

**The Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies in Washington,
DC. NESA**

Tuesday 10 August from 0900 – 1045 AM EST

0400-5.45 PM, Amman

Session on “Transnational Threats and Countering Violent Extremists

The Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies

**Arab-Israeli Conflict Seminar: Strengthening Israel-Jordan Trust to
Enhance Defense and Security Cooperation**

August 9-12, 2021

Transnational Threats and Countering Violent Extremists

The case of Jordan and Israel

Introduction

The Palestinian Cause constitutes a lever, as well as a religious and historical narrative, that continues to fuel the imagination of the Arab nationalist and Islamic collective conscious, and to delineate the form and the limits—horizontally—of the relationship between this collective conscious and the State of Israel. And over the course of the Jordanian state’s past 100-year history, extremist and terrorist groups, whether nationalist, leftist, or Islamist, have taken advantage of this narrative to combat the State of Israel, and with it, Jordan, through the accusation of collaboration with Israel and defending its security.

2) Jordan has lost [several leaders] because of this dark and imagined narrative, and this since the early days of the Jordanian state’s history; King Abdullah I, the founder [of Jordan], was assassinated inside al-Aqsa Mosque on July 20, 1951, as were the best prime ministers in Jordan’s recent history: Hiza al-Majali, who was assassinated in his office on August 29, 1960, and Wasfi al-Tel, who was assassinated in Cairo on November 28, 1971. Furthermore, five of Jordan’s best ambassadors, the best diplomats in the world, were killed by means of terrorist assassinations. Perhaps [assassinations have occurred in Jordan] more than in any modern state in the

world, when controlling for the number of inhabitants and the age of the state.

3) Certainly, global and regional interest in the Palestinian cause has regressed and given way to forgetfulness and marginalization following the events of September 11th, the American war in Iraq (2003), the rise of terrorist and extremist groups in large portions of the world, and the major events that ravaged the Middle East after the Arab Spring in late 2010. And still the ramifications of these events continue to push the region towards new and unprecedented crises, the most prominent of which is the appearance of militant Salafi groups, the most important of which are Daesh and its affiliates spread throughout the world. Furthermore, major transformations have ravaged Israel, the key partner in the Palestinian cause and the Jordanian one; the political right and its parties rose and the Israeli Labor Party, which managed the reconciliation and arrangements related to the establishment of the Palestinian Authority and [the resolution of] the outstanding issues, declined. After that, Israel lost its ability to form a political majority to manage Israeli affairs and to finalize the relationship with the Palestinians, in accordance with the signed agreements.

4) Palestinian actors were also impacted by these major, rapid transformations; the Fatah movement has grown old, and deep division has ensued. The same crisis has also afflicted Hamas, which has been subjected to division and internal controversy, as well as the push and pull between regional and internal interests.

5) Hamas's regional allies have suffered large, tumultuous crises. Syria and Iraq (after 2003) exited almost completely from the regional influence picture, and Iran and Turkey have begun to reevaluate their past actions. And we can note that Hamas's leadership abroad, as well as its operations and its offices, are all experiencing a certain regression and decline.

6) But the question remains: has the effectiveness of the motivational ability of groups practicing political Islam, as well as Salafi terrorist groups like al-Qaeda, Daesh, and its affiliates that operate today on social media and through lone wolves, diminished, in terms of threatening the countries of the region, and Jordan and Israel first and foremost? I do not believe so.

7) We have learned from the harsh lessons of history that armed conflict, continuing disputes, and their accompanying states of deadlock and paralysis, as well as people's feelings of despair, worry, paranoia, and fear of their future, pushes individuals towards behavior routes [*sic*] of violent extremism leading to terrorism. This is especially the case in light of the presence of extremist groups, parties, and groups [*sic*] that are motivated to capitalize on states of indignation and anger of the masses in order to mobilize their political discourse by playing on the strings of the feelings of the masses, as well as their tense emotions.

8) The 2020 Global Terrorism Index, which is published by the Institute for Economics and Peace in Sydney, confirmed that 96% of deaths resulting from terrorism occurred in countries suffering from armed conflict; the countries of the Arab and the Islamic world occupied the first ten positions on the 2020 Global Terrorism Index.

9) This means that there is a positive correlation between: 1) the presence of conflicts and repeated crises arising from them; and 2) the presence of security threats for concerned countries, as well as for the international community and international security.

10) Because of the effects of the process of political and technological globalization and the increasing tempo of global interdependence, the rate of acceleration of reciprocal influences has increased. For this reason, it has become hard to distinguish between the public and the private sphere, or to distinguish between the domestic and foreign policies of states, irrespective of their power and size.

11) And Jordan, by virtue of its geopolitical location, and by virtue of its deep and wide-reaching immersion in the process of globalization since the country's founding in 1921, occupies rank number 46 on the 2020 KOF Globalization Index published by the Swiss Economic Institute; thus, Jordan finds itself in the midst of this political saga that exceeds the country's own ability to exert control over its [the saga's] ramifications. Jordan would be alone [in dealing with these ramifications of globalization] if not for the collaboration of several of its friends and allies, the foremost of which is the United States of America.

12) Luckily, however, the political decision-maker in Jordan realizes at a deep level the danger these ramifications pose on its long-term national security, and that it is necessary to engage in constructive collaboration and reciprocal information-sharing with friends and allies, as pertains to the risks

of these ramifications, as well as their relative weight on the balance of national security.

13) Today, there exists a consensus among security and strategy experts that Islamist terror groups like Daesh, al-Qaeda and its affiliates, Hamas and Islamic Jihad, Hezbollah, a number of religious Shiite political parties in Iraq, and the Houthis in Yemen, continue to pose a dangerous security threat to global security, as well as to Jordan and its neighbors like Israel, notwithstanding the ongoing spread of the Coronavirus. In addition, violent extremist groups and local terrorism both threaten the security and stability of Jordan and Israel.

14) Therefore, this paper discusses means for protecting the borders of Jordan and Israel from violent extremist groups and other transnational security threats, for the purpose of strengthening long-term stability in the region. The paper does this in two sections, which are:

Section One: The danger that Salafi Jihadist terrorist groups, such as Daesh, al-Qaeda and its affiliates, and other groups like Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and Hezbollah pose on Jordan and Israel, considering that these groups represent the religious terrorism wave, or the fourth of the terrorism waves about which Professor David Charles Rapoport wrote.

Section Two: Means for protecting the borders of Jordan and Israel from violent extremist groups and other transnational security threats, for the purpose of strengthening long-term stability in the region.

Section One: The danger that Islamist terrorist groups pose on the security of Jordan and Israel.

1) In February 1998, Ayman al-Zawahiri and Osama bin Laden established what is called the “World Islamic Front for Jihad against the Jews and the Crusaders.”¹ This front was a high-level organizational entity under whose banner gathered al-Qaeda and the Egyptian Islamic Jihad, as well as radical Islamic organizations operating in other countries (like Pakistan, Bangladesh, Kashmir, and the Philippines). In this organization, Osama bin Laden took over the position of foremost leader, while al-Zawahiri took the position of deputy.

2) Out of this was produced Qaedat al-Jihad (the Base of Jihad). In June 2001, al-Zawahiri announced the official unification between al-Jama’at al-Islamiya and al-Qaeda, which identified its goals by way of a religious fatwa requiring Muslims to kill Americans—both civilians and military personnel—and to plunder their assets. It also directed the transfer of the battle from confronting the “near enemy” to **confronting the far enemy, represented by America and Israel**. The initial operations of this new alliance were the bombing of the embassies of the United States of America in Nairobi and Dar al-Salam on August 8, 1998 by its military arm, called the “Islamic Army for the Liberation of the Holy Places.” These attacks were quickly followed by the operation targeting the U.S. Navy destroyer U.S.S. Cole at Aden Harbor in Yemen.² The peak of al-Qaeda’s operations was the

¹ Muntasir al-Zayat (2008) February 98: It was the World Islamic Front, and it was the path to al-Qaeda, Al-Masry Al-Youm. Link: <https://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/1966024>. Accessed on 13-4-2021.

² Ibid.

attacks of September 11, 2001, which impacted political behavior in Jordan and thrust it onto trajectories whose path the country continues to navigate to this day.

3) **Assam Taher al-Barqawi, called Abu Mohammed al-Maqdasi**, who is of Jordanian nationality, is an ideologue preaching the most dangerous tenets of Salafi Jihadism, is the teacher of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, and is the most influential individual within the realm of Salafi Jihadism today, issued a religious opinion permitting the undertaking of a military operation against the Israeli army in the occupied territories of Palestine. This occurred in the wake of the Ibrahimi Mosque massacre in Hebron, which was carried out by the Zionist extremist Baruch Goldstein on February 25, 1994, and during which 29 worshippers were killed and 150 were injured.

4) After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, **al-Maqdasi issued a religious opinion affirming the legitimacy of these operations**, in addition to defending the perpetrators. He published a letter titled “This is what is owed to Allah” and was arrested afterwards by the Jordanian General Intelligence Directorate and held for several months.

5) It is worth noting that, despite Israel’s position at the forefront of al-Qaeda’s Islamic political discourse for many years—and despite the fact that literatures, narratives, and fatwas targeting Israel and the Jews can be plainly seen in the literature and beliefs of al-Qaeda—these beliefs were rarely

translated into actual missions or terrorist operations against Israel, whether within its borders or targeting the country's interests abroad.³

6) It is necessary to pay attention and be cautious about repeating this argument without the knowledge and insight of concerned actors and experts. This means that, if we used the technique of “analysis by contrasting narratives” proposed by Dutch security expert and professor Peter de Werd in his book, *US Intelligence and Al Qaeda: Analysis by Contrasting Narratives*, we will find that although perhaps al-Qaeda never carried out any terrorist operations against Israeli interests via a decision taken centrally by the organization's leadership, the reality nevertheless remains that al-Qaeda's religious narratives inspire, incite, and encourage such actions to this day.

7) **As for Daesh, which continues to believe in the strategy of “fighting the near enemy,”** in contrast to al-Qaeda, which believes in the strategy of fighting the far enemy (The United States and Israel), the only time it was observed to have made a clear threat towards Israel **occurred in conjunction with the announcement of the 2020 Deal of the Century, at which time the spokesperson for the organization, Abu Hamza al-Qurashi, announced “the beginning of the phase of fighting the Jews.”**

³ Al Hurra Channel (2020) “New Phase” of fighting Israel.. What is the secret behind the threats of the new leader of Daesh? Link: <https://www.alhurra.com/israel/2020/01/27/%D9%85%D8%B1%D8%AD%D9%84%D8%A9-%D8%AC%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%B1-%D9%82%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%84-%D8%A5%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%8A%D9%84-%D9%85%D8%A7-%D8%B3%D8%B1-%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%B2%D8%B9%D9%8A%D9%85-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%B4-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%9F>

Take note, here, how the organization took advantage of the state of chaos, disputes, and conflict in the region that emerged against the backdrop of the Deal of the Century, which Jordan strongly rejected.

8) In January 2020, the first audio recording published by al-Furqan Media that is attributable to al-Qurashi—following the killing of the previous leader of Daesh, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi—was not limited only to the Arabic or English language. To the contrary, it was published in Hebrew as well.⁴ Al-Qurashi said that he “has resolved, for himself and his brother Jihadists...**to [commence] a new phase, which is the fighting of the Jews and taking back that which they stole from the Muslims. He called on “the Muslims in Palestine and in all of the countries [in which they reside] to spearhead the fight against the Jews and to foil their plots, like the Deal of the Century.”** He also called on “soldiers of the Caliphate everywhere, especially the sons of Sinai and the blessed Levant” **to target settlements,** adding, “make it a ground for testing your **chemical weapons and missiles.”**⁵

9) There is a detail that is very important—both ideologically and practically, and on the technical and the security level—to which I would like to refer and

⁴ Mohammed Khilfan al-Sawafi (2020) ISIS and Israel: Implications and outcomes of shifting positions, TRENDS Research and Advisory. Link: <https://trendsresearch.org/ar/insight/%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%B4-%D9%88%D8%A5%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%8A%D9%84-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D8%B9%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%AD%D9%88%D9%84-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%82%D9%81/>

⁵ Al Hurra Channel (2020) “New Phase” of fighting Israel.. What is the secret behind the threats of the new leader of Daesh? Link: <https://www.alhurra.com/israel/2020/01/27/%D9%85%D8%B1%D8%AD%D9%84%D8%A9-%D8%AC%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%B1-%D9%82%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%84-%D8%A5%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%8A%D9%84-%D9%85%D8%A7-%D8%B3%D8%B1-%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%B2%D8%B9%D9%8A%D9%85-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%B4-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%9F>

which I would like to emphasize: it is that Daesh verbally attacked Hamas and accused the group of “apostasy and treachery.” Al-Qurashi emphasized this in his recording mentioned above.

I believe that the importance of this lies in the fact that this ideological dispute has prevented—until now—Daesh from expanding [its ranks] and spreading within the Palestinian territories, and particularly in the Gaza Strip, where Hamas has ensured this [will not happen] through excessive force and violence.

10) However, the presence of Daesh—who typically claim responsibility for attacks against Egyptian soldiers—in the Egyptian Sinai constitutes a potential danger to the borders of Israel and Jordan in the regions of Eilat and Aqaba.

11) Given Jerusalem’s stature for Muslims, as well as the special status of the conflict with Israel in the Arabic and Islamic narrative, and in the discourse of Islamic groups, the targeting of the State of Israel under the banner of protective zeal over the holy places, the first and foremost of which is Jerusalem, through confronting the Israeli occupation and the “Deal of the Century,” constitutes an opening for affecting Arabic and Islamic public opinion through religious sentiment. This is what clearly emerged in the confrontations that began on May 10, 2021 between Israel and Hamas and Islamic Jihad. I believe that it [such escalation] will occur again in the future, as long as the parties do not find a suitable solution to the causes of conflict.

10) I believe that the Deal of the Century, and the targeting of Israel, are part of an old historical and religious narrative for Islamist groups, and represent a powerful means to reconstitute themselves in a populist way. As a case in point, for instance, Daesh had a military presence near the Golan, called the Army of Khalid bin al-Waleed, for several years. Despite this, Daesh did not attack Israel, nor did the organization pose a threat to Israel, except for one single incident, and they issued an apology to Israel for it.

Former Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Ya'alon confirmed in November 2016 that Daesh “apologized immediately after its militants shot at Israeli soldiers in the Golan.”⁶

13) Since the birth of Daesh, the [threat] to target the State of Israel has never been proven to be serious. For this reason, the announcement of the raising of the banner of “Jihad” to liberate Jerusalem points to the organization’s intent to achieve popularity and gain a mass audience.

This, however, does not negate the imperative to caution that the continuance of Daesh’s incitement to fight the Jews and the Israelis **will induce some, especially “lone wolf” actors, to target Israeli interests, as well as Israeli and Jordanian soldiers.**⁷

⁶ Al Hurra Channel (2020) “New Phase” of fighting Israel.. What is the secret behind the threats of the new leader of Daesh? Link: <https://www.alhurra.com/israel/2020/01/27/%D9%85%D8%B1%D8%AD%D9%84%D8%A9-%D8%AC%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%B1-%D9%82%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%84-%D8%A5%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%8A%D9%84-%D9%85%D8%A7-%D8%B3%D8%B1-%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%B2%D8%B9%D9%8A%D9%85-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%B4-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%9F>

⁷ Mohammed Khilfan al-Sawafi (2020) ISIS and Israel: Implications and outcomes of shifting positions, TRENDS Research and Advisory. Link: <https://trendsresearch.org/ar/insight/%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%B4-%D9%88%D8%A5%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%8A%D9%84-%D9%85%D8%A7-%D8%B3%D8%B1-%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%B2%D8%B9%D9%8A%D9%85-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%B4-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%9F>

What do the potential threats to Jordanian and Israeli security look like?

The transnational threats facing Israel and Jordan are diverse and numerous, traditional and non-traditional; as are the weapons that terrorist groups will likely use against them. They are:

- **The carrying out of cyber attacks against vital and sensitive targets, as well as against targets that have a wide public and media impact.**
- **The use of unmanned aerial vehicles. This is what occurred in Jordan during the Fuhais and Salt terrorist operation of 2018. This was the first terrorist operation recorded in the history of Jordan in which the terrorists intended to use “aerial vehicle systems,” and this through the use of unmanned aerial vehicles retroactively equipped with explosives against security and government targets.**

These aerial vehicles were also used by Hamas against settlements located in the Gaza envelope during the confrontations of May 2021. The BBC also reported that the Israeli army downed an unmanned aerial vehicle coming from the direction of Syria on May 18, 2021 in the Wadi al-Uyun area of the Jordan Valley, along the northern Jordanian-Israeli border. According to the Israeli military, the unmanned aerial vehicle was flying in the direction of the Beit She’an region of northern Israel when it was downed. However, the launch direction of the unmanned aerial vehicle was not identified.

[%D8%A3%D8%A8%D8%B9%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%AD%D9%88%D9%84-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%82%D9%81/](#)

Previously, in 2018, an armed Iranian unmanned aerial vehicle launched from Tiyas Military Airbase in Syria entered Israeli airspace **and travelled the length of the Syrian-Jordanian-Israeli** border to the east of Beit She'an before an Israeli helicopter downed it. This compelled the Israeli military to launch large attacks against Iranian targets inside Syria.

- **Individuals' infiltration of Israel by crossing over shared borders [illegally].** An example of this is that of two young Jordanian men who crossed into Israel carrying knives. They told Israeli investigators that they were "headed to Jerusalem" in the aftermath of the demonstrations that occurred in Jordanian cities and in the al-Karama region in the Jordan Valley following the confrontations that took place between the Israeli military and Hamas in May 2021.

This is another indicator of the positive correlation between: 1) conflicts, disputes, states of chaos, and the stirring up of the masses by provoking zeal and continued incitement (which takes many forms, from religious incitement to nationalist incitement); and 2) increases in security threats, especially when the security and law enforcement apparatuses sometimes lose control in the face of the zeal of the masses and the mob. An example of this is the storming of the U.S. Capitol building by mobs and extremist groups incited by President Trump in January 2021.

Another example is five individuals' infiltration of Israel by crossing over the border from Jordan [illegally]. They were taken into custody by the border patrol in Israel. It was revealed that all of them were of foreign nationalities and that one of them is a Georgian citizen, according to a statement made by

the official spokesperson for the Jordanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates on July 24, 2021.

And in a first: in the first [incident] of its type since the rise of Daesh,

Jordan's State Security Court discovered, as reported in a news story published by Jordanian newspaper *Al Ra'i* on July 27, 2021, that the **Jordanian General Intelligence Directorate had thwarted a terrorist operation planned by a cell consisting of four** Jordanian individuals belonging to Daesh. Since the end of 2020, the cell had planned to carry out a terrorist operation targeting Israelis in Jordan, and to engage with Jordanian border patrol officers working in the Ghor al-Safi-Wadi Araba region with a view to gaining access to Israeli soldiers and killing them.⁸

- Inciting and encouraging lone wolves to carry out terrorist operations against targets within Israel, taking advantage, through this, of demonstrations and sit-ins, especially in the areas of Jerusalem and al-Aqsa Mosque, and of mass sit-ins, demonstrations, and protests taking place in Jordan, for the purpose of accomplishing various ends.

Section Two: Joint Cooperation

Means to protect the borders of Jordan and Israel from violent extremist organizations and other transnational security threats, in order to strengthen long-term stability in the region.

⁸ Ghazi al-Mariat (2021) The Jordanian newspaper Al Ra'i, The Intelligence Services thwart a Daesh Terrorist Plot.

Link:

<http://alrai.com/article/10600165/%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AA/%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AE%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%AA%D8%AD%D8%A8%D8%B7-%D9%85%D8%AE%D8%B7%D8%B7%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%B4>

- ❖ Jordan's border with Israel is its longest. Generally, it is a secure and calm border. Four brigades of the Israeli army guard the border. However, a large part of the border does not have a wall, a situation that facilitates operations involving the infiltration of individuals, as we have mentioned previously, as well as the smuggling of weapons, drugs, and individuals. This is a dilemma and a worrying situation for the Jordanian and Israeli security apparatuses, especially if collaboration were to occur between organized crime groups and extremist terrorist groups to exploit the border's security gaps in order to carry out terrorist or subversive operations.
- ❖ One of the important developments within the topic of border security is that the Israeli army has started to actively strengthen its collaboration with the Jordanian army along the length of the border between the two countries. **And for the first time, a shared operations command room has been established for both armies.** In it, the two sides share the same surveillance footage, allowing them to use a common language via a single control and surveillance system that has deployed surveillance tools and radar at weak points spanning the length of the border. If the project succeeds, its large-scale expansion to additional regions over the entire length of the border will be studied.
- ❖ As I mentioned in Section One, the continuance of the state of conflict and the inability to reach a peaceful solution that satisfies all parties will cause the Jordanian-Israeli border to remain exposed to dangers and attacks. From this stems the importance of joint cooperation

between friends and allies, and of continuing the dialogue and coordination between them, [even] under different circumstances and changes. And this is what materialized in the establishment of a shared operations room, and in the meeting of King Abdullah II with U.S. President Joe Biden in Washington on July 19, 2021, which was preceded by an important meeting between the King and Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett, which was followed by a meeting between Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi with his Israeli counterpart, Yair Lapid, on July 8, 2021 at the King Hussein Bridge, which spans the border between the two countries.

- ❖ The latest developments in the Syria War file, including the Syrian army's surrounding, in coordination with the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, of the region of Dera'a, located to the north of Jordan, and the continuing escalation between Israel and Iran through attacks on maritime vessels, are all considered to be important developments, in terms of the dangerous threats they pose on the security of Jordan, Israel, and their shared borders. This is because the Iranian-supported Syrian army's takeover of Dera'a means that the Iranian Revolutionary Guard is now situated along Jordan's northern border and has moved closer to the Israeli interior and the country's borders. In addition, the possibility has increased that the Jordanian border will be used for Iranian strikes targeting Israel, especially through the use of unmanned aerial vehicles, which the Revolutionary Guard has become an expert at using against soft targets, benefitting in this sense from the experience of the Houthis in Yemen.

- ❖ Opening the borders between Jordan and Syria, and the return of traveler- and cargo traffic [across this border], carry with them a wide array of security burdens for Jordan. These include an increase in the size of security checks and inspections, as well as searches at the border crossings with Syria at Jaber and al-Ramtha, so as to prevent Iran from using them for the smuggling of humans and weapons or for the purpose of storing weapons inside Jordan in order to strike Jordanian, Israeli, or American interests, especially following the signing of a joint cooperation agreement with the United States and the transfer of some American military bases from the Gulf to Jordan. Jordan must also undertake these burdens to prevent the use of these border crossings as political blackmail used to extort Jordan or pressure the country, as is being done along the Iraqi border.
- ❖ The forms of transnational threats have increased in their number and diversity through the process of globalization. They have come to include a wide array of traditional and non-traditional threats, as well as mixes between the two, starting with artificial intelligence, unmanned aerial vehicles, digital currencies, and extending to collaboration between terrorist groups and organized crime groups. States lack the ability to confront these threats alone. For this reason, there must be joint cooperation and coordination, based on mutual respect, between states.
- ❖ In conclusion, these accelerating changes and developments impose, upon both the Jordanian and the Israeli side, the necessity—especially in the security realm—of continuing the strategy of “open doors,” in

terms of cooperation, the exchange of important and sensitive information, and continued coordination, meetings, gatherings, and exchanges of expertise, when this is in the interest of both parties. This must be done in spite of tensions on the political level.

Thank you for listening.

The End