

Rotary Club Beirut Cosmopolitan

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District 2452 Rotary International



Marhaba

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April 2024 Issue

District 2452
Rotary
Club of Beirut Cosmopolitan



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**CREATE HOPE
in the WORLD**



MR. GABRIEL FERNAINÉ

CEO OF REBIRTH BEIRUT

"RENEWAL AND REBIRTH BEIRUT"

BUSINESS MEETING

The Phoenicia Hotel

April 16, 2024

There is something to be said about the impact of NGOs in Beirut and their contribution to saving many sectors of the country operational and viable. One NGO that has been very active recently is Rebirth Beirut, the Founder and President of which was invited to be our guest speaker on April 16, 2024.

Mr. Gabriel Fernaine, holder of MBA from Paris Dauphine, VP and head of business development of Fidelity Insurance, member of the advisory board of LAU Medical Center and served for over 20 years in the field of corporate banking and finance. He is very committed and actively engaged in serving the community and making a positive impact. His dedication to the community is what led to him founding Rebirth Beirut.

The mission of this NGO is to revive the city of Beirut and to bring hope back to its people, who were most affected by the blast and recent economic crisis, aiming for economic renewal and recovery in Beirut. This organization has been involved for over two years in several projects in the city:

1. The Beirut Traffic Lights project with 16 intersections finalized.
2. Let's Light Up Our community initiative: 132 streets, 4 squares, 2 Public Stairs, 9 avenues, one tunnel and one garden lit.
3. Shielding road potholes: 1000 done
4. Manholes and Drain covers
5. Project for a cleaner city
6. Project for recycling and collection of garbage
7. Rehabilitation of Beirut public gardens and planting trees in the city
8. 100-year-old building converted into cultural spaces for art exhibitions
9. Reviving the music world in Beirut with concerts

All these initiatives reflected positively on the local communities by providing employment, an increased sense of security and road safety, economic stimulation, community engagement and sense of solidarity, an environmental impact by using solar power to light the traffic lights and reviving the creative and cultural scene.

This was a very heartwarming presentation that was a clear testimony to the power of few individuals working against all odds to save the country when all else fails.





1. The Beirut Traffic Lights Project



Restoring and equipping the traffic lights of Beirut with solar power



Corniche Ain el Mreisseh – Manara
in collaboration with AUB



Rehabilitated offices housed in 100 year old building, turned into a cultural space



How Can YOU Help

Fund a Specific Project	Sponsor an Event	General Donation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adapt any of our ongoing or planned projects) - Adopt a street / avenue or a traffic light or a group of potholes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sponsor any of our ongoing or planned event(s) such as our exhibitions, concerts, events, the World Music Day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Any amount to our mobile cause is highly appreciated

Rehabilitation of the Northern Entrance of Beirut
in collaboration with CMA CGM



37 exhibitions so far



EACH ONE OF US
CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE
TOGETHER WE MAKE A CHANGE

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Page 10 of 10

100

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Thank You for Your Support

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IN THE SPOTLIGHT

RT. TOUFIC ABILLAMAH

TELECOM ENGINEER
MEMBER IN THE ROTARY CLUB BEIRUT COSMOPOLITAN

"CLASSIFICATION TALK"

BUSINESS MEETING

Zoom Meeting

April 23, 2024



The biggest asset of Rotary is its membership and the diversity of members who bring their expertise and life experiences to their clubs. Our club boasts of having members with unique talents and backgrounds who contribute greatly to our success as we serve our community.

On Tuesday, April 23, we had the privilege of listening to the classification talk of our newest young member, RT. Toufic Abillamah sponsored by PP Mounir Jabre. Toufic completed his Bachelors in Engineering, pursued by a DEA in Hyper Frequency from Toulouse, France. He furthered his education in 2023 by attending the executive MBA in Leadership at Harvard Business School, and was certified from MIT in the latest technology in Generative AI for Business. His career path oscillates between Management and Sales with leading US multinationals companies in Dubai and Qatar, to the entrepreneurial route by establishing his own consultancy firm in Lebanon specializing in Cyber Security.

As the Managing Director of Nexfort, he oversees its operations and strategic direction. In addition, Rt. Toufic is very versed in the volunteer world as he served on the Lebanese Red Cross for nine years on the First Aid Team. He also joined a group to support youth in combatting drug addiction. Toufic plays the piano, tennis and soccer. He is also a licensed pilot for single engine planes.

Rt. Toufic in his talk shared a very interesting presentation about a current and relevant topic: CYBER SECURITY. As defined, cyber security involves protecting networks, devices, and data from unauthorized access or digital attack. The common threats are phishing and social engineering, malicious software that damages or disables computers, ransomware and unauthorized access. Cyber Security is important because its absence can disrupt business processes, compromise sensitive information and harm individuals.

The following slide helps us in staying safe from cyber threats, the breaches of which are expected to reach \$ 10.5 trillion in 2025.

How Can You Stay Safe?

- Strong Passwords: Strong Password can protect you from Personal hacks

Length Matters

- Think of a phrase or sentence that you can easily remember.
- Tip: Aim for passwords that are at least 13 +characters long.

Use a Mix of Characters

- Hint: Combine uppercase and lowercase letters, numbers, and special characters.
- Tip: Instead of using "password123," try "P@ssw0rd!23"

Avoid Common Words and Patterns

- Hint: Don't use easily guessable words or phrases.
- Tip: Avoid using common words, names, or patterns like "123456", "qwerty", or "password".

Don't Use Personal Information

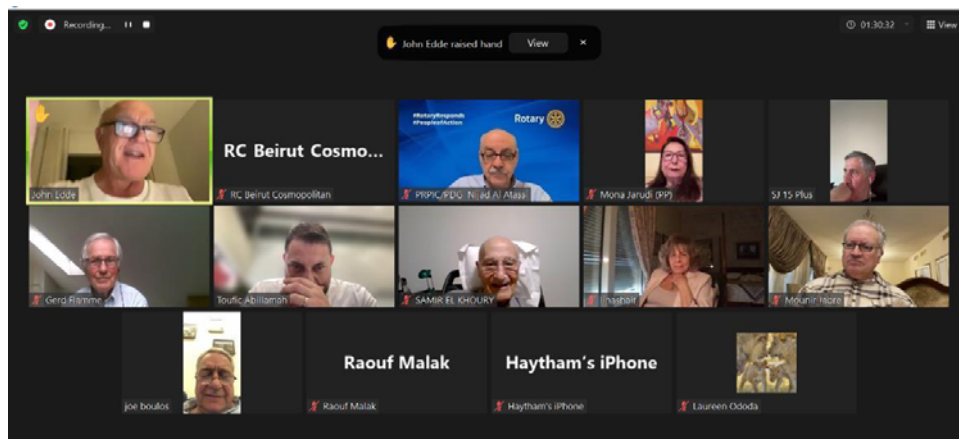
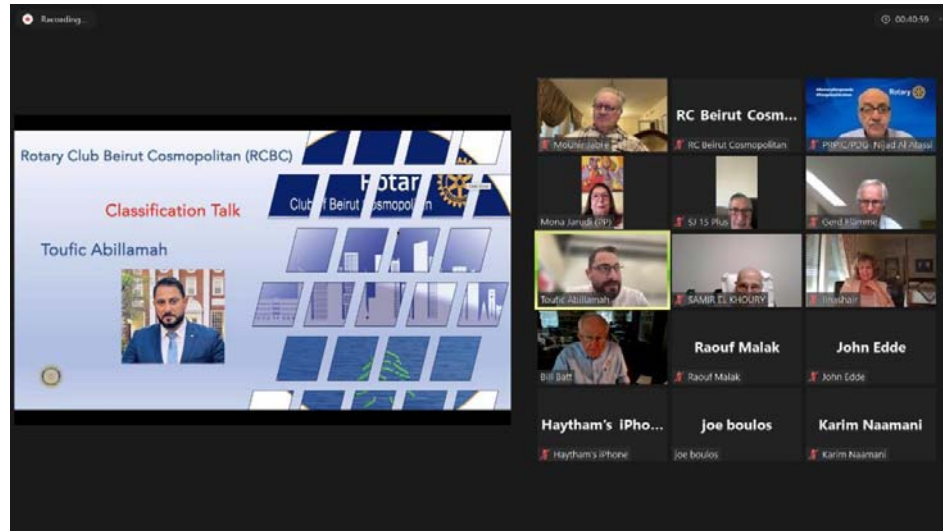
- Hint: Avoid using names, birthdays, or other personal information.
- Tip: Think of something unrelated to your personal life that you can remember.

On the local front, our speaker gave us the sobering statistics about Lebanon ranking 109th in the world and 12th regionally. The first serious government cyber security study was in 2019 with no execution, even though many private firms are helping the government especially the army, Lebanese general security and ISF. Cybersecurity is everyone's responsibility and a collective effort. The following slide outlines what can be done in Lebanon according to Rt. Toufic to beef up cyber security:



This presentation was very enriching and informative. It generated lots of interesting questions that were satisfactorily answered by our speaker.

A big welcome to Rotary Club Beirut Cosmopolitan Rt. Toufic !





HE DR. NASSER YASSIN

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT
ROTARY CLUB OF BEIRUT COSMOPOLITAN
IN COLLABORATION WITH
ROTARY CLUB OF BEIRUT LIBERTY & ROTARY CLUB OF KESROUAN
"MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT FOR THE FUTURE"



BUSINESS MEETING

The Phoenicia Hotel

April 30, 2024



In collaboration with Rotary Club Kesrouan and Rotary Club Beirut Liberty, Rotary Club Beirut Cosmopolitan hosted a very pivotal and important meeting that featured HE Dr. Nasser Yassin, Minister of the Environment, as our honorable guest speaker and witnessed our club as the first Inclusive Club in Lebanon and D-2452 by inducting Mr. Ibrahim Abdallah as the first person with a disability to join the Rotary Family.

This meeting was well attended by distinguished Rotarians and guests. In attendance were: DDG Chawkat Houalla representing the District Governor Bashar Haddad (D-2452), PDG George Azar, AG Toufic Ariss, Incoming DDG 2024-25 Mona Kanaan, DGN 25-26 May Monla Chmaitelly. Also present were Presidents Amal Richani of Rotary Club Beirut Liberty, Incoming President of Kesrouan Jean-Pierre Finan, and President Ramzi Abu Samah Rotary Club Beirut Cedars.

HE Mr. Yassin was introduced by PP Samir el Khoury who knew the minister when Dr. Yassin was a Professor of Policy and Planning at AUB and active in the NGO circles. HE founded in 2020 and directed the Lebanon Crisis Observatory to track the repercussions of various crises hitting the country. He co-chaired the AUB4Refugees Initiative to respond to the refugee crisis. Between 2014-2020, Dr. Yassin was the Director of Research at the Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs. He holds a PhD from University College London and MSc from London School of Economics after a BSc and MSc from AUB. His work on the Syrian refugee crisis was featured in many media outlets including BBC, Al Jazeera, the Economist, New York Times and Deutsche Welle among others.

Dr. Yassin started his presentation by taking us 25 years into the future. The temperatures as we know them now will double, heat waves will be more frequent, the drought will be multiplied five times, snow on the mountains will drop from 110 days per year to 45 days, precipitation will go down by 10% especially inland. With the current economic crisis, the adaptive capacity of Lebanon is weak, that's why we need an immediate call for action to reverse the damage done to our climate so far, and we can still reverse it if we have the collective will.

What needs to be done? First, we should completely try to move to a green environment in every sector. We need to be serious about decarbonizing all our structures moving to a low carbon reliance which will reduce our economic costs by 41%, reduce carbon emissions by 43%. We need to invest in our natural reserves because Lebanon is rich in its reserves and biodiversity that enables sustainability as we move to a greener economy. We should also have proper environmental governance because all our problems are due to lack of governance in this sector.

Dr. Yassin went on to outline the seven following points for his Future Ministry of the Environment to start serious work and avert a climate catastrophe:

1. Formulate a strategic plan for the garbage sector, proper collection, sorting and disposal.
2. Form a National Solid Waste Authority.
3. Form a master plan for 17 zones to decentralize work in this sector
4. There should be a Waste Information System to collect and disseminate data on garbage collection, identifying every kg of waste with its collection source.

5. Cost recovery will be self-financed through serious recycling efforts and control.
6. Establish proper guidelines to run the sectors.
7. Regulate all the waste streams such as chemical waste, paper, cardboard, metal etc.

The current Ministry of Environment is new in Lebanon and is considered like a conciliatory prize in the cabinet. It was established in the early 90s but it is only in the past couple of years that its importance is well recognized and the alarm is sounded to point at the horrible climate conditions in Lebanon that are exacerbated by the extensive use of generators to produce electricity and the mismanagement of waste disposal and lack of recycling to name a few dangers. What is needed is collective action by all ministries and proper accountability when crimes against nature are committed.





The second part of the evening was the pinning of Mr. Ibrahim Abdallah that was done ceremoniously following the Rotary Protocol. He was pinned by PDG George Azar assisted by DDG Chawkat and President Amal Talhouk, who is the sponsor of Mr. Abdallah and who worked tirelessly to make Rotary Club Beirut Cosmopolitan the first inclusive club in Lebanon. Rotary Club Beirut Cosmopolitan received this honor last year with the great support of PDG George Azar who believes in our club and supports all its activities.

It is a great honor to share the letter received from DG Bashar Haddad on this auspicious



Dear Fellow Rotarians of District 2452,

The **Rotary Club of Beirut Cosmopolitan** proudly inducted **Mr. Ibrahim Abdallah** as its first member with disabilities, underscoring the club's unwavering commitment to inclusivity and diversity.

Mr. Abdallah, a distinguished human rights activist and advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities, brings a wealth of experience and expertise to the Rotary family. Holding a Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Finance and Political Science, as well as a Master's Degree in International Law, **Mr. Abdallah** is currently pursuing his PhD while serving as a consultant on Disability at ESQWA.

Previously, **Mr. Abdallah** served as the Dean of Inclusive Education and director of the Center for Students with Disability (CSD) at Al Kafaat University. His dedication to advancing disability rights extends beyond Lebanon's borders, as he represented the country as a member of the Lebanese official delegation for negotiations on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) at the United Nations in New York from 2002 to 2006.

An experienced trainer on various topics including Human Rights, Social Protection, Inclusive Education, and Employment, **Mr. Abdallah** has shared his expertise in Beirut, Damascus, Amman, Khartoum, and Cairo. He has contributed significantly to publications related to Disability Rights and has been actively involved in promoting disability inclusion at the local, regional, and international levels.

The induction ceremony, held on Tuesday, April 30th, 2024, during the official meeting of **RC Beirut Cosmopolitan**, was attended by esteemed guests including **Deputy District Governor Chawkat Houalla**, representing **District Governor Bashar Haddad**, **Past District Governor George Azar**, and **District Governor Nominee Designate May Monia Chamaitelly**. The event, hosted jointly with RC Beirut Liberty and RC Kesrouan, featured H.E. Dr. Nasser Yassin, the Minister of Environment, as a guest speaker.

Mr. Abdallah's induction exemplifies the **Rotary Club of Beirut Cosmopolitan's** commitment to embracing individuals of all backgrounds and abilities. His membership not only enriches the club but also serves as a testament to the transformative power of inclusivity within Rotary.

With warmest Rotary regards,



REACHING OUT

April 20, 2024, a visit to Rotary Club Beirut Cedars for their business meeting at Smallville Hotel hosting MP Najat Aoun Saliba.

The topic of her talk was: "The Devastating Situation of the Waste Water Treatment Plants"



President Amal was busy in April participating in other clubs' activities.

On April 29, 2024 she visited our sponsor club Rotary Club de Beyrouth for lunch featuring the guest speaker Zeina Saleh Kayali, founder of Beit Tabaris.

The topic of her talk was: Figure Musicale du Liban au Feminin





April Birthdays

Joe Boulos (2)

May Khoury (21)

Abbas Sibai (22)

The End