COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION

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Council conclusions on Lebanon

3183rd FOREIGN AFFAIRS Council meeting
Brussels, 23 July 2012

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"1. The EU reiterates its strong and continued commitment to Lebanon's unity, stability, independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

2. The EU welcomes and supports the efforts of the Lebanese government to overcome divisions and promote national unity and peace. It welcomes in particular the President's initiative to revive the National Dialogue, and its progress achieved so far, notably the Baabda Declaration. The EU supports the intention to advance the dialogue on a continuous and inclusive basis, and encourages all political leaders to participate in order to find sustainable and constructive solutions to the main issues of national unity.

3. The EU calls on all Lebanese to refrain from violent actions, promote calm, and work toward defusing tensions. The EU welcomes the steps taken by the Lebanese authorities toward this aim and encourages further efforts to maintain security, notably by making clear that proliferation of arms, criminal activities and any form of violence are unacceptable.

4. The EU commends the Lebanese authorities for their efforts to support those fleeing the violence in Syria, and encourages the government of Lebanon to continue meeting its responsibilities in this respect. The EU reaffirms its readiness to continue providing assistance to Lebanon in coping with this burden.

5. The EU strongly condemns the recent incursions and other security incidents along the border with Syria, leading to the killing, injury and abduction of civilians at the hands of Syrian forces. Any violations of Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity are unacceptable and in breach of UNSC Resolutions 1559 and 1680.

6. The EU stresses the importance of the Lebanese government's continued commitment to the full implementation of Lebanon's international obligations, including UNSC resolutions 1559, 1680, 1701 and 1757. The EU welcomes the fact that the Lebanese government has paid its contribution to the 2012 budget of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon, thus honouring its commitments, and trusts that Lebanon will continue to fully cooperate with the Tribunal.

7. The EU stresses the importance of strong, independent, impartial and democratic public institutions for Lebanon's future, and supports the efforts of the Lebanese government in this regard. The support for such institutions from within the Lebanese society and by its leaders has been essential and needs to continue. This includes Lebanon's security forces, and particularly the Lebanese Armed Forces, which have to safeguard the rule of law and ensure security for all citizens against external and internal threats, and on the basis of respect of human rights. The EU is committed to continuing its support for Lebanon's security forces in fulfilling this role.

8. The EU encourages the Lebanese authorities to continue advancing on key governance issues of immediate importance, including the adoption of the budget, nominations to public offices, electoral reform with a view to legislative elections in 2013, and effective implementation of strategic sectoral policies, in order to address the economic and social needs of the population, thus contributing to stability in the country.

9. The EU reaffirms the importance it attaches to strengthening its partnership with Lebanon in the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy."