

For Immediate Release



## **AUB establishes the Farouk K. Jabre Center for Arabic and Islamic Science and Philosophy**

Beirut, Lebanon- 28/06/2012 - Renowned Lebanese businessman and philanthropist Farouk K. Jabre has made a generous donation to the American University of Beirut to fund the establishment of a new center for Arabic and Islamic science and philosophy, whose mission will be to support research on Arabic and Islamic science and raise awareness about these fields through outreach and education.

The Farouk K. Jabre Center for Arabic and Islamic Science and Philosophy will help the University expand the store of the Arab and Islamic world's legacy in science and philosophy in the region and will complement -and, in some cases, complete - other nascent initiatives at AUB that focus on Islamic studies from the historical, philosophical or business and financial aspects. The University already offers an MA in Arab and Middle Eastern Studies.

The center will also allow the University to offer additional undergraduate courses on Arabic science and philosophy, and to organize lectures and conferences to educate the public about the Arab world's rich legacy to science and philosophy.

"I wanted to help AUB create such a center because I believe we all have a collective responsibility to help youngsters in the region regain pride in their heritage which they are ignorant of," said Jabre, who is also an AUB trustee and alumnus. "Many young Arabs are under the misconception that neither the Arabic language nor its cultural environment is conducive to scientific thought, rational discourse, or knowledge production. Bright Arab minds end up leaving the region, discouraged from making contributions to science and technology in their native lands. This continuing cycle of emigration has perpetuated the endemic conditions of underdevelopment and condemned Arab societies to passive consumerism in the global knowledge economy."

The center is expected to be a major hub for researchers and educators in such diverse fields as Arabic philosophy, astronomy, mathematics, medicine, physics and technology.

"AUB decided to establish the center after noticing the dearth of records on Arab and scientific knowledge despite its contribution to the emergence of the European Renaissance," noted AUB Provost Ahmad Dallal. "Many historians and other experts are still unfamiliar with the facts, while members of the general public tend to cling to Eurocentric biases of the nineteenth century."

Dallal added: "The establishment of this new center fits in with our strategic goal of enhancing research, expanding doctoral programs and further developing our liberal education. Centers such as the Farouk K. Jabre Center for Arabic and Islamic Science and Philosophy energize AUB's intellectual environment, benefiting faculty, students, and the broader community, and increase our ability to educate students at all levels for the future."

Research on Arabic and Islamic science is only about five decades old. This branch of learning was pioneered by the late Edward S. Kennedy, an AUB faculty member for 30 years who left Lebanon at the height of the civil war. Professor Kennedy collaborated with AUB colleagues in such fields as mathematics, physics and history to edit and publish extracts from Arabic scientific manuscripts. In addition to his own foundational works and the handful of scholars that he trained, his legacy also includes some of the 1400 manuscripts held by AUB's University Libraries, which provide a modest foundation for studies in the field.

"In view of AUB's founding role in establishing the field of Arabic and Islamic science, it is especially fitting that the Farouk K. Jabre Center for Arabic and Islamic Science and Philosophy find a home within our walls," said President Dorman. "Not only is it a reflection of Trustee Jabre's enlightened understanding of the intellectual contributions of the Arab world, but the kind of research the center will foster fits perfectly with our own aspirations for interdisciplinary collaboration."

"Since its establishment in 1866, the University has become a recognized and respected regional leader in research and education, and an active participant in the formation and preservation of the Arab world's cultural heritage," added President Dorman. "We are not content to rest on our laurels, however, and we strive continually to find meaningful ways to meet the needs and concerns of our constituents."

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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 600 full-time faculty members and a student body of about 8,000 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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