

For Immediate Release



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AUB Global Alliance on War, Conflict, and Health launch

An online event to mark the launch of the Global Alliance on War, Conflict, and Health was organized by the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) at the American University of Beirut (AUB) in collaboration with the University of Southampton and People's Health Movement. The event was attended by policy makers, researchers, academicians, humanitarian workers, and changemakers in health science.

The foundations of the alliance were established in June 2018 when a meeting, under the leadership of the AUB-Lancet Commission on Syria, brought together over 20 local, regional, and international experts in the field of war, conflict, and health. The meeting helped to take stock of the field, identify critical gaps and key priorities, and outline a way forward. As of July 2022, the alliance has over 100 institutional members including academic institutions, humanitarian NGOs, research centers, networks, associations, civil society groups, and private sector entities. The alliance will soon open membership to individuals.

The launch event was moderated by Arwa Damon, founder and CEO of INARA, and former CNN international correspondent. Speakers included Dr. Fadlo Khuri, AUB president; Dr. Pierre Somse, minister of health of the Central African Republic; and Dr. Ahmed Al-Mandhari, regional director of WHO EMRO Office.

In his speech, Dr. Al-Mandhari highlighted the niche of the alliance. “The only way to tackle the massive health challenges conflict and insecurity bring is to work together,” he said. “The Global Alliance on War, Conflict, and Health is a welcome new platform for such work, bringing together a large and diverse membership. It is a global resource that can greatly benefit the Eastern Mediterranean region.”

Dr. Somse's speech stressed the importance of working together to combat the negative effects of war. “War is a public health emergency,” he said. “This alliance is a call for solidarity and action. It is about bringing together the expertise of different stakeholders from the south and north to work together, to share the experiences, and to advocate for resources to strengthen the health systems of countries affected by war.”

The alliance secretariat was represented by its co-chairs and presentations from alliance institutional members showcased the practical aspects of the pillars of the alliance.

“I am looking forward to hearing what we will arrive at today,” said Dr. Fadlo Khuri in his speech at the launch. “Moving forward – at the American University of Beirut that has lived through wars and has been profoundly affected by wars and conflict – we recognize our responsibilities, and I assure you that AUB will always be committed to this just and critical cause and to causes of peace, justice, and health for all.”

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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 900 full-time faculty members and a student body of about 9,500 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 that includes a full-service 365-bed hospital.

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