



Kerry to Suleiman: U.S. Salutes Efforts amid Regional Turmoil, Supports Electoral Law Agreed on at Parliament

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U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry informed President Michel Suleiman on Sunday that the American administration hails efforts made to shield Lebanon from the regional turmoil, particularly Syria's conflict, through the adoption of the Baabda Declaration.

"President Barack Obama salutes Suleiman and the United States appreciates preventing the spill over of Syria's conflict into Lebanon," Kerry told Suleiman during a phone conversation.

"We support Lebanon's stability and sovereignty."

In the Baabda Declaration, rival March 8 and 14 alliance leaders have affirmed their commitment to the Taef Accord and agreed to distance Lebanon from the policy of regional and international conflicts.

Kerry noted: "The U.S. Is ready to provide all the support needed to help Lebanon bear the cost of hosting Syria's refugees."

Meanwhile, Suleiman expressed that "the issue of refugees has become a burden on Lebanon": "A serious consideration should be given through a redistribution of their numbers on nations that are capable to host Syria's people."

"Lebanon will suggest hosting an international conference on this issue, through which we will request increasing aids to Syrians residing in the country," Suleiman revealed.

"We will also demand a support for Lebanon's political stand in this concern."

He stressed: "We support a political solution in Syria without any foreign military interference."

"This includes preventing safe havens for insurgents in Lebanon as well as the transfer of weapons and gunmen through Lebanese territories to Syria."

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees revealed earlier in March that the number of Syrian refugees that have left the neighboring war-torn country has exceeded 300,000.

Concerning the parliamentary elections, Kerry expressed America's support for all “the work done towards holding the parliamentary elections based on a law over which consensus is reached at the parliament.”