



مشروع بتمويل مشترك من الاتحاد الأوروبي
Project co-funded by the
European Union



الهيئة اللبنانية للعلوم التربوية
Lebanese Association for
Educational Studies



مشروع بتمويل مشترك من الوكالة الأميركية للتنمية الدولية والأمديست
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Press Release

Lebanese Association for Educational Studies Holding
International Conference on History Education

“Learning and Teaching History: Lessons from and for Lebanon”

March 25 and 26, 2011

Riviera Hotel

The Minister of Education and Higher Education, Dr. Hasan Mneimneh, opened Friday the conference on “Learning and Teaching History: Lessons from and for Lebanon” organized by the Lebanese Association for Educational Studies (LAES). The conference, which is co-funded by the European Union, USAID and AMIDEAST, was attended by LAES members, a group of researchers and professors from Lebanon and other Arab countries, as well as educators from Holland, Germany, Cyprus and the United Kingdom.

Minister Mneimneh emphasized the need for a unified set of history textbooks for all Lebanese schools and maintained that such textbooks will help break through the narrow views of history held by subgroups in society. He also called for teaching history through a critical thinking approach that would enable students to think objectively and reflect upon what they learn.

The minister told the audience that a committee he had formed has worked out a detailed plan for a history curriculum that can be shared by all Lebanese, and it has been referred for governmental approval.

The opening ceremony also featured an address by Ms. Elsa Fenet, Chargé d'affaires at the Delegation of the European Union to Lebanon who maintained that “a shared historical knowledge gained in school and elsewhere strengthens the identity and the decision-making capacity of a free citizen, able to participate actively in a democratic society. As such, history teaching is at the core of the founding principles of the European Union”, she said. Ms. Fenet went on to say: “Objectivity may seem sometimes unobtainable and truth may feel ultimately unknowable. But if we want to create a pluralistic atmosphere and develop the civic competencies of the students, this debate on learning and teaching history is crucially important”.

The LAES president, Dr. Raouf Ghusayni, had started the opening ceremony by a word of welcome, drawing attention to the vital importance of history education for Lebanon, a country that has suffered from internal conflicts for decades. He said that conference discussions will be particularly enriched by the contribution of overseas speakers who will focus on teaching history in post-conflict societies. The conference will also give special attention to contemporary methods of history learning which focus on research and critical thinking.