

# Map of Political Parties and Movements in Jordan

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# [MAP OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES AND MOVEMENTS IN JORDAN]

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## Forward

This map comes as a part of the continuous work of the Identity Center over the past few years, which aims to support the political development process in the country and increase public participation on different levels. We, at the Identity Center, believe that political participation is a genuine right that must be supported by all means. Based on this, the Center has implemented a large number of projects and programs aiming at achieving this goal in partnership with many national and international organizations including the partnership with the Netherlands Institute for Multi-Party Democracy (NIMD) and the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Jordan. And I would like to give special thanks for the representatives of the NIMD, Mrs. Sylva van Rosse and Mr. Will Derks for their efforts and continues support.

It is well known that Jordan as well as other counties in the region, has witness a high level of political momentum during the last three years, in conjunction with the Arab Awakening or the Arab Spring as it is often called. This high level of political activity can be noticed clearly in the increase in the number of the public groups that participated in the political life in Jordan, either in the streets or though their institutional work. It is also important to mention that the last three years were distinguished by the participation of political groups in areas that were previously unknown to political activism.

This political momentum fluctuated during the last years, some political forces rose and then disappeared and many new political traditional and non-traditional entities were created. It was important from our point of view, at the Identity Center, to produce research that could be used as a reference to understand the landscape of the political parties and movements in Jordan, not only from a statistical and quantative perspective but most importantly from also an analytical and qualitative perspective. This is what distinguishes this document from other similar works.

The team of the Identity Center and the researchers worked through 18 months to produce this map. Academic research was conducted and interviews and workshops were organized. The main challenge that we faced was the dynamic nature of this political landscape, the number of movements which appeared and then disappeared even within this time period was so large that we have to reconsider much of the information that was produced. In all cases we had to reach a point where we could finalize and launch this map, although we know that changes and updates will continue to immerge, even on a daily basis. I would therefore like to stress that this map will continue to be updated by the Center, according to the developing situation on the ground.

I hope that this map will be usable and useful for all of those who are interested in the political landscape in Jordan, as I am sure it will be useful for the Identity Center and for the Jordanian civil society who can build on it for future programs.

Mohammed Hussainy  
**Director**  
**Identity Center**

## Preface

With the advent of the so-called "Arab Spring", Jordan has witnessed unprecedented political activity manifested primarily in the emergence of popular movements, reform coalitions and initiatives that work hand in hand with the political parties in pressing for wide-ranging reforms. The whole idea behind the present report is to shed light on the partisan life in Jordan in general and, probably for the first time, examine the newly-emerged popular movements, dubbed in Jordan as "Hirak". An initial observation to the status of Jordan's political parties and also Hirak movements is that, they are fragmented in many aspects, and thus their endeavors to bring about the envisioned reforms will not be that promising, without them being able to better organize themselves. In fact, with the rising call in Jordan for constitutional monarchy, a demand brought on by the Arab Spring, His Majesty King Abdullah has made it clear that a combination of rightist, centrist and leftist political powers can ensure a logical representation and smooth transfer into a constitutional monarchy.

As the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Jordan, we have from the very beginning of the "reform era" supported the new political drive in Jordan. Moreover, we continue to support projects aimed at boosting democracy and pluralistic political activity.

This specific report is the result of cooperation between the Identity Center and the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy. The project was funded by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Embassy would like to stress, however, that the content of this report is the sole responsibility of its authors and does not necessarily reflect the position of the Netherlands Government.

I hope that this, not necessarily endorses all statements in this report, but believes that it is an impressive work and recording of political life in Jordan, where it will stimulate debate and contribute to the political reform process in Jordan.

Mr. Paul van den Ijssel  
**Ambassador**  
**Kingdom of Netherlands to Jordan**

## Introduction

The path towards deepening our democracy lies in moving toward parliamentary government, where the majority coalition in Parliament forms the Government. After the upcoming elections, we will start piloting a parliamentary government system, including how our Prime Ministers and Cabinets are selected.

– *His Majesty King Abdullah II (January 16, 2013)*

Since the election of Jordan's 17<sup>th</sup> Parliament on January 23, 2013, King Abdullah II has unveiled a package of reforms that is intended to transform the Jordanian parliament and give it a greater role in governance: the role that it was designated in the constitution. To make parliament more effective, King Abdullah II noted the critical importance of a greater focus on political parties. For a successful "transition to true parliamentary government," he explained, Jordan "will need to see the emergence of true national parties that aggregate specific and local interests into a national platform for action." While King Abdullah II has begun to implement concrete steps to accomplish these reforms, he also acknowledges that the process in Jordan will inevitably be slow. The latter point is crucial: the enormous amount of work that empowering political parties will require cannot be understated, as Jordanian parties have historically been very weak.

Political parties and movements have had little opportunity to wield power since the 1960s and the implementation of Martial Law. Even with attempts to liberalize and democratize the system since the resumption of parliamentary life in 1989, the set of laws governing party and government behavior provide parties with only a marginal role. As a result, they have not developed sufficient capacities or experience. This not only affects their ability to influence politics, but it also impedes their endeavors to disseminate their programs and ideologies to the Jordanian people. As a result, most Jordanians are uninformed about parties in the Kingdom, and even less familiar with party platforms.

Consequently, it was clear that accessible information was required regarding both political parties in Jordan and their platforms. This project, therefore, attempts to categorize active political parties and movements and identify their platforms and sympathies. Similarly, it attempts to shed light on the grassroots movements that have emerged in Jordan in the last couple years and been amorphously labeled Hirak. This very general categorization refers to movements that took to the streets to demand reform since the emergence of the Arab Awakening, but have not registered as political parties. Hirak, however, became increasingly important in the last couple years, and they require greater attention and contextualization, as the movements continue to exert significant influence.

At the same time as providing more information, the project also focused on facilitating discussion between organizations. This interaction not only helped parties and movements to liaise with one another, but also, and perhaps more fundamentally, encouraged parties and movements to more firmly establish their own platforms. This will subsequently enable these organizations to reach a wider audience, gain experience,

and exert a more meaningful role in the governance of Jordan.

### **Methodology**

Over a twelve-month period, the Identity Center completed a comprehensive survey of the active political parties and movements in Jordan. During those twelve months, the Center carried out a series of events that served both to foster greater awareness of these organizations as well as to encourage their development and horizontal dialogue and integration. The project began with desk research to identify the political parties and movements present in Jordan. Initially, over 100 names of parties and movements were identified, but these were then whittled down and only approximately half were included in the final product. Organizational inclusion in the project was determined based upon movement and party activity; organizations that were not active – that neither issued statements nor participated in political activities – were excluded. This process of elimination is a necessary task when examining the Jordanian political landscape, as many parties and movements exist in name only: many are small and inactive or they were created by larger parties simply to be included on political statements to give those statements greater credence.

Similarly, the Identity Center also began to identify and track social media groups. Not only has social media been a useful tool for emerging grassroots movements, but it has itself served as a platform for the genesis of digital political movements. These groups, which are very active via social media, have no presence on the ground. Instead they serve as digital watchdogs for political progress and reform or merely as forums for discussion and the dissemination of information. Owing to the popularity of Facebook in Jordan, it has served as the main platform for these movements in the last couple years. While the dynamism of these groups has allowed them to be very effective, it is this same characteristic that both limits their longevity and renders them exceedingly hard to track. Because of their amorphous nature, the importance of individual groups ebbs and flows; one that is extremely influential one week, will be dormant the next. As such, it is even hard to refer to these social media phenomena as groups in their own right. As a result, we have not included groups within this report that are limited to the digital sphere. Instead, we have highlighted the organizations on the ground that have been able to effectively exploit social media.

In the Jordanian context it is also necessary to differentiate between political parties and political lists. Followers of the 2013 Parliamentary Election will find that the lists through which candidates participated in the Election have been excluded from this project. They have been excluded because, unlike political parties, they represent temporary structures that are established for the explicit purpose of contesting elections. The candidates on the list, moreover, are already members of established political parties. Following the election, lists cease to constitute organizational structures, and legislative members are subsequently identified by their parent party. As a result, electoral achievements in this project are designated by political party rather than political list.

Key information is presented in this paper on each of the 46 active political parties and movements. This foundational data includes information pertaining to where and when the party or movement was founded, its objectives, the names of leading members, and (where available) website addresses. The basis of creation of each organization is also listed. The latter point is particularly salient in the Jordanian context, as it identifies the motives that fuel the organization's agenda. The basis for creation has been broken down into three categories:

1. Regional: movements focusing on the welfare of a specific regional demographic group.
2. Tribal: movements focusing on the welfare of a certain tribe (which may be spread across different regions of the Kingdom).
3. Political: parties and movements with a national agenda. These movements tend to focus on constitutional or legal issues that affect the living standards of the entire country's population. When possible, these organizations were also divided into sub-categories connoting political ideology; this designation is presented in one of the maps in Chapter 3.

Once bona fide and active parties were identified, the Identity Center followed up its desk research with interviews (both by phone and in person) with the leaders of all included parties and movements. These interviews were based upon a short questionnaire that was designed to facilitate the extraction of basic, and comparable, information for each organization. When parties or movements offered us further literature or sources, these were also included. We used this information to present each organization's respective platforms. This information is included in the narrative section of Chapter 2 under the subsection "overview and objectives." In this section, the platforms of each party, movement, coalition, and initiative are presented in the language and manner of the respective organizations. The language and ideas that are included in each of these subsections, therefore, does not represent the Identity Center's opinions, but only those expressed by the individual organizations. This section is included to highlight the way in which these parties are self-represented.

The subsequent section focusing on "strengths and weaknesses" presents the Center's own perspectives. For this section, the information that was derived from the interviews was synthesized with desk research to both establish a greater understanding of party platforms and allow an analysis of each movement's rhetoric.

The Identity Center then conducted eighteen workshops across the Kingdom with members of parties and movements. The workshop topics were determined by selecting the six most frequently identified goals of the political parties and movements as well as key platforms most often relayed through protest slogans. The topics were (1) constitutional amendments, (2) corruption and the return of public funds, (3) social justice, (4) Election Law and parliamentary government, (5) national identity and naturalization, and (6) development of the governorates. Each of the six topics became the focus of a workshop held in each of the three regions of the country (North, Central and South). The workshops were well attended by political parties and movements, and

the participants were presented with a paper on the topic of the workshop, followed by opportunities for open discussion. While these workshops served as fora to stimulate dialogue and cohesion between diverse political actors within the country, the results of these focus groups also informed both the examination of each movement's ideology and platform as well as the paper's analysis of the Jordan's parliamentary history and current political topography.

Whereas each of the activities that were undertaken for this project facilitated dialogue and fostered greater political participation and organizational development, they have all been distilled into this paper, which attempts to present its findings in an accessible and useable manner. As a result, the final report includes an introduction to the project, a brief history of Jordan's dynamic political atmosphere and analysis of the current situation, a database of the country's active political parties and movements, comparative organization maps, and a list of findings regarding the current political atmosphere in Jordan. These sections should serve as useful tools for both additional research and further organization development.

## Chapter 1: Political History

Political parties and movements in Jordan have a long, albeit convoluted, history, dating back to the creation of the Transjordanian Mandate under British supervision in 1921. Since that time, the freedoms and opportunities available to these parties and movements have oscillated greatly, progressing and regressing over time. The larger of these oscillations can be used to roughly divide the evolution of these organizations and movements into six separate phases:<sup>1</sup>

1. 1921-1950: Mandate Period Traditional Parties
2. 1950-1957: Post-Unification Ideological Parties
3. 1957-1989: Party Ban and Martial Law
4. 1989-1992: Political Liberalization and Democratization
5. 1993-2010: Confined Party Politics
6. 2010-2012: The Rise of Political Movements (Hirak)

### 1921-1950: Traditional Parties

In the same year as the Transjordanian Mandate came into being in 1921, its new ruler, Prince Abdullah Bin Hussein established its first government.<sup>2</sup> Restricted in its autonomy under British Mandate tutelage, Transjordan's government was confined to a Majlis al-Mushawirin (Council of Consultants) that was comprised of eight members, three of which – including Prime Minister Rashid Tali'a – were drawn from Hizb al-Istiqlal (the Independence Party).<sup>3</sup> While political autonomy remained circumscribed, Britain formally recognized an independent Transjordanian government in May 1923, and the first attempt at electoral politics was undertaken the following month. Prince Abdullah issued a decree allowing elections to take place for twelve positions that would constitute Majlis al-Shura (the Consultative Council).<sup>4</sup> The council was intended to debate proposed legislation with civil servants, but was given no power to initiate laws.

Following the Anglo-Transjordanian treaty of February 1928, the Organic Law emerged in April of the same year.<sup>5</sup> Included in the Organic Law was a hereditary monarchy, a unicameral system consisting of sixteen members, and an indirect balloting system.<sup>6</sup> At

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<sup>1</sup>For this categorization, this paper borrows heavily from Amin Ali Alazzam who separates Jordanian political party history into four phases. See "Political Participation in Jordan: The Impact of Party and Tribal Loyalties Since 1989," Ph.D. diss., (Durham: Durham University, 2008) 142. <<<http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/2183/>>> (Last access date November 28, 2013).

<sup>2</sup> Kamal Salibi, *The Modern History of Jordan* (London: I.B Tauris Publishers, 1993), 93-94.

<sup>3</sup>Salibi, *The Modern History of Jordan*, 93-94.

<sup>4</sup>Alazzam, "Political Participation in Jordan," 37.

<sup>5</sup> Alazzam, "Political Participation in Jordan," 32.

<sup>6</sup>"Parliamentary Life during the Emirate Era (1923-1946)," *The Parliament of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan*.<<<http://www.parliament.jo/en/node/146>>> (Last access date November 28, 2013).

the same time, however, political parties in this early phase of democratic development remained limited. A number of parties did emerge in the Mandate period (seventeen were born between 1921 and 1947), but they largely remained manifestations of social structures rather than ideological precepts.<sup>7</sup> The parties, chiefly focused on independence and development initiatives, were organized around traditional elites and lacked any popular base of support.<sup>8</sup> Between 1921 and 1946, these parties participated in five Legislative Councils, during which time the Prince and members of the Council vied to reinforce their respective powers. In 1946, under the Fifth Legislative Council, a new Anglo-Transjordanian treaty was signed, ending the British Mandate of Transjordan and leading to the establishment of the Hashemite Kingdom of Transjordan with Abdullah as its King. The next year the Council approved a new constitution for the Kingdom.

The Constitution of 1947 created a new system of governance that included two legislative bodies: Majlis al-Nuwab (the Council of Representatives) and Majlis al-A'ayan (the Council of Notables). While the constitution enacted several changes in government power structures, the Organic Law's stipulation that the government was responsible to the King remained in force.<sup>9</sup> The same year, the government also introduced a new electoral law, basing representation on a proportional system that drew from both the Muslim majority, as well as minority communities within the Kingdom. Elections for the first House of Representatives in the newly independent Kingdom took place on October 20, 1947. However, only independents and the loyalist Hizb al-Nahda (Revival Party) were allowed to contest the election, as all other political parties were banned at this time.<sup>10</sup>

### **1950-1957: Post-Unification Ideological Parties**

In the 1950s and 1960s the roots of contemporary Jordanian civil society and political party life were established; this bi-decadal period witnessed the proliferation of political parties, trade unions, professional associations, women's and students' organizations, and charities. This drastic transformation of the political landscape was triggered by two watershed moments in the early 1950s: firstly, the East and West Banks of Jordan were formally united following the events of *al-Nakba*,<sup>11</sup> and, secondly, King Abdullah was assassinated and his son Talal ascended the Hashemite throne. These two events led to a process of political liberalization within the Kingdom. While King Talal enjoyed only a

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<sup>7</sup>Alazzam, "Political Participation in Jordan," 41.

<sup>8</sup>Alazzam, "Political Participation in Jordan," 41.

<sup>9</sup>Kamel Abu Jabir, "The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan," in *Politics and Government in the Middle East and North Africa*, eds. Tareq Ismael and Jacqueline Ismael (Gainesville: Florida, 1991), 243.

<sup>10</sup>Alazzam, "Political Participation in Jordan," 51.

<sup>11</sup>*Al-Nakba*, also referred to as the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, was a conflict that pitted the combined Arab armies of Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon against the newly declared Israeli state. The outcome of the conflict resulted in Israel's expansion from the territory that it was allotted by the United Nations partition plan and Jordan's seizure of the West Bank. *Al-Nakba* also caused a mass exodus of Palestinians from their homes that were located within present day Israel.

very brief reign, he managed to introduce a new, liberalized constitution (still in effect, though amended), entrench a separation of legislative, executive, and judicial authority, make the government responsible to the parliament, and provide citizens with the right to establish and join political parties.<sup>12</sup> Political party rights were subsequently confirmed and specified with the passing of the first Political Parties Law in 1955.

While the Mandate period had witnessed the rise of parties based on personal authority and tribal affiliation, a new breed of ideological parties now emerged in the wake of the Political Parties Law.<sup>13</sup> As the post-Ottoman states began to liberate themselves from Mandatory oversight in the mid-twentieth century, they were heavily influenced by the emergence of the Cold War and the rising influences of both communism and Pan-Arabism. While Jordan was no exception to this trend, its particular political evolution was also coloured by the equally crucial union of the two banks of Jordan, which forced the genesis of new identities in the Kingdom and a new political landscape. As a result, the Kingdom witnessed the proliferation of a wide spectrum of political parties based both on larger ideological precepts and on regional aspirations.

In this period of expanding ideological parties and growing liberalization, the most crucial Jordanian election was held in 1956. By all accounts the 1956 Election of the Fifth Chamber of Deputies was the freest and fairest that the Kingdom had seen since its independence.<sup>14</sup> As a result of this increased electoral freedom, the opposition emerged with a strong standing in the parliament; the National Socialists under Suleiman al-Nabulsi took eleven seats, and other opposition parties – the Communist, Ba'ath, and Muslim Brotherhood parties – also performed well. The National Socialists enjoyed particular success as a result of its sympathies with Egypt's Jamal Abdul Nasser, who was incredibly popular in Jordan at the time.<sup>15</sup> With such strong representation, the opposition coalesced, recommending that Jordan abrogate the Anglo-Jordanian treaty; the government accomplished such an abrogation in March 1957, declaring that it would instead look towards Russia and China for politico-economic alignment.<sup>16</sup>

Unhappy with the direction towards which the government was taking his Kingdom, King Hussein – who had assumed the crown in 1952 following his grandfather's assassination and his father's abdication the following year – dismissed al-Nabulsi and dissolved the parliament. When violence between the parties and the state materialized as a result of this dismissal – and a coup attempt was subsequently made in 1957 – King

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<sup>12</sup>Kingdom of Jordan, "The Constitution of The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan," January 1, 1952. << [http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/constitution\\_jo.html](http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/constitution_jo.html)>> (Last access date November 28, 2013).

<sup>13</sup>Alazzam, "Political Participation in Jordan," 59.

<sup>14</sup> Nasser Aruri, *Jordan: A Study in Political Development (1921 -1965)* (Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1972), 134.

<sup>15</sup>Douglas Little, "A Puppet in Search of a Puppeteer? The United States, King Hussein, and Jordan, 1953-1970," *The International History Review* Vol. 17, No. 3 (Aug. 1995): 519-521.

<sup>16</sup>Alazzam, "Political Participation in Jordan," 66.

Hussein declared martial law in Jordan. By the time civilian rule came back into effect the next year, all political parties within the Kingdom had been banned and they remained illegal until 1992, when a new Political Parties Law replaced that of 1955.<sup>17</sup> Political life was further restricted when martial law was again implemented as a result of the launch of the 1967 War with Israel and the seizure of the West Bank of the Kingdom; this time, martial law would remain in force until after disengagement from the West Bank – more than two decades later.<sup>18</sup>

### **1957-1989: Party Ban and Martial Law**

While parties were banned and, thus, unable to contest elections after 1956, elections nonetheless continued until 1967. However, two months after the Ninth Chamber of Deputies was elected in April 1967, Israel captured and annexed the West Bank during the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. As a result of Jordan's loss of half its Kingdom, subsequent elections could not occur. Thus, while parties had already been absent for a decade, the parliamentary process was now completely frozen. The situation, however, further declined in 1974 when the Rabat Summit conferred upon the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) status as the "sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people."<sup>19</sup> This provoked King Hussein to dissolve parliament in November 1974, as half of the members of the House of Representatives represented the West Bank. The governmental vacuum left behind by the parliamentary absence was then filled by the National Consultative Council (NCC), which was created in 1978 to allow limited public participation in the political process during the suspension of parliament.<sup>20</sup>

Even though political parties were banned between 1956 and 1992, King Hussein allowed the Muslim Brotherhood to work freely, designating it as a charitable organization rather than a political party. This exemption was an extension of the Hashemite's longstanding support of the Brotherhood, which predated the official genesis of the organization's first Branch in Jordan in 1945.<sup>21</sup> King Hussein allowed the Brotherhood to continue to operate despite the ban on political parties, recognizing the value of the organization as a stabilizing force and a counterweight to the growing tides of communism, Arab nationalism, and militant Islamism in the Kingdom. Thus, while

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<sup>17</sup>Curtis R. Ryan, "Elections and Parliamentary Democratization in Jordan," *Democratization* Vol. 5, No. 4 (1998): 181.

<sup>18</sup>Jordan's disengagement from the West Bank occurred in 1988. The process involved Jordan's administrative and legal severing of ties with the territory. Disengagement also resulted in the removal of citizenship from 1.5 million Palestinian-Jordanians living in the West Bank. Disengagement has not thus far been legally or constitutionally entrenched. See Rex Brynen, "Economic Crisis and Post-Rentier Democratization in the Arab World: The Case of Jordan," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* Vol. XXV No. 1 (March 1992): 77.

<sup>19</sup>Brynen, "Economic Crisis and Post-Rentier Democratization in the Arab World," 77.

<sup>20</sup>Kathrine Rath, "The Process of Democratization in Jordan," *Middle Eastern Studies* Vol. 30, No. 3 (1994): 535.

<sup>21</sup>Emile F. Sahliyeh, "The State and the Islamic Movement in Jordan," *Journal of Church and State* Vol. 47, No. 1 (Winter 2005): 113.

other parties were forced underground during the party ban, the Brotherhood was able to flourish, vastly expanding its civil society networks and garnering increased grassroots support.<sup>22</sup> When political liberalization thawed the parliamentary freeze in the late 1980s, the Muslim brotherhood was in a unique position, as it was the only party in Jordan that was organized and able to draw upon existing socio-political networks.

### **1989-1992: Political Liberalization and Democratization**

The political liberalization that Jordan began to undergo in the late 1980s was a reaction to changing structures within the Kingdom and region. The Hashemite regime had rarely resorted to violent coercion, choosing instead to protect its position through eudemonic legitimacy and internationally funded neo-patrimonialism.<sup>23</sup> The regime's ability to sustain this means of legitimacy-provision, however, declined in the late 1980s when its sources of external funding were damaged. Jordan's neo-patrimonial leitmotif had been previously dependent on rents transferred from its Gulf patrons. The cornerstones of Jordan's rentier economy had been remittances and petro-dollar aid money, both of which had been derived from the Gulf; however, the "fat years" of Arab petroleum that had followed the 1973 War began to dry up in the early 1980s,<sup>24</sup> whilst Iraq, Jordan's closest regional ally and economic partner, faced increasing financial strains as a result of its protracted war with Iran.<sup>25</sup>

Fully appreciative of the domestic implications of such financial constrictions, King Hussein began casting out for alternative methods of securing monarchical legitimacy. Unable to continue the policy of "no taxation, no representation" that had characterized the Jordanian political system in its previous semi-rentier state era, King Hussein sought to pacify growing discontentedness within the Kingdom by laying the foundation for the renewal of parliamentary life in Jordan – absent since 1974. In a strategy of "defensive democratization," King Hussein attempted to pre-empt any further challenges to his legitimacy by introducing extensive, albeit controlled, democratic reforms.<sup>26</sup> He initiated this process by disbanding the NCC by Royal Decree in 1984 and preparing the groundwork for a return to parliamentary life. The Ninth Chamber of Deputies thereafter resumed its mandate in an extraordinary session, and by-elections were held in 1984 (and then in 1986) for those seats that had become vacant since 1974.

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<sup>22</sup>See Sahliyah, "The State and the Islamic Movement in Jordan."

<sup>23</sup>Brynen, "Economic Crisis and Post-Rentier Democratization in the Arab World," 78.

<sup>24</sup>Brynen, "Economic Crisis and Post-Rentier Democratization in the Arab World," 84.

<sup>25</sup>Laurie A. Brand, *Jordan's Inter-Arab Relations: The Political Economy of Alliance Making* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 214; and Amatzia Baram, "Baathi Iraq and Hashemite Jordan: From Hostility to Alignment," *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 45, No. 1 (Winter 1991), 58.

<sup>26</sup>For a more comprehensive explanation of "defensive democratization," See Glenn E. Robinson, "Defensive Democratization in Jordan," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* Vol. 30, No. 3; and Curtis R. Ryan, "Working Paper 7: Civil Society and Democratization in Jordan." *Knowledge Programme Civil Society in West Asia*. (Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam), 2010.

The economy, however, continued to decline and unrest intensified. Unable to financially compensate for the loss of Gulf funds, King Hussein was forced to turn secretly to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for assistance.<sup>27</sup> Yet, to satisfy IMF requirements, King Hussein was obliged to cut both public expenditure as well as subsidies on basic commodities. The widespread unrest that these measures provoked pushed King Hussein to consider much more drastic democratic reforms.<sup>28</sup> In 1988 he announced that after over twenty years of their absence, parliamentary elections would resume the following year. This announcement came at a particularly critical juncture, as disengagement from the West Bank the same year had rendered the excuse that the resumption of parliament was pending a solution in the West Bank void.

When the 1989 Election was contested, political parties were still technically illegal in the Kingdom; in amending the 1986 Electoral Law, the government chose to leave in Article 18, paragraph E, which prevented the participation of illegal parties, or parties that had anti-monarchical aims.<sup>29</sup> Because political parties had been illegal since 1957, paragraph E essentially prevented communists and other leftists from running under a party banner. However, while candidates could not stand on party platforms, party members could still run in the election, and in effect most party organizations were allowed to operate openly.<sup>30</sup> These conditions presented a huge advantage for the Muslim Brotherhood, which had been the only party able to legally organize and expand over the past two decades.<sup>31</sup> As a result, it took 22 of the 80 seats in the Chamber of Deputies, and independent Islamists took another 12.<sup>32</sup> However, not only did the Brotherhood perform well, but its long-standing position as the “loyal opposition” to the government earned it key positions within the cabinet over the next few years.<sup>33</sup>

After the elections, democratization continued to move at a rapid pace. In 1990 the Crown commissioned a group of diverse representatives to draft a National Charter, which was ratified in 1991, establishing general guidelines for political pluralism in the Kingdom.<sup>34</sup> The next year, the last provisions of martial law were lifted, and a new political parties law was introduced, thereby allowing pluralism to expand.<sup>35</sup> Yet, while the new parties law facilitated the reemergence of multi-party democracy in Jordan, it

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<sup>27</sup>Robinson, “Defensive Democratization in Jordan,” 389.

<sup>28</sup>Rath, “The Process of Democratization in Jordan,” 535.

<sup>29</sup>Linda Shull Adams, “Political Liberalization in Jordan: An Analysis of the State’s Relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood,” *Journal of Church and State* Vol. 38, No. 3 (Summer 1996): 510.

<sup>30</sup>Brynen, “Economic Crisis and Post-Rentier Democratization in the Arab World,” 93.

<sup>31</sup>Adams, “Political Liberalization in Jordan,” 511.

<sup>32</sup>Alazzam, “Political Participation in Jordan,” 145.

<sup>33</sup>Mehran Kamrava, “Frozen Political Liberalization in Jordan: The Consequences for Democracy,” *Democratization* Vol. 5, No. 1 (1998): 147.

<sup>34</sup>Kamrava, “Frozen Political Liberalization in Jordan,” 140.

<sup>35</sup>Kingdom of Jordan, “The Political Parties Law, Law No. 32 for the Year 1992,” September 1, 1992. <<<http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/pol-parties.html>>> (Last access date November 28, 2013).

also carried a series of conditions. Most importantly for the purposes of this paper, voluntary associations were barred from promoting the interests of any political party, and political parties were allowed neither to receive foreign funding nor maintain links with external organizations.<sup>36</sup> These restrictions had serious implications for the Muslim Brotherhood, forcing the movement to launch an autonomous organization so that it could continue to contest elections. Hence, the Islamic Action Front (IAF) was born and officially registered as a political party with the Ministry of the Interior in December 1992.

### **1993-2010: Confined Party Politics**

The momentum carrying reform, however, soon slowed, and the regime began to implement unilateral reforms designed to restrict the power of the opposition. At the same time, the regime became increasingly concerned with the rising power of the Brotherhood, and tensions soon emerged between it and the state. These tensions reached a breaking point as a result of Jordan's progress towards a peace treaty with Israel in the early 1990s.<sup>37</sup> The Brotherhood voiced strong opposition to normalization with Israel, and it was able to rally other opposition parties around its cause, constituting one of but a few instances in Jordanian history where the Jordanian opposition was able to effectively coalesce.

Unwilling to tolerate opposition to its foreign policy in the volatile post-Gulf War politico-economic context, and equally concerned about the growing challenge of political parties (and the Brotherhood in particular), the government introduced a new election law in 1993, significantly curtailing the influence of political parties. The Jordanian government replaced the previous 1986 Election Law, which allowed multiple votes and encouraged candidate alliances, with a Single Non-Transferable Vote system (SNTV; commonly referred to by Jordanians as "one person, one vote").<sup>38</sup> As Jordan is predominantly a tribal society, the government hoped that by limiting voters to a single vote, they would vote only by tribal affiliation and not use additional votes to support ideological sympathies.<sup>39</sup>

In the 1993 Legislative Elections that followed the imposition of the new law, the Muslim Brotherhood (now represented by the IAF) lost half of its seats. While this loss may also have resulted in part from popular dissatisfaction with the Brotherhood's performance and policy objectives in the previous government, the Brotherhood,

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<sup>36</sup>Egbert Harmsen, "Islam, Civil Society and Social Work: Muslim Voluntary Associations in Jordan Between Patronage and Empowerment," Ph.D. diss, (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008), 113; and Adams, "Political Liberalization in Jordan," 519.

<sup>37</sup>Alazzam, "Political Participation in Jordan," 137.

<sup>38</sup> "Jordan's 2010 Election Law: Democratization or Stagnation?" Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Jordan Office, October 28, 2010.

<<<http://www.kas.de/jordanien/en/publications/20947/>>> (Last access date November 28, 2013).

<sup>39</sup>Alazzam, "Political Participation in Jordan," 137.

nonetheless, blamed its poor performance on the newly imposed electoral system.<sup>40</sup> Consequently, when a new electoral system was not introduced for the next election in 1997, and “one person, one vote” remained in effect, the IAF, along with nine other opposition parties, decided to boycott the election. The Brotherhood had, in fact, seriously considered a boycott of the 1993 election, but was dissuaded as a result of a personal appeal from King Hussein.<sup>41</sup> Individuals who participated in the workshops the Identity Center convened for this project noted that the Brotherhood was particularly opposed to the new law, as the movement had benefited disproportionately from the former law. Consequently, the Brotherhood continues to focus on a reinstatement of the old law, whilst other political parties, workshop members maintained, seek the implementation of a drastically different system. Nonetheless, from its very inception, the “one person, one vote” system acted as a source of universal discontentment, and it would continue to constitute an impediment to party development for two decades.

In 2001, a new Election Law was passed. It introduced a new quota of six seats for female candidates, raised the number of seats in the house from 80 to 110, and restructured electoral districts to increase the representation of urban voters.<sup>42</sup> The law, on the other hand, upheld the controversial “one person, one vote” system. An election was scheduled to proceed in the same year as the passing of the new law, but with the outbreak of the al-Aqsa Intifada, it was postponed and parliament was suspended between June 2001 and June 2003.<sup>43</sup> The following two elections (2003 and 2007), however, were both held according to the 2001 Election Law, and the potential for political parties to succeed, therefore, remained correspondingly limited. Parties, moreover, were further restricted in 2007 as a result of the ratification of a new Political Parties Law. While the new law provided parties with state funding and gave them permission to set up partisan media outlets, it controversially increased the number of requisite founding members from 50 to 500, insisting that those members be derived from at least five of the Jordanian governorates.<sup>44</sup> For the already precarious and marginalized Jordanian political parties, these changes threatened their very survival.

For the 2010 elections, yet another Electoral Law was passed. Once again, the “one person, one vote” system remained in place. Moreover, and despite the fact that the law added four new seats to the Amman constituencies, the urban electorate remained vastly under-represented.<sup>45</sup> In response, the IAF announced that they would again boycott the election, as “one person, one vote” unfairly benefitted tribal candidates, whilst the persistent prevalence of gerrymandered electoral districts continued to underrepresent the predominately urban and Palestinian support base of the IAF. Despite the IAF’s boycott, leftist parties decided to contest the election, but with little success; opposition parties

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<sup>40</sup>Ryan, “Elections and Parliamentary Democratization in Jordan,” 182; and Adams, “Political Liberalization in Jordan,” 521.

<sup>41</sup>Adams, “Political Liberalization in Jordan,” 523-524.

<sup>42</sup>“Jordan’s 2010 Election Law: Democratization or Stagnation?”

<sup>43</sup>Alazzam, “Political Participation in Jordan,” 159.

<sup>44</sup>Alazzam, “Political Participation in Jordan,” 160.

<sup>45</sup>“Jordan’s 2010 Election Law: Democratization or Stagnation?”

gained only two seats in the new house (one of which was won by an independent Islamist candidate who ran despite the boycott).<sup>46</sup>

### **2010-2012: The Rise of Political Movements (Hirak)**

Owing to the weakness of official political parties in Jordan, which became overtly manifest as the initial events of the Arab Awakening transpired, the last decade has witnessed a sharp rise in the prevalence of non-traditional political movements (hirak). In 2011 hirak organizations emerged with unprecedented momentum and support, filling the Kingdom's pervasive political and ideological vacuums— the results of party weakness and incumbent failures. These movements – as well as the concerns that fueled them – reached a point of maturation during the early 2010s. The Arab Awakening, as participants in our workshops stressed, broke down taboos and emboldened oppositional rhetoric. Thus, whilst the Arab Awakening emerged in North Africa, intense protests broke out in Jordan on January 7, 2011 in the unlikely town of Dhiban in Madaba. The Dhiban protests were a reaction both to the vastly declining socio-economic situation that was becoming increasingly acute within the Kingdom, as well as to the persistence of widespread corruption and commandeered public funds. These concerns were constantly addressed by hirak participants in our focus groups, as the widening socio-economic gap between urban and rural was a key factor in the emergence of the 2011 opposition movements. Therefore, while the protests started in Dhiban, they did not remain local; instead, the events in that town ignited a powder keg of discontent that spread throughout the Kingdom. The following Friday protests focusing on the same concerns expanded far beyond Dhiban, reaching Amman, Karak, and Irbid.

At first these outbursts largely consisted of unorganized protestors and embryonic hirak organizations, while the formal political parties and opposition coalitions chose not to participate. However, by the following week formal parties and organizations, both recognizing the full force of the emerging protests and appreciating the existential risks of remaining aloof, decided to join the movement. As the opposition began to enjoy increasingly widespread involvement and its longevity became apparent, many of the participating organizations succeeded in putting aside differences and working to coalesce around common goals for political change. This rapprochement was aided by the fact that most of the movements that were active in this period – as Chapter Two highlights – were largely focused on similar goals and on solving the same problems. Our workshop participants emphasized that each group had its own reason for calling for a specific reform, but that the desired reforms were frequently the same. While cohesive unification consequently remained elusive, it was, nonetheless, increasingly possible to speak of a single opposition and to refer to hirak as a single movement.

Workshop participants also noted that the changes being demanded by the opposition gradually changed, and new foci continually emerged. Generally, however, the incipient groups called for an end to corruption, the restoration of stolen public funds and privatized national resources, a “modern” and democratic election law, constitutional

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<sup>46</sup>Curtis R. Ryan, “Political Opposition and Reform Coalitions in Jordan,” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* Vol. 38, No. 3 (2011): 377.

amendments giving power back to the people, and the development of the governorates. As the opposition increasingly gained strength, King Abdullah II launched the Royal Committee on Constitutional Review, which was tasked with reviewing the Jordanian constitution and proposing amendments that would both enhance civil liberties and promote political democratization. Out of this review, the Committee proposed a plethora of proposals for constitutional amendments – many of which were enacted later in the year; among other crucial reforms, the imposed changes restricted the limits of martial law and the jurisdiction of the State Security Courts, instituted a Constitutional Court, and established the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC). The founding of the IEC allowed for the subsequent 2013 Parliamentary Election to be monitored independently for the first time in Jordanian history (previous elections had been supervised by the Ministry of the Interior). More extensive electoral reform, however, was undertaken by another committee, which King Abdullah II established concurrently.

Along with the Committee on Constitutional Review, King Abdullah II brought together a coalition of political party leaders, lawmakers, journalists, and activists in the National Dialogue Committee, which was charged with examining possible changes to both the Political Parties Law and the Election Law. The work of the Committee, however, came to an abrupt standstill in March when the state violently suppressed protests that occurred on March 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. During these two days, a vastly enlarged congregation of protesters descended upon Jamal Abdul Nasser Square (*Duar Dakhalia*) – a busy traffic circle in the center of Amman. When security forces entered the circle on the night of the second day, and one person died and scores more were injured, the protesters disbanded and the members of the National Dialogue Committee refused to continue their work. King Abdullah II, however, beseeched them, and the Committee resumed its work after a six day absence, and presented its final report two months later. Responding to the recommendations that had been suggested by the Committee – as well as the Royal Commission on Constitutional Review – the government passed a new Election Law in 2012, eliminating, albeit not entirely, “one person, one vote” after its nearly twenty year imposition.<sup>47</sup>

### **The Current Political Landscape**

The committees that the state appointed and the subsequent laws that the government enacted drastically changed Jordan’s political landscape. This dramatic change, however, did not emanate from the importance of large concessions within the new legislation, but from how the government used this process of “democratization” to divide the opposition movements and impede its progress. At the same time, massive shifts in regional power structures occurred, which simultaneously eroded the power of opposition movements and party coalitions. As a result of the transforming domestic and regional political atmosphere, the *hirak* organizations have divided and weakened since 2011, and party coalitions have fallen apart or been rendered ineffective. The current political situation in

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<sup>47</sup>Curtis R. Ryan, “The Implications of Jordan’s New Electoral Law,” *Foreign Policy*, April 13, 2012.

<<[http://mideast.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/04/13/the\\_implications\\_of\\_jordans\\_new\\_electoral\\_law](http://mideast.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/04/13/the_implications_of_jordans_new_electoral_law)>> (Last access date November 28, 2013).

Jordan, therefore, very much sits at a crossroads. The fate of political parties and movements is inherently tied to the outcomes of regional events and current efforts to rearrange domestic power structures. As a result, a quick overview of the current regional and domestic situations will be beneficial for situating the information contained in the subsequent sections of this document.

### *Regional Context*

While the initial manifestations of the Arab Awakening facilitated the emergence of social movements in Jordan, the unexpected outcomes of the Awakening have provoked correspondingly damaging consequences for those movements. As noted above, the opposition movements, and even political parties, were able to coordinate with each other quite successfully during the events of 2011. This cohesion was based upon the presence of common domestic reform agendas. However, as regional conflicts intensified and international concerns become increasingly crucial, ideological affiliation and foreign policy proved to be substantially more divisive than domestic aspirations. The monumental shifts in regional power structures that were brought on by the persistence of the Arab Awakening have exacerbated the respective movements' contrasting ideologies and incited inter-organizational conflicts. Of particular significance in this regard were the events in Syria and Egypt, which both served to retard the momentum of *hirak* and balkanize its individual organizations. *Hirak* members of our focus groups noted that the cohesion of the opposition movement was highly influenced by regional conditions, and that divisions emerged in large part as a result of changes in regional structures.

While such a balkanization would typically open up a new political vacuum and offer increased opportunity spaces for the political parties to reassert their dominance, the parties (like *hirak*) have similarly been affected by the same regional events. Because the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood, and hence the IAF, supports both its brethren in Egypt as well as the Syrian opposition, whilst Jordan's leftists and nationalist supported the ouster of Morsi and the survival of the Assad regime, the Kingdom's major parties have found themselves in binary opposition to one another. Consequently, these parties, which were able to coalesce in the early period of the Arab Awakening, are finding any new attempts at rapprochement increasingly difficult.

The situations in Egypt and Syria, however, have not only prevented the coalition of divergent ideologies, but they have also affected the political fortunes of individual Jordanian parties. Most importantly, the Muslim Brotherhood and its Islamic Action Front have confronted large relative declines within the Jordanian political system. With the fall of Morsi and the persistent survival of Assad's regime, the Jordanian Brotherhood, like all Brotherhood branches, has witnessed serious setbacks. The conditions in Egypt and Syria have damaged the Jordanian Brotherhood's prestige and limited its opportunities within the Kingdom. As a result, the IAF is increasingly worried that were it to participate in an upcoming election, it would fare far worse than it has in the past. Yet, the increasingly marginalized position of the Brotherhood cannot solely be attributed to regional events. The political landscape of Jordan has also been drastically affected by the Jordanian government's initiatives to stymie the rise of opposition

movements and ensure the continued (or, perhaps, heightened) ineffectiveness of political parties.

### *Domestic Context*

In the lead up to the new Election Law, opposition parties and activists had requested the genesis of a party list system and proportional representation; these demands were reflected within the new law, but only minimally.<sup>48</sup> Whereas opposition parties and movements had been calling for a system in which fifty percent of the seats were allocated through proportional representation, the 2012 system gave them only twenty-seven out of one hundred and fifty. Political parties were now confined to contesting a mere twenty-seven seats, whilst the remaining seats were left open only to independent candidates. Thus, even though the protests of 2011 led to reform and the removal of the hated “one person, one vote” system, they did not yield a significantly reformed political system. Predictably, the IAF, dismissing the new Law as “a cosmetic change,” boycotted the subsequent 2013 Election, and the house was once again filled with loyalists, tribalists, and conservatives.<sup>49</sup>

While the 2013 Election saw the rise of some previously marginalized political parties, such as al-Wasat Islamic Party, these increases were largely a function of the IAF’s boycott rather than an increased role for political parties. The IAF remains the largest and best-organized party, facing a virtual absence of competition. The dearth of alternative political parties in Jordan can in large part be attributed to the current Election Law, the Political Parties Law, and the internal parliamentary bylaws (or lack thereof). The current laws both render the geneses of new parties exceedingly difficult and heavily restrict the role of parties within the parliament. Similarly, the current Elections Law discourages party politics and inter-party coordination, as candidates are largely forced to run independent of political parties. While candidates often have implicit (though widely known) political affiliations, their official status as independents impedes their ability to act in coordination with other parliamentary representatives. Because of this system, it is difficult for blocs to form, and coordination consequently remains minimal. This situation is merely aggravated by the fact that the 113 seats that are not contested by political parties in the National List are challenged based on SNTV. Consequently, the same “one person, one vote” system that was in place between 1993 and 2012 remains the dominant means of determining seat allocation in the house.

### **New Laws, Same Restrictions**

The 2012 Election Law, therefore, represents yet another attempt to pre-empt greater opposition by providing a façade of reform through tactics of “defensive democratization.” This strategy personifies the “democratization” process in Jordan: while conceding small changes to the opposition, the state uses reform to reinforce its

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<sup>48</sup>Ryan, “The Implications of Jordan’s New Electoral Law.”

<sup>49</sup>Kristen Kao, “Jordan’s Ongoing Election Law Battle,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, SADA” July 5, 2012.

<<<http://carnegieendowment.org/2012/07/05/jordan-s-ongoing-election-law-battle/ck59>>> (Last access date November 28, 2013).

own position and those of its supporters. Laws are passed that resemble reform, but instead serve to increase control over political parties and movements. While the political system is constantly evolving and new reforms are continually introduced, power structures remain static and political parties and movements continue to play only a marginal role in Jordanian political life. Leftist political parties have been particularly ineffectual, and the Muslim Brotherhood – with its much more extensive support base – has been continually sidelined by increasingly restrictive electoral and political party legislation. New laws have served not to expand the role of political parties or to democratize the system, but rather to reinforce the patron-client relationship that emerged during the rentier era of Jordan’s political history.<sup>50</sup>

With an effective absence of meaningful party politics, elections merely act as a means of disseminating political patronage. This, however, does not indicate that elections are not competitively contested. Candidates run on the basis of tribal support and the intrinsically related ability to distribute state resources to their constituents. Thus, the electorate votes for candidates that it believes most able to access and distribute *wasta* (connections) and services. Candidates who are not favored by the government are less likely to be elected, as their ability to obtain (and deliver) material perks is more tenuous than the entrenched elite and tribal leaders.<sup>51</sup> Consequently, voters opt to support safer candidates, who are personally connected both to the state as well as to the electorate and, thus, more able to directly dispense material rewards. Hence, because voters secure their personal needs before ideological needs, “one person, one vote” guaranteed both loyal parliaments and strong tribal representation for twenty years. Likewise, with the implementation of the mixed electoral system in 2012, the same voter priorities were maintained, and the role of political parties remains equally constrained.

The government’s “defensive democratization,” tactics were similarly successful in halting the momentum of the *hirak*. The government conceded new, albeit limited, measures that satisfied some movements and fell far short for others. However, in finding this middle road, the state was able to divide the opposition, pitting the movements against each other and preventing a united opposition front. The current political landscape, therefore, has changed drastically since the apex of *hirak* activity in 2011, and it is no longer possible to talk about a single *hirak* movement. Instead *hirak* groups can now be divided into two general categories: (1) political and (2) specialized. The political *hirak* – the movements that emerged in 2010 and 2011 – have witnessed a drastic decline in their activities. They are still active, but not at the same scale; they now function almost exclusively at the local level and do not coordinate with other movements. The specialized *hirak* organizations, on the other hand, eschew political issues and purely focus on micro level socio-economic issues pertaining almost exclusively to economic and labor rights. While they lack coordination and organization, these movements are

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<sup>50</sup>See Scott Greenwood, “Jordan’s ‘New Bargain:’ The Political Economy of Regime Security,” *Middle East Journal* Vol. 57, No. 2 (Spring 2003).

<sup>51</sup>Ellen Lust-Okar, “Elections Under Authoritarianism: Preliminary Lessons from Jordan,” *Democratization* Vol. 13, No. 3, (2006): 460.

present in almost every corner of the public and private sector, representing, for instance, the rights of workers in one particular company.

Since 1989, therefore, the state has successfully used party politics and reform to not only provide Jordan with a democratic image, but also to serve as a eudemonic legitimacy provider in lieu of its former reliance on neo-patrimonial links in a rentier system. No longer able to directly disseminate patronage to ensure the continued support of its key constituencies, as it did before political liberalization in the 1980s, the state now uses elections to indirectly provide benefits to its pillars of support. As a result, and despite the fact that new political parties have proliferated and are able to operate relatively freely, electoral victories (and the material perks that follow with them) continue to be served to state loyalists, and political parties maintain their marginal importance. While informal political movements have recently attempted to fill the vacuum left behind by ineffectual party politics, they too have seen their demands answered with hollow reforms.

**Chapter 2: Political Parties, Movements, Coalitions, and Initiatives**  
**List of Groups with Key Data**

**Political Parties**

#	Entity name	Arabic Name	Transliteration of Arabic Name	Geographic Scope	Founding date	Basis for Creation	Political Ideology	Key leaders	Website
1	Al-Hayat (Life) Jordanian Party	حزب الحياة	Hizb al-Hayat al-Urduni	Jordan	2008	Political	Center	Thaher Amro, Abdulfattah Kailani	
2	Al-Rafah (Welfare) Jordanian Party		Hizb al-Rafah al-Urduni	Jordan	2009	Political	Center	Mohammad Raja Al Shoumally	
3	Al-Risala (Message) Party		Hizb al-Risala	Jordan	2002	Political	Center	Hazim Qashshoua', Hayil Alshuiyyab	
4	Al-Wasat (Middle) Islamic Party		Hizb al-Wasat al-Islami	Jordan	2001	Political	Islamist	Mohammed Elhaj, Marwan Faouri, Awad Elkhlayila, Yasin Elmaqousi, Rakis Elkhlayila, Dr. Malik Elmoumani	www.wasatparty.com
5	The Arab Progressive Ba'ath Party		Hizb al-Ba'ath al-Arabi al-Taqadomi	Jordan	1993	Political	Arab Nationalist Leftist	Foad Dabbour, Sharif Halawah	www.abpparty.org
6	The Democratic Islamic Movement Party "Dua'a"	الاسلامية الديمقراطية	Hizb Al-Harakah al-Islamiah al-Dimoqratiah "Dua'a"	Jordan	1993	Political	Islamist	Usama Banat, Mohammed Abu Saffiyah, Amjad Mustafa	www.duaa-jo.com
7	The Freedom and Equality Party	الحرية	Hizb al-Hurriya wa al-Mosawah	Jordan	2009	Political	Center	Hamad Saleh Abuzaid	

8	The Islamic Action Front Party (IAF)	حزب جبهة	Hizb Jabhit al-Amal al-Islami	Jordan	1992	Political	Islamist	Hamzah Mansour, Ali Abulsukkar, Mohammad Albzour, Nimer Alassaf, Mosa Alwahsh, Abdulla Farajalla	www.jabha.net
9	The Jordanian Reform Party		Hizb al-Islah al-Urduni	Jordan	2012	Political	Center	Ibrahim Althaher	www.adaleh-aslah.org
10	The Jordanian Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party		Hizb al-Ba'ath al-Arabi al-Ishtiraki al-Urduni	Jordan	1993	Political	Arab Nationalist Leftist	Akram Alhimsi, Hisham Alnajdawi, Raja'e Naffa'a	
11	The Jordanian Communist Party	الشيوعي	Al-Hizb al-Shoyo'ee al-Urduni	Jordan	1951	Political	Communist	Moneer Hamarneh, Faraj Tmaizah, Nidal Mdyiah, Omar Awwad	
12	The Jordanian Democratic People's Party (HASHD)	الديمقراطي))	Hizb al-Sha'ab al-Dimoqrati Al-Urduni (HASHD)	Jordan	1993	Political	Left	Ablah Abu Ilba, Mohammad Alzarqan	http://www.hashd-ahali.org/jo/
13	The Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity Party	الشعبية الديمقراطي	Hizb al-Wihdah al-Sha'abeyah al-Dimoqrati al-Urduni	Jordan	1990	Political	Arab Nationalist Leftist	Saeed Thiyab, Abdulmajeed Dandees, Musa Elazab, FakherDa'as	www.wihda.org
14	The Jordanian National Party		Al-Hizb al-Watani al-Urduni	Jordan	2007	Political	Center	Mona Abubakr, Mohammed Elkhazalde, Faisal Elkhalayila, Ibrahim Abubakr, Ali Elalawneh	
15	The Jordanian National Youth Party		Hizb al-Shabab al-Watani al-Urduni	Jordan	2011	Political	Center	Mohammed Alokshosh	
16	The Justice and Development	والتنمية	Hizb al-Adalah wa al-	Jordan	2009	Political	Center	Ali Alshurafa	www.jdparty.org

	Party		Tanmeyah						
17	The National Constitutional Party		Al-Hizb al-Watani al-Dusturi	Jordan	1997	Political	Center	Ahmed Alshunnaq, Insaf Alrabadi	www.ncp.jo
18	The National Current Party	حزب التيار	Hizb al-Tayyar al-watani	Jordan	2009	Political	Center	Abdelhadi Al Majali and Saleh Ersheidat	http://www.tayarwatani.jo
19	The National Movement for Direct Democracy Party	القومية للديمقراطية	Hizb Al-Harakah al-Qawmiyah li al-Dimoqratiyah al-Mobasherah	Jordan	1997	Political	Arab Nationalist Leftist	Nasha'at Akram, Nasr Elnowaihi	
20	The United Jordanian Front Party	الجبهة الاردنية	Hizb Al-Jabha al-Urduniah al-Mowahadah	Jordan	2007	Political	Center Left	Amjad Almajali, Abdulrazzak Tbaishat	www.jo-front.com

## Movements (Hirak)

#	Entity name	Arabic Name	Transliteration of Arabic Name	Geographic Scope	Founding date	Basis for Creation	Political Ideology and Focus	Key leaders	Website
1	Al-Salt Movement		Hirak al-Salt	Al-Salt, Al- Balqa	2011	Regional		Sa'ad Alabbadi, Mohammed Aldabbas	
2	Al-Tafila Quarter Movement	الطفالية	Hirak Hai al-Tafaileh	Amman	2011	Regional		Mohammed Alharasis, Monther Alharasis	
3	The Aqaba People's Movement for Reform		Hirak Abna' al-Aqaba li al-Islah	Aqaba	2012	Regional		Siyyag Almajali	
4	The Arab Renewal Movement	التجديد العربية	Harakat al-Tajdeed al-'Arabiyah	Jordan	2011	Political		Usama Aknan	
5	The Dhiban Youth Committee	ذيبان	Lajnit Shabab Dhiban	Madaba - Dhiban District	2006	Regional		Mohammad Al-Sunaid, Fuad Qubilat, Faisal Al-Shakhanba, Haidar Al-Awaida, Kamel Al-Sunaid	
6	The Faqqou' Movement		Hirak Faqqou'	Kerak Faqqou'	2011	Regional		Mohammed Alomarieen, Yaser Alzaidyeen	
7	The Free People of Kharja Movement		Hirak Ahrar Kharja	Kharja	2012	Regional	Islamist		
8	The Free People of Tafila Movement	الطفيلة	Hirak Ahrar al-Tafila	Tafila	2011	Regional		Saed Elhoran, Nidal Alobaidin	

9	The Independent Youth Political Thought Group	فكر سياسي	Fikir Siyasi Shababi Mostaqil	Jordan	2012	Political	Youth	Sumaiyah Alghdhah	
10	The Jordanian 36 Current	التيار 36	Al-Tayyar al-Urduni 36	Jordan	2011	Political / Tribal	Movement of 36 tribes	Imad Alqaisi, Mohammed Meqdadi, Abd Elmanaseer, Tarek Alsalahat, Abdulfattah Jbarah	
11	The Jordanian Social Left Movement	اليسار	Harakat al-Yasar al-Ijtima'i al-Urduni	Jordan	2007	Political	Left		<a href="http://www.yasarjo.net/">http://www.yasarjo.net/</a>
12	The Jordanian Youth Movement		Al- Hirak al-Shababi al-Urduni	Amman	2011	Political	Youth without political affiliation	Lean Khayyat, Nihad Zuhair, Abdullah Mahadeen	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/7erak">https://www.facebook.com/7erak</a>
13	The Ma'an Youth Coalition for Reform and Change	والتغيير في	'Ttilaf Shabab al-Islah wa al-Taghyeer fi Ma'an	Ma'an	2012	Regional			
14	The Nationalist Progressive Current	التيار	Al-Tayar al-qawmi al-Taquadomi	Jordan	2011	Political	Pan-Arab Leftist	Khalid Ramadan, Muthanna Gharayibe, Abdulrahman Albitar, Issa Hamdan, Nasri Turazi	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/AlTayyarAlQawmiAlTakadomi">https://www.facebook.com/AlTayyarAlQawmiAlTakadomi</a>
15	The Northern Aghwar (Valley) People's Movement for Reform	الشمالية	Hirak Abna' al-Aghwar al-Shamalyeh li al-Islah	Northern Aghwar	2012	Regional		Nasr Alqarama, Yaser Alghazzawi, Rakan Alsgour, Methgal Alzanati	
16	The Political		Al-	Mafrag	2011	Tribal		Mohammed Alzyoud,	

	Gathering of the Bani Hassan Tribe	السياسي عشيرة بني	Tajamo' al-Siyasi li 'Abna' 'Asheerat Bani Hassan					Abdulkareem Alkhaliya, Ibrahim Alhisban, Ahmed Alshdaifat, Ayman Alkhaza'eleh, Bashshar Alrafali	
17	The Sahab Youth Reform Movement		Hirak Shabab Sahab li al-Islah	Sahab	2011	Regional	Youth	Ahmed Abu Zaid	
18	The Southern Al-Mazar Movement		Hirak al-Mazar al-Janoobi	Kerak Southern Al-Mazar	2011	Regional		Ali Aldalaeen	
19	Al-Salt Movement		Hirak al-Salt	Al-Salt, Al- Balqa	2011	Regional		Sa'ad Alabbadi, Mohammed Aldabbas	
	Al-Tafila Quarter Movement	الطفالية	Hirak Hai al-Tafaileh	Amman	2011	Regional		Mohammed Alharasis, Monther Alharasis	

## Coalitions

#	Entity name	Arabic	Transliteration of Arabic Name	Geographic Scope	Founding date	Basis for Creation	Political Ideology	Key leaders	Members
1	Higher Coordination Committee of the Jordanian National Opposition Parties	لجنة التنسيق العليا لأحزاب الوطنية الأردنية	Lajnet Altanseeq Al-olya Li Ahzab Al- Moaradah Al- Wataniyya Al-urdoneyah	Jordan	1993	Political	All Political Parties	Hamzeh Mansour, Said Dyab, Muneer Hamarneh, Abla Abu Olbeh, Akram Hems, Fuad Dabbour, Nsh't Ahmed	The Jordanian Communist Party, Islamic Action Front, the Popular Unity Party, The People's Democratic Party (HASHD), The Jordanian Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party, The Arab Progressive Ba'ath Party.
2	The Coordination Platform of Popular Movements	تنسيقية الشعبية	Tanseeqyit al-Harakat al-Sha'abyieh	Jordan	2012	Political	National and local Islamist	Majdi Albdour, Saa'e'd Eloran, Imad Ayasrah, Abdulwahhab Fraihat, Mohammed Aldabbas, Monther Alharasees, Mohammed Albawareed	Islamic Action Front, The Free People of Tafila Movement, The Dhiban Youth Committee, Al-Salt Movement, Al-Tafila Quarter Movement, The Ma'an Youth Coalition for Reform and Change
3	The National Reform Front	الجبهة الوطنية	Al-Jabha al-Watanoyeh li al-Islah	Jordan	2011	Political	Represents different political	Ahmad Obeidat, Fahmy Al-	Islamic Action Front, The Jordanian

							fractions	Katkout	Democratic Popular Unity Party, The United Jordanian Front Party, The Jordanian Social Left Movement, The Dhiban Youth Committee, The Free People of Tafila Movement, The Sahab Youth Reform Movement
4	The Democratic Civil State Coalition	المدنية الديمقراطية	Tahalof al-Dawlah al-Madaniya al Demoqratiya	Jordan	2012	Political	Leftist	Khalid Ramadan, Khalid Alkalalde, Nasri Alturazi	The Jordanian Social Left Movement, The Nationalist Progressive Current
5	The People's Gathering for Reform		Al-Tajamo' al-Sha'abi li al-Islah	Jordan	2011	Political	Coordination platform for individuals and movements	The 24 <sup>th</sup> of March Youth Coalition, Bani Hasan Youth Gathering for the Sake of the Homeland, Ma'an Youth Coalition for Change and Reform. In addition to Islamic Movement figures:	The 24 <sup>th</sup> of March Youth Coalition, Bani Hasan Youth Gathering for the Sake of the Homeland, Ma'an Youth Coalition for Change and Reform, Islamic Action Front

								Salem Alfalahat, Rhaiyl Gharaiybe, Ahmed Kafawin, and independent figures: Dr. Mohammed Khair Mamser, Mohammed Talab Abu Alim, Ali Aldala'een	
6	The Youth and People's Coalition for Change	للتغيير	Al-'Itilaf al- Shababi wa al- Sha'bi li al Taghyeer	Amman, Irbid, Karak	2011	Political	Leftist/ Nationalist/ Youth orientated	Fakher Daa's, Omar Awwad, Mohammad Al-Zarqan	The Jordanian Democratic People's Party (HASHD) The Jordanian Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party The Arab Progressive Ba'ath Party The National Movement for Direct Democracy Party The Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity Party The Jordanian Communist Party The Jordanian

									Social Left Movement The Nationalist Progressive Current The Sahab Youth Reform Movement
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### Initiatives

	Entity name	Arabic Name	Transliteration of Arabic Name	Geographic Scope	Founding date	Basis for Creation	Political Ideology	Key leaders	Website
1	The Defense Committee for People's Movements	هيئة الدفاع عن الحراك	Hay'it al-Difa' an al-Hirak al-Sha'abi	Jordan	2012	Legal	Legal Committee to defend Political Movements	Wael Atawi, Hussein Alfugaha, Ismail Burgul, Faten Abulhaiga, Majed Alrousan.	
2	The Supreme Council for Reform		Al-Majlis al-Alali al-Islah	Jordan	2012	Political	Division of IAF responsible for reform	Salem Al-Falahat, Zaki Bani Irshid	
3	Zamzam Initiative		Mobadret Zamzam	Jordan	2013	Political	Islamic Civic State	Dr. Ruhayyil Gharaybeh, Dr. Nabeel Al-Kofahi (former MP).	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/JordanBI.org">https://www.facebook.com/JordanBI.org</a>

## **Political Parties:**

### **1. Al-Hayat (Life) Jordanian Party**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: Political – Center

Date of establishment: 2008

#### *Overview and objectives:*

Al-Hayat was established in Amman in 2008. Al-Hayat believes in reforming the system from within, so it has not participated in protests or demonstrations in the country. Although the party mentions the environment and the role of women and youth directly, it has no clear agenda regarding any of these matters.

Its central aims include:

- Developing the Jordanian community and helping to achieve the comprehensive advancement of the country and its citizen on the political, economic, social, and environmental fronts using democratic and peaceful methods.
- Creating realistic platforms, solutions, and mechanisms to handle issues related to community members on political, economic, social, and environmental issues. This can be achieved through programs and plans to develop the life of people in all domains through a comprehensive vision of the political and life status of citizens.
- Developing political awareness among community members and empowering competent people in general
- Supporting groups with special needs so that they can participate in the decision-making process.
- Highlighting the role of women and supporting their participation in all fields.
- Highlighting the role of youth and developing their creative potentials to work and build up the country.
- The party directs special attention to the environment, as without preserving the environment no real advancement can be achieved for the community.
- Reiterating the importance of work and achievement on the ground so that citizens can feel the impact.
- Supporting the government and holding it accountable by deterring it from causing grievance to the country. The Constitution of Jordan must be observed in this respect.
- All members of the Jordanian Community must be equally served notwithstanding gender, upbringing, or religion.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- This party is largely inactive and does not play a significant role in the public sphere.

Reform agenda:

- It does not have a tangible platform or vision for reform.

## **2. Al-Rafah (Welfare) Jordanian Party**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: Political – Center

Date of establishment: 2009

*Overview and objectives:*

Al-Rafah was established in Amman in 2009. The party has very limited documentation regarding its programs, but it actively comments on different national and international issues through press releases. The party participated in the 2013 elections, but did not win any seats. As a result, it announced that it would work to form a shadow parliament to monitor the performance of the parliament.

Despite its sparse documentation, the party has several key focuses:

- It works to achieve the rule of law and equality among citizens, whilst also focusing on the principle of democracy and a solution to the Palestinian cause.
- It supports cultural and media programs, the installation of health insurance, education and the agricultural sector.
- At the same time, it works to combat corruption

Strengths and weaknesses:

- This party is largely inactive and does not play a significant role in the public sphere.

Reform agenda:

- It does not have a tangible platform or vision for reform.

## **3. Al-Risala (Message) Party**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: Political – Center

Date of establishment: 2002

*Overview and objectives:*

Al-Risala was established in Amman in 2002 with the slogan “Towards citizenship and modernity.” The party was established by ex-ministers who supported the regime and the current system. Thus, their agenda focuses on enhancing and supporting the current political system; they argue that working to reform the system from the inside is the best way to support reform in the Kingdom. Al-Risala is seen as a party that unconditionally supports the King and the regime’s political agenda. It is, therefore, widely criticized by opposition parties. The party was successful in winning one parliament seat in the 2013 elections (this victory, however, followed a protracted court case between al-Risala and the Jordanian People Democratic Party regarding vote counting for the national list). The result of which was a victory for the Al-Risala party for the seat.

According to its manifesto, the party has several specific aims:

- Pursue platforms that fulfill the human needs of the country, support national security and prosperity in the political and socio-economic realms, and reinforce loyalty to the country and political pluralism.
- Ensure responsible freedom within a framework of democracy and social justice. To accomplish this, all methods and tools provided for in the Constitution and the law should be used.
- To motivate people to support and join political parties, so as to enhance democracy empower political parties in the political process.
- The Constitution must be respected and its provisions implemented. The rule of law and political pluralism of thought and opinion must be respected.
- The country’s independence must be maintained and violence must be refused.
- Equal opportunities must be provided for all citizens.
- No association or financial affiliation with a non-Jordanian party can be accepted.
- Partisan association and recruitment cannot be implemented within the armed forces and the security forces.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- Hazim Qashou’, a former minister and current MP, leads this party. Because of his powerful social status, the protection of current and future members is guaranteed. As such, it is able to attract membership quite effectively.
- Hazim Qashou’ and, therefore, the party frequently appears in mainstream media.
- However, the party is largely dominated by a single personality. It essentially functions as a mouthpiece to promote Hazim Qashou’ and the agenda of the regime; it does not have a presence within civil society.

Reform agenda:

In public statements the party promotes the King’s agenda; it, therefore, does not push for widespread reform via street protests. However, in closely examining Hazim Qashou’s statements, as well as his practical policies as a minister and an MP, it becomes evident that he is indeed promoting reform in a subtler manner – especially in regard to the Election Law and the Municipalities Law.

#### **4. Al-Wasat (Middle) Islamic Party**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: Political – Islamist

Date of establishment: 2001

##### *Overview and objectives:*

Al-Wasat was established in Amman in 2001. It did not have a strong role in Jordanian politics following its inception; although it included a variety of prominent members, it did not immediately become a strong and effective party. While its marginal position remained prevalent even during the peak of reformist activities, the party performed surprisingly well in the 2013 elections, taking 16 seats. Yet, despite this electoral success, many people continue to regard the party as passive and inactive.

Al-Wasat pursues the following goals:

- Building a modern, democratic, prosperous and integrated Jordan: a country that is proud of its historic originality, which contributes to Islamic and human civilization.
- Participating in political life to establish the values of decency, belongingness, and justice through a comprehensive moderate methodology based on commitment, transparency, progressiveness, cooperation, and the understanding of factual status and its priorities. It sets the interest of Jordan atop all other considerations.
- The party emphasizes its role as a political, national, and democratic movement based on Islam, rather than a religious party that sees itself as a custodian of people's conscience and thinking. It considers the right to citizenship the single factor that binds all citizens. It reiterates the importance of leading public life according to this basis and its ethical values.
- Constitutional texts related to Islam must be given their true meaning to reflect their tangible impact on all walks of life. This will make the Islamic Shari'a the supreme source of all legislations and laws. All issues that contradict its provisions shall be null and void.
- Improving living standards for people and citizens, and adopting a rational and realistic economic policy including prosperity of life and well being of citizen.
- Development gains must be distributed in a just and fair manner to all groups so that their overall distribution helps remove grievance and marginalization from less prosperous communities.
- Reforming the public administration, as well as combating financial corruption and the lack of administrative control in order to maintain the nation's potential and direct it to achieve the public interest. This, the party claims, can be done by operationalizing the standards of efficiency and trustworthiness in assignment of responsibilities, as well as by activating the mechanisms of monitoring and accountability.
- Stressing the importance of cultural and linguistic diversification to support the Islamic identity of our country.
- Restoring Jordan's image as a civilized member of the Arab, Islamic, and international communities.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- The party was extremely successful in the last election. It received three national seats and fourteen independent district seats (seventeen in total).
- This success was a result of the party's effective use of media; it has both its own TV and radio stations. It also worked closely with grassroots organizations across the country (such as charity organizations, which benefit the poor).
- In addition, it benefited from the absence of the IAF in the election.
- Good relations have been built by the party with both the main opposition parties, as well as the government, which gives the party space to operate.

Reform agenda:

Al-Wasat Islamic Party is not a member of any coalitions, as it has its own independent reform program; it mostly focuses on fighting corruption and fostering political participation. The party primarily advocates for this reform through its media channels, rather than on the streets.

## **5. The Arab Progressive Ba'ath Party**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: Political – Arab Nationalist, Leftist

Date of establishment: Official: 1993, Unofficial: 1963

*Overview and objectives:*

The Arab Progressive Ba'ath Party was officially licensed in Jordan in 1993. It is an extension of the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party. It split with the Arab Socialist Ba'ath party when the mother party in Syria divided in two. The name was chosen because "Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party" was already registered at the time. Its name, however, is fitting, as the party describes itself an Arab nationalistic party that belongs to the people, and struggles to achieve its objectives and core principles in a democratic manner. Although the Arab Progressive Ba'ath Party was successful in attracting people to join the party and support it as a result of its still attractive Arab nationalistic background, the party has faced the same problems as the Jordanian Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party. Both have encountered resistance as a result of their relations to Iraq and Syria. Additionally, the Ba'ath parties suffered after the end of the Ba'ath regime in Iraq and the harsh consequences it had on the region's political landscape. The party won one parliament seat only in the 2013 elections.

Its agenda is based upon the following goals:

- The party believes that the Arab nation is a single, cohesive nation. Consequently, the party only engages in domestic policy from the perspective of the greater Arab interests.

- The party believes the Arab world is an integral political and economic unit that cannot be divided: no Arab country can survive without the support of all its fellow Arab countries. Thus, the party struggles to unite Arab countries in a single independent state.
- The party works for the institutionalization of democracy and the rule of law in the Constitution. It works to prevent the abuse of people and achieve political and economic reform to help realize the interests of the people.
- It calls on adherence to religion and respect for the national heritage, as well as the unification of the Arab nation, consecration of the democratic regime, and the accomplishment of the Arab economic integration.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- The Arab Progressive Ba'ath Party was strong between the time of its establishment in 1963 and the early 1990s due to its support from the Syrian Ba'ath party. However, this support declined after the relationship between Jordan and Syria improved, and the Syrian Ba'ath party lost its incentive to support its Jordanian counterpart against the regime.
- It has since continued to exist, but its activity has declined and its membership has dwindled. It has participated in elections, but it has not won any seats in any election.
- At the party conference of 2002, there were a number of resignations, as members felt there the party was being governed unfairly.
- Since the Arab Awakening, the party has participated in many movements on the street. However, since the Syrian conflict began, the party's focus has been solely on the situation in Syria, and it has neglected issues in Jordan.
- The party is a member of many national coalitions: the Youth and People's Coalition for Change, the Higher Coordinating Committee for Opposition Parties and the National Reform Front.

Reform agenda:

It has a clear vision for reform, which is reflected by its continued participation in the three coalitions' activities and street demonstrations.

## **6. The Democratic Arab Islamic Movement Party (Dua'a)**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: Political – Islamist

Date of establishment: 1993

*Overview and objectives:*

The Democratic Arab Islamic Movement Party (Dua'a) was founded in Amman in 1993. According to its declarations, the movement focuses on facilitating the liberalization of citizens from ignorance, under-development, abuse, and subordination. Although the party is an Islamic

party, it is a center party in terms of ideology. It is, for instance, different from the Muslim Brotherhood, the Islamic Action Front Party, and even the al-Wasat, in this regard. It is the only Islamic party in Jordan where its political objectives are only minimally affected by its religious disposition.

- It seeks to achieve Arab unity in a gradual manner, restore respect to the great Islamic religion in its enlightened and modern image, assist worldwide self-determination, present a civilized vision of humanity based on enlightened Islamic.
- Most fundamentally, however, the party is focused on the full liberation of Palestine and the unification of the East and West banks of the country through an inseparable merger.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- This party is largely inactive and does not play a significant role in the public sphere.

Reform agenda:

- It does not have a tangible platform or vision for reform.

## **7. The Freedom and Equality Party**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: Political – Center

Date of establishment: 2009

*Overview and objectives:*

The Freedom and Equality Party was established in Amman in 2009. This party is widely seen to constitute an individual initiative that was established in a tribal area of East Amman. It is also perceived as being purely tribal and lacking a clear political program.

It pursues the following objectives:

- National belongingness: the country is not merely a place of residence, but also the space for all human activities.
- Belongingness to the Arab Islamic nation.
- The spiritual and intellectual belongingness based on the shared Islamic character of most of the Jordanian nation.
- Democracy and freedom: democracy is a method of life that allows the nation to practice its sovereignty, freedom, and expression of opinion so that the government becomes a reflection of the people's will.
- Human belongingness necessitates an aware openness to the international human community as well as respect for human thought.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- This party is largely inactive and does not play a significant role in the public sphere.

Reform agenda:

- It does not have a tangible platform or vision for reform.

## **8. The Islamic Action Front (IAF)**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: Political – Islamist

Date of establishment: 1992

*Overview and objectives:*

The IAF was established in 1992 as the political arm of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan. The IAF is the largest and most influential political party in Jordan. It is a member of the Higher Coordinating Committee for Opposition Parties (which will be expanded upon below). The Islamic Action Front is the biggest, strongest, most organized, and best financed political party in the country. This status can largely be attributed to the Brotherhood's unique ability to expand and prosper through the martial law period. During this time, the organization vastly increased its organizational capabilities and involvement in socio-economic activities across the country.

The Islamic Action Front has made a plethora of demands in its lifetime, but its central platform focuses on:

- Restoring an Islamic way of life and implementing Shari'a law.
- Preparing the nation to fight against its enemies, the Zionists and colonialists, as well as serve the Palestinian cause within its Arab and Islamic framework.
- Establishing unity of the nation and democratic communal consensus (*Shura*) whilst defending human dignity and rights.
- Defending freedoms in general; it is concerned with the issues of people and comprehensive development of an Islamic community.
- Restoration of the constitutional status of the Jordanian nation as the source of state power. This, the IAF believes, can be achieved when people are given the right to elect their parliamentary representatives for both the Lower and the Upper houses.
- A parliamentary government that enjoys all constitutional and administrative powers.
- The government must be responsible for all institutions of the state, especially the General Intelligence Directorate (Mukhabarat). It should assume its constitutional and legal tasks; that is, only the protection of the country and citizens without interfering in public life or administrative and political affairs.
- Achieving the peaceful succession of power according to internationally observed democratic practices.

- Introducing constitutional amendments, especially to articles 34, 35, and 36<sup>52</sup> to help build a strong civil and democratic state.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- The IAF is the largest and the best organized party in Jordan.
- It is financially well established due to its connections with businesses and charities.
- The wide breath of its support is mostly derived from poorer segments of the population who are dependent on its aid.
- It is able to use religion, religious organizations, and mosques as tools to raise its membership and influence.
- It maintains a charity committee, which provides social welfare to their key constituents.
- It owns a number of media outlets, which are used to spread its message.

Reform agenda:

The IAF espouses unique opinions and priorities concerning the reform process and it is extremely vocal. Most crucially, it is focused on the Election Law and constitutional amendments to limit the power of the monarchy.

## **9. The Jordanian Reform Party**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: Political – Center

Date of establishment: 2012

*Overview and objectives:*

The Jordanian Reform Party was established in 2012. Although the party is newly established, it has a clearly defined program that focuses on unemployment, economic policies, poverty, women, youth, education, politics, foreign policy, culture, fighting crime, and fighting corruption. However, the party has faced criticism regarding its program of political reform in the country, as a lot of activists consider that the party's vision in this regard to be conservative and non-progressive.

It is the newest Jordanian party, and it guided by the following general principles:

- The Hashemite leadership is the legitimate leadership of the state of Jordan.

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<sup>52</sup> Articles 34, 35, and 36 pertain to the King's current power over the parliament, senate, the prime minister, and cabinet. These three articles have been the focus of numerous reform efforts that have attempted to limit the power of the monarchy, and ensure that political power within the Kingdom rests in the hands of parliament responsible only to the people. Kingdom of Jordan, "The Constitution of The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan," January 1, 1952.

<<[http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/constitution\\_jo.html](http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/constitution_jo.html)>> (Last access date November 28, 2013).

- The party prioritizes adherence to the text and spirit of the Constitution and the obtaining of community consensus for laws. These two issues are national priorities, and their implementation must be subjected to legal and civil oversight.
- The party believes that it is necessary to create an effective political state that contributes to motivating citizens to participate in the Kingdom's political life.
- The party reiterates the importance of actual implementation of the principle of separation among branches of power.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- This party is largely inactive and does not play a significant role in the public sphere.

Reform agenda:

- It does not have a tangible platform or vision for reform.

## **10. The Jordanian Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: National – Arab Nationalist, Leftist

Date of establishment: Officially: 1993, Unofficially: 1947

*Overview and objectives:*

The Jordanian Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party was created in Syria in 1947. A number of Jordanian political figures attended the establishment congress at that time, and they subsequently adopted the party's thought and its principles and assumed an effective role in formulating its literature. The party was officially licensed in Jordan in 1993. It was the first branch of the Syrian Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party outside of Syria. The Jordanian Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party had a wide base of supporters in the country before 1989; however, following the cessation of martial law in 1989, the party was no longer able to maintain its previous momentum. It became increasingly incapable of attracting youth to join the party – in large part because of relation to the oppressive Syrian and Iraqi regimes – and the controversial arguments about the party's affiliation with non-Jordanian political forces. The party was able to win a parliament seat in the 2013 parliamentary elections.

It works to achieve unity, freedom, and socialism through adherence to the following principles:

- Methodological planning to build a socialist economy.
- Supporting popular, national, and nationalistic directives.
- Combating all calls for regionalism and separation among Arab countries.
- Supporting human rights.
- Consecrating the principle of separation among the authorities of the state.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- Saddam Hussein provided a significant number of scholarships to Jordanian students to study for free in Iraq. From the early 1980s, these incentives resulted in significant support for the Socialist Arab Ba'ath Party. This strength has continued to this day, due to its strong connections with the Iraqi Ba'ath Party (unlike the Arab Progressive Ba'ath Party below, which is aligned with the Syrian Ba'ath Party).
- The party is particularly strong in the South of the Kingdom.
- Most of the regional movements, particular in the South, have leaders who are also members of the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party. These members established local interest protest movements in 2011 and 2012, but maintain their links to the Ba'ath Party.
- This cross membership resulted in a significant electoral conflict; despite the fact that the Ba'ath party decided to run in the elections, many of its members who were also involved in political movements boycotted the elections.
- The party is a member of a number of national coalitions: the Youth and People's Coalition for Change, the Higher Coordinating Committee for Opposition Parties and the National Reform Front.

Reform agenda:

It has a clear vision for reform, which is reflected by its continued participation in the three coalitions' activities and street demonstrations.

### **11. The Jordanian Communist Party**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: Political – Communist/ Leftist

Date of establishment: 1951

*Overview and objectives:*

The Jordanian Communist Party was established in 1951 when the National Liberation League in Palestine joined the Marxists in Jordan. At that time, Fouad Nassar, a military leader fighting against the British mandate, assumed leadership of the party. He described it as a voluntary political organization for every Jordanian woman and man who agreed with its principles, objectives, and intellectual directives, and agreed to be bound by its statutes and fulfill membership requirements as per its bylaws. The Jordanian Communist Party is one of the oldest and most firmly-rooted parties in the country; it has attracted thousands of Jordanians over the years, and was one of the most active parties during the 1950s and 1960. However, the party has suffered from a number of cleavages over the years. These splits were largely caused by diverging political point of views, which have highlighted the party's inability to contain and synthesize the views of all of its members or develop collective political decisions that satisfy all of its supporters.

Following are the principles of the party:

- Strengthening national independence, challenging economic subordination factors, and achieving social advancement.
- Laying the ground for a civil society and the spread of democracy in public life.
- Expanding the social justice base by adjudicating the concerns of the labor class, farmers, proletariat, and breadwinners.
- In its thought, the party adopts a Marxist and Leninist methodology that is also informed by principles of scientific socialism.
- The party is guided by the traditional struggles and revolutionary experience of the Jordanian nation.
- The party is inspired by all revolutionary and reform aspects of the Islamic Arab Heritage as well as the rich historical experiences of the world nations and their human and civil background.
- Openness to all ideas and opinions that can help the party to develop its agenda and increase its capacity and cognitive potentials for societal analysis in all of its dimensions: economic, social, and political. This, the party believes, can help it to better achieve its objectives and render it more capable of both fulfilling the nation's requirements as well as coping with the scientific, social, and economic developments.
- The party takes into consideration the particular relation between the Jordanian and Palestinian brother nations, as well as the mutual impact of the two national causes on both nations.
- The party considers Arab unity a means of providing the Arab nations with the potential to achieve development and challenge the exaggerated actions of imperialistic forces that seek to abuse the welfare of the Arab countries by keeping them weak and fragmented.
- The party deems it necessary to strengthen and develop the international solidarity among all nations and powers against international and multinational monopolistic policies and their attempts to perpetuate subordination and under-development.

#### Strengths and weaknesses:

- The Communist Party was considered the strongest party in Jordan in the 1950s and 1960s, enjoying a wide base of support.
- In 1956, the communist party ran for election as part of a coalition called "the National Front." The party was the main founder of the Front. Leading the Front in the election, it obtained two seats in the parliament. Subsequently, the Front was given a position in the cabinet. The minister himself was not a member of the party, but he represented the Communist-led National Front.
- However, as the Kingdom has since become more religious, the Communist Party has lost support to the Islamist parties.
- Its leadership and mentality, moreover, is static and not reflective of the people's wishes.
- It participates widely in demonstrations.
- This party is a member in many of national coalitions: the Youth and People's Coalition for Change, the Higher Coordinating Committee for Opposition Parties and the National Reform Front.

#### Reform agenda:

It has a clear vision for reform, particularly stressing social justice. It is also focused on subsidies, education, health care, and, to a lesser extent, the Election Law.

## **12. The Jordanian Democratic People's Party (HASHD)**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: National – Left

Date of establishment: 1993

### *Overview and objectives:*

The establishment congress of the HASHD was held in 1989 and the party obtained official licensing in 1993. The party presents itself as a democratic, political, and revolutionary organization that is part of the working class movement. It seeks to unify the factions of the working class movement within a progressive mass party aimed at strengthening the people in their struggle to achieve national goals. The party is working to coordinate these powers within a single united front capable of manifesting national democracy in Jordan. In this endeavor, it employs Marxism-Leninism, framing it as a scientific approach to analyze the status quo and advocate change.

It sees itself as an integral part of the Arab and international workers movement, which pushed for freedom, democracy, peace, and equality among nations. The party strives for Arab unity on the bases of democracy, equality, free voluntary choice, and respect for the distinct identity of Palestinian people in Jordan as well as their right of return to their homeland. The party believes that there exists no contradiction between giving full citizenship rights to Jordanians of Palestinian origin and the principle of Palestinian right of return to the future Palestinian state. Giving Palestinians citizenship, the party argues, will merely help to undermine the legitimacy of the idea of Jordan as an alternative homeland. The party defends the rights of Palestinian people in Jordan in an effort to ensure they have the same access to rights as all Jordanians, secure their active participation in the national and democratic struggle, and defend their interests in direct democracy as a means of strengthening the national unity of Jordan.

Like the Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity Party (see below), HASHD is a sister organization of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine. As a result, it finds itself in a similar position within Jordan. Nonetheless, the party was previously one of the most popular political parties in Jordan. It was particularly prominent— especially among university students – between 1989 and 1995 (after the termination of martial law and restoration of political life in the Kingdom). This popularity, however, did not endure, as a result of both Jordanian security services interference within Jordanian universities, as well as the wavering organizational abilities of the party. While the party maintains significant levels of support, it did not secure a seat in the last parliamentary elections of 2013.

Following are the tasks that the party believes necessary to accomplishing the above-stated goals:

- Realizing the democratic freedoms of the nation and bolstering the rule of law and institutions.
- Ending subordination to extra-national politico-economic forces and developing an independent and productive national economy.
- Implementing democratic agricultural reforms in compliance with the interest of farmers.
- Improving and extending the delivery of basic services and maintaining the environment.
- Uniting the working class and protecting its interests and rights.
- Producing a national and democratic educational policy and maintaining the physical and spiritual well-being of the youth, students, teachers, professionals, and intellectuals.
- Equality for women and the preservation of their rights.
- Reaching a united and associated people's movement to challenge reconciliation and normalization with Israel, strengthening national unity, and defending the country's independence and sovereignty.
- Supporting the Palestinian people's struggle to secure their right of return and self-determination, as well as national independence led by the Palestinian Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of Palestinians.
- Adopting a liberal foreign policy against imperialism and Zionism.

#### Strengths and weaknesses:

- HASHD became the first opposition party to have a woman as its leader when Abla Abu Obleh assumed control in 2010. This was a very significant step for a well-entrenched, pre-2011 party.
- The party has a prolific presence on the street; it has participated widely in popular movements during the last three years, conducting weekly activities on the street both alone and as a member of coalitions.
- HASAD is a member in three coalitions: the Youth and People's Coalition for Change, the Higher Coordinating Committee for Opposition Parties and the National Reform Front.
- HASHD has engaged in all of the elections since its establishment and has won seats in each election. The first secretary of the party, Abla Abu Olbeh, won a seat in the 2010 election, but lost it to Al-Risala after a court battle for the seat.
- HASHD maintains strong popular support, especially in large, urban areas with Palestinian majorities.

#### Reform agenda:

The party has a clear vision for reform. It holds weekly activities, including speeches, demonstrations, conferences, and public gatherings to advocate for reform. It has a leftist disposition, specifically in regards to social justice, education, election, law, and women's empowerment.

### **13. The Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity Party**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: Political – Arab Nationalist, Leftist

Date of establishment: 1990

*Overview and objectives:*

The People's Democratic Popular Unity Party was launched in 1990, and obtained official licensing in 1993. The party presents itself as a national democratic action group. The party's voluntary members are drawn from the societal elements which the party believes most willing to struggle and sacrifice: workers, farmers, and the petit bourgeoisie. The party also attracts intellectuals working for the cause of national, democratic, economic, and political change in order to achieve socialism and the national liberation of Palestine. The movement is focused on the right to return, self-determination, and the foundation of an independent state as a step towards the liberation of all of the Palestinian lands.

The Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity Party is a sister organization of the United Front for the Liberation of Palestine. This connection has led some political groups to accuse it of being affiliated with non-Jordanian groups and holdings conflicted interests. The party, however, considers the struggle for an independent liberated Palestine a task that all Arabs should adopt. It is very active in women issues and students' rights and reformist activities. It has a strong base of loyal supporters and is well organized.

The Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity Party focuses on:

- Establishing a national democratic rule whereby the nation is the source of power, whilst the state ensures that the law and its institutions reflect the concepts and values of justice, freedom, creativity, thought, and national unity.
- Strengthening and deepening democracy in the country as a point of leverage to achieve the movement's stated objectives and defend the right of citizens to employment, opinion, belief, and mobility.
- Disseminate freedom, equality, and political pluralism within the Jordanian community.
- Deepen the social revolution, especially in terms of gender equality.
- Defending the country (homeland) against what the party refers to as "external plans," especially the expansionary plans of Israel.
- Joining the battle for Palestine's liberation, which should continue to be a nationalist task.
- Reflecting the distinct historical relations between Jordanians and Palestinians within a voluntary democratic unity after founding the independent Palestinian State on the Palestinian lands.
- The party believes that Jordan is an integral part of the Arab Nation. As such, it seeks to enhance relations among Arab Action Factions, in order to to pave the road towards a Arab unity based on voluntary on a democratic basis working towards the development of a socialist community.
- The Party considers itself part of the international liberation forces that struggle for democracy, peace, and advancement. It struggles against imperialism, colonization, Zionism, racism, and all forms and tools of abuse, aggravation, and persecution.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- The party is seen as the largest leftist party in terms of both its membership and activity.
- It actively participates in movements on the street and has sufficient influence to attract large crowds to demonstrations.
- The party is active at universities and in student movements. It established the first committee to defend the rights of students.
- The party is a member of a number of national committees and coalitions: the Youth and People's Coalition for Change, the Higher Coordinating Committee for Opposition Parties and the National Reform Front.
- It frequently boycotts both municipal and parliamentary elections because of the Election Law.

Reform agenda:

It has a clear vision for reform, which is reflected by its continued participation in coalition activities.

#### **14. The Jordanian National Party**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: Political – Center<sup>53</sup>

Date of establishment: 2007

*Overview and objectives:*

The National Jordanian Party was established in Amman in 2007. The party was established upon principles that were seemingly attractive to a wide Jordanian audience; however, like many Jordanian political parties, the party has been largely unable to attract a wide group of supporters. This can in large part be attributed to the fact that the party was established by a small group that did not actively work to attract people to join or support the party. Additionally, the party has expressed few opinions and made even fewer declarations regarding controversial political issues.

According to its manifesto, the party seeks to:

- Resume the democratic stride of the nation and work towards protecting it by building up a stable, strong, and integrated democratic environment.

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<sup>53</sup> Center parties are traditionally close to the regime (although some are now starting to become more critical). In the Jordanians context, they are classified as being neither left nor right wing; they are not opposition parties, yet they are also not part of the government. Most can be described as conservative center right parties, but in Jordan they are referred to as center parties

- Foster a national environment in which political, intellectual, and cultural pluralism is respected – where the opinions of others are respected.
- Encourage the principle of dialogue between the government and parties to facilitate an exchange of opinion and advice so that the interests of both the country and the citizens are served.
- Liberalize and develop the national economy by both implementing a set of economic reforms, and approving a series of procedures that will help turn Jordan into a distinct investment environment and enhance partnerships between the public and private sectors by leveraging investments of the private sector in the infrastructure of the country.
- Job opportunities, the party argues, must be created for citizens in order to reduce and even remove unemployment among the youth and curb poverty.
- Emphasize loyalty to the country and the maintenance of its security as well as the protection of its institutions, potentials, and property against any internal or external attacks must be observed.
- The Constitution of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan must be maintained in the law. All Jordanians must be committed to the Constitution and work on developing and updating it to become a leading example.
- The national interest is above any other interests whether personal, partisan, or otherwise. The principles of justice, equality, and tolerance among all citizens of Jordan must be maintained.
- Violence of all forms and types must be resented and resisted. No Jordanian blood should be shed; it is a red line that cannot be exceeded in any case and under any condition.
- Peaceful methods and democratic channels must be observed; namely, the principle of dialogue in terms of implementing the platforms of the Party and achieving its goals.

#### Strengths and weaknesses:

- It was the first Jordanian party to be established and led by a woman, Dr. Mona Abu Baker. As a result, it has played an important role in removing the taboo of female-led political parties.
- The party is widely seen to be inactive. They do not play an active role in the public sphere. The party is not active on social media, and it does not produce statements or take place in public demonstrations.

#### Reform Agenda:

Although the party's platform calls for reform, it does not participate in any tangible political activities focused on reform and it does not officially participate in elections.

### **15. The Jordanian National Youth Party**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: Political – Center

Date of establishment: 2011

*Overview and objectives:*

The Jordanian National Youth Party was established with the slogan, “Yes we dare” in Amman in 2011. The Jordanian National Youth Party is one of the newest parties in the country. As its name suggests, it was established by a majority of youth and it concentrates on educational issues from a liberal point of view.

The central pillars of its political program are:

- Improving university and school environments.
- Decreasing university and school fees.
- Social justice and the removal of nepotism and favoritism.
- Real reform and the prosecution of the corrupt people.
- Securing decent physical and moral life for the youth.
- Taking the views of youth seriously.
- Fostering social participation and breaking the barriers of fear and shame so that young people are able to participate in political life.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- This party is largely inactive and does not play a significant role in the public sphere.

Reform agenda:

- It does not have a tangible platform or vision for reform.

## **16. The Justice and Development Party**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: Political – Center

Date of establishment: 2009

*Overview and objectives:*

The Justice and Development Party was established in Karak in 2009. Its headquarters, however, are located in Amman. Although many people, especially from non-politically active sectors of society, believe that the party is connected to the Turkish Justice and Development party, this perception is incorrect. Instead, it is an Islamic party that was established by a group of people who were merely influenced by the experience of the Turkish Justice and Development party. The party is politically conservative, but economically liberal.

As per its establishment manifesto, the party works to:

- Support the democratic progress of Jordan, enhance freedom of opinion, and encourage the principle of justice and equality among citizens.
- It supports religious attempts to present the real image of Islam with an eye on maintaining the national unity and principles of the Jordanian Constitution.
- The party also seeks to liberalize the national economy, work towards reducing the domestic deficit and internal debt, enhance the private-public partnership, activate the tourist sector, and increase the living standard for citizens.
- It also believes that the health, educational, agricultural, and industrial sectors must be developed whilst securing woman's rights in the community. Moreover, youth and groups with special needs must be given special attention and focus must be directed towards sports.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- This party is largely inactive and does not play a significant role in the public sphere.

Reform agenda:

- It does not have a tangible platform or vision for reform.

### **17. The National Constitutional Party**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: Political – Center

Date of establishment: 1997

*Overview and objectives:*

After amending the political parties law in 1997, and the addition of an article stating that membership in any party should not be less than 500 members, a number of small political parties that did not have sufficient supporters or members found themselves forced to either abandon the party, or merge with other parties. The National Constitutional Party is one of the successful examples of the latter tactic. It was the result of a merger between nine moderate reformist parties that held common ideologies and introduced similar platforms. Its biggest success stemmed from the fact that all nine parties came together and discussed their programs and objectives for a considerable period of time before agreeing to merge. The merger gave the party a lot of diversity, flexibility, and plurality, especially in terms of the positioning of the party and its declarations.

The party coalesced around several common demands:

- Introducing a national Jordanian Identity that draws upon a commitment to Arab ethos, Islamic content and spirit, humane visions, openness, but rejects regional closedness and fundamentalism, lawlessness and national prejudice and particularity.

- Maintaining the country's sovereignty and independence and protecting it from fragmentation and violation.
- Laying the ground for a democratic pluralistic regime.
- Supporting the Palestinians and their legitimate struggle, reiterating their rights to their territory and national identity, and founding their independent state on the occupied Palestinian national territories with Jerusalem as its capital.
- Reinforcing the unity and linkage between the two brother nations that will manifest itself after the establishment of the fully sovereign Palestinian State on its national territory on the basis of equality, free choice, and democratic methods.
- Seeking the creation of a federal Arab state that reflects the nation's will and maintains its rights, creed, and civilization based on equality and sound democracy.
- Participating in governments as per the platform to be approved by the party.
- Participating in the parliamentary elections to help support the principle of competitiveness based on platforms at all electoral levels.
- Contributing to the political decision making inside and outside the country.
- Enhancing the principle of national opposition based on platforms with the view of forming shadow governments in the case of non-participation in the government.
- The constitutional principle that Jordanians are equal before the law and that they must be supported and activated. Social justice must be achieved, as it is necessary to build up an integrated community that can secure freedom and dignity for all.
- Structuring a national economy to enhance the political strength of the State and link the political decision to the economic interest of the country. The advancement of middle and lower classes needs to be prioritized, and the income of individuals and their households must be increased to provide for the well-being of the Jordanian family through an income that secures basic needs and dignity.
- Supporting the Arab brothers in their just and fair cause while declining all types of dominance, abuse, and occupation as well as any attempts to jeopardize Arab national security by harming either their existence or their rights to exploit their potentials and wealth.
- Empowering women and the youth to assume their active role in political and socio-economic life, as all are partners in the country in a common indivisible partnership.

#### Strengths and weaknesses:

- This party started with a very strong foundation, as it was created by an influential group of former senators and ministers. However, many of these initial members left to create new parties or to take up positions in the government. Consequently, the party lost a lot of its high level support. Nonetheless, it continues to produce strong, articulate platforms, especially vis-à-vis reform. The party also benefits from substantial media coverage as a result of its very active general secretary, Ahmed Al Shunnaq. However, it no longer enjoys solid membership or widespread popular support.
- This party does not practice any kind of street activities, such as protests or demonstrations.

#### Reform agenda:

It has a decisive platform on reform (Particularly the Election Law). Its political positions are often close to the Islamists and opposition parties, although the party is not explicitly aligned as such. The party chose to push for reform through the mainstream media, rather than on the streets through protests. The party has boycotted the last two elections.

### **18. The National Current Party**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: Political – Center

Date of establishment: 2009

#### *Overview and objectives:*

The National Current Party was established in Amman in 2009. It is one of the larger parties in the Kingdom and its membership includes prominent figures who formally occupied positions in the government. This party's members considered it to be one of the largest political parties in Jordan. Among its members are numerous famous politicians and former statesmen, including Abdul Hadi Al-Majali, the former speaker of the Parliament, and current MP as well as the former minister of youth, Saleh Irshedat. However, the party only won one parliament seat in the 2013 elections. As a result of this setback, the party's secretary general stepped down as a Member of Parliament. Yet, when a plethora of political figures in the country went to his residence and urged him to reconsider, he withdrew his resignation. His return notwithstanding, these events provoked a large debate regarding the party's actual base of supporters, as well and the party's public relations and outreach policy.

According to its manifesto, the party is focused on:

- The party pursues the implementation of a national project that will help Jordan become a modern, civil state.
- This project, the party argues, would enhance the country's democracy, realize political pluralism, ensure human rights, encourage tolerance and dialogue, and establish the rule of law and social justice.
- All citizens must be involved in both a citizenship framework and national action to create a national identity.
- The party seeks to establish the value of national inclusion, political loyalty, equality, moderation, and tolerance.
- It reiterates the importance of good governance based on expanding people's participation, reinforcing the rule of law, and initiating political reform and development.
- This, the party argues, can be accomplished by elaborating upon the rules of governance and reconciling this concept with policies of security, as well as through respect for freedoms and the protection of citizenship on the basis of the law.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- Among its members are a number of prominent politicians, former statesmen, and businessmen. For instance, it counts among its members Abdul Hadi Al-Majali, the former speaker of the parliament and current MP, as well as the former minister of youth, Saleh Irshedat. The latter established the party in 2009 when the King announced that the country would once again allow political parties. Because of the prominent members of its leadership cadre, it has been very successful at attracting new members.
- The party has a strong social base (especially with the tribes), which has a vested interest in the success of the party. However, during elections, the tribes continue to vote along tribal lines, largely overlooking the National Current.
- It has a strong presence in the media but not within civil society.

Reform agenda:

The party's elite endorses the King's reform agenda, but it is pushing for it to happen at a faster pace. The party promotes its ideas through the mainstream media and large-scale conferences, but not on the streets.

### **19. The National Movement for Direct Democracy Party**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: Political – Arab Nationalist, Leftist

Date of establishment: 1997

*Overview and objectives:*

The National Movement for Direct Democracy Party was established in 1997 to achieve Arab unity through a project that focuses on the Palestinian cause. The movement, however, also acts within a wider scope so as to both move the nation into an effective economic bloc as well as achieve greater popular participation in political decision-making and implementation. This, the movement believes, can be done through direct observation of the system whilst working towards socialism. The most important feature of the National Movement for Direct Democracy Party is that when it was established, a number of citizens (both activists and non-activists) were interested in what the party had to offer (for examples, student scholarships and fiscal incentives). This interest, however, did not endure, and it became decreasingly successful in attracting people, as a result of its relationship with the Qaddafi regime in Libya. With the fall of Qaddafi, the party's situation has become critical.

The party maintains that their agenda can be rooted in the concept of national democratic revolution:

- Commitment to comprehensive democracy.
- Respect for partisanism, as well as political and intellectual pluralism.
- The party stresses the principle of separation among government authorities.

- The party supports Pan-Arab action, with special attention to be directed towards the industrial and agricultural sectors, and the working class.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- This party has never been very active.
- It participated in a national list with the National Democratic Party, but it did not get a seat.
- The party is a member in many of national coalitions: the Youth and People's Coalition for Change, the Higher Coordinating Committee for Opposition Parties and the National Reform Front.
- However, its participation in these coalitions is nominal, and it lacks a presence on the street.

Reform agenda:

Its written program shows a clear vision for reform, but it is not active in pushing for implementation.

## **20. The United Jordanian Front Party**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: Political – Center Left

Date of Establishment: 2007

*Overview and objectives:*

The United Jordanian Front Party was established in Amman in 2007. It is one of the largest and best-connected parties in Jordan. Although it classifies itself as a moderate party, its actions and platforms are closer to the reform demands of the Jordanian street, which usually extend beyond the realm of moderate parties. Thus, its views and declarations more closely reflect those of an opposition party. The party has in its membership a large number of famous politicians, former statesmen and academics. It also enjoys strong relations with all other political parties and the government. Indeed, the head of the party, Majad Al-Majali, who is a current MP, was previously the head of the royal court and has served as minister in a number of cabinets.

The party has a comprehensive program that focuses on a multitude of issues, including the environment. The party is known for attracting intellectuals and academics from a wide spectrum of fields. It also has strong youth and women participation. The party won only one Parliamentary seat in the 2013 elections through the national list but won 6 seats through the districts, demonstrating that even strong parties do not do well at the national level and need to resort to finding candidates at the district level.

According to its manifesto, the party works to build a state of institutions and law, maintain the sovereignty of the country. Its goals are in line with the directives of King Abdullah II:

- To achieve a bright future for the country's citizens and face the challenges confronting the Arab nation whilst defeating the aspirations of those who wish to destroy sovereignty of our Arab nation and beloved Jordan.
- The party believes that all Jordanians must bear the responsibility of national duties and encourage the entrenchment of ethical and moral values to maintain Jordan's national and Arab identity, whilst maximizing achievements of the country and defending it.
- There must, the party maintains, be an absolute belief in partisanism, pluralism, and the freedom of speech in favor of the country's and nation's interests.
- The country must be viewed as sacred and above all other interests. Focus must be on the Jordanian, Arab, and democratic values. Equality and justice must be given to all groups of the Jordanian people.
- The media and media specialists must be supported. Moreover, the right of women to participate in the political life must be admitted in harmony with the Jordanian principles inspired from the Constitution of Jordan, the National Charter, and the directives of the rational Hashemite Leadership.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- This party contains a number of prominent statesmen and is led by al-Majali, a politician who belongs to one of Jordan's key political families. As such, the party has enjoyed great success in attracting new members.
- The party has seven MPs in the current parliament. Consequently, it is the party with second strongest voting power in the current house.
- However, since the last election a number of members have resigned because of negligence in enforcing party regulations (which led to an unfair selection of candidates).
- The party has managed to gain widespread support, despite not having a presence on the street. This success is a function of the party's wide ranging and articulate policies and platforms. In addition, the party's leader is the son of a popular former prime minister who was assassinated in the 1960s.

Reform agenda:

As a member of the National Front for Reform Coalition, the party has a comprehensive platform for reform (please see details under Coalitions). The party acted as a go-between for the Islamists and the government during the protests of 2011. It tried to reach consensus between the two regarding reform as well as the participation of the Islamists in elections. However, it was largely unsuccessful in this endeavor because the two sides had such different opinions.

## **Political Movements (Hirak):**

Hirak are grassroots movements that emerged in 2011 to push for both the removal of Prime Minister Samir Al Rifai as well as the development of the movements' respective regions. They have continued to exist since that time, as the policies against which they emerged have not yet been changed. While they emerged early in 2011, just before the climax of the Arab Awakening, they obtained support as a result of the euphoria produced by the early success of the uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt.

There are common weaknesses amongst the hirak: they do not have their own alternatives to most socio-political issues, they do not have detailed plans for reform, and they do not have sufficiently formalized structures to allow them to take power.

### **1. Al-Koura Movement for Reform**

Geographic Scope of Attention: al-Koura area (North of Jordan)

Motive: Regional

Date of establishment: 2011

*Overview and objectives:*

The movement was initiated in the al-Koura district of the Irbid Governorate at the end of 2011. Al-Koura Movement for Reform is comprised of political activists in al-Koura who began by holding lectures and seminars about social and political issues. After months of holding lectures and seminars, they decided to expand the scope of their activities and functions to include protests and demonstrations calling for reform.

The Koura Movement for Reform has specified the following demands:

- Enforcing the constitutional principle that “the nation shall be the source of power”.
- Combating corruption and stopping theft of public property, which must be owned by the citizens.
- Appointing those qualified from al-Koura in senior positions in the state.
- Improving developmental and infrastructure services in al-Koura District.
- Reducing poverty and unemployment rates in al-Koura District.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- The movement has never been active on the street, but is very active through social and digital media. It uses these platforms to issue statements demanding greater freedom of expression and social justice.

- It has not been active since the start of 2013.

Reform agenda:

The movement seeks reform to the Election Law and the elimination of corruption. It also wants to reinforce social justice and freedom of expression.

## **2. Al-Salt Movement**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Salt – Balqa’a governorate (Middle of Jordan)

Motive: Regional

Date of establishment: 2011

*Overview and objectives:*

Al-Salt Movement was formed in the city of al-Salt during the spring of 2011 by a group of activist youth. The youth participating in al-Salt Movement organized a number of events to demand reform. They held demonstrations and other protests on Fridays, many of which focused on the arrest of political activists and prices increase. They were the only movement in al-Salt to boycott the parliamentary elections. Al-Salt was largely uninvolved in protests and demonstrations when hirak emerged in the country. When al-Salt Movement started, it faced a lot of criticism and hostility within the city. However, as the protests continued in the following months, the movement became increasingly accepted and participation in their events grew bigger and wider.

The demands of al-Salt Movement are:

- Constitutional amendments based on the principle: “the nation shall be the source of powers.”
- Nullification of the SNTV (one person, one vote) law to be replaced in a consensual electoral law that enables the creation of parliamentary governments.
- Opening corruption files and referring those charged with corruption to courts and recovering all the embezzled assets.
- Terminating Jordan’s economic dependency and creating new economic policies.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- The movement emerged with a strong mandate, but with limited membership (not more than 40). The low membership may be due to the regime loyalty of the people in al-Salt, which has traditionally been guaranteed by the provision of privileges in the al-Salt region.
- The movement was very active in 2012, but, like all hirak, was marginalized in 2013 as reform momentum was lost.

Reform agenda:

The movement demands the release of political prisoners, the combatting of corruption, and reform to the Election Law. It also has two central economic demands: a reexamination of price increases and a restructuring of the national economy (the method of accomplishing the latter is not specified).

### **3. Al-Tafila Quarter Movement**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Amman (middle of Jordan)

Motive: Regional

Date of establishment: 2011

#### *Overview and objectives:*

This movement erupted in the Tafila quarter of Amman in the beginning of 2011. It is the most famous movement in the Kingdom due to the number and continuity of its activities, the multiple arrests of its activists, its various tactics (including folk dance and the holding of mock funerals for the death of “integrity” of parliamentary elections). The movement has also pushed the boundaries in its demands and its open expression of controversial opinions. For instance, they have demanded the publication of the names of public figures suspected of corruption case, and their subsequent prosecution. Thus, they have been targeted and pursued by the security forces on a regular basis.

Although the Tafila Quarter Movement is located in Amman, it also has a high level of coordination with the Free People of Tafila Movement in the South, as most of the residents of Tafila Quarter originally come from the city of Tafila. The movement was successful in obtaining extensive media coverage because of its unique tactics of demonstration and expression.

While the Tafila Quarter Movement has organized a large number of activities and demonstrations that have called for a wide spectrum of demands, the movement is focused on several key, overarching goals:

- Reform of the Constitution.
- Prosecution of corrupt officials.
- Recovery of all public funds that were embezzled by the corrupt.
- An election law that has wider consensus.
- Just and fair distribution of the development returns to the provinces.
- Improving the infrastructure and service delivery in Tafila Quarter.

#### Strengths and weaknesses:

- The Tafila Quarter Movement continues to be one of the most active groups in the Kingdom.
- It is renowned for issuing the strongest statements against the regime. Despite the fact that many within its ranks have been arrested, its members continue weekly protests outside the Royal Court.

- It are greatly respected by other parties and movements for its members' bravery.

Reform agenda:

The movement demands modifications to the Election Law, the combatting of corruption, the reduction of the King's powers, and the reduction of the powers of the security services and court. It is also against price increases, and concerned with the release of political prisoners.

#### **4. The Aqaba People's Movement for Reform**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Aqaba governorate (South of Jordan)

Motive: Regional

Date of establishment: 2012

*Overview and objectives:*

The Aqaba People's Movement for Reform emerged in the first half of 2012 in the southern city of Aqaba. The Aqaba Movement is comprised of a group of trade union and association activists, as well as port workers and independent political activists. While such diverse backgrounds scarcely provided for a coordination of demands, they were able to agree on common regional demands. Consequently, most of the movement's demands are concentrated on issues inside the Aqaba governorate; although they have coordination with other movements in the country, they confine themselves to territorial demands.

The Aqaba People's Movement for Reform is focused on:

- Restoring the constitutional right of Aqaba's people to elect the municipal council of their city.
- Opening the corruption files at Aqaba Special Economic Zone to hold those responsible for such corruption accountable.
- Investigating all deals to sell land and the decision to limit the right of citizens to dispose with their property and recover the stolen lands from the state treasury.
- Cancelling the transaction to sell Aqaba port and its surrounding land.
- Decreasing the prices of water and electricity, which constitute a severe burden for Aqaba's citizens as a result of the region's weather conditions.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- The movement has good relations with a number of diverse groups and political parties across Jordan, including both nationalist and opposition groups (for eg. the People's Gathering for Reform). Through its connections, the movement has dramatically raised its profile.

- The movement was established very late and only demanded the reduction of corruption in the Aqaba area. Because the economy is strong in Aqaba, there was little to draw residents to the streets earlier. Yet, while the economic situation in Aqaba is good, residents feel politically marginalized.
- The movement held many demonstrations through 2012, but by 2013 the momentum declined.

Reform agenda:

The movement demands both the curtailment of corruption in Aqaba as well as revisions to the Election Law.

## **5. The Arab Renewal Movement**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: Political

Date of establishment: 2011

*Overview and objectives:*

The Arab Renewal Movement was declared in Amman by the end of 2011. Its establishment congress as a political party without license was convened in the third quarter of 2012. As such, it emerged differently than most of the hirak, which consider themselves collectives or groups. They Arab Renewal Movement consider itself to be a political party, but refuses to register because of its disagreement with the Parties Law. Although the Arab Renewal Movement is newly established, its roots date back further, as the movement includes members who were active in Jordanian universities since the 1990s. The movement remains very controversial; for, while some people consider its agenda to be very progressive, reasonable, and realistic, others consider it unacceptable and politically manipulative. The movement has a good base of support and is active among youth activists.

According to its founding statement, the movement is based on the following principles and goals:

- “Full citizenship” under the “Jordanian identity” umbrella is the main pillar for civil co-existence; accordingly, all Jordanians regardless of their origins, religions, sects, or creeds are citizens with full equality before the Constitution and the law whether they are men or women. Their Jordanian citizenship is larger and more precedent to all of their affiliations and ethnic/religious identities. Accordingly, all legislation must be based and all national policies and platforms must be built.
- The realization of a “constitutional monarchy” with the nation as the only source of power. This principle, the movement believes, is the substance of the Jordanian Constitution.
- Anti-corruption efforts should be the entry to the new Jordan based on “freedom and justice.” Jordan is seen – as are other Arab countries – as contaminated with corruption and corrupt people at all levels, especially when it comes to the public fund management.

Forever, the corrupt people have been hiding behind the monarchy to legitimize their corruption. They know that the people of Jordan are proud of this institution and respect it. For long decades, the monarchy has been suffering because of the actions of the corrupt. It is time now to alienate these forces from the decision-making functions and management of the public institutions and funds. They must be requested to reform and return what they have stolen. They must be deprived from all of their methods and shelters. The nation and the Throne Institutions must be seen as two strategic alliances in this respect.

- “Wealth Circulation” is the gate towards “sustainable development” and curbing poverty as well as terminating unemployment. A wealth concentrated in the hands of a few – as is the case in Jordan – cannot achieve sustainable development and curb poverty or terminate unemployment under any condition whatsoever. Accordingly, reforms relating to the problems, taxation, pricing, legislative frameworks for investment, issues of ownership, production, and distribution of production must be undertaken to help facilitate the realization of the equitable circulation of wealth. These reforms represent the sole means of overcoming the economic problems from which Jordan suffers.
- Developing culture, public freedoms, and civil society organizations must be a guarantee for advancement. All aspects of intellectual, cultural, and media freedoms must be developed in the Jordanian community. This can be achieved by means of backing up all ingredients of the creative process including cinema, theater, music, drama, arts, novels, and poetry. Translation of international intellectual, literary, and scientific works into Arabic must be urged. All types of pre and post-monitoring of publications and writings must be cancelled. Violations and penalties related to printing and publishing must remain within the narrowest scope. Freedom of writers, composers, journalists, and creative figures must be maintained by separating the laws regulating these domains from those regulating criminal issues. The executive authorities – no matter what – must be prevented from interfering in any of the national civil society activities. The right of all groups of the Jordanian people to associate themselves the way they want: professionally, socially, culturally, ethnically, and religiously, must be secured. Legislation to help the CSOs to assume an advisory role in the state management must be enacted.
- The role of women must be activated in all the walks of life; it is a basic action of advancement. The social life in Jordan must be politically, economically, and culturally based on full equality between men and women. Therefore, all cultural and legislative directives to enhance the role of women in society must be supported. Their right to assume the highest positions in the State on equal footing with men must be maintained. The movement will accept no excuse for the failure to realize this goal.
- The relation of Jordan with the Palestinian cause is based on the national Jordanian role in the Palestinian cause as the West Bank is a Jordanian occupied land. It has become Jordanian upon consensus of its people and legitimate citizens. It was occupied while under Jordanian rule. Nobody can make the decision to disengage while it is still under occupation. All Jordanians must join a referendum to decide upon its destiny. It was under Jordanian rule when it was occupied; as such, the burden of liberation falls on Jordan. It is part of Jordan’s land, and thus the decision to disengage cannot be legitimately made; it is an evasion from the historical responsibility of Jordan towards an integral part of its territory. Therefore, Jordan’s decision to administratively and legally disengagement from that territory is an illegitimate resolution; all decisions based upon that decision must be revoked. The Palestinian Liberation Organization is the only legitimate representative of

the Arab Palestinian people. It is concerned, in the first place, with the liberalization of the Palestinian territories and return of Palestinian refugees to their homeland and founding the Palestinian State on it. Its administrative and legal relations with the West Bank cannot be decided unless upon agreement with the Jordanian State through the Jordanian people. Accordingly, the only legitimate framework for addressing the Palestinian cause is derived from the United Nation's resolutions 181 (which laid out the Partition Plan, 1947) and 194 (regarding the refugee crisis caused by *al-Nakba*, 1948). No other authority can be accepted for a just and sound solution. Thus, all the current authorities based on the eternal principle of negotiation based on Madrid conference and Oslo agreement must be dismissed. In terms of restoring the West Bank into Jordan, Wadi Araba agreement (the peace treaty between Jordan and Israel) must be terminated. United Nations resolutions 242 (concerning territorial claims after the 1967 War, 1967) and 338 (Concerning territorial claims at the end of the 1973 War, 1973) must be revived as authoritative sources for a solution to the current situation.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- The Renewal Movement does not have a significant presence in the public sphere. All of its statements are announced solely through social media and digital media. As a result, its statements do not have a major impact, and are not widely considered to be important.

Reform agenda:

The movement emphasizes liberation of the West Bank as well as changes in the constitution that would allow elections on both banks. It also demands changes to the Political Parties Law in order to allow easier registration.

## **6. The Dhiban Youth Committee**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Madaba Governorate – Dhiban District (Between center and South of Jordan)

Motive: Regional

Date of establishment: The Dhiban Youth was first established in 2006 as a labour movement and then emerged as a political movement in 2011.

*Overview and objectives:*

The movement was first established in 2006 as a platform for realizing labour demands that emerged amongst the communities in the marginalized areas of Madaba Governorate. It first became politically active in January 2011, protesting on the streets against corruption and low level of living conditions. Dhiban is one of the most disenfranchised areas in terms of developmental projects and efforts in the Kingdom. Poverty and unemployment are becoming

increasingly prevalent. While the residents of Dhiban hoped to see their area included in the government's 2011 development plan, Samir al-Rifa'i's government submitted the general budget without mentioning the Dhiban district.

Although some of the key leaders of the movement come from a labor or unions background, they have been successful in their advocating for a number of political demands. One of the leaders of Dhiban also joined with other groups to establish the Jordanian Socialist Nationalist Liberation Party, and ran together for the 2013 parliamentary elections in a national list called Abna'a al-Harratheen (Sons of Ploughmen). But since its unsuccessful electoral attempt, both the list and the party have ceased to exist; therefore has not been included as part of this wider document.

Since 2006, youth from Dhiban, who originally come from labor unions and functions, have been calling for increased labor rights as well as the removal of state security's grip from the trade unions. These youth subsequently started to organize demonstrations calling for social justice, the curbing of poverty, the provisions of job opportunities, and the development of basic infrastructure services, which Dhiban still lacked. This movement was the first of its kind on the Jordanian street in early 2011.

The movement's key concerns are:

- The lack of economic development in the Dhiban area.
- Corrupt officials and their usurpation of state resources.
- Change in the constitution to codify the disengagement regulation from the West Bank to prevent the proposed Israeli "Jordan is Palestine" solution.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- It was very active in numerous protests aimed at socio-political and economic reform – especially for the development of the Dhiban region.
- It protested fiercely against raised prices and issued strong statements against the regime, (stronger than hitherto voiced) and, in particular, against the King. This pushed the limits and allowed for others to make statements of a similar nature.
- As a labour movement it began to push for economic improvement in their region as early as 2007. The Jordanian Social Left Movement (discussed above) grew out of these activities.
- The movement was strongest between 2007 and the end of 2012. During 2013, most of its activities were reduced because its leaders have now separated and joined other political movements.
- The movement was strongest when it was focused on a purely regional agenda. Once it started to push for a national agenda, popular involvement declined.

Reform agenda:

The movement is focused on combatting corruption and prosecuting corrupt officials. It also wants to reform the Election Law so as to facilitate more diverse political participation.

Similarly, it is pushing for the establishment of a constitutional monarchy wherein the powers of the King are limited.

## **7. The Faqqou' Movement**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Faqqou' – Karak governorate (South of Jordan)

Motive: Regional

Date of establishment: 2011

*Overview and objectives:*

The Faqqou' Movement emerged in mid-2011 as a result of an assembly of activists in the Faqqou' District of the Karak province. This movement joined other youth and people's movements in the Kingdom. They shared demands and coordinated joint events. The Faqqou' Movement demands that the disengagement decision with the West Bank is legalized, and the nationalization of privatized companies. The interesting thing about these demands is that they have a wide base of public supporter, but a limited number of advocates; the Faqqou' Movement is one of the few advocates.

The major demands of the Faqqou' Movement are:

- Delivery of basic services and infrastructure for Faqqou' District.
- Prosecution of corrupt figures and seizure of their assets.
- Constitutional amendments to control the powers of the King.
- A democratic electoral law.
- Putting the disengagement decision with the West Bank in a legal framework.
- The Jordanian armed forces and gendarmes should not be sent to suppress protests on foreign soil.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- From its inception in 2011, it was instrumental in arranging many of the protests against the rising prices in its village; these protests took place every week, and they reached national and online media through the movement's press statements.
- However, the movement did not have connections with other hirak and it, therefore, did not grow in size or power.
- Since 2013, most of its activities have been reduced, as a result of a general loss of momentum within the hirak.

Reform agenda:

The movement seeks to fight corruption and modify the Election Law. Consequently, it calls upon the king to stop making speeches about reform, and instead to undertake concrete action towards reform

## **8. The Free People of Kharja Movement**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Kharja (North of Jordan)

Motive: Regional – Islamist

Date of Establishment: 2012

### *Overview and objectives:*

The Free People of Kharja Movement was launched in the first quarter of 2012 in the town of Kharja in the Irbid governorate. Although the Free People of Kharja Movement is regional, it does not have any regional demands in its establishment declaration. Nonetheless, the Kharja Movement was able to create a high level of coordination and common grounds with other movements in different part of the country. The movement actively participates in different reformist activities in the country, especially in the Northern governorates of Jordan.

Following are the main demands of the movement:

- The Constitution must explicitly limit the King's powers to being head of state, rather than being in charge of authorities. In essence, a reflection of the British constitutional monarchy.
- There must be a clear separation among powers, not as is the case in the recent constitutional amendments.
- The Jordanian nation is the only and sole source of power.
- The Constitution must clearly illustrate the mechanism of government formation so that the King's consultations are limited to the parliamentary blocs. This will ensure that the government is formed by the political party that wins a majority of the Lower House.
- The Senate must be elected and not appointed, so that all groups and classes of the Jordanian society are represented.
- The Constitution must clearly stipulate that the government is responsible for the country. Therefore, it must be subject to accountability before the nation for any mistakes it commits.
- The prime minister and the ministers must be held accountable before the judiciary for any breach of the law or the Constitution without referring to the Parliament.
- Members of the Judicial Council must be elected by the Lower House in compliance with the terms of reference for judges' appointment. This must be identified in a special law.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- The movement was launched with calls for the elimination of corruption. The movement, however, did not connect with other hirak and only held small protests for its

demands. It did not receive a lot of support in the region, and its activities have almost completely disappeared at this time. Its limited ability to attract support may be a function of the socio-economic status of the region, as Kharja is not one of the Kingdom's poorer areas.

Reform agenda:

The movement is against price increases. It also wants to tackle corruption and amend the constitution to limit the powers of the King.

### **9. The Free People of Tafila Movement**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Tafila governorate (South of Jordan)

Motive: Regional

Date of establishment: 2011

*Overview and objectives:*

The Free People of Tafila Movement was created in 2011 to combat corruption and reestablish the public status of the country's resources that were privatized. The movement also seeks to recover the abused rights of citizens in the Tafila Governorate (and outside it) by combating all forms of racial discrimination and violence. The Free People of Tafila Movement is a very distinct political movement in the country, as its members have both a high level of coordination and considerable coordination with the southern governorates of Jordan. Its members are known for pushing the limits in their demands. The movement also enjoys significant levels of coordination with other political movements and parties in the country.

Since the launch of the Free People of Tafila Movement, it has voiced demands for the following:

- Constitutional amendments.
- Prosecution of the corrupt.
- Recovery of the public funds that were stolen.
- A consensual electoral law.
- Just and fair distribution of development returns to governorates.
- Appointment of the right people in positions of the state through implementing the standards of transparency and integrity.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- From its establishment in early 2011, the Tafila Movement was central in the arranging of a number of protests against price increases. Its presence gave a huge push to the protests. Moreover, it inspired many movements to continue because of both the strength

of the statements that the movement made against the King, as well as the loyalist traditions of the Tafila region.

- By 2013, most of its visible activities had declined (for the same reasons as in Dhiban above). The 2013 elections destroyed hirak, as it split the leadership between different candidates and lists.
- Additionally, the situations in Syria and Egypt split the Tafila Movement because it has an Islamist background, and its attention was consequently redirected to what was going on elsewhere in the region.

Reform agenda:

The Tafila Movement wants to fight corruption and prosecute all corrupted officials. It also wants to modify the Election Law so that all groups can participate in the political process. This, it believes, will enhance national unity. However, as with many of the other movements, it has not formulated a concrete political alternative. Moreover, it only addresses political issues from a local point of view.

### **10. The Independent Youth Political Thought Group**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: Political – Youth

Date of establishment: 2012

*Overview and objectives:*

The Independent Youth Political Thought Group (also known as “Youth for Reform”) was initiated by a number of independent youth activists in the latter half of 2011. The Group attempted to build platforms based upon community conferences and gatherings that expressed the consensus the Jordanian people. Their activities are concentrated in Amman.

Many members of this movement are also members of political parties. Yet, their parties have given them the space and permission to be active within the movement. This dynamic is the central reason why the movement began by holding open meetings with youth from different backgrounds. This allows the movement to discuss political issues and develop suggestions that are developed and agreed upon by the participating youth.

According to their founding statement, the movement focuses on several general demands:

- The prime minister must be either directly elected by the representatives or be selected by the parliamentary majority elected by people. This will secure the principle that the nation is the source of power.
- The legislative authority must be elected by the people by means of a modern electoral law that takes into consideration the socio-political composition that exists in the country. The Law must obtain national consensus.

- The judicial authority enjoys a particular status based on its members. Thus, giving the judges full freedom without any type of pressures or interference should be one of the main factors for the autonomy of this authority.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- The movement does not have a significant presence in the public sphere.
- Even via social media, it is largely inactive.
- All of its members are very active and active in other groups. However, within this movement, they organize very few activities.

Reform agenda:

As with most of the movements, it generally demands a decrease in corruption and reform of the Election Law.

### **11. The Jordanian 36 Current**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: Political, Tribal

Date of establishment: 2011

*Overview and objectives:*

The Current was established during the first quarter of 2011. It was given its name because of the 36 Jordanian tribal figures that established it. It is one of the most controversial political movements in the country, and many of its statements have crossed the regime's "red lines." The Jordanian 36 current is one of the most controversial political movements in the country; it started with very strong declarations that were considered unacceptable and unrealistic by a lot of Jordanians. However, regardless of the controversy around it, the movement was able to participate actively in the protests of 2011 and it has coordinated activities with other movements. There was a division in the movement for reasons related to different political views regarding the role of the monarchy in 2012. The Current is still active, but its present participation pales in comparison to the earlier period of its establishment.

The Current is focused upon:

- Creating a national rescue government comprised of decent figures who, the Current believes, can dismiss all of the "thieves and figures of the corrupt era".
- Creating a unified national front to hold a national conference to be a watchdog for the rescue government's performance and to provide it with guarantees and legislative coverage.
- The tasks of the rescue government during the transitional period must include: imprisonment of all thieves of the corruption era and the restoration of the funds they robbed by confiscating all of their assets and property inside and outside the country. For

this purpose, provisional laws must be enacted, as their actions constitute serious economic crimes.

- The rescue government will create a special committee of national experts and qualified persons, and dismiss the figures of the corruption era. The mandate of this committee is to draft a new constitution that is more in harmony with the Jordanian state. It must be based upon the principles of justice and equality. It must secure all basic rights of all components of the Jordanian people.
- Public property, funds, and resources belong to the Jordanian people. The rescue government shall be responsible for recovering all the public funds and assets and re-nationalizing the companies that were sold during the corruption era. The transactions upon which these resources were sold must be revoked. All investment contracts that include exploitation of national resources that were signed during the corruption era must be nullified. All public properties must be recognized again in the general budget as they are the property of the Jordanian people.
- Making all the necessary legal investigations to disclose the reasons of indebtedness during the corruption era and identifying the perpetrators in a transparent manner before the public opinion and under the oversight of the National Conference.
- The prompt disclosure of the total internal and external aids received during the corruption era. This must be done by examining the legal papers and presenting them to the people and the National Conference.
- The immediate creation of an independent commission under the National Conference to oversee the received grants and aids and announce the methods in which they were disbursed in a clear, explicit, and fully transparent manner.
- The immediate release of all those arrested for political reasons and those arrested because of opinion through an amnesty.
- In the National Conference, immediate disclosure to the Jordanian nation of all returns of the state institutions during the corruption era and the transitional period.
- Designate the Arab Jordanian Army to secure a peaceful transitional period and protect the rescue government to do its tasks.
- Upon completion of drafting the new constitution, the rescue government will restore its day-to-day business.
- Members of the 36 Current who participated in Identity Center workshops also stressed that the movement is interested in the constitutional entrenchment of the Disengagement Regulations<sup>54</sup> and the settling of questions of national identity. This interest stems from the Current's fear of the realization of the "alternative homeland scheme" – the Israeli suggestion that Jordan could serve as the Palestinian homeland.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- The Current has taken a stand on controversial and socially sensitive issues such as the definition of who is Jordanian, and the situation of Palestinian-Jordanians.

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<sup>54</sup> The Disengagement Regulations were issued in advance of Jordan's 1988 announcement that it planned to sever administrative and legal ties with the West Bank. While not legally or constitutionally enacted, the Regulations outlined the procedures that Jordan followed in its subsequent withdrawal from the territory.

- It is also willing to make statements that criticize members of the regime. These actions have served to open a more open forum of dialogue for these issues.
- It was very active in 2012 and it had a good presence in the media, but in 2013 its activities suddenly stopped for unknown reasons.

Reform agenda:

It supports disengagement from the West Bank and the Palestinian right of return because it wants to see a reduction in the number of Palestinians living in Jordan. As such, it asks for a change to the constitution and the Election Law to make disengagement with the West Bank constitutional, and thereby prevent Palestinians from engaging in the election. Similarly, it demands that the government stop giving national numbers to Palestinians. It is also vehemently against corruption in the regime.

## **12. The Jordanian Social Left Movement**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: Political – Left

Date of establishment: 2007

*Overview and objectives:*

The Jordanian Social Left Movement was founded in 2007 by a group of Jordanian leftists to serve as a platform for leftists and democrats. It was established to function as an umbrella organization that could incorporate a wide scope of issues, participants, and groups that were pursuing national interests. According to the declaration of the Jordanian Social Left Movement, it approves of the social leftist program vis-à-vis privatization, as privatization initiatives robbed the nation's resources and income, and resulted in political and economic waste. The Jordanian Social Left Movement attracted a large amount of youth activists and leftist figures when it was established.

The Jordanian Social Left Movement was the first political movement to be established in Jordan before the Arab Awakening; Most of its members are former members of leftist political parties, who saw the potential of a new type of organizational structure for their movement. This benefited the development of the movement, especially in its initial stages, and reinforced its potential to emerge as strong and effective body within the leftist political landscape. Although the movement has been very successful in terms of political activism, its leadership has been very controversial. The leadership is generally divisible into two groups: one that generally constitutes the liberal left and another consisting of leftists with an Arab nationalistic background. This division has led to a confusion among the movement's members, especially its youth members, which has resulted in a pervasive sense of apathy within the movement.

According to its Declaration, the movement's core pillars are:

- Redistribution of the wealth of the country in line with a taxation framework that excludes working and middle classes. This would include a framework that provides for a progressive income tax imposed on wealthy groups, large property holdings, services, and financial activities. A progressive tax, moreover, needs to be imposed on energy consumption. The general sales tax needs to be restructured so that it removes its imposition on services and goods for needy people, and increasingly targets goods and services being provided to the wealthy.
- Restoration of Ministries of supplies and Housing, and the provision of substantial subsidies for basic goods and services, agriculture and animal production, handcraft businesses and small projects, and working class housing projects.
- Cessation of the privatization of education, and the introduction of high quality free education for all those entitled at the high school and university levels.
- Termination of the privatization of the health sector and the restructuring and strengthening of public health services.
- Provision of proficient comprehensive health insurance.
- Support of laborers, agriculturalists, students, and professionals in their efforts to defend their legitimate interests.
- The Jordanian Social Left Movement stresses that it also wanted to see the ratification of the Law of Illegitimate Gains (more commonly referred to as “Where Did You Get That Law”), which would entail a review of the possessions of former public figures.
- The movements also emphasizes what it calls “political return;” that is, everyone who has a national number (the determiner of citizenship since 1992) should be given full rights as a Jordanian, whilst those without national numbers should only receive civil rights in Jordan.

#### Strengths and weaknesses:

- The Social Left Movement was the first established political movement in Jordan. It was well received because the people were excited about the possibility of a political alternative. As a result, it was able to attract a large number of Jordanians who were marginalized by the political parties, especially from the leftist parties.
- The movement was established by Dr. Ahmed Fakher and Dr. Khaled Al-Kalaldeh (the current Political Development and Parliamentary Affairs Minister). They both left the Communist Party to establish the movement.
- Many youth with anarchist leanings in Jordan joined the movement. This demonstrates the strength of the organization, as it was able to engage on both a grassroots level as well as with leftist parties.
- It was the first group in Jordan to be established with a horizontal power structure and a decentralized form of governance. This means that its members can form small committees, such as by region or profession, and they have the freedom to make their own decisions on any issue or action – except formal statements. This makes the movement very responsive to the needs of the people.
- The Social Left Movement is still active, but it has been weakened as a result of two central issues: firstly, an internal conflict emerged as a result of conflicting viewpoints vis-à-vis the crisis in Syria, and, secondly, its secretary general resigned (he is currently the minister of political development and parliamentary affairs).

Reform agenda:

As the initiators of hirak in Jordan, the movement's mandate and raison d'être is reform in Jordan. It was the first to go to the streets, launching the protests of 2011. Specifically, it focuses on social justice, fighting corruption, and electoral reform. It participated in the national dialogue committees.

### **13. The Jordanian Youth Movement**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Amman (Central Jordan)

Motive: Political – Youth (without political affiliation)

Date of establishment: 2011

*Overview and objectives:*

The Jordanian Youth Movement was created in the first half of 2011 and is one of the most active youth movements in the Kingdom. It is also the most controversial, as a result of the large number of protest activities that the movement has implemented, organized, and joined. Consequently, it has become a central target of anti-reformist forces in Jordan. The Youth Movement assumed an effective role in demanding the release of arrested persons, and in stopping what the movement considers to be the illegal activity of the security forces' and the Mukhabarat and their harassment of activists.

The Jordanian Youth Movement includes some of the most active political organizers in the country. Its membership spans a wide spectrum, from university students, to human rights activists, to previous political parties members. What distinguishes the movement is its ability to attract youth who have no prior experience with political parties, but are interested in joining political reform activism. This ability to garner inexperienced members may stem from the large amount of media coverage that the Jordanian Youth Movement has received. This factor, however, is probably also heightened by the fact that the movement is not affiliated with any of the political parties.

The main demands of the Jordanian Youth Movement include:

- Constitutional amendments based on the principle “the nation shall be the source of powers.”
- Nullification of SNTV (one person, one vote) law and its replacement with a consensual, democratic electoral law.
- Opening all files of suspected corruption and the subsequent referral of all involved people to courts to return the assets they abused and embezzled.
- Ending economic inequality and creating new economic policies.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- The movement does not have a formalized permanent leadership; this is both a strength and a weakness. It gives members substantial freedom, for they are not limited by the opinions of one person. At the same time, it can lead to inconstancy in decision-making, as different members work in different directions.
- It initially made a large impact, as it engaged regularly in demonstrations and was seen to be allied with the people on the streets. This led to a strong increase in popular support for the movement.
- However, it is perceived to be positioned on the extreme end of the hirak scale; it made decisions in protests that were more extreme than other movement. As such, it is also viewed as a divisive force amongst the otherwise unified hirak.
- Its reform efforts are limited to weekly demonstrations and some press releases.

Reform agenda:

The party stressed the fight against corruption. It also emphasizes modifications to the Election Law as well as progress towards a more representative democracy. It is similarly focused on constitutions change, arguing that the King’s powers should be reduced.

#### **14. The Ma’an Youth Coalition for Reform and Change**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Ma’an governorate (South of Jordan)

Motive: Regional

Date of establishment: 2012

*Overview and objectives:*

The coalition was launched in the city of Ma’an during the second half of 2012. The most interesting aspect of the Ma’an Youth Coalition for Reform and Change is its warning to the government regarding the cancellation of subsidies on fuel and basic goods. Such a cancellation occurred in 2012 and spread all over the Kingdom for around two weeks in what’s called Habbet Tishreen (the November uprising).

The movement focuses on:

- Demanding real and prompt constitutional reforms. Chief among them is that the nation shall be the source of power and that the King does not govern.
- Just distribution of wealth, potentials, and public jobs in all departments of the state. The job inheritance principle, which pulled the state to collapse, must be eliminated.
- Immediate release of all of those arrested for expressing political opinions, including the activists of movements who are unfairly imprisoned. This must be in compliance with the full respect of the nation’s will and dignity and in accordance with the Constitution and Law.
- The Coalition warns the government and the regime against launching “big” plans to lift subsidies from basic commodities that citizens need. Such a step should instigate the Jordanian street and exacerbate the conditions that have over-burdened citizens’ shoulders.

- The Jordanian State must perform its duties in education, health, culture, and social domains. Recently, it has been observed that its performance has clearly deteriorated in all of these sectors without exception.
- Our national institutions and corporations are owned by the Jordanian nation. We shall not allow the corrupt to rob its wealth and destroy it.
- The issue of prosecuting the corrupt who stole the nation's property has become a big concern of the street. Therefore, corruption and its perpetrators must be seriously and strictly dealt with. The robbed wealth must be recovered in order to support the treasury and the debt of which counts for JD 22 billion as per the official statistics issued by the state.
- Security forces must stay away from all the domains of the state in appreciation of their major role as provided for in the Constitution; i.e. the protection and defense of the country against its enemies.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- The Coalition was one the last movements to be established during the rise of hirak.
- It was only active for a few months and is currently inactive
- In the past, the government has harshly punished Ma'an for protests in the area. As a result, the population of Ma'an is now afraid to mobilize.
- The most powerful groups in Ma'an are Salafists. They do not believe in working within the political process; this further limits the effectiveness of grassroots mobilization.

Reform agenda:

The Coalition is against political arrests and corruption. It also wants to reform the Election Law.

### **15. The Nationalist Progressive Current**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: Political – Pan-Arab, Leftist

Date of establishment: 2011

*Overview and objectives:*

The Nationalist Progressive Current was launched in April 2011 by its general coordinator Khaled Ramadan and a group of youth and political activists in Jordan. The Current is based upon a wide scope of social justice issues as well as the pursuit of reform, which exceeds formalities and pushes to achieve citizen security through a long-term vision aimed at protecting the homeland and delivering it to the coming generations in a better state than the current one. The group seeks the introduction of progressive changes focused on building a new Arab movement that extends beyond mere rhetoric concerning the interests of the overwhelming majority of citizens.

The Nationalist Progressive Current has many supporters, especially in Amman and among political elites; however, it is also criticized by Jordanian nationalistic groups on the basis of its favoring the interests of Jordanians of Palestinian origin. Others see the Current as a body representing the interests of Jordanian people in general, regardless of their origins. As a result of these mixed perceptions, there has been considerable confusion among groups dealing with the National Progressive Current.

The Current has several basic pillars:

- Facts of the twentieth century need to be taken into consideration, as two individual state structures have been developed in Jordan and Palestine. Efforts must be made to maintain distinct relations between the two structures on the basis of Arab nationalism, history, geography, and blood relations.
- The overwhelming majority of Jordanian nationals belong to the Arab nation, and the nationals of ethnic minorities belong to the Arab nation as they are citizens in Arab countries. Thus, efforts must be made to strengthen the historical relation and joint interests between them.
- Both history and geography stand as witnesses to the linkages and relations between the Jordanian and Palestinian nations before and after 1948; efforts to create a separate history or independent future are aimed at adjusting the historical narrative to serve political agendas. In fact, politics must be subject to historical requirements.
- The Current is based on Arab nationalism, democracy, and citizenship based on enlightenment and the ideals of modernity, to be a practical bridging tool between culture and politics.
- The Current must be a means of introducing further justification to political life, intellectual dialogue, and a platform to refuse all types of discrimination, in addition to the protection of citizens' rights to practice their beliefs freely without being jeopardized or attacked by any other party.
- Members of the Current who participated in our workshops also emphasized the movement's continued commitment to the realization of social justice in Jordan. They similarly reinforced the importance of full citizenship rights and that discrimination based on origin must be eliminated. Regardless of the means of citizenship acquisition, therefore, it should not be possible for any citizen to have his or her citizenship removed (as has been witnessed since Jordan's 1988 disengagement).

Strengths and weaknesses:

- It demands equal citizenship and the forging of a common national identity for all Jordanians. Its leader, Khaled Ramadan, is now seen as by many Palestinian- Jordanians to be a champion of their cause. This has resulted in a wide base of support for the movement amongst the Palestinian community.
- It publishes press releases concerning current socio-political issues, and has thereby positioned itself so that Ramadan is frequently contacted by the media to give statements and opinions on a wide range of issues.

Reform agenda:

The movement supports workers' and professional associations, pushing for their demands against companies; it supports them logistically and with supplies and water for their strikes. The movement also arranges media coverage for the strikes.

The movement wants to fight corruption to achieve real reform. That is, it considers economic reform to be the first step from which all future reform will follow. Social justice is also one of its key themes and slogans.

### **16. The Northern Aghwar (Valley) People's Movement for Reform**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Northern Ghor (North of Jordan)

Motive: Regional

Date of establishment: 2012

*Overview and objectives:*

The movement was launched in the second half of 2012 in the town of Waqqas in the Northern Ghor region of the Irbid governorate. The movement emerged during a popular demonstration organized by the Islamic movement and the Jordanian Democratic People's Party. It is the first of its kind in that region that has emerged since the launch of protest activities demanding reform in the Kingdom early 2011. The movement is walking a fine line in its political activism.

The Northern Aghwar (Valley) People's Movement for Reform has several key demands:

- Termination of the marginalization policy that the government deliberately exercises against people in the Ghor area.
- Amendment of the one person, one vote electoral law.
- Reviewing the peace treaty signed with Israel, especially in relation with the rights of Jordan to the Yarmouk River water.
- Repairing the road that connects the Jordan Valley areas, which is known as "death road" as a result of the many accidents it has witnessed.
- Providing better service delivery to provide a clean and better environment in al-Mashare' city in the area.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- The organization is closely connected to the Islamists organizations, which has served to raise its profile and reinforce its position.
- The Islamists established the movement as a regional organization. While it is seemingly independent, it is closely linked to the Islamists.

- It does, however, organize its own regional activities and it has formulated its own regional demands.
- It lost its momentum in 2013.

Reform agenda:

The movement demands social service reform, the elimination of corruption, and modifications to the Election Law.

### **17. The Political Gathering of the Bani Hassan Tribe**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Mafraq governorate (North of Jordan)

Motive: Tribal

Date of establishment: 2011

*Overview and objectives:*

The Gathering was launched in Mafraq during the first half of 2011 after a series of meetings (lasting several weeks) were held between the politically active youth of the Bani Hassan tribe. Bani Hassan is one of the biggest tribes in the country, and much of its youth work in the army and security forces. Consequently, the establishment of this regional tribal movement came as a surprise for a lot of people. However, although its members were highly criticized by their local community at the beginning, they have been able to gain the respect and support inside their area, and in the country in general.

According to its association statement, the Gathering operates on a set of general principles:

- The Jordanian nation is an original component of the Arab and Islamic nation, and its form of government is a parliamentary monarchy. The Gathering will not accept any prejudice to it.
- Constitutional and legislative amendments must be introduced to change articles that contradict the requirements of democratic life, so that a foundation for the rule of law can be established.
- The national unity is a sacred pillar that cannot be jeopardized; the Gathering condemns forces that attempt to instigate bigotry among the Jordanian people.
- The political programs of successive governments and the way in which they managed the country has resulted in a national crisis that needs to be reviewed to hold those responsible for it accountable.
- The Gathering rejects what some irresponsible sources are doing through media illusion to mobilize the public opinion against the powers of reform.
- The shadow and public governments and some special interest groups have wasted the country's potentials and created an environment that is susceptible to the spread of corruption. Corruption, in fact, has become an institutionalized and the status quo; this threatens the security of the country.

- Dominating other authorities, the executive authority enacts law in breach of the Constitution and issues provisional laws to regulate the political action. This has resulted in parliamentary councils that do not fulfill the aspirations of the Jordanian people; thus, members of the executive authority must be held accountable for that.
- The concepts of citizenship, the rule of law, and enforced regulations regarding citizenship revocations and grants are the only means of maintaining national unity and dismissing illegitimate fears among Jordanians regardless of their origin.
- Article (24) of the Constitution, which states, “the nation is the source of powers,” must be enforced.
- Legitimate parliamentary representation is one pillar of the political regime of the Jordanian state. This requires a judicial commission to oversee parliamentary elections to reflect the people’s will and decent and honest elections.
- Real reform starts with activating the role of the judiciary. An independent judiciary needs to be established, irregular courts need to be cancelled, and precedence needs to be set for the validity of political decisions over security ones.
- Activating articles from 55 to 61 of the Constitution (which dictate the legal responsibility of ministers and trial procedures for ministers), and referring ministers to the court for prosecution according to the provisions of the law as is the case for any citizen.<sup>55</sup>
- A Constitutional court must be established.
- Freedom of opinion is a right provided for in the Constitution. We believe that all national forces have the right to practice this right freely, and to call for political and economic reforms, and combat corruption using all legitimate methods of expression in compliance with the law, without negatively impacting the country’s security.
- Reforms are required to address the continuous method of distributing jobs and gains. Many influential figures are not representative of their constituencies and have not come to office upon the free will of the people. This has exacerbated corruption and deprived many of their rights. Therefore, confidence in the institutions of the state has been weakened and the constitutional principle of “equal opportunity and fair distribution” has been breached.
- The Gathering commends the role of security forces in terms of maintaining the country’s security. We are proud of them.
- The Arab Army is the shield that defends the country and it is a source of pride for all Jordanians.

#### Strengths and weaknesses:

- The Gathering emerged strong as a result of two early statements demanding political reform and the elimination of corruption. The Gathering produced a to-do list for the King outlining necessary steps to be taken towards reform. This shocked many people, as the Bani Hassan tribe is known to be one of the most loyal to the regime.
- However, after this strong start, very little activity followed, and the Gathering now has no presence on the street or in public.

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<sup>55</sup> Kingdom of Jordan, “The Constitution of The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan,” January 1, 1952. << [http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/constitution\\_jo.html](http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/constitution_jo.html)>> (Last access date November 28, 2013).

- Even within the tribe, many of the more loyalist members were against the movement and physically attacked them in the street; this may have led to the subsequent decline in the prevalence of its statements.

Reform agenda:

The Gathering demands constitutional amendments in order to make Jordan a constitutional monarchy. It stresses that legislative authority must be given power, that the temporary courts need to be cancelled, and that corruption needs to be fought.

### **18. The Sahab Youth Reform Movement**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Sahab (Middle of Jordan)

Motive: Regional – Youth

Date of establishment: 2011

*Overview and objectives:*

The Sahab Youth Reform Movement is also known as the “Sahab Movement.” It emerged in the second half of 2011 in response to an initiative put forth by a group of activist youth from diverse political backgrounds. Since then, the movement has actively participated in a large number of functions calling for reform in the Kingdom.

Although the Sahab area is located in the Amman governorate, it is very marginalized, has a high crime rate, and is extensively polluted. However, members of the movement decided not to concentrate their demands on Sahab, but to instead focus on national reformist demands. Many activists believe the reason for this is the fact that members of the movement are politically active in other coalitions and parties.

Following are the demands of the Sahab Movement as expressed in their founding statement:

- The resignation of the government and the dissolution of parliament.
- The appointment of government that has won the confidence and satisfaction of the nation, and has members who are known for their clean hands and vigil conscience.
- Enacting a modern and just electoral law to reflect the real will of the nation and putting it forward for a referendum.
- Chasing the corrupt and penalizing them according to the law to recover the stolen assets of the people.
- Working to draft a constitution to restore the rights of the nation to select its government, monitor it and hold it accountable while achieving justice, equality, and equal opportunities.
- Stopping the prevalent economic approach that has resulted in selling the assets of the state, including institutions and public corporations.
- Ensuring public freedoms, including the freedom of opinion, and respect for human rights.

- Refusing all types of normalization with the Israel and creating an independent commission to be responsible for re-assessing the Wadi Araba agreement and its socio-economic repercussions on Jordan.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- This movement was established in 2012, but it was immediately attacked by the people of Sahab, who are largely loyal to the regime. The organization then joined the Youth and Popular Coalition for Change and participated in the Coalition's activities in Amman (outside of Sahab).
- Since the demise of the coalition, the movement has also disappeared.

Reform agenda:

The movement wants to fight corruption and prosecute corrupt officials.

### **19. The Southern al-Mazar Movement**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Southern al-Mazar – Karak governorate (South of Jordan)

Motive: Regional

Date of establishment: 2011

*Overview and objectives:*

This movement was created in August 2011 when the youth of Southern al-Mazar in Karak joined the protests in the Kingdom and started organizing demonstrations. In fact, coordinators of small social and youth movements in the region forged the movement. Although the Southern al-Mazar Movement is regional, their demands focus on national, rather than local, changes. This national focus distinguishes the movement from other territorial movements.

The Southern al-Mazar Movement has several specific demands:

- The reform process must be promptly put into effect without any delay.
- Trials of corrupt officials must take place in order to recover stolen resources
- Review privatization deals and nationalize privatized companies.
- Introduction of constitutional amendments based on the principle that the nation should be the source of power.
- Replace the one person, one vote law with a consensual electoral law that leads to parliamentary governments.
- Revoke the amendment of 2012, which served to restrict the freedoms of press and publication.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- The movement arranged many of protests against raised prices.
- During the second half of 2013, its public activity declined.

Reform agenda:

The movement demands immediate political reform. It wants to fight corruption and prosecute all corrupted officials. It also hopes to modify the Election Law; as such, it boycotted the last elections and tried to encourage Jordanians to do the same.

## Coalitions:

The first coalition was created in 1993 in the midst of an Israeli product fair in Jordan. The opposition parties engaged in large protests against the product fair. Subsequently, the opposition parties held a meeting and agreed to form a coalition. This was the first time the Communist Party, the Islamists, and the nationalists sat down together. The coalition was named the Higher Coordination Committee of the Jordanian Opposition Parties. In the beginning it was established solely to advocate against normalization with Israel; however, it has since extended itself into issues affecting the country.

In 1998 the center parties formed a new coalition to advocate for reform and to increase their share of the votes through a joint election bid. They consequently formed the Coordination Committee for Political Parties. However, the coalition only lasted for one year. By that time, a number of parties had merged, and others had ceased to exist. As such, the coalition lost its momentum and ended. Consequently, until 2011 there remained only one coalition. Yet, after 2011 and the Arab Awakening, a huge number of movements began to coalesce into several coalitions which are outlined below. There were many more coalitions than listed below; however, many did not last after the outbreak of the crisis in Syria, as the weight of that event forced divides within many of the coalitions.

### **1. The Coordination Platform of Popular Movements**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nationwide

Motive: Political – Islamist (national and local)

Date of establishment: 2012

#### *Overview and objectives:*

This entity was launched in May 2012 as a coordinating body for several political and youth movements that were calling for reform in Jordan. The organization focuses on consolidating all the efforts of its constituent movements and pushing for reform and progress. According to its establishment declaration, the movement's agenda is based upon the recovery of the nation's usurped powers and wealth, combating corruption, and prosecuting the corrupt.

The Coordination Platform of Popular Movements is well connected to a large number of political movements and parties in the country; it includes representatives of many of these movements and parties. However, although there are coordination meetings and efforts to work on uniting the action of political movements to give it more impact and effect, not all of these efforts are successful; conflicts of interest often emerge between two or more political movements regarding sensitive issues. Nonetheless, the Coordination Platform of Popular Movement is the most important body working on coordinating efforts between different political movements in Jordan at this time.

It pursues a reformulation of socio-political and economic structures in line with the aspirations of the Jordanian people according to four major frameworks:

- Implementation of real constitutional reforms based on the constitutional principle that the nation is the source of powers, amending constitutional provisions that contradict this principle, and enhance a real separation among powers. Thus, each branch of power will be independent and none will be able to abuse or dominate the other.
- The Jordanian people's will must be reflected through free and decent elections according to an electoral system that secures the emergence of an effective legislative power. This power must be assigned based on a just and fair democratic electoral law that helps strengthening national unity and respects the rights of everybody in line with developmental needs.
- Creating a political parties law that reflects the rights and freedoms emphasized in the Constitution, so that it is possible to create parties capable of securing the development of a more inclusive political life.
- Rebuilding the national economy to secure independence from subordination to exterior powers; at the same time, recovering the robbed assets and resources of the state as well as creating a national and independent economic programs to help employ all powers and invest all natural resources.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- It contains most of the popular movements that are pro-Islamist, bringing them together to coordinate some of the largest protests in Jordan. However, despite these efforts towards coordination, its protests have thus far proved unable to affect tangible change.
- It issues a number of press releases, many of which are widely covered by the media including social and digital media, print media, radio, and even mainstream TV.
- Despite all of these initiatives, few concrete results have been realized.
- On paper the coalition is still active, but it has been very inactive since early 2013.

Reform agenda:

The coalition's most important demands concern combatting corruption and modifying the Election Law. Most of the coalition's members boycotted the last election as a result of their demands not having been met.

## **2. The Democratic Civil State Coalition**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: Political – Leftist

Date of establishment: 2012

*Overview and objectives:*

The Democratic Civil State Coalition was established in the latter half of 2012. It is comprised of a group of political, social, and cultural forces, as well as a number of social movements and individual participants. Because the Democratic Civil State Coalition was founded by well-

known and respected leftist progressive figures in the country, it has a wide base of supporters, especially from the Jordanian leftist political scene. The coalition presented itself in a long and comprehensive document about political reform in the country. Although it is very new, the coalition represents a new platform upon which a wide range of political activists, especially youth, might be able to coalesce. However, there have not hitherto been any clear indicators about where the coalition will go, or what impact it will have on the Jordanian political arena.

As per its manifesto, the principles, ideas and demands of the coalition are as following:

- The nation shall be the source of power.
- The Constitution and laws shall be in harmony with the human experience in relation with human rights and freedoms as expressed in international instruments and charters.
- Citizens shall enjoy all rights, freedoms, and mechanisms required for monitoring performance of the three branches of power and holding the ruling authorities accountable.
- The basis for the civil democratic state is citizenship; the relation between the individual and the state – based on rights and duties of the Constitution and international instruments to which Jordan is a signatory – shall be maintained.
- The civil democratic state is for all citizens, regardless of their sect, creed, region, tribe or political disposition.
- The Constitution of the civil democratic state secures the right of each citizen to practice his/her religious rituals without restrictions.
- The Constitution of the democratic state provides for both man and woman enjoying their freedom being fully competent citizens.
- The aspired democratic civil state shall not be impartial with regard to the economy. Democracy has an economic dimension and a social dimension; these cannot be achieved without the state's both playing an enhanced role in the production and control of the national wealth as well as controlling the capital cycle to secure comprehensive development.
- The aspired democratic state shall be committed to handle imbalances in the living standards and income of its citizens with justice oriented programs that help the distribution of burdens and gains in a manner that secures the achievement of development conditions for all citizens wherever they should be.
- The social capital of the democratic state is its citizens. Such a state shall be responsible for developing the primary, high, third tier, and vocational education for its citizens to be at the highest levels in a manner that copes with the continuous scientific, academic, technological, and professional development. The right to education is a right for all citizens of the state while observing the implementation of justice conditions especially for low and middle-income citizens.
- The aspired democratic state is proud of its belonging to the Arab nation. It admits that its existence as a country unit is just a transitional phase towards the Arab united project that can generate the principles to rid it from subordination and the solidification of its socio-economic structure. It is a period that enables it to take the political stands that serve its national interests. The civil democratic state is a necessary introduction towards securing the conditions of success for the Arab unity project among Arab countries where nations

enjoy freedom, democracy, and equality; and where they control the sovereignty of their territories.

- The aspired democratic state protects the national texture and is keen on keeping it strong. It resists the projects of fragmentation and disintegration. It is keen on mobilizing the potentials of the state and the nation. It mobilizes all its human, physical and moral resources to challenge and abort those plans of fragmentation. This is a national mission that cannot be achieved with torn apart nations, fragmented territories, and waste potentials.
- Perceiving Israel as a threat to the Arab nation as a whole and that the Palestinian cause is the first cause, the coalition does not ignore the Jordanian particularity in this respect: it is that of history, geography, demography, heritage and blood. Thus, the Palestinian cause represents –as does the protection of Jordan – a national Jordanian cause for all Jordanians regardless of their origins. Both missions require, inter alia, confronting normalization with Israel and commitment to the right of return and enhancement of the national unity. Disintegrating Jordanian national unity is a requisite to weaken Jordan and turn it into a fertile land for liquidating the Palestinian cause including suggestions that Jordan could serve as the future Palestinian state. Challenging such plans and projects cannot be achieved with a disintegrated community that is subjected to fundamental and discriminatory directives and disappointed citizens who suffer from exclusion and marginalization. Thus, adopting the principles of a civil democratic state shall be a guarantee for a strong and secure Jordan with a distinct identity. It is the right response to the projects seeking to liquidate the Palestinian cause whilst adhering to and implementing the right of return.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- It is a reform coalition between the National Progressive Current, the Jordanian Social Left Movement, and independent activists. The individual members of this coalition are active on the streets, but the coalition has not been able to forge a strong position.
- It is active through digital and social media.
- It is inactive at the moment; its elite members are inactive, and, lacking an effective structure, little initiative is being taken.

Reform agenda:

This coalition is focused on reinforcing citizenship rights as a prerequisite for reform.

### **3. Higher Coordination Committee of the Jordanian National Opposition Parties**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nationwide

Motive: Political – All Parties

Date of establishment: 1993

*Overview and objectives:*

The Committee is a coalition of Islamist, Leftists and Arab Nationalist Parties. It was created in response to an Israeli product fair which was scheduled to be held in Amman in 1993. The political parties came together in protest to the fair, and have since maintained coordination to push for wider policy changes. They attempt to mediate the diverse political positions of its constitutive members to formalize a unified position on governmental policies.

The coalition is administered by a rotating leadership which is passed between the constitutive member organizations: the Jordanian Communist Party, the Islamic Action Front, the Popular Unity Party, the People's Democratic Party (HASHD), the Jordanian Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party, the Arab Progressive Ba'ath Party.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- The Committee has been able to maintain a coalition and position through drastic changes to the political landscape. The majority of the member parties have long-standing bases of legitimacy, as they were established before the Arab Awakening – and many as early as the 1940s and 1950s.
- Additionally, because it counts the Islamists within its ranks, it has had substantial success in mobilizing grassroots support.
- Disagreements in the coalition between various member organizations regarding reform priorities and its position on the Syrian crisis have created a dangerous gap between the members of the coalition.
- Some of the parties maintain ties with non-Jordanian organizations, which has led to accusations of its not being independent of outside influence.

Reform agenda:

The coalition has demanded reform since its establishment; it has organized political events (including protests and public meetings) to call for political and economic reform. It is against the government's economic policies and, consequently, it has participated widely in protests during the last three years. However, it has frequently been unable to formulate joint policies. Divisions have specifically emerged as a result of an inability to agree on how to engage with elections and how to react to the Syrian crisis.

#### **4. The National Reform Front**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: Political

Date of establishment: 2011

*Overview and objectives:*

The National Reform Front is a coordinating framework for several political parties (including the Islamic Action Front, the Jordanian People's Union Party, and the Jordanian United Front Party) and a plethora of political movements in Jordan. Its genesis was declared in May 2011 as

a result of an initiative put forth by the former Jordanian Prime Minister Ahmed Obeidat, several political parties and movements, as well as independent figures. Although the associated parties and figures are diversified and prominent, they failed to lead the opposition on the Jordanian Street as was expected. While, the national front for reform was successful in attracting a number of Jordanian opposition parties and elite figures, its weakness emerged when approaching youth political movements – including youth who were unsatisfied with the performance of political parties during the past decade. Because the front failed to attract these youth movements, a gap continues to exist between the political elite and youth activists in the country.

According to its founding document, the National Reform Front pursues several key initiatives:

- Establishment of a national strategy for comprehensive reform (based on the principles of the Constitution and the National Charter<sup>56</sup>) to put the country on a democratic track.
- Introduction of constitutional reforms that would reinforce the nation as the source of powers in the state. This would act as a stepping stone towards a system that identifies clear parameters for comprehensive political reform that would provide all guarantees required for the protection of public rights and freedoms.
- The ability of the Jordanian people to select their representatives based on a just and democratic electoral system that guarantees an effective legislative branch.
- Adoption of an integrated national plan to combat corruption in political life and restructured socio-economic and administrative structures of the State.
- Restructuring of the judiciary to secure an integral and independent judicial branch and control over the fragmented judicial authorities in the state, thereby helping to restore esteem and respect for judicial decisions.
- The reform of security institutions to ensure that they are working towards the tasks and duties set out in Jordanian law; namely, the protection of the country and its citizens.
- Review of education policy and the introduction of a curriculum rooted within a patriotic framework.
- Restructuring of the country's economic strategy to secure state ownership of public resources and strategic projects. Planning must be a major policy tool for directing and guiding the organizations of the economy and the community as a whole.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- The Front contains many diverse intellectuals, parties, and movements from across the political spectrum (including the Islamists).
- It is led by Ahmed Obeidat, who is a former Prime Minister and a former Director of the General Intelligence Directorate. Obeidat is popular amongst Jordanians because he was viewed as being a fierce opponent of corruption during his mandate as prime minister.
- The Front was established after the Arab Awakening. It includes a number of intellectuals who could not join the coalitions above because they are not members of political parties.

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<sup>56</sup> The National Charter was drawn up by 60 royally appointed Jordanians between 1990 and 1991 to establish a road map to formulate laws consistent with democracy and the reemergence of a multi-party democracy.

- It has branches in all of the governorates.
- The Front's greatest weakness is its dependence on a handful of individuals for its work; that is, it does not have a strong internal structure outside of its central personalities. The coalition may not survive if these key people quit.
- The coalition tried to make itself the representative of all political movements. This led to a clash with a number of youth political movements, as they did not want to be dominated by a strong coalition.

Reform agenda:

This coalition is very active in participating in protests and events calling for reform and has a comprehensive social, economic, and political program for reform.

## **5. The People's Gathering for Reform**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: Political

Date of establishment: 2011

*Overview and objectives:*

The Gathering was launched in the first half of 2011. The Gathering includes several Jordanian national and political forces, such as the Coalition of 24 March and the Bani Hassan Gathering. The Youth Coalition for Reform and Change (Ma'an) and other Islamic youth movements also joined. The Gathering is distinct as it is an alliance of several influential political movements. It neither has any partisan or political affiliation nor a central or organized leadership.

According to its association statement, the Gathering works towards:

- Rectifying the relation between the nation and the King by reiterating that the King is the head of the state and not of authorities. That is, the implementation of a system that reflects the British constitutional monarchy.
- The Parliament is free and sovereign. It expresses the will of a free nation and has a real legitimacy in its country. Any formulae to set the King's will above that of the nation and grants him any "supra" powers must be terminated.
- Power or authority concurs with responsibility. All types of immunity given to the ministers and prime minister must be removed. Governments must be elected. No executive branch can be secured without a representation capacity.
- Provide real guarantees to stop abuse of the nation's will and forfeited elections. Election fraud is a byproduct of foreign occupation.
- Preserving the basic rights of citizens and preventing the existence of any law, discipline, or regulations that impede Jordanians from enjoying their rights.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- Islamists control the Gathering; it includes other small groups and individuals, but the Islamists dominate and run the coalition.
- The coalition was created to serve as a platform to support the Islamist position vis-à-vis the authorities as well as other political parties and reform groups.
- It has enjoyed significant success in the media, but limited success on the ground.

Reform agenda:

The coalition promotes the Islamists' program of reform; therefore, it focuses on electoral reform, the reduction of the King's power, and, more recently, the Syrian issue.

## **6. The Youth and People's Coalition for Change**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Amman, Irbid, and Karak governorates (North, middle, and South of Jordan).

Motive: Political – Leftist, Nationalist, Youth-Orientated

Date of establishment: 2011

*Overview and objectives:*

During the 2011 wave of demonstrations, several coalitions emerged among the youth groups participating in the demonstrations. Some of these unions emerged from partisan and non-partisan youth groups, which were universally calling for student rights, including a more effective monitoring of violations and inequality within the Jordanian universities.

In June 2011, a group of nine youth groups decided to form a coalition, "The Youth and People's Coalition for Change." They subsequently issued a statement to declare the genesis of this coalition, and call for a protest march, which would begin at the al-Hussaini Mosque in downtown Amman. The statement also expressed the Coalition's resentment of the economic approach that the Government had adopted, which fully submitted Jordan to all of the requirements of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. The statement called for constitutional amendments to enhance the principle that "people shall be the source of power". The most distinctive aspect of the Coalition is that its leadership consists of members who are active in Jordanian political parties, such as the Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity Party and the Jordanian Communist Party. Despite the fact that Jordanian people –and especially university students – are very cautious when it comes to dealing with political parties, the movement has been able to attract university students to tackle issues related to education institutions, and political reform in general.

The Youth Coalition activities are focused on several specific issues:

- Preventing price increases, and ending Jordan's submission to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank conditions.

- Initiating alternative economic policies to solve the economic problems of the country and working to facilitate the creation of social justice.
- Ensuring basic freedoms for all Jordanians.
- Ending corruption and the usurpation of state resources.
- Increased economic responsibility for the state.

#### Strengths and weaknesses:

- This coalition was launched as a result of the failure of an earlier coalition created on the 24 March 2011 between the leftists and nationalists on one side and the Islamists on the other. The earlier coalition failed because it could not coordinate reform priorities and demands. Subsequently, the youth from nationalist and leftists parties decided to create a new coalition.
- It was launched by youth activists (both leftist and nationalist) within political parties, including the National Progressive Current, the Jordanian Social Left Movement, and youth and popular movements from many of the governorates.
- It is a well-coordinated coalition whose members organize statewide activities.
- The party, however, has not been too successful at mobilizing people for its protests and its numbers are always small in comparison to the Islamists.

#### Reform agenda:

This coalition demands for social justice, educational reform, and a restructuring of public services. It prioritizes socio-economic issues over political reform.

## **Initiatives:**

The term “initiatives” is here used to refer to groups of people who work to support political movements by forming complimentary organizations. They were first established to pressure the government towards reform. They cannot be considered movements, as they have neither formal membership nor an intention to transform into an entity.

### **1. The Defense Committee for People’s Movements**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: National – Legal

Date of establishment: 2012

#### *Overview and objectives:*

The Committee was established in Rusaifa during the second half of 2012 by activists in the people’s movements. According to its members, the Committee was founded to address the security forces’ dominance over political life in the Kingdom, and the recurrent attacks against activists. The committee’s activity is not limited to defending those arrested during activism, but also any Jordanian citizen who is chased, arrested, or harmed due to his or her political opinions.

The Defense Committee for People’s Movements has been successful in providing legal and moral support to those arrested, harassed, or attacked during demonstrations and activities. They have also been successful in attracting a large number of lawyers to join the committee, or cooperate with it in the provision of legal aid for political activists in the country; the committee is still active and follows up on all activists whom are arrested or were previously arrested.

As per its statement, the Commission’s aims are:

- Defending any Jordanian citizen arrested on the grounds of political activities, national opinions and ideas, or opposition movements.
- Using all possible and available methods, including the law, media, or mobilization by means of communicating with those who are unable to defend themselves, to provide support and backup no matter who they should be if they are in agreement with the objectives of the movements. The committee will also defend those arrested during demonstrations, strikes and marches, by calling for prompt and unconditional release of the arrested.
- Creating mechanisms to communicate and interact with the parents and families of those arrested and providing all types of moral and physical support to those families until their arrested family member is released. They must be connected with all legal and human supporting agencies and relevant media to express their demands and stands, and to voice the conditions in which they and the arrested live.
- Providing care for all of those injured during the people’s movement anywhere in the country regardless of their affiliation or directives as long as they were injured during movement actions. These might be attacked by the anti-reform forces in power. Care will be provided at the moment of injury till full recovery; this includes follow up of their legal,

judicial, and human needs resulting from their injury. Cases will be followed up with any agencies within this scope.

- Providing care, support, and protection for all those injured, including individuals and activists of the movements, in addition to those chased and harassed by the authorities, which employ their thugs and cronies to chase those activists from one place to another. This might be outside the movements' activities; we are certain that the security forces under these authorities target the activists on an individual basis and attack, harass, conquer, and threaten them.
- Providing any service of support, back up, care, defense, and protection for all activists in the movements who are targeted with any type of attack or harassment by the authorities and their security forces, if not mentioned or stipulated in the above five items. This should be seen as an integral part of the mandate of this commission because of necessity, the nature of things, and facts on the ground.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- The Committee solely contains people with legal backgrounds. As such, it is not seen as being overtly political. Consequently, it is provided with both space to operate as well as opportunities to defend political activists facing prosecution.
- It has a good social media presence, and it promotes itself effectively through this platform.
- However, its effectiveness is primarily derived from a few individuals, who, were they to leave, could destroy the initiative.

Reform agenda:

Its central objective is not reform, but documenting all violations against activists and trying to defend activists against unfair prosecution. Some observers, therefore, consider the Committee to be generally sympathetic to reform demands.

## **2. The Supreme Council for Reform**

Geographic Scope of Attention: Nation wide

Motive: Political – Reform Division of IAF

Date of establishment: 2012

*Overview and objectives:*

The Islamist movement declared the formation of the Supreme Council for Reform in April 2012. The Council is comprised of the executive offices of the Muslim Brotherhood and the Islamic Action Front Party. In its declaration, the Supreme Council for Reform accused the regime of “turning its back to the people’s objectives and necessary demands” and thereby deepening the socio-political and economic crises in the country and putting “the national

security and community peace at risk.” In its declaration, the Council also accuses the regime of anti-reformism, and of voiding political achievements from its content. This adds to the intense burdens upon life that the citizens are already experiencing.

A plethora of political movements saw the declaration of the Supreme Council for Reform as an attempt by Islamists to commandeer the efforts of the non-Islamist players in the Jordanian political arena; such views emerged as a result of previous relations between the Islamists and other political groups throughout Jordanian political history. These opinions constantly appear among Jordanian political activists, leading to problematic issues regarding political activism in the country – especially in relation to attempted coordination and unification of political demands and actions.

The Supreme Council for Reform’s platform calls for:

- The restoration of the constitutional status of the Jordanian nation as the source of state power. This, the IAF believes, can be achieved when people are given the right to elect their parliamentary representatives for both the Lower and the Upper houses.
- A parliamentary government that enjoys all constitutional and administrative powers.
- The government must be responsible for all institutions of the state, especially the General Intelligence Directorate (Mukhabarat). The Mukhabarat must assume its constitutional and legal tasks; that is, only the protection of the country and citizens without interfering in public life or administrative and political affairs.
- Achieving the peaceful succession of power according to internationally observed democratic practices.
- Introducing constitutional amendments, especially to articles 34, 35, and 36 to help build a strong civil and democratic state.
- The movement criticizes resolutions by the Government to increase prices, its amended draft of the Law of Press and Publications, and unjustified appointments for important positions.
- The Council expresses its desire to cooperate with different political and social groups to achieve reforms that secure the principle that “the nation is the source of power.” This would allow the people to elect their legislative and executive branches and secure the overall mandate of the Government on all levels. At the same time, it would help to address corruption and aid in the implementation of comprehensive development in the country.
- The Council calls on decision makers to listen to the voice of the nation, address the imminent concerns facing the country, and introduce comprehensive reforms before it is too late.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- The Council was launched by the executive offices of the IAF and the Muslim Brotherhood and represents a purely Islamist structure; it was launched in reaction to disagreement with the leftist nationalists because of contrasting positions towards the Syrian crisis.
- It exploits the capacities and resources of both the IAF and Muslim Brotherhood, and it is strongly supported by the top leaders of the Brotherhood.

- It, however, has largely been viewed as a mere replication of the IAF, and this has served to further isolate the Islamists from other movements.
- There is no cooperation between the Council and the other movements.

Reform agenda:

This initiative reflects the Islamist program of reform, as well as Islamist priorities regarding the Election Law and the realization of parliamentary government.

### **3. Zamzam Initiative**

Geographic Scope of Attention: nation wide

Motive: Political- Islamic Civic State

Date of establishment: November, 2012 (officially: 2013)

*Overview and objectives:*

Zamzam<sup>57</sup> was launched by a group of Muslim Brotherhood leaders, including s Dr. Ruhayyil Gharaybeh (former chief of the political office of the Muslim Brotherhood) and Dr. Nabeel Al-Kofahi (former MP).

Zamzam was established in November 2012 as an alternative initiative to the Muslim Brotherhood. The initiative was launched to call for the establishment of an Islamic Civic State in Jordan in which citizenship, political participation, and reform are undertaken in accordance with Islamic values. Membership consists of a wide range of people, including leftist politicians.

The establishment of Zamzam represented a large challenge to the Muslim Brotherhood, as many of the Brotherhood leaders did not agree with its establishment. Those who had set up the initiative, while no longer active in the Brotherhood, technically remained within its leadership cadres. All other members of the Muslim Brotherhood were banned from participating in Zamzam activities.

The Zamzam initiative is strongly supported by the regime – as it serves to weaken the Brotherhood – but its does not agree with the initiative’s principle requests. The launch of the initiative was attended by former Prime Minister Abdel Raouf Al- Rawabdeh.

The Zamzam initiative’s objectives are:

- A civic state built on Islamic values and full participation of the people.
- Giving all people the right to participate in politics.
- Holistic socio-political and economic reforms.

Strengthens and weaknesses:

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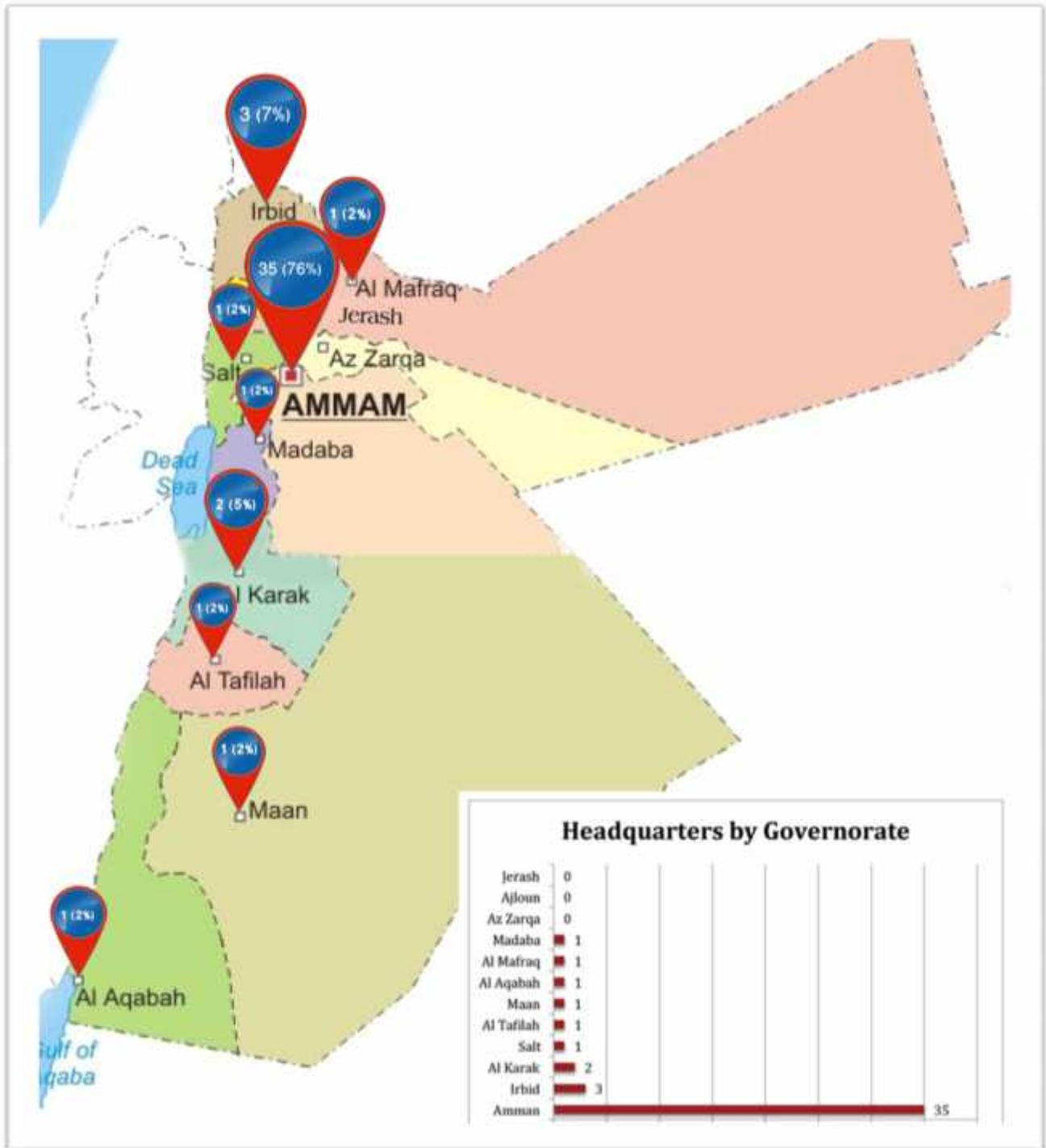
<sup>57</sup> “Zamzam” refers to the holy water in Mecca. The movement’s name is derived form Zamzam Hotel, where the initiative first meeting was held.

- The launch of the initiative was well covered by the media due to its break with the Muslim Brotherhood.
- It has been successful in building a wide popular base as a result of its leaders' visits to many cities and villages across Jordan to promote its ideas.
- The initiative was launch under the patronage of the regime and still enjoys significant regime support and media coverage.
- Until now there has been no real activity, program, protests or platform. The initiative maintains itself on speeches, events, and the declaration of broad statements.
- Many observers are skeptical as to whether the initiative will be able to sustain itself long term. Because it is dependent on its alliance with the regime, it may only maintain momentum if it continues to promote mutual, anti-Brotherhood interests.

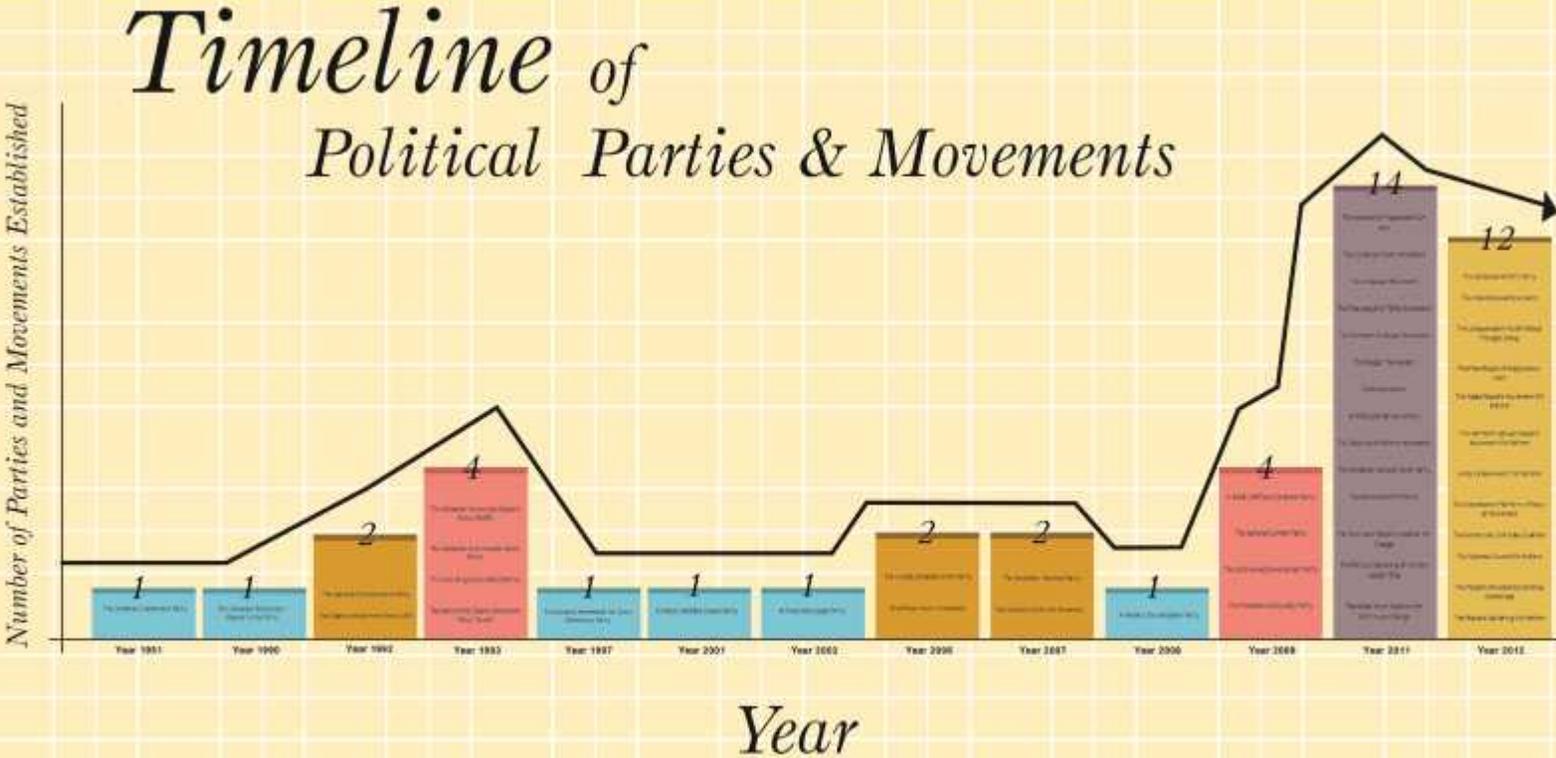
Platform for Reform:

Zamzam calls for holistic reform to build a new civic state based on Islamic values in which all citizens will be represented.

### Chapter 3: Maps of Jordanian Political Landscape Headquarters of Political Parties and Movements

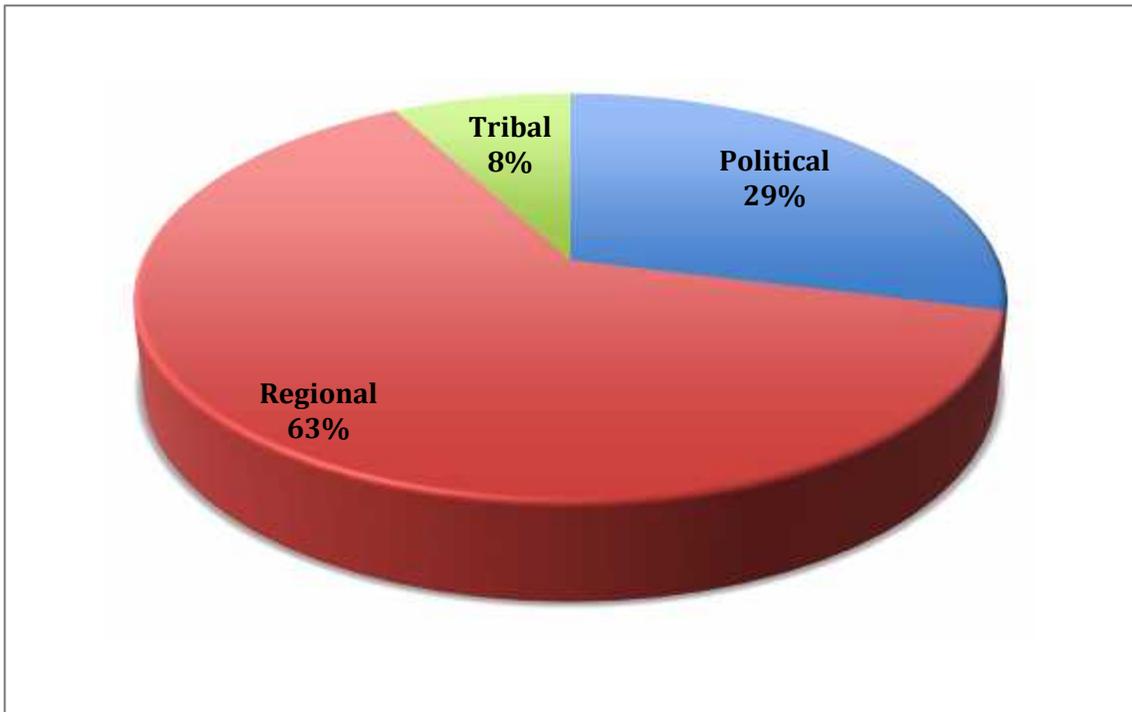


**Establishment Timeline for Political Parties and Movements**

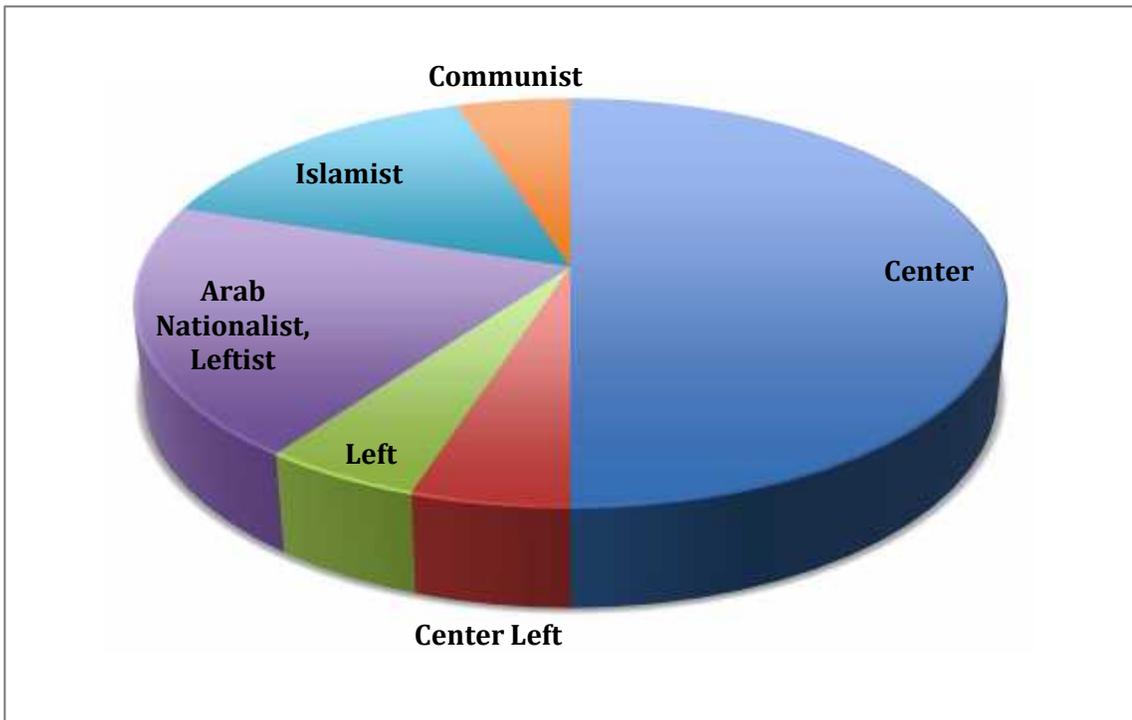


\* This timeline includes only the currently active parties and movements

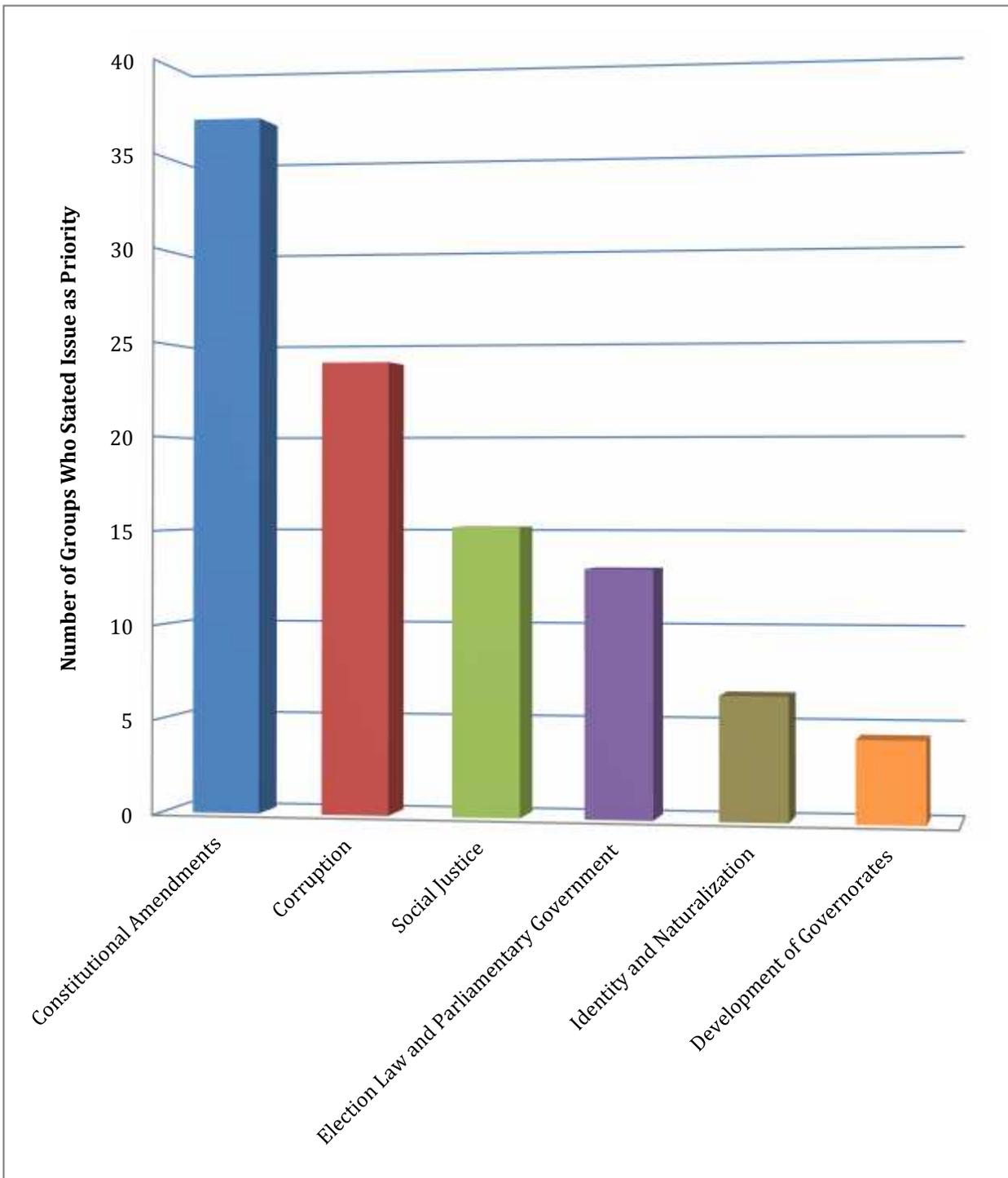
### Basis for Creation of Political Movements (Hirak)



### Political Party Orientation



## Priorities of Political Parties and Movements



## Chapter 4: Findings

### **Priorities, Relationships, and Coordination**

Jordan's political parties and movements universally demand reform. However, whilst they all discuss the same issues, they can neither agree on how to confront them nor in what manner they should be addressed. The Islamists –and the Islamic Action Front (IAF) in particular – believe that reform has to start with political change. Consequently, they prioritize constitutional and electoral reforms. The nationalist and leftist parties, however, concentrate on socio-economic reform, giving priority to policies related to the economy and standards of living. While these parties also demand political reform, they do not focus on it to the same extent as the Islamists.

The policy priorities of the political movements (Hirak) are less tangible and more difficult to define. Because the movements all emerged from different backgrounds, they do not share the same priorities. Yet, these differences notwithstanding, all of the movements are able to agree that the elimination of corruption is a top priority, and many commonly identify the issue of national identity as equally crucial. The inter-movement and inter-party discrepancies in policy priority have acted as a central impediment to greater coordination on the Jordanian political landscape. As a result, these movements and parties have not succeeded in forming a unified position or creating an integrated strategy.

At the same time, the relationship between parties on the one hand and movements on the other is equally complicated; this relationship can largely be categorized in two ways. 1. The first type of party-movement relationship can be characterized by political party domination over movements. This domination exists because the movement was either secretly created by the party or supported by the party,<sup>58</sup> or the party and movement share a similar ideology and pursue corresponding goals. 2. The second type of party-movement relationship can be characterized by a severe lack of trust. Many of the movements believe that the parties are attempting to use them for their own benefit. Consequently the movements remain distant, as they are suspicious that the parties will attempt to exert dominance. This suspicion is in large part a byproduct of party inactivity; the movements blame the political parties for not pursuing a stronger or more courageous course of action at any time before the Arab Awakening. At the same time, however, this suspicion was also reinforced during more recent events, as many of the movements feel as if the parties tried to commandeer their efforts in 2011. Conversely, the political parties accuse the movements of being chaotic, selfish, and lacking experience in politics. The parties feel as if the movements do not respect the historical sacrifices that the parties have made.

### **Impact of Regional Political Developments**

With Jordan's geostrategic and socio-economic position, regional developments have always drastically affected its domestic landscape; Jordanian political parties and movements are no exception. Regional politics heavily impact both their political dispositions and actions. In this regard, the recent developments in Egypt and Syria have dramatically influenced the positions of

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<sup>58</sup> A number of political party members created political movements without announcing their support for such groups. They did this so that it would appear as if there was independent, grassroots support for the respective reform programs of individual political parties.

the Jordanian political parties and movements. Developments in both countries have led to a binary organizational polarization in Jordan. The Islamists (the Muslim Brotherhood and its Islamic Action Front) explicitly support the Islamic opposition groups in Syria and back the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. The nationalists and leftists, on the other hand, have shown their support for the Syrian regime and have staked a clear position against the Islamists in Egypt. Because these disagreements have put the Islamists in one corner and the nationalist and leftist parties in the other, both sides now refuse to work with each other, choosing instead to hurl accusations back and forth. As a result, each faction has started to organize its own political activities independent of the other.

### **Alternative Programs?**

While the political parties and movements have continually criticized government policies, they have provided few concrete alternatives. The government's socio-economic and political programs are almost universally opposed by the parties and movements, but these organizations rarely provide suggestions for rectifying these policies. If they do, the recommendations are excessively vague, lacking the requisite details that would actually enable their implementation. All of Jordan's parties, for instance, oppose SNTV (one person, one vote), but none has provided a feasible proposal for replacing it. The parties have asked for a proportional system, but they have not provided specifics, and they cannot agree on details. Even the IAF continually changes its mind, demanding the reinstatement of the 1989 election system at one time, and pushing for different systems at another. As a result of this indecision and vagueness, the government is able to exploit the situation. It is correctly able to maintain that no party or movement has suggested workable systems that are capable of replacing (let alone improving) the ones currently in place, and is thus able to justify the maintenance of the status quo.

### **Parties and Movements and the People**

The political parties in Jordan are still very much elite institutions. They suffer from an effective absence of grassroots support, as they continuously fail to attract a wider audience to their movements. While most citizens agree with the demands of the parties (especially their socio-economic platforms), the parties are unable to mobilize supporters, let alone attract members. The IAF has enjoyed greater success, but it is still extremely limited – especially when compared to the support bases of other Muslim Brotherhood movements. These failures have in part resulted from the inability of Jordanian parties to present their movements in an attractive manner or disseminate their ideas outside of their elitist bubble.

At the same time, however, participation has also been impeded by the influence of regional events. Especially with the situation in Syria, Jordanians have become increasingly reluctant to participate in demonstrations or opposition activity. They fear that Jordan will follow a similar course and that the situation will only deteriorate. These concerns have merely been exacerbated by the misguided tactics of social movements (and the parties to a lesser extent). As the opposition gained strength in Jordan, the movements began making more extreme demands, and even calling for the removal of the Jordanian monarchy. Most Jordanians did not accept these agendas, as they consider the Hashemite regime to be the safety net of their rights and freedoms. When the opposition moved in this direction, therefore, it quickly lost support and inter-organizational strife emerged. While 2011 represented an opportunity for the opposition to

achieve change, its radicalized policies pushed away supporters and scarified any chance of realizing change.

### **Relationship with the Government**

The relationship between political parties and movements on the one hand and the government on the other is extremely convoluted. There is no direct channel through which one group can coordinate with the other. Instead, parties and movements deal with but one of the many appendages of the government: through, for instance, the prime minister, the royal court, or the security services. As a result, parties and movements are able only to achieve piece by piece solutions that are incapable of addressing concerns in a comprehensive manner. This decentralized situation postpones solutions, and allows the government to evade meaningful reform. The government, as noted above, is consequently able to rely on tactics of “defensive democratization,” circumventing oppositional demands by introducing piecemeal legislation that leads to insignificant changes. The inability of the opposition to coordinate in their demands and pursue a single reform agenda has only further enabled government inactivity. When coordination did briefly emerge between the movements in 2011, the government was forced to rely on more drastic measures. While the government eschews violence, it bared its teeth to the opposition on a limited number of occasions, reminding the opposition not to cross red lines.

### **Internal Organization**

The internal organization of parties and movements has also inhibited their effectiveness. Aside from the IAF, political parties have only skeletal internal structures. The IAF holds internal elections, but the other parties are much less capable. When these parties do run elections, the posts are repeatedly filled with the same small cadre of top officials. At the same time, the organization of political movements is even sparser. Internal bylaws are essentially absent, elections are non-existent, and even policy-votes are rendered difficult. Consequently, coordination between parties and movements is extremely problematic, as the absence of effective decision-making renders controversial issues detrimental to organizational cohesion.



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