



**Statement**

**by**

**Mr. Khalil Mohamad**

**at the  
Second Committee  
General Debate**

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*Check Against Delivery*

*Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations  
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Mr. Chairman,

Allow me first to congratulate you and the members of the Bureau on your election to steer the work of the Second Committee during the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly. You can count on my delegation's full support and constructive engagement in the deliberations ahead.

Mr. Chairman,

As it is time to assess success in achieving the Millennium Development Goals, the international community remains committed to building a world of Prosperity, Justice, Freedom, Dignity and Peace through the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Mr. Chairman,

Few days ago, at the UN Climate Summit the need was reaffirmed to take collective and resolute action in order to meet the challenges of global warming, by limiting global temperature, consistent with the objectives of economic development of poverty eradication. Indeed, since the RIO+20 Conference in 2012, the international community has highlighted the need for the Sustainable Development Goals to focus on inclusive and environmentally responsible growth in the Post-2015 Agenda. This culminated in the recent adoption of the OWG's Report on Sustainable Development Goals by the General Assembly, which endorses the outcome document as the main basis for integrating the SDGS into the future development agenda.

Through the "Three Pillars of Sustainable Development" the inter-linkages between economic and human development under the banner of the overarching goal of environmental stability were emphasized. Furthermore, the international community agreed that pursuing sustainable development should not be reserved to developed countries; as our resources are being dangerously depleted, it is imperative to consider it the only path of development, which can lift people out of poverty.

There are three main challenges and equally urgent priorities of sustainable development; (1) good governance, which entails better distribution of power and responsibilities, efficient combination of central planning, local initiatives and multiple actors' involvement; (2) technological improvement, via knowledge transfers from developed countries and by attracting FDIs; (3) public awareness, via awareness campaigns to sensitize the population on the high stakes of sustainability.

Mr. Chairman,

Like many developing countries, Lebanon faces the challenge of inequality, an asymmetry directly linked to poverty. An important article in Lebanon's constitution states that there must be an even development between regions on the education, social and economic level to ensure stability and unity. Local authorities have the power and responsibility to address the interests and more importantly, the needs of the people, particularly the vulnerable.

My country is witnessing a mass migration of our youth from the rural areas to the city and mostly abroad. As for those who remain, they are facing a high unemployment rate despite the high rate of literacy among our youth. They are a critical asset and must be an integral part of the Post-2015 Development Agenda. Youth deserve a real voice to address their problems and concerns and must be given more of an opportunity to express their perspectives on policies and programs that affect their current and future lives. That being said, we must further strengthen social dialogue. Youth are not only the future of tomorrow; they are also the leaders, entrepreneurs, students, caregivers, and problem solvers of today.

Mr. Chairman,

Most recently, the Syrian conflict has had a terrible impact on the Lebanese economy. This year, the number of Syrian refugees in Lebanon has reached 1.3 million, one quarter of the local population, "a devastating milestone for a host community stretched to a breaking point" UNHCR said. Lebanon is grateful for the support and multiple efforts of the international community but remains in a precarious situation. The refugees' crisis significantly affects wages and job opportunities, tourism and investment in the country.

Mr. Chairman,

The marine oil spill, which was caused by the destruction of the oil storage tanks at the Jiyeh electric power plant, south Beirut, by the Israeli Air Force in 2006, continue to threaten human health, economic growth and efforts to achieve sustainable development in Lebanon. The inability to contain the spread of oil in the early critical stages, due to the Israeli air and marine blockade led to the prolonged adverse effects that still exist today.

Lebanon continues to attach great importance to the support of the international community to adopt the "Oil Slick" resolution, acknowledging Israel responsibility to adequately compensate for the damage it inflicted on Lebanon.

Mr. Chairman,

Lastly, to echo the International Year for Solidarity with the Palestinians, my country would like to stress the fact that Israeli Practices in the occupied territories, East Jerusalem and the Gaza strip hinder the human and economic development of the State of Palestine. For instance, 80% of Palestinians in Gaza remain dependent on humanitarian aid because of the blockade; 32.2% of the local workforce is unemployed.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.