

LERC and the Uruguayan Embassy Celebrate 70 Years of Lebanese-Uruguayan Relations

Zoulal Joulfayan, LERC Intern

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Under the auspices of Her Excellency Dr. Marta Ines Pizzanelli Ambassador of Uruguay to Lebanon, the Faculty of Law and Political Science (FLPS) and the Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) held an event celebrating 70 years of Lebanese Uruguayan diplomatic relations on October 21, 2015.

The event featured Dr. Luis De La Fuente Abdalla, LERC's Liaison Officer in Uruguay who gave a presentation about the Lebanese presence in Uruguay. The event started with Dr. Guita Hourani, Director of LERC, welcoming the attendees and introduced Dr. De La Fuente Abdalla.



Mr. Khatlab, Mr. Smaha, H.E. Dr. Pizzanelli, Dr. Hourani, Dr. De la Fuente Abdala, Dr. Taan and her husband, Mr. Mohammed Taan (NDU, Oct. 2015)

Dr. Luis is a Uruguayan lawyer who is of Lebanese descent through his maternal lineage. He also works on disseminating the message of the Lebanon Dialogue Initiative (LDI). He completed

his Master's degree in Company Law at the Montevideo University, Uruguay, in 2001 and received an Anglo-Saxon Law Diploma from the same institution a year later. He is also a member of the Direction Committee of both the Uruguayan–Brazilian and the Uruguayan–Argentinean Chambers of Commerce and he was one of the founders and the former President of the Uruguayan-Lebanese Youth Association in 2004.

Dr. Luis' lecture covered the historical background of Lebanese Emigrants in Uruguay, how their journey began and the great impact they had on the Uruguayan societies. He also discussed the communities Lebanese emigrants built that gained the respect of Uruguayans and also strengthened bonds between both cultures. He also gave a brief biography of Dr. Alberto Abdala, his maternal uncle, who became the Vice President of Uruguay from 1967 to 1972. Dr. De La Fuente Abdala has come specifically to Lebanon to inaugurate a street in the name of his kin in Kalhat.



A group photo of the attendees with H.E. Dr. Pizzanelli (NDU, Oct. 2015)

Her Excellency Dr. Pizzanelli expressed her happiness in regard to the Uruguay-Lebanon relations. She said that the reason Lebanese emigrants were acknowledged in Uruguay was because they were hard working and that there were common values between them and the Uruguayans. She concluded by saying that she will donate to LERC the diplomatic archival documents that she obtained from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to exhibit in Beirut as part of the 70 year anniversary of the bilateral relations.