

Beirut, May 13, 2019

## **Inauguration of the Antoun Nabil Sehnaoui Cultural Space at the French Institute of Lebanon**

The French Institute of Lebanon, represented by its director Véronique Aulagnon, and Societe Generale de Banque au Liban, represented by its Deputy CEO Philippe Dubois, inaugurated the Antoun Nabil Sehnaoui Cultural Space at Cinema Montaigne, in the presence of actress and producer Julie Gayet, members of the bank's general management as well as numerous personalities from the political, media and cinema worlds.

This cultural initiative, which was born under the leadership of SGBL's Chairman and CEO Antoun Sehnaoui, the great patron and strong supporter of arts, aims to strengthen the French-Lebanese ties, as well as to support cinema through the activities of Cinema Montaigne and the visual arts of the "Galerie" space which have been completely renovated and refurbished by SGBL.

During her speech, Véronique Aulagnon declared: "I am very happy to welcome you at the French Institute of Lebanon for this acknowledgment. An acknowledgment I wish to address to our supporter, Antoun Nabil Sehnaoui, Chairman of SGBL. Our relationship with SGBL is based on friendship and passion. The friendship that SGBL and its chairman grant us, by supporting, beyond cinema, the French Institute and the activities of our exhibition gallery, as well as the Francophonie month and the Salon du Livre Francophone de Beyrouth Fair. As a major partner of the French Institute of Lebanon, SGBL, under the leadership of its Chairman Antoun Nabil Sehnaoui, shares with us a common vision of cultural initiatives and the influence of Franco-Lebanese friendship.

From his end, Philippe Dubois said: "We are very happy to be once again alongside the French Embassy and the French Institute and to celebrate the cinema with the inauguration of the Antoun Nabil Sehnaoui Space at Cinema Montaigne. We are here today to confirm the unwavering commitment of SGBL Group, under the leadership of our Chairman and CEO Antoun Sehnaoui, in promoting arts in Lebanon and in the region, through our ongoing support over the years, to many artistic and cultural initiatives in the country. Cinema holds a particularly important place in SGBL's cultural patronage policy, and is dear to the heart of Antoun Sehnaoui, who has always been devoted to the 7th art by taking on the role of producer with the creation of Ezekiel Film Production. It is precisely this passion and faith that drive our Chairman Antoun Sehnaoui and push him to invest in film production and to support promising talents in particular".

For Julie Gayet, "The unwavering support of Antoun Sehnaoui for culture and for artists is quite incredible, coming from his will to support young authors. He is my partner today in the cinema. I am recognized as an actress but I am less known as a producer and with Antoun Sehnaoui, we try to put forward young directors, Lebanese and international filmmakers. I think it's a very nice thing when a movie theater is born! Cinema is very



important because, before watching it on small screens or at home, it is a collective experience in the theater, a way of communicating together and it is another way of sharing culture. And I know he is sensitive to that and I thank Antoun Sehnaoui for this space”.

As for Adel Karam, he stated: "It was an ultimate experience that opened us the doors to the international scene thanks to a man who believes (...) in arts, and in us, Lebanese artists. Having someone like Antoun Sehnaoui in Lebanon is extremely important. His support compensates the state's absence towards art and culture. "

The inauguration was followed by a gala screening of Ziad Doueiri's movie "The Insult", produced by Ezekiel Film Production, which, and for the first time, brought the Lebanese cinema industry into history by being selected under the category of the best foreign film at the 2018 Oscars.

#### **About SGBL**

SGBL group operates in the Middle East, The Gulf and Europe. It offers a complete, personalized range of banking services covering universal and specialized financial services regrouping banking, insurance, financial leasing, wealth management, financial brokerage and credit card processing, catering to all client categories. The Group has four core business lines, Retail Banking, Corporate Banking, Private Banking and Investment Banking. SGBL endeavor to provide cutting edge universal banking services to best serve its individual and corporate clients day after day; its mission being to grow alongside its clients and shareholders.

#### **PRESS & MEDIA RELATIONS**

**Christelle FEGHALY**  
christelle.feghaly@socgen.com  
T +961 1 499813 Ext. 11210  
M +961 79 111069

**Michelle NACOUZI**  
michelle.nacouzi@socgen.com  
T +961 1 499813 Ext. 12478