

# Jordanian prime minister's visit

## Jordan's future plans are ripe for investment

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AMBASSADOR OF JORDAN

On the occasion of the visit to Japan of H.E. Samir Rifai, the prime minister and minister of defense of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, it gives me great pleasure to be granted this opportunity to convey our sincerest wishes to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, and to the great friendly people and government of Japan for continued peace, progress and prosperity.



On Oct. 12, H.E. Rifai started a three-day visit to Tokyo accompanied by five ministers and other high-ranking officials in an endeavor to further enhance our unique ties, and build on the momentum created by the Royal Visit of His Majesty King Abdullah II Ibn Al-Hussein to Japan last April.

During the visit, H.E. Rifai is scheduled to meet H.E. Naoto Kan, the prime minister, H.E. Takahiro Yokomichi, the speaker of the House of Representatives, H.E. Seiji Maehara, minister for foreign affairs, H.E. Akihiro Ohata, minister of economy, trade and industry,

and many high-ranking officials and leaders of Japanese companies. Issues such as mega-projects, economic cooperation, and the role Japan plays in the Middle East to advance the causes of peace, stability, and moderation will be among the highlights.

This visit reflects the strength and importance we attach to our bilateral relations, and our determination to see them grow further and stronger. We deeply appreciate how Japan has been supporting and continues to support the economic development policies of Jordan. Japan's assistance touches most Jordanians and covers many important fields and areas. The Japanese experts and volunteers, to whom our special gratitude goes, worked and are working with their Jordanian partners to aid these efforts. And we should not forget that both countries are currently working hand in hand to bring brighter hope to the lives of many in the region.

From the first day His Majesty the King assumed constitutional powers in 1999, Jordan witnessed a high-paced transformation in all aspects of life. His Majesty's vision, initiatives and personal involvement guided the develop-

ment process that lifted Jordan to where it is now. Today, we find ourselves advancing rapidly through the achievements and opportunities Jordan presents and the gateways we offer to the rest of the region. Our firm stability and security continue despite what the region witnessed during the past 11 years, presenting Jordan as a calm and modern oasis full of potential, where justice, human rights, freedom and democracy have a permanent address, and where dedication, hard work and optimism enabled this small country to achieve remarkable results in many fields such as becoming an education and medical center in the Middle East.

During that period, the average personal income of Jordanians has more than doubled, our international ratings have firmly progressed, and our investment laws and regulations have evolved steadily to address the needs and requirements of foreign investors. These and many other achievements lead to capital inflow reaching exceptional levels, thus reflecting

the trust, confidence and the attractive opportunities those investors have seen in Jordan.

Our future plans are highly bullish. Just to mention a few, we are planning to transfer Jordan from a country that imports 96 percent of its energy needs to an energy exporting country in the coming two to three decades. This energy will mainly be generated from renewable and zero-emissions sources like solar, wind and peaceful nuclear plants powered by Jordan's wealth of uranium. In addition to that, we have key water projects, especially "the Red Sea-Dead Sea water conveyor" designed to save one of the world's heritages and natural wonders, the Dead Sea, from extinction and help ease the fresh water shortage problem in Jordan and neighboring countries. Our plans also address developing Jordan's railways and road networks to better connect the Middle East with parts of Asia and Europe, utilizing Jordan's capacities in software and information technologies to cover the region, and to expand our internationally reputed pharma-

ceutical sector through joining forces with other leading international companies.

H.E. Rifai's visit brings along many messages, one in particular to the Japanese private sector, of our willingness to work together to widen their participation in our upcoming projects. These projects are not only economically feasible, but their benefits will reach beyond the borders of Jordan to others in the region, and will serve the causes of peace and stability and provide additional basis for a more sustainable development, one that will create jobs and increase hope for a better future, the fruits of which will benefit Jordan and the region.

I want to conclude by thanking The Japan Times for allowing me to use this forum to share my thoughts with their distinguished readers, and to wish our two sides successful and productive discussions, confident that these great efforts will create additional pillars to build on, serving the remarkable partnership that bonds our two countries and peoples.

Thank you.

## A brief overview of the prime minister's career



**Prime Minister of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Samir Rifai**

Samir Rifai was born in Amman in 1966, the son of former Prime Minister Zaid al-Rifai and grandson of former Prime Minister Samir al-Rifai.

Samir Rifai studied at Harvard University, receiving a bachelor's degree in Middle East Studies in 1988. He further studied at Cambridge University and obtained his master's degree in International Relations in 1989.

Samir Rifai began his career at the Royal Hashemite Court (RHC) in 1988, where he served in several departments, including the office of His Royal Highness the Crown Prince. In 1999, Rifai

was appointed as secretary general of the RHC, and was credited with implementing major administrative and financial restructuring of the RHC during his tenure. Rifai also led the Press Office and Communications Department of His Majesty King Abdullah II. In 2003, he was promoted to the position of minister of the RHC to act as the main link between His Majesty the King and the government. In April 2005, Rifai was appointed adviser to His Majesty the King, a position that he held until he accepted the position of CEO of Jordan Dubai Capital (JD Capital) in October 2005.

In addition to serving as chairman of several prominent companies, Rifai was a board member of a number of academic institutions, committees and organizations, such as King's Academy and Talal Abu Ghazaleh Academy. As part of his well-established career, Rifai assumed responsibilities on several official governmental committees and entities, including serving as chairman of the Royal Committee for promoting investments; chairman of the Amman Message Preparatory Committee; member of the Committee on Interfaith; member of the Higher Steering Committee for the Peace Process; vice chairman of the Board of the King Hussein Automobile Museum; and member of the Board of the King Abdullah Award for Excellence and Transparency in the Public Sector.

Rifai has been decorated with the Grand Cordon of the Order of Al-Kawkab Al Urduni, the Grand Cordon of the Order of Al-Istiqlal (Independence), along with several foreign decorations.

On Dec. 9, 2009, His Majesty the King appointed Rifai as Prime Minister of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.



**Valuable deal: Kiyoshi Asako (left), charge d'affaires a.i. of Japan in Jordan, and Jordan Atomic Energy Commission Chairman Khaled Toukan sign an agreement on peaceful nuclear energy cooperation in Amman on Sept. 10.** KYODO

## Heartiest Welcome

to His Excellency Mr. Samir Al Rifai,  
Prime Minister of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

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