



## AID DEVELOPMENTS

### **European Union allocated funding to its neighboring countries**

On 2 March 2010, the European Union announced its allocation of Euro 5.7 billion in the next three years to reinforce political cooperation and promote economic integration between the EU and its neighbors. Funding will support political and economic reforms, regional and cross-border cooperation in the partner countries covered by the European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). It will also support projects in areas such as climate change, transport, energy and environment. EU neighbors, including Lebanon, will receive more than Euro 2 billion in 2013 compared with Euro 1.6 billion in 2010.

### **United Nations Development Program and Spain launched the Hydro Agriculture Development Project of Marjeyoun area**

On 17 March 2010, the United Nations Development Program and the Embassy of Spain launched the "Hydro Agriculture Development Project of Marjeyoun area" in collaboration with the Litani River Authority. The initiative is funded by the Government of Spain through the Lebanon Recovery Fund (LRF) that was established shortly after the 2006 conflict. The UNDP is managing the funds and the implementation of this project in close collaboration with the national partner, the Litani River Authority. The US\$2 million project will serve 4 purposes: (a) set the infrastructure for the distribution network, (b) show the advantages and efficiency of modern irrigation techniques, (c) propose the new cropping patterns in the region with their socio-economic impact, and (d) support the establishment of a Water Users Association. The project covers an area of approximately 522 hectares in the Marjeyoun North perimeter, and more than 1,259 farmers are expected to benefit from the project activities.

### **Italy signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities**

On 18 March 2010, the Ambassador of Italy and the Minister of Interior and Municipalities signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the project entitled "Improving the Living Conditions in Lebanese Prisons". This project is financed by the Government of Italy through the Italian Development Cooperation Office in Lebanon and aims at building the Ministry's capacity at improving the living conditions of women, men and minors in Lebanese prisons. It is part of an overall strategy by the Government of Lebanon and the donor community to transform prisons from detention centers to social rehabilitation centers.

### **Jordan signed several agreements**

On 19 March 2010, the Prime Minister of Jordan and the Prime Minister of Lebanon witnessed the signing of 16 agreements and memoranda of understanding between the two countries in the economic, legal, tourism, industrial, financial, agriculture, transport, archeological, scientific, health and cultural sectors. Prime Minister Saad Hariri indicated that these agreements bring the two countries closer to creating a free trade zone with the aim of establishing a common Arab market in the future.



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### **Italy contributed to the United Nations Development Program's demining project**

On 20 March 2010, the Embassy of Italy, through the Italian Development Cooperation Office in Lebanon, approved a grant of Euro 500,000 to the United Nations Development Program for their demining program. Italy had already contributed Euro 3 million to the UNDP's demining project in Lebanon which aims at reducing the risk of death and injury to people living in the South of Lebanon and which contributes to the development of small and medium size enterprises and of the agriculture sector by making farm land accessible and usable as well as by providing training to farmers.



## AID COORDINATION

### **Reconstruction of the Nahr El-Bared Camp and surrounding areas**

On 18 March 2010, the Management Committee for the Nahr El-Bared Multi-Donor Donor Trust Fund approved UNRWA's proposal to allocate the remainder of the NBC-MDTF funds to cover the shortfall under Package-2 of the NBC Reconstruction Program.

### **Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the World Bank joined on Trade Facilitation**

On 18 March 2010, ESCWA and the World Bank organized a joint high-level workshop where they presented the findings and recommendations of a study entitled "Regional Cross-Border Trade Facilitation and Infrastructure for Mashreq countries". The conclusion of the workshop was the presentation of a proposed regional project based on the study. The project would cover the Mashreq region, consisting of Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine and Syria. The objective of the project would be to lay the foundations for improved trade and reduction of trade-related costs within the Mashreq region and between the region and the rest of the world. This will be done by focusing on the institutional, customs, logistics, transport services and infrastructure aspects.