

Putin Offers Conference on Syria Refugee Problem

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NOVO-OGARYOVO — President Vladimir Putin offered to host a conference on helping Lebanon and other countries cope with a flood of refugees from Syria.

During talks Wednesday with Lebanese President Michel Suleiman outside Moscow, Putin also said Russia was ready to provide temporary homes, tents, medication and other humanitarian aid.

"We will do our utmost to ... sponsor the organization of an international conference on the refugee problem," Putin said. "We are ready to offer Moscow as a platform for such a meeting."

Suleiman said that more than 200,000 refugees had fled to Lebanon since the uprising against Syrian President Bashar Assad began nearly two years ago, straining Beirut's budget.

(Reuters)

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