

US HUMANITARIAN COALITION FOR LEBANON

August 24, 2020

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing you today to raise awareness of the increasingly critical humanitarian situation in Lebanon which the August 4th explosions have exacerbated. The impact of the explosions, including both the immediate damage and the long road toward recovery, could cause millions of more people to fall into hunger and desperation. Lebanon is also host to the highest number of refugees-per-capita of any country in the world, who will need ongoing support in this dire time.

In an effort to alleviate this overwhelming suffering, a diverse group of U.S.-based humanitarian nonprofits and NGOs have joined together in “one voice” to request targeted U.S. support for the people of Lebanon in the form of Food for Peace.

The Lebanese people are facing an increasingly desperate situation with the impending economic collapse and lack of government services in their country. Costs are soaring as the Lebanese pound continues to depreciate. Many people cannot obtain food, medicine, power, or shelter. In the absence of near-term solutions, over 50% of the Lebanese population is facing poverty. The COVID-19 outbreak has compounded the severity of the hardship faced by so many Lebanese. The situation is even worse among Lebanon’s refugee population.

In a country where only 45% of the workforce is part of the formal economy, even they are now unemployed, or working for reduced wages. They are unable to pay for their children’s education, healthcare, and essential services such as housing, power, and water.

There are currently 600,000 people unemployed in Lebanon, an estimated 35% unemployment rate and climbing. Since the government is insolvent, there are no large-scale interventions to prop up the economy; and even those that exist for the poor and small and medium-sized businesses are underfunded.

There is little hope that negotiations between the Lebanese government and the IMF will yield results before the end of this year, and although the IMF has insisted on the importance of crafting a social safety net as part of a recovery plan, Lebanon has few resources to allocate to humanitarian relief.

This is where the critical role of humanitarian organizations, both local and international, has become an indispensable tool for reducing the pain of the more than 50% of Lebanese now living in poverty.

Coordinator: American Task Force on Lebanon

The Hon. Edward M. Gabriel, President | Leslie Touma, Executive Director | Leslie.touma@atfl.org | 202-223-9333 | www.atfl.org

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The Agricultural Trade and Development Assistance Act of 1954, commonly known as PL-480 or Food for Peace, has been mobilized worldwide to fight hunger. We are respectfully requesting that the U.S. Administration and Congress consider approving a specific PL-480 program for Lebanon to alleviate the tremendous suffering among the people there.

This has been done for Lebanon in the past. In 1999, Congress approved a program to forward 73,000 metric tons of surplus American wheat to Lebanon, the proceeds of which were placed in an escrow account to be used by the United States Agency for International Development for projects in Lebanon. At that time, the wheat was estimated to provide an additional \$7 million in U.S. assistance to Lebanon.

This is a critical time for Lebanon, its citizens, and the refugees taking shelter in the country. We ask that you please honor this request from these humanitarian organizations that are working together in this effort to alleviate human suffering.

Most respectfully,

ACT FOR LEBANON

ACTION AGAINST HUNGER

AFYA FOUNDATION

AMERICAN DRUZE FOUNDATION

AMERICAN FRIENDS OF THE LEBANON MOUNTAIN TRAIL

AMERICAN LEBANESE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

AMERICAN LEBANESE POLICY INSTITUTE

AMERICAN TASK FORCE ON LEBANON

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

AMIDEAST

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

ANERA

ANTHONY R. ABRAHAM FOUNDATION

ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA

ARAB AMERICAN FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER

ARMENIAN MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA (AMAA)

ARMENIAN RELIEF SOCIETY

BRIDGES OF PEACE INTERNATIONAL INC.

CENTER FOR ARAB AMERICAN PHILANTHROPY

EDUCATION AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEBANON (EOL)

EPARCHY OF OUR LADY OF LEBANON OF LOS ANGELES

EPARCHY OF SAINT MARON OF BROOKLYN

THE ESSEFF FOUNDATION

FRANCISCAN MONASTERY OF THE HOLY LAND IN AMERICA

GLOBAL SMILE FOUNDATION

HAIGAZIAN UNIVERSITY SUPPORT FUND, INC.

HEALTH OUTREACH TO THE MIDDLE EAST (HOME)

IN DEFENSE OF CHRISTIANS

ISLAMIC RELIEF USA

JOBS FOR LEBANON

LA CEDARS ROTARY FOUNDATION

LEBANESE AMERICAN FOUNDATION, INC (HOUSE OF LEBANON)

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US HUMANITARIAN COALITION FOR LEBANON

LEBANESE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

LEBANESE COLLEGIATE NETWORK

LEBANESE FOR LEBANON FOUNDATION

LEBANESE INTERNATIONAL FINANCE EXECUTIVES
(LIFE)

LEBANON RENAISSANCE FOUNDATION

LIFE FOR RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT

LOS ANGELES BEIRUT SISTERS CITIES

MAG AMERICA

THE MARSHALL LEGACY INSTITUTE

MEDAIR

MEDWISH INTERNATIONAL

MELKITE EPARCHY OF NEWTON

MOISE A. KHAYRALLAH CENTER FOR LEBANESE
DIASPORA STUDIES

NATIONAL APOSTOLATE OF MARONITES

NEAR EAST FOUNDATION

OPERATION SMILE

PROJECT HOPE

RENE MOAWAD FOUNDATION, USA

ROTARY CLUB OF FLINT

ROTARY CLUB OF TROY

SAFE SPACES LEBANON

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ACTION FOR LEBANON (SEAL
USA)

STREAM OF HOPE MISSION

WORLD LEBANESE CULTURAL UNION

ZAKAT FOUNDATION OF AMERICA

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