



Virtual briefing on the humanitarian situation in Lebanon

**Statement by Filippo Grandi,
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees**

10 August 2020

Mr. Chairman,

I wish to join all those who have expressed condolences and solidarity and who thanked OCHA for coordinating the effort.

The UN refugee organisations, UNHCR and UNRWA, have a close and long-standing association with Lebanon. This is a country that has hosted Palestinian and other refugees for decades – most recently, from Iraq and Syria. It is now time to stand by the Lebanese people in their hour of need.

In Lebanon, UNHCR has one of its largest operations globally – some 650 colleagues, who are now involved in the common relief effort and are available to pursue its goals.

We have already mobilised together with the UN and our humanitarian partners. I am planning to visit Lebanon next week to support our response.

I wish to make clear that our response covers the entire community - including Lebanese, refugees and migrant workers.

Given the centrality of the shelter emergency, our immediate priority is to help 10,000 vulnerable households repair their homes and make them safe. We are providing people with 'emergency weatherproofing' –plastic sheeting, timber, plywood and tools. We will support additional rehabilitation work through cash and in-kind assistance.

We are also, like others, drawing on our existing networks of outreach volunteers and other partnerships to step up our community support, including psychological first aid, connecting vulnerable people with the right services, and supporting community solidarity initiatives. We will also step up our existing hotlines and case management systems to provide individual assistance, including legal support.

Naturally, and to conclude, while echoing what many others have said, while we concentrate on this emergency, let us not forget that Lebanon is affected by the COVID pandemic, and continues to host hundreds of thousands of Syrian and other refugees. All these responses, often underfunded, require our sustained attention and support.

Thank you.