Munqeth Mehyar, Chairman and Jordanian Director, EcoPeace Middle East

Good morning Your Excellency's, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Munqeth Mehyar. I am the president of EcoPeace and the Jordanian Director of EcoPeace. I would like to begin this morning by a list of thank yous, which will be in English, then switching to Arabic, my mother tongue. Your Excellency Dr. Hazim El-Nasser, the Minister of Water and Irrigation in Jordan, we cannot thank you enough for all your vision, support, and leadership. The same line of thanks goes to his Excellency Sa'ed Abu Hammour, Secretary General of the Jordan Valley Authority. Without your vision, guidance, and leadership none of this could have happened or been possible. We are honored & pleased to have with us today the Israeli Deputy Minister of Regional Cooperation, H.E. Ayoub Kara, who will be here shortly. Deputy Minister of Agriculture in Palestine, H.E. Abdullah Lahlouh, H.E. Mahrouf Haran, Deputy Minister of Civil Affairs in Palestine. We thank you all and believe that you can all make what it takes to implement this master plan – such an important plan for the future. With us here today are Members of the Jordanian Parliament and Members of the Knesset. We thank you for being here with us and hope for your support. Your Excellency, Ms. Joanna Wronecka, Ambassador and Head of Delegation of the European Union to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan; special thanks for your continuous support by financially supporting this plan and personally being here for all our events. H.E. Helena Rietz, Ambassador of Sweden to Jordan, our gratitude goes to you, our main donor and main supporter, but above all our dear friend. Our thanks also to our dear representatives from the government ministries, to the mayors of the Jordan Valley, to the members of the Board of Directors, members of the International Advisory Committee of EcoPeace, our guests from India and Pakistan, and finally our master plan partners, the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) and Global Nature fund. I welcome you all in our lovely beloved Kingdom of Jordan.

Dear guests,

There is more than one person here with us and I don't know you all personally but I can say something about you all: you are distinguished people because you are different from the others because of your penetrating vision for the future. People come to you to ask for your help because you have the courage to understand the world in a different way. Your courage has meant that you're here at this conference. I feel strongly that we have you here at the conference. Your strength and presence are necessary to help us realize the vision. We strive for a better life and a better future for us all. This vision is the master plan that we are presenting today. This is the first step for positive change in the Jordan Valley. Responsibility and burden can’t be on civil society or donors alone, but it’s a participatory effort to achieve its success. We commend the efforts in the Jordan Valley and hope that we will see this initiative being repeated beyond and across the borders. Wish us all success.