Lebanese Republic | Presidency
of the Council of Ministers
LEBANESE PALESTINIAN
DIALOGUE COMMITTEE

A Unified Lebanese Vision For the Palestinian Refugees Affairs In Lebanon

Lebanese Working Group on Palestinian Refugee Affairs

November 2016

Preface

This text is the fruit of nearly two years of work; it was developed by the «Lebanese Working Group on Palestinian Refugees Affairs» established within the framework of the «Lebanese Palestinian Dialogue Committee» which is attached to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers.. It addresses one of the issues that provoked a sharp division on the Lebanese political scene and with the Palestinians. For the first time, Lebanese of all political affiliations, present through this document, made a common approach on how to deal with Palestinian refugees, while understanding and going beyond the circumstances, implications, differences and

contradictions that have shaped for a long period the mutual relations. It can be said that the participants in this achievement were driven by their concern for the greater interest of Lebanon, and their eagerness to build the best fraternal relationships between the two peoples.

The participants in the Working Group have embarked on this

experience, following a preparatory round of talks and meetings conducted by the LPDC Chairman, Dr. Hassan Mneymneh, with leaders of political parties, movements and forces that consented to initiate this dialogue. The working group consisted of representatives from the: Lebanese Forces - Hezbollah - Amal Movement – Free Patriotic Movement - Lebanese Phalanges Party - Future Movement - Progressive Socialist Party, as well as a team of facilitators and experts with great experience in the Palestinian issue, dialogue facilitation and concluding agreements.

The Working Group has held regular meetings that reached over 50, during which there was an in-depth and honest dialogue on the complex aspects of this issue, in order to reach a comprehensive text destined to provide the Lebanese State and its institutions with stable national guidelines regarding refugees and their cause.

The Group started by addressing the problems experienced by the Palestinians in Lebanon, as a host country, at the level of their living and social conditions, access to services, and their relationship with the Lebanese institutions, after nearly 70 years of presence in Lebanon.

The Group drew its work upon the Lebanese Constitution and laws, in addition to the Human Rights system, international and Arab conventions and Lebanese consensus positions on this issue especially with regard to Lebanon's commitment to support the Palestinian cause towards achieving the return of Palestinians and the establishment of an independent Palestinian State with Jerusalem as its capital.

The Group found that improving the humanitarian, socio-economic and living conditions of Palestinian refugees and

granting them their basic rights does not contradict, in any way, with Lebanon's sovereignty and its rejection of resettlement as a postulate of Lebanese consensus, nor with their right to return to the land they have been uprooted from.

The representatives of participating Lebanese parties have spent long hours formulating, discussing and verifying what is stated in this text based on previous Lebanese consensuses and their commitment to the greater national interest. They have reached a wording that can be built upon, in the adoption of public policies in this regard while preserving Lebanon's sovereignty over its territory, and giving Palestinians their rights and defining their duties within the framework of applicable laws.

Members of The Working Group have signed this document with the exception of the Phalanges Party that had partial reservations but has participated in the elaboration of this document in all its details and contributed to the debate, discussions and positive aspects. In in addition, the group hopes that official political and popular forces, parties and civil society organizations, as well as the Palestinian Authority, factions and associations will consider this shared vision as an incentive towards conducting more serious research on various problematic issues, and invites them to work on consolidating the consensus on the sovereignty of the State and Lebanese laws, reinforcing and supporting the Palestinian cause to achieve justice for refugees.

Introduction

1

Under the auspices of the Prime Minister Tammam Salam and on the initiative of the Chairman of the Lebanese Palestinian Dialogue Committee, former Minister Hassan Mneymneh, The Lebanese Working Group on Palestinian Refugee Affairs was formed on 9 January 2015, and held its first meeting at the Grand Serail in the presence of the Prime Minister and with the participation of the following representatives of parliamentary blocs:

MP Dr. Ali Fayad, representing Hezbollah

MP Dr. Ammar Houri, representing the Future Movement

MP Simon Abi Ramia, representing the Free Patriotic Movement

Former minister Dr. Tony Karam, representing the Lebanese Forces Party

Lawyer Rafiq Ghanem, representing the Lebanese Phalanges Party

Dr. Bahaa Bou Karroum, representing the Progressive Socialist Party

Mr. Mohamed Aljbawi, representing the Amal Movement

The team of experts consisted of the facilitator Dr. Antoine Haddad, experts Adib Nehmeh and Ziad Al-Sayegh and the team of the Dialogue Committee composed of Abdel Nasser El-ayi, Dr. Zuhair Huwari, and Dr. May Hammoud.

A preparatory round of talks with the parties and political party leaders, led by the Chairman of the Committee preceded the meeting.

2

The Working Group was formed and its main objectives were defined as follows:

a- Holding a formal dialogue between Lebanon's political parties about the situation of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon with the aim of making the views on this file converge;

b- Developing an inclusive text expressing the common viewpoint of the Lebanese parties involved in the dialogue, which would help the Lebanese government develop a stable national strategy related the Palestinian refugees.

c- Presenting suggestions to the government and the concerned Lebanese official stakeholders regarding the policies and steps that can be taken to address the problems facing the Palestinian refugees and their relationship with the Lebanese State;

3 This text represents the common vision of the members of the Working Group, resulting from the extensive discussions held on the various aspects of Palestinian refugees' issue in Lebanon.

Reference Framework

4 The Working Group adopts a regulating and guided reference framework for its discussions and agreements, composed of three interdependent, complementary and non-contradictory components:

a- Committing to the Lebanese Constitution and the National Accord Document.

b- Committing to the Human Rights system as being the universal reference for dealing with the rights of individuals, groups and countries.

c- Guaranteeing the Lebanese greater national interests that embody sovereignty, independence, coexistence, domestic stability and respect of the law.

Lebanese consensuses reached on the Palestinian refugees' issue

5 The Working Group draws upon the Lebanese national consensus points mentioned in the TAEF Agreement of 1989, the decisions of the National Dialogue Committee of 2006, and the unanimous official positions on the Palestinian cause, especially the ones related to the situation of

Palestinian refugees, and the Palestinian presence in Lebanon in general.

6 The Working Group renews its adoption of these points of agreement, as they express inclusive national choices that should be built upon in order to develop an integrated vision about the Palestinian presence in Lebanon and the Palestinian refugees. National constant policies are elaborated based on these principles so the Lebanese State could adopt appropriate measures with respect to the relation with international bodies and the Palestinian Authority, and that each party carries out its entrusted roles, duties and responsibilities.

7 Accordingly, the Working Group confirms the Palestinian refugees' right of return and the right of the Palestinian people to establish their independent State with Jerusalem as its capital. It also adheres to Lebanon's commitment to play an active diplomatic role in this direction, and reiterates the international community's responsibility to provide a just solution to the Palestinian issue and to ensure refugees' needs and rights that are embodied mainly by UNRWA's role.

8 The first point of agreement is the decisive stance refusing resettlement expressed by all the Lebanese and jointly by the Lebanese and Palestinians. This also includes addressing the issue of weapons according to the decisions of the National Dialogue Committee of 2006.

9 Regarding the living conditions, the Working Group emphasizes the need for greater efforts to address the humanitarian and living issues of Palestinian refugees through granting them the human rights of refugees on one hand, and improving the conditions of the camps and implementing the Lebanese laws in this regard on the other hand.

The Working Group confirms the adoption of and adherence

to previous consensus elements, in addition to those discussed during the past two years, and the following common points it reached, in particular the highlighted five recommendations submitted to the Prime Minister Tammam Salam on 20/3/2015. The Group considers these points as a solid foundation that should be drawn upon in further discussions to develop common grounds as much as possible, taking into account the national, regional and international developments during the last decade.

Defining resettlement

10 The Working Group believes that it is necessary to bridge the gap resulting from the lack of an official Lebanese definition of 'resettlement' and 'refugee' in general, and 'Palestinian refugee' in particular in Lebanese legislative texts, thus causing confusion, given that Lebanon did not sign the 1951 Refugee Convention.

11 The Working Group suggests defining the resettlement of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon as follows: «Granting Palestinian refugees in Lebanon the Lebanese nationality collectively, to all or some, outside the legal context by virtue of apolitical decision imposed in the context of a regional or international settlement and contrary to the Constitution, whether done all at once or gradually.»

Defining 'Palestinian refugee'

12 The Working Group proposes defining the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon as follows: «Each Palestinian displaced to the Lebanese territories since 1947, due to the uprooting operations and all the accompanying forms of forced displacement, and the subsequent Israeli occupation of Palestine in 1967 and its implications, in addition to all the descendants of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon in the sense defined above.«

Therefore, Palestinian refugees correspond exclusively to the

following categories:

a- Refugees registered at the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities.

b- Refugees of 1948 who are registered with the UNRWA in Lebanon.

c- Undocumented Palestinian refugees identified by the Lebanese authorities within the Non-ID category.

Position on resettlement

13 The Working Group deems necessary to address the issue of the comprehensive and undivided rejection of resettlement. This position is founded on the preamble of the Constitution, and stems from the eagerness to maintain Lebanon's greater interest. This goes along with the Lebanese commitment to support the right of return and the remaining legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people in general, and the refugees' issue in particular, as being one of Lebanon's foreign policy principles and a mandatory result of its affiliation to the Arab world.

14 The comprehensive and undivided approach towards the rejection of resettlement has three aspects:

a- Political-sovereign aspect

b- Socio-cultural aspect

c- Living related aspect

Resettlement (Tawte'en): Political- sovereign aspect

15 Drawing upon the commitment to the Lebanese Constitution, the Working Group confirms rejecting resettlement as being the act of acquiring collectively the Lebanese nationality as stated in the above definition, and the resulting political rights which are limited to the Lebanese citizens, and is working to materialize this position in policies and legislations so as to reflect the Lebanese consensus in this regard.

Resettlement (Tawte'en): Socio-cultural aspect

16 The Working Group considers that preserving the Palestinian

national identity contributes to a healthy interaction between the Palestinian refugee community and the Lebanese community and draws a clear line between a healthy interaction and the dissolution of the Palestinian identity.

17 Preserving the Palestinian identity as a guarantee against resettlement, in its socio-cultural aspect, is inherent to the Lebanese sovereignty over the Palestinian camps and strengthens democracy and freedom of peaceful political action towards ensuring national Palestinian rights, and facilitating the activity of civil society organizations working to enhance the Palestinian national identity within legal frameworks.

Resettlement: Living related aspect

18 Lebanon is committed to the system of rights as stated in this text, including the sovereign responsibility assumed by Lebanon, as a host country, towards all residents on its territory, while emphasizing the responsibility of the international community in this area, and what stems from it, in terms of meeting the economic and social rights, living conditions and basic needs of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.

19 The Working Group believes that unnecessary restrictions on granting Palestinian refugees their economic and social rights should be lifted, including the right to work and access to social protection, as long as these rights are regulated and their effects are tangible, through legislation and public policies that take account of these rights, so as not to conflict with Lebanon's greater interest and realistic abilities and the interests of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.

20 The Working Group emphasizes the right of Palestinian refugees to adequate housing, and the need to address the right to own property, as well as the

problems pending since the issuance of the Law 296/2001, which deprived Palestinian refugees from the right to own property, so as not to conflict with the provisions of the Constitution, the greater interests of Lebanon and Human Rights.

Camps Governance

21 The Working Group believes that the current chaotic situation in the camps, starting from the overlapping of formal defined territory and informal territory which expanded with demographic growth, to the internal management of the camp, and the relationship between the camp and its surroundings, is the product of a cumulative path and a de facto way of running things, in the absence of a consistent and stable strategy.

22 Following the reconstruction of Nahr El-Bared camp, and despite the heavy price paid by the camp and by Lebanon, relatively favorable conditions were available to introduce a new model of camp management, reinforced by a positive and healthy approach adopted by all the concerned parties. The Lebanese State took the entire responsibility of rebuilding the camp, based on a systematic plan and with the participation of camp residents. The Lebanese vision expressed in the Vienna Conference included new ideas for expropriation, urban planning, the extension of state sovereignty, and bringing back camp residents to their homes in a systematic and gradual manner. This experience ought to be pursued until its end, and to serve as an example for developing alternative ways to manage the camps.

23 The Working Group believes that the State's role in camp management should not be limited to the security aspect which is the case currently, but must also include political matters, access to services and human right issues, and thus take care of all those residing on its territory according to the

principle of state sovereignty on its territory and residents.

24 The existence of representative committees in the camps would help improve the management of the camp especially the living issues, and facilitate interaction between the refugees, public service administrations and surrounding municipalities.

25 The State must manage the camps in cooperation with UNRWA who is the agency responsible for the provision of services, and with the committees representing camp residents and authorities.

26 The assessment of camp management and the collaboration between popular committees and various public administrations, service institutions and municipalities show the need to work in this direction, in addition to taking the following procedural steps:

a- Identifying the drawbacks resulting from the multiplicity of authorities and channels of communication regarding the camp situation;

b- Unifying the Lebanese and Palestinian administrative authorities and organizing their collaboration based on sound principles.

Forming Associations

27 The Group affirms the right of Palestinian refugees to civil engagement, including the establishment of non-political associations, and it believes that this contributes to the development of their society and the consolidation of the Palestinian national identity, which serves the interests of Lebanon as well as the interests of the Palestinian refugees.

28 The Working Group deems necessary to address the current situation in terms of the procedures to establish associations working within the Palestinian circles in Lebanon, as they impose restrictions on independent civic associations with human rights or providing useful services goals, while extremist

and dangerous groups find many ways for operating and funding their work without any restriction, away from the laws and regulations of the State, the Embassy of Palestine and known Palestinian parties and institutions.

29

In this context, the Working Group proposes that the Lebanese authorities develop, by following the same logic of the Law on Associations, special measures to facilitate the establishment and registration of Palestinian associations working in camps and with refugees, in order to avoid the use of measures to get round the law such as establishing Palestinian associations with a Lebanese facade, which would prevent the Lebanese authorities from learning about the activities of the associations... Obtaining the necessary permits would benefit the Lebanese state and facilitate the work of civil organizations in shouldering a greater responsibility for improving the conditions of the camps and their inhabitants.

Security and Arms

30

The Working Group believes that the Articles of the National Accord Document and the decisions of the National Dialogue Committee of 2006 constitute the main framework for dealing with the sovereignty and security aspects - in issues related to the camps and Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, starting with Lebanon's indisputable right of extending its sovereignty over all its territory, without any exception, and its exclusive right to use weapons. The Working Group reiterates the decisions taken at the National Dialogue Conference held in 2006 in this regard, which provide for « disarming Palestinians outside the camps within a six-month period and addressing the issue of weapons inside the camps, while stressing the responsibility and commitment of the Lebanese State to protect the Palestinian camps

from any aggression. The conferees committed to work hard to implement the above and support the Government's efforts in doing so through means of dialogue».

31 The Working Group believes that, over two and a half decades after the end of the Lebanese war, the abrogation by the Parliament of the Cairo Agreement, the signing of the TAEF Agreement, in addition to the overall national and regional developments, and the progress made in the relationship between the Lebanese State and the State of Palestine, the government ought to reevoke the decisions of the National Dialogue Conference, to provide the necessary grounds for their implementation and to find a favorable political context, while giving priority to the Lebanese national interests.

32 The Working Group observes the need to consolidate and humanize security procedures around the camps and at their entrances according to objective and specific criteria, and to unify the Lebanese reference authority in this domain.

Right of Return

33 The Working Group believes that rejecting resettlement and supporting the right of return are two interdependent aspects of the Lebanese and Palestinian positions, as resettlement is neither a Palestinian nor a Lebanese demand, but rather an Israeli demand backed by some influential international forces. Accordingly, the Lebanese and Palestinian parties, as well as other supporters of Lebanon and the Palestinian right agree on facing this external threat.

34 The Working Group confirms its support for the commitments that have already been expressed by the successive Lebanese governments since 2005 concerning Lebanon's use of its political influence on the Arab and international scene, its foreign relations

and diplomatic action to back up the establishment of a Palestinian State and the right of return for Palestinian refugees. The Group sees that this is at the heart of any just solution for durable peace, and serves Arab interests in general, and Palestinian and Lebanese interests in particular. The Working Group also calls the Lebanese government to translate the consensus on refusing resettlement and granting the right of return, into a national action plan oriented towards foreign policy in this area.

Relationship with UNRWA

The Working Group highlights the political importance of the continued presence of the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), the role it plays and the responsibilities it assumes towards refugees, on behalf of the international community. It recommends the regulation of this relationship under clear and detailed agreements signed by the Lebanese and international parties, so as to ensure that the Lebanese state is adequately informed about its activities and guarantee its right to express opinions and provide proper guidance, and to guarantee harmony between the Agency's work in serving refugees and the development of their community.

LPDC and Managing Palestinian Refugee Issues

The Working Group believes that the establishment of the Lebanese Palestinian Dialogue Committee is a crucial step in dealing with the issue of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon in a systematic and unified manner. It recommends developing the work achieved by «the Lebanese Palestinian Dialogue Committee», particularly regarding the following topics:

First: Identifying tasks in line with its strategic plan, developing the organizational chart of the Committee, and allocating an official budget aligned with its tasks.

Second: Emphasizing the need to develop a Lebanese public policy regarding the issues of Palestinian refugees, elaborating an official framework for the Lebanese State to address Palestinian issues and ensuring the appropriate relevant structures.

37 The Working Group supports the conduct of statistical studies, the establishment of an observatory of refugees' issues, and all related studies and research, which enable the Lebanese State and its institutions, to work on Palestinian refugees and their situation according to a reliable database.

Final points

38 Finally, the Working Group underlines its complete solidarity with the struggle of the Palestinian people for their legitimate national rights, its resistance of the occupation, war, aggression, siege, repression and assassinations, and with its challenge of the settlement and Judaization plans as well as the apartheid wall.

39 The Working Group stresses the ties of brotherhood and solidarity with the Palestinian refugees in the refugee camps, especially in Lebanon. It welcomes the positive development in the relations between the people of Lebanon and the people of Palestine, and the content of the «Announcement of Palestine in Lebanon» in which our Palestinian brothers presented a critical review of their relationship with the State of Lebanon and the Lebanese people during the years of the Lebanese civil war. Therefore, the time has come for the Lebanese people con duct a critical review of their experience in order to learn from past experiences with Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.

40 The Working Group also highlights its commitment, on behalf of the represented political parties and

movements, to this approach aiming at strengthening and establishing the Lebanese - Palestinian relations, as well as the one between the two peoples on the basis of brotherhood and common interests.

41 The Working Group recommends the Lebanese government to launch the development of an integrated and consistent national policy on Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, based on their right to dignity and security, and on Lebanon's sovereignty and common interests. The Working Group, on behalf of the participating political parties and movements, also shows its readiness to actively contribute in elaborating this policy and to comply with its legal and executive obligations, within a cooperative and consensual framework.

42 This inclusive text is the outcome of a debate that took place between January 9, 2015, and November 17, 2016 with the participation of representatives of Lebanese political parties and movements, part of the working group, throughout 52 meetings. This text expresses the unified vision they reached through honest interactive dialogue, and will be put at the disposal of the Lebanese government, the Parliament, decision-makers and officials, to be relied on when developing plans and policies regarding the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.

Beirut, 17 November 2016

Signing political forces

Lebanese Forces Bloc

Change and Reform Bloc

Loyalty to the Resistance Bloc

Development and Liberation Bloc

National Struggle Front

Future Movement Bloc

ANNEX

The Working Group on Palestinian Refugee Affairs in Lebanon submitted to the Prime Minister Tammam Salam on 20/03/2015 five recommendations signed by the representatives of the following parties and political forces: Progressive Socialist Party, Lebanese Phalanges Party, Future Movement, Amal Movement, the Lebanese Forces, Hezbollah, Future Movement and the Change and Reform bloc. The recommendations are presented below.

Recommendations of the «Lebanese Working Group on Palestinian Refugee Affairs»

Recommendations Number 1 & 2
Labor and Social Security

In the framework of the tasks carried out by the «Lebanese Working Group on Palestinian Refugees Affairs» as a first step in handling the Palestinian issue, the themes discussed were related to the implementation of Labor Law No. 129 and the proper implementation of the Social Security Law No. 128. The meetings and discussions resulted in:

Recommendations emanating from the overall meetings.

The attendees agreed on the two following recommendations:

Recommendation 1

Regarding the implementation of the Labor Law amended by virtue of Law No. 129 issued on 17/08/2010, which amended Article 59 thereof, it is necessary to issue a decree defining the implementation mechanism of the amendment including the following basic elements:

- Exclusive inclusion of the Palestinian refugees officially registered at the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities and the

Directorate of Political Affairs and Refugees, according to this law;

- Commitment to the free work permit and cancellation of the reciprocity principle as stipulated in Law No.129;

- Entrusting the Department of Foreign Workers and regional departments, each in its scope of work, with granting Palestinians work permits;

- Dividing professions, in order to apply this decision, to the following groups (with specifying the detailed requirements for each):

1- Category 1: Employers

2- Category 2: Managers and representatives of foreign companies

3- Category 3: Craftsmen and self-employed

4- Category 4: Employees

- Specifying the documents to be provided for Palestinian refugees to obtain a work permit through the submission of an application signed by the concerned person without any need for a statement issued by the employer;

- Granting Palestinians work permits for a period of three years starting from the date of issue;

- Defining the procedure for renewing the permit;

- Adopting a mechanism for applying for or renewing work permits by mail or in-person;

- Determining the information to be mentioned exclusively on the work permit;

- adopting a ministerial decision including the elements listed above in case it was not possible to issue the decree for the time being,

Recommendation 2

The participants agreed that the interpretation of the Law No. 128 issued on 17/08/2010, amending Article 9 of the Social Security Law, which stipulates the payment by Palestinian refugee workers and their employers 23.5% of their basic salary as contribution to the three Social Security Funds, knowing that the workers receive only 8% of the end of service fund, is misplaced. This needs to be addressed through the following:

- Highlighting the need to correct this situation, since it imposes a financial burden on employers, including Lebanese, without allowing the Palestinian workers to benefit. The situation can be dealt with by taking the necessary measures to ensure a proper and fair implementation of the Law, whereby the employer is obliged to pay no more than 8.5% for every Palestinian worker against limiting his benefits to the end of service indemnity fund, as stipulated by the Law.

20 March 2015

Recommendation 3

Framing the Lebanese Relations with UNRWA

In the framework of the tasks carried out by the «Lebanese Working Group on Palestinian Refugee Affairs», the issue of framing the Lebanese Relations with UNRWA was discussed; and the meetings led to formulating the following recommendation:

The Working Group underlines the need to develop and ratify a headquarters agreement with UNRWA and a Memorandum of Understanding which takes into account international standards and Lebanese sovereignty on one hand, and is based on the right of the Lebanese State to stay informed and coordinate with the Agency without any need for transferring any UNRWA responsibility or duty to the State, or any involvement of the State therein on the other hand; as long as the Memorandum addresses the following key topics:

- Respect the requirements of the higher Lebanese national interest;

- Respect the United Nations resolutions and the decisions of the League of Arab States related to the Palestinian refugees;

- Set a continuous and periodic communication and cooperation mechanism that identifies the types, forms and limits of coordination with the Lebanese government;

- Develop a mechanism to solve disputes between the Lebanese State and the Agency.

20 March, 2015

Recommendation 4

Developing the work of the Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee

In the framework of the tasks carried out by the «Lebanese Working Group on Palestinian Refugee Affairs», the need to develop the work of the Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee was evoked; and the discussions held during the meetings led to the elaboration of the following recommendation:

In order to enable the Committee to follow up on the Palestinian issue in all its aspects, the «Lebanese Working Group on Palestinian Refugee Affairs» recommends developing the activities of the «Lebanese Palestinian Dialogue Committee», especially in the following topics:

First: In the short run:

- Identifying tasks that are in line with the Committee's strategic plan for the period 2015-2020

- Developing the organizational chart of the Committee and allocating an official budget aligned with its tasks.

Second: In the long run:

Emphasizing the need to:

- Develop a Lebanese public policy on the issues of Palestinian refugee issues

- Creating an official framework for the Lebanese State to address Palestinian issues and ensuring the appropriate relevant structures.

20 March, 2015

Recommendation 5

Conduct of a comprehensive census of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon

In the framework of the tasks carried out by the «Lebanese Working Group on Palestinian Refugee Affairs», the need to find a solution to the lack and the variation of data and information regarding the Palestinian presence in Lebanon was discussed;

The Working Group considers that the lack of official, comprehensive and accurate data on Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, is a major factor restricting the ability of the Lebanese State to formulate adequate policies on Palestinian refugees based on solid scientific grounds.

After viewing the work done by the Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee with the concerned parties to conduct a comprehensive census for Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, according to objective and professional standards;

The discussions led to the elaboration of the following recommendation:

- Conducting a comprehensive census of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon comprising the numbers of refugees as well as their socio-economic status in all camps, adjacent areas, Palestinian gatherings and other places of residence.

24 April, 2015