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Dear colleagues in the Ministry of Finance,

I am delighted to announce that our Ministry has won the **2007 United Nations Public Service Award, in the category of "Improving the Delivery of Services" for "Taxpayer Service"**.

The Public Service Award is "the most prestigious international recognition of excellence in public service" according to the UN, and rewards the achievements of public service institutions to development worldwide through an annual competition.

I would like to seize this event to congratulate each of you and to applaud the efforts of the hundreds of employees and civil servants in the Ministry. I would also like to thank the UNDP Project and in particular the tax team for their work towards this achievement.

This distinguished accolade clearly reflects a high international recognition of your tremendous modernization efforts that were exerted during the past years. Whereas this award attests the challenging reform program of the ministry, it is moreover a crowning of your continuous and remarkable work towards modernizing the tax administration as well as your strong belief in enhancing our institution and its standing.

This international recognition of excellence in public service should be an incentive for our Ministry to continue its innovations in the public sector and disseminate good practices for further improvements and accomplishments.

I am confident that this award will further motivate us to carry on our modernization journey, and build on our accomplishments. Furthermore, this reward stresses our commitment to reform and our responsibility to pursue its achievement. We have become a reference and a model that many administrations world-wide would like to follow. I rely on each of you to rise to this new challenge with excellence and panache.

I heartily congratulate you once again, and I wish you continuous progress, further accomplishments and greater success.

Best regards,

Jihad Azour
Minister of Finance of Lebanon