The 6th Houssam Hariri High School Model United Nations Conference
Special Committee

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I. Description of the committee:

As its name clearly infers, the Special Committee is a unique addition to the 6th HHHSMUN. Knowing that the Lebanese independence is celebrated just few days before our annual conference, the dais of this committee believes that it’s essential to create a “one of a kind committee” with a target to pass a precise and divisive resolution with the potential of elevating our “independence” from merely ink on paper to action on ground. In this committee, delegates will have to think outside the box, be innovative and think deeply about long term programs and plans their countries can launch to ameliorate the situation in Lebanon and participate in its development and progress.

II. Introduction:

Lebanon, officially the Republic of Lebanon, is an Arab state situated in the Middle East. It is bordered to the north and east by Syria, to the southwest by Palestine and to the west by the Mediterranean Sea. Its capital city is Beirut. Lebanon covers an area of 10,452 km². As anticipated in 2013, the country’s population was around 4,467,000 and around 18,000,000 outside Lebanon. Lebanon has been always characterized for hosting 18 different religious sects on the same land.

Historically, Lebanon in its current boundaries was founded in 1920 under the French mandate. Since gaining its independence in 1943, the inter-community oppositions have widespread; however the tension was kept within the bounds of the Lebanese complicated sectarian system until the 1970s. 1975 was the beginning of a destructive phase in the Lebanese history when the Lebanese civil war erupted. It ended in a Syrian intervention, approved by the Arab league, upon the request of the Lebanese government. Yet, despite the Syrian presence, flashing attacks continued. By 1982, 10% of the Lebanese population was killed or injured. In 1982, Israel launched a full invasion of Lebanon. 4000 UN troops were sent to withdraw the Israeli forces from the Lebanese lands working with resolution 425, adopted in 1978 in a similar circumstance. Israel enlarged its invasion which led to the withdrawal of the UN troops by 1984. Here, things started to get complicated between the different Lebanese parties; some against the Palestinian liberation organization
(PLO), others against the Syrians, a bunch of militias fighting other militias. Lebanon had “two governments in one country”. Things remained unstable until the Lebanese Parliament was called together in Taif, Saudi Arabia, in September 1989, where the Lebanese leaders agreed on a Charter for National Reconciliation, known as the Taif Accord. Following sixteen years of civil war, peace triumphed in Lebanon toward the end of 1990. There has been no huge battling in the nation (with the exception of the occupation in South Lebanon) for a few years and the principle political groupings acknowledge the Taif Accord as the premise of a post-war settlement. After long clashes in the south of Lebanon, the Israelis pulled back from southern Lebanon in May 2000. A 'Blue Line' was established by the UN on the country’s ground to specify the Lebanese boarders with Palestine.

The next 16 years were full of action. For instance, the Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri was assassinated in 2005, Syrian troops withdrew, Israeli war occurred in 2006, along with the Nahr al-Bared clash in 2007, then the first diplomatic relations with Syria year 2008, the International court of justice’s investigation in Hariri’s assassination in 2009, Syrian conflict in 2011, refugee crisis, borders tension, terrorist attacks… (BBC timeline, 2015)

III. Subtopics: The following subtopics formulated by the dais of the special committee could favorably be entertained:

- Economy:

  The Lebanese liberal economic system is built up on both competition and private ownership. The private sector is a diverse one, able to supply the country with around 75% of its demands, and is a major factor in economic growth and development (Embassy of Lebanon in Washington, DC). The 1975-90 civil war genuinely harmed Lebanon's economic framework, destroyed national outputs significantly, and wrecked Lebanon's efficient position in the Middle East. After the civil war, Lebanon reconstructed a lot of its physical and budgetary infrastructures by taking massive loans, generally from residential banks, which burdened the government with obligatory debts (CIA Factbook, 2014). According to studies done by the embassy of Lebanon in Washington, DC, Banking and Services sectors (Tourism mainly) dominate Lebanon’s
economy where they represent approximately 70% of the country's gross national product followed by a 20% from industrial contributions. Agriculture comes last with only a 10% involvement.

- **Garbage crisis:**
In a nation surely famous for its natural excellence and views, mountains of garbage could be viewed as a kind of downer. Lebanon produces around 1.5 million tons of wastes annually. However, without a waste treatment plan, long term solutions are actually required (EECOY, 2011).

The base of the issue retreats to the mid-1990s when the government assigned a privately owned company to gather wastes in Beirut at double the price that the municipality would have charged. Since that time, the value of the contract continued to increase rapidly at an average increase of 5% where it started at $3.6 million in 1994 and ended at more than $150 million. Consequently, Lebanese recompense one of the utmost expenses per ton for trash collection in the world. (Atallah, 2015)

Nonetheless, this is not were the crisis subsists. The problem began when the government decided to close the landfill in Naameh which is overloaded with over 10 million tons of garbage. Some municipalities tried to cover the issue up by either burning or dumping trash in different open-air spacious spots, in addition to some clean rivers. Thus, their way of handling the situation was composed of short-term solutions that don’t tackle the roots of the issue. To this end, the political, economical and environment crisis has been persisting for more than a year (Stepfeed, 2015).

- **Terrorism:**
Being geographically close to Iraq and a direct neighbor of Syria, Lebanon has been directly affected by the brutal acts of ISIS and other similar terrorist groups since the start of the Syrian war in 2011. Attacks have threatened all regions and were held in different forms and timings. In 2015, a statistic done by Alex Rowell for NOW news showed that 29 attacks where enough to kill a total of 205 citizens since 2011 (Rowell, 2015). Such vicious attacks seriously destabilized the initially shaky Lebanese system on all aspects of safety, politics, economics and even
the social sector of the Lebanese daily life. Thus, this has created a running cycle where “regional events disrupt the proper function of the system which keeps terrorism in check”, as stated by Nouhad el Mashnuk. (Omar, 2015)

- **Public education:**
  The Lebanese educational sector needs profound supplementary change. The educational field has been one of Lebanon's most vital features. This is not astonishing for a nation that used to be known as the "school of the Middle East." The 2014 Global Information Technology report positions the "nature of educational framework" in Lebanon as the 13th among 148 countries worldwide depending on its exclusive requirements and standards. Lebanon's educational sector ranks second best after Qatar's in the Middle East and North Africa. However, in any case, this is all because of the private sector. The state funded educational field needs profound rebuilding, as suggested by the report discharged not long ago by the Lebanese BLOM Bank (Nader, 2015).

  This is evident where only half of the 41,000 instructors in the public sector have college degrees. In this manner, public schools have excessively numerous instructors that may perform ineffectively. The average governmental funds allocated for the development of public education doesn’t constitute 7.1% of the Lebanese state’s annual budget and is hence far less than the 2011 worldwide and North African/Middle Eastern averages of 14.2% and 18.6% respectively (Nader, 2015).

- **Medication:**
  Similarly to the educational system, the medical system also has an edge in the private sector over the public one. Financially, the Lebanese population found other ways to pay for the costly medical operations. 48% of the Lebanese population is secured by the Ministry of Health (MOH), while 23% are secured by the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) known as the ‘Daman’ and just 8% are secured by private protection. This implies that to around 2 million Lebanese, the MOH is their only approach to bear the cost of medical care. Having a large portion of the nation secured by the MOH implies that those 48% are completely reliant on the MOH's financial plan. Catastrophically, due to the considerable number of services running in this nation, the financial payment allocated
for the MOH is only 3%. This is leading to a very complicated and unstable medical system for the Lebanese citizens. The ministry rarely pays on time, thus leading to huge difficulties and problems between patients, hospitals, and the ministry. (Why Lebanon’s Health Sector Is Messed Up, 2015)

- **Refugees:**
  Lebanon has always been accepting refugees, especially from neighboring countries. Although Lebanon is a non-signatory to the 1651 and 1967 Refugee Protocol and Convention still since 1948, Lebanon has become a major host nation for Palestinian refugees, and now it opens its doors for the Syrian refugees heavily in fluxing to its lands. Though good deeds are always encouraged, they do not always benefit the ones doing them. Ever since then, Lebanon has been facing a refugee crisis which has led to a series of humanitarian difficulties. To start, the economy has weakened drastically, along with an increasing amount of unemployment among the Lebanese population, as well as political infighting, internal divisions, and social mishaps (Mudallali, 2013). It is doubtful that there are always harsh consequences when an unstable nation like Lebanon hosts in a matter of months nearly 1.5 million registered Syrian refugees. With no sufficient resources to deal with the heavy refugee influx and despite the massive efforts pledged by the UNHCR and UNICEF on behalf of the UN, the problem remains proving that a divisive plan must be set to eradicate this issue once and for all. (UNHCR, 2016).

- **Presidency and Election Procedure:**
  The distribution of power and authority in Lebanon has remained the same since the French Mandate, dependent on religion and sectarian authority. In the 1930s, a rule was established to divide the major Lebanese officers’ roles based on the proportion of the different sects in the country. Though the proportions have changed over the years, the rule remains intact where the President should be a Maronite Christian, the Prime Minister a Sunni Muslim, the speaker of the Chamber of Deputies a Shia Muslim and other minor roles for other sects. A Lebanese citizen
must be 21, which then elects the president, the head of state. (Chiha&Trad, 1926). For the past three years, Lebanon has been facing harsh circumstances due to the lack of a presidential figure to run the country, making it one of the longest presidential gaps in history. Parties now a days are disputing whether to elect first a new Chamber of Deputies or a president. Moreover, conflicts are being raised around which procedure must be followed in this year’s elections; whether it would be a majority rule or promotional rule.

- **Resources:**
  - **a. Oil and gas:**
    Even though new researches prove the existence of oil in Lebanese marine and terrestrial territories, Lebanon still imports all its oil requirements. Some recent studies say that offshore oil and gas zones cover around 25 trillion cubic feet. Hence, this has been the reason for its products’ varying high prices stimulated by the world prices of oil. The same goes for gas, which is also imported from other countries. (Haiik, J., Kassem, A., Doctor, Malek, P., Tfayle, A., Al Rashidi, F. B., Abboud, R., & Ayyash, S., 2012).
  - **b. Water:**
    Lebanon’s location makes it prone to different water sources whether from the ground, the long sea shore, or the humid wind, thus making water one of the most indispensable and prominent natural resource in the country. It is not only essentially used for to satisfy the needs of the people, but also serves the country’s economy well, as it relies on tourism, farming, and industry; all of which require a vast amount of water supply. Though the country is considered to be rich in water, the poor distribution of this resource along with the pollution it faces have contributed to financial and health problems due to the insufficiency of water in some parts of the country. (Haiik, J., Kassem, A., Doctor, Malek, P., Tfayle, A., Al Rashidi, F. B., Abboud, R., & Ayyash, S., 2012).
  - **c. Electricity:**
    Electricity is one of the only energies produced in Lebanon itself, taken from river plants or even thermally from the Lebanese coast. Electricity has never been enough to quench the citizens’ needs for lighting and heating, as well as the requirements for the industrial
sector because of its high costs. The cruel Lebanese civil war along with the constant Israeli attacks, have been the major reasons for the shortage of electricity in Lebanon. The government has been promising since 1990’s to better this issue through having 24/7 electricity. Those plans have cost our government around $30 billion and up till now it has not been effective (Haiik, J., Kassem, A., Doctor, Malek, P., Tfayle, A., Al Rashidi, F. B., Abboud, R., &Ayyash, S., 2012).

• **Military:**
  The withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon on April 26, 2005 reclassified the role of the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF). Ever since, the overlapping domestic and regional contests starting with the assassination of political and security figures, followed by the Israeli war of 2006, the spread of terrorist militias and the remilitarization of the society have put substantial weights on the LAF. The LAF is seriously undermanned, underequipped and underfunded. Since 2005, the LAF has been attempting to modernize its equipment and ameliorate its status. (Nerguizian, 2009). However, due to budget limits, the LAF depends on the donations and friendly priced equipment especially from the United States of America and Saudi Arabia.

• **Borders:**
  Before the 2011 war in Syria, Lebanon only had to take care of its southern borders where the Israeli army is heavily based. Nonetheless, with the help of the UN peacekeeping groups, the situation remains monitored and under international control. However, the 2011 civil war in Syria forced the country to shift its attention to the other side of the map. Since 2011, the northern border has been suffering from conflicts with terrorist group such as ISIS and Jabhat al-Nusraseeping into Lebanese territories. None of the plans and strategies suggested have been passed and worked with due to the political dilemma facing the country. The Lebanese borders issue is not a joke; it’s an essential point that must be solved for the sake of the country’s safety and security.
IV. Hints and Tips
A. What to focus on while researching:
   - What is the position of your country towards Lebanon?
   - Who are your country’s allies and enemies?
   - How can your country help in solving a Lebanese crisis on the long run?
   - How can your country enhance its bloc in order to insure the recovery of Lebanon?
   - What are the previous actions done by your country to assist Lebanon?

B. Suggested Sites:

C. Be aware that delegates must:
   - Use credible resources.
   - Be creative in suggesting solution yet rational with respect to the countries’ capabilities.
   - Never be out of character. Keep representing your country’s position and not your own.
   - Arm themselves with deep knowledge about the history of Lebanon.
V. Countries Represented: (can add if the nb of delegates is greater than the countries suggested)

A. From Africa:
   • Egypt

B. From Asia:
   • China
   • India
   • Iran
   • Iraq
   • Japan
   • Jordan
   • Lebanon
   • Malaysia
   • Qatar
   • Saudi Arabia
   • Syria
   • United Arab Emirates

C. From Europe
   • Cyprus
   • France
   • Germany
   • Russia
   • Sweden
   • Turkey
   • United Kingdom

D. From Oceania:
   • Australia

E. From North America:
   • Canada
   • United States Of America
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VII. References:


