

Dear colleagues, friends and guests.

On behalf of the American University of Beirut it is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the 3rd Regional Conference of the Salim El Hoss Bioethics and Professionalism Program at AUB's Faculty of Medicine in joint sponsorship with the Cleveland Clinic.

As many of you that have joined us in previous years know, this conference has now become a tradition at AUB on the occasion of Global Medical Ethics Day.

With the dynamic nature of the fields of health care and medicine, the challenges that medical professionals face on a day to day basis are changing. Every day we are faced with difficult decisions, ethical dilemmas and moral questions. These questions arise in the various settings of our profession - while providing patient care, teaching or training our students, and conducting research.

This year's conference is addressing the topic of Stem Cell Research: Current Controversies which is no small task. Stem Cell Research is a controversial topic anywhere in the world. There are those with strong arguments for and strong arguments against. In addition to the ethical questions that arise, you will have the chance to hear about some of the challenges and opportunities specific to stem cell research in our region.

With the presence of many colleagues representing not only Lebanon but the Middle East Region, I hope you maximize this unparalleled opportunity to discuss this issue and learn from one another. The fact that medical professionals from

the region have joined us today demonstrates both the global nature and importance of ethics in medicine.

Once again, allow me to welcome you Lebanon, AUB and the Global Ethics Day Conference. I wish you all good luck and I encourage to make the most of the opportunity given to you at this conference to listen to and learn from your peers across the region.