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formation of the government. As Finance Minister, I would like to stress
again that the government should be formed shortly so that it can detect
and tackle all shortcomings**

Under the patronage of the Minister of Finance Ali Hassan Al Khalil, and in his presence, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed at the Ministry of Finance between the General Directorate of Land Register and Cadastre (GDLRC) represented by its DG Mr. George Maarawi, and the Lebanese American University (LAU), represented by its President, Dr. Joseph G. Jabbara. The objective of the agreement, is to execute joint programs related to digital transformation.

Minister Khalil stated:

“We are honored to witness today a milestone in the relationship between the public sector, represented by the Ministry of Finance, and the private sector, represented by the prestigious Lebanese American University, a leader in serving higher education in Lebanon and a pioneer in the growth of the Lebanese youth so they stay abreast of the developments achieved in the world.

Today, we are taking an essential step for both parties, since talks on moving forward toward the adoption of a digital policy and e-business are no longer extravagant or issues we can avoid to tackle. We are in an era where it is crucial to modernize the work of the Lebanese administration. Despite the small number of persons involved, this agreement has a very significant

impact, in my opinion, on both institutions. The Ministry of Finance will benefit from the expertise and abilities of the university students who will seriously contribute to the promotion of the spirit of innovation and provide new ideas that serve the national interest represented by this project on digital transformation in the GDLRC. We rely on the abilities of our youth and university students to play their role serving their country, ensuring their future is designed to restore their position in public life and develop their personal life.

This is part of the policy adopted by the Ministry of Finance. Indeed, we are following up on the e-services previously launched in the GDLRC and which are now essential, being the first step toward concretizing e-government. However, due to political circumstances and the parliamentary elections, and in order to avoid having this step fall within the framework of electoral propaganda, the launching of a wide spectrum of e-services at the Ministry of Finance has been postponed. These e-services aim to facilitate transactions for citizens, reinforce their trust in the State, while saving them time, in addition to controlling management and spending and facilitating the launch of investment projects.

We are facing a great challenge. It might seem odd that we are taking these steps at this politically inadequate time, but they are the results of previous hard work and they will be a starting point for the work planned in next phase.

Political forces should be aware that time is not in anyone's favor.

Therefore, we urgently need to accelerate the formation of a new government. We believe the next government should be patriotic and unifying, capable of carrying out its responsibilities in the next stage, pushing the country forward, economically, socially and financially, while implementing the reform plan which should focus today on the digital transformation of the State and its administrations

We should facilitate the formation of the government, but I am compelled to say that, unfortunately, we have not seen any serious action taken yet. As the Finance Minister, I would like to stress again that this matter should be solved shortly so that the new government is able to detect and tackle all shortcomings.

In the past days, we have signed an agreement with the World Bank to modernize the GDLRC. This important agreement aims to fill the gaps that are existing in this sector across Lebanon.

In the end, I would like to thank the LAU, Dr. Jabbra and his team who have underlined their trust in the cooperation between the Ministry and this university. This is an important matter that should spread to other sectors and areas in the country.”

Mr. George Maarawi, DG of the General Directorate of Land Registry and Cadastre

This event is taking place at a time when the GDLRC is working on digital transformation within the scope of the reforms supported by His Excellency the Minister of Finance, Mr. Ali Hassan Khalil. The GDLRC is cooperating with several local and foreign parties within the framework of the implementation of this reform plan. It also aspires to involve young university students in achieving its goals and has recently learned about the establishment of the Center for Innovation at the LAU. In order to move from planning to execution, the idea was presented to the Minister of Finance who encouraged and supported the project. Dr. Joseph Jabbra, representing the LAU administration, also welcomed this initiative, expressing his readiness to make it a success. Hence, the MOU we are signing today.

The importance of this project lies in the encouragement of students’ abilities and in filling the gap separating them from public service by implementing programs related to digital projects.

This project would have never seen the light without the will and vision of both the Minister of Finance, Ali Hassan Khalil, and the President of the LAU, Dr. Joseph Jabbra, and their concern to prevent brain drain and involve Lebanon’s higher education sector in the public sector through the modernization and development plan carried out by the GDLRC. It is certain that both teams will work hard to make this project a success, hoping that this memorandum will be the key to broader and more comprehensive cooperation between the public and private sectors in the future.

Dr. Joseph Jabbra

Honorable Assembly,

We are delighted that the agreement with the Ministry of Finance falls within the university's mission to serve the community and the youth – our only hope for the advancement of Lebanon, not only locally but also internationally. As long as there are leading figures such as H.E the Ministry of Finance and these young men and women, Lebanon will prevail through its youth, and we will spare no effort or expense in educating and encouraging them.