Pistelli in Beirut: Lebanon is paying the price of the terrible crisis in Syria

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Lebanon is paying a high price for the war in Syria, especially in terms of refugees. This was the comment of the Deputy Minister with responsibility for Development Cooperation, Lapo Pistelli, during his visit to Beirut. Speaking in the margins of his meeting with senior representatives of Lebanon's institutions, Pistelli commented that "Lebanon is at risk, along with Jordan, of being the first victim of the contagion spreading from the Syrian conflict".

The equivalent of 6 million refugees

"Lebanon is paying a high price in terms of the inflow of Syrian and Palestinian refugees. I would like my fellow Italians to think for just a second of what would happen if Italy had to take in 6 million refugees for a year. Because, in percentage terms, that's what the total in Lebanon equates to. And most of the refugees are from vulnerable categories of the population: women and children".

Syria: The international community must impose a solution

Pistelli underscored that it is time for the international community to impose a solution on the Syrians and that each global and regional actor must shoulder its responsibilities. At the end of his meeting with the Speaker of the Lebanese Parliament, Nabih Berri, Pistelli commented that "Berri agrees with our view that every effort must be made to ensure that the international conference in Geneva takes place. He agrees, most notably, that the time has come to impose a solution on the Syrians".

"Each actor concerned must shoulder its responsibilities. Starting with the United States and Russia, but also Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Egypt and Iran. Berri and I agree that if the Geneva conference fails, then the risk is that Syria will break up".

Visit to UNIFIL contingent and Development Cooperation projects

Deputy Minister Pistelli's schedule in Lebanon also includes a visit to the Italian military contingent engaged in the UN mission in the south of the country. A visit is also planned to the eastern Bekaa Valley, where Italian Development Cooperation projects are under way and where numerous refugees from Syria are being accommodated.

Source : https://www.esteri.it/en/sala_stampa/archivionotizie/approfondimenti/2013/06/20130625_pistelli_beirut/