



Tripoli, 14-12-2018

During the opening ceremony and official launching of the vocational training program

**Safadi Foundation graduates the first batch of trainees  
At the Safadi Accelerated Vocational Training Institute**

**Safadi: to enroll Tripoli in the extensive economic plan set by the government**

Under the patronage and in presence of the Mufti of Tripoli and the North Sheikh Dr. Malik Al-Shaar, Safadi Foundation graduated the first batch of trainees at the Safadi Accelerated Vocational Training Institute. The graduation was held during the official launching ceremony of the Institute and its first project: “Accelerated Vocational Training for the Economic Integration of Tripoli Youth”, funded by the Regional Development and Protection Programme in the Middle East-RDPP, to develop the youth’s vocational capacities, and economically integrate them, by creating job opportunities in Tripoli and the North.

The opening ceremony of this institute, which was established within Safadi Foundation’s program to revive the old city’s society and economy (ROSE Program) in Tripoli, was attended by the Mufti, HE Archbishop of Tripoli and North Lebanon Edouard Daher, the representative of the Minister of Education and Higher Education Marwan Hmedeh-Head of the Vocational and Technical Education Sector Tony Rashed, the representative of the



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Minister of Labor Mohammad Kabbara-Dr. Sami Radi, MPS: Mohammad Safadi, Ahmad Fatfat, Ahmad Karami, the representative of HE Najib Mikati-Mr. Abdulrazzaq Qarhani, the representative of former Minister Raya Hasan-Engineer Hassan Danawi, the representative of General Ashraf Rifi-Mr. Saadeddine Fakhouri, former Chief of Supreme Shari'a Court Sheikh Nasser Saleh, Head of Tripoli Waqf Sheikh Abdulrazzaq Esambuli, Tripoli Mayor Ahmad Qamareddine, El-Mina Mayor Abdulqader Alameddine, Director of Tripoli Port Ahmad Tamer, Director of the Association of Islamic Charitable Projects Hajj Taha Naji, President of the Order of Engineers and Architects in Tripoli – Lebanon Bassam Ziadeh, the representative of the Head of the North's branch of the Counter Terrorism and Espionage Section General Karam Mrad-Colonel Ahmad Adra, the representative of the General Manager of the Ministry of Social Affairs Judge Ahamd Abdallah-Head of the Ministry's North Department Majed Eid, Director General of Directorate General of Technical and Vocational Education Ahmad Diab, former Secretary General of the Higher Relief Council Major General Yehya Raad, Director of North Lebanon USJ Campus Fadia Alam, a delegation from GIZ presided by Mr. Enzo Suala, educational, social and economic bodies, the trainees' parents and a large public of interested people.

Following the national anthem and a welcome speech by the Head of Media and Communication Department, Mrs. Amal Elias Sleiman, the Mufti asserted the “importance of the accelerated vocational training institutes, in a society that is burdened with a crisis, in which neglect, obliviousness, ignorance, unemployment and poverty have accumulated”. He considered that “such institutes are the foundation of the youth's journey, where they will be armed with a profession that entitles them to work, have an income and restore their feeling of self-esteem”. The Mufti also noted the “ambition, will and striving of MP Mohammad Safadi to make this dream come true, especially for the souls that abstained from crimes of abuse whether it be alcohol or drugs”. As he congratulated Tripoli for having this establishment, he added saying that the “vocational training institute is the starting point of a new life, that begins through a vocational, high-quality and highly proficient training course, full of information and expertise”, stressing that



“Safadi Foundation’s mission is to meet the requirements of Tripoli and the North”.

As for the representative of the RDPP Mrs. Miray Shiha, she considered that “the issue of unemployment and finding solutions to it is not a new problem in Lebanon and Tripoli, but the situation has worsened with the aggravation of the Syrian crisis and the deterioration of the standard of living of the Lebanese and the Syrians in Lebanon”. Mrs. Shiha noted that the program “funded by 8 donors (the EU, Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, the UK, and the Czech Republic), works with several partners to find ways to support the youth, so that they engage in the work market”, and added that “Safadi Accelerated Vocational Training Institute will not only be theoretical, but will also be practical, as most sessions are dedicated to the practical application, whether it be at the Institute or outside of it, depending on the need and possibility, and according to the work market requirements”.

She also regarded that “this project is important as it will support around 32% of the students to find job opportunities. It will also provide them with training on life skills, such as communication and conflicts resolution”.

MP Safadi said that “Tripoli still falls on the list of areas that have not been included in the balanced development, even when 25 years have passed on establishing the Taif Agreement. Tripoli is suffering from official negligence, despite the importance of its strategic position, which is influential in times of peace as well as war”. MP Safadi stressed that “Tripoli scores the highest rates of poverty and unemployment in Lebanon, and in the Mediterranean Basin, making it a fertile ground for tension and instability”.

MP Safadi hoped that “Tripoli would be included in the list priorities, in terms of economic and social development, and that it would be enrolled in the extensive economic plan set by the government”. He pointed out that



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“Safadi Foundation is achieving many initiatives, with the support of international organizations, and in cooperation with several official and private bodies”. He described the Institute as “an oasis of hope for the students who are receiving training on professions, mostly related to construction”, stressing the “importance of finding job opportunities for them”. He then added saying that “22 out of 1,000 trainees are graduating today. They are the first batch of trainees to graduate. At least 11 of them have already started working as soon as the training sessions were finished”.

MP Safadi concluded by addressing the graduates, noting that their “response through registration and training is a message that Tripoli’s youth desire a life, through which they aspire towards a prosperous future. They will begin this prosperous life holding a certificate, signed by the Order of Engineers and Architects and by Safadi Foundation, which will contribute in their transition to the next level, where they would not look back”. He finally hoped to achieve another dream; the dream of opening a center for Islamic Studies.

The ceremony was concluded as Mufti Al-Shaar, MP Mohammad Safadi accompanied by his wife, President of ROSE Program Mrs. Violette Safadi, as well as the RDPP representative Mrs. Miray Shiha, and the President of the Order of Engineers and Architects in Tripoli Bassam Ziadeh, presented the certificates and the toolkits to the graduates, before cutting the graduation cake.