

# *Lebanon Hopes to Boost Business Opportunities in Cuba*

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Havana, June 5 (RHC) -- Lebanon is interested in expanding bilateral ties with Cuba and updating a trade agreement signed in 1998, a Lebanese official said on Thursday.

Bruno Sahat, an adviser to the Lebanese Economy Minister, made this remark during a joint business forum in Havana to boost bilateral economic and trade ties. Sahat also confirmed Lebanon's participation at Havana's 2015 International Trade Fair in November, in an effort to strengthen commercial ties.

Lebanese business leaders met with their Cuban counterparts and officials at the Hotel Nacional in Havana to review investment and business opportunities in the Caribbean country.

At the opening of the forum, Orlando Hernandez, president of the Cuban Chamber of Commerce, hailed the forum as a first step in diversifying ties and promoting economic cooperation.

The Cuban official invited the visiting business leaders to invest in government-backed projects designed to modernize the island's aging industrial facilities, including the Mariel Port development zone, a deep-sea port and industrial park taking shape 50 kilometers west of Havana.

Ali Kazma, president of the Lebanese-Cuban Businessmen's Council, said the two sides will hold a

second meeting in September.

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