

# European ambassadors fete Jordan as regional leader, safe haven

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Former prime minister Adnan Badran delivers a speech on behalf of HRH Prince Hassan at the 'Poland/ Visegrad Group and the EU-Jordan and the Middle East' conference on Sunday (Petra photo)

AMMAN — Jordan is internationally recognised as a “safe haven” that promotes moderation and dialogue in a region of political turmoil, European ambassadors said Sunday.

Convening at the “Poland/Visegrad Group and the EU-Jordan and the Middle East” conference, speakers from the four Visegrad countries — Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary — the EU and NATO discussed several political, military and economic issues related to Jordan and the region.

Jordan, which has taken the lead in the fight against terrorism in the region, has implemented serious reforms, especially in the judiciary and anti-corruption spheres, EU Ambassador to Jordan Joanna Wronecka said.

She noted that the EU supports Jordan with some 500 million euros in order to address the needs of Syrian refugees and host communities, and works with local communities through civil society organisations.

Addressing an audience of diplomats and senior officials, Polish Ambassador Krzysztof Bojko said the conference takes place at a “difficult” time for Jordan and the Middle East, while Hungarian Ambassador Csaba Czibere said political advisers

at the foreign ministries of the Visegrad Group are scheduled to visit the region, including the Kingdom, to get a wider perspective on the latest developments.

Czibere commended Jordan's "uncompromising" leading role in the fight against "forces of darkness" in the region.

Commenting on Jordan's role as a the "most active" member of the NATO Mediterranean Dialogue partnership format, Czech Ambassador Petr Hladík said the Kingdom has built effective partnerships not only to be a security consumer, but more of a security producer.

"Jordan's Armed Forces reached an advanced degree of professionalism as well as technical and human resources advancement, and thus, have reached the capability and the required training potential to be interoperable with NATO," he said.

Another field of cooperation is cybersecurity, as NATO and Jordan launched a joint project last year to develop a national cyber defence strategy.

In the same vein, Commandant of the NATO Defence College in Rome Maj. Gen. Janusz Bojarski said the rise of Daesh, and the crises in Libya and Yemen have shown the extent to which the security of NATO nations and their Mediterranean partners have become "intertwined", adding that Jordan's contributions are of "enormous" importance.

"It is the steadfastness and commitment that your country and your armed forces displayed that makes the coalition work," he noted, adding that Jordan "carries the heaviest burden" regarding Syrian refugees.

In remarks at the one-day conference, delivered on his behalf by former prime minister Adnan Badran, HRH Prince Hassan highlighted the region's need for participatory civil state building and governance without any form of discrimination, citing Poland's experience in the "smooth" transition to democracy.

"The state is for all, with no marginalisation... Human rights, justice, equality and accommodation of cultural differences and dialogue will build non-oppressive diverse true democracy, sustainable for generations," he said.

The prince cited education as a key tool in the fight against ignorance and intolerance, calling for reforming education curricula for early childhood in a manner that plants peace instead of conflict.

Citing the threat of terrorism as the "biggest challenge" in Jordan and the rest of the world, Deifallah Fayez, director of the Europe Department at the Foreign Ministry, described terrorism as a "world war".

"That's why we, in Jordan, believe that this war should be fought on many fronts, starting in the short run with the military approach and in the long run, the ideological war should be won and the core causes should be addressed," he said.

The Polish embassy in Amman in cooperation with the WANA Institute, Al Rai Centre for Studies and the Jordan Europe Business Association organised the conference.