



EUROPEAN UNION

Delegation of the European Union to
the Republic of Lebanon

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PRESS RELEASE

EU Ambassador Christina Lassen discusses legal aid, engages with students on eve of Human Rights Day

On the eve of International Human Rights Day, the Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Lebanon, Ambassador Christina Lassen, visited the Tripoli Bar Association, as well as the University of Balamand upon the invitation of its president Dr Elie Salem.

In Tripoli, Ambassador Lassen met with the Head of the Tripoli Bar Association, Mr Fahed Mokaddem, and with the members of the board. The visit was an opportunity to launch the new Legal Aid Commission of the Tripoli Bar Association, as well as the special portal on legal aid on the Bar's website, which were established in the framework of the European Union-funded project "Support to Legal Aid in Lebanon." By supporting this and similar projects, the EU aims to enhance access to quality legal aid services for the most vulnerable.

During her visit to the University of Balamand, Ambassador Lassen delivered a speech before the university's academics and students. She centred her remarks on the key international human rights covenants that are the focus of this year's Human Rights Day, and underscored the European Union's unwavering commitment in support of human rights.

"Human rights are the founding principles of the European Union and key in our relations with all our partners across the world – all the more with close partners such as Lebanon," Ambassador Lassen said.

"The European Union provides financial assistance to Lebanese institutions to develop and implement human rights policies and reforms and we support civil society organisations that are advocating human rights vis-à-vis the public and vis-à-vis the Lebanese authorities," she added.

The visit was also an opportunity to meet with Tripoli's Head of Municipality Amer Rafeii, Mufti Sheikh Malek Shaar and President of the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture of Tripoli and North Lebanon Toufic Dabboussi. Discussions focused on the socio-economic conditions and the needs of the city's communities. The trip also included a visit to the Business Incubation Association in Tripoli – BIAT.