

# REPUBLIC OF LEBANON

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants



## **North America Lebanese Diaspora Energy New York**

September 16-17, 2016





***New York  
September 16-17, 2016***

## **Concept**

At the initiative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants, the Lebanese Diaspora Energy Conference (LDE) was held in Lebanon in 2014, with the participation of a wide array of the Lebanese Diaspora. Building on the success of the first LDE, consecutive conferences were organized in 2015 and 2016, with a total number of participants reaching over 2400 this year.

In an effort to move the conversation closer to the Diaspora and to better understand its need, in addition to further strengthen its ties with Lebanon, a decision was taken at LDE 2016 to hold regional conferences in New York, Sao Paulo, and Johannesburg.

The North America Lebanese Diaspora Energy Conference in New York will be held on 16 & 17 September 2016. Several prominent organizations will be participating, including the Lebanese International Finance Executives (LIFE), the Network of Lebanese-American Professionals (LebNet), the American Task Force for Lebanon (ATFL), ABANA, along with hundreds of leaders from a variety of fields.

This regional conference aims to promote the culture of entrepreneurship, with a focus on startups, among other topics. It will bring together experts in information technology, finance, medicine, energy, and public relations to produce policy recommendations with indicators of achievement for measurable implementation in Lebanon.

The conference offers an opportunity for entrepreneurs, universities, and foundations to work together to create opportunities for members of the Diaspora to grow their potential in Lebanon, the US and Canada.

The conference will celebrate success stories from the Diaspora and provide a platform for its members to share their experiences. It also aims to continue establishing a network of successful and professional members of the Diaspora from around the globe.

In addition, it will serve as a stage to pitch the Lebanese Nationality Restoration Law to potential beneficiaries.

## **Motivation**

Since the second half of the 19th century, Lebanese have been migrating and settling in various geographic regions of the world, and their numbers abroad have far surpassed that of Lebanon. Many of the Lebanese abroad have achieved upward mobility and sought to engage in the prosperity of their home country. They are the source of critical revenues. Through remittances, they contribute to reducing poverty. They also serve as a source of knowledge and know-how, investment, trade, and global business connections.

The Lebanese Government, recognizing the importance of strengthening ties with the Diaspora, has recently adopted legislation for regaining citizenship, hosted annual Diaspora conferences, and initiated steps for political inclusion. Meanwhile, the Diaspora equally values improvements in the business climate, reform and transparency in strengthening ties.

The conference represents an opportunity for the Diaspora to provide Lebanon with policy recommendations for reform and economic growth on a wide variety of pertinent issues, ranging from strengthening the startups ecosystem and diversifying economic sectors, to creating educational partnerships and energy extraction and production.

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## **Panels**

### **First Panel:** Startups and Entrepreneurship: Opportunities and Challenges

Startups present an enormous opportunity to diversify economic resources, create jobs, and cultivate talent and skills. The Central Bank's Circular 331 provides equity investment opportunities, especially for technology startups, and opens up new horizons for entrepreneurs, innovators and investors.

- How to maximize the benefits of Circular 331 and expand those opportunities to a larger talent pool in Lebanon in a transparent manner?
- How can the Diaspora access the talent pool and entrepreneurs in the startup ecosystem to create new opportunities?
- How can we strengthen the competitive advantages of the startup ecosystem in Lebanon to become a relevant regional hub in the Middle East?
- What is the role of professional networks in connecting the talent pool in Lebanon with their counterparts in North America?

### **Second Panel:** Diversification of Energy Resources

Endemic economic problems, including growing national debt and the need for job creation, necessitate a fast track approach to fossil resources extraction and production. This need should be balanced by investing in sustainable renewable resources that reduce environmental impact. In this regard, transparency, equal opportunity in awarding contracts, and independent oversight are important.

- What is the appropriate balance between renewable and fossil resources for energy production?
- What are the most efficient renewable resources for energy production in Lebanon?
- What is the best model for investing the financial proceeds of future energy production from fossil resources?
- How to develop the technical capacity and know-how that will provide the labor force necessary for prospective job opportunities from fossil energy production?
- What is the economic feasibility of privatizing electrical production in Lebanon?

### **Third Panel:** Educational Partnerships and Healthcare Cooperation: Exchange of Knowledge and Capacity Building

Considering its liberal and pluralistic society, Lebanon is positioned to be the educational hub of the Middle East. Further enhancing healthcare capacities can increase demand for medical tourism and hospital care.

- What is the status of higher education in Lebanon, including research and scholarships?
  - How to maintain quality education in Lebanon while making it more affordable and accessible?
  - What are the differences between private and public universities in Lebanon?
  - How can educational partnerships turn Lebanon into a regional educational hub?
  - How can educational partnerships enhance capacity building and training initiatives that meet the needs of the job market and create an environment conducive to innovation?
  - How can medical centers cooperate in the areas of science, medicine and technology?
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**Fourth Panel:** Let's Get Connected: Diaspora Narratives & Strengthening Ties

(Lebanese Nationality Program/Lebanon Connect/Lebanese Schools/Lebanese Diaspora Houses/Diaspora Cedar/Lebanese Diaspora Fund/Women Pioneers/Invest to Stay)

Embracing the diversity of the Diaspora and its cosmopolitan character, mapping its size, and understanding its interests, are all necessary for developing policies to strengthen its ties with Lebanon. Emotional and patriotic engagement should be matched with political inclusion and investment opportunities. For some, political representation encourages involvement in economic development. For others, improvements in the business climate and returns on investments take precedence over sentimental ties.

- What are the effective policies for Diaspora engagement that strengthen ties to Lebanon?
- How can we obtain accurate data on the Diaspora to develop a solid understanding of its size and needs, both essential for the formulation of policies that serve its interests and strengthen its ties with Lebanon?
- How much is political inclusion of the Diaspora instrumental in the creation of pressure groups that lobby for Lebanese political, economic and social interests?
- How can Diaspora success stories inspire Lebanese youth to realize their potential?
- What advertisement strategies involving celebrities encourage citizenship campaigns?

**Fifth Panel:** Investment, Diversification and Economic Growth (Banking and Finance/Services)

Given the potential for growth through economic diversification in Lebanon, the Lebanese economy should not remain solely a service industry economy. In addition, the lack of regional stability has been detrimental to the service industry, and offers another reason to diversify. Lebanon can be the regional hub for education and healthcare, as well as one of the financial centers in the region. In addition, the vast opportunities created by the thriving startup ecosystem, the unrealized capabilities of the industrial sector, and the promise of fossil energy resources can unlock needed economic growth.

Remittances to Lebanon in 2014 were estimated at 7.7 billion dollars, representing approximately 17% of Lebanon's GDP and leading remittance inflows in the entire Arab region. These figures indicate a strong Diasporic-Lebanese relationship that could be further cultivated for investment projects.

- Considering that the banking sector is the main engine for economic growth, how can that sector promote economic diversification under the guidance of the Central Bank?
  - What is the role of microfinance in realizing economic diversification?
  - What are the necessary structural reforms, measure that enhance transparency, and investments in infrastructure that would create an environment conducive to investment?
  - While noting that returns on investments are as important as sentimental ties, how can we raise capital from the Diaspora, aside from remittance flows, and direct it to finance educational, medical and infrastructure projects?
  - How to identify investment opportunities, such as real estate, agriculture, industry, etc., that yield high returns and draw Diaspora interest?
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**Sixth Panel:** Branding Lebanon: Buy Lebanese & Lebanese Cuisine

Lebanese exports have recently seen an expansion in soft industries such as chemical products, paper products, and jewelry. Quality Lebanese cuisine and wine also have potential for growth. The Gulf region currently leads the list of countries importing from Lebanon. The challenge is to increase exports to North America by reinforcing competitive sectors such as the food and beverage industry, as well as the jewelry industry.

- What are the effective branding and marketing strategies that increase sales of Lebanese products in North America?
- How can the Lebanese jewelry industry be connected to retailers in North America to increase sales of gold, precious stones, and accessories?
- What is the role of Lebanese cuisine in branding Lebanese food and beverage products and increasing their sales?
- What are the marketing strategies to promote Lebanese cuisine, including those that involve engaging celebrities and renowned chefs?
- Can incorporating creativity and innovation in ingredients, flavors, and presentation of Lebanese cuisine further elevate its status and increase its consumption in North America?
- How to increase wine sales in North America?
- How can the Diaspora promote Lebanese products in North America?

We look forward to your participation and contribution at LDE NY 2016. We also hope you will mark your schedule for the next LDE in Lebanon on 4, 5, and 6 May 2017.

For further information kindly check the following link: [www.lde-leb.com](http://www.lde-leb.com)

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**NA LDE NY Conference**  
**September 16 & 17, 2016**  
**583 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10065**

**Program**

**Friday, September 16, 2016**

7 am – 9 am	<b>Registration &amp; Continental Breakfast</b>
9 am – 10 am	<b>Opening Session</b>
10 am – 11:30 am	<b>First Panel</b> Startups and Entrepreneurship: Opportunities and Challenges
11:30 am – 1 pm	<b>Second Panel</b> Diversification of Energy Resources
1 pm – 2:45 pm	<b>Buffet Lunch</b>
3 pm – 4 pm	<b>Third Panel</b> Educational Partnerships and Healthcare Cooperation: Exchange of Knowledge and Capacity Building
4:30 pm – 6:15 pm	<b>Fourth Panel</b> Let's Get Connected: Diaspora Narratives & Strengthening Ties (Lebanese Nationality Program/Lebanon Connect/Lebanese Schools/Lebanese Diaspora Houses/Diaspora Cedar/Lebanese Diaspora Fund/Women Pioneers/Invest to Stay)
7 pm – 11 pm	<b>Cocktail and Gala Dinner</b> (583 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10065)

**Saturday, September 17, 2016**

8 am – 9 am	<b>Continental Breakfast</b>
9 am – 10:30 am	<b>Fifth Panel</b> Investment, Diversification and Economic Growth (Banking and Finance/Services)
10:30 am – 12 pm	<b>Sixth Panel</b> Branding Lebanon: Buy Lebanese & Lebanese Cuisine
12 pm – 1 pm	<b>Closing Session</b>
1 pm – 2:45 pm	<b>Buffet Lunch</b>
6 pm – 8 pm	<b>Reception hosted by CG Majdi Ramadan</b> (9 E 76th Street, NY, NY 10021)

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## Welcome Address



### **Gebran Bassil – Minister of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants**

Honorable Bassil was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants of the Republic of Lebanon on February 15, 2014.

His official tenure of an executive office started in 2008, as Minister of Telecommunications, where he established the roadmap policy paper for the sector defining its strategic long-term development, mainly through the modernization of the services and the opening of the market for competition.

He then led the Ministry of Energy and Water between 2009 and 2014 where he initiated the mapping of Lebanon as an oil and gas country. He triggered major reforms in the energy and water sectors, thus paving the ground for a sustainable development of all these key economic sectors.

In his current capacity as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants, he is committed to the continuous engagement of the Ministry alongside the Lebanese Diaspora. His main focus is to drive the Lebanese diplomacy towards a renewed leading role both regionally and internationally.

Minister Bassil was born on June 21, 1970. He is a graduate of the American University of Beirut in civil engineering (BE and MS).

## Speakers



### **Ziad Aboultaif – Member of Parliament, House of Commons, Parliament of Canada**

A successful business owner, devoted member of multiple community boards and a strong advocate for live organ donations, Ziad has long been an advocate for organ and tissue donation and in 2003 he made a partial-liver donation.

A business owner for more than 12 years, Ziad is a strong supporter for small business ownership as it maintains the strength of Canadian economy and reduces the unemployment rate. He has travelled the world as part of his domestic and international business commitments giving him a strong analytical understanding of what drives Canadian and international economies. Elected to Parliament in 2015, Ziad was appointed Official Opposition Critic for National Revenue.

His extensive work on community boards has earned him both an Alberta Centennial Medal (2005), and a Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal (2012). In Parliament Ziad is working to increase awareness on the importance of organ and tissue donation and will stand as a role model to encourage Canadians to improve the lives of others.

Originally from Aihla, Lebanon, Ziad immigrated to Canada in 1990.

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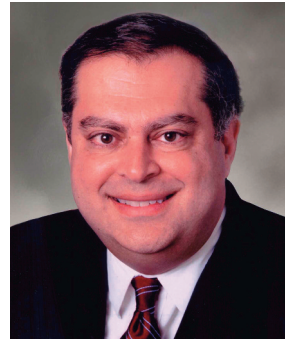
### **Spencer Abraham - Former Secretary of Energy**

Secretary Spencer Abraham is Chairman and CEO of The Abraham Group, an international strategic consulting firm focused on the energy sector and based in Washington, DC.

Secretary Abraham served as the tenth Secretary of Energy in United States history from 2001-2005. He helped President Bush devise America's first national energy plan in over a decade and oversaw its implementation. As part of this plan, he led efforts to broaden America's international energy partnerships as well as forge closer ties to key oil producing nations.

Prior to being named a Cabinet Member, Secretary Abraham served as an effective and highly productive U.S. Senator from Michigan for six years, where he was the author of 22 pieces of legislation signed into law. He served on the Judiciary, Budget and Commerce Committees. In addition, he was chairman of two subcommittees: Manufacturing and Competitiveness, and Immigration.

Secretary Abraham is a member of the Board of Directors of several public companies, including Occidental Petroleum, NRG Energy, and PBF Energy, and is a member of the Board of Trustees at the California Institute of Technology. In addition, he is the author of Lights Out!: Ten Myths About (and Real Solutions to) America's Energy Crisis.



### **Lena Diab - Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Minister of Immigration**

Minister Diab was elected in 2013 to the Provincial Assembly representing Halifax Armdale, and appointed to Executive Council of Nova Scotia as the first female Attorney General and Minister of Justice as well as Minister of Immigration. In July 2015, the Immigration portfolio became her exclusive cabinet position.

Minister Diab is passionate about making Nova Scotia more diverse. Under her leadership, the province has welcomed more immigrants, strengthened its immigration program, and built global networks.

She is the daughter of Lebanese immigrants to Canada and the eldest of six children. Born in Nova Scotia, she lived in Lebanon for 8 years, returning to Halifax at the age of 11.

Prior to entering politics, she led a successful legal career for over 20 years. Her educational background includes a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and Political Science, a Masters of Public Administration and a law degree.

She has received numerous honors and accolades, including the Lebanese Chamber of Commerce in NS Professional Award, the prestigious Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal, the Progress Women of Excellence Award and the Canadian Council of Ambassadors of the Arab League Award.

She is the proud mother of four children and has two grandchildren.





### **Timothy Pounds**

#### **Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon**

Timothy Pounds is a member of the Senior Foreign Service and currently Acting Deputy Secretary for Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon. He has served in Ankara, Turkey, Lima Peru, and Damascus as a Political Officer. He was Consul General in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia and Kirkuk, Iraq. He recently completed a three-year tour as DCM Manama, Bahrain. Domestically, Mr. Pounds worked as the Lebanon desk officer (2001-2003) and then as senior Egypt desk officer (2003-2004) before serving in Iraq in 2004. Between 2004 and 2005, he was the Director for Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, and North Africa at the National Security Council in Washington, DC. He studied Arabic at the Foreign Service Institute in Washington and Tunis (2005-2007).

Prior to joining the Foreign Service, Mr. Pounds worked as a national security analyst and a management consultant in the private sector. He holds a BA in History and Political Science from the University of Iowa and an MA in Public Administration from the University of Maryland School of Public Affairs. He is married to Tracy Roberts-Pounds, also a Foreign Service Officer. They have three children: Samuel, Audrey, and James, and a black Lab named Jack.



### **Hashim Sarkis- Dean, MIT**

Dr. Sarkis is Dean of the School of Architecture and Planning at MIT. Prior to that, he was at Harvard University Graduate School of Design (GSD) as the The Aga Khan Professor of Landscape Architecture and Urbanism. In addition to professorships at Harvard University and MIT, Dean Sarkis has held numerous visiting appointments around the world including the American University of Beirut and the Metropolis Program in Barcelona.

In addition to his academic work, Dean Sarkis is principal architect in the Cambridge and Beirut based firm, Hashim Sarkis Studios, founded in 1998. His architectural and planning projects include affordable housing, institutional buildings, and town planning throughout the globe. His current projects include the recently completed Byblos Town Hall—for which he has received a First Prize Award—and the Courtowers, which is under construction.

Dean Sarkis has a Bachelor of Architecture and Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Rhode Island School of Design and a Master of Architecture from Harvard University GSD. He received his Ph.D. in Architecture from Harvard University GSD for his thesis *Publics and Architects: Re-Engaging Design in the Democracy*.

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**Salim G. Sfeir – CEO Bank of Beirut**

Mr. Sfeir, born in Beirut September 17, 1944, is the CEO of Bank of Beirut Group, one of top major Banks in Lebanon.

In 1969, he graduated from the University of Montreal with a BSS in Economics and received his MBA - University of Detroit, 1971.

In 1971, he joined Bank of Nova Scotia, Beirut. 1980-1983 BANK MED-Deputy General Manager. Founded Wedge Bank in 1983 and in 1992 was appointed General Manager and Member of Board of Directors, Vice-Chairman and Managing Director. 1985-1991, General Manager & CEO, Wedge Bank (Switzerland).

In 1993 he organized and implemented Management Buy-in of Bank of Beirut leading it to develop into one of the top major five banks in Lebanon, through strategic alliances, bank acquisitions, and expansion into 4 continents.

Board Member of Association of Banks, Lebanon. Was Vice-Chairman Board of Trustees, LAU, and AMIDEAST. Currently, Vice-Chairman, WPF, Member Board of Trustees-University of the Holy Spirit.

Numerous Honors conferred on Sfeir:

Knight Commander-Pontifical Order of Pope Saint Sylvester by His Holiness, the Supreme Pontiff. National Order of the Cedar Medal-President Michel Sleiman.





**Paula Faris – ABC**

Paula Faris is the co-anchor of "Good Morning America"'s weekend edition and regular contributor to GMA weekday, as well as a co-host of ABC's "The View".

While at ABC News, the Emmy-Award winning journalist has reported on a wide-array of topics, from the Republican National Convention, to the World Cup in Brazil and the Patriots "deflate-gate" scandal. In September 2015, she sat down exclusively with controversial Kentucky clerk, Kim Davis, who made global headlines after refusing to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples. Earlier that year, she hosted "The Oscars Backstage" at the Academy Awards. She's interviewed everyone from Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders to Reese Witherspoon, Tiger Woods and Robert DeNiro.

Faris came to ABC News after spending over 10 years working for TV affiliates in Chicago, Cincinnati and Dayton. She began her career behind the scenes, shooting, editing and producing.

A native of Jackson, Michigan, Faris graduated Cum Laude from Cedarville University (OH) and married her college sweetheart in 2000. She resides in New York with her husband and their three young children.



**Peter Ganim – Actor**

Mr. Ganim is an American artist of Lebanese heritage. An acclaimed stage actor in both classical and contemporary roles, he's appeared in theatres across the country and regularly with New York City's Middle Eastern company, the Obie Award honored Noor Theatre. As a director, he co-founded the French-language company Théâtre du Rêve, helmed award-winning productions of Pinter, Mamet, and Wilder, and produced several short films, including the Guggenheim finalist, 'Ya Habibi, New York'. He appears on film and television, as well, notably his recent 'Best Actor' turn in Anthony Haden Salerno's 'Lapse' and the upcoming Amazon Studios series, 'The Ridge'. New York theatre audiences will find him next spring in the Broadway company of Lincoln Center Theater's hit production of 'OSLO', at the Vivian Beaumont Theater. In the world of audiobooks, he's had the great fortune to narrate several landmark titles, including Edward Said's 'Orientalism', and Mohammed Ould Slahi's 'Guantánamo Diary'. He's served as the 'Emcee' for multiple conferences and conventions, and like any good Lebanese named Peter Maron, he is also an ordained minister.

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## Startups and Entrepreneurship: Opportunities and Challenges



### Moderator

#### Habib Kairouz – Managing Partner RHO Capital

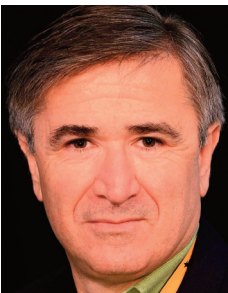
Habib Kairouz is a Managing Partner of Rho Capital Partners, a private equity firm with approximately \$1.5 billion under management and offices in New York, Palo Alto and Montreal. Rho's business units span various classes of private equity, including venture capital (Rho Ventures and Rho Canada), technology buyouts (Rho Acceleration) and private equity fund investments (Rho Fund Investors). Habib's current and past investments include CommerceOne, Dashlane, Everydayhealth, Intralinks, iVillage, OMGPOP, ReachLocal, Snagajob,

Tacoda, Tripod and Yantra.

Habib received degrees in Engineering and Economics from Cornell University and an M.B.A. in Finance from Columbia University.

Habib is also involved in a number of non-profit organizations, focused on either the field of venture capital or targeting reforms and economic assistance for Lebanon and has served on the boards of the following organizations:

- Social & Economic Action for Lebanon ([www.seal-usa.org](http://www.seal-usa.org))
- Lebnet ([www.lebnet.us](http://www.lebnet.us))
- Lebanese International Finance Executives ([www.lifelebanon.com](http://www.lifelebanon.com))
- Lebanon Chapter of Endeavor Global, ([www.endeavor.org](http://www.endeavor.org))
- New York Venture Capital Association (NYVCA).
- IT Advisory Board of the New York City Investment Fund.
- Eugene Lang Entrepreneurship Center at Columbia University
- Fintech Innovation Lab program in New York City



#### Magid Abraham - CEO of comScore

Dr. Abraham is Executive Chairman of APX Labs, and most recently Executive Chairman of comScore. He was founding CEO of comScore for 14 years, focusing on innovation, strategy and industry leadership. Before comScore, Dr. Abraham was founder and CEO of Paragren Technologies, producing CRM systems. He was president of IRI, a major international research company, which he led through sustained growth and innovation. He a Visiting Scholar at Stanford in 2016 and serves on a number of commercial and institutional boards.

Dr. Abraham is a world expert on consumer and market measurement and analytics He has authored seminal award winning articles. He received the Advertising Research Foundation's "Lifetime Achievement Award". He earned the AMA's Parlin award and MIT's Buck Weaver award, both in recognition for contributions and leadership in the theory and practice of Marketing Science. He was named EY Entrepreneur of the Year and inducted in the Entrepreneurship Hall of Fame and designated "Technology Pioneer" by the World Economic Forum. Dr. Abraham received a Ph.D. and an M.B.A. from MIT, and is engineer of the École Polytechnique, France.



**Mike Ahmar - President of Ahmar Investment Inc**

Mohamed "Mike" Ahmar is the President of Ahmar Investment Inc., a real estate development company. Mr. Ahmar is a founder and the Executive Chairman of the Board of Partners Bank of California.

Mr. Ahmar founded ICG in 1985, a leading specialty distributor of desktop displays, A/V presentation products and digital imaging peripherals for the commercial and consumer technology markets. In June 2006, ICG was acquired by Electrograph Systems, Inc. a portfolio company of private equity firm Caxton-Iseman Capital, Inc. Mr. Ahmar spent 21 years building ICG from the ground

up. As a result of his leadership, ICG has twice been listed as one of Inc. Magazine's 500 fastest growing companies in the U.S.

Mr. Ahmar earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Electronics Engineering from Northrop University and Master of Science in Electrical Engineering from San Jose State University.

In 1999, Mr. Ahmar and his wife, Hania started the Ahmar Family Foundation, a non-profit organization formed to serve and benefit charitable and educational purposes.

Mr. Ahmar is a member of YPO/WPO and CEO.

Mr. Ahmar is currently member of the following boards:

Lebanese American University, Board of Trustees. L.A.U. ([WWW.LAU.EDU.LB](http://WWW.LAU.EDU.LB))

American Task Force for Lebanon. Treasurer and member of the executive committee; Washington DC. ([WWW.ATFL.ORG](http://WWW.ATFL.ORG))

USC Marshall School of Business, Board of Leaders.

Chapman University, Board of Counselors.

Co-Chairman, The Lebanese American Foundation (House of Lebanon)([WWW.HOUSEOFLEBANON.COM](http://WWW.HOUSEOFLEBANON.COM))

Friends of the Lebanese Academy of Science (FLAS).

Los Angeles Fire Department Foundation.



**George Akiki - President of LebNet**

George Akiki is a Technology Executive with a strong passion for the role of technology as a key driver of economic development. George is President and co-founder of LebNet, a US non-profit Lebanese American high tech professional society focused on the role of Diaspora in job creation and mentorship of entrepreneurs from countries of origin.

He is a member of the advisory council of Computer Science at LAU, member of the Steering Committee of Lebanon for Entrepreneurs, and member of the Investment Committee of the Kafalat iSME programme

Akiki is currently managing director at Agate Advisors and his prior 17-year career at Cisco spanned multiple leadership roles in areas facing rapid transformation including an extensive involvement in Cisco's Corporate Social Responsibility where he led the "Partnership for Lebanon" which later evolved into an International assignment to lead CSR for MEA.

He received a BSEE from Fairleigh Dickinson University, a Graduate EE degree from Ohio State University, and an MBA from Golden Gate University. In 2011, George relocated back to the USA following a 3-year assignment in the Middle East.

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**Paul F. Boulos - President of Innovzye**

Dr. Boulos is Founder, President, Chief Operating Officer and Chief Innovation Officer of Innovzye, and a world leading expert in water and wastewater and navigation engineering. He also serves as a President and Director of MWH Global. He is credited with more than ten authoritative books and over 200 technical articles resulting in numerous "industry firsts" and over 500 keynote addresses, invited lectures, chairs and panels. He is the recipient of an array of national and international awards and honors including notable technical awards for excellence in scholarship from the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), the American Water Works Association and the Environmental Protection Agency; Ellis Island Medal of Honor; Lebanese American Foundation Pride of Heritage Award; ASCE Parcel-Sverdrup Civil Engineering Management Award; University of Kentucky Hall of Distinction (the most prestigious honor granted by the university); Lebanese American University Distinguished Alumni Award; and NAE Einstein Society Award. He was awarded Honorary Diplomate status by the American Academy of Water Resources Engineers and Distinguished Diplomate status in Navigation Engineering by the Academy of Coastal, Ocean, Port & Navigation Engineers, both Academies' top honors. He was also elected to the grade of Distinguished Member of ASCE, the highest honor conferred by the Society; and to the National Academy of Engineering, the highest professional distinction accorded to an engineer.



**Tarek Fadel - Founder of Fadel**

As CEO, Tarek Fadel is responsible for the strategic management of FADEL, the leader in cloud IP Rights and Royalty Management Software. Prior to founding FADEL in NY in 2003, Tarek was a Director at Oracle Corporation with over 20 years of experience in building, selling and implementing enterprise business software applications. He directed a national consulting practice at Oracle, directly responsible for the success of several global enterprise client implementations, and also held the position of Director of Product Management releasing several E-Commerce CRM products to market, globally. Tarek also worked at Cambridge Technology Group and played a major role in deploying its enterprise application server products to market in the mid 1990's. Tarek holds a technology patent for his work on Method and Apparatus for E-Commerce Integration Architecture and patent pending for his work on Digital Asset Rights Clearance. Tarek attended the Lebanese American University Computer Science program in Beirut, Lebanon from 1991 - 1993. He holds a bachelor's degree in Computer and Information Science from the City University of New York and an MBA from Columbia University.



**Tony Fadell - Founder of Nest**

Tony is an angel investor and entrepreneur with a 30-year history of founding companies and designing products that profoundly improve people's lives. He is currently an advisor to Alphabet and its CEO, Larry Page, and invests in many disruptive technology startups. Tony is the founder and former CEO of Nest. Previously, Tony was the SVP of Apple's iPod Division and led the team that created the first 18 generations of the iPod and the first three generations of the iPhone. Tony has authored more than 300 patents. In May 2016, TIME named Nest Thermostat, the iPod and iPhone as three of the "50 Most Influential Gadgets of All Time."



**Rabih Nassar – Founder & CEO of Scriptr**

Rabih is the founder and CEO of Scriptr.io, an enterprise platform that enables Internet of Things product interoperability & accelerates Application Development. In 2009 he founded Apstrata, a cloud platform that accelerates mobile application development and helps Mobile Network Operators benefit from the developer economy. In 2006, Rabih served as SVP of Engineering for Vidavee, a cloud B2B video on-demand startup acquired by Vignette (VIGN/OTEX). In 2003 he co-founded ElementN, the holding group behind Scriptr. In 2000 he co-founded Super11.net, one of the largest Latin American ISPs, Application Service Providers and portals at the time. Rabih earned a B.S.

in Telecommunications from the St. Joseph University and an MBA from the École Supérieure des Affaires in Beirut.



**Walid Saba – Co Founder- & CTO of Klangoo**

Dr. Walid Saba is a Co-Founder and the CTO of Klangoo, the developer of the Magnet digital content semantic engine. Prior to Klangoo Walid spent over 20 years holding various positions at such places as the American Institutes for Research, AT&T Bell Labs, Metlife, Nortel Networks, IBM and Cognos. He has also spent 7 years in academia where he has taught computer science at Carleton University, the New Jersey Institute of Technology, the University of Windsor, and the American University of Beirut (AUB). He has published over 35 technical articles, including an award winning paper that he received at the German Artificial Intelligence Conference (KI-2008). Walid received an MSc in

Computer Science from the University of Windsor, and a PhD in Computer Science which he obtained from Carleton University in 1999.

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## Diversification of Energy Resources



### Moderator

#### Edgar Choueri – Professor, Princeton University.

Edgar Choueri is Professor of Applied Physics and Astronautical Engineering at Princeton University, where he is Director of the Engineering Physics Program, and Associated Faculty in the Department of Astrophysical Sciences. He is also Director of two research laboratories at Princeton: the Plasma Propulsion Laboratory, where he works, with NASA funding, on plasma rockets for space travel to the Moon, Mars and beyond, and the 3D Audio and Applied Acoustics Laboratory, where he works, on 3D audio. His 3D audio inventions have been used in a number of commercial products and have been the topic of much coverage in the media. He holds a PhD (1991) in plasma science from Princeton University. He has authored more than 200 publications, led more than 25 research projects funded by NASA and the US Air Force Office of Scientific Research, including two space experiments on US and Russian spacecraft, and received numerous awards including a knighthood of the Order of the Cedar from the President of the Lebanese Republic in 2004. He served (2008-2013) as the founding President of the Lebanese Academy of Sciences, a not-for-profit organization comprised of leading Lebanese, European and American scientists, and dedicated to offering independent and free advice to Lebanon on scientific matters.



#### Ziad Raymond Azar - White & Case LLP

Dr. Azar is an attorney at White & Case LLP in New York. Dr. Azar's practice focuses on corporate and financial transactions in the United States and internationally. His expertise involves the tender, development, financing, acquisition, and divestiture of energy, infrastructure, and natural resource projects. At White & Case, Dr. Azar represented major institutions such as Saudi Aramco, Sonatrach, the Abu Dhabi Water and Electricity Authority, Indorama, Goldman Sachs and Deutsche Bank on multiple cross-border project development and financing transactions.

Prior to joining White & Case, Dr. Azar was a consultant with the World Bank Group in Washington DC where he co-authored and helped launch the Doing Business Report series, the World Bank's seminal annual publication on the cost of business regulation in more than 150 countries worldwide. He then taught law and economics at Harvard University. Dr. Azar's academic credentials are furthered by multiple publications in business law and economic policy that have been commended for substantive contributions to their field.



#### Joseph Dableh – President LRT Technologies Inc.

Dr. Dableh came to Canada from Lebanon in 1971. Completed his Master Degree and Ph. D. in Electrical Engineering.

Joseph spent 10 years at Ontario Hydro, 14 years at McMaster University, and 16 years in his own technology companies. Currently, he is developing a modern Life Sciences and Innovation District in Oakville, Ontario, Canada. This district will include a research incubator that will host and mentor inventors from every walk of engineering and scientific life.

Joseph has founded few engineering companies. He holds many patents in various scientific areas, mainly:

- A method to fix the core of CANDU Nuclear Reactors instead of fully replacing them. This was used in 17 CANDU Reactors in Canada and abroad and resulted in avoiding massive exposure to radiation and in the saving of tens of billions of dollars.
- A novel water purification and desalination method that consume very little energy.
- An intelligent light dimming and control method that makes every light bulb an intelligent appliance that can be controlled over the Internet.



**Habib Joseph Dagher – Professor, University of Maine**

Dr. Dagher is the founding Executive Director of the Advanced Structures & Composites Center, a National Science Foundation funded research Center housed in a 100,000 ft<sup>2</sup> laboratory with over 180 personnel. The Center is a world leader in the development of low-cost, high-performance engineered materials for construction. The Center has worked with over 500 clients worldwide, and has received top national and international awards for its research. Dr. Dagher is author of over 100 publications, holds 25 patents with 8 additional patents pending. He has received numerous awards including the 2015 White House Transportation Champion of Change; the Carnegie

Foundation Maine Professor of the Year; the Distinguished Maine Professor Award, the highest award given to a faculty member at UMaine; and the American Society of Civil Engineers Charles Pankov Innovation Award, the highest innovation award offered by the society. Dr. Dagher testified before the US Senate on offshore wind energy. He led a team that developed the first grid-connected offshore wind turbine in the US and the first floating turbine in the world made out of concrete and composite materials. He is also Director, DeepCwind Consortium and Principal Investigator, New England Aqua Ventus I Project.



**George Sassine – Senior Product Manager GE Power**

Georges Sassine is President of the Lebanese Oil and Gas Initiative (LOGI), an NGO building a global network of experts to help Lebanon benefit from its oil and gas wealth.

In his private sector career, he is currently a senior product manager at GE Power. He previously led strategy and business development for GE's emergency power business and was part of GE Energy's Global Strategy team.

He previously worked with several multinational corporations driving policy analysis, investment and business strategy. He was part of Deutsche Bank's

Energy & Climate Change Advisors team in New York, Man Group's energy private equity fund in London, the American Enterprise Institute and the Environmental and Energy Study Institute in Washington DC, as well as the UNDP project at the Lebanese Ministry of Energy & Water.

Georges has been published advancing innovative solutions to Lebanon's pressing challenges including the Financial Times, CNN, the Huffington Post, Annahar, L'Orient le Jour, Executive Magazine and the Daily Star.

Georges holds a Master in Public Policy from Harvard University, and a bachelor in Mechanical Engineering from the American University of Beirut.

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**Omar Sawaf - CEO Yellowstone Capital**

Omar A. Sawaf is founding partner and CEO of Yellowstone Capital Partners, Houston Texas.

Prior to co-founding Yellowstone in 1993 with his brother Bashar Sawaf, Omar was the President of Capital Guidance Corporation, the U.S. subsidiary of a global family/ investment group with core operations in real estate, building materials and chemical distribution as well as private equity.

Omar's business development experiences focused on middle market private equity buyouts and venture capital in the food, energy and health care

industries.

Omar holds a B.S. in Industrial and Systems engineering from Ohio State University and a M.B.A. from Harvard Business School.

## Educational Partnerships and Healthcare Cooperation: Exchange of Knowledge and Capacity Building



### Moderator

#### **Bernard Haykel - Professor, Princeton University**

Dr. Haykel is a historian of the Arabian Peninsula and a scholar of Islamic law and Islamic political movements. He is professor of Near Eastern Studies at Princeton University where he is also director of the Institute for the Transregional Study of the Contemporary Middle East, North Africa and Central Asia. Haykel is the author of "Revival and Reform in Islam," and most recently the co-editor of "Saudi Arabia in Transition," both published by Cambridge University Press. He is also the author of numerous articles on Salafism, al-Qaeda, ISIS, Wahhabism and the politics of Saudi Arabia and Yemen. He has received several awards, such as the Prize Fellowship at Magdalen College, Oxford, the Carnegie Corporation and Guggenheim fellowships and the Old Dominion Professorship at Princeton. Haykel has advised the U.S. and British governments and appears frequently in print and broadcast media, including PBS, NPR, the New York Times, al-Jazeera and the BBC among others. He earned his D.Phil. in Oriental Studies from the University of Oxford.



#### **Ghassan K. Abou Alfa - Professor, Weill Cornell Medical College**

Professor Abou-Alfa joined the Gastrointestinal Oncology Service at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center and Weill Cornell Medical College in New York back in 2001. Prof. Abou-Alfa specializes in the treatment of gastrointestinal cancers and in particular, liver cancer. Prof. Abou-Alfa received his medical degree from the American University of Beirut, Lebanon, and completed his post-doctoral training at Yale University School of Medicine. He received his MBA from Columbia University. Prof. Abou-Alfa serves as the chair of the National Cancer Institute (NCI) Task Force for Hepatobiliary Cancers and the chair of the AIDS Malignancy Consortium (AMC) Non-AIDS Defining Malignancies (NADC) Liver/GI Task Force. Prof. Abou-Alfa who has lectured worldwide on the subject on gastrointestinal malignancies. He serves as the chair the medical/scientific board of the Cholangiocarcinoma Foundation and the Blue Faery Liver Foundation, and serves on the National Medical Advisory Committee of the American Liver Foundation.

Dr Abou-Alfa has also spearheaded many projects in the Arab World since 2006. Under the direction of Dr Abou-Alfa, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center has established a strong relationship with American University of Beirut, with an ongoing faculty exchange and a monthly video-link conferencing with the AUB physicians, with several of its proceedings are already published in peer-reviewed journals. This joint collaboration, one of the most sustained between an US institution and one in the Middle East, has led to the development of the first joint tissue bank with a shared database in the region. Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center and AUB have also joined efforts on a first in its class-training course for oncologists in the Arab World that was offered on competitive basis. The joint program also offers supported fellowship opportunities for excelling medical graduates.

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**Nada Anid - Dean, NYIT**

Dr. Nada Marie Anid is the first female dean of New York Institute of Technology's School of Engineering and Computing Sciences offering programs in Manhattan and Old Westbury, N.Y., Abu Dhabi, UAE, Vancouver, CA, and Nanjing, China.

Among Dr. Anid's many accomplishments is the creation of NYIT's Entrepreneurship and Technology Innovation Center (ETIC) and its three labs focusing on IT & cybersecurity, bio-engineering and health, and energy and green technologies.

Anid is the recipient of numerous awards in recognition of her contributions toward the advancement of women in technology including the book "The Internet of Women: Accelerating Culture Change".

Anid is a Program Evaluator for the Engineering Accreditation Commission of ABET, and holds leadership positions in the American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE) and the American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE), among others.

Anid earned her Ph.D. in environmental engineering from the University of Michigan (Ann Arbor), and bachelor's and master's degrees in chemical engineering from the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH-Stockholm)



**Elias Bou Saab - Minister of Education and Higher Education, Lebanon**

Elias N. Bou Saab was named Minister of Education and Higher Education in Lebanon in February 2014. Minister Bou Saab, a native of Dhour El Choueir, co-founded the American University in Dubai, the first US accredited university in the Gulf and has overseen its development into one of the premier institutions higher education in the region

He is also the co-founder of the Emirati Lebanese Friendship Association and a former member of the Board of Directors of the Young Arab Leaders. In 1992, he founded The Lebanese Graduates of Britain (LGB) and served as its

first President.

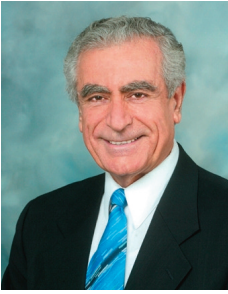
He earned his Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing (Magna Cum Laude) from The American College in London- where he was twice elected President of the Student Government Association, and his Masters of Arts in International Relations from Boston University.



**Rodolphe el Khoury - Dean, University of Miami**

Dr. el-Khoury is Dean of the University of Miami School of Architecture. Trained as both a historian and a designer, he divides his time between scholarship, research, and practice. He is the author of numerous books on architecture and urbanism, including See Through Ledoux; Architecture Theatre, and the Pursuit of Transparency; Monolithic Architecture; and Figures: Essays on Contemporary Architecture. el-Khoury's leads RAD-UM, a research lab for embedded technology and robotics aiming at enhancing responsiveness and resilience in buildings and smart cities. The work of his firm, Khoury Levit Fong (KLF), has won international awards.

el-Khoury's work has been featured in national and international media outlets that cut across disciplines ranging from WIRED Magazine to the Wall Street Journal to the Space Channel to BBC World. He has shared his work through teaching, visiting professorships and lectures at dozens of institutions in the U.S. and abroad.



**Joseph G. Jabbara, President, Lebanese American University**

Dr. Jabbara assumed the presidency of LAU on August 1, 2004.

Dr. Jabbara's leadership has launched the university on the path of institutional and academic renaissance, supported by strong internal human and financial resources.

Prior to his role at LAU, Dr. Jabbara served as Academic Vice President at Loyola Marymount University (LMU) in Los Angeles, California, from 1990 to 2004. He had earlier served as Vice President, Academic and Research, at St. Mary's University (SMU) in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, from 1980 to 1990.

Dr. Jabbara earned his law degree at the Université Saint-Joseph in Beirut, and a Ph.D. in Political Science from the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

He is the author, co-author, and co-editor of 12 books. The latest, *Public Administration in Transition*, was recently published in London, England. He has also published over 33 articles and chapters in books and scholarly journals, over 26 book reviews in both English and French, and scores of scholarly papers and keynote addresses given at learned societies' meetings and professional gatherings.



**John S. Nader - President, Farmingdale State College**

Dr. Nader became President of Farmingdale State College in July 2016.

Within weeks of his arrival on campus, Dr. Nader announced approval of Farmingdale's first graduate degree, a Master of Science in Technology. He plans to shepherd several new bachelor degrees through final approval to implementation.

He has approved a plan to hire fourteen new faculty to better serve students and accommodate growth.

Dr. Nader served as Provost at SUNY Delhi, supervising all academic programs, as well as many academic support areas and partnerships with community colleges.

In 2015, John Nader served with a team of academics from the State University of New York who worked with Al Kafaat University, Lebanon as it seeks accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

As Mayor of Oneonta, NY, he led the revitalization of a long-dormant downtown property and the creation of a veterans' memorial walkway. As a county legislator and community action leader, he helped establish a homeless shelter.

Dr. Nader received a BA in Politics from Ithaca College, and an MA and a PhD in Economics from the New School for Social Research.

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**Mona Nemer – Vice-President Research, University of Ottawa**

Dr. Nemer is a renowned cardiovascular researcher and an accomplished senior academic leader. As Vice-President, Research at the University of Ottawa, she oversees university-wide research strategies, management, infrastructure development as well as entrepreneurship and commercialization activities. Prior to joining uOttawa in 2006, Dr. Nemer was Professor at the Université de Montréal and served as Director of Academic Affairs then Executive Director for planning and development at the Institut de recherche clinique de Montréal (IRCM). Dr Nemer serves on numerous national and international Boards and Advisory Councils. She holds a PhD from McGill University and did post-doctoral training at Columbia University and at the IRCM. Dr. Nemer contributed seminal discoveries to molecular cardiology and is the recipient of numerous national and international honours and awards that recognize her multifaceted accomplishments. She is a fellow of the Academy of Sciences of the Royal Society of Canada, a Member of the Order of Canada, a Knight of the Order of Québec and a Knight of the Order of Merit of the French Republic.

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## Let's Get Connected: Diaspora Narratives & Strengthening Ties



### Moderator

#### **Akram Khater – Professor, North Carolina State University**

Dr. Khater is University Faculty Scholar, Professor of History, and the Khayrallah Distinguished Professor in Lebanese Diaspora Studies at North Carolina State University where he also serves as the Director of the Khayrallah Center for Lebanese Diaspora Studies. A native of Lebanon (born 1960), he earned a Ph.D. degree in History from the University of California, Berkeley. His books include *Inventing Home: Emigration, Gender and the Making of a Lebanese Middle Class, 1861-1921*, and *A History of the Middle East: A Sourcebook for the History of the Middle East and North Africa*, and *Embracing the Divine: Passion and Politics in the Christian Middle East*. He has completed a PBS documentary film on the history of the Lebanese community in North Carolina, and was the curator for a museum exhibit on the same topic. He is the curator of a new traveling exhibit titled *The Lebanese in America*. He is also the editor of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, and sits on the editorial board of a book series on immigration studies.



#### **Neemat G. Frem, President & CEO of Indevco Group**

Mr. Frem is the President & CEO of Indevco Group, a Lebanese-owned and based multinational manufacturing Group employing over 10.252 people worldwide.

Managing over 51 manufacturing plants and 21 commercial companies located in USA, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, United Arab Emirates, Greece, Ghana, Iraq and Cyprus; the manufacturing plants produce plastic, paper and corrugated packaging, tissue and consumer products, machinery and alternative energy sources.

Founded Phoenix Machinery in Safra in the late 1990s. A success story, the company has evolved from a machinery manufacturer into a supplier of renewable energy products and a provider of turnkey commercial projects for waste to energy systems.

Former President of the Association of Lebanese Industrialists (ALI) from 2010 till 2014. ALI is the official representative of the Industrial Sector in Lebanon. It focuses on developing, promoting, and nurturing the Industrial Sector and the industrial companies of Lebanon.

January 2013 launched Loubnan El Afdal - Better Lebanon a national initiative with political, economical and social dimension, with a clear roadmap for a renewal in the Lebanese national contract as an attempt for a restructuring change in the Lebanese continuous political crisis.

President of Maronite Foundation in the World.

Founder & Board Member of a number of associations promoting inter-religious (Christian – Islamic) dialogue and civic society.





**Edward M. Gabriel - Ambassador/President and CEO of ATFL**

Ambassador Gabriel is the former U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Morocco, having served from November 1997 to March 2001, during which time a new U.S.-Morocco strategic relationship was launched on political, military and economic levels. He has an extensive background in international affairs, having convened multilateral policy forums involving national security, environmental, and trade and energy issues. He has been involved in matters of Russian and European nuclear non-proliferation and has been active in advising the U.S. government on Mideast policy matters. Currently, Ambassador Gabriel is President and CEO of The Gabriel Company, LLC, which advises

American corporations and international entities on investment and policy strategies and projects. He is the President and CEO of the American Task Force on Lebanon, Co-Chairman of the American Schools of Tangier and Marrakech, and a member of the boards of AMIDEAST, the Arab American National Museum, the Arab American Institute, and The Keystone Center.



**Sergio Daniel Jalil - Director Celibal- Latin American Center for Lebanese Studies**

Argentinian-Lebanese, Mr. Jalil serves as both the President of Miami-based Business Advisors International Consulting, and Chief Executive Officer of Paris-based Orisson Group Risk and Disaster Management.

As the former Middle East Policy Advisor to President Carlos Menem of Argentina, Jalil organized the first visit of a Latin American Head of State to Lebanon in 1998.

With a graduate degree in Arab Studies and International Politics of the Middle East from Georgetown University and a Specialization in International Development and International Relations of the Middle East from Johns Hopkins University, Jalil spent time as a Professor of Middle East Development and Geo Political courses at the Universidad Catolica de Cordoba.

Fluent in six languages, Jalil established several Lebanese-centric organizations, including the Lebanese Youth Movement of Argentina, the World Lebanese Cultural Union (WLCU), the International Youth Committee - and his current role as the founder and Executive Director of the Latin American Center for Lebanese Studies (CELIBAL).



**Paul Salem - Vice President for Policy and Research Middle East Institute in Washington**

Dr. Salem is vice president for policy and research at The Middle East Institute. He is the author of several books and many reports and articles that focus on issues of political change, transition, and conflict as well as the regional and international relations of the Middle East. Prior to joining MEI, Salem was the founding director of the Carnegie Middle East Center in Beirut (2006 and 2013), director of the Fares Foundation (2000-2006), Associate Professor of Political Studies at the American University of Beirut (1990-2000), and founding director of the Lebanese Center for Policy Studies (1990-2000). He served on

Lebanon's National Commission for Electoral Law Reform (2005-2006) and was a member of the Senior Review Committee of the UNDP Arab Human Development Report (2002). He is a frequent commentator in Arab, international and American media. Salem is also a musician and composer of Arabic-Brazilian jazz (his CDs can be found online).



**Nadim Shehadi - Tufts University**

Mr. Shehadi is director of the Fares Center for Eastern Mediterranean Studies at The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University. He is also an associate fellow of the Middle East and North Africa Programme at Chatham House in London. He serves as a member of the Middle East Strategy Task Force at the Atlantic Council in Washington DC and as a Member of the Advisory Council of The Centre on Religion and Global Affairs, in London. Until he moved to the US in 2015, Nadim was a senior member of St Antony's College Oxford where he was also director of the Centre for Lebanese Studies from 1986 to 2005. Nadim is trained as an economist and is on the board of several foundations, academic journals and think tanks and contributes regularly to media coverage of the Middle East. Among his publications is: *The Lebanese In the World: A Century of Emigration* co-edited with Albert Hourani.



**Raif Shwayri - Owner of EME Consult**

Raif Shwayri is a consultant in International Development, owner and President of EME Consult in Lebanon. Prior to that, he served for 17 years as the CEO of Al-Kafaàt Foundation, a leading Development-organization in Lebanon. With seven different campuses, Al-Kafaàt provides programs in education and rehabilitation to over 5,000 people daily. In addition, Mr. Shwayri has conducted a large number of projects for international agencies, both public and private, and

specializes in the development and implementation of sustainable programs in health, education, social entrepreneurship and social welfare. Mr. Shwayri studied Mechanical Engineering at the American University of Beirut and at Kings College, University of London, and holds a Master of Business Administration from the Cardiff Business School, University of Wales. He is also the recipient of the John W. Ryan Fellowship bestowed by the State University of New York.

He is a published author with Nadim, *un Liban généreux. Paris: Les 2 Encres, 2008*, and *Beirut on the Bayou. NY: SUNY Press 2016* ([www.beirutonthebayou.com](http://www.beirutonthebayou.com)).



**Philippe Ziade - Founder Appleton Properties/ Invest to Stay**

Mr. Ziade is the Founder of Growth Holdings, a conglomerate of Real Estate and software development companies. He was recognized by The Wall Street Journal, Top 1000 real estate professionals in the US, Ranking 13th on the list nationally, and #1 in Nevada. He has been featured on Forbes Japan and on primetime on MSNBC, CNBC, CNN, CNN Headlines, Fox Business Network and Discovery Channel.

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## Investment, Diversification, and Economic Growth



### Moderator

#### **Marc Malek – Managing Partner of Conquest Capital Group and Chairman of Lebanese International Finance Group(LIFE)**

Mr. Malek is the Founder and Portfolio Manager at Conquest Capital Group. Established in 2001, Conquest is an alternative asset management firm with a disciplined quantitative and systematic approach to tactical trading in the macro space. Marc began his role as Portfolio Manager in 1999 after departing UBS. While at UBS, Marc held a number of senior positions. By 1999 he was the Global Head of FX and Derivatives Proprietary trading in Europe and the Americas. Prior to his tenure at UBS he worked at a hedge fund trading currency options and developing proprietary trading models. Marc began his career in 1992 at Salomon Brothers in New York as a Financial Analyst in the Financial Strategy Group. Marc graduated with Honors from the California Institute of Technology ("Caltech") with a Bachelor of Science in Engineering and Applied Science, and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics from Reed College. Marc's research has been published extensively in academic journals and books including Risk Books and The Journal of Alternative Investments.



#### **Mr. Naïm Abou-Jaoudé – CEO, Candriam Investors Group**

Mr. Abou-Jaoudé is Chairman of New York Life Investment Management International and CEO of Candriam Investors Group, part of New York Life Investments.

Throughout his 25-year career, he has built a strong reputation in Asset Management and is recognized as thought leader in Finance.

New York Life Investments, among the largest asset managers worldwide, has \$520 bn in Assets Under Management and is part of the New York Life insurance group.

As Chairman of NYLIM International, he is responsible for all of NYLIM's global activities outside the USA. In addition, he has been CEO of Candriam Investors Group since 2007, a leading European asset manager with a global coverage (Europe, Middle East, USA, Asia-Pacific).

He is a Board member of several industry bodies and associations, among which the Board of LIFE (Lebanese International Finance Executives).

He is a graduate of the Institute of Political Studies in Paris (IEP - Sciences Po) and holds a Master's degree in Economics and Finance (Paris II).

He is committed to always act and engage in the interest of Lebanon's future.

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**Raed H. Charafeddine - First Vice-Governor at Banque du Liban**

Mr. Charafeddine has been the First Vice-Governor at Banque du Liban, Lebanon's central bank, since April 2009. Prior to his current mission, he spent twenty years in the banking sector where he held senior Executive positions at leading commercial banks in Lebanon and in the UAE.

Mr. Charafeddine is the Alternate Governor for Lebanon at the International Monetary Fund as well at the Arab Monetary Fund's Board of Governors and the Alternate Chairman of the Capital Markets Authority in Lebanon.

Mr. Charafeddine is a visiting lecturer in world-renowned Universities. His speeches focus on topics related to Central Banking and on Arab Countries in Transitions specifically on the monetary, economic, financial, social and cultural aspects. He is also a contributor to many national and international forums on the issues of governance, human and organizational development, civil society, and interfaith dialogue.

His papers and presentations are gathered on his website: <http://raedcharafeddine.net/>.

Mr. Charafeddine is a holder of Masters and Bachelor degrees in Business Administration from the University of North Carolina, Charlotte.



**Roger F. Dagher - Group Chief Financial Officer, Bank of Beirut**

Mr. Dagher was born in Beirut in 1966, married with two children; he holds a Master degree in Banking and Finance and a BA in Law and speaks three languages.

He joined Bank of Beirut in 2004 as the Group Chief Financial Officer. His duties include the participation in the Strategy Planning; ensuring the compliance with financial laws and regulations; operating an efficient and effective finance organization and leading business improvement initiatives, such as process reengineering and cost control.

Before joining Bank of Beirut, from 1991 till 2004, Roger Dagher worked with the Banking Control Commission (the Lebanese Banking Supervisory Authority). His last position was the "Head of the Off-Site Supervision" where he was responsible for developing an effective risk-based approach to monitor different types of risks facing Lebanese banks, enhancing the early warning system and building full-fledged reviews for banks' risk profile assessment.

He is also a visiting Professor at University of Holy Spirit – Kaslik (USEK) for "Master in Business Administration-Banking Operations and Management".



**Rand Ghayad – Professor, Boston University**

Dr. Ghayad is an economist with expertise in labor and financial markets. He is a Professor of Economics at BU and a research advisor to the Institute for Career Transitions at M.I.T Sloan. His research focuses on unemployment discrimination and resulted in him being granted U.S. permanent residency pursuant to section 203(b)(2), for outstanding research in the national interest. Dr. Ghayad has previously served an economic advisor to think tanks and federal agencies such as the Federal Reserve Bank, the Brookings Institution, the White House National Economic Council, the International Labor Organization, and UNDP. Dr. Ghayad's work over the past four years has been cited and quoted in

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400+ journal and media articles, books, conferences, and congressional testimonies by Nobel Prize winners, academics, policymakers, and on numerous occasions by President Barack Obama and the Chairman of the Federal Reserve System Janet Yellen. On the basis of his research, the Obama Administration signed an executive order to ban discrimination against unemployed job seekers who have been out of work for a long time



**Nabil Itani - Chairman, Investment Development Authority of Lebanon (IDAL)**

Mr. Nabil Itani was born in 1953. He is currently the Chairman and General Manager of the Investment Development Authority of Lebanon (IDAL). His career spans over three decades of professional achievements, contribution to the architectural profession, and service to Lebanon. An accomplished architect and architectural consultant, his professional experience is wide-ranging encompassing design and supervision of landmark projects in Lebanon and the Arab World, as well as affiliations, academic posts, publications, and conference presentations. His contributions in official committees and in the

drafting of major proposals have had positive ramifications on investment, architecture, and administrative practice in Lebanon.



**Nassim Nicholas Taleb - Statistician & Risk Analyst**

Nassim Nicholas Taleb spent 21 years as a risk taker before becoming a researcher in philosophical, mathematical and (mostly) practical problems with probability.

Taleb is the author of a multivolume essay, the Incerto (The Black Swan, Fooled by Randomness, and Antifragile) covering broad facets of uncertainty. It has been translated into 36 languages.

In addition to his trader life, Taleb has also published, as a backup of the Incerto, more than 45 scholarly papers in statistical physics, statistics, philosophy, ethics, economics, international affairs, and quantitative finance, all around the notion of risk and probability. He spent time as a professional researcher (Distinguished Professor of Risk Engineering at NYU's School of Engineering and Dean's Professor at U. Mass Amherst). His current focus is on the properties of systems that can handle disorder ("antifragile").

Taleb refuses all honors and anything that "turns knowledge into a spectator sport".

(Please note that the author does not allow fluffy and longer bios with information from the web. Only the official biography is authorized)

## Branding Lebanon: Buy Lebanese & Lebanese Cuisine



### Moderator

#### **Michael Karam - Writer and renowned Wine Expert and advocate of Lebanese wine**

Michael Karam was born in London in 1965. In 1991, he moved back to Lebanon, where he works in journalism and corporate communication. In the late 90s, he was appointed features editor of the relaunched Beirut Daily Star and between 2002 and 2006, was the managing editor of Executive, the business monthly.

In 2006, he left full-time journalism to work in corporate PR. From 2007 and 2011, he was a consultant for the Zain Group, the mobile telecom network operator, providing corporate communication support, especially during Zain's 2008 rebranding across the Middle East and Africa.

Since 2011, Michael has worked with the wine industry to promote Lebanese wine across the World. He is the author of Wines of Lebanon, which won the Gourmand Award for the Best New World Wine Book, 2005 and Arak and Mezze: The Taste of Lebanon, which was shortlisted for the Gourmand award for Best Food and Travel Book 2007. He is currently working on "Wine and War", a feature documentary that celebrates Lebanese entrepreneurial resilience, through the story of wine in the Levant.



#### **Joe Cheaib - Owner of Sirène de la Mer Restaurant**

Born in Damour, Lebanon in 1968, Mr. Cheaib immigrated to Canada in 1981. He studied in a Canadian College in Montreal and worked at the same time in family company: Adonis Group.

In University, he majored in economics as well as doing a minor in marketing. He then went into business by opening "La Sirene de la Mer", which was the first Lebanese fish and seafood restaurant in Canada. From the very beginning, he innovated, combining the opening of a fish market to the restaurant. This way customer could choose their fish and seafood, which are prepared and cooked on the spot! During the following fifteen years, two other fish restaurants opened their doors offering jobs to more than 200 employees.

Involved for many years in the charitable world, Joseph Cheaib participated actively in various fund raising campaigns. In 2006, he vigorously worked on the national financing campaign of the Canadian Red Cross, helped raise funds for various crisis around the world I.E. Haiti Lebanon and Canada, Joseph's has held events to raise funds for cancer research and treatment for the St-Justine's children's hospital .

Today he sets on the board of directors of the cedars cancer foundation in collaboration with the McGill university hospital.



**Marc Hochar - Co-owner of Chateau Musar**

Mr. Hochar is the 3rd generation member of the Hochar family at Chateau Musar. He has always been passionate about wine, but only got involved with the family winery in 2010 after a 20-year long career in banking and asset management. After graduating from Ecole Polytechnique in France, he joined JPMorgan where we spent 13 years in Corporate Finance, Equity Derivatives and Equity Capital Markets. He then set-up and ran a fund of hedge fund business for 5 years before joining the family business. He is currently a member of the board of Chateau Musar, with responsibilities for international sales and marketing, and financial affairs. Together with his cousin Ralph in London and his brother Gaston who has been running the winery since the 90's, they continue the pioneering work started by their grandfather in 1930 in making fine wines renowned for their elegance and longevity.



**Joumana Kayrouz - Founder of Joumana Kayrouz PLLC**

Mrs. Kayrouz's personal injury law firm in Michigan is recognized as one of the largest personal injury law firms in the state. She emigrated to the States in 1986, where she enrolled and obtained a master's degree from Yale University, and then went on to graduate from law school in Michigan.

In 2012, Kayrouz was appointed President of the Board of Directors for the Miss Lebanon Emigrants USA. Prior to that, Kayrouz served as the national president of Auxilia. In 2013, Kayrouz launched the Joumana Kayrouz Foundation with a \$50,000 starting endowment. In 2014, Kayrouz served as the official Sponsor of the St Jude Children's Research hospital's 50th anniversary with a \$50,000 donation. In Lebanon in 2015, she overhauled the emergency room of Tel Chiha hospital in Zahle, Lebanon. She also created an ENT clinic working with the Second Lady of Lebanon, Randa Berri.

She received several awards including "Top Lawyer of the Year", "Economic Bridge Builder Award", "Trailblazer Award", the "Humanitarian of the Year Award", the "Best Female Attorney Award", the "Best Dressed Female Award", and the "Esteemed Women of Michigan Award". She was also named by Crain's Detroit Business as the "American Dreamer".



**Colette Malouf - Jewelry Designer**

Born in New York of Lebanese parents, Colette has carried on the entrepreneurial spirit of many generations in her family. Growing up with Soho as her backyard, she was exposed to the emerging art and design world. In contrast, she was surrounded by the glamour of her family's luxury dress house. In 1987, just out of college, she invented a unique hair accessory that put her on the international fashion map. As a pioneer in her category, today she currently has 20 Colette Malouf stores throughout Japan, China and Korea in addition to selling to fine stores around the world such as Bergdorf Goodman in NY, Le Bon Marche in Paris and Tsum in Moscow.

Colette has a BS in Communications from Boston University and has completed an Entrepreneurial Masters program at MIT. She was nominated Accessory Designer of the year by the Accessory Council and the Rising Star Award by The Fashion Group International. She has been a long time member of The Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA), The Fashion Group International (FGI) as well as Entrepreneurial Organization (EO). She is a Board Chair at EO as well as a Co-Chair on the board of Studio Samuel, an NGO that helps adolescent girls stay out of poverty through a life skills training program.



**Philippe Massoud - Renowned Chef and CEO of ilili Restaurant**

Mr. Massoud's mission is simple: revive an ancient cuisine, re-invent it and bring the concept to a public who, for the most part, has never experienced it as it should be.

In 2007 Philippe opened ilili, a 300-seat restaurant in New York City's then struggling Flatiron District. Some considered his gamble on the area risky, but Philippe had faith in the neighborhood and in the power of his cuisine to draw a crowd.

In 2013 Philippe opened ilili Box, a pop fast casual concept inspired by ilili's success. ilili Box won Best NYC Falafel in 2014, and is the third successful brand launched by Philippe.

In the more than eight years since opening, ilili's mezza style dining has proven to be a success, drawing in crowds night after night and playing a major part in the rebirth of the Flatiron as a foodie destination. As the restaurant's executive chef, CEO and owner, Philippe is responsible for the entire business, while he oversees operations with his brother/co-owner, Alexander.



**David Nammour - Founder of Muncheez**

After graduating from Notre Dame de Jamhour in Lebanon, David moved to the United States for college. David got his BS in Civil Engineering from Duke University and MS in Civil Engineering from Columbia University. After graduating, David worked for enduring hydro a Hydropower developer in DC for 2 years. David founded Muncheez in 2010, is a Lebanese fast casual concept in Washington DC. Muncheez to date has one location and a food truck. Muncheez is looking to expand, and is en-route to opening two more locations in the next year.



## **Logistics**

Conference Venue and Registration  
583 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10065

Cocktail and Gala Dinner  
583 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10065

Reception hosted by CG Majdi Ramadan  
9 E 76th Street, NY, NY 10021

## **Committee**

Majdi Ramadan – Consul General of Lebanon in New York

Basheer Sarkis – Counselor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Emigrants.

John Abi-Habib – Owner of MSI

Lina Beydoun - Ph.D., Academic Executive Director at the Lebanese American University

Maher Takkouch – Accounting

Karine Diab – Executive Secretary of the Conference

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**John & Sonia Abi-Habib  
Therese Abi-Habib**

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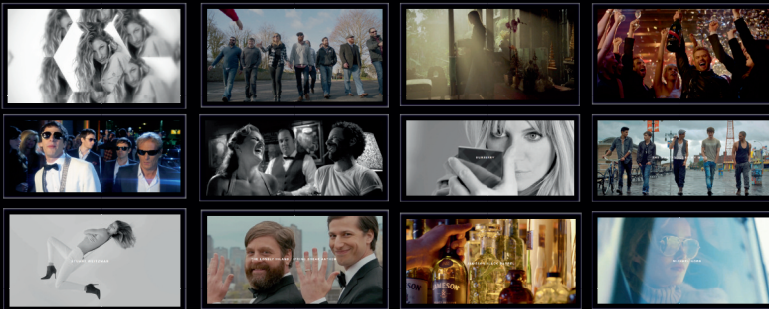
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