

To: all media and press, Damascus, Syria

CONFRONTING CANCER IN SYRIA

INVITATION TO A MEDIA FORUM WITH INTERNATIONAL EXPERTS AND THE MINISTRIES OF HEALTH AND HIGHER EDUCATION

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The Euro-Arab School of Oncology (EASO) will be holding a media forum on Sunday 4th May at 11am at Le Méridien Damascus, Bosra Room. All journalists, in particular those interested in health and medical science, are invited.

This media forum is scheduled as a closing event of the two-day master class on lung cancer and mesothelioma, organised by EASO together with the Al-Bairouni University and the Syrian Association of Oncology.

Key speakers will include high-level representatives of the Syrian ministries of health and education as well as prominent oncologists from Europe and the Middle East.

The aim of the media forum is to raise awareness about one of the biggest fatal diseases in Syria and to highlight what needs to be done to prevent suffering and save lives.

Presentations will be made about the latest best practice as well as the role of palliative care and the need for social integration of cancer patients and survivors, and on cancer prevention, treatment and care.

The media forum comes at the end of the first initiative of EASO in Syria, which will bring together cancer doctors from across the country to hear a dozen lectures on lung cancer and mesothelioma, dealing with subjects ranging from pathology and imaging of lung cancer to its surgery and radiotherapy.

Programme of the Media Forum

Opening, introductions and questions and answers will be chaired by Professor A. Al Chikh Youssef from Al Bairouni University Hospital, Damascus.

The following international speakers have been invited to make a brief presentation:

- Dr Ana Bekic of the Institute for Oncology and Radiology of Serbia, Belgrade
- Professor Mohsen Gadallah of Ain Shams University, Cairo, Egypt
- Professor Paul Van Houtte of the Institut Jules Bordet, Brussels, Belgium

Their Excellencies Dr Maher Al Hosami, Minister of Health and Dr Ghiath Barakat, Minister of Higher Education of the Syrian Arab Republic will be represented. Representatives of the World Health Organization will also be in attendance.

Notes to Editors:

1. Registration: Please let us know if you will be able to attend. This will allow us to inform you of any changes. You can register by sending an e-mail to [Corinne Hall at magazine@eso.net](mailto:Corinne.Hall@magazine@eso.net) or fax at 00 39 0285 46 45 45.

The conference is scheduled to last around one hour and a half and you are invited to a buffet lunch at the end. Simultaneous translation in English and Arabic will be available.

2. EASO: The Euro-Arab School of Oncology is a non-profit organisation based in Cairo and created to promote the diffusion of the latest knowledge in the field of cancer prevention and cure in the Arab countries. Its main purpose is to invest in training in order to reduce mortality from cancer and cancer-related diseases.

EASO is the regional organisation of the European School of Oncology based in Milan (<http://www.easo@esoncology.net>).

3. European School of Oncology (ESO): The European School of Oncology was founded in 1982 with the aim of contributing to the reduction of deaths from cancer due to late diagnosis and/or inadequate treatment. After 25 years of experience ESO's mission continues to be reflected in its motto "Learning to Care", which stresses the concept of studying and learning and also of caring for the patient in a global sense. By improving the skills of all health professionals dealing with cancer patients, ESO shortens the length of time needed to transfer knowledge from research centres to daily practice, combining advanced technology with humanism in care.

The European School of Oncology has always given great importance to the learning process. Since its attention is focused on the clinical aspects of the cancer problem, care is the ultimate goal of its commitment to improve the oncological skills of health professionals. Care and not only treatment is of paramount importance to ESO because it believes in the holistic approach to the cancer patient. (www.cancerworld.org)

4. Biographies of the key speakers:

Dr Ana Bekic is a medical doctor, specialist in epidemiology, with a Master's Degree in oncology, working at the Institute for Oncology and Radiology of Serbia. She is a member of the National Oncological Committee and several advisory groups for cancer prevention and control at the Ministry of Health of Serbia and has participated in the development of national guidelines for cancer prevention, tobacco control strategy, national cervical cancer screening program and other strategic documents.

Professor Mohsen Gadallah started his career as a graduate from the Faculty of Medicine at Ain Shams University, Cairo and later studied Public Health at Ain Shams and in Germany, and obtained a doctor's degree of Public Health in 1982. Prof. Gadallah is currently Chair of the Department of Community Medicine and Director of Family Medicine Centre at the Faculty of Medicine, Ain Shams University, Egypt. He contributed to over 70 publications in national and international journals.

Professor Paul Van Houtte has been head of the department of radiation oncology at the Institut Jules Bordet since 1986 and he has teaching activities both at the graduate and postgraduate levels at the faculty of medicine and at the public health school. One of his main areas of interest is the treatment of lung cancer and particularly the development of combined approaches with chemotherapy and surgery. He received several awards including the Lucien Cox price for oncology and the IASLC Distinguished Achievement Award. Prof. Van Houtte is member of the Royal Academy of Medicine and of several medical societies including the European and the American societies of therapeutic radiology and oncology (ESTRO and ASTRO), and the European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer (EORTC). He also has various functions in national institutions (Agence fédérale de contrôle nucléaire, la Chambre de reconnaissance, the College of Radiotherapy) or societies (ABRO-BVRO).

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