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Al-Aqsa Agreement between Jordan and Palestine,

31 March 2013

Note: Amidst the regional tensions, on 31 March 2013 King Abdullah II of Jordan and Palestine President Mahmoud Abbas signed an agreement in Amman regarding the protection of al-Aqsa Mosque in east Jerusalem. Both sides recognized the Palestinian sovereign rights over the City and special status of Jordan. Editor, MEI@ND.

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Agreement between His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al-Hussein, the Custodian of the holy sites in Jerusalem, and His Excellency Dr Mahmoud Abbas, President of the State of Palestine, Head of Palestinian Liberation Organization, and President of the Palestinian National Authority

Glory to Him Who carried His servant by night from the Sacred Mosque to Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa, the environs of which We have blessed, that We might show him of our signs! Indeed He is the Hearing, the Seeing. (The Holy Koran, Al-Isra', 17:1)

Indeed, Allah loves those who fight in His cause in a row as though they are a [single] structure joined firmly. (The Holy Koran, Al-Saff, 61:4)

This agreement has been made by and between:

His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al-Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Custodian of the holy sites in Jerusalem,

And:

His Excellency President Mahmoud Abbas, in his capacity as President of the State of Palestine, and Head of The Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, and President of the Palestinian National Authority,

Preamble

A. Recalling the indissoluble bond between all members of the Arab and Muslim Ummah;

B. Recalling the special status of Jerusalem as a holy and sacred city in Islam, and recalling present and eternal association of the holy sites with Muslims of all lands and all ages; and bearing in mind the significance of Jerusalem to those of other faiths;

C. Recalling the unique religious importance, to all Muslims, of Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa with its 144 dunums, which include the Qibli Mosque of Al-Aqsa, the Mosque of the Dome of the Rock and all its mosques, buildings, walls, courtyards, attached areas over and beneath the ground and the Waqf properties tied-up to Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa, to its environs or to its pilgrims (hereinafter referred to as “Al-Haram Al-Sharif”);

D. Recalling the role of King Al-Sharif Hussein Bin Ali in protecting, and taking care of the holy sites in Jerusalem and in the restoration of the holy sites since 1924; recalling the uninterrupted continuity of this role by His Majesty King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, who is a descendant of Al-Sharif Hussein Bin Ali; recalling that the Bay’ah (oath of allegiance) according to which Al-Sharif Hussein Bin Ali held the custodianship of the Jerusalem holy sites, which custodianship was affirmed to Al-Sharif Hussein Bin Ali by the people of Jerusalem and Palestine on March 11, 1924; and recalling that the Custodianship of the holy sites of Jerusalem has devolved to His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al-Hussein; including that which encompasses the “Rum” (Greek) Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem that is governed by the Jordanian Law No. 27 of the year 1958;

E. The continuity of Hashemite King of Jordan’s custodianship of the holy sites since 1924 makes His Majesty more able to maintain the holy sites and to preserve Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa (Al-Haram Al-Sharif);

F. Recognizing that the Palestine Liberation Organization is the sole legitimate and legal representative of the Palestinian people and;

G. Recognizing that the right of self-determination of the Palestinian people is expressed in realizing the State of Palestine whose territory encompasses the land within which Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa (Al-Haram Al-Sharif) is situated;

H. Recalling the terms of the official statement by His Majesty King Hussein Bin Talal, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, custodian of the holy sites in Jerusalem, concerning Jordan’s qualified disengagement from the West Bank, made on 31 July, 1988; the statement excluded the Jerusalem holy sites;

I. Recalling the terms of the official statement by the Jordanian Government on its role in Jerusalem, made on 28 July, 1994, reaffirming Jordan’s invariable position and historic, exclusive role over the holy sites;

Intending to establish legal obligations and to affirm their recognition of the legal status of the parties set out in this agreement, the parties to this agreement have agreed and declare as follows:

ARTICLE 1:

The “Preamble” to this agreement shall be an integral part of this agreement and is to be read and construed with it as a whole.

ARTICLE 2:

2.1. His Majesty King Abdullah II, as the custodian of the Jerusalem holy sites, exerts all possible efforts to preserve the Jerusalem holy sites, especially Al-Haram Al-Sharif, which is defined in item (c) in the Preamble to this agreement, and to represent their interests so as to:

A. assert the respect for the Jerusalem holy sites;

B. affirm that all Muslims, now and forever, may travel to and from the Islamic holy sites and worship there, in conformance with freedom of worship;

C. to administer the Islamic holy sites and to maintain them so as to (i) respect and preserve their religious status and significance; (ii) reaffirm the proper identity and sacred character of the holy sites; and (iii) respect and preserve their historical, cultural and artistic significance and their physical fabric;

D. to represent the interests of the holy sites in relevant international forums and competent international organizations through feasible legal means;

E. to oversee and manage the institution of Waqf in Jerusalem and its properties in accordance with the laws of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

2.2. The King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the custodian of the holy sites in Jerusalem, will continue to endeavour to procure that the duties referred to in Article 2.1. here be fulfilled.

2.3. The Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian National Authority recognize the role of the King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan set out in paragraphs (1) and (2) of this Article 2 and undertake to respect it.

ARTICLE 3:

3.1. The Government of the State of Palestine, as the expression of the right of self-determination of the Palestinian people, shall have the right to exercise sovereignty over all parts of its territory, including Jerusalem.

3.2. The King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Palestinian President will consult and coordinate with each other concerning the holy sites when necessary.

Done at the Royal Palace in Amman on Sunday, 31 March 2013 on 19 Jumada I 1434 Hijri.

Note: The text was carried by *The Jordan Times* on 1 April 2013. **Web Link:**
<http://jordantimes.com/jordan-palestine-sign-historic-agreement-to-protect-al-aqsa>

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