

The 7th International Interdisciplinary Conference in Amman
“Poland/V4 and the EU – Jordan and the Middle East”

organized under the patronage of HRH Prince Hassan bin Talal,
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in cooperation with *WANA Institute, Al Rai Center for Studies* and *JEBA*
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***Opening speech of HRH Prince El Hassan bin Talal presented
by H.E. Prof. Adnan Badran***

- I am thankful to the Polish Ambassador and other sponsors, WANA Institute, Al Rai Center for Studies and JEBA for organizing this conference.
- We're proud of the friendly relations with Visegrad group (Czech and Polish) and our close allies with Europe. Poland as the largest economy in central Europe and the 6th in EU, is playing a major role in Europe and NATO and its defense college in Rome.
- Poland succeeded in smooth peaceful transition to democracy which gave growth and stability over the last 26 years.
- By contrast, in Middle East, we suffer, because of the absence of full democracy. Religious, sects, nationalistic and ethnic wars and terrorism are spread in the region.
- We've heard with horror about Christians being asked to leave their homes, and about destruction of holy places and their symbols by the fanatic ISIS, who claim the Jihadist Islam. Although their ideology has nothing to do with Islam, a religion of tolerance, harmony and peace with others. ISIS, the so called Islamic State, wants to create an extremist religious state as the Ku Klux Klan (KKK), an Christian-adopting religious fanaticism to kill men, children, and enslave women in the name of God.
- Those actions are appalling in a region, home of religions and ethnic diversity for centuries; we cannot allow this tragedy to unfold in Mesopotamia, the land of Christians and Muslims of ancient civilization. Turkmen's, Yazidis, Sunnis and Shias , Kurds and Arabs were uprooted from their homes in fear for their lives. Horrors also unfolding on a daily basis in Syria, that one out of every three Syrians, became a refugee in his own country or abroad.
- Religious leaders and followers must draw strength from ethical perceptions of their civilization. They must avoid rigid statements from misinterpretations of religious beliefs.

They should draw inspiration from their ethical standards of justice, compassion and imagination. Holy places in our sites and hearts should not develop into venues of separation and hatred, they should develop into highways of dialogue, values of dignity and solidarity”.

- Physical wall separating Israelis and Palestinians is not a solution. Building a culture of peace based on justice, dignity and human rights will create brotherhood of the sons of Abraham. ***“have we not all have one father”***.
- Threats of violence can cause the minds of ordinary people to atrophy. We should do whatever we can to reach a peaceful solution to this conflict. Not giving the Palestinians their rights to live peacefully and end the occupation of their homeland, become the core of spreading extremism in the whole region.
- We have to tear down walls of misunderstanding, loss of opportunity and discrimination against, racial, ethnic, religious, sects which drain progress, development and human resources. They distract people of multiplying the space of commons, instead, will enlarge the space of differences which yield conflict. Resolving differences, or creating a diverse coalition will build a culture of peace among citizens of the world. We should not isolate ourselves from those who are different. We cannot allow divisions to harden. Involving all the people in the decision process is a basic principle of democracy. The more we understand cultures of others, the more we accept differences with respect. Dialogue is a matter of more than peacemaking, but of living an authentically human life. In the words of James Banks about the American dream as he says ***“our challenge as a new century begins. To establish an authentic Unum that has a moral authority, and yet create moral, civic and just communities where diverse racial, ethnic and cultural communities will participate and which they will have allegiance”***
- In Middle East, we should promote civil state building and governance encompassing all strata of people without racial discrimination, gender, religion, sect, nationality - roots, ethnicity or color. Arab spring started in Tunisia, and the Tunisians succeeded in drafting a secular constitution to build a democratic state of multiparty system with modern elections, based on justice and freedom. However, Arab spring failed in other countries of the region and lead in some countries to disaster.
- The state is for all, with no marginalization. Our people should get out of the **cave** to the world of **enlightenment**. Reconnaissance out of the **medieval ideology** is a must. Human rights, justice, equality and accommodation of cultural differences and dialogue will build non-oppressive diverse true democracy, sustainable for generations.

- The four pillars of Jack Delors' UNESCO commission on education for the 21st century: learning to be, to know, to do, and **learning to live together**, are the keys of tearing down walls of hatred and conflicts. **Dialogue** is behind the very idea of "*learning to live together*". It must be at the heart of our efforts to tackle the challenges facing societies – From poverty to information technologies – so many of which require global commitments, concerted approach, and internationally – recognized norms and codes of conduct.
- Education is therefore the pivot. It is an essential mean to promote dialogue, while helping to remove the roots of ignorance, prejudice, intolerance and conflict. Achieving constructive dialogue means, for example, improving educational skills, attitudes and pedagogy. Just think of the difference it would make if all school text-books were revised to reflect the contributions of all cultures and peoples, and to remove from them the expressions of prejudice and intolerance which fire incomprehension, mistrust, even hatred.
- The best hope of a nation lies in the proper education of its youth (Erasmus). Building culture of peace- among citizens is possible through **reforming education** particularly at early childhood to root out extremism from our curricula and pedagogy. Since wars and conflicts are seeded in the minds of men, then culture and defences of peace could be planted and grown through education. But what should we address in the new reforms of education:
- By education, we mean the right form of education, (not dogmatic education) is the key of tearing down hatred, walls of terrors and horrors, replacing it with bridges of tolerance and understanding of other cultures and respect and appreciate differences in race, religion, values, to promote social justice, ethics and solidarity. We should identify barriers that render the integration of ethics among people on this planet. Alleviating psychological and social barriers to ethical values is away to let it flourish naturally. In addition to education, the media including the social networks, have an important role to play in bringing a paradigm shift in perception for other people's ideologies and value system; a real change of attitudes toward other cultures and civilization can become reality.
- As Homosapiens, we make One-World, beautiful with enriching mosaic of diversity of cultures. We've got to learn living on it together peacefully and in harmony.