Press Release

Adnan and Adel Kassar in a Press Conference Presenting the Achievements of "Beirut to Beijing"

The Project Laid the Foundation Stone for a Large and Successful Cooperation between Lebanon and China

Messrs. Adnan and Adel Kassar held a press conference on 28 July 2016 at Fransabank headquarters to present the achievements of the project "One Belt, One Road to China: Beirut to Beijing", organized and launched by Fransabank in the Chinese capital Beijing on the 15th of July and which runs until 29 July. This event was organized in collaboration with the China People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the support of the Lebanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Economy and Trade, Ministry of Tourism, the Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture in Lebanon (FCCIAL), the Investment Development Authority of Lebanon (IDAL) and with the cooperation of the Chinese embassy in Lebanon and the Lebanese Embassy in China.

The conference was attended by the commercial attaché of the Chinese Embassy Ms. Zhang Fengling, representatives of the Lebanese companies participating in the project activities, as well as representatives of the Lebanese and Chinese media.

In his address, Mr. Adnan Kassar stressed that the aim of this press conference is to highlight the important achievements of the project including the Corporate Conference held on 18 July and which was attended by 120 representatives of Chinese trade and investment groups alongside the Lebanese delegation.

Kassar expressed: “We, at Fransabank, are proud to have organized this event, promoting Lebanese culture, tourism, trade, cuisine and which helps identify potential partnerships between China and Lebanon in various sectors.” He thanked the Lebanese embassy in China, and its chargé d’affaires Mr. Hatem Nasrallah, the Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture in Lebanon (FCCIAL), as well as Chinese and Lebanese officials and private sector leaders, who through their efforts, have contributed to the success of this project.

Kassar also thanked the China People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC) for honoring him by issuing two commemorative stamps, unveiled to the public on the occasion. The first stamp shows a portrait of Adnan Kassar and names him as “an old friend of Chinese People”, thus making him the first non-head of state, in the history of China, to receive this honor. The second stamp bears the name of Lebanon celebrating the 45th anniversary of the establishment of China Lebanon diplomatic relations and symbolizes the activities of the project "Beirut to Beijing."

Kassar commended the Chinese President, His Excellency Xi Jinping and praised his visionary Silk Road strategy, which encompasses USD 6 trillion in resources to finance infrastructure, investment, telecommunication as well as cultural and other exchanges, with the support of the recently founded Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB).
Kassar stressed that Fransabank Group will continue its efforts and use all its resources to position Lebanon within this strategy. He also explained that the project "Beirut to Beijing", which was preceded by several initiatives launched by Fransabank with China, has managed to contribute to effectively placing Lebanon within the new revived Silk Road strategy.

Kassar added: "During the Lebanese corporate fair held in Beijing, we cooperated with the Chinese official institutions such as the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade, the Chamber of International Commerce, Chinamex, Complant, China Arab States Expo along with our Chinese friends and colleagues to ensure the presence of prominent Chinese enterprises."

Kassar also thanked all the participants in "Beirut to Beijing" and congratulated the Lebanese companies, who have either signed contracts with Chinese companies or are in the negotiation phase.

Kassar stated: "Fransabank Group is one of the leading banking and financial groups in Lebanon, and it’s within our commitment, my brother, Adel and I, to place our high level relations with China since more than 60 years at the service of the Chinese Lebanese ties and our dear country.” He added, "Fransabank Group has always been the pioneer amongst the supporters of activities related to China in the Arab world and in Lebanon in particular. What thrills me the most is to see that all my private and personal achievements to promote relations between China and Lebanon, and between China and the Arab world, are receiving today appreciation and respect from Chinese officials."

Kassar announced to the press and the audience that it is personally rewarding for him to come back from Beijing to Beirut with all these promising achievements, seizing the opportunity to announce "Beijing to Beirut", which will be held at Phoenicia Hotel in November, in the presence of Chinese officials and high-level delegations.

Kassar concluded: I am convinced that "One belt, One Road: Beirut to Beijing" and the strategy of the Chinese President, HE Xi Jinping, will create another milestone which will strengthen our friendship with China on one hand, and will promote the cultural and commercial exchange between our two countries on the other hand. We hope that the project “Beirut to Beijing” is the first step to greater partnerships and more successful joint projects, based on trust and mutual benefit."

Adnan and Adel Kassar later answered questions from journalists and representatives of the Lebanese and Chinese media. The conference was followed by a reception in honor of the attendees.

End of Press Release

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