

9th NDU International Film Festival 2015

Speech of Fr. Walid Moussa, O.M.M.

November 15, 2015

Your Excellency Minister of Culture,

Guest of Honor,

Distinguished Participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to welcome you here today. And to our guests from overseas, I say: Welcome to Notre Dame University-Louaize, and thank you for sharing with us our 9th International Film Festival “The Power of Youth”.

As you all have come here, and you represent a range of nationalities and a diverse array of cultures, it suggests to me that we are right to organize this festival that has become not only an annual tradition at our university, but also a benchmark for many in the film-making arena. In a week from today, as we celebrate Lebanon’s Independence, we cannot but ascertain the values that are associated with it. In this context, NDU has long gathered unto its students a set of values nurtured through the universal principles of human dignity, freedom, and tolerance, so their innate leadership may blossom in justice, truth, and love. For years, Lebanon has suffered a lot to gain independence. Lebanese have paid a heavy price in the face of occupation and terrorism. What happened three days

ago is but an example. Those and other events are meant to deepen the feeling of fear, uncertainty and even despair on the part of the Lebanese. But, because we enjoy the will-power, determination and courage to always strive for a better future, we shall prevail and never fall in despair. Another feature of Lebanon (and the Lebanese) is its international character. As a Lebanese university, our concern is to further exhibit this beautiful face of Lebanon in the world. To that end, we continue to forge links with the outside world. A central part of our Mission is to ensure that our students, our young emerging talents, continue to enjoy access to high-quality education and a global perspective that will contribute to their success once they leave NDU and embark on their professional careers. This evening, we take pride in what our graduates have achieved in their media studies, especially in film-making. Another significant part of our Mission is to show our students how to put their beliefs and ideas to work in the chaotic but wonderful world beyond the campus. Film-making is but a vehicle to that end. As President of this university, I am fortunate to have worked with faculty who took their mission so seriously to help each student build those abilities that make valuing and effective communication through film-making as important as social interaction, cultural dialogue, and ethics.

In closing, I would like to express my special appreciation and thanks to H.E. Mr. Raymond Arajji for his patronage. I also would like to congratulate our students and their faculty for being shining examples of the values instilled in them and which we hold so dear at NDU. Last but not least, a word of recognition goes to the Man whose imagination, consciousness and education enabled him to take

the Lebanese 'turath' (culture) into artistry. They say 'every challenge is an opportunity'. We, at NDU, believe in this motto; Mr. Abdel-Halim Caracalla does too believe that every challenge is an opportunity. He once said, "I always throw down a challenge to myself to create something new and so excel myself on each occasion." Today, we are privileged to honor him for his outstanding achievements. Also today, in my capacity as President of NDU, I want to renew our commitment to our students who call upon us to be more supportive. As always, we shall certainly answer the call.

Thank you