



Speech by

H.R.H. Princess Basma Bint Talal of Jordan

at the

Closing Session of the

**END HUMAN TRAFFICKING NOW: ENFORCING THE UN PROTOCOL
Luxor International Forum**

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Your Excellency Mrs Suzanne Mubarak,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a true privilege and somewhat of a responsibility to give the closing remarks at the culmination of such a critically important event, with such a notable gathering, and such commendable efforts. But human trafficking, as you have insisted these past few days, deserves no less than an extraordinary effort on all our parts. Increasingly acknowledged to be a modern form of slavery, human trafficking represents the evil that humankind, at its worst, is capable of. Human trafficking also embodies the sinister side of globalisation, with the exchange of money for people, across borders and continents.

We have learned here that whether or not they are fully aware, in some way or another growing numbers of countries are implicated in human trafficking, with the secret transfer and exploitation of children, women and men from, to, or through their borders.

As a globalised evil, human trafficking can only be combated through a global response, of which this gathering here in Luxor is very much a part: minds and institutions from around the world, coming together, as you have now, to consolidate measures and forge new alliances in the struggle to put an end to human trafficking.

In this struggle, the voice of H.E. Mrs Suzanne Mubarak has been clear and consistent. As such a respected advocate for human dignity Mrs Mubarak, you have lent your voice, presence and leadership to this cause, bringing with them the dynamism and vision which characterise your work.

Internationally, and in the Arab world – which suffers from a false sense of security about human trafficking – Mrs Mubarak, the authority with which you speak, and the respect which you command, have served to bring to light the issue and make people realise the gravity of the situation.

In this event we set out to establish a common understanding of human trafficking and awareness of the heavy toll it poses, and to engage each other as women leaders, civil society activists, artists, the corporate sector, the tourism industry, academics, government representatives, the media and entertainment industries, and most importantly youth. We have been inspired by the magic and history of this ancient setting, and motivated by the energy and commitment of our collective gathering to make some valuable achievements.

At a moral level, and through your combined efforts, you have further cemented the definition of human trafficking as the practice of slavery in the world today, and at a practical level, you have advanced our strategic thinking and action plans, developing old alliances and new ones, expanding networks and strengthening cooperation.

We can be especially encouraged by the steps taken to involve the tourism industry and the corporate sectors more fully in this endeavour. In fact, our recommendations from these past few days include ways to mobilize all the sectors involved and empower them further in our fight.

The recommendations include:

We urge companies to step up their efforts and adopt the Luxor implementation guidelines of the Athens Ethical Principles. I am pleased to share with you the news that today more than 30 companies have done so.

We urge the tourism sector to take the necessary actions to put a stop to any human trafficking offences taking place in all of their spaces and locations.

The social media is a powerful tool to spread the message on human trafficking and to create networks. We must combine our efforts to end this modern form of slavery using these important tools.

The entertainment industry and the media have today identified the next steps to be taken. Their commitment will increase not only sensitisation but also understanding of this crucial issue, and generate activism and advocacy by all their members and the wider public.

As we go about achieving these targets, let us make no mistake, it is a fight. Human trafficking represents an assault on the core values that the human family cherishes and holds sacred. Human dignity, compassion, justice, freedom – all are victims of a global racket that wrecks lives, violates human rights, and threatens any progress that humanity has collectively achieved.

This is a fight which requires that we rally together our very best resources, human, organizational, informational, and technological. There can be no room for complacency or denial in our midst about the reality of human trafficking, which although distant to some, is like a cancer so malevolent that it can take root anywhere, any time. As long as there are vulnerable people in our world, this is a threat about which we will have to constantly be vigilant.

Winning such a fight requires champions. I consider all of you here today to be such champions, individuals and institutions who are responsible for pushing ahead, keeping up the momentum and forcing the issue to put an end to this heinous crime against humanity.

There is still so much to do, and many challenges yet to face. I know however that with your combined efforts, and with your commitment, Mrs Mubarak, there is hope. We cannot afford to think otherwise, for the sake of all the victims of human trafficking now, and in the future- not only them, but for the sake of our shared humanity, the values and all that we must hold dear as members of the human race.

Thank you.