



Beirut, Sep 14, 2026

AUB and CMA CGM Group Sign Strategic Partnership to Create the CMA CGM Artificial Intelligence and Insights Institute

- **CMA CGM and AUB join forces to advance AI and data science innovation in Lebanon and the region**
- **A \$10 million donation to establish and endow the CMA CGM Artificial Intelligence and Insights Institute at AUB**
- **The partnership will foster cutting-edge research, develop AI talent, and drive innovation across logistics and sustainable operations**

The American University of Beirut (AUB) and the CMA CGM Group signed a strategic partnership establishing the CMA CGM Artificial Intelligence and Insights Institute within the School of Computing and Data Sciences (SCDS), the university's eighth and newest faculty. The agreement was signed by AUB President Fadlo Khuri and CMA CGM Group Chairman and CEO Rodolphe Saadé at a ceremony held on the AUB campus.

CMA CGM and AUB Join Forces to Advance AI, Data Science, and Innovation

Anchored by a \$10 million donation from CMA CGM, the partnership will establish and endow the CMA CGM Artificial Intelligence and Insights Institute. The institute will advance interdisciplinary research and innovation at the intersection of computing, data science, and artificial intelligence (AI) with fields across the university, while driving entrepreneurship, shaping policy and practice, expanding capacity building, and creating strategic international collaborations.

Its research will be organized in part through thematic clusters, including the CMA CGM Data, Decisions, and Operations Cluster, focused on:

- logistics optimization and network design;
- forecasting, pricing, and yield management;
- research computing and automation;
- resilience and disruption management;
- and sustainable operations.

The CMA CGM Artificial Intelligence and Insights Institute will also contribute to the development of the next generation of AI and data science talent in Lebanon and across the region through specialized educational offerings, upskilling certificates, professional diplomas, and hands-on learning opportunities.

The signing ceremony brought together AUB leadership, Board of Trustees members, deans, faculty, and students, as well as the CMA CGM delegation. It featured opening remarks by Professor Zaher Dawy, AUB provost, and Professor Jihad Touma, SCDS founding director; addresses by Dr. Fadlo Khuri, AUB president, and Rodolphe Saadé, CMA CGM chairman and CEO; and the formal signing of the agreement followed by a reception.

“To remain relevant, it is vital for a university to recognize when the world is changing, and to then have the courage and imagination to change with it,” Khuri said. “For 160 years, AUB has sought to do something quite simple but simultaneously difficult: to take knowledge and put it to work in service of people and society. That mission has taken many forms over the decades. And today, it is taking another exciting new step with the School of Computing and Data Sciences.”

Reflecting on the partnership, he added, “So today, we extend our sincere thanks to CMA CGM and to Chairman and CEO Rodolphe Saadé, whose visionary leadership and commitment to innovation have helped make this partnership possible.” The president described the company’s continued support as “an extraordinary vote of confidence in AUB and Lebanon, in our students and faculty, and in the importance of investing in knowledge.”

“Today, we are launching a new partnership with AUB to establish the CMA CGM Artificial Intelligence and Insights Institute,” said Rodolphe Saadé, CMA CGM chairman and CEO. “It is our first academic partnership of this scale in AI, combining AUB’s academic excellence with CMA CGM’s operational expertise to address key challenges for our industry. AI will be central to the future of CMA CGM and Lebanon, and this partnership reaffirms our confidence in Lebanon’s youth and our ambition to help train the talents who will shape that future.”

This strategic partnership reflects CMA CGM and AUB’s shared commitment to advancing computing, data science, machine learning, and AI by connecting these technologies to real-world challenges, advancing research and teaching in fields including logistics and sustainable operations, as well as medicine, health, climate, language, and the humanities.

“Today is a landmark day for us, a celebration of aligned missions and a bold vision around computing, data science, and artificial intelligence from Beirut to the world,” said AUB Provost Zaher Dawy.

“For centuries, the Mediterranean was a highway for physical movement. Today, it is also a highway for information and intelligent decision-making. Our task, like Odysseus’s, is to navigate a world of networks we are only beginning to understand,” said SCDS Founding Director Jihad Tuma.

“This institute, we hope, extends a role Beirut has always played, a place from which the Mediterranean can be studied, understood, and connected to the world, where knowledge contributes to resilience and to human flourishing,” he added. “And it is our students, more than any of us on this stage, who will carry that role forward—the ones who will actually sit with these questions, build these systems, and decide, wisely, what moves next.”

The CMA CGM Artificial Intelligence and Insights Institute will take shape alongside the broader build-out of the School of Computing and Data Sciences. The school will comprise more than 25 core faculty members, including 18 new faculty lines, and offers BS, MS, and PhD degree programs with the first cohort of students joining in fall 2027.

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About the CMA CGM Group

The CMA CGM Group is a global player in sea, land, air, and logistics solutions, true to its corporate Purpose: We imagine better ways to serve a world in motion. Present in 184 countries, it employs 170,000 people, including nearly 6,000 in Marseille, where its head office is located.

As the world’s third-largest shipping company, CMA CGM serves more than 420 ports across five continents with a fleet of over 700 vessels. In 2025, CMA CGM carried more than 24 million twenty-foot equivalent containers (TEUs). Its subsidiary, CEVA Logistics, one of the top five global players, operates 1,000 warehouses and handled 15 million shipments in 2025. The group’s air division operates a fleet of cargo aircraft under the CMA CGM AIR CARGO and Air Belgium brands. CMA Media, the third-largest private media group in France, brings together RMC-BFM and several national and regional press titles (La Tribune Dimanche, La Tribune, La

Provence, and Corse Matin) as well as the social media platform Brut. Committed to the energy transition, the CMA CGM Group aims for Net Zero Carbon by 2050.

The CMA CGM Foundation provides humanitarian aid in crisis situations and supports education and equal opportunities worldwide. To date, the foundation has transported 120,000 tons of humanitarian aid to 106 countries and supported over 630 projects in France, Lebanon, and around the world.

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 790 full-time faculty members and a student body of over 9000 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 that includes a full-service 365-bed hospital.

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