

Intervention Abboud Bejjani
Colloque Maison du Futur May 14, 2025
“Overcoming Divisions: A Conference for Lebanon's Future”
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Good morning, everyone.

I want to take this opportunity to express how privileged I am to be here at the 50th anniversary of Maison du Futur. I also want to extend my gratitude to President Gemayel for the honor of serving this esteemed think tank, not only as a moderator today but also as a member of its board.

Thank you for joining us today for this significant discussion titled *'Remembering the Past, Imagining the Future'*, which focuses on reconciliation and the concerns or ambiguities that often arise in the aftermath of war and conflict.

As I reflect on the lasting impact of conflict, I am reminded of the profound complexities that arise when societies seek to heal and rebuild. Reconciliation is not just about addressing past issues; it is also about confronting the concerns and uncertainties that can remain when the aftermath of conflict is not adequately addressed. For many, the inability to confront the past can hinder their capacity to imagine a hopeful future.

When thinking about this topic, a few countries come to mind, such as South Africa, Rwanda, Ireland, and Lebanon, each of which has dealt with its own unique challenges in the wake of conflict. While the approaches taken in these countries differ, they all highlight the importance of fostering understanding, rebuilding trust, and creating inclusive narratives that respect the diverse experiences of affected individuals.

We will explore critical questions surrounding reconciliation: How can societies effectively navigate the complexities of healing? What role do truth and dialogue play in addressing the fears and uncertainties that can arise? How can the lessons learned from these diverse contexts inform our understanding of contemporary challenges?

I invite each of our esteemed professors, Paul Carmichael, Joseph Maila, and Jean-Paul, to share their insights and experiences as we work together to understand the multiple nature of reconciliation and its importance in paving the way for a more peaceful future.

With that, I'd like to turn the floor over to Paul Carmichael to begin our discussion