

**KING ADDRESSING ISSUES FACING US, AT PEKING UNIVERSITY  
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Bismillah ar-Rahman ar-Rahim;

Thank you. President Xu, Assistant President Li please accept my deepest appreciation to you for hosting me today. It is a special honour to be with you at a time when our countries celebrate 30 years of partnership.

In fact, our relations extend to the middle of the fourteenth century when Ibn Batuta travelled to China. A hundred years later, the famous Chinese Muslim admiral, Zheng He reached the Arabian Peninsula and sent pilgrims to Mecca.

Although no enduring opening between our two worlds followed these expeditions, the seeds of exchange and friendship were planted then. Today, we mark a joint determination, a shared interest, and a common agenda in expanding this partnership.

My friends,

China and the Arab World are central to the resolution of the most important 21st Century issues: from the stability of the world economy, to global peace and security, to the future of intercultural understanding and cooperation. We seek to safeguard our people from the violence of war and the threat of terrorism; to grow our economies and create new prosperity; to access and increase knowledge and enjoy its benefits; to build our societies, and offer hope to our young people.

Clearly, in this globalized age, we cannot achieve these aims in isolation. We must work together. And no partnership is more important or multi-dimensional than that between China and the Arab World.

Jordan is at the centre of one of the world's most strategic areas. Our region stands at the nexus of continents. But stability, peace and progress, remain under assault, by a legacy of poverty and conflict. Meeting these challenges, in our region, can help advance important global interests, including those of China.

In turn, we in the Arab World are deeply interested in China's success. We look to your country as a model of effective development and a leader in international affairs. We recognize China's decisive voice in peacemaking and international cooperation, through your permanent seat on the UN Security Council, and other global roles. We value your intellectual and cultural wealth, and your commitment to the development of nations large and small. And we need your economic partnership – through trade and investment.

These are the reasons that I see a major role for China in the future of the Middle East, and a growing partnership worldwide. Working together, we can speed the resolution of regional conflicts, avoid future threats, and contribute to global political and economic stability.

Let me address two critical areas, the ending of conflict and the expansion of development.

The long and destructive conflict between Israelis and Palestinians is at the core of regional instability and a concern of Muslims worldwide. Palestinians have waited for global justice and a homeland for almost 60 years. It is time for peace. Earlier this year, the Arab countries reaffirmed the historic initiative they agreed on, in 2002, with provisions for a just, comprehensive and lasting settlement. Jordan has taken a leading role in advocating movement towards restarting the peace process and establishing a Palestinian state on the basis of the Arab Peace Initiative.

Today we have a significant opportunity to advance the peace process for the first time in many years as we prepare for the international meeting later this year. We need to ensure that such an opportunity delivers an outcome that brings the parties closer to a two-state solution. The breakthroughs that can be achieved will also lead to progress in resolving the wider Arab-Israel conflict.

China can play an important role in supporting this process, both as a world power and a respected and trusted Asian neighbour. We appreciate the steps China has already taken, including naming a Special Envoy on the Middle East. And we view with admiration the role of Chinese observers in Lebanon and its commitment to a presence in Darfur under the United Nations.

A second key area of common cause between our nations is development. Despite the region's oil wealth, most countries in the Middle East are still developing nations. We must move forward if we are to meet the needs of our people – especially our youth. Like you, we seek a path of growth, and like you, we are committed to reform and innovation. We have made it a priority to pursue growth policies, with major programs in education and training.

China is already playing an important role, as model, supporter, and partner. Jordan and its people are very grateful for the assistance and support China has provided us through the past years. We also give much importance to our trade and investment relations.

Just last month, Queen Rania visited China to discuss common initiatives in education, women's empowerment, and health. More and more students from Jordan are studying in China, and our scholars enjoy meaningful exchanges. Cultural exchange is strengthening and enriching our understanding of each other.

During the next two days of my visit, Jordanian officials and business leaders will sign with their Chinese counterparts in Beijing and Shanghai agreements for cooperation that cover a variety of areas, ranging from nuclear energy, to cultural and educational exchange, especially between our universities. The China Development Bank will establish an office in Jordan and the Jordan Investment Board will also establish presence in China.

My friends,

Historically, China led the world's economies. Experts tell us that, for almost two thousand years, your country generated between a quarter and a third of global GDP. The development challenges our countries face now, are the legacy of only a few hundred years. Today, we must remember that our path forward is not creating a new reality – it is reasserting our peoples' rightful role in global progress.

Next year the Olympics will bring your country's people and achievements before the entire world. This extraordinary event is in keeping with your country's great past and growing international presence.

I hope that our partnership will grow as well. The Arab countries and China have a long legacy of global leadership. I believe that working together effectively; we can create a future worthy of this heritage – one that will stretch from the Four Seas to the Red Sea and beyond.

Thank you very much.