



## "Routes and Dialogue" for the Heritage Beyond Walls programme

Tuesday, March 15th, 5pm to 7 pm (Italian time),

Dr. Rachid Chamoun, Director LAU-LCF, Honorary President of the Phoenicians' Route

Advisor to the Lebanese Minister of Tourism for International Relations

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84978966685>

Honored colleagues and partners,

I thank you for your invitation and I hope that our participation would bring in an added value for the "Routes and Dialogue" -Heritage Beyond Walls programme. Our intercultural dialogue seeks to enhance of our cultural tourism road map, to be implemented within the strategic themes and actions according to the changes taking place inside and outside the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe.

The current collaboration between the Lebanese American University and 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 encompassing our 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 opening speech, The minister of tourism expressed his interest publicly to collaborate with the public and private sectors. LAU have taken tangible actions with the support of LAU President Dr. Michel Mawad. I feel honored to have been entrusted by His Excellency Minister of Tourism Eng. Walid Nassar to serve in my capacity as the advisor for international affairs to represent Lebanon to the EPA into the European Institute of Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe. Yes indeed, it is more of a mission than a project for Lebanon in line with my sustainable commitment being the Honorary President of La Rotta dei Fenici confederation.

The Lebanese Council of Ministers in their meeting on March 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). Recently, 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 36 Member State of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe.

Today, I am delighted to announce to you Lebanon” in its position, the 36 Member State with the Enlarged Partial Agreement, for the Cultural Routes, Council of Europe. The very first Euro-Mediterranean Middle eastern country to be a Member State to the EPA, into the Council of Europe.

I share with you our acknowledgment to thank his Excellency, President of the Lebanese Republic General Michal Aoun, and his Excellency Prime Minister Najib Mekate, and the Lebanese Cabinet of Ministers for their approval and support for Lebanon’s accession to the EPA. Yes indeed, we thank his Excellency Minister of tourism Eng Walid Nassar and LAU President Dr Michel Mawad, and sincere and warm gratitude to Dr Stefano Dominioni, Executive Director of the Enlarged Partial Agreement at the Council of Europe for their continues support.



Our State Membership within the European Institute of Cultural Routes Council of Europe shall strengthen our current institutional affiliation with “La Rotta dei Fenici” and Routes of El legado Andalusí’ by the Umayyad Route, and shall activate our association with the Routes of the Olive Tree, and Iter Vitis Route (Wine Route), and other applicable cultural routes for Lebanon.

Pursuant to our recent “Intercultural Forum”- Cultural Tourism Roadmap for Lebanon at the Lebanese Pavilion- Expo 2020 Dubai- March 4-11, 2022, and in line with “Routes and Dialogue” for the Heritage Beyond Walls”. I am happy to announce our upcoming cultural forum in Lebanon.

Under the patronage of His Excellency, President General Michel Aoun. The Lebanese American University and the Lebanese Ministry of Tourism shall launch the Euro Mediterranean Intercultural Dialogue Forum in collaboration with Ministries of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Culture and the with the participation the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), and the European Institute of Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe.

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 three consecutive days and will take place at LAU –Byblos, and the Municipality of Jounieh on April 19, 20&21, 2022. The Forum has a threefold activities 1.) Celebration of Lebanon, the 36th 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.



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.

Our intercultural dialogue connectivity and discussions within the European institute of cultural routes may include but not limited to the following pool of thoughts for sharing our common values.

Leisure and cultural tourism, key resources for responsible tourism and sustainable development, Human Rights and Democracy, Tolerance, Coexistence Negations, Euro-Mediterranean Tangible and Intangible Heritage, Educational and Cultural Exchange and the development of Peace and Mutual respect .

It has been an enjoyable cultural journey with the Lebanese Ministry of Tourism, the Phoenicians route management team 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.