

## **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

*Today, we are meeting during an exceptional and unprecedented humanitarian circumstance in the Arab region, whereas the Lebanese Republic witnessed a terrible catastrophe on the 4<sup>th</sup> August, following two explosions that occurred in a warehouse containing huge quantities of "ammonium nitrate", which resulted a complete destruction of Beirut port and its surrounding area, and affected many residential neighborhoods in the Lebanese capital Beirut, claiming hundreds of victims and thousands of injuries, leaving large numbers of missing persons and homeless families, and causing substantial material damage of public and private properties and many key buildings in the city.*

*This catastrophe has generated difficult humanitarian and health conditions and enormous pressures that exceeded the capability of the Lebanese healthcare system, as hospitals no longer have the capacity to absorb and provide the adequate treatment to the huge numbers of injuries. We all know that such catastrophe requires enormous capabilities to face its tremendous humanitarian repercussions, and needs a rapid multi-dimensional response in the health, social, humanitarian and economic fields.*

*In light of that, and within the framework of the rapid response of the League of Arab States to this terrible humanitarian catastrophe, the Arab League Secretary-General, HE Mr. Ahmed Aboul-Gheit calls on the Arab States, international community as well as Arab and international relief aid agencies to exert every effort to confront this terrible catastrophe; and calls for an immediate Arab action in this regard; and urges the Social and Economic Affairs Sectors of the Arab League to take the necessary measures in coordination with all relevant Arab and international organizations. To that end, I participate today in this important meeting, to affirm the full support for the appeal launched by Lebanon aimed at securing the necessary assistance to face the humanitarian, social and economic repercussions of the massive blast that rocked Beirut.*

*In this context, the Arab League Secretary-General made a visit to the Lebanese Republic, accompanied by a high-level delegation on the 8<sup>th</sup> of August 2020, during which Mr. Aboul-Gheit visited the destroyed port of Beirut and its outskirts. The Secretary-General convened several meetings with the President of the Lebanese Republic, the Chair of the Parliament*

*and the Prime Minister and he also contacted a number of Lebanese politicians, the head of Lebanon's Red Cross and civil society activists to review the overall situation; and requested to submit a detailed report to the Secretariat General of the League of Arab States on the urgent needs in preparation for taking the necessary actions in this regard.*

*Within that framework and in my capacity as head of technical secretariats of specialized Arab ministerial councils of the health, social affairs, youth and sports fields and population, I would like to note that coordination is ongoing to adopt urgent resolution to provide the necessary health, humanitarian and social assistance needed for the Lebanese brothers.*

*I would also like to refer, in this context, to the Arab States and the world endeavours to send medical and humanitarian aids to the Lebanese people and to provide urgent assistance to affected people.*

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

*The catastrophe that Lebanon had witnessed, the global and Arab rapid response and the successive political developments there, require good coordination and reliable data on the necessary relief requirements and how to be delivered, to support the affected Lebanese brothers and their families.*

*In conclusion, I assure you of our full cooperation to confront this humanitarian catastrophe and I pray to God Almighty to crown our efforts with success.*

**Thank You.**