

NYHEDSBREV - December 2012



1. DANSK BISTAND TIL ORGANISATIONSARBEJDE

- NÅR DIALOGEN FORPLIGTER
- THE REFUGEE CRISIS: MINISTER FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION CHRISTIAN FRIIS BACH VISITS JORDAN
- SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS AND DRC'S RESPONSE IN THE REGION
- DANISH MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS LOOKS AT THE SYRIAN CRISIS – ONLY A POLITICAL SOLUTION IS SUSTAINABLE



2. HANDEL

- DANISH COMPANIES HAVE POTENTIAL FOR GOOD BUSINESS IN LEBANON! -BUT THE PRESS PAINTS A DIRE PICTURE

3. KULTUR

- LEBANON'S FARMER'S MARKET SOUK EL TAYEB - SOON IN COPENHAGEN?
- DANISH FEAST – A TASTE OF CLASSIC AND CONTEMPORARY FILMMAKERS IN BEIRUT
- GOOD BEIRUT
- THE DANISH YOUTH CINEMA ON THE ROAD - LEBANON 2012
- DIARIES OF A LITTLE DICTATOR
- "NICKY GOES TO COPENHAGEN" AT SALON DU LIVRE IN BEIRUT

4. NYT FRA AMBASSADERNE

- APPLICATION FOR VISA TO DENMARK: CHANGE OF PROCEDURES!
- PERSONALEÆNDRINGER
- LATEST FROM THE EMBASSY OF DENMARK, DAMASCUS

JINGLE BELLS IN BEIRUT AND THE SOUND OF RPGS IN DAMASCUS

While Damascus is preparing for the Big Battle, X-Mas preparations are under way in Beirut's lavish shopping malls. The absurdity of life is right now played out in front of us. The conflict in Syria is approaching two years anniversary, with a civil war getting uglier and uglier. Some are optimistic that it will soon be over and a new and better system installed. Others see in their crystal ball a protracted conflict that may last years – many years – and prospects of a modern democratic state only in the far horizon.

Meanwhile Lebanon tries its best to stay out of the conflict. The Government's "dissociation-policy" is commended by all international players. But some internal Lebanese players

have difficulties respecting this policy risking involving the country directly in the Syrian quagmire. Already effects are felt. At the turn of the year some 160.000 Syrian refugees are stressing local communities, a significant drop in the economic growth rate is hurting many and more security incidents are a challenge for the security forces.

With this Christmas newsletter we are trying to catch a broad spectrum of some of the Danish activities in Lebanon, Jordan and in Syria, both those related to the ongoing crisis and those belonging to the world of normalcy. We are updating you on changes in our embassy in Damascus and on how Denmark is responding to the humanitarian and other challenges posed by the Syrian conflict in Syria and in the region as a whole. But all is not war! We will also tell you a little about the cultural activities in Lebanon! And we shouldn't forget either the success stories or opportunities for Danish companies.



With the Best Christmas wishes to you all,

Jan Top Christensen, Ambassador to Lebanon
Rolf M H P Holmboe, new Ambassador to Syria and Jordan

NÅR DIALOGEN FORPLIGTER

Af Mads Christoffersen, generalsekretær i Danske Kirkers Råd

”Kære venner af dialogen”, lød det som et tilbagevendende refræn i åbningstalen fra ambassadør Jan Top Christensen ved en dialogkonference i maj i Beirut. Og ja, det var virkelig venner af dialogen, der mødtes. 50 kristne og muslimske lærde og ledere fra Danmark, Libanon, Jordan, Syrien, Irak, Saudi Arabien, De Forenede Arabiske Emirater var samlet først i Beirut i maj og siden i København i september med et mål om at styrke dialogen, respekten og samarbejdet på tværs af religiøse og kulturelle forskelle.

Med en fælles stemme i Beirut

Konferencen i Beirut var første del af The Danish-Arab Dialogue Conference 2012. Med overskriften ”With a Common Voice” fokuserede konferencen på, hvad deltagerne som kristne og muslimer kunne sige sammen om temaer som etik, religionsfrihed og troen på Gud. Tre intensive dage på et hotel i Beiruts sitrende bydel Hamra dannede rammen om oplæg, diskussioner og samtaler i små grupper. Der blev både diskuteret energisk og nikket anerkendende. Konferencen endte i en fælles erklæring med et klart budskab om, at kristne og muslimer deler det fælles udgangspunkt i troen på den ene Gud. Med dette trosmæssige udgangspunkt, er vi forpligtet til at respektere hinanden på tværs af religiøse, politiske og kulturelle forskelle.

Domprovst Anders Gadegaard var som formand for Danske Kirkers Råd meget begejstret for konferencens resultat. ”Vi



skulle undersøge og nå frem til, at muslimer og kristne i Danmark og Mellemøsten har så meget til fælles, at vi kan sige noget sammen, både om teologi og om menneskerettigheder. Jeg oplevede, at vi deler troen på Gud. Den tro er fundamentet for troen på ligeværd mellem mennesker og for lige rettigheder. Det kom til at stå i sluterklæringen, og dermed indeholder den alt, hvad jeg havde turdet håbe på”, udtalte han lige efter konferencen i Beirut.

Gensidig forpligtelse i København

Konferencen blev fulgt op af en konference i København i slutningen af september. Her mødtes den samme gruppe af kristne og muslimer fra Danmark og Mellemøsten for at arbejde videre med resultatet fra Beirut. Her ville deltagerne gå skridtet videre og se på, hvordan de kunne nå videre



end blot ord og faktisk forpligtede sig på hinanden. Den officielle åbning blev holdt i Landstingssalen på Christiansborg, hvor bl.a. social- og integrationsminister Karen Hækkerup holdt tale. De efterfølgende dage foregik på Borups Højskole, hvor ikke mindst integrationsborgmester Anna Mee Allerslev vakte stor begejstring blandt deltagerne fra Mellemøsten med hendes

NÅR DIALOGEN FORPLIGTER

tale om hendes visioner for et inkluderende København og hendes støtte til byggeriet af en stormoske.

Med eksempler fra Danmark og Mellemøsten så deltagerne på mulige veje til at styrke ikke bare respekten for den anden, men også det konkrete samarbejde mellem kristne og muslimer. Konferencens deltagere formulerede en fælleserklæring med titlen "The Copenhagen Commitment", hvor de forpligtede sig til at styrke samarbejdet og til at støtte mennesker af en anden religion, når de bliver forfulgt eller undertrykt.

Gensidig støtte til moskeer og kirker

I erklæringen ligger der også en forpligtelse om at støtte hinanden i opførelse af helligdomme som kirker og moskeer både i Danmark og Mellemøsten. På det efterfølgende pressemøde i København, sagde Ærkebiskoppen for den Maronitiske Kirke i Beirut, Boulos Mattar: "Menneskerettigheder er ikke blot et spørgsmål for individer men i ligeså høj grad for hele samfund. Når man inviterer nogen indenfor i sit hjem, så lader man dem arbejde, sove, spise – og bede. Alle disse rettigheder er ligeværdige."

Domprovst Anders Gadegaard tilsluttede sig det synspunkt: "Jeg betragter det som en pligt – både som et kristent menneske og som medlem af den danske folkekirke – at bakke op om muslimernes ønske om et sted at bede."

Så meget mere end karikaturtegninger

Deltagerne på konferencen var generelt begejstrede for processen og resultatet. Som en af deltagerne gav udtryk for, viste konferencen, at Danmark er så meget mere end nogle tåbelige karikaturtegninger. Samarbejdet mellem kristne og muslimer



i Danmark som fælles arrangører og Udenrigsministeriets støtte til konferencen viser, at dialog er vejen frem for fredelig sameksistens og forpligtende samarbejde på tværs af religiøse og kulturelle forskelle. Ved at kalde konferencen "The Danish-Arab Dialogue Conference 2012" viser arrangørerne tydeligt, at Danmark er interesseret i at gøre en forskel og styrke samarbejdet til den arabiske verden.

Ord, der forpligter

Med ambassadørens ord til vennerne af dialogen og med sin tilstedeværelse under hele konferencen i Beirut gives også et signal om anerkendelse af religiøse leders rolle for fred og forsoning i både Danmark og Mellemøsten. Det er arrangørernes håb, at det stærke netværk, der er skabt mellem konferencens deltagere må komme til gavn lokalt og internationalt også i fremtiden og at deltagerne vil fortsætte dialogen og samarbejdet. For dialog er ikke bare tomme ord, men ord der forpligter.



The Danish-Arab Dialogue Conference 2012 blev holdt i Beirut 1.-3. maj 2012 og i København den 25.-28. september 2012. Konferencen er arrangeret af Kontaktgruppen for Muslimer og Kristne – ved Danske Kirkers Råd og Muslimernes Fællesråd – i samarbejde med The Arab Group for Muslim-Christian Dialogue i Libanon. Konferencen blev finansieret af Udenrigsministeriet.

Læs mere om Danish-Arab Dialogue Conference og de to fælleserklæringer på www.dialogue2012.org

THE REFUGEE CRISIS: MINISTER FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION CHRISTIAN FRIIS BACH VISITS JORDAN

Rolf Holmboe, Head of Mission Damascus, Ambassador to Jordan

On 9 September 2012 the Danish Minister for Development Cooperation Christian Friis Bach visited Jordan.

The backdrop of this visit was the deepening crisis in Syria and the increasingly negative effects for the neighbouring countries and the region. Since 2011, Jordan trade relations have increasingly become more difficult and costly, as the normal trade and shipping routes through Syria were closing down. Jordan had to send trade by other and more expensive routes. Jordan also lost Syria as its major trading partner, so for Jordan, the economic negative effects were already serious. As the armed opposition went on the offensive in Syria and attacked the two biggest cities Damascus and Aleppo in July, the war intensified and the negative spill-over increased.

Refugees from the fighting started to pour into Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey in huge numbers. In August, the largest number crossing over into Jordan in one day was 3000 refugees. Jordan was facing a huge and growing problem. Along with the UN, Danish NGOs such as the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), the Danish Red Cross, Save the Children Denmark and Denmark's Emergency Management Agency (DEMA) responded quickly to the crisis, reacting on funding from DANIDA and other partners.

Christian Friis Bach visited the Za'atari Refugee Camp in Mafraq, Northern Jordan, to get a first-hand look at the challenges facing Jordan and the humanitarian organizations. He met and talked with



** Minister for Development Cooperation Christian Friis Bach meets with Danish experts from DEMA – the Danish Emergency Management Agency.*

several groups of Syrian refugees, who had crossed into the camp to avoid the heavy fighting in Syria. He met the Danes from DEMA, who were responsible for rapidly building up the camp infrastructure. The met with Syrian children and with Danes from Save the Children, who were setting up child-friendly spaces for the many unaccompanied children and for the smaller children in general (app. 52% of the refugees are children).

The Minister got some very candid accounts about the situation for the population inside Syria and a good impression of the hugeness of the task at hand in Jordan. The camp was set up in the end of July, and in early September 27.000 people were living in it. With this heavy influx, planning

was underway to accommodate 80-100.000 refugees in the area.

The biggest challenges in the camp were to ensure the supply of food, water and electricity. The major hassle was the dust. The camp lies in the desert and has strong winds that blow up the fine dust affecting all life in the camp. The tents provided for the refugees have a life span of only four months at the maximum and therefore a major effort was to supply prefab houses for as many refugees as possible, especially families. Sometimes visibility is almost down to zero because of this dust and it makes hygiene and health another major challenge.

WFP was responsible for food supply,

THE REFUGEE CRISIS: MINISTER FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION CHRISTIAN FRIIS BACH VISITS JORDAN

which was currently based on “hot meals” provided from Jordanian suppliers outside the camp. Soon it was hoped that cooking facilities could be set up so that food deliveries could switch to ingredients and the refugees could cook for themselves.

UNHCR og Jordan Health Aid Society operated a clinic alongside field hospitals from inter alia France, Italy and Marocco to provide health care and first aid for refugees. UNICEF was responsible for water and wash facilities, for establishing education for children (developing it into schools in the near future) and for taking care of unaccompanied children.

As part of the visit, Christian Friis Bach met with the Jordanian authorities in the area and with the Jordanian Hashemite Charity Organization (JHCO), who is the implementing partner for the UN and international agencies in setting up and running of the camp, and he met with UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP representatives and Danish staff working in the camp. In these discussions they examined at length the challenges ahead and how Denmark best could support the handling of the crisis.

In Amman, the Minister met with HE Minister for Foreign Affairs Nasser Joudeh and the Minister took the opportunity to announce further Danish support to handle the refugee crisis, bringing Denmark up to a position as the fifth largest donor for the Syrian refugee crisis inside Syria and in the region. He asserted that Denmark would stay engaged as long as this crisis endured to help stave off the negative effects for ordinary Syrian citizens and for



** Christian Friis Bach meets with Syrian children in one of the child-friendly spaces set up inside the camp, where the children can stay in safety under adult supervision.*

the neighboring countries like Jordan.

Christian Friis Bach also visited to projects funded by Denmark over “The Arab Initiative”. He visited the Institute for Family Health as part of the Queen Al Noor Hussein Foundation, which was working with the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT) from Denmark. The Institute was working with torture victims from Iraq and Syria and operated health centers in Jordan and provided counseling services and psychological support to Iraqi victims. The Institute also had six mobile clinics, and one as currently at Za’atari to

assist traumatized Syrian victims.

Finally, the Minister met with Eva Abu Halaweh, Director of the Mizan Law Group, who in cooperation with the IRCT provided legal assistance to victims of torture and protection for vulnerable groups, such as refugees and women. Since 2011, torture is explicitly forbidden under Jordanian law, but lobbying and awareness building to strengthen human rights and especially the rights of women was still very much needed.

SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS AND DRC'S RESPONSE IN THE REGION

Preeti Abraham, the Danish Refugee Council

The Syrian crisis which began in March 2011 has resulted in massive internal displacement within the country, while 442,256 persons¹ are seeking refuge in the neighboring countries of Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq – with nearly 54% of them being children up to the age of 17. Turkey hosts the largest number of registered refugees (33.5%), followed by Lebanon (25.9%) and Jordan (25.4%).² Significant additional refugees are present in Iraq and North Africa. Humanitarian agencies estimate that there are tens if not hundreds of thousands more who are unregistered either from choice or because of fear of the consequences of registration.

In addition to the refugees, the humanitarian agencies estimate that nearly 1.2 million people are internally displaced within Syria and urgently need assistance. IDPs are often the most vulnerable to violence and rights violations and many have not attempted to leave the country because of lack of resources or due to anticipation that displacement would be temporary. Within Syria, there are mainly two patterns of displacement – those who travelled long distances to reach safe places within Syria, and those who are displaced over short distances as an immediate result of fighting within their area. As the conflict has spread throughout Syria, all types of displacement are now protracted – and in many cases families have had to move multiple times, as previously safe areas come under attack.

Challenges faced by Refugees

Within Syria, the majority of displaced Syrians find themselves living in cramped and cold situations irrespective of whether they sought refuge with other families, in collective shelters, or by renting accommodation.

Families who sought refuge in collective shelters (predominantly schools so far) only have access to very cold water in limited quantities, as facilities meant for (e.g.) daytime school use are now permanently shared by over 300 people. There is not enough diesel (“mazut”) for private consumption, let alone humanitarian assistance distributions, and hence providing heating sources for individuals is not a relief option. Those hosted with other families or renting accommodation are often living in small spaces with at least 15-20 people, which reduces the cost of living but does not address the continued vulnerability of displaced families unable to meet basic needs.

In Lebanon, UNHCR states that the number of refugees has reached 127,420 persons including 34,310 persons awaiting registration as of 20th November 2012. Refugees have a tough time at the borders where they are often asked for bribes. Many instead choose to cross over illegally, risking landmines, gunfire and an arduous journey.

Once in the country, only Syrians are registered by UNHCR and hence entitled to assistance. Non Syrians, including Lebanese and Palestinians who have lived in Syria, are not registered. In addition, some confessional minorities are reluctant to register due to fear of persecution and remain unassisted. Most refugees have limited means and are entirely dependent on humanitarian assistance. Those crossing the borders illegally are denied ‘circulation permits’ preventing them from getting employment in Lebanon. With food and non-food item distribution functioning relatively effectively, the immediate challenges facing refugees is the inadequate preparation for winter and the lack of adequate shelter, where the (preferable) approach of hosting of refugees and private rental is causing severe



** DRC outreach worker talking to Syrian refugees*

economic stress both to refugees and the hosting families. Only a small minority lives in collective shelters and temporary dwellings, and refugee camps are not permitted. Given that the refugees inhabit some of the poorest regions of the country i.e North Lebanon and the Bekaa, the economic impact of hosting large numbers of refugees by poor Lebanese hosts needs urgent consideration and redress.

In Jordan, the influx of refugees started in March 2011 and according to UNHCR reached 125,670 persons on 22nd November 2012 including 32,173 awaiting registration. The refugees are mainly living in rented or hosted accommodation in the urban centers of Jordan, with a minority living in the Zaatari refugee camp which was opened when the Jordanian government regarded the stresses of hosting such a large population among the community untenable. The Zaatari camp has the eventual capacity of around 80,000 refugees, and the government is planning to open 2 additional camps. The camp is managed by the Jordanian Hashemite Charity Organization (JHCO,) with support being given by UNHCR and other international and NGO actors, and much work is ongoing to improve the quality of services for shelter, NFIs and food assistance – and to advocate for greater freedom of movement.

¹ <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php> as on 25th November 2012. Numbers are those registered or having applied for registration

² Ibid, accessed on 22nd Nov 2012

SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS AND DRC'S RESPONSE IN THE REGION

As mentioned, the majority of refugees are in fact living in the Jordanian urban centers, as well as in the so called "poverty pockets" of the country. The large population increase has put these poverty pockets under stress, with increasing prices of rents and commodities affecting both refugees and the hosting community. Currently the urban refugees receive only limited assistance in terms of food, non-food items, winterization and protection, with the affected host community receiving little or no support. Refugees do not formally have the right to work.

DRC's response to the Crisis

DRC began responding to the crisis at the earliest possible; with programs in Lebanon, Syria and now Jordan.

DRC Syria is focusing on alleviating major non-food, shelter, water and sanitation needs in Homs, Dara'a and Damascus Governorates in collaboration with DRC's main partner, the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC), to distribute non-food relief items to displaced and conflict-affected Syrians. To date, approximately 65,000 people have received non-food assistance. During November and December nearly 80,000 people will receive winterisation assistance (blankets, mattresses, clothes). DRC has four community centers that are accessed by approximately 1,500 displaced and conflict-affected Syrians and refugees each month. Beneficiaries at the Dara'a community centre, supported by DANIDA, remarked to UN visitors that the community centres provided a "home away from home," a place where they could experience some kind of normality, share their feelings and find relief from the situation. DRC's memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Education (MoE), allows it to undertake rehabilitation works on MoE property, by which rehabilitated school buildings are either used as educational institutions or designated as collective shelters. DRC currently ensures that schools used as collective shelters in

Damascus and the surrounding areas have the adequate infrastructure, electrical systems, and water/sanitation support to meet displaced families' basic needs. This includes pioneering prefabricated shower units in these shelter-schools that provide hot water, effectively addressing health concerns related to hygiene and lack of water.

In Lebanon, DRC is responding to the needs of nearly 70% of refugees in North Lebanon and Bekaa governorates and will shortly initiate operations in the South governorate. DRC is the largest partner for UNHCR in the country and also partners with WFP, ECHO, BPRM, DANIDA and the local government to assist refugees. The interventions include registration and protection monitoring of the displaced population, distribution of food and non-food items (NFIs), provision of shelter through collective shelters, individual shelters and rent assistance. DRC supports the most vulnerable amongst the displaced Syrians, as well as Lebanese and Palestinian-Syrians and confessional minorities who are reluctant to register for assistance. DRC has supported nearly 70,000 refugees with food and non-food items that included food kits, food vouchers for purchasing food from local stores, clothes, baby kits, hygiene kits, fuel, kitchen sets, mattresses and blankets. By the end of 2012, DRC plans to increase the number of collective shelters and provide accommodation for at least 160 families in individual shelter units. Currently DRC's assistance is focused on preparing for winter by distributing blankets, mattresses, fuel and heating stoves in addition to other items. DRC also implements small scale community level projects that benefit both displaced and host communities. In order to help the refugees find employment, DRC is employing refugees in its activities as well as training them with vocational skills.

In Jordan, DRC's response has to date been limited to activities at the Zaatari camp, but with intervention planned in Amman as well



** DRC employee distributing aid*

South Jordan. Programs to date have mainly focused on improving camp management and coordination, providing assistance with winterization packages and provision of community services. DRC is particularly pleased to have been able to second experienced staff to assist and support the JHCO in day to day camp management and coordination, as well as building the capacities of key staff. To help refugees face the harsh winters, DRC will support JHCO to procure tents and blankets for about 1800 individuals as well as provide community services that will benefit about 26,000 people. In Amman, DRC and JHCO is planning to provide winter NFI packages in addition to heaters and fuel for three months for 200 households. In Ma'an, DRC and JHCO will assist another 200 HHs with winter NFI packages. In both locations, 80 of the 200 households will be vulnerable Jordanian families.

DRC's response to the Syrian crisis in each country is supported by additional expertise drawn from its regional office for the Middle-east and North Africa as well as from the headquarters in Copenhagen. With no immediate end in sight to the ongoing war in Syria, DRC plans to continue and scale up its response operations in the region to meet the needs of the increasing number of refugees and displaced persons and is urgently investigating what would be appropriate responses in Iraq and Turkey.

DANSK BISTAND TIL ORGANISATIONSARBEJDE

DANISH MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS LOOKS AT THE SYRIAN CRISIS – ONLY A POLITICAL SOLUTION IS SUSTAINABLE



From 10-12 November, the Danish Foreign Minister, Villy Søvndal, was visiting Lebanon to get a detailed understanding of the Syrian crisis and its effects on Lebanon. The Minister spent a wet and rainy day in the Bekaa Valley talking to Syrian refugees and discussing with the humanitarian workers from Danish Refugee Council, one of the biggest operators assisting both in Lebanon and inside Syria. During meetings with Prime Minister Najib Mikati and President Michel Suleiman, Mr. Søvndal learned about the effects of the Syrian crisis on Lebanon and the policy of dissociation, trying to separate Lebanon from the Syrian quagmire. From meetings with experts, NGOs, religious representatives and activists the Minister got many different views on the conflict. Villy Søvndal was very clear in his message: the conflict can only find sustainable solution through political negotiations.

DANISH COMPANIES HAVE POTENTIAL FOR GOOD BUSINESS IN LEBANON! -BUT THE PRESS PAINTS A DIRE PICTURE

The press in Europe, including Denmark, about Lebanon is most often very negative, portraying the country on the brink of a new civil war. However, whether it is ignorance, sensation-seeking or just incompetence, it may push Lebanon in the wrong direction. Tourists stay away, companies hesitate to explore the opportunities and investment goes down. It is easy for journalists to put dramatic scenarios on paper/screen with a rough estimate to attract a larger audience. It is more difficult to ensure a more precise and sober picture.

When Danish businesses are considering and exploring Lebanon as a potential market, they have only one task in the "to-do list"; contact The Trade Council at the Danish Embassy in Beirut. Through experience, a solid network with the public and private sector, the Trade Council provides services that will make market exploration and penetration easier and smoother. The Trade Council's services are also available for already established Danish businesses in Lebanon. Market research, partner search and match, general consultancy and setting up meetings with public and private figures are among the services provided by the Trade Council. The Trade Council also assists in hosting events for product and brand launch or any other related events. When it comes to governmental projects, the Trade Council has detailed knowledge and know-how in dealing with governmental institutions and access to high level public figures.

The success stories are not few, the feedback is positive and satisfaction levels are high.

The following are a few of the success stories:

- **E. Pihl & Søn A.S.**, a Danish contractor is currently extending the existing quay for the container terminal in Port of Beirut. The project is worth USD 120 million. A second important phase of the project is being negotiated.
- **BWSC**, Danish power plant developer and constructor, has been announced the winner by the Tender Committee, and is now in the phase of negotiating the final contract. Once an agreement is reached, BWSC will add two new power plants in Zouk and Jiyeh

with a combined output of 280MW, worth USD 350 million.

- **MÆRSK Oil and Gas & Dong Energy** are expected to participate in the bid rounds for offshore gas and oil exploration in Lebanon when the tender is out early 2013.
- **Danish pharmaceutical companies** have a strong presence and hold big market shares in Lebanon. **Novo Nordisk** has a market share of 50 % in Lebanon. **Lundbeck** has 30 % share. **Leo Pharma** has also major presence in Lebanon.
- All those companies have benefited from Trade Council services.
- **Saxo Bank** benefited from the extensive network that the Trade Council has with public institutions – Banque du Liban and Ministry of Finance - and succeeded avoiding being squeezed out of the Lebanese market.
- **Id Design and BoConcept**, Danish design and furniture companies, have established branches in Beirut.
- **Bestseller**, the Danish fashion company, has 80 stores in Lebanon and its regional HQ is located in Downtown.
- **Vestas**, the famous Danish wind turbine producer, has recently with a number of Lebanese companies, submitted letters of interest to The Ministry of Energy. Hopefully, we will see Danish windmills turning in Akkar in 2013
- Other well-known Danish companies and brands such as **Arla, Danish Crown, Tulip, Lego**, and many others have significant market presence.

Danish Lebanese Businessmen Association (DLBA)

DLBA was created to establish, sustain and develop contacts between Danish and Lebanese companies, which have a shared interest in improving their commercial activities in Denmark and Lebanon. The Trade Council and Embassy assists DLBA members in raising issues and concerns to various Ministries and EU representatives concerning trade barriers. The Trade Council has also worked on connecting DLBA with various Danish producers and suppliers since DLBA members are directly connected and referred once a relevant opportunity is available. We are right now, together with the other Nordic Embassies in Beirut, exploring whether we should expand the Association to become

Nordic-Lebanese Business Forum.

The African Connection

Danish companies wanting to try out the Lebanese market should be aware of the fact that, besides being well-connected to the rest of the Middle East, Lebanese businessmen also often do business in Africa. So a contact in Beirut may lead to contacts in many other countries. The Embassy's Trade Council is ready to assist with such contacts.

Many Projects in the Pipeline

The list of projects and opportunities in Lebanon is long. Public infrastructure projects such as power plants, dams, waste management projects and many others are in the pipeline. Recently, the government has taken steps to engage in public-partnership-projects. The Lebanese goods market also holds opportunities for Danish business, where there is always admiration and respect for Danish quality products whether food and dairy products, fashion items, furniture, electronics or machinery. The Lebanese services market could also be worth exploring further by Danish providers, whether financial and banking services which are very stable and one of the region's best, management services, logistics and transportation or consultancy services.

Denmark exported to Lebanon in 2011 goods worth USD 116 million and services in the value of USD 34 million. The Embassy's Trade Council is assessing that Danish companies could do much more in the Lebanese market. And the Trade Council is always ready to assist getting the best entrance into the market.

For further information please contact

Ahmad El Loubani
Head of Trade Council
Tel +961 (1) 970804
Email:ahmlou@um.dk

LEBANON'S FARMER'S MARKET SOUK EL TAYEB - SOON IN COPENHAGEN?

By Edward Lewis

(This article was first published in *The National* - <http://www.thenational.ae/lifestyle/food/beirut-farmers-market>)

Established by the food activist Kamal Mouzawak, the market, Souk El Tayeb, has been championing Lebanon's small-scale producers since 2004, creating a space for them to promote and sell their produce directly to the public and introducing city-goers to rural Lebanon.

Yet, the busy and happy scene painted by the weekly Saturday meeting masks the fact that the driving force behind its establishment was not simply a need to nourish a city but a desire to help heal a divided nation – food has emerged as an unlikely tool for dialogue in this complex Middle East country.

“What is always very interesting about a farmers’ market is that you get a chance to look at the people’s lives, you have to knock on their door and meet them even if you don’t know them,” explains Kamal. This most basic of human actions had been denied to those living through years of a brutal civil war – travel was often highly restricted and distrust of your neighbours rife, something that didn’t disappear overnight when the guns fell silent.

Aside from the more obvious and tragic implications of war, Lebanon’s renowned produce and a way of life were also deeply affected. Heavily subsidised foreign imports, more accessible, cheaper fast-food alternatives and countryside littered with landmines all meant Lebanon’s local production was under serious threat. More damaging than anything was the fragmentation that had occurred: the divisions caused by the ethnic and religious tensions meant a unified platform for local producers was lacking. For Kamal, the answer was clear: “What can bring all these people together more than the land, the product of the land, the agriculture and the

cuisine that we make from it?”

And so, the farmers’ market was established, gathering local producers from across the country, protecting their interests and enabling them to compete fairly. Most importantly, it has created a space where, regardless of faith or ethnicity, be they Sunni, Shiite, Greek Orthodox, Maronite or Druze, farmers can come together and celebrate their shared heritage and identity. If the market was the initial seed, the organisation has grown organically, now encompassing a range of educational projects and outreach programmes throughout the country. Concepts such as National Tabouleh Day or Tefeh El Tayab (a celebration of Lebanon’s different apples) have actively engaged local communities, while for Souk@school Kamal has visited schools to demonstrate the importance and role of local, sustainable produce to Lebanon’s next generation.

A private food label for the producers of the market, Dekenet, has also been established, encouraging cohesion and providing greater recognition for their work and a better income. Then there is the commercial front, Tawlet, a farmers’ kitchen located in the heart of the old town where each week a different local producer cooks their regional speciality for the public.

The rise in the number of farmers present at the market and a noticeable appetite for the ever-expanding national activities are indicators that Souk El Tayeb’s concept is working and a difference has been made in Lebanon. The successful model of combining social responsibility with business has not gone unnoticed, with Qatar the next destination where Kamal will attempt to use the farmers’ market to preserve culinary traditions and rural heritage and empower local producers.

Souk el Tayeb is going to Denmark?

“One particular highlight this year is the inclusion of the Souk el Tayeb, Lebanon’s first farmers market. To me, the Souk is the



epitome of what it means to ‘have guts’. Despite bombings and unrest in their city, the market continues to not just function, but to flourish – celebrating culture, cuisine and agriculture. Its very existence is as an act of resistance against sectarian violence. Their story stresses the fact that knowledge, craft and entrepreneurship in the food sector can be a powerful tool for progress – not just for chefs, but for the entire world around them. We believe that inviting the Souk el Tayeb to MAD will help their entrepreneurial spirits connect with global food society, become inspired and forge valuable friendships with people from across the world. They will be able to gain the knowledge, inspiration and network that will empower them even further and thus benefit their entire community” René Redzepi, NOMA

Read more on:

<http://www.soukeltayeb.com/>
<http://madfood.co/home>

Aside from the more obvious and tragic implications of war, Lebanon’s renowned produce and a way of life were also deeply affected. Heavily subsidised foreign



LEBANON'S FARMER'S MARKET SOUK EL TAYEB - SOON IN COPENHAGEN?

imports, more accessible, cheaper fast-food alternatives and countryside littered with landmines all meant Lebanon's local production was under serious threat. More damaging than anything was the fragmentation that had occurred: the divisions caused by the ethnic and religious tensions meant a unified platform for local producers was lacking. For Kamal, the answer was clear: *"What can bring all these people together more than the land, the product of the land, the agriculture and the cuisine that we make from it?"*

And so, the farmers' market was established, gathering local producers from across the

country, protecting their interests and enabling them to compete fairly. Most importantly, it has created a space where, regardless of faith or ethnicity, be they Sunni, Shiite, Greek Orthodox, Maronite or Druze, farmers can come together and celebrate their shared heritage and identity.

If the market was the initial seed, the organisation has grown organically, now encompassing a range of educational projects and outreach programmes throughout the country. Concepts such as National Tabouleh Day or Tefeh El Tayab (a celebration of Lebanon's different apples) have actively engaged local communities,

while for Souk@school Kamal has visited schools to demonstrate the importance and role of local, sustainable produce to Lebanon's next generation.

A private food label for the producers of the market, Dekenet, has also been established, encouraging cohesion and providing greater recognition for their work and a better income. Then there is the commercial front, Tawlet, a farmers' kitchen located in the heart of the old town where each week a different local producer cooks their regional speciality for the public. Af Julie Arrildt, Statskundskab, Århus Universitet

DANISH FEAST – A TASTE OF CLASSIC AND CONTEMPORARY FILMMAKERS IN BEIRUT

By the Danish embassy in Beirut

For the 2nd year in a row, the embassy arranged a Danish Film Festival in Beirut.



This year, the festival Danish Feast emphasised on the long tradition of film making in Denmark through the years – classics, contemporaries and daring documentaries. The Festival aimed to give the Lebanese audience a taste of the high quality, creativity and cinematic storytelling, that Danish cinema has become famous for. The Opening film was Lars Von Trier's famous "EUROPA", a visually challenging film, using peculiar shifts between black/white and coloured pictures and presents to us a world in a

state of transition, continuously reminding us of the fragile equilibrium between chaos and order. The films were provided by the Danish Film Institute and financed by the Danish Arts Council. The Festival was planned in partnership with Metropolis Art Cinema and co-sponsored by IXSIR wine.



** Henning Carlsen's "Hunger" from 1966 was one of the screened films at "Danish Feast"*

Henning Carlsen's "Hunger" from 1966 was one of the screened films at "Danish Feast"

The festival was very well visited, got a lot of public attention and the embassy is very keen on continuing this tradition in the years to come.

GOOD BEIRUT

Af Julie Arrildt, Statskundskab, Århus Universitet

Med taskerne pakket og bærbarene udskiftet med blokke og blyanter, gik 42 svedende statskundske på opdagelse i de komplekse arabiske mønstre og smuthuller. Endelig var det blevet tid til at få sand under neglene og krydre teorierne med sumak.

Vores studietur kan næsten beskrives som at være sprunget ind og ud af en historiebog. Som når Pyrus rejser i julehistorierne, bevægede vi os på tværs af et bredt spektrum af levende fortællinger om Libanons historie og nuværende politiske situation. På bare 12 dage lykkedes det os at få en indgående og ikke mindst forskelligartet forståelse for dynamikkerne og konfliktstrukturerne, der så mange gange har været kilde til undren, når man har observeret spændinger i Mellemøsten hjemme fra det isolerede Danmark.

En sådan rejse medfører foruden næring til statskundske-hjertet også personlige gevinster, såsom aflæsning af fordomme. Når man er ude på den anden side af historiebogen, synes det meget fjernt, at vi steg af flyet med bange anelser om at fortælle, hvor vi var fra og med gode råd om at fjerne det danske flag fra



backpackertasken. Det skal nemlig tages i betragtning af, hvor velkomne vi var stort set lige meget, hvor vi bevægede os hen. "Welcome" lød det fra næsten ethvert gadehjørne og man kom derfor hurtigt til at føle sig mere sikker end usikker.

Bag om avisoverskrifterne

Fordomme kommer typisk ikke ud af det blå. Ofte har avisoverskrifter været spækket med bombastiske og stormfulde

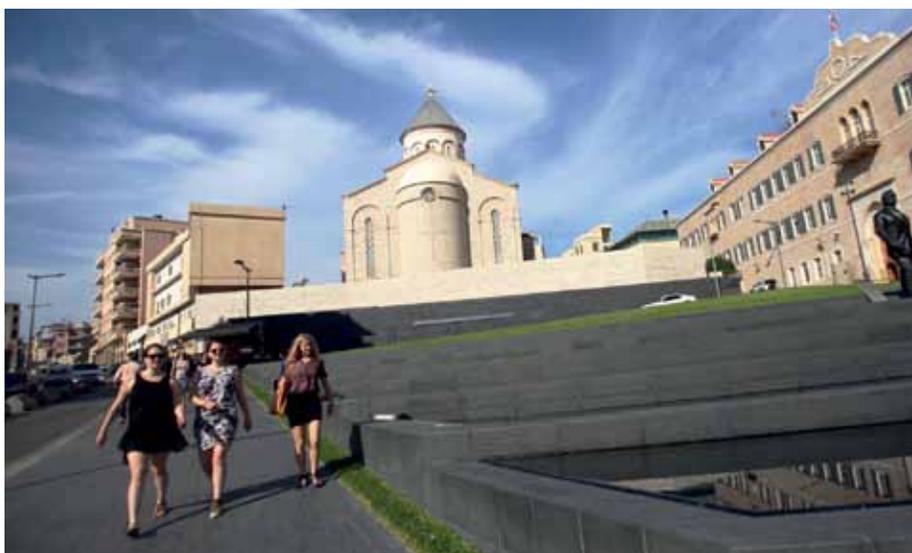
beskrivelser af Beirut, der ellers længe har ligget forholdsvis stille, hvad angår borgerkrige og uroligheder. Under vores ophold i Libanon fik vi mulighed for at dykke ned under overfladen af overskrifterne og opleve byen indefra.

Det gjorde vi i den grad på flere faconer. Ved at komme ansigt til ansigt med de personer, der selv lever og ånder i denne del af verden, fik vi zoomet ind på Beirut ikke bare med analytiske briller, som vi er så trænede i, men også med nærværende førstehåndshistorier og kontroversielle udtalelser, der udfordrer det grundlag, vi kender fra vores skoling.

Sekterne – en tiggende bombe?

Vi lærte hurtigt, at et af de væsentligste kendetegn ved Beirut er deres sekteriske opdeling – på både godt og ondt. "Det er det, der giver folk identitet, rettigheder og muligheder, men det er samtidig også det, der gør systemet svært at ændre." Forklarede Maria Lindhardt, ansat på den danske ambassade.

Den sekteriske opdeling kom vi blandt andet til at opleve da en meget åben taxachauffør fortalte om sine fordomme



GOOD BEIRUT

om muslimske kønsrollefordelinger. Man fik hurtigt indtrykket af, at borgerne i højere grad identificerer sig med deres religiøse sekt end som libanesere. Men det er ikke kun rent personligt sekterismen gennemsyrrer.

Da vi besøgte parlamentsmedlemmet, Ashod Pakradounian, i Parlamentsbygningen, fortalte han om udfordringen i, at den muslimske del af befolkningen vokser, mens fordelingen af sæder i parlamentet er den samme. Det rykker naturligvis ved den i forvejen ustabile balance mellem sekterne i landet. Men som så mange andre standpunkter, vi mødte på turen, blev dette syn på Libanons udfordringer også mødt med sin modpol i de energiske ungdomspolitikere fra Tajaddod Youth. De udfoldede deres kritiske holdninger til det sekteriske system. Et af problemerne

er ifølge dem, at civilbefolkningen ikke kan kanalisere sine krav andre steder hen end til det ufungerende politiske system baseret på sekter. ”They act as gatekeepers forbidding them to come through with their wishes.” Udtalte koordinator, Ayman Mhanna.

Den faktiske bombe, der sprang

Vi må erkende, at turen skiftede karakter efter bilbomben i Beirut den 19. oktober – men ikke nødvendigvis negativt. Begivenheden gjorde, at vi fik mulighed for at opleve stemningen i landet uden at det var gennem en kameratelelinse. En oplevelse, der adskilte sig væsentligt fra de dramatiske beretninger på BBC om, at den syriske konflikt var på vej ind over landegrænsen.

Det pudsige ved hele situationen var, at

vi stadig følte os trygge. Denne kontrast blev især fremhævet, da vi på dagen for begravelsen af Wissam Al-Hassan skulle ud og lege med LEGO. Alt imens vi stod og rekonstruerede en ødelagt bygning med peace-tegn og andre glade budskaber, kørte faretruende militærtanks og mængder af biler med libanesiske flag ud af vinduerne forbi på vejen lige ved siden af. Pointen var, at det ikke ændrede på, hvor fredeligt det føltes.



THE DANISH YOUTH CINEMA ON THE ROAD - LEBANON 2012

By Mohamad Daya, Danish Embassy in Beirut

When it comes to cultural events, Lebanon - and especially Beirut - witness great activity by local and foreign organizations all year long. Beirut usually attracts most of those events leading to high saturation level, overlapping events and strengthening the perception that Beirut is Lebanon. The Danish embassy has also organized or participated in numerous cultural events in Beirut but has also for a long time seen the need to spread those events across Lebanon and to come in contact with the diverse Lebanese youth. From that notion, the idea for “Danish Youth Cinema on the Road” was born.

The title is self-explanatory. “Danish” since the films are made in Denmark. “Youth Cinema” since the targeted audiences was students ranging from the young age of 6

years to the youth of 17 years. And finally “On the road”, since the embassy would visit cities and town across in order to screen the films and discuss their themes

and messages with the students.

The choice of cities and towns was done carefully to make sure that all the regions



THE DANISH YOUTH CINEMA ON THE ROAD - LEBANON 2012

were covered and students from diverse backgrounds participated. Our local partners in those areas were cultural centers, public libraries and schools, a choice which not only reflects the embassy's belief in the role these institutions play in the society but also highlights the educational side of this event.

And so on 30th of October the wheels were set in motion. The first town we visited was Zouk Mikael, then Nabatiyeh, Bourj Hammoud, Hermel, Saida and Baakline. On the 16th of November we reached Tripoli our final city. All in all we visited 7 regions in the North, South, Bekaa, the mountains and the outskirts of Beirut and more than 2000 students enjoyed the movies and took part in the discussions.

Visit in Hermel

From movies discussing family issues such as having a new born sibling or the relationship with the parents to movies discussing social interactions, a total of 6 Danish movies with different themes were screened all but one dubbed into Arabic. Each movie was screened to a specific age range and revolved around social and educational topics which are of relevant to children and youth and directly related to their daily lives, problems and aspirations. The discussions which followed each screening were one of the most important aspects of this event. During those



discussions, a local communicator from the embassy would explain the messages of each movie and then moderate discussions with the students which shared their ideas, opinions and personal experiences related to the movies. The educational value was not only added through those discussions but also through the students' interactions and public speaking in front of many other students from different schools and classes.

This initiative has witnessed great success and was welcomed enthusiastically by the schools, the students and our hosts which we would like to thank for their hard work, their professionalism, their hospitality and

their collaboration. The embassy is very keen on repeating this festival again in 2013.

Our partners:

ZOUK MIKAEL – “YOUTH AND CULTURE CENTER”

NABATIEH – “Kamel Youssef Jaber Cultural and Social Center”

BOURJ HAMMOUD – “Mesrobian Highschool&Technical College”

HERMEL – “Cultural Center of Hermel”

SAIDA – “RAFIC HARIRI HIGH SCHOOL”

BAAKLINE – “Baakline National Library”

TRIPOLI – AZM Cultural Center – Beit El Fan



“Danish Youth Cinema on the Road - Lebanon 2012” was sponsored by the Danish Film Institute and the Danish Institute in Damascus.

DIARIES OF A LITTLE DICTATOR

Af Annette Max Hansen,
kommunikationsleder, CKU

CKU har under Mellemøst kulturprogrammet indledt et samarbejde med den syriske kunstnergruppe Masasit Mati og støttet 2. sæson af deres dukketeater serie Top Goon – Diaries of a Little Dictator. Serien er blevet kendt i hele regionen for sin uforfærdede satire og dristige afmaskering af det syrisk regime. Masasit Mati består af skuespillere, forfattere, scenografer, skulptører, musikere og filminstruktører, der lever i eksil i Beirut, hvor de opererer undercover.

Det er ukendt hvor mange syrere der lever i eksil i Libanon, men det uofficielle tal løber op på omkring 100.000, mange af dem kunstnere. Jeg er på vej til at møde tre af dem. En instruktør, en forfatter og en skuespiller. Tre ud af et team på 10, der kalder sig Masasit Mati. De har med stor gennemslagskraft skabt en kompromisløs og konfronterende satirisk dukketeater serie, Top Goon – Diaries of a Little Dictator, som siden december 2011 er blevet distribueret via Youtube. Serien har indtil videre haft flere hundredetusinde seere.

”Should I stay or should I leave? The big question is where can I make the best effort?” Det spørgsmål har mange syriske kunstnere stillet sig, og for Jameel, Top Goons instruktør, blev løsningen at rejse. Han hedder ikke Jameel i virkeligheden, men af hensyn til hans og gruppens sikkerhed



bruger vi i dagens anledning dæknavne. Og her skal svaret på valget af eksil også findes. Fra Beirut kan de kæmpe uden frygten for at blive fængslet, tortureret, eller det der er værre. Både Jameel, forfatteren Faris og den kun 22 årige skuespiller Sally, har alle siddet i fængsel. Og frygten er reel. Musikere har fået halsen skåret over for at synge latterliggørende sange om præsidenten, en karikaturtegner har fået brækket arm og fingre for at tegne Assad, der forsøger at få et lift ud af byen.

Ikke desto mindre er den kunstneriske opstand stigende, og frygtløsheden har taget over. Eller som Jameel siger, da jeg spørger ham om man har overvundet frygten

”It’s not about overcoming fear, it’s about facing it.” Han bryder sig heller ikke om metaforen the wall of fear has come down, som er hyppigt anvendt i medierne. Frygten er allestedsnærværende, men forskellen er at den ikke længere er styrende.



DIARIES OF A LITTLE DICTATOR

“Who wants to kill a million?”

I Top Goon – Diaries of a Little Dictator, bliver Assad, som titlen antyder, gjort til en lille ynkelig mand, pillet ned fra sin piedestal og rensat for guddommelighed. Og udover at dukketeatret er valgt som form fremfor ’rigtigt’ teater fordi det er en sikrere ramme at arbejde i, så har dukketeatret også et fantastisk satirisk potentiale. ”The puppets can ridicule”, fortæller Jameel, ”and we hope the series will shatter the cult of the personality that has been created around Assad”, fortsætter han. I serien bliver han kaldt Beshar eller Beeshu som er en slags pussenusse navn, og hans karakter svinger mellem et forkælet barn, der lider af ADD og en fordærvet autokrat, der hele tiden skal trøstes.

I det første afsnit med titlen Beeshu’s Nightmares, som blev lanceret i december 2011, er Assad iført pyjamas og nathue. Han vågner brat af et mareridt, hvor han har drømt, at den syriske befolkning ikke længere elsker ham og vil stille ham for en dommer. Det kan han simpelthen ikke forstå. ”Why do they want to topple the regime? I swear to God, I haven’t killed as many as my fathers”, klynker Beeshu.

I et interview på ABC NEWS, som Masasit Mati har valgt at bringe som et afsnit i sig selv for at understrege, at serien ikke overdriver, men at virkeligheden overgår fiktionen, nægter Assad at træde tilbage før at befolkningen ikke længere bakker ham op. Det er også dette interview der har inspireret introen til afsnittene, der altid begynder med Assad, der synger ”I’m not crazy.” I interviewet fortæller han nemlig journalist Barbara Walters, at regimet ikke slår folk ihjel. ”No government in the world would kill its people unless it’s led by a crazy person.”

Friheden er konkret

Kunstnergruppen er opkaldt efter det sugerør man bruger til at drikke Mati, en te som indtages af de fleste syrere dagligt, og hvis navn signalerer, at gruppen henvender sig til manden på gaden og et ønske om at samle en befolkning på tværs af økonomiske og sociale skel. Skel som allerede er i opløsning, fordi revolutionen har udlignet hierarkiet og, som Jameel siger ”That’s the great thing about the revolution. Before people were not together, now they suddenly meet because there’s a space.” Folk mødes og taler sammen. Og selvom ens baggrunde kan være meget forskellige knytter frihedstrangen. ”I’ll tell you a story”, starter Faris, en af seriens manuskriptforfattere. ”We went to an agricultural area in the mountains. We sat with the farmers talking about the future with the cows in the background. And the farmer says. We all want freedom, but you know what kind of freedom I want. I want my cows back that they have stolen

from me. Your freedom is a concept, not a concrete one.” Med andre ord, hvad enten trangen til frihed handler om ytringsfrihed eller køer, så deler syrerne den.

Efter et par timer, 17 kopper kaffe og 2 pakker smøger senere siger vi farvel til hinanden, dér i solen på en fredelig fortovscafé i Beirut, fjernt fra kampene og den virkelighed, som vi har talt om. Jeg er ikke sikker på, at jeg helt kan fatte, hvad det vil sige at sætte livet på spil for at skabe en bedre fremtid. Og det er mit privilegium. Men Jameels sidste ord, før vi tager afsked, sidder stadig i mig og begrænser sig ikke til frontlinjen i det arabiske forår. ”The revolution is about rediscovering your own humanity. This is also a personal revolution for each and one of us.” Der er meget på spil, og meget mere end blot at vælte en diktator.

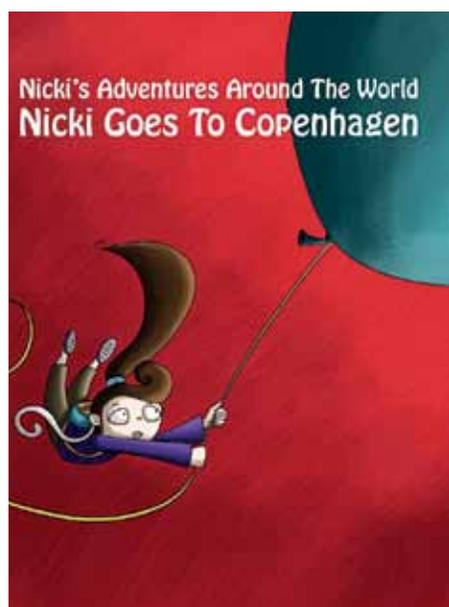


“NICKY GOES TO COPENHAGEN” AT SALON DU LIVRE IN BEIRUT

By author and illustrator Nicole Debbas

The Danish Embassy was present at this year’s Salon de Livre as a member of EUNIC (cooperation between the European cultural institutes in Lebanon). The Danish stand was showcasing a broad selection of Danish classic and contemporary Danish literature translated into French and donated by Danish publisher Gyldendal and also had the pleasure of presenting Lebanese author and illustrator Nicole Debbas who, at the moment, is finishing up her next book “Nicky goes to Copenhagen”. Following is Nicole’s own story about her visit to Copenhagen and her day at Salon De Livre.

I had the opportunity to visit Copenhagen this August thanks to the support of the Danish embassy in Lebanon and the Danish ministry of Foreign Affairs. Their interest in the series I am writing and illustrating “Nicky’s Adventures around the World” encouraged me to write an album about Copenhagen and discover this lovely city for the first time.



The series is an introduction of countries to children all around the world. It is a way to travel through the adventures of a girl named Nicki and her cat Miaw and discover new countries that they have never visited traveling with her giant magical balloon. The book introduces the culture and characteristics of each country featuring the famous sites and a general idea of the history that is unique to each country. It is an educational yet fun way for children to learn about new places and people different from where they are.

After my visit, a conference for children was organized at the Biel salon du livre in November where I was able to present the books and series to the children and discuss with them my trip to Copenhagen. They all seemed eager to hear what I had to say about the city and the process of writing a book and illustrating it. Comparing real pictures with scenes of the previous albums gave them a good idea of how the book is created. They seemed happy to know that I am the character “Nicky” in the series and that the cat” Miaw” is actually my cat, and enjoyed seeing the real pictures of him. Most kids hadn’t heard of Copenhagen before which made the presentation even more interesting since I was able to introduce them to something new. The interaction was fun and enriching. Seeing what kids had to say about the concept and the voyage as well as their funny remarks and attention to detail was impressive. One kid looked at the Danish flag and asked if there were a lot of hospitals in Denmark; comparing the flag to the Red Cross. Another kid commented on the little mermaid statue wondering where her little fish was, he was referring to the fish flounder in the Disney version.



It was a wonderful experience that motivated me even more to finish the new Nicki Goes to Copenhagen album that will soon be released in English then translated in French and Arabic, also available in e-books.

Read more about Nicole and her work on
www.habibpublishers.com (being redesigned)
www.nicoledebbas.com
<https://www.facebook.com/debbasnicole>
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Habib-Publishers/401227963258695?ref=ts&fref=ts>

NYT FRA AMBASSADERNE

APPLICATION FOR VISA TO DENMARK: CHANGE OF PROCEDURES!

As from 1 February 2013, the Danish Embassy in Beirut will take over from Norway the handling of visit and business visas to Denmark as well as applications for family reunifications.

The visa applications will have to be submitted at the visa application centre VFS in Beirut for subsequent assessment by the Danish Embassy and the Danish authorities.

Further information will be available on the web site of the Danish Embassy in the near future.

PERSONALEÆNDRINGER

BEIRUT



Andreas Holm Pedersen starter 1/1 på ambassaden i Beirut som barsels afløser for Maria Lindhardt, som går på barsel frem til d.1.7.2013. Andreas har en bachelorgrad i arabisk fra Københavns Universitet og ser frem til det diplomatiske arbejde hvor han kommer til at sidde primært med politiske og kulturelle arbejdsopgaver.

DAMASKUS



Rolf Michael Hay Pereira Holmboe, Head of Mission, Damascus and Denmark's Ambassador to Jordan.



Amal Amal Nasr Estephan has replaced Nicole Bitar as Financial Officer since October 2012 "I just want to use this opportunity to introduce myself; I am Amal Nasr Estephan, married and having two beautiful girls. I always hoped to work with foreign organizations and here I am and hopefully for a long time".



Daniel Nicolai Sinding Andersen, regional sikkerhedsrådgiver.

LATEST FROM THE EMBASSY OF DENMARK, DAMASCUS

A new team has arrived at the Danish Embassy in Damascus in the second half of 2012: Rolf M. Hay Pereira Holmboe as Head of Mission and Ivan M. Nielsen as Deputy Head of Mission. Our new security advisor, Daniel Andersen, has also arrived and will be advising us on all issues relating to the safety and security of the embassy and its' staff.

Also the fall of 2012, we bid farewell to Consul Henrik Hjernø Sørensen. His contribution was very much appreciated, as were his engagement and great sense of humor. We are sad to see him leave, but we wish him good luck in his future endeavours back in Copenhagen or on another posting!

In yet another change, we will welcome our Nordic colleague and friend, the Embassy of Sweden, into our premises as of 1 December. They are now moving in with us and may be contacted via the phone number +963 11 61909000, which will now be the phone for both the Danish Embassy and the Swedish Embassy.

These days, due to the prevailing security situation, we are forced to continue to spend much too much time outside Syria and some embassy functions are carried out from Beirut. If you wish to contact us by phone or email, this should be directed via the Danish Embassy in Beirut (ph. +961 1 991 001/2/3/4/5; email: beyamb@um.dk). In case of emergency, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs' 24/7 call center may be contacted at +45 33 92 11 12.

As far as applications for visa for Denmark are concerned, these should still be submitted either courtesy of the Norwegian Embassy in Amman or at another Danish representation with authority to issue visas. From early 2013, this will also include the Danish Embassy in Beirut (please visit www.libanon.um.dk for more information to follow).

As far as our accreditation to Jordan is concerned, our Honorary Consulate General in Amman remains available at ph. +962 (0)6 5606500; fax +962 (0)6 5698322; email: Danish.Consulate@kawar.com. While we encourage you to also contact our Consulate General directly, we also stand ready to assist with matters from or pertaining to Jordan, too.

KONTAKT INFORMATION

**DANMARKS AMBASSADE
DAMASKUS, SYRIEN**

TEL.: +963 11 61909000

**DANMARKS AMBASSADE
BEIRUT, LIBANON**

**EMBASSY COMPLEX, SÉRAIL HILL
ARMY STREET, DOWN TOWN BEIRUT
P.O. Box: 11-5190 BEIRUT**

**CONSULAR DEPARTMENT OPENING HOURS:
TUESDAY – THURSDAY 09:00AM – 12:00 NOON
TEL.: +961 (1) 991 001
FAX: +961 (1) 991 006
BEYAMB@UM.DK**

**DET DANSKE HONORÆRE
GENERAL KONSULAT I AMMAN,
JORDAN**

**ROYAL DANISH HONORARY CONSULATE GENERAL,
AMMAN LOCATED IN KAWAR GROUP BUILDING,
24 SHARIF ABDUL HAMID SHARAF STREET
P.O.BOX 222 AMMAN 11118 JORDAN
TEL : 00 962 6 5609500
FAX: 00 962 6 5698322
EMAIL: DANISH.CONSULATE@KAWAR.COM**

Nyhedsbrevet

Nyhedsbrev fra Amman, Beirut og Damaskus udkommer efter behov og normalt 2-3 gange om året. Nyhedsbrevet retter sig mod danskere i Syrien, Jordan og Libanon og andre med interesse for regionen og omfatter aktiviteter i landene med relation til Danmark. Redaktionen varetages på skift af Damaskus og Beirut.

Dette nummer er redigeret i Beirut.

Nyhedsbrevet findes på ambassadernes hjemmesider, www.ambdamaskus.um.dk, og www.ambbeirut.um.dk. Nyhedsbrevet sendes endvidere elektronisk til danskere som er som er tilmeldt til ambassaderne.

Andre interesserede er velkomne til at få Nyhedsbrevet tilsendt elektronisk ved henvendelse til en af de to ambassader.

Artikler fra eksterne bidragsydere er meget velkomne. Artikler, indlæg osv. afspejler ikke nødvendigvis ambassadernes holdninger eller vurderinger

OFFICIELLE LUKKEDAGE BEIRUT 12-2013

2012: 25.12

2013:

Tuesday 01/01/2011	New Year
Thursday 24/01/2013	Prophet's Birthday
Monday 25/03/2013	Annunciation
Friday 29/03/2013	Good Friday (Oc.)
Wednesday 01/05/2013	Labor Day
Friday 03/05/2013	Good Friday (Or.)
Friday 09/08/2013	Id El Fitr* *Based on Lunar Calendar
Monday 04/11/2013	Hegira New Year* *Based on Lunar Calendar
Friday 22/11/2013	Independence Day
Tuesday 24/12/2013	Christmas Eve
Wednesday 25/12/2013	Christmas Day
Monday 31/12/2013	New Year's Eve