

**Address by Ambassador Angelina Eichhorst  
Head of the European Union Delegation to Lebanon**

**MAGIC BOX- MEETINGS AROUND CHILDREN'S THEATRE**

**Sunflower Theatre, Tayyouneh – Friday, 2 November 2012**

***Check against delivery***

Dear friends,

I am happy to be here with you tonight to watch the "Ball of Dreams" performance, a vivid example of EU-Lebanese artistic cooperation. The European Union supports this performance to encourage the development of creative children's theatre in Lebanon.

Children's theatre is recognised as an art form in itself in many countries around the globe. We hope that the debates held and the plays performed around the "The Magic Box" (Soundouk El Ferje) will unleash a fresh debate around innovative concepts and formats and make children's theatre accessible to the larger Lebanese public: Not only in theatres, but also in schools, libraries and other places where young people come together to learn and interact.

Our children are the future. Ideally, our children's intellectual and emotional development must be fostered, their perception of realities sharpened. A theatre play offers a wide and open space to practice empathy, reflection and dialogue, skills that are sometimes neglected and in our fast-paced societies. The "Ball of Dreams" will pause us for a moment in a playful and entertaining way and will let us participate in inter-generational dialogue via the protagonists in the play.

I would like to thank and congratulate all our partners and partner organisations. Let us now reveal the magic of the "box" and dream the "Ball of Dreams" together.

Thank you.