

**President Peter F. Dorman Commencement Speech 2009**  
**Saturday June 27, 2009**  
**Commencement 2009**

Good evening. It is my great pleasure to extend a warm welcome to all of you, to the 140th celebration of commencement exercises at AUB, and my first opportunity to preside over the granting of 1,811 new degrees.

Today is a joyful occasion for everyone here: for students who have finished their years of demanding course work, for families who have watched the progress of their daughters and sons with interest and supported them over the years, and for professors who have given of their wisdom and guidance in shaping this new generation of educated men and women. For you graduates of the Class of 2009 of AUB, I offer my warmest congratulations, for you are the beneficiaries of a university education that is second to none in the Middle East. The diplomas you are about to receive will do more than simply certify that you have completed a degree in the program of your choice. Behind each diploma lie the history and stature of one of the greatest international universities in the world. Behind each diploma lie the universal values that are nurtured on this campus: tolerance, freedom of thought, inclusiveness, and sustainability. Behind each diploma lie historic generations of men and women who have left their significant mark in the world, and whose ranks you are about to join.

Indeed, as each of you crosses the stage to receive a diploma from the hands of your dean, there is much to live up to, in that relatively small certificate; but I have no doubt you will rise to the occasion. You are graduating at a time when soft new winds of change are beginning to blow from east and west alike. What the future looks like is anyone's guess, but I am confident that the Class of 2009 will take its place in the forefront of those events.