Country: Lebanon

Agenda Item : Combating food insecurity and the risk of famine

Paragraph 1 : Lebanon, officially the Republic of Lebanon, is an Arab and Middle Eastern country on the Eastern Mediterranean coast in Western Asia.

Lebanon’s main sources of income are the service sector and tourism. In addition, local people make a living from agriculture and animal husbandry. The most important agricultural products include citrus fruits, grapes, apples, tomatoes and olives. The country’s main export products include jewellery, cement, textiles and minerals.

Although it is not clear, the population of Lebanon is approximately 5,353,930. While Arabs constitute the majority of the population, the ethnic population distribution includes Armenians, Palestinians and Syrians.

Paragraph 2: Providing food aid by the United Nations World Food Program (WFP) to support economic and social development in countries in need of assistance is important if the food needs that arise in times of emergency and crisis are not met. Small, densely populated and lying at the hearth of a region beset by conflict and political instability, Lebanon is experiencing a profound socioeconomic crisis on top of the protracted Syrian refugee crisis.

The consequences of the war in Ukraine are also heavily impacting Lebanon, creating additional inflationary pressures. With food exports suspended from the world’s grain basket, and imports affected by the global rise in prices for fuel and commodities, prices of food in Lebanon have already risen.

**Poverty and food insecurity for all populations in Lebanon have sharply increased.** Inflation-deteriorated purchasing power, high unemployment, stagnant wages and limited social safety nets have had severe consequences on the living conditions of not only the poorest, but also the middle class.  **Now in 2022, 3.4 million people in Lebanon need humanitarian assistance.**With the constant increase in food prices, food security has become a major concern. Half of Lebanese families and almost the entire refugee population are worried about having enough food to eat. Having shown exceptional solidarity towards people fleeing war and insecurity in neighbouring countries, Lebanon has the **world’s highest per capita refugee presence, estimated at 25 percent of the overall population**. The spill over from the ongoing war in Syria has exacerbated economic and social challenges, placing a strain on existing resources. According to WFP estimates, the number of **Syrian refugees who are severely or moderately food insecure stands at 1.3 million, of whom 1.2 million are receiving assistance**.

As the Lebanese and refugee populations were already suffering from the economic recession compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, a devastating blast hit the capital’s port on 4 August 2020, destroying homes, businesses and the major grain silos. The World Food Programme (WFP), along with other international and national actors, acted swiftly to ensure people were able to secure their food and other essential needs, and to rebuild their destroyed homes and livelihoods.

With the initial aim to respond to the Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon, WFP has been providing life-saving assistance to refugees in the country since 2012. Since then, WFP’s role has expanded, ensuring that both vulnerable Lebanese and refugees have sufficient nutritious food throughout the year. WFP also provides technical assistance and capacity strengthening support to the Government of Lebanon.

Paragraph 3 : I think Lebanon is an underdeveloped country with problems. For this reason, the United Nations should ensure access to safe food. The most important solution for future generations to have easy access to food is world peace. I wish for a world without wars.