

AT THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF MOTEC LIFE – UK, HOUSE OF LORDS, CHORMONDELEY ROOM
AND TERRACE, WESTMINSTER, LONDON

‘From Success to Significance’

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World Orthopaedic Concern –UK representative for West Africa

My Lord Professor David Alton, chief Patron of Motec, His Excellency Mr Victor Smith, Ghana High Commissioner to UK and Ireland represented today by Mr Dampsey Asare, head of chancery, His worshipful Mayor of the Borough of Dacorum Mr Robert Mclean and Mayoress Wendy, Mr Peter Dyson, co-patron of Motec, Prof Nigel Standfield, Dean of the London postgraduate school of surgery, Mr Stephen Manion, Chairman of the World Orthopaedic Concern UK, Deacon Simon Wright of St Marks’ Parish, Hemel Hempstead, Trustees and members of Motec Life UK, colleagues, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. It is with absolute delight that I join Rt Honourable Lord Alton to welcome you to the 10th anniversary celebration of Motec Life –UK. We are honoured to have you join us in sharing the work of a determined group of volunteers who have given so much already and still continue to do so convinced about the importance of the goals of Motec, and the part they play in this critical work.

There are choices in life and we have chosen a purposeful path which will follow us throughout our lives. 10 years of this path may not appear to be long, but the achievements over this short time have been remarkable. Considering the poverty and difficulties in the regions where we operate, we have achieved so much, especially through our collaborations with various institutions in Ghana and West Africa. We have great cause to celebrate. I say in my own personal language, we are here to *‘jollybrate’*. As part of this, we have just returned from Ghana after a fabulous string of educational programmes for healthcare personnel working with our target hospitals and institutions in Ghana and colleagues from across West Africa to raise the standard of surgical care. Key to this has been the Lord Alton Course for surgeons held at the Ghana College of Physicians and Surgeons. This has been very well received and the College has requested for many of such teaching programmes perhaps twice a year. We continue to be victims of our own success. From a humble beginning with ten members in October 2006 working visit to Ghana, when we made our maiden working visit to Ghana, Motec has now expanded from making small case-by-case surgical success to become a multinational, multi-cultural and multi-profession charity. We have achieved significant improvements in surgery as well as many other aspects of health care and healthcare infrastructure in several regions of Ghana and also across West Africa.

Motec has indeed made its mark based on the objectives set out in 2006 to ‘Move’ hospital based team of experts, from UK to share experiences, provide training and clinical care where needed and at the same time focus on capacity building collaborating with target

health institutions. We collaborate with Teaching hospitals, The Ghana College of Physicians and Surgeons, and the West African College of Surgeons. Motec is able to achieve this multi-facet approach by allowing sub groups of her membership with dedicated leadership running projects including the challenging and 'under-performing' surgical disciplines such as spinal care, orthopaedic-trauma and breast surgery. Other projects include microbiology, anaesthesia, radiology, physiotherapy, general nursing and malnourished children's rehabilitation. All these sub groups operate under the umbrella of Motec. We believe that we cannot improve medical and nursing care by selecting only one group of professionals and that we must provide teaching and support not only for surgeons, but for all the allied healthcare professionals needed to support health services within the hospital and the public sector. We run national and international workshops and provide external examiners in specialist and consultants' examinations in Ghana and West Africa, where we can assure that the next generation of doctors and health workers are meeting the high standards needed to provide safe surgical care. Next year, we will be in Burkina Faso after previously supporting programmes in Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Togo and Nigeria through our World Orthopaedic Concern -UK / West Africa College of Surgeons link. We have transformed small successful projects into significant life changing clinical programmes for thousands of people in Ghana and the West African sub-region in tune with the theme of the evening 'from success to significance'.

While appreciating what has been achieved in the past ten years, it is equally important for us to look forward to what we can do in the next decade. We have a policy of improving health care services in our target hospitals and once the improvements are recognised and sustainable, we move on to respond to other requests confident that through our rigorous training courses we have upskilled a small group of healthcare workers who are then able to pass their new skills and knowledge onto others. We have satisfactorily trained and supported independent trauma and orthopaedic care in some parts of Ghana and set up independent breast cancer care as well as satellite clinics in rural Ghana. We will continue to deliver the ever popular 'The Lord Alton course for surgeons in the developing world' across West Africa.

Our next focus is the authorities in Ghana who may have to consider welcoming help to train vascular surgeons. Sadly, Ghana has no dedicated vascular surgeon. The authorities must also recognise the importance of trauma care, and they, as a country, have to produce or have readily available basic trauma products for desperately needed trauma services, which will save lives but also be essential to alleviate the poverty seen as a result of morbidity and mortality caused by trauma. For some time now, policy makers in Ghana appear indifferent to these areas of high demand which have been stressed over and over again by our target hospitals. I am aware that it has been difficult for donors to appreciate how much surgery can contribute to health and wealth. I am of the view that donors may have to step-in to support trauma products in Ghana through a self-sustaining project.

Proposals to this effect from Motec assembled by our charity from UK working with our Ghanaian colleagues remain in the files of the President of Ghana and the Ghana High Commission for some years now.

For what has already been achieved during the past decade, there is still a lot to learn and a lot of support required to continue to perform at a very high standard. There are at least five key areas that Motec would continue to need support:-

- Financing volunteers training programmes especially safe surgery, patient rehabilitation and radiology course for surgeons and residents of West Africa
- Support for the breast cancer education and clinical care in rural Ghana through our target hospitals;
- A basic trauma product manufacturing self sustaining project to produce safe and affordable implants for the West African sub-region linked with improvements in manpower;
- Funding for a secretariat in London to look after doctors from West Africa training in UK; and
- Some part professional leave for the charity volunteers' committed time in Ghana.

These are but a few of the areas that Motec will extremely be delighted to receive your support. I can say for certain that any help from you will be channelled into our projects and our track record shows. I recommend that you watch the Motec presentation by our Vice President Dr Louisa Draper and the documentary on Motec. These represent snapshots of the challenges we face in our work. Please remember that our charity is run solely by volunteers who pay their travel tickets and help deliver our goals and objectives during their annual leave. These volunteers have examined their lives and know the individuals they 'touch' and the beautiful consequences of their devotion. They represent some of the cream of our Great Britain and we should be proud of them.

If it comes to thanking those who make invaluable efforts to support our course, permit me to borrow the words of a famous scientist – Einstein. He said- **Not everything that counts can be counted.** At this juncture, I would like on behalf of Motec Life UK to record our appreciation of the support of our patrons, Rt Hon Lord Alton in particular, Mr Peter Dyson and Mrs Marian Barnor. The breast consultants leading the breast care project Mr Steven Goh of Peterborough City Hospital and Dr Charles Arhinful of Akosombo deserve commendation for effective programmes of public education and transfer of surgical skills, surgical care of patients including complete management of breast cancer including chemotherapy and radiotherapy programme in Ghana. I would also like to add our complete satisfaction with the commitment and perseverance of Prof Nigel Standfield, Dean of the London

postgraduate School of Surgery for supporting clinical and postgraduate medical training for Ghanaian and West African doctors in UK. These doctors return to their home country to become effective trainers and excellent clinicians holding the mantle of Motec and Great Britain high. Our target hospitals in Ghana have been fantastic. To the High Commission, volunteers, members of WOC-UK, the general public, Borough of Dacorum and my Parish St Marks church in Hemel Hempstead, we say thank you. If we all continue to work together, we will achieve better results. Lalia Gifty Akita, a Ghanaian author of 'Think Great' and Founder of **Smart Youth Volunteers Foundation** once *alluded* that if we stay united in heart and mind, we will have one people and one good beautiful world. I believe that we can accomplish better things for the underprivileged people in this world.

Rt Hon Lord Alton, thank you for hosting us and to you all, thank you for celebrating with us!