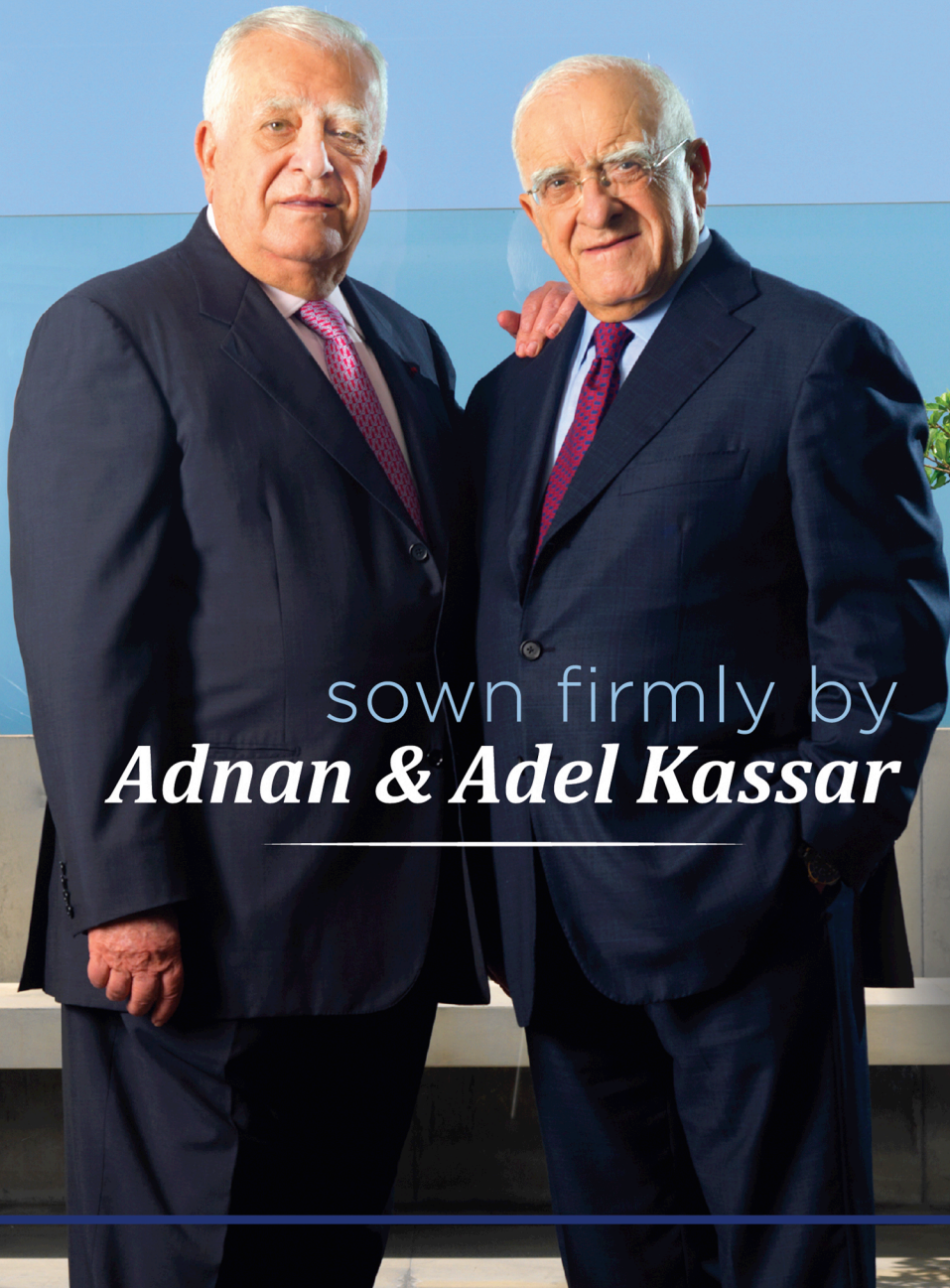


FRANSABANK's silk road to

CHINA



sown firmly by
Adnan & Adel Kassar

In the early 1950s, Adnan and Adel Kassar, then 20 and 18 years old, informed their father, Wafic Kassar, a prominent judge turned into Ambassador, that they would not continue in his footsteps but that they, after completing their Law Degrees, will seek to enter the business world.

Subsequent to constant persistence, Wafic Kassar agreed and gave his blessing to his only two sons, coupled with a small capital as start funds to help them pursue their entrepreneurial aims.

The Kassar brothers would travel to Karachi in the 1950s, when their father, Wafic Kassar was Ambassador of Lebanon to Pakistan and start a line of business there.



— Wafic and Shafiqah Kassar with their sons Adnan and Adel Kassar, 1945



— Ambassador Wafic Kassar in Karachi, 1954



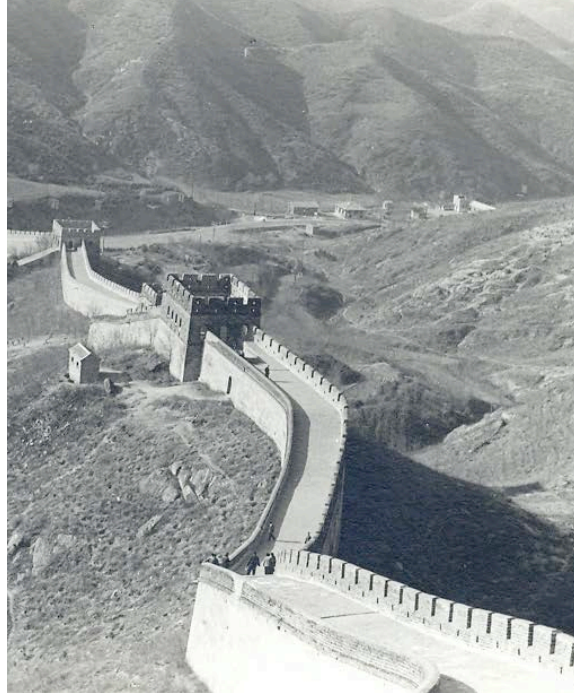
— Early days; Wafic and Shafiqah Kassar with Adnan Kassar on the far left.

The trips to Pakistan persisted, even after their father moved to Istanbul to become Ambassador of Lebanon to Turkey.

It was fate that would take Adnan Kassar in a certain 1954 trip to Karachi, where the young and aspiring Adnan Kassar meets with a visiting Chinese business delegation, buying cotton at the time, and there started the long legacy and the new era for the Kassar brothers and China.

The first Arab businessmen to establish relations with the People's Republic of China, they would work not only to promote China to Lebanon, but to the entire Arab world.

The Chinese delegation visiting Pakistan may have felt Adnan Kassar's enthusiasm to have invited him to Hong Kong. Adnan Kassar quickly takes them up on their invitation and effects this first of many trips to China.



— China – The route to Success for the Kassar brothers



— The China Resources building today in Hong Kong

The invitation to Hong Kong led him to meet with the representatives of China Resources (HK), which was handling, from Hong Kong, the business of the mainland People's Republic of China. His meeting with Mr. Chan HuaTseng was productive and led to fruitful results. Mr. HuaTseng then asked Adnan Kassar to obtain, from the President of the Republic of Lebanon, an invitation to visit Lebanon for the Chinese delegation attending the Damascus fair in Syria, for the first time, in 1955.

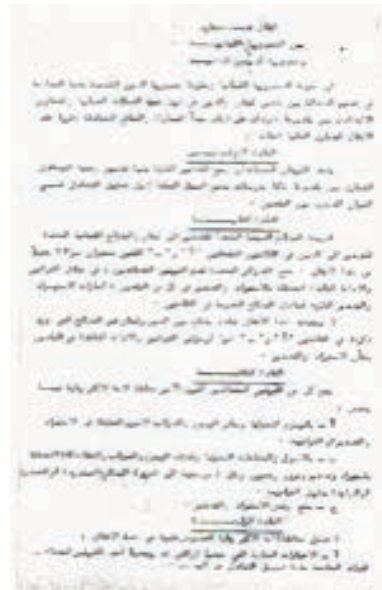
Lebanon had diplomatic relations with Taiwan and as the Lebanese Government then recognized Taiwan as the representative of China in Lebanon, it presents political incongruity to issue an invitation to Chinese delegates and so obtaining this invitation was quite challenging. But for Adnan and Adel Kassar, challenges were customary business and they worked relentlessly and successfully obtained this invitation from the President of the Republic of Lebanon, Mr. Camille Chamoun.

The first Chinese delegation then came to Lebanon in October 1955, headed by Mr. Chieng Ming, then Deputy Minister of Trade of China.



— Adnan and Adel Kassab host the first Chinese Delegation in 1955 in Chtaura

With the efforts of Adnan and Adel Kassab, the Chinese delegation, during this first Chinese visit to Lebanon, signed with the late Mr. Rachid Karame, then Minister of Trade of Lebanon, the first trade agreement between China and Lebanon, although Lebanon and China did not have diplomatic relations. This helped to effectively establish trade relations between China and Lebanon, and between China and the Arab world through Lebanon.



That same year, Adnan and Adel Kassab worked to establish the first economic representative office of the People's Republic of China in Lebanon. The non-existence of diplomatic relations between China and Lebanon, and the presence of an Ambassador of Taiwan in Lebanon, proved this endeavour to be quite exigent. Serious efforts were exerted with the Government of Lebanon, and Adnan Kassab would not stop until Lebanon had Mr. Wang Lee Wang, the first trade representative of the People Republic of China, raise the People's Republic of China flag high in Lebanon.

This attracted high opposition from the Taiwan and the US embassies.

The Kassab brothers would counter all resistance and ensure that the Chinese Representation in Lebanon would be the key start for the further development and strengthening of Lebanese and Arab relations with China.

Following their long and successful dealings with China Resources in Hong Kong, Adnan and Adel Kassab get invited to visit Peking in December 1956. The road from Hong Kong to Peking would prove challenging, but Adnan and Adel Kassab become accustomed to challenges.

Trips to Canton by train from Hong Kong, were followed by flights from Canton to to Peking on board old American planes with Russian engines that could only fly 1.5 to 2 hours. The planes made refueling stops in grass fields where they would watch the captain personally go down for the refueling. Barrels of oil would be brought to the plane, first shook to mix the fuel and the captain's hand going under the engines to ensure no fuel leaks.

Going to Peking becomes easier than returning to Hong Kong, after attending the Canton Fair which becomes an annual tradition for Adnan and Adel Kassab since 1956.



— Adnan Kassab at the Canton Hot Springs, Oct 1965



— Adnan Kassab being interviewed by the Chinese National Television Channel



On the return trip from Peking to Hong Kong, the voyage becomes more hectic and weighty having to drag suitcases filled with samples of products, ranging from foodstuffs, Chinese handicrafts, stationary, glassware and porcelain.

While back then many of these products were unknown outside of China, the dealerships and trade agreements Adnan and Adel Kassab established for the Arab countries ensures they became common goods available in the markets of the entire Arab world. The Kassab brothers often organized exhibitions to promote Chinese products in Lebanon and the Arab countries.

Adnan and Adel Kassab worked tirelessly to promote Chinese goods in the Arab world. They feel great personal pride and sincere satisfaction to see the then almost non-existent trade relations grow to have, in 2014, China become the Arab World's second biggest trade partner and the top trading partner for nine Arab countries.

The Chinese Lebanese Trade exchanges reached \$2 billion in 2014 making China Lebanon's top trading partners. On the other hand, the Trade volume between China and the Arab world has grown to an annual of US\$ 239 billion in 2013.



— Adnan Kassab at the Canton Fair



— Adnan Kassab at one of their exhibition for Chinese goods



— Adnan & Adel Kassab's First Chinese Exhibition of artifacts, gifts and ornaments 1964

Adnan and Adel Kassab take China to heart, for it taught them patience, resilience, efficiency and attention to the most minute of details.

They became first-rate students of the great Chinese school of business. And in all their activities, in all the positions they would assume, they would keep China deep in their heart.



— 1973 Adnan Kassar heads the 1st Lebanese business delegation to China and establishes the first diplomatic relations between the two countries.

In 1972, Adnan Kassar is elected the President of the Lebanese Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture. His first official visit in this capacity would be to China, when he heads the first Lebanese business delegation to visit China. The delegation comprised prominent leaders whose companies would grow and prosper from the ties they establish in China. It was at this time that Lebanon established diplomatic relations with China.

In the early 1970s as Adnan Kassar commences his official duties in the world of Chambers of Commerce in Lebanon climbing the top positions nationally, then regionally and internationally and ultimately assuming Ministerial posts as well, he would always keep China's interests on the top of his agenda.

Adel Kassar, on the other hand, would develop and strengthen their group's activities with China, prompting Arab and international companies to enter the Chinese business sector. Adel Kassar would lead the private business activities further growing the Arab and international trade with China over the years.



— Official Lebanese Government visit to China in 2002



Several Lebanese delegations are later organized and this included His Excellency the late Prime Minister of Lebanon, Mr. Rafic Harriri's trip in 2002, who insisted that Adnan Kassar be present by his side.

Adnan and Adel Kassar's real love for China and the Chinese people and their continued care to see the Chinese Lebanese and Arab relations further develop, prove mutually beneficial for them, and for the Chinese-Arab relations.

The Chinese proved to be excellent business partners for Adnan and Adel Kassar,

who reciprocate their trust and respect. Cooperation would establish businesses that met the common good for China and the Arab communities.

In 1981, Adnan Kassar organized the first Arab delegation visit to China and made it his personal mission to strengthen and bring closer the Chinese and Arab private sectors.



— Meeting H.E. Mr. Yao Yilin, Speaker of Parliament in 1981



— Arab delegations to Beijing 1981

The First Arab Delegation proved to be highly successful; Adnan Kassar would have the opportunity to meet with His Excellency, Mr. Yao Yilin, Speaker of Parliament of China. The visit paved the way for the start of a strong collaboration for business exchanges, trade and partnerships between China and the Arab World.



It was in this context that in April 1988, at the Damascus meeting of the General Union of Arab Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture, that Adnan Kassar proposed, and has approved, the establishment of the Chinese-Arab chamber of Commerce. Its mission, to develop and strengthen trade, commercial and other relations between China and the Arab world would prove successful.



— China Arab chamber of commerce, Beijing meeting 1995

The Chinese Arab Chamber would hold meetings in Beijing in 1995 then in Beirut, in Amman, in Dalian, in Dubai, in Shanghai as well as many other Arab and Chinese cities.



Adnan Kassar doesn't limit his endeavor to develop the Chinese relations to the Arab world. He also works towards developing relations between China and the international business community through the International Chamber of Commerce.

He traveled to China with an international delegation in January 1985 to set the ground for the first official ICC visit, which was effected to China, in June 1985. The ICC's relations with China would further develop and the ICC would organize the 32nd World Congress in Shanghai in 1997.

Adnan Kassar would later become the first Arab to lead the International Chamber of Commerce, which has over 140 national committees and represents the world private sector, becoming its Chairman in 1999. His main concern was to have China become a member of the ICC and worked diligently towards the successful launch of the first National Committee of the ICC in China. China is now an active member in the International Chamber of Commerce.



— ICC visit to China organized by Adnan Kassar, 1985



— ICC World Congress in Shanghai 1997

Whether in his Lebanese, Arab, or international leading positions, the Chinese would always find Adnan Kassar's doors open wide for them.



— Meeting in Damascus the Minister of Foreign Trade of China, Mr. Li Lang Chang, July 1991



— Welcoming in Beirut the Minister of Foreign Affairs of China



— Mrs. Wu Yi, Vice Premier of State Council of the People's Republic of China visiting Adnan Kassab March 2002



— Adnan Kassab meets with Vice Minister of China, H.E. Mr. Bi Jingquan in St. Petersburg, Russia, June 2007

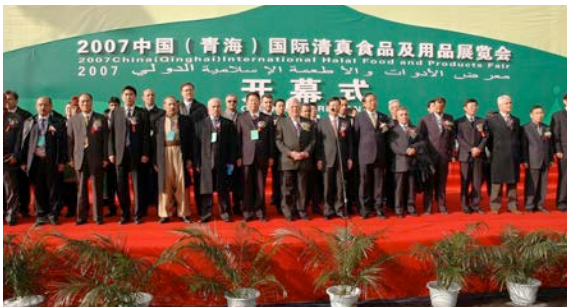
The Chinese delegations Adnan Kassab received, as President of the Lebanese Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture, or as Chairman of the General Union of Arab Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture, would be many. They were all highly welcomed and given the closest of attention. Receiving Chinese delegations and officials always bring back to Adnan Kassab fond and dear memories of China. Through his journey with China, Adnan Kassab would build lifetime friendship and close partnerships that he would forever dearly value.



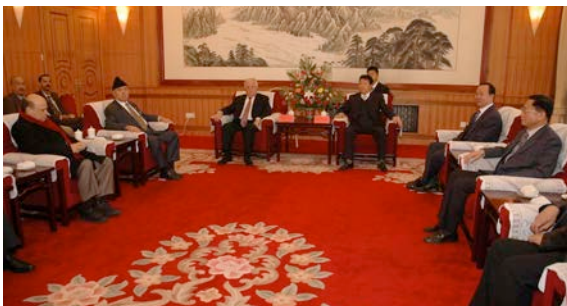
— Adnan Kassar receiving the Chinese Ambassador and Commercial Attache Mme Ge in his home, 2011



Every Ambassador of China to Lebanon would be told of Adnan and Adel Kassar's close ties to China and with every Ambassador and every employee of the Chinese embassy, a close relationship would be established and grown into a lasting friendship. The Kassar brothers would continue to always welcome Chinese delegations with warmth that matches their great attachment to China, welcoming them as though they are receiving family and friends.



Believing in personal contacts as the key to establishing and developing closer ties, Adnan Kassar would promote Arab and international participation in various forums, conferences and fairs in China.



— Adnan Kassar holds high level meetings bringing the Arab – Chinese Communities closer

Adnan Kassar would also often invite Arab Chamber leaders and business delegations to travel with him to China with the aim of further developing the relations and creating new partnerships.





— CCPIT Chairman Wan Jifei decorating Adnan Kassab with the Honorary Membership Award, Beijing Oct 2007



— Meeting with Vice Premier of China H.E. Mr. Hui Liangyu, Oct 2007

China, on all levels, appreciated Adnan Kassab, and to show its gratitude, the Chinese Government invited Adnan Kassab to Beijing in 2007 to present him an award, declaring him a true and lifetime friend of China and the Chinese people for over 50 years.

The award marked the half a century of Adnan Kassab's giving to China, the five decades of Adnan Kassab's friendship to China and the 50 years of Adnan Kassab's commitment to China. The award is a token of gratitude and appreciation for Chairman Adnan Kassab's endeavors to strengthen and promote trade and economic relations between China and the Arab World.

The Ceremony honored Chairman Adnan Kassab with Lifetime Membership in China Council for Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT), presented by CCPIT Chairman Mr. Wan Jifei.

This award would be the most treasured of decorations and awards Adnan Kassab has already received from the highest levels, from all parts of the world.

Adnan Kassab would not culminate his work with China with this award, but would dedicate increased efforts and a new drive to pursue closer ties with China, its banks, its companies and its citizens.

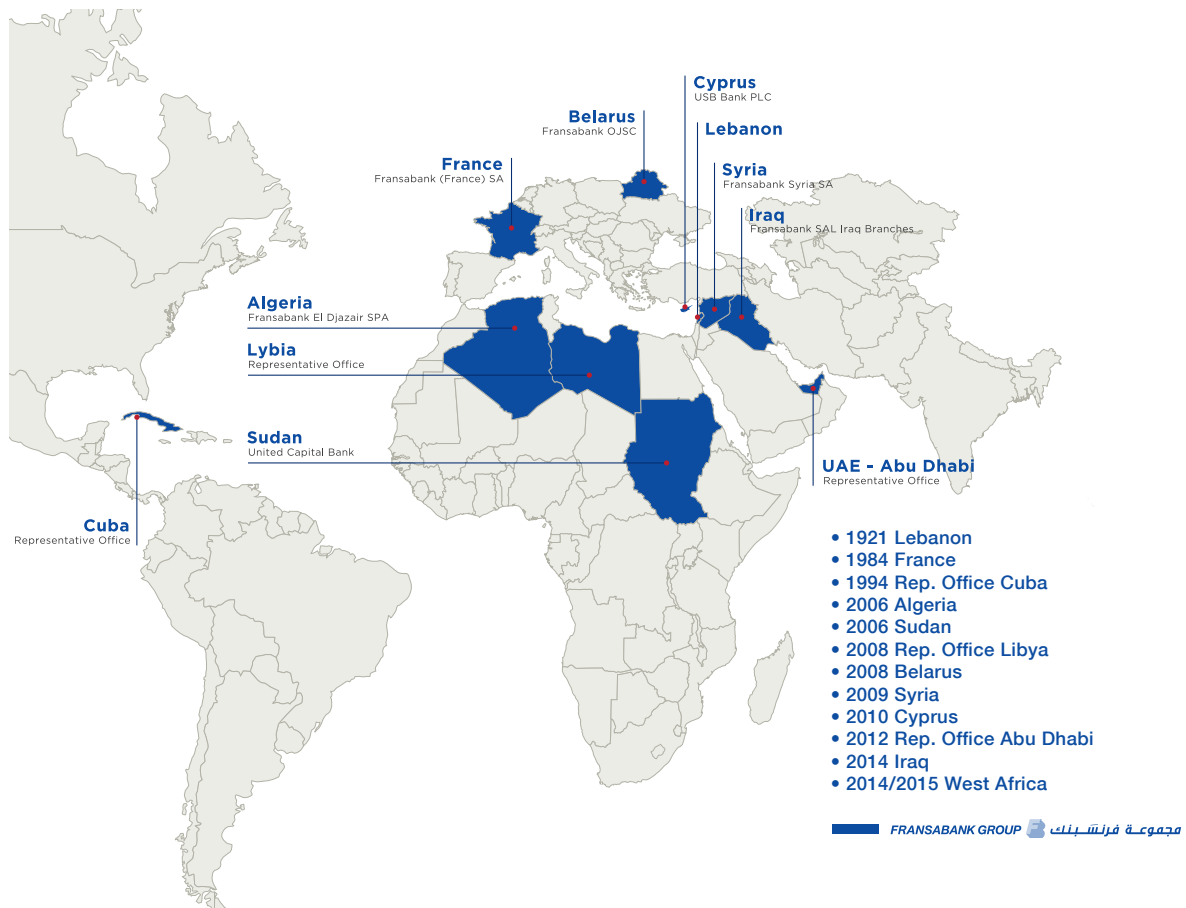


Adnan and Adel Kassar, in the 1980s, became the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Fransabank Group which they acquired and they remain today its majority shareholders. Fransabank is the oldest bank in Lebanon, established in 1921.

They would pave the way, with their visionary management, to make Fransabank a leading Lebanese bank, headquartered in Beirut with subsidiaries or affiliated entities in over 11 countries.



Adnan and Adel Kassar celebrating the 90th anniversary of Fransabank Group, which was established in 1921



Fransabank Group is a major player of the solid Lebanese banking sector which has been and is still considered the backbone of the Lebanese economy. In fact, it is the Lebanese banking sector which has ensured that Lebanon's economy survived during challenging times ranging from the international financial crisis, the global recession as well as instability ties to national and regional crises.

Adnan and Adel Kassar have developed a high level and strong collaboration and association between Fransabank Group and

the world's leading international financial institutions. The bank shareholding itself comprises prominent international financial institutions. This has empowered the bank to offer highly competitive products and services to its large clientele in its markets of operations as well as in other markets. Such strategic ties also effectively enabled Fransabank Group to serve Lebanese and international clients all over the world, thus growing from a Lebanese to an international financial institution offering universal products and services.

Shareholders of Fransabank

Adnan Kassar	39.50%
Adel Kassar	39.50%
Deutsche Investitions - und Entwicklungsgesellschaft mbH (DEG) <i>Germany</i>	5.00%
Al-Fadi Holdings Limited - Kingdom of <i>Saudi Arabia</i>	2.70%
The Public Institution for Social Security <i>Kuwait</i>	2.00%
Local, Arab and Int'l investors (each holding less than 2%)	11.30%
Total	100%

In 2007, BPCE, the second largest French group, has joined the shareholding of our French subsidiary Fransabank (France), acquiring a 40% of stake.

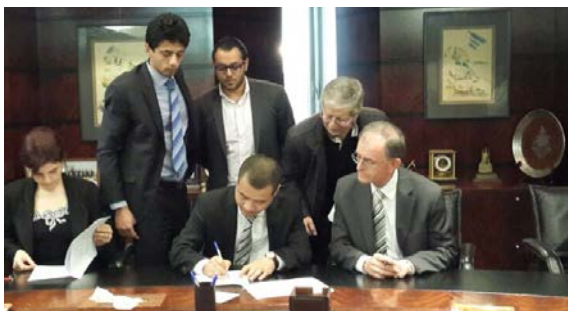


Fransabank has been benefiting for more than fifteen years from Medium to Long term credit lines granted by international financing and developmental institutions, namely:



Adnan and Adel Kassar, with China always kept in their hearts, would spur Fransabank Group to establish a China desk. The goal was to continue serving and supporting the interests of China and to make Fransabank Group a partner for the Chinese businesses, investors and traders.

As the first bank in the Arab world to dedicate a China desk, catered to serving the banking and finance ties with China and the Chinese companies dealing in Fransabank Group markets, a new page of relations starts to build on the historic and close ties between the Kassar Group and China.



Fransabank Group's China Desk is dedicated to serving Chinese companies in the various markets where our group operates. The objective of our China Desk is to promote and facilitate exchanges between the Chinese businesses and companies in Fransabank areas of operations.

The China Desk aims to develop Fransabank Group's relations with Chinese banks, institutions, embassies and other entities.

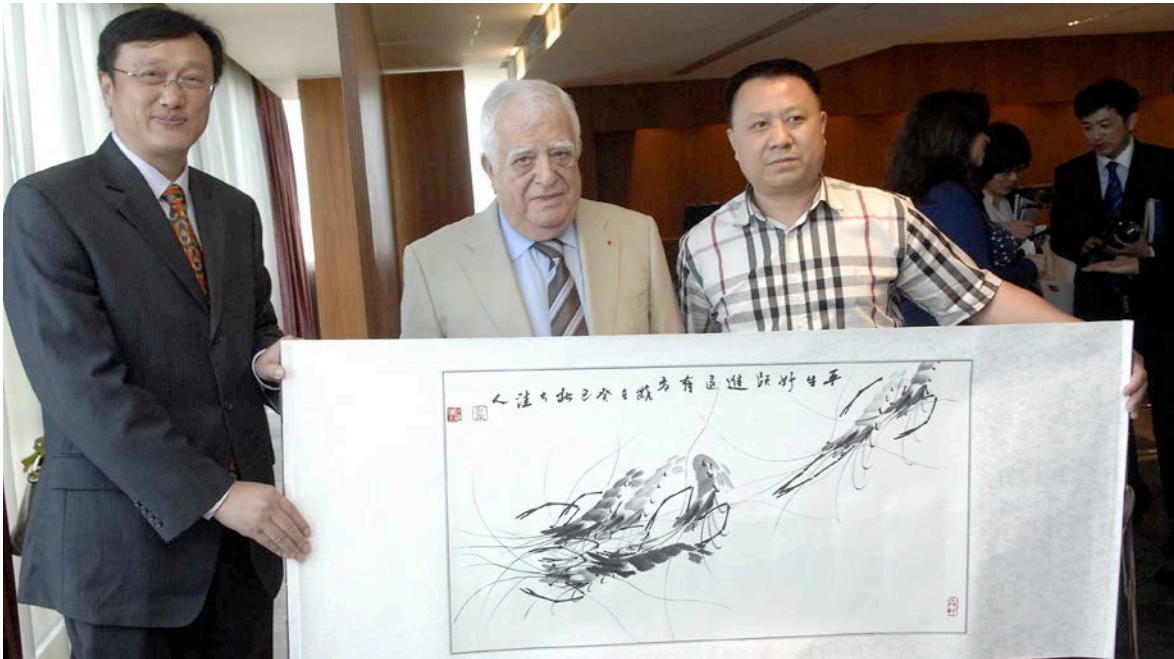
The China Desk works to identify competitive products and services to cater to the needs of its clients in their dealings with China, as well as to serve the Chinese companies and entities working in its markets.



— Leading Chinese Telecom Group signing a financing agreement with Fransabank Group, January 2014

Fransabank's China Desk was established in 2013 to build on the Kassab brothers' long-standing relations with China which dates back to the 1950s. Fransabank Group's China desk invites and receives Chinese delegations, trade missions and banking groups, amongst others.

With the Chinese economy growing at unmatched capacities and with Chinese companies becoming valid competitive international players, Fransabank Group uses the wealth of contacts and respect enjoyed by its shareholders to gain a new competitive edge.



— Adnan Kassab receiving Chinese delegations at Fransabank headquarters, 2013

In April 2014, Fransabank Group China Desk received a high level Banking Delegation visit from China with whom talks for closer correspondent banking and trade finance relations were effectively discussed.

The visit was successful in promoting and developing stronger relations with the various leading Chinese banks participating in this delegation, to serve each other's clients in the respective areas of operations.

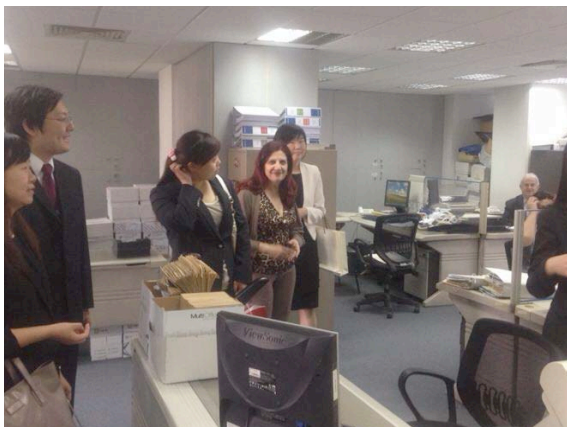


Adnan and Adel Kassar had ensured, upon their acquisition of Fransabank SAL in the 1980s, to establish correspondent accounts with Chinese banks.

Fransabank has, for over three decades, started and developed a strong collaboration with the various leading Chinese banks for the purpose of serving each other's customers and facilitating trade exchanges between China and the Arab world, as well as the other markets served Fransabank's growing international expansion.

The China Desk team would build on this historic strong relationship with the Chinese banks to further strengthen the relations to better cater to the growing Chinese presence and investments in its markets.

Fransabank counts amongst its Chinese correspondent and partner banks many of the leading Chinese banks including Bank of China, ICBC, The Agricultural Bank of China, China Citic Bank, China Merchants Bank, China Development Bank, Exim Bank as well as many foreign banks present in China.



— Chinese Banks visiting Fransabank Group's Trade Finance Division, April 2014



The Fransabank Group executives have become closely attached to the mission of expanding Fransabank Group's ties to China, to Chinese banks, entities and to Chinese clients.

They have well captured the admiration of the Kassab brothers for China, to develop their own enthusiasm and care for promoting links and ties to Chinese entities and the wonderful people of China.

Fransabank executives would plan frequent travels and missions to China to ensure they remain personally abreast of the latest developments in the Chinese economy, as well as in close contact with Fransabank Group's partners, clients and friends in China.



While a team at Fransabank is dedicated to the development of ties with Chinese entities, Adnan and Adel Kassar would remain personally involved in the activi-

ties and are now even more motivated to serving the Chinese interests, trade and investment relations in the Arab world and internationally.



— September 2013, Adnan and Adel Kassar at the Phoenicia Hotel celebrating China National Day, hosted by the Embassy of China in Lebanon



To commemorate over 60 years since the signing of the Lebanese - China Trade Agreement, the first in the Arab world, Adnan and Adel Kassar will be hosting, in 2015, the 60th anniversary celebration in Lebanon. On the occasion, they have invited the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade - CCPIT, the General Union of Arab Chambers of Commerce,

Industry and Agriculture and the League of Arab States, to hold the China Arab Chamber of Commerce meetings and China Arab Business Forum in Beirut.

Fransabank and the Kassar family will host the visiting Chinese and Arab public and private sector delegates for a grand celebration event in Lebanon.



— Adnan Kassar discussing with Chinese Embassy planning for 2015 anniversary celebration marking 60 years since signing of Lebanese - China Trade Agreement.

Following Fransabank Group's Chairmen Adnan & Adel Kassab's belief and engagement to create a better community and society, we have included environmental and social aspirations in our core activities. In 2013, Fransabank joined the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC), becoming the first Bank in Lebanon to become a participant in the UNGC. As such, the Bank is fully dedicated to the UNGC ten principles that are committed to sustainability and responsible business practices in the areas of environment, human rights, labor, and anti-corruption.

A long history of corporate initiatives backs up Fransabank achievements as a corporate responsible financial institution in five areas of interests.

- Integrity and Trust
- Responsible Employer
- Supporting Economic Development
- Environment and Sustainability
- At the Heart of the Communities



Fransabank Group International & Local Awards

“Business for Peace” Award granted to H.E. Mr. Adnan Kassar, Chairman of Fransabank Group, by the Business for Peace Foundation’s independent Award Committee consisting of Nobel Prize winners in Peace and Economics. The ceremony took place during the Oslo Business for Peace Summit and Award on May 15, 2014, in the Oslo City Hall.

“Arab Banker of the Year 2012-2013” granted to H.E. Mr. Adnan Kassar, Chairman of Fransabank Group in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the field of banking and finance in the Arab world.

“Best Private Banking Services in Lebanon 2013” granted to Fransabank Group by the Euomoney Awards under the Family Office Services category.

“Social Economic Award 2013” won by Fransabank under Art & Heritage category in honor of its JABAL initiative.

“The Best Banking Group in Lebanon 2012” was granted to Fransabank Group by the the Global Banking & Finance Review.

“The Best Investment Bank for 2012” was granted to Fransa Invest Bank, Fransa-bank Group’s investment and private banking arm by the World Finance Magazine.

In May 2012, the Banker, part of the Financial Times group, presented Fransabank Group three awards:

For **“The Banker Deals of the year 2012 Awards for the Middle East.”** Fransabank was selected for one award **“The banker Deals of the year 2012 - Loans - Middle east”**

Fransa Invest Bank was selected for **“The Banker Deals of the year 2012 - Loans - Middle East”**

Fransa Invest Bank was selected for **“The Banker Deals of the year 2012 - Bonds, Sovereigns, Supras and Agencies - Middle East.”**

“Social Economic Award 2012” won by Fransabank under Women Empowerment Category.

“Best Contactless Innovation Award” won by Fransabank for its innovative Master-Card PayPass Card, during the “Smart Card Awards Middle East 2012” that was organized by Terrapin in the UAE.

“Largest National Outreach Award 2012” won by Fransabank for its largest branch network in Lebanon within the Lebanese National Achievement Awards for Banking.



FRANSABANK

China Desk contact details



Mr. Georges ANDRAOS
Head of International Division
T. 00961 1 340 180/8 - **Ext.** 1401
Direct. 00961 1 753 339
E. georges.andraos@fransabank.com



Mrs. Nadine HAJJAR
Advisor to the Chairman
Direct. 00961 1 342 613
E. nadine.hajjar@fransabank.com



Mrs. Chirine ARAYSSI
Head of Correspondent Banking
International Division
T. 00961 1 340 180/8 - **Ext.** 1238
E. chirine.arayssi@fransabank.com



Mrs. Carine AZKOUL
Relationship Manager
International Division
T. 00961 1 340 180/8 - **Ext.** 1486
E. carine.azkoul@fransabank.com



Mr. Mazen ASSAAD
Senior Relationship Officer
International Division
T. 00961 1 340 180/8 - **Ext.** 1497
E. mazen.assaad@fransabank.com