

For Immediate Release



AUB-led e-government workshop underscores private-public cooperation to establish digital services and enhance transparency

Beirut, Lebanon- 19/04/2012 - The American University of Beirut has offered its academic and research expertise to the Lebanese government to help it develop an effective e-government program.

This announcement came at the end of a special e-government workshop which was held on April 18, 2012 at Gefinor-Rotana Hotel, grouping together members of the private and public sectors as well as international experts on e-government.

Organized by the Suliman S. Olayan School of Business at AUB, the workshop was a sponsored activity of two AUB-led projects: the I-MEET project, by the Qatar National Research Fund and the CEES project, funded by the European Union FP7 (Seventh Framework Program) which supports research and technology.

AUB Professor Ibrahim Osman, an expert on business information and decision systems, is the lead investigator for both projects which also include two international academics (Brunel University in the United Kingdom and Qatar University) and three industrial partners (OMSAR, ictQatar and Turksat).

I-MEET, a three-year project launched in 2009, stands for "An Integrated-Model for Evaluating E-government services Transformation," while the three-year CEES project stands for "Citizen-oriented Evaluation of E-Government Services and was launched in 2010.

The April 18 workshop highlighted the importance of e-government services in order to improve the relationship between the state and the citizen, enhance economic growth by leveraging innovation talent and technological capability, while increasing transparency and citizen participation in the decision-making process. The workshop included speakers from the ICT strategic unit at the Prime Minister's office, OMSAR, Microsoft, Booz &Co, United Nations ESCWA, and the British Embassy.

The workshop concluded that AUB will help the Lebanese government in developing and transforming traditional services to online versions. An AUB team of experts will provide academic support to the national public-private advisory strategic unit. It will also help establish a performance delivery assessment unit and provide tools to measure the success of e-

services. An AUB team will also offer training and capacity building to the government and it will work to raise awareness about the importance of adopting e-government here in Lebanon.

On the other hand, workshop participants urged the government to implement a series of measures to create an enabling environment for an e-government program.

These include:

- empowering the telecommunication regulatory agency to ensure fair competition among the competing firms to bring the prices down and save scarce government funds.
- expediting the approval of the e-government and ICT law which has been held up in Parliament.
- setting up a performance delivery and management control unit to manage transformational change.
- committing to implementing digital identity cards to facilitate access to e-commerce and e-government services.
- collaborating with other neighboring governments to bring down the costs of satellite technology.
- strengthening telecommunications and wireless infrastructure

ENDS

PHOTO CAPTION [L-R]: Osman, OSB Dean George Najjar, Salam Yamout [PCM], AUB Provost Ahmad Dallal and British Ambassador Tom Fletcher

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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 600 full-time faculty members and a student body of about 8,000 students. AUB currently offers more than 100 programs leading to the 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 420-bed hospital.

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