

Jordan: Background and U.S. Relations

Updated October 20, 2026

Congressional Research Service

<https://crsreports.congress.gov>

RL33546



RL33546

October 20, 2026

Jeremy M. Sharp
Specialist in Middle
Eastern Affairs

Jordan: Background and U.S. Relations

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is an important U.S. partner in the Middle East, and the two countries have cooperated closely for decades. Issues of bilateral cooperation include countering Islamist extremism, stabilizing Iraq and Syria, promoting the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, and thwarting Iranian regional influence. Security cooperation is arguably the foundation of the U.S.-Jordanian relationship. The United States also is a significant contributor of foreign assistance to Jordan and has provided aid to key sectors, such as the kingdom's water distribution system.

During the 2026 U.S.-Iran conflict, Jordan and the U.S. forces it hosts have been targeted. As of September 2026, Iran had fired over 400 projectiles at Jordan. In July 2026, three American soldiers were killed when Iranian missiles struck Muwaffaq Salti Air Base (MSAB), a Jordanian facility used by U.S. Air Forces Central Command (AFCENT).

Jordan's long-standing policy toward Israel and the Palestinians has been to maintain its 1994 peace treaty with Israel while supporting a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that would ultimately lead to an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a pivotal issue in Jordanian politics. Though Jordan and Israel remain peaceful neighbors and continue to cooperate quietly on security issues, long-standing animosity between Jordan's King Abdullah II and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, along with broader Jordanian opposition to Israel's policies in the West Bank, has strained bilateral relations.

Over decades, U.S. assistance has helped Jordan address serious vulnerabilities, both internal and external. Jordan's small size, refugee burden, and lack of major economic resources have made it dependent on aid from various Western and Arab sources. Between FY1951 and FY2026, the United States provided approximately \$35.5 billion in foreign assistance to Jordan, making it one of the top recipients of U.S. aid globally.

On September 16, 2022, the United States and Jordan signed their fourth Memorandum of Understanding governing U.S. foreign aid to Jordan. The seven-year agreement (FY2023-FY2029), subject to appropriations of Congress, commits the Administration to seeking \$1.45 billion in annual economic and military aid for Jordan. Proposed legislation for FY2027 would increase that amount.

H.R. 8595, the National Security, Department of State, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2027, would provide a total of \$2.1 billion in foreign aid to Jordan. H.R. 9495, the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2027, would provide "not less than" \$150 million in defense appropriations for Jordanian border security and "up to" \$500 million to support the armed forces of Jordan. S. 4784, the Senate's National Defense Authorization bill, contains Section 1201, which would authorize U.S. defense assistance to the Jordanian Armed Forces through 2027 to secure Jordan's borders, increase Middle East stability, counter terrorism and Iranian-supported groups, and improve interoperability with U.S. forces. The bill also would require prior congressional notification before assistance is provided.

Contents

Overview	1
The Conflict with Iran	2
Israel, Gaza, and the West Bank	4
Jordan and Syria	6
Country Background	7
The Hashemite Royal Family	8
Political System and Key Institutions	8
Jordan Outlaws the Muslim Brotherhood; United States Designates Its Branches as Terrorists	9
U.S. Relations.....	10
U.S. Military Forces in Jordan	11
Overview of U.S. Foreign Assistance to Jordan	12
Votes on U.S. Aid to Jordan	12
Military Aid.....	12
Economic Aid	13
Economic Reforms and U.S.-Jordanian Trade.....	14
The Case of Ahlam al Tamimi	15

Figures

Figure 1. Jordan: Country Map	2
Figure 2. AC-130 Gunship Displayed at Muwaffaq Salti Air Base.....	3
Figure 3. King Abdullah II meets with Syrian President Ahmed Al Sharaa.....	6
Figure 4. King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein.....	8

Contacts

Author Information.....	15
-------------------------	----

Overview

For decades, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has served as a reliable security partner for the United States in the Middle East. Jordan's internal stability, commitment to upholding its 1994 peace treaty with Israel, and its participation in U.S.-led counter-terrorism coalitions have endured despite persistent regional conflicts along or near several of its borders (Syria, Iraq, the West Bank)¹ for almost a quarter of a century.

During the 2026 U.S.-Iran conflict, Jordan and the U.S. forces it hosts have been targeted. As of September 2026, Iran had reportedly fired over 400 projectiles at Jordan.² In July 2026, three American soldiers were killed when Iranian missiles struck Muwaffaq Salti Air Base (MSAB), a key Jordanian facility used by U.S. Air Forces Central Command (AFCENT).

To buttress Jordan both militarily and economically, the United States provides the kingdom with substantial amounts of foreign assistance. For fiscal year (FY) 2025, Jordan was the third-largest recipient of bilateral U.S. foreign aid globally after Ukraine and Israel. U.S. security assistance helps subsidize the procurement of advanced weaponry, including F-16 Block 70 fighter aircraft for the Jordanian Armed Forces (JAF). U.S. economic assistance, specifically direct budget support (\$845.1 million annually), subsidizes Jordan's national budget, providing nearly 6% of government revenues in 2025.³

Jordan and Israel remain at peace and continue to cooperate quietly on security issues. Nevertheless, long-standing animosity between Jordan's King Abdullah II and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, along with broader Jordanian opposition to Israel's policies in the West Bank and elsewhere, has strained bilateral relations.⁴ The Palestinian issue resonates deeply with many Jordanians, a majority of whom are of Palestinian origin. In a September 2026 speech before the United Nations General Assembly, King Abdullah II highlighted Israeli settler violence in the West Bank and criticized Israeli government settlement policies, warning that the "Israeli government's expansionist appetite is now a regional threat."⁵

On a bipartisan basis, Congress has long supported Jordan through the appropriations process.⁶ For FY2027, President Donald Trump has requested \$1.45 billion for Jordan, consistent with the seven-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on U.S. foreign aid to Jordan. Congress, in turn, has proposed to substantially increase that amount. For FY2027, H.R. 8595, the FY2027 National Security, Department of State, and Related Programs Appropriations bill, would provide \$2.1 billion in total economic and military aid to Jordan. In addition, outside the scope of the current MOU, H.R. 9495, the FY2027 Department of Defense Appropriations Act, would provide not less than \$150 million for Jordan border security reimbursement.

¹ The U.S. Board on Geographic Names and Department of State refer to the territory as the West Bank. See <https://fam.state.gov/FAM/05FAH03/05FAH030410.html>. Some U.S. lawmakers and some Israelis refer to the territory as "Judea and Samaria," the biblical names for the region. Recognizing Judea and Samaria Act (S. 384 and H.R. 902); Ephrat Livni, "U.S. Evangelicals Press for Annexation of West Bank," *New York Times*, March 10, 2025.

² The Institute for National Security Studies (INSS), "Live Dashboard: The Campaign Against Iran and the Shiite Axis," last updated September 2, 2026.

³ "Government Approves 2025 General Budget Draft Law," *Jordan Pulse*, November 21, 2024.

⁴ Emily Milliken, "Jordan-Israel Security Cooperation Continues Quietly but Unabated," Atlantic Council, May 27, 2025; and Ofir Winter, "New Biography of King Abdullah II Reveals What Israel Has Missed," Strategic Assessment, INSS, November 2025.

⁵ King Abdullah II Official Website, "King Delivers Jordan's Address at 81st UNGA," September 22, 2026.

⁶ Ben Fishman, "Congressional Funding Increase Not Enough to Strengthen State Department," PolicyWatch #4090, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, August 13, 2025.

Beyond security assistance, U.S. economic aid helps Jordan address its acute water shortages.⁷ As one of the most water-deprived countries in the world, Jordan seeks U.S. support in both increasing water-use efficiency and developing new sources of freshwater (see below).

The Conflict with Iran

Prior to the 2026 U.S.-Iran conflict, Jordan had been affected by periodic confrontations involving Iran and Israel, as well as Iranian-supported groups and the United States. In January 2024, three U.S. service personnel serving in Jordan were killed and more than 40 were injured when an uncrewed aerial system (UAS, or drone) attack attributed to Iran-backed Iraqi militias struck a military base in Jordan near the Syrian border. During the 12-day war between Israel and Iran in June 2025, Jordan again found itself in the crossfire of conflict. As Israel conducted sorties against Iran and Iran responded with missile and drone attacks, shrapnel from interceptors, drones, and missiles fell on Jordanian territory, injuring several Jordanians and causing some property damage.⁸

Figure 1. Jordan: Country Map



Source: CRS using U.S. State Department and ESRI resources.

⁷ "Jordan, US Sign \$78.2m Deal to Prepare Water Networks for National Carrier Supplies," *Jordan Times*, May 17, 2026.

⁸ Nurit Yohanan, "Caught in the Crossfire, Jordan (Quietly) Shields Israel as Iranian Shrapnel Rains Down," *Times of Israel*, June 24, 2025.

Before the launch of Operation Epic Fury in February 2026, MSAB served as a key logistical hub for U.S. C-17 airlifts and a stationing location for combat aircraft.⁹ Once hostilities began, Jordan condemned Iranian attacks against it and, according to one analysis, “avoided framing the strikes as attacks on the U.S. presence in the country, instead portraying them as violations of Jordanian sovereignty.”¹⁰ Due to public sensitivities over the presence of U.S. troops in the kingdom, Jordanian officials have stressed that “there are no American bases in Jordan,” noting instead that bilateral defense agreements govern the presence of U.S. forces in a manner that respects Jordanian sovereignty.¹¹

Since February 2026, Iran has inflicted some damage against Jordanian defense facilities hosting U.S. troops. According to media accounts, Iran has struck a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missile battery and MSAB multiple times, reportedly damaging aircraft hangars, barracks, and combat aircraft.¹² In July 2026, three American soldiers were killed when Iranian missiles struck MSAB. During an Iranian missile barrage against Jordan in September 2026, U.S. forces fired “60 to 70 Patriot interceptors [costing tens of millions of dollars] to counter the attack, which consisted of about 20 ballistic missiles.”¹³

No Jordanian civilians have been killed in the Iran conflict, the economic impact of which has been mixed. On the one hand, tourist visits are down and fuel prices are up, while, on the other, exports have increased and Jordan’s southern port of Aqaba has emerged as a transshipment hub for bypassing the Strait of Hormuz.¹⁴ Iran’s attempts to control the Strait of Hormuz have revived discussion of long-standing plans to construct a one-million-barrel-per-day oil pipeline from Iraq to Jordan, though substantial cost hurdles remain.¹⁵

Figure 2. AC-130 Gunship Displayed at Muwaffaq Salti Air Base



Source: DVIDS, Demond Dean, Combined Special Operations Joint Task Force-Central, September 19, 2023.

⁹ Ghaith al-Omari and David Schenker, “Jordan’s Wartime Balancing Act,” PolicyWatch #4202, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, April 15, 2026.

¹⁰ Ahmad Sharawi and Behnam Ben Taleblu, “Iran Wants to Punish Jordan for Hosting U.S. Forces,” Policy Brief, Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, June 12, 2026.

¹¹ Raja Abdulrahim, “Why Jordan Hosts U.S. Troops Even as That Makes It a Target,” *New York Times*, July 23, 2026.

¹² Thomas Bordeaux and Gianluca Mezzofiore, “Radar Bases Housing Key US Missile Interceptor Hit in Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and UAE, Satellite Images Show,” CNN, March 6, 2026; “War in the Gulf Has Weakened Two of America’s Arab Allies,” *The Economist*, August 10, 2026; Michael R. Gordon, Lara Seligman and Robbie Gramer, “Iran Missile Struck Housing Units for U.S. Troops at Jordan Base,” *Wall Street Journal*, July 20, 2026; David S. Cloud, “Jordan Is Learning Its U.S. Alliance Has a Price in the Iran War,” *Wall Street Journal*, August 2, 2026.

¹³ Jared Malsin, Summer Said and Shelby Holliday, “U.S. Burns Through Interceptors—Over 70 Patriots, Thaads Were Used to Blunt a Recent Iranian Attack on Jordan,” *Wall Street Journal*, September 16, 2026.

¹⁴ Economist Intelligence Unit, “One-Click Report: Jordan,” *Viewpoint*, September 10, 2026.

¹⁵ “FACTBOX-Alternative Routes for Middle East Oil and Gas Due to Hormuz Disruption,” Reuters, April 21, 2026.

Israel, Gaza, and the West Bank

Jordan's long-standing policy toward Israel and the Palestinians has been to maintain its 1994 peace treaty with Israel while supporting a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that would ultimately lead to an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital. As previously mentioned, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a pivotal issue in Jordanian politics. According to polling, Jordanian public opinion overwhelmingly supports Palestinian aspirations for statehood while opposing the normalization of relations with Israel – even in the event of a two-state scenario in which Israel and a Palestinian state coexist.¹⁶

Holy Sites in Jerusalem¹⁷

Per arrangements dating back to 1967 (when the Israeli military seized East Jerusalem—including its Old City—from Jordan) and then subsequently confirmed in the 1994 Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty, Israel acknowledges a continuing role for Jordan vis-à-vis Jerusalem's historic Muslim shrines.¹⁸ A Jordanian *waqf* (or Islamic custodial trust) has long administered the Temple Mount (known by Muslims as the Haram al Sharif or Noble Sanctuary) and its holy sites, and this role is key to bolstering the religious legitimacy of the Jordanian royal family's rule. Jordanian monarchs trace their lineage to the Prophet Muhammad. Disputes over Jerusalem that appear to circumscribe King Abdullah II's role as guardian of the Islamic holy sites create a domestic political problem for the king. Jewish worship on the Mount/Haram is officially prohibited under a long-standing "status quo" arrangement that dates back to the era of Ottoman control during the centuries before World War I. Since the formation of Israel's current coalition government, several high-level Israeli ministers have visited the Temple Mount/Haram al Sharif, and the Israeli police have maintained fewer practical constraints on Jewish prayer.¹⁹

As previously mentioned, Jordanian-Israeli relations are functional but cold. Beyond strains between the two countries' leaders, Jordan also finds itself dependent on Israel for vital resources, such as natural gas and water. Under a 2016 arrangement, Jordan imports natural gas from Israel's offshore Leviathan field; Israeli gas might constitute as much as a third of the energy needed for Jordan's electricity generation.²⁰ In 1997, three years after the signing of their peace treaty, Israel and Jordan reached an interim arrangement under which Israel began providing Jordan with freshwater from Lake Tiberias (the Sea of Galilee). In 2021, Israel agreed to sell Jordan 50 million cubic meters of additional water annually from the Sea of Galilee and had continued to do so until 2026; It reportedly stopped due to dissatisfaction with anti-Israel rhetoric emanating from high level Jordanian officials.²¹

Jordan is a key external actor cooperating with Israel and international organizations to provide humanitarian assistance to Gaza. The "Jordan Corridor" is an overland logistics route through which aid convoys travel from Jordan, through the West Bank and Israel, before entering Gaza via the Kerem Shalom crossing. Since 2023, on two occasions Jordanian truck drivers have

¹⁶ Arab Barometer Wave IX, Jordan Report, September 2026.

¹⁷ For more information on Jerusalem and its holy sites, see CRS Report RL33476, *Israel: Background and U.S. Relations*, by Jim Zanotti.

¹⁸ Article 9, Clause 2, of the 1994 Israel-Jordan peace treaty says that "Israel respects the present special role of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in Muslim Holy shrines in Jerusalem. When negotiations on the permanent status will take place, Israel will give high priority to the Jordanian historic role in these shrines." In 2013, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) reaffirmed in a bilateral agreement with Jordan that the King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan will continue to serve as the "Custodian of the Holy Sites in Jerusalem," a title that successive Jordanian monarchs have used since 1924.

¹⁹ Sam Sokol, "Ben Gvir Waves Israeli Flag on Temple Mount with Far-Right MK Who Calls 'To Get Rid of All the Mosques, Construct the Temple,'" *Times of Israel*, May 14, 2026.

²⁰ Doron Peskin, "Israel Gas Cutoff Exposes Deep Energy Divide Between Jordan and Egypt," *Calcalist*, April 2, 2026.

²¹ Lazar Berman, "Parched Jordan Fuming at Israeli Refusal to Renew Expired Water Deal—Report," *Times of Israel*, July 7, 2026.

committed violent acts against Israeli soldiers and civilians at the Allenby/King Hussein Bridge crossing from Jordan into the West Bank.²²

Under the Jordan Medical Corridor Initiative, Jordan provides medical treatment to Palestinian children who have been temporarily evacuated from Gaza by the JAF and the World Health Organization (WHO). Jordanian charities and trusts, such as the Jordanian National Red Crescent Society and the Jordan Hashemite Charity Organization, are active sponsors of health programs in Gaza and the West Bank. Jordan also operates two military field hospitals in Gaza and one in the West Bank. Jordanian staff have been injured in shelling of field hospitals in Gaza.

With Gaza's future governance still unresolved, Jordan may allow some personnel from a future Palestinian police force for Gaza to be trained inside Jordan (Egypt has reportedly started training some others).²³ Jordan is home to the Jordan International Police Training Center (JIPTC), which was first used to train Iraqi security forces after the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq and has since been used to train Palestinian Authority security forces based in the West Bank.

Compared with Gaza, which does not share a border with Jordan, developments in the West Bank are generally of greater concern to Jordanian policymakers. Jordanian officials may fear that instability in the West Bank could destabilize the kingdom, particularly if it leads to an influx of Palestinian refugees.²⁴ Over the past several years, there have been frequent attempts to smuggle weapons into the West Bank from Jordan.²⁵ Jordanian leaders also have periodically condemned the actions of certain Israeli government figures who have, in their view, undermined King Abdullah II's custodianship and administration of the Temple Mount/Haram al Sharif in Jerusalem.²⁶ Finally, Jordan has continued to condemn Israeli settlement construction and settler violence against Palestinians in the West Bank.²⁷ Jordan likely welcomed President Donald Trump's September 2025 declaration that he would not allow Israel to unilaterally annex the West Bank.²⁸

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has long operated in Jordan.²⁹ According to UNRWA, more than 2.39 million registered Palestine refugees (comprising original refugees and certain descendants) live in Jordan, the largest number of registered refugees of all UNRWA field sites, with 18% of all registered refugees living in the

²² "Aid Driver Kills Two Israeli Military Personnel at Jordan Border Crossing," Reuters, September 18, 2025.

²³ International Crisis Group, "Hollow Promises: Resetting Gaza's Ceasefire," Middle East Report N°257, August 24, 2026.

²⁴ "Why Egypt and Other Arab Countries Are Unwilling to Take in Palestinian Refugees from Gaza," Associated Press, October 18, 2023.

²⁵ Emanuel Fabian, "IDF Says It Thwarted Attempt to Smuggle Weapons from Jordan into Israel via Drone," *Times of Israel*, September 24, 2026; Jonathan Spyer, "Tracking Iran's Weapons Route into the West Bank," *Jerusalem Post*, July 5, 2024.

²⁶ "Israeli Minister Sparks Anger by Praying at Sensitive Jerusalem Holy Site," BBC News, August 3, 2025.

²⁷ Qatar News Agency, "Jordanian Foreign Minister Warns of Continued Settlement Expansion Undermining Peace Prospects, Two-State Solution Efforts," November 29, 2025.

²⁸ "President Trump Signs Executive Orders," CQ Newsmaker Transcripts, September 25, 2025; "Read the Full Transcript of Donald Trump's Interview on the Gaza Ceasefire With TIME," *Time*, October 23, 2025, and Sean Yom, "Jordan Sees Bigger Threat From Israel Than Iran," *ForeignPolicy.com*, August 31, 2026.

²⁹ See CRS In Focus IF12863, *UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA): Background and U.S. Funding Trends*, by Rhoda Margesson and Jim Zanotti.

10 recognized camps inside Jordan.³⁰ For 2025, UNRWA estimates that it required at least \$159 million for operations inside Jordan.³¹

Jordan and Syria

As Syria's transitional government seeks international support and investment, Jordanian authorities have pursued cautious, pragmatic engagement. The Jordanian-Syrian Higher Coordination Council serves as the two countries' official forum for advancing trade and investment initiatives. In 2025, bilateral trade rose substantially.³² Narcotics trafficking from Syria into and through Jordan continues to pose a challenge for Jordanian law enforcement.³³

Jordan remains an important location for U.S. policy engagement on Syria - Combined Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve (CJTF-OIR) moved its headquarters to Jordan in 2026 and coordinates counterterrorism engagements with Syrian government forces from Jordan, and the State Department's Syria Regional Platform operates in part from U.S. Embassy Amman.

Since the fall of the Asad regime, Jordanian officials have publicly denounced Israeli incursions into Syria and the expansion of Israel's zone of control there.³⁴ However, according to Jordanian officials, they have privately assured Israel that Jordan would not allow shared adversaries, such as Iran-supported groups or foreign terrorist fighters, to threaten either country.³⁵ Jordan also has served as an intermediary between Syria and Israel, hosting direct talks between the two sides.³⁶

UN agencies report that there were 343,142 registered Syrian refugees in Jordan as of August 2026; some have resided in camps or have lived among the general populace for over 12 years.³⁷

Figure 3. King Abdullah II meets with Syrian President Ahmed Al Sharaa

February 2025



Source: The Royal Hashemite Court, February 26, 2025.

³⁰ UNRWA, "Where We Work," available at <https://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/jordan>; see also <https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/refugees> and CRS Report RL34074, *The Palestinians: Background and U.S. Relations*, by Jim Zanotti.

³¹ See <https://www.unrwa.org/how-you-can-help/how-we-spend-funds/core-programme-budget>.

³² Armenak Tokmajyan, "Syria and Jordan by the Numbers," Diwan, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace's Middle East Program and the Malcolm H. Kerr Carnegie Middle East Center, June 2, 2026.

³³ Khaled Yacoub Oweis, "Jordan's Air Raids on Syrian Border Highlight Emergence of New Breed of Drug Smugglers," *The National* (UAE), May 4, 2026.

³⁴ Burcu Ozcelik, "Israeli Attacks on Syria Risk Destabilizing Jordan," *ForeignPolicy.com*, May 7, 2025.

³⁵ CRS conversation with Jordanian officials, May 8, 2025.

³⁶ Christina Goldbaum, "Syria and Israel Hold U.S.-Mediated Talks to Try to Ease Tensions," *New York Times*, August 24, 2026.

³⁷ See <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria>.

Country Background

Jordan, which was created by colonial powers after World War I and gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1946, initially consisted of desert or semidesert territory east of the Jordan River, inhabited largely by people of Bedouin tribal background, the original “East Bank” Jordanians.³⁸ The establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 brought hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees to Jordan, which subsequently unilaterally annexed a Palestinian enclave west of the Jordan River known as the West Bank—later captured by Israel in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War.³⁹ The “East Bank” Jordanians, though probably no longer a majority in Jordan, remain predominant in the country’s political and military establishments and form the bedrock of support for the Jordanian monarchy. Jordanians of Palestinian origin make up an estimated 55% to 70% of the population. They tend to gravitate toward employment in the private sector, most likely due to their alleged general exclusion from certain public-sector and military positions.⁴⁰ According to Marwan Muasher, a former Jordanian foreign minister and current vice president at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

Although the Jordanian constitution affirms that all citizens are equal before the law, the Jordanian establishment—the so-called East Jordanians, or the population in Jordan before 1948—never fully accepted that new order. The unwritten position is that Jordanians of Palestinian origin have to fully absorb the Jordanian identity, as defined by the East Jordanians pre-1948, no matter what the numbers of both communities are, out of fear that East Jordanian identity was in danger. This tension over identity remains unresolved.⁴¹

³⁸ For historical background, see Library of Congress, Federal Research Division, *Country Profile: Jordan*, September 2006.

³⁹ Though there was little international recognition of Jordan’s 1950 annexation of the West Bank, Jordan maintained control of it (including East Jerusalem) until Israel took military control of it during the June 1967 Arab-Israeli War, and Jordan maintained its claim to it until relinquishing the claim to the PLO in 1988. In an address to the nation, the late King Hussein stated on July 31, 1988, that “We respect the wish of the PLO, the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, to secede from us as an independent Palestinian state.” See http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/88_july31.html.

⁴⁰ Speculation over the ratio of East Bankers to Palestinians (those who arrived as refugees and immigrants since 1948 and their descendants) in Jordanian society is a sensitive domestic issue. Jordan last conducted a national census in 2015, and it is unclear whether or not the government maintains such national-origin statistics. Over time, intermarriage has made it more difficult to discern distinct differences between the two communities, though divisions do persist.

⁴¹ Marwan Muasher, “Jordan’s Redline on Admitting Palestinians Is Unlikely to Change,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, November 21, 2023.

The Hashemite Royal Family

Jordan is a hereditary constitutional monarchy under the Hashemite family, which claims descent from the Prophet Muhammad and once ruled the Hejaz and Muslim holy cities that are now in western Saudi Arabia. King Abdullah II (age 64) has ruled the country since 1999, when he succeeded to the throne upon the death of his father, the late King Hussein, who had ruled for 47 years. Educated largely in Britain and the United States, King Abdullah II had earlier pursued a military career, ultimately serving as commander of Jordan's Special Operations Forces with the rank of major general.

The king's son, Prince Hussein bin Abdullah (born in 1994), is the designated crown prince.⁴² While Crown Prince Hussein, like his father, is a graduate of the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, his official duties have focused less on national security and more on building a culture of technological entrepreneurship in the kingdom. Currently, Crown Prince Hussein is leading the National Council for Future Technology aimed at boosting Jordan's artificial intelligence-related sector.

Figure 4. King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein



Source: Alexandros Michailidis/Shutterstock.com.

Political System and Key Institutions

The Jordanian constitution, most recently amended in 2022, gives the king broad executive powers.⁴³ The king appoints the prime minister and may dismiss him or accept his resignation. He also has the sole power to appoint the crown prince, senior military leaders, justices of the constitutional court, and all members of the senate, as well as cabinet ministers. The constitution enables the king to dissolve both houses of parliament and postpone lower house elections for two years.⁴⁴ The king can circumvent parliament through a constitutional mechanism that allows the cabinet to issue provisional legislation when parliament is not sitting or has been dissolved.⁴⁵ The king also must approve laws before they can take effect, although a two-thirds majority of both houses of parliament can modify legislation. The king also can issue royal decrees, which are not subject to parliamentary scrutiny. The king commands the armed forces, declares war, and ratifies treaties. Article 195 of the Jordanian Penal Code prohibits insulting the dignity of the king (*lèse-majesté*), with criminal penalties of one to three years in prison. Article 38 of the constitution grants the king the power to issue pardons.

⁴² In July 2009, King Abdullah II named Prince Hussein (then 15 years old) as crown prince. The position had been vacant since 2004, when King Abdullah II removed the title from his half-brother, Prince Hamzah. Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdullah II, now 32, is a graduate of Georgetown University and the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (UK). He holds the rank of second lieutenant in the Jordanian Armed Forces.

⁴³ In the past 15 years, Jordan's constitution has been amended three times (2011, 2016, and 2022).

⁴⁴ The king also may declare martial law. According to Article 125, "In the event of an emergency of such a serious nature that action under the preceding Article of the present Constitution will be considered insufficient for the defense of the Kingdom, the king may by a Royal Decree, based on a decision of the Council of Ministers, declare martial law in the whole or any part of the Kingdom." See Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Constitutional Court, "Jordanian Constitution," available at <https://cco.gov.jo/en-us/Jordanian-Constitutional>.

⁴⁵ Amendments to Article 94 in 2011 put some restrictions on when the executive is allowed to issue temporary laws.

Successive Jordanian parliaments have mostly complied with the policies laid out by the Royal Court. The legislative branch's independence has been curtailed not only by a legal system that rests authority largely in the hands of the monarch, but also by electoral laws designed to produce pro-palace majorities with each new election.⁴⁶ Aided by frequent gerrymandering, in which electoral districts arguably are drawn to favor more rural, pro-government constituencies over densely populated urban areas, parliamentary elections have produced large pro-government majorities dominated by representatives of prominent tribal families.⁴⁷ In addition, voter turnout tends to be much higher in pro-government areas, since many East Bank Jordanians depend on familial and tribal connections to access patronage jobs.⁴⁸

Jordan's constitution provides for an independent judiciary. According to Article 97, "Judges are independent, and in the exercise of their judicial functions they are subject to no authority other than that of the law." Jordan has three main types of courts: civil courts, special courts (some of which are military/state security courts), and religious courts. State security courts administered by military and civilian judges handle criminal cases involving espionage, bribery of public officials, trafficking in narcotics or weapons, black marketeering, and "security offenses."⁴⁹ Religious courts for both Muslims and Christians adjudicate matters of personal status, including marriage, divorce, child custody, and inheritance.⁵⁰ The king may appoint and dismiss judges by decree, though in practice a palace-appointed Higher Judicial Council manages court appointments, promotions, transfers, and retirements.

Jordan Outlaws the Muslim Brotherhood; United States Designates Its Branches as Terrorists

The global democracy monitoring organization Freedom House rates Jordan as "partly free," noting that "media and civil society groups are hampered by restrictive laws and government pressure."⁵¹ Within this context, Jordan's branch of the Muslim Brotherhood has historically been one of the kingdom's strongest opposition groups. For years, the Jordanian government's permissive attitude toward the Brotherhood reflected the palace's accommodationist approach toward some nonviolent political Islamist movements—provided that those groups respected monarchical rule. Overall, Jordanian authorities' tolerance for organized opposition has waxed and waned depending on both the external security situation and the state of the economy.

Since the October 7, 2023 Hamas attacks against Israel and subsequent conflicts in Gaza, Lebanon, and Iran, Jordanian authorities have opted for a harsh public response to both alleged Brotherhood militancy and the organization's political activities.⁵² In April 2025, Jordanian authorities arrested 16 members of the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood, including two members of its leadership, for allegedly acquiring and manufacturing weapons (explosives, rockets, and

⁴⁶ Kristen Kao, "How Jordan's Election Revealed Enduring Weaknesses in Its Political System," *Washington Post*, October 3, 2016.

⁴⁷ Rachel Bessette, "Jordan's Parliamentary Elections: Why They Do (and Don't) Matter for the Kingdom's Future," *Lawfare*, September 29, 2016.

⁴⁸ Sean L. Yom, "Tribal Politics in Contemporary Jordan: The Case of the Hirak Movement," *Middle East Journal*, vol. 68, no. 2 (Spring 2014), pp. 229-247.

⁴⁹ See U.S. Embassy in Jordan, "Jordanian Legal System," available at <https://jo.usembassy.gov/jordanian-legal-system/>.

⁵⁰ U.S. Department of State, *2022 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Jordan*.

⁵¹ Freedom House, "Freedom in the World 2026: Jordan," available at <https://freedomhouse.org/country/jordan/freedom-world/2026>.

⁵² Ghaith al-Omari, "The Brotherhood May Have Pushed Jordan Too Far This Time," *PolicyWatch 4032*, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, April 22, 2025.

drones) and coordinating their efforts with groups in Lebanon. Later that month, the Jordanian government announced an outright ban on the organization, prohibiting it from operating in the kingdom.⁵³ On July 22, 2025, the Brotherhood announced that it had permanently dissolved itself, stating that dissolution was in the “national interest.”⁵⁴ In October 2025, Jordan’s State Security Court sentenced nine Jordanians in multiple cases involving the previously mentioned alleged plots to acquire weapons and destabilize the kingdom. A few defendants were acquitted, and the cases may be appealed to Jordan’s highest court.⁵⁵

In January 2026, the U.S. Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), pursuant to Executive Order 13224, as amended, designated branches of the Muslim Brotherhood, including its Jordanian branch, as Specially Designated Global Terrorists for providing material support to Hamas. In its designation announcement, OFAC charged that

Muslim Brotherhood members in Jordan, in cooperation with entities abroad, have engaged in manufacturing rockets, explosives, and drones, as well as recruitment operations. Elements with connections to the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan and abroad have facilitated this work by raising money through illegal means.⁵⁶

The Islamic Action Front (IAF), historically the political arm of the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood, has long operated legally as a registered political party and is the largest opposition party in Jordan’s parliament, having won 31 of 138 seats in the 2024 parliamentary elections. In early 2026, Jordan’s Independent Election Commission ordered the IAF to change its name and bylaws to comply with a 2022 Jordanian law that prohibits political party names with religious or ethnic connotations.⁵⁷ The IAF subsequently changed its name to the Ummah Party (“Nation”). Despite this rebranding, some outside groups critical of the Brotherhood’s activities have noted the commingling of Ummah Party and Muslim Brotherhood leadership.⁵⁸ The next parliamentary elections are scheduled for November 2028.

U.S. Relations

Successive Administrations have maintained close cooperation with Jordan, as bilateral relations have focused on an array of regional and international issues over the years, including countering Islamist extremism, stabilizing Iraq and Syria, promoting the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, and thwarting Iranian regional influence. As discussed below, security cooperation is arguably the foundation of the U.S.-Jordanian relationship. The United States also is a significant contributor of foreign assistance to Jordan and has provided aid to key sectors, such as the kingdom’s water distribution system.

⁵³ While the government had closed the group’s headquarters in 2016, and a 2020 court ruling had ordered the disbanding of the Brotherhood, authorities had not completely shut down the Brotherhood until 2025.

⁵⁴ “Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan Officially Dissolves Itself amid Security Crackdown,” *Al Bawaba News*, July 22, 2025.

⁵⁵ “After Banning Group, Jordan Sentences Nine in Muslim Brotherhood ‘Terrorist’ Plot,” *The Arab Weekly*, October 9, 2025.

⁵⁶ U.S. Department of the Treasury, “Treasury and State Departments Designate Muslim Brotherhood Branches as Terrorist Organizations,” January 13, 2026.

⁵⁷ Independent Election Commission, Political Parties Law No. (7) of 2022, available at <https://iec.jo/en/node/22725>.

⁵⁸ Ahmad Sharawi, “Jordan’s Muslim Brotherhood Wing Opts for a Cosmetic Rebrand,” Policy Brief, Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, May 1, 2026; and Sharawi, “The Muslim Brotherhood Still Controls Jordan’s Rebranded Ummah Party,” Policy Brief, Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, September 23, 2026.

U.S. Military Forces in Jordan

According to the U.S. State Department, the United States and Jordan have a 1996 Status of Forces Agreement, a 2006 Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement, and a 2021 Defense Cooperation Agreement (DCA).⁵⁹ The 2021 DCA formalizes years of U.S.-Jordanian military cooperation, which became more visible at the start of CJTF-OIR against the Islamic State (IS, also known as ISIL/ISIS) in 2014. In 2026, the U.S. military repositioned troops from Iraq to Jordan as part of CJTF-OIR in a move to improve force protection.⁶⁰ In 2026, over 200 personnel from the United States and Jordan participated in the 12th iteration of Eager Lion, a joint military exercise; For over two decades, the JAF have participated in the State Partnership Program with the Colorado National Guard.⁶¹

Though the 2021 DCA governs U.S.-Jordanian military cooperation, the presence of armed U.S. military personnel in the kingdom remains a sensitive domestic issue in Jordanian politics.⁶² According to the 2021 agreement

Jordan shall provide unimpeded access to and use of Agreed Facilities and Areas to U.S. forces, U.S. personnel, U.S. contractors, and others as mutually agreed, for activities including-visits; training; exercises; maneuvers; transit; support and related activities; refueling of aircraft; landing and recovery of aircraft; bunkering of vessels; temporary maintenance of vehicles, vessels, and aircraft; accommodation of personnel; communications; staging and deploying of forces and materiel; pre-positioning of equipment, supplies, and materiel; security assistance and cooperation activities; joint and combined training activities; humanitarian and disaster relief; contingency operations; and other activities as mutually agreed by the Parties or their Executive Agents.⁶³

Since 2015, an estimated 11 American soldiers and civilian contractors have been killed in Jordan either in combat operations or by acts of terrorism.⁶⁴

As Iranian strikes against U.S. forces positioned in Gulf Arab countries continue, U.S. policymakers may be evaluating whether to relocate U.S. military personnel to Jordan based on force protection considerations connected with Jordan's greater geographical distance from Iran.⁶⁵

⁵⁹ U.S. Department of State, "U.S. Security Cooperation with Jordan," Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, January 20, 2025.

⁶⁰ "Jordan's Alliance with the US Makes the Kingdom a Target for Iranian Strikes," Associated Press, September 4, 2026.

⁶¹ U.S. Central Command, "CENTCOM Completes Exercise Eager Lion in Colorado," September 25, 2026.

⁶² Saud al Sharafat, "Critics React to US-Jordan Defense Agreement," *Al Monitor*, April 1, 2021; and Raja Abdulrahim "Jordanians' Rare Challenge to Their Leaders: Tell the U.S. to Leave," *New York Times*, July 29, 2026.

⁶³ U.S. Department of State, *Agreement Between the United States of America and Jordan with Exchange of Notes, Treaties and Other International Acts Series 21-317*, signed at Amman January 31, 2021, entered into force March 17, 2021.

⁶⁴ See "Shooting at Jordan Police Training Center Kills 5, Including 2 Americans," CNN, November 10, 2015; "Jordanian Soldier Sentenced to Life in Killing of 3 American Troops," National Public Radio, July 17, 2017; U.S. Department of Defense, "3 U.S. Service Members Killed, Others Injured in Jordan Following Drone Attack," January 29, 2024; and "U.S. Identifies 3rd Service Member Killed in Iranian Attack," NBC News, July 22, 2026.

⁶⁵ Noah Robertson, John Hudson and Susannah George, "Pentagon Weighing Smaller U.S. Military Presence in Gulf once Iran War Ends," *Washington Post*, August 18, 2026.

Overview of U.S. Foreign Assistance to Jordan

Over decades, U.S. assistance has sought to help Jordan address serious vulnerabilities, both internal and external. According to the U.S. State Department, “Jordan’s stability and security are priorities for the United States, which has provided Jordan with assistance since the late 1960s.”⁶⁶

Jordan’s small size, high refugee burden, and lack of major economic resources have made it dependent on aid from various Western and Arab sources. Between FY1951 and FY2026, the United States provided approximately \$35.5 billion in foreign assistance to Jordan, making it one of the top recipients of U.S. aid globally. Since FY2015, the United States has provided an additional \$2.8 billion in military assistance to Jordan through multiple defense appropriations accounts.

In 2022, the United States and Jordan signed their fourth Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding U.S. foreign aid to Jordan. The seven-year nonbinding agreement (FY2023-FY2029), subject to congressional appropriations, commits successive Administrations in principle to seeking a total of at least \$1.45 billion in annual economic and military aid for Jordan. When compared to the previous MOU, this fourth MOU would provide 13.7% more in annual aid and is set to last for seven fiscal years instead of five. If implemented fully, it will be the largest ever multi-year U.S. foreign assistance commitment (\$10.15 billion over seven years) to the kingdom.

Congress has appropriated aid for Jordan above amounts set forth in the MOU. P.L. 119-75, the FY2026 Consolidated Appropriations Act, provided a record \$2.1 billion in bilateral aid to Jordan, the third-largest amount globally that fiscal year, behind Ukraine and Israel, and 44% above the \$1.45 billion specified in the MOU. The same Act also provided “not less than” \$150 million in defense appropriations for Jordanian border security and “up to” \$500 million to support the armed forces of Jordan.⁶⁷ P.L. 119-60, the FY2026 National Defense Authorization Act, required a report describing all of the available authorities to provide assistance to the governments of Jordan and Lebanon. In addition, the law contained a new \$1 million authorization for cyberspace sustainment and cooperation between the United States and Jordan.

Votes on U.S. Aid to Jordan

During House floor consideration of H.R. 8595, the National Security, Department of State, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2027, lawmakers considered an amendment to eliminate all U.S. foreign assistance to Jordan proposed in the bill (\$2.1 billion total). The amendment (H.Amdt. 236) failed by a vote of 6-421. Also in the 119th Congress, during House consideration of H.R. 4016, the FY2026 Defense Appropriations bill, an amendment (H.Amdt. 56) to strike funding (up to \$500 million) to support the Armed Forces of Jordan failed by a vote of 30-400.

Military Aid

Using military aid, the JAF has procured advanced U.S. weaponry. In February 2022, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) notified Congress of the potential sale of up to 12 F-16 Block 70 fighters to Jordan estimated at \$4.21 billion. According to manufacturer Lockheed Martin, the Block 70 F-16s have more advanced radar systems, which could improve

⁶⁶ U.S. Department of State, “U.S. Security Cooperation with Jordan,” Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, January 20, 2025.

⁶⁷ P.L. 114-92, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016, authorized the U.S. Department of Defense to provide assistance, equipment, and training to specific foreign governments for border security operations. The Department is “using a secondary Department of War designation,” under Executive Order 14347 dated September 5, 2025.

interoperability.⁶⁸ The Royal Jordanian Air Force has used existing fighter aircraft to intercept drones and projectiles fired by Iran.⁶⁹ On March 19, 2026, just weeks after the start of the conflict with Iran, the State Department used emergency authority under Section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, to bypass congressional review of a \$70.5 million Foreign Military Sale (FMS) to Jordan of spare parts and repairs for its F-16, C-130, and F-5 aircraft.⁷⁰

In the context of the current conflict with Iran, the United States may prioritize enhancing Jordan's air defense capabilities in the years ahead. In early 2026, the State Department approved a \$280 million FMS to Jordan of the Ku-band Radio Frequency System (KuRFS), a radar providing 360-degree coverage and designed to detect drones and other projectiles.⁷¹ In October 2026, U.S. defense contractor RTX announced a \$729 million contract to sell the Low, Slow, Small Unmanned Aircraft Integrated Defeat System (LIDS) to Jordan, Qatar, and the U.S. Army.⁷²

Economic Aid

The United States provides economic aid to Jordan through direct budget support (cash transfers) and State Department-administered programs focusing on economic development, water, and education. The annual \$845.1 million cash transfer to Jordan, one of the largest globally, helps Jordan manage its structural fiscal deficit.⁷³ U.S. cash transfers to Jordan also help stabilize the kingdom's sovereign credit rating with international rating agencies and lenders.⁷⁴

⁶⁸ Lockheed Martin, "Falcon Forward: A New Era of F-16," available at <https://www.lockheedmartin.com/en-us/products/f-16.html>.

⁶⁹ "Jordan Air Defense Systems Intercept, Neutralize Four Iranian Drones," Jordan News Agency (Petra), July 22, 2026.

⁷⁰ U.S. Department of State, "Government of Jordan—Aircraft Repair, Return, and Spares," Foreign Military Sales: Congressional Notification, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, March 19, 2026.

⁷¹ U.S. Department of State, "Jordan—Ku Band Multi-Function Radio Frequency System (KuMRFS) Radars," Foreign Military Sales: Congressional Notification, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, February 26, 2026.

⁷² Jeremy Binnie, "RTX announces first LIDS contract for Jordan and Qatar," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, October 14, 2026.

⁷³ U.S. Embassy in Jordan, "Cash Transfer Agreement," December 13, 2023.

⁷⁴ S&P Global, "Jordan 'BB-/B' Ratings Affirmed; Outlook Stable," August 28, 2026.

Water Scarcity in Jordan and U.S. Aid

Jordan is among the most water-poor nations in the world and ranks among the 10 countries with the lowest rate of renewable fresh water per capita.⁷⁵ In July 2021, after years of delays in evaluating the now-defunct trilateral project (Israel-Jordan-Palestinian Authority) known as the Red-Dead Sea Conveyance Project, Jordan moved ahead with plans to build its own desalination plant in Aqaba, along with a water treatment facility, pumping station, and a 280-mile pipeline to carry water to Amman and elsewhere.

The estimated \$5.8 billion project, now known as the National Water Carrier Project (NCP), is slowly moving ahead with U.S. and other international support. In sum, the project aims to provide up to 40% of the kingdom's municipal water demand by 2040. The project's main partners are Jordan's Water & Irrigation Ministry and a consortium of French and Egyptian companies, such as Meridiam, Orascom Construction, VINCI Construction Grands Projets, and SUEZ. The Development Finance Corporation (DFC) is providing up to \$1 billion in debt financing and political risk insurance for the project.⁷⁶ The State Department also has pledged up to \$300 million in grant aid along with other lenders, such as the Green Climate Fund, European Development Bank, and the International Finance Corporation.⁷⁷ In March 2026, the United States and Jordan signed a \$203 million grant agreement to fund the project.⁷⁸

Economic Reforms and U.S.-Jordanian Trade

With few natural resources and a small industrial base, Jordan has an economy that is heavily dependent on external aid from abroad, tourism, expatriate worker remittances (mostly from the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, the United States, and Qatar), and the service sector. Among the long-standing problems Jordan faces are poverty, corruption, slow economic growth, and high levels of unemployment (including female and youth unemployment). As of 2026, public debt continues to be well over 100% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). According to a former U.S. diplomat to Jordan, per capita incomes in Jordan are now lower than before the 2008 global financial crisis.⁷⁹

Despite the effects of regional instability on economic activity over the past several years, Jordan's economy is slowly rebounding. The International Monetary Fund (IMF), which has extended financing to Jordan totaling \$1.2 billion (2024-2028), has praised the government's economic reforms and resilience.⁸⁰

As of October 2026, U.S. reciprocal tariffs on Jordanian exports to the United States are 10% after the July 2026 signing of the U.S.-Jordan Agreement on Reciprocal Trade.⁸¹ The agreement exempts Jordanian apparel and textile exports to the United States from tariffs.⁸² In 2001, P.L. 107-43, was signed into law, which implemented the U.S.-Jordanian Free Trade Agreement; that agreement had eliminated duties and commercial barriers to bilateral trade in goods and services. In 2025, the total volume of bilateral trade between the two countries was \$5.3 billion.

⁷⁵ See <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/ER.H2O.INTR.PC>.

⁷⁶ See https://www.dfc.gov/sites/default/files/media/documents/Public%20Information%20Summary%20-%20National%20Carrier%20Project%20Company_0.pdf.

⁷⁷ "Climate Fund Backs \$6 Billion Jordan Water Project with Its Largest Deal," Reuters, October 29, 2025.

⁷⁸ "Jordan Approves \$203 Mln U.S. Grant for Strategic Water Desalination Project," Jordan News Agency (Petra), March 17, 2026.

⁷⁹ Dan Swift, "Jordan's Economy in Peril—Here's How the US Can Help," *The Hill*, October 10, 2025.

⁸⁰ The International Monetary Fund, "Jordan: Fifth Review Under the Extended Arrangement Under the Extended Fund Facility, Request for Modification of Performance Criteria, and Second Review Under the Resilience and Sustainability Facility Arrangement—Press Release; Staff Report; and Statement by the Executive Director for Jordan," June 23, 2026.

⁸¹ The White House, "Fact Sheet: President Donald J. Trump Announces Trade Deal with Jordan," July 21, 2026.

⁸² See Annex I of the U.S.-Jordan Agreement on Reciprocal Trade at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/Jordan-Annex-I.pdf>.

The Case of Ahlam al Tamimi

Ahlam al Tamimi is a Jordanian national who was an accomplice in the 2001 suicide bombing of a Jerusalem pizza restaurant that killed 15 people, including two Americans. In Israel, she had been sentenced to life in prison but was released and returned to Jordan in 2011 as part of a prisoner exchange deal between Israel and Hamas. The U.S. Justice Department filed criminal charges against Tamimi in 2013, and those charges were unsealed in early 2017. Tamimi is on the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Most Wanted Terrorist List.⁸³ The United States and Jordan have an extradition treaty, which, according to the U.S. State Department, entered into force on July 29, 1995.⁸⁴ The United States requested Tamimi's extradition in 2017, but Jordan's Court of Cassation ruled that the extradition treaty was invalid. In November 2019, the State Department said that "the United States regards the extradition treaty as valid."⁸⁵ According to an April 2021 media account, one reason why the U.S. and Israeli governments have not applied further visible pressure on the government of Jordan to extradite Tamimi is concern for the stability of Jordan.⁸⁶ One unnamed U.S. State Department official was quoted as stating that "while [King] Abdullah has no love for Tamimi, giving her up to America would put the king in a very difficult position with his own people."⁸⁷ In 2026, the U.S. State Department's Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism Ambassador Rabbi Yehuda Kaploun and U.S. Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee posted on social media calling for Tamimi to face justice.⁸⁸

Author Information

Jeremy M. Sharp
Specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs

⁸³ Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Most Wanted Terrorist: Ahlam Ahmad al-Tamimi," available at https://www.fbi.gov/wanted/wanted_terrorists/ahlam-ahmad-al-tamimi/@@download.pdf.

⁸⁴ The kingdom's courts have ruled that Al Tamimi cannot be extradited until such a treaty is endorsed by the Jordanian parliament.

⁸⁵ U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports on Terrorism 2019: Jordan."

⁸⁶ Yonah Jeremy Bob, "Will Ahlam Tamimi Be Extradited from Jordan for the Murder of Malki Roth?," *Jerusalem Post*, April 30, 2021.

⁸⁷ Bob, "Will Ahlam Tamimi Be Extradited?"

⁸⁸ Marc Rod, "Two U.S. Envoys Call for Sbarro Bombing Terrorist Tamimi to Face Justice," *Jewish Insider*, August 10, 2026.

Disclaimer

This document was prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS). CRS serves as nonpartisan shared staff to congressional committees and Members of Congress. It operates solely at the behest of and under the direction of Congress. Information in a CRS Report should not be relied upon for purposes other than public understanding of information that has been provided by CRS to Members of Congress in connection with CRS's institutional role. CRS Reports, as a work of the United States Government, are not subject to copyright protection in the United States. Any CRS Report may be reproduced and distributed in its entirety without permission from CRS. However, as a CRS Report may include copyrighted images or material from a third party, you may need to obtain the permission of the copyright holder if you wish to copy or otherwise use copyrighted material.