



**Address by
Ambassador Shehab Madi**

Head of the delegation of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

**13th OSCE Ministerial Council
Ljubljana, 5-6 December 2005**

Mr. Chairman

Excellencies,

Distinguished Colleagues and Friends,

Allow me on behalf of my delegation to extend our appreciation to the Government and people of Slovenia for the warm hospitality and the excellent organization of this meeting. I am sure that under the Slovenian presidency, one more foundation block was added to our partnership.

As we meet in the year of the thirtieth anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act and the fifteenth anniversary of the Charter of Paris, we believe it is time to reaffirm our support to the OSCE principles. Jordan attaches great importance to the values and objectives of our partnership, which we consider to be an indispensable forum for dialogue on issues of peace and stability, mutual understanding, tolerance and shared economic prosperity.

In this regard, we perceive the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) not only as a major step forward in consolidating the Euro-Med Partnership, the OSCE-Med cooperation and the NATO-Med Dialogue, but also as a new vehicle for widening our scope of cooperation in the various areas of mutual interest. It would also allow for continued trade liberalization and harmonization of standards, leading to higher levels of investment and growth, and it can build on our mutual commitment to strengthening the rule of law, instituting sound governance, and promoting human rights.

Distinguished Colleagues and Friends,

Our political dialogue remains essential to ensure peace and prosperity of the region. Finding a just and lasting solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict should remain our pivotal priority. The implementation by both the Israelis and Palestinians of the understandings agreed upon at the Sharm El-Sheikh Summit and their respective obligations under the Road Map and its terms of reference, including the Arab Peace Initiative, is the cornerstone for the Peace Process. A process of comprehensive settlement, one that must address the Syrian and Lebanese tracks on the bases of Israeli withdrawal from all Arab lands occupied in 1967, and security for Israel to live in peace with its neighbors.

Jordan has welcomed the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza as a step on the way to the implementation of the Road Map, towards further withdrawal from occupied territories since 1967, and to the establishment of a Palestinian state and the end to the Palestinian Israeli conflict.

We highly support and appreciate all the steps and democratic choices the Iraqi people have taken in their efforts to rebuild their country. We pledge to continue working closely with the Iraqi government and stand ready to render every possible help necessary. Iraqis deserve the continuing support of all of us present here today.

Distinguished Colleagues,

Jordan believes that what is needed now, more than ever, is a renewed and re-reinvigorated South-North dialogue. What makes this attainable is that our long term interests are compatible, even common; we all seek justice, peace and security. That is why we have to be sensitive to each other's needs to insure that a regional security process is established and developed through co-operation and transparency.

Jordan is ready to intensify its cooperation with the OSCE on political and security matters and welcomes dialogue on common concerns at the regional, sub-regional or bilateral levels. Matters related to confidence and security-building measures, arms control, and the creation of a Middle East Zone free from Weapons of Mass Destruction should be addressed.

The Middle East, like other regions, has its own internal struggles that should be seen as a sign of its vibrancy that is necessarily capable of enabling the emergence of a homegrown model of reform.

Our region should have the imagination to push through major changes. They might be slow, but reform plans are underway in all countries of the region, with varying degrees of progress.

There is a strong call for broad political reforms in the Middle East, to build good governance that gives the people their means of self-expression, collective action, and popular politics at the national level.

Jordan's vision is to develop a modern, tolerant and open society. To establish itself as a successful example of political, social and economic reforms, that are conceived and implemented from within. Instituting the elements of sound governance and democratization are part of an evolutionary process, which is reflective of the needs and aspirations of the Jordanian society. Our social and economic reform efforts are directed at prompting an accelerated pace for launching new strategies and initiatives aimed at enhancing the welfare of the Jordanian people and propelling economic growth to higher and sustainable levels. We place special emphasis on the educational and training systems to match the requirements of the labor market.

Excellencies,

Jordan highly values the dialogue between cultures and civilizations. We regard the establishment of the Anna Lindh Foundation as another step towards enhancing the cultural dimension of our partnership, a partnership aimed at people-to-people understanding and interaction, in a manner that promotes tolerance, creates alliances of civilizations, fights xenophobia and cultural discrimination.

These noble concepts have been articulated in the Amman Message, with the aim of highlighting the true nature of Islam, and I quote from the Message:

“Islam's principles... provide common ground among different faiths and peoples... Muslims believe in all messengers of God; denying the message of any of them is a deviation from Islam. This furnishes a wide platform upon

which peoples of different faiths can meet together, with respect for others' ideas and faiths, and act in common in the service of human society.”

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Jordan strongly condemns all acts of terror, which require our firm collective stand in combating them. Jordan has been lately a target of vicious blind terror attacks that killed and wounded innocent men, women and children. Jordan pledges to continue full cooperation with all parties in combating the surge of terrorism. Jordan will continue to fight terrorism and its perpetrators with all possible means. Security and stability are the country's top priority and no terrorist individual or organization will be tolerated.

Jordan repudiates all vicious falsehoods and sinister campaigns to smear Arabs and Muslims with the label of terrorism. All fair-minded and level-headed people know the true nature and meaning of the Islamic faith which is anchored in the values of justice, tolerance, peaceful coexistence and inherent reverence for the person of the human being. Thus, we feel more than ever a pressing need to pay due attention to the significance and relevance of the dialogue among civilizations. Indeed, inter-cultural dialogues promote understanding and coexistence among peoples and nations. They also help in dissipating the causes of extremism and bigotry, which usually emanate from and fester in the lack of a genuine knowledge and comprehension of the essence of any creed and culture. For sure, the history of Jordan over the millennia is a true testimony to the advocacy of peace, human understanding and co-existence.

Thank you