



## **A new Group of Climate Change Champions awarded during the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Ceremony of the Lebanon Climate Act**

Press Release

Beirut, on 28 September 2018

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The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Ceremony of the Lebanon Climate Act was held on Friday September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at Le Royal Hotel Dbayeh during the 9<sup>th</sup> International Beirut Energy Forum.

The event featured the Keynote Speakers: Mr. Philippe Lazzarini, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, United Nations Development Programme, Mr. Mohamed Choucair, Chairman of the Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture in Lebanon represented by Mrs. Rola Sleiman, External Relations Manager, Mrs. Nada Zaarour, President of Green Mind NGO, and Dr. Raed Charafeddine, First Vice-Governor of Banque du Liban (via a video message).

The Lebanon Climate Act is a program organized by Green Mind NGO in partnership with the UNDP in Lebanon and Banque Du Liban, and in cooperation with the Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture in Lebanon. It is the only platform existing in Lebanon and in the Arab World where businesses are being supported in becoming engaged in the fight against climate change and in supporting the government of Lebanon to achieve its emissions reduction commitment as per our country's INDC.

*Lebanon's INDC (Intended Nationally Determined Contribution) is the document where Lebanon has publicly outlined what climate actions it intends to take under the international Paris agreement by 2030, and has set a target of 15% CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduction as an unconditional target and committed to reduce 30% of its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions conditional to finance, technical support and capacity building.*

Mr. Philippe Lazzarini, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, United Nations Development Programme said that "The Lebanon Climate Act is an initiative that stems from government policy to support the private sector in the national response to climate change. After all, at the heart of Lebanon's economy are the vibrant entrepreneurs and industrialists. But the productive sector also produces solid waste, discharges waste water and emits greenhouse gases as well as chemical fumes, all of which contaminate the natural environment if systems are not put in place to reduce pollution and emissions that cause climate change. Here we observe the real struggle between economic growth and impact on the environment. Supporting small and medium enterprises and industrial facilities is important for creating jobs, improving livelihoods and ultimately economic development in a country such as Lebanon."

Mrs. Nada Zaarour, President of Green Mind NGO emphasized the program's harmony with the global actions and programs and said "We are very happy to learn that we are much in

line with the world's climate activities direction. For instance, in the San Francisco's Global Climate Action Summit that was held just 10 days ago, the outcome of the main discussions under the Talanoa Dialogue was to make a call for global leaders and businesses to join the grand coalition to combat climate change in order to reduce the global carbon emissions while using these actions as an engine of economic and social growth; a call that we have similarly started almost 3 years ago here in Lebanon through the Lebanon Climate Act Program."

Mr. Mohamad Choucair, President of the Federation of the Lebanese Chambers, conveyed through his representative, the message that "Economic organizations in Lebanon are attaching great importance to climate change and nature protection, and are urging the authorities to do the same". He added "The adoption of Lebanon Climate Act in 2016 was an important milestone but a lot remains to be done, starting with zero taxation on organic products and investing in clean energy". Finally, he insisted on the role that the Federation of Chambers seeks to play in encouraging companies to adopt an ecological behavior that preserves the future of earth.

Via his video keynote, Dr. Raed Charafeddine, Vice Governor of Banque Du Liban stated "We all have a role to play in preserving our climate and environment; it is a shared responsibility of all sectors. From our side, Banque Du Liban has been keen for the past two decades to foster sustainable growth. To this end, we have been promoting environmentally friendly initiatives as part of our loan incentive packages as well as encouraging the banking sector to adopt international environmental standards for due diligence while granting loans."

He added "Green Mind and the UNDP have been doing a great job in leading the Lebanon Climate Act program, and now we are counting on your response to this global call as representatives of the private sector to advance this mission and achieve positive results."

The ceremony featured a documentary film on the achievements of the Lebanon Climate Act Champions of 2017, as well as a Panel session with a few of the Champions of 2018 under the title "From Intentions to Actions – A discussion with the new Climate Champions".

The Panel session was moderated Mr. Albert Thoumy, MTV star host, and addressed the key drivers for engaging in climate action with 4 of the new champion companies: Gemayel Freres, MTV, Notre Dame University and Holy Spirit University of Kaslik.

Finally, the new companies demonstrating climate change leadership were announced and awarded the "Climate Change Champion 2018" trophies in recognition of their efforts.

Those companies are:

- Gemayel Freres,
- Gandour,
- Adel Metni Foundation,
- Notre Dame University,
- Holy Spirit University of Kaslik,
- Nature by Marc Beyrouthy,
- Commercial Insurance,
- Patchi,
- MTV,
- and Webcor Group.