



EUROPEAN UNION

Delegation of the European Union to
the Republic of Lebanon

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PRESS RELEASE

Closing of the EU-funded project "Better Together for a Better Tomorrow"

On 14 April, Search for Common Ground Lebanon (SFCG) organised the closing event for the "Better Together: A Youth-Led Approach to Peaceful Coexistence" project funded by the European Union and implemented by SFCG.

"Better Together" was implemented over a period of two years in partnership with the Lebanese Organisation for Studies and Training in the Bekaa and the Development for People and Nature Association in South Lebanon. It encouraged dialogue and trust between 320 youth (Lebanese youth, as well as Syrian and Palestinian refugees) from 8 different communities to foster confident, empathetic and respectful relationships through the development of their artistic skills and collaborative work.

The closing event consisted in an animated and interactive debate about the role of youth in fostering peace and security.

In his opening remarks, Dr. Alexis Loeber, Head of Cooperation at the Delegation of the European Union to Lebanon stated: "This project has created a better environment and an open space for building trust. It has enabled dialogue where silence formerly prevailed, and established relationships based on respect and mutual understanding where prejudice and misconceptions were present before. Those are astonishing achievements and we applaud you for them." Mr. Loeber also underscored that the EU believes that "the engagement and participation of youth are essential to building and consolidating a peaceful society."

SFCG country director Elisa Dari highlighted: "It was a privilege for us to facilitate this process, for young people to achieve the success they have achieved thus far they had to have the freedom to co-create a future for themselves which allowed them to go beyond their differences. What this project has highlighted is that building trusting relationships takes time and we want to deepen the work we have started so that we can continue to facilitate the strengthening of their skills, capacities, talents so that they be better architects of inclusive security and sustainable peace in their communities."

Representatives from SFCG, the Delegation of the European Union and other donors, relevant Ministries, and local/international stakeholders attended and actively participated in the event.