

Press statement after EU Ambassadors meeting with Prime Minister Nagib Mikati

Thursday 22 June 2011

Today the European Union Ambassadors met with Prime Minister Nagib Mikati and Foreign Minister Adnan Mansour at the Grand Serail.

The following press statement was issued by the EU Delegation office on behalf of all EU Member States Ambassadors:

"The European Union Ambassadors to Lebanon thank Prime Minister Mikati for this meeting, which took place in a pleasant and cordial atmosphere.

We referred to the statement by the European Union High Representative Catherine Ashton on 14 June, in which she welcomed the formation of the Government in Lebanon, ending months of political and institutional stalemate. We reiterated that it is important for this new Government to adopt a Ministerial Declaration which upholds Lebanon's international obligations, not least with respect to UN Security Council Resolutions 1701 and 1757. The Special Tribunal for Lebanon must continue its work without impediment and with the cooperation of the Lebanese authorities. We also reaffirmed the importance that the European Union attaches to the independent and democratic functioning of the Lebanese institutions.

Lebanon is an important partner for the European Union and we look forward to enhanced cooperation in the context of the new European Neighbourhood Policy, adopted in Brussels on 25 May 2011. This policy is built on the basis that closer political cooperation, closer economic integration and increased EU support will depend on progress made towards reform. Important decisions and actions need to be taken to implement Lebanon's reform agenda and to address successfully the political and economic challenges facing the country. In this regard a number of priority areas were discussed."

Twenty-three of the twenty-seven EU Member States have accredited Ambassadors to Lebanon. Sixteen Ambassadors are resident in Lebanon. The European Union (EU Member States, European Commission and European Investment Bank) allocates a yearly average of Euro 220 million in grants and loans to Lebanon, which is currently the second EU-aid recipient country in the Southern Neighbourhood.