American University of Beirut
Office of the President

March 24, 2016

Dear AUB Community,

It gives me tremendous pleasure to announce that the Dar Group, represented by our own Trustee, Mr. Talal Shair, has pledged to fully support the design of the new state-of-the-art AUB Medical Center, as well as the development of a Campus Master Plan aligned with a comprehensive AUB Academic Strategic Plan.

The Dar Group is renowned the world over for their engineering and architectural expertise, professionalism, and service excellence. I am excited about the impact of this generous pledge and the value that the Dar Group of companies can bring to AUB as we embark on these milestone projects: a campus-wide master plan aligned with a comprehensive AUB academic strategic plan and an ambitious AUBMC 2020 Vision that is transforming the education, research, and delivery of healthcare in Lebanon and the region.

In recognition of their extraordinary gift to AUB we will name the Children's Pavilion in the New Medical Center Complex in honor of Dar Al-Handasah, in addition to a cutting-edge engineering lab at the Faculty of Engineering and Architecture (FEA).

The pledge of the Dar Group could not have come at a more significant time in AUB's history. As we celebrate our 150th anniversary, we reflect on AUB's accomplishments in the development of the communities we serve. It is acts of philanthropy such as this remarkable gift from the Dar Group that have enabled AUB to be the premier liberal arts university in the Middle East and establish itself as a world-class research institution.

AUB and Dar Al-Handasah share a long history of impactful contributions to our community and the region. The Shair family and the Dar Group have long been extraordinarily generous supporters and benefactors of AUB. Dar Al-Handasah is one of the primary employers of our graduates and has provided critical support to the University over the years, in many ways.

Established in 1956 as Dar Al-Handasah by the late Dr. Kamal Shair, the Dar Group now comprises an international network of professional service firms of over 17,000 employees dedicated to planning, designing, engineering, and project managing facilities, installations, and structures.

Dr. Kamal Shair was a faculty member in FEA from 1956 to 1962 and served as a member of the AUB Board of Trustees from 1990 until his death in 2008. Kamal Shair chaired AUB's very successful Campaign for Excellence (2002-2007), which raised more than $170 million.

The legacy of Dr. Kamal Shair continues to shine through his son Talal. Under Talal's leadership, the Dar Group reached new heights of international prominence. Talal joined the Board of Trustees in 2010, and has been a very active member of the Board and Chair of the Facilities Committee. Both Kamal Shair and Talal Shair are former students of AUB.

The Shair family and the Dar Group have made countless contributions to AUB. Their support has extended over almost every aspect of the University's strategic priorities: academic scholarship and research, student fellowships and financial aid, medicine and patient care, and University capital projects and infrastructure. We are extremely proud to have the names of the Shair family and Dar Al-Handasah associated with AUB through many critical initiatives, such as the Kamal Shair Central Research Science Laboratory, the Kamal Shair Chair in Leadership, the Dar Al-Handasah (Shair and Partners) Endowed Research Fund in Engineering, the Dar Al-Handasah (Shair and Partners) Endowed Professorship in Engineering, and the Dar Al-Handasah (Shair and Partners) Architecture Building. Today, we add yet another.

With the unwavering support that we receive from our close partners, such as the Shair family and the Dar Group, and with such transformational gifts that further the strategic mission of our great institution, there is no limit to what we can accomplish. Together, we indeed make history.

Fadlo R. Khuri, MD
President