



Embajada de Líbano en México

Ladies and Gentleman,

Graduates of the Masters Programs of the Alliant International University in Mexico,

First, I congratulate the young women and men who are ending today a long episode of studies, of achievements and frustrations of learning and suffering, of hopes and disappointments. Usually, it takes a student two decades to reach the age of graduation, which you have happily attained with your master degree. You are about to begin your journey towards new horizons.

You are graduating in a country known to be rich in its resources, natural and human. A country of unique position between two oceans, with long coastal areas, in the vicinity of the largest economy and market in the world. Nature gave Mexico a variety in its climate, landscape, population and wealth. Its cultural heritage is the greatest in the western hemisphere and its impact is seen on the different aspects of national life. These positive givings offer an ample idea about the capacities of a great country, and the indefinite opportunities and promises available for its young generation, yet this is not the whole picture, unfortunately.

Mexico is still struggling with the effects of the international financial crisis on its economy and working capacity. Its oil resources are dwindling, the remittance of its emigrants was reduced in the last two years, and tourism is not expanding, due to local conditions. The country is facing organized crime and all its implications on the population and the economy. Corruption is widespread in society and its institutions, and the implementation of the law lacks the commitment of the citizens and the firm stand of the authorities. The government and the legislative authorities are trying hard to address the chronic problems of the nation, with different grades of success. This situation represents a big challenge to the society, and creates obstacles for

the new generation, limiting their ambition for a successful life and meaningful achievements.

You will step in an evolving world, where some nations are going through a decline from their glorious past; others are ascending in their power and international status. The old divisions are disappearing and new coalitions are emerging. Poverty, ignorance and disease are still a dominant factor in a large number of societies, and continue to be the biggest challenge to humanity despite the many organizations, initiatives and projects to combat these illnesses throughout the past century.

Climate change is another imminent and current danger to the planet we live in. Many questions about the way of life are to be answered and many vital problems need to be addressed. The value system which dominated the decision making in the past two centuries in the western powerful nations is showing its catastrophic results and threatening human survival on earth. The greed and the irresponsible overexploitation of natural resources, the irrational practice of polluting the water, the ground and the air for decades, has given us the urgent task of reconciliation with nature before it is too late. It is a huge enterprise which requires international awareness and consensus, something we still lack as we saw in Stockholm last December. But the clock is ticking.

With globalization we are affected by the fluctuation of the international economy, negatively and positively. The competition for jobs is fiercer on the national level and the international too. You might be competing for your job with a young man or woman from India, China or Egypt...and may the better candidate win. That brings us to the challenge you will face on the individual level.

Again the world is evolving, and so is the knowledge on the theoretical and practical levels. You cannot sit on your glory and be content with what you already know. You will be required to always be involved and aware of the latest and the current innovations in your field. Cyber space where you can enrich your knowledge on a daily basis is available for all, but creativity is

your own, and it is up to you to surpass others and yourself. That does not apply on the professional level only, but it should be our way of dealing with our weaknesses and shortcomings, of which, we ourselves, are most aware of. We need to decide to make a change first, and the way and the technique to do it will reveal itself to us if we are serious about it. Time will reveal the difference in our behavior, our attitude and the way we mature.

In every step in our life we face the choice in achieving our aims, the short way or the right way, and that brings meaning to our journey on this earth. We have to verify the nature of our objective, its morality and utility to the society, and how it fits in the global picture. Honesty, integrity and commitment to the well being of others are valid values for all times and on all levels. Their violations left destructive effects on the most solid of institutions and the recent examples abound.

New considerations are emerging in the last few decades which involve our responsibility towards the survival of the human race on the globe...that was not the case when our generation was growing up. We were taken by the technical achievements, the new discoveries, the material success stories, and the new facilities in our lives. Now we are realizing the amount of sacrifices and negligence we inflicted, which is causing climate change, desertification, pollution all around, erosion, deforestation and all sorts of alarming signals that require a different way of seeing things, doing things and appreciating the fragility of our system which by the law of nature will have a detrimental effect on human survival. As I have mentioned before, our whole system of values is under a big question mark...So how ready are we to be part of the elements of change or of the traditional way.

As individuals we feel at awe confronting global problems of tremendous impact. But on a small scale, as on a large one, we can choose to be part of the problem, or part of the solution. On the personal level, on the family level and on the local level, we will feel the differences we can make, and that would be the incentive to hold on to our beliefs, or to review their validity. On the national and global levels, it becomes more philosophical and depends on our order of priorities, but we should always believe in the

importance of our choices, on our inner peace and balance, and in the life of the others around us, and eventually on the humanity at large. Let us remember the butterfly effect...and maybe if we believe in it, we will be more cautious in our decisions, and in our stand.

Life will offer you in every day a set of experiences and opportunities. So play the game and enjoy it. Let your optimism as young men and women lead your paths, and be the masters of your own destiny. Don't leave it to coincidence, or the other's decisions in the long run, although you have to negotiate on the practical level, but if your aim is high and clear, your future will be set, and your steps will lead you there.

Good luck.