yielded tangible progress, and we are committed to redoubling efforts in light of changing political and security conditions in Syria. In this regard, Lebanon calls on

the international community to increase humanitarian support inside Syria, channeling aid towards recovery, reintegration, and resilience programs. The UNHCR Enhanced Regional Survey on Syrian Refugees (September 2025) revealed that 53% of Syrian families in Lebanon rely primarily on humanitarian aid. Redirecting this assistance into Syria would encourage and sustain return, especially as refugees themselves have expressed their strong aspiration to rebuild their homeland, strengthen national unity, and reunite with their families.

To facilitate this process, the Government of Lebanon extended the administrative measures of General Security until 31 December, including exemptions from fines and the lifting of re-entry bans. This approach provides a win-win outcome for all stakeholders, while also opening the door to regulating the stay of the breadwinner who remain in Lebanon in accordance with labor market needs. It is worth recalling that 90% of displaced Syrians in Lebanon generate income through work, a fact that underscores the importance of aligning return and stay arrangements with legal and economic realities.

Excellencies,

Resolving the displacement crisis is not only a national imperative for Lebanon; it is also a necessity for the stability and security of the wider region and both shores of the Mediterranean. It is a safeguard against irregular migration, exploitation, and human trafficking. In this spirit, the Council of Ministers has approved, at the request of the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Unified Practical Procedures for Identifying, Assisting, and Protecting Victims of Human Trafficking in Lebanon (Decision No. 5/2025).

Nevertheless, despite positive developments in Syria that have enabled thousands to return, Lebanon continues to witness new arrivals, after December 8, which pose additional protection challenges. Addressing their status remains a shared priority between the Government of Lebanon and UNHCR. From this distinguished platform, Lebanon calls for the activation of sustainable solutions, including complementary pathways based on humanitarian considerations, in line with the needs of host countries and the collective responsibility of easing burdens.

In closing, we echo the High Commissioner's call: while humanitarian financing faces unprecedented shortfalls, these challenges must not overshadow the opportunities that remain for practical, cooperative, and innovative approaches. Lebanon firmly believes that—despite the funding crisis—prospects for solutions remain within reach if we combine principled engagement, burden-sharing, and investment in recovery and self-reliance. Together, we can turn today's constraints into tomorrow's opportunities for peace, stability, and return.

Thank you.