

# Children of the World to treat two Lebanese for free

Lana Asfour  
Daily Star staff

3/3/2001

Two Lebanese children will undergo treatment for vascular problems and third-degree

burns in New York next week.

The operations will cost more than \$200,000 and will be funded by the Forum's Children of the World Foundation, thanks to the tireless efforts of

Dr. Nicolas Georges Zouain.

Of his own initiative, Zouain, a Lebanese forensic doctor working in New York, contacted the foundation and persuaded it to add Lebanon to its list of deserving countries.

The Children of the World Foundation is an American non-profit organization founded by the Forum Club, a philanthropic business group. It provides children under the age of 10 from all over the world with urgent medical treatment that is not available in their own countries.

It has already treated children from Russia, Ukraine, Malta, and various countries in Central and South America. Lebanon is the first country in the Middle East to receive help from the forum.

The identities of the two Lebanese children have been kept secret out of respect for their privacy and medical needs. They were chosen out of a group of 20 due to their complicated surgery.

Mireille Dib Nehmeh, who is completing her medical residency at the American Univer-

sity Hospital, helped find the two children. "The operations will help a two year-old boy who has had a vascular malformation since birth," she said.

"He has had several operations in Lebanon, but they haven't worked."

The other child, a 9-year-old girl, is suffering from third-degree burns and needs "extensive skin reconstruction using sophisticated implantation methods."

**'Recognition that Lebanese children need and deserve support'**

The operations will take place in Staten Island University Hospital, which won the Nobel Prize for medicine in 1996, and the Downstate University Hospital.

In a conference at the Press Federation Friday, Philippe Zouain, Nicolas Zouain's brother,

said, "This is a first step in establishing a link between Lebanon and international humanitarian and medical institutions."

He thanked the doctors and their teams for treating the children for free.

He said he was grateful to Middle East Airlines and American Airlines, which donated the tickets for the two children and their parents to travel.

Zouain said the international medical donation, "is a balm for the Lebanese wound in these difficult times."

Najib Dib Nehmeh, who introduced the speaker, emphasized the humanitarian nature of the project. After the conference, he drew attention to Nicolas Zouain's efforts.

"It took nine months of persuasion and negotiations for the project to be realized," he said.

"The war in Lebanon left many children with serious injuries," Dib-Nehmeh said. "The importance of the project lies in encouraging worldwide recognition that Lebanese children need and deserve support from international institutions."



Philippe Zouain and Baalbaki: "link with humanitarian institutions"