

Comments on Lebanon's ongoing economic turmoil in Arab News, Mar 13 2021

Dr. Nasser Saidi's comments appeared in an Arab News article titled "[Prolonged crisis of governance leaves Lebanon adrift and isolated](#)" on 13th March 2021.

The comments are posted below.

...the latest lockdown has all the trappings of the final straw.

"None of this is surprising," Nasser Saidi, Lebanon's former economy and trade minister, told Arab News.

"Income is down. GDP is down by at least 25 percent. We're having inflation in excess of 130 percent; general poverty is over 50 percent of the population; food poverty is over 25 percent of the population; unemployment is rapidly increasing; and thousands of businesses are being shut down.

"All of this is coming to the fore and at the same time we have a lockdown. It was a very stupid decision the way it was done, to lock Lebanon down, because it prohibits people from even being able to go and get their groceries, their food and necessities. And then it meant also shutting down factories and manufacturing.

"If you get sick, you can't even get to a hospital or afford a hospital. Hospitals are full now due to COVID-19. You have had a series of very bad decision-making and policies, and Lebanon is paying the price for it. This is going to continue. It is not going to go away. In my opinion, we are seeing just the tip of the iceberg."