



**AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY
OF BEIRUT**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AUB awards Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters to Ghassan Abu-Sittah, Arundhati Roy, and Darren Walker this June

President of the American University of Beirut (AUB) Fadlo Khuri announced that during AUB's 155th commencement exercises on June 7 and 8, 2024, three exceptional individuals will be awarded the university's highest form of recognition, the Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters, for their outstanding leadership and service that have left an indelible mark across various global domains.

"These luminaries embody values we cherish at AUB, demonstrating that principled, compassionate, innovative thinking and decisive humanitarian action can profoundly impact societies, even in the face of adversity. Their recognition reaffirms our unwavering dedication to fostering progressive thought, transformative initiatives, and sustainable solutions that positively impact lives worldwide," Khuri said. He continued presenting surgeon Ghassan Abu-Sittah, author Arundhati Roy, and philanthropic leader Darren Walker:

"Ghassan S. Abu-Sittah, a prominent war surgeon known for his courage and humanitarianism in volunteering to treat war-injured patients across the Arab region for decades, is a multi-award-winning authority in conflict medicine, plastic and reconstructive aesthetic surgeon, and professor, renowned for his firm stance for human rights, freedom, and justice. While serving as physician and professor in clinics and universities such as AUB, he has treated the injured in war zones in Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, and Gaza, where he was besieged with physician and nursing colleagues for 43 days in the now destroyed al-Ahli and Shifa hospitals. A genuine hero whose courage has been witnessed the world over for the last decade and a half, he has never shied away from serving where the need is greatest."

"Arundhati Roy, an emblem of intellectual courage, has influenced literary and socio-political spheres. Initially an architect, actress, screenplay writer, and production designer, winning the National Film Award for her screenplay *In Which Annie Gives It Those Ones*, her literary breakthrough came with the Booker Prize-winning novel *The*

American University of Beirut

PO Box 11-0236, Riad El Solh, Beirut 1107 2020, Lebanon
T +961 1 35 00 00 – Ext 2650 | communications@aub.edu.lb

aub.edu.lb

God of Small Things. She has written extensively on socio-political issues, championing anti-globalization and critiquing global capitalism, neo-imperialism, the Hindu caste system and nationalism, among other local and global issues. Actively supporting various causes, she has refused awards to protest injustices, affirming her commitment to advocacy. She is a beacon of human kindness and empathy in a world badly in need of such role models.”

“Darren Charles Walker, president of the Ford Foundation, is a preeminent leader in philanthropy and societal development, renowned for his dynamic leadership and unwavering commitment to fostering equality and innovation. Celebrated for his powerful and transformative impact in the fields of social justice and philanthropy, he sheds light on global troubles while both leading and inspiring meaningful action worldwide. Author and active member of many prestigious international organizations, his work emphasizes the importance of justice and inclusivity, as he has shaped grant-making strategies focusing on education, creativity, and free expression. His courage in responding to the needs of those less fortunate marks him as a standard bearer across several fields.”

“With immense pride, we welcome these visionary leaders and role models into the esteemed circle of AUB’s honorary doctorate degree recipients. They serve not only as beacons of achievement and empowerment but also as inspirations for new generations committed to making meaningful impacts for a better future for all,” Khuri concluded.

ENDS

For more information please contact:

Simon Kachar, PhD
Executive Director of Communications
Lecturer – Political Studies and Public Administration Department
Founding Director – Good Governance and Citizenship Observatory
Fellow – Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs

T +961 1 37 43 74 Ext: 2676 | M +961 3 42 70 24
sk158@aub.edu.lb

Note to Editors

About AUB

Founded in 1866, the American University of Beirut bases its educational philosophy, standards, and practices on the American liberal arts model of higher education. A teaching-centered research university, AUB has more than 750 full-time faculty members and a student body of over 8000 students. AUB currently offers more than 120 programs leading to bachelor’s, master’s, MD, and PhD degrees. It provides medical education and training to students from throughout the region at its Medical Center that includes a full-service 365-bed hospital.

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