

Jbeil District Sustainable Tourism Vision

رؤية لسياحة مستدامة لمدينة وقضاء جبيل

Lebanese American University

Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury Health Sciences Auditorium, Byblos Campus. 7-9 April 2022

Cultural Routes of The Council of Europe agreement (EPA)

Towards Sustainable Tourism Roadmap for Lebanon

Dr. Rachid Chamoun, Director, LAU-LCF, Board Member of WATCH

Excellences, honoured guests, partners and colleagues,

I am honoured to welcome you to this intercultural forum on Jbeil District Sustainable Tourism Vision.

Our collaboration with the Lebanese Ministry of Tourism / started on the occasion of the Ministry's launch of the "Winter Tourism package 2021-2022" at the Grand Serail on the 4th of November 2021. His Excellency, Minister of Tourism Eng. Walid Nassar, presented the Ministry's Action Plan, encompassing his vision and aspirations for the tourism reality in Lebanon for a short, medium and long-term plan. The action plan roadmap highlights reactivating agreements with a network of National and International Tourism Organizations, specifically the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the European Institute of Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe, and La Rotta dei Fenici. " In his speech, Minister Nassar expressed his interest publicly to collaborate with the public and private sectors, and we have taken tangible actions with the support of LAU President Dr. Michel Mawad.

The Lebanese Council of Ministers in their meeting on February 10, 2022 have approved the EPA membership in accordance with the accession letter of the Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Lebanon dated 15 November, 2021 to the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe (EPA). On February 18, 2022 ,During the International Conference on the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe Crossing Italy: A European Heritage, officially announced Lebanon , the 35 Member State of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe.

We are thankful to His Excellency, the President of the Republic General Michel Aoun and the Lebanese Council of Ministers, for their approval and support, given the relevance of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe program for the protection and promotion of our country's cultural heritage.

Through its program, the Council of Europe offers a model for transnational cultural and tourism management and allows synergies between national, regional and local authorities and a wide range of associations and socio-economic sectors. Our affiliation with the Cultural routes of the council of Europe will pave the way to strengthen our constitutional goal towards the enhancement of memory, history, heritage; cultural and educational exchanges within the discourse of multiple layers of contemporary cultural and artistic practice; cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development.

On behalf of LAU project team, we thank H.E. Minister of Tourism Eng. Walid Nassar and Dr. Stefano DOMINIONI, Executive Director and Executive Secretary, of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on the European Institute of Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe for accomplishing the mission for Lebanon the 36 Member State of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe.

It has been an enjoyable cultural mission with the Lebanese Ministry of Tourism and the European Institute of Cultural Route since 2017.

In my capacity as a student of nation building, learning from the intercultural dialogue and programs at the Cultural Routes in the Council of Europe, it is a privilege to be entrusted in representing the Ministry of Tourism to the EPA on the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe.

Pursuant to our recent consecutive international activities at the Lebanese Pavilion expo 2020 on “Cultural Tourism Road Map for Lebanon” on January 16 and the Intercultural Forum on Cultural Tourism Roadmap for Lebanon from March 4-11, 2022. I am happy to announce the upcoming “Euro Mediterranean Intercultural Dialogue Forum” **Under the patronage of His Excellency, President of the Republic General Michel Aoun- Represented by his Excellency Minister of tourism Eng. Walid Nassar.**

The Lebanese American University and the Lebanese Ministry of Tourism shall launch the Euro Mediterranean Intercultural Dialogue Forum in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Agriculture, the European Institute of Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe, La Rotta dei Fenici, Routes of the Olive Tree, Iter Vitis Route(Wine Route), and Routes of El legado Andalusí by the Umayyad Route. With the participation of the Ministry of Foreign affairs, and Ministry of Environment.

The Forum will focus on enhancing the joint mission of the Lebanese Ministry of Tourism and the Lebanese American University to disseminate knowledge about the history of Lebanon and will seek to sustain Lebanon’s intercultural dialogue and connectivity with the confederation of the Euro-Mediterranean cities to promote Lebanon’s Cultural Tourism industry towards boosting its Economy. The forum will be for two consecutive days and will take at LAU –Byblos, and the Municipality of Jounieh on April 20&21, 2022.

The Forum consisting of various activities among them: 1.) Celebration of Lebanon, the 35th Member State of the Council of Europe, 2.) The launch of the Intercultural Dialogue Academy for Lebanon, and 3.) The inauguration of the Phoenicians’ route Museum in the historical district of Jounieh and 4.) To celebrate “Bkassine Best Tourism Villages by UNWTO.

Together we seek to promote and sustain Lebanon’s Sustainable Tourism Industry, according to the Ministry’s Cultural Tourism Roadmap in line with The Phoenicians’ Route Action Plan and the Strategies of the European Institute of Cultural routes.