



## EUROPEAN UNION

Delegation of the European Union to  
the Republic of Lebanon

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### Press Release

## **EU-funded demining project hands over cleared land to landowners in Batroun region**

A delegation of EU officials, Lebanese army representatives and members of the non-governmental organisation Handicap International today handed over land that has been cleared from land mines to the local communities in the Batroun region. This demining project is implemented by Handicap International and coordinated by the Lebanon Mine Action Centre (LMAC) within the Lebanese Army that coordinates all demining activities carried out in Lebanon.

As many countries that faced war, mine clearance is a serious issue in Lebanon. Few Lebanese living outside Batroun region are aware that there too, several villages are still living with the threat of landmines and unexploded ordnance dating back from the Lebanese civil war.

The European Union has been supporting demining activities since 2000 in Lebanon for a total amount of €18 million, allocated to clearance of both landmines and cluster munitions.

The current EU mine action programme aims at restoring the conditions necessary for the security of the population as well as local economic and social development. The activities implemented by five NGOs include clearance operations of cluster munitions in South Lebanon and mine clearance in Central and Northern Lebanon, awareness campaigns on the dangers of mines, and support to victims. The programme will help the Lebanon Mine Action Centre to achieve its goal of making Lebanon mine free by 2015.

Cecile Abadie, Head of the Infrastructure and Local Development Section at the Delegation of the European Union to Lebanon, underlined that *"the handover of cleared land will allow inhabitants of the region to develop new economic activities and implement livelihoods initiatives. It is a very tangible result of the project"*.