



**Press Release: For Immediate Release**

## **EU will deploy 100 observers on election day**

**Beirut, 2 June 2009** – The European Union Election Observation Mission is finalising preparations to field a total of 100 observers on election day.

A group of 44 short-term observers today left Beirut to join 30 long-term observers who have been working around the country for the past month, observing election preparations and campaign activities in all 26 electoral districts.

The short-term observers received detailed briefings ahead of their deployment in teams of two to join the long-term teams. On election day, the teams will observe the opening of polling stations, voting, ballot counting and aggregation of results.

The mission was invited by the Lebanese authorities to observe the elections and began its work in Beirut in mid-April with the arrival of a core team of analysts.

It is led by a Chief Observer, Mr José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra, a Spanish Member of the European Parliament, who has held extensive meetings with political leaders and officials.

“The assessment by observers of election day activities will form an important part of our preliminary findings and we hope that the day will proceed smoothly and peacefully,” said Mr Salafranca.

The EU mission is the largest of the international teams observing the parliamentary polls scheduled for 7th June. All EU observers are bound by an internationally accepted code of conduct. This means that they maintain strict neutrality and impartiality in the course of their work and cannot interfere in any way in the electoral process. The EU mission will release its preliminary findings on 8<sup>th</sup> June.

### ***Note to editors:***

The EU mission is made up of a total of 100 observers from 29 countries including 26 of the 27 EU member states, as well as Norway and Switzerland. Following a request from the Canadian authorities, the mission has also incorporated two Canadian short-term observers.

The mission was deployed in three phases. An eleven-member core team set up its headquarters in Beirut in mid-April. A total of 30 long-term observers began working throughout the country in early May. They were joined today by 44 short-term observers. A delegation of European Parliamentarians will join the mission for election day, as well as four locally recruited short-term observers who are members of European embassies in Beirut.

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