

## Lebanon's Forced Returns Put Refugees at Risk

**Washington, D.C. May 4th, 2023:** The American Relief Coalition for Syria (ARCS) calls on the Lebanese Government to cease the forced return, arbitrary arrest, and deportation of Syrian refugees residing in Lebanon, and to fulfill its obligations under the customary international law principle of non-refoulement.

Since the beginning of April 2023, hundreds of Syrian refugees in Lebanon have been arbitrarily arrested and subjected to security crackdowns, according to reports from humanitarian and human rights organizations (including Amnesty International and Refugees International) and reputable media sources. On April 28<sup>th</sup>, the Access Center for Human Rights (ACHR) [documented](#) 542 cases of arbitrary arrests as part of at least 13 security crackdowns, and further reported that 200 refugees, including women and children, were deported through border crossings back into Syria.

Instances of forced returns and deportations back to Syria have been [documented](#) by Amnesty International to place returnees at an elevated risk of serious human rights violations including arbitrary arrest, torture, sexual violence, enforced disappearance, and death committed by the Syrian Government. Thus far, under the recent crackdowns, ACHR confirmed that two people that were forcibly returned to Syria have been arrested with one of them being forcibly disappeared with no current knowledge of his whereabouts.

ARCS calls on the Lebanese Government to respect international law and the principle of non-refoulement. In addition, ARCS calls on the Lebanese Government to provide an opportunity for Syrians to regularize their legal status, especially those with expired residency who cannot afford to renew it due to the collapse of the Lebanese lira. Finally, ARCS calls on the United States Government to increase the processing speeds for resettlement applications of Syrian refugees, prioritizing those currently in Lebanon.