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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AUB Honors Alumna, Trustee Emerita, and Benefactor Hutham S. Olayan with University Medal

The American University of Beirut (AUB) honored alumna, trustee emerita, and benefactor Hutham S. Olayan with the University Medal, the university's highest award, at a special Board of Trustees dinner at the University Club in New York City.

After welcoming trustees, distinguished guests, friends of AUB, and members of Olayan's family, Chair of the AUB Board of Trustees Abdo George Kadifa spoke of Olayan's remarkable and enduring dedication to the university. He described her as a steadfast champion of AUB whose leadership, service, and generosity have helped shape its future.

Hutham Olayan's relationship with AUB began when she was an undergraduate and continued through the alumni community. In 1993, as Lebanon emerged from years of war and AUB undertook the work of rebuilding, she joined the AUB Board of Trustees. At the time, she wrote that AUB would be "needed more than ever" and expressed her hope of helping build upon its "legacy of greatness."

Over more than two decades of board service, Olayan became one of AUB's most essential and trusted leaders. She served as vice chair and co-chair, led the Trusteeship Committee, helped personally recruit new trustees, and facilitated several major gifts to the university. Her commitment, counsel, and stewardship were especially important to the growth of the Suliman S. Olayan School of Business, named for her father.

The evening also recalled a poignant chapter in Olayan's AUB story. Though she graduated in 1975, her commencement was canceled because of the war. Nearly three decades later, at the business school's first commencement under the Olayan name, she spoke of the joy of finally experiencing an AUB graduation and seeing Beirut, Lebanon, and the university "not just alive and well, but fully resurgent."

AUB President Fadlo Khuri read the official commendation, recognizing Olayan's extraordinary leadership, unwavering devotion, transformative contributions, and more than three decades of service and philanthropy. Kadifa then presented her with the University Medal.

In her remarks, Olayan said the recognition was especially meaningful because her father, Suliman S. Olayan, had received the same honor 26 years earlier. She added that it serves "as a reminder that [the Olayan Group's] belief in this university—and in Beirut's brightest light—will never dim."

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The celebration was a warm tribute to an AUB leader whose wisdom, constancy, and loyalty have left a lasting mark on the university and its community.

E N D S

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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 800 full-time faculty members and a student body of over 9,700 students. AUB currently offers more than 140 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, which includes a full-service 365-bed hospital.

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