



January 30, 2017

To the AUB Community,

Like many of you, over the last 72 hours, we have been watching with growing concern what has been happening in America's airports. On Friday, January 27, 2017, the President of the United States of America, issued an Executive Order barring the entry, into America, of immigrants and visitors from seven countries: Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen.

I have and always will believe in the transcendent values of America. Therefore, we find this action and its implications to be in conflict with the enduring values of liberty and justice for all, which the original framers of the US constitution fought to protect and preserve. These very same values were behind the founding of the American University of Beirut (AUB) in 1866, embodying a message of hope and universal faith in a time of great need.

We affirm today that our values at AUB are those of equal opportunity, openness, equal treatment, and equal protection under the law for all; irrespective of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or ethnicity. We at AUB believe in the power of education to transform societies and to serve as the great equalizer among the disparate peoples of the earth. We at AUB are firm in our belief that with this very power of education and enlightenment, it will be made clear to all that those values which unite us all as a human race are so much more powerful than all the factors that come between us.

On behalf of the oldest university in the Middle East, we posit that attainment of the finest ideals of the great American opportunity, as embodied in the American Dream, is what is driving those individuals who are coming to America's shores; people who need America's succor and support now more than ever. The exchange of ideas that results from visiting professors and students lies at the core of the advancement of knowledge and research.

We speak as a university that prides itself on serving those least fortunate, as demonstrably shown on January 27, 2017, in our stellar [#AUB4Refugees Symposium](#), addressing our approaches to the many challenges of refugees. Surely, those qualities of mercy and mutual understanding for all are paramount at this time. We at AUB firmly believe that our students, faculty and staff, irrespective of their country of origin or religion, are exactly the kind of individuals who can and will change the world for the better.

It is difficult to remember a period since the Second World War, with so much suffering going on in the world, and with the Arab world, in particular, hosting almost half of the world's displaced persons, that fair, optimistic, and open-minded American leadership has been more vital. We, at the oldest and finest American institution of higher learning abroad, remain engaged in helping our community enhance, promote and protect the very values that America's greatest President, Abraham Lincoln, intended when he referenced the "better angels of our nature" in his first inaugural speech.

Respectfully,

Fadlo R. Khuri, MD
President