

Let us stand together to heal the wounds and demand justice

We, the presidents of the undersigned 11 universities, have witnessed the devastation to our beloved capital city of Beirut with great pain and growing concern. We have seen the hundreds of deaths and thousands of injuries, including many among our own communities. Our universities have sustained and absorbed serious damages to many of our campuses and hospitals and the homes of our people. Yet, we have also seen this destruction countered by the magnificent, inspirational examples of our physicians, nurses, and staff members in the hospitals, as well as our students, faculty members, alumni, and staff who are mobilizing to help the wounded, pick up debris in the streets, offer shelter to those who have lost their homes, and help search for those many unfortunates still trapped under the rubble.

Our hearts break for our beloved Beirut. Every one of us has grown up to a large degree in this magical, irreplaceable, ir retrievable city. We pledge to make every effort to rebuild it and heal our communities. As the Lebanese people mourn, heal, rebuild, and repair, our universities in turn pledge to mourn, build, heal, and repair with them, and with Beirut, our shining capital city, damaged, broken, but of incalculable value, a shining star of shared destiny for the diverse groups of people who call it home. We pledge to never abandon Beirut, Lebanon, and our communities in these dark times and throughout the difficult years to come.

We also stand ready to assist now in any way we can. Our hospitals are open and our emergency rooms are receiving patients day after day, regardless of their ability to afford treatment. We will do everything possible to create tangible opportunities to support our students' education and wellbeing irrespective of the collapse of the Lebanese economy and the additional burden placed on the Lebanese people by this latest catastrophe. Our 11 universities will stand firmly by our students, faculty, staff, alumni, and communities through this catastrophe as we have stood by Lebanon and the Lebanese people throughout the decades.

We share the anger all citizens of Beirut, Lebanon, and the world feel towards this entirely preventable disaster. We do believe there must be accountability and, in time, justice for this criminal, monstrous explosion. We fully support a transparent, expert, independent and just investigation of the destruction of Beirut. But first and foremost, our main priority must be to care for those wounded and displaced by this horrific explosion. As such, we stand together, with constancy and devotion, with our people, from now until the end of this crisis and whatever the future may bring.

Throughout these terrible days we have collaborated and cooperated with one another and with the first responders and other brave personnel, all of whom risked their lives to save others, far too many of whom paid the ultimate price. To honor them and all those who died, we must pull together to bind the many, still open wounds. We do so by expressing our love for our communities, by opening our doors to them whenever and wherever we can, and by caring

for those who were severely injured and those who lost family members or homes, all the way through the end of this healing process. And out of that healing must come a strong, sustainable and accountable civil state, a nation of laws and decency, one which will never allow such a tragedy to occur again.

With love and devotion,

*The American University of Beirut
Université Saint Joseph de Beyrouth
Beirut Arab University
Université la Sagesse
Lebanese American University
Haigazian University
Holy Spirit University of Kaslik
Notre Dame University-Louaize
Islamic University of Lebanon
University of Balamand
Antonine University*