Keeping up with the progress

CCIA-BML CORPORATE PROFILE
SUMMARY
Chamber of Commerce Industry and Agriculture of Beirut and Mount Lebanon

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mr. Mohamed CHOUCAIR Chairman
Mr. Mohamed LAMAA Vice-President
Mr. Gaby TAMER Vice-President
Dr. Nabil FAHED Treasurer

MEMBERS
Mr. Bahige ABOU HAMZE Board Member President of energy & environment committee
Mr. Raouf ABOU ZEKI Board Member President of financial committee
Mr. Wissam ARISS Board Member President of SME & training committee
Mr. Ghassan BOULBOL Board Member President of new technologies, investment promotion & intellectual property rights committee
Mrs. Marie Michel CHAMMAS Board Member President of tourism committee
Mr. Chakib CHEHAB Board Member President of agricultural committee
Mr. Joumana BASSIL CHELALA Board Member President of administrative committee
Mr. Raphaël DEBBANE Board Member President of industrial committee
Mrs. Tania Eid Board Member
Mr. Rabih FREM Board Member President of exhibitions committee
Mr. Toni GHORAYEB Board Member
Mrs. Zeinab HARB Board Member President of trade committee
Mr. Jacques HOKAYEM Board Member President of labor and social affairs committee
Mr. Ahmad HOTIEI Board Member
Mr. Hicham ITANI Board Member
Mrs. Sawsan WAZZAN JABRI Board Member President of members committee
Mr. Mahmoud MATAR Board Member President of trade agreements committee
Mr. Nagi MOLZANAN Board Member President of public relations committee
Mr. Victor NAJARIAN Board Member
Mr. Salah OSSEIRAN Board Member President of economic committee

Me. Andre NADER Legal Advisor
Mr. Rabih SABRA Director General
Organizations viability is contingent on their potential to renew themselves by continuously generating their inherent principles and kick-off dynamism - and changing the management approach is not necessarily a criticism or discredit to a previous management but a warning that time has changed and hence keeping up with the progress that requires alignment with contemporary needs.

We want an emerging Lebanon and the Chamber plays in this context a leading role, particularly by supporting enterprises, seizing their needs and contributing effectively to meet them directly or through the government. The Chamber constitutes in fact the bridge connecting both private and public sectors. Hence, it has to fulfill this significant and unique role in the absence of which the economy would endure, and if performed successfully the Chamber will strongly contribute to the emergence of the economy.

Mohamed Nizar Choucair, Chairman
The Chamber of Commerce Industry and Agriculture of Beirut and Mount Lebanon (CCIA-BML) is a non-profit private organization working for the public benefit. The CCIA-BML was established in 1898 and is the largest of the four Lebanese Chambers that are regulated by Ministerial Decree No 36/67 enacted in 1967. Decree No 36/67 awarded the Lebanese Chambers the exclusive rights to the provision of certain services, namely the issuance of certificates of origin and the authentication of invoices and commercial documents.

Promoting the business interests of its member enterprises is one of the principal objectives of the Chamber. Today, CCIA-BML’s membership roster includes over 14,000 Lebanese businesses, situated in two main districts: Beirut and Mount Lebanon. Together, both districts comprise about 70% of businesses operating in Lebanon. The CCIA-BML’s strategy aims at stimulating all sectors of economic activity and enabling them to contribute to the development of a strong and competitive national economy. This is to be achieved through the elimination of all impediments hindering private investment.

Within that perspective, the Chamber has reinforced the existing partnership between the private and the public sectors, and tightened coordination with other Chambers, sectoral associations and organizations of the civil society.

The Chamber has been certified by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) since 2004 and has successfully sustained the quality requirements.

The CCIA-BML head office is conveniently located in the Sanayeh District, in the heart of Beirut and houses a business library, training facilities, a research centre, conference and exhibition spaces. In addition, CCIA-BML operated branch locations in Jounieh, Baakline, and Sin El Fil.
The CCIA-BML represents the interests of the private economy, contributes to the formulation of economic policies and to the elaboration of legislation that impacts business activity, develops partnership and dialogue between the business sector and the government, and provides a broad array of services to enterprises. Faithful to its role as the prime backer of the interests of the private economy, the Chamber intends to serve as a resource leader for business and the community at large.
OVER 120 YEARS OF DEDICATION TO THE INTERESTS OF THE PRIVATE ECONOMY IN LEBANON, THE CCIA-BML HAS DEVELOPED A WIDE AND DIVERSIFIED ARRAY OF SUPPORT SERVICES, IN LINE WITH THE EVOLVING NEEDS OF SMES AS THEY FACE THE CHALLENGES OF INTERNATIONALIZATION. THE CCIA-BML’S MAIN SERVICES INCLUDE:

- The provision of export related documents such as certificates of origin, authentication of export documents, etc.
- The provision of information on markets, standards, norms, legislations, needed commercial documents, economic indicators, trade statistics, etc.
- The provision of professional training in the fields of business, management, finance, taxation and the like.
- Promoting cooperation between Lebanese & foreign enterprises, & organizing multi-disciplinary seminars, conferences, & B2B matching events & assisting foreign trade missions & delegations.
- The organization and hosting of business events, trade fairs and exhibitions.
- The provision of ATA {Temporary Admission} & TIR {Transports Internationaux Routiers} carnets,
- The provision of bar-coding services,
- The preparation of periodical & specialized economic publications, studies, & position papers.
1. **CERTIFICATE OF MEMBERSHIP & CERTIFICATE OF ORIGIN**

Membership in Chambers of Commerce in Lebanon is not mandatory and is open only to corporate entities, including the foreign ones (as long as they abide by the establishment formalities stipulated by the Lebanese law). The Chamber grants official certificates to all its members and provides authentication for commercial and industrial member companies. The Chamber provides as well certificates of origin for goods exported from Lebanon and endorses invoices related to this process.

2. **GS1 LABELING & BAR CODE SERVICES**

The Chamber offers exclusively to its member’s assistance in obtaining GS1 Labeling and Bar Code services. GS1 (previously known as EAN) is the international standard in electronic identification & coding. The GS1 system relies on unique and unambiguous numbers (Bar Codes) that can be used by any organization regardless of size, industry or location to identify purchased products and services. GS1 Lebanon is the Lebanese authority for GS-1 global system, and has been operating in the country since May 1996. It controls the domestic numbering system and provides members with the assistance and support to obtain the full benefits of global GS1 standards. Around 1100 companies in Lebanon are currently GS1 members.

3. **ATA CARNET-TEMPORARY ADMISSION**

ATA Carnet simplifies temporary importation of goods, professional equipment, and commercial samples, and consequently plays a crucial role in the organization of international fairs in Lebanon and abroad. By presenting an ATA Carnet to foreign customs, products and equipment pass duty free and tax free into a carnet country for up to one year. At the end of the year all the items listed on the carnet must be returned to the temporary exportation country. The Beirut Chamber issues and guarantees ATA Carnet in Lebanon, and guarantees the Carnets issued by other contracting parties when used in Lebanon.
4. TIR CARNET - TRANSPORTS INTERNATIONAUX ROUTIERS
The TIR System was designed to speed up border crossing. It is based on an international treaty, the TIR Convention of 1975, which was drawn up under the auspices of the United Nations. The TIR System is an international transit system that applies to the transport of goods between a customs office of departure in one country and the office of destination in another country. The countries involved should be contracting parties to the TIR convention.

The TIR Convention is operational today in 57 countries and the system has now 68 contracting parties, mostly in Europe, the Middle East and Central Asia. The Chamber has been appointed by the Lebanese government to act as the accredited body of issuing and guaranteeing TIR Carnets in Lebanon.

5. CENTER FOR ECONOMIC RESEARCH (CER)
The CER assumes the role of economic observatory and as such it produces a set of annual reference publications that include analytical reports on the Lebanese economy and the investment environment, sectoral reports, position papers on central and controversial economic issues, a periodic cost-of-living index, and data on Lebanese exports.

The CER contributes to the Chamber’s monthly magazine “The Lebanese and Arab Economy”, which covers general economic topics in Lebanon and CCIA-BML activities. The Center also hosts a modern documentation center, offering access to more than 2000 publications including books, periodicals, journals, magazines, reports, studies and multimedia references.

At the enterprise level, the CER partners with EU-funded programs that involve preparing sectoral studies and encouraging the creation of joint ventures between Lebanese business enterprises and their European counterparts. The latest projects within that approach were carried out under the “Invest in Med” program and covered 5 sectors of activity.

6. AGRICULTURE
The CCIA-BML is involved in defending the interests of the private sector regarding national policies, trade agreements, and laws related to agriculture.

The Chamber’s agricultural services include providing technical and market information, export requirements, marketing standards, trade statistics, and micro services to farmers and agricultural enterprises.
7. TRADE SHOWS AND LEBANESE PAVILIONS
As part of its mission to promote Lebanese exports all over the world, The Chamber has been actively present in more than 100 renowned fairs since 1978.

CCIA-BML Fairs and Exhibitions, one of the leading fair organizers in Lebanon, is a well-known international exhibition organizer who has 30 years successful track record in organizing national participation in various international fairs in Europe and Arab countries. The Chamber further facilitates Lebanese participation in trade fairs by partially covering fees and putting a professional team at the exhibitor’s disposal for assistance.

8. THE LEBANESE ARBITRATION CENTER
The Chamber founded “The Lebanese Arbitration Center” in 1995, which is the sole institution that provides administration and monitoring services for arbitration proceedings in Lebanon. The Center has succeeded in weaving around it a solid network of experts, consultants, arbitrators and jurists who are dedicated to serving justice through arbitration rather than litigation.

The Lebanese Arbitration Center offers its different services to the business community, to all business enterprises whether or not they are members of the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture, to all private and public institutions, and to the government.

9. BUSINESS TRAINING CENTER: IFA FRANCO-LIBANAIS
IFA, the Chamber’s training Centre was established in 1995 as a joint venture between CCIA-BML, the Regional Council of Ile-de-France, and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Versailles Val d’Oise-Yvelines.

Since its foundation, the mission of IFA has been to conceive and provide highly qualified and professional training programs within the objective to satisfy the SMEs needs.

The IFA training programs encompassed long term cycles, targeted seminars and customized tailored modules in the fields of business, management, finance, taxation and the like.
The CCIA-BML is a member of the Federation of Lebanese Chambers and a key member in the panel of Economic Organizations which include the country’s leading economic and business associations. The Chamber is also a member of the General Union of the Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture in the Arab Countries, of the Association of the Chambers in the Mediterranean region (ASCAME), and of the International Chamber of Commerce – Lebanon.

In addition, the CCIA-BML is an active member in several joint Arab and foreign Chambers. The Chamber concluded as well several Memoranda of Understanding with numerous international institutions such as the ESCWA, and with other Chambers around the world.
CCIA-BML
NEW SERVICES & PROJECTS

1.

COMPANY LAWS

The Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture of Beirut and Mount Lebanon stands ready to accompany prospective local and foreign investors throughout the enterprise establishment process and thus allow them to take full advantage of the competitive characteristics of the country’s investment environment. The Chamber is committed to offering advisory support to investors on matters relating to the choice of form of incorporation as well as tax, labor and general business laws. Various departments at the Chamber stand ready to provide more advanced legal and business services, such as tax reporting and procedures, business planning, bankable feasibility studies, and other similar services.

Through the Chamber’s many business support programs, investors and their enterprises may seek help in partner search efforts, subcontracting, and more generally, a regional and international exposure that would promote their competitiveness.
In response to the ever-growing demands of Lebanese SMEs for specialized business services, CCIA-BML decided to launch a vital initiative for the sustainable development of local enterprises: the SME Support Center. The center is set to provide SMEs with a comprehensive package of affordable services, including enterprise diagnosis, assistance to access finance, and assistance in the preparation of bankable files and feasibility studies.

The SME Support Center aspires to become a key “one-stop-shop” destination for dynamic, growth-oriented SMEs, providing them with all the technical services they need to accomplish their growth plans.

To better serve its 14,000 members, the CCIA-BML has embarked on the ambitious project of streamlining and fully automating its operations.

The year-long process, deemed by the Chamber’s Board of Directors to be a strategic challenge, will lead to the emergence of an E-Chamber that offers a more responsive interface with member enterprises, and guarantees transparent and efficient procedures. It is the Chamber’s intention to share its electronic platform with its members by allocating to each registered enterprise a customizable space where company can create, update and promote its profile and activities.
ECO-CHAMBER

The Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture of Beirut and Mount Lebanon needs to show concern about the environment, and to adopt environmentally responsible behavior in the workplace. Through adopting environmentally friendly practices, the Chamber is planning to reduce its costs and have a real environmental impact that would reflect positively on its image.

Greening the Chamber involves implementing a comprehensive green program based on energy efficiency, recycling and awareness. By launching the ECO-Chamber project, the CCIA-BML will be setting an example to both business enterprises and administrations to apply a greener policy.