

STATSMINISTERENS TALE VED MIDDAG PÅ AKERSHUS SLOTT 2. OKTOBER 1978  
I ANLEDNING HANS KONGELIGE HØYHET KRONPRINS HASSAN AV JORDANS BESØK

Your Royal Highness, dear friends,

On behalf of the Norwegian Government I have the privilege and the great pleasure to welcome you, the Royal Highnesses/princess Tharwat and princess Alia as well as the distinguished members of your delegation.

Modern development has reduced distances and brought all countries and peoples closer. But this development has also made us dependent on each other. Problems in one area may affect the whole world.

We regard your visit to Norway as a proof of our common

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desire to overcome the obstacles created by history and geographical location and to bring the two countries closer together.

Our peoples share the wish for peace, international cooperation and mutual understanding as expressed in the Charter of the United Nations. Only in peace can we safeguard the welfare of our peoples and develop the resources of our countries.

The importance of peace is particularly clear when we look upon the situation in the Middle East. A durable, just and honourable settlement of the conflict between Israel and its neighbours, including the Palestinians, is a matter of concern to all Nations. The people of Norway does also feel this as a concern.

Our policy is to maintain impartiality and to pursue a policy of good and friendly relations with all the countries in the area. We have fully supported the peace-keeping activities of the United Nations in the Middle East, and also made our contributions to these activities. Our support to UNRWA and our present participation in the UNIFIL are examples of this.

But the whole problem is of course much more serious for the countries in that region. It affects you as a matter of life and death. And your responsibility, and your possibilities to influence development are much larger than for countries in the periphery.

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is one of the most indispensable partners to any lasting peace settlement in the region. In terms of historical and cultural continuity

the Royal Hashemite Family holds a special position in the Arab World making your participation all the more important.

We know, Your Royal Highness, the great efforts of the Royal House to safeguard the welfare of your people. We also know the leading role Your Royal Highness yourself are playing in the economic development of the country.

I can assure Your Royal Highness that the Norwegian Government follows with interest and sympathy the economic and social progress of your country. We hope that you will soon be able to pursue your efforts under conditions of peace in the region.

The one-sided-ness in natural resources has turned Norway into a country very dependent on foreign trade.

We wish to expand the geographical distribution of

our foreign trade. Therefore, we are eager to develop our economic cooperation with the Arab World. We know that Jordan considers itself particularly well situated for becoming a trade- and banking center of the Middle East. We are looking forward to hear further about these ideas and to explore the possibilities for a mutually profitable cooperation in this field.

We hope that your visit to Norway and our conversations here will contribute to the further development of friendship and economic cooperation between our two countries.

Your Roayl Highness, I hope you will find your stay in Norway an interesting and pleasant one. I propose a toast for the prosperity and the happiness of His Majesty King Hussein, Your Roayl Highnesses and the people of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.