



Press Release

Fransabank Knowledge® on “Performing in a Challenging World” with renowned international speakers in the presence of Lebanon’s Key Decision Makers

Beirut, 22nd February, 2012

On the occasion of its 90 years anniversary celebrations, Fransabank Group held on the 22nd of February, 2012 at the Adnan Kassar Edifice for Arab Economy, its "Knowledge®" Conference, an economic and finance conference with renowned Lebanese and international speakers from the business and financial sectors.

Held under the auspices of the Lebanese President of the Council of Ministers His Excellency Mr. Najib Mikati represented by Minister of Finance His Excellency Mr. Mohamad Safadi, Knowledge® tackled the topic of “Performing in a Challenging World” and was moderated by Mr. Ramzi El Hafez, publisher and editor-in-chief of the renowned Economic Magazine in Lebanon “Lebanon Opportunities” who provided a brief wrap up about each speaker’s main achievements as well as speeches.

On this occasion, Mr. Adnan Kassar, Chairman of Fransabank Group stated in his opening speech: “In my name and in the name of my brother Adel, we would like to thank His Excellency Mr. Najib Mikati for his patronage of this conference. He could not join us due to his commitment at the Parliamentary Session that is being held today. We thank HE Mr. Mohamad Safadi, Minister of Economy for representing him and welcome him among us. We would like also to thank the Governor of the Central Bank of Lebanon, H.E. Mr. Riad Salamé and all the renowned international speakers Mr. Helmut Maucher, Mr. Jean-René Fourtou and Mr. Philippe de Fontaine Vive, as well as our dearest friend Mr. Rahme Koç and all attendees for being present among us today.”

Commenting on Fransabank’s 90 years of history and legacy, President Kassar enthusiastically share his pride of what Fransabank Group has achieved, describing the Group’s growth as: “Respectful and worth of appreciation for the growth and development it achieved throughout the years which leads to aspiring to more promising growth and development in the future.” He also added: “We have organized this conference, inviting prominent speakers to share with us their expertise and knowledge, as well as their ‘secret recipes for success’ in leadership in international business and finance in a regional world marked with political uncertainties, and a global world faced with economic instabilities.” However, he asserted: We must confess to Lebanon’s competitive edge and its own success, as well as its ability to stand firm in front of unfavorable regional circumstances. It is all the result of the Lebanese people and their ability and capability to meet challenges with confidence due to their resilience to unfavorable circumstances. It is mostly the Lebanese economy’s unquestionable ability to surmount obstacles with dedication and resilience. Lebanon has proven to have a superb ability to adapt to changing conditions in difficult times and to safeguard its advantages. Our economy is backed by a strong banking sector that continues to overcome difficulties with success. Here we must recognize the prudent policies of our Central Bank under the wise leadership of His Excellency Governor Riad Salamé.”



In turn, H.E. Mr. Riad Salamé discussed the topic of “Sustaining a sound financial and monetary sector”, starting his speech about the dynamism of Fransabank, as well as its market position “Fransabank has turned into one of the leading banking groups in Lebanon. And since my appointment as Governor of the Central Bank, I have witnessed the efforts made by Minister and President Adnan Kassar and by President Adel Kassar, owing to which the bank has grown steadily and has contributed to a large extent to the economic development and the growth of the financial sector in Lebanon.”

At the financial level, Salamé stressed on Lebanon’s sound financial situation strengthened by the appropriate monetary environment. He added: “However, this was achieved through lengthy efforts, with the aim of building up a solid and strong system, characterized by its conservatism, and well-equipped to face any financial risk, political risk or security-associated risk.” He commented: “Our model gained confidence, knowing that confidence is a prerequisite for stability.” Confidence, Salamé accentuated, “stems from the strenuous efforts made constantly by the Central Bank, in terms of leadership, credibility, transparency, anticipation and decision-making”.

Mr. Helmut Maucher, the Honorary Chairman of Nestlé S.A., spoke about “Leadership in Business” where he explained: “When talking to business people these days or observing business in general, you will hear a lot about processing and application of information technology. And the topic of this conference is ‘Knowledge’ which is of course also important to the success in business. Many people even characterize the present day society already as a “knowledge society” and we also know that our knowledge is doubling about every three years. In view of all of this, we sometimes neglect or even seem to forget the importance of good leadership for success in business. That is probably why my friend Adnan Kassar has asked me to speak about during my intervention of “leadership in business” today.

At the end of his speech, Mr. Maucher emphasized on the fact that personality and character are more important for good leadership than professional skills and he always advises management to be always close to products, to people and to customers.

Mr. Jean-René Fourtou, The Chairman of the Supervisory Board of Vivendi, talked about “Competitiveness of emerging market companies in the global world”. He reviewed the evolution of group Vivendi, its history and its strategy in acquiring “Maroc Telecom” which was considered a success story in international markets. He revealed this success story and then listed Morocco’s growth and how it was able to achieve in the past ten years a steady growth, despite its lack of oil and raw materials for export, except for phosphate”. He concluded his speech, stating: “There are lots of opportunities in front of us, especially for you – the Lebanese entrepreneurs!”

Mr. Philippe de Fontaine Vive, The Vice President of the European Investment Bank, discussed the “Role of banks in sustainable economic development”. He commented: “If Fransabank was able to operate for 90 years as a financial institution it is because it has built trust and confidence, which is one of the most valuable assets of this bank. He also discussed the international financial crisis, where he expressed confidence that international banks can, and with the existence of recovery plans and regulatory reforms to face the repercussions of the impending crisis, along with confirmation of its role in long-term investments.

The conference was followed by a cocktail reception that was attended by over 500 key public and private figures, business men and women, academicians, as well as a large crowd of local and international media.

End of Press Release

For more information and for all speakers speeches

- Kindly visit Knowledge[®] specially dedicate site, on www.fransabank.com/fransabank90/knowledge.
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