

P6_TA(2005)0076

Situation in Lebanon

European Parliament resolution on the situation in Lebanon

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its resolution of 16 January 2003 on the conclusion of an Association Agreement with the Republic of Lebanon¹,
 - having regard to its previous resolutions on the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, particularly that of 23 February 2005²,
 - having regard to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559 of 2 September 2004 on Lebanon,
 - having regard to the statement on Lebanon of 15 February 2005 by the President of the United Nations Security Council,
 - having regard to the Council's conclusions of 21 February 2005 on the Middle East Peace Process,
 - having regard to its resolution of 20 November 2003 on Wider Europe - Neighbourhood: A New Framework for Relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours³,
 - having regard to its resolution of 12 February 2004 on reinvigorating EU actions on human rights and democratisation with Mediterranean partners⁴,
 - having regard to Rule 103(4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. deeply shocked by the attack in Beirut on 14 February 2005, which claimed the lives of the former Lebanese Prime Minister, Rafik Hariri, and of other innocent civilians,
- B. whereas Rafik Hariri was one of the most influential politicians and one of the most devoted to the reconciliation process in Lebanon and a strong supporter of the withdrawal of foreign troops from his country,
- C. whereas Lebanon is a country with strong historical, cultural and economic links to Europe, an important partner of the European Union in the Middle East and a participant in the European Neighbourhood Policy, and whereas this tragedy is an assault on the democratic principles which are dear to Lebanon and to the European Union,

¹ OJ C 38 E, 12.2.2004, p. 307.

² Texts Adopted, P6_TA (2005)0046.

³ OJ C 87 E, 7.4.2004, p. 506.

⁴ OJ C 97 E, 22.4.2004, p. 656.

- D. encouraged by the magnitude of the peaceful and democratic public demonstrations of recent days and their reflection of a high degree of national unity among people of different political and religious persuasions in the country,
 - E. welcoming the fact that the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has decided to send a fact-finding mission to ascertain 'the circumstances, causes and consequences' of the death of the former Prime Minister of Lebanon, Rafik Hariri,
 - F. whereas on 28 February 2005 the Prime Minister of Lebanon, Omar Karami, resigned as an opposition-sponsored motion of no confidence in the government was being debated in Parliament and in response to the public pressure exerted through demonstrations organised by the opposition calling for the withdrawal of Syrian troops,
 - G. whereas parliamentary elections are scheduled to take place in Lebanon in May 2005 and having regard to the will of the Lebanese people to determine their political future,
 - H. having regard to the decision of the Presidents of Syria and Lebanon to announce a withdrawal of Syrian forces to the eastern Bekaa Valley before the end of March, even though the international community was calling for a complete and rapid withdrawal from Lebanon,
 - I. whereas the resumption of talks between the Israeli Government and the Palestinian National Authority has made even more urgent the involvement of Syria and Lebanon in the process with a view to reaching a comprehensive and lasting settlement of the Middle East conflict,
 - J. stressing that the forthcoming signature of the Association Agreement with the EU will commit Syria to a political dialogue based on support for democracy, human rights and the rule of law and respect for international law,
 - K. underlining the need to prevent Lebanon from descending into a new period of turbulence and to support and consolidate its fragile democratic institutions and to continue the reconstruction process,
 - L. highlighting the role that a fully democratic and sovereign Lebanon can play in the development of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy,
1. Condemns unequivocally the bomb attack in Beirut on 14 February 2005 which killed the former Prime Minister of Lebanon, Rafik Hariri, and other innocent civilians, expresses its horror and indignation at this barbarous act and conveys its sincerest condolences to the families of Mr Hariri and of the other victims;
 2. Calls, pursuant to the statement made by the UN Security Council President on 15 February 2005, for every effort to be made to ascertain the causes, circumstances and consequences of this attack; calls on the Lebanese authorities to continue to cooperate with the UN's fact-finding mission;
 3. Believes that this crime must not thwart the electoral process in Lebanon, and stresses the importance of free, democratic and transparent parliamentary elections in that

country; reiterates its call for consideration to be given to a European Union observer mission to monitor the parliamentary elections in Lebanon, and calls on the Commission to take all necessary measures in this regard;

4. Calls on the Commission to initiate immediate cooperation by supporting civil society and independent NGOs through the MEDA programme and the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights;
5. Urges the Commission to finalise the action plan for Lebanon, addressing all the questions concerning the political stability of the country, the consolidation of its democratic institutions and the speeding-up of the reconstruction process;
6. Warmly welcomes the positive developments in the Middle East region in recent weeks, including revitalisation of the negotiation process between Israel and Palestine, and calls on Syria not to tolerate any form of terrorism, including support for the operations of Hezbollah and other armed groups;
7. Considers that clear evidence exists of terrorist activities on the part of Hezbollah and that the Council should take all necessary steps to curtail them;
8. Considers it important, to that end, that a direct dialogue be re-established between Syria and Israel with a view to ensuring peace and security for those countries and guaranteeing their sovereignty and integrity, in compliance with United Nations Security Council resolutions;
9. Calls on Syria to fully cooperate with the European Union in the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy to ensure peace and stability in the region; recalls the great significance of implementing Resolution 1559 affirming the international community's support for Lebanon's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence; calls on Syria to refrain from all interference in Lebanon's internal affairs; notes the decision to withdraw Syrian forces before the end of March, but calls for the complete withdrawal of Syrian troops and of its intelligence services from Lebanon, as indicated in the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council; considers that the conclusion of the Association Agreement with Syria and further development of the European Neighbourhood Policy towards that country will be possible only on the basis of a clear commitment by Syria in that regard;
10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and Commission and to the Government and Parliament of Lebanon.