



**Date: 06/12/2017**

Minister of Finance, Ali Hassan Khalil, met with the World Bank's Country Director for the Mashreq region, Saroj Kumar, and Philippe Lazzarini, the Deputy UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon, discussing with them the joint projects between Lebanon and their international organizations.

Minister Khalil met also with Egyptian Ambassador to Lebanon, Nazih el-Najari, with whom he discussed the general situation in Lebanon and the region.

After the meeting, the Country Director made the following statements:

*- Do you feel reassured about the situation in Lebanon? And what is the future of the WB projects in Lebanon?*

The WB group is committed to supporting the people and government in Lebanon in long term social and economic development. Our projects in Lebanon supported cross sectoral development, providing basic services to the people of Lebanon . We also supported the government in education and health sectors. We discussed with the Minister of Finance the ongoing projects, but we are also looking at what new programs we can do to support the government in jumpstarting growth. We can also create jobs for the Lebanese people in the country. We are really encouraged by the reforms being carried out by the government but there is of course a need to escalate on these reforms so that they can see more growth in the economy. But we have offered our support to the government and we will continue working with government and the private sector in Lebanon to make sure that they can see more growth in the coming years.

*- So, you are reassured about the situation in Lebanon?*

Absolutely. We have been partner of the Lebanese people and government for a long time. We will continue working and our support is especially to ensure economic stability in the country and see more growth and more jobs for the Lebanese people.

*-What is the financial worth of these projects?*

Our portfolio in Lebanon is about 1.5 billion dollars and we are currently preparing projects for about an additional 700 million dollars. These projects will come to our Board of Directors over the next 5 or 6 months. They are essentially in a cross section, education, health and supporting a special economic zone in the country. So we're

looking at all the spheres of economy that are in Lebanon.