

PRESS RELEASE

PHILIPPINE EMBASSY PROMOTES CLOSER ECONOMIC COOPERATION WITH SAIDA IN SOUTH LEBANON



PHOTOS:

FIRST ROW LEFT – Ambassador Leah M. Basinang-Ruiz (left) receives a briefing from Mr. Mohamad Saleh (right); **FIRST ROW RIGHT** – Ambassador Ruiz hands over brochures from the Board of Investment of the Philippines to Mr. Saleh, who was accompanied during the meeting by Mr. Omar Dandachli (second from right), CCIAS Vice President and Ms. Rana Sayed (rightmost), CCIAS Assistant Director for Administration; **SECOND ROW LEFT** – Ambassador Ruiz visits the South Business Innovation Center (SouthBIC); **SECOND ROW RIGHT** – Ambassador Ruiz visits the Agro-Food Development Center, and Laboratories; **THIRD ROW LEFT** – Mr. Saleh tours Ambassador Ruiz around the Golden Tulip hotel, resort and marina complex; and **THIRD ROW RIGHT** – Mr. Saleh hosts a luncheon for Ambassador Ruiz after the brief tour of the hotel, resort and marina complex.

09 October 2013 – Upon the invitation of the President of the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture of Saida and Southern Lebanon (CCIAS), Mr. Mohammad Saleh, Ambassador Leah M. Basinang-Ruiz visited on 08 October 2013 the Chamber's headquarters in Saida, the capital city of South Lebanon Governorate.

Mr. Saleh briefed the Ambassador on the various initiatives of the CCIAS to build a thriving and prosperous business community in Lebanon's south, with the support of the local government and international funding. He proudly gave a tour of the various facilities and in-house services the Chamber offers to its members, ranging from food product testing and quality control to research and product development, as well as legal clinic and training center, which together comprise the operations of the Chamber's newly launched South Business Innovation Center (South BIC).

Under Mr. Saleh's leadership, the CCIAS is interested in exploring opportunities for trade, investment and labor cooperation between South Lebanon and the Philippines and hopes to visit the Philippines in the first quarter of next year. Ambassador Ruiz pledged the Embassy's support for and assistance to the proposed business mission of the Chamber to the Philippines, in collaboration with relevant government agencies in Manila.

Ambassador Ruiz was also given a brief tour of Mr. Saleh's newly opened hotel, resort and marina complex, the Golden Tulip Jiyeh Marina and Resort, which is located within 20 minutes drive of Beirut.

The ancient city of Sidon is Lebanon's third largest city, which is famous for its archaeological sites and references in biblical passages. It is also home to at least 300 Filipinos working and residing in the city. **END**