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Times Change. Values Don't.

The speech I delivered at this year's Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) Commencement Ceremony was inspired by the theme of the 25th "General Assembly of the International Federation of Catholic Universities" – an assembly in which I participated in Australia. I pondered over this theme and looked at it from a purely Lebanese perspective. I would like to share my thoughts with you in this message for the *e-Chronicle*.

In summary, I said that everything changes and nothing stands still — from politics and politicians to political parties, presidents, curricula, professors, methodologies, literature, and science — but values seldom change, and it is these values that we should all cling to.

The alarming fact of change, however, is that no one knows what tomorrow holds – be it changes in the sphere of global politics or the forced demographic remapping of the Middle East.

What will become of Lebanon? What will become of us?

Yes, times change, but the values that were instilled in us through our parents and our grandparents, and cultivated in education, are the pillars of determination and sturdiness. These values are as resilient as the cedars of Lebanon.

The values embedded in our contemporary society are the fruit of geography, history, and religious teachings. Lebanon's strategic location between the sea and the mountain; Lebanon's history, brimming with civilizations: Phoenician, Roman, Greek, Assyrian, Pharaonic, Persian, Arab, etc.; and Lebanon's religious teachings (both Christian and Muslim) combine to shape our values, which constitute the foundation of the Lebanese identity.

These values are: Courage; generosity; honesty; dignity; kindness; compassion; self-esteem; equality; freedom; openness; dialogue; respect for others... Our

values are concrete towers that stand clear in the face of changing times, and a source of pride - pride that cannot be measured with instruments or dislodged by trivial political feuds and futile sectarianism.

Today, challenges and pressures are mounting relentlessly through globalization; technology; extremism; violence; war; financial lure; lust; drugs; and folly. All these dangers threaten our genuine Lebanese values. I, therefore, call upon each individual to confront and triumph over these dangers, and keep alive the values that we have inherited.

At NDU, we fully embrace all these values, as our mission statement attests, and we are proud to say that our graduates not only receive an educational degree but also a degree immersed in morality and spirituality.



president's message

Father WALID MOUSSA

outreach

Dr. Eid Represents NDU at the Annual NAM Convention

Within the framework of the Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) mission to serve as a bridge of communication between Lebanon and the rest of the world, Dr. Assaad Eid, Assistant to the President for Planning and Development, represented from July 1-5, 2015 NDU President Fr. Walid Moussa at the 52nd Annual National Apostolate of Maronites (NAM) Convention, which was held in St. Maron Cleveland, Ohio, USA.

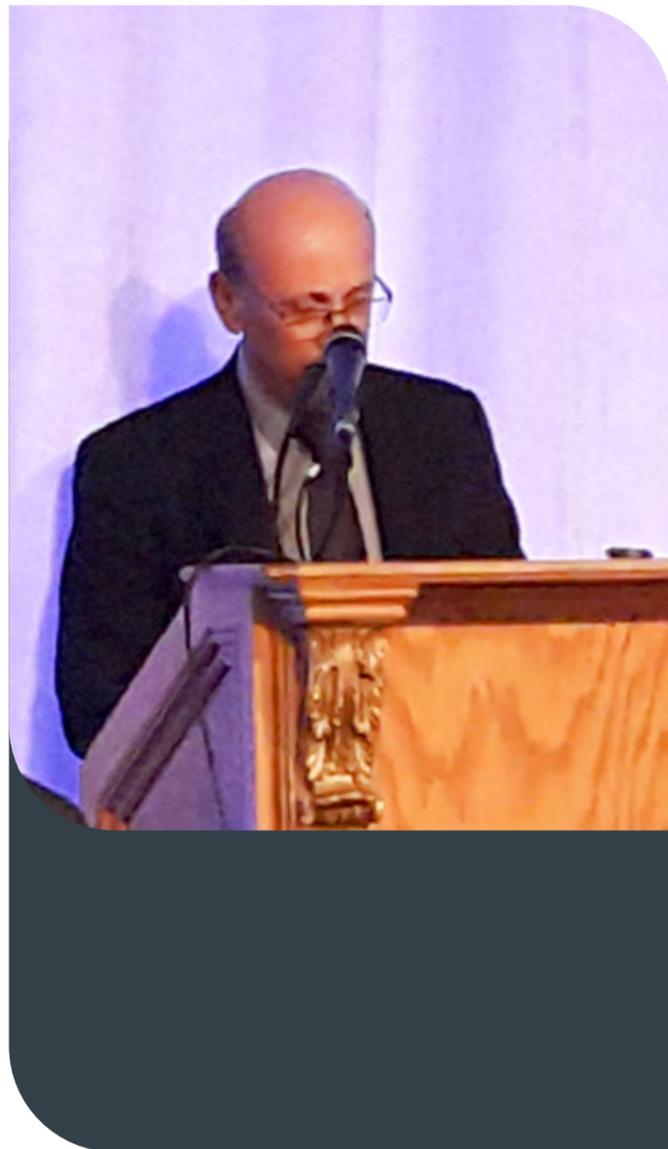
The NAM is the official lay apostolate of the Maronite Church of the USA. The only lay apostolate of its kind in the Maronite World, it was established in 1964 and has held a national convention every year since. NDU's regular participation further solidifies the University's image as the preeminent Maronite Catholic institution of higher education in Lebanon and the Middle East.

Dr. Eid gave two separate and well-received speeches at the convention. In both speeches, he shared a few thoughts on the 'how' NDU-Louaize may contribute to keeping the Maronite Community alive,



The Four Panelists (from left to right) Dr. Assaad Eid, Assistant to the President for Planning and Development; Mr. Toufic Baaklini, President of In Defense of Christians (IDC); Dr. Salim Sfeir, Chairman and CEO of Bank of Beirut; Father Hady Mahfouz, President of the Holy Spirit University Kaslik (USEK)

vital, and engaging amidst the perils and turmoil that engulf the Middle East region. He spoke of the most daunting challenge impacting the future of the Lebanese youth. The problem he said, "is neither the church nor the communities; it is the political circumstances in which we work". He went on to say that the role of the university "is to facilitate dialogue and prepare students for life in an increasingly complex society. We need to have faith in dialogue for it brings about hope. It is also essential in creating understanding, and understanding creates peace".



NDU Choir Perform Live at Carnegie Hall



The Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) Choir, led by Fr. Khalil Rahme, was hosted in June 2015 to perform at the prestigious Carnegie Hall, Manhattan, NY, USA.

One of the concert's main features was the singing of an Arabic hymn, performed for the first time, titled "Paul, the Prophet of Peace," written by Fr. Philip el-Hajj and composed by Eyad Kanaan and Fr. Rahme, who also conducted the orchestra.

This concert served to further elevate the pristine status of NDU in the U.S.



Two Murex D'Or for Waynon

Waynon, the feature film produced by NDU and directed by seven of its endowed students of Audio Visual Arts, won two awards at The Murex D'Or Ceremony on June 4, 2015: "Best Lebanese Feature Film" of 2014 and "Best Cinema Actress" for Diamand Abboud.

NDU believed in its students, and investing in them was a choice taken by the administration. This decision was rewarded with the numerous international and national awards received, and adding to this long list of success was the Murex D'Or recognition.

Congratulations NDU!



(From left) Mr. Sam Lahoud, Mr. Emile Chahine, Dr. Nicolas Khabbaz

NDU at the Grand Serail



The Community Service Office (CSO), a unit under the Student Affairs Office (SAO) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), actively represented NDU on April 29, 2015, at the Grand Serail in Beirut, following an invitation by Mrs. Lama Tammam Salam, wife of the current Lebanese prime minister, to a conference titled, "Volunteering Is For Everyone," as part of her wider initiative titled, "An Appointment at the Serail." Fifteen NDU students from various Faculties and academic backgrounds attended the conference. NDU was the only university with such a high number of representatives, prompting Mrs. Salam to take the time to discuss future endeavors with them.



“Hear Our Voices” Workshop

Five young female filmmakers from Lebanon (Manon Nammour, Lynn Dagher, and Ornella Maalouf from Notre Dame University-Louaize - NDU, Dana Atab from Lebanese-American University – LAU, and Sara Salloum from Lebanese International University - LIU) recently participated in Sweden in a filmmaking workshop titled, “Hear Our Voices.” Organized by the Division of Audio Visual Arts (DAVA), this activity is the result of collaboration between NDU International Film Festival (NDUIFF) and Malmo Arab Film Festival.

The five students traveled to Stockholm in a fully covered program by the Malmo Arab Film Festival. The Lebanese talents met five Swedish partners, and each group of two produced a short film in four days (concept, script, shooting, and editing), tackling subjects, such as gender equality, feminism, and women’s rights.

The final cut was screened at the Malmo Arab Film Festival in Stockholm. This was the third version of the same workshop (after collaborations with Egyptian and Jordanian students), and it was unanimously voted as the most successful one in terms of discipline, professionalism, and the high level of the final cut.

A special screening, which will be organized for the five short films during the 9th NDU International Film Festival this November.



campus activities

NDU Celebrates 28th Founders’ Day

Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) commemorated between Thursday, May 7, and Friday, May 8, 2015, its rich heritage and promising future in a series of special events especially organized for Founders’ Day 2015.

The celebrations, held at the Main Campus, were launched with the annual Founders’ Day address delivered by NDU President Fr. Walid Moussa in a speech titled, “*The University’s Role in Countering Violence and Terrorism.*” Present were administrators, faculty, staff, students, alumni, NDU friends, invited guests, and a host of public figures.

Fr. Moussa said, “We all stand here today to celebrate our University’s twenty-eighth anniversary and to turn the page to a new chapter in our history...”

He then moved on to assess today’s violent world and its negative impact on Lebanese youth. “The news we all read or hear form a picture that reveals genocides; kidnappings; murders; rapes; wars; embezzlements; displacements; diseases; and epidemics,” Fr. Moussa said.

Even mainstream films are awash with violent and offensive storylines, he noted.

Fr. Moussa went on to say, “Our children are being raised in a culture of violence. It is becoming clear that, in some schools and universities, students are increasingly demonstrating a lack of morals, values, and respect for their parents and for others... We should never again remain silent in the face of evil. It is our duty to address violence, and there is no better

place to address violence than in our institutions of higher learning; institutions where we can transform our classes, curricula, and halls to create platforms that advocate peace, love, and respect.”

Fr. Moussa finally invited his audience to “go back to the drawing board and work out a plan to raise our children with the values of love, freedom, and peace; rather, than violence and hate.”

“Once we reach this state of harmony, everything else is simply a detail,” he concluded.

Following the President’s address, the two-day celebrations, which included many guest celebrities, went into full swing and continued well into the night with the crowd only growing in numbers as the hours passed.



NDU Job Fair 2015

The Placement Office, a unit under the Office of Public Affairs and Communications at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), held from May 27 to 28, 2015, its annual Job Fair at the Main Campus. The Job Fair 2015 took place under the patronage of the Minister of Labor H.E. Mr. Sejaan Azzi.

The Job Fair 2015 brought together more than 60 leading companies and organizations, and featured a range of employers from diverse industries, including banks, insurance companies, contracting and engineering firms, computer and communications businesses, catering companies, hotels, schools, airlines, transportation businesses, retail and distribution firms, logistics, NGOs, libraries, etc.

This event gives NDU students, graduates, and alumni the opportunity to discuss with various company representatives career opportunities (from internships to seasonal, part-time, and full-time jobs).

Dr. Nada Saad Saber, Director of the Public Relations and Cultural Affairs at NDU, in an opening speech welcomed participants and stressed the importance of hosting this annual event, which opens new horizons to NDU graduates and alumni.

For her part, Mrs. Layal Nehme Matar, NDU Placement Officer, in her speech said, "NDU has worked hard to mould the souls and minds of its students. Our University's main concern is to instill in them the spirit of perseverance, and help them develop appreciation for beauty, truth, and hard work." She added that the Job Fair not only provides students with many opportunities but also helps pump new blood into the work environment.

Mr. Souhail Matar, Vice-President for Public Affairs and Communications at NDU, then took the podium to state that he felt saddened that students find themselves searching for jobs to no avail. He added that this situation is forcing students to leave the country in search of greener pastures and opening doors for foreigners to replace them. Mr. Matar surmised that this bleak outlook would continue unless a sound research study is done to determine the current trends of the Lebanese labor market.

NDU President Fr. Walid Moussa was determined to move forward in an era plagued with destruction and terrorism, murder and genocide, and ethnic and sectarian violence. Fr. Moussa in his speech said, "Our mission remains unyielding and we will continue without fear. Each year, we construct new buildings, launch new majors, and purchase new equipment... Those who plant the seeds of good will undoubtedly reap the fruit."

Minister Azzi also delivered a speech. In it, he said, "The complaints I receive from universities and students will continue to increase as long as there exists a presidential vacuum, not because having a president is the perfect solution, but because a president fills a void by attending to national and constitutional duties. This Fair is clear evidence that the NDU administration not only cares about educating its students but also cares about preparing their future. Today proves that the private sector is looking for new blood to develop their businesses - this is vital particularly since Lebanon is suffering from record unemployment rates. Although figures are relatively inaccurate, the Central Administration of Statistics (CAS) puts the unemployment rate at twenty-five percent compared with around eleven percent before the wave of Syrian refugees flooded the country. From the twenty-five percent of unemployed, thirty-six percent are youth, and graduates from institutions of higher education. These figures are alarming for a country like Lebanon."

The Minister also clarified that around 47,000 students graduate annually from universities while only 12,000 job opportunities are provided, which means that 35,000 students remain unemployed.

Mr. Azzi called on the public to support the Ministry of Labor by responding to the campaigns held against the Ministry for not granting work permits to foreigners. In so doing, the Ministry is not showing hate toward foreigners; rather, it is demonstrating love for its fellow citizens.

The Minister also noted that he had requested from several civil society organizations to assist the Ministry's inspectors in combating foreign labor, because the current number of inspectors is insufficient.



NDU Job Fair 2015

The Community Service Office (CSO) and the Student Affairs Office (SAO), in collaboration with Human Rights Club, launched between June 3 and 4, 2015, the NGO Fair 2015 at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) in the presence of Mrs. Lama Tamam Salam, the wife of current Lebanese Prime Minister Tamam Salam.

This annual event gathered 65 NGOs to join forces and work toward creating opportunities for everyone to volunteer, to commit, and to achieve a mission, but, most importantly, to work toward creating a sustainable civil commitment.

The NGO Fair 2015 aimed at celebrating 800 years since the signing of the Magna Carta given that this notable event signified the evolution of the concept of democracy and human rights across history, and also resembles the social and political situation in Lebanon today.

NDU President Fr. Walid Moussa delivered a speech in which he said, "We live in a state of amnesia and inhumanity, because humanity itself is taken advantage of and stained. This gathering, however, sheds light on human dignity." Fr. Moussa then asked students to make the most of this opportunity by exploring their humanitarian identity before striving toward fraternal unity.



Mrs. Salam praised the activities of NDU and said, "Community service in all its forms unites students to help them reach for the future. She added, "Those that give from their time grow morally." Mrs. Salam encouraged the student body to make the most out of this opportunity, because one day "the next generation will thank you for what you have done."

The presence of British Ambassador to Lebanon Mr. Tom Fletcher concluded the NGO Fair on the second day. For his part, he said, "My dream is to see Lebanon go back to being an inspiration." He encouraged students to "make the most of the Lebanese heritage, because the solutions to the problems that this country faces don't come from ambassadors but from each and every one of us." Mr. Fletcher then proceeded to ask three questions: "First, we need to reconsider the Magna Carta's role in redefining the relationship between the King and his subjects, and how does that apply to the Middle East? How can Lebanon reclaim the pristine reputation it had since the establishment of the first School of Law? Do we need a new Magna Carta for the internet era?"

A Q&A session with Mr. Fletcher, students, and NGO representatives followed.



Cecil Hourani's Conference on Charles Malik

The Institute of Lebanese Thought (ILT), in collaboration with the Faculty of Law and Political Science (FLPS), at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), organized on May 4, 2015, at the Issam Fares Conference Hall an interactive lecture between Cecil Hourani and Tony Nasrallah titled, "*Recollections of Charles Malik*." The lecture revolved around Professor Charles Malik (1906-1987).

President of NDU Fr. Walid Moussa delivered the opening speech. In his welcome address, Fr. Moussa said, "This is an occasion to recognize one of our major figures in philosophy and political science: Charles Malik. I will leave it to our guest speaker, Cecil Hourani, to give us a vivid picture on the author of *Al-Muquaddima*, and the co-author of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights."

Fr. Moussa also elaborated on the identity and vision of the Institute of Lebanese Thought (ILT). He said, "The ILT is a new body at NDU, which is tasked with preserving the works of prominent Lebanese figures, such as Charles Malik, the subject of our meeting today. The ILT is an inter-disciplinary body working on publications and other academic activities to explore a range of themes pertaining to the study of Lebanese culture and heritage as reflected in Lebanese literature, history, theology, philosophy, political science, and other aspects related to the characteristics of Lebanon, past and present."

Dr. Ameen A. Rihani, Director of the ILT, introduced and welcomed the main speaker, Mr. Cecil Hourani. Rihani highlighted the guest's diplomatic and cultural role in such positions as advisor of the Tunisian President Habib Bourguiba (1903-2000), as head of the Arab Office in Washington D.C., as founder of the International Cultural Center in Tunisia, as well as a philosophy lecturer at the American University of Beirut (AUB), where Malik was forming the philosophy department in the 1930s.

Hourani spoke extensively of the intellectual, philosophical, and political dimensions in Malik's thought, since the days he studied philosophy under Martin Heidegger in Germany and under Whitehead in the United States. Hourani also discussed Malik's founding of the Lebanese embassy in Washington D.C. and his diplomatic contributions to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and his presidency over the UN General Assembly. Malik's local role as a foreign minister of Lebanon also received a share of the discussion.

Hourani synthesized the main philosophical and theological thought in a dialogue form and in a series of questions Tony Nasrallah addressed to him. The session was illustrated by slides displaying manuscript pages from Malik's hitherto unpublished diaries and other archives. Nasrallah is currently editing and preparing these documents for a series of publications sponsored by the ILT.

The session then proceeded to a Q&A forum, reflecting a genuine interest of the audience in Malik's politics, philosophy, and theology. The audience combined students with faculty, from NDU's campus as well as from other universities. The session equally attracted an audience from Malik's village in North Lebanon to Hourani's town at the southern border of the country, as well as many other spots in between. The ILT announced its plan of publishing its first book on Malik in a year's time, which will inaugurate a series of publications on Malik in both Arabic and English.



Mr. Cecil Hourani



Dr. Ameen Rihani, Director of Institute of Lebanese Thought (ILT)



From left to right Mr. Tony Nasrallah and Mr. Cecil Hourani

Charles Malik (1906-1987) was a Lebanese philosopher, diplomat, and politician. Malik was a Distinguished Professor of philosophy at the American University of Beirut (AUB), and he was the founder of the philosophy department there. He earned his PhD from Harvard by studying under Heidegger in Germany and Whitehead in the USA, and was later conferred no less than 60 honorary doctoral degrees from various European and North American Universities. Malik was one of the main framers of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, and he presided over the UN General Assembly, the UN Security Council, and the UN Economic and Social Council. He also served as Lebanon's Minister of Foreign Affairs. Malik kept a private diary which piled up to 35,000 pages. NDU'S *Institute of Lebanese Thought* has showed great interest in housing his archive and publishing his heritage.

Cecil Hourani was a diplomat since the 1940s. In his fabulous autobiography, *An Unfinished Odyssey*, one reads about his interactions with heads of states as well as with great scholars. His thrilling story takes the reader from Manchester (where he was born and brought up) to Oxford (from where he graduated) to Beirut (where he taught) to Egypt (helped the British during World War II) to New York and Washington (as a diplomat) to Tunisia (where he was the adviser of the Tunisian president for a decade) to Jordan and back to London where he now settles. Hourani is the brother of the historian Albert Hourani, and is the grandfather of Skandar Keynes, the famous actor who played the role of Prince Edmond in *The Chronicles of Narnia*. The newly-elected president of AUB, Fadlo Khuri, is the great nephew of Hourani.

Tony Nasrallah works at the ILT as Assistant Research Affiliate responsible for researching, editing, and introducing the manuscripts of Charles Malik, and getting them ready for publication. He is right now completing his PhD dissertation on Malik's thought and heritage.

Inter-University Workshop: "Threats to Lebanon's Stability and Security" with U.N. Special Coordinator for Lebanon Ms. SIGRID KAAG

The Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) Department of Government and International Relations at the Faculty of Law and Political Science (FLPS) and the NDU Human Rights Club organized on Thursday, May 21, 2015, an inter-university workshop titled, "Threats to Lebanon's Stability and Security." The workshops brought together students from four different Lebanese universities to debate diverse issues related to the subject in question and discuss their findings and recommendations with U.N. Special Coordinator for Lebanon Ms. Sigrid Kaag.

Some 75 students from the American University of Beirut (AUB), the American University of Science and Technology (AUST), La Sagesse University (ULS), and NDU, were divided into groups, each tackling a different topic, with professors and/or graduate students moderating the discussions. A student in each working group was chosen as secretary to take notes and report on the results reached in the plenary session.

Once deliberations were concluded, an open talk took place with Ms. Kaag, moderated by renowned journalist Mr. Bassam Bou Zeid. The groups shared the results of their discussions with Ms. Kaag who, in turn, addressed their concerns, responded to their recommendations, and answered their questions.

The discussions during the workshop tackled the main threat to Lebanon's stability and security, namely:

- 1- **The implications of the Syrian crisis:** The group discussed the Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon and its impact on the country's security and stability.
- 2- **Instability of the southern borders:** Students shed light on the Israeli violations of the U.N. resolutions, the role that the U.N. plays in peacekeeping, the security threats posed on the entirety of the Lebanese territory, the oil and gas sector, and healthcare problems.

- 3- **Political deadlock and economic downward spiral:** The two topics were discussed jointly because of their correlation; students linked the deterioration in economic activity in Lebanon to the political stalemate that has gripped the country for months. The paralyzed parliament and the presidential vacuum were also addressed as contributors to the worsening state of the Lebanese economy.
- 4- **Corruption and non-existent rule of law:** The group underlined that the deeply-rooted corruption in all governmental institutions is impeding the application of the rule of law.
- 5- **Lack of respect for human rights:** The discussion centered on the disregard of human rights in the practices of the Lebanese authorities. The group presented recommendations on how the U.N. might push for a better implementation of previously agreed upon human rights obligations.

Following the open discussion, the FLPS presented Ms. Kaag with an honorary trophy after which everyone gathered to share an informal lunch.

Overall, this event was a valuable experience for NDU students. The format of bringing together students from other universities was also efficient in helping students build networks among one another and in helping them compare their knowledge and discuss issues of common interest so that common ground can be found.



Ms. Sigrid Kaag, UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon





FLPS Hosts EU - University Debate: "Evaluating the Work of the EU in Lebanon" -DALIA ATALLAH*

As part of the "University Debate" series organized by the EU Delegation to Lebanon, the Department of Government and International Relations (GIR) of the Faculty of Law and Political Science (FLPS), Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) and the NDU Student Union organized on June 10, 2015, a panel tackling the role played by the EU in promoting and contributing to political reform in Lebanon.

The guest speakers included a number of European ambassadors namely, H.E. Ambassador Angelina Eichhorst, Head of the EU Delegation to Lebanon, H.E. Rolf Michael Hay Pereira Holmboe, Ambassador of Denmark to Lebanon and Jordan and Head of Mission to Damascus, and H.E. Alex Lenaerts, Ambassador of Belgium to Lebanon. The panel also included Rev. Prof. Fadi Daou, Chairperson and CEO of ADYAN Foundation, and two students from the department, Ms. Rita Abou Mrad and Ms. Joelle Harfouche, who gave their opinions on the issue by highlighting both the positive and negative points respectively. The first student started by citing the accomplishments made by the EU in Lebanon in different sectors and across several fields, while the second voiced criticism for lack of monitoring and evaluation of EU funds, and claimed that EU efforts have fallen short of achieving significant, tangible change.

Chairperson of the GIR Department Dr. Elie el-Hindy moderated the debate. The audience included a large number of diplomats from the embassies of Australia, Romania, and Greece, as well as speakers, interested guests, scholars, civil society activists, and students. EU Ambassador Eichhorst commented on the positive and the negative points brought up by the students, followed by remarks from both the ambassadors of Denmark and Belgium respectively. The three diplomats went on to answer a series of questions from the audience, which was mainly made up of NDU students, as both sides debated openly and frankly the EU's development projects and the steps to be taken in order to achieve better results.

This debate was yet another event by the Department of GIR and the FLPS, aiming at engaging the youth in political matters crucial to their country's development and helping them voice their opinions and recommendations to higher authorities for a chance to proactively make a change in society.



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The **NDU** Chronicle
is an e-bulletin published by
Notre Dame University -
Louaize, Lebanon

Editor
Mario Najm

Design and Layout
NDU | DBGO Design & Brand
Guardian Office

