

**Minutes of Meeting: Pre-Proposal Meeting for RFP Procurement of provision  
and installation of IT Hardware for the Lebanese Customs Data Center  
Procurement Ref.: LB-MOF-475139-GO-RFP**

**Date of Meeting:** February 20, 2025

**Time:** 10 a.m.

**Location:** Customs Regional office, Beirut Port

**Meeting Facilitators:**

- The Lebanese Customs team including Mr Haitham Ibrahim, Mr Charbel Khalil, Mrs. Rana Slim and Mrs. Maha Dehaini, and in the presence of the President of the Higher Customs Council by proxy Mrs. Rima Makki.
- Mr. Rabih Ibrahim from Ministry of Finance

**Attendees:**

| No. | Company Name            | Representative Name | Title of Representative | Phone Number           | Email Address               |
|-----|-------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1   | Middleware Data Systems | Ayman Salloukh      | Sales Manager           | 03 834734              | asalloukh@middleware.com.lb |
|     |                         | Ziad Melhem         | Division Manager        | 70 187609              | z.melhem@middleware.com.lb  |
| 2   | Data Consult            | Fadi Medlej         | BDN                     | 03 255552              | f.medlej@dcgroup.com        |
| 3   | ICC                     | Jean Annan          | Dep. Manager            | 03 002592<br>01 822229 | Jean.annan@icc.com.lb       |

**Clarifications and Questions:**

Question 1:

There are several points to highlight in the RFP:

- 1-There are some required hardware that are expired or reaching end-of-support very soon.
- 2- The server required has to be Dell or HP, but the required backup system EMC from Dell, for example, doesn't show an acceptable equivalent option from HP.

Response 1:

- For the expired product, bidders are required to provide a certificate from the supplier/manufacturer confirming that the item has expired, and they must offer the subsequent generation of the product ensuring that the new item meets or exceeds the specifications of the previous one and is from the same required brand.
- The items requested by the Lebanese Customs were initially specified to be Dell-branded, considering the necessity for compatibility with the existing items.

Technically, this compatibility may be with the HP brand as well, except for the EMC backup system.

Additionally, the RFP allows for joint ventures, allowing bidders to partner to respond to the full technical requirements of the bidding.

Question 2:

The RFP indicates that support is required for three years for some items, five years for others, and one year for the software. Could you clarify what is meant by the software support?

Response 2:

As for the Software support, it typically refers to support for the various software components i.e. operating systems for all servers and other computers, network-related software, anti-virus software etc. Different products offer different support but 3 years is sufficient.

Question 3:

The installation period of two months seems too short, as Cisco typically requires a minimum of two months for delivery, and the same applies to HP. Can the period be extended to three months, considering that the two-month period is insufficient—especially for Cisco, which does not have stock readily available and requires customization? Additionally, previous experience shows that paperwork and obtaining export licenses often take longer than the installation period set at 2 months.

Response 3:

The items do not need customization. The period may be extended for three months. An amendment to the RFP will follow.

Question 4:

Are the rooms for the Data Center at both locations prepared with raised floors, air conditioning, doors, cabling, and other necessary infrastructure? What would happen if the items were delivered but the Data Center rooms were not ready to achieve the required operational performance?

Response 4:

The preparation of the Data Center infrastructure is currently underway, and it will be ready before the product delivery..

Question 5:

Is there any ongoing work for establishing a connection between the Port of Beirut and the Port of Tripoli?

Response 5:

A fiber optic connection will be arranged soon. However, this connection is not a pre-requisite as the customs works with two separate clouds.

Question 6:

Are the companies responsible only for the delivery of products and operational system?

Response 6:

Yes, the companies are responsible solely for the delivery of products, operational system, and cloud installation.

**Closing Remarks**

The companies mentioned that they might require an extension for the proposal submission deadline, currently set for March 10.

The submission deadline may be extended until March 17. An amendment to the RFP will follow.