

ALEF's Inaugural 'Gathering for a New Lebanon' Concludes with Bold Call for Peace with Israel, Major Reform & Investment

The American Lebanon Education Foundation (ALEF) successfully launched its inaugural policy and advocacy event, "Gathering for a New Lebanon,"

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, April 28, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [American Lebanon Education Foundation \(ALEF\)](#) successfully launched its inaugural policy and advocacy event, "[Gathering for a New Lebanon](#)," on Tuesday, April 14, 2026, at the historic Yara Restaurant in Midtown Manhattan.

Over 100 leaders, business executives, activists, policymakers, and allies gathered for an evening of candid dialogue and strategic vision-setting for a free, sovereign, and prosperous Lebanon.

The invitation-only gathering featured a 6:00 PM reception followed by an 8:00 PM dinner and program. Speakers emphasized three core pillars: achieving peace with Israel, implementing major political and economic reforms, and attracting substantial foreign investment.

Ziad K. Abdelnour, Founder and Chairman of ALEF, delivered a forceful keynote declaring that ALEF is an activist organization, not a social club. He outlined three non-negotiable goals: peace with Israel as the essential first step, sweeping reforms to remove corrupt leadership, and billions in foreign investment that will only flow after peace and reforms are achieved.

Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman, a leading candidate for Governor of New York, expressed strong support for a free Lebanon and pledged to open a trade and cultural center in Beirut if elected. He also addressed New York State issues and called for attendee support in his



Ziad K. Abdelnour, Founder and Chairman of the American Lebanon Education Foundation (ALEF), delivering the keynote address at the "Gathering for a New Lebanon" event in New York City on April 14, 2026.

campaign.

Amir Fakhraivar, Senate Chairman of the National Iranian Congress and a survivor of Iranian regime imprisonment and torture, shared powerful personal testimony and drew parallels between Lebanon's challenges and successful post-war constitutional reforms in Japan. He highlighted concurrent diplomatic developments in Washington, D.C., and called for new constitutions in Lebanon, Iran, and Syria modeled on American principles.

The event coincided with historic U.S.-brokered talks in Washington, D.C., where Secretary of State Marco Rubio hosted the first direct diplomatic meeting between Lebanese and Israeli ambassadors in decades. This rare engagement, aimed at advancing a ceasefire and long-term peace framework, added powerful momentum to the evening's strong message of regional peace and Lebanese sovereignty.

Event photos, video highlights of the speeches, and full speaker quotes are available upon request.

Bob Straniere (Counsel to ALEF – Opening remarks): “We believe we are today on the brink of the leadership, the friendship, and the effectiveness of a free Lebanon so that the 4 million Lebanese who live there, will have the opportunity to participate in all of the issues that will build a strong country in a strong relationship with the United States of America.”

Quote from Ziad K. Abdelnour, Founder and Chairman of ALEF: “We need to achieve peace with Israel. Whatever it takes, without a Lebanon-Israel peace, we’re going nowhere. ... Anybody against peace with Israel is against Lebanon.”

Quote from Bruce Blakeman: “We have the power in this room. Together with me, President Trump, to make sure that we give support to a free Lebanon, to a prosperous Lebanon.” When I’m governor, one of the first things I’m going to do is open a trade and cultural center in Beirut so that we have a partnership with the Lebanese people and Lebanese Americans.”

Quote from Amir Fakhraivar: “It’s the time for Hezbollah to get out. ... Let’s hope right now the Iranians and the Lebanese and the Israelis and the Americans, we all can come together ... and make sure we all can follow the path of post-war Japan ... to just use American Constitution, which is the first written constitution and the best constitution on the planet.”

The evening concluded with a unified call to action for sustained advocacy, a strong U.S.-Lebanon partnership, and concrete steps toward Lebanese sovereignty.

The American Lebanon Education Foundation (ALEF) is a global initiative of professionals, activists, and leaders united by a shared vision of a free, sovereign, and prosperous Lebanon. As an independent, non-partisan movement, ALEF advocates for political, economic, and security

reforms while engaging international policymakers to support Lebanon's sovereignty. [For more information, visit www.usalef.org](https://www.usalef.org).

Media Contact: American Lebanon Education Foundation (ALEF) contact@usalef.org +1 (212) 970-ALEF (2533) 445 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10022

Note to Editors: Interviews with Ziad K. Abdelnour or other speakers can be arranged. Please contact ALEF directly.

Ziad Abdelnour

ALEF American Lebanon Education Foundation

+1 212-970-2533

Contact@usalef.org

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