

**“Strengthening the Strategy Development of Dar al-Fatwa Institutions to Enhance Stability and Religious Tolerance in Lebanon”**

**In the Name of God the Most Merciful**

Proceeding from the oath delivered by His Eminence, Grand Mufti of the State of Lebanon, Sheikh Abdullatif Derian, including a road map for the future work of Dar Al-Fatwa and its institutions, which falls in line with the messages of Islam such as leniency, tolerance, and spreading a culture of respect towards other human beings, who God has honored and bestowed upon with the task of building and developing the earth.

And in implementing what was stated in the series of speeches, religious sermons, and public declarations delivered by His Eminence on the importance of reconsidering Dar Al-Fatwa's administrative structure and improving and modernizing it to become better equipped to fulfill its new role.

The Grand Mufti has adopted a number of initiatives with Al-Azhar Al-Sharif, and with ministries of endowments in Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar, hoping and trusting that these initiatives will produce the practical results that we look forward to.

His Eminence has also responded positively to a constructive initiative presented by the German Berghof Foundation which fits within the framework of this general orientation and complements it, especially that this initiative is supported by the European Union and the German government.

In accordance with the cooperation agreement to be signed today, the Foundation offers two main things. The first is moral support of Dar Al-Fatwa's orientation and work towards spreading a sound image of Islam not only in Lebanon but in the world at large, especially after this image has been tarnished at the hands of a group of extremists. It is natural that this constructive process starts inside Lebanon to become, God willing, through its success, an example for other pluralist societies.

In light of the fact that a third of the one billion and 600 million Muslims live in non-Muslim countries and communities (in Europe, the US, India, China, Russia and other places), spreading a culture of tolerance, acceptance, moderation to effect peace, and respect within our communities and communities around the world is seen as a very important task.

At a time when the darkness of radicalism prevails, Dar Al-Fatwa wants to light a candle of moderation based on the Islamic fundamentals which state that diversity is not only God's will but also a demonstration of the greatness of His creation and a testimony to His many prodigies. Dar Al-Fatwa also aims to show that this diversity exists and continues with us and by us until the day of judgment by divine will. For this reason, God the Almighty

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encourages us to meet and mingle not to avoid one another, and also to leave judgment to Him alone and only for the day of judgment and He will justly rule on our differences and conflicts.

Hence, the agreement of cooperation between Dar Al-Fatwa and the Berghof Foundation, with all the international expertise that this German Foundation holds in the field of dialogue, negotiation, and mediation, as well as all the respect and credibility it has acquired within the communities it has worked, is a driving force on the moral as well as the organizational levels, which helps Dar Al-Fatwa undertake the mission it has assumed.

The first article of the agreement calls for "working together to reinforce peacebuilding and to spread a culture of moderation in Lebanon, and to build on Dar Al-Fatwa's fixed targets and policies in Lebanon to reinforce values such as moderation, tolerance, and respect for human dignity and public freedoms". It also calls for "supporting Dar Al-Fatwa's institutions in improving its work towards reinforcing stability and religious tolerance in Lebanon".

Finally, it is important to stress that Dar Al-Fatwa's commitment to spreading a culture of tolerance, dialogue and respect for human rights and dignities reflects the identity and character of Lebanon's Muslims and the role they play within their country and abroad from the days of the Imam of Beirut, Imam Abdul Rahman Al-Ouza'i, to this day. For this reason, the cooperation between Dar Al-Fatwa and the Berghof Foundation to fulfil this role is highly appreciated and respected.

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