

Good morning all.

On the occasion of Global Ethics Day I would like to welcome you to the 2nd Annual Regional conference of the Salim El-Hoss Bioethics and Professionalism Program at the AUB Faculty of Medicine, in collaboration with UNESCO, ISESCO and in joint sponsorship with the Cleveland Clinic.

We all know the topic of ethics in medicine is an important yet controversial one. What defines ethical conduct? Unethical conduct? We have a commitment to patients that come under our care to treat them in the most ethical, compassionate and professional way possible. The topic of this year's conference is one that is very dear to my heart as both a scientist and an academician – and that is research ethics. It is great to see so many colleagues from across the region join us for this conference.

Whether in my current role at AUBMC or previous roles I have held, as an academic medical center, research plays a pivotal role in defining an academic institution; this we know. We at the AUB Faculty of Medicine and AUBMC have outlined an ambitious vision for the future, our AUBMC 2020 vision which will take us new heights of excellence in patient centered care, education and research. One of the main pillars of this vision for the future is our commitment to our academic and research mission as a Faculty of Medicine and a medical center.

Many of the initiatives being implemented align to this commitment. The Salim El-Hoss Bioethics and Professionalism program launched approximately a year and half ago itself is one of these initiatives - the first of its kind in the region, the program seeks to educate, train and raise awareness on issues of bioethics and professionalism.

In the field of clinical research much has also been done at AUB to bring important issues such as the ethical conduct of research to the forefront. The Human Resource Protection Program was launched at AUB and is a comprehensive system to ensure the protection of the rights and welfare of subjects in Human Research. AUB will always look to be a pioneer in the region in the field of research.

I am sure this year's program, focusing on current controversies in research ethics will be a valuable one, and a great way to share experience and expertise from across our region.

I wish you a successful and thought provoking meeting.