

## **Commencement Exercises 2015** **May 30, 2015**

Board of Trustees Chairman Philip Khoury

Your Excellencies, Board of Trustees, AUB Faculty, distinguished guests, families, friends and especially the graduating class of 2015, I would like to welcome you to the Undergraduate Commencement Ceremony of the American University of Beirut.

My name is Philip Khoury, and I speak as Chairman of the AUB Board of Trustees. As we recognize and celebrate the achievements of our under graduates, it is also fitting that we should commemorate the eighth and final Commencement proceedings of President Peter Dorman.

President Dorman has led AUB with distinction since 2008. As a result of his leadership, today the American University of Beirut is academically stronger, more dynamic, and more ambitious than ever before. The achievements of the Dorman administration are many. Today, AUB is ranked 249th globally by the QS World Rankings, up from 500 eight years ago, and placing AUB in the top 10% of universities worldwide. AUB's academic and medical programs continue to receive prestigious new accreditations, many of them unique in the region. Our faculty produce more than twice the research output of all other Lebanese universities combined. Our financial aid program has more than tripled, enabling us to attract and support the highest caliber students from around Lebanon and the region. The Medical Center is expanding and undergoing its most dramatic transformation in 50 years, and more than 100 physicians have been recruited from overseas. Major new facilities for engineering, medicine and international affairs and public policy are transforming our campus. The University is once again a hub of the thriving regional art scene, with two new galleries and a major new collection of modern Lebanese art. With President Dorman's leadership, AUB has raised more than \$350 million in grants and donations, for teaching and research, scholarships, facilities and medical care.

All this is but a fraction of what Peter Dorman's presidency has meant for AUB.

Leading a university is more than a list of accomplishments. It requires a combination of skills, character, and team work. And Peter Dorman's fine character is known to all: his patience, his moral fortitude, and his utter lack of vanity. He has served this university with honor and humility. We all strive to be good and virtuous people, but few of us are as uncompromising in this respect as Peter Dorman. As our President, in every interaction, he has been unfailingly gracious, attentive, and engaged. He has always been available to greet enthusiastic students; meet with alumni; engage faculty members and staff; meet and thank donors great and small; visit with patients at AUBMC; sit with grieving AUB families after the loss of a loved one; and shake hands with every university security guard he meets. Everywhere he went, someone had an AUB story that they wanted to share with him, and he has always listened not only out of respect but also out of interest. Peter Dorman has known that as president, he embodies the brand and reputation of the university, and that each of these interactions matters.

The Arab world needs leaders and institutions that inspire hope. Realizing this, Peter Dorman's goal has been to consolidate and reinforce the values at the core of AUB's mission – a liberal arts identity; a tolerant and safe environment for intellectual discourse, reinforcement of personal ethical conduct; support for high quality teaching, research and medical practice; and enabling talented students to get the best possible education in the region. In all of these areas, we have made huge strides. And it is for these reasons that AUB's role as a force for positive change in the region continues to grow.

Peter, you brought the finest personal qualities to the presidency of AUB: integrity, intelligence, loyalty, and a genuine concern for others. You are a gentleman, in the very best sense of the word. We thank you and we wish you and Kathy all the best as you begin a new chapter in your lives.

Before I invite Peter Dorman up to the podium to formally begin the proceedings of this ceremony, I also want to acknowledge that with us today on the stage is Dr. Fadlo Raja Khuri. Fadlo Khuri is an alumni trustee but, more importantly, in 3 short months he will become AUB's 16<sup>th</sup> President, succeeding Dr. Dorman. Fadlo will you please stand just for a moment.

Now let's hear from Peter Dorman.