

**REMARKS BY  
HIS MAJESTY KING ABDULLAH II  
INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE  
THE HAGUE  
31 OCTOBER 2006**

Bismillah Al Rahman Al Rahim

Madam President, members of the court, thank you for your kind welcome. Rania and I appreciate your gracious words. It is an honour to be with you today.

The great Muslim historian, Ibn Khaldoun, wrote: "The office of judge holds a place with God to which nothing else compares.

" His words reflect Islam's profound respect for the role of the court in a just and righteous human society.

Today, this court's incomparable leadership on behalf of global justice... your dedication to bringing the benefits of the rule of law to world affairs... your high standards of integrity have given hope to millions of people. We in Jordan are especially proud that our esteemed jurist, your vice president, Awn Al Khasawneh, shares in the court's great enterprise. Members of the court, madam president, on behalf of all Jordanians, I thank you all for your labours, your integrity, your courage and your wisdom.

Madam President,

Here at The Hague, in 1899, the modern world set its sights on bringing the rule of law to international affairs. In the decades that have followed — through years of war and peace, crisis and opportunity — the rule of law has slowly moved forward. Today, this honourable court carries the vision into the 21st century: An international legal order, in the service of justice and peace.

It is a mission, may I say, that is ever more relevant to our global times. The global impact of regional conflict... the worldwide reach of economic shocks and trends... the interregional flows of people and ideas... and the whole-earth reality of environmental problems and health concerns: In these and many other ways, our nations are sharing current events and will share the world's future. How well we succeed depends on our cooperation and coordination. And nothing is more important to that effort than a practising, just international legal order.

Madam President,

Jordan has made a clear commitment to the cause of international peace and legality. That commitment is attested to in our respect for this court, our good faith in treaty obligations, our support for United Nations conventions and international legal instruments, and our active role in human rights, including our strong national programme.

In these commitments, we are guided by our Arab-Islamic legal heritage. Madam President, you have spoken today of Islam's pioneering contributions to the growth of global law and justice. Indeed, for Muslims, global good citizenship — justice and integrity in the dealings among peoples, regardless of faith, race or nationality — is a cornerstone of a righteous life. In the Holy Koran it is written: "Be just — that is closer to piety."

And: "So give full measure and full weight and wrong not mankind in their goods, and work not confusion in the earth after the fair ordering thereof."

Islamic civilisation upheld the primacy of settling disputes by law, not force — among nations as among peoples. This has been Jordan's consistent effort, as a regional and global peacemaker. Today, we are devoting our full efforts to conflict resolution in my region. This includes working closely with other Arab states to create a unified strategy that can deliver on the promise of peace.

In the Middle East, our people have suffered tremendously from conflict. There is an urgent need for international assistance to help Iraq and Lebanon achieve security and rebuild their communities and economies. In Iraq, Jordan has provided humanitarian aid, as well as civil and security training. And we keep channels of dialogue open with all Iraqi leaders to encourage national reconciliation in their country. In the Lebanese crisis, Jordan helped spearhead the call for a ceasefire, and provided immediate humanitarian and other support.

Such contributions, from many countries, are vital to putting these countries, and the region, on the road to peace. But we will not achieve regional security until we focus on the core issue in the Middle East, an issue that has posed an ongoing challenge to international peace and order. And that is the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

There has been no shortage of international resolutions on what must be done to settle this conflict. But in the absence of a qualified legal opinion, individual parties to the conflict were left to interpret these resolutions... and politics as usual prevailed.

Two years ago, this — the longest unresolved conflict before the United Nations — finally found its way to this esteemed court. And for the first time in the history of this bitter dispute, the world was privileged to have a dispassionate legal perspective of this conflict.

The advisory opinion that the court's judges penned was more than a declaration about the illegality of the wall — a barrier that would divide Israelis and Palestinians even further... a barrier that would perpetuate conflict in our region. By pronouncing, extensively, on long-standing questions of legality, this court has given Arabs, Israelis and the international community firm ground on which to build peace in our region — a new foundation of international legality and justice. This court ruled, clearly, that the Palestinian territories are occupied... that the Palestinian people possess a legal right to self-determination, on Palestinian territory... and that the conflict will only be brought to an end when all relevant Security Council resolutions are, finally, implemented.

The court's opinion speaks to the profound injustice which the Palestinian people have suffered for decades. There cannot be lasting peace until this injustice is corrected, in full accord with international legitimacy. This is the basis for the landmark Arab Peace Initiative. Articulated at the 2002 meeting of all Arab states, it offered a comprehensive settlement... guaranteeing Israel's security to live in peace with its neighbours... and providing, at long last, a sovereign, viable and independent Palestine.

This two-state solution accords with international legality, and has been supported by the world community as well as the parties. Indeed, the International Court of Justice, in its ruling, asserted the need for such a negotiated solution, one that will establish a Palestinian state, existing side by side with Israel and its other neighbours — with peace and security for all in the region.

It is vital now to move the peace process forward on this basis. Concerned nations must act together — and with new urgency. Every day that goes by in conflict, every day that the humanitarian situation for the Palestinian people worsens, every day that our youth feel

themselves failed by the international system... every day of mistrust and missed opportunities, slides us further down the path to regional and global disaster.

Madam president,

The United Nations and this court are founded on the principle that violence, force and illegality should not be allowed to determine the future. The Arab people agree. We know that unilateral solutions will not bring peace. Peace requires a willing partnership, result-minded negotiations, and a settlement that is in full accord with international legality.

This court takes no role in diplomatic and political efforts. Yet your work — indeed, the work of the entire international court system — makes a vital contribution. It is through the high reputation of this court, and your influential voices, that our world may strengthen international law and civility... creating a firmer path to peace... and setting us on the road to a goal that is urgently needed by all.

It is an old truth: Peace and respect among nations depend on trust, and trust depends on the expectation of justice. I pledge Jordan's continuing support. Together, God willing, we can build an international legal order that will safeguard and empower the people of our world.

Thank you very much.