Ayoub Kara, Israeli Deputy Minister of Regional Cooperation

I wish to congratulate those who are with us here today working on this important regional Master plan and have come to be in this beautiful area by the Dead Sea under the patronage of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. I would like to thank those who came to attend this conference, and the representatives of the Jordanian government who for many years have been cooperating to protect the environment and to develop the Jordan valley and the Jordan River region.

The Jordan River is not a normal river. It is one of the most important rivers in the world. It is in the hearts of 100s of millions of people around the world. The project for developing the Jordan River is a responsibility not just for our region but for the whole world. Agricultural, economic, rural and touristic projects as well help form a peaceful interaction. We have to, today, find every way possible to protect and develop the natural treasures that God has given us, including the Dead Sea.

There was a Peace Agreement signed for it. This new document allows new opportunities for it and the Jordan River as well as other natural reserves. Israel supports this position and has started to develop the Jordan River, and there are other projects in the Jordan River too. It began in 2013 with 9 million cubic meters of water from the Sea of Galilee being released into the Jordan River. We have also developed touristic centers in the valley. There are no cultural and historic regions such as the Jordan River in the world, so we have to strive to succeed.

The program that has been proposed here is important and valuable. It will need cooperation between all ministries. We have prepared a detailed program to develop the northern part of the Lower Jordan River Valley. Every coordinated program that is made between Jordan and Israel protects the area. We are waiting for more co-operation for developing vital projects and other initiatives that are important and we will listen during this conference. Let us succeed and exert every effort possible. I call upon you to put politics aside so the cooperation will allow us to be able to enhance the environment and economy. Our cooperation will be the secret to success. I have no doubt that this program will have an echo throughout the world and open up opportunities beneficial for all people in the region.

My brothers and sisters I call on you on this occasion asking God above to see you all healthy always, however all of me, my heart and mind, is with those suffering from religious extremism with organizations like Daesh in Syria. I call on you to form an alliance to cooperate against this extremism. We renounce and combat this extremism to build bridges for peace.

We can't accept people or mankind to be humiliated, especially on this holy land. I wish you all a fruitful and successful conference.