

**Address by Diego Escalona Paturel, Head of the Operations Section  
Delegation of the European Union to Lebanon**

**Inauguration of the TAIEX Workshop on Market Surveillance Techniques**

**Ministry of Economy and Trade - 4 March 2013**

*CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY*

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am glad to be among you today for the opening of this workshop on market surveillance techniques.

Today's gathering takes place in the framework of **TAIEX** - the European Union's Technical Assistance Information Exchange programme. TAIEX mobilises experts from Europe to present EU legislation and regulatory systems to our key partners. It also provides information on compliance with - and the application of - European rules.

I am very pleased to see Lebanon making increased use of this instrument. This shows the interest of Lebanon in coming closer to EU standards and regulations.

Lebanon's efforts in technical approximation take place at many levels. They comprise standards and best practice, legal and commercial aspects as well as aspects of entrepreneurial culture. This approximation means progress in the achievement of our joint EU-Lebanon Action Plan in the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy and will certainly be conducive to Lebanon's further integration into the globalised economy.

What the European Union has to offer to Lebanon in the mid and long run is nothing less than the integration into the European market with its 500 million citizens – and customers. We believe that this is an opportunity not to be missed!

The European Union has been promoting the creation of a well-functioning and efficient market surveillance system in Lebanon since 2006. Until now, more than 20 million Euros have been destined to reinforce and consolidate the Lebanese Quality infrastructure, covering legal, institutional and private sector-related aspects.

Additional support from the European Union amounting to 6 million Euros has already been set up to further reinforce and consolidate the Lebanese Quality infrastructure for the period 2012-2015. The assistance will reinforce standardisation, accreditation, metrology, market surveillance, and inspection, and will promote and consolidate the Lebanese Excellence Awards.

As part of this support, substantial technical assistance, as well as a twinning programme with European Union Member States administrations is currently being implemented. The EU bodies working with Lebanon are now the British Standards Institution jointly with the Czech Office for Standards, Metrology and Testing.

The experts who will be contributing to this seminar are bringing with them a wide and rich EU experience in market surveillance. They come from different European Union Member States administrations, from Slovenia, Czech Republic, Belgium, Poland, and Portugal.

I am also happy to see that representatives from the Ministry of Economy and Trade from across Lebanon are here today to share their experiences and concerns with our European experts.

Finally I wish us all an interesting and fruitful work.