

Mashura Research Center



King Abdullah II's visit to Oman

Accelerated Regionalism:

Within the past three years, two significant crises have faced the world, the Covid-19 pandemic, which has caused massive damage economic and health infrastructure of most nations worldwide. The second crisis is the Ukrainian war, which reflected poorly on the economic and political atmosphere of most countries and regions, especially in supply chains which are essential for the modern world economy, and many countries rely on it for the stability of their economy, with energy crisis striking the west and the whole world; thus, the stability of their political and security status. Due to its geographical setting, political movements have increased in the Middle East. These political movements are based on positive strategic thinking, as their main goal is to increase the area's development and protect it from the sharpnel of the economic and political crises we are facing in our current world.

With the increasing pace of agreement in the fields of technology, higher technical education, sustainable power, Food security, and supply chains, Jordan was obliged to double the effort in employing its geographical and political weight, harvesting the solid diplomatic relations the kingdom has with the western world represented in the United States of America, and Europe. Also, Jordan had to benefit from the ample storage of experience in security matters to enter the agreement as mentioned above, presenting all of its logistic expertise and the importance of its geographical sitting. The competence of its human resources and its well to become the regional energy hub, by providing electricity from its surplus energy, to its neighboring countries will reflect positively on the kingdom regarding economic, social, and political benefits; thus, the King will have more cards of power to play in the kingdom's foreign diplomacy.

Therefore, an integrative regional partnership was contained in the tripartite cooperation agreement between Egypt, Jordan, and the UAE, which expanded to include new regional countries. After a visit from the UAE partner to the Sultanate of Oman last week,

development partnership agreements were documented, especially in transportation, logistics, food security, and medium manufacturing; King Abdullah II went to Muscat on a two-day visit, which the Omani Sultan Haitham bin Tariq gave a warm diplomatic welcome to the Jordanian monarch.

What is Jordan seeking from Oman?

The joint final statement by the two countries was filled with warmth and friendliness, pointing to the achievement of mutual agreements that will lead toward implementing cooperation in different aspects, that include collaboration in the industry, mining, preventing monopoly, archiving, higher education, research, innovation, consumer protection, insurance, and tourism industry.

These agreements and cooperation between Jordan and Oman are consistent with the accelerated regional movements that are going on to face the economic repercussions that the world is facing due to the Ukrainian war, with no indicators of any peace agreements to occur any time soon. According to recent official statics, Jordan exported 72 million dollars worth of merchandise to Oman last year and imported 79 million dollars worth of merchandise to Oman; in addition, 6% of the Jordanian employment in the Gulf region is based in Oman.

Despite being in a hot political zone with crises and wars in the region, Oman had succeeded for many decades in performing a calm, diplomatic strategy and achieved to avoid entering any political struggles, and managed to keep good diplomatic ties with its neighbor Iran. This link between Oman and Iran became handy for the Gulf countries with a tide relationship with Iran. Oman played the middleman role, especially during struggle times, such as the Iran-Iraq war and the struggle in Yemen; Oman and the kingdom have a massive role in truce and peace settlements.

Without shedding much light, Oman had successfully established undisclosed good ties with Israel, which manifested recently during the visit of Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu to Oman in 2018. Despite the lack of diplomatic relations between Israel and Oman, He was welcomed by the late Sultan Qaboos bin Saeed, who passed away shortly after the visit.

Oman and Jordan meet in their strong ties with the United States, and the two countries are considered to have a moderate compass in international relations, and both countries hold historically solid ties with the United Kingdom. Both Jordan and Oman hold sturdy military cooperation with each other, with Jordanian military experts sent for consultancy at Oman by King's orders, and this comes due to a long history of mutual expertise

change between the two countries. The two countries shared the same point of view toward the Qatar conflict with other gulf countries. Eventually, the conflict was arranged. Jordan and Oman had sought a solution since the beginning of the issue.

Education, culture, and Omani identity

Negotiations between the two countries involved different cultural matters and educational aspects, with 3500 Omani students living and studying in Jordan and the Omani chair at the Al-AlBayt university in Jordan, which scrutinizes Oman studies, this can be looked upon as a type of soft power. Also, the presence of teachers and academic scholars from Jordan in Oman manifested positively toward the Jordanian expertise in Oman.

On the sidelines of the King's visit, talks were held about cultural exchange, most notably the signing of cultural agreements regarding the exchange of experiences and documentary and documentary cooperation, the most prominent of which is represented by the Jordanian Hashemite Royal Documentation Center. Some members of the Omani Shura Council praised the historical role of Jordanian universities in graduating Omani competencies and diverse experiences.

Many factors focus on the cultural aspect during the visit, not only because the Sultan was the former minister of culture before becoming the Sultan. However, the arrangement of the King accompanied by Queen Rania and the crown prince Hussien to visit Oman's cultural facilities that are considered to be an essential cultural value for the Omani nation, such as the national Oman museum and the Oman opera house. Oman managed to present its rich history and robust heritage, manifesting a type of soft power of the nation of Oman while presenting modern technology and development, ensuring that Oman managed to keep up with the rapid development pace of technology while holding calmly and respectfully into its heritage roots.

The unmentioned in the visit briefings

During the closed sessions between the two leaders, King Abdullah and Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, it is strongly suggested that the Iranian dossier was a matter of discussion due to the solid private ties Oman has with Iran. Therefore, Jordan might ask Oman to be an arbiter in calming the atmosphere and building bridges of understanding between Amman and Tehran. The matter of the Jordanian north borders is a top priority as the kingdom is facing intense and enormous pressure on the borders it shares with Syria due to drug smuggling, which adds an extra bill to Jordan's economy and military power, in addition to the demolishing of society drugs causes in Jordan. Jordan does not conceal the fact that

he is in a war against drugs, and every news platform displays the capture of vast amounts of drugs meant to enter Jordan. The Jordanian role in this war against drugs has a significant impact on the region, as these drugs are not only meant to be distributed in Jordan, a massive amount of it is on its way to Saudi Arabia and other gulf countries. Thus Jordan is considered a safe gate against drugs for the Arabic Peninsula. Nevertheless, no mention of any discussion concerning the Iranian dossier and Jordanian north borders was given, but from a political interpretation aspect, the issue might be discussed discreetly to pacify the Jordanian-Iranian relation.

Concerning the Palestinian issue

The joint statement released by the two countries reflected the usual stand on the Palestinian matter, which is the two-state solution, and that eastern Jerusalem is the capital of Palestine. However, it is estimated that Jordan is trying to take more precautions for the elections that will be held in Israel and the coming back of Benjamin Netanyahu as Prime minister. Thus Jordan is taking an extra nudge in precautions to prevent the usual clashes with Netanyahu's policies through Oman's political strategies that always succeed in being reticent.

