



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Council conclusions on Lebanon

(2718th GENERAL AFFAIRS Council meeting - Brussels, 20 March 2006)

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. The Council welcomes the important and timely discussions with Prime Minister Fouad Siniora. The Council welcomes the launching of the national dialogue and its initial agreements in respect of the relevant UNSC resolutions. The Council encourages the continuation of the dialogue and hopes it will contribute to political stability in the country by addressing critical issues of national concern. It reiterates its support for Lebanon's unity, stability and independence, and reminds its neighbours of their obligations to respect Lebanon's sovereignty. The EU condemns the past violent attacks on Lebanese citizens, journalists and political leaders and the ensuing loss of lives. The EU is deeply concerned about the continued intimidation and about attacks against the right to freedom of expression.
2. The Council reaffirms its full support for the UN International Investigation Commission, under Serge Brammertz, into the assassination of Rafiq Hariri, as mandated by UNSCR 1595 and 1644, and welcomes the report by Mr. Brammertz. The EU urges all parties to cooperate unconditionally with the UNIIC and hopes that light will be shed on this and other assassinations.

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3. The Council reaffirms its full support for the Government of Lebanon and encourages it to urgently set up and launch the economic and political reforms programme initiated during the Core Group meeting held in New York in September 2005. The EU stands ready to support credible and effective plans for political and economic reform. The EU looks forward to the convening of the first Association Council with Lebanon. It expresses its satisfaction that the negotiations of the ENP Action Plan will start soon. The implementation of this action plan will support the reform process in the country.

 4. The Council underlines the importance it attaches to the full implementation of UNSCR 1559, including disbanding and disarming of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias. It encourages the Government of Lebanon to extend its authority throughout the country."
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