



Delegation for relations with the Mashreq countries

DMAS_PV20130123_1

MINUTES

of the meeting of 23 January 2013, from 16:15 to 17:15
Brussels

The meeting opened at 16:25 on Wednesday, 23 January 2013, with Ms Matias (Vice-Chair) in the chair.

1. Adoption of draft agenda (PE495.805)

The draft agenda was adopted

2. Adoption of the minutes of the meeting of 28 November 2012 (PE495.806)

The minutes were adopted

3. Chair's announcements**4. Exchange of views on the recent political situation in Lebanon**

Ms Adriana Brassart, Desk Officer for Lebanon, EEAS

In the light of Syria crisis added with the assassination of chief security officer Mr Wissam El-Hassan, political situation remains polarised in Lebanon. National dialogue, which started to discuss the defence strategy and the issue of Hezbollah arms, is stalled as March 14th block decided to block the meetings until the current government resigns and a technocratic government is established until the elections. Parliamentary sessions are also halted due to the political tension in the country. Nevertheless sub-committee of the parliament on electoral reform still continues its working where all parties, including March 14th Block, agreed to participate in.

There are various proposals on the table for electoral reform: Orthodox gathering, which receives the support of all the Christian parties, foresees a proportional representation in big electoral district with each sect electing their own members. This proposal is opposed by President Suleiman, PM Mikati and March 14th Block as they consider it unconstitutional and fear that it might lead the country to further sectarian division. The proposal submitted by the

cabinet to the Parliament in August 2012 foresees to divide Lebanon into 13 medium sized electoral districts and elections based on proportional representation. Another proposal is dividing the country into 50 small electoral districts with the system of winner-takes-all. The Sub-committee on electoral committee is trying to find a solution where a mixture of proportional and winner-takes-all system would be applied either through parts of the parliament being selected based on one system, the other through creating a senate elected by the system. The elections are supposed to be held in the beginning of June. In case parties cannot reach an agreement on electoral reform, the elections could still take place under the previous legislative framework. Nevertheless Ministry of Interior notes that if no agreement reached on the electoral law until February, technically and logistically, it may be difficult to organize elections in the foreseen time.

EU also has been promoting electoral reform and concerned that other aspects of the elections as pointed out in the last EU Election Observation Mission Report, are not given due attention in the electoral debates, such as the issues related to the fair conduct of the elections, establishment of an independent electoral commission, campaign financing, pre-printed ballots, lowering the voting age (21 to 18 years), increasing the representation of women in the parliament by introducing a quota etc. So far the only suggestion realized by the authorities is the expatriate voting, but the effect of it was rather limited. EU will deploy election observation mission for the upcoming elections.

-Economic and social reforms are progressing very slowly due to the political tensions in the country. Lack of progress in reform also adds to the fragility of the country as social disparities and economic problems add to the tension in the society. Several mass demonstrations were taking place in 2012 regarding the level of salaries in the private and public sector.

The country is under great risk of spilling over of the Syria crisis in the country. While sporadic outbreaks of violence happened throughout 2012, the spread of weapons among the population also increase the security risk as even small tensions can easily turn into violent clashes. Last Friday, the convoy of the minister of youth and sports was attacked by Islamists groups in Tripoli. While Tripoli and Saida are the major tension areas in terms of such clashes Bekaa region is also bears high security risk because of the Syrian refugees and border clashes.

Despite some critics, during national dialogue meetings Lebanese leaders agreed to adopt "dissociation policy" in the face of the Syria crisis. Syria crisis not only poses security and political problems but also the growing number of Syrian refugees also arises as huge challenge for Lebanon. The number of refugees started to grow dramatically at the end of the year reaching 212 thousand registered refugees according to the UNHCR numbers and this number is expected to grow to 425 thousand by June. Considering the size of the population in Lebanon, these numbers are almost equal to 10% of the population.

Until December, Lebanese government was disengaged from the management of refugees, seeing it as a matter of international organisations, while in December government decided to mobilize and got involved in the management of refugees. The government formulated a response plan which was presented to various donors, including Arab League and donors conference hosted by Kuwait in January.

In terms of providing support to the management of refugees, EU has been working mainly with UN agencies as until recently government was not involved in the situation. EU so far allocated almost 45 million in Lebanon, which includes the humanitarian and development

assistance from the ENPI and Instrument for Stability. Further funding is being considered. Besides, EU continue insisting in the dialogue with the Lebanese authorities on their need to address the crisis with an emergency plan in case of major influx of refugees, necessity to keep the borders open.

Lebanese Armed forces are considered as one of the major institutions for security and stability in the country. In the meetings of the National Dialogue (Babdaa Declaration), the army received endorsement by all political leaders that they should be deployed throughout the country to ensure security. Indeed Army had successfully intervened in certain escalation of violence in 2012. They are deployed in different parts of the country including southern border (working with UNIFIL along the blue line) in the east and north of the country and Tripoli. The problem of the army is their limited capacity in ensuring security. In September, Armed Forces presented to a plan to increase their capacity, with the cost of \$1.6 billion.

The EU Members States adopted two Council Conclusions in July and November 2012 concerning Lebanon. 19 November Council Conclusions stress the need for preserving peace and stability, encourage dialogue, and call on parties to implement to dissociation policy from events in the region, reiterated the importance of institutions including security forces in maintaining stability and security and importance of implementing the reforms.

Despite all the challenges 2012 has seen quite positive year in terms of EU-Lebanon relations in the framework of ENP. New ENP Action Plan received political endorsement at the last Association Council in October and expected to be adopted around May on the EU side. Progress Report on Lebanon is expected to be issued in March. Preparation for the new financing period until 2016 is going on the EU level and programming is built on action plan priorities.

The meeting closed at 17.15.

**ПРИСЪСТВЕН ЛИСТ/LISTA DE ASISTENCIA/PREZENČNÍ LISTINA/DELTAGERLISTE/
ANWESENHEITSLISTE/KOHALOLIJATE NIMEKIRI/KATAΣΤΑΣΗ ΠΑΡΟΝΤΩΝ/RECORD OF ATTENDANCE/
LISTE DE PRÉSENCE/ELENCO DI PRESENZA/APMEKLĒJUMU REĢISTRŠ/DALYVIŲ SAŖAŠAS/JELENLÉTI ÍV/
REĢISTRU TA' ATTENDENZA/PRESENTIELIJST/LISTA OBECNOŠCI/LISTA DE PRESENÇAS/LISTÁ DE PREZENȚĂ/
PREZENČNÁ LISTINA/SEZNAM NAVZOČIH/LÄSNÄOLOLISTA/DELTAGARLISTA**

Бюро/Mesa/Předsednictvo/Formandskabet/Vorstand/Juhatus/Προεδρείο/Bureau/Ufficio di presidenza/Prezidijs/Biuras/Elnökség/ Prezydium/Birou/Predsednictvo/Predsedstvo/Puheenjohtajisto/Presidiet (*)	
Marisa Matias, Said El Khadraoui	
Членове/Diputados/Poslanci/Medlemmer/Mitglieder/Parlamendiliikmed/Μέλη/Members/Députés/Deputati/Deputāti/Nariai/Képviselők/ Membri/Leden/Posłowie/Deputados/Deputați/Jäsenet/Ledamöter	
Karim Sajjad, Franz Obermayr	
Заместници/Suplentes/Náhradníci/Stedfortrædere/Stellvertreter/Asendusliikmed/Αναπληρωτές/Substitutes/Suppléants/Supplenti/ Aizstājēji/Pavaduojantys nariai/Póttagok/Sostituti/Plaatsvervangers/Zastępcy/Membros suplentes/Supleantî/Náhradníci/Namestniki/ Varajäsenet/Suppleanter	

187 (2)	
193 (3)	
49 (6) (Точка от дневния ред/Punto del orden del día/Bod pořadu jednání (OJ)/Punkt på dagsordenen/Tagesordnungspunkt/Päevakorra punkt/Ημερήσια Διάταξη Σημείο/Agenda item/Point OJ/Punto all'ordine del giorno/Darba kārtības punkts/Darbotvarkés punktas/ Napirendi pont/Punt fuq l-aġenda/Agendapunt/Punkt porządku dziennego/Ponto OD/Punct de pe ordinea de zi/Bod programu schôdze/ Točka UL/Esityslista kohta/Föredragningslista punkt)	
Adriana Brassart	4

Наблюдатели/Observadores/Pozorovatelé/Observatører/Beobachter/Vaatlejad/Παρατηρητές/Observers/Observateurs/Osservatori/Novērotāji/Stebėtojai/Megfigyelők/Osservatori/Waarnemers/Observatorzy/Observadores/Observatori/Pozorovatelia/Opazovalci/Tarkkailijat/Observatörer

По покана на председателя/Por invitación del presidente/Na pozvání předsedy/Efter indbydelse fra formanden/Auf Einladung des Vorsitzenden/Εσιμεhe kutsel/Με πρόσκληση του Προέδρου/At the invitation of the Chair(wo)man/Sur l'invitation du président/Su invito del presidente/Pēc priekšsēdētāja uzaicinājuma/Pirmininkui pakvietus/Az elnök meghívására/Fuq stedina tal-President/Op uitnodiging van de voorzitter/Na zaproszenie Przewodniczącego/A convite do Presidente/La invitația președintelui/Na pozvanie predsedu/Na povabilo predsednika/Puheenjohtajan kutsusta/På ordförandens inbjudan

Съвет/Consejo/Rada/Rådet/Rat/Nõukogu/Συμβούλιο/Council/Conseil/Consiglio/Padome/Taryba/Tanács/Kunsill/Raad/Conselho/Consiliu/Svet/Neuvosto/Rådet (*)
Комисия/Comisión/Komise/Kommissionen/Kommission/Euroopa Komisjon/Επιτροπή/Commission/Commissione/Komisija/Bizottság/Kummissjoni/Commissie/Komisja/Comissão/Comisie/Komisia/Komissio/Kommissionen (*)
Европейска служба за външна дейност/Европска служба pro vnější činnost/EU-Udenrigstjenesten/Europäischer Auswärtiger Dienst/Euroopa välisteenistus/Ευρωπαϊκή Υπηρεσία Εξωτερικής Δράσης/European External Action service/Servicio Europeo de Acción Exterior/Service européen pour l'action extérieure/Servizio europeo per l'azione esterna/Eiropas Ārējās darbības dienests/Europos išorės veiksmų tarnyba/Európai Külügyi Szolgálat/Servizz Ewropew għall-Azzjoni Esterna/Europese dienst voor extern optreden/Europejska Służba Działań Zewnętrznych/Serviço Europeu para a Acção Externa/Serviciul european pentru actiune externă/Európska služba pre vonkajšiu činnosť/Evropska služba za zunanje delovanje/Euroopan ulkosuhdehallinto/Europeiska avdelningen för yttre åtgärd (*)
Други институции/Otras instituciones/Ostatní orgány a instituce/Andre institutioner/Andere Organe/Muud institutsioonid/Άλλα θεσμικά όργανα/Other institutions/Autres institutions/Altre istituzioni/Citas iestādes/Kitos institucijos/Más intézmények/Istituzjonijiet oħra/Andere instellingen/Inne instytucje/Outras Instituições/Alte instituții/Iné inštitúcie/Druge institucije/Muut toimielimet/Andra institutioner/organ

Други учасници/Otros participantes/Ostatní účastníci/Endvidere deltog/Andere Teilnehmer/Muud osalejad/Επίσης Παρόντες/Other participants/Autres participants/Altri partecipanti/Citi klātesošie/Kiti dalyviai/Más résztvevők/Partecipanti oħra/Andere aanwezigen/Inni uczestnicy/Outros participantes/Alti participantī/Iní účastníci/Drugi udeleženci/Muut osallistujat/Övriga deltagare

Issa Abdelaziz, Ronny Noerens, Rima Taraby

Секретариат на политическите групи/Secretaría de los Grupos políticos/Sekretariát politických skupin/Gruppernes sekretariat/Sekretariat der Fraktionen/Fraktsioonide sekretariaat/Γραμματεία των Πολιτικών Ομάδων/Secretariats of political groups/Secrétariat des groupes politiques/Segreteria gruppi politici/Politisko grupu sekretariāts/Fraczijų sekretoriai/Képviselőcsoportok titkársága/Sekretarjat grupi poliṭiċi/Fractiesecretariaten/Sekretariat Grup Politycznych/Secr. dos grupos políticos/Secretariate grupuri politice/Sekretariát politických skupin/Sekretariat političnih skupin/Poliittisten ryhmien sihteeristö/Gruppernas sekretariat

PPE	Jorge Soutulla, Virginia Millan de Silva
S&D	Valborg Linden Josten
ALDE	Itziar Munoa
ECR	
Verts/ALE	
GUE/NGL	
EFD	
NI	

Кабинет на председателя/Gabinete del Presidente/Kancelář předsedy/Formandens Kabinet/Kabinett des Präsidenten/Presidendi kantselei/Γραφείο Προέδρου/President's Office/Cabinet du Président/Gabinetto del Presidente/Priekšsēdētāja kabinets/Pirmininko kabinetas/Elnöki hivatal/Kabinett tal-President/Kabinet van de Voorzitter/Gabinet Przewodniczącego/Gabinete do Presidente/Cabinet Preşedinte/Kancelária predsedu/Urad predsednika/Puhemiehen kabinetti/Talmannens kansli

Кабинет на генералния секретар/Gabinete del Secretario General/Kancelář generálního tajemníka/Generalsekretærens Kabinet/Kabinett des Generalsekretärs/Peasekretäri büroo/Γραφείο Γενικού Γραμματέα/Secretary-General's Office/Cabinet du Secrétaire général/Gabinetto del Segretario generale/Ġeneralsekretära kabinets/Generalinio sekretoriaus kabinetas/Főtitkári hivatal/Kabinett tas-Segretarju Ġenerali/Kabinet van de secretaris-generaal/Gabinet Sekretarza Generalnego/Gabinete do Secretário-Geral/Cabinet Secretar General/Kancelária generálneho tajomníka/Urad generalnega sekretarja/Pääsihteerin kabinetti/Generalsekreterarens kansli

Генерална дирекция/Dirección General/Generální ředitelství/Generaldirektorat/Generaldirektion/Peadirektoraat/Γενική Διεύθυνση/ Directorate-General/Direction générale/Direzione generale/Generāldirektorāts/Generalinis direktoratas/Főigazgatóság/Direktorat Ġenerali/Direktoraten-generaal/Dyrekcja Generalna/Direcção-Geral/Direcții Generale/Generálne riaditeľstvo/Generalni direktorat/ Pääosasto/Generaldirektorat	
DG PRES DG IPOL DG EXPO DG COMM DG PERS DG INLO DG TRAD DG INTE DG FINS DG ITEC	Pekka Hakala
Правна служба/Servicio Jurídico/Právní služba/Juridisk Tjeneste/Juristischer Dienst/Öigusteenistus/Νομική Υπηρεσία/Legal Service/ Service juridique/Servizio giuridico/Juridiskais dienests/Teisės tarnyba/Jogi szolgálat/Servizz legali/Juridische Dienst/Wydział prawny/ Serviço Jurídico/Serviciu Juridic/Právny servis/Pravna služba/Oikeudellinen yksikkö/Rättstjänsten	
Секретариат на комисията/Secretaría de la comisión/Sekretariát výboru/Udvalgssekretariatet/Ausschusssekretariat/Komisjoni sekretariiat/Γραμματεία επιτροπής/Committee secretariat/Secrétariat de la commission/Segreteria della commissione/Komitejas sekretariāts/Komiteto sekretoriatas/A bizottság titkársága/Sekretariat tal-kumitat/Commissiesecretariaat/Sekretariat komisji/ Secretariado da comissão/Sekretariat comisie/Sekretariat odbora/Valiokunnan sihteeristö/Utskottssekretariatet	
Aydan Bahadır, Lars Nielsen	
Сътрудник/Asistente/Asistent/Assistent/Assistenz/Βοηθός/Assistant/Assistente/Palīgs/Padējējas/Asszisztens/Asystent/Pomočnik/ Avustaja/Assistenten	

- * (P) = Председател/Presidente/Předseda/Formand/Vorsitzender/Esimees/Πρόεδρος/Chair(wo)man/Président/Priekšsēdētājs/Pirmininkas/
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