16.

# מדינת ישראל

## משרדי הממשלה

פיתוח הקעת הירדן
בשיתוף עם ירדן.
(פרסומים באנגלית והשקעה מאשר ישפרל)

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Government of Israel

# Israel-Jordan
# Cooperation in the Rift Valley

Draft No.1

Introduction

Tel-Aviv, April 1994

Contents

## 1. The Rationale for Regional Cooperation

Success of the peace process hinges on two factors: rapid pace and visibility of the process, and the initiation of regional cooperation in the Middle East.

Nations in the region must be able to perceive a new climate of hope and cooperation, while animosity and distrust must diminish visibly and rapidly. As the dialogue progresses, the sides must reach constructive compromises and formulate new policy conceptions.

A precondition for a stable peace and coexistence between Israel and her neighbors is the fostering of economic cooperation, based on development and utilization of joint infrastructure and on free trade of products and services. At the same time peace, if achieved, will open to the region's nations manifold opportunities for international economic aid and improved access to the world's money and capital markets. No doubt this is an historic opportunity to raise capital in unprecedented amounts, and to actualize investment and development plans.

In the initial stages, capital will be channeled to joint national projects related to the development of infrastructure of roads, sea ports, aviation, tourism, industry and agriculture, connecting electricity grids, laying down gas and oil pipelines from the Gulf States and developing energy and water sources. The second stage will be the implementation of projects, most of which will be based on private initiative from the different economic sectors. The need for private projects and their appeal will grow substantially following peace and once infrastructure has been improved. Initiative of this nature will constitute the bridge to peace and dual existence between the Jews and Arabs, ultimately leading to growth and economic prosperity in the region.

Regional cooperation must take into account the harsh realities and disparities of the region's different economies: varying degrees of industrialization - from partial to post industrialization to agriculture-based economies, presence or absence of fuel resources. These differences may hinder the development of mutual trade and should the economies develop in undesirable directions, may even widen the gap between the economies.

Cooperation will also entail confronting social challenges such as social polarities and population explosions, which may result in instability. Every effort should be made to foster an atmosphere of moderation.

In order to create a new Middle East characterized by open borders, economic cooperation and growth, and free movement of persons, products and services, we must begin modestly, undertaking practical projects that do not require great investment or long-term changes.

## 2. Options for Economic Cooperation between Jordan and Israel

### General

The economies of Israel and Jordan share many similarities. The countries have the same topography, climate and natural resources and jointly control some of the region's most valuable natural assets - the Dead Sea, the Jordan River Basin, and the Eilat-Aqaba Gulf. Cooperation in various projects, while benefitting primarily Israel and Jordan - each of which would have to consent - would also serve to benefit other nations in the Middle East, especially the Palestinian people.

### Energy

Cooperation in regional energy projects may represent an important area of potential cooperation such as various projects in the Jordan river Basin, the oil pipelines from the Gulf States to the area, and connection of the electricity grid.

### Agriculture

Given the shared climatic and cultivation conditions in Israel and Jordan, joint agricultural research and technology exchange would benefit both countries. Preventing desertification may also be an appropriate area for cooperation. Another area of cooperation could be the manufacture and export of agricultural equipment to other Middle Eastern countries.

### Water

Potential cooperation exists in urban water supply in the Aqaba - Eilat region. Handling effluent and sewage is another area for cooperation both in Eilat and Aqaba and the rest of the Jordan Rift Valley. Another potential area is in efforts to increase precipitation.

## Tourism

The main benefits would emerge from cooperation in services, most significantly tourism in all its forms: cultural, archaeological, health, sightseeing and leisure. Cooperation is envisaged in developing tourism infrastructure and advertising joint packages, as well as in providing related services. Projects in this field would cover virtually the entire area from the Jordan River in the north to the Eilat-Aqaba Gulf in the south.

## Transportation

Cooperation potential exists in connecting roads between Jordan and Israel at various points, the joint development of a railway to the Aqaba Gulf and airports in Eilat and Aqaba. Yet another area of potential cooperation is access to Mediterranean port services for Jordan. Sailing lines on the Dead Sea for tourism purposes may be developed in cooperation.

## Industry

The Dead Sea is one of the richest areas for potash, bromine, magnesium and other minerals. The surrounding area possesses rich deposits of other materials such as phosphates. This represents an opportunity and need for cooperation in developing these resources.

## Logistics and trade

By virtue of its location and existing trade relations, Jordan can be Israel's gateway to other Arab states and would profit from developing the infrastructure and services to facilitate trade. Israel, in turn can serve as the natural gateway for Jordan's shipping to and from Europe. Jordan would enjoy reduced costs compared to shipping via the Suez Canal or around Africa. Israel may represent an important and large market for Jordanian exports such as textiles, furniture and leather goods.

Trade opportunities are unlimited. In an atmosphere of cooperation, both countries would ultimately benefit from the vast experience accumulated by the other - Jordanian construction companies through projects in the Arab world, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States in particular, and Israeli companies through international experience in Africa and other countries.

## Other service branches

Opportunities for cooperation exist in other service branches such as health and infrastructure services namely electricity, communications and transport - both land and air.

## Rift Valley canals

Numerous proposals exist between the Mediterranean and Dead Sea and the Red Sea and Dead Sea both for energy and water desalination purposes. Cooperation in evaluating the merits of the various proposals is required in order to decide on the course of action.

## 3. Cooperation in the Rift Valley

The purpose of this document, in the initial stage, is to formulate a presentation of the development options for economic cooperation in the Jordan Valley and Arava only, and to present their main characteristics for the Israeli negotiating team to the peace talks with Jordan. The options to be presented will be based primarily on proposals and material supplied by various government ministries: tourism, transportation, energy, water, agriculture, environment and communication.

### Development Options for the Jordan Valley and Criteria for their Selection

Opportunities for cooperation in the region fall into three categories:

1. Regional development options for cooperation between Israel and Jordan, mainly in infrastructure areas requiring government involvement in order to facilitate investment by private entrepreneurs.

2. Cooperation in research and development where the combined effort of both sides will serve to reduce costs and improve chances of success.

3. Other areas for cooperation between countries or public organizations which may foster business opportunities for the private sector.

The proposed presentation relates to the first category.

The main criteria according to which the projects were selected are as follows:

1. The project's contribution to strengthening infrastructure ties between countries of the region to facilitate joint exploitation of their relative advantages, advantages of demand size and structure.

2. Agreement between partners to establish the project regarding its ability to stand up to technical, economic and financial feasibility tests.

3. The project requires cooperation between the countries and entrepreneurs on both sides.

4. The manner in which the project's contribution is to be divided between the countries and the private partners will be reasonable and agreed upon by all sides.

5. The project encourages private entrepreneurs to participate in the investment, establishment and management.

# 4. Components and Elements of the Rift Valley - Master Plan

## 1. Tourism

### 1.1 Combined tours and combined marketing campaigns

1.1.1 Sightseeing and Touring Tourism (History, Archaeology and Cultural).

1.1.2 Vacation Tourism

1.1.3 Pilgrimage Tourism

1.1.4 Desert/Safari Tourism

1.1.5 Health and Spa Tourism

### 1.2 The Development of tourism infrastructure

1.2.1 The Binational Park - the lowest place on earth - the Dead Sea.

1.2.2 The Aqaba - Eilat Bay

### 1.3 Joint Ventures in Tourism

1.3.1 Joint ventures in tourism enterprises in the Rift Valley (Accommodation, Tourist Transportation, etc.).

1.3.2 Joint tourism fair in the Rift Valley

## 2. Transportation

### 2.1 Integrated Transportation Systems

2.1.1 **The Central System** - the Dead Sea Basin - infrastructure to the regional tourism and industrial complexes (roads, railroads, border crossings, marine transport).

2.1.2 **The Southern System** - the Aqaba - Eilat Bay - infrastructure to the regional tourism complexes: outlets to the Indian Ocean (roads, railroads, border crossings, airports, sea ports).

2.2 Air Transportation

2.2.1 Coordination in the development of the Aqaba - Eilat airports.

2.3 Land Transportation

2.3.1 Roads

2.3.1.1 Eilat-Aqaba.

2.4 Marine Transportation

2.4.1 Aqaba - Eilat joint port feasibility study.

## 3. Communication

3.1 Regional telecommunication cables and connections to international lines.

## 4. Energy

4.1 Connection of the national electric power grids.

4.2 Oil and Gas exploration, including Geophysics and Seismic Mapping.

4.3 Oil pipelines from the Gulf.

## 5. Water

5.1 Joint ventures in the control and use of flood water

5.1.1 The lower Jordan - Yarmuk - Rokad

5.1.2 The Arava Basin

5.2 Desalination plants in the Rift Valley (Canals to the Dead Sea, Jordan Valley, Arava Valley, Eilat-Aqaba).

5.3 Joint ventures in the exploration and use of fusile, geothermal and other sources of water (including brackish water sources in the Jordan Valley Basin).

5.4 Joint ventures in artificial rain making.

## 6. Agriculture

6.1 Joint ventures in the prevention of desertification.

6.2 Joint ventures in the development of aquaculture in the Red Sea.

## 7. Environment

7.1 Fly eradication in the Rift Valley.

7.2 Lower Jordan rehabilitation.

## 8. Research and Development

8.1 Per the above as appropriate.

8.2 Joint research and information sharing in archaeology.

8.3 Solar energy projects in the Rift Valley.

8.4 The Rift Valley hydrological data base.

# APPENDIX

# Appendix

## The Task Force for the Preparation of Development Options with Jordan

The following partial list includes all projects relating to the Jordan Valley, the Arava and the Aqaba - Eilat Gulf as detailed in Section 4 above.

## 1. Tourism

### 1.1 Combined tours and combined marketing campaigns

1.1.1 Sightseeing and Touring Tourism (History, Archaeology and Cultural).

1.1.2 Vacation Tourism

1.1.3 Pilgrimage Tourism

1.1.4 Desert/Safari Tourism

1.1.5 Health and Spa Tourism

### 1.2 The Development of tourism infrastructure

1.2.1 The Binational Park - the lowest place on earth - the Dead Sea.

1.2.2 The Four States park - The Aqaba - Eilat Bay

### 1.3 Joint Ventures in Tourism

1.3.1 Regional chains of tourism enterprises (Accommodation, Tourist Transportation, etc.).

1.3.2 Joint tourism fairs

## 2. Transportation

### 2.1 Integrated Transportation Systems

2.1.1 **The Northern System** - Irbid - Beit Shean - Haifa - to provide cargo and passenger links to the Mediterranean and regional infrastructure (roads, railroads, Jordan River passes, airports and the Haifa port).

2.1.2 **The Central System** - the Dead Sea Basin - infrastructure to the regional tourism and industrial complexes (roads, railroads, border crossings, marine transport).

2.1.3 **The Southern System** - the Aqaba - Eilat Bay - infrastructure to the regional tourism complexes; the Egyptian - Jordanian link and the outlet to the Indian Ocean (roads, railroads, border crossings, airports, sea ports).

## 2.2 Air Transportation

2.2.1 Development of regional lines and coordination between national airlines.

2.2.2 Coordination in the development of airports in the region and the provision of services to airlines (Jerusalem - Amman, Aqaba - Eilat).

## 2.3 Land Transportation

2.3.1 Roads

- 2.3.1.1 Amman - Jericho - Jerusalem.
- 2.3.1.2 Egypt - Eilat - Aqaba.
- 2.3.1.3 Haifa - Irbid.

2.3.2 Joint Ventures in Cargo and Passenger Regional Traffic.

## 2.4 Marine Transportation

2.4.1 Aqaba - Eilat joint port.

2.4.2 Joint ventures in storage, loading and unloading port enterprises (Gaza, Ashdod, Haifa).

2.4.3 A Jordanian Free Port.

## 3. Communication

### 3.1 Radio and Television

3.1.1 Regional commercial stations.

### 3.2 Telecommunication

3.2.1 Communication satellites.

3.2.2 Joint ventures in regional telecommunication - cellular phones.

3.2.3 Regional telecommunication cables and connections to international lines.

3.2.4 Joint ventures in data-base services and computer networks.

## 4. Energy

4.1 Connection of the national systems.

4.2 Oil and Gas exploration, including Geophysics and Seismic Mapping.

4.3 Oil pipelines from the Gulf.

## 5. Water

5.1 Joint ventures in the control and use of flood water

5.1.1 The lower Jordan - Yarmuk - Rokad

5.1.2 The Arava Basin

5.2 Desalination plants in the Rift Valley (Canals to the Dead Sea, Gaza, Jordan Valley, Arava Valley, Eilat-Aqaba).

5.3 Joint ventures in the exploration and use of fusile, geothermal and other sources of water (including brackish water sources in the Jordan Valley Basin).

5.4 Joint ventures in artificial rain making.

## 6. Agriculture

6.1 Joint private sector oriented Research and Development fund for agriculture and the use of water resources in the Rift Valley..

6.2 Joint ventures in the prevention of desertification.

6.3 Joint ventures in the development of aquaculture in the Red Sea.

## 7. Mines and Natural Resources

7.1 Joint ventures in the development o the Dead Sea minerals.

7.2 Joint ventures in the development of phosphate rocks and the production of derived chemicals.

7.3 Joint ventures in the development of geological data-base.

## 8. Manufacturing

8.1 Regional private sector oriented Research and Development fund.

8.2 Specialized Export Processing Zones in the Rift Valley (Textiles, Metals, etc.).

8.3 Joint ventures between firms.

## 9. Financial Markets and Investments

9.1 The establishment of investment companies for the development of the Rift Valley (including risk capital).

9.2 Joint investment promotion programs for the Rift Valley (image building, conferences, etc.).

## 10. Trade and Services

10.1 Joint ventures in the development of regional Free Trade Zones in the Rift Valley.

10.2 Joint venture in the development of private sector initiatives in vocational training in the Rift Valley.

## 11. Health

11.1 Joint ventures in the development of private sector initiatives in the health service sector to be located in the Rift Valley (hospitals, etc.).

## 12. Construction

12.1 Joint ventures in engineering and architectural design of projects in the Rift Valley.

12.2 Joint ventures in construction of projects in the Rift Valley.

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מרים

תיק שיתוף שלום

10.7.94

אל: מר עמוס הון, מנכ"ל משרד האנרגיה והתשתית

הנדון: **מחקר פליאוסייסמי של בקע ים המלח בשיתוף ה-USGS וחירדנים**

עמוס שלום.

מזה זמן מדובר על פרויקט למחקר הבקע משותף לירדנים ולמכון הגיאולוגי האמריקאי (ה-USGS). זה מחקר נוסף למחקר פצלי השמן ופוטנציאל הנפט באזור ים המלח.

במסגרת זו הוגשה הצעה מקדמית (באישורו של רן קרול) ל-US-AID שבמסגרתה ניתן לקדם ולממן תוכניות מחקר בשיתוף ארץ שלישית במימון האמריקאים ודרך ישראל.

ההצעה המקדמית אושרה עקרונית וכעת מתבקשת הצעה מפורטת (עד סוף אוגוסט). נציג ה-USGS ביקר לפני ימים מספר בירדן וקיבל את הסכמתם לפרויקט (אגב, במסמך העקרונות של ה-AID כתוב במפורש כי מדובר בישום ולימוד טכנולוגיות ישראליות, ראה מכתב מצורף).

אנחנו נערכים לבנית התוכנית המלאה.

ב ב ר כ ה,

עמוס בירן
מנהל המכון הגיאולוגי

העתק: מיכאל בייט, מינהל מדעי האדמה.



11.7.94

Date: Tue, 05 Jul 1994 10:15:18 MDT
From: bucknam@gldvxa.cr.usgs.gov
To: bein@vms.gsi.gov.il
Message-ID: <00980F77.38853AC0.4@gldvxa.cr.usgs.gov>
Subject: Paleoseismology Proposal

Dear Amos:

I received an E-mail note from Iaakov before he left for Europe about the USAID proposal for Paleoseismology of the Dead Sea Rift, but we did not complete a round of discussions about how to proceed before he left. At the time of Iaakov's note, Fred Simon was in Turkey and soon to go to Jordan. He got a positive response from the Jordanians, who have designated Besam Sunna, Head of the Geology Section, as their principal investigator.

I'd like to clarify and agree on how to proceed with preparing the proposal by the August 15th deadline. I view my role as primarily to facilitate preparation of the proposal; I am willing to start the process by preparing a first draft leaving (probably many) "to be completed" paragraphs or sections.

In developing the proposal, I look for suggestions as to how I can help in the work itself, but I do not view this project as a primary research opportunity for myself. What I have learned about the region make it clear that project will be a fascinating and challenging study, but there are a several practical considerations that will restrict my involvement.

Iaakov noted that Jordan is designated as the target country. The proposal was submitted to the AID U.S.--Israel Cooperative Development Program (CDR). From an AID information sheet:

"[CDR] seeks to strengthen the ability of 'target country' scientists to do innovative research. Empahsis is on helping scientists from the target countries... obtain Israeli technology and to collaborate with Israeli researchers. CDR focuses on problems that are especially important in target countries. It provides grant funding for target country and Israeli scientists to cooperate in joint research."

The quote seems to be the part that gives the reason for designating Jordan as the target country. If you don't have a copy of the information sheet, I can Fax a copy to you (it will be a fax of a fax). Fred's sense was that studies in Jordan and Israel could probably proceed as parallel bilateral efforts--perhaps you have other suggestions as to how to structure the proposal in the context of the CDR program.

I look forward to your comments and suggestions on proceeding with preparing a proposal for this program.

With Best Regards, Bob Bucknam

# The Valley of Peace

Shimon Peres
Minister of Foreign Affairs

# From Rift to Abundance

The Afro-Syrian Rift stretches along the Israel-Jordan border like a backbone.

It encompasses the River Jordan wending its way, snake-like, between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea; further along it embraces the Arava, which connects the Dead Sea with the Red Sea.

Yet the rift does not only serve as the border between Israel and Jordan. The central section of the Rift constitutes a territorial component of the Palestinian issue - the eastern segment of the West Bank.

This is an ancient Rift, one which has spawned a number of unique geographical phenomena: within it lies the lowest point on the Earth's surface; it contains the most saline of the world's seas; and it embraces a river holy to the three monotheistic religions.

Nature, too, has bemused itself with this Rift; three seas - three worlds: to the north, the Sea of Galilee shining as a pearl, replete with fish and birds and surrounded by flora; to the south, the Dead Sea, a body bereft of life on whose waters one can lie as if on a couch. Despite its location along the same longitude as the Sea of Galilee and despite the fact that it draws its waters from the same river, it remains a lifeless sea, devoid of fish, devoid of birds, devoid of flora. The Dead Sea, in turn, is connected by a barren strip of land to one of the most picturesque seas of the world – the Sea of Reeds or the Red Sea. This is a sea which has proven its understanding of history, when it divided itself into two, to allow passage to Moses and the People of Israel, only to wash away, in a fit of rage, Pharoah and his chariots. Since then, it has remained serene and blue, with a wind sweeping from north to south, amassing all the dirt from its northern beaches, like a giant broom, and banishing it to the distant south. At its sea-bed lie enchanted coral reefs, and in its waters swim schools of fish of the most unusual hue, as if they emerged from the spring collection of some divine fashion show.

The Rift could be left to remain as a geographic waste-land and a political confrontation zone. Or alongside this Rift a new structure of life could be built which would transform a boundary of gloom to a valley of life.

The border between us and the Kingdom of Jordan, at its southern segment, should be the Arava Wadi. But this wadi does not have established delineated contours. Further to the north, the border bisects the heart of the Dead Sea. Yet the Dead Sea, too, is incessantly changing its borders. It is shrinking, receding.

In one of my meetings with Yasser Arafat in Cairo, he insisted in his demand that we permit the Palestinians to renew construction of the "Lido" close to the shores of the Dead Sea. The "Lido" was, in its heyday, the most famous hotel on the northern Dead Sea. I told him that the "Lido" had collapsed and that the sea had fled from the hotel. But he was insistent: "I know this place. I have been there by foot," he said. I was compelled to respond that in this case his foot had remained at the same place, embedded in his memory, but the sea had gone for a walk...

From the southern tip of the Sea of Galilee to the northern shores of the Dead Sea, the Jordan River continues to wind its way - a river plundered of much of its living water, a river which contains more chlorine and salt as well, of course, as history, than fresh, sweet water. On its two shores are located military outposts, in fields covered by agricultural plastic sheeting, seeming from afar more aqueous than the river itself.

Here, the wall of politics has enshrouded itself over the wall of nature, and has become a source of concern and aggravation. But the wall of politics is also surmountable. We maintain that peace can bring a new lease of life to this entire Rift.

King Hussein maintains that in order to bring about peace, three problems must be solved: borders, water and refugees.

Inasmuch as borders are concerned, Israel has already announced that it



is prepared to return to Jordan every last vestige of sovereignty along this border, taking into consideration the ~~sole existing delineation of~~ the ~~border - that~~ of the British Mandate.

With reference to the water issue, Israel suggests that instead of arguing over water concessions - which in any event would not suffice for any of the three sides (the Jordanians, the Israelis and the Palestinians) even were they to be distributed differently, it is preferable to create new quantities of water either by substituting existing crops with others that demand only minimal irrigation, by recycling methods, or by desalinisation techniques. The time is now ripe to remove the salt from the sea and the desert from the land.

And if, indeed, we create a fertile valley throughout the stretch of the Rift, tens of thousands of refugees could inhabit the area, with the ability to live in dignity from new sources of income.

Instead of perpetuating the Rift as a region of strife between the three peoples, it could be transformed into a true valley of plenty for all the three together. Nature and reason have issued an invitation for this change: the minerals of the Dead Sea, the sensitive location of the Rift, the beauty of the nature, the varying levels of the terrain, the lands awaiting fertilization, political necessity. This is a triple invitation, for all sides.

It is possible not only to alter nature, but also to change political relationships. Indeed, a people cannot choose its neighbours, yet all peoples can choose the neighbourly relations they prefer.

Many peoples have opened their borders, since they no longer fear invading armies, expecting visitors in their stead; they have reduced their customs barriers in order to participate, in the only way possible, in the new economic understanding of our times - economies which are not economies of flags, but economies of markets. The rigid borders have become flexible, because these peoples are dependent on new forms of cooperation rather than on traditional forms of confrontation.

Unfortunately, there are still leaders who continue to bear the fear of war. They persist in hoarding military rations instead of provisions of sustenance. They fail to understand that the real success of modern leadership is no longer measured by victory in the battle-field, but by achievements in the wheat-field. Today's leaders must transform the battle-lines of yesterday into the production lines of tomorrow.

I believe that the "hunting season" in human history is over. It is now too difficult, too expensive, to conquer new hunting grounds. And it is even more arduous to compete for such spoils in a world of scientific achievement. There still exist, of course, stronger peoples and weaker peoples, but it is no longer viable to conquer the weak and carry the cost of their weakness. I am certain that if someone were to offer the British Queen all of her former colonies, she would refuse. For if she were to accept them she would drag Great Britain into bankruptcy. Modern wealth emanates more from small microchips than it does from the great markets of India. In the contemporary era, scientific and technological creativity have come to replace political and economic coercion.

Several of our Arab neighbours have expressed their concern that were a common market to be established in the Middle East, or were a free trade area to be created, the Israeli economy would attempt to dominate them. This constitutes a basic misunderstanding: modern economies are no longer built on domination, but on competition. No longer can a country despatch a battleship to force another country to buy its produce or to sell its raw materials. What counts today is the quality of the product, not the military might of its producer, and a good product needs persuasion, not artillery. Japan, the world's third largest economy, does not coerce - indeed cannot coerce - any individual or state to purchase its commodities. If it does not excel it may not exist, and any people that concedes its competitiveness, in fact deprives itself of its future. Israel is not obligated to compete solely in the Middle Eastern arena. It competes, successfully, in the United States, Europe and Japan. Yet Israel must understand that as the standard of living of its neighbours increases, the level of tension among them, and between them and Israel, will correspondingly decrease.



We co-exist with the Kingdom of Jordan within a framework of quiet and tacit understanding, and we could probably continue in such a manner in the future. However, even if Israel and Jordan do not change the nature of the relations between them, they must change the content of these relations. It is not sufficient that the weaponry of one side does not threaten the other. We must think of the fate of the people who live on both sides of the border. Will they know progress? Will they feel hope?

A government that does not concern itself with people, will invite threat – not from an external source, namely military attack – but from within, from the protest of its citizens in the form of fundamentalist movements which threaten its stability.

And what is true for Jordan is true for the Palestinians. They, as all of us, must progress from a world of symbols to a world of reality and planning. The Palestinian people have been led in this century by two prominent leaders: Haj Amin El-Husseini, the Mufti of Jerusalem, who stood at the helm for 43 years and Yasser Arafat, the head of the P.L.O, who has been the leader of the Palestinian people for the past 28 years.

The Mufti of Jerusalem was applauded throughout his lifetime. Whenever he negated a solution of any kind, his popularity rose. But with hindsight, it must be admitted that nothing caused as much tragedy to the Palestinian people as did the leadership of the Mufti. He prevented the establishment of a Palestinian state on most of the territory of western Palestine, as decided upon in the U.N. resolution of 1947; he created the Palestinian refugee problem and blocked its solution; and he brought about the annexation of the West Bank by Jordan, an annexation which did not withstand the test of time.

For an appreciable length of time, Arafat continued the policy of the Mufti. He believed that terrorism would bring about the establishment of a Palestinian state. This policy brought in its wake a large number of victims on both sides, but achieved nothing. Yet in his favour it must be stated that recently he decided to change his policy, progressing from the world of declarations to the world of practicality, and he realized that a

bird in the hand is worth more than a thousand birds in the imagination. I have no doubt that, in the final analysis, Arafat will go down in history as the first Palestinian leader who gave to his people (a people who had never enjoyed autonomy, territory, authority) something real and tangible.

The Palestinian people will now gain full autonomy on a concrete tract of land with true authority, as an interim solution, from which it can embark on a new future. I have no doubt that Arafat has served his people better than did the Mufti, in the same way that Sadat served the Egyptian people better than did Nasser. For when all is said and done, the fruits of peace are more important for any people than the glory of war.

Yet Israel, too, must undergo profound transformation. It cannot go on living with perpetual suspicion regarding the supposed evil intentions of its neighbours. For its neighbours, as well, have no alternative but to adapt themselves to a world in which television broadcasts reality both good and bad, both day and night. Neither Israel nor its neighbours possess infinite resources for investment in the arms race, whilst just around the corner lies a world built on galloping economies, not on creeping strategies.

Israel must understand that if, from an economic standpoint, it can be part and parcel of the western world, from a security standpoint it can not continue to remain an island of prosperity in a sea of poverty. Our vested interest in the economic prosperity of our neighbours is of a political nature, perhaps even more than of an economic one.

The proposed Valley of Peace is the first test, the first concrete test, in changing the age-old state of affairs and creating a new beginning in the relationships between the three peoples who have known so much bloodshed and so little tranquility.

This is the test for Jordan, if it will overcome its strategic suspicions and attain an economic entry permit into the new world. This is the test for the Palestinians, if they will foreswear from the use of violence and build



up an economic power-base for the good of their younger generation. This is the test for Israel, if it will break away from its entrenched way of life in favour of a wider-ranging perception, which may seem visionary, but in fact, is Israel's most important realistic assurance.

We have the strength within us to carve out a new chapter in the painful history of the Middle East, a chapter in which it will be inscribed, unequivocally, that what had been a geographic and political rift has been transformed into an economic backbone, into a valley of political wisdom.

We possess both the instruments and the opportunity to carry this through.

# The Valley of Peace

Jordanian-Israeli Cooperation
for Creating and Ensuring Lasting Peace

When the countries come to discuss projects that are to change the laws of nature, they will find two opposing arguments: On the one hand, there will be a group of people who want to examine each and every matter, from the start, in terms of economic feasibility, cost-benefit data, financial profit-and-loss data, the scope of investments, interest rates, and so on. On the other hand, another group will claim that a project of this type should not be considered in economic terms alone, since, if it can indeed be carried out and can ensure peace between Israel and Jordan, "How much is peace in the region worth to Jordan and Israel?" "How much money will peace save on defence and military expenditures?"

Must such joint projects prove themselves economically within twenty years according to the yardsticks of the free market, or does their fate depend on the decisions of leaders who can see beyond the narrow and immediate horizons of economists?

These and similar dilemmas will certainly have to be confronted. The feasibility study discussed here, therefore, is not an economic feasibility study, but rather one that relies on long-term political thinking that takes account of economic ramifications.

## Introduction

★ The "Valley of Peace" is divided between the Kingdom of Jordan and the State of Israel and stretches along the Arava, an arid strip of desert land that forms part of the Syrian-African Rift. It begins at the southern end of the Dead Sea and extends to the northern tip of the Gulf of Aqaba. It is 10-25 km. wide, about 180 km. long, and has an area of 2,000 square km. To the east are the hills of Moab and Edom, which rise 1,700 meters above sea level. To the west are the Negev hills which rise 1,000 meters above sea level. Thus the valley forms a kind of flat desert "courtyard" with an outlet to the sea at the Gulf of Aqaba. The middle section of this courtyard rises about 200 meters above sea level, and it descends in the north to the Dead Sea, the lowest point on earth, approximately 400 meters below sea level.

★ At the southern tip of the Arava, two port cities and tourist centers have grown up — Aqaba and Eilat. The region is congested, and conflicts of interest have arisen between tourism, which depends on the rare environmental qualities of the sea and desert, and the two ports that serve the Israeli and Jordanian economies (and those of other Arab countries). These ports handle oil, chemicals, and general freight that seriously endanger the environmental and tourism assets.

★ Traveling north from the port cities along the Arava, one finds six flourishing localities on the Israeli side whose economies are based on agriculture and recreation and which provide a livelihood for about 2,000 residents. At the northern end of the Arava, both Israel and Jordan have some of the world's largest potash plants, which use the raw material that abounds in the Dead Sea. Since Biblical times, the Dead Sea has been an awesome, majestic place and a magnet for recreational and medical tourism.

★ The border between Israel and Jordan extends along the Arava from Sodom, on the shores of the Dead Sea, to the Gulf of Aqaba. Over the years, this line has generated the formation of certain attitudes on both sides with respect to security, politics, and economics, with complete separation between east and west and disregard for geographical and physical factors. Parallel roads have been paved along the border, and two separate cities have been created on either side of the Gulf of Aqaba: Aqaba and Eilat. Two separate ports have been built on the shores of the Gulf, two separate airports serve the two countries, and separate infrastructure systems for energy, water, sewage, transport, and telecommunications have been developed on both sides. The result is a waste of resources and perpetuation of the desert.

★ Israel and Jordan are subject to similar domestic demographic patterns, with their populations concentrated in a dense urban cluster — in Amman and on the coastal plain. Most of Jordan is a distinctly desert land, with agricultural land taking up no more than five percent of its total area, mainly along the Jordan Valley. Half of Israel is desert, and the country has not yet been able to realize its old socio-economic dream of decentralizing the population and settling the Negev. Both countries, therefore, face the challenges of taming the desert, making it blossom, and drawing people from the peripheries of the urban areas in the center of the country to productive strips of land that provide a livelihood and quality of life in the desert.

★ Of all the desert areas in the two countries, the "Valley of Peace" incorporates special conditions for settlement and economic prosperity:

**A. Energy and Water:**

The difference in altitude between the Gulf of Aqaba and the Dead Sea, about 400 meters, and the extensive evaporation from the Dead Sea produce a unique, important energy potential. A canal to convey seawater from the Gulf of Aqaba to the Dead Sea could facilitate the production of hydroelectric energy, or alternatively, desalination of seawater and the production of water for domestic, agricultural, and industrial use. In both cases, the energy obtained would be non-polluting.

**B. Agriculture**

Based on Israel's experience in the "Valley of Peace," there is considerable agricultural potential for raising vegetables, fruit, flowers, and livestock, making use of the region's unique climatic advantages. On the basis of the little that has been done so far, there seems to be an opportunity to bolster the marketability and competitiveness of out-of-season produce in the European markets.

**C. Tourism**

Southern Jordan, the southern Negev, and the "Valley of Peace" itself have a high concentration of tourist sites of all kinds, including desertscapes, ancient cultural sites, and recreational, sports, and



marine tourism. The Arava expanse lends itself to the development of water sites shared by Israel and Jordan to produce a unique blend of an arid desert climate and water-based recreational and sports facilities.

**D. Transport**

Since antiquity, the Arava has been a vital land corridor between the Gulf of Aqaba and the population and economic centers along the coastal plain, as well as Egypt and the Fertile Crescent. The artificial political situation that exists today has, to a large extent, breached the transportation traditions of the valley. It would be worthwhile to take full advantage of the valley's geographical features and to restore its function as an international, continental transportation artery serving future transportation between the Persian Gulf states and economic and population centers along the coastal plain, and thence to Europe and the West. This would also attract shipping to the region and strengthen the port services industry (see below). The present small airports would be replaced by one large international/binational airport. This region is the only continental passage between the western Arab world – North Africa and Egypt – and the eastern Arab world – Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and the Gulf States – and thus constitutes a critical link in the chain of land routes linking the Arab world.

**E. Oil and Gas**

Marketing oil and gas from the Persian Gulf to Europe and the West requires bringing them to the Mediterranean basin. The means used today include tankers and pipelines through which oil is channelled to terminals in the Eastern Mediterranean basin (Turkey, Syria, Lebanon). The "Valley of Peace" would be an additional conduit for oil and gas from the Gulf that would use already-existing infrastructure – the Eilat-Ashqelon pipeline. The anticipated long-term growth in the marketing of oil and gas to the West would justify the additional investment in infrastructure for storage and for a pipeline from Aqaba/Eilat to Ashqelon or to alternative sites on the Mediterranean coast, for example, Gaza.

**F. Marine Agriculture**

The availability of saline water and seawater in a hot desert climate facilitates the development of agricultural/marine projects for producing proteins and nutrients from fauna (various species of fish) and flora (sea algae). Research in this field is being carried out at the Desert Research Institute in Sde Boqer, and agricultural and industrial activity taking place in Eilat is indicative of the inherent potential of the region.

**G. Environment**

As stated, there is a sharp contradiction between the rare scenic, natural, and environmental resources and the shipping and port activities in the narrow strip of sea that is the Gulf of Aqaba. The "Valley of Peace" could provide an environmental solution to the problem by creating a "closed port" north of Eilat and Aqaba. A strip of water, which would form the start of the Red Sea - Dead Sea canal project, would take in the ships that currently dock in the Jordanian and Israeli ports, and would gradually replace these ports. The environmental hazards would be eliminated, and the land reserves created by dismantling the existing ports would bolster the tourist and hotel industries in Aqaba and Eilat. On the other hand, it will be necessary to examine in depth the environmental effects of such extensive changes and regional development and to assess the potential harm to the environment as against development and peace.

★ The unique economic potential of the "Valley of Peace" depends on the turning point that is taking shape in Jordan-Israel relations. With the advent of peace, the two countries – with international assistance – should be able to convert the desert that is split between them into an economically and environmentally flourishing area and make it a "Valley of Peace." The valley would change from an arid desert into a region full of Israeli and Jordanian agricultural villages; urban centers; desert- and marine-agriculture facilities; recreational centers; transportation arteries; and tourism, commercial, and industrial centers. The coastal cities would expand into a joint urban complex relying on



shared, modern water, electricity, energy, transport, and telecommunications infrastructures. The chemical plants at the Dead Sea would be streamlined and expanded as a result of Jordan-Israel cooperation and improved infrastructure. The hotel, recreational, and medical tourism industries would be enhanced on both sides of the valley. Seawater would flow throughout the valley, enhancing the economic and environmental value of the Dead Sea on the one hand, and making possible the creation of water parks for tourism and marine agriculture along its length.

Hydroelectric and solar energy would fuel the economic projects in the valley. Floodwaters would be impounded, saline water would be desalinated, and the valley would constitute an economic unit not dependent on external energy and water sources. Half a million people would find jobs, livelihoods, and quality of life in the "Valley of Peace" on both sides of the border. This would ease the urban and ecological strain around Amman and Tel Aviv, and instead of the arid coast that has characterized the Arava for half a century, there would be a prosperous and bustling economic expanse – the "Valley of Peace."

★ A turning point in Israel-Jordan relations would make this project possible, and such a turning point is taking shape right now. Nevertheless, the "Valley of Peace" would require considerable international assistance from agencies and countries that want to be involved in its projects, whether in the field of energy, desalination, tourism, transportation, industry, environment, or others. In the present stage, therefore, it is necessary to conduct a preliminary feasibility study describing the "Valley of Peace" and presenting a list of possible projects for this complex, from the Sodom region, with its industrial and tourist enterprises, to Eilat and Aqaba.

We estimate that this preliminary study would cost US $3 million. It should be performed by a joint steering committee made up of representatives of Jordan, Israel, the United States, and the other countries taking part in the multilateral peace process.

★ Based on the data discovered in this study, it will be possible to sketch clusters of modular projects in various fields in keeping with their professional qualities and economic and environmental properties, and to offer a "project book" to the contributing countries so as to bring about the preliminary planning of sets of projects, and to adapt such projects to the general context of the "Valley of Peace."

## ★ Possible Projects

### A. Transport

- A deepwater internal port shared by Jordan and Israel, elimination of the ports of Eilat and Aqaba and their transfer to the new, shared port, and the establishment of a free-trade area around the shared port.
- A joint Jordanian-Israeli railway that would carry rail traffic from the Aqaba/Eilat urban complex south to Saudi Arabia and Egypt and north to industrial and population centers in Jordan (and thence to Syria and farther north) and in Israel (and thence west to Egypt and north to Lebanon).
- A local road infrastructure, shared by Israel and Jordan, that would serve the new urban and rural population centers throughout the valley.
- Infrastructure for shared roads that would carry freight and passengers, which will lead from the Eilat/Aqaba urban complex south to Saudi Arabia and north to the Jordan Valley, the Amman region and Jerusalem, the coastal plain and Tel Aviv. Roads would lead from there to serve northbound and eastbound traffic from Jordan to Syria and the Gulf, and northbound and westbound traffic from Israel to Lebanon and Egypt.
- Shared international airports that would be built north of the Eilat/Aqaba urban complex that would serve the population of the valley as well as incoming tourists from Europe, the Western world, and other areas. An airport in Jordan (extant) for travelers and tourists and a freight airport in Israel (extant).



### B. Energy

- Taking advantage of the substantial differences in the levels of the Red Sea and the Dead Sea to produce hydroelectric energy. Taking advantage of reservoirs to regulate the production of electricity using the "pumped energy" method.
- Taking advantage of seawater resources to create solar pools and produce electricity.
- Production of solar energy using the "solar farm" (Luz) or "solar tower" (Weizmann Institute) methods.
- Production of aeolian energy in the high areas of the hills of Edom and the Negev.
- Investigation of "hot-air chimneys."

### C. Tourism

- Reinforcement of the tourism infrastructure in the Aqaba/Eilat urban complex, and use of the evacuated port areas for setting up marinas and sports tourism and diving facilities.
- Establishment of a joint Jordanian-Israeli network of recreational villages throughout the Arava, alongside artificial bodies of water that would be formed as byproducts of the channelling of seawater to the Dead Sea.
- Development of joint Jordanian-Israeli package tours to sites in both countries in the "Valley of Peace," in its environs, and within both countries in conjunction with Egypt.

### D. Non-Marine Agriculture

- Establishment of agricultural enterprises (farms and villages) that rely on state-of-the-art uses of fresh and saline water to grow vegetables, fruit, and flowers in hothouse conditions, based on high market prices abroad for out-of-season produce. Marketing would be carried out directly from the airport north of the Aqaba/Eilat urban complex.

- The establishment of agricultural projects based on such unique desert crops as the Elvira cactus; taking advantage of the unique weather conditions as a hothouse for exports to Europe.
- Raising cattle on fodder produced from desert plants in the "Valley of Peace" under desert conditions.

Marine Agriculture

- Creation of agricultural enterprises based on fish and algae for which there are potential markets abroad. Important research studies in this field have already been conducted at the Desert Research Institute in Sde Boqer and in Eastern countries, and the economic potential is estimated at hundreds of millions of dollars.

**E. Industry**

- Agricultural industry – production of processed food from flora and fauna in the valley.
- Chemical industries on the shores of the Dead Sea.
- State-of-the-art industries to be set up in the Aqaba/Eilat urban complex.
- A free-trade zone for goods going from the East (Japan) to Europe and vice-versa; the zone would employ skilled personnel from Israel and Jordan in the region.

**F. Water**

- Desalination of seawater by channelling it from the Red Sea to the Dead Sea and exploiting the altitude differential to create the conditions for desalination through reverse osmosis.
- Desalination of brackish water with solar energy.
- Recycling the effluent from the Aqaba/Eilat urban complex and channelling it to agriculture and industry in the valley and, ultimately, to the Dead Sea.



- Impounding of floodwaters in streams east and west of the valley by building a series of dams, filling aquifers, and rerouting streams.
- New hydrological research studies to discover water resources in aquifers in the "Valley of Peace" and in its environs to the east and west that have not yet been explored.

**G. Human Resources and Civic Infrastructure**

- Drawing population from urban centers in the north would inevitably lead to the creation of education infrastructure in the valley on both the Israeli and the Jordanian sides. This infrastructure could be used as a launching pad for peace-related educational ventures.
- Academic and professional training on natural methods of making the desert bloom would be concentrated in the valley, which would become the leading project in the world in the fight against desertification. It would be a good idea to found a special desert-studies university in the area that would specialize in agricultural, economic, environmental, climatic, hydrological, technological and other aspects of the desert. The university would be sponsored jointly by Jordan, Israel, and other countries, and courses would be taught in Arabic, Hebrew and English.
- A population of half a million would require civic services and infrastructure, such as schools, hospitals, telecommunications centers, transportation services, supply services, banks, insurance, community and welfare services, etc.

  The project requires a joint Israeli-Jordanian outline plan for shared or corresponding civic infrastructure, as needed.