



EUROPEAN UNION

Delegation of the European Union to
the Republic of Lebanon

Beirut, 19 December 2012

PRESS RELEASE

The Delegation of the European consults civil society on EU-Lebanon relations

Yesterday afternoon the Delegation of the European Union met with NGOs, unions and local authorities to discuss EU-Lebanon relations. Discussions focused on the current and the new Action Plan in the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) as well as on the Single Support Framework that will support financially the priorities of the Action Plan.

The Head of the Delegation, Ambassador Angelina Eichhorst, opened the meeting by stressing the new approach of the European Union in its relations with its Southern neighbours. She welcomed the fact that EU-Lebanon cooperation in the European Neighbourhood Policy framework advanced with unprecedented intensity during 2012, although implementation of Lebanon's reform objectives have only advanced slowly.

Ambassador Eichhorst informed the participants of the newly negotiated Action Plan for Lebanon 2013-2015. This was followed by a discussions on the implementation of the Action Plan in 2012 led by Mrs. Elsa Fenet, Head of Political Section and a exchange on the EU Single Support Framework 2014-2016 led by Mr. Diego Escalona Paturel, Head of Cooperation Section. The participating civil society organisations contributed with substantial comments and questions, resulting in a lively debate on the EU-Lebanon relations. Key issues referring to social dialogue, the need for a functioning economic and Social Council, electoral reform, and rights of refugees and disabled, as well as mental health and heritage were discussed.

Following the meeting, Ambassador Angelina Eichhorst expressed satisfaction with the discussions and the feedback from a diverse and well informed civil society and committed to continued close cooperation in the coming future.