

*“Jordan is a model of harmony between followers of different doctrines and religions”*

Amman, Jordan marked the World Interfaith Harmony Week with a seminar entitled “Jordan as a model of harmony between followers of different doctrines and religions”.

Representatives from various organisations including a delegation from the Prime Minister’s office, the departments of Judges and General Fatwa and the Jordanian Centre for Research on Religious Coexistence attended the event, which was held at the Islamic Cultural Centre, the mosque of the founder of Jordan, King Abdullah bin Hussein.

Deputising for Prime Minister Omar Razzaz, the Awqaf Minister Muhammad Al-Khalayleh emphasized Jordan’s adherence to values and principles of harmony. Al-Khalayleh said that the call to harmony is at the core of Islamic law. This principle has been demonstrated and practiced by most rulers and imams throughout Islam’s history. This commitment to harmony and coexistence gives the right to all people, different in race and beliefs, to live in security, safety and peace.

He added that Islam does not only call for recognition of the other, but calls for respect for this recognition and acceptance of the rich diversity of the cultures of today's world, openness and communication, and the promotion of freedom of thought and conscience, noting that harmony is a virtue that facilitates peace and contributes to replacing the culture of war with its culture.

Al-Khalayleh explained that harmony and calling for it does not mean leniency or relinquishing the basic values and principles in our Islamic religion, nor does it mean weakness or defeat, but rather it is a positive stance calling for recognition of human rights recognized by all people, and it calls for people to adhere to their beliefs and religion and accept that others adhere to their beliefs and their religion.

He called on the international community to be just and fair concerning issues in the Islamic world, especially noting the importance of Al Aqsa Mosque and

the Hashemite custodianship over Islamic and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem and Muslim minorities worldwide.

The Grand Mufti of the Kingdom, Abdul Karim Khasawneh, said Jordanians, both Muslims and Christians, are proud of the history of their coexistence, and that it is a model of partnership, giving each person the right to justice and equality.

Judge Abdel Hafez Al-Rabta referred to the Covenant of Umar when recalling the Hashemite right and responsibility in guardianship of the Muslim and Christian places of worship in Jerusalem, Al-Quds Al-Sharif.

He added that Islam was a pioneer in determining the concept of citizenship based on preserving rights and participation in the performance of duties, while dealing well with the components of society, without attacking the privacy of any of them, indicating that justice and compassion are the basis of the idea of harmony between the followers of religions, and between members of societies.

Father Nabil al-Haddad, Director of the Jordanian Interfaith Coexistence Research Centre, said that in Jordan, people learn about harmony in its mosques, churches, and schools. He pointed out that in Jordan, harmony is not seasonal, not limited to the first week of February, but it is a permanent situation 52 weeks in a year. Various initiatives like the Amman Message and the A Common Word are manifestations of this intrinsic Jordanian attitude.

The ceremony was also attended by the Vatican ambassador in Amman, Ambassadors of a number of Arab and foreign countries, and Islamic and Christian religious figures.

