

# Future of frankincense:



## Global Frankincense Alliance

### Opening remarks

**Presented by: L. Denzil Phillips, GFA Interim Coordinator**

**March 17th 2021**

Good day everyone, my name is Denzil Phillips Interim Coordinator of the Global Frankincense Alliance (GFA)

Welcome to our first online international meeting . I understand there are more than 250 people registered for this event from 38 countries. Probably the largest single gathering to discuss Future of Frankincense ever held. Participants include harvesting groups, exporters, importers, distillers, retailers and many of the world leading experts on this plant. We also have a sizeable number of frankincense consumers and therapist in attendance. Thank you all for coming.

A special welcome goes to all those whose livelihoods depend directly on the fate of these magnificent trees. We would like to dedicate this meeting to YOU and your TREES. Your contribution and involvement is CRITICAL . We hope that you use this opportunity to inform those higher up the frankincense supply chain about your conditions and concerns. Your presence also allows

buyers of frankincense, scientist and those involved in the conservation of this species an opportunity to communicate directly with people whose livelihood and very existence relies upon on the long term survival and growth of this globally important plant. Please do not waste this opportunity to express your views from the field.

For those of you not familiar with the Global Frankincense Alliance, we are a not for profit organisation founded in Cyprus in November 2019 during the World Congress of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants. Our purpose is simple to collect and share information and contacts about the culture, history, science, conservation and business of frankincense. The GFA has no hidden agenda just a desire by a dedicated group of people from all parts of the world to understand more about frankincense (and hopefully later myrrh) and to share that knowledge for the purpose of supporting the survival and health of these plants and the communities dependant upon it.

We welcome all those interested in this work and invite you to join hands with us and become a friend of GFA In so doing you will make a personal commitment to the survival of this species. We thank all our existing members for that commitment.

Although frankincense is a global symbol of peace and harmony the world of frankincense is sadly by no means united. Politics, trade and wars have all played a part in weakening and dividing the mighty world of frankincense. GFA strongly believes that only if we unite do we have a chance to help harvesters and their communities build a more prosperous and sustainable future for this commercially and culturally important product. This meeting, free for all, is once such demonstration in our beliefs. The lives of tens of thousands of poor families is at stake.

I would like to thank all our supporters big and small without whose help this meeting could take place. In addition I would like to thank our back office team who have worked tirelessly for many weeks to make this meeting a success.

I would also like to take this opportunity on behalf of the GFA to extend our heartfelt condolences to all the relatives and friends of Mr Hassan Hassan the late Chairman of Meydi Frankincense. Hassan was one of the most committed suppliers of frankincense in Africa who was sadly struck down by COVID 19

recently. Let his inspiration and memory lend wisdom and strength to these proceedings

Before I hand over to my colleagues to continue with the proceedings I would like to give a personal thanks to all the members of the GFA advisory board who have dedicated pro bono time to 'keeping the GFA on the rails' despite Covid 19 severely affected our original launch and promotional program. Their commitment to quality, accuracy and integrity has helped make companies and organisations around the world begin to sit up and listen to what we are striving to say.

Finally I want to say an enormous thank you to my colleague our GFA co-Coordinator Sue Canney Davison who has worked literally night and day to create this event. Without her efforts this event has been made possible.