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# The Israel–Jordan Peace Treaty: Patterns of Negotiation, Problems of Implementation

LAURA ZITTRAIN EISENBERG and NEIL CAPLAN

The Peace Treaty of 26 October 1994 between the State of Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan was one of the most promising negotiated settlements to emerge following the 1991 Arab–Israeli Peace Conference in Madrid, Spain.<sup>1</sup> Strong leadership imbued with a genuine desire for peace, a willingness to prioritize demands and accept compromises, and constructive third-party support all contributed to the achievement of a formal Israeli–Jordanian accord.

The treaty has enjoyed overwhelming Israeli support, albeit accompanied by some disappointment that the cross-border traffic is disproportionately west to east and that Jordanian professionals, businessmen and artists have been reluctant to engage in joint ventures. Nevertheless, Israelis are generally satisfied that the long border with Jordan has remained quiet, and that King Abdullah II has been no less outspoken in his support for Israeli–Jordanian peace than was his late father, King Hussein. Strategists appreciate that the treaty with Jordan cuts off Iraq's only invasion route into Israel, and gives Israel a partner with shared interests in stabilizing the area as a Palestinian state between them is supposed to take form.

A positive Jordanian appreciation of treaty relations with Israel is limited to a small circle around the king. Elsewhere there is considerable unhappiness with the way the treaty has played out since its signing in 1994. While Jordan has been able to reap strategic and economic benefits in its relations with the United States, there is widespread dissatisfaction with the treaty (especially when measured against the expectations it had generated) in terms of bilateral relations with Israel, Jordan's 'pivotal' position in the region, and improvements to the average Jordanian's standard of living.<sup>2</sup> The anti-normalization movement, spearheaded by Jordan's professional and cultural elite, is a significant counterbalance to

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the Palace's efforts to make the peace work. In the absence of a tangible pay-off and amid post-Oslo Arab-Israeli tensions, pro-Palestinian sentiment in Jordan remains strong and has made the peace with Israel an awkward one, particularly in times of severe Israeli-Palestinian unrest.

In fact, the history of Jordanian-Israeli contacts and peacemaking efforts has always reflected a tension between Jordan's desire to satisfy its genuine shared interests with Israel and its disinclination to challenge both pro-Palestinian sentiment and general Arab resistance to the legitimization of Israel or normalization of relations with it. In earlier decades, this tension displayed itself in back-channel Israeli-Jordanian coordination. However, the 1991 Gulf War and Madrid conference transformed these connections into a formal and open relationship. The continued relevance of anti-Israeli sentiment in Jordan and the pervasive disillusionment with the course of Jordanian-Israeli relations since 1994 bespeak the fragility and limitations of a treaty whose well-intentioned drafters were, on the Jordanian side, way out ahead of mainstream Jordanian sentiment and, on the Israeli side, not sufficiently sensitive to Jordan's dilemmas. Both sides entertained overly optimistic assumptions about the spread of regional stability and the concomitant flourishing of Jordanian-Israeli economic projects.

Despite the fact that the treaty has yet to achieve its full potential for normal and fruitful Jordanian-Israeli relations, the process and products of 1994 reflect in many respects a positive divergence from traditionally negative patterns of Arab-Israeli bargaining behaviour. Israel and other would-be Arab peace partners have no choice but to tread this still imperfect path, hopefully guided by some lessons from the Jordanian-Israeli experience.

#### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND, 1921-91

How does the Israel-Jordan Treaty of 1994 fit into the cycle of advances and setbacks that have characterized Zionist-Transjordanian and Israeli-Jordanian diplomatic relations since the early 1920s?<sup>3</sup> By any standard, the scope and depth of Zionist-Transjordanian and Israeli-Jordanian contacts since 1921 have been remarkable. Israel and Jordan are the Solomonic baby who survived Winston Churchill's mid-1921 division of the territory of the Palestine Mandate: the territory west of the River Jordan remained 'Palestine,' and the lands east of the River Jordan became the Hashemite Emirate of Transjordan. The British appointed, as new ruler of Transjordan, Abdullah, son of Sharif Hussein of Mecca who had led the Arab Revolt against the Turks.

But Abdullah was not content to govern only his assigned desert principality. Hegemonic ambitions to rule over 'Greater Syria' made the ultimate disposition of western Palestine a matter of continuing interest to

him. In the 1930s, he solidified a budding political relationship with the Jewish Agency Executive in Palestine through a land-sale option.<sup>4</sup> For the Emir, an alliance with the Jews offered a common front against the Palestinian Arabs, who were demanding Palestinian–Arab sovereignty over the land Abdullah coveted, and who totally rejected any formula for sharing Palestine with the Zionists. In his desire to outflank the Palestinians and extend his kingdom to the Mediterranean coast, he was prepared to accept a Jewish autonomous unit within western Palestine under his sovereignty, but this scenario had little appeal to Zionists.

Still, the Zionists and the Emir did have reason to find one another appealing partners. There is evidence that Abdullah shared in the period's stereotypical and exaggerated beliefs about the wealth and influence the Jews could put at his disposal, a sentiment perhaps reinforced by the gifts he was offered and accepted. For the Zionists, Abdullah was the pan-Arab, non-Palestinian leader who might eventually accommodate a Jewish National Home in Palestine in the classic 'exchange of services' mode.<sup>5</sup> Abdullah and members of his inner circle met often with Jewish Agency officials, exchanging ideas and proposals for resolving the conflict over Palestine to the satisfaction of both Zionist and Hashemite aspirations.

As the first Arab–Israeli war approached, serious contacts and negotiations took place between Abdullah and officials of the Jewish Agency for Palestine. While some historians, notably Avi Shlaim, believe that there was an understanding between Abdullah and the Zionists amounting to 'collusion' in pursuit of a clear-cut plan to share all of Mandatory Palestine between them, other scholars, such as Avraham Sela, argue that this understanding was neither so firm nor so clear. While the Abdullah–Zionist channel – which saw an eleventh-hour, May 1948, visit to Amman by future Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir, disguised as an Arab peasant woman – did not deter the king from joining in the pan-Arab war against the new Jewish state, the Arab Legion was deployed selectively to avoid conquering territory accorded to Israel under the UN partition plan.<sup>6</sup>

The war on Israel's eastern front ended with a Jordanian–Israeli armistice, ostensibly negotiated with UN mediation at Rhodes in the spring of 1949; in reality, Lieutenant-Colonel Moshe Dayan and Colonel Abdullah al-Tal negotiated the armistice agreement directly, with personal input from the King during occasional visits to his winter palace at Shuneh. The Rhodes agreement established the Jordanian–Israeli Mixed Armistice Commission and a 'Special Committee', both of which met near the Mandelbaum Gate of the Old City of Jerusalem and provided official points of contact between Israeli and Jordanian officials for several years. After concluding the armistice, Abdullah and his old friends in the new Israeli government entered into extensive talks, resulting ultimately in a draft treaty of peace between the two nations.<sup>7</sup> But Abdullah hesitated to

sign the accord due to vehement Arab opposition, both within Transjordan and without, to any deal with Israel. Abdullah's assassination in July 1951 by a Palestinian nationalist ended this chapter in Jordanian–Israeli relations.

Two years later, Abdullah's grandson Hussein assumed the throne. In later years, the Jordanian monarch would quietly resume his late grandfather's predilection for clandestine meetings with Israeli officials. When it launched the June 1967 war on its Syrian and Egyptian fronts, the Israeli government communicated to Hussein that if he kept out of the fray, Israel would not move against his troops. The pressures for pan-Arab unity were too great, however, and the king committed his army to battle on Israel's eastern front. In the course of the fighting, Jordan lost the precious Old City of Jerusalem and the West Bank to Israel. The loss of the former had a particularly painful resonance for Jordanians, since it includes the al-Aqsa Mosque where King Abdullah I was assassinated, the Dome of the Rock, and the burial site of King Hussein's great grandfather, Hussein ibn-Ali, the former Sharif of Mecca. In the aftermath of the war, the Israeli and Jordanian leaderships reopened their quiet contacts, working together to administer the West Bank which Israel now controlled, but in which Jordan retained much interest and influence.

By all accounts, Hussein met with every Israeli prime minister over the years, creating ongoing relationships which weathered wars and regional crises. Informal Jordanian–Israeli cooperation in fields such as border security and environment created a functional relationship of such depth and breadth that, writing in 1978, Ian Lustick doubted whether any open, negotiated settlement between the two countries could provide as satisfactory an arrangement.<sup>8</sup> In the absence of a peace treaty, Israel and Jordan shared what Aharon Klieman has described as a durable 'adversarial partnership' built on 'a policy of de facto disengagement and conflict avoidance'. This policy reflected 'a basic affinity of core political interests and concerns,' among them the long shared border; mutual interests in the West Bank; the preponderant Palestinian impact upon their politics and societies; and (more recently) challenges from Islamic fundamentalism.<sup>9</sup>

In 1987, King Hussein and Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres met in London to personally draft a peace accord – one that was intended to look like an American initiative. But 'the London Document' of 11 April 1987 turned out to be a dead letter, overtaken by violent eruptions in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict and the structural peculiarity of the Israeli government at that time. Deadlocked Israeli elections in 1984 had necessitated the creation of a National Unity Government under whose terms Labour leader Shimon Peres and Likud leader Yitzhak Shamir were to alternate, each for two years, holding the offices of prime minister and foreign minister. Yitzhak Shamir completely opposed the Israeli

concessions Peres had agreed to in his accord with Hussein, particularly the Palestinian focus, the international conference framework, and the inclusion of the Soviets. So, although Peres began his Jordanian diplomacy as prime minister, he signed the agreement in the diminished capacity of a foreign minister operating in defiance of the new prime minister. Not wanting to involve itself in this domestic Israeli struggle, the US stayed on the sidelines, withholding the superpower support Peres had hoped to bring to bear on Shamir. Without the approval of the Israeli government, the agreement remained an inoperative piece of paper.<sup>10</sup> Coordinated Jordanian–Israeli activity reverted to its traditionally clandestine mode until 1991, when Jordan's political isolation and dire financial straits after the Gulf War brought it to the public negotiating table set by the United States in Madrid.

#### FROM LONDON TO MADRID, AND BEYOND

The 1993–94 Jordanian–Israeli peace process is best appreciated against this background of extensive Transjordanian–Zionist and Jordanian–Israeli relations. The history of these interactions provides a useful perspective for understanding the course of more recent Jordanian–Israeli peacemaking. The authors' work in the broad field of Arab–Israeli diplomacy, pre- and post-1948, identified a pattern of negative negotiating behaviours, which have historically stymied those who would search for an Arab–Israeli peace.<sup>11</sup> The logical inference is that the more closely current negotiations follow the old patterns, the more likely the chances of failure; any hopes for resolution of this conflict rest upon deviation from those patterns in very specific directions. In many critical respects, this is precisely what occurred with the Jordanian–Israeli Treaty, which happily broke with the earlier patterns of unsuccessful Arab–Israeli negotiations. But reversion to negative habits of the past – for example, doubting the motives of the 'other' and differences in perceptions between the leaders and the led – has thus far precluded the full expression of the rewards promised by the treaty's architects.

The futile diplomacy of the Mandate period followed a pattern that lends itself to examination along the lines of several components which, our research suggests, have been traditionally associated with failed Arab–Israeli negotiations: (1) dubious purposes and ulterior motives, (2) problems of timing, (3) the asymmetrical or weak status of one or more of the negotiating partners, (4) the generally negative impact of third-party involvement, (5) the wide gulf between proposed terms of agreement and (6) psychological factors, mainly the gap between leaders' attitudes towards 'the enemy' and those of their constituencies. Consideration of Jordanian–Israeli relations within this six-point framework illuminates the unique constellation of circumstances which allowed the parties to break

the historical pattern of failures and to reach an agreement in 1994, and highlights those forces that still threaten that agreement seven years later.

#### PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

Although the 1987 Peres–Hussein attempt at formal peacemaking failed, it did not deplete the reservoir of goodwill that had developed among the elites from years of tacit alliance, clandestine cooperation, and informal agreements reached and kept. Intermittent contact between Jordanians and Israelis at the highest levels, particularly between the king and a small number of top Israeli leaders, lent a sense of continuity and stability to the relationship and an element of trust completely lacking between Israel and any other Arab partner. Meeting at the White House, Yitzhak Rabin and King Hussein admitted to a curious President Clinton that they enjoyed a friendship of some 20 years' duration.<sup>12</sup>

Although our research suggests that a history of frequent encounters does not necessarily enhance the prospects for a successfully negotiated settlement – sometimes familiarity only reveals incompatibility – it is likely that the trust created by the unique nature of long-term Jordanian–Israeli relations did contribute to the achievement of a formal peace treaty, once the two parties decided to go public. The question, then, becomes: if Jordan and Israel were enjoying a quiet, mutually satisfying relationship, what motivated them to come out of the shadows and into the light?

#### PURPOSES AND MOTIVES

Israel was born a pariah in the Middle East, and it has always been Israeli policy to try to normalize Arab–Israeli relations through bilateral peace accords with its neighbours. Since the Mandate period, Zionist leaders had fantasized about the economic potential of an open Middle East market. With regard to Jordan, Israeli economists had more recently speculated about the potential financial rewards of jointly developing commercial and tourist facilities at the Dead Sea and at the twin cities of Eilat and Aqaba. A formal accord with Jordan was a necessary stepping-stone along the path of mutual fiscal gain. Beyond the economics of peace, however, security-conscious Israel clearly appreciated that peace with Jordan would constitute significant closure along its long eastern front, and a buffer between it and Iraqi troops who could only march on to Israel via Jordan.

A deal with Hussein was acceptable policy across Israel's highly fractionalized political spectrum. Peace with Jordan was a long-cherished goal, dating from the interrupted agreement with King Hussein's grandfather, Abdullah. After capturing the West Bank from Jordan in the 1967 war, many Israelis touted the 'Jordanian option' as a way to trade

that territory for a separate peace, without the trauma of having to deal with the Palestinians or the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). The popularity of the accord with Hussein reflected the traditional Israeli preference for dealing with non-Palestinian Arab state leaders, and the longstanding predominance of 'Jordan-firsters' over 'Palestine-firsters' within the Israeli foreign-policy establishment.<sup>13</sup> This was true despite the 1993 breakthrough to direct Israeli–PLO dealings embodied in the Oslo Accords, and even more so in light of subsequent crises in Israeli–Palestinian relations. Enthusiasm for the treaty with Jordan was also an expression of relief at having found a counterweight to, or insurance policy against, Yasser Arafat's and the PLO's unproven ability to 'deliver the goods'.

The King shared many of Israel's motivations in finally concluding a formal peace, and his thinking had similarly evolved to the point where the question was not 'whether' peace was possible, but 'when' and on what specific terms. Concerned that successive Israeli–PLO agreements would leave him sidelined, Hussein was anxious to maintain Jordanian influence in the West Bank. His own declaration of 31 July 1988<sup>14</sup> had reduced Jordanian responsibility for West-Bank Palestinian affairs; any new PLO–Israeli security or economic measures established there would obviously have a huge impact on Jordan, however, and Hussein wanted to position Jordan to best shape developments to its advantage.

In making peace with Israel and removing the risk, however small, of war, Hussein extricated Jordan from its military dependence upon Iraq. This served two interrelated Jordanian goals: renewal of the friendship with America, and economic recovery. Pressured by his vast Palestinian population to side with Iraq in the 1991 Gulf War, the King found himself estranged from his traditional US and Gulf Arab benefactors. During that war, Palestinian refugees from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia had poured into Jordan, further straining its already meagre resources. The fledgling Palestinian autonomy envisaged in the 1993 Israeli–Palestinian 'Declaration of Principles'<sup>15</sup> also threatened the steadily falling Jordanian dinar.

Although the US rewarded Jordan's participation in the 1991 Madrid Conference with a resumption of military assistance, Amman's worsening economy required massive foreign intervention, including US forgiveness of Jordan's \$700 million foreign debt. Nothing short of an historic, open declaration of peace with Israel could have brought such a handsome reward, and Secretary of State Warren Christopher acknowledged that, in this situation, 'the economics of it may be driving the politics of it'.<sup>16</sup> Peace with Israel served the Jordanian goal of political rehabilitation in the eyes of the US, and promised an economic boon in terms of US aid and debt-forgiveness, as well as in terms of a new economic relationship with Israel itself.



## TIMING

Timing elements that precipitated a formal Jordanian–Israeli Treaty were both internal and external. As previously mentioned, the Gulf War struck a devastating blow to the Jordanian economy. The loss of foreign aid from the US and the Gulf States; the abrupt influx of some 350,000 Jordanian nationals, many but not all of Palestinian origin, expelled by the states in which they had been working; and the sudden cessation of the remittances which these workers had been sending home prompted Hussein to consider drastic action.

Another catalyst for diplomatic boldness was the end of the Cold War and the demise of the Arab states' Soviet sponsor, which necessitated some degree of Arab accommodation with the sole remaining superpower. The Gulf States, Egypt, and even Syria had sided with the US against Iraq during Operation Desert Storm; further advances in relations with the US would require Arab reconciliation with Israel. With the PLO and Syria now talking to the United States, Jordan could not afford any strains in its relationship with the US. Peace with Israel would help vault Hussein back into the comfort of a US partnership.<sup>17</sup>

The Oslo and Cairo agreements of 1993 and 1994 also served to force the King's hand. Jordan's on-again, off-again relationship with the PLO and the state of conflict between Israel and the PLO both constrained and motivated Jordanian interaction with Israel. Mindful of the sensibilities of the huge Palestinian component of his constituency, King Hussein had always been hesitant to effect a formal peace with Israel without the PLO's acquiescence or endorsement. The suddenly very real prospect of an Israeli withdrawal from parts of the West Bank, the establishment of a Palestinian self-governing authority there, and Israeli–PLO negotiations about Jerusalem in the not-too-distant future persuaded Hussein that he had better move quickly to protect Jordan's interests and influence in those areas. For example, once the PLO and Israel began negotiating openly in the autumn of 1993, the PLO goal to make Jerusalem the capital of an independent Palestine challenged Jordan's self-proclaimed responsibility for the Islamic holy sites in the city. Article 9 of the Israeli–Jordanian treaty recognizes Jordan's special role there, potentially allowing the king to outflank Arafat on Jerusalem. Reflecting again the Israeli preference for Hussein over Arafat, Prime Minister Rabin was only too happy to facilitate this manoeuvre.

Even more important was the fact that the PLO's agreements with Israel removed the almost sacrosanct taboo against breaking pan-Arab ranks and dealing openly with Israel. Anwar Sadat had tried to break that taboo himself 16 years earlier with his trip to Jerusalem and the subsequent Camp David Accords. But, with no Arab state following his lead, Egypt endured a long period of estrangement from the Arab world

as the price of this initiative. According to scholar and former Palace advisor Adnan Abu-Odeh, the Palestinian issue had ‘historically placed two decision-making restraints on King Hussein, one Arab (removed by the Gulf War and Madrid) and one Palestinian (removed by Oslo)’.<sup>18</sup> Once Arafat began negotiations with Israel, he freed Hussein from any responsibility for the Palestinian cause. Under no obligation to be more Catholic than the Pope (or more Palestinian than Arafat), King Hussein finally signed a year-old draft peace agenda with Israel on 14 September 1993, the very day after the signing of the Palestinian–Israeli DOP.

Domestic considerations provided yet another timing factor which encouraged the King in his diplomacy with Israel. In the months leading up to the 8 November 1993 Jordanian elections (the first multiparty general elections since 1957), the Islamic Action Front campaigned on a platform of no peace with Israel. But the electoral results favoured the conservative, tribal and independent blocs loyal to the King, confirming Hussein’s estimation that the time was ripe for an open Jordanian–Israeli peace and reinforcing his determination to make the process succeed. Hussein thus faced a rare moment when a settlement with Israel was simultaneously ‘mutually beneficial on the Israeli–Jordanian bilateral level, acceptable on the Jordanian–Palestinian level, and possible on the inter-Arab level’.<sup>19</sup>

In responding to external events and economic pressures with overtures to one another, Jordan and Israel were repeating some of the traditional Arab–Israeli negotiating patterns. But, unlike the historical paradigm in which ulterior motives were usually limited to maintaining the status quo or subverting the other party’s position, this time the two parties concluded independently that their multiple purposes could best be served by actually seeing the negotiations through to a successful end. Both Jordan and Israel responded to timing considerations in the 1990s in a proactive sense, seeing an open window of opportunity and reaching through it towards one another with the positive goal of ending their dispute through peaceful accommodation.

#### STATUS OF THE NEGOTIATORS

Post-Madrid Israeli–Jordanian negotiations benefited from sustained, symmetrical, high-level interaction between the two sides. Like Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin after making peace at Camp David in 1978, and in sharp contrast to the precedents set at the turn of the century, both King Hussein and Prime Minister Rabin commanded sufficient popularity and power at home to be able to make good on their promises. Rabin enjoyed a particularly strong position domestically. Even the right-wing opponents of his dealings with the PLO endorsed peace with Jordan, dubbed by one observer a ‘risk-free’

policy, 'a local equivalent to mom and apple pie'.<sup>20</sup> Fondness for the king and the strong historical preference for dealing with him, as opposed to Arafat, meant that Israeli negotiators went into the Jordanian meetings with an unprecedented degree of public trust and support for an accord.

King Hussein's peace operation faced opposition from both Islamists and leftists, not insignificant elements in the Jordanian parliament. But the 1993 electoral defeat of the Islamic Action Front by Hussein loyalists suggested that the King was correct in his estimation that he could expect parliamentary support for his treaty with Israel. In gauging the likelihood of support from the Jordanian population, Adnan Abu-Odeh distinguishes between Transjordanians (Jordanian nationals of Transjordanian origin) and Palestinian-Jordanians (Palestinians who became Jordanian nationals after the unity of the West and East Banks in 1950).<sup>21</sup> Occasional Israeli pronouncements, particularly by the Likud, that 'Jordan is Palestine', had long tormented Transjordanians with visions of a Palestinian or Israeli overthrow of the Hashemite monarchy and the declaration of Arab Palestine under the leadership of the PLO in Jordan's place. According to Abu-Odeh, himself a Palestinian-Jordanian, since the Jordan-Israel peace agreement constituted explicit Israeli recognition of the territorial and national integrity of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Transjordanians were largely 'happy because the treaty, as Prime Minister Majali said, "had buried *al-Watan al-Badil*," the notion that Jordan could become a "substitute homeland" for the Palestinians'.<sup>22</sup> Reaching out to Palestinian-Jordanians as well, the regime promoted peace with Israel as the panacea for all of Jordan's people and problems. In fact, the strength of the king's personality and the overwhelming respect that he enjoyed among all his subjects allowed Hussein to pursue peacemaking with Israel.

Again departing from the historical pattern in which errant, unofficial or unpopular representatives undermined negotiations, Hussein and Rabin kept their negotiations restricted to the very highest leaders and a small coterie of their most trusted advisors. Former Foreign Minister Shimon Peres' role in the 1993-94 agreements with Jordan, acting with Prime Minister Rabin's full authority, stands in sharp contrast to his abortive negotiations with the King around the London Document of 1987 that was vetoed by then-Prime Minister Shamir. Despite a bitter, decades-long rivalry between themselves, Rabin and Peres joined forces after 1993 to present Hussein with as solid a political partner as he presented to them. At the treaty signing ceremony in the Arava desert on 26 October 1994, the two Labour Party rivals went out of their way to praise each other for their diplomatic contributions; it was not clear whether the sharper hatchet being buried there was the one between Jordan and Israel or between Rabin and Peres.

Overcoming the obstacles that had doomed the London document of 1987, the 1993-94 Jordanian-Israeli accords thus benefited from direct

and well-focused attention by strong leaders in control of their governments and well served by loyal aides. Success was also facilitated by the fact that the high-level officials entrusted with the ongoing negotiations between the periodic meetings by their political bosses developed smooth and pleasant interpersonal relations. After their first encounters under the Madrid and Washington formats, the delegations became effective in hammering out details and developing the substance of the principles enunciated by Israeli leaders and by King Hussein, who were recalled by their legal and military advisors and draftsmen only when the time was ripe to narrow the remaining gaps and finalize the agreed texts.

#### THE THIRD-PARTY ROLE

In the 1993–94 Israeli–Jordanian talks, the US assumed its habitual role of an external power whom both sides, particularly the Jordanians, were eager to impress. US support, money and arms were, after all, an important motivating factor for the king in declaring an open peace with Israel. Klieman cautions, however, against blindly accepting the conventional wisdom that full US participation is ‘absolutely essential; or, alternatively, that this involvement is both necessary and decisive at every single stage’.<sup>23</sup> He reminds us that the ‘Israel–Jordan breakthrough achieved in the first half of 1994 ... testifies to the ability of the protagonists to pursue direct channels on their own’, with the definitive negotiations taking place in Amman and London between the king and Peres (November 1993) and the King and Rabin (May 1994), before direct US involvement began. Indeed, individual peace initiatives have often begun independently of the US (for example, Hussein–Peres in 1986–87 and the 1993 PLO–Israeli talks in Oslo), and sometimes even in opposition to US policy preferences (for example, Sadat’s 1977 overture to Israel and journey to Jerusalem). Klieman notes that the critical American contribution has often been in the later stages of the diplomatic process, when the US acted as facilitator and guarantor, keeping the negotiators on track and enticing them to persevere until they reached an accord.<sup>24</sup>

The importance of the US ‘bandwagoning’<sup>25</sup> an indigenous Middle East initiative – that is, endorsing, facilitating and underwriting a process that has already begun – is evident in the different fates of the Jordanian–Israeli initiative of the late 1980s and that of the early 1990s. In contrast to the American hesitancy, which helped undermine the prospects of the 1987 accord, the US energetically supported the later attempts at a separate Jordanian–Israeli peace. When Jordanian–Israeli negotiations at the State Department under the Madrid formula stalled, the administration applied its best diplomatic resources to the problem.

Secretary of State Christopher shuttled repeatedly to the Middle East and President Bill Clinton received the King, his brother Crown Prince Hassan, Prime Minister Rabin and Foreign Minister Peres in Washington.

In another happy departure from the historical pattern, in which each party tried to win an outside power over to its side exclusively, the US in this instance enjoyed the trust and friendship of both parties in nearly equal measure after Madrid. Neither side expected the Americans to impose a lopsided settlement on the other. Israelis and Jordanians regularly included American negotiators in their meetings, principally Martin Indyk (then chief Middle East specialist at the White House) and Dennis Ross (chief American negotiator for the Middle East). In the month immediately preceding the Washington Declaration, 'triangular talks' among senior diplomats from the three countries occurred on an almost daily basis in Washington. In moves that recalled efforts of the early 1960s, Israelis sought to persuade the Americans to grant the Jordanians the financial incentives that would reward the King and reinforce his position as a pro-Western element of regional stability and an advocate of Arab-Israeli reconciliation in an area open to radicalism and destabilization.<sup>26</sup>

The July 1994 Washington Declaration, like its unsuccessful 1987 predecessor, epitomized Jordanian and Israeli desires for an American stamp of approval for their bilateral agreements. Although Hussein and Rabin drafted the bulk of the document in London, both men jumped at Clinton's invitation to unveil their accord at the White House. The language of the Declaration specifically, but disingenuously, identifies it as the 'initiative of President William J. Clinton', and pays tribute to the American president in four of the five introductory sentences and again in all three of the concluding sentences.<sup>27</sup> The word 'initiative' misrepresents the US contribution to this negotiating process, but clearly reflects both parties' need to cloak themselves in American armour in revealing and defending their accord. The October 1994 Peace Treaty incorporates and elaborates upon the Washington Document, which is cited twice in the preamble.

There is no doubt that Jordanian-Israeli efforts benefited from serious and sustained US attention throughout 1993 and 1994. Although the peace treaty was signed at a site on the Israeli-Jordanian border, President Clinton sat with the leaders on the dais and put his signature on the document as the primary witness. Perhaps most indicative of the importance both parties attached to a US endorsement of their accord was the decision to schedule the desert ceremony for 1:00 pm, when the sun was most punishing. It may have been siesta time in the Middle East, but on the American east coast, the morning news programmes were just beginning their broadcasts.

## TERMS OF AGREEMENT

As the parties moved through the successive stages of their peace process, the terms of agreement expanded in both breadth and depth. The culmination of a four-part process which evolved over 24 months, the Jordanian–Israeli Treaty terminated the state of war between the two countries, established a full and formal peace, and went on to outline quite specific and concrete steps in many areas. The treaty's 30 articles and five annexes cover an extensive array of cooperative measures in fields including border demarcations and crossings, water sharing, cultural and scientific exchanges, tourism, transportation, crime, economics and trade, aviation, environment, post and telecommunications, energy, health, and agriculture.<sup>28</sup>

An interesting aspect of the treaty is its rather cursory security clauses and the absence of any third-party or UN presence or guarantees in this domain.<sup>29</sup> The fact that 'conventional security arrangements, such as demilitarization, early warning stations, and so on [are] nonexistent' in the Jordanian–Israeli treaty is a 'reflection of their shared geopolitical and strategic concerns relating to a series of third parties, such as Iraq, Syria, the Palestinians and the United States'.<sup>30</sup> Neither Jordan nor Israel anticipated a security threat from the other.

## PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS

The psychological element in successful negotiations is two-fold. First, the leaders themselves must come to believe that they can best achieve national interests via negotiation, not war. Secondly, they must persuade their constituents to give diplomacy a chance. With myriad public actions and declarations, King Hussein and Rabin clearly demonstrated their own metamorphoses from warriors to statesmen–peacemakers. But it is not enough for the leaders to embrace peace and sign agreements. They must sell peace to their people as the optimal way of achieving the security and material wellbeing to which the ordinary citizen aspires.

Rabin had the easier task, since Israeli public opinion had long thought highly of King Hussein and looked to Jordan as the preferred negotiating partner in any deal over the West Bank. Especially when compared to Arafat and the PLO – names which many Israelis utter in a tone usually reserved for Hitler and the Nazis – King Hussein was not feared as a vicious enemy but rather seen as a gallant opponent. In fact, Rabin used the momentum with Jordan to justify his more controversial dealings with the PLO, arguing that the former could not have come about without the latter. Rabin attempted to persuade the Israeli public that his was truly a broad policy aimed at winning peace for Israel with *all* its Arab neighbours – a process in which the distasteful partnership

with the PLO was a necessary evil and the peace with Jordan a justifying reward.

King Hussein had a considerably harder task before him. In 1992, Adam Garfinkle observed that 'while the Hashemite hierarchy operates in a normal, civilized and pragmatic manner toward its neighbours, including Israel, the attitudes of the population of Jordan do not exactly follow suit. Rather, there is a kind of inverse proportionality at work'.

He attributed this phenomenon to such factors as: (a) East Bankers' resentment that Israel had foisted a huge West Bank Palestinian population upon them; (b) the Palestinians, who comprise more than 50 per cent of the Jordanian population, evincing a high level of anger at Israel for their families' displacement and for the treatment of their brothers and sisters under Israeli occupation; and (c) the government's toleration of widespread Israel-bashing in the media, perhaps as a counterbalance to general public knowledge of its extensive contacts with Israel.<sup>31</sup>

Against this backdrop of unfriendly images of Jews, Israelis and Zionism,<sup>32</sup> Jordanians had been exposed to decades of news coverage of harsh Israeli actions in the occupied territories and shared in the general Arab perception of Israeli aggressiveness and aspirations to regional economic hegemony. While Israelis had little to lose in making peace with Jordan and embraced the idea almost instantly, many Jordanians were sceptical that the benefits of peace with Israel would outweigh any damage to their interests at home, in the Arab world, and vis-à-vis the Palestinian cause.<sup>33</sup>

King Hussein worked tirelessly to persuade his subjects that accommodation with Israel was possible and would enhance their personal wellbeing as well as Jordanian national interests. Hoping to teach by example, he spoke openly and often of Jordanian-Israeli rapprochement. A July 1994 border meeting between Israeli and Jordanian diplomatic teams, the signing of the Washington Declaration, the joint address to Congress by Hussein and Rabin later that month, and the Treaty signing ceremony on 26 October 1994 were all broadcast live by Jordanian state television, clearly signalling the end of the era of *sub rosa* Israeli-Jordanian contacts and the regime's new policy of open relations and normalization.

Indeed, a wave of optimism swept through Jordan and Israel in the months immediately following the conclusion of the treaty. Prime Minister Rabin and King Hussein proved themselves to be genuine leaders who had the courage to step outside of the traditional pattern, by which Israeli and Arab leaders achieved and maintained power by fanning the flames of fear and trumpeting their own steadfastness against the enemy. Convinced of the feasibility and desirability of peace between their countries, Rabin and Hussein signed the treaty, each confident that he had instilled in the majority of his people hope for a new diplomatic dawn. In

fact, negotiating the treaty would be the easy part; the hard part would be making it operational and sustaining popular enthusiasm for it.

#### THE POST-TREATY ERA, 1994–2001

Events in the turbulent Middle East, particularly in the Palestinian–Israeli arena to which Jordan is so sensitive, quickly put the Jordanian–Israeli Treaty to the test. Israelis were sent reeling by Yitzhak Rabin’s assassination in November of 1995, a series of Hamas suicide bus bombings in the spring of 1996, the election of rightwing Benjamin Netanyahu as Israeli prime minister that May, and the rapid deterioration of relations between Arafat’s Palestinian Authority (PA) and the Netanyahu government. This same sequence of disturbing events also contributed to growing feelings of concern and unhappiness among Jordanians about their government’s treaty with Israel.

Ironically, Rabin’s murder at the hands of an Israeli Jewish opponent of the peace process demonstrated how far Arab–Israeli rapprochement had come. Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak spoke at the funeral in Jerusalem, and Morocco, Oman, Qatar and the Palestinian Authority sent official delegations. But it was King Hussein who delivered the most heartfelt eulogy for Rabin, in which he unmistakably declared his personal affection for Rabin, Jordan’s newfound openness in its diplomatic relations with Israel, and his own commitment to pursue the peace process with Rabin’s successor.<sup>34</sup> But acting Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres did not enjoy the trust Rabin had commanded among Israelis (or Jordanians), and his defeat by Benjamin Netanyahu in the elections of 1996 added a new and untried personality to the Jordanian–Israeli equation.

King Hussein’s personal frustration with what he perceived as Netanyahu’s lacklustre, even damaging, contributions to the peace effort was revealed in a letter dated 9 March 1997 from the King to the Israeli Prime Minister, which surfaced in the Israeli press. In the letter, Hussein sharply berated Netanyahu for undertaking projects which provoked Palestinian anger, such as the Har Homa settlement in East Jerusalem, and criticized him for what Hussein felt was his failure to provide the King with a strong partner for peace, as had Netanyahu’s predecessor and Hussein’s fallen friend, Rabin.<sup>35</sup> Hussein’s disappointment in Netanyahu and the Prime Minister’s own divisive impact within the Israeli body politic suggested an erosion of the mutually high status and command of power enjoyed by the leaders since the negotiation of the treaty.

Only four days after Hussein’s written reprimand to Netanyahu, a Jordanian soldier on a shooting spree killed seven Israeli schoolgirls on a field trip along the Jordanian–Israeli border. The atrocity swept attention away from the King’s letter and its concomitant pressure on Netanyahu to



make a clear gesture on behalf of peace. Appalled at the destruction wrought by one of his soldiers, King Hussein travelled to northern Israel to pay his respects directly to the girls' bereaved families. The King's immediate assumption of responsibility and the example he tried to set for a Jordanian response briefly highlighted the fact that Jordanians were not yet as embracing of Israelis as was their King. Most Jordanians condemned the attack on the Israeli children, although some did celebrate the gunman as a hero. Many, however, felt that he was a lunatic for whose actions Hussein should not have accepted national responsibility, and felt a profound discomfiture with the image of the King kneeling on the floor to console the girls' parents.

But it was an incident in Jordan – a bungled Mossad attempt to assassinate Hamas official Khalid Masha'al on the streets of Amman – that sent Israeli–Jordanian relations plummeting in September of 1997. Feeling personally betrayed and politically at risk, King Hussein threatened to close the Israeli Embassy, put the captured Mossad agents on public trial, or sever the Jordanian–Israeli peace treaty. Netanyahu was forced to travel to Amman to take responsibility for the operation and to apologize to Crown Prince Hassan – King Hussein refused to receive him – as well as provide the antidote to the poison used in the attack on Masha'al. Israeli–Jordanian relations teetered on the brink until it became clear that the man would recover, reflecting the King's belief that 'if Masha'al dies, the treaty is over'.<sup>36</sup> The crisis was finally defused when Israel acceded to Hussein's demand that it release tens of Hamas operatives from Israeli jails, including the charismatic Hamas leader, Sheikh Ahmad Yasin.

Although the King's regard for Netanyahu never improved, the two men worked together in the context of the Palestinian–Israeli negotiations at the Wye Plantation in Virginia in October of 1998. At President Clinton's request, Hussein literally rose from his hospital sickbed to travel to Virginia to lend his diplomatic skill and moral authority to the talks that were faltering there. At the announcement of the resultant Wye Accords, the image of President Clinton, King Hussein, Prime Minister Netanyahu and Chairman Arafat standing shoulder to shoulder demonstrated that, regardless of their uneasy interpersonal relationships, contact and negotiation were taking place at the very highest levels.

Ehud Barak's victory in the Israeli elections of 1999 renewed hope that the Israeli–Jordanian agreement would finally yield the rich payoffs promised, particularly among those who held Netanyahu responsible for the difficulties the two nations had experienced since signing the treaty in 1994. But the obstacles to genuine Jordanian–Israeli normalization were not as one-sided or as simple as Netanyahu's detractors believed. Among the explanations for the ongoing chill in Jordanian–Israeli relations are economic obstacles, continuing Palestinian–Israeli strife, the struggle over Jerusalem, and the deep-seated distrust and enmity many Jordanians still

bear towards Israel, despite the best efforts of King Hussein, King Abdullah II, and Israeli officials from the prime minister down to persuade them that peace with Israel is both honourable and beneficial.

The economic payoff that peace was supposed to produce has simply not materialized. This is partly due to unrealistic expectations encouraged by the Jordanian regime as part of the campaign to convince ordinary citizens that their own economic wellbeing would improve after the treaty. In fact, the standard of living in Jordan actually deteriorated as real growth rates dropped from an average of 10 per cent in 1992–94, to 5.6 per cent in 1995, and then to a mere 1.5 per cent in 1996–98, a rate well below the natural population growth rate.<sup>37</sup> The reality of Jordan's struggling economy and its people's ongoing hardship is a critical factor in the rapid erosion of Jordanian support for the treaty. Peace was supposed to 'invigorate the Jordanian economy through enhanced exports to Israel, heightened tourist activity, increased international investment, reduced military spending, and technology transfer'.<sup>38</sup> Of these, only tourism increased significantly, although not to the extent anticipated, suppressed by the threat of terrorism and regional insecurity.

In a throwback to the traditional pattern of Arab–Israeli interactions, each side explains the economic bust by questioning the purposes and motives of the other. Israel decries the fact that Jordan's professional unions and business community blackball those members who undertake joint ventures with Israel or travel there.<sup>39</sup> Many Israeli proposals for cooperative projects cannot find Jordanian partners. Together, Jordan's thirteen professional associations, Islamist-dominated, are 'the most vocal and active component of Jordan's anti-peace movement, which rejects any normalization of ties with Israel'.<sup>40</sup> Israelis also point out that continued political instability throughout the Middle East, even in the distant Gulf region, inhibits international investment in prospective Israeli–Jordanian projects.

Jordanians argue that along with standard Israeli bureaucratic complications, deliberate Israeli impediments – in the form of non-tariff barriers, protectionism under a security pretext, and a desire to retain the West Bank as a captive market – are responsible for the negligible increase in Jordanian exports to Israel and to the West Bank and Gaza.<sup>41</sup> The delay in some of the more visible projects, designed for both economic and symbolic purposes, itself seems symbolic: plans for the Aqaba Peace airport have been repeatedly renegotiated, and are now held up by Israeli environmentalists who charge that the air traffic will endanger local birds. Zeid al-Rifa'i, Speaker of the Upper House of the Jordanian Parliament, sees the airport imbroglio as further evidence that Israel simply 'doesn't appreciate Jordan's need to produce positive, tangible results'.<sup>42</sup>

The link between Jordanian–Israeli relations and the state of Palestinian–Israeli relations was brought into sharp relief by the outbreak

of the 'al-Aqsa Intifada' in September 2000. What began as widespread Palestinian demonstrations protesting a visit by Israeli hawk Ariel Sharon to the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif, turned into an unending cycle of bloody clashes throughout Gaza, the West Bank and parts of Jerusalem. This new Intifada developed into a violent referendum on the direction of the peace process, and surpassed the original Intifada of 1987–93 by the Palestinians' use of firearms and explosives and the Israeli response with tanks and missiles. Running gun battles between uniformed Palestinian police and Israeli soldiers seemed to confirm the nightmare scenarios of Oslo gone wrong. Against the backdrop of protests, shootings and funerals, Palestinian and Israeli leaders declared, with decreasing credibility, their continuing commitment to a fast-faltering 'peace process'.

The response to the new Intifada in the Arab and Muslim worlds was acute. In Jordan, support for the Palestinians brought tens of thousands of protesters into the streets of the capital. Jordanian troops forcibly held back crowds, some trying to march on the Israeli Embassy and others intending to cross the border into Israel, demanding that they be allowed to join in the Palestinian uprising. In two separate incidents, Israeli diplomats were shot and lightly wounded in Amman. The editors of the Israeli newspaper *Yediot Ahronot* rightly recognized the symbiotic connection between Israeli–Palestinian and Israeli–Jordanian relations when they wrote that, while conflict with the Palestinians would inhibit Israel's ability to maintain good relations with the Jordanian royal house, '[a]ny agreement between Israel and the Palestinians will almost certainly calm things down in Jordan and will give renewed impetus to bilateral relations ... Whether we like it or not, ... our relations with Jordan depend – for good or ill – on the will of Yasser Arafat.'<sup>43</sup>

#### THE JORDANIAN–ISRAELI TREATY: AN INTERIM ASSESSMENT

Was it worth it? Many ranking Jordanians say 'yes', that geostrategic and economic imperatives make peace with Israel a necessity for Jordan and an obvious choice, especially within the context of the regional and international flux wrought by the 1991 Gulf War and the Palestinian–Israeli Declaration of Principles in 1993.<sup>44</sup> Not having to keep the military on a war footing along the lengthy western border eases the fiscal burden of the state, which benefits as well from generous American assistance, which increased after the treaty was signed. Supporters are also at pains to point out that the King made minimal concessions but retrieved every centimetre and drop of the country's land and water.

The average Jordanian in the street, however, persists in the belief that Israel is not well-intentioned in its dealings with Jordan; that Israel seeks regional economic hegemony; that Israel wants to neutralize the Arab states via bilateral peace treaties so it can continue its aggression against

the Palestinians; that Israel wants to have its cake (peace) and eat it, too (retaining territorial buffers and military superiority).<sup>45</sup> Picking up on this disparity between the pro-peace sentiments clearly expressed by Kings Hussein and Abdullah II and the more negative attitude of the Jordanian street, former Chief of the Jordanian Royal Court, Marwan Kasim, observes that what Jordan and Israel achieved in 1994 was ‘a peace of the Palace, not of the people’, or perhaps not even peace, but only a political ‘settlement’.<sup>46</sup>

The perspective from the Israeli side is more sanguine. While admitting that ‘the peace has been less warm than [had been] hoped’, Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein considers the Israel–Jordan Treaty a definite achievement in terms of the ‘important progress’ in several areas of mutual cooperation and its survival in the face of a number of crises, including the untimely passing of its two signatories. Rubinstein, one of the treaty’s architects, believes that there are people on *both* sides striving for cooperation, and that the ‘price paid for peace in national terms’ has been for both parties ‘reasonable and fair. ... While “environmental” developments do have influence on the quality and temperature of peace,’ he writes, ‘I believe that the interest of both parties is in keeping it.’<sup>47</sup>

For Israeli scholar Asher Susser as well, the treaty was ‘definitely worth it’ – as are all peace treaties with the neighbouring states from Israel’s point of view. What Susser, a Jordan specialist at Tel Aviv University’s Dayan Centre for Middle Eastern Studies, finds especially relevant in the Jordanian case is ‘the importance of the treaty in reference to third parties, because of Jordan’s geopolitical importance as a stable and peaceful neighbour between Israel and Iraq, and as a partner to both Palestine and Israel in the forging of a stable triangle of all three in the future’.<sup>48</sup>

Popular Israeli opinion agrees, albeit with some disappointment. After an initial rush across the border to take in the sights in Amman, Petra and Jerash, Israelis’ enthusiasm for travel to Jordan has been dampened by fears for their personal safety and of a Jordanian cold shoulder. They wonder, was Jordan’s motive in making peace primarily to cement its relations with a powerful third party, the US, as per the historical pattern? And coming as it did after Arafat’s rejection of unprecedented generous offers regarding Palestinian sovereignty and Jerusalem made by Barak at Camp David in July 2000 and his reluctant and highly conditional acceptance of President Clinton’s ideas the following January, many in Israel see the new Intifada as proof that the Palestinians do not desire compromise at all, but still cling to the goal of replacing Israel in its entirety. Popular Jordanian support for the Palestinians and their uprising calls into question, for Israelis, Jordan’s commitment to the terms of a genuine coexistence with Israel. Disappointed as they are by the cold

peace with Egypt, Israelis are resigning themselves to a chilly peace to the east for the foreseeable future.

In their work together, the late Jordanian King, the late Israeli Prime Minister, and their immediate entourages did overcome most of the negative patterns of Arab–Israeli negotiating. An outstanding obstacle, however, remains the disparity between the vision of the original peacemakers, Hussein and Rabin, and that of the Jordanian and Israeli people. Jordanians maintain a high degree of hostility towards Israel and do not recognize the depths of Israel’s insecurity, born of Jewish persecution, nurtured by multiple Arab–Israeli wars, and confirmed for many Israelis by Arab support for Palestinian violence and far-reaching claims. Israelis remain largely oblivious to Jordanian fears of economic domination, and do not appreciate that the bond between Jordanians and Palestinians is such that Palestinian suffering at Israeli hands necessarily inhibits Jordanian–Israeli relations.

Within our six-point framework for analysis, Jordanian–Israeli relations have largely avoided the oft-repeated Arab–Israeli negotiation pitfalls of the past. Contact is maintained at the highest levels between the two sides’ recognized leaderships, each of which enjoys full third-party support from the United States. Well-defined areas of common interest and prospective cooperation are accepted by both sides, who also share a desire to resolve the outstanding Palestinian–Israeli issues and thereby remove that obstacle to warmer Jordanian–Israeli relations.

Trouble lies in the realms of purpose and psychology. The treaty’s architects intended for the strong Israeli economic engine to lend power to the weaker Jordanian one. Jordan was to look forward to robust trade relations with both Israel and the PA territories, and Israel was to understand that Jordan’s economic recovery was in Israel’s own best interest. Israeli policies which hinder Jordan from realizing the full economic boon envisioned in the treaty are counterproductive to the cause of peace, and only serve as ammunition for those who claim that Israel’s real purpose in making peace was to neutralize Jordan, not revitalize it.

In the psychological realm, the main obstacle is the gap between leaders who are genuinely committed to peace as a strategy and as an objective in its own right, and the people, who are still suspicious of the purposes and motives of the other and reluctant to let go of their familiar negative images of the erstwhile enemy. It is a process which will likely take generations to complete. This fault line is particularly severe in Jordan. While King Hussein truly believed that peace with Israel would benefit his country and, indeed, the entire region, he was unable to persuade his people to come to the same conclusion. The gap between the King’s convictions and those of the people was simply too large for the treaty to unfold on the ground as positively as the well-drafted words

unfolded on paper. His charisma was such, however, that even at their most disillusioned moments Jordanians held Israel responsible for the shortcomings of the peace, not the King.

For their part, Israelis largely believe that after their having embraced the peace with Jordan so wholeheartedly and having expressed great respect for Kings Hussein and Abdullah II, responsibility for peace's failure to flourish lies largely with the Jordanians. Each party sits on its respective side of the River Jordan, waiting for a gesture of goodwill from the other.

Despite the limitations in making it operational, the Jordanian–Israeli Peace Treaty of 1994 is alive and functioning at the dawn of the twenty-first century. Security cooperation between Jordan and Israel is close and effective. The long border between them is quiet; it is both good news and bad news that Jordanian forces foil attempts to infiltrate Israel from Jordan on a weekly basis. The border crossings remain open and people and goods move in an orderly manner in both directions, if not in equal measure. There is direct phone, mail and transportation service between the two countries, and their leaderships maintain open lines of communication and consultation. The pressures of the al-Aqsa Intifada have been great, but so far there is no indication that the treaty will fail under the stress. The outbreak of the Al-Aqsa Intifada caught the Jordanian Embassy in Tel Aviv in between ambassadors, and Jordan has repeatedly postponed posting its new representative. While unfortunate, this is nevertheless a sign that the treaty is working, in that it is a normal diplomatic way by which one country signals its displeasure with the policies of the other.

Although the opponents of peace point out that regional economic problems in general and Jordan's recent economic difficulties in particular seem to date from the signing of the treaty, other analysts argue that the convergence of events was coincidental, and that 'it is obvious that [these economic woes have] actually resulted from the lack of a *qualitative* peace, rather than from [the] onset [of peace itself]'.<sup>49</sup> Six years after the historic peace agreement, it was obvious that 'the dividends of peace are not self-activated; [the protagonists] must be proactive if they are to secure them'.<sup>50</sup>

Moreover, Jordanian–Israeli relations cannot be insulated from ugly realities in the immediate neighbourhood. The spillover effect of Israeli–Palestinian violence is such that one can simply not expect a full and fruitful normalization of relations between Jordan and Israel barring a settlement of the Palestinian problem. Jordanians are likely to accept whatever arrangements the Palestinians accept, including Palestinian sovereignty over parts of Jerusalem, despite historic Hashemite attachments to the city and Article 9.2 of the Jordan–Israel Treaty. Achievement of a comprehensive settlement will thus remove a tremendous obstacle to Jordanian–Israeli normalization.

But that process needs active tending if it is to survive until a comprehensive settlement is achieved. Those Israelis and Jordanians genuinely committed to normal state-to-state relations must work diligently to infuse their civil societies and their populations with the belief that peace is possible, an admittedly more difficult challenge in Jordan, where normalization is unpopular; every new outbreak of Israeli–Palestinian violence only makes it more so. Each party must understand that the other side is watching and must make broad and unmistakable gestures that signal peaceful intentions. And, most importantly, they must act quickly to produce the kinds of tangible rewards which make peace a real and positive alternative for the general population.

It won't be easy. Asher Susser points out that, with Rabin's assassination in 1995 and King Hussein's death in 1999, 'both of the statesmen whose personal rapport had given the Jordanian–Israeli peace treaty its unique sense of intimacy had passed from the scene. The web of mutual state interests between Israel and Jordan remains intact ... [b]ut the added value of the personal chemistry and the strategic rapport at the highest political level ... might prove elusive' – and critical – in the future.<sup>51</sup> After almost four years on the throne, King Abdullah II has gone far towards consolidating his power at home and earning respect abroad. But the quick turnover between prime ministers in Israel since 1995 and the polar leaps in political orientation from one to the other have made it difficult for a partnership such as that enjoyed by Hussein and Rabin to even begin developing between Abdullah II and current Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. And even should the King and Sharon strike up a positive working relationship, there is still the problem that Jordanian public sentiment regarding peace with Israel does not yet accord with the official policy of the Palace.

But the geostrategic and economic rationale for Jordanian–Israel peace remains constant, and the 1994 treaty is working well enough to sustain the commitment of the two governments. In a perfect world, the rapid conclusion of a comprehensive settlement to the Arab–Israeli conflict would allow today's functional Jordanian–Israeli relationship to become something more substantial and deep-seated. In the meanwhile, however, the imperfect peace between them is still a precious commodity to be treated with care. In spite of the uniquely prepared groundwork laid by decades of quiet Jordanian–Israeli cooperation, and despite the success of the leaders in avoiding almost all of the historic pitfalls in Arab–Israeli negotiations, the Jordanian–Israeli experience demonstrates that it is easier to negotiate peace on paper than it is to implant it in the minds and lives of ordinary men and women on the ground.

## NOTES

1. The treaty is actually the fourth in a series of Jordanian–Israeli agreements which grew out of the bilateral talks set in motion at Madrid. The other three are a ‘Draft Agenda for Peace’ (October 1992), the ‘Common Agenda’ (14 September 1993), and the ‘Washington Declaration’ (25 July 1994). For the sources of these texts, see Laura Zittrain Eisenberg and Neil Caplan, *Negotiating Arab–Israeli Peace: Patterns, Problems, Possibilities*, Bloomington, 1998, p.100, n.1.
2. Asher Susser, *Jordan: Case Study of a Pivotal State*, Washington DC, 2000, pp.93–100.
3. Eisenberg and Caplan, *Negotiating*, pp.12–14, 60–74, 90–102.
4. Anita Shapira, ‘The Option on Ghaour al-Kibd: Contacts between Emir Abdullah and the Zionist Executive, 1932–1935’, *Studies in Zionism*, Vol.2 (Autumn 1980), pp.239–83. N. Caplan, *Palestine Jewry and the Arab Question, 1917–1925*, London, 1978, pp.171–82; N. Caplan, *Futile Diplomacy, Vol. I – Early Arab–Zionist Negotiation Attempts, 1913–1931*, London, 1983, pp.51–4, 106; N. Caplan, *Futile Diplomacy, Vol. II – Arab–Zionist Negotiations and the End of the Mandate*, London, 1986, pp.11–14, 40–42.
5. Caplan, *Futile Diplomacy, I*, pp.51–4.
6. Avi Shlaim, *Collusion Across the Jordan: King Abdullah, the Zionist Movement, and the Partition of Palestine*, Oxford, 1988; Avraham Sela, ‘Transjordan, Israel and the 1948 War: Myth, Historiography and Reality’, *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.28, No.4 (October 1992), pp.623–88.
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8. Ian Lustick, *Israel and Jordan: The Implications of an Adversarial Partnership*, Berkeley, 1978, pp.1, 14–16, 22–9.
9. Aharon Klieman, *Statecraft in the Dark: Israel’s Practice of Quiet Diplomacy*, Jerusalem, 1988, pp.103–8; Lustick, chapter 3.
10. For a case study of the negotiation of the London Document, see Eisenberg and Caplan, *Negotiating*, Chapter 3.
11. *Ibid.* See also Neil Caplan, ‘Negotiation and the Arab–Israel Conflict’, *Jerusalem Quarterly*, Vol.6 (Winter 1978), pp.3–19.
12. Chris Hedges, *The New York Times*, 9 August 1994; Elaine Sciolino with Thomas Friedman, *The New York Times*, 31 July 1994.
13. For discussions of these two orientations, see Shlaim, *Collusion*, chapter 16; Aharon S. Klieman, *Israel and the World After 40 Years*, Washington DC, 1990, pp.213–32.
14. Text in Yehuda Lukacs (ed.), *The Israeli–Palestinian Conflict: A Documentary Record, 1967–1990*, Cambridge, 1992, pp.520–25.
15. Text in Eisenberg and Caplan, *Negotiating*, pp.212–16.
16. Quoted in Douglas Jehl, *The New York Times*, 26 July 1994.
17. See Stephen Zunes, ‘The Israeli–Jordanian Agreement: Peace or Pax Americana?’, *Middle East Policy*, Vol.3, No.4 (April 1995), p.57.
18. Eisenberg interview with Adnan Abu-Odeh, former political advisor to Kings Hussein and Abdullah II, Amman, 29 June 2000.
19. Dan Schueftan, ‘Jordan’s “Israeli Option”’, in Joseph Nevo and Ilan Pappé (eds), *Jordan in the Middle East: The Making of a Pivotal State*, London, 1994, p.265.
20. Clyde Haberman, *The New York Times*, 16 July 1994.
21. Adnan Abu-Odeh, *Jordanians, Palestinians and the Hashemite Kingdom*, Washington DC, 1999, p.xv.
22. *Ibid.*, pp.213, 234, 257–8.
23. Aharon Klieman, ‘Approaching the Finish Line: The United States in Post-Oslo Peace Making’, Ramat Gan, 1995, p.18.
24. *Ibid.*, pp.16–18.
25. *Ibid.*, p.17.
26. Elaine Sciolino with Thomas Friedman, *The New York Times*, 31 July 1994; Susser, *Jordan: Case Study of a Pivotal State*, p.21.
27. Jordanian–Israeli Washington Declaration, 25 July 1994, in Walter Laqueur and Barry Rubin (eds), *The Israel–Arab Reader*, 5th edn, New York, 1995, pp.655–7.



28. The text of the Treaty is in Eisenberg and Caplan, *Negotiating*, pp.217–28.
29. Elyakim Rubinstein, 'The Israel–Jordan Peace Treaty', lecture to Middle East course (in Hebrew), Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 26 February 1995, p.11.
30. Asher Susser, 'The Jordanian–Israeli Peace Negotiations: The Geopolitical Rationale of a Bilateral Relationship', *Davis Occasional Papers*, No.73, Jerusalem, 1999, pp.1, 21.
31. Garfinkle, *Israel and Jordan in the Shadow of War*, pp.83–9.
32. For an exposé of disturbing anti-Semitic themes in Jordanian publications, see Victor Nahmias, 'Israel in Jordanian eyes', *Jerusalem Post* international edn., w/e 25 January 1986, p.15.
33. Marwan Muasher, 'Jordanian Attitudes to the Peace Process', lecture by the Ambassador of Jordan to Israel, Tel Aviv University: Moshe Dayan Centre for Middle Eastern and African Studies, 12 June 1995.
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35. Text of the King's letter to Netanyahu of 9 March 1997 and Netanyahu's response of 10 March 1997 are in the *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol.XXVI, No.4 (Summer 1997), pp.154–6 and 158–9.
36. Eisenberg interview with Natheer Rashid, Member of the Upper House of Parliament, former Minister of the Interior and former Director of Intelligence, Amman, 28 June 2000.
37. Maen Nsour, 'Economic Aspects of the Peace Treaty Between Jordan and Israel', paper presented at the annual conference of the Association of Israel Studies, Washington DC, 1999.
38. Ibid.
39. Sarah Schaffer, 'No Peace Now: Jordan's young and fragile pro-peace camp is on the verge of extinction', *The Jerusalem Report*, 4 December 2000, pp.24–5.
40. Ibid.
41. Nsour, 'Economic Aspects of the Peace Treaty'; Eisenberg interview with Zeid al-Rifa'i, Amman, 30 June 2000.
42. Eisenberg interview with Zeid al-Rifa'i.
43. Summary of editorials from the Hebrew Press, 7 December 2000, provided by the Information Division of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, online at [www.mfa.gov.il](http://www.mfa.gov.il).
44. Eisenberg interview with Bassam Asfour, Chief of International Press at the Jordanian Royal Court, Amman, 27 June 2000; Eisenberg interview with Natheer Rashid.
45. Eisenberg interview with Adnan Abu-Odeh.
46. Eisenberg interview with Marwan Kasim, Amman, 29 June 2000.
47. Elyakim Rubinstein, communication with Caplan, 9 January 2001.
48. Asher Susser, communication with Eisenberg, 1 January 2001.
49. Nsour, 'Economic Aspects of the Peace Treaty'.
50. Ibid.
51. Susser, 'The Jordanian–Israeli Peace Negotiations', pp.37–8.