

**Speech of Very Reverend Archimandrite Dr. Alexi Chehadeh at the opening ceremony of the "Multidisciplinary Days of Medicine" conference**

**Beirut, 11 March 2017**

Your Excellency, Syrian MP Samir Hajjar

Mr. Samir Achkar, President of the Lebanese University World Culture

Dr. Antoine Achkar, President of NGM

Dear members of NGM

Ladies and Gentlemen,

May the peace of God be with you.

I would like to start by thanking you on behalf of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East, Department of Ecumenical Relations and Development, for inviting us to participate in this important conference.

Your role contributes to the development of the medical field, saving human life. This development is important for human life in general, and especially in times of crisis, one of which we have been living in Syria for more than 6 years. For this reason, we need your help and support so that we can save the greatest number of lives.

In our turn, through our programs, which we will briefly present to you, we are contributing to reduce the suffering of the Syrian people, without any religious or sectarian distinctions.

We wish you a fruitful conference, and I invite you to make your next conference in Syria, praying that peace would soon be established throughout the region.

We also wish for prosperity in Lebanon, thanking the country and its people for the role they play in helping Syrian refugees.

We also thank the French doctors present today, asking them and the French people to support a peaceful solution to the Syrian crisis, since we believe that the only reasonable solution to the crisis is through dialogue between the different Syrian social groups.

Finally, I urge you always to pray for Syria, for the Syrian people, for Lebanon and its noble people, and for the French people who adore freedom, and with whom the Syrian people have a bond of friendship, dating back to more than 60 years. Also for peace and salvation of the whole world.

I thank you for your attendance, for your prompt response and for your generous donation.

I therefore give the floor to Miss Sara Savva, GOPA-DERD Associate Director-General, who will present the role of GOPA-DERD during the crisis, and tomorrow our colleague Mr. Francesco Dato, Damascus and Rural Damascus Area Coordinator, will present “The social and Humanitarian” effect of the crisis on the Syrian people.

Thank you!