

Your Majesty,

Your Excellencies,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a great honour and rare privilege for me to introduce to you today a true friend of Canada and one of the leading statesmen of our times, His Majesty King Hussein of Jordan.

I also wish to extend a warm welcome to the distinguished delegation accompanying His Majesty on his visit, a delegation which includes the Chief of the Royal Court, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and several key ministerial colleagues.

Your Majesty, Canada is committed to expanding the good relations between our two countries. We view Jordan as a positive and stable force for peace and prosperity in the region, and the Government stands ready to do what we can to build on the excellent trade and commercial prospects that already exist.

I have seen for myself the miracle you have brought in the 37 years since you succeeded to the throne. Jordan was once a country with few known resources whose development was sharply limited and whose economic and social problems were considerable.

It is now a proud, modernizing country of formidable human and natural resource potential. A strong infrastructure has been put in place. The education system has been expanded. Business opportunities abound.

In short, Your Majesty, your accomplishment is remarkable. You have given your people a gift sought for generations in a region troubled by conflict and instability: -- the gift of prosperity, order and stability.

Canada's policy towards Jordan is based on a straightforward proposition: that it is in our interest to ensure that the prosperity and welfare of Jordan is safeguarded.

We all know the tragic history of the Middle East region. The wars. The bloodshed. The hatred, ambition and ideological rigidity. The children cheated of their future by retribution and dogma.