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Dear all, from all continents,

The election campaign for Mayor of Montpellier (France) ended tonight.

Starting from nothing, with no political party, no militants, no support, I qualified for the second round, where my position was, I believe, more than honourable. I defeated the candidate of the President's party, the candidates of all the parties that came first in the last presidential election. And in the second round I was overtaken by the heir to a political system that has governed Montpellier for almost fifty years.

Tonight, I feel neither resentment nor rancour, rather a form of pride. Pride first of all in having been a legitimate candidate: an entrepreneur, the president of a sports club, I had never been involved in politics. The result shows that the citizens trusted me to take on political responsibilities. The old system held out, but today I am a player in political life.

Why is this important to me? Because as a Bedouin from the confines of the desert who was welcomed by Montpellier to study and who was never to leave it again, I want to serve this city to which I owe so much. I had the idea of giving back some of what was given to me: a home, a setting, a territory. I could have moved the group's headquarters to a larger city: I didn't do that because this is where I want to keep my roots, which are also those of the group.

I will continue to fight for my city, as an entrepreneur, as president and owner of the rugby club that I hope to transform into the best European club.

During this campaign, I never stopped thinking about the group and acting on its behalf: the days were long, very long at times. But I always find the energy for commitment when I think that excellence can be achieved.

Today, life goes on. We have a lot of challenges ahead of us, starting with emerging from the Covid-19 crisis. I thank you all for your commitment during such a difficult time, which unfortunately is not over everywhere in the world and which may return.

Take care of yourself and your family. And together, let us be aware, let us never forget, that nothing is impossible.

Mohed Altrad

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