

Kings of Bahrain, Jordan agree to continue cooperating on Arab causes and regional security

Author:

Tue, 2021-11-23 00:39

LONDON: Bahrain's King Hamad and Jordan's King Abdullah II on Monday stressed the need to continue to coordinate and consult on issues of mutual concern, the foremost of which is the Palestinian cause.

"The two leaders noted the centrality of the Palestinian cause, calling for stepping up efforts to reach a just and comprehensive peace on the basis of the two-state solution, as a strategic option to end the conflict," according to a statement issued by Petra, the Jordan News Agency.

King Abdullah, accompanied by Queen Rania, was in Manama for an official visit. The royal couple was greeted on arrival at Sakhir Air Base by King Hamad and Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad.

The Jordanian king praised the strong bilateral ties between the countries and highlighted the importance of expanding cooperation in all sectors. He commended Bahrain's stances in support of Arab causes and its steadfast efforts to maintain Arab unity.

His Majesty King Abdullah II holds talks with [#Bahrain](#) King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, reaffirms the deep-rooted ties between [#Jordan](#) and Bahrain, and keenness to advance relations and cooperation in service of the mutual interests of the two countries and peoples pic.twitter.com/hEixNw27fa

– RHC (@RHCJO) [November 22, 2021](#)

King Hamad also praised the deep-rooted ties between the nations, the advanced level of cooperation, and the contributions made by the Jordanian community in Bahrain in all sectors. He commended Jordan's efforts to arrange the safe return of Bahraini students and nationals to their home country during the COVID-19 pandemic. He stressed the importance of bilateral cooperation in combating the pandemic and limiting the spread of the virus, and thanked King Abdullah for the facilities Jordan provided to the Bahraini embassy in Amman, the Bahrain News Agency reported.

Both leaders said they were satisfied with the levels of bilateral trade and the advanced level of economic and trade ties. They called for continued coordination in efforts to counter terrorism and sustain security and stability.

Their Majesties King Abdullah II and Queen Rania are received by [#Bahrain](#) King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and Crown Prince Salman bin

Hamad Al Khalifa, who is also prime minister of Bahrain, upon arrival at Sakhir Air Base [#Jordan pic.twitter.com/LPqdSwqHV0](https://twitter.com/LPqdSwqHV0)

– RHC (@RHCJO) [November 22, 2021](#)

The talks also covered the latest developments in Syria, with King Abdullah reiterating his country's support for efforts to preserve the country's sovereignty, stability, territorial integrity and the unity of its people. In addition the two monarchs stressed the need to work to stop foreign interference in regional affairs, and to enhance bilateral cooperation to stabilize regional security and stability and protect international navigation in the Arabian Gulf from any threats that affect the movement of global trade, BNA said.







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Jordan, Israel, UAE ink energy-for-water agreement Bahrain says it foiled planned attack, confiscated Iranian weapons and explosives

[Sudan PM says he returned to safeguard economic gains](#)

Author:

Tue, 2021-11-23 00:48

KHARTOUM: Sudan's Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok said on Monday that maintaining the economic gains from the past two years was among the reasons he had decided to return to his post, under a deal with the military nearly a month after he was removed in a coup.

In an interview at the Khartoum residence where he had been held under house

arrest following the Oct. 25 military takeover, Hamdok said he believed a technocratic government he is expected to appoint would have a chance to improve living standards.

Prominent political parties and Sudan's powerful protest movement have opposed Hamdok's decision to sign the agreement with the military on Sunday, with some calling it a betrayal or saying it provided political cover for the coup.

"Among the reasons for my return is preserving the economic gains and the economic opening to the world," Hamdok said.

Since Hamdok was first appointed prime minister in 2019 under a power sharing deal following the overthrow of Omar Bashir, Sudan has carried out economic reforms including the lifting of fuel subsidies and a managed float of its currency.

The reforms, monitored by the International Monetary Fund, won Sudan approval for forgiveness on much of its more than \$50 billion in foreign debt – a deal that was thrown into doubt by the coup.

The World Bank and some bilateral donors paused badly needed economic assistance after the military takeover.

"We will continue our contacts with international financial institutions, and the new budget that will begin in January will proceed on the path of economic reform and open the door to investment in Sudan," Hamdok said.

The civilian coalition that had been sharing power with the military before the coup and its former ministers said they rejected the agreement, citing a violent crackdown on anti-military protests over the past month.

But Hamdok said a new, technocratic government could help improve Sudan's economy, which has suffered a prolonged crisis involving one of the world's highest rates of inflation and shortages of basic goods.

It could also work toward completing a peace deal signed with some rebel groups last year to end years of internal conflict, Hamdok said.

"Implementing the Juba agreement and completing the peace processes with groups that did not sign the Juba agreement are at the top of the new government's agenda," he said.

After the deal between the military and Hamdok was announced on Sunday, protesters who had previously championed Hamdok began shouting slogans against him. Hamdok said he signed it to prevent further bloodshed.

"We are committed to the democratic path, freedom of expression and peaceful assembly and greater opening to the world," he said on Monday.



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Blinken tells Sudan leaders that US wants more progress before restoring aid
Sudan PM Hamdok reinstated after coup, protester killed

[Jordan, Israel, UAE ink energy-for-water agreement](#)

Author:

Tue, 2021-11-23 00:32

AMMAN: Jordan, Israel, and the UAE on Monday signed a declaration of intent to begin deliberations over the feasibility of an energy-for-water project.

Omar Salameh, spokesperson of the Jordanian Water Ministry said that the signing of the declaration was “neither a technical nor legal agreement” and it only means that the three sides will start the feasibility studies for the mega project as of the beginning of 2022.

Stopping short from giving further details, Salameh only said that resource-poor Jordan is to receive 200 million cubic meters of water annually under

the project, adding that the joint venture will not be implemented without obtaining the stipulated amount of water.

The spokesperson explained that Jordan is among the poorest countries in the world for water, with a water deficit expected to hit 45 million cubic meters in 2022. He added that Jordan's annual water resources are less than 80 cubic meters per person, below the international threshold of 500 cubic meters per person.

Salameh also said that Jordan obtains a total of 35 million cubic meters of water from Israel under the 1994 Wadi Araba Peace Treaty and another 10 million cubic meters outside the peace deal between the two countries.

Jordan signed an agreement with Israel in October to purchase an additional 50 million cubic meters of water outside the framework of the peace agreement and what it stipulates in regard to water quantities.

In a recent report, the US news website Axios said that a massive solar farm in the Jordanian desert under the project that will generate clean energy to be sold to Israel in return for desalinated water.

According to Axios, the solar farm will be built by the UAE government-owned alternative energy company, Masdar.

The plan calls for the solar farm to be operational by 2026 and will be designed to produce 2 percent of Israel's energy by 2030, with Israel paying \$180 million per year – divided between the Jordanian government and the Emirati company.

Axios also claimed that the project has been pushed by US Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry.

Jordanian Ammon news website said that the declaration of intent was signed on Monday by Jordanian Minister of Water and Irrigation Mohammad Najjar, UAE Minister of Climate Change and Environment Mariam Al Mheiri, and Israel's Energy Minister Karine Elharrar on the sidelines of Expo 2020 Dubai.

The signing ceremony was attended by Kerry and Sultan Al-Jaber, the UAE's minister for industry and advanced technology and the special envoy for climate change, according to the website.



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New water protests hit IranJordan dam reserves at all-time low as water crisis looms

[Blinken encourages Tunisia reform in talks with leader](#)

Author:

Mon, 2021-11-22 00:20

TUNIS: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken encouraged Tunisia's leader to make reforms to respond to Tunisians' hopes for "democratic progress," the US State Department said on Sunday, nearly four months after President Kais Saied seized political power.

Saied said last week he was working nonstop on a timetable for reforms to defuse growing criticism at home and abroad since he dismissed the Cabinet,

suspended parliament and took personal power in July.

Last week, thousands of Tunisians protested near parliament in the capital, demanding he reinstate the assembly, while major foreign donors whose financial assistance is needed to unlock an International Monetary Fund rescue package for the economy have urged him to return to a normal constitutional order.

"The secretary encouraged a transparent and inclusive reform process to address Tunisia's significant political, economic, and social challenges and to respond to the Tunisian people's aspirations for continued democratic progress," the State Department said in a statement about a call between Blinken and Saied.

It added that Blinken and Saied discussed recent developments in Tunisia, including the formation of the new government and steps to alleviate the economic situation.

A Tunisia presidency statement said earlier that the US would offer support to Tunisia once it has announced dates for political reform. Saied seized nearly all powers in July in a move his critics called a coup, a decade after the Arab Spring's first and only successful pro-democracy uprising, before installing a new prime minister and announcing he would rule by decree.

Saied has defended his takeover as the only way to end governmental paralysis after years of political squabbling and economic stagnation, and he has promised to uphold rights and freedoms won in the 2011 revolution.



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Tunisian protesters try to march on suspended parliament
Tunisian town revolts over trash crisis

New water protests hit Iran

Author:

Mon, 2021-11-22 00:12

TEHRAN: More than 1,000 Iranians marched Sunday toward the governor's office in the western province of Chahar-Mahal Bakhtiari to demand a solution to water shortages, state media reported.

The march came two days after thousands of protesters converged on the central city of Isfahan to vent their anger after the lifeblood river dried up due to drought and diversion.

Footage broadcast by state television showed crowds of protesters marching in the streets of Shahr-e Kord, the provincial capital of Chahar-Mahal Bakhtiari.

They were heard chanting "it is forbidden to divert the water of Chahar-Mahal" and shouting slogans against "projects to transfer water to other regions."

Iran has endured repeated droughts over the past decade, including in the south.

Iran has also experienced regular floods in recent years, a phenomenon made worse when torrential rain falls on sun-baked earth.

Scientists say climate change amplifies droughts, and their intensity and frequency in turn threaten food security.

State television said Sunday's protest come as wells, aqueducts and rivers have been drying up, including the Zayadne Rood River that runs from the Zagros mountains in Chahar-Mahal Bakhtiari province to south of Isfahan city.

Last week, hundreds of farmers also rallied to protest the drying up of the Zayadne Rood that has been depleted of water since 2000.

Earlier this month President Ebrahim Raisi promised to resolve water issues and said a committee would be formed to rehabilitate the river.



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One killed in Iran water shortage protests: state media
Time shrinking for Iran nuclear deal, US envoy warns