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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AUB and the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies in Beirut Sign MoU to Advance Research and Academic Collaboration

The American University of Beirut (AUB) and the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies (ACRPS) in Beirut signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to advance collaboration in scientific research, policy studies, and publication. The collaboration will include partnerships with the Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship and the Nature Conservation Center (AUB-NCC) at the university. The meeting was led by Professor Zaher Dawy, AUB provost, and Dr. Nasser Yassin, director of ACRPS in Beirut. It was attended by Lina Abu Habib, director of the Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship at AUB, Associate Professor Yaser Abunnasr, director of AUB-NCC, as well as professors and researchers from AUB and ACRPS.

The event opened with remarks by Dr. Nasser Yassin, director of ACRPS in Beirut. He stated, "We gather today to sign a memorandum of understanding between ACRPS, the Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship, and AUB-NCC. The memorandum seeks to enhance collaboration between all parties on developing and implementing joint research and producing knowledge while placing humanitarian, social, human rights, development, governance, civil society, environmental, and climate issues at the center of our concerns."

Yassin added that "both parties will work on enhancing joint research and publishing in Arabic and co-organize events such as conferences and workshops," and that "they will foster the publication, translation, and dissemination of research outputs and reports related to humanitarian, social, human rights, and environmental issues to the research community and experts in the Arab region." Additionally, the parties will collaborate on "establishing a joint fellowship program and a postdoctoral program."

He explained that "this agreement is part of the ACRPS's plans to expand partnerships with universities, research centers, and public institutions in Lebanon, within the center's broader vision of supporting scientific research and developing knowledge tools."

Professor Dawy, AUB provost, highlighted AUB's pivotal role in the Arab world and the significant impact of research conducted by AUB's researchers on a wide range of issues of local and regional importance. He welcomed this MoU with ACRPS in Beirut, as it provides opportunities for collaboration that will, in turn, broaden their impact.

Meanwhile, Associate Professor Yaser Abunnasr, AUB-NCC director, remarked that "marking its 25th anniversary, AUB-NCC is working on three initiatives that address climate change:

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capacity building, dialogues and discussion sessions, and gender inclusion.” Abunnasr regarded these topics as fully in line with AUB-NCC’s ambition to gradually expand its presence in the region. He added that there are several new projects related to climate change, whether in Lebanon, Syria, or Qatar.

He believed that the partnership with ACRPS is “a good steppingstone, especially since the Arabic language is a fundamental matter for me personally, which will enable collaboration and facilitate access to publications through shared communication channels.” He also explained that “collaboration should not be limited to the two parties but should extend to other universities,” underscoring that “the memorandum of understanding is only an excellent starting point for this partnership.”

The director of the Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship, Lina Abu Habib, stated, “The first meeting that brought us together with ACRPS has opened the door for a discussion on establishing a joint fellowship program that hosts male and female research fellows, both resident and nonresident.” She added that the two parties discussed “joint research and the development and drafting of joint regional research proposals in our shared areas of interest, namely social movements, civil society, and citizenship, with an additional focus on gender issues.”

Abu Habib emphasized that what truly matters in this agreement is “jointly expanding the translation of our publications into Arabic, so that it becomes part of our collaborative work. This is what we are constantly working on at the university.”

The meeting concluded with the two parties signing the MoU and agreeing to develop a master plan to initiate work within the coming weeks.

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 800 full-time faculty members and a student body of over 9,700 students. AUB currently offers more than 140 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, which includes a full-service 365-bed hospital.

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About the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies (ACRPS)

The Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies (ACRPS) is an independent academic institution devoted to the advancement of the social sciences and humanities. The center strives to generate rigorous scholarship and foster a meaningful exchange of ideas among Arab researchers and scholars, while also strengthening the link between academic inquiry and the political, social, cultural, and economic challenges confronting their societies. The center provides a space for critical inquiry, the production of original theoretical and applied research, and the cultivation of intellectual exchange.

The Beirut branch of the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies was registered by Presidential Decree No. 8613, dated August 3, 2012, to conduct research and studies addressing social, political, economic, environmental, and media conditions with the aim of promoting and enhancing research in the social sciences and humanities, guiding public opinion, and supporting decision-making. This is done through independent and credible scholarly research, as well as scientific cooperation with national, regional, and international institutions. The branch's scope of work in Beirut includes publication, translation, and editing units, indexing, and documentation.

About the Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship at AUB

The Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship is a regional hub that provides research, resources, knowledge, and a space for civil society actors, researchers, students, practitioners, and policymakers in the Arab region. The institute fosters communication and collaboration on issues related to social movements, activism, and citizenship, with a strong focus on the universality of human rights, equality, intersectionality, and social justice.

About the Nature Conservation Center at AUB (AUB-NCC)

The AUB Nature Conservation Center (AUB-NCC) is a leading multidisciplinary research institution. Founded in 2002, the center focuses on environmental research and advocacy, promoting sustainable development, and protecting biodiversity. The center places nature at the heart of development, combining interdisciplinary research, community engagement, and the promotion of environmental responsibility, in order to protect biodiversity, address climate change, and preserve ecosystems that support life. The center's work focuses on five key areas: water and life, earth and biodiversity, man and nature, health and the environment, and circular economy and resource management. The center is also stepping up its work to launch its climate change course of action. Collaborating with partners at local, regional, and global levels, the center develops effective solutions to achieve positive environmental outcomes that support a sustainable future.