

REMARKS BY
HIS MAJESTY KING ABDULLAH II
61ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS
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Bismillah ar-Rahman ar-Rahim; In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

Madam President, President of 61st General Assembly, Her Excellency Haya Rashed Al-Khalifa.

Members of the General Assembly:

Sheikha Haya, may I extend the warmest congratulations to you, on your election as President of the General Assembly.

Allow me also to say a word of gratitude and admiration to Secretary General Kofi Annan. Jordan applauds the progress achieved in U.N. reform under Secretary Annan's tenure. We welcome especially, the recent creation of the Human Rights Council and the Peacebuilding Commission.

My friends,

I come before you today with a deep sense of urgency. Never has it been more important for the world community to act decisively for peace in my region.

The recent crisis in the Middle East is a crisis for all nations. There can be no just global order when aggression and occupation are permitted to take the place of international law. When these occur in a region as strategic as the Middle East the shockwaves run worldwide. Our youth are asking, where is the justice, where is the will, of the global community? We must answer them by establishing a lasting peace, based on the international legality we have pledged to uphold.

This means a new focus on the core problem. The region's contemporary crises are outgrowths of a central grievance, felt throughout the Middle East and indeed the world. That grievance, plain and simply, is Israeli occupation and the denial, over decades, of Palestinian rights. Until we end that wrong, conflict will breed more conflict, year after year.

The Middle East conflict has repeatedly come before this institution. And the U.N.'s position has been repeatedly articulated, in resolutions condemning aggression and occupation; affirming Palestinian self-determination; and supporting a process for peace. Yet each year without progress has brought us another crisis, more suffering, more division. It is time to take a better path.

We must, of course, respond immediately to help those who suffer the terrible destruction of conflict. In Lebanon, we must ensure that the government can extend its sovereignty and control over all the Lebanese territories. The Arab world and the international community must exert every effort to support reconstruction and development.

These are vital measures. But in the Middle East, these are only partial measures. We can only solve the Arab-Israeli conflict by addressing the issue at its core; the restoration of internationally recognized Palestinian rights.

In 2002, the 22 Arab states – agreeing unanimously – led the way with a breakthrough peace proposal. Our vision and commitment is a viable, independent Palestinian state, living side-by-side with a secure Israel. Under the Arab Peace Initiative, Israel's security would be guaranteed, and the occupation of Palestine would end, in accord with U.N. resolutions.

Events show clearly that there can be no unilateral solution to the conflict. There must be a genuine partnership among all parties, in the context of international legality and justice.

Such a global partnership for peace is directly connected to the global partnership for development. Across the world, nations at peace are moving forward with economic growth and development: investing in education, building communities, helping to shape the future of the globe. But no nation succeeds in isolation. All nations, all people – especially our youth – must be able to share in a promising future.

We must make peace a priority. And we must do so now. No Session of this great institution could make a greater contribution to a future of justice and hope.

Thank you.