



WLCU-WSG Administrative Report October 2009 to March 2012.

“Team approach” was the essence of the daily work at the Secretariat General. Our leadership team, based on the WLCU principles, worked tirelessly with the focus on a common goal: *“take the WLCU to a higher level of performance”*. This meant to make our Union a well structured respectable organization, where its leaders act always according to the bylaws and the constitution.

Secretarial affairs:

Unified Logo: Initially, various chapters in the Union used different WLCU Logos. The WSG sent to all members the correct Logo in color. The new modified logo is now being used on letter heads and on signatures throughout the Union.

New ID card: We issued a new computerized WLCU, ID card; we were able to distribute over 300 ID cards to worldwide members, we have the capacity to issue a 1000 ID card easily.

E-mail : We bought the services and the backup for 2 years for 50 email address @wlcu.org or @ulcm.org we encouraged worldwide members to activate their WLCU email, we could at any time extend the services to cover even 1000 emails and more.

Constitution and By-laws: We distributed the revised electronic international bylaws to all available members and leaders; we refer to the bylaws in every nominations or appointment.

Regional By-laws: While the “Confelibra” represents the WLCU in the Geographical Region of Brazil and had its own constitutions, yet its relationship with WLCU is regulated under the “Protocol of Cooperation”. Some Geographical regions lack any regional bylaws, and one region had bylaws that contradicted the international bylaws. That is why the Secretariat General in agreement with the WP created in Feb 2010 a legal review committee in Australia- presided by Dr Georges Assaad- who produced a new regional bylaws in harmony with the international bylaws, and was used as a template for other regions. The result was:

- Regional bylaws for Australia and NZ (English).
- Regional bylaws for USA & Canada (English and French).
- Regional bylaws for Europe (English and French).
- Regional bylaws for Latin America (English and Spanish).

Chapter’s registration: Since Nov 2009 we started encouraging chapters to register at the WSG, and asking them to pay the annual dues, however we had to ask the WP to use



his constitutional right for an extension of 5 months, to be able to achieve the registration, and collect the annual dues for 2010 and 2011. Details will follow at the 17th World Congress in March 2012 in Mexico City, Mexico.

World Council meeting: while we called for 7 world council meeting, we achieved 6 world council meetings as follow:

-**Brisbane; Feb 2010:** Adjourned.

-**Miami; April 2010:** Extraordinary meeting to discuss the dialogue with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

-**Montreal; June 2010:** Ordinary session.

-**Beirut; Aug 2011:** Ordinary session.

-**Ghana; May 2011:** Ordinary session.

-**Beirut; July 2011:** Ordinary session.

-**New York; Nov 2011:** Ordinary session.

These meetings were chaired by the president with the help of the WSG. An agenda was prepared prior to the meetings and the minutes of the last meeting was read, approved and signed by the WP and the WSG according to the Bylaws.

The minutes of the meeting was recorded and typed by the WSG and the DWSG Mr Roger Hani. The Miami meeting was tape recorded. Minutes are available for consultation to any member as per the bylaws. The WSG conducts an ongoing follow up on all decisions taken.

Financial affairs:

Chapters Dues for 2010-2011: Continuous reminders were sent to chapters to pay their dues. The WSG extended the expiry dates for dues payment twice as a flexibility measure requested by some leaders.

Dues for world Council members for 2010-2011: We follow up on the decision of the World council meeting in Montreal to collect from every world council member a \$500 annual dues starting in 2010, and 2011. Only One third of members paid their annual dues.

Academic affairs:

It is an achievement by itself to be able to initiate an official contact with 2 well known universities. Facilitating the cooperation took years of hard work. Convincing the other parties about the seriousness of our organization needed to use our personal credibility. Signing an agreement was a necessary success but not sufficient as a continuous follow up is needed.



Notre Dame University (Beirut): On 2 different occasions

-Student of anthropology at NDU, attended a lecture by the WSG. “The Lebanese Emigration and the role of WLCU”. The invitation was made by associate professor Clovis Karam.

-WLCU-LERC. New official relationship

The Cultural and Heritage Affairs Committee and the World Secretariat General prepared with the Lebanese Emigration research centre (LERC) a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the WLCU, to work toward a future Museum of Lebanese emigration in Lebanon, while working to keep the memory of the Lebanese emigration alive.

The agreement was signed by WP Mr Eid Chedrawi on behalf of WLCU and Dean Father Walid Moussa on behalf of Notre Dame University in Aug 2010.

-Archives and Documentation committee: To succeed in our joint effort with the LERC, and to achieve the goal of the MOU, with the NDU; a Secretariat committee was created formed by Maurice Aouad (Ghana), Petra Fakhry(Sydney) and Fatima Elgull (Uruguay).

Simon Fraser University (Canada): the WSG encouraged a cultural cooperation between the Local WLCU, and the SFU bodies: the Centre for Comparative studies of Muslim Societies and culture, and the Faculty of World Literature. This cooperation resulted in 2 successful events:

- ***The International day of the Lebanese emigrant*** in March 2011, Under the Auspices of the W VP Mr Farid Makarem, the Lebanese community celebrated the event-prepared by the Youth Descent- Screening of the Fayrouz movie Safar Barlek, followed by a discussion and a reception.

-***Standing by the Ruins’ book:*** Jan 2012 An academic night with Professor Ken Seignurie Launching of his new book about Lebanon and the Middle East, followed by book signing and a reception.

Phoenician International Research Center (PIRC) : the WSG gave his utmost support to the PIRC (affiliated to WLCU, under heritage and cultural affairs) during the commemoration of the 2600 years of the circumnavigation of the Phoenician around Africa. Many thanks to the PIRC that gave us the occasion to show we are mainly a cultural organization.



International Legality:

Trade Mark registration: We are still working at this project initiated by Alberto Cheker and Jose Nassar, with Attorney Steven Stanton.

United Nations: Undoubtedly, the UN recognition of the WLCU as an NGO, and our association with the United Nations system, gave us the international legality needed.

- Department of Public Information (DPI): Annual meetings:

The World Secretariat General promoted to the maximum our relationship with the DPI. The WSG and DWSG, and other NGO members attended various worldwide meeting and promoted the WLCU as a representative of the Lebanese Diaspora.

-Economic and Social affairs Council (ECOSOC): Application:

The WSG initiated the idea of applying for accreditation to the ECOSOC council. With the NGO committee, the World Secretariat General planned and participated in the works aimed at giving accreditation to the WLCU from the ECOSOC Council.

-United Nations Information Center: (UNIC)

Following the directive of the DPI, and to comply with the rules, WSG after consultation with the chief administrative officer Mr Anis Garabet appointed 3 delegates to initiate a relationship with the UNIC in Ghana, Canberra, and Buenos Aires.

-UNESCO :During the World Council Meeting in Ghana the WSG created a committee to revive the UNESCO application(frozen since may 2007), This Committee consisted of Mr Roger Hani and Mr Edmond Massih to help Mr Georges Abiraad –originally in charge- to re-apply on behalf of WLCU.

After the success of the Cultural events prepared by the British Columbia Council in the last 3 years, and by the French National Council, without neglecting the importance of the MOU with the LERC, I believe we should be ready to re-apply.

The WSG is working towards the SFU and the LERC to get some necessary documents to be used in our application to UNESCO. We truly believe that this step should continue with the new administration of the 17th World Congress, a great effort is needed to accomplish a well deserved recognition to WLCU- as a Cultural organization- by the highest Cultural instance of the UN.



Media :

The World Secretary General had various interviews with Lebanese and International media:

- EL-Moustakbal newspaper, Melbourne, Australia.
- Annahar Newspaper on a few occasions.
- Emirate news.
- Radio Canada International (RCI) on a few occasions.
- Radio Voix du Liban (VDL) on a few occasions.
- Radio ALSharq- Montreal.
- Alsabah al jadid (Calgary Newspaper).
- Al-Mustakbal newspaper-Beirut
- Lebanon Debate-Online newspaper.
- AL-Balad newspaper.
- ANB TV (5 minutes)-Beirut.
- OTV TV (20 minutes)-Beirut.
- Mashriqiat- Online newspaper.

As described by a former SG: *“these interviews were passionate, truthful with clear point of view, of high standard, right to the point, and show a deep conviction and understanding of the WLCU mission Statement”*.

WLCU International Activities:

-**Brisbane celebration** (Feb2010) of 140 years of Lebanese presence in Queensland. It was a first “Thank you Australia” and inauguration of the Lebanese Emigrant Statue, with 2 Lebanese ministers attending, Fadi Abboud and Salim Wardy. The World Council visited Melbourne, Canberra and Sydney. This highly organised event was widely covered by Australian and Lebanese media, and its positive effects were discussed at the Senate chamber in Queensland.

-**Montreal celebration** (June 2010) inauguration of the Daleth monument to celebrate the 127 anniversary of Lebanese in Canada, in the presence of Minister Salim Sayegh.

-**Notre Dame University (NDU)**- (Aug 2010) signed agreement with WLCU and Honouring Ms. Guita Hourani Director of LERC.

-**Miss Emigrant 2010. Beirut** with Fadi Boudagher

-**Venezuela, Caracas** Nov 2010 Gibran cultural space, placement of the first stone, Inaugurated in the presence of Venezuelan authority in Chacao.



-Argentina Celebration with the government of Buenos Aires (Nov 2010)

-Brazilian reception of WLCU W President (Nov 2010).

-International day of Lebanese Emigrant: (Mar 2010) Vancouver, Canada, the first Worldwide celebration of the event.

-Ghana, Accra (May 2011) Inauguration of the Lebanese-Ghanaian Friendship, with the presence of Lebanese and Ghanaian officials and UNIC representative, and the famous General Erskine (past commander of the UNIFIL in Lebanon).

-Honouring Dinner at Le Royale Beirut July 2011 and WLCU Iftar in Tripoli for Mufti Shaar.

-UN Headquarter, NY (Nov 2010). The head of the Department of Public Information, Ms. Maria Luisa Chavez, and the head of the Outreach division, Maher Nasser, met with the World Council. Also, the celebration of the Independence day with NY, NJ Chapters.

-Melbourne inauguration of the Lebanese emigrant statue, by the Head of the municipality (Diana Asmar, Lebanese descent) along with the presence of Minister Walid Daouk. Honouring reception and Dinner by Antoine Ghanem, who sent a historical message to Lebanese authorities, and the World Council visit to Sydney to celebrate the Independence day with the Australian Lebanese Association (ALA).

-Paris Celebration 17 March 2012. "Escale a Beirut" Fundraising for the orphans of the Lebanese Army.

-Phoenician boat visit to Lebanese cities 20 Oct 2010

During the last 30 months we promoted the WLCU with courage and honesty. Additionally, we worked with integrity to achieve the WLCU mission statement. We communicated with all available members. We shared with them all the news. We consulted with them in all internal and external affairs. We involved them in the decision making. The decision is no longer at the hand of few people at the top, it became a shared responsibility. The question remains: Did we succeed or fail in taking the WLCU to a higher level of performance?!! Do we really see the element of success? History will reveal the answer.



Finally and following the Chinese proverb: “if you are planning for one year, grow rice. If you are planning for 20 years, grow trees. If you are planning for centuries, grow men”... This is why we chose a title to the 17th world congress: “Building the Leaders...Building the Union”.

On behalf of the World Secretariat General’s team.

March 2012

Dr. Nick Kahwaji D.D.S.
World Secretary General
World Lebanese Cultural Union. *Est. in Mexico 1959*
(Associated with DPI - United Nations)
Office: 604-469-1861
Private: 604-461-WLCU

