

**The Euro-Mediterranean & Lebanon Partnership:
How Can this Partnership Get Maximum Future Benefit?**

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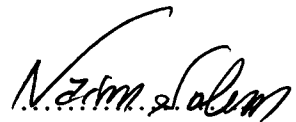
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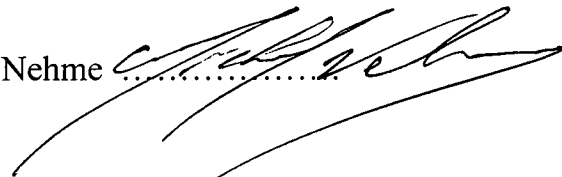
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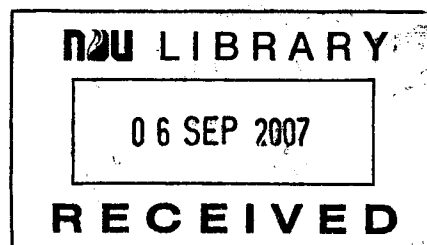
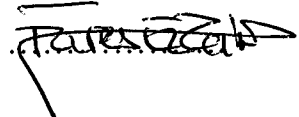


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Chapter I

Introduction

Lebanon has been faced with many challenges in the rebuilding and expansion of its damaged infrastructure and in improving its economic and regulatory environment following the series of wars since the 1970s. The vitality of the private sector has remained strong, with certain sectors, notably banking and education, taking the lead in the process of recovery. Progress made directly after the civil war to control the difficult economic situation was not maintained in subsequent years. Large fiscal deficits continued to prevail, with a consequent rise in the level of public debt. Noteworthy is that contrary to the general aspirations and expectations that accompanied the ending of the civil war, the expanding regulatory role of the government was not accompanied by institutional reform, which represents increasing efficiency, greater transparency, decreasing corruption and preferential treatment, and enhanced independence of the judiciary. All attempts at reform have met with failure. By the end of the 1990s and the beginning of this decade, the public sector was generally inefficient, troubled with widespread corruption, while the judiciary was probably dependent on political figures and relations than ever before.

The poor institutional performance eventually contributed to the major economic imbalances that Lebanon came to face, in large measure attributable to the maintenance of large fiscal deficits. By 2002 the government had come under increasing pressure to implement corrective measures to address the difficult economic situation, including privatization of specific public utilities and a major reduction in the fiscal deficit.

These measures on their own, however, were not considered sufficient, and to avoid a potential financial crisis (one of whose manifestations could have been a substantial depreciation of the Lebanese pound) the government had to seek major external financial assistance: The Paris II donor meeting of 23rd November 2002 arranged by President Chirac. A financial package of \$ 4.4 billion of financial and developmental assistance was approved thereby providing an opportunity to the authorities to reverse market trends, and permitting the Central Bank to reconstitute its depleted foreign reserves and to effect a limited reduction in prevailing interest rates. In the following two years, however, the assassination of Prime Minister Rafik Hariri was a shock, and a continuation of assassinations of journalists, politicians, and a number of ordinary people lingered into 2007. The economic, political, and security situation was going from bad to worse. Demonstrations arose, unemployment increased, and the youth's way out was to leave the country for better opportunities. The youth today are finding better chances abroad; thousands have left their home country, with no hope of ever coming back. To further add to these circumstances, the government had to cope with the economic consequences of Israel's war on Lebanon, between July 12 and August 14, 2006. The Israeli attacks on civilian infrastructure, and occupation of the southern border area brought disaster, killing so many. The debt increased, and even more people fled, and what was thought to be the most promising summer in years with the largest number of tourists and events, turned out to be nothing but a catastrophe. The public debt continues to climb and a number of measures that the Lebanese government had pledged to undertake are yet to be implemented.

While recognizing progress made in specific social sectors, such as education and health, Lebanon's overall economic development has suffered from various forms of social inequities, poor urban and rural planning, and persistent environmental degradation, despite efforts on the part of certain governmental officials and concerned NGOs to arrest or minimize the downward trend.

TOPIC AND ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED

The Euro-Med Partnership

It was in the midst of this transition, in 1995, that the EU entered a commitment with Lebanon, to deal with the political, economic and cultural issues that are undeniably crucial. The new framework for Partnership between the EU and the Southern Mediterranean countries, namely, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Malta, Egypt, turkey, Cyprus, Israel, Lebanon, Palestinian authority, Jordan, and Syria was launched with the Barcelona Conference in November 1995, establishing a policy with ambitious long-term objectives. Backed by the largest European Union financial commitment ever made outside the Union, the Declaration launched a set of economic, political, cultural, and social initiatives, intended to reinforce one another in an open-ended process of regional integration with the assistance of the European Union.

The Agreement, commenced on the 10th of January 2002 in Brussels, was signed on the 17th of June 2002 in Luxembourg. The purpose of this initiative was to give a boost to the partnership between the European Union (EU) and the

Southern Mediterranean (MED) countries, and work towards integration and union.¹

The twenty-seven Partners, including Lebanon, having adopted the Barcelona Declaration, setting up the three main objectives for the Partnership: **Peace and stability** through a reinforcement of political and security dialogue; the construction of a zone of shared prosperity through an **economic and financial partnership** and the slow establishment of a free trade zone; and to create closeness between peoples through **social, cultural, and human partnerships**. The Barcelona Declaration explicitly used the language of regional community building to express its goals, and it treated security as a basic aspect of regional development. The Declaration asserted that the best way to achieve security, political stability and economic welfare in the Mediterranean was neither by an elaborate system of alliances, collective security systems, or mere functional economic integration schemes. Rather, it asserted that security and prosperity would be achieved by inventing a region that pools its resources and offers a shared social identity that could be a partner to the European Union.

For the Euro-MED Partnership, there has been little progress so far compared to what the agreements set out to achieve. Growth in the MED countries remains low, exports growth is limited and undiversified, and foreign companies are still very hesitant to invest in the region. At the same time, the lack of growth and job creation is giving rise to a serious economic, political and social crisis.²

¹ <http://www.economy.gov.lb/MOET/English/Panel/Trade/InternationalTradeAgreements/EU/BarcelonaProcess.htm>

² Artawi, Hisham and Ephraim Kleiman. "Economic interactions among participants in the Middle East peace process." *Middle East Journal* 51(2), 1997.

Why has intervention not led to growth? A review of basic theories of foreign aid might better explain the relationship.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this thesis is to highlight how negative trends can be overturned, and how the European Foreign Aid to Lebanon, i.e., Euro-Med & Lebanon partnership, can be enriched to get the maximum benefit in the future. The issue that Foreign aid affects the economic growth of developing countries has drawn the attention of many scholars over time. Therefore the studies and issues will be carefully examined and applied to Lebanon to ensure its maximization of benefits from the Euro-Mediterranean partnership.

With full accountability of its political body and transparency of its public institutions, the future macro-economic stability will require the implementation of major monetary reform measures that will bring the fiscal deficit under control along with a setback in public debt dynamics. Lebanon till today has more to accomplish. Its reforms and overall enhancement of its cultural, political, and economic structure are yet to come with a very hopeful future.

Aid is found to have a positive impact on economic growth through several mechanisms: aid increases investment, increases the capacity to import capital goods or technology, aid does not have an adverse impact on investment and savings and it increases the capital productivity and promotes endogenous technical change (Morrissey, 2001).³

³ Morrissey, Oliver. "Does Aid Increase Growth?" *Progress in Development Studies* Vol 1, No. 1, pp.37-50, (2001).

Snyder (1993), taking country size into account, finds a positive and significant relationship between aid and economic growth. He emphasizes that “previous econometric analysis has not made allowance for the fact that larger countries grow faster, but receive less aid”. He also claims that donors favor small countries for a number of reasons. First, donors who are seeking support from recipient countries find it better to provide aid to many small countries than to focus on just few large countries. With the same amount of aid, the proportion of aid over GDP will be bigger in small countries compared to that of larger countries and as a result, give them more credits. Second, there is pressure on multiparty donors to deliver aid to all member countries and due to their feasible project size, small countries tend to receive more aid than they expected. Third, small countries tend to have historical colonial relations with donor countries, which are somewhat influential to donors’ aid giving decisions. The last reason is that trade normally has larger fraction of GDP in small countries than in big ones and therefore, these countries may be gaining more weight in donors’ assessment.

Snyder analyzes the relation between foreign aid inflow and the growth rate of gross domestic product in 69 developing countries over three periods (the 1960s, the 1970s and 1980-1987), incorporating country size (measured by gross domestic product) in the model. He argues that when country size is not included, the effects of aid are small and insignificant but when this factor is taken into account, the coefficient of aid becomes positive and significant.⁴

By contrast, Knack (2000), in a cross-country analysis, indicates that higher aid levels erode the quality of governance indexes, meaning bureaucracy, corruption and the rule of law. He argues that “aid dependence can potentially

⁴ Snyder, Donald W. “Donor Bias Toward Small Countries: An Overlooked Factor In the Analysis of Foreign Aid and Economic Growth.” *Applied Economics*, 25, 481-488, (1993).

corruption and the rule of law. He argues that “aid dependence can potentially undermine institutional quality, encouraging payment seeking and corruption, bringing conflict over control of aid funds, drawing off scarce talent from bureaucracy, and alleviating pressures to reform inefficient policies and institutions”.⁵

Large aid inflows do not necessarily result in general welfare gains and high expectation of aid may increase payment seeking and reduce the expected public good quality. Moreover, there is no evidence that donors take corruption into account seriously while providing aid.⁶

Pedersen (1996) asserts that it is still not possible to conclude that aid affects growth positively. He argues that the problems lie in the built-in incentive of the aid system itself. The aid conditionality is not sufficient and the penalties are not hard enough when recipient countries deviate from their commitments. In fact, there are incentives for aid donating agencies to pay out as much aid as possible. This holds back the motivation of recipient countries and raises the aid dependency, which in turn distorts their development.⁷

Commonly, many authors find the positive impact of foreign aid on growth subject to certain factors. Burnside and Dollar (1997), in their well-known paper “Aid, Policies, and Growth”, find that aid has a positive impact on growth in developing countries with good fiscal, monetary and trade policies but has little

⁵ Knack, Stephen (2000). “Aid Dependence and the Quality of Governance: A Cross-Country Empirical Analysis.” Policy Research Paper, No. 2396. Washington D.C.: Development Research Group, World Bank

⁶ Svensson, Jacob (1998). “Foreign Aid and Rent-Seeking.” World Bank Policy Research Paper 1880

⁷ Pedersen, Karl R. (1996). “Aid, Investment and Incentives.” *Scandinavian Journal of Economics* 98(3), pp.423-438

impact on countries where such policies are poor.⁸ They explain that “aid can affect output only through its effect on the stock of capital, that is, to the extent that it is used for investment rather than consumption”. They argue that aid itself has small and insignificant impact but aid interacting with good policy has a significant positive impact on growth. In fact, policy seems more important for aid effectiveness in lower income countries.

Aid works well in a good policy environment and a poor country with good policy should get more aid, which is not always the case in reality. A well-designed aid plan can support effective institutions and governance by providing more knowledge and transferring technology and skills. It is recommended to decentralize the aid flows in recipient countries. Money aid is important but idea aid is even more important. Aid can be the midwife of good policy in recipient countries. In poor-policy countries, idea aid is especially more essential than money aid. This implies that in a good-policy environment, aid increases growth via the investment channel whereas in a poor-policy environment, it nurtures the reforms through policymakers training or knowledge and technology transfer. These non-money effects are believed even more important and viable than the money value of aid. Aid works much better where the reform is initiated or internalized by local government rather than when it is imposed by outsiders. Therefore, aid is normally more effective when it facilitates efficiently and timely reforms triggered by the local authority.⁹

⁸ Burnside, Craig and Dollar, David. “Aid, Policies and Growth.” *The American Economic Review*-, 90(4), 847-868, (1997).

⁹ World Bank (1998). “Assessing Aid: What Works, What Doesn’t and Why.” Oxford University Press, New York, p 92.

In short, the results of research on the relation between aid and growth vary depending upon the models, data and countries of analysis. Therefore, the debate over the impact of aid on growth is on-going and left open to further study.

Thesis Statement: Lebanon can benefit to the maximum from the Euro-Med partnership. However, the challenge lies in the ability of the Lebanese administrative or political institutions concerned, to formulate and implement the required corrective plans. Reform of public administration and the enhancement of political governance are essential pre-requisites for future long term macroeconomic stability and sustainable development. Otherwise, the economic fortunes of Lebanon will continue to be excessively dependent upon outside developments, whether positive or negative, over which the authorities have no control. While outside influence will always be ever present, it is very important that domestic economic management be capable to achieve the objectives of macroeconomic stability and sustained development in a traditionally open economy. This in turn calls for the enhancement of good governance or institutions to levels that would permit such a management to achieve the long-term objectives.

METHODOLOGY

The thesis will examine the scope of EU activities in Lebanon, as a sample of the implementation of Euro-Med agreement. Observation of the events and projects taking place will be reviewed from many sources, such as government information, reports, work of researchers, articles from specialized magazines and journals, as well as information collected from the internet. Moreover, this analysis examines information from a variety of sources, relying mainly on

secondary data which is defined as "data collected for some purpose other than the problem at hand."¹⁰ This data is collected from different sources.

The analysis will further clarify the nature of the Euro-Med relationship, shedding light to the goals it drew to accomplish. Internal secondary data from within the Lebanese European Commission in Saifi, Beirut, includes newsletters, guides and reports. External secondary data comes from different sources such as: journals and other publications, and the internet.

Proposed Organization of the Thesis

Chapter I: Introduction

In this chapter the purpose of the study is defined. The significant topics will be discussed, describing the approach and methodology to be used.

CHAPTER II: Goals, and Economic & Local Development

In the second chapter, the history of the Euro-Med partnership with Lebanon will be introduced, highlighting the achievements of economic and institutional developments, and the local advances it was set to accomplish. The objectives of the Partnership between Europe and the Mediterranean included a free trade area, in a framework of shared prosperity and modernization of the trade relations and the economic sector as a whole. The political dialogue is an absolute requirement for the cooperation as it aims to establish peace, stability and security in the Mediterranean region. So the financial cooperation as well as the economic

¹⁰ Naresh K. Malhotra, *Marketing Research An Applied Orientation*, 3rd ed., (USA: Bookwest Textbooks, 1998),112.

and sector cooperation are the two essential mechanisms to boost the economic and social development towards a liberalization of trade exchanges and an opening of the market. As a result living and working conditions in Lebanon will improve, and there will be an increase in the employment levels which will in the long run, serve the area with wealth.

CHAPTER III: Democracy, Education & Youth

In the third chapter, the project developments and accomplishments of Democracy and Human Rights will be pursued. Human Rights and fundamental freedoms form an essential part of the framework governing relations between the European Union and its Mediterranean partners. Reform of the Lebanese judiciary system and protection of migrant workers' rights is highly supported. In addition, Lebanese Education, Youth and Research will be discussed. Important projects require research and this as a result enables youth to meet and share common interests and undertake concretely common action. Projects such as "Documentary research about poverty and discrimination in Lebanon" and "Youth and the municipalities: participation circle" will be drawn attention to, among several others. Finally, Supporting Palestinian Refugees is a crucial element; so it will also be discussed. Humanitarian projects aim for better living conditions for the Palestinian refugees who live in camps. Focus is on waste water, socio-economic developments, vocational training and health which includes both psycho-health and food aid.

CHAPTER IV: Environment & Cultural Exchange

In the fourth chapter, the Environment and how it can be better will be pursued. Such developments include, among many others, the control on environmental tasks, strengthening environmental legislation, and enhancement of permanent environmental awareness. Communication and Cultural Exchange make up the last part of chapter four. Communication aims at raising public awareness of the activities carried out within the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, and Cultural Exchange aims at creating cooperation and integration in the cultural and human matters. These sectors include a Regional Information and communication program; and audiovisual programs that are intended to get a close and mutual enrichment through promotion and exchange. An example is the "Euro-Med Audiovisual Regional Program" which aims to promote the development of the Euro-Mediterranean audiovisual sector through technology transfer, distribution of audiovisual works and conservation of audiovisual archives.

CHAPTER V: Conclusion and Recommendations

In chapter six, my personal analysis will be defined. Free trade area with a context of shared prosperity of the economic sector is not feasible unless it is associated to a balanced and sustainable social development; as a result bringing solidity and security to this area. The free movement of goods represents the basis element of market economy as it lies within the scope of the gradual establishment of a free trade area. Other than aiming to improve living and working conditions and increasing employment levels, cooperation in the cultural and human matters

is highly important; audiovisual and information is also intended to get a closer and common improvement through support and exchange. All these measures are put into practice within an institutional framework that will facilitate the settlement of disputes that could arise. How this framework can be improved, how Lebanon can benefit to the fullest from this partnership, and how Lebanon can be noticeable with the peace, prosperity and dynamism it truly represents, are all questions to be answered with full analysis. Finally, the conclusion is represented. It will consist of an overview of all the developments discussed; bringing together the influential benefits accrued. Examples are improvements of living conditions for some, the rise of important human factors, enhancement of the education to a high standard and the awareness of environmental factors that will give rise to a better Lebanon. The setbacks, from the rising financial debt, to the local developments, can yet be reformed, improved, and reversed, nonetheless empowering the political structure. Destruction and the financial debts can be solved with careful commitment to planning and implementing. As a result, the economic situation shall give rise to employment, and investment opportunities shall flourish. Lebanon shall get back its identity.

Chapter II

Goals and Economic & Local Development

History & Goals

The euro-med program began in the Barcelona conference which was held on 27-28 November 1995. This conference was attended by 27 ministers of foreign affairs of which 15 were from the European Union member states, and 12 from the south Mediterranean countries. The latest EU enlargement, 1st May 2004, has brought Malta and Cyprus into the European Union. Therefore the euro-med partnership comprises 35 members, 25 EU member states and 10 Mediterranean partners namely: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey. This major and unique partnership constitutes common objectives, and for this unique regional relationship to succeed, commitment on both parts is required. The three main objectives are: a common area of peace and stability through the enforcement of a political and security dialogue; the construction of a zone of shared prosperity through an economic and financial partnership and the gradual establishment of a free trade area; and the rapprochement between peoples through a social, cultural, and human partnership aimed at encouraging understanding between cultures and exchanges between civil societies. This partnership is fulfilled through two different cooperation mechanisms. The first is the *bilateral cooperation*, which is direct, most significantly between the European Union and each of the southern Mediterranean countries individually. This cooperation reflects the general principles governing the new Euro-Mediterranean relationship to address the three objectives, although they each contain characteristics specific to the relations

between the EU and each Mediterranean Partner. The other cooperation is the *regional cooperation* between the European Union and the 12 Mediterranean partners, which implies north-south and south-south cooperation. This regional dialogue represents one of the most innovative aspects of the partnership covering the political, economic and cultural fields at the same time. This cooperation has a strategic impact because it deals with problems common to many Mediterranean partners.¹¹

The Euro-Med and Lebanon partnership for that reason aims at bringing about a Lebanon of security, a dynamic economy, and good social relations. The political dialogue aims to establish peace, stability and security in the region in order for the region to sustain a zone of shared prosperity. Cooperation is organized from senior officials to Government Ministers. The cooperation is complemented by regional and bilateral projects that are intended to promote democracy, the rule of law, civil rights and women role in politics. The free movement of goods addresses the exchange of the agricultural, industrial, and processed products. It also represents the gradual establishment of a free trade area over a transitional period not exceeding twelve years; and it is organized in such a way that the goods originating in Lebanon and exported to the European market will be exempted from custom duties. As a result, this recognition enables Lebanon to maintain protection of its economy in order to pursue effectively the required forms. Lebanon should gradually and progressively abolish all custom duties on imports of goods originating in Europe during a twelve-year period. The

¹¹<http://www.economy.gov.lb/MOET/English/Panel/Trade/InternationalTradeAgreements/EU/BarcelonaProcess.htm>

financial, economic and sectoral cooperation programs aim at supporting Lebanon in its efforts to successfully achieve a strong economic and social development. This cooperation is fulfilled through an effort towards modernization of industry, diversification of products and support to job-creating activities. The social and cultural cooperation balances the financial economic and sector cooperation, and in addition to its interference in its immigration field, it has an effort to improve living and working conditions so that growth could be geographically balanced and beneficial to the most disadvantaged populations. Finally the cooperation between the cultural, audiovisual and informational fields brings about rapprochement and mutual enrichment through cultural exchanges and promotion, while maintaining mutual respect for each other's cultures. Mainly it shall support the conservation and restoration of the historical and cultural heritage, the exchange of artists and art exhibitions, as well as the training of personnel working in the cultural field. Finally *the interim agreement* in Lebanon became effective on March 1st 2003, which regulates the commercial component of the association agreement. This agreement states that the new rules between the European Union and Lebanon shall be implemented mainly by opening the respective markets and by tariffs dismantling.¹²

The Economic and Institutional Development

The economic and institutional development is represented by many important projects. To start with, a very important fifteen-million-Euro project is called '*Quality*' Project which initiated on June 27, 2005. The partner of this four-

¹² www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/delegations/intro/role.htm

year project is the Ministry of Economy and Trade, and what it aims at is to begin the development of institutional chain for conformity assessment of quality control in Lebanon. It aims at improving the competitiveness for a better access of Lebanese products to international markets, and to also ensure the improvement for consumer protection. The project consists of three main components: To support the government and the definition of a legislative and regulatory framework; to support the developments of the institution which have an essential role in the analysis of quality and conformity of products; and lastly to raise awareness for enterprises to adopt better practices for improving product quality.

In March 2005, a work program was specified that involved several public and private sectors. This work program consisted of *the elaboration of a quality control policy*, specifically through the analysis of related experiences in other countries, raising awareness of public opinion, and supporting enterprises to help them develop their policy of quality control and integration of knowledge in the methods of quality control into their training programs. *The establishment of an inventory* of the main operators such as laboratories and standardization institutes was included. Also contained was *the strengthening of institutional capacity* through the creation of a quality control 'task force', the adoption of common production procedures and the establishment of a specialized library at the Ministry. In addition to that, there was *the review of the legal and legislative framework*, *the improvement of market monitoring* and *the establishment of an information center* to the benefit of enterprises. Lebanon's Quality Program is a challenging program, requiring a wide variety of inputs and consistent follow up to measure up to all the requirements. Not only does the legislation have clear guidelines constantly, but the major product quality enables the market to rise in

the consumer's view, as a result enhancing the market image. Lebanon will have a stable environment favorable to developing and marketing quality products that can endure competition from imported goods and overcome export markets. This project's objective is to raise awareness among businesspeople of quality-control procedures such as official approvals, and to set up websites and databases. The program also aims to train entrepreneurs in quality-control. Corrective actions should be taken on a regular basis, and there should be document control and management responsibility. This project will not reach its goals ultimately if all these procedures are not well applied, and the market must therefore be well monitored by the specialized and well-trained quality control teams.¹³

Another project carried out is the '*Support for the Implementation of the Association Agreement*'. The partner of this twelve-million Euro project, also a four-year one, is the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. This project aims at supporting the Lebanese institutions and other public institutions that contribute to the implementation of the association agreement. It is represented in the form of an operational fund available upon demand. What distinguishes this project is its privilege to exchange knowledge through both the Lebanese and European Union member states. The accomplishment is the preparation of a draft law on competition in 2005, through the support made available for institutional strengthening of the competent Ministry.

The European commission approved this action plan, which is attached to the presidency of the council of ministers and prepared by the beneficiaries. The

¹³ www.economy.gov.lb

components of the projects are *support for reforming the competitive law, support for consumer protection, support to the insurance sector monitoring authority and support to the customs service*. The main targets in 2004 were the reforms of the competition system, meaning the introduction of a law aiming to establish a regulatory authority, the pursuit of customs modernization, and the improvement of consumer protection including support to consumer associates. The work plan deals with a number of topics including support for fiscal reform such as general income tax and law on the management of the public budget, promotion of intellectual property rights and improvement of health measures. Well-designed competitive law, successful law enforcement and competition-based economic reform promote increased efficiency, economic growth and employment for the benefit of all. When consumer interests are protected from the market fraud for example, it creates a wide-sense of security, and gives the right to consumers to file any complaints, thus creating eligibility in the market setting. The support to the monitoring authority of the insurance sector will ensure the plan is well designed and enforced properly, rather than just supervising the insurance program in order to avoid any hazardous issues.¹⁴

On May 31st 2006, The Minister of Economy and Trade, H.E. Mr. Sami Haddad, the Minister of Finance, H.E. Mr. Jihad Azour, and the Head of the Delegation of the European Commission in Lebanon, H.E. Mr. Patrick Renaud, announced the initiation of three institutional twinning projects with the United Kingdom, Spain and Italy, funded by the European Union in the framework of the Association Agreement that entered into force on April 1st 2006. Twining is an

¹⁴ www.pcm.gov.lb

instrument in the EU cooperation and it is knowledge transfer and capacity building where all the member states administrations and beneficiary countries' administrations share their experiences. The first twinning project is the 'Institutional Strengthening of the Consumer Protection Directorate' with the Ministry of Economy and Trade in Lebanon, Northern Ireland, and United Kingdom as partners, with an investment of 1,050,000 Euros. The second project is the 'Institutional Building of the Insurance Supervisory Authority' with the Ministry of Economy and Trade in Lebanon, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Spain as partners for this 995,500 Euro project. And finally the third project concerning the support to the implementation of the association agreement is the 'Capacity Building and Modernization of the Petroleum Warehousing Operations'. This 125,000 Euro project has the Lebanese Ministry of Finance and the Lebanese Directorate General of Customs as partners, and also Italian Ministry of Economy and Finance and Italian Customs Agency.¹⁵

An additional project for economic and institutional development is the *'Integrated Support Program for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises'* with a budget of seventeen-million Euros. Its partner is the Ministry of Economy and Trade. This projects aims at supporting the development and implementation of an agenda that supports the initiation and growth of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in Lebanon. The main intervention areas of the program are: development of a national policy favouring SMEs including a legislative and regulatory framework more responsive to the obstacles encountered by the enterprises; support for the creation of a network of demand-driven and business

¹⁵ www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/euomed/index.htm

support services including the resources needed for the continuation of the Euro-Lebanese Center for Industrial Modernization (ELCIM) initiative launched by the EU in 2001; participation in a loan guarantee mechanism for the benefit of enterprises; and encouraging Lebanese banks to increase their commitments to viable projects with good growth potential. In April 2005 this project set up a technical assistance team and the Euro-Lebanese Center for Industrial Modernization restarted in may 2005. According to a case study of the apparel manufacturing in Lebanon done by the United Nations on 28th October 2003, the productivity and competitiveness of small and medium sized enterprises can be enhanced through clusters and networks. International experience has shown that clusters are effective tools of industrial policy in countries seeking social and economic objectives; and as a result increases the competitiveness of SMEs.¹⁶ Therefore clusters, such as inter-firm relations, offer specific and important advantages to SMEs, because they collectively achieve levels of efficiency well beyond their reach and capabilities as individual firms. Therefore, the apparel industry in Lebanon, for example, plays an important role in economic growth in developing countries and especially in ESCWA (Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia) regions; it also faces many challenges and stiff competition. In order to succeed, apparel enterprises need to seek collective inter-firm relations and efforts in the form of clusters, networks and self help groups. This project can be more effective if Lebanese banks encourage SMEs with

¹⁶ United Nations, (2003). Case study on: "The Apparel Industry in Lebanon":

<http://66.102.9.104/search?q=cache:ep0BhwXIO9AJ:www.escwa.org.lb/information/publications/edit/upload/sdpd0310.pdf+support+for+lebanese+small+and+medium+sized+enterprises&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=6>

enforced, facility programs will help these enterprises become more abundant in Lebanon, thus creating dream opportunities for fresh graduates with entrepreneurial goals.

The '*Assistance to the Rehabilitation of the Lebanese Administration*' (ARLA) is also a thirty-eight million Euro project. Its partner is the office of the Minister of State for Administrative Reform (OMSAR), central government agencies, administrations and municipalities. The goal is to offer technical assistance and training for the rehabilitation and modernization of administrative institutions through offering management instruments and exchange of know-how. The Program Monitoring Consultancy (PMC) component is the first activity to start within the ARLA framework. Over the past 3 years, the PMC has been assisting in strengthening the above-mentioned functions of OMSAR and selected core administrative agencies. In addition, the PMC will provide support to OMSAR in the programming and monitoring of "Management Support Consultancies" (MSCs), involving technical assistance to other public institutions and ministries in their basic management and planning functions. The current activities also include the support of the Ministry of Labour, the support for the creation of a regulatory authority for the telecommunications and civil aviation sectors, and the institutional restructuring of the sea and land transport sector. A follow-up of projects for the evaluation of performance of various administrations which are the Central Inspection (evaluation of the performance of various ministries), and Ministry of Finance (customs databases and archives, improvement of the quality of offered services, management of human resources)

are comprised in this program. Finally tourism and economy (informing citizens), and training civil servants are activities included too.¹⁷

For a program that aims at effective administrative reform, main activities must consist of de-bureaucratization (including streamlining, downsizing, re-organization, decentralization, privatization), change of administrative and resource allocation privileges, improving the quality and competence of management personnel through more effective recruitment, training, and performance rewards, and finally designing budgeting and auditing programs to achieve the value of money and fiscal capacity of the administrative apparatus in the delivery of services.¹⁸ The Lebanese administration has to be able to meet all these challenges that come with technology innovation and globalization, so that an over all organizational performance can be improved.

Finally a twenty-five million Euro project is called '*Investment Planning Program*'. Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR), technical ministries, and high council for privatization are the partners of this project. The goal is to support institutional development of public administrations involved in the rehabilitation of the main infrastructure of the country, mainly in the sectors of water, energy, environment, public works and transportation. This project carries many achievements; among them are in e-commerce, where there was a preparation of a draft law to provide Lebanon with legislation adapted to electronic transactions. The e-commerce team has also achieved an important awareness-raising campaign particularly in the distribution of the newsletter ECOMLEB (E-

¹⁷ www.omsar.gov.lb

¹⁸ Zhiyong Lan (June 1999). "The 1998 Administrative Reform in China: Issues, Challenges, and Prospects." *Asian Journal of Public Administration*, vol 21 (no 1), pp29-24

commerce in Lebanon); this project (1.7 million euros) has the priority to assist in developing the appropriate legal and regulatory framework for all types of e-transactions in Lebanon, and to assist in the development of e-commerce in Lebanon.¹⁹

In transportation there was the introduction of new management tools such as the Management Information System (MIS) that includes a computerized Highway Management System (HMS), a Document Information System (DIS), and the adoption of the Geographic Information System (GIS). Although the management tools for transport are enhanced, a closer linkage in the management and on-the-ground transportation will help improve and avoid the hazardous incidents taking place daily. This way this program could be closely aware of the daily incidents through its advanced Management Information System.²⁰ In the council for Development and Reconstruction, organizing, implementing, and an important information campaign targeting groups of professionals and universities working on the Master Plan for Land Use in Lebanon (SADTL) was carried; also a competition for universities was launched to motivate the performance.²¹

Concerning the environment's achievements, an inventory of existing legislation and updating secondary regulation for current application, specific to the sector, was executed in 2004, by the 'Stable institutional structure for protected areas management (SISPAM)' project. In 2004, the project researched necessary referential, taking into consideration the legal, administrative, financial and

¹⁹www.ecomleb.org

²⁰http://www.euroinfocentre.net/eu_finance_programs.php?cAction=Details&ArticleID=41&PH_PSESSID=a53287a17fb78b2701d7c6c5c0d06f20

²¹http://www.euroinfocentre.net/eu_finance_programs.php?cAction=Details&ArticleID=41&PH_PSESSID=a53287a17fb78b2701d7c6c5c0d06f20

political implications. It executed an inventory of the existing national legislation specific to the sector.

What's more is that there is support for the setting up of the resource management tools of the Ministry of Environment. What has been undergone is the preparation of a national action plan for the protection of the environment and the realization of a directory of contacts covering the press, and professionals in the field.²²

As to energy, there was an implementation of inventory of the energy sector in Lebanon (inventory of energy resources). During 2004 the main activities led to the end of the preparation of a sector strategy document and a first draft of the general law for the energy sector. Also approved in 2002 were the draft decrees for the implementation of the law related to the electricity sector.

Finally drinking water, waste water and irrigation also had attainments. Upon spread of law 221 on the creation of water establishments (May 2000), an inventory of water was implemented. Infrastructure management tools, means of production of distribution, as well as water resources were produced and then tested under various situations. During 2004, a sector strategy document was prepared, and in 2005 the ministry adopted this strategy and presented a first document of sector strategy jointly with the adoption of the implementation decrees of law 221. Activities in 2005 concentrated on the installation and operation of designed management tools as well as training users within the framework of a major autonomy for the water establishments. It is important to face the innovations concerning all these sectors because they are vital issues in the country's living conditions. If not carried out properly, major setbacks could

²²http://www.euroinfocentre.net/cu_finance_programs.php?cAction=Details&ArticleID=41&PH PSESSID=a53287a17fb78b2701d7e6c5c0d06120

slow down the overall development process. This is why water, electricity or transportation systems ought to be on the road to modernization, resulting in positive population feedback.²³

Local Development

Local development is necessary to create better living conditions. 'Economic and Social Fund for Development' is a project (25 million Euros) with the Council of Development and Reconstruction, municipalities, non-governmental organizations and consulting firms and banks as partners. This project aims at improving the economic and social conditions of low income groups through two components. The first is the Local Development component (6 million Euros) which aims at improving living conditions of the most disadvantaged groups residing in the poorest areas. Six agreements were signed with eleven direct communities to provide them with technical assistance in the preparation of local development plans. Aytroun and Mishmish are the first two direct municipalities that are in the process of implementing the priority projects that are in the framework of local development plan. These are mainly the establishment of service centers for agriculture, educational and cultural centers, and mother or infant health care centers. Four other beneficiaries have finalized the projects to be covered under a grant contract.

The second is the Job Creation component (12 million Euros) which aims at increasing the number of jobs and income in disadvantaged regions, through the mobilization of a credit fund for micro enterprises managed by non-governmental

²³http://www.euroinfocentre.net/cu_finance_programs.php?cAction=Details&ArticleID=41&PH_PSESSID=a53287a17fb78b2701d7c6c5c0d06f20

organizations, and on the other, a micro credit managed by banks. 'Al Majmou'a', 'Société Générale de Banque Liban (SGBL)', and 'Banque Libanaise pour le Commerce (BLC)' are the three loan contracts that were signed with the micro-financing institution. Partner banks have supported 133 projects submitted by small and medium-sized enterprises. 'Young Urban Professionals (YUP)' is the enterprise which is responsible for supporting potential bank clients and 309 projects benefited from this enterprise in the implementation of business plans. Of these projects, 43% were accepted by the banks. At the same time, the NGO 'Al Moujam'a' granted micro-credits to 255 small enterprises. All in all, there was the creation of 460 new jobs.²⁴

Under the Local Development plan is the '*Agricultural Development Project*' (10 million Euros), which aims at adapting the fruits and vegetable sector to meet the needs of current and future markets, and to reevaluate farmers' profession through improving revenues. It is sorted out at three levels: a well planned agricultural policy leading to the reduction of the production costs; the helping in marketing efforts, and the establishment of more efficient producer groups. The first aim to reduce the production costs is to have more local agricultural activity, by encouraging farmers, supporting them, and having suitable rural settings. This will bring about the production of more and more local fruits and vegetables that could be planted on Lebanese land, thus reducing the amounts imported. In order for these procedures to be carried out, well studied

²⁴http://www.dellbn.ccc.eu.int/en/eu_and_lebanon/project3.htm

programs have to be included to get the expected daily outcomes and as result more farmers would have jobs.²⁵

'Income generation through food processing' (938,240 Euros) is an activity for the improvement for the socio-economic level of women and farmers living in rural areas, and the creation of small processing units and preparation of processed foods. Its partners are Africa 70 (NGO engaged in programs and actions of rural and city developments in Africa, Latin and Central America, Asia, and Eastern Europe) and AMEL association (objective is to promote the social, economic, political and cultural rights of the disadvantaged in Lebanon). The program contributes to the building of a strong and responsible civil society in order to strengthen national unity and promote democratic values and social justice. This project opened a cooperative in Rashaya managed by specially trained women for the purpose of food processing and cultivation of medical plants. This cooperative produces fruit juice, jams, as well as sauces that are sold in Beirut markets and villages. This project gives a great importance and a sense of security to the unprivileged areas, allowing the women and farmers to feel productive. For example, many supermarkets in the village and non-village areas depend greatly on the Lebanese dairy products and sweets that are made; such products are white cheese, yogurt, shanklish, jams, chocolates etc. These products are tastier than those produced industrially. So if cooperatives are increased, the demand for these goods increases, thus creating more jobs and importance to remote areas.

Among the activities targeting the municipalities that are within the framework of the project "*Assistance to the Rehabilitation of the Lebanese Administration (ARLA)*" is *'Solid Waste Management'* (10 million Euros)

²⁵www.agriculture.gov.lb

whose partner is the Office of the Minister of State for the Administrative Reform (OMSAR). This project's aim is to finance projects for solid waste management such as household, hospitals, slaughter houses, agriculture, industry, markets etc. At the same time the covering of all waste management is carried out; such as the collection of waste, sorting and transfer, recycling, mechanical treatment, biological treatment, thermal treatment etc. Many companies in Lebanon such as Sukleen, have dedicated their goals to have a cleaner Lebanon. Also municipalities such as Aley, Bhammdoun el Daia, Ain El Jdide have engaged in collection and transport of household waste. Union of the Municipalities of Shouf such as Swayjani, have not only engaged in the collection and transport but also sorting out and composing household waste in addition to the collection and treatment of hospital solid waste. Many municipalities such as Jbeil Caza, Ansar, and Abbassiyeh are still in the concept stage at developing waste management activities. Solid waste management is the most important hygienic problem; recycling and all the nature treatments must be stressed in all areas because there are still many Lebanese areas that are totally neglected. If carried out properly, and if well-organized companies spread throughout the region, and if municipalities dedicate their goals to their region's complete cleanliness, a well-balanced daily hygiene will exist.²⁶

'Supporting municipalities in the field of local development' (3 million Euros) also has OMSAR as its partner and aims at providing municipalities with human and technical support, through helping them identify structured local development projects, and then through the assisting in establishing

²⁶ www.omsar.gov.lb

proper documents to find donors or investors. This project will help bring support to 12 clusters of municipalities, representing 200 towns and villages. The simplified local development plans for the clusters are set, and the municipal elected members and the consultative platforms (grouping civil society representatives) are in the course of identifying the projects that will allow the implementation of the selected development strategies. According to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), supporting municipalities should contain the strengthening of local authorities at county and municipal level, and should limit the reconstruction of targeted basic community infrastructure particularly related to the functioning of small remote communities, businesses and local markets. Also the improvement of the delivery of social services is necessary, especially for the elderly, and the excluded groups. Finally the economic activity is favoured through the support for greater entrepreneurial activity and investment, mainly in agriculture, rural products, tourism and small-scale manufacturing.²⁷

Conclusion

To sum up, the economic and institutional programs have covered a wide range of issues that are critical in Lebanon. However, the Euro-Med partnership has done little to Lebanon's economic and institutional reforms. If these projects are well implemented with consistent improvement and proper financial support, then many companies are funded by banks, and the administrative reform can bring about good organizational performance, new jobs can be created, and more entrepreneurial opportunities can be opened.

²⁷ www.omsar.gov.lb

Local development programs are on the rise. Many opportunities for villagers are coming along, and more procedures for water, transportation and electricity management are being developed. There is still a lot to be done, a complete economic strategy for sustainable growth has to be developed, and effective monetary policies created will help remove national debt. In the end it is only with a stable environment that Lebanese and foreigners can investment. Still, at least the Euro-Med projects with Lebanon have been created, and have the goals to bring about progress. To further this progress, excellent implementation, organization, and consistent financial support is favourable along with a constant strive for advancement and dedication by Lebanese citizens.

CHAPTER III

Democracy, Education, and Youth

Introduction

No doubt that Democracy and Human rights form the heart of any nation, and no doubt that a nation has better relations if it carries the right message of equality and human rights. This issue has shaped the lives of many, and it is important to be dealt with delicately, in order to avoid any forms of internal upheavals or intense violence as in the past. Many people are being brought together by the increasing integration of markets, the emergence of new regional political alliances, and remarkable advances that have prompted extraordinary demographic shifts. The coming together of peoples and cultures is an increasingly global, multicultural world full with tension, confusion and conflict in the process of its adjustment to pluralism.²⁸ Human rights range from the right to protection of persons belonging to ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities, freedom of assembly and association, the right to education; freedom of thought, conscience or religion; freedom of opinion and expression to the principle of non-discrimination. Women should not be excluded from some political roles if democracy ought to be correctly implemented.

The judiciary will be one of the key elements of concern if the Lebanese aspire to build a properly functioning democracy. Youth, education and research outline the future of a country. Today, the youth portray the most important initiatives regarding all fields of study. It is the intensifying of

²⁸ Ayton-Shenker, Diana (March 1995). "The Challenge of Human Rights and Cultural Diversity", United Nations Department of Public Information DPI/1627/HR

research and the updating of the education that leads to such creativity of innovations that overwhelm the technological, biological, environmental, and business world. Another issue concerning Lebanon's democracy is the Palestinian refugees' issue. Dealing with Palestinian refugees is such a crucial element that if not dealt with delicately, internal violence could emerge. These Palestinians are living in Lebanon. They do not have a proper infrastructure with such a high poverty level, over-crowdedness, and increasing unemployment. It is very complex, because many of the refugees have long wanted to return to their homes, but cannot due to the violence that they will encounter. The future carries a great promise for Lebanon if the youth is well informed and encouraged, and if human rights issues are pursued to cover all issues and get a better sense of security for citizens.

Democracy & Human Rights

The European Union underwent many activities to enhance Human rights issues and democracy in Lebanon, along with the Mediterranean countries. Among the projects created is '*Support for the Reform of the Lebanese Judiciary System*' with an investment of 1.5 million Euros. Partners of this project are Office of the Minister of State for Administrative Reform (Omsar), Ministry of justice, ACOJURIS which is an international judicial cooperation (France), and First Telecom (Greek office). Its main goal is to give support for the Ministry of justice in modernizing the Lebanese judiciary system. The project accepted the training of 1,250 court clerks, with the technical support of ACOJURIS Association (FR), which started in 2005 at the judiciary study institute. A Specialized department for training court clerks has been

established, in addition to multi-purpose conference halls. For the sake of experience sharing and exchange study, courses were organized in Europe for 10 magistrates and 14 court clerks (in June and September 2005). Also following a call for proposals in order to provide technical support to the Ministry of Justice to prepare a plan to computerize all Lebanese court work, first telecom was chosen in April 2005. The European commission also provided support for the documentary fund of the Ministry of Justice which includes mainly the purchase of works and magazines relevant to the European legal system for an amount of 90,000 Euro.²⁹ This is very important because such works and magazines give a broader knowledge of European judicial cases and actions, giving the Lebanese a wider range of expectations and initiations to change.

Another project is called '*AFKAR*' which is for the strengthening of the Lebanese Civil Society (1 million Euros). This project is implemented by OMSAR, and encourages Lebanese associations to submit projects in the promotion of good citizenship, intercommunity dialogue and supporting vulnerable groups in legal matters such as migrant workers and refugees. All these are essential to the Lebanese civil society and its role in combining the rule of law. Following the call for proposals published in June 2004, 83 projects were proposed of which 16 were chosen by the evaluation committee, so utilizing the total amount of the available funds (Euros 750,000 maximum amount granted by project: 50,000 Euros). The NGO emergences (ACOURIS, FR) support OMSAR in technical follow ups of the projects through the organizing of training sessions and thematic exchanges with civil society operators, as well as organizing the

²⁹ www.justice.gov.lb

Lebanese civil society capacity for involvement and interest. Following the success of this first time initiative, AFKAR II (2006-2008) is the continuation and development of AFKAR I. The project aims at enhancing the Lebanese civil society NGOs in the implementation of actions concerning specific objectives. These objectives are to support the actions that are aiming to strengthen the rule of law, raise awareness of Lebanese citizens about respect and protection of basic rights, and raise awareness of Lebanese citizens about the necessity of dialogue. Actions that support the rule of law are promotion and consolidation of civil, political, economic, and social rights; as well as democratic values through lobbying and advocacy actions for the adoption, application or amendment of laws that guarantee the equality of citizens and marginalized groups before the law, as well as their judicial and social protection. Such groups are prisoners, drug addicts, elderly, migrant workers, refugees and many others. Another important objective is the necessity of dialogue which is done by the promotion of exchange of ideas among the different constituents of the Lebanese youth through creative and innovative initiatives involving arts, cultural actions and other mixed interventional activities.³⁰

Many of the projects AFKAR has selected include the Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (NGOs) which aims at increasing the capacity of journalists and reporters in the election process; Youth Association for Social Awareness (YASA), which holds the national defensive driving campaign; René Mouawad Foundation which raises awareness of youth in human rights and

³⁰<http://209.85.135.104/search?q=cache:YFzjbfS.SLQAJ:msib.omsar.gov.lb/NR/rdonlyrcs/59D84BD0-5F4E-40488969AEAD66F16D5E/4246/1GuidelinesFinalVersionEN.pdf+OMSAR:+AFKAR+IL+%27Strengthening+the+actions+of+Lebanese+society.%27&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=1>

democracy; Permanent Peace Movement for juvenile justice, and several others that even include prevention for drug addicts and support provided to the child victim of sexual abuse. It is important that such projects have covered the problems of the Lebanese society. If well pursued, these programs will have a wider coverage of media so that the greatest possible number of people can participate to make a difference.

According to a Lebanese country report, Lebanon enjoys a lively civil society covering a wide spectrum of issues from environmental and human rights issues, to women's issues and good governance. It is hoped that with the rise of good political transformations in the country, and the flow of international funding, enhancement of civic education, and the rapid development of communication and technology, the Lebanese civil society organizations will be able to boost and better utilize its resources.³¹

Micro-projects concerning human rights, '*European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights thematic line- (EIDHR)*', have the Lebanese and European Associations as partners. The European commission committed 500,000 Euros in 2004 for these micro-projects in Lebanon. The management of this budget is entrusted to the delegation of the European Commission in Lebanon. Followed by a call for proposals in 2005, 34 projects were submitted, and 6 were chosen for a budget per project of 100,000 Euros.

The selected projects are Father Afif Osseiran Foundation (NGO), which deals with minors in conflict with law; another is Movement Social Libanais that deals with the right to live, right to be and to have been; Association Justice et Miséricorde which allows access to the social and legal rights of the detainees of

³¹ Abou assi. Khaldoun (Beirut 2006). "An assessment of the Lebanese civil society". Lebanon Country Report, p51.

the Roumieh Prison; Makhzoumi Foundation which is dedicated to the public awareness of the concept of democracy; Fontiers and Rawad deal with refugees rights program and legal assistance and advocacy; and lastly Amel Association which aims at accomplishments for inter-community dialogue in South Lebanon. It is impressive to see that such delicate issues have been taken into consideration.³²

A project regarding the migrant workers is called '*Protection of the rights of migrant workers (non-Syrian) and asylum seekers (non-Palestinian) in Lebanon*'. This project's investment is 761,300 Euros, and Caritas Sweden and Caritas Lebanon are the direct partners. The main aim of this project is to reinforce legal protection of migrant workers and refuge seekers. A vision and mission in 2000 were created; their vision stated that all refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants in Lebanon have their rights recognized, protected and respected. Also their mission was to strengthen and protect the human rights of migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers. In 2004 and 2005, a help telephone line was created, with trained guards of the maintenance center for foreign persons, psychological social support, social and judicial follow ups, and finally support for migrant workers in order to established the relative legislations, with 500 beneficiaries. The center also made training sessions for migrant workers to have more knowledge of their rights. Also an awareness campaign was held to the Lebanese public opinion concerning the rights of migrant workers and the very bad treatment they get sometimes. This project allowed the realization of a survey of the behaviour of various parties such as the employees, agencies and employers.

³² www.dellbn.ccc.eu.int

In addition there was the production of a documentary film. It brought awareness and avoidance of neglecting these migrants and refugees.³³

Migrant workers are a very important source of labour, particularly in the agriculture, hotels and catering, and low-skill parts of the administration, business and management sectors. In Lebanon, many domestic workers are not motivated to work in low-skill, low-paid work sites. Nevertheless migrants tend to be more motivated, reliable and committed in such settings. For example, migrants (Srilankans, Egyptians, Philipinos, and Africans) are prepared to work longer and more flexible hours. They are satisfied with their duties and hours of work; and work harder in terms of productivity and speed. Many Lebanese avoid working in gas stations, and in the construction & maintenance of transportation and sewage systems, etc. Therefore a wide gap of these areas has been left to migrant workers. Refugees have fled to Lebanon due the disastrous violence in their homes such as Iraqis and others, and even due to better and more enjoyable living conditions. Now that migrant workers and refugees are increasing, their rights ought to be well protected and fought for. In the end, they are living in Lebanon; at least they should be taken care of to safely provide their families back home with the necessities they are working for.

Education, Youth, and Research

Youth is hope, prosperity and bright future; therefore without the youth's input and collaboration, there is no prosperous future. The *'Euro-Med Youth*

³³ http://www.caritas.org.lb/champ/social/social_e.asp

Action, Youth II (2000-2006) carries many projects with an investment of 24,000,000 Euros. The goals of these projects are to support the meetings of the youth of the Euro-Mediterranean in order to discuss their major interests and to undertake the actions necessary. Youth exchanges, voluntary service and training are the activities undertaken. Projects are selected through calls for proposals three times a year. Some of the projects selected in November 2004 are '*Youth and the municipalities: Participation circle*' which is based on the exchanges of experiences concerning the involvement of youth in the process of the municipal decision-making. Its aim is to group citizens of each country depending on their municipal experience to enable better sharing and exchange of their real life experiences; and the interconnection of relations between youth and local administrations. Those participating in this project are from Egypt, Algeria, Jordan Lebanon, Italy, Sweden, France, and Spain. Another project is '*Environment and Citizenship*', which is a training course that aims at promoting social and environmental development in order to improve the living conditions on the individual and local level. This is addressed to 24 youth from Lebanon, Italy, Spain, Tunisia and Jordan. Lastly, a project also included in the youth program is the '*Documentary research about poverty and discrimination in Lebanon*'. In this project two Lebanese volunteers participated in a regional research work based on poverty and discrimination, which is organized within the framework of the project '*Mashrek-Maghreb Gender Linking and Information Project*'. Among other activities, these volunteers organize training sessions particularly on citizenship.³⁴

³⁴ <http://www.salto-youth.net/abouteuromedyouth/>

The second Youth Action Plan for Lebanon, *LebYouth*, launched in 2005, is a unique program in which youth think about and propose what they believe is a suitable alternative to the setbacks in the system instead of revolting and protesting. They are a sense of identity that they become a constructive force for change.³⁵

LebYouth contributes generously to the European Neighborhood Policy process. In the political context, the youth action plan encourages political dialogue and debate, promotes independence, consolidates a more democratic form of government, calls for the immediate disarmament of all civilians to promote peaceful dialogue and not conflict and violence and finally adopt a new professional mentality in the government to put an end to traditional corrupt practices. In the Economic context, its goal is to develop a comprehensive economic strategy for sustainable growth, implement effective monetary and fiscal policy to eradicate the national debt, develop a secure and stable environment that is favorable for internal and foreign investment, and maintain a lead position in financial services in the region. Lastly, in the Social context its aim is to develop a national welfare system that observes basic human rights, education, and health, to encourage greater respect for the environment, public spaces, and natural resources, and finally create a solid framework for road safety and transportation policies.³⁶

³⁵http://209.85.165.104/search?q=cache:egbLLf74jzAJ:www.dellbn.cec.eu.int/en/whatsnew/youth05/action_plan_second_edition.doc+lebyouth&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=3

³⁶http://209.85.165.104/search?q=cache:egbLLf74jzAJ:www.dellbn.cec.eu.int/en/whatsnew/youth05/action_plan_second_edition.doc+lebyouth&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=3

What is important is that the youth action plan serves to inspire hope and confidence among Lebanese youth in the prospect of nurturing better ties with Europe. *LebYouth* encourages the contribution of non-government actors in the development of the official Action Plan, thereby involving the general population and thus creating a more sustainable partnership between Europe and Lebanon. The *LebYouth* has a wide range of participants affiliated universities, supporting NGOs, and media contacts; it is unique in that it offers the European Neighborhood Policy a very high level of evidence in Lebanon that no other initiative could possibly provide. The *LebYouth* is a promising program that carries a great hope and potential for reforms for the youth and Lebanon itself. It is encouraging to see the advancement this program is going through, its action aims at people's concerns, and it is done by the people, to the people and for the people.

'*Euro-Med Youth III*' program was launched on the 20th of April 2007.

This project's objective is to fund projects that promote one or more of thematic priorities such as fighting against racism and xenophobia, active citizenship, gender equality, minority rights and heritage and environment protection. It is launching calls for proposals; so it will yet be implemented.³⁷

Concerning Research, the '*International Cooperation Program INCO-MED*' is a program that is represented with an investment of 5,123,162 Euros. It concentrates on research of different fields such as health, water, agriculture, culture and heritage.

³⁷http://www.intermedproject.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=153&Itemid=2

Lebanon participated in ten projects that were selected in 2004, covering the period of 2002-2006. These target water, agriculture scanning, and health sectors for the benefit of children victims of war. Following calls for proposals in 2004, 7 projects with 9 Lebanese partners were selected, the total budget of shared by the Lebanese beneficiaries is 850,000 Euro. Among these projects is Euro-MEDANet 2 which aims at increasing the rate of participation of researchers from Mediterranean countries in the European research program. These programs are responsible for disseminating information, by organizing several information sessions, by creating mailing-lists from scientific databases allowing partner search. This dissemination takes place during seminars and conferences, and SMEs among many others. The material and media used are updated CDs and newspaper articles. Universities, higher education institutes, private sectors, SMEs and even individuals are targeted.³⁸

The Mediterranean partner established an information focal point that helps the research community to access European funding resources, its site is www.euinp.org.lb. The other projects concern mainly water management and manuscript analysis system.

Education is a vital weapon that needs to be always updated. The '*Tempus Program*' (2005), is a project for inter-university cooperation that was extended to the Mediterranean partners to help these countries in the reform and modernization of the higher education system. TEMPUS finances Joint European projects, individual mobility grants to all individuals working in the higher

³⁸ www.cordis.lu/inco2

education sector (i.e. professors, administrators and representatives of student associations), of which many benefited from.³⁹

The ongoing joint European projects selected with Lebanon's participation are 14. Among the selected projects are: The Innovative and Integrated Approaches, Methods and Tools for Mediterranean Forest Ecosystem Management (Lebanese University); The University at the Service of Socio-Vocational Rehabilitation Programs (Al-Kafaat Foundation), establishment of a Doctorate granting law school at the Lebanese University, and finally the establishment of a Master Doctorate degrees in scientific studies at the Lebanese University. The ongoing projects that Lebanon participated in are carried out through the participation of the Lebanese University (LU) and the American University of Beirut (AUB). These three projects are: The organization of a conference for general secretaries of Mediterranean Universities done by the Lebanese University; higher education for good governance which implies inventory of academic resources done by both LU and AUB; and benchmarking international relations offices for development.⁴⁰

A major project called the '*Integration of Youth in Difficulty*' (2,016,455 Euros) with *Comité Catholique Contre la Faim et pour le Développement* (FR), leader of a European Consortium, and *Mouvement Social Libanais* as associates. This project's major aim is to improve the integration of young people aged between 15 and 19 years that are in difficulty, such as school drop outs and those without any education. This is done through the implementation of innovative

³⁹ http://www.dellbn.ccc.eu.int/en/eu_and_lebanon/project4.htm

⁴⁰ http://www.dellbn.ccc.eu.int/en/eu_and_lebanon/project4.htm

vocational and social training programs adapted to the actual local economic situation; and through the raising of awareness of concerned decision-makers to enable them to address this problem at the national level. The project benefited largely from an extension of 10 months to achieve activities such as the participation in job opportunities exhibitions aimed at improving the image of vocational training, elaboration of a social rehabilitation manual for social workers, and finally the implementation of a study in 16 public schools on the causes of failure. The vocational and social training guidance and the integration of jobs in the market have been accomplished. This program benefited 1,100 youth, and made possible the employment of 62% of them. The program offered training courses from pastry-making, hair-dressing or cosmetics to computer repairs and assembly, and air-conditioning. The adoption of training for market needs was permitted, all through activities for municipal promotion as well as surveys of local demand for a trained workforce. The *Mouvement Social Libanaise* team included training courses that were executed in the framework of educational programs, and 200 volunteers were trained to provide services for youth in difficulty. What is essential is that programs of all sectors are introduced, making the children have the choice to find the right areas of their potential, and then becoming really good at it to work and make a living. For example, Al Kafaat is a development non-profit organization that provides medical, rehabilitation, educational, and employment services to over 4,500 individuals with special needs throughout 7 centers scattered in and around Beirut. It offers many education services, including catering whose general director is Chef

Ramzi. His food production company has supported Kafaat foundation, so that it in return helps the continuity of the education and help of the society.⁴¹

Lastly, a project targeting the youth is '*Accelerated Vocational Training in Lebanon*' with an investment of 741,191 Euros with Care International (UK), and YMCA Lebanon as partners. It targets unemployed youth originating from the poorest regions in Lebanon as well as from vulnerable groups. It also targets to provide adapted and short training courses to permit them to find a job or to create their own economic activity. Training sessions concerning specifically construction, mechanics, food processing, child day-care and administration have been attended by about 200 people. A hundred of them had great support in finding jobs and others in opening a micro enterprise. Some of the activities are two surveys that were undertaken with enterprises that were carried out on the needs of skills to better aim guiding of training. At least 9 local organizations received support for training programs to improve their capacity and to find good trainees; and due to various beneficiaries, the founding of two networks in the field of child-care and food-processing.⁴²

Palestinian Refugees

Support for Palestinian refugees remains a vital factor to be dealt with. This support is to aim at humanitarian projects aiming to improve their living conditions. European non-governmental organizations and United Nations Relief

⁴¹<http://www.mouvementsocial.org/index.aspx>

⁴²<http://www.mouvementsocial.org/index.aspx>

and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in Near East (UNRWA) implement these projects and focus on waste-water ,socio-economic development, vocational training, health including psycho-social health and food aid. UNRWA gets support from the European commission; it is the main provider of basic services to all the Palestinians. ⁴³

The European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO) is another contributor and finances over 60,000,000 Euros to the humanitarian projects concerning the Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon. It embodies the European Union's intention of improving its aid in case of emergencies such as conflicts or catastrophes. This organization's uniqueness is that its aid is based mainly on humanitarian, non-discriminatory and impartial principles. Its general goal is to contribute to the prevention of any worsening of the living conditions especially those living in the refugee camps or even isolated in remote areas. Palestinian Refugees will be supported in sectors of water, sanitation, health, support to helpless groups (elderly, children and the handicapped), and shelter reconstruction. Projects concerning the Rehabilitation of Sanitary Infrastructure are done in 5 camps (Bourj el shemali, Rashidiyeh, Mieh, and Beddawi), and the Food Aid (distribution of food to refugee camps) is financed by UNRWA. Another project is the modernization of the Red Crescent society through the reinforcement and improvement of 5 clinics in Lebanon. Also included is income generation and social solidarity in 4 Palestinian camps; and educational and social programs for Palestinian children through the establishment of 6 extra curricular centers, which has Enfants Réfugiés du Monde, Najdeh, and the General Union of Palestinian Women (GUPW) as partners. Essential is the fact that cultural and

⁴³ <http://www.un.org/unrwa/overview/index.html>

educational activities for the Palestinian youth and the improvement of the employment are taken into close consideration to give the youth the right to education and improvement.⁴⁴

ECHO projects in 2004-2005 include 'Sanitation in Nahr el Bared camp' financed by UNRWA and 'Psycho Social Relief to the Elderly' financed by Caritas. Also rehabilitation of drinking water infrastructure, sanitation infrastructure in unofficial gatherings, provision of sustainable safe drinking water and sanitation for the unofficial Nahr el Bared, and support for the red crescent society health services are the health projects taken into actions. Other projects include advocacy and legal assistance to non-registered Palestinians, shelter rehabilitation in the Palestinian refugee camps in Sikke, Saida and in Mohajreen quarter in Nahr el Bared camp. Assistance to the disabled Palestinian refugees, psycho social relief and mental relief to the elderly, children and disabled; and finally support to children suffering from hearing and sight problems and nutritional deficiency are all physical conditions that are protected.⁴⁵

Housing is one of the most serious problems affecting Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. The refugee families build additional rooms and, in many cases, additional floors to their houses in order to have room for the increasing numbers. According to Amnesty International in 2005, there are families of up to ten people sharing a single room. Due to lack of maintenance, the paved roads, shops, and houses have worsened. The restrictions on Palestinian's right to work have prevented them to improve their lives. These restrictions on employment have an effect on human rights, such as housing rights, education and standards of living.

⁴⁴ http://www.dellbn.ccc.eu.int/en/eu_and_lebanon/project7_print.htm

⁴⁵ http://www.dellbn.ccc.eu.int/en/eu_and_lebanon/project7_print.htm

Palestinian families were interviewed by Amnesty International, and they said that children dropped out of school because they thought it was hopeless to continue and graduate since there are no opportunities to have careers and have a decent living.⁴⁶ This issue remains to be improved. Serious changes should be made to be able to give the Palestinians all the rights that citizens should have. Children should all be taken care of. The youth is their future, and if they carry no hope then they would live hopeless lives. The Palestinians have been offered support in all kinds of sectors, from health to living conditions. It is important that they are treated with responsibility and fairness. All these programs should be enforced more delicately; the children should be educated, provided they have a future. Their camps' infrastructure should be permitted to be well maintained; all until a solution is created for Palestinian refugees to live properly either in their home country or Lebanon.

Conclusion

The Euro-Med partnership has done little to cover the educational and youth issues that Lebanon still suffers from. According to the 'Movement Social' in Lebanon, 35% of Lebanese children are out of school.⁴⁷ This represents a large percentage. Many more organizations including churches and other support groups should dedicate their goals more and more closely to this vital situation. Children should be supported; their education involves everything they see, hear,

⁴⁶ Amnesty International:

<http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGMDE180042006?open&of=ENG-LBN>

Elsayed-Ali, Sherif (July 2002). "Palestinian refugees in Lebanon":

<http://66.102.9.104/search?q=cache:w8TyXwxeKYAJ:www.fmreview.org/text/FMR/26/05.doc+palestinian+in+lebanon+today&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=3>

⁴⁷ <http://www.mouvementsocial.org/index.aspx>

and do each day. Children's or women's rights, or the more disadvantaged should be protected. Human Rights programs must be well pursued and developed without any exception. Judiciary systems ought to be more independent to concentrate and make more effective the situations that have caused pain and sufferings in many people's lives. Democracy has to be fought for, giving the benefit to women in need, or those that have fought for positions they deserve such as women politicians or even minor-skilled workers. Both the advantaged and the disadvantaged should have equal rights to life, afford and enjoy everyday being. Youth in difficulty ought to be well helped, and assisted, and cared for; many have cases that are beyond their control, many do not have the means to even go to school. If these issues are not well cared for, the number of uneducated children will increase, leading to an unhealthy Lebanese society. Youth is what stimulates the evolving innovations, all through research, the right to exist, and the proper education. It involves the promise of tomorrow, and it involves the eagerness of entrepreneurial opportunities and accomplishments. It is what Lebanon depends on. It is the great tomorrow that has so many to offer.

Chapter IV

Environment and Cultural Exchange

Introduction

The environment presents the foundation of our life. Pollution is posing a great threat to human health. It is harming living resources and ecological systems, and endangering the loss of species. It is vital to our continued existence. Lebanese scenery and greenery has long been known for its beauty. It has attracted millions in the past decades, and has been given an image of livelihood and enjoyment for citizens of all countries. In recent years Lebanon's environment has been degrading, and so it is here that the Euro-Med and Lebanese partnership plays an influential role. Its goal is to have constant cleanliness in all areas and better knowledge of the loss of species, and how their distinction could destabilize the ecosystem and endanger human lives.

Communication and Cultural exchange have given rise to discussions, meetings and exchange of knowledge between the Mediterranean and the European countries. How should the relationship as a whole improve and reach its ultimate goals? It is through the continuation of cultural interaction, the exchange of ideas and other country characteristics, for instance people's way of living, the setbacks, and the disadvantaged areas, that the improvements could be taken into achievements. Great exchange brings knowledge; knowledge brings the planning for action, and action leads to change and thus significant results. This program's gain brings people together to meet for interests, leading to the improvement of the Lebanese capacity to exchange ideas, skills and experience. When people from all sectors collaborate, there are different aspects to learn from, widening the

familiarity scope and enhancing cultural trade and communication into a constructive and powerful tool.

The environment

The environment is a key issue that, if not well pursued, could lead to disastrous effects. Many projects are carried out under 'LIFE Third Countries Program'. One of them is the '*The Establishment of the Lebanese Cleaner Production Center*' with an investment of 308,080 Euros and the Ministry of Environment as a Partner. This project raises campaigns for the awareness of industrialists, and site training and demonstration activities. The following website www.lebanese.cpc.com was created in addition to a reference data base.⁴⁸

Another project is '*Technical Assistance to Reinforce Government in Environmental Tasks (TARGET)*' with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) as partner and an investment of 425,704 Euros. Its plan is to develop the capacities of the Ministry of Environment in defining its mission. To do so, several training activities to its personnel as well as NGOs or the specialized national experts were applied to organize the human resources and available funds. As a result there will be better management in the affairs of the Ministry and modern leadership practices will be easily implemented. The management of this ministry well organized and implemented will get the needed results concerning the environmental tasks and programs.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ www.moe-gove.lb

⁴⁹ www.undp.org

'Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Land Use Planning in Lebanon' (285,600 Euros) has the UNDP also as a partner. Its goal is to spot out and combine environmental considerations in national policies, programs, and plans. In 2004 the project developed capacities at the institutional level such as town planning, and land management procedures. The ministry of environment got assistance for making environmental regulations. The general action framework is being worked on to know where intervention is needed in certain sectors; and the consolidation of the capacities of the national institutions concerned with the implementation of the SEA strategy has also started.

'Strengthening environmental legislation development and application system in Lebanon (SELDAS)' with the Chaire UNESCO-Cousteau Ecotechnie at the University of Balamand as a partner, has an investment of 450,500 Euros. Its aim is to provide support for the implementation of an appropriate legislation. An inventory concerning all existing environment legislation was accumulated, and among the crucial activities concerning the development of environmental legislations are promoting teaching environment legislation and its distribution. To get a good environmental program, proper development and implementation of the environmental legislation is important.⁵⁰

'Enhancement of a Permanent Environmental Awareness Unit at the Ministry of Environment in Lebanon' (250,000 Euros) is a project that supports the largest number of clubs, associations, municipalities and schools involved in environmental issues to raise the most widespread awareness possible, on environmental impact of projects, to train and assess the work of NGOs, and to prepare proposals concerning environmental projects. In addition, a vital aspect is

⁵⁰www.unesco.org; www.balamand.edu.lb

to work hand in hand with the media in order to raise public awareness, to provide concerned parties with technical assistance, and finally to develop a website aiming to establish an exchange forum between the Ministry of Environment and the public and to produce manuals, videos, CD ROMs, posters and other materials. All aim at raising awareness and rapprochement between the public and private sectors over environmental issues. Many issues such as pollution, and how it is caused and how to prevent it are vital problems that have to be acknowledged to the public.⁵¹

A project that aims to institutionalize a management structure to the protective zones that have problems specific to Lebanon on the regional and national level is called '*Stable Institutional Structure for Protected Areas Management (SISPAM)*'. After great research in 2004, the project executed an inventory of the existing national legislation specific to the sector. It includes monitoring and assessment procedures based on objectively verifiable indicators.⁵²

Concerning migratory birds, '*Building Capacity for Sustainable Hunting of Migratory Birds in Mediterranean Third Countries*' is a project that aims to improve the protection of migratory birds in the countries covered in the flyway spaces of great seasonal migrations. It started at the end of 2004, and raises awareness for hunters, to practice conservative hunting, spread information that targets the public, establish a structure for the resolution of conflicts and finally prepare a national action plan. Its current partners are Bird Life International, Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon, *Association des Amis des*

⁵¹ www.moc.gov.lb; www.undp.org

⁵² www.moc.gov.lb

Oiseaux, United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), with an investment of 466,347 Euros. Lebanon is a key area for migrating birds, being both rich in number and variety. However, all these birds are exposed to hunting, and some of them are dangerously on the way to extinction. Hunting laws must be well enforced in order for birds to have important habitats. As a result, the conservation of biodiversity leads to the improvement of the quality of people's lives. According to the Bird Life International, birds should be conserved because they present biodiversity with immense value; also societies value birds for economic, cultural, and ethical and spiritual reasons; the bird watching industry is a growing economic force; and finally birds are indicators of the state of the environment. In short, places that are rich in bird species are also rich in biodiversity.⁵³

The Ministry of Environment is a partner for the '*Reduction of Barriers Hindering the Rehabilitation of Quarries in Lebanon*', which is a project that aims at minimizing the environmental and socio-economic force of abandoned quarries that have not been rehabilitated in Lebanon. The project initiated beginning of 2005 and its objectives are achieved through reviewing the legal, institutional, technical, financial, framework related to preys. Therefore barriers for the rehabilitation of preys shall be raised, procedures and means for the implementation of rehabilitation plans shall be developed, and information campaign shall be organized.⁵⁴

Another environmental project is '*Improving Coastal Land Degradation Monitoring in Lebanon and Syria*' (352,000 Euro) and Partner is Regional

⁵³ Bird Life International: http://www.birdlife.org/worldwide/vision/why_conserve_birds.html

⁵⁴ www.moc.gov.lb

Activity Center for Environment Remote Sensing. Important progress was achieved within the establishment of a mechanism for control of risky zones.

'Towards a sustainable mechanism for forest fire fighting in Lebanon' (324,000 Euros) has Association for Forest Development and Conservation, Green Line Association, and Shouf Cedar Society as partners. This project focuses on the establishment and supply of databases, training of fire fighting teams, training of forest guards, information conferences and awareness-raising activities. All Lebanese forests are exposed to fires for any reason, and firefighters have to be available in all possible areas, not only in some areas.⁵⁵

There are three projects under the Small and Medium-Term Priority Environmental Action Program - SMAP I and SMAP II programs. The first is the *'Integrated Coastal Management from Jbeil to Lattakieh (Lebanon-Syria)'* with the Lebanese and Syrian ministries of environment as partners. The main component of this project is to install equipment for wastewater management in Batroun and North Lebanon; and therefore more transfer of information to other municipalities enhances the equipment installation for wastewater management along the Lebanese coast especially in the tourist zones. The other activities are on-going, incubator of small enterprises in Syria and studies on tourism in Lebanon. These studies include the development of tourism resources and wastewater treatment. Launching actions in the ecotourism sector in Anfeh region (North Lebanon) and a plan for the construction of a wastewater treatment centre in Batroun (North Lebanon) are activities carried out. The Lebanese seaside suffers from wastes from all kinds, not only harming sea life and bringing contamination, but also degrading the scenery and leisure

⁵⁵ www.moe.gov.lb

for tourists.⁵⁶ The second of these programs is the '*Regional Solid Waste management in Maghreb and Mashrek Countries*' and with the National Council for Scientific Research (NCSR) and the Ministry of Environment as partners. The regional component of this project is over but the national components are still on going. The results of this project in Lebanon are achieved with the elaboration of a draft law for the adoption of a legal framework for solid waste management and the organizations of training sessions at the national and municipal levels. In addition to that, the project allowed the condition of a support to some institutions for the identification and the implementation of two regional guides. The aim was to promote the adoption of integrated solid waste management techniques and systems in the Mediterranean Countries, through the development of a network for the exchange of experiences and information at the regional level.⁵⁷

In addition, the third is '*The Integrated Management Program of Olive Oil Waste in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan*' which sets up techniques, controls and treatments intended to reduce water and soil pollution resulting from olive oil effluents. The mobilization phase of this project is virtually finalized with the recruitment of regional and national agents. Finally a preparation of an action plan for the Nahr el Kabir River in Lebanon and Syria (1,269,781 Euros) was done and National Council for Scientific Research (NCSR) was the Lebanese partner. Their aim is to develop an integrated management system for the Nahr el Kabir river basin, by preparing a master plan and an action plan based on data on the different types and sources of water contamination. To

⁵⁶ www.moe.gov.lb

⁵⁷ www.cnrs.edu.lb

finalize the projects, a regional action plan for energy and urban environment in Mediterranean Countries has Lebanon involved in the organization of urban transport.⁵⁸

Unfortunately, sources of pollution in Lebanon are increasing. They vary from toxic substances and liquid and solid wastes released from industries to other wastes that are from marinas and vacation boats, or travelers and shore users. All these add to sea pollution. Pesticides and fertilizers that are used for agricultural utilization for example, result in water and soil pollution. Air pollution has increased, especially in condensed areas because of more factories. The Waste Water management programs have to be enforced in such a way that the municipalities in charge should have the right budgets to treat their regional problems. In Lebanon, most of the municipalities have small budgets, or none at all, and therefore leaving this problem behind. What happens is that the discharged waste causes air and water, spoils the sceneries, and therefore poses health threats to the public. How? People throw everything in the sea from chemical products and food waste fuel and numerous heavy metals leading to the death of many sea animals, thus endangering them and leading to an ecological imbalance. The undersea sewage in Lebanon could increase the rates of diseases such as cholera. The soil is deteriorating also because of pollution, and erosion. This causes a threat in that the soil may become barren of natural productivity, and so loss of agriculture. Many species are being misplaced, due to loss of habitat, hunting, and pollution.⁵⁹ As we have seen, the air, soil and water pollution

⁵⁸ www.undp.org

⁵⁹ Ministry of State for the Environment, (1991). National Report on the Environment and Development in Lebanon, Republic of Lebanon.

are all interlinked, and cause numerous threats and diseases. It is important that all environmental programs provide the right education and message to the public, so that they are aware that the dangers they are facing are linked to their health. The policies have to be made obligatory, and the media can play a greater role in awakening the Lebanese citizens. The environmental factor is very important, many more projects should be on the rise, so that one day each and every single area in Lebanon is protected and preserved.

Communication

Communication helps advance the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership to further clarify the detailed procedures for development. The '*Regional Information and Communication Program*' is an agreement between the Euro-Med partners that was launched in November 2001, to raise public awareness of the activities carried out within the framework of the partnership. The first objective is to ensure better distribution of the results obtained in the different fields of action of the partnership; the second is to emphasize the program's results among the beneficiary public in the Mediterranean countries and territories; and finally the third objective is to build up and enrich intercultural dialogue by producing and distributing the largest number of audiovisual programs.⁶⁰ The communication objective should be emphasized, because with out it, there are no close relations, exchange, or any form of linkage of elaborated ideas on both sides. The flow of ideas by word and image is extremely important because it ensures the free flow of information favorable to improvement of societies and their democratic functioning. Moreover, it helps ensure equitable access to opportunities for

⁶⁰ www.europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/med/regional/audiovisual_fr.htm

sharing knowledge and promoting the creativity that technologies provide. It also assists countries in building up their skills in communication and information, and improves infrastructures such as media, libraries, archives, information services and networks. Lastly, communication promotes the training of professionals. Such goals should be established by promoting meetings to develop projects, having educational and training sessions, and promoting the freedom of press. All these procedures should be done through institutional networks of research such as workshops and seminars. Advanced technology is favourable to handle the advance of flow of information skillfully, on time, to bring about accurate research.

Cultural Exchange

Cultural exchanges create closer interaction and ready help relationships, and therefore meaningful achievements. The European commission financed many projects; the first is '*La Cité idéale*', which is a project of the *Chaire Unesco Du Dialogue* at the Saint Joseph University, with an investment of 25,000 Euros. This plan held a production of a 3D animation done by 7-9 years old children in countries such as Lebanon, Egypt, Syria, France and Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon. Through these programs, the children build an ideal example of a supreme city and the meeting of other people; and they direct their visions to carry a good role in society, by having a city full of activities and closer interaction. Such visions are expressed through TV programs, where children state their ideals. These productions are sent to the schools of the partner countries, and discussions take place; the Lebanese Civil Society and the European Union maintain these

reflective exchanges.⁶¹ However, the Lebanese media can play a greater role through weekly programs launched on local broadcasting stations that are for children's visions and activities. European guests invited and talk shows will further help stimulate this relation. As a result, Lebanese children will be exposed to inspiration and healthy future careers. Both parties will learn the cultural setbacks and sufferings of each country and how these issues can be resolved. Schools should be part of such activities, to allow a broader knowledge to the children while letting their voices be heard. This will bring such a close relation between Lebanon and Europe, and it will motivate the youth to exchange more and more potential ideas.

'Beirut Cinematographic Days' is also a 30,000 Euro program. This is an association of cooperative and cultural productions of cinematographic and audiovisual works. The third edition of this project, the Cinema festival encouraged regional exchanges and other non-Arab directors to participate through their own perspectives on the region. The festival created discussions, debates, and round tables between all the different parties in the cinema sectors. An aspect of cooperation with the Mediterranean Partners was created because the majorities of films shown were Arab-European co-productions. Among the festival achievements also is an award for the best Lebanese short-film or documentary to a director called Bassam Fayyad for his film 'Road beyond Sunset'. The award covers full expenses to the production and production facilities on the next project. Also, directors Rima el Horr and Olga Naccache were awarded a scholarship for the development of scenarios. Lebanese cinema is broadening and more documentary and entertaining instructive movies should be

⁶¹ www.citeideale.usj.edu.lb

held through more festivals. The greater the rewards, the more there are productions. A great percentage of youth is majoring in making movies, and so the market ought to expand to better allow the flow of more and more advancement and creativity.⁶²

A 22,000 Euro project targets the promotion of not well known Lebanese regions, by having a group of photographers, visit the 'Jurd' for the first time, and give their perspectives. This project is called '*The Seasons in the Jurd*', and it was based on Euro-Mediterranean Photo campaigns in the mountainous region between the Cazas of the Bekaa and North Lebanon. These photographers, of Lebanese, Syrian, Belgian, French, and Spanish nationalities were invited to these 'Jurd' areas to take pictures at different seasons. Through their works, the area and its inhabitants are expressed clearly. The themes were from landscape, trees, traditional dwellings, to pastoral and agricultural activities that were put in an exhibition in Beirut. The photos are later sold in all tourist sights as postcards, and the revenues are used for reforestation of the Jurd, and for the sake of planting fruit trees in favor of the inhabitants. Tourists therefore are attracted to these regions that are barely known, giving Lebanon a wider range of beautiful tourist sceneries and events.⁶³

'The Madrasa of Storytelling', a project of Monnot Theater, emphasizes the development of storytelling through the learning of techniques and the spirit of the oral arts. This project aims at professional story tellers, amateurs, and researchers in Lebanon and other Mediterranean countries (France, Algeria, and Morocco). The international festival of tale and Monodrama allowed the pursuit of activities

⁶² www.euromedheritage.net

⁶³ www.mada.org

that made possible the participation of young amateur story tellers to collect and publish old tales, to arrange training workshop on the arts of tales and collection, as well as tutorials on the art of storytelling and legendary tales. Nour Bou Saleh participated in the training workshops for youth, and was selected by the Ministry of Culture to represent Lebanon at The Francophone Olympics.⁶⁴

Children living in difficult circumstances are given a chance to create films. When Lebanese and other Arab nationals from disadvantaged entourages participate in film making and photography, then the picture presents the true actuality of cultural exchange and creativity. During this festival the youth were able to produce their films and display their photos in the exhibition called "Our Photo Voices", and show all their creative work to the public. The film 'Limonada' was given a prize at Youth Media Festival Berlin 2005 as well as three prizes at the International Festival for Children's Film in Cairo. 'Children on the Margin Create Films' is a project by the Arab Resource Center for Popular Arts (ARCPA). This way, even the disadvantaged children expose their living, expose the disadvantaged areas that they have experienced and give their true side of the suffering. It is this way that changes are initiated, and put into great action.⁶⁵

In the Euro med Heritage Regional Program, the aim is to highlight the euro-med cultural heritage. Lebanon participates in projects within the framework of phases II and III of the program. These projects are '*Filière Innovates*', whose Lebanese partner is the Lebanese University and the Institute of Social Science.

⁶⁴ www.euromedheritage.net

⁶⁵ www.europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/med/regional/audiovisual_fr.htm

Its aim is to improve traditional products quality, employment levels, revenues and technical and cultural training of producers.

'*Mediterranean Voices*' has the American University of Beirut as partner, and it collects the memories of people and places through reminiscences, pictures and sounds of Mediterranean cities that have witnessed a collective history, creation of the database of the cosmopolitan vocal heritage as well as audiovisual documents. Med-Voices project is such a major research project in that it collects and records histories. The research includes the collection of family histories, memories of places and important events, local traditions, rituals and customs, festivals and holidays; as well as a number of daily practices which are part and parcel of everyday life, working and socializing in these cities and certain neighbourhoods within them. These are collected in many Mediterranean cities including Beirut, which are then accessible through multi-lingual database easy to get to on the web. The Mediterranean Voices plan explores the everyday social interactions and cultural practices which help shape the meaning and character of Mediterranean urban quarters. It is efficient that many unheard voices are expressed. Also, there is greater means of promoting better awareness of the international cultural heritage of Mediterranean urban landscapes among academics, policy-makers, civil society organizations, educational institutions, and the interested general public. This program is working in collaboration with certain target groups. These groups include local authorities, neighbourhood associations, cultural and heritage institutions, musicians and artistic associations, museums, non-government organizations, tour guides, schools, and university departments. The collected material is also being used to build up a series of events such as seminars and exhibitions and conferences, across the Mediterranean region. An exhibition

called *Shared Spaces in Times of Crises (Memories of Alexandria, Ancona, Beirut, Bethlehem and Split)* was organized in Beirut in June 2005, and was also held among many places in Alexandria and Ancona (Italy). The exhibition also moved to Bethlehem and Split (Croatia), which commonly suffered war ethnic conflict and cultural disasters.⁶⁶

'*Quantara*' aims at establishing a database integrating a whole range of multimedia supports that range from videos and pictures to texts. The aim is a large crossing of identities of euro-med heritage and this data is fed by the euro-Arab partners of a consortium managed by *l'Institut du Monde Arabe*. The exchange of distinctiveness is a basic element of the project, the identity of each Mediterranean country is nourished by the identity of the others. This project targets to further clarify the Mediterranean's common, individual and shared identities. These are done through research, study and database creation, training people for the collection of data, and diffusion and cultural promotion.⁶⁷

On the other hand the Euro-med Audiovisual Program aims to promote the audiovisual sector of the Euro-med through technology transfer, distribution of audiovisual works and conservation of audiovisual archives. Phase II (15million Euros) of this program was agreed upon to be implemented from 2005-2007. The fields selected are the support of promotion, distribution and dissemination of Mediterranean Films, to safeguard the Mediterranean works, to structure and standardize legislation in the audiovisual sector in order to ensure the protection of the Mediterranean film and finally to support professional training. Following a call for proposals, 8 million Euros were provided for projects concerning the

⁶⁶ www.med-voices.org/pages/introduction.aspx

⁶⁷ <http://www.euromedheritage.net/en/euromedheritageprojects/eh3/qantara.htm>

advancement and maintenance of Mediterranean audiovisual works; and 3 million Euros were released for projects dedicated to the distribution of Mediterranean and European Films in the MEDA region and in the European Union.⁶⁸

Conclusion

Encouragement and greater respect for the environment, public spaces, and natural resources is a vital aspect that Lebanese citizens lack. Although the Euro-Med programs aimed to target all aspects from the initiation of improvement to expected results and maintenance, they have not covered the environmental cleanliness and improvement that Lebanon requires. The environment has suffered and still is, but with great emphasis on a development agenda done by every community, it would bring back the clean and beautiful nature of all areas in Lebanon. Communication should be highlighted day after day; it is extraordinary what cultural interchange could bring. The Euro-Med partnership adds to Lebanon's communication exposure and cultural interchange. The rise of knowledge, the exposure of our famous Lebanese traditions, the coverage of the inconveniences in many areas, the attitudes and reactions of actions, all contribute to the rising off limit improvement that Lebanon is bound to, either sooner, or later.

⁶⁸ www.europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/med/regional/audiovisual_fr.htm

Chapter V

Recommendations and Conclusion

Recommendations

To this day, the Euro-Med projects created with Lebanon have covered a wide range of sectors. It is very promising to know that such plans have been studied and created to improve and further develop the Lebanese society, economy, and as a result the political situation. Lebanon cannot depend entirely on this partnership. If so, aid-dependency will increase, and pressures to improve policies and institutions will also increase. Therefore the development will be distorted, and corruption will take over. Lebanon is need of good policies that must be enforced, so that the Euro-Med partnership could partly help support effective institutions through investment.

To determine the extent to which the actual practices of the Euro-Med partnership are consistent over time, evaluation of the implementation and the effectiveness of the Euro-Med interventions have to be available based on expert opinion. There has to be more access of info, and it must be valid, reliable, and systematic to use. This way, performance measures could be evaluated based on experts' view, and more info concerning the Euro-Med partnership would be exposed for further study.

Concerning economic and institutional development, other than aiming at consumer protection, Lebanese products must have a much better access to international markets. The legislation and regulatory framework is preferable to have very clear guidelines to be enforced, to ensure quality control through special

monitoring teams. The media's role in raising awareness will protect consumer interests and decrease the chances of market frauds. Lebanon is in need of exposing its products to international markets. There is such a wide range of international products in the Lebanese market that in fact Lebanon's potential of production and export has been decreased, or made inferior, in a sense. Now, the Lebanese businesses' main aim is to get products from the Far East, or neighbours, such as Syria or turkey, to decrease their costs. Why can't their products be produced in Lebanon? Why can other countries not focus on importing from Lebanon? The common answer is that there are very low wages in the Far East compared to Lebanon for example, and that contributes to the low costs. This is why industrial machines should be bought into the Lebanese factories; and these cost effective machines will need minimum workers; as a result products will be produced at a minimum cost compared to the low-waged countries. Special projects have to be created to businesses that import greatly. Incentives will be offered to these businesses if they open factories in Lebanon and begin producing. The production must consist of good product quality and duty concessions between Lebanon and the EU countries. This way, the Lebanese products will then be able to enter the EU market in an easier system. The incentives would be the increase of export to European countries, upon their demands. Then Europe will start importing from Lebanon, and this will contribute greatly to the increase of export and the encouragement of local goods.

The support for medium and small enterprises can be enforced through facility programs given by banks. For example fresh graduates that have good strategic entrepreneurial plans have to be offered support programs and incentives. Europeans can participate by making partnerships with small or medium sized

businesses in Lebanon to give the businesses a boost. This way, fresh graduates are faced with the hope of opening businesses with Europeans. When such joint ventures and clusters are pursued, SMEs' capabilities become stronger and more effective, thus increasing the competitiveness. After all, the Lebanese people want to stay in their home country to build their future successfully. If special projects adapt the SME issue and work on enforcing it constantly, then Lebanese industries and businesses will expand, promising opportunities are created, and foreigners are encouraged to visit, invest and receive generous returns. In addition, Lebanese entrepreneurs that are well established abroad will be encouraged to re-channel some of their investments in Lebanon.

To ensure that the Lebanese public administration's objectives are achieved, domains of authority, responsibility, and accountability for employees must be enforced. The improvement of the strategic planning systems is important to review key policy decisions. The organizational technology update helps define the principle policies, programs, and procedures. An Effective personnel system recruits, selects, trains, evaluates, rewards, and promotes employees, which in turn enhances the administration's performance. Most importantly good management information and control systems will develop and report information about the organization's use of resources, levels of activity and achievement.⁶⁹

The rehabilitation of the main infrastructure of the country, namely in the sectors of water, energy, environment, public works and transportation needs to be further advanced. Such systems should have information centers in all Lebanese areas. These centers will be fully equipped with the latest technology. Lebanon

⁶⁹ Moore H. Mark, (1995). *Creating Public Value: Strategic Management in Government*. p226

still suffers from water supplies, electricity or even transportation. Special programs for the improvement of these systems ought to be enforced. Privatization of all these systems jointly with Europeans helps improve services. The government cannot be sued, but private companies can; and as accountability does exist in private companies, then the funds are used appropriately to provide the services for the public. Privatization will lead to competitiveness thus lesser costs. On behalf of the citizens, the government will become a regulator of these institutions so that they provide the proper services needed. If such companies are created with the right experts, qualified managers, equipment and management know-how, then roads would be improved constantly, long tunnels would be created to avoid traffic jams, water systems would be controlled so that all areas have delivery of water, and finally electricity would be improved. Thus, the needs of the public are finally met.

The Lebanese environment faces a lot of threats and there is still much to do to improve the environment. Environmental companies and projects made jointly with Europe must be created especially for the improvement of the threats. Such companies should be dedicated to planning construction of buildings all over the Lebanese land, so that the projects avoid destroying natural areas and scenery. Road-widening projects that displace old houses and destroy orchards and natural land should be carefully planned in order to avoid all the destruction it is causing. Soil erosion is worsening due to forest fires, construction, and neglect of agricultural terraces. Agricultural terraces must be well developed and taken care of so that the soil will contain all the nutrients needed to grow healthy fruits and vegetables; or else there would be a loss of plant species due to development, and overgrazing. Hunting laws must be enforced everywhere to avoid distinction of

species. Forest fires, Air pollution, mostly from cars and factories, water pollution from sewage and industrial wastes dumped in rivers or contaminating the water are resulting in human illnesses. It is favourable to have more sewage treatment plants. If not, then the human diseases such as cancer and cholera will be more and more widespread. Other than having special companies to collect and treat garbage, these companies have to be spread in all Lebanese areas because of the uneven distribution of cleanliness. People that Litter on road sides and picnic areas should be held accountable and recycling more commonly used. The only way people will stop being ignorant is to educate them on the consequences of pollution. Weekly television shows done in every area will educate the citizens of the environment and its effects if not well treated. If the government creates authority and incentives for people, then they can encourage cleanliness. The laws must be enforced and violators taken to court because in return, they are violating other people's rights. Privatization helps improve all the required services according to the law.

Projects such as improving the agriculture and creating income through food processing, encourages the people living in the disadvantaged areas. People in the remote areas suffer from low income or even unemployment. The distribution of these products will create more jobs, increase income and give the disadvantaged some consideration. There must be more assistance enforced to small farmers to expand their production into more advantageous alternative crops of new products such as medicinal herbs and flowers.

Euro-Mediterranean partnership with Lebanon has not contributed enough to the Lebanese youth and its education. It has given chance to some uneducated

and unemployed to take short training programs to enable them to find jobs. Except that many more children do not have a chance to be educated. The education of all Lebanese children has to be enforced, and supported by joint programs and individual grants. Plans distributed to cover all areas, especially the disadvantaged, will give chances to those that long to go to school but do not have the means, or those that are unemployed. This way, the youth are taught skills, and given careers to make a living.

Cultural Exchange remains to be the most important issue that brings the world closer to the Lebanese citizens. Lebanon's culture is one of the most beautiful cultures in the world. The Lebanese people are known for their generosity and friendliness. The landscape is indescribable, varying from the breathtaking mountains, to lively cities, historical ruins, and so many beautiful site seeing places. The Euro-Med partnership has covered plans concerning cultural exchange, but the media has to play a much bigger and influential role. Television talk shows exposed on a weekly or monthly basis will connect the Europeans and the Lebanese. The talk shows would bring foreigners as guests to meet with the Lebanese. The ideas exchanged would range from reality sufferings, cultural and village exposure, to entrepreneurial projects. Such thoughts would be expressed either through short films, story telling, photographs, or through movies; thus enforcing it continuously. The media can play an important role because it will further expose the goals of this partnership and make possible a very wide range of people to participate. For example many Lebanese have a dream that special places or situations in Lebanon would be transformed, enhanced or exposed to the public. Business people would connect and expand and school children will be encouraged, educated and exposed. Film festivals have to be increased to a regular

basis and contests taken. The winners would then be exposed to world film festivals. Universities, schools, and other organizations should take part. This big interchange of ideas will give Lebanon such a big boost; its image will even be better than what it was before the civil war. In return, our traditions are promoted to the Europeans, and so they will be encouraged to visit our country on a more regular basis. This project will bring about a prosperous and advanced connection.

Therefore, necessary reconstruction programs are supposed to be enforced to build capacity and to reduce poverty. All the physical infrastructures must be repaired and rehabilitated. Fiscal discipline is obligatory to finish with the increasing debt. Initiatives such as employment creation programs ought to be taken to stop the skilled and educated Lebanese work force from leaving the country. The government must account for transparent programs concerning the reconstruction of Lebanon. However these programs have to be controlled under strict leadership before shareholders start diverting the programs according to their views and interests. Programs must be implemented through constantly dealing with restoration and development, responding to the priorities of targeted communities, and having direct participation of civil society institutions. While coordination on the international level is necessary, Lebanon must not depend on this partnership entirely without any effort of its own. It has to focus on building and maintaining existing capacity on the community level that leads to enterprise and employment creation.

The Euro-Med partnership is taking into account the economic, social and environmental situation with an overall budget dedicated 165,000,000 Euros till 2006. Although without Lebanese effort, this partnership can do little. The funds

Lebanon is receiving have to be used only for the purpose. The economy ought to greatly address the unemployment and poverty that is seriously affecting the country. The adoptions of appropriate tax regimes help tackle inequality and social gap, hence alleviating social suffering.⁷⁰ Also consensus between different political groups regarding necessary reforms is vital. The judiciary has to be reformed in such a way to firmly monitor transparency standards concerning all the reform programs. It is not supposed to be politically pressured by any particular party. The rebuilding effort must comprise communities, environmental cleanliness and needs of the society. The Euro-Med partnership, along with government agencies, donors, civil society, and the private sectors have to contribute together to improve the economic situation. The development and reconstruction represented by local, municipal authorities, as well as experts, will further maximize outcomes.

With the European support, future action in Lebanon is supposed to be portrayed through projects that combine reconstruction, advance, media exposure and community focus. If such actions are taken properly, then areas that enjoy prosperity, such as agriculture and tourism areas; will provide accomplishment stories that may be imitated by other communities, and with time and anticipation, the whole region. Consequently, the partnership will take its true image and will represent its true goals.

⁷⁰ UN-ESCWA. December 2006. Lebanon's Rebuilding and Revival: A policy Paper with Initiatives

Conclusion

Many of the projects created in Lebanon, in partnership with Europe, have yet to go further. It is only in our dreams that we see the Lebanon we really hope for. Except that it is about time that the dreams become a reality. Although the Euro-Med partnership with Lebanon has so much potential if well enforced, it cannot stand alone without constant local improvement. However, by decreasing the number of youth leaving Lebanon and allowing them to express their dreams in their own home country, then this would be the initiation of a true change. If the economic situation is improved through political authorities and collective consensus, then employment levels will increase, and poverty levels will decrease. The societal problems will decline through awareness raising campaigns held by humanitarian organizations for example. And finally, if the environment is well treated through the enforcement of special cleanliness programs covering all areas, then people's health, natural habitats and the ecosystem are protected.

In a study concerning whether the Barcelona Process is working, Stephen Calleya stresses that the Euro-Med partnership offers a unique opportunity to strengthen the political, economic and cultural ties across the Euro-Med area, defining the area as a geo-strategic area composed of sub-regions. The EU has failed to reach progress in achievement of stability and security in the region. He emphasizes that Euro-Med process is the most adequate type of multilateral forum that can further cooperative security in the area, and Euro-Med is the only regional institutional management that brings states of the region together.⁷¹ Fulvino Attina sees the new regionalism as an appropriate theory to grasp the Euro-Med

⁷¹ Calleya, Stephan C. (2000). "Is the Barcelona Process Working?" Center for the European Integration Studies, Discussion Paper P75.

partnership and evaluates the Mediterranean as security partnership building. He stresses that partnership building, conflict prevention, early warning and preventive diplomacy seem feasible only at a later stage of the Mediterranean security partnership, therefore the priority should be given to reduce gap between cultures.⁷² The Barcelona process is a product of globalization and interdependence within the new regionalist premises. It clarifies the problems posed by the global international environment and put suggestions onto the table. In terms of identifying problems, defining objectives, and selecting intervention logics, programming, delivering projects and anchoring the policy reforms, the Euro-Med partnership is better than any other scheme in the region.⁷³ Therefore the stimulation of dialogue among the Euro-Med politicians and businessmen, the involvement of NGOs, and transparency of the rules and procedures could boost the process.

The Euro-Med partnership has contributed to Lebanon's advancement. Nevertheless, Lebanese leaders with confidence must be part of the development, and must have the capacity to employ effective ways to work with large diverse groups towards a common goal. Also obligatory and accountable engagements must exist towards their community. The communities across the country will then create common grounds, develop new anti-poverty strategies, and build true commitment for implementing the strategies they develop. With Europe and diverse stakeholders, such as Lebanese foreigners, as collaborators, projects will create prosperous conditions for all residents. Citizens will have a voice, exchange

⁷² Attina, Fulvio. (2002). "Security Cooperation at the Regional Level: From Opposed Military Alliances to Security Partnerships. Is the Mediterranean Region on the right track?" Jean Monnet Working Papers in Comparative and International politics. October 2002 JMWP no. 45.

⁷³ Philippart, Eric. (2003). "The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: A Critical Evaluation of An Ambitious Scheme." *European Foreign Affairs Review* 8, pp. 201-220.

knowledge and resources, and be exposed to issues of poverty and prosperity. With time, there will be better communities that can reach maximum potential.

Lebanon will become the *New Lebanon* that every Lebanese longs for. We Lebanese long for the beauty and life that exists; we long for the amazing interests and values we share, and we long for contributing to the growth that Lebanon deserves. We long for enjoying Lebanon as it was built for enjoyment and pleasure; and we long for bringing back all the families that have left the country for their safety. We are hurt that we remain to be a ground of dispute, and we refuse to stay this way. With European support, and with the Lebanese standing together as one to work for development, then individuals, families and communities are enabled to become and remain prosperous. The wonderful Lebanese culture will attract outsiders to take pleasure and reside in Lebanon, and contribute to its prosperity.

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