

The Ministry of Culture launches ARCHEOMEDSITES Project in Tyre, Lebanon - 6th of February 2015

Under the patronage of H.E. Minister Raymond Araygi, the Local Management Unit at the Ministry of Culture launched, in collaboration with the Italian NGO Ricerca e Cooperazione, the EU-funded project ARCHEOMEDSITES on the 6th of February 2015.

A number of administrative and political figures, cultural and municipal bodies as well as local NGOs, civil society and scouts, individuals and institutions concerned with heritage management and protection, namely the UNESCO regional office in Beirut, were present during the event.

After the welcoming speech by Dr. Seif - person in charge of Archeomedsites Project on behalf of the Lebanese Ministry of Culture, Mr. Colavito, Archeomedsites Project Manager, representing the Lead Partner, the Italian Ministry for Cultural Heritage, Activities and for Tourism, presented to the audience the general project objectives and activities, along with a documentary about the project and its many components.

Another technical presentation by the project's local coordinator, Mrs. Hmeidan focused on the planned local cultural activities that will take place in and outside Tyre; mainly:

- Preparation of a local management plan for the City and Al Bass sites in Tyre in collaboration with local and International experts in the field of heritage management.
- Launching of awareness campaigns for residents and civil society as well as awareness workshops addressed to students.
- Stimulation of voluntary work of civil society that aims to enhance the World Heritage Site of Tyre.

In this framework, the Ministry of Culture announced the first voluntary activity, "Design and execution of waste bins for the two sites at Tyre" through the collaboration of many partners, namely, the Italian contingent of the UNIFIL and the local Scouts in addition to the Municipality of Tyre and the Italian NGO Ricerca e Cooperazione. Moreover, the Tyre Heritage Trailer – THT, a new outreach educational concept was announced. The trailer will exhibit the history and heritage of Tyre in order to disseminate knowledge and promote an appreciation of its history and traditional handicrafts through a hands-on experience.

Also, this project will provide the General Directorate of Antiquities with a specialized archaeometric laboratory for pottery and metal analysis equipped with an enhanced technology to conduct preliminary and advanced archaeological tests.

The technical presentations were followed by a speech from the Mayor of Tyre, Engineer Hassan Dbouk, who welcomed the project and hoped for more fruitful cooperation between all state institutions, local and European bodies, in order to work jointly on the enhancement of the World Heritage Site of Tyre.

The speech of Dr. Federica Mazzotta, First Secretary - Italian Embassy, supported the project and its goals, which fall within the frameworks of cooperation between the two countries. While the word of the SW Commander and the Italian Contingent Commander at the UNIFIL forces operating in Lebanon, Brigade General Stefano Del Col, highlighted the UNIFIL's cooperation, especially the one related to the first volunteer activity within Archeomed sites project to be implemented in collaboration with various partners in Tyre.

The ceremony ended with the speech of H.E. Minister Araygi given by the General Director of the Antiquities Department, Architect Sarkis Khoury. The speech highlighted the importance of this type of projects and the horizons it opens for the Ministry, mainly the Directorate of Antiquities, in order to enhance the scientific framework for the proper management of World Heritage Sites, namely the World Heritage Site of Tyre which was the target site for the implementation of Archeomed sites project.

ARCHEOMEDSITES project is co-financed by the European Union through the ENPI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin 2007-2013 Program for a total amount of 1,793,806.68 euro distributed among 11 partners in 3 different countries: Italy, Lebanon and Tunisia. It aims to create a network of institutions within the Mediterranean area for the protection and enhancement of archaeological sites and urban areas.

For Further details:

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