

For Immediate Release



The Worldwide Alumni Association of The American University (WAAAUB) holds its 7th Annual Convention

Beirut, Lebanon- 24/1/2016 - The 7th annual convention of the Worldwide Alumni Association of the American University of Beirut (WAAAUB) was held in Beirut on January 22 and 23, 2016. In an opening ceremony that acknowledged the auspicious occasion of AUB's 150th anniversary and the inauguration of its 16th president, Dr. Fadlo R. Khuri, WAAAUB President Wafa Saab (EMBA '07) welcomed alumni from around the world at the Maamari Auditorium of the Suliman S. Olayan School of Business.

"The future of this country is not just the great economic power that we can bring to bear based on our alumni but it is an intellectual, honest alliance of universities and not-for-profit centers of intellectual thought to bring to the light of day the knowledge that is necessary to transform a very young world," said AUB President Fadlo R. Khuri's in his introductory remarks.

Keynote speaker Neemat G. Frem (BE '91), CEO of INDEVCO Group gave an address on his ambitious initiative to build "A Better Lebanon" through civic and community engagement. "If today we are still dreaming of a beautiful and better Lebanon, it is because we are proud of the Lebanese individual," said Mr. Frem. "To AUB, I thank you for being the perfect quarry for a successful Lebanese individual. We ask you in addition, to ignite these citizens to act on their duty of building the national institutions of the Lebanese State. This aim will bring back Lebanon, a Lebanon that resembles you and me."

A panel of speakers moderated by Marc Daou (BBA '00) included WAAAUB President Saab, Nicolas E. Chammas (BE '85), president select of the MIT Alumni Association; Nagy Rizk (BE '86), president of the INSEAD Alumni Association of Lebanon; and Lamia Rustom Shehadeh (BA '61), president of the Harvard Alumni Association of Lebanon. Representing prestigious institutions of higher education, the panelists discussed best practices of successful worldwide alumni associations.

In her speech, WAAAUB's first female president, Wafa Saab, presented her plans to mobilize the resources of a remarkably talented and accomplished alumni base in new and ever more effective ways. "We are facing a sea of change in technology and communication that has been transforming societies. We need to ask ourselves--how do we remain relevant to the generations embracing this change? How do we ensure that this change is compatible with the culture and tradition of our institution? These are some of the challenges we face today. But they also represent the opportunities that motivate us . . . to be and to create agents for positive change."

During the WAAAUB Convention business meeting, President Saab described how the WAAAUB community will celebrate AUB's historic anniversary with special events and initiatives that demonstrate AUB's rich legacy of positive and transformative impact on the lives of its students, on the health and prosperity of Beirut and Lebanon, on the strength and vitality of the region, and on the world. The convention closed with a gala dinner at the Phoenicia Hotel in honor of President Fadlo Khuri.

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Note to Editors

About AUB

Founded in 1866, the American University of Beirut bases its educational philosophy, standards, and practices on the American liberal arts model of higher education. A teaching-centered research university, AUB has more than 700 full-time faculty members and a student body of about 8,500 students. AUB currently offers more than 120 programs leading to bachelor's, master's, MD, and PhD degrees. It provides medical education and training to students from throughout the region at its Medical Center that includes a full-service 420-bed hospital.

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