

Subject: The Temple Mount

Dear Ambassador Mohammad al-Haja,

We appreciate your country's courage and willingness to establish a true and lasting peace with the State of Israel. We are two nations who believe in God, pray to Him and respect all people and their right to worship freely.

In your meeting with Rabbi Shalom Cohen, the spiritual leader of Shas, who we respect and cherish, he expressed a personal opinion which we cannot ignore. His claim that the Temple Mount does not belong to the Jewish People and that we are not allowed to enter it are false. Two thousand of years of persecution and foreign rule, during which Jews were banned from entering the Temple Mount, created a situation of uncertainty when we regained control of the Temple Mount more than 50 years ago.

The truth is that the Temple Mount is where King Solomon built the Temple, and where Jews returning from the Babylonian Exile built the Second Temple .

The First and Second Temples stood on the Temple Mount above the Foundation Rock (Al Sachra in the Dome of the Rock) and it is these two Temples which are the source of the Muslim name, Beit al Makdas.

For thousands of years since the Temple was destroyed, Jews prayed and still pray every day for its rebuilding as a place where all people can worship God. Prophet Isaiah said :

"וְהָיָה בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים נִכּוֹן יִהְיֶה הַר בֵּית ה' בְּרֹאשׁ הַהָרִים וְנָשָׂא מִגְבְּעוֹת וְנִהְרָוּ אֵלָיו כָּל הַגּוֹיִם. וְהָלְכוּ עַמִּים רַבִּים וְאָמְרוּ לָכוּ וְנַעֲלֶה אֶל הַר ה' אֶל בֵּית אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב וְיִרְנוּ מְדַרְכָּיו וְנִלְכֶה בְּאַחֲרֵיתוֹ, כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא תוֹרָה וְדָבַר ה' מִירוּשָׁלַם" (ישעיהו ב.)

In the days to come, The Mount of the LORD's House Shall stand firm above the mountains And tower above the hills; And all the nations Shall gaze on it with joy.

And the many peoples shall go and say: "Come, Let us go up to the Mount of the LORD, To the House of the God of Jacob; That He may instruct us in His ways, And that we may walk in His paths." For instruction shall come forth from Zion, The word of the LORD from Jerusalem.



Unlike the reality today, in which Israel avoids controlling the site and desists from expelling radicals and terrorists, **Jews always dreamt of the day when the Temple Mount would be free and full freedom of worship would be the norm, and it would become a global center of peace.**

I will be honored to meet you and maybe ascend together to the Temple Mount soon.
God bless you, and welcome to Israel.

Best,

Tom Nisani, Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, cursive 'T' followed by a loop and a horizontal stroke.