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Jordan's King Abdullah II to Address Catholic University Law School on Reclaiming Moderate Islam

WASHINGTON, D.C. – His Majesty King Abdullah II, king of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, will deliver an address: **“Traditional Islam: The Path to Peace”** at The Catholic University of America Columbus School of Law at **noon on Tuesday, Sept. 13, 2005**, in the law building's William J. Byron, S.J. Auditorium.

The invitation-only event is open to media coverage.

The king's remarks will build upon recent efforts to enhance understanding about the true tenets and teachings of Islam. In July 2005, as a result of the International Islamic Conference hosted by King Abdullah II in Amman, more than 180 scholars representing 45 countries signed a final declaration unanimously condemning the practice known as *takfir* (calling others “apostates”) that is used by extremists to justify violence. The declaration also recognized the legitimacy of all eight of the traditional schools of Islamic religious law from the Sunni, Shi'i and Ibadi branches of Islam, and identified their common principles and beliefs. It defined the necessary qualifications and conditions for issuing *fatwas* (religious directives), contrasting them to the illegitimacy of so-called *fatwas* justifying terrorism that are issued ‘outside’ of the traditional schools of Islamic religious law and in violation of Islam's core principles.

The Sept. 13 lecture will be the only official address given by King Abdullah II during his two-day swing through Washington. En route to the United States, King Abdullah also will meet with Pope Benedict XVI to build on the relations that Jordan had established with Pope John Paul II, and to discuss ways in which Muslims and Christians can continue to work together for peace, tolerance and coexistence.

King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein assumed his constitutional powers as monarch of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on Feb. 7, 1999, the day his father, the late King Hussein, passed away. Born in Amman in 1962, he began his primary education at the Islamic Educational College in Amman and later attended private schools in England and America. Prior to his current position, King Abdullah II spent many years in the military holding various ranks, among them commander of the Royal Jordanian Special Forces and special operations commander.

The king's address at CUA is an initiative of the Columbus School of Law's Interdisciplinary Program in Law and Religion, which extended the invitation and arranged the king's visit. The program was created to provide a forum for study, research and public discussion of issues arising at the nexus of law and religion.

A live Web cast of King Abdullah's lecture will be available at www.law.edu

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