

An architectural model of the Pavilion of Lebanon, featuring a tall, slender tower and several smaller structures with arched roofs, set against a dark background.

*The Pavilion of*  
**LEBANON**

GROUNDBREAKING  
AT THE  
NEW YORK  
WORLD'S FAIR  
1964-1965

*August 15, 1963*



**COVER:**

The Pavilion of Lebanon will capture the art of traditional Lebanese architecture in contemporary form. The building will be constructed of imported Lebanese stone. It will contain exhibits illustrating the cultural heritage of Lebanon and its tourist potential; an open-air restaurant will serve Lebanese cuisine. The architects-designers are Assem A. Salaam and Pierre El-Khoury of Beirut. Justin Henshell and Edwin A. Weed of New York are associate architects.

Excerpts from transcription of remarks made by Lebanese and World's Fair officials at groundbreaking ceremonies for the Pavilion of Lebanon, at the New York World's Fair, Thursday, August 15, 1963.





AMBASSADOR RICHARD C. PATTERSON, JR. [Chief of Protocol]: Mr. Chammas, Mr. Makkawi, Mr. Consul General, Mr. Moses, Governor Poletti, distinguished guests. This important groundbreaking ceremony marks the beginning of construction of the beautifully designed Pavilion of Lebanon. Before introducing the speakers on this auspicious occasion, I have the honor to present for a bow the Chargé d'Affaires of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United States, Mr. Khalil Makkawi, who is honoring us this afternoon as the personal representative of the Ambassador of Lebanon to the United Nations.

Our first speaker on this important occasion has visited Lebanon several times and knows well the attractions, the achievements and potentials of that beautiful country. I have great pleasure in giving you Governor Charles Poletti.

GOVERNOR CHARLES POLETTI [Vice President, International Affairs and Exhibits]: Ambassador Patterson, distinguished representatives of Lebanon, President Moses, Hank Harris and Hugh Auchincloss and friends of Lebanon. I am very happy that it has been possible to have a groundbreaking for Lebanon, and I want at the very outset, on behalf of the Fair, to express our appreciation of the staunch and valiant and steadfast support given to the Fair in achieving a pavilion by such people as the architect, Assem Salaam. We are grateful to him for all the weeks that he's invested to bring this about and we are also grateful to those officials of Lebanon who have helped.

We consider it very important to have a Pavilion of Lebanon because those of us who know Lebanon know of its unusual qualities and its special qualities. Of the many countries that we at the Fair have visited, Lebanon holds a special place. Lebanon is not a large country. I think it's about as large as the State of Vermont, where I was born, which is about 150 miles long and about 40 miles wide — about the size of your country.

But, of course, in Vermont we can't boast of all those wonderful things that you have in Lebanon. You have those magnificent beaches; you have places like Baalbeck, which are unique in the world; and you have the Cedars of Lebanon — and I'm delighted and grateful that we're going to be honored by having at the pavilion a little Cedar of Lebanon, a great-great-great-grandson of the cedars of Biblical days.

Your country possesses many remarkable features, and I'm very fond of it because the people are so friendly and so intelligent. We Americans are happy to enjoy the friendship of the people of Lebanon, and we are proud that the American University in Beirut has been able to make, and serve as, a bridge of better understanding between Lebanon and the United States.

I think that the greatest investment that any country can make, to bring about a better understanding, is through education. It's all right to build dams, improve roads and put up a printing press or paper mill, but what pays dividends in the long run is education. And all the people who have the opportunity of going to the American University in Beirut come out with a better understanding of



the United States, and all the Americans who have anything to do with that Institution come out understanding the people of Lebanon more sympathetically and more intelligently. So we are happy that Lebanon is coming to this World's Fair and is coming in such an unusual and extraordinary way.

We at the Fair will continue to be of whatever assistance we can. Let us assure you that we are cheerfully ready to give whatever we can to contribute to the success of your pavilion.

We at the Fair want you to know — all of you, and through you the people of Lebanon — that we deeply appreciate Lebanon's action in having a pavilion here and in helping us achieve the objective of this great enterprise that's headed by our president, Robert Moses. This objective is to give the seventy million visitors, and principally Americans, an opportunity to learn more about the peoples of the world, and to come to the simple conclusion that the world is indeed small, and we'd better understand and appreciate and love each other more than we have in the centuries past. Thank you very much.

AMBASSADOR PATTERSON: Thank you, Governor Poletti. It's not easy for me to present the next speaker, but I'll do the best I can. He's Robert Moses, president of the New York World's Fair. Ladies and gentlemen, I have the high privilege of presenting The Honorable Robert Moses.

MR. ROBERT MOSES: Ambassador Patterson, Governor Poletti, our friends from Lebanon. I've got to look up my geography because I think that I come from an even

smaller State than Governor Poletti. I was born in Connecticut which has a few more people than Vermont, and I think it's smaller. But anyway, size has nothing to do with it, and I think that's the moral here. I don't minimize or deprecate or fail to grasp the significance of the great pavilions here. We are very dependent on them and they are putting on a very remarkable series of shows and demonstrations. But it isn't the size that counts — we are constantly telling the exhibitors and we try to make it clear to the smaller industries — that what we want is to have them here and we want them to exercise every ingenuity they can. We want them to use their imagination and, as in the case of previous Fairs, particularly the Fair on this site in 1939-1940, it isn't the size or the amount of investment that counts.

The people who will come here are prepared to allocate several days to seeing the Fair. Some of them live nearby and they'll just walk in from places in Queens, while others will come from the rest of the city and suburbs. Others will come from the hinterland and from abroad and they'll be prepared to spend a week or ten days here. And the people will hear about the Pavilion of Lebanon, that it is an attractive place, and they will come to see it.

Beyond that, I think it's been our experience here at the Fair that what we need more than anything else, and especially on the part of foreign countries, is a desire to put our best foot forward and to make it apparent, as Governor Poletti said, that it is one world and we are drawing closer and closer together — and that it's high



time that we knew something about each other.

I think this is going to be a fine pavilion. I think a lot of people are going to see it. I think the word will get around everywhere that it's something that they should not miss. And all I can add to what Governor Poletti said is that I'm delighted that you're here and that you've reached the point of breaking ground. Thank you.

**AMBASSADOR PATTERSON:** Thank you, Mr. Moses. It is now my privilege and pleasure to introduce a distinguished Lebanese diplomat who during his outstanding career has served his Government in high posts in many foreign countries. I present The Honorable Nabih Noussair, Consul General of Lebanon in New York, and chairman of the Commission of Lebanon to the New York World's Fair.

**THE HONORABLE NABIH NOUSSAIR:** President Moses, Governor Poletti, Ambassador Patterson, ladies and gentlemen. I am happy and honored to be here today at the groundbreaking ceremony for the Lebanese Pavilion. Lebanon did not miss the Fair held in New York in 1939-1940; every year it is represented at the Fair in Chicago. It wants to be present at the New York World's Fair in 1964-1965 because this Fair offers the best opportunity for all the countries of the world to make themselves better known internationally.

Lebanon will try to acquaint the millions of visitors who will be here next year with the contributions that it has made in the past, from the time of the Phoenicians, and the contributions that it could make in the future and thus serve the purpose of this Fair, which is to promote



At the groundbreaking ceremonies for the Pavilion of Lebanon are: (left to right): Mr. Hugh D. Auchincloss, Jr.; The Honorable Nabih Noussair, Consul General of Lebanon; Governor Charles Poletti, vice president, International Affairs and Exhibits; M. Souheil Chammas, Deputy Chief of Mission of Lebanon; and Mr. Lionel Harris, International Division of the New York World's Fair.



peace through understanding. When I think of the number of people who will visit the Fair in 1964-1965 I realize the importance of the work we are starting now and I appreciate the value of the farsightedness of all those who have promoted the idea of the Fair.

Our pavilion will be built with stones brought from Lebanon and this, we think, will be an important element in the representation of our country. We will try to display the things which will show our characteristics and our role among all continents. I congratulate the leaders of the Fair, and, in my capacity as delegate of Lebanon I am happy to say that we are ready to do all we can to assure that our efforts are crowned with success. Thank you.

AMBASSADOR PATTERSON: Thank you very much. Our next speaker is a well-known attorney and economist and diplomat. He attended the American University in Beirut, has law degrees from the Schools of Law of the Syrian University at Damascus and St. Joseph's University in Beirut. Later he took a post-graduate course in economics at the University of Paris and practiced law in Beirut before being appointed First Secretary and later Counselor of the Embassy of Lebanon in Washington. I have the high honor to present the personal representative of the Ambassador of Lebanon, and Deputy Chief of the Mission of Lebanon to the United States, Mr. Souheil Chammas.

MR. SOUHEIL CHAMMAS: Thank you, Ambassador Patterson. President Moses, Governor Poletti, friends of Lebanon, ladies and gentlemen. It's both a

privilege and an honor for me to represent today, at the groundbreaking ceremonies for the Pavilion of Lebanon, His Excellency, Ibrahim Hussein El-Ahdab, the Ambassador of Lebanon to the United States. I hope that in replacing him I shall not fail him.

The participation of Lebanon in the New York World's Fair is very meaningful to Lebanon. It is very meaningful for multiple reasons. First, the theme of the Fair — Peace through Understanding — has much meaning in Lebanon and is deeply rooted in the Lebanese people, traditionally a peaceful people. A tremendous Fair like this one and one possessed of such a theme and the aim of achieving such a worthwhile ultimate objective is worth participating in, and I think it's a privilege for all countries — of course I cannot speak for all of them, I speak only for my own — it's a privilege for Lebanon to participate in this Fair.

The second reason is that, no doubt, the New York World's Fair will be a meeting center for the various civilizations of the world, a meeting point of their accomplishments, of their contributions — a meeting of the minds of the people, of their determination to understand each other, and to try to communicate with each other in all ways possible. And I don't think there is any better or more suitable way to accomplish this than by participation in the New York World's Fair.

Third, this Fair is being held in the City of New York in the United States of America, a country which believes in democracy, freedom and human dignity. Lebanon, my country, small as it is, is a democratic republic; it is very



proud of its independence and of its accomplishments. It is very tolerant and it is very free.

In Lebanon we are proud to note that we have no less than fourteen denominations living together peacefully, contributing all their efforts to the progress of the country. One Lebanese is distinguished from his fellow Lebanese by the manner in which he best contributes to the welfare of his country. We don't discriminate between Lebanese citizens, whether they be Moslems, Christians, Jews, or otherwise. This third common link, of course, prompted us to participate in the New York World's Fair.

I'm not here to speak of our past contributions, but I have heard President Moses and Governor Poletti state, so well and so truthfully, how small Lebanon is. Yet, small as it is, it is the country whose ancestors have given to the world the alphabet, the cornerstone of human civilization. It is the country, the first country in the Middle East, that used printing as a means of communicating ideas to the various peoples of the area. It is a country whose people are the descendants of those who believed in going to the world outside, of going to other peoples, of trading with the world without colonizing it. And in this respect, we have another point where we meet with the United States of America. The fact that we have a free economy built on free enterprise, the fact that the Lebanese is individualistic, but at the same time an orderly individual, makes him somewhat like the American citizen.

I'm not going to take much more of your time. I wish only to state, in the name of my Ambassador and in the

name of the Lebanese Government, that it is a privilege to be able to participate in the New York World's Fair. We do thank, wholeheartedly, President Moses, Governor Poletti and all the others who have contributed in making our participation possible. And I do not want to miss the occasion to mention in particular two good friends of mine, who have been very patient with us, especially in choosing the site for our pavilion: Hugh Auchincloss and Lionel Harris. I thank you.



Shown above are (left to right): M. Khalil Makkawi, Deputy Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the U.N.; Mr. Robert Moses; Governor Poletti; Miss Souad Tabbara, Attaché at the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the U.N.; M. Souheil Chammas, Deputy Chief of Mission of Lebanon; and, in the cab of the bulldozer, Consul General Nabih Nussair.

# THE PAVILION OF LEBANON

HIS EXCELLENCY IBRAHIM HUSSEIN EL-AHDAB, *Ambassador of Lebanon to the United States*

MR. SOUHEIL CHAMMAS, *Counselor, Embassy of Lebanon*

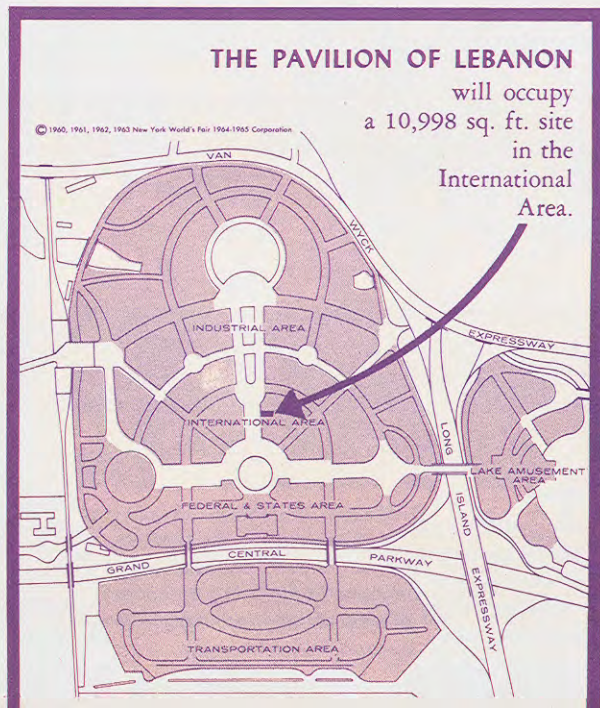
MR. KHALIL MAKKAWI, *Deputy Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations*

THE HONORABLE NABIH NOUSSAIR, *Consul General of Lebanon in New York and Chairman of the Commission to the World's Fair*

MESSRS. ASSEM A. SALAAM and PIERRE EL-KHOURY, *Architects-Designers, Beirut*

MESSRS. JUSTIN HENSHELL and EDWIN A. WEED, *Associate Architects, New York*

GILLES and COTTING, *General Contractors*



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