

Press Release

Adnan Kassar heading Lebanese delegation to China

The President of the Lebanese economic organizations and former Minister Adnan Kassar, Chairman & CEO of Fransabank Group headed today the 50 member Lebanese business delegation to China for the "Beirut2Beijing" project under the title "One Belt One Road to China", to be held in the landmark Minzu Hotel in the heart of China's capital Beijing from 15 to 29 July, on the occasion of the 45th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Lebanon.

"Beirut2Beijing" is an idea launched during the meeting held between President Adnan Kassar and the President of China's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries Mrs. LI XIAOLIN in Cairo earlier this year, on the sidelines of the ceremony where China President Xi Jinping granted Adnan Kassar the "China Arab Outstanding Contribution Award".

Beijing2Beijing aims to promote economic, trade, investment and tourism relations between Lebanon and China, through the participation of leading Lebanese companies in key Lebanese productive sectors including wine, dairy products, chocolate, olive oil, olives and soap, canned food, nuts, honey, artisanat as well as services sectors including banking, transportation, legal advisory, consultancy and others. The purpose is to effectively establish a foothold for Lebanese companies in China and create partnerships with Chinese companies, as China is today a promising market with enormous potential for Lebanon and one of the most important trading partner for the Arab world.

The project includes the Lebanese gourmet festival offering Lebanese Cuisine from 15 to 29 July at Minzu Hotel's restaurant, a corporate fair from 15 to 20 July where the Lebanese companies exhibit their products and services in the hotel's ballroom and a Corporate Conference followed by Business to Business meetings on the 18th of July. It also comprises cultural and entertainment programs held every Friday evening during July.

The grand opening of Beirut2Beijing will take place in the evening of 15 July hosted by the People's Association of Friendship with Foreign Countries in the presence of officials from the China Foreign Ministry, the Arab Ambassadors in China, as well as high level officials and business leaders from China. The VIP opening will see the launch of official Stamp envelopes designed and printed by the Stamp Association of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in collaboration with the China National Philatelic Corp. to celebrate the **45th Anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Lebanon**, one bearing the portrait of President Adnan Kassar proclaiming him "Old Friend of Chinese People" and another bearing the image of Lebanese cuisine, culture and products.

On the occasion, President Kassar stated that "the China Lebanon historic relations date back thousands of years into the ancient silk road and the modern relations started in 1955 when the first trade agreement between China and Lebanon was signed, and which my brother Adel and I had the honor to promote, culminating in the 1972 establishment of diplomatic relations between Lebanon and the Peoples Republic of China. Today China is Lebanon's number one trade partner. My brother Adel and I are building on our personal and historic ties to this great nation for the benefit of our beloved country Lebanon. China has

been a great school as Adel and I started dealing with China in the early fifties. We were the first Arabs to deal with the People's Republic of China, witnessing - over the decades - the growth of China to become a major economic and political world power. I am confident in the enormous potential to be derived from Beirut2Beijing as a momentum created in the spirit of China President Xi's new Silk Road Strategy, setting another major milestone for friendship between the people and business cooperation between our companies, based on trust and mutual benefit. "

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End of Press Release

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