

P R E S S R E L E A S E

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Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on Lebanon

The European Union has been closely following the situation in Lebanon, and welcomes the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Southern Lebanon. It expresses its hope that this move will facilitate reconciliation and reconstruction in the region.

The European Union hopes that the United Nations Secretary-General will be able to certify the withdrawal as being in full compliance with Resolution 425, and thus a significant step towards a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the region. The European Union reiterates its full support for the efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General and asks all parties involved to exercise full restraint, to cooperate with the United Nations and UNIFIL and to refrain from acts and declarations that might imperil their endeavours.

The European Union looks forward to the restoration of the Government of Lebanon's effective authority in Southern Lebanon and remains committed to assist and contribute to Lebanon's efforts towards reconciliation and rehabilitation.

The European Union's Special Envoy Miguel Moratinos will be visiting Lebanon to assess the situation and report back to the next General Affairs Council.

Internet: <http://ue.eu.int/Newsroom>
E-mail: press.office@consilium.eu.int

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Press Office - Rue de la Loi, 175 - 1048 Brussels
Tel. 285 62 31 - 285 63 19 - 285 68 08 - 285 81 11 -- Telefax 285 80 26

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