



## AID DEVELOPMENTS

### **Additional Italian funding for Saoufar Bridge rehabilitation project**

On 3 August 2009, Italy disbursed an additional grant of Euro 2.8 million to the Council for Development and Reconstruction for the rehabilitation of the Saoufar bridge. This disbursement brings Italy's total contribution for the rehabilitation of the Saoufar bridge to Euro 7 million. Italy contributed a total of Euro 38 million at the Stockholm Conference in 2006.

### **Southern Beirut municipalities sign Kuwaiti funding deal**

A memorandum of understanding was signed on 16 September 2009 between the Union of Municipalities of the Beirut Southern Suburbs and the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development to fund four education and healthcare projects in the region. This operation will be funded from the US\$ 300 million grant pledged at the Stockholm Conference in 2006.

## AID COORDINATION

### **A high-level French delegation visited Lebanon**

On September 9-12, 2009, a mission of the French Senate headed by Senator Michel Charasse visited Lebanon to assess the French-Lebanese aid relationship. The Senator met with Minister Chatah on 10 September 2009 and discussed the French government's pledge of Euro 375 million budget support loan. The first tranche of Euro 150 million was disbursed in February 2008. The two remaining tranches are linked to reforms in the telecom and power sectors.

### **An IMF mission was in Lebanon to assess performance under EPCA**

An International Monetary Fund (IMF) mission visited Lebanon September 10-18, 2009 to monitor and assess Lebanon's second quarter performance under the Emergency Post-Conflict Assistance (EPCA) which ended on 30 June 2009. The IMF concluded that Lebanon is starting to reap the benefits of prudent macroeconomic policies. The two key objectives of EPCA - reducing the government debt-to-GDP ratio and strengthening international reserves - were clearly met, buoying confidence and economic activity despite the difficult international environment and recent delays in forming a government.

### **EC Support Programme for Infrastructure Sector Strategies and Alternative Financing**

After close consultation with both government stakeholders and donors, and following meetings with the Ministers of Finance, Water and Energy, and Public Works and Transport, the European Commission completed the identification of the "EC Support Programme for Infrastructure Sector Strategies and Alternative Financing (SISSAF)". A project preparation mission is scheduled for early 2010.



## Aid Coordination

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

Notwithstanding the State Council decision to suspend temporarily all backfilling activities at the Nahr el Bared Camp (NBC) site, physical planning and engineering design activities remain on course for their timely approval by the Government. These include the UNRWA schools and UNRWA compound as well as housing works under Package-2. The preliminary archeological investigations are being pursued by the Directorate General of Antiquities and focus primarily on the sites related to the UNRWA schools and Package-3. In the New Camp, both the Government and ECHO are preparing to launch the housing stabilization and repair works of all the partially damaged buildings in the "Prime Areas".

The Nahr El Bared Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) Management Committee, co-chaired by the Government of Lebanon, Spain and the World Bank, agreed to allocate the amount of US\$ 1 million to UNRWA to cover part of the financing shortfall for the rubble removal activity in the Old Camp. Also, the Nahr El-Bared Recovery and Reconstruction Cell at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers continues to coordinate both government and donor interventions in the NBC and surrounding areas and is expected to issue the third quarterly Briefing Note by the end of October 2009.

### **Closing ceremony for the EU project on VAT Capacity Building**

The Project Administration Office at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers held the closing ceremony event for the EU funded project "Accroissement des qualifications et compétences des ressources humaines de la Direction de la TVA" at the Grand Serail on 30 September 2009. The project, which began in September 2007 and ended in January 2009, had a total budget of Euro 191,000. The training of 142 persons from the tax administration was executed by the French General Directorate of Public Finance at the French Ministry of Finance and its purpose was to update and improve the technical, professional and managerial skills and know-how of VAT employees, particularly in the areas of Human Resource Management and Audit. The project was deemed to be very successful as it contributed to the tax administration modernization.