

**Mr. Chairman**

**Mr. Secretary General**

**Distinguished Delegates**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

First of all, I would like to express my sincere thanks on behalf of Lebanon for this kind invitation for this important Conference.

And since Lebanon is not yet part of the Energy Charter constituency I would like to express our gratitude to the Secretariat for the close cooperation during the year, in this context ,I am very glad to inform the conference that the internal consultation process regarding the Energy Charter Process has been finalized few days ago, and I am pleased to announce that the government of Lebanon decided to join the Energy Charter Process as an Observer by signing the Energy Charter Declaration, I am delegated from H.E. the Minister of Energy and Water Eng. Jebran Bassil to come here today to confirm to you our wish to sign the Declaration, and to inform you that the Ministry will send and official letter to the Secretariat asking the support of the Energy Charter Conference and the approval to sign , this official letter is under preparation in Beirut and will be send to the Secretary General in the next few days.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Secretariat for their efforts and support during the decision making process, and assure you that we will liaise with them on the following steps for the place and the date to celebrate the signing as soon as we get the approval by the member countries.

I would like once again to thank you for giving us this chance to be here today and wish you all very successful discussions.

**Thank you**