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Press release | 18.09.2018

European Free Alliance delegation in Lebanon

Press release from EFA MEPs visiting Lebanon

EFA Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), **Josep-Maria Terricabras** (ERC), **Jill Evans** (Plaid Cymru) and **Jordi Solé** (ERC) are in Lebanon leading a delegation aiming to find out more about the reality of the country, where one in every four inhabitants is a refugee.

Since the beginning of the Syrian war, Lebanon, which has a population of 4.5 million inhabitants, has hosted more than one million Syrian refugees. At the same time, Lebanon is hosting up to 260,000 Palestinian refugees, the majority of which have been residing the country since 1948 and 32,000 who arrived, leaving the Syrian war behind.

The MEPs met the Prime Minister of Lebanon, Mr Saad Hariri, this morning. The discussion focused on EU-Lebanon relations, the Syrian refugee crisis and the political situation of the wider region.

The delegation also had the opportunity to discuss the social challenges of the country, together with the Minister of Social Affairs, Mr Pierre Bou Aussi and to visit the Palestinian refugee camp of Shatila with representatives of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA).

According to MEP **Josep-Maria Terricabras** (President of EFA in the European Parliament):

"Lebanon is facing an incredible challenge due to Syrian migration flows, that together with the instability of the region and tensions with its neighbouring countries, has created a strain on Lebanon's infrastructure and public services.

"EU, national and international aid is crucial to maintaining the fragile stability in Lebanon. This is why as Members of the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament we will work to strengthen the technical and economic support to Syrian and Palestinian refugee programs and more specifically, we call for an increase in funding for UNRWA in the 2019 EU budget."

The delegation will meet among others, the head of the EU delegation in Lebanon, Mrs Christina Lassen; representatives from the UN-Habitat program; members from Ana Aqra non-profit association that works for the literacy and self-learning of Syrian refugee children and the most disadvantaged children in Lebanese public schools.

The programme will also include meetings with civil society groups such as Terres des Hommes, Jafra

Foundation, Norwegian Refugee Council, Kayany Foundation and ABBAD – Resource Center for Equality. The EFA delegation is taking place from Monday to Wednesday.

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Responsible MEPs



Jill Evans

Member



Jordi Solé i Ferrando

Member



Josep Maria Terricabras

EFA President and first Vice President of the Greens/EFA Group

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