



# *Foreword*

The Kingdom of Jordan is renowned for its archaeological highlights, such as Nabataean Petra and Roman Jerash, but this country, at the crossroads of so many civilizations past and present, protects innumerable other treasures. Jordanians and tourists alike, who venture beyond these major tourist attractions, will come across unexpected and magical remnants of the past. Some are easy to spot, such as Roman pillars and Ottoman houses. Others, even if they are 'megalithic' in size, may not always be recognizable as monuments from distant ages, yet across the country we find dolmens and menhirs as markers in the landscape and testaments to past communities.

On these lands, there exists an abundance of monuments from the historical archive of mankind. In fact, it is hardly possible for us to develop land without encountering an archaeological feature. The challenge for us today is to manage our demographic and economic growth, without destroying what our ancestors have left behind. In the face of such dangers, there is a heightened need to cooperate and coordinate conservation efforts. After all, these are not only monuments from Jordan's past, but are an important part of a global heritage. To preserve our collective history, we must strike a balance between finding our past and respecting our present.

In this context, I am most pleased that Ambassador Scheltema has written a book that draws to our attention the very precarious situation of megaliths. It is my hope that the publication of this book will succeed in raising awareness about this sometimes neglected aspect of archaeology. It should bring people, local authorities, planners and landowners alike, to the realization that a site once destroyed is lost forever. It will also allow us, as Jordanians, to explore our own country, off the beaten track, and provide new adventures for those who are eager to go beyond Petra. More than this, it makes us realize, once again, that our treasures are not gold, but better: civilization, past and present.

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