



Under the auspices of:

H.E. The President of the Council of Ministers **Mr. Fouad Siniora**

Date & Venue: 20 – 21 September 2006, Phoenicia Inter-Continental – Beirut

Organized by: ExiCon Exhibitions & Conferences

In cooperation with Lebanese Ministries:

Ministry of Finance

Ministry of Public Works and Transport

In Coordination with Lebanese Ministries:

Ministry of Economy

Ministry of Industry

Ministry of Energy and Water

Ministry of Social affairs

Ministry of Public Health

ESCWA - UN

Reconstruction Projects and Investment Opportunities in Lebanon

Introduction:

It seemed obvious, from the moment the war started in Lebanon that the Israeli aggression was aiming at the destruction of the infrastructure and the vital utilities in various areas of Lebanon. The assault had, arbitrarily and mercilessly, targeted all areas, facilities, bridges, roads, ports and even places of residence, health, education and social services. This has led to a grave humanitarian disaster which has left Lebanon in ruins. The country is going through a devastating phase and needs tremendous effort to be reconstructed in accordance to what has been stated at the Rome summit and the recent Security Council meeting where Resolution 1701 was passed.

This was preceded by the setting up of the Arab International Fund for the Reconstruction of Lebanon which was initiated by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia with a 500 million-dollar grant followed by 300 million from Kuwait. The Lebanese Government contacted international and Arab authorities and organisations in order to put forward reconstruction plans and mechanisms and to gather necessary support. The World Bank, the IMF, and the United Nations Development Programme are expected, accordingly, to play a major role in this along with the indispensable role of Arab governments and organisations.

The morning of Monday the 12th of August, 2006, was the deadline for cessation of hostilities. The wheel of reconstruction and development should shake off the dust of war and start to roll with the support of the Lebanese public, including all its factions and sectors, and the assistance of the Arab and international communities.

It is paramount that the process of reconstruction does not only include the rehabilitation of the Lebanese infrastructure, but also the establishment of large-scale development projects that the Lebanese people have been longing to see in all areas. This would allow the participation of the private sector and attract Lebanese expatriates and foreign investors to play a role in accomplishing development projects through supporting and enhancing privatisation of some vital services. In addition, it is envisaged that international, Arab and Lebanese banks and funding organisations will play a role in facilitating the reconstruction process.

It is expected that a coordinating body will be established to supervise the reconstruction process, specify priorities, grant contracts, and put expenditure plans in place. Some constitutional and legislative amendments are also expected in order to keep pace with changing circumstances, accelerate the process and create an attractive atmosphere for investments. The Lebanese government seems adamant, serious and conclusive in motivating all the Lebanese to stand firm and be strong, as they were during the crisis, in order to launch the national project for the reconstruction of their homeland, the land of peace and love.

Conference objectives:

The conference aims at launching the reconstruction process after devastating destruction inflicted upon Lebanon. This can be achieved through the liaising of concerned sectors with Lebanese governmental bodies, whereby the current situation of the war aftermath, the government findings of its studies and assessment of the

situation, the reconstruction phases, plans and funding requirements will all be discussed. Light will also be shed on the availability of grants and the amount of funding, and necessary alternatives will be sought to cover the shortage. The conference aims can be summarised as follows:

1. Promoting and accelerating the reconstruction process of Lebanon.
2. Assessing the current situation of the infrastructure and the vital facilities, laying bare the implications of the war, and explaining the requirements necessary to embark on their rehabilitation and reconstruction through:
 - a- Demonstrating funding requirements for reconstruction, presenting a summary of the available funds and estimating its shortage (the general plan of the government in connection with 'the Arab Support Fund', its mechanism, those concerned in its management to ensure credibility, transparency of performance and entrusting donors).
 - b- Presenting projects attached to initial feasibility plans in all production sectors (industrial, agricultural, service...) to be ready for investment.
3. Activating work mechanisms to revive the economic situation in Lebanon, consolidating trust in the Lebanese economy and creating an attractive atmosphere for investments through:
 - a- Encouraging the Lebanese public and private sectors to enter a genuine and sustainable partnership through privatising some services and facilities.
 - b- Promoting the resumption of uncompleted projects that started before the war.
4. Assessing the position of the engineering sector in Lebanon, the abilities of the contractors, the availability of construction materials and equipment necessary to remove the rubble, and beginning the reconstruction process by adopting the following steps:
 - a- Solving the issue of the rubble.
 - b- Re-planning (guidance plans, civil structure, number of areas, shape of buildings, road surfaces).
 - c- Investing in construction (the role of Arab capital).
 - d- Demonstrating the requirements of the funding programmes and the mechanism of training contractors.
 - e- Demonstrating projects and plans carried out by organisations through direct funding or grants, and the mechanism of their supervision and organisation in order to coincide with the government's plans for reconstruction.
 - f- Following up the process of passing emergency laws appropriate to the required speed of work needed to solve the social and financial crisis in the aftermath of the war, and keeping pace with the reconstruction process.
5. Emphasising the cooperation and solidarity between Lebanese economic organisations and their Arab counterparts.
6. Focusing on the importance of the local, Arab and international banking sectors, at this stage, especially the role of Islamic Banks which contribute effectively and economically to the necessary economic and social development processes related to reconstruction.

Conference Topics:

1. Infrastructure and vital facilities: their current position and an assessment of the implications of the war on them.
2. Reconstruction plans of the government and its priorities.
3. Funding sources for reconstruction.
 - The scope of the government's budget.
 - The private sector in Lebanon.
 - The Arab International Fund.
 - International organisations.
 - Direct grants and projects by the donors.
4. Special sessions to demonstrate the projects and demands of reconstructing the infrastructure and facilities:
 - Transport, bridges, roads, and ports facilities.
 - Places of residence.
 - Health facilities.
 - Buildings, social and educational facilities.
 - Commercial premises and factories facilities.
 - Electricity plants and facilities.
 - The water grid.
 - Communication and telephone network.
 - Reconstruction essentials and challenges faced.
5. Demonstrating the reconstruction projects provided for directly by the donors and the requirements of the contractors' training.
6. Enabling the revival of the Lebanese economy and consolidating trust in it.
7. Investment opportunities and the mechanism for attracting the capital of Lebanese expatriates, Arabs and foreigners.
8. Demonstrating and managing projects and services available for partnership with the private sector through privatization.
9. The role of local, Arab and international banks in the reconstruction process.
10. Demands on establishing international and Arab partnerships with the private sector in Lebanon to contribute to reconstruction and to shed lights on legal, financial and technical aspects.
11. Illustrating the reconstruction requirements of basic and complementary constructing materials along with the required types of equipment and the mechanism for providing a labour force.
12. Illustrating the capacity and capability of the construction business in Arab countries and the role which this business can play in the reconstruction.
13. Engineering and financial consultation services required for the reconstruction process.

Presentations within conference sessions from:

- Ministry of Finance, Lebanon
- Ministry of Public Works & Transport, Lebanon
- Ministry of Public Health, Lebanon
- Ministry of Economy & Trade, Lebanon
- Ministry of Industry, Lebanon
- Ministry of Energy & Water, Lebanon
- Ministry of Work, Lebanon
- Ministry of Social Affairs, Lebanon
- Ministry of Interior & Municipalities, Lebanon
- Ministry of Communications, Lebanon
- Ministry of Environment, Lebanon
- Union of Arab Banks
- Chamber of Commerce & Industry
- Union of Engineers
- Council of Development & Construction
- General Housing Institute
- Union of Arab Investors
- League of Arab States
- USCWA – United Nations
- Saudi Council of Chambers
- Islamic Development Bank
- Banks, Financing houses & Insurance companies representatives

Targeted Sectors on the Agenda:

- Economic activity
- Engineering services
- Contractors' sector and building equipment
- Electricity, water and energy
- Banks and funding agencies
- Housing agencies
- Communication and IT
- Insurance
- Industry
- Food and agriculture
- Transport, roads, ports and airports
- Building materials, manufacturing and trade
- Education
- Health service, medical equipment and pharmaceutical.
- Tourism
- Environment