

**Speech of the Armed Forces Commander General Joseph Aoun at the
Launching Ceremony of the “Lebanese Army Code of Conduct for Law
Enforcement”
Monroe Hotel, 29/1/2019**

**Your Excellencies the Ministers, Ambassadors, and Members of
Parliament,**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaimed in 1948 was the mainspring of all international standards and mechanisms subsequently adopted to uphold human rights.

And as a matter of fact, Lebanon was the only Arab country to participate in the drafting of this Declaration, through the conclusive and influential role of the great thinker and diplomat Charles Malek in the wording of the text, cited in the Preamble of the Lebanese Constitution. Since seventy one years now, Lebanon remains at the forefront of the countries that place human rights as an absolute priority, and hence ratified most of the international treaties and conventions relating to the promotion and protection of human rights, notwithstanding the wide-ranging political, security and economic challenges and circumstances that prevailed throughout the past.

Seeing our country take the lead in this field is only normal, being the country of diversity, of interaction among cultures and civilizations, the country of openness and liberties. By the same token, it is plain common sense for the Lebanese Army to be vibrant image of this nation, reflecting the high cultural, humanitarian and moral values of its people.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Lebanese Army abides by the various laws issued by the Lebanese constitutional institutions, as well as the international charters relating to the International Humanitarian Law. Therefore, it incorporates them in its internal regulations, heedful of complying with the human rights and preserving its professionalism, integrity and image at the local and international levels.

Thus, the Lebanese Army Command has established the Directorate of International Law and Human Rights, the core aim of which consists of mainstreaming the provisions of the International Human Rights Law in the military instructions and regulations, and monitoring their implementation.

Distinguished Audience,

We are particularly keen on abiding by the international standards that govern the military rules of conduct and the way of dealing with any citizen of suspect during the execution of our military duties, despite the challenges and attacks that confront us and put the lives of our soldiers at risk.

We do seek, at all times, to strike a balance between security imperatives and international standards relating to Human Rights. Besides, the principle of accountability and sanction is applied in case of any infringements of military instructions.

Moreover, we rely on transparency and credibility in our relations with the local and international institutions dealing with human rights issues in various field.

Honorable Audience,

Our gathering today to launch the Lebanese Army Code of Conduct for law Enforcement is an opportunity to renew our commitment to International Human Rights standards, but also to renew the confidence of the local and international community in this military institution, that is developing its various capabilities, on the one hand, and the sense of humanity, of ethics and discipline among its soldiers, on the other hand.

Therefore, I am confident that the members of the Military Institutions will adhere to the content of this code and accurately apply it on the ground, as it constitutes a roadmap for the relationship between the security agent and the citizen in implementing the provisions of the law, and regulates the ethical, humanitarian and legal conduct and obligations in the course of military missions, taking into account the rights of these agents that must be respected in the performance of their duties. The Directorate of International Law and Human Rights, alongside with the competent bodies of the Army Command will monitor the application of this Code, disseminate it within the institution and prosecute any violation of its clauses.

On a final note, I would like to thank the UNHCR and all the associations and humanitarian institutions for their trust in and continuous cooperation with the LAF. And

I do assure you that the launching of this code is not our end goal, we shall deploy additional efforts to guarantee its proper implementation, and strive for its constant upgrading in line with our vision that aims at promoting the concept of human rights within the institution, as well as the respect for the rule of law and the public and individual liberties, within the legal and constitutional frameworks that preserve the integrity of the nation and the dignity of the citizen.

May you live long,
Long live the Army,
Long live Lebanon.