

Address of the Professor Salim Daccache s.j., Rector of the University Saint Joseph University of Beirut, in the ceremony of launching two new master's degree by the Institute of Business Management of USJ, 27 July 2017, at the François Bassil Auditorium, Campus of Sport and Innovation.

Your Excellency M. Avedis Guidinian, Minister of Tourism,
Mr Nizar Alouf, representing the President of the Syndicate of Hotel Owners,
Mrs Maya Bekhazi Noun, General Secretary of the Syndicate of Owners of Restaurants, Cafés, Night Clubs and Pastries,
Mrs Joumana Dammous Salamé, Director-General of Hospitality Services, our Media partner,
Dear ladies and gentlemen Vice rectors, Deans and Directors
Mr Joe Chehab, Director of the Institute of Business Administration,

Dear Friends,

We are honored, your Excellency, by your presence and patronage today at the launching of these new two Master's degree, that was developed by the Department of Hotel Management at the Institute of Business Administration at our University. It is a joy to welcome you to this event, which is not like any other one, since this is the birth of two Masters Degrees: one in Hospitality Management, Luxury and Lifestyle and another one in Lebanese and Mediterranean Gastronomy and Lifestyle.

As I congratulate the team of professors who developed these Masters Degrees in an original and relevant way, I would like to make four quick comments:

- The first is that the objective of these new two programs is to stay in tune with an ever-changing hotel and restaurant market that needs advanced skills. Yesterday I was discussing with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Majid al Futaim Group, who assured me that there is little Lebanese expertise in this field and that if he is given fifty Master's graduates he will make use of their expertise right away. Lebanon can

prepare for the right skills in this area and our University has taken up the challenge to do so.

- My second comment is that this kind of advanced scientific program that trains for Masters in the fields of hospitality and culinary art needs, for sure, the support of partners from the professional world to ensure its success because it is a theoretical and practical program at the same time. It will succeed to the extent that it will be supported by our partners and to the extent that our future students will be able to have their practicums with the best Chefs and specialists.
- The third comment concerns the language of instruction for this program. By choosing English, which has become the most widely used language in business, we do not deny the Francophone identity of the University, knowing well that the Francophonie admits language pluralism. Our vision in developing programs using the English language is part of the USJ Vision 2025, the year the University will celebrate its 150 years of foundation. In fact, the culinary art says that even if the language of this Master's degree is English, we know well that it will be close to French since the terminology of culinary art and luxury products is French.
- Finally, it is on the basis of international and inter-academic partnerships such as the agreement signed by the hospitality industry with the Institute Paul Bocuse Worldwide Alliance, that this program will have nobility, since the very beginning, and a solid foundation to be credible and operational.

I renew my congratulations and I wish a formidable success to these Masters' programs built on the Lebanese knowledge and know-how.