

Rampling tours Tripoli: We stand united in the face of terrorism

Paying tribute to the fallen and supporting host communities were the highlights of British Ambassador Chris Rampling's visit to Tripoli, north Lebanon.

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Following the terrorist attack that hit Tripoli on the eve of Eid el Fitr, a delegation of EU Ambassadors with Ambassador Rampling paid condolences to the Mayor of Tripoli, Ahmad Qamareddine and expressed their solidarity with Lebanon and its armed forces, who work tirelessly to maintain security and protect civilians across Lebanon.

At Rachid Karamah Exhibition Center, the Head of the EU delegation Ambassador Christina Lassen and German Ambassador Georg Birgelen, joined by Ambassador Rampling and other EU heads of mission, attended the inauguration of the EU-funded GIZ 'North Lebanon' project. The project aims to support young people and women by supporting start-up programmes for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and business development services. It also includes infrastructural support for an improved urban environment.

At the Attarin Souk, British Ambassador Chris Rampling and German Ambassador Georg Birgelen jointly celebrated the completion of the souks rehabilitation project as part of the Lebanon Host Communities Support Programme (LHSP) with the Minister of Social Affairs, Richard Kouyoumjian, and Minister of Interior, Raya El Hasan, Governor of the North, Mr. Ramzi Nohra and Mayor of Tripoli, Mr. Ahmad Kamareddine. The project focused on the rehabilitation of a 300-metre long portion of the Attarin Souk which includes around 60 vegetable, meat, poultry, and grocery shops. The street serves over 80,000 beneficiaries who benefited from the restoration of the roof water drainage system and the rehabilitation of the shops and facades. Since 2014, UK support to LHSP has reached so far over £48 million and German support of around €48 Million.

During his Tripoli tour, Ambassador Rampling visited the Tripoli Oil Installations and was briefed by the Director General Mr. Sarkis Hleis on the role and economic value of this facility in North Lebanon and the region.

Ambassador Rampling also met with former Minister Mohammad Safadi and toured the Safadi foundation and later took part in a round table discussion with

civil society organised by MP Mosbah el Ahdab.

On the anniversary of HMS Victoria's commemoration that sank off the coast of Tripoli on 22 June 1893, a remembrance service was held at the Commonwealth War Grave with dignitaries and Lebanese army officials .

At the end of his visit, Ambassador Rampling said:

Today, with my EU colleagues, we sent a strong message of support and solidarity with Tripoli and the Lebanese people. We stand together united in the face of terrorism and united in our efforts to preserve Lebanon's stability. This was our message to the mayor and senior officials of Tripoli. From grief to hope, my joint visit with my EU colleagues and German Ambassador today – following the unfortunate attack – is part of our commitment to a stronger relationship and partnership with Lebanon and Tripoli. It gave me great pleasure to be back to Tripoli to inaugurate a UK funded project in Partnership with the Lebanese Government, notably the Ministry of Social Affairs, UNDP, local authorities and communities.

This is my second visit to the Souks when I saw first-hand the ongoing works and now I am glad to see the rehabilitation project of the Attarin souks, completed. We hope this project will improve the lives of shop keepers, shoppers and the entire community.

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Devon landowner took 23 times the legal limit of waste from haulier

To restore land to agricultural use, the landowner imported 23,500 tonnes of soil but was only allowed a maximum of 1,000 tonnes.