



AID DEVELOPMENTS

United States Agency for International Development held a workshop on water resources management of the Litani River Basin

On 1 November 2010, the Litani River Authority (LRA), in collaboration with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), held a workshop to highlight to water stakeholders and government officials, the vision of LRA to change into an Integrated River Basin Agency to improve water resources management of the Litani River Basin, which will benefit approximately 350,000 people in 161 communities using the water resources of the basin. The workshop highlighted the USAID \$8 million Litani River Basin Management Support program to promote integrated water resources management as a solution to the challenges facing LRA.

United States Agency for International Development provides scholarships

On 2 November 2010, the United States Agency for International Development presented a check for \$64,764 to Haigazian University as part of its \$600,000 contribution to the Haigazian scholarship fund for 2010. 145 students will benefit from this amount, bringing the total number of students to date with USAID scholarships at Haigazian University to 403.

French Agence Francaise de Developpement and Byblos Bank signed a Euro 25 million student loans program

On 3 November 2010, Byblos Bank and the Agence Francaise de Developpement (AFD) signed a Euro 25 million line of credit program of student loans for university students. These loans are offered to students from nine universities in Lebanon.

European Union launched a twinning project at the Ministry of Finance, Euro 1.1 million

On 9 November 2010, the European Union and the Ministry of Finance launched a twinning project between the Lebanese and French governments to improve tax compliance and risk management, and to increase the revenues of the government. The Euro 1.1 million initiative, financed by the European Union, will involve 61 European experts over a period of one year. It aims to apply the French tax authorities standards in the collection of taxes.

United States hands over Megaports Project at Port of Beirut to Lebanese Customs

On 10 November 2010, the official hand-over ceremony of the Lebanon Megaports project to the Government of Lebanon took place. The Megaports initiative seeks to deter, detect and stop illicitly trafficked nuclear and radiological materials by deploying fixed, mobile and handheld detection equipment. Lebanon is the first country in the region to fully implement the Megaports program. At the Port of Beirut, Megaports has partnered with Lebanese Customs to install six detection systems. In addition, the U.S National Nuclear Security Administration has agreed to provide maintenance for seven installations funded by the EU and deployed by the International Atomic Energy Agency.



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Turkey and Lebanon signed several agreements

On 24 November 2010, the Lebanese and Turkish Prime Ministers witnessed the signing of several agreements, including a free trade agreement between Lebanon and Turkey, after an agreement was reached earlier this year on establishing a free trade zone that also includes Jordan and Syria. They also signed a joint political declaration on the establishment of the High Level Strategic Cooperation and Coordination Committee.

European Union launched a project for the State Council, Euro 0.5 million

On 25 November 2010, the Ambassador of the European Union and the President of the State Council launched the project to digitize the archives of the State Council (Euro 500,000). The project will provide the technical equipment for digital archiving, the management information system as well as the necessary training.

Italy signed a new initiative with the Ministry of Agriculture, Euro 1.8 million

On 26 November 2010, the Italian Development Cooperation Office and the Ministry of Agriculture signed a project (Euro 1.8 million) for the improvement of the quality olive oil and actions against the spread of Phytoplasma, a disease that severely damages almond trees' cultivation in many areas of the country. This one-year project, which will be managed by the Ministry of Agriculture, aims to improve the quantity and quality of olive oil production in the four most productive regions of the country, according to European commercial standards, and to establish a national laboratory to certify good quality olive oil. The initiative also aims to give the Lebanese Ministry of Agriculture the instruments to monitor the phyto-pathologies that mainly threaten the almond trees, and to develop the research on the insects that affect the trees.

Greece signed a new initiative with the Ministry of Environment, Euro 1.6 million

On 30 November 2010, the Ministry of Environment and the United Nations Environment Program and the Embassy of Greece signed a Euro 1.6 million project for the monitoring of environmental resources. The initiative will include studies of various types of pollution in Lebanon and several environmental projects.



AID COORDINATION

Eleventh Meeting of the Committee of the Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP)

On 16 November 2010, the eleventh meeting of the Committee of the Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP) was held in Luxembourg. The FEMIP is the vehicle through which the European Investment Bank operates in the Mediterranean partner countries since October 2002. FEMIP supports infrastructure projects, investment in human capital and environmental protection schemes through loans, private equity and technical assistance. At the eleventh meeting, different topics were presented relating to the water, renewable energy, and maritime infrastructure sectors and to the labor market in the Mediterranean countries.