

- Squandering of public funds: ESCWA building
- Municipal and ikhtariah elections in the Beqa'a
- The Monthly interviews German Ambassador Birgitta Maria Siefker-Eberle

1,646,307 VEHICLES IN LEBANON



**50% of new cars
are mortgaged**

**76.5% of vehicles are
more than 10 years old**



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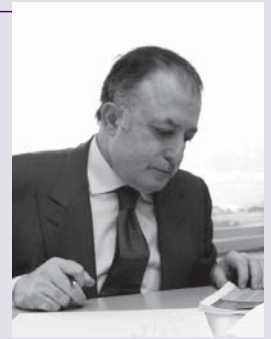
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DIRTY HANDS AND FLIES

To the Arab sultans and the zua'ama of the Lebanese tribes



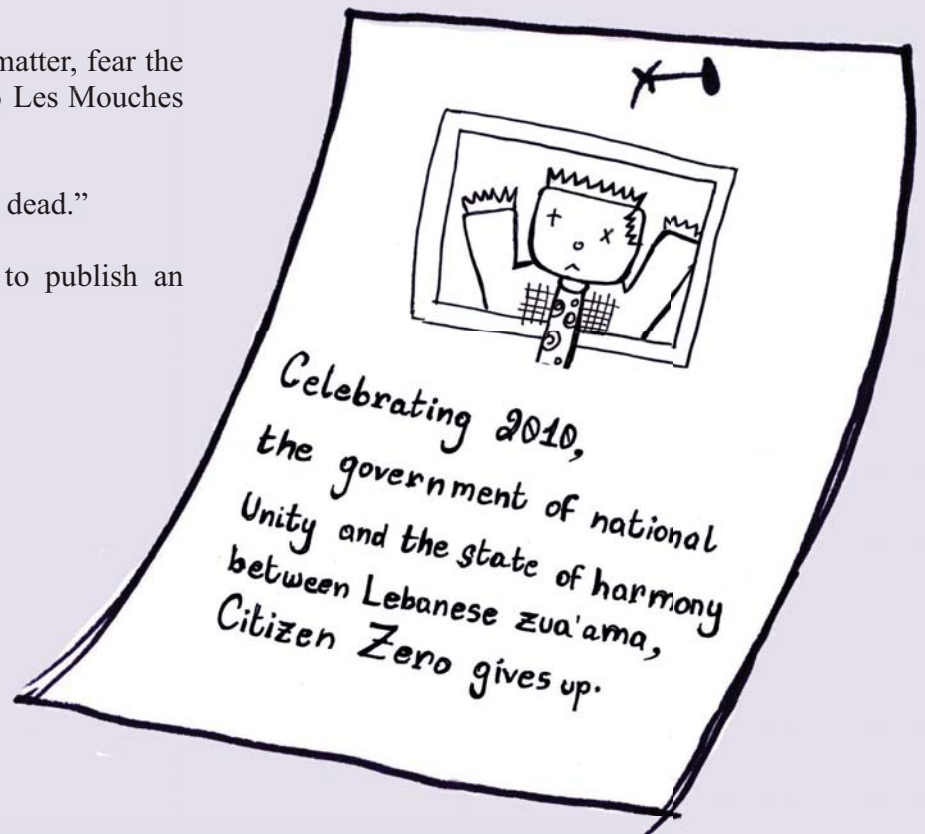
In order not to do injustice to the Arab sultans (now known as kings or presidents) and in order not to do injustice to the zua'ama of Lebanon (the lords of war, money and tribes) we shall recall what Jean-Paul Sartre wrote in Les Mains Sales (Dirty Hands) in 1948:

“Listen to me:
A family man is never a real family man.
An assassin is never entirely an assassin.
They play a role, you understand.
While a dead man, he is really dead.
To be or not to be, right?”

Since none of them care for, or for that matter, fear the dead, let us also quote Sartre in his 1943 Les Mouches (The Flies):

“Fear ‘your’ dead no more, they are ‘my’ dead.”

With this, The Monthly will notcase to publish an editorial for a period of time.



1,646,307 VEHICLES IN LEBANON

76.5% are more than 10 years old; a car for every three individuals; half of newly-made cars are mortgaged

Many are the reasons behind the Lebanese people's habit to purchase cars, including social status and incompetent public transportation services. The result was an excess in cars compared to the Lebanese population or Lebanon's total area and nerve-wrecking traffic jams in large cities. The Monthly will tackle the issue of cars in three articles: the first will give a general overview of the status of vehicles, the second will look into the owners of special license plates and the third will shed light on customs fees on car imports.

Number of Vehicles

The number of privately owned cars in Lebanon reached 1,324,005 in 2009 at the rate of one car for every three individuals, since both Lebanese and non-Lebanese residents are estimated at a total of four million people. The total number of vehicles (including cars) reached 1,646,307, of which privately owned cars form 80.4%. Table 1 shows the distribution of vehicles according to their uses.

Distribution of vehicles according by type Table 1		
Type	Number	%
Private/ tourism	1,324,005	80.4
Private truck	165,583	10
Motorcycle	84,913	5.2
Public/tourism	34,964	2.1
Public truck	13,209	0.8
Private bus	7,366	0.5
Public bus	6,155	0.4
Security forces	5,413	0.3
Public works	4,308	0.3
Tractor	391	0.02
Total	1,646,307	100

Note: Tables 1 to 6 were compiled by Information International based on Ministry of Interior statistics.

Brands

The most popular brand name is Mercedes, with 309,836 vehicles forming 18.9% of total vehicles. The next popular brand is BMW, with 150,802 vehicles forming 9.2% of total vehicles in Lebanon. Table 2 lists vehicles by brand.

Vehicles by manufacturing date

More than three quarters (76.5%) of vehicles in Lebanon were built over 10 years ago, with only 3.7% of vehicles built over the past three years. The figures indicate that the fleet of vehicles is old, accident-prone and costly in terms of maintenance.

Table 3 shows the distribution of cars based on the year of manufacturing.

Cars and machineries according to brand name Table 2		
Brand	Number	%
Mercedes	309,836	18.9
BMW	150,807	9.2
Toyota	135,703	8.3
Honda	123,958	7.5
Renault	114,299	6.9
Nissan	79,259	4.8
Peugeot	71,850	4.4
Volkswagen	71,742	4.4
Datson	40,221	2.4
Opel	38,632	2.3
Volvo	38,474	2.3
Yamaha	37,148	2.3
Fiat	35,311	2.2
Suzuki	34,726	2.1
Mitsubishi	31,318	1.9
Chevrolet	30,503	1.8
Hyundai	23,674	1.4
Mazda	23,312	1.4
Jeep	20,135	1.2
Kia	18,058	1.1
Other	217,341	13.2

Distribution of vehicles based on the year of manufacturing. Table 3		
Year	Number	%
Before 1970	109,269	6.7
1971-1979	264,542	16.1
1980-1989	460,382	28
1990-1999	420,973	25.7
2000	38,655	2.4
2001	37,872	2.3
2002	35,401	2.2
2003	26,853	1.6
2004	24,467	1.5
2005	25,788	1.6
2006	20,059	1.2
2007	16,123	1
2008	28,571	1.7
2009 (until February)	17,804	1
Unspecified	114,135	7
Total	1,640,894	100

Cars according to date of ownership

Only 6.2% of residents owned their vehicles 40 years ago or more, compared to 14.6% one or two years ago. Table 4 shows the distribution of cars according to the date of ownership.

Distribution of cars according to ownership date		Table 4
Year	Number	%
Before 1970	101,190	6.2
1970-1979	52,245	3.2
1980-1989	93,759	5.7
1990-1999	423,880	25.8
2000	49,168	3
2001	74,164	4.5
2002	70,852	4.3
2003	82,700	5
2004	86,795	5.3
2005	96,656	5.9
2006	117,724	7.2
2007	153,087	9.3
2008	219,489	13.4
2009	18,913	1.2
Unspecified	272	0.02
Total	1,640,894	100

Vehicles used for the first time

The highest number of vehicles used for the first time was in 2008 with 106,675 vehicles, compared to the annual average of 52,000 vehicles from 2000-2007.

Colors

78.1% of cars in Lebanon have a monochrome color scheme, with white being the predominant color for 209,609 cars or 12.8% of vehicles, followed by black (172,167 cars); silver (155,022); navy (119,223); blue (91,996); lead-gray (73,259); red (67,357); olive (60,184); green (45,838); maroon (44,406); champagne (32,294); grey (31,263) in addition to 60,156 dichromatic cars and 13,143 vehicles painted with three colors.

Mortgaged cars and machineries

145,442 vehicles are mortgaged (when added to the 358 pre-ordered cars the number becomes 145,800), including 134,266 privately-owned vehicles, forming 92.3% of total mortgaged cars and machineries.

Banks form 77% of the 865 parties to whom the vehicles are mortgaged. The top 15 banks are:

- ⊙ BLOM Bank: 25,442 cars
- ⊙ Byblos Bank: 13,047 cars
- ⊙ Credit Libanais: 10,550 cars
- ⊙ HSBC: 10,382 cars
- ⊙ Bank of Beirut: 8,441 cars
- ⊙ Al-Bank al-Ahli al-Douali: 6,105 cars
- ⊙ Lebanese European Public Banking Company: 6,072 cars
- ⊙ Lebanon Bank of Commerce (BLC): 5,836 cars
- ⊙ Banque de la Mediterranee: 4,892 cars
- ⊙ Fransabank: 4,041 cars
- ⊙ Bank Audi: 2,985 cars
- ⊙ Bank of Beirut and the Arab Countries: 2,951 cars
- ⊙ Lebanese Canadian Bank: 2,229 cars
- ⊙ Credit Bank: 2,061 cars
- ⊙ French Lebanese Bank: 1,657 cars

Mortgaged cars by brand

Mercedes tops the list of most commonly mortgaged cars with 18,135 vehicles, followed by Nissan (16,738); BMW (12,856); Toyota (10,146); Kia (9,654); Peugeot (8,490), Honda (8,383), Hyundai (6,868) and Renault (6,294).

Mortgaged cars according to manufacturing date

Newly-manufactured cars form the majority of mortgaged vehicles. Some 17,224 cars built in 2008 are mortgaged, forming 60.2% of total vehicles made in 2008. The total number of cars built between 2005 and 2008 reached 90,541, including 45,328 mortgaged vehicles, or about 50% of cars made during that period. Table 5 lists mortgaged cars according to the date they were manufactured.

Mortgaged cars according to manufacturing date		Table 5
Year	Number	%
Before 1970	716	0.5
1970-1979	1,211	0.8
1980-1989	2,702	1.9
1990-1999	38,878	26.7
2000	10,200	7
2001	10,249	7
2002	9,586	6.6
2003	7,079	4.8
2004	7,738	5.3
2005	10,221	7
2006	9,417	6.5
2007	8,466	5.8
2008	17,224	11.8
2009 (as of February)	11,768	8
Unspecified	345	0.3
Total	145,800	100

Mortgaged cars according to the date they were first used

Cars that have recently been put in use form the majority of mortgaged cars. In 2008, 106,675 were put in use, including 41,090 mortgaged vehicles forming 38.5%. In comparison, the number of cars first used in the period spanning from 2005 to 2008 reached 286,000, including 91,000 mortgaged cars, forming 32% of cars used for the first time. Table 6 lists mortgaged cars according to the date they were used for the first time.

Mortgaged cars according to the date they were first used		Table 6
Year	Number	%
Before 1970	42	0.1
1970-1979	235	0.2
1980-1989	966	0.6
1990-1999	20,325	14
2000	3,684	2.5
2001	4,367	3
2002	4,446	3
2003	5,480	3.7
2004	10,418	7.2
2005	12,199	8.4
2006	15,881	10.9
2007	21,885	15
2008	41,090	28.2
2009 (until February)	3,219	2.2
Unspecified	1,563	1
Total	145,800	100

The number of cars is significant in comparison to Lebanon's population and area, but they are mostly old vehicles whereas more than half of newly-manufactured cars are mortgaged to banks or dealerships.

Note: In Tables 3 and 4 the total did not include the 5,413 vehicles owned by the security forces.

State revenues from cars

Cars ownership among the Lebanese provides more than LBP 1,000 billion in revenues for the state treasury via the following sources:



- Customs fees on cars imports which vary according to the date of manufacturing (the law prohibits the import of cars over eight years old) and the brand.
- Customs fees on the import of spare parts and other car accessories
- Customs fees on gas consumption
- Customs fees on licenses and their renewal
- Customs fees on car registrations. The fees vary depending on the date of manufacturing and brand
- Annual traffic tariffs and fines estimated at LBP 150 billion

The following table shows the value of fees according to the car's horsepower and date of manufacturing. (In thousands of LBP unless indicated otherwise)

Value of fees according to the car's horsepower and date of manufacturing.					Table 7
Horsepower	Date of manufacturing is less than two years	Date of manufacturing is between two and four years	Date of manufacturing is between five and 12 years	Date of manufacturing is 13 years or older	
From 1-10	325	155	75	33	
From 11-20	525	245	120	53	
From 21-30	1,050	505	240	109	
From 31-40	1,525	730	310	140	
From 41-50	2.5 million	1.2 million	510	230	
From 51 and above	3.1 million	1.5 million	715	288	

Source: Table 9 in the 2003 public budget law

The next article will look into owners of special licence plate numbers in Lebanon.

Politicians, high-ranking officials, and businessmen

SPECIAL LICENSE PLATE NUMBERS

Owners of special license plate numbers or phone numbers (three-digit license plates and easy-to-remember phone numbers) are usually either in the government or are close to government officials. Since 2008, special mobile phone numbers have been granted upon request by coordination between telecom company owners and officials in the Ministry of Telecommunications. In 2008, the ministry held an auction to sell unique numbers.

The government has, since 2006 imposed higher prices on special numbers, generating additional income for the state. Moreover, license plate numbers were granted to politicians and their friends upon the Minister of Interior's discretion, and some ended up selling these numbers to make profit, depriving the government of a large potential income. (See The Monthly, issue # 82, from May 2009.)

License plates

Before 1997, license plate numbers were issued from a region, without being coded by any regional code. Some individuals managed to obtain special numbers in the 50's and 60's, because there weren't as many vehicles, and at that time, most people were not interested in having a special number. As the number of cars increased, more attention was given to license plate numbers. Special numbers (of more than three digits) were bought from their previous holders either upon a decision from the Minister of Interior or any other high ranking official in the Ministry.

License plates had to be reorganized and adopt new numbers since many had been damaged during the civil war, but continued to exist in records. As such, resolution 356 was enacted on August 20, 1997, in order to renumber and identify the models of car and vehicle license plates. This resolution was amended many times, eventually leading to

resolution 17 issued on January 28, 1998 and resolution 91 issued on February 23, 2005.

Registration plate numbers became as follows:

- ⦿ Number one for the president
- ⦿ Number two for the speaker of parliament
- ⦿ Number three for the prime minister
- ⦿ Number four for the deputy speaker of parliament
- ⦿ Number five for the deputy prime minister
- ⦿ From number six to 36 for the ministers
- ⦿ Number 37-165 for the cars of the MPs
- ⦿ In the Beqa'a cars are numbered from 100,001 to 490,000 coded with the Arabic letter "ج"
- ⦿ In the south cars are numbered from 100,001 to 490,000 coded with the Arabic letter "ص"
- ⦿ In Nabatiyeh cars are numbered from 100,001 to 490,000 coded with the Arabic letter "ن"
- ⦿ In Ouza'i cars are numbered from 100,001 to 490,000 coded with the Arabic letter "و"
- ⦿ In Dikouneh cars are numbered from 100,001 to 490,000 coded with the Arabic letter "ب"
- ⦿ In Beirut, cars are numbered from 200 to 300000 coded with the Arabic letter "ج"
- ⦿ In some areas, the following numeration is adopted: 300,001 to 490,000 coded with the Arabic letter "ج" and number 200 to

100,000 coded with the Arabic letters "ط" and "و"

The decree authorized owners of a private tourism to keep the same registration plate number that existed before the decision was issued on condition he submits an official request to that end. Consequently, many owners were able to keep the three digit registration plates while others, a small group, did not request to keep their numbers enabling the government to redistribute them on a number of relatives and politicians.

The new numeration gave the government new numbers which were distributed by ministers of the interior on politicians, relatives and supporters. The article examines special three digit registration plates that were not coded. Who are the owners of these plates? Can the government impose additional annual fees on these numbers (as listed in the 2008 draft public budget law) to compensate the state?

Owners of special license plate numbers

Table 1 lists the owners of special license plate numbers.

Owners of special license plate numbers		Table 1
Number	Owner	
160	Current MP and former minister of interior	
161	Above mentioned politician	
162	Daughter of above mentioned politician	
165	Former president	

Owners of special license plate numbers	Table 1
166	Director general of the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities
167	Daughter of politician, owner of plate numbers 160 and 161
168	Businessman
169	Former president
170	Wife of former president, owner of plate number 169
171	Above mentioned figure
172	Businessman
173	Businessman (booked car)
176	Businessman
177	A political and parliamentary authority
179	Businessman
180	Daughter of former president, owner of plate number 165
181	Above mentioned person
182	Son of a former director general in the presidency
183	Son of a former director general in the premiership
184	Retired judge in the Court of Audit
185	Daughter of a former MP and minister
186	Businessman
188	Businessman
189	Businessman (booked car)
190	Wife of a businessman
191	Wife of MP, owner of plate numbers 160 and 161
192	Businessman (booked car)
193	Former president
194	Businessman (booked car)
195	Former director general in the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities
196	Former MP and minister
197	Businessman (booked car)
200	Wife of an MP and former minister of interior
201	Former MP and minister
202	A religious Christian authority
203	Wife of a former president
204	Above mentioned personality
206	Retired officer
207	Former MP
208	Wife of a former MP
209	Businessman
210	Wife of a former president
212	Son of a former president
213	Businesswoman (booked car)
214	Businessman
216	Businessman and spouse of the daughter of a former president
217	Son of a former president
218	Son of a former president, owner of plate number 217
219	Businessman
220	Wife of a former president
221	Wife of a former MP and minister
222	Wife of a current MP
223	A political za'im and current MP, owner of plate number 27,000
224	Wife of a political za'im and an MP

Owners of special license plate numbers	Table 1
225	Former minister
226	Former minister
227	Former director general in the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities
228	Son of a former MP
229	Businessman
230	Businessman
231	Current MP
233	Former MP
234	Wife of a businessman
235	Journalist
239	Businessman
240	Former director general
241	Journalist
242	Daughter of a political za'im and current MP
243	Former president, owner of plate number 165
244	Businessman
245	Wife of a former MP and minister
246	Son of a former MP and minister
247	Businessman
248	Businessman
249	Former MP
250	Former MP
251	Current MP
252	Former MP and minister
253	Religious Christian authority
254	Former minister
256	Former director general at the Ministry of Interior
258	Former MP and minister
260	Son of a former director general at the Ministry of Finance
261	Businessman
262	Current MP
263	Businessman
264	Retired judge
265	Former minister
266	Retired officer
267	Son of a former MP
268	Wife of a retired judge
269	Businessman
270	Businessman
271	Son of a former MP
272	Former director general
273	Muslim cleric
274	Former judge
275	Wife of a former minister and MP
276	Son of a former MP and minister of interior
277	Former governor
278	Former MP and minister
279	Son of a former MP
280	Businessman
281	Businessman
282	Former director general for the presidency
285	Retired judge
286	Former MP
288	Businessman

Owners of special license plate numbers	Table 1
289	Wife of a former MP and minister of interior
291	Businessman
292	Former premier
294	Wife of a businessman and former minister
295	Businessman
297	Son of a former MP
299	Son of a former MP and businessman
300	Businessman (booked car)
302	Former MP
303	Businessman
304	Businessman
305	Businessman
306	Businessman
307	Businessman
308	Businessman
309	Businessman
310	Son of a former director general at the Ministry of Interior
311	Businessman
312	Retired officer
313	Businessman
320	Wife of a former head of the Constitutional Council
321	Former speaker of parliament
322	Businessman
323	Businessman
324	Former MP
325	Businessman and former minister
329	Daughter of a former premier
330	Businessman
331	Businessman
333	Businessman
336	Businessman and a former MP
337	Son of the above mentioned personality
340	Daughter of a former premier
341	Former MP and minister
342	Wife of a former president. She also owns plate number 210
500	Businessman
1000	Head of a party and son of a former president

Note (1): The booked cars belong to the same businessman

Note (2): Due to the high number of special license plate numbers, both coded and not coded, it is impossible to list all of them. The article listed the special plate numbers of politicians and their relatives in addition to those of businessmen and influential figures.

The next article will look into customs tariffs on car imports.

Custom tariffs on car imports

FROM USD 5,000 TO USD 50,000

The world economic and financial crisis has hit production sectors worldwide. The car industry has suffered particularly, with sales plunging to their lowest and companies declaring bankruptcy and laying off employees. Sales are so low that some European countries have gone as far as disseminating advertisements to buy one car and get another free.

Despite everything, the car sales industry in Lebanon is still prospering. Prices continue to soar due to car loans offered by banks.

Car agency and showroom owners have declared that high custom tariffs and taxes are the main reasons behind the increase in car prices. Their revenues barely cover operational expenses, since the price of a car is set according to its price in its country of production and also includes import costs and custom tariffs that vary according to the car's type and production year.

To be able to compare the price of a car with the customs fees rate, Table 1 includes the custom tariffs imposed on cars common in Lebanon. These tariffs vary between USD 5,000 to USD 50,000, an average of 25% - 35% of a car's price depending on the make and year.

Customs fees on car imports in Lebanon								Table 1
Car type	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
BMW X5 3.0	6,200	6,700	7,900	9,200	10,600	13,100	22,400	26,200
BMW Z4 3.0	-	-	7,300	8,700	10,300	11,100	14,300	16,700
BMW 540	5,500	6,400	7,700	-	-	-	-	-
BMW 325 CI	5,200	5,400	5,500	6,700	8,000	9,700	-	-
BMW M5V8	10,200	11,600	13,700	-	-	28,100	31,600	40,700
AUDI A4-V6	5,000	5,100	5,300	5,400	6,300	8,900	10,600	12,600
Audi A8 Quattro V8	5,100	5,300	5,900	9,900	14,800	19,100	23,600	33,300
Ford Expedition 4 WD	4,900	5,000	5,000	5,100	5,300	5,500	6,400	-
Cadillac Escalade V8	-	5,400	5,500	6,300	7,600	9,100	17,400	-
Honda Accord EX	4,900	5,000	5,200	5,400	5,500	6,600	7,800	-
Honda Civic EX-	5,000	5,100	5,200	5,300	5,400	6,200	7,000	-
Honda CRV EX	4,900	5,000	5,100	5,300	5,400	6,200	7,900	-
Hummer H2 4 WDV8	-	-	7,300	8,300	9,700	11,400	14,800	26,000
Mercedes C240	5,000	5,200	5,400	6,100	7,600	-	-	15,600
Mercedes C320	5,200	5,300	5,600	7,100	8,700	10,600	12,700	16,800
Mercedes CL500	9,500	11,200	12,800	14,700	17,100	20,100	42,900	49,200
Mercedes ML500	-	5,400	5,600	6,300	7,500	15,500	17,600	24,400
Mercedes SL 500	9,100	10,400	17,100	18,900	22,200	25,800	33,500	46,000
Porsche Cayenne V8 turbo	-	-	18,800	22,000	25,400	28,800	-	44,700
Porsche 911 Carrera Cabriolet	15,800	17,700	20,900	24,100	28,800	32,800	36,900	39,700
Nissan XE 4WD V6	4,700	4,800	4,900	5,000	5,200	5,300	5,500	11,200
Nissan Pathfinder LE	4,900	5,000	5,100	5,200	5,500	5,600	6,900	16,800
Toyota RaAV 4	5,000	5,100	5,100	5,200	5,300	5,500	6,500	8,100
Toyota Corolla LE	4,800	4,900	5,100	5,200	5,300	5,400	5,500	6,400
Toyota Land Cruiser	7,500	8,700	10,300	12,000	13,900	15,900	20,100	29,600
Golf GTI VR6	5,000	5,200	5,300	5,400	5,600	7,100	8,000	9,100

Source: Custom Tariffs 2009

Note: Law #150 of May 6, 1992 prohibited the import of foreign cars older than 8 years. Therefore, according to the terms stipulated in this law, as of 2009, importing cars produced before 2001 is illegal.

CDR after 33 years

OVERSHADOWED MINISTRIES AND MANY SHORTCOMINGS

The Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR) was formed under Decree # 5 by the government of then-Prime Minister Salim Hoss after the first round of the civil war ended in 1976. CDR was part of a new vision for reconstruction, planning and organization without the impediment of administrative work. However, after the war broke out again CDR slipped into a 'clinical death' until it was resuscitated in 1993. Thirty-three years later, what has been accomplished? Did the CDR fulfill its goal?

Creation of the CDR and the abolishment of the Ministry of Planning

Decree # 5 dated January 31, 1977 described CDR as "a public institution with financial and administrative autonomy and is directly accountable to the Council of Ministers". Article 13 of the decree stipulates abolishing the Ministry of Public Planning and replacing it with CDR. The council is not subject to prior inspection by the auditors' office.

Tasks

The law, over several amendments, gave CDR extended jurisdiction while "maintaining consultation and cooperation" with all concerned ministries, public institutions and municipalities. CDR was therefore awarded a significant, essential role since it is the body that possesses support and resources not the ministries, administrations and municipalities that are suffering from decay and administrative and financial routine.

Among the CDR's tasks are:

Planned projects

- ⦿ Draft a general plan, subsequent plans and reconstruction and development programs and propose economic, financial and social policies in tune with the general plan in the framework of specific development and financial goals that must be approved by the Council of Ministers.
- ⦿ Outline a budget draft to implement the general scheme and ensure coordination between the public budget and the general plan by providing feedback on the drafted public budget law.
- ⦿ Propose reconstruction and development law drafts to the Cabinet.

- ⦿ Outline general guidance framework for civil regulation and get the approval of the Cabinet.

Advisory and guiding tasks

- ⦿ Advise the Council of Ministers on economic and financial relations with states and bodies, institutions and organizations abroad.
- ⦿ Provide contact, via the ministry involved, with states and bodies, institutions and organizations abroad concerning all economic, cultural, technical and social aid.
- ⦿ Prepare and promulgate statistics related to all aspects of economic and social activity.
- ⦿ Order and prepare necessary research in the fields of development and reconstruction or propose the appointment of qualified bodies to carry out studies and present recommendations aimed at mobilizing scientific capabilities for development and reconstruction.
- ⦿ Request that all ministries, public institutions and municipalities prepare projects that conform to the general goals of reconstruction and development.
- ⦿ Provide information for ministries, public institutions, municipalities, private/public companies and private establishments.
- ⦿ Provide suggestions for the formation, development and guidance of financial institutions and private/public companies and public institutions involved with development.



Beirut Northern Suburb - Sin El Fil area
CRD progress report- March 2000

Executive tasks

- ⊙ Prepare feasibility studies for reconstruction and development projects listed in the general plan or in the programs in addition to studies to prepare the general plan and subsequent plans.
- ⊙ Execute projects included in the general plan, subsequent plans and in programs in addition to implementing any development and reconstruction-related projects assigned to the CDR by the Council of Ministers.
- ⊙ Execution of a project can be carried out via any public institution, municipalities or mixed or private company selected by the CDR.
- ⊙ Implementation is carried out using any appropriate legal means either through bids, solicitation, settlement or any form of partnership.
- ⊙ CDR will replace all public institutions and municipalities in projects assigned to it in all matters involving acquisition requests, transactions, administrative licenses and permissions with the exception of those given by the Cabinet.
- ⊙ Carry out tasks listed in articles 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 of legislative Decree # 107 dated June 30, 1977 in regions that were damaged by war or natural disasters, that pose a threat to public health and safety or that are under examination. The Council of Ministers will assign the projects to the CDR.
- ⊙ Immediately start executing any project assigned by the Cabinet. CDR drafts and amends studies related to the guiding and descriptive planning and structure and has the right to organize or reorganize and develop an area or part of an area, sell organized plots of land or construction buildings and distribute net revenues from the sales to right holders.

Financial tasks

- ⊙ CDR funds any project or program that the Council of Ministers refers it to. As such, CDR has the right to sign deals for domestic and external loans, which can also be in the form of bonds.
- ⊙ The government, based on cabinet decrees, can sponsor CDR's loans as long as they do not exceed LBP 300 million in each of the first three years and 15% of the total public budget of the previous year for each of the following years.
- ⊙ CDR has the right to offer loans, in any form, to a public institution, municipality, or a mixed or private establishment.
- ⊙ CDR has the right, after Cabinet approval, to contribute to any establishment, and can also waive its contributions.
- ⊙ CDR can assign the National Bank for Industrial

and Touristic Development to manage its funds and investments based on deals signed between the two parties.

Inspection tasks

- ⊙ By default, CDR supervises all projects contained in the public plan, subsequent plans and programs. The council also inspects projects that the Cabinet had assigned it to finance or observes their implementation. In this case, the only inspecting body is the audit office in legally-required circumstances.
- ⊙ The CDR should submit regular performance reports to the Council of Ministers.
- ⊙ The CDR supervises channeling external economic and financial aid.
- ⊙ The council inspects the appropriate use of proceeds from loans for development and reconstruction purposes.

Amendments

The CDR's founding law was amended several times but the two main changes were made by Law 117 and Law 247 and their amendments:

Law 117 dated December 7, 1991, which created Solidere, introduced several new articles and clauses to the law that founded the CDR. Most significantly:

Article 1: "To carry out directly or through any public administration, public entity, municipality, Joint-stock or mixed company that shall be formed with the participation of the Council of Development and Reconstruction or any Real Estate Company formed in line with the provisions of Article 21 of the Law on Town Planning the execution of any project assigned to it by the Council of Ministers in any of the areas specified for in paragraph 4 of the present Article.

The Articles of Incorporation, of every Joint-Stock or Mixed Company that shall be formed with the participation of the Council of Development and Reconstruction or any Real Estate Company mentioned in the preceding paragraph, shall be subject to the approval of the Council of Ministers and to the provisions of the Code of Commerce."

Article 2: The following paragraph was added to Article 5 of Decree No. 5 dated January 31, 1977, amended by Article 1 of Decree No. 16 dated March 23, 1985: "Whenever the Council of Development and Reconstruction carries out the execution of the provisions referred to in paragraph 6 of this article through a Real Estate Company, such Company shall be formed and its Articles of Incorporation shall be approved by Decree adopted by the Council of Ministers.

The Articles of Incorporation shall state and define

all matters related to the formation of the company, its object, the conduct of its activities, the various prerogatives of its organs and its liquidation. Such Articles of Incorporation should not violate the basic rules provided for in the laws in force and especially the provisions of the Code of Commerce.

The Articles of Incorporation of the company may include provisional stipulations allowing for the formation of the company and the conduct of its activities before final settlements of the disputes concerning the rights of the property owners and any other rights pertaining to such property that have formed the contributions in kind (in the capital of the company).

Law 247 dated August 7, 2008, amended by Law 295 dated April 3, 2001 stipulates merging of Council for Development Projects and the Council of Greater Beirut Projects with the CDR.

Activities

From 1992 until 2008, the CDR signed contracts amounting to USD 9.2 billion distributed throughout several sectors as shown by Table 1. External funding of these deals reached USD 3,919 million while the rest was financed by the Lebanese government. The value of the contracts that have been implemented reached USD 6,500 while the rest, worth USD 2,700 million, is pending execution.

Contracts signed by the CDR based on sectors (1992-2008)			Table 1
Sector	Value of signed contracts	Value of foreign funding	
Roads, highways, public transportation, airport and seaports	2,367	738	
Electricity	1,420	1,260	
Telecom and postal services	818	48	
Education	969	435	
Public health	311	230	
Social affairs	86	42	
Integrated development and environment	55	41	
Solid waste	1,265	32	
Potable water	731	526	
Sewage	510	275	
Agriculture and irrigation	112	86	
Government buildings	196	39	
Other projects	442	167	
Total	9,282	3,919	
Source: the CDR reports issued in July 2008 and December 2009 published in some newspapers. The final figures are to be included in CDR's annual report.			

Top projects

Here is a list of the CDR's largest projects in different sectors:

Electricity: the CDR signed contracts in the electricity sector amounting to USD 1,420 million, of which USD 215 million worth of deals are pending execution.

Foreign funding reached USD 1,255 million, or 88% of total financing. Here is a list of executed contracts:

- ⦿ Rehabilitation of Zouq power plant for USD 26.5 million.
- ⦿ Rehabilitation of the Jiyyeh power plant for USD 60.7 million.
- ⦿ Rehabilitation of the Hreicheh power plant for USD 10.7 million.
- ⦿ Rehabilitation of main transfer stations for USD 80.6 million.
- ⦿ Rehabilitation of distribution grids for USD 119.1 million.
- ⦿ Establishment of the Zahrani and Beddawi power plants for USD 595.6 million.
- ⦿ Creation of new gas generation units in each of Sour and Baalbek for USD 60.9 million.
- ⦿ Creation of new plants for USD 139.
- ⦿ Setting up underground cables for USD 113.4 million.

Telecom and postal services: the CDR signed contracts in the telecommunications and postal services sector worth USD 817.8 million, of which USD 48 million or 5.8% were in foreign funds. Most of the contracts have been implemented, most significantly:

- ⦿ Rehabilitation and expansion of network connectivity and distribution for USD 522.7 million.
- ⦿ Rehabilitation and expansion of telephone exchange at the cost of USD 183 million
- ⦿ Rehabilitation and expansion of telephone networks for USD 53.1 million.
- ⦿ Rehabilitation and expansion of international telecommunications for USD 6.6 million.

Roads and highways: the CDR signed USD 1,665 million worth of contracts in the roads and highways sector, of which USD 1,290 million worth has been executed. Foreign funding reached USD 575 million, amounting to 34% of total financing. Here are the most significant projects:

- ⦿ Rehabilitation of the international and main roads at the cost of USD 427 million (75% of the project has been completed).
- ⦿ Improving the Jounieh-Bkirki-Harissa road for USD 14 million.
- ⦿ Improving the Metn highway for USD 70.2 million.
- ⦿ Improving the Zgharta-Ehden road for USD 27.7 million.
- ⦿ Improving the Trablous-Chekka road for USD 15 million.
- ⦿ Improving the Chekka-Tabarja road for USD 27 million.
- ⦿ Improving the Nahr el-Kalb passage for USD 47.4 million.

- Beirut's circular road (all entrances) at the cost of USD 282.7 million
- Improving the quality of public services in Dahiyeh at the cost of USD 246 million.

Airport and seaports: The CDR signed contracts worth USD 702 million to develop Beirut's international airport. Foreign funding amounted to USD 163 million or 23.5% of total funding. Seaport contracts, especially in Beirut and Trablous, were under the management of the two ports (works in the two ports cost USD 175 million).

Education: Contracts in this sector reached USD 969 million of which USD 435 million, or 45%, were provided by foreign funding. The most important projects are:

- Rehabilitating and construction of public schools for USD 2,385 million.
- Rehabilitating and construction of public vocational schools for USD 1,174 million.
- Rehabilitating of university complexes and the construction of the Lebanese University Campus in Hadath for USD 347 million.

Public health: Contracts in this sector reached USD 311 million, of which USD 230 million or 74% were in foreign funding. The most significant projects were:

- Establishing the Beirut Government University Hospital (Rafic Hariri University Hospital) for USD 121 million.
- Establishing a government hospital in Zahle for USD 20.6 million.
- Establishing a government hospital in Hermel for USD 11.7 million.
- Establishing a government hospital in Kesrouane for USD 6.3 million.
- Establishing a government hospital in Saida for USD 21.6 million.

Solid waste: The CDR signed contracts amounting to USD 1,265 million of which foreign funding contributed to only 2.5% of total funding. The most significant projects are:

- Rehabilitating main dumps for USD 246.3 million.
- Creating an emergency plan to dispose of solid waste for USD 348.6 million.
- Paying the expenses of garbage collecting in Greater Beirut for USD 411.4 million.

Potable water: The CDR signed contracts worth USD 731 million of which USD 526 million (77%) were of foreign funding.

Administrative budget

An administrative budget is allocated for the CDR from the Cabinet's budget to pay the salaries and wages of council employees and other expenses (electricity, telecommunications and stationary). In ten years (2000-2009) the administrative budget reached LBP 175 billion. Table 2 shows that CDR's administrative budget exceeds that of the Ministry of Public Works (excluding transportation-related departments) which reached LBP 18.6 billion in 2009. It also exceeds the total budgets of the ministries of industry, environment and displaced which reached LBP 16.3 million.

CDR's administrative budget		Table 2
Year	Budget (in billion LBP)	
2000	6	
2001	12	
2002	12	
2003	20.7	
2004	17	
2005	21	
2006	23	
2007	22	
2008	22	
2009	20	
Total	175.7	
Source: Public budget laws (2000-2005) and draft public budget laws (2006-2009) since the budget has yet to be endorsed		

The CDR: A success or a disappointment?

The CDR enjoys one of the widest jurisdictions of any public institution or administration, as stipulated by its founding law and amendments. However, the council has fallen short of fulfilling its tasks, especially those related to public and comprehensive planning. Most of its large projects could have been carried out by the ministries involved, which have trained and qualified staff members. However, the CDR opted to employ private companies, who charged large sums of money, to carry out studies and supervise the projects. The end result did not meet expectations since in most of the sectors where the expensive projects executed are still unable to provide the necessary services (electricity, potable water, solid waste disposal and health and medical care). As such, what are the plans that the CDR has outlined for these sectors? What projects have been implemented to do so? What are the projects that have yet to be executed, and what is their cost?

As for expenditures, it did not meet the needs of the agriculture and irrigation sector - one of the main productive fields which received no more than 1.2% of CDR's funding.

The problem surpasses the council and its jurisdictions to address its usefulness, and questions whether or not there is a need to give those powers to the service ministries after amending their bylaws and laws.

SQUANDERING OF PUBLIC FUNDS- CASE STUDY: ESCWA BUILDING

The 2009 draft budget for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs lists under the section “Leases, Other Estates” that the rent for the complex occupied by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) was LBP 15,619,250,000 for a period of 15 months. The Lebanese government, which leased the complex from Solidere, has paid a total of LBP 153 billion (more than USD 100 million) over a period spanning from December 1997 until December 2009.

The complex

Solidere constructed the complex on its estate number 1134 occupying an area of 22,713 m² in Zoqaq el-Blat based on a prior agreement to lease the complex to the Lebanese government/Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The government was to place the complex at the disposal of ESCWA and other UN-affiliated organizations. The complex contains a parking lot for 476 cars (a section of the parking lot is public property).

Lease

The government signed a seven-year lease with Solidere on November 1, 1997. The contract expired on January 31, 2005 (the audit office considered that on September 1, 1997 the contract entered its fourth year therefore it expires on August 31, 2005) at an annual cost of USD 6,813,900 for the first three years (USD 300 for each square meter).

Starting the fourth year, a Libor plus 2% increment is added to the rental fees.

Based on these figures, the rent reached USD 8,246,550 by the end of 2005 in addition to the Value Added Tax (VAT) which went into effect on February 1, 2002.

Starting June 2005, the government and Solidere negotiated a contract renewal after the Ministry of Foreign Affairs proposed searching for a new complex due to a hike in rent prices and the fact the United Nations planned to increase its staff in Lebanon. The ministry proposed USD 6.7 million a year for three renewable years.

Solidere submitted a counter offer as follows:

- ⦿ A renewal of the contract for seven years. The contract includes the complex and the parking lots currently in use.
- ⦿ That rent is set at USD 8.5 million annually for the first four years.

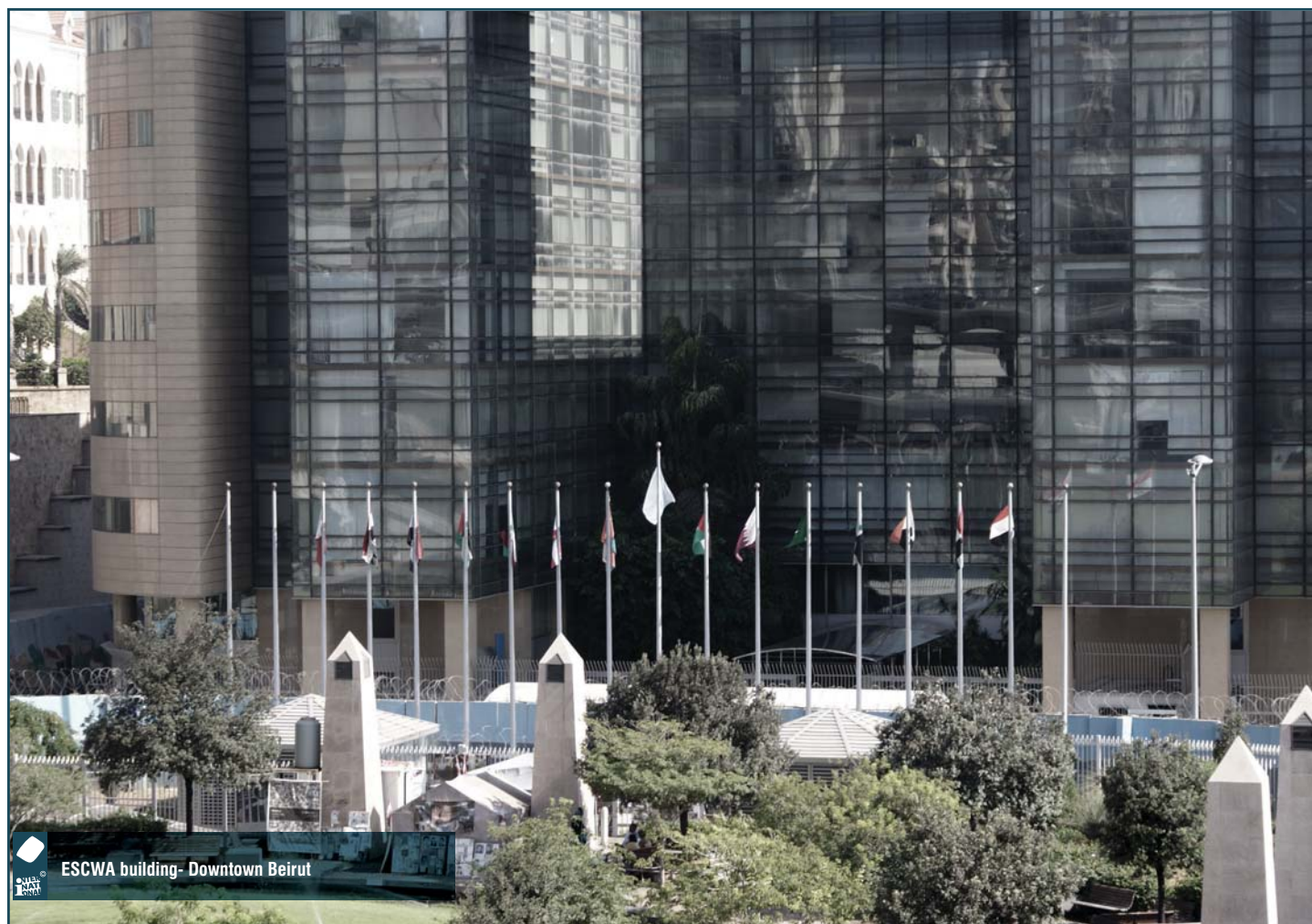
“Consequently, the government squandered no less than USD 2.3 million a year of public funds.”

- ⦿ That annual rent is set at USD 8,925,000 for the fifth, sixth and seventh rental years.
- ⦿ That the Ministry of Foreign Affairs pays the VAT.

The Lebanese people have endured the burden of over USD 100 million in rent to host ESCWA, which has perhaps played a role in enhancing Lebanon’s status and presence and provided employment opportunities. Since the cost of works on the complex and the estate did not exceed USD 25 million according to 1997 prices, Solidere was able to recover the value of the building after four years. Government officials are responsible for providing Solidere with such a rare investment in the real estate market after they agreed to pay an annual USD 300 for each square meter at a time when prices ranged between USD 170 and USD 200 only for similar complexes in similar areas. Consequently, the government squandered no less than USD 2.3 million a year of public funds.

Table 1 shows the amount paid to lease the ESCWA complex from 1997 until 2009 (In LBP).

Amount paid to lease the ESCWA complex from 1997 until 2009 (In LBP)			Table 1
Year	Amount	Legal document	
Two months in 1997 and a whole year in 1998	12,091,265,000	Decree # 12527 of July 10, 1998	
1999	10,500,000,000	Public budget law	
2000	10,500,000,000	Public budget law	
To cover the difference in rent in 2001 with the start of the fourth year on January 1, 2001. The audit office however refused payment considering that the fourth rental years begins on September 1, 2001 and the new rent should be adopted instead	815,850,000	Decree # 5363 of April 21, 2001	
2001	10,500,000,000	Public budget law	
2002	12,000,000,000	Public budget law	
2003	14,360,000,000	Public budget law	
2004	14,360,000,000	Public budget law	
2005	14,360,000,000	Public budget law	
2006	14,360,000,000	2006 draft budget	
2007	11,750,000,000	2007 draft budget	
2008	11,750,000,000	2008 draft budget	
2009 (for 15 months)	15,619,250,000	2009 draft budget	
Total	152,966,365,000		



ESCWA building- Downtown Beirut

Municipal and ikhtiariah elections in the Beqa'a

147 MUNICIPALITIES AND 414 MOKHTAR

The municipal and ikhtiariah elections in Shia'a towns and villages, or those with a Shia'a majority, in the qada'as of Baalbek, Hermel, Zahle and Western Bekaa will practically be a no-contest vote since voters will definitely elect Hizbullah and Amal's contender. The same is expected in the Sunni villages and towns where voters will vote for the Future Movement's candidate. Actual electoral battles will be limited to Christian villages and towns, or those with mixed confessions. The city of Zahle is expected to go through a major electoral battle as a result of the parliamentary election in June. Defeated parliamentary candidate Elie Skaff will seek to compensate for his loss through one of his supporters in the municipality elections in order to consolidate his 'za'ama' and 'presence in Zahle' and prove that his defeat was caused by the fact that his competitors won votes from towns and villages outside the city. Skaff's opponents meanwhile, with particular emphasis on the Lebanese Forces and the Phalange party, will aim for a victory in the municipal elections in order to consolidate their parliamentary victory.

The Monthly will examine the towns and villages of the Bekaa muhafaza, in terms of the number of municipalities, Municipal Council members, number of makhatir and revenues of the Independent Municipal Fund, in addition to the number of registered voters and the number of ballots in 2009. Table 1 shows that the number of municipalities in the Bekaa form 15.5% of municipalities in Lebanon.

Qada'a	Number of towns	Number of municipalities	Number of municipal members	Number of makhatir	Revenues from the Independent Municipal Fund for 2007	Number of registered voters in 2009	Number of actual voters in 2009
Zahle	39	29	372	81	8,899,215	158,109	93,376
Baalbek	103	58	726	199	12,173,114	213,528	104,315
Hermel	32	5	69	44	1,857,753	42,759	23,028
Rachaia	26	26	282	34	2,271,687	42,033	20,271
Western Bekaa	35	29	360	56	4,476,403	80,956	45,274
Total	235	147	1,809	414	29,678,172	537,385	286,264

Source :Compiled by Information International based on the official Gazette

Meanwhile, makhatir in the Bekaa form 17.3% of makhatir in Lebanon while municipal revenues reached some LBP 29.7billion ,contributing 14.1% of total revenues of the Independent Municipality Fund in 2007.

The Bekaa registered a low number of municipalities compared with the number of towns and villages. Municipalities exist in only 62.5% of towns and villages compared with 83% in the muhafazat of South and Nabatiyeh. The reason for this is the low number of inhabitants in most towns and villages in the Bekaa especially in the qada'a of Baalbek and Hermel.

Table 2 shows the number of registered and actual voters in 2009 and the numbers of the makhatir available in each municipality of the Beqaa.

Zahle					
Town	Number of registered voters	Number of actual voters	Number of Municipal Council members	Number of makhatir	Revenues of the Municipal Council Independent Fund 2007 (in thousands LBP)
Zahlé/EI-Berbara	4,201	1,673	21	1	3,558,729
Zahlé/Haouch EI-Oumara	6,785	4,181		1	
Zahlé/Er-Rassiyé Tahta	3,098	1,601		1	
Zahlé/Saydet En-Najat	2,817	1,435		1	
Zahlé/Mar Elias	4,622	2,238		1	
Zahlé/Mar Mkheyil	4,462	2,004		1	
Zahlé/Mar Antonios	1,737	849		1	
Zahlé/Miden Sharqui	5,458	1,712		1	
Zahlé/Miden Gharbi	4,736	1,622		1	
Zahlé/Er-Rassiyé Fauouqa	4,090	2,054		1	
Zahlé/Hay EI-Saydet	1,463	1,028		1	
Zahlé/Maallaga	6,895	3,567		1	
Zahlé/Maallaga Shmeli	3,101	2,088		1	
Zahlé/Haouch EI-Zara'aneh	4,154	2,280		1	
Zahlé/Kark Nouh	2,935	1,887		1	
Zahlé/Ouadi EI-A'arayish	1,594	1,099		1	
Touaite	147	106		1	
Karme	299	237		1	
Ablah	2,014	1,171	12	1	110,994
Barr Elias	9,112	6,063	18	4	482,740
Bouarej	1,274	943	9	1	100,663

Zahle					
Town	Number of registered voters	Number of actual voters	Number of Municipal Council members	Number of makhatir	Revenues of the Municipal Council Independent Fund 2007 (in thousands LBP)
Terbol	3,247	2,249	15	2	187,446
Taalbaya	5,807	3,749	15	3	288,549
Taanayel	697	511	9	1	55,708
Jdita	3,682	2,425	15	2	239,695
Aanjar/Khodr Bek	1,916	884	15	1	339,970
Aanjar/Betyias	1,386	528		1	
Aanjar/Haji Jbeili	829	133		1	
Aanjar/Kaboussie	892	195		1	
Aanjar	953	329		1	
Aanjar/Ouaqf	439	179		1	
Hay El-Fikani	1,197	923	9	1	72,644
Deir El-Ghaza	810	506	9	1	45,630
Raait	1,588	1,048	12	1	87,414
Riyah ⁽¹⁾	2,680	1,421	5	1	385,782
Haouch Hala ⁽¹⁾	2,121	1,387	10	2	
Saadnayel	4,663	3,342	15	2	325,292
Chtaura	334	183	9	1	51,439
Aali En-Nahri	6,087	4,339	15	5	384,077
Fourzol/Tahta	2,061	1,478	15	1	198,747
Fourzol/Fauouqa	1,372	967		1	
Qaa Er-Rim	1,688	1,175	12	1	99,889
Qabb Elias/Tahta ⁽²⁾	5,926	3,880	17	2	592,579
Qabb Elias/Fauouqa ⁽²⁾	3,613	1,994		2	
Ouadi Ed-Delm ⁽²⁾	670	426	1	1	
Qoussaya	1,014	595	9	1	41,000
Kfarzabad	3,608	2,363	15	2	193,777
Majdel Aanjar	6,158	4,620	15	4	413,959
Mrayjat	1,736	1,028	12	1	99,082
Maksé	995	766	9	1	64,511
Nabi Ayla	1,191	774	9	1	61,648
Niha	1,304	736	9	1	79,112
Massa	421	329	9	1	30,211
Aain Kfar Zabad	1,842	1,147	12	1	143,268
Hazerta	2,770	2,124	15	2	164,660
Jalala	368	171	---	1	---
Haouch El-Ghanam	279	209	---	1	---
Hay El-Selm	256	197	---	1	---
Dalhamiyet	2,464	1,882	---	1	---
Nasriyet	749	513	---	1	---
Tell El-Akhdar	85	42	---	1	---
Employees	406	394	---	---	---
Total	158,109	93,376	372	81	8,899,215

(1) Haouch Hala and Riyah form a single municipality of 15 members.

(2) Qabb Elias Fauouqa and Tahta and Ouadi Ed-Delm form a single municipality of 18 members.

Baalbek/Hermel					
Town	Number of registered voters in 2009	Number of actual voters in 2009	Number of municipality council members	Number of makhatir	Revenues of the Municipal Council Independent Fund 2007 (in thousands LBP)
Baalbek/Branieh/Hay el Masshiyeen	844	25	21	1	1,618,464
Baalbek/ Berbara / Hay el Masshiyeen	776	90		1	
Baalbek/El-Reesh El-Sharqui	5,858	2,918		3	
Baalbek/El-Reesh El-Gharbi	3,550	1,855		2	
Baalbek/Abbasiyeh	172	79		1	
Baalbek/Nabi Na'am	5,489	3,146		3	
Baalbek/Hay El-Shmeiss	567	328		1	
Baalbek/Hay El-Solh	2,426	1,124		2	
Baalbek/Ghafra	3,382	1,040		2	
Baalbek/Qala'a	2,564	1,029		2	
Baalbek/Qala'a Gharbi	66	36			
Baalbek/Qebbit Douris	68	50			
Aya'at	3,473	1,647	15	2	212,061
Btedaai	536	166	9	1	30,432
Bednayel	5,271	3,053	15	3	300,972
Barqa	813	54	9	1	40,523
Britel/Younssieh	1,038	673	18	1	717,335
Britel/Sharqui	1,893	959		2	
Britel/Shmeiss	661	417		1	
Britel/A'ain Bnayyeh	159	108		1	
Britel/Aain Ej-Jaouz	131	98		1	
Britel/Gharbi	1,751	1,005		2	
Britel/Shmeiss	1,048	627		1	
Britel/Teen	286	185		1	
Bechouat	627	33	9	1	38,634
Bouday ⁽¹⁾	4,327	2,525	15	2	338,325
Aallaq ⁽¹⁾	852	414	3	1	
Temnine Et-Tahta	4,445	2,785	15	3	260,631
Temnine El-Fauouqa	2,071	1,349	12	2	124,506
Jaboulé	695	335	9	1	42,924
Hadath Baalbek/Shmeli	810	244	15	1	141,585
Hadath Baalbek/Gharbi	1,762	984		1	
Harabta	2,763	1,514	15	3	171,101
Haouch Tall Safiyé	577	331	9	1	28,449
Khreibet	1,318	832	12	1	98,693
Douris/Hay El-Ber	1,339	650	15	1	154,997
Douris/Hay El-Chahadieh	179	98		1	
Douris/ Hay El-Saydeh	1,272	156		1	
Deir El-Ahmar	5,973	951	18	4	346,405
Ras Baalbek	4,165	1,467	15	3	245,530
Serraine Et-Tahta	1,283	314	9	1	51,115

Baalbek/Hermel					
Town	Number of registered voters in 2009	Number of actual voters in 2009	Number of municipality council members	Number of makhatir	Revenues of the Municipal Council Independent Fund 2007 (in thousands LBP)
Serraine El-Faouqa/Sharqui	1,221	714	15	1	160,619
Serraine El-Faouqa/Gharbi	1,221	791		1	
Serraine El-Faouqa/Hay El-Jami'i	127	106			
Serraine El-Faouqa/Hay El-Hara	88	65			
Saaidé	735	404	9	1	41,928
Chaate/El-Jami'i	3,483	1,815	15	2	316,865
Chaate/El-Dahr	1,430	515		1	
Chlifa	1,901	317	15	2	116,532
Taraiya/Jnoubi	2,085	1,300	15	1	351,091
Taraiya/Chmeli	2,981	1,845		2	
Talia	842	265	9	1	51,581
Taibet	656	104	9	1	48,303
Aarsal/Jnoubi	5,817	2,495	21	4	930,354
Aarsal/Chmeli	7,099	3,050		4	
Aarsal/Sharqui	48	43			
A'ain	5,917	3,310	15	3	342,458
A'ainata	1,228	99	12	1	65,677
Fekehe/Jami'i ⁽²⁾	3,122	1,511	10	2	381,207
Fekehe/Mar Gerges ⁽²⁾	1,459	232		1	
Jdeidet ⁽²⁾	1,969	701	5	1	
Falawi	962	552	12	1	58,475
Qa'a	5,652	1,576	15	3	293,971
Laboué	4,484	2,512	15	2	272,904
Majdaloun	911	351	9	1	54,490
Maqné	3,955	2,291	15	3	207,588
Nabi Chit/Jnoubi	278	196	15	1	384,174
Nabi Chit/Chmeli	565	384		1	
Nabi Chit/A'reed	411	259		1	
Nabi Chit/ A'aqbeh	380	280		1	
Nabi Chit/Sharqui	499	334		1	
Nabi Chit/Tebshar	142	116		1	
Nabi Chit/Gharbi	3,589	2,459		3	
Nabi Chit/Jami'i	225	146		1	
Nabi Osmane	2,380	1,519	12	2	144,806
Nahlé	3,312	1,907	15	2	224,743
Ouadi Faara	814	468	9	1	49,003
Yammouné	1,619	1,124	12	2	98,454
Youmine/Jnoubi	2,799	1,402	15	2	451,320
Youmine/Sharqui	376	254		1	
Youmine/Shmeli	2,812	1,357		2	
Youmine/Gharbi	590	384		1	
Chmistar/Jnoubi	2,124	855	21	2	959,533
Chmistar/Sharqui	2,061	1,061		2	
Chmistar/Shmeli	3,571	1,633		2	
Chmistar/Gharbi	4,125	2,056		2	

Baalbek/Hermel					
Town	Number of registered voters in 2009	Number of actual voters in 2009	Number of municipality council members	Number of makhatir	Revenues of the Municipal Council Independent Fund 2007 (in thousands LBP)
Beit Chama	1,251	522		1	
Beit Mchaik	1,070	636		1	
Jebaa	271	200	9	1	18,983
Rmassa	323	181	9	1	69,912
Kfar Dane	1,311	789		2	
Aaqidié	342	185		1	
Kfar Dabach	515	280		1	
Mazraat Al-Swaidan	350	209		1	
Mazraat Et-Tout	363	158		1	
Beit Slaibi	559	380		1	
Masnaa El-Zahra	410	243		1	
Nabi Rchada	1,266	658		1	
Qald El-Sabeaa	778	461	9	1	121,469
Hizzine	978	624	9	1	46,118
Qsarnaba	2,375	1,552	12	2	213,541
Haouch Er-Rafqa	2,105	1,388	12	1	163,921
Ram ⁽³⁾	867	462	7	1	75,429
Joubanié ⁽³⁾	205	166	2	1	
Haouch Snaid	230	152	9	1	17,363
Zabboud	826	549	9	1	50,207
Khodr/Sharqui	675	437	12	1	132,536
Khodr/Gharbi	1,068	743		1	
Khodr/Hay Al-Ashghal	84	62		1	
Khodr/Hay El-Cha'ab	49	35			
Haouche Barada	567	106	9	1	30,114
Qarha	421	284	9	1	27,243
Hlabta	1,050	680	9	1	73,108
Janta	733	516	9	1	46,587
Taoufiqié	1,416	1,111		1	
Ham	325	152		1	
Haouch En-Nabi	644	423	9	1	43,248
Mazraat Ed-Dlail	216	130		1	
Haour Taala	2,449	1,102		2	
Haouch El-Dehab	77	32		1	
Dar El-Ouassaa	389	163		1	
Riha	1,315	667		1	
Zrazir	880	0		1	
Sefri	318	200		1	
Chaaibé and Nabi Sbat	167	105		1	
Sbouba	415	252		1	
Safra	283	3		1	
Tfail	554	282		1	
Aain Bourday	597	177		1	
Qadam	1,183	133		1	
Aain Es-Saouda	208	127		1	
Kneisset	2,189	1,224		2	
Mazraat Abou Slaibi	373	40		1	

Baalbek/Hermel					
Town	Number of registered voters in 2009	Number of actual voters in 2009	Number of municipality council members	Number of makhatir	Revenues of the Municipal Council Independent Fund 2007 (in thousands LBP)
Mazraat El-Sayyed	128	68		1	
Mazraat Beit Matar	131	12		1	
Maaraboun	1,123	495	9	1	74,577
Moqraq	542	411		1	
Nabha Qlailé	236	152		1	
Nabha El-Harfouch	216	145		1	
Nabha Ed-Damdoum	2,526	1,440		2	
Nabha El-Mehfara	600	73		1	
Naqra	135	95		1	
Ouadi Ez-Zein	394	257		1	
Ouadi Es-Safa Ech-Chargi	340	254		1	
Ouadi El-Mishimshé	165	104		1	
Yahfoufa	597	332		1	
Youmine El-Swwanieh	430	283		1	
Ansar	525	361		1	
Hermel/Hay El-Hara	7,479	3,950	21	3	1,022,608
Hermel/Hay El-Waqf	5,361	2,690		3	
Hermel/Hay Bditta	5,387	2,677		3	
Faysan ⁽⁴⁾	519	353	1	1	522,819
Qasr ⁽⁴⁾	6,296	3,349	14	3	
Jouar El-Hachich	1,061	458	9	1	67,426
Kouwekh	1,679	1,017	12	1	104,717
Bestan	577	361		1	
Hariqa	452	313		1	
Hmayré	428	251		1	
Haouch Es-Said Ali	254	159		1	
Kharayeb	336	182		1	
Zighrine	1,478	653		1	
Zwaitini	576	290		1	
Sahlet El-Maeh	240	138		1	
Souaisé	364	229		1	
Charbine	2,014	1,078		1	
Brisa	283	186		1	
Chouaghir Et-Tahta ⁽⁵⁾	1,011	515	7	1	140,183
Chouaghir El-Fauqa ⁽⁵⁾	502	283	5	1	
Qnafiz	98	17		1	
Bouaida/Gharbi	386	287		1	
Bouaida/Shmelieh	140	91		1	
Mrah El-Aain	200	134		1	
Ouadi El-Aaoss	64	11		1	
Mazraat Beit El-Touchem	194	141		1	
Mazraat Soujod	384	232		1	
Ouadi Et-Terekman	1,380	484		1	
Ouadi El-Ratil	778	218		1	

Baalbek/Hermel					
Town	Number of registered voters in 2009	Number of actual voters in 2009	Number of municipality council members	Number of makhatir	Revenues of the Municipal Council Independent Fund 2007 (in thousands LBP)
Ouadi El-Karam	1,025	650		1	
Ouadi El-Neera	341	164		1	
Ouadi Bnayt	371	207		1	
Chouaghir	679	209		1	
Mazraat El-Faqih	87	61		1	
Ma'assir	206	139		1	
Maaysra	129	58		1	
Employees	1,055	793			
Total	256,287	127,343	795	243	14,030,867

- (1) Bouday and A'alaq form a single municipality of 18 members**
(2) Fekehe and Jdeidet form a single municipality of 15 members
(3) Ram and Joubanié form a single municipality of nine members
(4) Faysan and Qasr form a single municipality of 15 members
(5) Chouaghir Et-Tahta and Chouaghir El-Fauqa form a single municipality of 12 members

West Bekaa/Rachaiya					
Town	Number of registered voters 2009	Number of actual voters in 2009	Number of Municipal Council members	Number of	Revenues of the Municipal Council Independent fund 2007 (in thousands LBP)
Joubb Jannine	5,503	2,986	15	3	306,516
Bab Mareaa	518	258	9	1	24,679
Baaloul	2,038	576	12	1	115,920
Haouch El-Harime	2,232	1,582	12	2	137,529
Khirket Qanafar	3,192	1,707	15	2	155,270
Sohmor	3,402	2,710	15	2	188,890
Soultan Yaacoub Et-Tahta ⁽¹⁾	1,303	656	6	1	156,510
Soultan Yaacoub El-Fauqa ⁽¹⁾	1,412	617	6	1	
Saghbine	3,708	1,707	15	2	173,313
Souairi	3,311	2,118	15	2	212,536
Aana	1,030	716	9	1	58,523
Aammiq	876	522	9	1	50,263
Aytanit	1,795	364	12	1	77,949
Aain Zebdé	1,163	672	9	1	58,967
Ghazzé	4,334	2,466	15	3	229,431
Qaraaoun	5,787	2,404	15	3	308,534
Kamed El-Laouz	4,661	2,341	15	3	277,669
Kafraiya	1,027	588	9	1	61,324
Lala	3,510	1,388	15	2	196,234
Marj	5,369	3,867	15	3	351,127
Manara	2,001	1,454	12	1	128,763
Mansoura	1,460	934	12	1	79,194
Yohmor	1,497	1,081	12	1	92,764
Khiara	917	543	9	1	53,323
Libbaya	2,699	1,856	15	2	165,947
Maydoun	352	311	9	1	25,022

West Bekaa/Rachaiya					
Town	Number of registered voters 2009	Number of actual voters in 2009	Number of Municipal Council members	Number of	revenues of the Municipal Council Independent fund 2007 (in thousands LBP)
Aain Et-Tiné	1,156	631	9	1	76,748
Qelaya	1,164	827	9	1	67,352
Machghara	9,944	4,739	18	5	549,326
Loussa	153	136		1	
Tall Znoun	649	394		1	---
Dakoué	588	342		1	---
Raouda	1,416	1,108	12	1	96,780
Zilaya	336	272		1	---
Chebrqiyet	36	13		1	---
Rachaiya/Fauouqa	735	225	15	1	319,822
Rachaiya/Kaouassba	2,725	1,638		2	
Rachaiya/Hay El-Midane	2,710	1,049		2	
Bakka	816	308	9	1	46,048
Bekfaya	939	502	9	1	47,710
Beit Lahia	1,062	506	9	1	55,965
Biret Rachaiya	2,722	1,185	15	1	145,889
Tannoura	618	427	9	1	34,530
Helouet	485	246	9	1	28,648
Haouch	853	395	9	1	44,583
Khirbet Rouha	2,972	1,147	15	2	150,101
Deir El-Aachayer	435	280	9	1	24,458
Rafid	2,469	1,410	12	2	140,091
Dahr El-Ahmar	938	611	9	1	65,579
Aaqabet	1,578	1,166	12	1	91,875
Aayta El-Foukhar	2,359	1,170	12	2	121,002
Aayha	2,338	1,379	12	2	137,415
Aain Harcha	1,047	534	9	1	53,789
Aain Arab	921	289	9	1	44,505
Aain Aata	1,670	825	12	1	91,432
Kfar Denis	1,065	638	9	1	58,480
Kfar Qouq	1,808	1,042	12	1	106,199
Kfar Michki	1,650	307	12	1	84,722
Kaoukaba	488	355	9	1	31,437
Majdel Balhis	2,046	730	12	1	100,439
Mhaiydsé	1,125	748	9	1	66,540
Mdoukha	1,538	417	12	1	78,774
Yanta	1,921	742	12	1	101,654
Employees	377	363	---	---	---
Total	122,949	65,520	642	90	6,748,090

(1) Soultan Yaacoub Et-Tahta and Soultan Yaacoub El-Fauouqa form a single municipality of 12 members

Distribution of Confessions according to towns

Zahlé	
Town	Confession
Zahlé/El-Berbara	Maronite and Greek Catholic
Zahlé/Haouch El-Oumara	Greek Orthodox, Maronite, Greek Catholic, Shia'a, Syriac Orthodox and Sunni
Zahlé/Er-Rassiyé Tahta	Greek Catholic and various confessions
Zahlé/Saydet En-Najat	Greek Catholic, Maronite and other Christians
Zahlé/Mar Elias	Greek Catholic, Maronite, Shia'a, Sunni and various confessions

Zahlé	
Town	Confession
Zahlé/Mar Mkheyil	Greek Catholic, Maronite, Armenian Catholic and various confessions
Zahlé/Mar Antonios	Maronite, Greek Orthodox and Armenian Orthodox
Zahlé/Miden Sharqui	Armenian Orthodox, Latin, Shia'a, Greek Orthodox, Armenian Catholic, Greek Catholic, Syriac Catholic, Evangelist, Maronite and other Christians
Zahlé/Miden Gharbi	Armenian Orthodox, Greek Orthodox, Syriac Orthodox, Greek Catholic, other Christians and confessions
Zahlé/Er-Rassiyé Fauouqa	Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic and Maronite
Zahlé/Hay El-Saydet	Syriac Orthodox
Zahlé/Maallaqa	Maronite, Shia'a, Greek Catholic, Caldanian Orthodox, Syriac Orthodox, Caldanian Catholic, Sunni and other Christians
Zahlé/Maallaqa Shmeli	Maronite, Shia'a, Sunni, Greek Catholic and various confessions
Zahlé/Haouch El-Zara'aneh	Maronite, Sunni, Syriac Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Syriac Catholic, Armenian Catholic and Greek Orthodox
Zahlé/Kark Nouh	Greek Catholic, Maronite and Shia'a
Zahlé/Ouadi El-A'arayish	Maronite and Greek Catholic
Touaite	Greek Catholic
Karme	Shia'a
Ablah	Greek Catholic and various confessions
Barr Elias	Sunni and Greek Catholic
Bouarej	Sunni
Terbol	Sunni, Maronite, Greek Orthodox and Greek Catholic
Taalbaya	Sunni, Maronite, Greek Catholic, Shia'a and Sunni
Taanayel	Greek Catholic, Maronite and Sunni
Jdita	Sunni, Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic and Maronite
Aanjar/Khodr Bek	Armenian Orthodox, Armenian Catholic and Armenian Protestant
Aanjar/Betyias	Armenian Orthodox and Armenian Protestant
Aanjar/Haji Jbeili	Armenian Catholic and Armenian Orthodox
Aanjar/Kaboussie	Armenian Catholic and Armenian Orthodox
Aanjar	Armenian Orthodox, Armenian Catholic and Armenian Protestant
Aanjar/Ouaqf	Armenian Catholic and Armenian Orthodox
Hay El-Fikani	Shia'a
Deir El-Ghaza	Greek Catholic, Maronite and Greek Orthodox
Raait	Greek Orthodox
Riyaq ⁽¹⁾	Greek Catholic, Shia'a, Maronite, Greek Orthodox and Armenian Orthodox
Haouch Hala ⁽¹⁾	Greek Catholic, Armenian Catholic and Shia'a
Saadnayel	Sunni
Chtaura	Various confessions
Aali En-Nahri	Shia'a
Fourzol/Tahta	Greek Catholic
Fourzol/Fauouqa	Greek Catholic and Maronite
Qaa Er-Rim	maronite, Greek Orthodox and Greek Catholic
Qabb Elias/Tahta ⁽²⁾	Sunni
Qabb Elias/Fauouqa ⁽²⁾	Maronite, Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic and Sunni
Ouadi Ed-Delm ⁽²⁾	Sunni, Greek Orthodox and Maronite
Ooussaya	Greek Orthodox and Maronite
Kfarzabad	Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Maronite and Sunni
Majdel Aanjar	Sunni

Zahlé	
Town	Confession
Mrayjat	Greek Catholic, Maronite, Greek Orthodox and Druze
Maksé	Greek Orthodox, Druze and Sunni
Nabi Ayla	Shia'a
Niha	Greek Catholic, Maronite, Shia'a and Greek Orthodox
Massa	Shia'a
Aain Kfar Zabad	Greek Catholic, Shia'a and Greek Orthodox
Hazerta	Shia'a
Jalala	Various confessions
Haouch El-Ghanam	Shia'a
Hay El-Selm	Shia'a
Dalhamiyet	Sunni
Nasriyet	Shia'a
Tell El-Akhdar	Sunni
Employees	Various confessions

(1) Haouch Hala and Riyaq form a single municipality of 15 members.

(2) Qabb Elias Faouqa and Tahta and Ouadi Ed-Delm form a single municipality of 18 members.

Baalbek/Hermel	
Town	Confession
Baalbek/Branieh/Hay el Masshi-yeen	Maronite, Greek Orthodox, Armenian Orthodox
Baalbek/ Berbara /Hay el Masshi-yeen	Greek Catholic
Baalbek/El-Reesh El-Sharqui	Shia'a
Baalbek/El-Reesh El-Gharbi	Shia'a
Baalbek/Ab-basiyeh	Shia'a
Baalbek/Nabi Na'am	Shia'a
Baalbek/Hay El-Shmeiss	Shia'a
Baalbek/Hay El-Solh	Sunni
Baalbek/Ghafra	Sunni
Baalbek/Qala'a	Sunni
Baalbek/Qala'a Gharbi	Sunni
Baalbek/Qebbit Douris	Sunni
Aya'at	Greek Catholic, Maronite, Shia'a, Sunni
Btedaai	Maronite
Bednayel	Sunni and Shia'a
Barqa	Maronite
Britel/Younssieh	Shia'a
Britel/Sharqui	Shia'a
Britel/Shmeiss	Shia'a
Britel/A'ain Bnaye	Shia'a
Britel/Aain Ej-Jaouz	Shia'a

Baalbek/Hermel	
Town	Confession
Britel/Gharbi	Shia'a
Britel/Shmeiss	Shia'a
Britel/Teen	Shia'a
Bechouat	Maronite
Bouday	Shia'a
Aallaq	Shia'a
Temnine Et-Tahta	Shia'a
Temnine El-Faouqa	Sunni and Shia'a
Jaboulé	Sunni and Shia'a
Hadath Baalbek/Shmeli	Greek Catholic, Maronite and Greek Orthodox
Hadath Baalbek/Gharbi	Shia'a
Harabta	Shia'a
Haouch Tall Safiyé	Maronite and Shia'a
Khreibet	Shia'a
Douris/Hay El-Beer	Sunni and Shia'a
Douris/Hay El-Chahadieh	Shia'a
Douris/ Hay El-Saydeh	Greek Catholic and Maronite
Deir El-Ahmar	Maronite
Ras Baalbek	Greek Catholic and Maronite
Serraine Et-Tahta	Greek Catholic and Maronite
Serraine El-Faouqa/Sharqui	Shia'a
Serraine El-Faouqa/Gharbi	Shia'a
Serraine El-Faouqa/Hay El-Jami'i	Shia'a

Baalbek/Hermel	
Town	Confession
Serraine El-Faouqa/Hay El-Hara	Maronite
Saaidé	Shia'a
Chaat/El-Jami'i	Shia'a
Chaat/El-Dahr	Sunni
Chlifa	Greek Catholic, Maronite and Greek Orthodox
Taraiya/Jnoubi	Shia'a
Taraiya/Chmeli	Shia'a
Talia	Greek Orthodox and Maronite
Taibet	Greek Catholic and Maronite
Aarsal/Jnoubi	Sunni
Aarsal/Chmeli	Sunni
Aarsal/Sharqui	Various confessions
A'ain	Sunni, Greek Catholic and Shia'a
A'ainata	Maronite
Fekehe/Jami'i	Sunni
Fekehe/Mar Gerges	Greek Catholic
Jdeidet	Sunni and Greek Catholic
Falawi	Shia'a
Qa'a	Greek Catholic and Maronite
Laboué	Shia'a
Majdaloun	Greek Catholic, maronite, Shia'a and Greek Orthodox
Maqné	Shia'a
Nabi Chit/Jnoubi	Shia'a
Nabi Chit/Chmeli	Shia'a
Nabi Chit/A'areed	Shia'a
Nabi Chit/A'aqbeh	Shia'a
Nabi Chit/Sharqui	Shia'a
Nabi Chit/Teb-shar	Shia'a
Nabi Chit/Gharbi	Shia'a
Nabi Chit/Jami'i	Shia'a
Nabi Osmane	Shia'a
Nahlé	Shia'a
Ouadi Faara	Shia'a
Yammouné	Maronite and Shia'a
Youmine/Jnoubi	Shia'a
Youmine/Sharqui	Shia'a
Youmine/Shmeli	Shia'a
Youmine/Gharbi	Shia'a

Baalbek/Hermel	
Town	Confession
Chmistar/Jnoubi	Shia'a
Chmistar/Sharqui	Shia'a
Chmistar/Shmeli	Shia'a
Chmistar/Gharbi	Shia'a
Beit Chama	Shia'a, Greek Orthodox and Maronite
Beit Mchaik	Shia'a
Jebaa	Shia'a
Rmassa	Shia'a
Kfar Dane	Shia'a
Aaqidié	Shia'a
Kfar Dabach	Shia'a
Mazraat Al-Swaidan	Shia'a
Mazraat Et-Tout	Shia'a
Beit Slaibi	Shia'a
Masnaa El-Zahra	Shia'a
Nabi Rchada	Shia'a
Qald El-Sabeaa	Shia'a
Hizzine	Shia'a
Qsarnaba	Shia'a
Haouch Er-Rafqa	Shia'a
Ram ⁽³⁾	Shia'a
Joubanié ⁽³⁾	Shia'a
Haouch Snaid	Shia'a
Zabboud	Shia'a
Khodr/Sharqui	Shia'a
Khodr/Gharbi	Shia'a
Khodr/Hay Al-Ashghal	Shia'a
Khodr/Hay El-Cha'ab	Shia'a
Haouche Barada	Greek Catholic, Maronite, Shia'a and Greek Orthodox
Qarha	Shia'a
Hlabta	Shia'a
Janta	Shia'a
Taoufiqié	Shia'a
Ham	Shia'a
Haouch En-Nabi	Shia'a
Mazraat Ed-Dlail	Shia'a
Haour Taala	Shia'a
Haouch El-Dehab	Shia'a
Dar El-Ouassaa	Shia'a
Riha	Shia'a
Zrazir	Maronite

Baalbek/Hermel	
Town	Confession
Sefri	Shia'a
Chaaibé and Nabi Sbat	Shia'a
Sbouba	Shia'a
Safra	Maronite
Tfail	Sunni
Aain Bourday	Greek Catholic, Maronite, Shia'a
Qadam	Maronite and Shia'a
Aain Es-Saouda	Shia'a
Kneisset	Shia'a
Mazraat Abou Slaibi	Maronite
Mazraat El-Sayyed	Maronite
Mazraat Beit Matar	Maronite
Maaraboun	Sunni
Moqraq	Shia'a
Nabha Qlailé	Shia'a
Nabha El-Harf-ouch	Shia'a
Nabha Ed-Damdoum	Shia'a
Nabha El-Mehfara	Maronite
Naqra	Shia'a
Ouadi Ez-Zein	Shia'a
Ouadi Es-Safa Ech-Chargi	Shia'a
Ouadi El-Mishimshé	Shia'a
Yahfoufa	Shia'a
Youmine El-Swwanieh	Shia'a
Ansar	Shia'a
Hermel/Hay El-Hara	Shia'a
Hermel/Hay El-Waqf	Shia'a
Hermel/Hay Bditta	Shia'a
Faysan ⁽⁴⁾	Shia'a
Qasr ⁽⁴⁾	Shia'a, Sunni and A'alawite
Jouar El-Hachich	Shia'a
Kouwekh	Shia'a
Bestan	Shia'a
Hariqa	Shia'a
Hmayré	Shia'a
Haouch Es-Said Ali	Maronite, Sunni and Shia'a
Kharayeb	Shia'a
Zighrine	Shia'a

Baalbek/Hermel	
Town	Confession
Zwaitini	Shia'a
Sahlet El-Maeh	Shia'a
Souaisé	Shia'a
Charbine	Maronite and Shia'a
Brisa	Shia'a
Chouaghir Et-Tahta ⁽⁵⁾	Shia'a
Chouaghir El-Faouqa ⁽⁵⁾	Shia'a
Qnafiz	Shia'a
Bouaida/Gharbi	Shia'a
Bouaida/Shme-lieh	Shia'a
Mrah El-Aain	Shia'a
Ouadi El-Aaoss	Sunni and Shia'a
Mazraat Beit El-Touchem	Shia'a
Mazraat Soujod	Shia'a
Ouadi Et-Terek-man	Shia'a
Ouadi El-Ratil	Maronite and Shia'a
Ouadi El-Karam	Shia'a
Ouadi El-Neera	Shia'a
Ouadi Bnayt	Shia'a
Chouaghir	Sunni and Maronite
Mazraat El-Faqih	Shia'a
Ma'assir	Shia'a
Maaysra	Sunni and Shia'a
Employees	Various confessions

(1) Bouday and A'alaq form a single municipality of 18 members
 (2) Fekehe and Jdeidet form a single municipality of 15 members
 (3) Ram and Joubanié form a single municipality of nine members
 (4) Faysan and Qasr form a single municipality of 15 members
 (5) Chouaghir Et-Tahta and Chouaghir El-Faouqa form a single municipality of 12 members

West Bekaa/Rachaiya	
Town	Confession
Joubb Jannine	Sunni, Greek Catholic, Maronite and Greek Orthodox
Bab Mareaa	Greek Catholic and Maronite
Baaloul	Sunni
Haouch El-Harime	Sunni
Khirbet Qanafar	Maronite, Greek Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Druze and Evangelist
Sohmor	Shia'a
Soultan Yaacoub Et-Tahta ⁽¹⁾	Sunni
Soultan Yaacoub El-Faouqa ⁽¹⁾	Sunni
Saghbine	Greek Catholic, Maronite and Greek Orthodox
Souairi	Sunni and Shia'a
Aana	Greek Catholic, Maronite
Aammiaq	Sunni, Greek Orthodox, Maronite and Greek Catholic
Aaytanit	Greek Catholic, Maronite and various confessions
Aain Zebdé	Maronite and Druze
Ghazzé	Sunni
Qaraaoun	Greek Orthodox and Sunni
Kamed El-Laouz	Sunni
Kafraiya	Sunni and Greek Catholic
Lala	Sunni
Marj	Sunni
Manara	Sunni
Mansoura	Sunni, Greek Orthodox, Maronite and Greek Catholic
Yohmor	Shia'a
Khiara	Sunni
Libbaya	Shia'a
Maydoun	Shia'a
Aain Et-Tiné	Shia'a
Qelaya	Shia'a
Machghara	Greek Catholic, Greek Orthodox and Shia'a
Loussa	Shia'a
Tall Znoun	Greek Catholic, Maronite and Sunni
Dakoué	Various confessions

West Bekaa/Rachaiya	
Town	Confession
Raouda	Sunni
Zilaya	Shia'a
Chebrqiyet	Greek Orthodox
Rachaiya/Faouqa	Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic and Syriac Catholic
Rachaiya/Kaouassba	Druze
Rachaiya/Hay El-Midane	Greek Orthodox and Druze
Bakka	Sunni
Bekfaya	Druze
Beit Lahia	Greek Orthodox and Maronite
Biret Rachaiya	Sunni
Tannoura	Druze
Helouet	Druze
Haouch	Maronite and Druze
Khirbet Rouha	Sunni
Deir El-Aachayer	Druze
Rafid	Sunni
Dahr El-Ahmar	Druze
Aaqabet	Druze
Aayta El-Foukhar	Greek Orthodox and Sunni
Aayha	Greek Orthodox and Druze
Aain Harcha	Greek Orthodox and Druze
Aain Arab	Greek Orthodox and Sunni
Aain Aata	Greek Orthodox and Druze
Kfar Denis	Sunni
Kfar Qouq	Greek Orthodox and Druze
Kfar Michki	Sunni, Greek Orthodox and Greek Catholic
Kaoukaba	Druze
Majdel Balhis	Greek Orthodox and Sunni
Mhaiydsé	Greek Orthodox, Sunni and Druze
Mdoukha	Sunni
Yanta	Druze
Employees	Various confessions

(1) Soultan Yaacoub Et-Tahta and Soultan Yaacoub El-Faouqa form a single municipality of 12 members

CRIMINAL LIABILITY

In some cases, a person commits a crime and is arrested but not prosecuted due to factors that affect his/her liability. These factors are either linked to the act itself, justifying it -called "grounds for justification"- or are linked to the perpetrator's character and affects liability due to the absence of the ability to distinguish right or wrong. Such factors are called "grounds for exemption from punishment".

The law can allow acquittal despite the presence of all the prerequisites of crime and criminal liability, these reasons are called "grounds for justification".

Grounds for justification

Special cases that accompany a liable person before the law due to the presence of elements of crime. They obstruct criminal liability. They are linked to the action not to the perpetrator. The Penal Code lists five grounds for justification:

1- Practicing a right: Article 183 of the Lebanese Penal Code states, "an action committed as an exercise of a right, without committing excesses, will not be considered a crime." Certain conditions must be met for this article to take effect: the 'right' must be listed in the laws or in decrees; the 'right' must be exercised without transgression (i.e. without abuse of the right); that the 'right' must be exercised with good intentions.

2- Legitimate defense: Article 184 of the Penal Code states, "an action is considered an exercise of right when it becomes necessary to protect against an unjust and unprovoked act against oneself or one's property or against someone else or their property..." Citizens have the right to self-defense. The aggressor can be killed if his or her death was necessary to save a life.

Self-defense has conditions:

- ⦿ If the victim has prior knowledge of the attack, the victim cannot ambush and shoot the aggressor and claim it as self-defense.
- ⦿ In case of an attack against a person or property, i.e. an attack on the life and safety of a person or on one's honor or liberty, If these two conditions were met, the person in danger of being attacked has the right to self-defense.
- ⦿ Self-defense should be proportionate to the danger.

3- Abiding by the law or following official orders:

- ⦿ Article 185 of the Penal Code states, "an action is not considered a crime if it is committed based on a legal text or following a legitimate order from the authority..."

- ⦿ The examining magistrate who detains the perpetrator of a crime cannot be legally pursued for the crime of confinement. A judge who issues a death penalty sentence cannot be accused of murder or provocation for murder.

- ⦿ A subordinate who executes a legitimate order from his superior cannot be accused of committing a crime unless the order was issued by a non-specialized authority or was issued in violation of the law.

4- Victim's consent

Crime is most often committed against the will of the victim. But in some cases, the victim consents to the crime in order to bear the consequences of the action. Article 187 of the Penal Code states, "an action, punishable by law, for infringing upon the liberties of others is not considered a crime if it is committed with [the victim's] consent prior or during its occurrence." If a person destroys someone's car with the consent of the owner, the action is not considered a crime because the owner agreed to it. The Penal Code does not consider this a crime because it does not harm society as a whole.

In some cases, however, a victim's consent is not cause for justification, such as crimes against state security and euthanasia.

5- Rights guaranteed by the law

Article 186 of the Penal Code states, "an action permitted by the law is not considered a crime. The law permits:

- ⦿ disciplinary hitting of the children by their parents and teachers in a manner accepted by social norms."
- ⦿ All surgeries and medical treatments that are cosmetic in nature, on the condition they are carried out with the consent of the patient or the consent of his/her legal guardians or in urgent cases.
- ⦿ violence during sports games if it respects the rules of the game."

Punishment inhibitors

These differ from reasons for justification. Punishment inhibitors affect the personality of the perpetrator and paralyze criminal liability. These grounds could be:

1- Material mistake: It means that the perpetrator was unaware of the amount of material damage he/she causes, which eliminates one of the moral elements of the crime and therefore proves the absence of crime. The action is intentionally committed, for example, when a hunter shoots another person by mistake while aiming at his prey. In this case the person is exempt from punishment. The mistake itself is unintentional; a hunter can shoot at a lion only to discover that he killed a person disguised as a lion.

2- Legal mistake: The legal text bears responsibility for this mistake. Article 223 of the Penal Code states, “No one can file an objection under the pretext of ignorance of the legislation or by misinterpreting it.”

It is considered grounds for exemption from punishment if:

- ⦿ Ignorance of civic or administrative legislation
- ⦿ Ignorance of a new legislation if the crime is committed during the three days following its promulgation
- ⦿ A foreigner who has been in Lebanon for a maximum of three days who is ignorant of a crime punishable by Lebanese laws but is not illegal under the laws of his country or his country of residence.

Therefore, a person who commits a crime that meets the conditions stipulated by Article 223 will be exempted from punishment.

3- Force majeure Two cases fall into this category: Physical or moral duress: physical duress is the form that one cannot withstand such as those resulting from natural disasters, human or animal actions. For example, if a person who is unauthorized to enter a country but was washed by the waves to shore cannot be punished because he was not responsible for the act. Moral duress is when a person coerces another into committing a certain criminal act under the pressure of threats. For example, a person who commits theft under compulsion is exempt from punishment.

4- Mental incompetence: A person who was not sane or willing at the moment of the crime is not liable. A person is exempt from punishment if he or she is mentally disabled, drunk, under the influence of drugs or is a minor.

In comparison, the United Arab Emirates Penal Code harshens the punishment of perpetrators committing a crime under the influence of alcohol. Article 336 of the UAE Penal Code states, “any person who assaults the safety of another in any means mistakenly causing the death of the victim will be sentenced to a maximum ten years in prison. If one of the elements listed in the second paragraph of Article 332, the circumstance is considered extreme, it is also considered extreme if the perpetrator committed the crime while under the influence of alcohol or a drug.”

Grounds for exemption from punishment

They are reasons to exempt from punishment despite the presence of all the conditions of criminal liability. The law specified these grounds.

The statement “is exempt from punishment” is included in legal texts concerned with grounds for exemption rather than “no crime committed” or “no punishment” mentioned in the sections on grounds for justification and grounds for non-punishment.

Legislation has a provision for exempting criminals in some cases in order to encourage them to help arrest other criminals. Article 272 of the Lebanese Penal Code states, “anyone who conspires against state security but confesses before execution will be exempt from punishment. The sentence is mitigated if the perpetrator confesses after committing the act or started to.

Criminals can benefit from mitigated sentences if they inform the authorities of a conspiracy or another felony targeting state security before it has been executed. The article does not cover instigators.”

Article 353 states, “a briber or an intruder is exempt from these penalties if he informs the authorities in charge or confesses before the case has been referred to court.”

Article 310 states, “... he is exempt from punishment anyone who did not occupy a post or a service in a gang or did not stop in places of sedition and surrendered his weapon without resistance and before the issuing of any ruling.”

Other grounds for exemption are mentioned in articles 316, 355, 347, 409, 452 and 654 of the Penal Code. The Penal Code exempts perpetrators from punishment but does not negate the fact that what was committed was a crime by law, effectively convicting criminals without reprimanding them. 🌐

SYNDICATE OF PROFESSIONAL ARTISTS

The Syndicate of Professional Artists in Lebanon was established in 1993 by a Decree 1/200 issued by the minister of labor. The syndicate aims, among other things, to protect and defend the interests of the arts, insure its progress and improve performance. The syndicate includes actors, musicians, television and radio producers and anchors, theater, movie and television directors, playwrights, poets, song writers, dancers and all those involved in lighting, wardrobe and set design in addition to all artists working in the theater, movie, radio and television industries.

Membership

Prospective members must be Lebanese, have full civil rights and be 18-years of age or older (except for those with an outstanding talent), must not be convicted of a felony, have a diploma in the arts from a higher learning institute or years of experience and be recommended by two members of the syndicate. Professional artists are exempt from having a diploma in exchange for reference letters and certificates pertaining to their experience. For example, an actor should have on his or her resume a major role in seven episodes of a television program while a director must have seven television shows to his or her name.

The syndicate then forms a special committee to discuss membership applicants. A one-time membership fee is set at LBP 100,000 in addition to LBP 60,000 as an annual subscription fee.

In 1999, the syndicate created the co-op fund to cover healthcare expenses for members. Members are to pay an annual fee, which varies depending on their age. Artists who are between 18 and 35 years old pay USD 440, those between 36-45 pay USD 473 and those above 81 pay USD 2,632 a year. The fund covers all hospital expenses, 85% of lab tests and 80% of medications.

Structure

The syndicate consists of a general assembly, a board, president, a follow-up body and other committees.



Syndicate of professional artists board members

General assembly

The general assembly includes all members who have paid their fees. It meets at least once a year at the request of the board and the session is presided by the syndicate head. The assembly elects board members, amends by-laws, reviews and approves the budget and sets membership and subscription fees. As of February 2008, 561 artists were members of the assembly.

Syndicate board

The 12-member board manages the affairs of the syndicate and is elected for four year terms. After two years, six members leave the board and their replacements are elected. Members whose term in office has expired are allowed to run for another term. The board drafts the budget, the final account and the annual report. It also appoints, dismisses and sets the salary scale for employees. Current board members include: president Mohammed Ibrahim, vice president Henry Zogeib, secretary Alvera Younis, treasurer Samira Baroudi and members Jihad al-Atrash, Chadia Doughan, Albert Kilo, Elias Rahbani, Alico Daoud, Fadi Saad, Nicholas Osta and Sobhi Tewfik.

President

The president is the official representative of the syndicate and the board's head. He calls for meetings and general assembly sessions. The president is elected by the board for two years. Since its creation, the syndicate has been headed by five consecutive presidents, some of whom have stayed in office for four years. Table 1 shows the names and terms in office of each president.

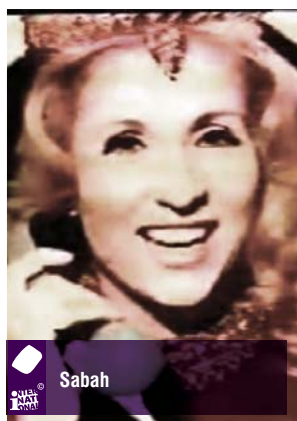
Names and terms in office of each syndicate president Table 1	
Name	Term in office
Antoine Multaqa	1993-1995
Ihsan Sadiq	1995-1997
	1997-1999
	2003-2005
	2005-2007
Tewfik Basha	1999-2001
Albert Kilo	2001-2003
Mohammed Ibrahim	2007-to date



Ragheb Alemeh



Wa'el Kfoury



Sabah



Lilian Nimri

The follow-up body and other committees

The board forms a follow-up body consisting of five prominent members to follow up on the syndicate's affairs and with official administrations. It then presents its recommendations to the board.

Dismissal of members

The board can dismiss any member for the violation syndicate's by-laws, the loss of one of the preconditions for membership, the violation of syndicate rules or for committing a professional breach of ethics harming the reputation of the employer, the profession or causing moral or financial damages.

In 2006, the syndicate dismissed singer Diana Haddad for failing to honor a contract for a concert in Kuwait.

Unlike other syndicates, the Syndicate of Professional Artists cannot stop dismissed artists from continuing their career due to its non-obligatory nature. 🌐

Private schools in Lebanon

LOUISE WEGMANN (CLW)

Objective

College Louise Wegmann (CLW) says its goal to be a gathering place for students from all ethnic and spiritual families in Lebanon. Accordingly, teaching and awareness is based on the essential values of humanity and a balanced social life.

School Foundation

The school was founded in 1965 by a group of students from the Protestant College, of similar teaching levels but of mixed faiths, at a time where mixed students were rare. They founded an institution named after their principal, Mrs. Louise Wegmann. The founders are today within the board of trustees, which is also composed of Alumni.

College Louise Wegmann is a private Lebanese school established under decree number 3048 dated 4/10/1965. It is also listed under the French schools abroad dated 11/7/1983, published in the official gazette # 190 dated 18/8/1983.

The founders are:

Mrs. Helene Badaro, Mrs. Nabila Drooby, Mrs. Leila Khalaf, Mrs. Nadia Klat, Mrs. Nada Oueini, Mrs. Aline Parseghian and Miss Seta Seferian.

Campuses

The school started in a small building in Hazmieh, which then they moved to Bchamoun where new buildings were built until 1973. After the beginning of the war in 1975, students near Bchamoun remained there, and they opened new campuses in Beirut and Jouret el Balout for students who lived further away.

After 1990, the school decided to gather students together. Since the number of students was too high, they decided to gather students from the 7th grade onwards. They rented the current building in Beirut from the French Embassy for students from the 7th till 12th grade and from kindergarten until 6th grade in Bchamoun and Jouret el Balout.

School Organization

The school is managed by a board of trustees who takes care of the establishment and the school's financial and educational needs.

The director is responsible for every branch of the school, including the orientation, conception, and the implementation of the educative and cultural programs.

The parents' committee, working in collaboration with the school, gives suggestions, studies and tries to find appropriate solutions to the school's needs and participates in organizing social, sports, and cultural activities.

Curriculum and Education

CLW teaches three languages (Arabic, English, and French) at all levels. The school follows either the Lebanese baccalaureate or the French baccalaureate. It is also accredited by the French government as an Ecole Homologuée, meaning as an institution that offers an accredited French program. CLW follows the class system rather than credit system.

CLW includes 3 laboratories in every branch of the school, sports fields, and libraries.

Faculty and students

CLW currently has 1,669 students across all levels and campuses and 372 faculty and staff members.

The following table shows the numbers of students and faculty from 2004 until 2009.

Year	Faculty and staff	Students
2004-2005	361	1,843
2005-2006	362	1,864
2006-2007	371	1,727
2007-2008	372	1,692
2008-2009	372	1,669

The students come from different nationalities, although they are mainly Lebanese, followed by French students. 30-40% of the students have double nationalities.



Taking a break



The following table describes the student nationality distribution.

Nationality	Total number of students
German	4
American	200
Austrian	3
Australian	7
Belgian	18
Brazilian	13
British	41
Canadian	165
Danish	9
Egyptian	2
Spanish	5
French	215
Greek	40
Indian	1
Italian	15
Jordanian	3
Lebanese	1067
Pakistani	2
Palestinian	2
Romanian	3
Russian	1
Swedish	1
Saudi	3
Swiss	6
Syrian	4
Ukrainian	1

The tuition fees in the school vary from one level to another. This year, it ranged from LBP 6,560,000 to LBP 8,780,000 per year, including tuition, insurance,

medical services, and stationary supplies.

The school also offers food for students according to a fixed formula per year, in addition to optional transportation.

There are around 360 students that get financial aid and another 150 students get facilities in the payment.

Students talk

A number of students at Louise Wegmann shared their opinions about their school:

- CLW is a school that is dear to my heart. All along my educational path I was well supported by the faculty and staff which is something that, I think, is very important for a student's wellbeing. Thanks to this school, I had some great times, because they knew how to transform my energy and enthusiasm positively to help me succeed. Thanks to all those who put an effort in this school, I was able to grow up and mature in a calm and enriching environment. Thanks to it, I'm almost completely prepared to face university life. I'm very grateful to the school, if only for this.
- It's been more than 14 years that my friends and I have been brought up in the CLW, and I find it impossible to imagine our childhood anywhere other than here. The personnel has warmly and encouragingly greeted us every single day of the numerous years that we've spent here. Actually, we've been overjoyed to spend over eight hours a day in class here because courses are taught in a simple and amusing manner. To all young parents, I strongly advise you to think about CLW, because it's an establishment that not only educates students but also builds a personality for him in order to procure for him a healthy, balanced childhood.
- I've been at "my" school, Louise Wegmann, for 14 years now. Ever since the first years, it has taught us to slowly leave the protective cocoon that we formed around ourselves to protect ourselves from the scary real world. With time, we discovered different cultures, writers and thinkers that have allowed us to see the world differently and individually, whether from a literary, philosophical perspective or a mathematical, biological one. We've slowly learned to live in this other world, the world of adults, of responsibility, laws and duty. Fear then ceded its place to impatience and the desire to emancipate ourselves from the protection of others, and the desire to go discover and learn by ourselves. The school formed these free, autonomous minds that want to go find their place in a world that they're ready to face, wholly thanks to it. 🌱

Universities in Lebanon

ALBA UNIVERSITY: A VERSATILE APPROACH TO THE ARTS

Establishment

The Lebanese Academy of Fine Arts (ALBA) was established in 1936 as the first Lebanese institute for higher learning. It was approved by the state in 1944 and later incorporated into the University of Balamand which was established in 1988. The main campus is located in the Saloumi region. The university offers the following majors:

- ⊙ Architecture
- ⊙ Fine Arts and Applied Arts
- ⊙ Decorative Arts (including interior architecture and design, graphic design and advertising)
- ⊙ Cinema and Audiovisual Production
- ⊙ Urban Planning



A new educational system

In 2004, the university started giving all its courses under the European credit system, also known as the License-Master-Doctorate system (LMD). The new system smoothes transfers between Lebanon and universities abroad.

University objectives: diversity, innovation, personal support and distinction

ALBA's goal is to provide a multi-faceted approach to the arts to enable students to excel in all the necessary material that motivates innovation. Many Alba alumni have become pioneers of their respective fields and have represented Lebanon in many international events. Some of their work has been recognized and awarded. Courses are given by professionals and experts from Lebanon and abroad. ALBA focuses on executing both individual and

group projects by moving from theory to practice. The greater objective of arts training in ALBA is to gain more experience and distinction which mainly allows students to fully express their talents and explore new horizons and work opportunities in Lebanon and abroad.

Partnerships: an enriching international reserve

For 20 years, ALBA enjoyed a strategic partnership with similar institutes abroad. These many agreements helped establish relations with prestigious national art academies in France and elsewhere (Russia and Poland among others). The partnerships paved the way for a better level of arts education and helped achieve the following:

- ⊙ Exchange of students and professors
- ⊙ Workshops in Lebanon and abroad
- ⊙ Joint art projects
- ⊙ Visiting lecturers to Lebanon
- ⊙ Research seminars

Every year ALBA communicates with new international arts schools and universities in order to expand its network of partners. The education exchange programs exposes students to different artistic paths and enriches their journey. Students often take part in international events such as competitions, festivals, workshops and research.

ALBA's five faculties have signed agreements with the following institutes:

Faculty of Visual Arts and Applied Arts is partner with:

- ⊙ Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Art et des Métiers d'Art (ENSAAMA)
- ⊙ Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts (ENSBA)-Paris
- ⊙ L'École Nationale Supérieure d'Arts Paris - Cergy (ENSAP-C)
- ⊙ Ecole Nationale Supérieure de la Photographie (E.N.S.P.), Arles
- ⊙ Académie des Beaux-Arts de Varsovie, Pologne
- ⊙ Ecole Lacambre, Bruxelles

Faculty of Architecture:

- ⊙ Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture de Paris Belleville (E.A.P.B.)
- ⊙ Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture de Marseille- (E.N.S.A./Marseille)
- ⊙ Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture de Paris Val de Seine

School of Cinema and Audiovisual Production

- ⊙ Fondation Européenne pour les Métiers de l'Image et du Son (F.E.M.I.S.), Paris
- ⊙ Institut National de l'Audiovisuel (I.N.A.), Paris
- ⊙ Ecole Nationale Supérieure Louis Lumière, Paris

Faculty of Decorative Arts :

- ⊙ Interior Architecture and Design is partner with :
- ⊙ Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts Appliqués et des métiers d'Art (E.N.S.A.A.M.A.), Paris
- ⊙ Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts Decoratifs (ENSAD)

Graphic Design and Advertising

- ⊙ ENSAD
- ⊙ Academy of Fine Arts, Warsaw-Poland
- ⊙ The Eastern Superior School for Arts and Graphics

ALBA's Urban Planning Academy

- ⊙ L'Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture Paris-Val de Seine
- ⊙ Université François Rabelais de Tours
- ⊙ Université Michel de Montani – Bordeaux 3
- ⊙ Faculty of Planning-University of Montreal

Features

- ⊙ According to Isabelle Edde, head of public relations, ALBA distinguishes itself by being an academy, not a university, adding a homely atmosphere and allowing professors to follow up on their students regularly.
- ⊙ A rich cultural life: ALBA organizes many events for the public in collaboration with foreign cultural centers, including conferences, film festivals, exhibitions and a cinema club. It also plays an active role in publishing and research, including the publication of works by students or faculty members.
- ⊙ ALBA publishes information on architecture, urbanization, drawing, photography, graphic design and animation.
- ⊙ Laboratories include photography labs, audiovisual labs, and drawing and mosaic labs.
- ⊙ Accredited degrees: Architecture diploma which is accredited by the Syndicate of Architects in France; graduate and post graduate degrees in fine arts and applied arts that are recognized by schools of arts in France (based on a decree from the French Minister of Education); other diplomas are also accredited by France.



ALBA photo laboratory

ALBA in numbers

- ⊙ ALBA offers some 30 degrees, covering a wide range of majors issued by the Lebanese Minister of Education and Higher Learning
- ⊙ It has 200 faculty members
- ⊙ 800 enrolled students
- ⊙ Average annual tuition fee is LBP 8,000,000 equivalent to LBP 185,000 per credit for some courses in architecture.
- ⊙ When asked about their opinion, all students agreed that ALBA offers an extremely affordable tuition in return for an excellent level of education compared to other universities.

FOREIGN AND ARAB COMPANIES IN 2009

Twenty-two foreign and Arab companies were registered in Lebanon in the second half of 2009 bringing the number of companies to 43 compared to 32 registered businesses in 2008 and 44 in 2007.

Table 1 lists the companies that were registered in Lebanon (Please refer to August issue 2009 issue # 85 for the list of companies registered in the first half of 2009).

Foreign and Arab companies registered between July-December 2009

Table 1

Company	Nationality	Number and date of registration	Capital	Sector	Representative in Lebanon
Majmoua'at al-Maouqua'a Lil Khadamat wa Hafr al-Abar	Jordanian	# 2508 dated June 30, 2009	750,000 Jordanian dinars	Well drilling for all purposes and oil well drilling outside Jordan	Rami Wahdan Ayoub A'aweiss
Info systems ITL	American	# 2509 dated July 2, 2009	200 shares	Identify solutions for the computers network (representative office in Lebanon)	Ibrahim Farah
Kuwait National Airways	Kuwaiti	#2510 dated July 9, 2009	50 million Kuwaiti dinars	Air transport and services	Hana' Salim el-Baba
KUTAY Ltd.	Turkish	#2511 dated July 16, 2009	120,000 Turkish Liras	Contracting and construction works such as schools and hospitals	Ersim Akbas
Hemopharm	Serbian	#2512 dated August 13, 2009	10.2 billion Serbian dinars	Produce pharmaceutical products (representative office in Lebanon)	Danijela Kupresanin
Tetra Tech EC	American	#2513 dated August 19, 2009	USD 1000	Participate in any legal work that a founding company executes in compliance with corporate law of the state of Delaware	Randal Roberts
Emirates Private Investment and development	Emirati	#2514 dated August 18, 2009	5.6 million dirhams	Investment in commercial, industrial, real estate, tourism and agricultural projects	Abdel Rahman Mohammad al-Balouki
Kurdistan News Agency Ltd.	Iraqi	#2515 dated September 4, 2009	One million Iraqi dinars	Contribute to media services	Malak Najm
Kenexa Midle East	Emirati	#2516 dated September 15, 2009	50,000 dirhams	Human resources training programs	Vernon Bryce
Canada 2000 Immigration and Business service inc.	Canadian	# 2517 dated September 28, 2009	One Canadian dollar	Provide immigration and commercial services (representative office in Lebanon)	Fida Youssef Boustani
PMI al-Mutahida li Idarat al-Mashari'	Kuwaiti	# 2518 dated October 6, 2009	50,000 Kuwaiti dinars	Project management	Ramzi Hanna Rizqallah
Al-Phineeq Liltijara	Jordanian	# 2520 dated November 16, 2009	100,000 Jordanian dinars	Business	Adnan Faisal Abdel Latif al-Sheikh Amine
Labatec Pharma	Swiss	#2521 dated November 11, 2009	2.5 million Swiss francs	Chemical and pharmaceutical products (representative office in Lebanon)	Youssef Abed Ali
Byblos Building Maintenance and Cleaning Services	Emirati	#2522 dated November 24, 2009	150,000 UAE dirhams	Building maintenance and house cleaning	Samer Boutros al-Khoury
Rosy Blue (Eurasia)	Emirati	#2523 dated November 25, 2009	One million UAE dirhams	Diamonds, gemstones, gold and silver	Nader Nazem Nasreddine
Modern Building Contracting	Emirati	#2524 dated December 1, 2009	200,000 UAE dirhams	Contracting and construction	Abdel Nasser al-Qaderi
Haemonetics	Swiss	#2525 dated December 4, 2009	100,000 Swiss francs	Marketting medical products (representative office in Lebanon)	Shady Hawwa
Conin	Syrian	#2526 dated December 3, 2009	3 million Syrian liras	Architecture and contracting consultations in addition to residence sales	Issa Khairallah Nimr Taha
Trane BVBA	Belgian	#2527 dated December 14, 2009	200.9 million euros	Primary materials and products to manufacture plumbing tools	Sa'id Qassouf
GlasTrosch	Swiss	#2529 dated December 16, 2009	100,000 Swiss francs	Manufacture and installation of glass and glass trading (representative office in Lebanon)	Joseph Sayegh

Note: Two companies numbered 2519 and 2528 were registered but no further information was available.



CHRONIC COUGH

It is imperative to rule out serious diseases & make specific diagnoses in all cases of chronic cough

Dr. Hanna Saadah

Cough means that something is irritating the lung, airways, voice box, esophagus, or back of the throat. When cough is sudden in onset and of short duration, it is usually caused by a recent illness such as the common cold, pneumonia, bronchitis, or laryngitis, and the diagnosis is usually obvious. However, when the cough is of prolonged duration, the diagnoses may not be as obvious but the causes may be a lot more serious. Hence, it is imperative to rule out serious diseases and to make specific diagnoses in all cases of chronic cough.

Chronic cough means that someone has been coughing for several weeks without showing signs of improvement, which is in contrast to the self-limited course of most new-onset cough disorders mentioned above. The causes of chronic cough may be divided into several broad clinical categories:

Smoking is by far the commonest cause of chronic cough. Chronic inhalation of tobacco smoke irritates the airways, causing the mucus glands to enlarge, become hyperactive, and produce large amounts of sputum. This leads to the familiar moist cough of smokers with daily sputum expectoration, a condition medically known as chronic bronchitis. Nonsmokers who are exposed to second-hand smoke may also develop a similar condition. By definition, anyone who expectorates sputum on most days of the week may be given the diagnosis of chronic bronchitis.

Moreover, besides chronic bronchitis, primary or secondary smoke inhalation may also cause airway spasm, a condition similar to asthma, which can also cause chronic cough but with little or no sputum expectoration. Although important, chest x-rays are not usually useful except in ruling out other serious causes of chronic cough such as lung cancer or tuberculosis. Chronic sinusitis with chronic sinus drainage, by irritating the back of the throat or by provoking micro aspirations, can cause a chronic dry cough that will not abate until the sinusitis is treated. The diagnosis is difficult because sinus x-rays may fail to detect the condition. A useful clinical clue is to ask the patient to point to the site where the cough is coming from. If the patient points to the neck instead of the chest and if chronic sinusitis is clinically suspect, it may be wise to prescribe a short course of antibiotics as a diagnostic & therapeutic trial.

Allergies, common in spring and fall, may cause cough by irritating the nose, sinuses, and airways. In such cases, history is crucial because it provides the seasonal clue. Any seasonal cough is an allergy suspect and allergy treatments in the form of antihistamines or cortisone usually provide relief. Reversible airway spasm is almost always present in seasonal cough giving

the condition its common name of seasonal asthma.

Acid reflux—the condition where stomach acid creeps up the esophagus at night when we are lying flat—may cause cough by two mechanisms. Cough may be due to nocturnal micro aspirations or to esophageal irritation, both of which provoke daily cough, especially at night or upon rising in the morning. Treating reflux aggressively by elevating the head of the bed, avoiding late eating and drinking, abstaining from smoking and caffeine, and suppressing stomach acid with medicines usually provides relief within a week or two. A therapeutic trial confirms the diagnosis better than any other available test. Certain blood pressure medications are cough provokers such as beta blockers (eg. Inderal) and ACE inhibitors (eg. Lisinopril). The cough may come soon after they are started or several months or even years later. When it comes long after such treatments are begun, it may be difficult to diagnose unless the doctor keeps a high index of suspicion. There is no test to diagnose medicinal cough except stopping the medicine, which causes the cough to resolve within a few weeks.

Chronic sub-clinical asthma is commonly associated with chronic cough and may not be obvious because of the lack of shortness of breath and wheezing. In fact, cough may be the only symptom of sub-clinical asthma. In such cases, testing lung function with a breathing machine shows reversible airway obstruction, which when treated with inhalers causes the cough to resolve.

Adult whooping cough is common and may cause cough spells that are so prolonged and severe that they end in vomiting. The cough may persist for many months and responds poorly to usual treatments. The diagnosis is made by blood tests and patience is the best approach.

Finally, the less common causes of chronic cough should be suspected when the more common causes have been ruled out. Investigations, which include x-rays, are indicated, especially when coughs get worse in spite of treatments. No cough should be left undiagnosed. ●●



SCIENCE IN THE MEDIA

Antoine Boutros

Although science became a source for economic technology just a century and a half ago, it has proven to be a revolutionary force with vast capabilities. It has become the main cursor for civilization and has pervaded almost all aspects of life with its implementations and tools through which human beings are able to challenge nature – sometimes imprudently – and to delve into the secrets of life as both players and drivers.

A modern phenomenon in the media worth noting is the unprecedented dissemination of scientific and medical news, no longer a rare occurrence. They have become an almost daily news item that sometimes occupies lead headlines and front pages.

Experts trying to determine the extent of shift in media coverage by measuring the amount of space scientific news occupies, have noticed an increase in the size, placement and quality of science and technology stories. Unfortunately, great scientific accomplishments have turned into a double-edged sword, since stories about science are no longer confined laboratories, research centers and remote areas. They are no longer limited to the stars, galaxies, light years, space journey and desert atomic tests. . Instead, they have reached the extent of simulating the birth of the universe within the walls of laboratories, capturing the sounds of the Big Bang widespread talk of genealogy and what it reveals about the secrets of life, stem cells experiments and hope of cures for the incurable, in addition to follow ups on environmental challenges, pollution, emissions and global warming.

The developments covered by the media also include cloning and other strange and worrying life alterations. As science and medicine become more diverse, new diseases are surfacing as well. We barely emerge from one disaster before the next one hits with force, starting with immune deficiency, followed by foot-and-mouth disease and finally the H1N1 virus; all of which are the result of our manipulation of the laws of nature. It is a representation of the impact of news reports of scientific developments on human beings and the large spaces they occupy in their minds through media outlets. As such, it is important for scientific media coverage to be aware of its impacts and to be responsible.

The wave of scientific media caught up with the Arab world as well, due to the increasing role of science and medical implementations in our lives, but without being a sign of progress in the field of sciences in our societies. In spite of that, this is considered a significant development worth studying because the media is a requirements for serious awareness and interest in an era when the international language of science has become essential, because science and technology are the new currency of the 21st century, and because the advancement of nations is driven by their scientific and technological strengths.

The ‘thrill factor’ generally determines scientific topics, both in the Arab and Western worlds. A few years ago, some scientists caused outrage over a picture of a giant mass that resembles the face of an ape and that was found among tens of thousands of pictures broadcast by a space probe on the planet Mars. Architecture images resembling the pyramids were also suspected next to the mass. Despite the storm of

controversy provoked by tabloids, most experts cast doubt on the authenticity of these images, since the presence or absence of life on Mars or other planets does not necessarily require the existence of pyramids and ape -like figures. After much study and analysis, experts remarked that the same location on Mars (known as ‘Caledonia’) showed a variation of shadows, indicating that the photo-shoot taken during different times of the day from several angles yield different images. However, some still insist that the pictures are authentic and that the authorities were trying to bury the story.

On many occasions, coverage of scientific news are politically and, commercially driven and even with personal and private considerations making an investigation into the report a difficult task. The American press introduced the Pulitzer Prize for journalists to reward risk-taking and courage in uncovering such scandals. Recently, a new study emerged refuting centuries-old logic that warned of the dangers of consuming eggs, claiming doing so increases the levels of LDL, the so-called ‘bad’ cholesterol. The new report, however, argues that consuming eggs is healthy and, contrary to popular belief, that doing so increases the levels of HDL, the so called ‘good’ cholesterol in the blood stream. It accused companies that make cereals of standing behind the rumor that eggs were unhealthy. However, it later turned out that the new study itself was funded by poultry companies that were harmed by those reports.

Against this backdrop, specialized scientific magazines such as “Nature” and “Lancet” have decided not to publish research studies funded by companies and industries. A few years ago, the British Observer newspaper published a report on the British “Welcom” pharmaceutical company, saying decisions taken in its closed doors are no less serious than decisions taken by governments when they opt for war or peace.

Editors of scientific affairs in media must turn science into a topic of specialization and interest. They must possess general knowledge of the methods and requirements of scientific research, develop a scientific writing style, and produce accurate and responsible work. Finally, scientific editors must have a good sense of judgment in order to evaluate the sensitivity, validity and, first and foremost, the credibility of the topic at hand. The style of writing must also be clear and unambiguous; writers should simplify scientific jargon when reporting facts.

Last but not least, moderation must be adopted in reporting scientific news in a manner that does not openly challenge religious beliefs and alienates readers. The aim of science reporting must be gaining more adherents to the realm of science. New scientific news must be dealt with carefully for they could very well be the seeds of the future. ♦♦



PHOENICIA IN THE HELLENISTIC ERA

Dr. Hassan Salameh Sarkis

Phoenician cities enjoyed a wide network of ties with the Greek city-states even before Alexander the Great waged his battles against the Persian Empire and subsequently entered Phoenician cities, either peacefully or violently. After the Median Wars ended, leaving their traces on the 5th century, the Persian army, in the 4th century, mobilized thousands of Greek mercenaries in Phoenicia in preparation for later attacks on Egypt. The mercenaries, in addition to merchants, brought with them many Greek customs.

Furthermore, coexistence between Greeks and Phoenicians in Cyprus contributed to strengthening commercial and cultural ties between Cyprus and the Levant. As a result, Greek religious practices, sports and arts became widespread in Phoenician cities, which helps to explain their swift integration into the Greek civilization that prevailed in the region during the reign of Alexander's successors.

The Greeks taught the Phoenicians the benefits of monetary use in trade, one of the most significant consequences of the Greek presence at the time. Currency was invented in the 7th century BC by the Lydians, one of the peoples of Asia Minor who were also influenced by the Greek culture. One of their most prominent and richest kings was Croesus who ruled in the 6th century BC. Towards the end of the 5th century BC or the beginning of the 4th century BC, the cities of Byblos, Tyre, Sidon, Arwad, Tripolis and Dora (Khirbet el-Borj at the South of Mount Carmel) started to monetize their silver currencies which were decorated with Persian, Greek or local symbols.

It is worth noting that the Greek influence started to assert itself in the Phoenicians' daily life and habits. Greek language was soon adopted in coastal cities, gradually replacing the Phoenician until the latter's complete disappearance from inscriptions by the 2nd century. It no longer was a written language, and appeared only as legend on coins. In remote areas, Aramaic, in its different dialects, remained the colloquial language among residents.

After Alexander's death in 323 BC, his generals partitioned his great empire amongst them. Phoenicia – once the cause for clashes between Egypt and other continental empires that came from Mesopotamia – became once again at the heart of the conflict between Egypt's Ptolemies and Syria's and Mesopotamia's Seleucids. Phoenician Cities were controlled by one side or the other, depending on circumstances and often benefited from the situation, preserving part of their rights by managing their own affairs and minting their own currencies.

During the 3rd century BC, some Arab tribes, such as the Nabataeans and the Ituraeans, started to infiltrate and settle in Syria. By the end of the 2nd century BC and the beginning of the 1st century BC, due to chaos that reigned over the region after disagreements among the Seleucid dynasty, the Ituraeans managed to partition areas of influence, especially

in the northern Beqaa where they created the city of Chalcis and turned it into their capital. The city enjoyed a strategic location controlling mountain trails connecting the Beqaa to Syria and the Jordan Valley to southern Phoenicia. Perhaps the search for Chalcis should be carried out among the undulations of Lebanon's eastern mountain range, east of Baalbek where Ituraeans headed the priesthood. They also controlled most of the roads and passageways that linked the Bekaa with the Mediterranean coast, via Lebanon's western mountain range. They created the principality of 'Arqa which controlled most of northern Lebanon and constructed forts and fortified caves in regions that overlooked the sea using them to carry out raids on coastal cities like Byblos and Berytus (Beirut).

In light of such chaos and the economic and social ramifications of the Seleucids' inability to stop the Ituraeans attacks or even thwart piracy which threatened navigation in the eastern Mediterranean, the Seleucids sought the help of Armenia's King Tigran in order to spread security in the region. He occupied most regions without any serious resistance in the year 83 BC. Under Tigran's rule, the region witnessed a period of prosperity and some of its cities enjoyed self-rule and the right to mint their own currencies, like what happened in Beirut in 81/80 BC. However, he failed to accomplish his mission and withdrew in the year 69 BC paving the way for some adventurers to create "militias" to protect their cities from pirate attacks on one hand and from the raids of the Lebanon mountain's Arabs on the other hand. This phenomenon would not have emerged across the Seleucid kingdom had it not been for the social, political and military disintegration caused by the absence of an effective centralized authority, the conspiracies of royal family members and the ruling class's partitioning of the state's political and financial spoils.

These militias soon turned into tools of oppression prompting Roman General Pompey to march to Damascus in 64/63 BC once he heard of what has become of the Phoenician coast and Syrian inside. He destroyed the Ituraeans' strongholds of North Lebanon, eliminated the tyrants of the coastal and inner cities and beheaded the heads of Dyonisos of Tripolis and Kinyras of Byblos.

At this point of history, Rome began its reign over the region.

The Monthly Interviews

GERMAN AMBASSADOR BIRGITTA MARIA SIEFKER-EBERLE

How did diplomatic relations between Lebanon and Germany start?

Diplomatic relations started in 1953 and relations between Lebanon and Germany soon developed well. This was the time when the newly founded two German republics, the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic were competing in stepping in the Middle East. The Federal Republic of Germany was trying to prevent the opening up of embassies of the German Democratic Republic according to its policy of being the sole legitimate representative of the German people. In 1965, with our diplomatic recognition of Israel, the states of the Arab League including Lebanon severed diplomatic relations with Germany. Our interests were being represented during that period of time by the French Embassy in Beirut until in 1972 diplomatic relations were taken up again. Ever since, we have had good and stable relations.

When did you arrive in Lebanon? And what posts did you occupy during your diplomatic career?

I arrived in Lebanon at the end of February 2009. My last position was that of Deputy Permanent Representative with our Permanent Mission to the United Nations Organizations in Geneva. Before working in Geneva I spent quite a long time in the Foreign Ministry in Berlin and Bonn working first in the legal department and then with human resources. Earlier I had worked at our Permanent Mission to NATO in Brussels, and at our Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan. My first posting was Damascus, Syria. I entered the Foreign Service in 1984.

Why did Germany decide to take part in UNIFIL in the south? What is the role of the German contingent?

After the 2006 war with Israel, when UN Security Council Resolution 1701 came into force, Germany was asked to participate. Germany has been part of the maritime contingent of UNIFIL from the very beginning. Altogether, Germany has held the command for 21 months and has just handed it over to Italy at the end of November. The German UNIFIL mandate was just prolonged until the end of June next year by the German Bundestag.

Germany currently deploys two patrol boats and one tender for provisioning and about 200 marines. Apart from participating in the UNIFIL mission, Germany has been training and equipping the Lebanese Navy. After 2006, Germany funded the reconstruction and modernization of six coastal radar stations with 1.2 million Euros. The German Embassy handed over another ship security equipment worth 500,000 Euros for the



German Ambassador Birgitta Maria Siefker-Eberle

Lebanese navy's ships in October 2008. Furthermore, Germany provided 750,000 Euros for ship and material maintenance and cars to the LAF navy in June 2009. Germany also donated three patrol ships to Lebanon.

Is Germany prepared to take in more Palestinians from Lebanon to help solve the issue of Palestinian refugees?

Such a question would have to be decided in an overall peace settlement because it would then concern many states. For the time being Palestinians can settle in Germany according to the general entrance and residence regulations that apply to them the same way as to other foreigners or refugees. They can f.e. apply for family re-unification.. There are neither special regulations nor a contingent for Palestinians.

How many staff members do you have in the embassy (German and Lebanese)?

We have 60 altogether; 30 German and 30 locals.

How many annual visas does the German Embassy approve?

We issue about 6,000 visas per year.

How large is the German community in Lebanon? What are their fields of work?

It's difficult to tell exactly: we have 1,500 registered Germans with us, but during the war in 2006 almost 6,000 holders of German passports asked the Embassy to evacuate them. There are Germans who got married to Lebanese. There are also lots of Lebanese who were granted German citizenship and who have returned to Lebanon. Those with dual-citizenship often do not register with the Embassy, since they are well integrated here. Many of those of German origin are quite active in the German Protestant community of Beirut, which has a far-reaching history.

Considering that you lived in Lebanon during your childhood, tell us more about your experience and how you see Lebanon developing?

I spend an important part of my childhood here. My father was with the German Embassy when I was in elementary school. In those days the German School was still at the Corniche. The buildings are still standing, but now they are private buildings. I did return because I always kept Lebanon in very good memory. Of course, those were the beautiful times. After I had finished high school in Germany, I returned for university studies. I studied Arab history and Arabic language at AUB from 1973 until 1975. I had to leave Beirut because of the civil war at the end of 1975. Then, I studied law in Germany, but I always tried to keep on track with my Arabic. It is a difficult but beautiful language.

Lebanon's and particularly Beirut's development has been marked by a tremendous population growth since the 1960's. I would say 80% of what I still remember as being orange groves and green areas of Beirut is now covered with buildings and towers. The city of Beirut has also changed a lot due to the war. I regret to see what has been done and is being done to the beautiful old Lebanese houses and the environment. Protection of the environment certainly belongs to those topics that should be included in the reforms the new government will have to tackle.

There are also changes in the demographic structure of Beirut's different neighborhoods. West Beirut used to be very different at the times when I was studying there, but I have noticed that recently something of the old atmosphere is coming back. The once very lively and colorful atmosphere in downtown, where everything has been beautifully rebuilt, has also changed a lot. Among the very positive developments I see, is the activity of civil society in Lebanon. People are being more critical about politics and more aware of what is happening to the environment.

Germany played a mediation role between Hezbollah and Israel; it is also now a mediator between Hamas and Israel, how do you explain the role of your country? It is an important role. This role is important and efficient, because we do not talk about it.

You viewed relations between Lebanon and Syria from Damascus, but now you are in Beirut, does your view of bilateral ties change?

At the moment, I think that the Syrian-Lebanese relations are developing in a very positive way and we welcome this development very much. I sometimes felt the Syrian role in Lebanon was being seen too one-sided here. Having lived in Syria together with the Syrians who are friendly and kind people, just as the Lebanese are, helps to see things in a more balanced way.

In the current government's ministerial statement, there is an article in support of women's role in Lebanon. You are a woman and you are and were in Lebanon, how do you see the situation of women here? Has it changed?

Not very much, which is not negative, because when I was studying here, women already enjoyed remarkable freedom and independence. The role of the woman depends of course also on the social layer or religious community she belongs to. Generally, there are no limitations regarding education and profession. Women can move freely within the country. These things were already possible in the 60's and in the 70's. I think, in this regard, Lebanon is a progressive country. But there are certain limitations to women's rights and freedoms stemming from religion, traditions and family structures which are very deeply rooted and which are reflected in certain laws and decrees. For example, the law stating that women cannot transmit their nationality to her children. Many (female) ambassadors here are trying to push for a change in this law. We know that there are ministers in this government who want that change. I really hope that the new government will manage to change the nationality law in this regard.

What do you like most about Lebanon?

One thing, I like very much about this country is the landscape, which I hope you will preserve as much as possible. As for the Lebanese people, I like their capacity to improvise, their creativity, versatility and of course their hospitality. I like the way they are really gifted for languages and their openness to the world and the way they communicate with one another, whether you speak to an intellectual or a taxi driver.

What do you like least about Lebanon?

Perhaps the lack of thoroughness, seriousness and commitment when it comes to everything that concerns the society as a whole, which includes the environment and matters of social justice and responsibility. I also dislike the treatment of migrant and foreign workers, which is seen critical by the Lebanese society and Lebanese media as well.

Any other subjects you would like to discuss?

Lebanon was my dream posting. I really was hoping to be an ambassador here once. This post, however, was occupied when I had to leave Geneva. But then my predecessor got appointed overnight to the EU-mission in Georgia and his position here became vacant. I applied instantly. It was really a quite happy coincidence. The post of Ambassador in Lebanon is certainly an interesting one.

I think we are all glad and content with the way the elections took place and that we have a new government now. I tend to be optimistic concerning this new government and I am confident with regard to its willingness and ability to work and cooperate on the necessary reforms. Where Germany can offer help and advice we stand ready to do. 

POPULAR CULTURE*

“Because of the scarcity of men they named the cock Abu Qassim”

A woman once married a wealthy man, and lived happily until the day he died. She was left alone after her closest friends and family abandoned her.

The country then went through a state of chaos; so the woman came up with a trick to protect herself from thieves and prying men. So she named her rooster “Abu Qassim”. The woman used to speak to the rooster loudly each time she heard noises outside her door at night. One night, a neighbor passed by to borrow something and overheard the woman talking to “Abu Qassim”. Soon word spread about “Abu Qassem” until it reached the woman’s brothers who decided to seek revenge for their sister’s honor. When they arrived and started knocking at her door, the woman panicked thinking they were strangers wanting to harm her. She started calling on “Abu Qassim” repeatedly until her brothers broke in and yelled “where is this Abu Qassim, let us slaughter him”. She replied: “You left me alone since the death of my husband and at a time when thieves roam the streets. Now you have become gallant when you heard about Abu Qassim?” She then opened the door to where she was hiding the rooster and said: “Here is Abu Qassim, if you are men slaughter him!” They asked her why she named him Abu Qassim, she replied “because of the scarcity of men ...”

“Those who don’t know the truth say a handful of lentils”

A farmer had a daughter who was helping him winnow the lentils. The man went out on an errand. When he came back, he found his daughter in a suspicious position with a strange man, behind the pile of lentils.

The farmer attacked the man wanting to kill him, but the latter managed to escape and asked for the help of a group of men standing by. When they asked the young man what the problem was, he said he had taken a handful of lentils so the man attacked him. The men then scorned the farmer, who thought it best not to tell them the real story, so he replied: “True! God forgive him for a handful of lentils.”

Only one villager had witnessed what happened from afar, but did not divulge the secret out of respect for the farmer’s privacy and only said: “Those who don’t know the truth say a handful of lentils.”

“There remained no one in the arena except Hdaydan”

The residents of Zoqaq el-Blat nicknamed the ruler of Beirut, Turki Zuhdi effendi, “Hdaydan”. The word refers to an animal that has just been hoofed. Zuhdi effendi used to ride a kind of animal known as al-Rahwan resembling a donkey. The residents used to call the animal “Hdaydan” and with time the ruler himself took on the nickname as well. The horse race track in Hirsh Beirut was very old and all horse riders went there on mid-day every Thursday. According to the rules, only pure breed horses were allowed to enter the ring. One day as the racers prepared their horses for the race, Zuhdi effendi arrived and rode al-Rahwan around the ring in an act of defiance. The authentic horse riders then left the ring saying “There remained no one in the arena except Hdaydan”

A night in Mahmoud Ahmad’s Khan

Following are excerpts from “Isma’a Ya Ridha” by Aniss Freiha, first edition 2006 published by Naufal publishing house, Beirut

“Of the remaining memories, oh Ridha, is a night I spent in Mahmoud Ahmad’s Khan in Borj Square, Beirut.

...Khan Mahmoud Ahmad is known today as the luxurious Cinema Dunia. And all movie theaters in the Borj Square and its environs were once khans for donkey drivers who would go there with their donkeys and mules every Monday morning and return to their villages with merchandise from Beirut. Cinema Roxie was once Khan el-Chartouni. Cinema Empire was once Khan el-Kanafani and Cinema Metropolis was once Khan el-Metn.

Mahmoud Ahmad used to sit on a wooden chair at the entrance of the khan to meet the donkey riders and to “welcome” them and their rides. He was a kind man from a good village. He started his life as a donkey rider and faced the same hardships as other donkey riders in Beirut. So he decided to own a khan and become the kind of owner that donkey riders wanted: an honest man, hospitable, who doesn’t steal the food of a ride, does not steal from a ride’s saddle, does not look at what’s in a bag...From Mahmoud Ahmad’s Khan to Abi Nasr’s Souk. How glorious are these shops! And how plenty! There is only one in our village in el-Faouqa neighborhood and another in el-Tahta neighborhood. Their merchandises combined do not make enough to fill a load for a donkey. I was amazed by this glory and was in awe at the sight of goodies I have never seen before: all sorts of colored candies, sugar-coated candies and macaroons.

Congratulations to the owners of shops in Abi Nasr’s Souk!

* Proverbs were compiled from *Salam Al Rasi- The complete works, Beirut, Dar Nawfal.*

Myth #30

PAUL GUIRAGOSSIAN: A LEBANESE OR PALESTINIAN ARTIST?

Paul Guiragossian was an artist whose career was highly rewarded in Beirut, given Lebanon's highest honors and lauded by the city's elite. His creations were the most widely exhibited works in Lebanon, and also exhibited in other major cities around the world. His work has also found its way into all the major Lebanese private and national collections.



La Grande Marche - 1989

Myth: Paul Guiragossian is a Lebanese Armenian painter.

Fact: In addition to being a Lebanese Armenian artist, Paul Guiragossian is also a Palestinian that was born in 1926 in Jerusalem. Throughout his artistic career, many of his images depicted his formative years in Jerusalem and became a distinctive feature of his art.

Guiragossian was only three years old when Catholic monks took him in in Jerusalem. He boarded in Jerusalem's Franciscan Convent and received his formal education at its charity school. His talent for drawing distinguished itself at a young age and he was later sent to spend his last four years of school as an apprentice of religious painting in a studio of the Catholic mission's resident Italian painter. His apprenticeship then secured him a job for two years as an assistant to an ageing Armenian icon painter in the Old City of Jerusalem.

Paul Guiragossian came to Beirut in 1939 with his family as a result of the upheavals occurring in Palestine. At 21 years old, Guiragossian settled in Beirut's suburb of Burj Hammoud with his family, which was where the city's most impoverished population of Armenian refugees that had escaped the Ottoman massacres earlier in the century lived. He was given Lebanese citizenship.

After settling in Beirut, Guiragossian set up his studio in Burj Hammoud. In 1957, he received a scholarship to study at the Academy of Fine Arts in Florence and from 1961 to 1962, he spent a year studying and painting in Paris. When he returned, he spent the rest of his life living and painting in Burj Hammoud, despite the financial success he later achieved. According to Paul Guiragossian, Burj Hammoud provided him with the security and seclusion he felt in his childhood within the convent and in Jerusalem's old city walls.

During the three decades he lived in Beirut, Guiragossian's style underwent a gradual transition from figurative to abstract. His later paintings, fresh and vivid, reduce all details of the body to vigorous slashes of thick paint highlighted by luminous accents of color. The vertical figures, whether suggesting movement or stillness, whether representational or abstract, are consistently huddled together, which could be interpreted as representing the fusion that occurred between his Armenian identity and Palestinian experience. When painting biblical themes, he created scenes of exodus and exile, which reflected his life experience in which the disinherited Palestinians relived the destitution of Armenians. Upon his death in 1993, Guiragossian received a state funeral.

Must-Read Books

THE SPIRIT OF THE POT

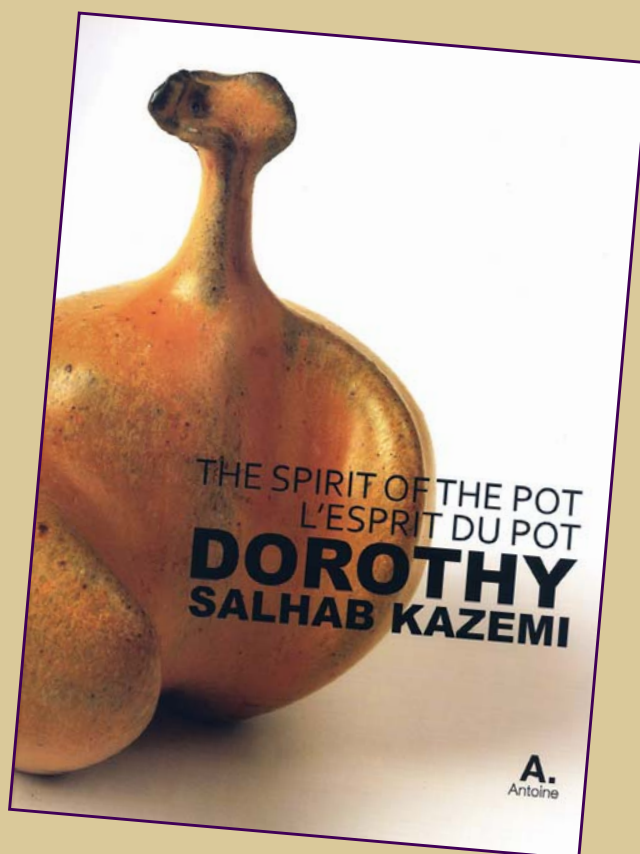
Dorothy Salhab Kazemi

The Spirit of the Pot: Dorothy Salhab Kazemi examines Lebanon's pioneer in the art of ceramics, Dorothy Salhab Kazemi. The collaborative fruit of Françoise Espagnet, Gérard Khoury, Joseph Tarrab and Afaf Zurayk, The Spirit of the Pot: Dorothy Salhab Kazemi takes a bilingual dive deep into the essence of the artist, in an original manner. Instead of listing a long, possibly tedious biography, The Spirit of the Pot: Dorothy Salhab Kazemi chooses to let readers sculpt their own impressions of Dorothy through a careful, thorough chronological exposé of her creations.

This Magnum Opus starts out with a beautiful preface by Afaf Zurayk. Ms. Zurayk paints a very flattering portrait of Dorothy. According to Zurayk, Dorothy was a melting pot for Islamic, Japanese and European styles of ceramics. Yet despite that, she managed to create her own genre entirely. Zurayk speaks of the richness, the sensibility inherent in her creations. "Her profound spirituality, coupled with a genuine love of the earth, makes her work truly unique". The Spirit of the Pot: Dorothy Salhab Kazemi is, for Zurayk, more than just a eulogy to a powerful, deep artist. It's an exposé that future potters would do well to learn from.

Joseph Tarrab then takes a more technical, precise look into the method behind Dorothy's creative originality. He goes back to the beginning when, after being trained by eminent potters such as the Danish Gutte Erikson, who had worked with the English Bernard Leach, Dorothy decided to return to Lebanon and practice her craft here. Kilns and their secrets were usually jealously guarded by traditional potters, so Dorothy set up a kiln of her own in her hometown of Roumieh. She started by producing basic, classical items such as bowls and pots, using local clay and glazes that she herself put together, instead of importing them. She would later go on to create more abstract, personal works, with more open, interesting forms, inspiring herself from her diverse, Oriental-yet-Western background. As her prowess progressed, her creations took on a more feminine, flowing, curved form.

Françoise Espagnet examines the motivations behind Dorothy's love for pottery. Originally an English Literature major, Dorothy decided to throw herself completely into the world of ceramics. Her return to Lebanon was preceded by becoming moderately well-established in both Denmark and Scotland. She brought with her a passion for working with stoneware, a previously unused technique in Lebanon.



Her favorite things to make, Dorothy would say, "are big bowls, even if they are hard to make. The bowl with its spiral forces the gaze to go lower in following the curve". She later continued her work in stoneware and porcelain by setting up a new base in Verteillac, in the Dordogne area of France, where she made ample use of French Clay.

Gerard Khoury paints a personal, intimate portrait of his friend Dorothy, recalling her passion for the art. He creates a vivid image of a hardworking potter, of an uncompromising artist, a perfect cog in the machine that is Lebanon, yet someone that managed to reach beyond it in order to gain creative energy. He delves into the sources of her inspiration, all while insisting that she was highly capable of original thought. She would use ideas to move forward, to operate on a higher plane.

A large part of the rest of the book consists of a plethora of photographs of her work, from which one can notice her evolution as an artist. It concludes with press clippings spanning most of her adult life, and then lists her curriculum vitae. All in all, The Spirit of the Pot.

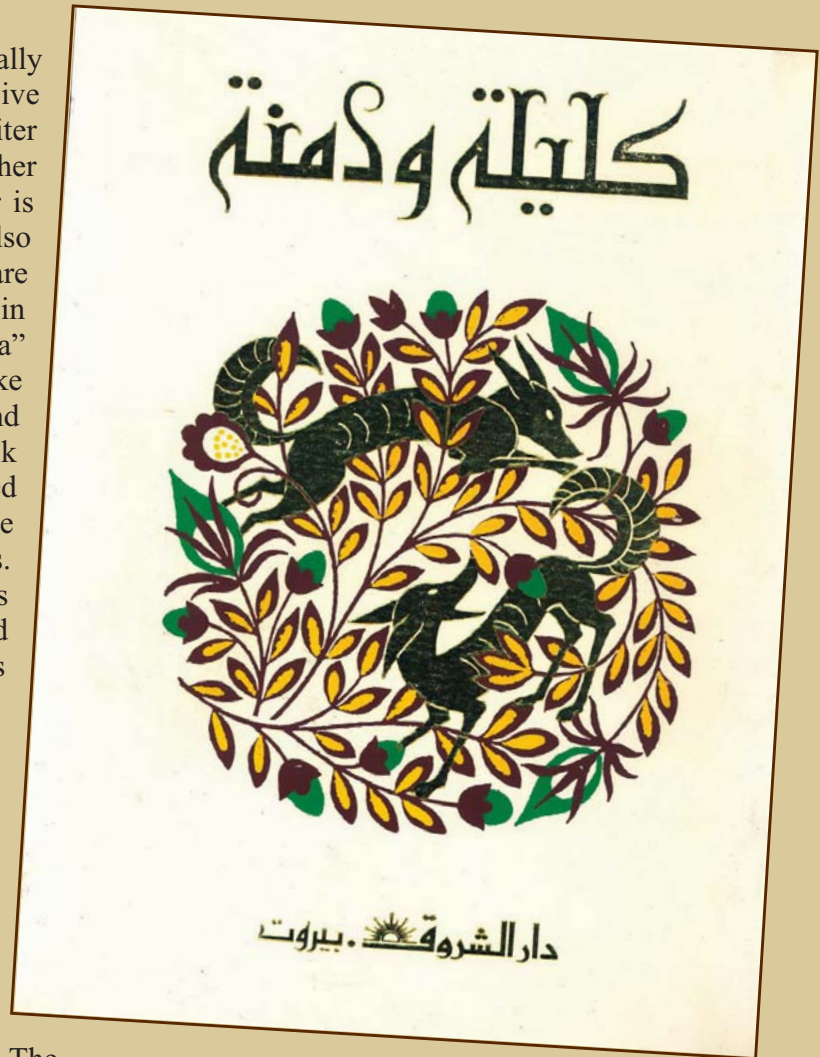
Must-Read Children's books

“KALILA WA DOMNA”

The Arabic book entitled “Kalila wa Domna”, originally called “Panchatantra”, which means “The Five Principles”, is a collection of short stories. The writer of this book is thought to be the Indian philosopher named “Bidpai”, or “wise man”. Since the writer is most probably a fictional character, the book has also been called “Bidpah’s Fables”. The book’s origins are presumed to be from when Bidpai was a teacher in the court of the king of the city called “Mahilaropya” in the south of India. The king asked him to make his sons wise politicians, promising him gold and other valuables in return. Bidpai accepted the task but refused the payment stating in a self-assured way that he will leave his teaching profession if he will not be able to teach the king’s children politics. Soon, he discovered that it was not an easy task as he has imagined so he invented a creative method to teach the children politics, through moral stories that have animal characters instead of people.

The book “Kalila Wa Domna” was first translated from its Indian dialect to Persian, and then to various languages; however, the Arabic version written by Adballah Ibn Almoqafa’a became the most valuable because it preserved the original and was its means of translation to other languages. Abdallah Ibn Almoqafa’a was comfortable with Persian so he translated the book from Persian to Arabic with an easy, elegant linguistic style. The stories in this book take place in a forest with animal characters. They reflect morals and proverbs -in the form of parables and symbols coming out of the mouths of the animals- that have a counseling value; these morals are directed towards society. These stories therefore do not only entertain but also teach educative, social and moral values.

The fables in this book closely resemble the French fables “Les Fables de La Fontaine” [De La Fontaine’s Fables]. The famous writer Jean De La Fontaine admitted that his fables are mostly inspired from Bidpai’s fables stating “This is a second book of fables that I present to the public... I have to acknowledge that the greatest part is inspired from Pilpay, an Indian Sage”.



Only “Dar Al Shorooq” in Beirut and “Al Sharika Al Wataniya” in Algeria reprinted and republished the book in 1973 based on the oldest known version dating back to 618 AH, found in the Library of the Hagia Sophia in Istanbul.

Distinctive features of this book are its beautifully colored illustrations by Suzanna Fritz that captivate readers and stimulate their imagination. Moreover, it uses exactly the same names and places as in the original Persian version.

This book is recommended from the intermediate level upwards.

Families named after food

QDAMI, ZEIT AND ZAATAR

Hundreds of Lebanese families are named after foods, vegetables and fruits. Some of are essentially limited to a single region and confession whereas others are spread out across Lebanon and are faithful to different confessions.

Among those families:

- ⦿ **Qdami:** 160 members. They are Shia'a and are registered in the towns of Jouaya (qada'a Sour) and Marounite (qada'a Saida).
- ⦿ **Festoq (pistachio):** 110 members. They are Sunni and registered in Beirut (Marfa' and Mazra'a)
- ⦿ **Succar (sugar):** 3,000 members. They are mainly Maronite and registered in Bcharri whereas Sunni members are registered in Beirut.
- ⦿ **Battikh (watermelon):** 210 members. The majority are Sunni but some are Maronite. They are registered in Akkar in the towns of Mqeilbe, Akkar el-Qadima and Qbayyet.
- ⦿ **Zaatar (thyme):** 740 members and are mainly Greek Orthodox in Kfar A'aqa in Koura; Maronite in Zgharta and Chebteen, Sunni in Sour, Hamra in Akkar and in Saida; Catholic in Zahle and Shia'a in Markaba, Harouf and Deir el-Zahrani.
- ⦿ **Zeit (oil):** There are only three members, all female. (Shia'a, Evangelist and Catholic).
- ⦿ **Fattouch (Lebanese salad):** 240 members, mainly Greek Orthodox in Minniyeh and Catholic in Zahle.
- ⦿ **Tuffaha (apple):** 230 members, Sunni and Shia'a.
- ⦿ **Naanaa (mint):** There are only nine members, all female (Sunni, Greek Orthodox and Syriac Orthodox).
- ⦿ **Bizir (seeds):** Two female members. The first is Catholic, from Beirut, and the second is an Evangelist from Jbeil.
- ⦿ **Koussa (squash):** 460 members. They are mainly Greek Orthodox in Bezbina in Akkar, Mina in Trablous, Beirut and Sheikh Mohammed in Akkar; Catholic in Beirut and Zehrieh in Trablous and Sunni in Beirut, Trablous and Qalamoun.
- ⦿ **Kaak (toast):** 14 Sunni members from Beirut.
- ⦿ **Khiyar (cucumber):** Two members, the first is Maronite from Bcharri and the second is Catholic from Zahle.
- ⦿ **Aadass (lentil):** 105 members. They are Jews from Beirut, Greek Orthodox from Rachaiya el-Fokhar, Beirut and Aain Qinta in Hasbaiya and Sunni from Trablous.
- ⦿ **Baqdounis (parsley):** There are only four members, all female. They are Sunni from Trablous.
- ⦿ **Tabikh (stew):** 514 members. They are Sunni from Trablous, Nabi Youchaa in qada'a Minniyeh-Dinniye and Shia'a from Hosh el-Dahab in Douris in qada'a Baalbek.
- ⦿ **Qameh (wheat):** 243 members. They are Shia'a registered in Arabsaleem and Zotar el-Charqiyeh in qada'a Nabatiyeh, in Borj Rahhal in qada'a Sour, in Kfar Hatta in qada'a Saida, Qantara in qada'a Marjeyoun and in Beirut.
- ⦿ **Shorba (soup):** 195 members. They are Shia'a registered in Beirut and Mahrouneh in qada'a Sour.

In addition to these families there are tens of others with names like Zbeeb (raisins), Riz (rice), Samneh (margarine).



Discover Lebanon

HWAR TALA -QADA'A BAALBEK

Etymology

Researchers have come up with more than one theory for the origins of the word. Some believe that Hwar Tala is Syriac for 'white fox'. In his book "The Names of Lebanese Cities and Towns", Anis Freiha explains that Hwar refers to a cave or a hole; therefore the name could mean 'foxhole'.

Location

Hwar Tala is located in the qada'a of Baalbek in the Bekaa muhafaza. It is situated at 1,100 meters above sea level, 75 kilometers away from Beirut and 25 kilometers from Zahle. It covers an area of 2,294 hectares. It can be reached via Zahle-Safri-Tlayya.

Population

Registered inhabitants are estimated at 3,228 and mainly belong to the Shia'a confession. There are 400 houses and 65 commercial establishments in the town.

Electors

In 2000, the number of registered voters was 2,069, of who 998 cast their ballots compared to 1,809 electors in 2005 casting 951 votes. The voters belong to the following Shia'a families: Masri, Aouta, Darwich, Hijazi, Younis, Hamza, Mazloun, Murad, Dani, Dana, Astlani, Aslani, Hajj, Ghandoura, Qassim, Chehadeh and Traf.

Local authorities

Hwar Tala does not have a municipal council and the local authorities are represented by two makhatir, Hassan al-Masri and Suleiman al-Masri.

Education

There is one public and intermediate school in the town with 35 registered students in 2005-2006 compared to 32 in 2006-2007. It has six faculty members.

Economy

The town's main source of income is employment and agriculture, with an emphasis on the cultivation of grains and fruits such as grapes and apricots.

Archeological sites

There no discovered sites in the town.



Problems

Hwar Tala suffers from water shortages, as do many Lebanese towns, in addition to underdeveloped roads and power shortages.

Arslan-Jumblat

ARSLAN: FROM “JUMBLAT LOST HIS MENTAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL BALANCE” TO “JUMBLAT MADE A NATIONAL AND WISE DECISION”

Often tense relations between Walid Jumblat and Emir Talal Arslan have never been a barrier to protecting and preserving the interests of the Druze. Arslan has repeatedly accused Jumblat of monopolizing decision-making on behalf of the Druze in the mountains, of political provocation and of working against the interests of the confession. Today, Arslan says that Jumblat's policy shift was a wise decision and a return to the bases of nationalism.

Enmity

“... He likes to play the role of the innocent lamb, every time, as if all the people are oppressors while we all know each other and we know everyone's history.” (*An Nahar* December 16, 2004)

“We tell Walid Jumblat that we do not have a problem with him, but his problem is in his conflict and repeated and constant divorce from the the principles and values of Kamal Jumblat. Should reconcile with them, Walid Jumblat would have solved his problems without the need for anyone's help.” (*An Nahar* January 23, 2007)

“... Unfortunately, Walid Jumblat has lost his mental and psychological balance.” (*December 30, 2006*)

“There is a malfunction in this effendi's scales... the malfunction is in the political, strategic, mental, psychological and intellectual scales. And there is not remedy for this issue in politics.” (*November 29, 2006*)

“Oractially, and for over ten years, there has been a monopolization of the Druze decision-making by Walid bek.” (*An Nahar* February 23, 1996)

“The [policy of] political provocation that Walid Jumblat has been adopting for the past six years is bound to give birth to anything... the Druze situation can no longer handle Jumblat's hateful political speech. What is left is for Jumblat to point accusations at me and at anyone who enters my home as if we were Jewish... It is enough for him to spill blood in order to preserve some of the gains and privileges either by stealing the Ministry of the Displaces or seven or eight MPs.” (*An Nahar* August 19, 1996)

“For 25 years, MP Jumblat has been swimming in multi-national funds under the cover of donations for martyrs and the disabled... the years went by and he is swimming in legitimate money he made from leasing maritime domain and squandering the funds of the Ministry of Public Works and after that the Ministry of the Displaced...” (*August 30, 2004*)

“Despite accusing all of us of being mercenaries and once of being a symbol of [intelligence] apparatuses, everyone knows that there is only one mercenary among the Druze and he stands every Sunday evening at the doors of the nouveau riche to sell his confession at a time when everybody's source

of revenue is scarce...” (*An Nahar* August 30, 2004)

“We see that he has to be one of the first [people] to fear a fate similar to that of Milosevic because of the executions of tens of Druze young men that he carried out.” (*October 25, 2004*)

“Incitement to kill President [Bashar] Assad is strange to the traditions, principles and values of the monotheistic confession of the Druze, which rejects the culture of crime and murder being called for by Walid Jumblat. This confession cannot deny the brotherly and remarkable positions that President Hafez Assad and after him Bashar Assad took in support of it during the conspiracy that it was subjected to on the part of Israel and its infiltrators.” (*Al-Akhbar* January 27, 2006)

Reconciliation

“We and Walid bek can resolve our issues. We do not need anyone to teach us how to manage things.” (*An Nahar* October 30, 1995)

“The dignity of the Druze is not just in appearance and in the negligence that some practive toward the Druze confession. I have all the power to understand and the ability to cooperate with everyone starting with Minister Jumblat.” (*An Nahar* September 29, 1997)

“We and Walid bek are in agreement over many matters on the patriotic and national levels. Walid bek is a symbol of this line of thought and this direction in Lebanon and we have a solid relation with him.” (*An Nahar* December 12, 2003)

“This wise decision that Walid bek took forms a solid brick for the Lebanese national structure and in the national and resistance choice that Bani Maarouf cannot be outside either historically, in the past, in the present or in the future.” (*An Nahar* August 3, 2004)

“MP Jumblat launched a series of patriotic and bold stances. He became aware of the regression of the American scheme in the region, and this is a good thing.” (*Al Bayraq* May 25, 2009)

“Jumblat's positions form an anticipated step in the patriotic rescue journey that kicked-off on May 11, 2008. [We] welcome this national and Arab decision which emanates from the history of Bani Maarouf and from the history of this nation of resistance against colonization and Zionism.” (As Safir August 3, 2009) ●●

International Media

IRAN AND WEST AT LOGGERHEADS OVER NUCLEAR FILE

US wants new UN sanctions against Iran's 'continuing' nuclear ambitions

Washington believes Tehran working on weapon design despite spy reports that programme has ended

The Guardian, Julian Borger, Sunday 3 January

"The US believes the official intelligence assessment of Iran's nuclear programme is wrong and Tehran is working on

the design of a nuclear weapon, it was reported today.

Washington is seeking support for new sanctions against Iran at the UN security council following the expiry of a new year deadline, imposed by the US president, Barack Obama, for Tehran to respond to an offer of economic help and improved diplomatic relations in return for curbing its nuclear programme.

"After reviewing new 'documents that have leaked out of Iran and debriefing defectors lured to the west, Mr Obama's advisers say they believe the work on weapons design is continuing on a smaller scale – the same assessment reached by Britain, France, Germany and Israel," the New York Times reported.

The key sources of new intelligence are likely to include two recent

Iranian defectors – Ali Reza Asgari, a Revolutionary Guards general who vanished in Istanbul in 2007, and Shahram Amiri, a leading Iranian nuclear scientist, who disappeared while on a pilgrimage to Mecca last summer.

The Iranian government has blamed the US for their disappearance.

However, the Obama administration believes there is still time to try sanctions as a means of stemming Iran's nuclear ambitions. It feels there is scope for them to work because of serious technical problems in the country's uranium enrichment programme and because the regime is distracted by continuing political unrest.

A report by the International Atomic Energy Agency, published late last year, recorded a significant decline in the number of working centrifuges at the enrichment plant in Natanz.

Experts said this could be a result of the technical shortcomings in the Pakistani centrifuge design Iran bought from the rogue nuclear scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan and also because of a covert sabotage campaign by the west.

"For now, the Iranians don't have a credible breakout option, and we don't think they will have one for at least 18 months, maybe two or three years," a senior Obama administration official told the New York Times.

The newspaper also quoted a senior Israeli diplomat in Washington as saying that Israel was prepared to put military options on hold for the time being.

"Obama has convinced us that it's worth trying the sanctions, at least for a few months," the diplomat said."

Iran warns West it will produce nuclear fuel 'by February'

The Independent, Ali Akbar Dareini, Saturday, 2 January 2010

"Iran warned today it will produce nuclear fuel on its own if there is no deal to have the West deliver the fuel in exchange for Tehran's enriched uranium by the end of January.

"We have given them an ultimatum. There is one month left and that is by the end of January," Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki said, speaking on state television.

However, even if Tehran started working on the fuel production immediately, it would likely take years before it can master the technology to

turn uranium, enriched to the level of 20 percent, into rods that make the fuel.

Iran dismissed an end-of-2009 deadline imposed by the Obama administration and the West to accept a UN-drafted deal to swap most of its enriched uranium for nuclear fuel. The deal would have reduced Iran's stockpile of low enriched uranium, limiting — at least for the moment — its capabilities to make nuclear weapons.

The US and its allies have demanded Iran accept the terms of the UN-

brokered plan without changes.

Instead, Tehran came up with a counterproposal: to have the West either sell nuclear fuel to Iran, or swap its nuclear fuel for Iran's enriched uranium in smaller batches instead of at once as the UN plan calls for.

This is unacceptable to the West because it would leave Tehran with enough enriched material to make nuclear arms.

The UN deal has been the centrepiece of the West's diplomatic effort toward Iran." 

ARAB WORLD MOST VULNERABLE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

The Arab world is one of the most vulnerable regions of the world to the impacts of climate change, the Arab Forum for Environment and Development (AFED) warns in a new report. The report 'Arab Environment: Climate Change-Impact of Climate Change' came before a conference in Copenhagen to hammer out an initiative to combat climate change.

The AFED report and the Arab Human Development Report (AHDR)-2009 ranked the Arab world as the least directly responsible for climate change – carbon dioxide emissions here contribute only 4.2% to global emission.

Climate change is expected to worsen the already severe water shortage in the Arab world, experts say. A projected rise in temperature by two or three degrees would increase droughts and floods, reduce river flow and precipitation and affect the quality and quantity of groundwater.

According to the World Bank, the Middle East and North Africa Region is “the most water scarce region in the world” with half of the population living under conditions of water stress.

Containing 10% of the world's dry land, the Arab world's freshwater resources do not exceed 1%.

The report indicated that Lebanon and Syria are facing water stress (1,000 to 1,700 m³/capita/year) and other Arab countries are facing water scarcity (less than 1,000 m³/capita/year).

The most vulnerable region in the Arab world to climate change is North Africa, which is “almost fully dependant on rainfall”.

An exception in the Maghreb is Libya, which relies mostly on the Great Manmade River. Climate change will least affect the Arabian Peninsula since water resources are already scarce.

Since climate change threatens to either reduce or increase river flow, Egypt, Sudan, Iraq and Syria supposedly face a far more

challenging situation because they depend on river flow from outside their territories.

Jordan and Palestine have the “lowest per capita share of water in the Arab world (100-200 m³ per capita per year)”. The situation there is further exacerbated by the fact that they share their water resources with Israel.

Among the consequence of climate change is a rise in sea level and flooding mostly affecting areas in “low-lying” coastal countries such as Bahrain, Djibouti, Kuwait, Libya, United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Comoros, Lebanon, Tunisia, Morocco, and Saudi Arabia. For example, a projected three or four degrees centigrade increase in average temperature would raise sea level by one meter, experts say.

In terms of land mass, Qatar, the UAE, Kuwait and Tunisia are the most vulnerable to the one meter sea level rise, which would affect “one to three percent” of their land”, the report said.

In Egypt over 12% of its most viable agricultural lands in the Nile Delta would be affected by a one-meter rise in sea level.

Meanwhile a 1.2 degrees centigrade rise in temperature by 2020 “would reduce available water in Lebanon by 15% and in some areas of Morocco by over 10%”.

Table 1 shows climate change future scenarios and their impacts on water and agriculture in the Arab world.

Climate change future scenarios – water and agriculture			Table 1
Scenario	Type of change	Effects on human security	Affected area
WATER	2 °C rise in Earth temperature	1 to 1.6 billion people affected by water shortages	Africa, the Middle East, Southern Europe, parts of South and Central America
	3 °C rise in Earth temperature	Increased water stress for additional 155 to 600 million people	North Africa
	Climate change	Repeated risk of drought known in recent years, with economic and political effects	Mauritania, Sudan and Somalia
	Climate change	Reduced average rainfall	Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and OPT
	Rising sea levels	Risk of flooding and threats to coastal cities	Gulf coast of Arabian peninsula
	Climate change	50% decline in renewable water availability	Syria
	1.2 °C rise in Earth temperature	Decreased water availability by 15%	Lebanon
	1 °C rise in Earth temperature	Reduced water runoff in Ouergha watershed by 10%	Morocco
	Climate change	Greater water shortages	Yemen
	Climate change	Reduced water flow by 40-60%	Nile river
AGRICULTURE	3 °C rise in Earth temperature	Increased risks of coastal surges and flooding	Cairo
	2-3 °C temperature rise in tropical regions	A drop by 25-35 % in crop production (with weak carbon enrichment) and by 20-15% (with strong carbon enrichment)	Africa and West Africa (Arab countries included)
	3 °C rise in Earth temperature	Reduced agricultural productivity and unsustainable crops	North Africa
	1.5 °C rise in Earth temperature	70% drop in yields of Sorghum	Sudan (Northern Kordofan)
	Climate change	Flooding of 4,500 km ² of farmland and displacement of 6 million people	Lower Egypt

Source: Arab Human Development Report-2009

The dangers of climate change are met with inadequate planning by the Arab world, the report said, urging governments to adopt “mitigation and adaptation” efforts to properly address the issue.

REAL ESTATE INDEX IN LEBANON-2009

Real estate circulations could exceed USD12 billion

The real estate sector in Lebanon was stagnant during the last four months of 2009 compared to the giant leap in prices in 2008 and the beginning of 2009 that reached 100% in some estates. Realtors are now waiting in anticipation what direction the market will take: will the prices remain stable or will they either increase or drop? What are the repercussions of each scenario?

Current forecasts point to the following:

- A drop in the prices of luxurious and huge apartments that cost more than USD 1 million. These apartments are mostly located in specific areas in Beirut.
- Stable prices for apartments costing between USD 500,000 and USD 1 million.
- Limited increase, by 5%-10%, in the prices of apartments that cost less than USD 500,000.
- Minimal chance that the market will witness a wave of speculations since there is no shortage in cash flow in banks which causes significant price increases followed by equally serious drops and losses.

In conclusion, extremely high prices will witness a drop, while average prices will remain stable in addition to a limited increase in lower prices with fear of possible speculation. Figures point to the possibility that prices registered in sales contracts in 2009 might reach USD 8 billion which means that the actual total value (including unregistered contracts) might reach up to USD 12 billion. Tables 1 and 2 show the prices of land and constructed properties that were sold in December 2009.

Land sold in December 2009			
Location	Area (m2)	Price (USD)	USD/m2
Beirut			
Ramlet el-Baida	1,600	12,000,000	7,500
Achrafiye	670	4,154,000	6,200
Achrafiye	1,000	2,000,000	2,000
Spinneys	1,200	5,400,000	4,500
Ba'abda			
A'ain el-Rummeneh	470	1,316,000	2,800
Hazmieh	1,000	2,100,000	2,100
Ba'abda	2,000	1,140,000	570
Metn			
Ba'abdat	1,100	451,000	410
A'ain Sa'adeh	1,650	825,000	500
Rabiyeh	1,800	3,600,000	2,000
Bahr Saf	2,450	882,000	360
A'aley			
Daouhet el-Hoss	2,400	1,104,000	460
Qabir Chamoun	1,850	240,500	130
A'aley	1,200	252,000	210
Baissour	2,700	189,000	70
Kesrouane			
Faqra	760	364,800	480
Feytroun	1,100	242,000	220
A'ajaltoun	1,600	336,000	210
Ghidrass	2,050	133,250	65
Faraiya	3,500	350,000	100

Source: Information International-2009

Prices of constructed property sold in December 2009			
Location	Area m2	Price USD	USD/m2
Beirut			
Sioufi (Hadiqua)	185	444,000	2,400
Clemenceau	160	520,000	3,250
Saqiyet el-Janzeer	230	713,000	3,100
Ras el-Nabi'	150	300,000	2,000
Ras el-Nabi'	300	360,000	1,200
Qreitem (highway)	190	665,000	3,500
Zarif	160	264,000	1,650
Dar el-Fatwa	120	188,400	1,570
Raouche	110	363,000	3,300
Mar Elias	200	400,000	2,000
Ramlet el-Baida	120	390,000	3,250
Ba'abda			
Yarze	250	325,000	1,300
Mar Taqla	240	448,800	1,870
Hay el-Amercan	170	204,000	1,200
Haret Horeik	210	168,000	800
Metn			
Rabiye	220	352,000	1,600
Aoukar	300	450,000	1,500
Mansourieh	130	130,000	1,000
A'ain Saadeh	230	296,700	1,290
Beit Meri	280	280,000	1,000
A'aley			
A'aley	250	207,500	830
Daouhet A'aramoun	170	170,000	1,000
Bchemoun	180	149,400	830
Bchemoun (Mderiss)	110	110,000	1,000
Daouhet el-Hoss	160	192,000	1,200
Kesrouane			
Ballouneh	110	170,500	1,550
Adonis	170	153,000	900
Qleia'at	150	129,000	860
Sahel A'alma	200	200,000	1,000

Source: Information International-2009

TOWARD A LEBANESE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

FOOD PRICE INDEX 2009: STABILITY AND DECLINE

A comparison between the prices of 100 food and consumer products in January 2010 to January 2009 shows a drop in the prices of 45 items and an increase in those of 39 while the prices of 16 products remained stable.

Prices in 2009 were predominantly either in decline or remained stable due to a significant hike in prices at the end of 2008, especially for culinary oils, grains and dairy products. As such, it was only normal for prices to remain stable or to drop in 2009. Furthermore, the international financial crisis affected consumerism, leading to a drop in prices on a global level that also in Lebanon. Table 1 shows the change in prices during 2009.

The prices of food and consumer products in 2009
(Prices in LBP) Table 1

Item and brand		Prices beginning of January 2009	Prices beginning of January 2010	% of price change
Oil				
Afia corn oil	(3.5 liters)	16,700	11,370	-32
Mazola corn oil	(3.5 liters)	17,100	13,250	-22.5
Mazola corn oil	(2 liters)	11,000	6,750	-38.6
Slim corn oil	(2 liters)	9,500	7,250	-23.7
Wesson corn oil	(2 liters)	10,500	8,250	-21.4
Ghandour soya oil	(3.8 liters)	13,470	10,500	-22
Alfa corn oil	(4 liters)	16,750	12,985	-22.5
Al-Wadi olive oil	(1/2 liter)	7,900	9,200	+16.4
Ketchup and Sauces				
Libby's Ketchup	(567 g)	2,050	2,875	+40.2
Extra Ketchup	(340 g)	1,325	1,500	+13.2
Extra Ketchup	(2.2 kg)	6,600	5,550	-15.9
Dolly's Mayonnaise	(500 ml)	3,450	3,650	+5.8
Al-Wadi Mayonnaise	(500 ml)	3,800	4,250	+11.8
Al-Bsat Tahina	(900 g)	8,600	8,950	+4
Al-Bsat Tahina	(450 g)	4,450	4,690	+5.4
Taous tomato sauce	(70 g)	525	495	-5.7
Taous tomato sauce	(425 g)	2,750	2,625	-4.5
Tala tomato sauce	(675 g)	2,500	2,500	0
Coffee and Tea				
Najjar coffee	(1kg)	12,500	12,250	-2
Brazil coffee	(1 kg)	11,100	10,500	-5.4
Al-Hisan tea	(180 g)	2,250	2,450	+8.8
Nastle	(250g)	1,720	2,200	+27.9

The prices of food and consumer products in 2009
(Prices in LBP) Table 1

Item and brand		Prices beginning of January 2009	Prices beginning of January 2010	% of price change
Dairy Products				
Candia full cream milk	(1 liter)	2,200	2,450	+11.3
Candia full cream yoghurt	(2 kg)	5,250	4,800	+8.5
Bonjus labneh	(1 kg)	3,750	3,750	0
Taanayel labneh	(500 g)	4,800	5,000	+4.1
Candia labneh	(500 g)	5,250	5,000	-4.7
Taanayel yoghurt	(1 kg)	3,000	2,575	-14.1
Smeds cheese	(400 g)	3,500	4,100	+17.1
Picon cheese	(360 g)	3,400	3,525	+3.6
Picon cheese	(160 g)	1,725	1,725	0
Double crème cheese	(1 kg)	7,750	6,400	-17.4
Fresh country cheese	(1 kg)	9,100	7,500	-17.6
Khashkawan cheese	(1 kg)	15,500	11,000	-29
Lurpak butter	(200 g)	2,500	2,450	-2
Tatra butter	(200 g)	2,250	2,250	0
Al Maalaqtain margarine	(2 kg)	9,800	10,100	+3
Al Baqara al Haloub margarine	(2kg)	19,950	25,610	+28.3
Vegetaline margarine	(2 kg)	17,000	13,950	-18
Nido full cream milk (bag)	(2,250 g)	23,250	19,050	-18
Nido full cream milk	(2,500 g)	29,000	23,100	-20.3
Tatra full cream milk	(1,800 g)	16,400	17,600	+7.3
Sugar and Salt				
Sugar	(2 kg)	2,250	3,000	+33.3
Al Ousra Sugar	(5 kg)	5,100	7,250	+42.1
Salt	(700 g)	525	500	-4.7
Box of salt	(738 g)	1,250	950	-24

The prices of food and consumer products in 2009
(Prices in LBP) Table 1

Item and brand		Prices beginning of January 2009	Prices beginning of January 2010	% of price change
Cereals				
Khater white lentils	(1 kg)	2,750	2,700	-1.8
Khater chick peas fahli	(1 kg)	2,350	3,000	+27.6
Khater beans	(1 kg)	1,700	1,750	+2.9
Peeled wheat	(1 kg)	1,350	1,800	+33.3
Pineal Lima Bean	(1 kg)	3,100	3,000	-3.2
Brown Fine Burgul	(1 kg)	1,980	1,800	-9
Egyptian rice	(1 kg)	2,570	2,050	-20.2
American rice	(1 kg)	2,300	2,100	-8.7
Italian rice	(1 kg)	2,300	2,300	0
Al Wadi Hommos Tahina	(380 g)	1,125	1,200	+6.6
Chtaura Hommos Tahina	(380 g)	1,450	1,100	-24
California Gardens beans	(450 g)	790	1,000	+26.6
Al Wadi beans	(450 g)	1,150	1,000	-13
Chtaura beans	(480 g)	1,250	1,000	-20
Libby's corn	(340 g)	1,520	1,450	-4.6
Pasta				
Barilla spaghetti	(500 g)	2,050	2,050	0
Antonio Amato spaghetti	(500 g)	2,500	2,850	+14
Monte spaghetti	(500 g)	2,250	2,150	4.4
Tissues and Detergents				
Mimosa tissues	(500 g)	2,400	2,500	+4.1
Fine tissues	(200 tissues)	1,100	1,250	+13.6
Primo tissues	(200 tissues)	1,150	1,200	+4.3
Gipsy tissues	(300 tissues)	2,250	2,350	+4.4
Mimosa toilet papers	(4 rolls)	2,400	2,400	0
Yes detergent	(900 g)	1,920	2,250	+17.2
Clorox	(1 liter)	1,400	1,450	+3.5
Persil	(4 kg)	18,000	18,200	+1.1
Ariel	(4 kg)	18,000	18,450	+2.5

The prices of food and consumer products in 2009
(Prices in LBP) Table 1

Item and brand		Prices beginning of January 2009	Prices beginning of January 2010	% of price change
Meat, Fish and Eggs				
Luncheon meat beef	(198 g)	2,300	1,750	-24
Zwan chicken	(200 g)	2,500	2,250	-10
Zwan beef	(200 g)	2,500	2,200	-12
Al Mona chicken	(200 g)	1,850	1,900	+2.7
Al Taghzia beef	(200 g)	1,750	1,750	0
Al Taghzia chicken	(200 g)	1,750	1,750	0
Geisha sardine	(125 g)	1,250	1,000	-20
Deli sardine	(125 g)	990	990	0
Milo sardine	(125 g)	990	990	0
Geisha tuna	(200 g)	2,050	2,250	+9.7
White Bell tuna	(200 g)	2,100	2,100	0
White Diamond tuna	(200 g)	1,950	2,050	+5.1
Skipper tuna	(185 g)	1,830	1,750	4.3
Eggs	(30 eggs)	7,500	8,050	+7.3
Beef	(1 kg)	13,000	13,000	0
Sheep	(1 kg)	18,000	20,000	+11.1 v
Halvah and Jam				
Al Wadi halvah	(454 g)	5,630	4,250	-24.5
Al Bsat halvah	(450 g)	5,540	4,200	-24.2
Chtaura apricot jam	(1 kg)	6,050	6,400	+5.7
Al Wadi apricot jam	(1 kg)	6,620	5,500	-16.9
Fruits and Vegetables				
Orange	(1 kg)	800	750	-6.2
Tomatoes	(1kg)	1,500	1,100	-26.6
Cucumbers	(1kg)	1,500	1,200	20
Bananas	(1kg)	1,000	1,000	0
Lemons	(1 kg)	500	500	0
Apples	(1 kg)	2,000	2,000	0
Potatoes	(1 kg)	700	850	+21.4

Source: Compiled by Information International.



Children around the world

Out of the 1.9 billion children in the developing world:

- ⦿ **640 million** don't have adequate shelter (1 in 3)
- ⦿ **400 million** have no access to safe water (1 in 5)
- ⦿ **270 million** have no access to healthcare (1 in 7)
- ⦿ **72 million** children of primary school age in the developing world did not attend school in 2005; 57 % of them were girls.
- ⦿ **26,000 children** under the age of 5 die each day from preventable afflictions like malnutrition, malaria, diarrhea, and acute respiratory infections. Malnutrition is associated with over half of these deaths.
- ⦿ **1.5 million** children were orphaned in Mozambique in 2008, including 510,000 due to HIV/AIDS.
- ⦿ **27-28 %** of all children in developing countries are estimated to be underweight or have stunted growth.
- ⦿ **8.8 million** children died in 2008 before reaching the age of 5.
- ⦿ **1.4 million** children die every year from lack of access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation.
- ⦿ **2.2 million** children die each year because they are not immunized.
- ⦿ **155 million** children are overweight, including 30-45 million obese children.
- ⦿ **250 million** children will die from smoking-related illnesses.
- ⦿ **700 million** children worldwide are affected by secondhand smoke.

Beirut Airport-Rafic Hariri International Airport in 2009 Five million passengers and a 22% increase

The number of passengers in Rafic Hariri International Airport reached 4,986,544 in 2009 compared to 4,085,334 in 2008, registering an increase by 901,210 and 22%. Airport traffic in 2008 marked a 20% increase compared to 2007.

In December 2009 airport traffic registered a 13.6% increase compared to November 2009 and December 2008 when traffic registered a 3% rise.

Table 1 shows airport traffic in December 2009 compared to November 2009 and progress between 2008 and 2009.

Traffic at Rafic Hariri International Airport in December 2009 and November 2009 and in 2008 and 2009.

Table 1

Traffic	November 2009	December 2009	% of change	2008	2009	% of change
Arriving airplanes	2,499	2,703	8.1+	22,658	28,781	27+
Departing airplanes	2,488	2,692	8.2+	22,620	28,762	27.1+
Total # of airplanes	4,987	5,395	8.1+	45,278	57,543	27+
Arriving crews	19,662	21,055	7+	183,384	229,887	25.3+
Departing crews	19,635	20,975	6.8+	182,957	229,836	25.6+
Total # of crews	39,297	42,030	7+	366,341	459,723	25.4+
Arriving passengers	194,811	232,169	19.2+	2,025,547	2,493,237	23+
Departing passengers	183,038	196,913	7.6+	2,014,013	2,460,654	22.1+
Transit passengers	2,493	2,917	17+	45,774	32,653	28.6-
Total # of passengers	380,342	431,999	13.6+	4,085,334	4,986,544	22+
Imported goods (per ton)	3,571	3,749	5+	36,297	40,676	12+
Exported goods (per ton)	2,806	2,739	2.4-	31,321	30,881	1.4-
Total amount of goods (per ton)	6,377	6,488	1.7+	67,618	71,557	5.8+

Source: Directorate General of Civil Aviation-November and December 2009 and Information International

Stats & Numbers

- ⊙ **USD 347 million** is the cost of projects to build dams and lakes to provide 22 million m³ of potable and irrigation water. The dams are located in Yammouneh and Youneen in the Beqa'a, A'azouniyeh in A'aley, Beqa'ata and Ma'assir el-Chouf in the Chouf.
- ⊙ **LBP 11.1 billion** is the cost of works to create and preserve fishermen ports, located in Jal el-Bahr and A'ain Mreisseh in Beirut, Sour, Berbara and Jiyeh.
- ⊙ **LBP 210 billion** is the value of credit lines channeled to the Ministry of Finance to fund the interest rates of loans owed to development banks to execute projects in the sectors of agriculture, industry, tourism, technology and manufacturing.
- ⊙ **LBP 600 million** is the amount channeled to the Council for Development and Reconstruction to implement a project to restore and rehabilitate the Beiteddine Palace.
- ⊙ **LBP 450 million** is the amount channeled to the Higher Relief Council to pay for the expenses of National Tree Week.
- ⊙ **USD 21.3 million** is the cost of works to complete Nahr el-Maout's conversion road including the Metn's highway bridge. The number of cars that pass through the area daily is estimated at 250,000 vehicles.
- ⊙ **LBP 376.8 million** is the value of a grant offered to Indonesia after an earthquake in September 2009.
- ⊙ **LBP 75.3 million** is the value of a grant offered to the Ukraine to help combat the flu pandemic, including H1N1.
- ⊙ **LBP 750 million** is the amount allocated to organize celebrations on Independence Day in Lebanese embassies around the world in 2009.



Photo by Waddah Joma'a - 2009

Other publications by Information International and INMA (in Arabic):

- 1-Salaries and Remunerations in the Public Sector
- 2-Public Seaside Properties
- 3-Lebanon's Parliamentary History 1920-2000
- 4-Taxes and Fees
- 5-Lebanon in Figures 1992-2002
- 6-Lebanon in Figures 2003-2004
- 7-Lebanon in Figures 2005-2006
- 8-"I am Responsible, All of Us are Responsible"
- 9-"Our Environment is Our Home"
- 10-"My Society is My Responsibility"
- 11-"My Society is My Responsibility" Workbook
- 12-"I am a Student, I am a Citizen: Ways Towards State Building"
- 13-"I am a Student, I am a Citizen: Ways Towards State Building" Workbook
- 14-"Lebanon Wars, why?"
- 15-Discrimination in Lebanon
- 16-Lebanon's MPs and Lebanese Parliamentary Elections 1960 - 2009
- 17- 2009 Parliamentary Elections by ballot box, candidate and confession-North District
- 18- 2009 Parliamentary Elections by ballot box, candidate and confession-Beirut District
- 19- 2009 Parliamentary Elections by ballot box, candidate and confession-Mount Lebanon District
- 20- 2009 Parliamentary Elections by ballot box, candidate and confession-Beqa'a District
- 21- 2009 Parliamentary Elections by ballot box, candidate and confession-South and Nabatiyeh District



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Antoun Saadeh*:

A Biography Vol. II, Years of the French Mandate

After his first volume of the biography of Antoun Saadeh focusing on his youth, which was published in 2004, Salim Mujais, a Lebanese physician living in Chicago, published his second volume about al-Zai'm (the leader) which covers Saadeh's activities during the years of the French Mandate in present-day Syria and Lebanon. The author offers detailed and thoroughly researched story of a man who had a deep and radical revolutionary influence on the cultural and political life of the Arab east. Mujais describes Saadeh as the Diderot of his era who yearned for a change in the course of history while gathering for the first time a secret organization that he established in 1932, spanning across sectarian lines.

Saadeh's First years in Syria: Working for the target

Antoun Saadeh was born in 1904 in Dhour Shweir and spent his youth years in Brazil, helping his father Khalil Saadeh with his newspaper 'Al-Jaridah', and later the journal 'Al-Majallah' which both were published in Sao Paolo. In 1930, Saadeh returned to a Syria divided by the two colonial powers of the time, the United Kingdom and France. Saadeh's zeal for modernization and resolute devotion to initiate a national renaissance laying the foundations of independence and civil rights immune to political accidents and international alliances began then. After spending a year in Damascus writing articles for two Syrian papers, he began to contact the leaders of 'al-Kutlah al-Wataniyah' (the National Bloc) which was struggling against the French Mandate. He criticized the National Bloc's reactionary and conciliatory attitudes towards the mandate in several articles, especially their policy of fragmenting Syria in several sectarian states.

Saadeh returned to Lebanon, a new state created by France, and began teaching German at the American University of Beirut and Arabic to foreigners, many of whom were diplomats, in Beirut. The Social National Party: Promoting consciousness and liberating politics from ethnic and sectarian influence Starting by promoting his teachings secretly among college students without drawing the fire of the French Mandate, Saadeh founded the Social National Party (SNP) in 1932. He was able to formalize his principles of unification and independence of the Syrian people into a tangible political framework capturing members of different religious affiliations and forming institutions parallel to the state's.

Consecutive Arrests

The French authorities and its proxy, the Lebanese government, came to know about the party as of November 1934 from the President of the American University of Beirut, Bayard

Dodge. Saadeh was first apprehended in November 1935 after being accused of forming a military organization seeking to usurp the French Mandate. He was sentenced to 6 months imprisonment which he spent completing his influential work "Nushu' al-Umam" (The Rise of Nations), the macro-history of human civilization. Saadeh was released on May 12, 1936.

On June 1936, Saadeh published "al-Balagh al-Azraq" (The Blue Memorandum) where he asserted the danger of the French diplomacy and defied the separation of Lebanon from the rest of Syria. Again, Saadeh was arrested on June 26, 1936 after being accused of preparing for civil disobedience endangering French colonial plans supported by their allied president, Emile Eddeh. Saadeh was released on November 1936.

During this period, Saadeh undertook public visits enlarging the base of his Party. After a public meeting in Bekfaya in February 1937 which displayed the growing strength of the SNP, Saadeh was arrested for the third time on March 10. He then wrote the SNP anthem and his novel "Dumia" (Puppet), which was lost during his imprisonment.

Due to the forthcoming elections, the political necessity for a settlement between Saadeh and the government led to his release on May 15, 1937. Saadeh then declared public support to the government's candidates after the compromise that, among other things, allowed him to publish a daily newspaper, 'an-Nahda', and that guaranteed the end of persecutions of party members after the elections. Through an-Nahda, Saadeh expressed his strong opposition to the Zionist immigration and the settlements of southern Syria (present-day Israel). Before the beginning of the World War II, Saadeh had become a wanted man by the French Mandate. He therefore secretly left Beirut to Haifa, and left Syria again to Brazil and later Argentina, where he tapped into the Syrian Diaspora to expand the SNP's power and membership, and began publishing 'Az-Zawba'a' in Buenos Aires, the official newspaper of the SNP. Mujais's book is the first detailed biography of Saadeh sixty years after his assassination in Beirut on the 8th of July, 1949.

