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## PRESS RELEASE

### Launching of IPTEC National Awareness Campaign “Be an Eco-driver and Protect your Health and your Environment”

**Al Machnouk: 59% of the nitrogen oxides NOx emissions result from the land transportation sector  
Dr. Issa: We aim at rationalizing the use of energy and reducing environmental pollution**

H.E. Mr Mohamad Al Mashnouk, Minister of Environment highlighted the importance of the problem caused by the road transportation sector with regard to the depletion of natural resources on the one hand and increasing air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions on the other. Minister Al Mashnouk added that the solutions to such a *Problématique* are not so obvious and require the involvement and collaboration of both public and private sectors for putting in place efficient policies, enforcing and applying the adequate regulation.

Under the patronage of His Excellency the Minister of Environment Mr. Mohamad Al Machnouk, and with the support of the Ministry of Environment (MoE), ESCWA and UNDP, IPT Energy Center (IPTEC) launched the “*Be an Eco-driver and Protect your Health and your Environment*” initiative during a press conference organized on Monday, September 15<sup>th</sup> 2014 at the Hilton Grand Habtoor Hotel, Sin el Fil. The press conference was convened in the presence of H.E. the Minister of Environment Mr. Mohamad Al Machnouk, Dr. Walid Doughaily representative of ESCWA, Ms. Aline Lahoud ambassador of the campaign, Dr. Toni Issa president of IPTEC, and Mr. Zakhia Issa representative of IPT, along with representatives of different parties participating in the campaign as well as representatives of the local media.

#### **Al Machnouk**

Minister Al Machnouk further stressed on the public / private sectors joint responsibility in improving air quality and on the importance of raising awareness and changing driving behavior early on, mentioning the Ministry’s Draft Law on Air Quality Protection currently awaiting final endorsement by the Parliament’s General Assembly.

The minister highlighted some facts and figures that emphasize the importance and necessity of the campaign:

- 80% of the vehicle fleet in Lebanon (1.2 million cars) is owned by individuals (private);
- The average age of the current fleet of cars exceeds three years, noting that 63% of them exceed twenty years;
- The rate of car ownership is one car for every three people;
- The rate of increase in the number of cars for the next decade is estimated at 1.5% per annum which increases the weight of the challenge to avoid suffocation;

On the environmental level:

- The land transportation sector is the main source of air pollution in Lebanon and its negative effects have already attracted the attention of policy-makers and decision-makers;

-It is the largest contributor to the deterioration of air quality in the cities considering that it is the main source behind 59% of nitrogen oxides NOx emissions in 2005;

- On the other hand, the land transportation is responsible of sector emissions of greenhouse gases resulting from the combustion of fuel by 21.4%, which is equivalent to the amount of 3.929,40 Gg (Gegagram) of carbon dioxide CO2.

### Issa

**Dr. Toni Issa**, president of IPTEC, introduced the activity that falls under the “*National Campaign for Air Pollution Reduction in Lebanon through Efficient Energy Use in Land Transportation*” previously initiated by IPTEC and that goes in line with IPT’s corporate social responsibility policy aiming at increasing public awareness regarding air pollution reduction and efficient energy use in land transportation by focusing on issues related to eco driving, proper car maintenance, and the promotion of the use of clean, alternative and renewable energy solutions. Dr. Issa highlighted the importance of sensitizing the general public and engaging them in practices that reduce air pollution footprint taking into consideration that the transport sector is a main source of environmental pollution in Lebanon and consequently has a negative impact on our health and environment.

On the other hand, Dr. Issa explained that the private sector has become aware of its responsibility in the process of social development, which led to the emergence and crystallization of the concept of Corporate Social responsibility CSR, also known as Corporate Citizenship, which means:

- Abiding by the regulations and ethical standards and international norms when dealing with the community;
- Ensuring that their activities have a positive impact within the environment in which they operate;
- Contributing to the development of the society where they evolve and being keen on the interests of consumers and workers concerned by their activities;
- Refraining from any action that would harm the community or the environment, regardless of whether the regulations prevent such acts or not;
- Taking the public interest into account when making business decisions to achieve a balance between the human factor, the environment and the margin of profit.

He added: IPT not only believes in these principles and adopts them, but it went even further. We established the first of its kind research center in Lebanon, IPT Energy Center (IPTEC), to fulfill IPT’s corporate social responsibility commitment. The issues we are tackling are in line with IPT’s business activities in the oil sector with all its imminent challenges, difficulties and rising concerns. The focus on energy efficiency and conservation uses; the reduction of environmental pollution caused by the use of energy sources; the promotion of the use of clean energy solutions and alternative and renewable energy (...), are the major headlines adopted by IPT to achieve the concept of social responsibility.

### ESCWA

Dr. Walid Al Doughaili stated in his speech on behalf of the ESCWA: the specificity and importance of this awareness campaign reside in the fact that it is directed to anyone driving a car and mainly aims at convince them of the usefulness of eco-driving. This initiative is an example of what can be achieved by the private sector in Lebanon to serve the nation and its citizens, in term of sustainable development in its three pillars:

1- Economic development: by reducing fuel consumption in land transportation sector, and thus reducing the oil bill, in order to improve the balance of payments, and reduce the cost of transportation to the average citizen and to all sectors of production.

2 -Social development: through reducing air pollution rates and therefore in the water and soil pollution rates, especially in areas which population density is increasing. This will also have an impact on improving health conditions and lower disease rates, which will have a significant impact on the productivity as whole.

3- Environmental development: by reducing the quantities of combustion gases emissions in the air, and with it all the particles and harmful substances and toxic gases, and greenhouse gases that cause global warming and severe environmental consequences.

He added that there must be a synergy at all levels for an awareness campaign to succeed in reaching its targets and goals. This initiative requires joint efforts between IPTEC what is doing its moral, humanitarian and social duty and giving back to its community, representing the private sector, and the public sector, where the possibility of developing a political, legal, administrative and regulatory framework is necessary.

He concluded by thanking the Ministry of Environment and the Minister for his participation and sponsorship, hoping that this collaboration will extend to Lebanese government in general and other relevant ministries in particular.

### **Lahoud**

The artist Aline Lahoud, who was chosen to be the ambassador of the campaign she called on citizens to preserve the environment, and adopt driving behaviors that reduce air pollution. She also invited people to start using bicycle or going on foot for short distance trips. She finally pointed out that the advertising campaign logo will be represented by a leaf to symbolize the environment and nature and a dark smoke to symbolize the pollution generated by in land transportation.

### **Tcheroyan**

**Mrs. Sarah Tcheroyan**, the project manager of IPTEC, revealed the campaign's visuals and presented the various activities undertaken to increase public awareness about eco-driving practices.

### **Eco-driving License**

Following the press conference, the campaign was launched through a road show with Virgin Radio at IPT Station - Dekwaneh, where both H.E. the minister of environment, Mr. Mohammad Al Machnouk and Aline Lahoud (campaign ambassador), engaged with passer byes to promote eco-driving behaviors and hand out **Eco-driving Licenses**. This will be followed by weekly activations on most IPT stations across Lebanon, to ensure that the message of the campaign reaches many Lebanese drivers.

In addition to offline engagement, IPTEC has set up a social media campaign to reach and engage with its primary audience, the youth, through online games and discussions. In order to extend its reach, IPTEC has collaborated with Fabriano to invite students to express, through art, their concern for the air pollution caused by

land transportation and the solutions they propose. The collaboration with Beirut Marathon Association aims to show the importance of using non-motorized and healthier ways to move around in Lebanon.

Noting finally, that IPT Energy Center (IPTEC) is a specialized research and development center in sustainable energy that carries out scientific studies on energy, oil and gas in Lebanon. IPT established this center to fulfill its corporate social responsibility by increasing knowledge on efficient energy use and its conservation and the reduction of environmental pollution resulting from the use of energy sources in Lebanon.

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