

United Nations



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**Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs**

**Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator  
Mark Lowcock Opening Remarks at Lebanon Briefing for Member States**

*Virtual Briefing, New York, 10 August 2020*

*As delivered*

Secretary-General, Excellencies, Ministers, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to this briefing on Lebanon.

We are joined today by:

the United Nations Secretary-General Mr. António Guterres;

His Excellency, Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, President of the General Assembly;

Her Excellency, Ambassador Amal Mudallali, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Lebanon;

Mr. David Beasley, the Executive Director of the World Food Programme;

Ms. Najat Rochdi, UN Deputy Special Coordinator, Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for Lebanon; and

Her Excellency, Ambassador Anne Gueguen, Chargé d'affaires, Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations in New York.

The Beirut blast brought death and destruction to a country already grappling with serious challenges.

The humanitarian response has been swift and wide-ranging. It is just the first phase in what will be three phases of response.

The second – recovery and reconstruction – will cost billions of dollars and require a mix of public and private finance.

The third element is responding to the Lebanon's pre-existing socioeconomic crisis which is already exacerbated by COVID-19. Tuesday's blast will have repercussions far beyond those we see in front of us now.

Donors, international financial institutions and the wider international community should come together and put their shoulder to the wheel.

We will best serve the Lebanese people with a collective response.

This blast ripped through any pretence that all is well in Lebanon.

The Lebanese people – generous and strong for so many and for so long – are telling us they've had enough.

As they steel themselves for a long and difficult journey, we must remain by their side, offering our resources and our influence, as well as our hearts.

I am now delighted to give the floor to the Secretary-General, who I think will be with us until 11:30 when he had to leave for other commitments.

Mr. Secretary-General, you have the floor.