

Economic issues will make or break the Jordan-Israel peace process

by Susan Welsh

History was made on July 25, when Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel and King Hussein of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, at a ceremony at the White House in Washington, signed a joint declaration ending the state of war which had existed between the two countries since 1948. The next step is to negotiate an actual peace treaty, while forging ahead with economic development projects that alone can underwrite the peace process in the Middle East.

So far, the two sides have agreed to establish direct telephone links, connect their electricity grids, and open border crossings, including one at Aqaba and Eilat and another in the north. Jordan has agreed to allow Israeli airliners to use its airspace for flights to the Far East and India.

Prime Minister Rabin, who proposed a toast at the White House dinner to "those who have the courage to change axioms, to overcome prejudices, to change realities," showed that he is keenly aware of the need to address the economic issues, before the terrorists and lunatics on both sides drown the peace process in blood. "The results of any agreement when it is signed has to be translated to the life of the peoples in the country that sign it," he said in his public remarks. "They have to realize that the change has taken place, that life is safer, that their life is improved, educationally, economically, socially. . . . By beautiful words alone, realities are not changed. . . . The countries and the peoples will realize that there is a meaning of peace not brought by beautiful words, but by the change of their life, that peace brought something new to them."

According to a well-informed source, Rabin's private discussions with President Clinton were even more forthright on this issue. He stressed the importance of the United States and the other western powers' delivering on the pledges made at the so-called donors' conference held in Washington last year. Rabin is concerned, according to this source, that too much time is being lost between the agreements and the implementation.

In his memoirs, published in 1979, Rabin identified the importance of following through with financial pledges in a discussion of the Camp David accord:

"I believe that more than anything else, including the

Palestinian problem, the factor that will decide the stability and durability of the peace and Egypt's adherence to its commitments is the extent to which the economic situation in Egypt shows definite improvement. I hope that now that the formal treaty is signed, the countries that spoke so promisingly of peace and coaxed and cajoled the sides at every opportunity—the United States, Canada, and the European nations—will pay more than just lip service to peace. Just as there was little chance of Europe's developing as a democratic part of the world after World War II had it not been for the Marshall Plan, without providing concrete economic support for Egypt—and Israel—those who preach peace will not be able to prove that their vision is truly valid."

Secret discussions under way

The most vital economic issue for Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinians is water, and European newspapers reported that the three sides held secret meetings in Oslo, Norway on July 24-26 to discuss the sharing of water supplies. According to Asbjörn Mathisen, Norway's deputy minister for overseas development, this is the first time that the three sides have met to discuss the question of water. The three sides reportedly agreed on a declaration, which is described as an important tool in future negotiations on sharing water.

Pointing in the direction such discussions should go, Jordanian Minister of State for Prime Ministerial Affairs Jawad Anani called for the construction of a Red Sea-Dead Sea canal, in a speech before the Washington Institute for Near East Policy on July 28. He said that Jordan favored the project as a way to promote joint economic development of Jordan and Israel. The speech was reported in the *Washington Times* on July 31.

Anani noted that Israeli Energy Minister Moshe Shahal has recently called for building a Mediterranean-Dead Sea canal, but that Jordan would prefer building the Red Sea-Dead Sea link first. "In Jordan, the Red-Dead is our priority," he said. The projects are complementary; many Jordanians and also Israelis claim that the Red-Dead project is technically preferable. Anani also called for using the canal to develop a huge desalination program for fresh water for



Left to right: King Hussein, President Clinton, and Prime Minister Rabin in the White House Oval Office on July 25, 1994. "After generations of hostility, blood, and tears and in the wake of years of pain and wars, His Majesty King Hussein and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin are determined to bring an end to bloodshed and sorrow."

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The *Washington Times* reported an Israeli estimate that a string of power plants could desalinate inflowing water from the Mediterranean, in the Med-Dead canal project, costing about \$1 billion. "Sited along a canal and powered by a minimum 800-megawatt generating capacity, the plants could produce up to 3.3 billion cubic feet of fresh water a year," the paper said.

Documentation

The following is the complete text of the declaration signed in Washington on July 25, 1994 by His Majesty King Hussein, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, and President William J. Clinton:

A. After generations of hostility, blood, and tears and in the wake of years of pain and wars, His Majesty King Hussein and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin are determined

to bring an end to bloodshed and sorrow. It is in this spirit that His Majesty King Hussein of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Mr. Yitzhak Rabin of Israel, met in Washington today at the invitation of President William J. Clinton of the United States of America. This initiative of President William J. Clinton constitutes an historic landmark in the United States' untiring efforts in promoting peace and stability in the Middle East. The personal involvement of the President has made it possible to realize agreement on the content of this historic declaration. The signing of this declaration bears testimony to the President's vision and devotion to the cause of peace.

B. In their meeting, His Majesty King Hussein and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin have jointly reaffirmed the five underlying principles of their understanding on an agreed common agenda designed to reach the goal of a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace between the Arab states and the Palestinians, with Israel.

1. Israel and Jordan aim at the achievement of just, lasting and comprehensive peace between Israel and its neighbors and at the conclusion of a treaty of peace between both countries.

2. The two countries will vigorously continue their ne-

gotiations to arrive at a state of peace, based on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 in all their aspects, and founded on freedom, equality, and justice.

3. Israel respects the present special role of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in Muslim holy shrines in Jerusalem. When negotiations on the permanent status will take place, Israel will give high priority to the Jordanian historic role in these shrines. In addition, the two sides have agreed to act together to promote interfaith relations among the three monotheistic religions.

4. The two countries recognize their right and obligation to live in peace with each other as well as with all states within secure and recognized boundaries. The two states affirmed their respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence of every state in the area.

5. The two countries desire to develop good neighborly relations of cooperation between them to ensure lasting security and to avoid threats and the use of force between them.

C. The long conflict between the two states is now coming to an end. In this spirit the state of belligerency between Israel and Jordan has been terminated.

D. Following this declaration and in keeping with the agreed common agenda, both countries will refrain from actions or activities by either side that may adversely affect the security of the other or may prejudice the final outcome of negotiations. Neither side will threaten the other by use of force, weapons, or any other means against each other, and both sides will thwart threats to security resulting from all kinds of terrorism.

E. His Majesty King Hussein and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin took note of the progress made in the bilateral negotiations within the Israel-Jordan track last week on the steps decided to implement the sub-agendas on borders, territorial matters, security, water, energy, environment and the Jordan Rift Valley.

In this framework, mindful of items of the agreed common agenda—borders and territorial matters—they noted that the boundary sub-commission has reached agreement in July 1994 in fulfillment of part of the role entrusted to it in the sub-agenda. They also noted that the sub-commission for water, environment, and energy agreed to mutually recognize, as the role of their negotiations, the rightful allocations of the two sides in Jordan River and Yarmouk River waters and to fully respect and comply with the negotiated rightful allocations, in accordance with agreed acceptable principles with mutually acceptable quality.

Similarly, His Majesty King Hussein and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin expressed their deep satisfaction and pride in the work of the trilateral commission in its meeting held in Jordan on Wednesday, July 20th, 1994, hosted by the Jordanian prime minister, Dr. Abdessalam al-Majalim, and attended by Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres. They voiced their pleasure at

the association and commitment of the United States in this endeavor.

F. His Majesty King Hussein and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin believe that steps must be taken both to overcome psychological barriers and to break with the legacy of war. By working with optimism toward the dividends of peace for all the people in the region, Israel and Jordan are determined to shoulder their responsibilities toward the human dimension of peacemaking. They recognize imbalances and disparities are a root cause of extremism which thrives on poverty and unemployment and the degradation of human dignity. In this spirit, His Majesty King Hussein and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin have today approved a series of steps to symbolize the new era which is now at hand.

1. Direct telephone links will be opened between Israel and Jordan.

2. The electricity grids of Israel and Jordan will be linked as part of a regional concept.

3. Two new border crossings will be opened between Israel and Jordan—one at the southern tip Aqaba-Eilat and the other at a mutually agreed point in the north.

4. In principle, free access will be given to third-country tourists traveling between Israel and Jordan.

5. Negotiations will be accelerated on opening an international air corridor between both countries.

6. The police forces of Israel and Jordan will cooperate in combatting crime with emphasis on smuggling and particularly drug smuggling. The United States will be invited to participate in this joint endeavor.

7. Negotiations on economic matters will continue in order to prepare for future bilateral cooperation including the abolition of all economic boycotts.

All these steps are being implemented within the framework of regional infrastructural development plans and in conjunction with the Israel-Jordan bilaterals on boundaries, security, water, and related issues and without prejudice to the final outcome of the negotiations on the items included in the Agreed Common Agenda between Israel and Jordan.

G. His Majesty King Hussein and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin have agreed to meet periodically or whenever they feel necessary to review the progress of the negotiations and express their firm intention to shepherd and direct the process in its entirety.

H. In conclusion, His Majesty King Hussein and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin wish to express once again their profound thanks and appreciation to President William J. Clinton and his administration for their untiring efforts in furthering the cause of peace, justice, and prosperity for all the peoples of the region. They wish to thank the President personally for his warm welcome and hospitality. In recognition of their appreciation to the President, His Majesty King Hussein and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin have asked President William J. Clinton to sign this document as a witness and as a host to their meeting.