

For Immediate Release



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Talal Salman in lecture at AUB:

“Reflecting on the Lebanese press and its fight for survival”

Journalist Talal Salman gave a lecture at the American University of Beirut (AUB) entitled "Journalism: between the profession of informing and reporting and attempting to play the role of the political advocate," which was part of an encounter with him organized by the University for Seniors at AUB.

In his lecture, Salman recalled some of his experiences during his nearly 60 years in journalism. Salman then talked about the harsh conditions of the press in Lebanon, which in the current political climate even threaten its existence. He addressed the challenges to the printed press in the world because of the shift to cheaper and faster electronic media. He said the printed press readership in Lebanon is constantly shrinking and that the press institutions are mostly individual institutions, financed by their owners. He added that as expenses increase and income decreases, they are “at best rigidly stuck at a certain level of deficit that is circumvented by means and methods that affect their independence and compromise their role as an honest source of news and information.”

Salman presented some recollections from his personal experience at As-Safir newspaper, which he founded on March 26, 1974. He spoke about the history of the Lebanese press, which was one of the most important platforms for Arab countries in conflict in the mid-1950s and 1960s, when Beirut was "pluralistic, and everyone accepted everybody else."

He then mentioned some of the operational reasons for the crisis in the economic independence of the Lebanese press. One reason, according to Salman, is that Lebanon is not an industrial country, and that the values and customs of the industrial society do not prevail in it. He pointed out that in most cases, capital is individual or familial and is not the result of accumulation of industrial and collective production directed at the public.

He concluded: "The Lebanese press may not be qualified to play the role of the protector of revolutions, but with its chaos and its plurality of platforms, it expresses a demand, or rather a right, to know what is happening in our present and what is being planned for our future.

Following the lecture, Salman engaged in a lively question-and-answer session with the audience.

ENDS

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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 900 full-time faculty members and a student body of about 9,100 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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