

Lebanon: “E pluribus unum”

Why I support the petition for Lebanon to be recognized as “the land of Dialogue among civilizations and cultures”

Although the Latin motto “e pluribus unum” (“out of many, one”) is more known as being on the United States’ seal, it also identifies itself perfectly with a small ancient country in the Middle East: Lebanon.

Over six million people living in a four thousand square miles’ land with over seven thousand years of history. Alias, no oil. The most religiously diverse country in the Middle East with eighteen state-recognized religious sects: four Muslim, twelve Christian, one Druze, and one Jewish. Arabs, Phoenicians, Armenians, Europeans, Assyrians and other people sharing the same small space. Around fifteen percent of the population being composed by refugees from neighboring countries.

A sophisticated and educated people who, in its majority, is bilingual or even trilingual.

Several problems and conflicts it’s very true, but which country doesn’t have them?

The very fact that Lebanon is able to function daily with so much diversity is amazing and commendable.

The problems of the Middle East are no longer “a distant inconvenience”. They’re “knocking on our doors” everywhere. There’s no country distant enough of those conflicts. The neighbor Europe was affected first and also the Americas. If nothing major is done, by combining the recognized statistics, we will see the total extinction of Christians in the Middle East in less than twenty years while in the West, with the exponential growth of the immigration and the so-called ‘Islamophobia’, we are about to witness a hunt of innocent moderate Muslims which will make Nazi Germany looks like Disneyland. That will only fuel the violence of the radicals creating a vicious circle of destruction.

In addition to a smart global strategy, we need a safe haven, a land where dialogue is the priority and a profession of faith. That’s the major challenge of the twenty first century. No country in the region is able to fulfill this task better than Lebanon. And I don’t say it just because my ancestors lived there for over fourteen centuries, but because the Lebanese people is one most industrious and hardworking in the whole word. The major proof of this is the fact that many of Lebanese people in the diaspora left with almost nothing and after one century are millionaires and billionaires. They were able to build fortunes out of nothing living in a foreign land with strange languages and customs.

Lebanon is the land of dialogue. It’s the country from where we will build a new Middle East. That’s why I support the petition of Lebanon as the land of dialogue among civilizations and cultures.

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