

# Decision-Making for Jordan's Foreign Policy

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## Abstract:

*This study aims to address the political decision-making in Jordan. The study shows that Jordan is like the rest of the Arab countries, Jordan is characterized by political stability. There have not been many changes in the structure of the Jordanian political system and the mechanism of political decision-making in foreign policy, since the declaration of the independence of the Kingdom of Jordan. The power remained concentrated in the hands of the King even after King Abdulla II inherited King Hussein and came to power in 1999, during whose reign the state witnessed a space of freedom and political and economic stability, which was reflected in the various joints of the state and returned to its prosperity and stability. The internal and external determinants of the Kingdom's foreign policy such as, the number of residents and the social structure, in addition to the institutions of foreign policy allow the Jordan's decision-maker to interact with a stable system in this regard. The study shows that Jordan has had all the elements enabling it to build a nation-state coherent possessed of the elements of integration and harmony, making it operate efficiently and effectively in order to achieve the goals that won the acceptance of the Kingdom and its consensus.*

## Introduction:

This chapter is divided into three main parts. Part one traces the determinants of the Jordanian foreign policy. Part two discusses the institutions involved in making the Jordanian foreign policy. Part three analyzes the process of decision-making in foreign policies with regard to the interests of Jordan.

The determinants of the Jordanian foreign policy are divided into internal and external determinants. The internal determinants include the geographical location which exposes and connects Jordan heavily to political, economic, demographic, and security events, in surrounding countries. The population determinants might also put decision makers in Jordan under pressure to choose the most appropriate alternative given the current conditions. Military power is another determinant that will be addressed, to show its effect on the Jordanian external policy. Other internal determinants affecting foreign policy decisions are: natural resources, social structure, public opinion, political system, and the personalities of leaders. The external determinants

affecting the Jordanian foreign policy include international power structure, international organizations, reaction of other states, world public opinion, and alliances and treaties (bilateral and multilateral). These factors will be discussed to reveal their connection to Jordan's foreign affairs policy.

The second part of this chapter addresses the institutions that are involved in foreign policy making in Jordan. The structure of the Jordanian political system determines the institutions that are authorized to make decisions regarding, and implementing the foreign policy. These institutions include the King of Jordan, the Royal Court, Cabinet, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, the Legislative authority, and the Security Institution.

The third part of this explains the process decision-making for Jordanian foreign policies. This part highlights the fundamental principles and the objectives of the Jordanian foreign policy. Then, it tackles the mechanism of the Jordanian foreign policy decisions and what factors are taken into consideration regarding political decisions.

The chapter will end with a conclusion summing up the whole discussion.

## **Determinants of Jordanian Foreign Policy**

### **The Internal Determinants**

#### **1. Geographical Location:**

There is consensus among political science experts on the importance of geographical space as a variable affecting the political system, and hence its role cannot be ignored by the decision makers while developing any foreign strategy. Since the geographical location of any country is fixed, it is the primary characteristic of the geographic environment that affects the level of effectiveness of any foreign policy, as opposed to other conditions that might be changed at will.<sup>1</sup> An example is the Suez Canal, which enriched its surrounding regions, while other regions lost their prominence.

In case of Jordan, its geographical location is important as it links Syria, Turkey, Palestine, and Lebanon with the Arab Gulf countries mainly Saudi Arabia. It also links Iraq in the Levant with North Africa. Jordan's northern part is densely populated, and the population keeps drifting into the Syrian territories, on account of its northern borders with Syria, which extend to about 375 kilometers.<sup>2</sup> The area is interconnected demographically through tribal bonds and shared historical and cultural heritage.

Jordan is a landlocked country, surrounded by four regional countries, each of which has a source of power greater than Jordan. In the north there is Syria, in the east Iraq and Saudi Arabia, the Gulf of Aqaba in the south and Israel including Palestine (occupied) on the western borders. The marine borders are just in the short coast Gulf of Aqaba and the Dead Sea, which is a salty lake on the borders of Israel and Palestine.<sup>3</sup> This geographical location forces Jordan to build positive relations with neighboring countries to facilitate marine access to international waters.

Thus, the geopolitical factor plays an important role in the formulation of Jordan's foreign policy regarding international trade with surrounding countries. Transit trade is a crucial support for Jordan's economy. Jordan's location put it in the heart of Arab–Israeli conflict, wherein it bore the burdens and consequences of Israel's occupation of Palestine, more than any other Arab country. The Palestinian question became of high interest for Jordan politically, demographically, economically, and military, at the internal and external levels, and cannot be isolated from the public matters of Jordan.<sup>4</sup>

The sensitivity of the Jordanian foreign policy not only comes from its influence on the strategic balance, but also because Jordan's location holds contradictions that simultaneously create stability and deprivation for the country. The shortage of natural resources in Jordan is a challenge that limits its ability to be stable without the support of external factors or without a fixed continuous policy to maintain associations with all strong surrounding countries in the area, namely Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Israel.<sup>5</sup> This reality has forced Jordan to follow a policy that is built on balance and on strong alliances (the United Kingdom & the United States of America), to not be threatened by external powers in the region.

Thus, the geographical location of Jordan highly influences its foreign policy, to maintain security through committing to the unipolar policy put forth by the US. The Jordanian foreign policy goes along with the American policy in the region on account of its strategic alliances.

Jordan's geographical location forces its decision-makers to be considerate of the following factors:

1. The geographical location of Jordan forms an entrance into the Mediterranean Sea.
2. The area is landlocked with limited access to territorial and international waters.
3. The existence of ruins, and holy and sacred places.
4. The proximity of Jordan to Palestine, and being surrounded by six countries.
5. Jordan does not have strategic depth.

## **2. Population:**

Population is an important factor in determining the strength and status of the state. The state's population provides a human base for economic growth and building military power, especially if natural resources are provided in addition to other capabilities.<sup>6</sup> The population size might not mean much when it comes to the external policy of the state, unless it is connected to other factors. Anthropology scientists say that the best size of population for any country is when a balance is achieved between its population and existing natural resources.<sup>7</sup>

In the year 2000, the population of Jordan was 5 million, which rose to 9 million in 2016. This growth, however, did not shift Jordan from weakness to power because of other economic and

regional factors.<sup>8</sup> The reason for this population escalation was that after the American invasion of Iraq in 2003, an estimated 200,000 Iraqis moved to Jordan, comprising approximately 4-5% of Jordan's total population. Jordanian officials initially viewed this as a security and economic issue and not a humanitarian concern. They feared that an emphasis on the crisis narrative would lead to Iraqis becoming like the millions of Palestinian refugees already in Jordan. For this reason, the Government of Jordan argued that the displaced Iraqis were not refugees, but "guests" who would return to Iraq.<sup>9</sup>

The population structure of Jordan affected its political position toward various issues locally, regionally, and internationally. During the second gulf crisis, the political discourse focused on national unity on the interior front, and King Hussein used to repeat the phrase "Jordanians from all origins".<sup>10</sup> This philosophy in the political discourse frequently surfaced in all major crises that Jordan went through. The Jordanian society is described as an ideal model for religious pluralism since the time of its establishment; it boasts of multi-ethnicity and a diversity of religions, controlled by consistency, interspersed with peaceful coexistence and homogeneous community.<sup>11</sup>

### **3. Social Structure:**

The social structure of Jordan exercises clear influence on its foreign policy. Originally, before 1948, the Jordanian society was a Bedouin society; the tribalism still dominates a large portion of the Jordanian society in rural and urban areas where tribes are an important tribute to the Jordanian official institutions.

After 1948 war, this sociocultural structure was affected by the huge number of Palestinians who settled in villages, town, and cities. Many of them were literate and well educated. The simple society and economy of the native Trans-Jordanians managed to assimilate them. Later on, the second wave of Palestinian refugees came after the 1967 war. By the 1970s, Palestinians had established a cultural dominance over the East Bank, and by the 1980s, Palestinians had extended considerable cultural and economic influence on the country.<sup>12</sup>

As a result of demographic changes in Jordan, the refugees have become part of Jordanian policy. Since the end of 2012, hundreds of thousands of Syrians have entered into Jordan in a relatively short period of time. Upon showing their passports, refugees were registered and could stay six months without a visa. In order to secure the basic needs of the Syrians, Jordan has borne enormous burdens as these people need water as well as medical care.

### **4. Public Opinion**

Public opinion is formed through relative consensus on pressing issues that concern a broad social group. Usually, public opinion is stimulated by the press; it is the result of the cumulative views of citizens on a certain subject to achieve goals that extend to the future. The desired solutions necessarily lead to a unified action and a crucial decision that stems from the citizens' awareness of past experiences and lessons learned.<sup>13</sup>

The Jordanian public opinion has been united on most issues on the ground, most important of which is the emphasis on democratic approach as a system of life on the basis of free parliamentary elections. Jordan witnesses the contribution and existence of a legislative institution that plays an important role in broadening participation in decision-making at internal and external levels. The Jordanians also agree on a comprehensive reform process as the only gateway to a safe future for the country,<sup>14,15</sup> beginning with transferring citizens to a modern society, to achieving equal opportunities and social justice in order to consolidate social security that will bring stability in its different dimensions for withstanding the demands of stressful life. The external pressures on Jordan have influenced the conviction and senses of the Jordanian people. The Jordanians have repeatedly reconsidered their positions in order to attain the means to gain sufficient flexibility, to overcome the difficulties arising from the Arab-Israeli conflict, the American policy, and other crises that resulted in security, economic, and demographic consequences.<sup>16</sup>

### **5. Economy:**

Economic resources comprise of human and non-human resources (including natural resources), which provide the base for economic development of a state. Being abundant in economic resources helps the state to establish stronger external relations that enable it to acquire suitable arm systems. On the contrary, a shortage of resources may lead to wars. This basic fact has been proven many times since the beginning of the industrial revolution and it explains the presence of American forces in the Arab Gulf, to ensure constant flow of oil.

Jordan has a shortage of natural resources which translates into an insecure future for the economy, hence Jordan's weak position in the field of economic competition and exchanged economic interests in the open international market. Although, Jordan has natural resources such as potash, phosphate, and limited amounts of natural gas, the agricultural production meets below 15% of Jordan's food need.<sup>17</sup>

The second gulf war resulted in the greatest risk for the Jordanian decision makers because of Jordan's supporting position on Iraq. During that time, Iraq was almost the only country that provided Jordan with economic assistance, including oil at very low prices, and in return, Iraq was importing goods from Jordan.<sup>18</sup>

Jordan's weak economy limited its ability to stay unbiased to either the Western or Eastern blocks. The economic assistance to Jordan was connected directly to promote political positions against the Soviet Union in the 1960s. Economic assistance was used to pressurize the Jordanian government in this same direction in 1975, when Jordan decided to initiate relations with the Soviet Union.<sup>19</sup> The United States cut part of its economic assistance to Jordan and pressed to it follow the American policy regarding solving the Arab-Israeli conflict in the region.

The Jordanian decision makers recognized the dire economic situation that Jordan was in because of a shortage of natural resources. So when the value of the Jordanian Dinar dropped down, the Jordanian leadership took important economic and political decisions. As a result, the decision was made to follow economic reform policies that supported the political reforms.<sup>20</sup> The

clearest policy was the privatization policy and increasing American assistance, after signing the peace agreement with Israel. In addition to this, Jordan focused on attracting foreign investment in technology, building industrial cities and free zones, and drawing educational plans to provide the local market with trained and skilled cadres, among other such measures. However, even all of the aforementioned efforts could not help it gain independence of political decisions. By 2016, the public debt in Jordan had become huge and reached USD 26.5 billion,<sup>21</sup> and the payback dissolved all its plans to achieve real development.

### **6. Natural Resources:**

The possession of natural resources plays a major role in designing the foreign policy of any country, as availability of natural resources increases the ability to establish a strong economy and empowers the country in front of other countries. The kingdom's mineral resources have been the main source of gross production as well as of the total value added in the economy. These resources constitute an important part of the exports of Jordan.<sup>22</sup>

The report of Jordan's Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources in 2016 shows the distribution of mineral resources in Jordan as follows:<sup>23</sup>

### **7. Military Power:**

Military power refers to the resources and technologies that enable a state to be prepared for an armed conflict reaching comprehensive war, in case such a situation arises. This preparation includes forming armies, and training and equipping them with suitable weapons. Experts believe that possessing military power may encourage a state to use it or to threaten to use it. It could also be used as a tool to deter other states.<sup>24</sup> Anthropologists found in their studies of states that possession of military machines will encourage states to use power while dealing with others.

Jordan is surrounded by countries much stronger than itself in military power and economy as well as demographically, and the entire region is filled with ideological conflict and competition. Moreover, Jordan is located next to Palestine which is under Israeli occupation. All these factors put Jordan's security under threat.<sup>25</sup> The Jordanian leadership having recognized this weakness, worked hard to overcome this situation by forming a strong army and special security agencies. The Jordanian leadership followed the policy of empowering the interior front, with the help of western allies- Britain and the United States.

Since Jordan's military capabilities were largely dependent on foreign aid and external funding,<sup>26</sup> it led to further restrictions on Jordan's foreign policy, the effectiveness of its military capability, and the reduction of its defense alternatives.

In the shadow of variables and factors which resulted from the New World Order, Jordan managed to secure its national stability. The Jordanian military powers recognized that Jordan will not be able to stand any external invasion, which exerted pressure on the political decision

makers. The Jordanian leadership, however, was able to choose an alternative that managed to achieve balance in the face of threats from Israel and Iraq.<sup>27</sup>

## **8. The Political System:**

The Jordanian constitution of 1952 defines the nature of regime in Jordan as a constitutional monarchy, with a parliamentary system based on two councils representing the nation. The first is the Council of Representatives formed as a result of general elections according to constituencies, and divided on the basis of demography, representation of minorities, and the quota system for women (according to the 2003 amended electoral law). The second is the Senate, whose members are appointed by the King, with no more than half the members of the Council of Representatives. The Council of Nation is the legislative authority, responsible for issuing, amending, and repealing laws, monitoring the performance of the government, and approving the state budget. The will of the King to appoint a Prime minister is constitutionally accompanied by the given trust of the Parliament.<sup>28</sup>

## **The External Determinants**

Several external factors influence the Jordanian foreign policy. These are:

### **1. The International Order:**

The changes in the form and nature of the international public order affect the foreign policy of Jordan as one of the constituent units of this system. Jordan being a small country, has less ability to maneuver abroad, join a particular alliance, or withdraw from an organization.

The changes in the current Arab regional order and the international order posed an obvious challenge to the Arab world, including Jordan. The changes greatly influenced its intellectual, political, and social structure, as well as its security and integrity. Recent developments point to an important fact: the Arab reality is no longer limited to the conditions of the Arab region alone, or to the Middle East, but extends to other regions too. The Arab regional system is very sensitive to new variables, in terms of economy and geography, but on account of various international factors, it could greatly affect the global balance of power.

The structure of the international system, the current world order with all its organizations, has become an important factor influencing the Jordanian foreign policy and the extent of its implementation.

### **2. International Organizations:**

Jordan's participation in a large number of international organizations further increases the country's responsibility. The organizations are:<sup>29</sup> ABEDA, AFESD, AMF, CAEU, CD, CICA, EBRD, FAO, G-11, G-77, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICC (national committees), ICCT, ICRM, IDA,

IDB, IFAD, IFC, IFRCs, ILO, IMF, IMO, IMSO, Interpol, IOC, IOM, IPU, ISO, ITSO, ITU, ITUC (NGOs), LAS, MIGA, MINUSTAH, MINUSMA, MONUSCO, NAM, OIC, OPCW, OSCE (partner), PCA, UN, UN Security Council (temporary), UNAMID, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNMIL, UNMISS, UNOCI, UNRWA, UNWTO, UPU, WCO, WFTU (NGOs), WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO. These 62 organizations, especially the United Nations, human rights organizations, and civil society organizations, impose certain policy directives on Jordan, as part of the country's obligations to these organizations; these directives encompass not only policies oriented to the external environment but also internal policies. The contemporary economic and military blocks also affect foreign policy decision-making in Jordan. Amidst all this, the big concern is how to gain economic prosperity for Jordan without dragging the kingdom into predicted consequences.

### **3. World Public Opinion:**

Along with the internal public opinion, it is also very important to take into consideration the world public opinion as it shows the way the other states think. The international and worldwide values cannot be denied or neglected by any country, unless it is totally out of the international community and functioning in complete solitude, and Jordan, being at center of an unstable region, is definitely not one. With the advent of new technologies, especially social media channels, every major issue now spreads all over the world in a few minutes. The Jordanian government recognizes that the more extreme it is in its opinion, the more isolated it would be, and hence internal public opinion is sometimes suppressed in favor of the world public opinion.

### **4. The Jordanian Diplomatic Relations:**

Jordan has established diplomatic relations with 53 countries all over the world. The importance of each relation depends on the basis the interdependence.<sup>30</sup> The basis of its relations with any country depends on the mutual concerns of Jordan and the other country, and could be political, economic, or cultural. In fact, such bases can be found in every bilateral relation. To act independently is risky, and in each relationship while the Jordanian government works through fundamental principles to achieve its own external objectives, the other state does the same for its own prosperity.

### **5. Alliances and Treaties (Bilateral and Multilateral):**

Strategic alliances are an important tool in implementing foreign policies. Alliances were mandatory during the Cold War 1945-90, wherein both the United States of America and the Soviet Union competed against each other to gain more allies. These alliances impacted the foreign policies of all newly independent countries. Jordan was one of them and chose the Western block, still maintaining bilateral relations with USA.<sup>31</sup>

As any other country, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan adopted the policy of forming alliances and treaties with other countries, as part of which Jordan has signed agreements that have an important impact on Jordan's foreign policies. At an economic level, many bilateral and multilateral agreements were signed to achieve economic development in Jordan, the most important being the European-Jordanian partnership and the World Trade Organization. Politically, the alliance with USA is the most important to the Jordanian leadership. Jordan and Israel have also had official relations since 1994, when Jordan signed a non-hostility agreement with Israel (the Washington Declaration) on 25 July, followed by the signing of a historic peace treaty between Jordan and Israel on 26 October.

All the determinants of the Jordanian foreign policy are inter-related and interdependent, and none of these act independently. They act in combination to affect the decision-making and implementation of foreign policy in Jordan.

### **The Executive Authority:**

The executive authority in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has two arms: the King, and the Cabinet.

#### **1. The King:**

Under the Constitution, the King exercises his authority through the ministers, and is protected and immune from consequence or responsibility. His decisions are ultimate and no any Prime minister can compete against or gain his authority.<sup>32</sup>

#### **2. The Cabinet:**

The Cabinet consists of the Prime Minister and his ministerial team, and they are represented in their entirety. According to article 35 of the Constitution, it is the King who appoints the Prime Minister, dismisses him, and accepts his resignation, and also appoints ministers, dismisses them, and accepts their resignations, on the basis of the recommendation of the Prime Minister.<sup>33</sup>

#### **3. The Legislative Authority (The Parliament)**

The Parliament is the second pillar of the Jordanian political system. The legislative authority rests in the hands of the King who reserves the right to ratify issued laws by the Parliament after

been suggested by the government. The Parliament, which is called the Council of the Nation, consists of the Senate and the Council of Representatives, each of which has specific powers and duties set by the Constitution, for the administration of the country's affairs.

#### **A. The Senate:**

The Senate consists of no more than half the number of members in the Council of Representatives. The order to appoint this Council comes directly from the King every four years, signed by the Prime Minister and the Minister of the Internal Affairs.

#### **B. The Council of Representatives:**

The Council of Representatives consists of members elected for a four-year term by the people in accordance with the Election Law.<sup>34</sup>

#### **4. The Judiciary Authority:**

The third pillar of the political system in Jordan, the Judiciary Authority is regarded by the Constitution as an independent authority with no authority other than the law. The judges are independent persons appointed by Royal Decree in accordance with the provisions of the relevant laws.<sup>35</sup>

#### **Leadership and the Personalities of Leaders:**

Since Foreign Policy is made and implemented by leaders of the country, the values, experiences, talents and personalities, ideas, attitudes, knowledge, skill orientations, and the world-view of the decision-makers significantly influence the various characteristics of foreign policy. The differences among decision makers also impact formulation and implementation of foreign policy.<sup>36</sup>

As for Jordan, the real power rests in the hands of the King who heads the three authorities. The King is the internal and external political decision maker, based on absolute constitutional powers. The King's constitutional rights make him superior to any law. The role of the legislature is limited to providing advice to the executive authority and to approving decisions taken in advance, in addition to the fact that its authority is not mandatory.<sup>37</sup> The legislative authority is further marginalized by the Senate appointed by the King, who always influence the Council of Representatives elected by the people; the Council of Representatives cannot object or approve any legislation or law without a clear indication from the Senate. This increases the hegemony of the executive authority.

## **Jordanian Foreign Policy Institutions:**

While the King sits on the top of the pyramid of foreign policymaking and takes all the important decisions, there are other institutions play a supporting, administrative role. Although these institutions do not take any decision, they provide consultancy. The King receives the world leaders and conducts external visits to present the Jordanian point of view in the international arena. On the other hand, the other institutions help to formulate and implement foreign policy decisions.

### **1. The King of Jordan:**

Foreign policy making in Jordan is considered ‘semi dominant’, as one person possesses the authority of making choices, while others in the government play a supporting role, marginalizing the role of opposition. Per the 1952 Constitution, the King of Jordan is the head of the executive, legislative, and judiciary authorities, wherein he implements his wills through the ministers’ council responsible for administering all of the country’s internal and external affairs.<sup>38</sup> The supremacy of the King is confronted with many economic, political, and social development challenges, which he has to deal with.<sup>39</sup>

The King ratifies and validates and declares all the laws, and the orders to implement them. The King is the high leader of the armed forces with all of its branches; only he has the authority to declare wars and contract peace treaties. Based on his own discretion, the King might also send special envoys from outside the governmental institutions.

King Abdullah II has been in charge since 7 February 1999, and the constitution grants him all rights and duties of the King. He takes foreign policy related decisions by himself, and supervises several issues through his repeated formal visits to various states and international organizations.<sup>40</sup>

### **2. The Royal Court:**

The royal court is the institution closest to the king, and there is no constitutional act that clarifies its authority or defines its responsibilities. The role of the royal court is to discharge consultation duties. The head of the royal court is the link between the King and the Prime Minister, and accompanies the King on all of his internal and external visits, being is well aware of the King’s attitudes and opinions on various issues. The royal court consisting of the chairman and a number of consultants,<sup>41</sup> is considered the closest to the King in the decision-making process, because of the nature of its daily work with the King. The royal courts also includes the Crown Prince, who practices his authority in the King’s absence or in case any other constitutional conditions deprive the King from exercising his authority. Although the Crown

Prince does not hold an official position, he can formulate and influence the foreign policy, on orders from the King.

### **3. Cabinet of Jordan:**

The Cabinet in Jordan consists of the Prime Minister and a number of the ministers as needed for public interest. The Prime Minister is selected assigned directly by the King on the basis of a number of considerations and qualifications that make him able to plan the general policy for ministers. The Prime Minister selects the other ministers and finally, the King approves the selected ministerial formation.

The cabinet is responsible for the management of internal and external issues, except issues which are entrusted by the constitution to another body.<sup>42</sup> The role of the Prime minister in the external decision making process is predetermined and is to provide non-binding advice to the King. The role of the cabinet in directing and implementing foreign policy is derived from the constitution. The constitution gives the cabinet, the authority and responsibility to administer all internal and external affairs. The Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs are in charge of the external affairs of Jordan. Both of them participate in conferences and other external issues, beside the King. The Prime Minister receives the heads of diplomatic missions in Jordan, if necessary.<sup>43</sup>

The authorities of the Prime Minister have undergone drastic changes during the history of Jordan. In the fifties, the Prime Minister was given a wide range of authority in directing the foreign policy. However, the King used his authority over the government, formed a new government, dissolved the Parliament, and called for new parliamentary elections, keen to the Prime Minister's role in foreign policy limited to giving non-binding consultations to the King.

### **4. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates:**

In 2013, the name of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was changed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates is an executive body of the foreign policy of the state,<sup>44</sup> and is considered the window through which Jordan can look to the world. It works on gathering information through embassies, consulates and attaché offices, and provides this information to the state's institutions according to the disciplines.

Headed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the main duty of the staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates is to strengthen relations with the world. The Jordanian diplomatic missions are charged with pursuing the interests of its citizens and of course the interests of the government. The role of the Minister of Foreign Affairs in directing and implementing foreign policy is limited to giving non-binding consultations to the Prime Minister and the King.<sup>45</sup>

### **5. The Legislative Authority:**

The articles of the Jordanian constitution stipulate that the legislative authority has some specialty in foreign affairs such as ratifying the agreements that affect the public and private rights of the Jordanian citizens. The agreements would not be valid unless ratified by the parliament. Foreign policy is discussed with the foreign and international affairs committee in the Parliament, and these discussions form the basis for the non-binding recommendations to the government and the King on all issues related to the agreements and treaties that affect the homeland and its treasuries.<sup>46</sup>

The articles of the Constitution give the Parliament some authorities, such as the right to form a committee of external affairs that aims to supervise the work of the government, and to vote against the government on the recommendation of the external affairs committee. Still the King has greater authorities. As a matter of fact, the Parliament's authorities are determined by the royal will. Thus, its role in the foreign policy is limited to consultation, rather than drawing it. In fact, the actual power of all internal and external affairs of Jordan rests in the hands of the executive authority.

## **6. The Security Institution:**

The King is the supreme commander of the Jordan Armed Forces, while the Prime Minister occupies the Defense Ministry and must provide advice at the moment of decision-making. The Jordanian Armed Forces role in foreign policy is very important as the King consults the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the Jordanian Armed Forces, for issues related to military power and security.<sup>47</sup>

The security institution plays a significant role in the political life of Jordan. The army forms a core component to the internal stability of Jordan and against external threats<sup>48</sup>. The Jordanian army gives the King the power to face challenges and make internal and external policy decisions. Through the army, the King can solve problems for which the civil authorities are not able to find solutions. So, the King pays great attention to the security institutions. Similarly, loyalty for the King is a core feature of the Jordanian army. The Jordanian army leadership was transferred to the King in 1956,<sup>49</sup> and since then there is no opportunity for possible military disobedience in the Jordanian army. In return for the care of the King towards the army and all troops, the army extends complete loyalty to the King. In 1970-1971, the army was the King's primary tool to exile the Palestinian fighters from Jordan.<sup>50</sup> But, despite the significant role of the army in securing Jordan and implementing the King's policies and decisions, it still retains only a non-binding consultation to the King.

## **The Fundamental Principles of the Jordanian Foreign Policy:**

Jordan initiated a number of fundamental principles for forming the country's foreign policy, since Jordan's establishment in 1921. All of the surrounding variables, circumstances, and events

in the international order had been taken into consideration. Islam, the common Arab work, and the Palestinian issue are main considerations of the Jordanian foreign policy. Jordan aims to maintain Arab national security, and to find a fair solution for the Palestinian people that guarantees their legitimate rights. Jordan always deemed the Palestinian issue to be a Jordanian issue as well, because the second majority of Jordan's population is of Palestinian origin, and this fact has highly affected the Jordanian political behavior.<sup>51</sup>

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is a part of the Arab World based on the concept of the One United Arab State. The Jordanian political system inherited the Great Arab Revolution 1916, which aimed to liberate the Arab Levant from the Ottoman hegemony to create the Great Arab State. Since the moment of its establishment, Jordan was firmly linked to the issues of the Arab Nation, and this link is apparent in Jordan's position towards the Arab Nation's issues. Jordan has been supporting the Palestinian people since 1948; it also supported Egypt during the Suez crisis in 1956, and contributed to the Arab armies against Israel in the 1967 war. In 1973, Jordan supported Syria on the Syrian front, and was with Iraq during the Iraqi-Iranian war which lasted 8 years.<sup>52</sup> Moreover, Jordan was a shelter for Arab Liberation Movements against prosecution in some Arab countries.

Political considerations also played a major part in directing the Jordanian external policy through stability and legitimacy. The Jordanian political system was built on the roots of Hashemite's origins of the first founder of Jordan, Hussein Bin Ali, going all the way back to Prophet Mohammed. The last Khalif who was given Baia was Hussein Bin Ali in 1916. The Arab National vision, reflected in the Great Arab Revolution, aimed to attain Islamic and National goals in Mecca, the center of the Islamic World; this vision stayed with the successive Jordanian political systems. Add to that the Bedouin and tribal dimension, as the family of the Hashemites is a Bedouin family that goes along with the Bedouin tribes in Jordan, which are a fundamental part of the current political system.

From the above mentioned points, four basic fundamental principles of the Jordanian political system can be derived:<sup>53</sup>

1. Concentrating on the principals and goals of the Great Arab Revolution based on liberty, independence, and unity among Arabs.
2. Concentrating on the principals, values, and beliefs of Islam.
3. Continuing political development operations, building constitutional establishments, and increasing political participation.
4. Full commitment to the Palestinian Issue as the central issue of Jordan.

### **The Objectives of the Jordanian Foreign Policy**

The Jordanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates works constantly to achieve these objectives:<sup>54</sup>

1. Standing by the principles of the Constitution, national values, tolerant Islamic values and the principles of the Great Arab Revolution.
2. Adhering to the international conventions and norms, the principles of international legitimacy, respect for human rights, and building relations with states and powers throughout the world, within the framework of common interests and mutual respect.
3. Adhering to the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states and not allowing any external party to interfere in Jordan's internal affairs.
4. Resolving the regional and international disputes and conflicts through peaceful, diplomatic, and dialogue methods, and refrain from resorting to force.
5. Standing for national responsibilities towards the Palestinian issue, which is the central issue of Jordan and the basis of conflict in the region.
6. Continuing its efforts to end the Israeli occupation of all Arab territories.
7. Continuing with the role and responsibility in the protection and care of Islamic and Christian holy sites in occupied Jerusalem.
8. Exercising its humanitarian role in the maintenance of international peace and security, and contribute to stability in the troubled places of the world and to the provision of relief assistance, through various frameworks, including contribution to the United Nations peacekeeping forces.
9. Fulfilling the primary duty of preserving the security of Jordanian people, homeland, institutions, and national interests, and condemning terrorism and fighting it.<sup>55</sup>
10. Working towards establishing understanding and dialogue, between religions and civilizations, as a starting point for contributing to a global dialogue that leads humanity to future horizons away from blind fanaticism and terrorism.
11. Clarifying the true nature of Islam and call for peaceful coexistence of all human beings.

### **The Duties of Foreign Policy Makers**

The duties of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of Jordan are:<sup>56</sup>

1. Contribute to the drawing up and implementation of foreign policy in accordance with the directions issued by concerned authorities.
2. Represent the kingdom among other countries and international and regional organizations, and participate in international conferences.
3. Organize the kingdom's ties with other countries and international and regional organizations, and foster political, economic, cultural, and other relations with them and follow up on their implementation.
4. Organize the relations of foreign missions accredited to the kingdom with the official and concerned authorities of Jordan.
5. Protect the interests and rights of the kingdom and its citizens abroad, and enhance communication and participation with Jordanians abroad.

6. Enter into treaties and agreements with other countries and international and regional organizations, and contribute to the implementation of their decisions and their preservation, in cooperation and coordination with relevant parties.
7. Conduct negotiations and discussions with other countries and international and regional organizations, in cooperation and coordination with relevant parties, in accordance with the kingdom's policies and interests.
8. Facilitate coordination between international and regional organizations and national human rights institutions, to promote human rights concepts and values through the studying of international standards contained in relevant international conventions and protocols, and to consider ratifying them and/or incorporating them into national legislation and laws.
9. Explain the objectives and bases of Jordan's foreign policy by maintaining contact with various media.
10. Coordinate with accredited missions and Jordanian authorities regarding foreign communities within the kingdom.

### **Decision-Making for Jordan's Foreign Policy**

Decision-making in foreign policy decides the destiny of a country. Suitable decisions through the times of crises are of utmost importance, in order to lead the country on a path of action that brings about the accomplishment of its national interests and helps it deal with important international units. Although the foreign policy determines the relations of a state with other states, it is the decision-making process which recognizes the problems, discovers the alternatives, and takes the final call to resolve the unresolved issues. Consequently, foreign policy decision-making is the main tool to evade negative consequences and realize national interests, while achieving positive consequences that benefit the people.<sup>57</sup>

Jordan's foreign policy decision-making includes analysis and evaluation of past experiences to learn lessons for the present. While the current data may have different values than before, past experiences enable decision-makers to avoid mistakes in similar situations by identifying the needs and accessible choices of action currently and in future, for protection and promotion of the Jordanian national interests.

Political decisions in Jordan might be taken by one person, or a group of individuals, or through a strict system via special protocols, or by a parliamentary institution. Each decision-making structure is different from the other.<sup>58</sup> These differences lead to different paradigms of operations regarding decision-making among different institutions.

### **The Role of Authorities in Jordan's Foreign Policy Decision Making**

The actors of Jordanians foreign policy are divided into primary and secondary actors, based on their power and authorities, which are guided and controlled by the 1952 Constitution. The

Jordanian political system is strictly restricted by the articles of the Constitution. In another words, the real power of decision making lies in the hands of the King. By himself, the King leads and controls all boundaries of the kingdom's foreign policy.

There are four models of decision making in Jordan that follow four types of issues. The four models outline the decision-making mechanism for issues and who is authorized to take such decisions. The decision-making process in any of the four types is not carried out according to any criterion of a Western or democratic political system. This means that it is a process that is not subject to the principle of popular participation and public opinion in some way, and is not based on studies and research conducted by specialized institutions, and presented with perceptions, results, and scenarios. Also, none of them is based on political programs of partisan or elected governments. It is a process neither institutionalized nor based on collective responsibility or even popular choice. Of course, the nature, features, monopolies, determinants, and objectives of foreign policy do not allow anything else.<sup>59</sup>

Therefore, decision-makers in Jordan adopted a special approach based on four patterns depending on the type of decision, three of which have an impact on international affairs which necessarily serve the objectives of foreign policy or do not contradict them, and the fourth relates to internal administrative affairs in various fields.

**The First Type:** Decisions of a political/economic, military or security nature that relate to or affect the objectives of foreign policy, either negatively or positively, or serve them, without directly or indirectly affecting citizens through their implementation. These decisions usually do not affect people's livelihood priorities. Such decisions are confidential, whether they are related to Western allies, or Israel, or the issues of Jordan, or the Arab region. These decisions are taken by the King alone and he orders the government to execute the request, through direct or indirect means. So, the government or the implementing agency does not understand the background and the objective of the decision, and does not discuss the matter as a royal order.

**The Second Type:** Decisions related to the objectives of foreign policy, which are non-confidential and known to the citizens, and whose implementation can result in unfavorable or controversial circumstances internally.<sup>60</sup> These decisions are taken mainly by the King, with the involvement of a select group of state officials, whose role is not to take decisions or provide consultation or discuss the decisions, but to ensure and facilitate their implementation. State officials are also responsible for overcoming difficulties of citizens' acceptance internally due to their adverse effects, along with overcoming those adverse effects.

**The Third Type:** Decisions related to international issues which are isolated from the goals of foreign policy. For example, initiating bilateral agreements between Jordan and other countries, with regard to economic and cultural cooperation and other international affairs.<sup>61</sup> These decisions are also taken by the King.

**The Fourth Type:** Internal decisions, unless they involve military or security matters, or have direct or indirect impacts on foreign policy or its objectives. Such decisions are practically entrusted to the Prime Minister and theoretically to the Cabinet. The Prime Minister consults with the King only if the

decision to be taken directly affects the general public and internal stability, such as decisions to lift subsidies on goods, to liberalize prices and to impose taxes, or privatization. These decisions are taken only by the Prime Minister, after consultation with or orders from the King. There is no doubt that the King agrees to these decisions to serve, partially, the objectives of foreign policy, and financial and political requirements.

### **Stages of Policy Making**

The Jordanian foreign policy decision-making process goes into four stages:<sup>62</sup>

**Stage One-** Assessment of the domestic political and international environment: Jordan's foreign policy is made and implemented within domestic and international political context, which needs to be understood by decision-makers to determine and decide the most suitable foreign policy choice.

**Stage Two-** Goal setting: Jordan has various foreign policy objectives, which are affected by the domestic and international political environment. In addition, achieving the policy objectives involves encountering problems and obstacles, mandating constant reviews of the country's external priorities.

**Stage Three-** Formal decision-making: Foreign policy decisions are formally taken at various levels within the government. Decisions are typically made by the King, the highest executive authority in the Jordanian political system. Other secondary actors, such as the Prime Minister, the Parliament, other ministers, and the security institutions, take decisions on a very low level which have no vital effect either on the Jordanian people or the kingdom as a whole.

**Stage Four-** Implementation of foreign policy decisions: Once foreign policy decisions are made, they must be executed. Usually, foreign policy decisions are implemented by special authorized departments in the Jordanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates.<sup>63</sup> However, other departments of other ministries in the government, such as departments of defense, commerce, and security agencies, may also sometimes play a part in implementing specific foreign policy decisions.

### **Conclusion**

This study concludes the following:

1. A number of internal and international political, economic, social and security factors affect Jordan's foreign policy directly and indirectly. Internal factors include geographical location, population, social structure, economy, natural resources, military power, public opinion, political system, and leadership and the personalities of leaders. The Jordanian foreign policy is affected by external determinants such as the International Order, and alliances and treaties (bilateral and multilateral). Since these factors are linked with international and regional environments, they might threaten the stability and security of Jordan.

2. The geographical location of Jordan has a great impact on its foreign policy with other countries with whom it shares its borders, and may share ethnographic factors such as religion, language, and history. Jordan decided on its regional and international foreign policy by realizing the features of its own geographic location; it is a landlocked area, with limited natural resources and water, and with very limited access to the Red Sea.
3. The population and social structure of the country were affected by the successive waves of refugees from Palestine, Iraq, Syria, and other Arab states, influencing many aspects of life in Jordan. The Jordanian society was not economically ready for these quick demographic changes and so the prices of goods and properties went up gradually. Refugee waves resulted in changes in intellectual and religious beliefs and ideologies in different sections of the Jordanian society.
4. Lack of natural resources and water shortage in Jordan are constant hurdles to achieving sustainable economic development in the country. This economic challenge significantly affects the Jordanian foreign policy as the country is dependent on external aid for economic prosperity and stability. The high cost of energy further adds to the burden on public budget, causing high inflation, poverty, and unemployment. The population distribution, economic deficiency, and the shortage of natural resources create an inconvenient internal situation urging the Jordanian leadership to follow a cautious foreign policy with regard to other regional and international units.
5. Jordan's dependence on western economic and military assistance, to build and keep its security institutions working also affects its external policy. Jordan has thus maintained strong and distinguished relations with Western military powers in general, and the US, in particular, to ensure continued military assistance. Jordan is also required to maintain cordial relations with the surrounding Arab countries, based on tolerance and objective policies, in order to solve any bilateral issues peacefully.
6. Within the Jordanian political system, six institutions are constitutionally authorized to deal with foreign policy issues. They are classified into two types: 1) the primary authority, i.e., the King, and 2) the secondary institutions, including the Royal Court, the Cabinet, the Parliament, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates Affairs, and the Security Institution. These institutions work constantly to achieve the various objectives of the Jordanian foreign policy.
7. The power of decision-making with regard to Jordan's foreign policy, rests with the King. Foreign policy in Jordan is, almost exclusively, controlled by the King. The King maneuvers the foreign policy with minimal intervention from other institutions. No other institution can influence foreign policy decisions, except in some constitutional cases, which are rare and have no real effect on the King's power.
8. The process of foreign policy decision-making in Jordan involves four stages: assessment of domestic and international political environment, goal setting, formal decision-making, and implementation of decision.

9. There are four models of decision-making in Jordan that deal with four types of issues: 1) Decisions of a political, political-economic, military, or security nature that affect the objectives of foreign policy are taken by the King alone and implemented by the government. 2) Decisions related to the objectives of external affairs, which are non-confidential, and their implementation results in controversial effects, are mainly taken by the King, with the involvement of a select group of state officials that facilitates implementation. 3) Decisions related to international issues which are isolated from the goals of foreign policy are also taken by the King. 4) Internal decisions that affect the general public and internal stability are taken by the Prime Minister and the Cabinet, unless they are military or security issues, and have direct or indirect impact on foreign policy, in which case, the Prime Minister takes decisions in consultation with the King.

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