

Mr. President,

I am taking the floor on behalf of the European Union members of the Council and Romania

I would like to thank the Ambassador of Lebanon for engaging in constructive dialogue on the draft resolution L. 5 on the report of the Commission of Inquiry. The discussions were conducted in an open atmosphere of mutual respect. The EU appreciates Lebanese delegation's availability to amend the draft resolution to meet number of our concerns.

Mr. President, I would like to reiterate the EU's commitment to assist and support Lebanon and the Lebanese people in the aftermath of the last summer's military conflict. The democratically elected Government of Lebanon has the EU's full support in its efforts to reconstruct the country and maintain stability and democracy.

Mr. President, Prime Minister Siniora has underlined the importance for all parties to engage in dialogue in order to face the challenges of Lebanon. The EU joins this call and urges all parties to work together for the benefit of all of the Lebanese people through their democratically elected bodies. In this respect it is of utmost importance that all parties return to dialogue.

The EU is committed to a stable and prosperous Lebanon. We believe that Lebanon can turn its diversity into a strength on the basis of stability and development. The EU urges all parties both inside the country and in the region to support the efforts of the government of Lebanon to achieve these objectives.

Mr. President, the EU continues to have concerns on the scope of the mandate of the commission of inquiry. We underline in this respect that any inquiry conducted in the aftermath of a military conflict should encompass the conduct of all parties and all aspects of the conflict. We regret the fact that this was not possible in this case due to the limitations of the resolution S-2/1.

We appreciate the extensive work of the commission of inquiry. We welcome the fact that the report includes references that also address the conduct and obligations of all parties, which for us is a very relevant feature in the consultations that the High Commissioner is going to have with the Government of Lebanon. We note in this respect that a number of recommendations in the report do not fall strictly within the mandate of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The European Union Member States and Bulgaria that are not members of the Council align themselves with this position.

Thank You Mr. President