

Television's MBC 1 documents LERC and its activities

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Reported by Elie Nabhan

The pan-Arab news and entertainment satellite TV station, MBC 1, based in Dubai's Media City, with an estimated audience of around 130 million Arabic speakers, scheduled a visit to the Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) at Notre Dame University – Louaize (NDU) to film an episode for its morning program, *Sabah el kheir, Ya Arab*.

Backed by two camera men, the show's reporter, Mrs. Mirna Sarkis, sat down for an interview with Ms. Basma Abdel Khalek, LERC's Project Manager, who introduced the Center and answered her questions.

During the interview, Ms. Abdel Khalek explained to Mrs. Sarkis about the operations within LERC and gave a presentation of LERC's current projects, especially the research underway on citizenship entitled *Acquisition and Loss of Nationality: The Case of Lebanon*.

Ms. Abdel Khalek informed Ms. Sarkis about the other LERC projects underway, including *The Impact of the Global Financial Crisis on Lebanese Expatriates in the Gulf Countries; Impact of Naturalization on Employability, Social Mobility, and Economic Development of the Naturalized Kurds in Lebanon*, the book in the process of being printed on the Arabs in Cuba, the book in the making on out-of-country voting and the upcoming book on Lebanese *Zajal* that intends to highlight the most poignant and meaningful verses or poems that have as a theme the diaspora.

Mrs. Saliba was also introduced to all of LERC's publications including the Center's latest book *Our People* and NDU's Palma Journal special issue on Lebanese migration.

The camera was then turned onto Mrs. Liliane Haddad, Chief Indexer and Archivist at LERC, who explained the operations of the Lebanese Emigration Archives and Database and the variety of academic, historical and cultural material collected by the Center.



Mrs. L. Haddad with Mrs. M. Sarkis at the LEAD offices (Mar 2010).

Mrs. Sarkis was most interested in the history of Lebanese migration as documented through LERC's collection of old documents and photos. LERC's data concentrated on migration history were explained by Mrs. Haddad and photographed.

Mrs. Sarkis presented to the Center a letter from the United States Immigration and Naturalization Office addressed to the Sarkis family, dating from 1954, concerning applications for citizenship, and a response from the Assistant in the White House to the President of the United States, General Eisenhower, addressed to the Boutros Sarkis and dated February 7th 1958.

These, like other valuable documents, will be digitized and preserved in LERC's electronic archives.

The MBC 1 team was then taken on a tour of the Lebanon and Migration Museum at NDU, where more filming took place.



While filming at the Museum: Mr. E. Nabhan stands with Mrs. M. Sarkis (Mar 2010).



Filming at the Museum: Ms. B. Abdel Khalek (middle left) with the MBC 1 team (Mar 2010).