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 by Senior Human Rights Adviser Dr. Ekkehad Strauss
On behalf of Mr. Anders Petersen, the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Jordan

Amman, Monday, 3/2/2020
Celebration of the closing of the project “Supporting political dialogue between Civil Society and the Parliament” and the 20th anniversary of the Amman Center for Human Rights Studies

Amman, 3 February 2020

Your Excellency, Atef Al Tarawneh, President of the House of Representatives,
Dear Dr. Nizam Assaf Director of the Amman Center for Human Rights Studies,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am honored to speak, on behalf of Mr. Anders Petersen, the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Jordan, at this occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Amman Center for Human Rights Studies (ACHRS) and the closure of the project “Supporting political dialogue between Civil Society and the Parliament” supported by the United Nations Democracy Fund.

Allow me to begin by congratulating Dr. Assaf and all the staff and volunteers of ACHR S on 20 years of successful work. With your different activities, in particular related to training and research, you contributed significantly to the dissemination of a culture of human rights and increased the level of awareness and sensibility towards human rights and democracy in Jordan. I wish you the same constructive engagement, patience and enthusiasm for the continuation of your work in the coming years.

The project “Supporting political dialogue between Civil Society and the Parliament” is yet another example for the innovative and forward-looking work of the ACHRS. Again, the ACHR S went beyond the approach of an independent think tank for human rights and facilitated actively a dialogue process on important human rights. The discussion and recommendations of the different round tables provide valuable guidance on practical next steps how to increase the protection and promotion of the right to life, freedom of opinion, academic freedom and women’s rights. Engaging students in the dialogue on
these topics followed by a study visit to Parliament is an important contribution to engaging youth in political discussion and decision-making. Some of these students will receive awards for their efforts later this evening. I also congratulate His Excellency, Atef Al Tarawneh, and the members of Parliament for their participation in the project activities.

The project is also an example for the effective partnership between the UN Democracy Fund and civil society. The UN Democracy Fund was created by UN Secretary-General Kofi A. Annan in 2005 as a United Nations General Trust Fund to support democratization efforts around the world. UNDEF funds projects that empower civil society, promote human rights, and encourage the participation of all groups in democratic processes. The large majority of UNDEF funds go to local civil society organizations. In this way, UNDEF plays a novel and unique role in complementing the UN's other, more traditional work -- the work with Governments -- to strengthen democratic governance around the world.

As the United Nations in Jordan, we look forward to our continuing partnership with the government, the National Assembly, civil society, the private sector and others in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals by leaving no-one behind, including SDG 16, which reflects the importance of participatory institutions and policymaking.

Thank you for your kind attention.