Taha A. Mikati is founder and chairman of M1 Group. From modest beginnings in the late 60s in construction and engineering in the UAE, he developed his business into a dynamic, diversified, international organization covering sectors as varied as telecommunications, retail, energy, travel, fashion, real estate and more.

Mikati hails from Tripoli in North Lebanon. Born in 1944, he was brought up in Beirut in a loving, close-knit family. He attended International College, and later the American University of Beirut where he studied engineering.

A pioneer and entrepreneur by nature, he founded shortly after graduation his own small company, Arabian Construction Company, [ACC], successfully handling contracting and engineering projects in the UAE the Company grew to become one of the largest construction companies in the Middle East. In 1978 he moved back to Lebanon with his family, running his business from there. The civil strife in the country having made international communications an almost impossible task, with the infrastructure destroyed, he had the knack to install on the roof top of his office building a satellite phone as those installed on ships at large. Other businesses in the country over asked to follow suit. Mikati decided then to start with his freshly graduating brother Najib a small company that would install and operate these systems- INVESTCOM.

The Company installed 50 satellite systems, soon realizing the need for communication on a wider scale, to service not only businesses but the individual at large. INVESTCOM became the first privately owned company to install a mobile network in the Middle East, offering affordable telecommunications to the community at a crucial time in Lebanon. This was replicated in emerging markets with poor or nonexistent telecom infrastructure.

INVESTCOM became a major international player in the world of telecommunications, showing unprecedented growth with over 5000 employees and a presence in 12 countries across 3 continents. In 2005 INVESTCOM listed its share on the London Stock Exchange, and on the Dubai International Financial Exchange, in what was the largest international listing of a Middle Eastern company.

In 2006, MTN and INVESTCOM combined in a landmark deal to create the largest emerging markets mobile operator. Today, M1 Group is one of the largest beneficial shareholders of MTN.

Through M1 Group, Mikati continues his success story with diversified business ventures and investments worldwide, the latest being the acquisition of prestigious French fashion label Faconnable, acquired in August 2007.

A philanthropist and humanitarian, Mikati commits to various organizations in Lebanon and beyond. He is the chairman of Azm and Saade Association, caring for the individual’s welfare, assigning far-reaching health, social, educational, and sports programs. He also supports Dar Al-Aytam, caring for Lebanese orphans; the American University of Beirut; the Harris School at the University of Chicago, with the Mikati Fellowship; the Cleveland Clinic, with The Mikati Foundation Endowed Chair in Liver Diseases, and more.

This is the story of a successful FEA alumnus which proves that FEA graduates are problem solvers, life-long learners, leaders in their profession, able to excel in additional professions, contribute effectively to the societies in which they live and work, have civic responsibilities, and are dedicated to helping others.