Under the Patronage of His Excellency the Prime Minister Dr. Omar Al-Razzaz

On the occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the UDHR

Final Ceremony

Speech by Ambassador of the European Union Delegation to Jordan

His Excellency Mr. Andrea Matteo Fontana

December 10, 2018
Speech of the EU Ambassador Andrea Matteo Fontana at the occasion of the commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

- I am delighted to see you all today to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. A Declaration that explicitly establishes equal dignity for every person. 'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights'.

- Indeed, this commemoration marks also 70 years of peace in Europe! The longest period of peace in our continent, and this happened not by coincidence, but because the respect and protection of human rights is one of the European Union's fundamental values. We adopted the charter of fundamental rights which transposed the universal declaration into the EU legal order. And any violation of these rights affects the democratic principles upon which our society is founded.

- We view all human rights as universal, indivisible and interdependent, with no difference between civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. We continue to reaffirm our commitment to protect and promote the universality of human rights.

- Unfortunately, human rights continue to be violated, all around the world, including in Europe. And in some countries the situation is getting worse. But the good news is that there is nothing inevitable about this. We can all contribute to positive change and we all have an interest to do that. Each individual, each country and institution has a role in promoting human rights. And I believe in the inspirational power, the contagion that can be spread when positive results are shown and good stories are told.

- I am convinced that there is no sustainable development without human rights, and there is no sustainable security without fundamental freedoms. Our States and our societies are strong only when the debate is free and open, when civil rights are respected, when the space for participation is open and guaranteed, and participation itself is active and welcomed.

- This is true also in Jordan, where we regularly discuss how to enhance the promotion of human rights. We work together on projects that promote human rights for all including the rights of women, youth, refugees,
migrants and persons with disabilities. And through projects we contribute to enhancing the right to education, the right to healthcare, the right to work, the right to justice and the right to stand as a candidate in elections.

- We jointly reviewed progress in this area at the recent Universal Periodic Review on Human Rights. We acknowledged the progress made by JO and recognised the ongoing cooperation between the government and the civil society in the UPR process.

- We are encouraged to see how that human rights figure prominently in the new Government two-year plan promoting a national renaissance ("nahda"): we noted how the plan recognises the key role of freedom of expression and assembly as well as the promotion of participation of youth and women in developing political life in Jordan. The EU is already involved in all of these aspects but and is ready to step its efforts to support the implementation of the of the Government's plan.

- Let’s unite our efforts! This commemoration does not mean that the declaration belongs to the past, the declaration is a manifest of today! Human rights must remain at the core of our daily cooperation with Jordan.