

JORDAN - MIDDLE EAST*

ADDRESS BY HIS MAJESTY KING HUSSEIN I TO THE NATION
19 February, 1986



IN THE NAME OF GOD, THE MERCIFUL, THE COMPASSIONATE

Fellow Citizens,
Palestinian Brethren Everywhere,
Arab Brethren,

I extend my greetings to you all. It is from you, from your public awareness, from my belonging to you and from my loyalty to your aims and aspirations that I derive my ability to outline the salient features of our primary cause, as we perceive them here in Amman, only some miles from Jerusalem. I seek guidance and assistance from the Almighty.

In recent weeks, Amman has been the centre of attention for much of the world, drawing media people and journalists from all quarters. News coming out of Amman was reported on the front pages of world newspapers, and occupied a prominent place in agency reports and news bulletins. But the content of these reports reflected mere speculation or expectations on the possible outcome of discussions held by the Palestinian leadership while in Amman with us and with leading officials of our government. Amman, along with concerned world circles, went through a period of expectation, but we preferred not to issue any declarations or communiques until matters under

* [These are extracts of the address by His Majesty King Hussein I provided by the Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Canberra.]

- 2 -

intensive discussion, whether between us and the Palestinian leadership, or among its own members, became clearer.

Now that a measure of clarity has become apparent, I consider it my duty as well as my responsibility towards you, being in the thick of events and in the eye of the hurricane, to appraise you of the most recent phase of political endeavour with regard to our foremost cause: Palestine, its land, its Holy Places, its people and their identity.

Dear Brethren,

Before I turn to the details, and in the light of obstacles and surprises which lay in store for us, exceeding our expectations when we first embarked on this chapter of political action, it would be well to remind ourselves that this was not the first round of political effort on our part since the war of 1967. There were several previous endeavours to this end. These were:

1. Jordan's role in formulating Security Council Resolution 242 in November 1967.
2. Cooperation with the United Nations Secretary-General's special envoy Ambassador Gunnar Jarring, in his attempt to implement this Resolution. This effort, which was coordinated with Egypt, produced no results.
3. Participation with Egypt in accepting the Rogers Plan of 1970 and attempting to secure its implementation. This attempt failed.

- 3 -

4. Participation in the International Peace Conference in Geneva in December 1973 and in subsequent efforts in 1974 and 1975 with the then U.S. Secretary of State, leading to the disengagement agreements, first between Egypt and Israel, then between Israel and Syria. On our front, however, we were unable to arrive at a similar agreement.

5. Coordination with Egypt, Syria and the Palestine Liberation Organization in 1976 and 1977 with a view to resuming the International Conference, with PLO participation. The attempt failed as a result of President Sadat's visit to Jerusalem.

6. A first attempt at coordination with the PLO, between October 1982 and April 1983, to arrive at an incipient bilateral formula which would form the basis of a larger Arab formula. This was conducted in the wake of Israel's invasion of the Lebanon and the PLO exodus from Beirut. The results fell short of our expectations.

7. A second attempt at coordination with the PLO, between the summer of 1984 and February 1986, on which I shall elaborate later.

This brief summary, Ladies and Gentlemen, shows that Jordan was either a party to the various attempts to reach a just, peaceful, permanent and comprehensive settlement or an initiator of political action towards this end.

The only initiative from which Jordan excluded itself was that leading to the Camp David Accords, which it refused to join for reasons known to all.

It is likewise evident that failure at any particular stage did not deter Jordan from joining or initiating subsequent action which held the promise of seriousness or sincerity. There were two reasons for Jordan's determination and consistent policy:

First: Jordan believes in peace. As a member of the United Nations, it subscribes to the resolution of international conflicts through peaceful means and to peaceful coexistence among states on the basis of right, justice and equity as stipulated in the U.N. Charter and International Law.

Second: By virtue of:

- Its immediate historical and geographical links with Palestine and the Palestinian cause;
- Its observation of developments in the occupied territories, particularly in Jerusalem;
- Its informed understanding of Zionist thinking as well as of Israeli plans seeking on the one hand to take advantage of current Arab disarray, weakness and paralysis and, on the other, of Israeli military superiority based on long-range planning, persistent effort and vast, uninterrupted and stable material assistance.

Jordan recognizes the gravity of the danger inherent in the state of no-war, no-peace first and foremost to the Palestinian people and to Jerusalem, then to Jordan's own national security and, ultimately, to the Arab nation at large.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

-5-

In this last part of my speech, I shall describe to you the important features of every phase of our efforts during this last year. In order to clarify the picture to you, a reference to three facts must first be made:

1. Every round of talks between us and the American Administration was always preceded by consultation with the Palestinian leadership, and followed by further briefing and re-assessment with that leadership.

2. Our discussions with the American Administration in every round of talks dealt with two separate issues: the issue of the International Peace Conference, and the issue of the Palestinian representation through the PLO.

3. When we started these discussions with the American Administration in February 1985, there was already another issue under discussion relating to Jordan's request to purchase American arms. This issue had started at the end of the Carter presidency, and continued through the Reagan presidency. Jordan adopted a very definite policy regarding it when we started our dialogue to revive the peace process. This position stipulated that there should be no linkage between the American arms deal to Jordan -- a bilateral issue -- and the peace effort, which has an international dimension.

Throughout all our meetings with American officials, we focused on two issues, as I mentioned earlier. However, during the period between the signing of the Jordanian-Palestinian Accord and September 1985, we concentrated our attention on the issue of Palestinian representation and the means to ensure the participation of the PLO in an International Conference. I shall review chronologically the stages pertaining to this issue.

We had agreed with the PLO leadership, from the outset, on the need to emphasise the concept of Jordanian-Palestinian partnership, while dealing with the Palestinian dimension on the background of the larger Arab-Israeli conflict. On this basis, joint delegations visited world capitals, as I mentioned earlier. They also planned to visit Moscow and Washington. Moscow declined to receive the joint delegation, in keeping with the Soviet Union's position vis-a-vis the February 11 Accord. Washington, however, while not refusing the Accord, did not endorse all its principles. The need to concentrate on the United States therefore became apparent to us, just as the need to concentrate our efforts with the Soviet Union. We agreed with the Palestinian leadership on the following procedure for joint action:

1. We asked the US Administration to start a dialogue with a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation composed of Jordanian Government officials and members chosen by the PLO.
2. After this dialogue, the PLO will declare its acceptance of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

3. After this takes place, the United States will no longer be bound by its previous position not to conduct any talks with the PLO before the latter's acceptance of the two pertinent Security Council Resolutions. Thus the United States would recognise the PLO and a meeting between American officials and members of the PLO can be held in Washington to discuss the issues of a peaceful settlement and the normalisation of relations between them.

4. As a result of the normalisation of American-Palestinian relations a major political obstacle blocking the Arab Peace Plan which gave an important role to the PLO, would have been removed. Arab efforts could then be channelled to pursue the efforts with the United States and other countries to convene an International Peace Conference.

After agreeing on this procedure with the Palestinian leadership, we accordingly contacted the officials in the American Administration at the end of March 1985 and presented them with the idea of meeting a joint delegation in preparation for the next two steps which would follow as a result of the meeting.

In early April 1985, we received the American reply, which in principle accepted this proposal provided that the Palestinian members of the joint delegation were not leading members of the PLO or any guerilla organisation.

We consulted with the Palestinian leadership, which provided us with the names of three candidates. The Americans refused them because they did not meet their criteria and asked that we provide them with the names of others who did.

In May 1985, we met with the American Secretary of State in Aqaba, who reiterated the Administration's position regarding the subject of the names. However, he did not exclude those who were members of the Palestine National Council. He also conveyed to us the United States Administration's suspicions regarding PLO intentions. The American's expressed their concern that, if, after a meeting with a joint delegation, the PLO did not follow it up by accepting Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, it would have secured a political gain at the expense of the United States, exposing it to criticism and domestic and political difficulties, thus jeopardising the peace process.

On 19 May 1985, our Prime Minister conveyed this American position to Mr. Arafat. As I was planning to visit the United States at that time, the Prime Minister and Mr. Arafat agreed on the text of a press statement to be made after my talks with the President in order to alleviate American fears.

On 29 May 1985, I said in that statement at the White House Rose Garden:

"I have also assured the President that on the basis of the Jordan-PLO Accord of February 11, and as a result of my recent talks with the PLO, and in view of our genuine desire for peace, we are willing to negotiate, within the context of an International Conference, a peaceful settlement on the basis of the pertinent United Nations Resolutions, including Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338".

The American officials affirmed, during my talks in Washington, their position regarding Palestinian participation in the joint delegation. They limited the number to four, two from the Occupied Territories and two from the outside. They requested that we provide them with these names as soon as possible so that the American Administration could take its decision at the appropriate time.

Upon our return to Amman in June 1985, we conveyed to the Palestinian leadership our discussions in Washington, who in turn accepted this proposal and promised to provide us with the names of the candidates as soon as possible. We waited until 11 July 1985, when some names were provided to us. We were told then that a meeting of the PLO Executive Committee and the Fatah Central Committee had discussed this subject and agreed on the names of the candidates.

On 12 July 1985, we relayed a list of seven names to the United States Administration and waited for the Administration to inform us of its approval of four of the names on that list. We agreed that no public announcement should be made on this issue. But a few days later, we were surprised when the world press began to discuss those names. Suddenly the issue turned into an American political one. The Press began to discuss it and the Zionist lobby activated influential political institutions in opposition to it, culminating in pressure on the United States Administration to justify, defend and finally retract its position. As a result, we received American approval of only two names from the list, instead of four, one from the West Bank and the other from the Gaza Strip. After enquiries we were told by American officials that the Administration was still not sure that the PLO would fulfil the second phase of the agreed scenario, namely to accept Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

On 15 August 1985, a meeting was held at our Prime Minister's residence in Amman attended by the Prime Minister, the Chief of the Royal Court, the Minister of Court and the Foreign Minister from the Jordanian side, and Mr. Arafat accompanied by Mr. Khalil Al-Wazir, Mr. Abdul Razzaq Al-Yahya and Mr. Mohammed Milhem from the Palestinian side. During that meeting, the Prime Minister once again asked Mr. Arafat whether he was clear on the method of proceeding, particularly with regard to the second phase -- namely PLO readiness to accept Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. Mr. Arafat reaffirmed his acceptance of all steps and arrangements agreed upon between us, including the PLO's readiness to accept the above-mentioned Resolutions.

In light of Mr. Arafat's reply, we informed the American Administration that the suspicions it had on this subject were not justified and that we were awaiting their positive reply concerning the date of the meeting between American officials and a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.

On 7 September 1985, we received the American reply, which said that it was not possible to hold the meeting, thus terminating this scenario before the first step, originally expected in June, was taken. This came at the time we were preparing for a visit to New York to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the United Nations, and to Washington to discuss with the American Administration bilateral issues and the peace process.

Assessment of the situation, prior to the visit, led us to believe that we could pursue our dialogue with the United States by concentrating this time on the second phase of the process, namely the International Conference, since not much progress had been achieved on the issue of Palestinian representation. Our reading of the American position led us to believe that further discussions could take place on that other issue, which was last discussed in May 1985. I mentioned earlier

that from the beginning our dialogue with the Americans had dealt with two issues separately: Palestinian representation and the International Conference, with emphasis on the subject of Palestinian representation.

-11-

I will now turn to our efforts on the second issue, namely the convening of an International Conference.

In May 1985, in our discussions with the American Administration in Washington, we raised the issue of convening an International Conference because we considered it to be the venue for all concerned parties to meet, including the PLO. The American position was a flat rejection of an International Conference. Instead, the United States proposed that, after the PLO was brought into the peace talks, a meeting should be set up between Israel and a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, under the auspices of the United States, to be held in an American city. Upon learning this, we decided to cut short our visit and reaffirmed to them our definite and unequivocal rejection of seeking a unilateral approach similar to that of Camp David.

The American Administration then changed its position and proposed that the talks could be held at the United Nations in Geneva. Once again, we informed the United States Administration that we rejected this proposed, like the one before it, as we did not see that the problem was one of where the talks should be held. We reiterated that Jordan's unwavering position was that it sought to reach a comprehensive settlement through the convening of an International Conference attended by all the parties to the conflict, including the permanent members of the Security Council. As a result, the United States Administration reconsidered its proposal and promised to ponder seriously the issue of convening an International Conference. We accepted this and continued our discussions concerning the issue of Palestinian representation.

During talks in Washington in October 1985, we again raised the issue of an International Conference after having proposed it to the Administration prior to our departure to the United States. Meetings were held between Jordanian and American officials in Washington. The United States submitted a proposal concerning the International Conference, which, after careful examination, seemed to suggest a conference in name only. We on the other hand insisted that the Conference should have clear powers.

Among the various American suggestions was the inclusion of the Soviet Union in the Conference only after it restored diplomatic relations with Israel because this was an Israeli condition. We argued

against this for the following reasons:

1. An International Conference without the participation of the Soviet Union would be a flawed conference.
2. If the reason to exclude the Soviet Union from the conference was that it had no diplomatic relations with Israel, which is a party to the conflict, the United States on its part does not recognise the PLO, which represents another party to the conflict. Thus the Soviet Union and the United States were in the same position in this regard.
3. It would be futile to plan seriously to convene an International Peace Conference if any party had the right to place conditions on who could attend. This applies to the five permanent members of the Security Council as well as the parties to the conflict. Therefore, it was imperative that an invitation be extended to Syria, the PLO

-13-

and the Soviet Union to attend the Conference if the peace process was to continue and the efforts for a just and comprehensive peace were to produce fruitful results.

After extensive discussions lasting three days, the United States accepted the following points which we proposed:

1. The UN Secretary-General would issue invitations to an International Conference under United Nations auspices.
2. Invitations to attend the Conference would be issued to the permanent members of the Security Council, including the Soviet Union in addition to the parties to the conflict.
3. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 would form the basis for the International Conference.
4. The Americans held to their position of requiring acceptance by the PLO of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, since these formed the basis for the convening of the International Conference. We agreed to this understanding on the basis that Mr.

Arafat had himself agreed to this last August.

We continued our intensive discussions with the American Administration concerning the powers and responsibilities of the Conference and we insisted that it should not be a Conference in name only but one that was effective and had a clear mandate. Despite prolonged discussions, we did not reach a final understanding with the American Administration regarding this issue. We agreed to continue our discussions of this central point, and considered that what we had agreed upon constituted a basis from which to proceed. While we were still in Washington, the cycle of terrorism and counter-terrorism began with the Larnaca incident, followed by the Israeli raid on the PLO headquarters in Tunis. This had a negative effect on the peace process and our efforts were once again jeopardised by fears and suspicions.

Upon our return to Amman in October 1985 we informed the Palestinian leadership of what we had accomplished during our talks in Washington. We informed them that the PLO would be required to accept Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 in order to be invited to the International Conference, to accept the principle of participating in negotiations with the Government of Israel as part of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation within the context of the International Conference, which would be convened to establish a comprehensive settlement, and to renounce terrorism. We also informed the Palestinian leadership that our discussions with the American Administration regarding the question of the mandate of the Conference were still inconclusive, and that further discussions would follow. We made it clear to the Palestinian leadership that a written statement of acceptance was needed from them, while leaving them to choose the

appropriate time to announce that approval. The written acceptance was needed so that we could encourage the American Administration to proceed earnestly to convene an International Conference and to reassure them that the PLO was anxious to participate in the peace process. We had already made clear to the United States Administration that Jordan would not attend the Conference unless invitations were extended to the PLO, Syria and all other parties to the conflict.

We also promised the Palestinian leadership that their acceptance would be kept confidential and shown only to the concerned United States officials until they themselves decided to announce it.

On 7 November 1985, after talks with President Hosni Mubarak, Mr. Arafat issued a statement in Cairo denouncing terrorism in all its forms, irrespective of its source. The PLO Executive Council then held a meeting in Baghdad, and as we were not officially notified of its decisions, we awaited Mr. Arafat's visit to Amman to hear from him, once again, the final position of the PLO on Security Council Resolution 242.

Meanwhile, I made a private visit to London on 7 January 1986 for medical reasons. While I was there, the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs arrived in London with a United States delegation. He requested to see me to continue our discussions regarding the issue of the International Conference. We held two rounds of talks in London, the first attended by the Prime Minister and the Chief of the Royal Court on 18 January and the second, on 20 January, attended by the Chief of the Royal Court. Throughout both meetings the discussions focused on defining the mandate of the International Conference and the participation of the PLO, as both issues had become interwoven as a result of progress achieved in the peace process. The American position had developed to the extent of agreeing to the right of the parties to the

-16-

conflict to submit any disagreements between them to the Conference. However, we could not reach full agreement regarding the role of the Conference in settling disputes among the negotiating parties.

Concerning the issue of PLO participation in the Conference, the American delegation reiterated their previous position requiring that the PLO should first accept Security Council Resolution 242, in order for the United States to start a dialogue with it. The United States did not commit itself to accepting the invitation of the PLO to the Conference. Our reply was that we wanted the United States to agree to have the PLO invited to participate in the Conference if it accepted Security Council Resolution 242. This point became the subject of extensive discussions, during which I asked for a clear American position to relay to the PLO. The American delegation agreed to take this up at the highest level on its return to Washington.

On 21 January 1986, I returned to Amman having achieved these results on the issues of an International Conference and PLO participation. On 25 January 1986, our efforts bore fruit when we received a final reply from the United States Administration concerning PLO participation in the International Conference. Their reply came in a written commitment which said:

"When it is clearly on the public record that the PLO has accepted Resolutions 242 and 338, is prepared to negotiate peace with Israel, and has renounced terrorism, the United States accepts the fact that an invitation will be issued to the PLO to attend an International Conference

-17-

The United States would then start contacts with the Soviet Union with the purpose of participating, together with the other permanent members of the Security Council, in the International Conference, which would be convened by the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

On that same day, Mr. Arafat arrived in Amman with a Palestinian leadership delegation. We held four extensive meetings in the course of four days. I presided over three of these meetings. The discussion concentrated on the subject of American assurances and the PLO's position regarding those assurances. We assumed that the PLO would accept these since:

1. The assurances met the PLO's requirements.

2. They reflected a significant change in the United States position in favour of the PLO. The US position regarding the PLO when we first started our intensive year-long dialogue, had been that the United States would only enter into talks with the PLO after the latter's acceptance of Security Council Resolution 242. Now, by comparison, the United States present position was that it was willing to go one more step beyond talking to the PLO, by accepting to have the PLO invited to the International Conference.

But our brethren in the Palestinian leadership surprised us by refusing to accept Security Council Resolution 242 within this context, while acknowledging what they described as our 'extraordinary effort' which caused a significant change in the United States position, and which would not have been possible had i

not been for the respect, credibility and trust which our country, Jordan, enjoyed in this world.

In spite of this, we continued our discussions with the PLO leadership in the hope of convincing them that their acceptance would cement a very important link in the peace efforts leading to the International Conference, which in the unanimous view of the Arabs and all peace-loving peoples constitutes the major venue for

the establishment of a comprehensive, permanent and just peace. It is towards the objective of convening such a Conference that we have worked tirelessly for the past nine years, but to no avail. Now that the opportunity was here, we hoped that it would not be wasted like other missed opportunities if we were to remain faithful to our goals of saving our people and liberating our land and holy places.

The answer of the Palestinian leadership was that they wanted an amendment to the proposed text for acceptance of 242. The amendment would require an addition of a statement indicating the agreement of the United States to the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination within the context of a confederation between Jordan and Palestine -- as stated in the February 11 Accord. We reminded the Palestinian leadership that the subject of self-determination within the context of a confederation was a matter for the Jordanians and Palestinians, and that no other party had anything to do with it. Nothing was to be gained from the support of this or that state as long as we ourselves were committed to this. The important thing was to achieve withdrawal first, then to proceed with what we had agreed upon. We reminded them that this had always been our position and that we had

-19-

it clear all along, starting from my opening address in Amman at the 17th session of the Palestine National Council, in which I referred to the proposed Jordanian-Palestinian relationship and continuing through all our discussions to date. We said to them that involving the United States, or others, in this matter meant that we were voluntarily opening the door to others to interfere in our common concerns and those of a people who had a sovereign right to their land and their own decision making -- unless they were dealing with us on a basis of lack of confidence. But despite this, the Palestinian leadership insisted on their position. And despite the fact that the most recent American position had satisfied PLO demands, we agreed to resume contacts with officials in Washington through the American Embassy in Amman on the evening of 27 January 1986. The American response was as follows:

1. The February 11 Accord is a Jordanian Palestinian Accord that does not involve the United States.
2. The United States supports the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people as stated in the Reagan Peace Initiative.
3. The PLO, like any other party, has the right to propose anything it wishes, including the right of self-determination, at the International Conference.
4. For all these reasons, the United States adheres to its position.

We relayed the American response to Mr. Arafat during an enlarged meeting at Al-Nadwa Palace on 28 January, but he insisted that we try again. We indicated to him that we had gone as far as we could with the American Administration at that stage, but he insisted, so we got in touch once again and the reply was that the United States adhered to its position.

On the morning of 29 January, an enlarged meeting was held at the Prime Ministry and I headed the Jordanian side. I informed Mr. Arafat and his party of the American position as reaffirmed to us once again. The meeting ended with a statement by Mr. Arafat that he needed to consult the Palestinian leadership. We asked him to give us the final answer on the PLO position with regard to Resolution 242 while he was still in Amman, although we had ascertained, during that period only, that the PLO's decision to reject 242 had been taken in the meeting of the PLO leadership in Baghdad on 24 November 1985, but we had not been officially notified of that.

On the same evening (29 January) we received a suggestion from the American Administration to the effect that the United States feels that since the PLO cannot decide at present to accept 242, it can wait until the time it considers appropriate. The United States feels that the peace process can still proceed with Palestinian participation from the occupied territories. The opportunity will remain available for the PLO to take part in the International Conference the moment it accepts Resolution 242.

In our reply to the United States, we rejected this suggestion, indicating that this time the suggestion concerned not only the PLO but Jordan as well, since our unwavering position was: no separate settlement.

President Reagan wrote to me on 31 January 1986 explaining his inability to proceed in his efforts with

-21-

Congress for the sale of American arms to Jordan. We had sought to acquire the arms since 1979 in the face of fierce Zionist opposition. I had received assurances from the President that our requirements would be met.

On the evening of the same day, the Minister of Court informed Mr. Arafat of the latest American suggestion to proceed with the peace process without the PLO until it meets the set conditions. He also informed him of our refusal of this suggestion and apprised him of President Reagan's letter explaining his inability to meet Jordan's requirements.

On 5 February 1986, the American side presented a new text containing the approval of the United States to convene an International Conference on the basis of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 including the realization of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. We met with Mr. Arafat on the same evening at Al-Nadwa Palace and we handed him the new American text. He promised to study it and at the same time gave us three differently worded texts which were one in substance, reaffirming the same PLO position which we had heard from the start of this round of meetings.

On 6 February, Mr. Arafat had a meeting with our Prime Minister at his residence. The meeting was attended by the Chief of the Royal Court and by Mr. Abdul Razzaq Al-Yahya and Mr. Hani Al-Hassan from the Palestinian side. Mr. Arafat informed the Prime Minister that despite the positive development of the American position, recognition of the legitimate rights

of the Palestinian people did not encompass the right self-determination, to which, the PLO insisted, United States ought to give its prior approval.

On 7 February, Mr. Arafat left Amman insisting on his position and on the reasons why he was unable to accept Resolution 242. Hinging on that agreement, of course, was an immediate opening of American-Palestinian dialogue on the basis of which would have continued our efforts for convening International Peace Conference to which the PLO would invited to participate as a representative of Palestinian people.

Thus came to an end another chapter in the search for peace. Another extremely important and significant round of Jordanian-Palestinian action was terminated after a full year of serious and persistent effort to transform the PLO role, referred to in the Arab Peace Plan, into a significant reality that would go beyond mere statement of positions. It would have led to the presence and participation by the PLO in the International Conference, at the invitation of the Secretary-General, to represent its people and speak on their behalf with their adversary under the eyes of the world, side by side with the other parties concerned and the five permanent members of the Security Council.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

We have gone through a gruelling year of intensive effort and faced a host of obstacles, in many instances exceeding the limits of our endurance. But we succeeded in achieving what had been felt to be impossible. We opened up avenues that had been considered closed to us and to our Arab and Palestinian brethren. We were able to carry the Fez Resolution to a point just preceding the International Peace Conference, for which it called. Buoyed on the one hand by progress achieved in providing a real opportunity for peace and, pained on the other by impediments when we were so close to the finishing line, we have felt it imperative to give a full public account of the situation and once again turn the matter over to the Palestinian fora in the occupied territories and the diaspora as well as Arab capitals and organisations.

Fellow Citizens,
Palestinian Brethren,
Arab Brethren,

This is the way in which we view the present status of the Palestinian issue within and outside the occupied territories. It is our analysis of developments in the context of the state of no-war, no-peace and their effect on the future of the Palestinian people, who are threatened with separation from their land. It is also an account of our joint action with the PLO leadership over a year of continuous effort aimed at moving the peace process, before it is too late, out of the debilitating sphere of inaction into the revitalising realm of positive action. It was undoubtedly a precious opportunity to achieve our objectives and thwart enemy plans which are clear for all to see.

But if this phase of political action with the PLO has ended differently from what we had hoped for, the principles and tenets of the Jordanian-Palestinian Accord will continue to embody the foundations governing relations between the Jordanian and Palestinian peoples with regard to equality of rights and obligations in facing our joint destiny.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It has been my destiny to experience the various phases of the Palestine tragedy, as well as the results of the implementation of Zionist plans drawn up by forces which know what they want and carry out what they have planned, stage by stage. I have not seen or observed any emergence of the long-awaited Arab plan which would be capable of defending the just cause of a brotherly and dear people who surely deserve better than their continued plight currently holds for them.

-24-

It has also been my destiny to carry out my responsibilities in an Arab country, contiguous to the land of Palestine, which contains the remains of my ancestor Hashem in Gaza and which was blessed by the sojourn of my ancestor Prophet Mohammed -- May God's Prayers and Blessings be upon him -- whom the Almighty selected to inspire mankind and whom He sent to the First Qibla and the Third Holy Place in Jerusalem, where my great grandfather is buried -- a great grandfather who sacrificed all in defence of the rights of the Palestinian people on their national soil and asked to be buried within the confines of the Holy Mosque. And my grandfather who moved to the defence of Al-Aqsa Mosque in 1948 in the face of the most difficult circumstances that could confront a leader at the time. With me at his side, he fell, a martyr in the mosque which he had rescued.

As I see what goes on in Jerusalem, Gaza, Nablus, Hebron and other cities, villages and camps on the West Bank and at the same time observe what goes on outside, my heart turns heavy. I have no alternative but to apprise you of the facts. No one can expect anything but rejection on my part of the prevailing state of disarray which I see all around us. No one can expect anything but a frank disclosure from me. I will not be a party to concealment at a most critical juncture in your lives. I am one of you; I belong to you all; I experience deeply every detail of our cause, the cause of all Arabs.

Next to my faith in God Almighty, I have faith in you and in your ability to direct the course to its proper path.

-25-

Ladies and Gentlemen:

After two long attempts I and the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan hereby announce that we are unable to continue to coordinate politically with the PLO leadership until such time as their word becomes their bond, characterised by commitment, credibility and constancy. On our part, we know of no other way of fostering confidence than by truthfulness or of strengthening it than by clarity. For confidence is paramount in constructive cooperation.

As for you, Ladies and Gentlemen, who stand tall under occupation, who remain steadfast in your ancestral homeland, who are the keepers of Al-Aqsa, the site of the Prophet's ascension, who are the defenders of Jerusalem and the Holy Places, living symbols of the long history of the land of prophets and holy men, and preservers of an identity which -- God willing -- will never be blurred or erased, to you, our Palestinian brethren in the occupied territories, I send my greetings, love and appreciation. To you I renew my pledge that here in Jordan we will remain as we have been: brothers committed to your cause and supporters in all you have to face. We will continue to support you, within our capabilities, by every available means. We look forward to the day when you will be a free people on your own soil, secure and confident of your present and future and proud of the fruits of your struggle and steadfastness.

As God is my witness, I have conveyed the message.

As God is my witness, I have conveyed the message.

As God is my witness, I have conveyed the message.

From the Almighty we draw the support. Peace be unto you and God's mercy and blessings.