Opening Ceremony
Introductory Remarks

Adnan Badran
President, AAS

- First of all I wish to thank Prof. Elias Baydoun and the secretariat of the Arab Academy of Sciences for an excellent work they’ve done on organizing this conference “Arab Universities: An Urgent need for Change”.

- I wish to thank the financial sponsors of this conference, University of Petra, the Research Fund of Higher Education in Jordan, the Regional UNESCO Office in Beirut, COMSTECH, the Future University of Sudan.

- I wish to thank you all here today for your participation in this conference, together we will be listening to keynote addresses and papers, and together, we will share a fruitful dialogue of how to reform higher education in the arab world.

- Papers presented in this conference will be later peer-reviewed, and edited for publication in a book.
• Last year conference, entitled “The Triangle: Energy, Water & Food nexus for sustainable security in Middle East”, papers presented were peer reviewed edited and are now in the process of printing by the publisher Springer– Nature, which will come out soon.

Dear Colleagues,

• Arab Academy of Science (AAS) is honored to join the AUBites, around the world in celebrating the 150th anniversary of establishing this great institution which started in 1866, by its first president Daniel Bliss, as a Syrian Protestant College changed later in 1920 to the American University of Beirut.

• It was created on rocky hill away from town, where the Beirutians at that time started making jokes saying “Those crazy Americans are building the university faraway in the wilderness among the wolves”. But quickly, the area around the university developed to become modern Beirut, and the AUB became the most dynamic university in the region to graduate quality, creative thinkers, innovators & entrepreneurs, AUB has fostered on the
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secular enlightenment doctrine among its graduate away from ethnic, religious sectarian discrimination. AUB graduated advocates and leaders to seed democracy, freedom of thought, enquiry, justice & human rights, in the minds of men of the region.

- At San Francisco World Conference in 1945, Nineteen who signed the charter to create the new body of United Nations were AUBites, among them Charles malek. In Jordan seven prime ministers were graduates of AUB.

- AUB is ranked no. 1st to 2nd among the top 250 universities in the arab region by the QS world universities ranking, also, ranked as 2nd among arab Universities by the Times World University Rankings.

- Therefore, we congratulate Prof. Fadlo Khuri, MD on the 150th anniversary of AUB, and as the AUB 16th president inaugurated on Feb. 25th 2016 this year. Also, we congratulate Emeritus Prof. John Weterbary, former AUB President served from 1998 to 2008, who is among us participating in our conference.
Prof. Fadlo could not be among us today due to his travel abroad, we welcome Dean Nadia El-Cheikh Dean of Arts & Sciences, who is deputizing on his behalf.

**Dear Colleagues,**

- Reform of higher education is needed urgently in the arab region, it has to catch up with new trends of education and pedagogy, it should lead to enlightenment, critical thinking, enquiry and the analytical mind for problem-solving, for the entrepreneurs and delivery of ethics.
- Education is the key to the young minds to unlock the doors of the future & unleash the potentials of the youth.
- There is no way of combating the misery we’re encountering now in the region, except through education to ignite the minds to new orbits of discovery, creativity and innovations.
- Finally wish you a fruitful conference.

Thank you.