

**Joint statement of the International Support Group for Lebanon
on the adoption of the 2019 Budget**

Beirut-Lebanon

July 19, 2019

The members of the International Support Group (ISG) for Lebanon welcome the adoption of the 2019 budget as an urgently needed first step by Lebanon in fiscal management and towards reducing its deficit, as part of Lebanon's economic vision and its commitments at the Conférence économique pour le développement par les réformes et avec les entreprises (CEDRE).

The ISG also recognizes the adoption and initial implementation of the electricity sector reform plan and encourages the Government to make progress on the outstanding matters related to this important file including establishing an independent regulatory authority and other good governance mechanisms for enhancing efficiency, transparency and accountability.

The ISG supports the Government of Lebanon to begin implementation of the adopted budgetary measures and welcomes the Government's intention to expeditiously begin preparations for adopting its 2020 budget so that the process concludes in a timely, fiscally-responsible manner. In light of the economic challenges facing the country, the ISG encourages Lebanon's leaders to adopt further fiscal, structural and sectoral reforms as soon as possible, and to implement anti-corruption and transparency measures, which Lebanon has identified as essential for its economic recovery and growth and in line with Lebanon's commitments at CEDRE. These reform measures can improve governance, create a favorable business climate, thereby enhancing investments in vital infrastructure and services, and signal to the Lebanese people and the international markets Lebanon's commitment to achieving sustainable economic stability and growth.

The ISG recognizes and commends the sacrifices which the Lebanese people are making in order to set the country on the path towards economic growth and a dignified and prosperous future for its population, and reiterates its support for Lebanon's stability and economic recovery.

Note to Editors

The International Support Group has brought together the United Nations and the governments of China, France, Germany, Italy, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States, together with the European Union and the Arab League. It was launched in September 2013 by the UN Secretary-General with former President Michel Sleiman to help mobilize support and assistance for Lebanon's stability, sovereignty and state institutions and to specifically encourage assistance for the Lebanese Army, Syrian refugees in Lebanon and host communities and government programs and public services impacted by the Syrian crisis.