



## IFI moves into its New Home

In its **Inaugural Month of May**, to mark its move into its permanent home on campus, the Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs showcased the wide variety of its research areas and partner organizations by hosting many events, highlighting IFI's position among the leading policy research institutes in the Arab world. The Inaugural Month culminated in IFI officially opening its new Zaha Hadid-designed home with a lively ceremony on May 29, attended by over 450 distinguished guests. The official opening of IFI's permanent home, broadcast live on several Lebanese TV stations, was attended by AUB Board of Trustee Member Mr. Michael Fares, son of H.E. Issam Fares, in addition to many AUB Board of Trustee Members, AUB's senior administration, Lebanese ministers and MPs, Lebanon's diplomatic corps, and many other dignitaries. H.E. Issam Fares, unable to attend in person, commented in a video message broadcast at the event: "We must strive harder to develop credible and effective institutions that initiate ideas, produce knowledge, and contribute to global policy debates that aim to promote peace and prosperity".

### Inaugural Events in the Month of May

#### Climate Change and Transportation



IFI's Climate Change and Environment in the Arab World Program held a conference entitled "**Building the Case for Sustainable Transportation in the Arab World**", with the aim of presenting sustainable transport modes, systems and strategies for the Arab region.

#### Impact of Syrian Refugee Crisis in Lebanon



IFI's Refugee Research and Policy in the Arab World Program held a one-day Policy Forum (part of a wider series) "**Addressing the Impact of the Syrian Refugee Crisis on Lebanon**". This interdisciplinary approach to the refugee crisis brought together AUB researchers, government officials, civil society actors and UN representatives to discuss a variety of dimensions of the crisis.

Media: [LBCI](#) | [Al-Akhbar](#)

#### Social Justice: Use and Misuse of Public Space



IFI's Social Justice and Development Policy in the Arab World research initiative hosted an event entitled "**The Making and Reclaiming of Communal Spaces in Beirut: The Story of the Dalieh**". Ms. **Abir Saksouk-Sasso** discussed the contested use and misuse of public space in Beirut.

Media coverage: [Al-Akhbar](#)

#### Changing Order and Disorder in the Region



The changes that are taking place in the region, creating new power balances with many repercussions, was one of the themes discussed by IFI and the **Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS)** in a panel discussion entitled "**The Changing Order and Disorder in the Arab Region**". IFI and DIIS also held a roundtable to launch a two-year joint research project that will result in a book, and a conference in Copenhagen.

#### UN & Human Rights



IFI's UN in the Arab World Program held a talk entitled "**The UN in the Arab region: The Human Rights Agenda Reconsidered**" by senior UN civil servant Mr. **John Pace**. He provided an insight into the theoretical debate pertaining to human rights studies in the region. A photo exhibition focusing on the UN's activities in Lebanon since 1945 was also launched.

#### Syria Chemical Weapons



A closed-door discussion among IFI-AUB faculty and Ms. **Sigrid Kaag**, Head of the Joint Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons - United Nations Mission for the Destruction of Syria's Chemical Weapons, focused on the progress to rid Syria of its chemical weapon materials and lessons that can be learned from this critical operation.

#### Indian Views on the Region



IFI, in collaboration with AUB's Department of Political Studies and Public Administration, organized a roundtable with India's former Ambassador **K. P. Fabian** and IFI-AUB faculty, discussing the ambassador's experiences as a diplomat, his insights on Indian foreign policy and Indian politics, and the ongoing developments in the Arab world.

#### Human Rights in the Arab World



IFI's Research, Advocacy, and Public Policy-making Program hosted a closed-door workshop to discuss human rights activism in light of recent political upheavals. This event is part of a two-year research project with Lund University in Sweden.

#### Role and Impact of Arab Think Tanks



IFI's Research, Advocacy and Public Policy-making Program launched the monograph: "**Overview of Policy Research Institutes in the Arab World, 2010-2014**", with IFI's Dr. **Hana El-Ghali**, IDRC Regional Director Dr. **Bruce Currie-Alder**, and AUB's Dr. **Fadi Al-Jardali**. The monograph reviews the last four years of IFI research on the role and impact of PRIs and research centers in the region.

#### IFI Open House



IFI opened its building for all those interested to visit and discover this unique new addition to the AUB campus. Visitors had the opportunity to explore Zaha Hadid's first completed building in the Middle East and connect with IFI staff.

#### Michael Fares Visits IFI



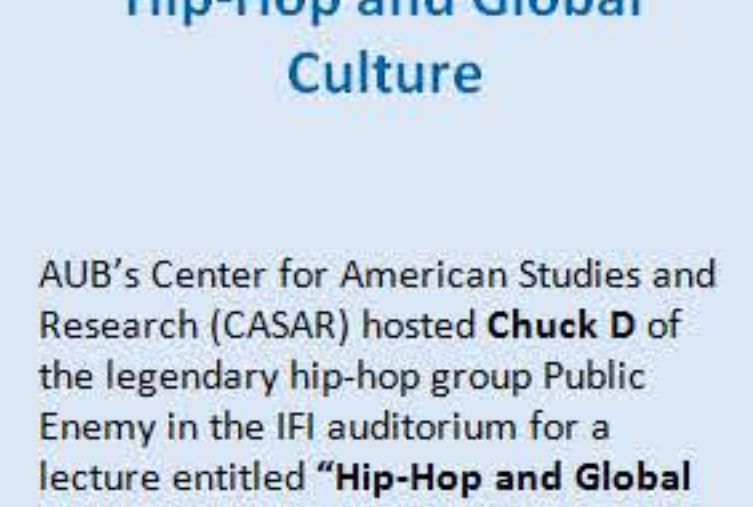
AUB Board of Trustee Member Mr. **Michael Fares**, also the son of H.E. Issam Fares, met with all IFI staff to discuss the institute's programs to date and future plans. H.E. Issam Fares has been IFI's principal benefactor since its launch in 2006 and IFI continues to benefit from his generosity.

#### Humanitarian Action



Humanitarian action, despite its neutral and impartial act, is inherently a political act. This was one of the themes discussed by Mr. **Fabrizio Carboni**, Head of Lebanon's ICRC Delegation, in a presentation at IFI entitled "**ICRC: Today's Challenges and Priorities after 150 Years of Humanitarian Action**". It coincided with the opening of a photo exhibition on ICRC's worldwide work since its inception.

#### Hip-Hop and Global Culture



AUB's Center for American Studies and Research (CASAR) hosted **Chuck D** of the legendary hip-hop group Public Enemy in the IFI auditorium for a lecture entitled "**Hip-Hop and Global Culture**", moderated by CASAR Director Dr. Alex Lubin.

#### Syrian Civil Society before the Revolution



AUB's newly established Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship, in collaboration with IFI, held a panel discussion entitled: **Despite all Difficulties: Syrian Civil Society before the Revolution**, with Dr. **Hassan Abbas** and Dr. **Fouad Fouad**, moderated by Mr. **Fateh Azzam**, Director of the Asfari Institute.

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