

### **5.35 MODERATOR: BRIEF INTRO INTO SUBJECT AND INTRO TO OUR HOST DR. JABBRA.**

Good evening ladies and gentlemen and welcome to the Meeting of Minds; Gandhi and Haydar in Today's World. My name is Mouna Mounayer and it is my privilege to be the moderator of this panel discussion.

Today we celebrate International Non-Violence day, which is also the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, leader of the Indian Independence movement and pioneer of the philosophy and strategy of non-violence in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Jawdat Haydar was a poet and philosopher – a civic poet, if you will, who sought to express contemporary political and social ideas through poetry. He was also one of the earliest poets to try and bridge the gap between civilisations rather than encourage talk about the 'clash of civilisations'.

Two men who lived very different lives but impacted deeply on their own communities and further afield through their devotion to their life long philosophies. Both were committed pacifists. Both wanted to change the world around them, to better the lives of the poor and less fortunate. Both saw injustices and were not prepared to sit back and turn the other cheek but equally they did not see violence as the answer to social and legal change. Their greatest wish was for humanity to one day learn to be at peace with itself.

Today we are discussing whether the overarching message of these two men is relevant to our times. So without further ado please welcome our panelists, Mr Fouad Makhzoumi, Dr Rosie Ghannage and Dr Khatoun Haidar. Thank you. We are also very honoured that Dr. Joseph Jabbara, President of LAU will open the discussion.

(2 mins)

## DR JABBRA SPEECH

**5.37: MODERATOR:** Thank you very much DrJabbra. We will now watch a short introductory film.

### **5.49: MODERATOR: INTRO FOUAD MAKHZOUMI**

Our first panelist today is Mr.FouadMakhzoumi. As you probably all know Mr.Makhzoumi,is one of Lebanon's and the world's leading industrialists. He is a businessman, a philanthropist and a politician. He is the recipient of many awards including the Commander of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Italy and the Socrates Oxford Annual Award for 2014 presented to him by the European Business Assembly.

MrMakhzoumi holds a Masters in Chemical Engineering. His business and non-business initiatives are a reflection of his life long practice of tolerance and secularism. He set up the National Dialogue Party to bridge the gaps between the Lebanese and the Forum for National Dialogue. He also set up an NGO to address socio-economic issues of concern to all Lebanese. These are a few illustrations of the way he thinks, conducts his life and business.

This evening he will look at how 'spirituality coupled with the meditational minds of Gandhi and Haydar, inspired their respective lives and directed them on the path of tolerance and acceptance of their fellow human beings, without discrimination as to race or creed.'

MrMakhzoumi, the floor is yours.

## **6.04 PM: MODERATOR INTRO PROF ROSIE KHOURY GHANNAGE**

Our second panelist this evening is Professor Rosie KhouryGhannage, who is an expert in the fields of applied linguistics and discourse analysis. Professor Ghannage graduated from Nottingham University in England. She has worked as an educational consultant, a curriculum designer, a lecturer and an advisor at UL and USEK since 1990.

Professor Ghannage has written several research articles in the fields of culture and discourse analysis and many in the field of language and assessment as well as participating in many conferences in Lebanon and abroad.

This evening Professor Ghannage's talk is titled: Is there a need to seek the truth with Mahatma Gandhi and JawdatHaydar? Professor Ghannage will highlight how both Mahatma Gandhi and JawdatHaydar experienced the truth and non-violence to reach peace.

Professor Ghannage, the floor is yours...

## **6.12 PM: DR KHATOUN HAIDAR**

Our final panelist this evening is DrKhatounHaidar, who apart from being JawdatHaydar's granddaughter is gender and human rights activist in her own right. She has several publications as well as being an expert consultant. Her areas of expertise are Gender, Development and Strategic Planning. Her 35 year career has spanned work in Europe and the Middle East with both public and private organisations. DrHairdar's has an academic background in Development Studies, in interdisciplinary doctoral programme in economics, sociology and political science. She holds a doctorate in Women Studies and has extensive field experience. Dr. Haidar is also the founder of the Lebanese NGO Synergy-Takamol and she is the founding member of Tha'era – a regional women network for equity and parity.

This evening Dr. Haidar will be talking about the The Theory of Change in Practical Terms and its relevance through non-violence.

Dr. Haidar the floor is yours...

## **6.23 pm: MODERATOR CONCLUSION**

I would like to thank all our panelists this evening for their most enlightening views on this subject.

The 21<sup>st</sup> century is an age of paradox. On the one hand we talk of living in a global village as technology, communication and transportation promote a global outlook and an awareness of interconnectedness, yet on the other hand we face injustice and inequality on an unprecedented scale.

In the spirit of what our panelists have talked about these evening and Haydar and Gandhi's vision of committed pacifism, we can see that a shared set of ideas about nonviolent resistance has been developed by a new generation of scholars and advocates. Universities around the world now have departments with names such as the Institute of Peace and offer courses on Peace Studies and Conflict resolution. Governments such as that of Canada are creating a Department of Peace that will promote a culture of peace and assertive non-violence in Canada and the world.

From the Arab Spring in 2011 to the recent YouStink protests in Lebanon – the ordinary people on the street demand that their voices be heard. Following the blueprint laid down by such personalities as Gandhi and Haydar, nonviolent political resistance movements are becoming increasingly more common and able to reach a wider audience through such things as social media.

So with all of that in mind I would like to open the floor to questions from the audience to our panelists....

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. HOW IS THE WORLD TODAY DIFFERENT FROM THE WORLD IN, WHICH GANDHI AND HAYDAR LIVED?
2. ARE THE LIFE EXPERIENCES AND IDEAS OF GANDHI AND HAYDAR RELEVANT FOR THE WORLD AS IT IS TODAY? AND CAN THEY BE IMPLEMENTED AND PROPAGATED TODAY AND IF SO HOW?
3. RHETORICALLY SPEAKING, IS THE CONCEPT OF A NON-VIOLENT FIGHT OR A PEACEFUL SOLDIER INHERENTLY CONTRADICTORY AND IF YES HOW CAN THIS CONTRADICTION BE RESOLVED?
4. HOW CAN WE CONVINCED THOSE WHO BELIEVE THAT 'IF YOU ARE NOT WITH US, YOU ARE AGAINST US' THAT THERE IS ROOM IN THIS WORLD FOR ALL OPINIONS AND BELIEFS?

## **FINAL WORDS:**

I would like to thank Ms Anita Nayar, the Ambassador of India to Lebanon, Dr Joseph Jabbra, President of LAU and MrsShahinaOsseiran, Friends of JawdatHaydar, for organizing this panel discussion. Thank you all for attending and participating. I will leave you with these two thoughts : 'Wherever there are conflicts, wherever you are confronted with an opponent, conquer him with love.' Gandhi

“...Preach love and peace to those who listen and Explain to them what're the rights of man and What's liberty what's equality and What's a brotherhood” JawdatHaydar

THANK YOU AND HAVE A VERY GOOD EVENING.