



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



## **Council Conclusions on Lebanon**

*2902nd GENERAL AFFAIRS Council meeting  
Brussels, 10 November 2008*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. The Council welcomes the return to normal functioning of the Lebanese institutions following the Doha agreement of 21 May and reaffirms its full support for the Lebanese authorities, and in particular President Sleiman and the government led by Prime Minister Siniora.
2. It commends the resumption of the national dialogue under the authority of President Sleiman, in accordance with the Doha agreement. It encourages all the parties to engage in dialogue in a spirit of consensus and compromise in order to make progress on the question of the national defence strategy, in the interests of all the Lebanese people.
3. The Council welcomes the announcement of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Syria and Lebanon. That announcement, which should take practical form with the appointment of the ambassadors and the opening of the two embassies before the end of the year, constitutes a historic step. The Council encourages both parties to implement the other commitments referred to in the six-point communiqué agreed upon last August by Presidents Assad and Sleiman, and in particular the demarcation and monitoring of the common border and the issue of prisoners and disappeared persons.
4. The European Union and its Member States are willing to lend their support where necessary to the development and implementation of the Lebanese national border management strategy.

# **P R E S S**

---

5. The Council commends the adoption by the Lebanese parliament of a new electoral law which takes account of some of the recommendations made by the Boutros Commission as a first step towards more comprehensive electoral reform. The European Union reiterates that it is fully prepared to support the preparation and organisation of and the follow-up to the 2009 legislative elections in order to ensure that they take place under transparent and fair conditions in accordance with international standards. It is also willing to envisage the deployment of an election observation mission if requested to do so by the Lebanese authorities.
6. The Council underlines the essential role played by the Lebanese State and its law enforcement authorities, and in particular its armed forces, in combating terrorism. It solemnly reiterates its commitment to the principle of State monopoly on the legitimate use of force. It encourages the Lebanese authorities to pursue their activities with a view to establishing a comprehensive policy for maintaining public order based on respect for the law and the proportionate use of force.
7. The Council reaffirms the European Union's full support for the Commission of Enquiry and the Special Tribunal for Lebanon. It hopes that the Tribunal will commence its work as soon as possible.
8. The Council notes the opportunities offered by the Association Agreement and the European Neighbourhood Policy for contributing towards the implementation of the reforms announced at the Paris III Conference. It underlines the importance of implementing the economic, financial and commercial aspects of the EU-Lebanon Action Plan and of pursuing the reforms necessary for reviving the country's economic activity.
9. The Council notes that the European Union is the main donor for the reconstruction of the Nahr el-Bared camp. It considers that other parties must also make a financial contribution to that reconstruction. It encourages the Lebanese authorities to improve the economic and social status of Palestinian refugees and to pursue initiatives to improve living conditions in the camps, without prejudice to the outcome of the peace negotiations on the final status of the Palestinian territories.
10. The Council reaffirms its support for the United Nations' efforts to make progress on the issue of the Shebaa Farms, and continues to support the option of placing them under UN trusteeship, in accordance with Prime Minister Siniora's seven-point plan. It also backs current efforts, and in particular UNIFIL's plan, aiming to find a solution to the issue of Ghajjar. It confirms its full support for UNIFIL, whose activities alongside the Lebanese army continue to be essential for peace in the region.
11. The Council remains determined to reinforce Lebanon's sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, unity and stability. The Council recalls its commitment to the full implementation of UNSC Resolutions 1559, 1680, 1701 and 1757."