



## **ASIA/LEBANON - Survey: impatience towards Syrian refugees increases**

Beirut (Agenzia Fides) - 54 per cent of the Lebanese hopes that the borders of their own Country are barred, due to the influx of new refugees from Syria. As much as 90 percent of them prefer to see the freedom of unrestricted access cancelled that Lebanon has so far granted to those fleeing civil war in Syria. The survey sponsored by the Norwegian Fafo Research Foundation and published only because of the reactions raised by the Lebanese people due to the wave of refugees fleeing the war in Syria. According to tests carried out in May on a sample of 900 people, representative of the ethnic and religious mosaic of Lebanon, the reasons for the growing discontent are mainly economic and social order: 82 percent of respondents believe that refugees take away work from the Lebanese causing a fall in wages, while 66 per cent of their prolonged presence is likely to undermine the management of water and energy resources of the Country. Some data show the growth of xenophobic inclination: More than 80 percent of respondents negatively consider the possibility that their relatives marry a Syrian or Syrian, while 53 per cent are worried by the idea that Syrian children are eligible to attend the same school classes as their children.

Father Simon Faddoul, President of Caritas Lebanon, does not consider the results of the survey surprising: "Unfortunately", says the Lebanese priest to Fides Agency "it was to be expected. In Lebanon, there are more than one million Syrian refugees. According to them the figure rises up to a million and a half, and the Lebanese are only four and a half million. Lebanon is too small to support such a heavy a influx that is impacting people's lives at an economic and security level and is likely to contribute to the destabilization of the fragile political balance. This is the reality. The international community should bear the consequences of the Syrian conflict, favoring a redistribution of Syrian refugees in other Countries and easing the pressure that now weighs solely on neighboring nations". (GV) (Agenzia Fides 12/07/2013).