



EUROPEAN UNION

Delegation of the European Union to
the Republic of Lebanon

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Press Release

High level European Union official visits Lebanon to enhance EU-Lebanon dialogue

The Managing Director for the Middle East and Southern Neighbourhood at the European External Action Service, Hugues Mingarelli, is visiting Lebanon on 5-6 September 2011. His visit aims at further developing the dialogue between Lebanon and the European Union in the context of the new European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) adopted by the EU in May 2011.

Mr. Mingarelli is scheduled to meet with H.E. Speaker Nabih Berri, H.E. Prime Minister Najib Mikati, H.E. Minister of Economy and Trade Nicolas Nahas, H.E. Mr. Naji Abi Assi and Dr. Elie Assaf, Advisers to the President of the Republic H.E. Michel Sleiman, and Mr. Alain Bifani, Director General of the Ministry of Finance.

With his various interlocutors, Mr. Mingarelli will be exchanging views on EU-Lebanon dialogue and co-operation and encouraging Lebanon to seize the opportunities provided under the European Neighbourhood Policy to further implement its reform agenda and consolidate its relationship with the EU.

Upon his arrival in Beirut, Mr. Mingarelli said: "I am pleased to discuss with our Lebanese partners how we can further develop ties between the European Union and Lebanon". He recalled that "the European Union confirms its commitment to accompany Lebanon in its reform process and to help promote a growth agenda through political dialogue and co-operation".

Background

Catherine Ashton, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Commission Vice-President, and Štefan Füle, EU Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy, launched in May 2011 a new and ambitious European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), confirming the EU's determined and reinforced engagement with its neighbours.

Following a broad review of the policy, they set out the main priorities and directions of a revitalised ENP strategy which seeks to strengthen individual and regional relationships between the EU and countries in its neighbourhood through a 'more funds for more reform' approach - making additional funding of €1.24 billion available, but with more mutual accountability.

Most of the EU assistance to Lebanon comes from the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). Under the ENPI, €150 million of grants have been allocated to Lebanon for 2011-2013. Per year, this represents a 7% increase compared to the previous programming period (2007-2010).