



## A Message to Beirut

The ARWA association and all of its members wish to express their deep emotion at the recent tragedy in Beirut. We extend our sincere condolences to the Lebanese people, to our brothers and sisters of a nation whose history has shown resilience and strength to stand up without silencing sorrow, fears and hopes for a better future.

Our thoughts are first and foremost with the wounded and afflicted families and all those who accompany and support them in these times of pain, without forgetting our friends and colleagues who are members of our association and who are deeply committed to their country and its several millennia year-old culture. We share their sorrow and distress and wish to express to them our deepest sympathy, our sincere friendship, and a message of brotherhood.

A country of openness, hospitality and vibrant exchanges, Lebanon has left its mark on world history and its rich heritage is a truthful testimony to this. In the depths of millennia, in Beirut, human history begins at the Palaeolithic site of Ras Beirut, not far from the port, the site of the blast which has just darkened the present and suspended time.

The brutal disappearance of this outlet to the world and the human tragedy it caused, in a city travelled by men for several hundred thousand years, moves our community who is committed to researching and highlighting multi-millennial history of which we are all heirs. Beyond the irreparable loss of life, we also deplore the loss or damage to the many heritage sites, private and state museums, and other cultural heritage institutions severely affected by this tragedy. But we remain convinced that the heart of Beirut, stricken by this disaster, will be restored without losing its past glory.

With the conviction of our community of researchers and professionals, we wish to lend our full support to the Lebanese people and to all the specialists mobilized to safeguard the essence of these national assets that radiate throughout the world, with the assurance that they can find resources and help in us, as professionals and friends who are heartedly dedicated to safeguarding such a rich and diverse heritage, an heritage representing the whole Lebanese community.



The ARWA Community

International Association for Archaeological Research in Western & Central Asia