

For Immediate Release



## **AUB Libraries joins US libraries to create a digital library of over 100,000 Arabic volumes**

Beirut, Lebanon- 22/07/2014 - The American University of Beirut Libraries have joined Arabic Collections Online (ACO), a five-year project funded by New York University Abu Dhabi that aims to digitize and make accessible worldwide over 100,000 volumes of Arabic content.

Along with New York University Libraries and its partners, the AUB libraries will create the Arabic Collections Online (ACO) project, a major digitization project funded by New York University Abu Dhabi, whose aim is to create a digital library of public-domain Arabic language content of over 100,000 volumes. Partners in this substantial digitization of Arabic content already include numerous prominent North American institutions, and the AUB Libraries are the first ones outside the United States to join the project. The AUB Libraries will contribute several thousand titles from their growing rich and historical Arabic collections in a variety of subjects and disciplines.

Dr. Lokman I. Meho, American University of Beirut chief librarian, said: “We are delighted to have joined the libraries of NYU, Columbia, Cornell, Princeton, and other major research institutions in the U.S. to make this significant contribution to scholarship and to bring great library collections of Arabic materials to researchers worldwide. The AUB Libraries’ extensive Arabic language collections and their commitment to open access and to high standards of digital preservation make them perfect partners for this project.” Given the scope of the project, the hope is that it will constitute an important step in the direction of democratizing access to scholarly Arabic materials, and to boosting research from and about the Arab region.

The AUB Libraries are widely regarded as one of the best academic libraries in the Middle East and North Africa. Their collections include over 1.2 million volumes of print and electronic books, 10,000 rare and unique books, 10,000 print periodicals (of which 3,500 are in Arabic), 140,000 electronic journals and conference proceedings, 300 electronic databases, hundreds of major reference works, and 1.2 million audiovisual items in various formats (the majority of which are microforms of local and regional newspapers and magazines dating back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries). The Archives and Special Collections contain 700 linear feet of archival material (including papers of famous Lebanese and Arab intellectuals); 1,400 manuscripts; 9,000 volumes of AUB theses and dissertations dating back to 1907; 5,000 posters; 1,900 maps; and 50,000 photographs. The collections are developed and enriched on an ongoing basis to support the academic and research programs of the AUB, one of the leading universities in the region.

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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 100 programs leading to the 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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