

**Dr Kamel Morkos keynote speech at the Schools' Graduates Honoring Ceremony
co-organized by the Municipality of Deirmimas and Aghsan Association**

Deirmimas, As Saydeh Hall of the Latin Church, 15 September 2017

UNIFIL Sector East Commander

The CIMIC officers and the Canary band

Mayor & people of Deirmimas

Dear students & distinguished guests,

We are honored today to be present amongst you to celebrate your educational accomplishments with plaques & a cocktail party organized in your honor.

Why in Deirmimas? And Why in the presence of the UNIFIL Commander of the Sector East BG Venancio Aguado de Diego?

Dear students,

We invited you to Deirmimas to award you with a plaque of appreciation from the municipality of your home village and to congratulate you for your achievements. But not only that!

We invited you here to reach out to everyone of you before you seek higher education around the globe, hoping that today's memory will bring you back one day to this beautiful village where you may contribute a fraction of the knowledge you will acquire in order to make Deirmimas a safe & welcoming place of refuge for all those who seek to reconnect with their roots and the olive tree.

We invited BG. Venancio to attend this event, because he is simply at the top of an organization that represents a noble peace mission and whose aim is to maintain stability and prosperity in our region. The connection between your graduation and peace is more relevant today than ever before. Your generation and ours have unfortunately witnessed lately how peace, society and culture have become victims of conflicts.

I quote the Director General of UNESCO Irina Bokova who said last year “The destruction of culture has become an instrument of terror, in a global strategy to undermine societies, propagate intolerance and erase memories”

The UN peace mission, public and civil society organizations are here today to encourage you to carry this memory of peace with you wherever you go as you are the bearer and preservers of our cultural heritage.

Dear students,

We are very proud of you: You are the future of our nation. As Kahlil Gibran said, « your souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which your parents cannot visit, not even in their dreams. » We wish you peaceful and happy tomorrows.

May your dreams come true, and may success accompany you towards a bright future.