FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

<u>New Ayman and Sawsan Asfari Institute Building opened</u>

The American University of Beirut celebrated the opening of the Ayman and Sawsan Asfari Institute Building, hosting the Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship. Present at the opening reception and dinner were members of the Board of Trustees, the Asfari family, university faculty and administration, and friends of the American University of Beirut and the Asfari Institute.

"Over the past decade, the Asfari Institute has established itself as a thriving regional hub serving the growing ecosystem of civil society, building bridges between academia and activism," said President of the American University of Beirut Fadlo Khuri. "It is our shared mission□to continue to strengthen the voice of the vibrant and vital civil society in our region, championing tolerance, dignity, and human rights for all which drives us."

American University of Beirut Trustee Ayman Asfari and his wife Sawsan co-founded the Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship at the university in 2012, at a time of unprecedented social and political transition. Today, the institute has become a regional hub that mobilizes the production, exchange, and dissemination of knowledge to shape citizenship in the Arab world. The Asfari family has supported many initiatives at AUB, personally, through the Asfari Foundation, or through Trustee Asfari's company Petrofac. They have contributed to enhancing financial aid, student scholarships, the Asfari Institute, and support for patients and students of different initiatives and funds.

"We are extremely fortunate to be in a place like the American University of Beirut opening a space like the Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship, which is able to make a powerful impact in the region at a time when it is going through severe crises. This is the role of both the university and the Institute," said Director of the Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship Lina Abou-Habib. "The Asfari Institute is an integral part of the AUB community. Its mission is to serve an emerging and inclusive

civil society ecosystem in the region, and, in doing so, amplify the outreach of AUB as well as its core values of diversity, equality, inclusion, and dignity and rights for all".

Refurbished and extended, the historic building holds classrooms, a state-of-the art conference hall, two floors that host the administrative team at the Office of the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, a podcast and filming studio with a conference room, and a classroom.

"As a beacon of light in a sea of darkness, and with its goal to serve Lebanon and the region through its outreach initiatives like the Asfari Institute, the American University of Beirut can produce many such beacons so that we may progress from despair to hope, a transformation our people have long awaited and truly deserve," said Trustee Ayman Asfari.

E N D S

For more information please contact:

Simon Kachar, PhD
Interim Director of the Office of Communications
Director of News and Media Relations

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 800 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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