Under the Patronage of Eng. Atef Al Tarawneh,
President of the House of Representatives

On the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the ACHRS
And the Closing of the Project, "Supporting the political
dialogue between civil society and the Jordanian Parliament"

The Closing Ceremony

Speech of Dr. Lubna Bayouq
Member of the Scientific Council, ACHRS

Amman, Monday, 3/2/2020
Dear audience,

I welcome all of you most beautifully on behalf of the Amman Center for Human Rights Studies at this celebration on the occasion of the conclusion of the project "Encouraging Dialogue between Civil Society and the Jordanian Parliament", which coincides with the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the Center.

I am pleased to express our sincere thanks for the kindness of Eng. Atef Al-Tarawneh, Speaker of the House of Representatives, who sponsored this ceremony after kindly sponsoring the sessions in which the representatives participated, and those that gathered them in a dialogue with civil society organizations and the academic community.

The film will outline the project activities implemented by the Center with the kind support of the United Nations Democracy Fund. About three hundred people directly benefited from the project such as representatives, civil society servants, academics and student figures who participated in the project activities. In addition, nearly forty thousand people indirectly benefited as visitors visited the website of the project.

The project concluded with the adoption of twenty-two concrete recommendations for amendments to laws related to the right to life, academic freedom, freedom of opinion and expression, and women's rights. These recommendations were brought to the attention of the Speaker of the Parliament.

The project included the participation of twenty-five students in the undergraduate stage, which was a written competition in the four topics mentioned above. We are pleased to announce the winners at this ceremony, and would like congratulate them all, wishing them excellence in university study and success in their scientific, professional and family lives.

I would like to point out that the Center achieves success despite the challenges that the region is going through in regards to human rights due to the regions conflicts that have been accompanied by unprecedented human rights violations. The Center champions the most basic human right to live in safety, and fights for vulnerable groups of women and children whom are often subject to these violations. We must deal more seriously with human rights issues and emphasize the need to respect international law and the right of self-determination, especially the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

Dear audience,

We are also pleased to introduce the participants of the first batch of youth leaders from Jordanian universities. Today seventeen male and female students from six
Jordanian universities graduated from this pilot program. The training program included over a hundred hours of training, theoretical knowledge and practical skills, and changes in the attitudes of student leadership and their role in building a society in which young people participate in decision-making positions.

Allow me to thank all the trainers and administrative staff who contributed their time and effort to the success of this course, especially: Dr. Ibrahim Hijazin, Dr. Hashem Nassar, Dr. Tayseer Abu Owdeh, Dr. Ola Kassab, the trainer Muhammad Sarsak and Dr. Nizam Assaf.

The video that will be presented to you shows the contributions of the Center since its establishment in 2000 as a hub for reflection on human rights issues, especially those that involve the five priorities of the Center, which are the right to life with a focus on the abolition of the death penalty, the right to think with a focus on academic freedom, the right to speech with a focus on freedom of opinion, press freedoms, and the right to access information, the right to participate with a focus on elections; and finally, women's rights with a focus on building their leadership capabilities to participate in decision-making positions.

Dear audience,

Allow me to show you the most prominent of our business plans for the coming year:

First: Continuing to work on drafting a proposal for a global declaration on academic freedoms, and in 2021 establishing contact with UNESCO to take this activity global.

Second: Continuing to spread the culture of academic freedom and emancipatory education in cooperation and partnership with stakeholders in Jordanian universities.

Third: We also announced in the celebration of the occasion of the seventieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that the Center will further develop the program of the Jordanian Institute for Women Leaders by introducing a new course for youth leaders for university students. The students will be anywhere from eighteen to twenty-two years. Today we are honored to sponsor His Excellency Eng. Atef Al-Tarawneh, Speaker of the House of Representatives, graduate of the first class of this course, which numbered seventeen participants from six Jordanian universities.

Fourth: We will continue to spread the culture of dialogue and tolerance and fight against intolerance, hatred and violent extremism in accordance with the Declaration of the "coalition of civil society to combat extremism, intolerance and hatred in the Arab region," which took place in 2017.
Fifth: We will work in the coming years in cooperation with the current parliament to adopt the recommendations as outputs of the project to gradually become part of the Jordanian legislation in the coming years.

Before closing I would like to express my sincere gratitude of the contribution of the members of local and international institutions in the development of the Center's work and the success of its programs and activities locally and regionally over the past twenty years. All of us have a great thanks and appreciation.

Finally, Once again, my sincere thanks to the kindness of Eng. Atef Al-Tarawneh, Speaker of the House of Representatives, who sponsored the celebration. We thank him and the representatives, assistants and aids in the honorable council for all their efforts in making the project a success, looking forward to further cooperation with all of you.

Thanks are also due to all those who participated in the project activities from civil society and the academic community.

I would also like to thank both Mr. Eckhard Strauss, a delegate of the United Nations Resident Representative and Mrs. Leila Hamarneh for their participation in this celebration.

Thanks are also due to all the women and men who participated.