

Jordan National Day Special

Bilateral efforts for a brighter future

RAGHED AL-SAQQA
CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF JORDAN



Today, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan celebrates its 73rd Anniversary of Independence. It is with great honor and privilege that I take advantage of this glorious occasion to express on

behalf of Their Majesties King Abdullah II Ibn Al Hussein and Queen Rania Al-Abdullah, the Royal Family, the government and people of Jordan our utmost respect and heartfelt wishes to their majesties the emperor and empress, their majesties the emperor emeritus and empress emerita, the imperial family, the government and the great and friendly people of Japan for continued peace, progress and prosperity.

Jordan is destined to face regional challenges, but addressing challenges and overcoming hardships while building a better future is the true measure of any thriving nation.

By the strong and wise leadership of His Majesty the King and the absolute resolve, unity and determination of all Jordanians, we were able to beat all odds and flourish as a nation of peace, moderation and tolerance, where all our guests feel safe and welcomed, and where our investment in the most valuable resource (our citizens) enabled us to become a leading center of education, medicine and information communications technology in our region and beyond.

Our eyes on the future are sharp and optimistic; a knowledge-based society equipping itself with cutting-edge training and investment in technologies that will shape the future of Jordan such as



Al-Khazneh, a temple carved by hand from sandstone, in the ancient city of Petra in southern Jordan. The facade has a Hellenistic architectural style. EMBASSY OF JORDAN

clean and renewable energy, mega-water projects involving desalination plants to produce much needed fresh water to ease the chronic water shortages in Jordan and neighboring countries, as well as railway networks that will further connect our region and usher in stronger inter-regional cooperation.

Jordan plays an important role in the stability and security of the Middle East. Working closely with our partners like Japan, our efforts are focused on bringing about a better future for all. Jordan's role as a shining beacon of humanity can be seen by the sheer number of refugees received over the past many decades; the most recent group of which are the some 1.3 million Syrian refugees who have fled to Jordan since 2011, supported not just by

the government, but also by the local communities where 90 percent of them currently live with care and dignity. In fact, more than 40 percent of those who live in Jordan today are considered refugees by the international community.

On this special day, we pay tribute to our true friend, Japan, which supported us on our journey, providing much needed assistance to our socioeconomic development. We offer our sincere gratitude to the hundreds of Japanese experts and volunteers who worked and are working in Jordan, demonstrating the true, honorable and magnificent fabric which Japanese are made of.

Our bilateral relations have witnessed significant growth and continue to strengthen year after year, as demonstrated during the visit of His Majesty the King to Japan from Nov. 25 to 27, last year. During that visit, and in the presence of the leaders of our two countries, an investment agreement between Japan and Jordan aiming at further protecting and promoting bilateral investments was signed, in addition to an exchange of notes for the Business Environment, Employment and Fiscal Sustainability Reform Development Policy Loan.

Also, the first Japan-Jordan strategic dialogue meeting at the level of foreign ministers was held in Amman on Dec. 14, representing a speedy and concrete materialization of the agreement reached during the November 2018 summit meeting between His Majesty the King and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to raise our bilateral relations to a strategic level.

Jordan is the home of the two-and-a-half thousand-year-old city of Petra — entirely carved in rose red stones and a living testament of the ingenuity of our ancestors — and the Dead Sea, the lowest point on earth, a globally recognized natural wonder. On behalf of all Jordanians, I

invite you to visit Jordan with “*ahlan wa sahlan*” which means, “you are welcome as one of us.”

I would like to thank The Japan Times for giving me this opportunity to share my thoughts with its distinguished readers

This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.



Salt formation at the Dead Sea, one of the saltiest bodies of water in the world and a popular tourist destination. embassy of jordan

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to the People of
the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
on the 73rd Anniversary
of Their National Day

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 **Mitsubishi Corporation**