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Foreign Policy and Diplomatic Planning History between Israel and Jordan

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Abstract:

The relationship between Israel and the kingdom of Jordan had extended the time of the peace agreement. In fact, informal relationships between the Israeli government and the Hashemite dynasty was unique. This unique informal relationship between the two sides had created the ground for the possibility to connect people of two different nations. A significant element that played a great role in designing the agreements between the Jordanian and the Israelis was the Palestinian conflict with Israel. This paper is divided into five main sections- each section contains subsections that related to the main point. This article starts with an introduction that describes how informal relations lead to formal relations between the two countries. The second section titled Defining the problem and Chosen topic follow historical and time sequence relationship development along with discussing the surrounding elements especially the Palestinians' connection. The third section called Situation estimate (spectrum of situations) shows why comparing to other countries in the Arab world, Jordanian relations with Israel is unique and that because of all political changes and wars, the Israeli occupation of the west bank and the signature of the peace process. The fourth part discusses the possible alternative of development include many aspects such as the security system and the entrance of a third party like the USA in the peace agreement. This section followed by operative analysis and recommendations of the authors

Keywords: Jordan Israeli relations, security, a peace agreement, Palestinians role, the triangle relation of the Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian authority, diplomatic planning history

1. Introduction

Diplomatic relationships between different countries are not related solely to peaceful relations; however, sometimes conflict relations could also be part of the international relation system. The relationship between Israel and Jordan is unique, for the fact that this relation did not only start before the peace process agreement was signed, but also through many years before. The uniqueness of such relationships lay within the non-formal relation that was between members of many Israeli's historical leaders and members of the Hashemite ruling family since the second decade of the last century. Such informal relations between the two sides had led to the diplomatic relationships that started with signing the agreement. There were secret agreements three decades before the peace agreement, even though that there is no total peace agreement; such secret agreements still exist, which prove the strategic cooperation between the two countries.¹

This informal relationship between the two sides had created the ground for the possibility of connecting people of two different nations. The peace agreement in 1994 was a reflection of such process. According to conventional wisdom, in most countries of the liberal world in general and Israel in particular that the peace agreement signed between Jordan and Israel was a positive step taken between the two sides, especially when Israel located in the Middle East a place which is considered a constant burning ground for war. In addition to the historical relationships mentioned above, one of the main reason that push the tire of peace a head was the personality of the last King Hussein who made history by signing the agreement before he passed away. ²On the one hand, some researchers may argue that Hussein was a great choice to sign the agreement with, particularly; he was to a certain extent a pro-western. On the other hand, others may see him as a king who lacks legitimacy for his throne in the eyes of the Palestinian majority in his country. The last argument have been the reason why the western world and Israel in general found themselves approving the existence of autocratic king ,who is neither a country or a people, thus in a way impairing not resolving the Palestinian issue.

It would be impossible to extend this paper on discussing the relationship between Israel and Jordan, without emphasizing the conflict with the Palestinians. The relationships between the two countries were always affected formally and informally in accordance with developments that took place through the years in the Israeli Palestinians conflict. Therefore, after this introduction this paper would try to shed alight about the triangle relationship between Jordanians,

¹ Yosi, Malmilian , historic relation between Israel and Jordan, The opinion newspaper, 16th of feb2015 <http://www.raialyom.com/?p=173407>

²Darren Muler ,Lion of Jordan; The Life of King Hussein in War and Peace, Middle Eastern Studies, 44:5, 822-826,Volume 44, Issue 5, 2008

and Israeli from one side and to the extent it is affected by the Palestinian case. The second part of this paper would defined the problem discussed with relating to the chosen topic, the third part will discuss Situation estimate or the spectrum of situations the fourth part Possible alternatives developments and process of both countries and the fifth and final section of this paper would discuss suggestion and recommendations

2. Defining the Problem and Chosen Topic

The reason of choosing this topic was due to the need of discussing the diplomatic relationships between Israel, and Jordan, a country that considered a part of a hostile nation against Israel for many decades. When Israel was first established even King Abdullah the First, who was the grandfather of the current king, was worried about the same threat to Israel "the Palestinians" Both the Zionist and the new king of Transjordan recognized by the British as an independence state, Both of them had both a common concern about having a neighboring Palestinian state hidden by the Mufti Amin Hussein family. Abdullah who had a historical aim in controlling Arab Palestine and thus he kept in contact with Jewish agency including the meeting he conducted in 1947 with Golda Meir when she was the acting head of Jewish agency's political department. The agreement between the two was that Abdullah capturing the Arab Palestine; in return he will not attack Jews or stand in the way of establishing a Jewish state. Another meeting was planned between the two, but it never took place Furthermore, because of so many tumults in Palestine Abdullah found he under tremendous pressure to fight the Jews even though he never wanted so. In other words, the Jordanian's kings never saw the Israelis as enemies since the establishment of the country.³

One main reason which might deepen the importance of such a case is the deep connection with the Palestinians case. Despite the fact that there were multiple channels of peace negotiations between Israel and many Arab countries since the Madrid convention, however there was an agreement between the Arab countries among them to coordinate a complete and a just peace with Israel. In order to completely define the situation one has to introduce the motives for the peace agreement.

- First: the secret Oslo agreement between Israel and the Palestinians, which made Jordan worry about losing one of its cards. In other words, Jordan was worried that the Palestinians case would be solved on Jordan's expense. One of Jordan's concerns was created when some of the Israeli politicians suggested that Jordan would be an alternative homeland for the Palestinians.
- Second: the stalled talks on the Syrian and the Lebanese track, and at the same time Jordan saw that time was not running in its favor, King Hussein was smart enough the risks that Jordan would face if he chose to sign the agreement when the Lebanese and Syrians were ready for it. There was a big possibility then Jordan would have lost everything.
- Third: economic, political and social effects for the first Gulf War, there was about 300 thousands workers who came back from the Gulf, in addition to debts beside the decrease of the outside help that Jordan was receiving.
- Fourth: American pressure, Jordan knew not having peace with Israel would deteriorate its relations with the United States the biggest ally of Israel.

It is important to mention that the Jordanians played a vital role in Madrid talks that started in 1993, after that was the signing of an agreement to end the hostility between the two countries in Washington before signing the final agreement in Wadi Arava in 1994.

The Israeli reflection was also noticed, since the Israeli society had divided between those who support the agreement and the hardliners, however both camps throw their differences a part and found a common ground to accept the agreement. Prime Minister Rabin at the time and his groups thought that isolated Palestinians would more easily come to terms once King Hussein openly allied with Israel, The Likud and His allies hoped that by resolving the Palestinians problem with Jordan, which is home to half the Palestinians people. They could avoid addressing the thorny question of Palestinians nationhood in the territories. Both sides of camps in Israel have seen that making an agreement with Jordan is essential therefore they rushed to ensure it.⁴

3. Situation Estimate (Spectrum of Situations)

One who reads the previous two sections of this paper might observe that it is almost impossible to understand the present circumstances without discussing the historical, geopolitical and strategic. The relationship between Israel and Jordan is unique compared to its relationship with other Arab world. The reason for this uniqueness is that no other Arab country had this kind of close relationship with Israel. As it was mentioned in the above sections that even before the signature of the peace agreement there was a common interest between the two countries. The peace agreement had strengthened these interests. If one wonders what are the common interests that make both countries strive toward the agreement, this can be connected to the historical geographical land escape of Israel homeland.

Since 1921 until now Jordan's authority was constant and the Hashemite dynasty ruled from then until now. Jordan is located between Israel and Iraq, and between Saudi Arabia and Syria, and in the heart of the Palestinian issue. Undermining the Jordanian regime was unwanted for both local and international players. Another important motive which played a vital role in forming the relationship between Israel and Jordan what some researchers might call the

³ Yoav Gelber, inside, BAR-ON, Mordechai ed. A Never Ending Conflict: A Guide to Israeli Military History. Westport, Connecticut, London: Praeger, 2004, pp.62-64.

⁴ Raphael Israeli, *The Israel Jordan agreement-a missed opportunity*, policy papers Aerial center 1998, pp1-3

strategic Pendulum. In other words, Jordan was located in the middle between Israel and Iraq, and if the relationship with one is tense, then it is more flexible with the other.

Jordan lost the west Bank in 1967; the king believed that unity of the west bank and the east bank of the Jordan River which is Jordan today is considered one entity. This changed in the 80s when the king clearly stated that the West bank which mostly Palestinians is a separate entity. Rapprochement between had strengthen more than any other time was when Jordanian's relation with Iraq had decrease mainly because of the Iraq lost the war with the United States. Because of this lost Iraq had become weak strategically and economically. Because of these developments in the beginning of the 1990s Jordan needed to have mutual agreements with Israel, these needs had strengthened more after the Oslo agreement with the Palestinians.⁵As it was mentioned before the peace agreement was a natural historical extension of the strong relationship between Hashemite rulers and Israeli leaders ,some researchers claim that the regional events that took place in the end of the eights alone were not the only reason that lead to sign the peace agreement. The peace agreement goal was not only for the sake of ending hostility between the countries, but also to create a political, economic and strategic alliance that would in essence creates a new regional frame in the Arab world to change the national frame. More importantly by signing the agreement Jordan had prevented the risk of having Jordan as and to be an alternative home land and Jordan stays as independent political entity to itself. ⁶

4. Possible Alternatives Developments

In the end of the day when it comes to the situation between Jordan and Israel cooperation between the two countries tend toward being a necessity. According to an article that Shimon pirez wrote about an economical conference that took placed in Jordan, he claims that Jordanian has not waited for us. After they required economical help from the United States, many high techs companies like Cisco and Hp already were in were active in the kingdom. To the credit of the Jordanians they are taking care of education, an exchange place between both countries.

In the first few years after the signing of the peace agreement before building the cooperative projects between the two countries, the Jordanian so that the Israelis do not fulfill their promises. The former president of Israel connect this failure of misunderstanding not due to the fact that the Israeli refuse to do what they promise, but there are many elements that may prevent them from accomplishing it immediately. For example, it is possible to finish a certain project within two years, while in Israel it may take up to seven or eight years. When both countries start a cooperative project, the Jordanians implement the needed investment. They do not understand what may be the reason for such project take such a long time.

On the other hand, in Israel had to pass first planning committees. Many challenges from different organization like those who deal with the natural resources, their claim that by building industries would lead to disappearance of the flying birds in the area. In addition to the nature organization, the Israelis side has a many skeptic's members toward any new idea that is discussed. According to the former president, despite the fact that the new technological revolution,a peak skepticism still found.⁷

In his words Shimon Pirez claims that "we have to cooperate between each other's". One of the most urgent projects that need to be worked on is the project of the Dead Sea that is decreasing by the minute. On this issue not only the Jordanians and the Israeli should help each other's on these issues, but also the Palestinians who have a gate to the Dead Sea.

By waiting to receive the total cost of the project which may reach at least four billion dollars is not going to help. Israel and Jordan can start with the first million. Waiting to receive the total amount and not starting the steps until receiving it is mainly the old way. The only way to receive the finance is to cooperate with each other's on a common purpose. Each of the two countries should take steps to have common goals, and not each side would measure it individually according to national measurements may face torments and lack of success. ⁸

The issue of water still plays a sensitive role in forming the relationship between the two countries, that is due to fact that part of the water comes through the River of Alyarmouk that is coming from the Syrian side, this caused Jordan to worry about her national security for years. The peace agreement with Israel had improved enormously the economic situation in Jordan. As it was mentioned before Oslo talks in the beginning of the 90s, which called for Palestinian's autonomy had pushed the Jordanian to public talks with Israel. Since 1994 peace had took place between the two countries. Not once the king had asked to disconnect the relationship, criticize Israel in the international arena and even wanted to bring back the ambassador. With that Israel still have many common interests:

4.1. Natural Resources

The common limits that pass through the African fragment include in it the Aqaba Gulf, and the Dead Sea. None of the sides can take advantage of the natural resources without affecting its partners to the boarder. If the political relation is damage, then the natural resources would be affected negatively.

4.2. Economic Interests

Also, these kinds of interests are connected to geographical and geological data. Use the Israel who is richer than Jordan can use the inexpensive Jordanian work force especially when building textile factories. In addition, there should be

⁵אשר סר, המטוטלת האסטרטגית בתוך שמעון שמיר(עורך) יחסי ישראל ירדן, פרויקטים, כלכלה, עסקים 2004, עמ' 11-14

⁶ Khaled Abd Alrazeq, Israeli Jordanian Relationships, in light of the peace agreement, Amman 1999, pp5-7

⁷Shimon Perez, necessity of cooperation's, inside Shimon Shamir, (Editor) Israeli, Jordanian relations, Business economic project page 30-33 2004 Perez, ibid⁸

a use of the shared boarder of the limit. Such steps of shared economical interest had led to lift up the economy in Jordan and part of the Israeli businesspersons transfer their factory from Israel to the kingdom. The extent of trade between the two countries can reach hundreds of million dollars a year. The interesting thing is the trade that cannot reach the amount of trade between Israel and the European countries, still because of the political reason in the Middle East contain a lot of importance.

Transport relationships can clearly be noticed because Jordanians are using the Israeli seaports, directing the trucks toward Haifa and Ashdod ports. They are even using the Israeli labeling trade to market their products to the west. In addition, the Jordanians allowed using Israeli aviation limits. Israel on the other hand can use the Aqaba port when Ilat port is full. Such a trade may help since the eastern boarders Iraq and Saudi are closed in the Israeli face.

Because of the peace agreement between the two countries, Tourism have been improved. Thousands of Israeli tourists visit Jordan each year. Many Israeli Arabs study there. In addition, many Muslim pilgrims to Mecca in Saudi Arabia have to go through Jordan and use the Jordanian travel document instead of the Israeli passport because there is no diplomatic relationship with Saudi Arabia.⁹

4.3. Security and Geopolitical Interest

Israel sees in the Hashemite kingdom as septum country that defend her. Beyond any doubt Israel is interested in the Hashemite dynasty because if the Hashemite dynasty leaves the throne it means hostile power like Palestinians and the Islamic brotherhood may reach power. Therefore, Israel is interested in having a strong Jordanian army that would keep security in Jordan and its weapon are not directed toward Israel. In addition, there is a security and intelligence cooperation between the two countries. Even though it is not publicly mentioned, Israel had secret agreements and give minor land in the Arava to Jordan in order to have valid boarders that useful for this purpose.

4.4. Operative analysis

The triangle relation of the Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian authority is very complex. For the simple reason, that such relationships contain complex issues that have not been solved. One of the risks that Israel may face is giving the Palestinians the Jordanian valley, a step that might be bad to the country security. Therefore, the voices in the country are going up not to give it back, and keep the shared border with Jordan in this area.

Jordan does not view Israel as a threat to her, knowing that Israel interested in keeping Jordan in a solid ground, yet the Palestinian element threaten the relationship between Jordan and Israel. Every solution with the Palestinians creates an obligation to accordance between them. This kind of understanding concerning different issues: the final limits between the countries, shared security and intelligence, Water settlement, Regional developments in addition the ecological issues, and the old city of Jerusalem seen by Jordanian as its responsibility.

What was discussed above could be the positive side of the token; however, risks may accompany the agreement. In a way, sometimes such agreement can become a trap. Some researchers may see that the Israel's concession to Jordan in land and water, and allowance in terms of fund-raising and lip service for practically nothing. This could be caused by the fact that the calculus of the Israeli government has been to shift the center of gravity from unreliable and unpredictable Arafat to predictable Arafat to Moderate and pro-western Hussein, in order to dwarf the Palestinians issue, While the right wing opposition has sustained Hussein in order to Eliminate Arafat. Both were wrong and the king has outsmarted them both.

The King understood the problem of legitimacy in the eyes of his Palestinian majority which remember him as the descendent of the Hashemite house whose roots are in Hijaz, Saudi Arabia, king Hussein the father and king Abdullah the second tried always to form the Jordanian identity, especially when the total support is received by the Bedouin minorities, and more difficult to get supporters who came from the west side of the Jordanian river in 1967. It is vital to mention that when Israeli government lent to Hussein the legitimacy he needed for his rule, it fell into a trap of recognizing it as Jordan as if Hussein and his house were a people or a country and not merely disposable regime. Because of the fact that the Palestinian majority could not affect the change of the kingdom, the entire Palestinian burden now rest on the Israel's shoulder out of her own choice in a way this the problem become insoluble.¹⁰

5. Recommendation of the Preferable Choice of Policy

As it was mentioned in the previous pages Jordan importance, maybe connected to many elements, one of the most important one is the economical one, using the fact that Jordan despite being found between Israel, and a place of fire burning like Iraq and Syria. By continuing the economic reforms could keep the stability of both Jordan and Israel. Three main elements that would be recommended in the economic side, one is the water by building a tunnel that might not only serve the Israel and the Jordanian but also the Palestinians, this kind channel would be the solution to fight the water scarce. Electricity would be another place for cooperation, particularly when 10% of Israel electricity has to come from outside sources.¹¹

Next to the economic issue most importantly strategic and elements sharing should continue to exist between the two countries, in fighting Islamic fanaticism, and terrorism. Jordan can play very interesting rule in facing the Iranian

9Anton, Barkovitch and Arnon, Sofer, Jordan (Hashemite Kingdom) foreign policy on brink of crisis, Haifa University publishing 2014, pp 28-34

10Raphaell Israeli, The Israel Jordan agreement-a missed opportunity, pp8-12

20-24 עמ' 2004, פרויקטים, כלכלה, עסקים, 2004, יחסי ישראל ירדן, שמעון שמיר (עורך), Moshie Shahal Succeeding, in micro failing, inside Shimon Shamir, editor, Israeli Jordan relations, Business, economic projects, 2004, pp 20-24 (Hebrew)

encouragement of terrorisms and the Palestinian's terrorisms especially when it has good relation with all conflict sides. The existence policy of keeping Jordan a vital player is great one, it should not be change. Keeping a safe Jordan will help keep quiet in our area.

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