

For Immediate Release



## **AUB to hold a panel discussion on the prospects of democratic transitions following recent Arab uprisings**

Beirut, Lebanon- 16/05/2012 - The American University of Beirut and the Global Development Network are holding a panel discussion entitled "The Road to Democracy: The Arab Region, Latin America and Eastern Europe," on May 18, 2012, 4:00 - 7:00 pm, in College Hall, Auditorium B1.

### **More about the panel discussion**

After decades of authoritarian rule, the popular uprisings of Tunisia and Egypt (January 2011) appear to have opened the door for a potential democratic transformation not only in these two countries but also in the Arab region as a whole. This, of course, remains to be seen.

In their aftermath, the following political picture in the region has so far emerged:

(1) Popular and/or armed uprisings have occurred in Libya, Bahrain, Yemen and Syria. In the case of Libya, Western military intervention played a decisive role in toppling the Qathafi regime, while in the case of Bahrain; Saudi military intervention has played a crucial role in preserving the regime. In Yemen, after a prolonged period of mass protests and military conflicts, a new president was elected, but national reconciliation is yet to be achieved. And in Syria the outcome of popular peaceful demonstrations against the regime that turned into armed upheavals remains uncertain.

(2) In the other Arab countries, threatening mass movements do not seem to be in the making, and, for the time being at least, the surviving autocratic regimes are not in imminent danger of being overthrown.

With the above in mind, the panel will assess the prospects for democratic transition in the Arab region in light of the lessons to be learnt from the recent uprisings with a focus on Tunisia and Egypt, and against the experience of democratic transformation in Latin America and Eastern Europe.

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### **Agenda**

Opening remarks:

Professor Samir Makdisi, Professor Emeritus of Economics, AUB

Welcome remarks:

Dr. Ahmad Dallal, Provost, AUB

Dr. Gerardo della Paolera, President, Global Development Network

Moderator:

Professor Samir Makdisi, AUB

**Panelists:**

Professor Boris Vujici, Deputy Governor, Croatia National Bank and GDN Board of Directors

Professor Torcuato Di Tella, Ambassador of Argentina to Italy

Dr. Noha El-Mikawy, Regional Representative for the Middle East and North Africa, The Ford Foundation

Professor Moez Labidi, Professor of Economics, University of Monastir, Tunisia

**Discussant:**

Mr. Rami Khoury, Director, Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs, AUB

**Schedule:**

4:00 - 4:30 pm Welcome coffee

4:30 - 6:00 pm Session in progress

6:00 - 7:00 pm Open discussion and wrap up

ENDS

**For more information please contact:**

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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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