

**Statement by the Head of the Delegation of the European
Union, Ambassador Angelina Eichhorst**

Second Donor Meeting with Prime Minister Nagib Miqati

on 17 December 2012

On Lebanon's Response to the Syrian Crisis

Prime Minister,

Ministers, Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As the number of refugees of Syrian and Palestinian origin crossing into Lebanon continues to increase exponentially and with winter now truly upon us, a robust, structured and comprehensive response is more than ever essential.

So far, a tremendous effort has been done by the Lebanese hosting communities. We thank them for their generosity and compassion. The local and national administrations have been providing services to the extent possible, with the collaboration of many international partners, notably UNHCR, other UN agencies and NGOs, including those from Europe.

The announcement by Prime Minister Mikati on 3 December 2012 of the “Response of the Government of Lebanon to the Crisis of Syrian Displaced Families and Lebanese Host Communities” is a major turning point in the management of this humanitarian crisis.

This plan gives us all the opportunity to work in partnership with the Government to shape an overall framework to reinforce the sustainability of the response provided and the ownership of the national administrations.

Prime Minister, your call that “Lebanon can no longer support the burden of Syrian refugees alone”, should not be left unheard. The European Union will support the Government of Lebanon and share the burden.

To date, for the Syrian crisis, the European Union has mobilised almost €400 million. Half of this, €200 million, has been committed by 22 EU Member States and the other half by the European Commission, out of which, so far, €41.5 million have been allocated to Lebanon targeting the needs of Syrian refugees and Lebanese host communities. With EU Commissioner Georgieva’s announcement last Friday of an extra €30 million for the region, the allocation for Lebanon will increase further. As well, I am pleased to announce that the European Commission will propose to make an additional contribution for Lebanon in the beginning of 2013. Our contribution will respond to the needs identified by the Government of Lebanon and the UN Agencies. I also herewith repeat Commissioner Georgieva’s plea to make an extra effort to as far as possible match all existing and upcoming Plans.

As an immediate response to Lebanon’s plan, the EU now works directly with the Ministries, the UN agencies and the NGOs to address key priorities identified by the Government.

Based on this national initiative, and with different donors able to contribute according to their own means and instruments, and in line with their own funding culture and procedures, I hope we will all be able to respond in the most efficient manner to what now amounts to a truly exceptional and dire situation.