Resolution on the situation in Lebanon

2021/2878(RSP) - 16/09/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 575 votes to 71, with 39 abstentions, a resolution on the situation in Lebanon.

The current situation in Lebanon is extremely alarming and deeply concerning due to the political, economic, social, financial and health crisis, and the state of institutional breakdown. Moreover, on 4 August 2020, a devastating explosion of a large amount of ammonium nitrate at the Beirut port caused more than 200 deaths, wounded more than 6 500 people and damaged over 74 000 homes, directly affecting 300 000 people. Those responsible for the explosion have still not been identified.

Corruption is one of the key challenges stifling Lebanon's development and prosperity, and deepening alienation from and distrust of the political system. Following the resignation Prime Minister Hassan Diab in the aftermath of the explosion, Lebanon finally formed a government on 10 September 2021. The new government will urgently need to deliver the necessary substantive policy package of reforms in order for Lebanon to combat corruption and to preserve its stability, unity, sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity. A transparent, independent, neutral and effective investigation into the Beirut port explosion is a priority and must be ensured according to the resolution.

Parliament considers Lebanon's present situation to be a man-made disaster caused by a handful of men across the ruling political class. It called for the EU to offer Lebanon the deployment of a comprehensive EU administrative advisory mission in order to address the urgent need to counter the accelerating breakdown of public administration and basic services.

Parliament also reiterated its support for the determination of the EU to assist Lebanon in its economic restructuring. The Council and the Commission should continue their efforts to support the reconstruction and economic recovery of Lebanon and to establish closer cooperation with and better funding for civil society organisations in the country.

In 2021 alone, the EU has provided Lebanon with EUR 55.5 million in humanitarian aid with an additional EUR 5.5 million were released during summer 2021 to strengthen Lebanon's COVID-19 response. Parliament called on the Commission and the Member States to:

- **release additional humanitarian aid**, given the dire conditions on the ground, in particular food aid and hospital and pharmaceutical material, and to provide **alternative energy resources** including solar panels for all schools and hospitals;

- engage constructively with the new Lebanese Government in delivering the structural and sectoral reforms required to unlock significant EU macro-financial assistance.

Parliament called on all EU Member States without exception to fully cooperate with and strengthen the EU's new **targeted sanctions** against corrupted leaders and those responsible for undermining democracy and the rule of law and their affiliates in Lebanon. The EEAS and the Council should urgently allocate sufficient resources to the effective development of the new mechanism. Member States and their partners, such as the UK and Switzerland, are urged to cooperate in the fight against the alleged misappropriation of public money by a number of Lebanese officials.