

UN development agency remains committed to support Lebanon, says agency head

Reverberations of the Syrian conflict – which has now lasted longer than World War II – are being felt throughout the region, including in Lebanon, which shares most of its land border with the war-torn country, and hosts hundreds of thousands of its refugees, the head of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) warned on Friday.

“Almost seven years into the Syrian conflict, Lebanon remains at the forefront of one of the worst humanitarian crises of our time and continues to show exceptional commitment and solidarity to people displaced by the war in Syria,” said Achim Steiner, the UNDP Administrator, [wrapping up](#) his first official visit to the country.

“[We] remain committed to supporting the Lebanese Government and local communities hosting refugees in their efforts to maintain stability and to continue its support to local communities hosting refugees.”

The ongoing Syria crisis has impacted Lebanon’s social services, infrastructure and jobs.

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During his visit, Mr. Steiner met with the Lebanese Prime Minister, Saad Hariri, as well as many other senior officials and discussed the challenges the nation faces, seven years into the Syria crisis.

The UNDP chief also visited Bourj Hammoud, an area hosting close to 20,000 Syrian refugees, and saw the impact of the crisis at the local level and how the Lebanese community and Syrian refugees manage day to day issues such as their children’s education, earning an income and accessing essential health services.

“Every refugee would like to return home but, in the meantime, until conditions permit, our role is to assist Lebanon in managing the global public good it provides,” he said, underscoring UNDP’s support for the upcoming Paris and Brussels Conferences.

During his visit, Mr. Steiner also attended a roundtable discussion on Lebanon’s efforts in pursuit of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with officials from the Parliament and Government, alongside representatives of civil society and the private sector.