



U.S. DEPARTMENT of STATE

Jordan

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The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is a constitutional monarchy ruled by King Abdullah II bin Hussein since the death of his father, King Hussein bin Talal. The Constitution concentrates a high degree of executive and legislative authority in the King, who determines domestic and foreign policy. In the King's absence, a regent, whose authority is outlined in the Constitution, assumes many of the King's responsibilities. The Prime Minister and other members of the Cabinet are appointed by the King and manage the daily affairs of the Government. The Parliament consists of the 40-member Senate, appointed by the King, and a lower house, the Chamber of Deputies which is elected every 4 years. The lower house exerts influence only intermittently on domestic and foreign policy issues. The 1997 parliamentary elections were marred by reports of registration irregularities, fraud, and restrictions on the press and on campaign materials. The King dissolved Parliament in June 2001 and subsequently postponed elections until spring 2003. A new election law enacted by the Government in July 2001 increased the size of the lower house from 80 seats to 104. According to the Constitution, the judiciary is independent, and the Government took steps in 2001 to strengthen the judiciary's administrative independence. However, in practice, it remained susceptible to political pressure and interference by the executive.

General police functions were the responsibility of the Public Security Directorate (PSD). The PSD, the General Intelligence Directorate (GID), and the military shared responsibility for maintaining internal security, and had authority to monitor the activities of persons believed to be security threats. Elements of the security forces continued to commit human rights abuses.

Foreign assistance, remittances from citizens working abroad, exports of minerals, and, increasingly, revenues from export of manufactured goods and tourism were the mainstays of the country's economy. The Government made substantial progress in deregulation, privatizing state owned companies and opening up to foreign trade and investment. As the country makes a transition to a market driven economic system, the main economic problems it faced were high unemployment and persistent poverty, especially in rural areas. Other drags on economic growth included the political uncertainty in the region, limited water resources, and the lack of a viable market for the country's products in its traditional trading partners in the region, particularly Iraq. Economic growth, which has improved in recent years after stagnating in the mid-1990s, is only partially addressing these problems.

The Government generally respected the human rights of its citizens in some areas; however, there were significant problems in other areas. There were significant restrictions on citizens' right to change their government. Citizens may participate in the political system through their elected representatives in Parliament; however, the King has discretionary authority to appoint and dismiss the Prime Minister, Cabinet, and upper house of Parliament, to dissolve Parliament, and to establish public policy. Other human rights problems included police abuse and mistreatment of detainees, allegations of torture, arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of transparent investigations and accountability within the security services, prolonged detention without charge, denial of due process of law stemming from the expanded authority of the State Security Court and interference in the judicial process, infringements on citizens' privacy rights, harassment of members of opposition political parties, and significant restrictions on freedom of speech, press, assembly, and association.

A law enacted by the Government in October 2001 gave the Government broad powers to restrict and prosecute journalists and to close publications. This royal decree, or temporary law, in the absence of

Parliament effectively superseded the 1999 amendments to the Press and Publications Law, which had reduced somewhat the restrictions in previous laws regarding the ability of journalists and publications to function and report freely. Significant restrictions continued throughout the year. The Government limited academic freedom. In July, several professors were dismissed from local faculties, apparently for political reasons. The Government imposes some limits on freedom of religion, and there was official and societal discrimination against adherents of unrecognized religions. The evangelical Christian community reported incidents of governmental harassment during the year. One foreign Protestant pastor and his family reportedly left the country after being harassed by the Government. There were some restrictions on freedom of movement. Violence against women, restrictions on women's rights, and societal discrimination against women were problems. Although there was some evidence that societal attitudes toward "honor" crimes was improving, the law still allowed for reduced punishments for violent honor crimes against women for alleged immoral acts. Child abuse remained a problem, and discrimination against Palestinians persisted. Abuse of foreign domestics was a problem, and child labor occurred on a small scale. Jordan was invited by the Community of Democracies' (CD) Convening Group to attend the November 2002 second CD Ministerial Meeting in Seoul, Republic of Korea, as a participant.

RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Section 1 Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom From:

a. Arbitrary or Unlawful Deprivation of Life

There were no reports of the arbitrary or unlawful deprivation of life committed by the Government or its agents during the year.

The security services promoted a climate of impunity by continuing to be reluctant to conduct transparent investigations into allegations of wrongful deaths that occurred during police detention in previous years. However, in some instances, the authorities were more forthcoming.

In January, a youth from Ma'an died in a hospital while in police custody. The Government reported that the boy was arrested for violating the privacy of neighbors, and suffered from fatal injuries after falling from a roof during flight from the police. Local residents said the Government was not truthful about the circumstances surrounding the boy's death. This death led to rioting, the death of a police officer, and the injury of six police officers and eight rioters.

In April, a 10-year old boy was killed during an anti-Israeli demonstration in the Baqaa refugee camp. Family members claimed he was struck by a tear gas canister fired by anti-riot police. The Government formed a special committee to investigate the incident and concluded that there was no wrongdoing on the part of the Government because the boy was struck in the head by an object not fired by police.

In November, a challenge to government authority by an armed group in Ma'an led to the deaths of five persons, including two police officers and three militants.

In August 2001, unknown assailants shot and killed an Israeli businessman working in Amman. Two extremist organizations, the Islamic Movement of Jordan ("The Group of Ahmed Al Daqamseh") and the previously unknown "Nobles of Jordan", claimed responsibility for the killing. The Government stated that it had reason to believe the killing was criminal and not political in nature. At the end of the year, the Government had made no arrests in the case.

In September 2001 the police provided diplomatic representatives with credible information that security forces were not responsible for the death of one person and injury of six others during an October 2000 protest in the Baqaa refugee camp. Protesters continued to maintain that police caused the death and injuries.

According to the Government, several members of the security service were remanded for trial in the January 2000 beating death of Mar'i Khalil Al-Jahran in a South Shuna police station. There were no developments in this matter during the year.

On February 28, terrorists unsuccessfully attempted to assassinate a senior government official and his family with a car bomb. Two bystanders were killed by the blast. At the end of the year, the Government's investigation of the incident continued.

In October, USAID official Lawrence Foley was shot and killed in front of his home. In December, the

The Constitution states that "personal freedom shall be guaranteed" and that no person may be detained or imprisoned "except in accordance with the provisions of the law." Under the Constitution, citizens are subject to arrest, trial, and punishment for the defamation of heads of state, dissemination of "false or exaggerated information outside the country that attacks state dignity," or defamation of public officials. Criminal laws generally required warrants; however, in most cases suspects may be detained for up to 48 hours in the absence of a warrant. Police obtained many warrants after making arrests.

The Criminal Code requires that police notify legal authorities within 48 hours of an arrest and that legal authorities file formal charges within 10 days of an arrest; however, the courts routinely granted requests from prosecutors for 15-day extensions, also provided by law. This practice generally extended pretrial detention for protracted periods of time. The security forces arbitrarily arrested and detained citizens. In cases involving state security, the authorities frequently held defendants in lengthy pretrial detention, did not provide defendants with the written charges against them, and did not allow defendants to meet with their lawyers until shortly before trial. Defendants before the State Security Court usually met with their attorneys only 1 or 2 days before their trial. In April 2001 the Parliament passed amendments to the Criminal Code that eliminated pretrial detentions for certain categories of misdemeanors.

The Government detained persons, including journalists (see Section 2. a.) and Islamists for varying amounts of time for what appeared to be political reasons. Human rights sources reported that more than 1,000 persons were detained for security reasons and subsequently released within a short period of time throughout the year. Human rights groups reported that there were a smaller number of long-term political detainees.

Local governors had the authority to invoke the Preventing Crimes Law, which allowed them to place citizens under house arrest for up to one year without formally charging them (see Section 2.d.). House arrest may involve requiring persons to report daily to a local police station and the imposition of a curfew. Persons who violate the terms of their house arrest may be imprisoned for up to 14 days.

The Government used the threat of detention to intimidate journalists into practicing self-censorship. In October 2001, the Government adopted a series of amendments to Penal Code provisions dealing with the press. Subsequent to the adoption of these amendments, there were incidents of detainment and intimidation of journalists (see Section 2.a.).

The Constitution prohibits the expulsion of any citizen, and the Government did not routinely use forced exile; however, in June the Government attempted to prevent the return of Ibrahim Ghosheh, one of four leaders of the terrorist organization HAMAS allegedly expelled in 1999. In June 2001, Ghosheh arrived unexpectedly from Qatar, and immigration authorities at Queen Alia International Airport (QAIA) attempted to block his admission to the country. Ghosheh was detained at the airport until June 30, when the Government admitted him to the country in return for his pledge to cease his HAMAS activities. The three other expelled HAMAS leaders remained outside the country at year's end (see Sections 1.e. and 2.d.).

e. Denial of Fair Public Trial

The Constitution provides for the independence of the judiciary, and the Government passed legislation in 2001 to strengthen such independence; however, the judiciary was not independent in practice and remained subject to pressure and outside interference. A judge's appointment to, advancement within, and dismissal from the judiciary are determined by the Higher Judiciary Council, a committee whose members were appointed by the King. In June 2001 Parliament passed a law intended to give the Council increased independent jurisdiction over the judicial branch; previously, the Council had been subject to frequent interference and pressure from the Ministry of Justice stemming from the Ministry's oversight of the council. The new law promoted the independence of the judicial system by limiting the Ministry of Justice's administrative control over judges. There had been numerous allegations in previous years that judges were "reassigned" temporarily to another court or judicial district to remove them from a particular proceeding. The Government claimed that the Higher Judiciary Council's new independence made such tampering much more difficult. Despite constitutional prohibitions against such actions, judges complained of telephone surveillance by the Government (see Section 1.f.).

The judicial system consists of several types of courts. Most criminal cases are tried in civilian courts, which include the appeals courts, the Court of Cassation, and the Supreme Court. Cases involving sedition, armed insurrection, financial crimes, drug trafficking, and offenses against the royal family are tried in the State Security Court.

Shari'a (Islamic law) courts have jurisdiction over marriage and divorce among Muslims. Christian courts have jurisdiction over marriage and divorce cases among Christians, but apply Shari'a law in inheritance cases (see Section 5).

Government arrested two suspects, who confessed to the act as well as being members of the terrorist organization Al Qa'ida. The trial date is set for 2003.

Women continued to be victims of "honor killings" (see Section 5).

b. Disappearance

There were no reports of politically motivated disappearances.

c. Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

The law provides prisoners with the right to humane treatment and provides prisoners the right to an attorney. However, the police and security forces sometimes abused detainees physically and verbally during detention and interrogation, and allegedly also used torture. Allegations of torture were difficult to verify because the police and security officials frequently denied detainees timely access to lawyers, despite legal provisions requiring such access. The most frequently alleged methods of torture included sleep deprivation, beatings on the soles of the feet, prolonged suspension with ropes in contorted positions, and extended solitary confinement. Defendants in high-profile cases before the State Security Court claimed to have been subjected to physical and psychological abuse while in detention. Government officials denied allegations of torture and abuse.

In October, the Court of Cassation considered convicted terrorist Raed Hijazi's appeal and remanded the case to the Security Court with an order to reconsider the death sentence. Hijazi's sentence stood. In January, the State Security Court rejected accused Hijazi's defense that his confession was coerced, found Hijazi guilty, and sentenced him to death. He had been tried for crimes against the national security. In 2000, Syria had apprehended Hijazi, accused of a terrorist plot targeting American and Israeli tourists during the millennium celebrations, and rendered him to stand trial. According to media accounts of the trial, doctors for both the defense and the prosecution testified that Hijazi's body showed signs of having been beaten, but witnesses, including Hijazi, made contradictory and inconclusive claims regarding whether the alleged abuse occurred while he was in Jordanian or Syrian custody.

A number of cases of beatings and other abuse while in police custody were reported to human rights activists during the year. Many of these reported incidents occurred during April, when there were hundreds of anti-Israeli demonstrations throughout the country. In April, a local newspaper reporter covering anti-Israeli demonstrations in Sweileh claimed that he was detained, threatened and 'manhandled' by government security forces (see Section 2.c.). Human rights activists believed that there were many incidents that were not documented.

Police on several occasions used force to disperse demonstrations during the year (see Section 2.b.).

There were no developments in the investigation of the November and December 2000 shooting attacks against Israeli diplomats.

Most prisons met international standards. That said, prisons and local police detention facilities were spartan, and on the whole were severely overcrowded and understaffed. Human rights groups and prisoners complained of poor food and water quality, inadequate medical facilities, and poor sanitation in certain facilities. In July 2001 the Government passed a temporary law that restricted the types of physical force that prison officials may use to subdue prisoners. In 2000 the Government opened a new prison facility in an attempt to alleviate the problem of overcrowding.

The Government held some persons who are detained on national security grounds in separate detention facilities maintained by the GID. The Government held other security detainees and prisoners in regular prisons. Conditions in GID detention facilities were significantly better than general police detention facilities. While security prisoners often were separated from common criminals, conditions for such prisoners did not differ significantly.

Local human rights monitors were allowed to visit prisons, but complained that the authorities required them to undertake a lengthy and difficult procedure to obtain permission for such visits. The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) had access to prisoners. With some exceptions, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was permitted unrestricted access to prisoners and prison facilities, including GID facilities.

d. Arbitrary Arrest, Detention, or Exile

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Most civilian court trials were open. Defendants are entitled to legal counsel, may challenge witnesses, and have the right to appeal. Defendants facing the death penalty or life imprisonment must be represented by legal counsel. Public defenders were provided if the defendant is unable to hire legal counsel. According to government legal officials, civil, criminal, and commercial courts accord equal weight to the testimony of men and women. However, in Shar'ia court, the testimony of two women is equal to that of a man's in most circumstances (see Section 5).

The State Security Court consisted of a panel of three judges, two military officers and one civilian. Sessions frequently were closed to the public. Defendants tried in the State Security Court often were held in pretrial detention without access to lawyers, although they were permitted to be visited by representatives of the ICRC. In the State Security Court, judges have inquired into allegations that defendants were tortured and have allowed the testimony of physicians regarding such allegations (see Section 1.c.). The Court of Cassation ruled that the State Security Court may not issue a death sentence on the basis of a confession obtained as a result of torture. Defendants in the State Security Court have the right to appeal their sentences to the Court of Cassation, which is authorized to review issues of both fact and law. Appeals are automatic for cases involving the death penalty.

In September 2001, the Government passed a temporary law that removed the right of appeal for defendants convicted of misdemeanors in the State Security Court. According to reports, several defendants were convicted in the State Security Court without the right to appeal, the most notable being Toujan Faisal (see Section 2.a.). King Abdullah later pardoned Faisal.

In the past, defense attorneys have challenged the appointment of military judges to the State Security Court to try civilian cases as contrary to the concept of an independent judiciary. According to human rights activists, military judges appeared to have received adequate training in civil law and procedure.

In the past, the press routinely carried details of cases tried before the State Security Court, despite 1998 provisions in the Press and Publication Law that prohibited press coverage of any case that was under investigation, unless expressly permitted by the authorities. The 1999 amendments to the Press and Publications Law permitted journalists to cover court proceedings "unless the court rules otherwise." There was press coverage of trials in the State Security Court during the year.

The Court of Cassation vacated the State Security Court's verdict of July 2001, in which the State Security Court had retried and sentenced nine men to life imprisonment for their alleged involvement in politically motivated bombings in 1998. The July 2001 retrial came as a result of credible reports that the initial trial in 1998 was flawed, and that the defendant's confessions were made under duress and torture. Following the ruling of the Court of Cassation vacating the State Security Court verdict, there were no further developments in the case.

In June 2001 the Government permitted one of the four HAMAS leaders expelled in 1999 to reenter the country (see Sections 1.d. and 2.d.); there were credible reports of executive branch influence with respect to the original verdict of expulsion.

There were no reports of political prisoners; however, the Government detained persons for varying periods of time for political reasons (see Section 1.d.).

f. Arbitrary Interference with Privacy, Family, Home, or Correspondence

The Constitution requires that security forces obtain a warrant from the Prosecutor General or a judge before conducting searches or otherwise interfering with these rights, and the security services generally respected these restrictions; however, in security cases, at times in violation of the law, the authorities obtained warrants retroactively or obtain pre-approved warrants. Security officers monitored telephone conversations and Internet communication, read private correspondence, and engaged in surveillance of persons considered to pose a threat to the Government or national security. The law permits these practices if the Government obtains a court order. Judges complained of unlawful telephone surveillance (see Section 1.e.).

Section 2 Respect for Civil Liberties, Including:

a. Freedom of Speech and Press

The Constitution provides for freedom of speech and of the press; however, the Government imposed a number of restrictions on these rights, and such restrictions increased during the year. In October 2001, the Government broadened its authority to prosecute journalists and close publications. The Government detained

and restricted journalists based on the provisions of the October 2001 laws.

The 1998 Press and Publications Law and the 1999 revisions to the law, combined with the 1998 Press Association Law, imposed stringent restrictions on the operation of newspapers. The Government also intimidated journalists to encourage self-censorship. Private citizens may be prosecuted for slandering the royal family, the Government, or foreign leaders, and for "sowing sedition." Citizens generally did not hesitate to criticize the Government openly, but were more circumspect in regard to the King and the royal family. The Press and Publications Law and the law governing the Jordan Press Association (JPA) require membership in the JPA for persons to be considered "legal" journalists or editors, thus potentially excluding dozens of practicing journalists from the profession. The Government during the year selectively enforced this provision. The JPA used its authority to enforce bans on journalists receiving funding from foreign sources or having Israeli contacts. In 1999 then-Prime Minister Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh issued an order directing government offices to cooperate only with JPA members.

The 1998 Press and Publications Law granted the Government wide discretionary powers to issue fines, withdraw licenses, and order shutdowns, which enabled it to control the editorial content of newspapers. However, the 1999 amendments to the Press and Publications Law limited to some extent the Government's discretion to issue fines, transferred the power to withdraw licenses to the judiciary, limited significantly the Government's power to order shutdowns, and allowed journalists to cover court proceedings unless the court ruled otherwise. The 1998 Press and Publications Law imposed strict limits on publications, which gave the Government very broad leeway to sanction publications. According to the 1999 amendments, all publications must be licensed by the Government. The law also requires that the editor in chief of a newspaper be a citizen who permanently resides in the country and to have been a member of the JPA for at least 4 years. This last provision reflected a reduction in the requirements of previous legislation but placed the burden of regulation on the JPA.

The Penal Code authorizes the State to take action against any person who incites violence, defames heads of state, disseminates "false or exaggerated information outside the country that attacks state dignity," or defames a public official.

In October 2001, the Government adopted a series of amendments to Penal Code provisions dealing with the press. The amendments reinforced existing Penal Code restrictions on free speech and allow for the prosecution of any person found to have written, published, or aired any statements "harmful to national unity; instigating criminal actions; sowing the seeds of hatred and malice; inciting divisions among members of society; instigating acts of religious and racial fanaticism; insulting the dignity of individuals, their reputation or personal freedoms; committing acts of corruption or publishing false information or rumors; inciting people to organize strikes or sit-ins, or to hold meetings in a manner that violates the law; or committing any act considered harmful to the state's reputation and dignity." The amendments gave the State Security Court the authority to temporarily or permanently close any publication or media outlet that published or aired any such statements. The Government strengthened provisions regarding defamation of the King or Royal Family, providing as punishment imprisonment of three years. In addition all violators of the new provisions automatically were subject to trial before the State Security Court rather than the special press and copyright court.

Prior to the October 2001 amendments, persons accused of violating the Press and Publications Law were tried in a special court for press and copyright cases. Journalists also may be prosecuted for criminal and security violations in connection with their work. Although a substantial number of cases were dismissed before trial, many other cases lingered in the courts for years. The Government routinely used detention and prosecution or the threat of prosecution to intimidate journalists and thereby successfully encouraged self-censorship (see Section 1.d.).

In March former parliamentarian Toujan Faisal was arrested and charged with acts of sedition via libel and incitement of violence against the Government. On a foreign-based Internet site and on al-Jazeera, Faisal criticized the Prime Minister and the judicial system for corruption. In May the State Security Court sentenced Faisal to one and a half years in prison. Since Faisal was convicted of misdemeanors, she had no right to appeal (see section 1.e.). Many contended that Faisal's arrest and sentence were the result of a political vendetta. In May the King pardoned Faisal and she was released in late June.

On March 18, editor Hashem Khalidi and publisher Tajeddin Hroub of the weekly Al-Bilad were detained on the charge of publishing "false news" following publication of an article in their newspaper.

In March a foreign NGO reported that a publication of the opposition weekly Al-Majd was censored by the Government. In September Al-Majd claimed that their publication was delayed for one day because "security forces" stopped the printing of the newspaper until articles considered "offensive" were removed. In January

the editor of the newspaper, Fahd al-Rimawi had been detained for 2 days and charged with publishing false news.

In April Al-Jazeera correspondent Mahmoud Al Housa was detained for 3 days, apparently under the provisions of the October amendments. In the same month a local newspaper reporter covering demonstrations in Sweileh claimed that he was detained, threatened and "manhandled" by government security forces (see section 1.c.). In August he claimed that government authorities seized his passport and threatened him with prosecution.

In August the Government closed indefinitely the local office of Al Jazeera and suspended the media credentials of Al Jazeera's local correspondents in response to their airing of a talk show segment which the Government considered inflammatory and anti-Government.

In August journalist Mamoun Al Roussan, editor-in-chief of the weekly Al Jazeera was arrested and detained for publishing an article criticizing Qatari officials. Both Al Roussan and his publisher, Sakher Abu Anzeh were detained for a week.

In November Yasser Abu Hilalah, a columnist for the Al Rai newspaper and former correspondent for Al Jazeera, and Samir Abu Hilalah, a journalist with Al Arab Al Youm, were released after being held for 24 hours. Both were detained after sending information to their respective news sources on the unrest between security forces and citizens in Ma'an.

In January 2001, the Government arrested seven members of the Anti-Normalization Committee, a group that opposes the country's relations with Israel, on charges of belonging to an illegal group (see Section 2.b.). The State Security Court also charged two of the seven with possession of explosives and with terrorist activities. The arrests followed the publication of the Committee's blacklist, which included the names of companies and persons with ties to Israel or Israeli businesses. All seven detainees were released on bail while awaiting trial. The trials had not yet begun by year's end. The Government also filed charges under the Press and Publications Law against two journalists, Ma'moun Rousan and Abdel Naser Hourani, for printing the blacklist in their publications. At the end of the year, both men were still involved in judicial proceedings related to the charges.

In May 2001, police in Amman arrested journalists Jamal Alawi, and Yasser Zaatreh. According to press reports, police forcibly detained the journalists during anti-Israeli rallies marking the anniversary of the creation of the State of Israel. That same month, police also reportedly seized film and cameras from other television journalists. Alawi and Zaatreh were released without charge after a brief detention. Police reportedly beat Tareq Ayyoub as he attempted to cover political demonstrations in Amman (see Section 2.b.).

In June 2001, police in Zarqa briefly detained five journalists who worked for the Associated Press. The reporters were attempting to film a memorial service for the suicide bomber involved in the Dolphinarium Disco bombing in Tel Aviv. Police released all five after a few hours.

In July 2001, Senator Jawad Anani claimed that he was forced to resign following his publication of an article that was critical of the Government. The Government denied any involvement in Anani's decision to resign.

In December 2001 the GID reportedly detained two television journalists associated with al-Jazeera for covering a demonstration by Islamists in Ma'an. According to the reporters, the GID forced them to hand over their video footage and physically abused them while they were in custody. Both journalists were released with 24 hours and no charges were filed against them.

The Press and Publications Department continued to enforce bans on the publication of a number of books within the country. Although some books were banned based on religious objections, anecdotal evidence suggests that the number banned for political reasons is higher.

There were no developments in the January 2000 arrest of Asim Ogla Al-Maghayirah, whom authorities accused of affiliation with the banned political party Al-Tahrir and of distribution of illegal pamphlets.

In February 2000, the High Court of Justice dismissed the appeal of Nidal Mansour's expulsion from the JPA. In September 2000, the JPA had voted to expel Mansour for allegedly receiving foreign funding on behalf of the nongovernmental organization (NGO) that he headed (see Section 4). As a result of the Court's decision, Mansour was removed as editor of the newspaper that he owns.

The Press and Publications Department continued its April 2000 ban on a book of poetry by Ziyad Al-Anani; the book contained a poem that reportedly was offensive to Islam (see Section 2.c.).

Some journalists continued to complain about high taxes on the media industry and tariffs on paper, which they claimed led them to reduce the size of their publications. They also criticized the Government for its policy of advertising predominantly in newspapers in which the Government owned shares.

The Government did not block the entry of foreign publications during the year. In January 2000, the Government passed a bill that grants foreign media operations "absolute freedom of expression" in the country. The bill reportedly was passed in order to encourage foreign investment. At the time, some commentators criticized the Government for passing a bill that offers full autonomy for foreign journalists while maintaining laws that restrict freedom of expression for local journalists.

Radio and television news broadcasts were more restricted than the print media. The Government was the sole broadcaster of radio and television programs. It had commercial agreements with the British Broadcasting Corporation, the London-based Middle East Broadcasting Center, and Radio Monte Carlo that allow it to simulcast regional programs using local radio transmitters. Jordan Television (JTV) reported only the Government's position on controversial matters. International satellite television and Israeli and Syrian television broadcasts were available and unrestricted.

The GID actively investigated Internet reports of "crimes against the King." In March, the Government restored access to two overseas websites that it had blocked within the country. There were additional reports of government interference with Internet access.

The Government limited academic freedom. In June, three universities dismissed a total of eight professors, most of whom taught Shari'a law, without explanation. Most suspected the Saudi-educated professors were dismissed because of their political views and/or their background. Four of the professors have since been reinstated. During the year, sources in the academic community claimed that there was an intelligence presence in academic institutions. In 2001 two university presidents were pressured to resign because of their political views. Some academics claimed that they received frequent threats of dismissal.

During the year, Jordan University continued its policy established in March 2000 that granted the president of the University the authority to appoint half of its 80-member student council, including the chair. The amendment was viewed widely as an effort to curb the influence of campus Islamists. Many students, including non-Islamists, objected to the University's decision.

b. Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association

The Government restricts freedom of assembly. Citizens must obtain permits for public gatherings. In August 2001 the Government adopted a law that requires the organizers of rallies and demonstrations to request permission from provincial governors at least 3 days prior to any event. Under the law, no protest may be held without the governor's consent and violators face imprisonment from 1 to 6 months and a fine not to exceed \$4,230 (3,000 dinars). The Government adopted the law in the absence of a sitting Parliament, which the King dissolved in June 2001 (see Section 3).

In mid-March, media reports indicated that tear gas was used in protests at refugee camps and some protestors were detained; however the demonstrations remained peaceful overall.

On March 22, there were media reports that the Government used tear gas to disperse approximately 1,500 protestors in Irbid when they attempted to march from a local university to the city's center. The demonstrators had been denied a permit to demonstrate by the Government. Unconfirmed press reports indicated that some of the demonstrators were beaten.

Despite the restrictions, there were numerous anti-Israeli protests and demonstrations throughout the country, especially in April. On some occasions in April, police used tear gas, water cannons, and dogs to disperse protestors in various areas of Amman and throughout the country.

In May and June, professional associations cancelled demonstrations in which they planned, among other things, to burn American goods. The cancellations were reportedly prompted by government pressure.

In June 4 members of the outlawed Liberation Party were sentenced to 1 year in prison. Reportedly, the four were arrested while obtaining signatures on a memorandum to the Prime Minister that demanded, among

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other things, military aid to the Palestinians.

In August Saudi religious extremist Sheikh Salman al Awdah was detained and deported from the country prior to delivering a scheduled speech.

In March 2001, riot police protecting the Prime Ministry used physical force to disperse a sit-in by 25 academics protesting the absence of employment opportunities at local universities. No one was seriously injured; however, press reports claimed that at least 10 demonstrators briefly were detained. The Government denied that it detained any of the demonstrators.

In April 2001, organizers canceled a planned march from the Shmeisani area of Amman to U.N. offices in the city. According to press reports, the governor of Amman refused permission for the event.

In May 2001, security forces dispersed hundreds of protestors who were attempting to stage two rallies in Amman. The Government claimed that the rallies were unauthorized and unlawful. Police used tear gas, water cannons, batons, and dogs to disperse the demonstrators, reportedly injuring between 10 and 30 persons (see Section 1.c. and 2.a.).

In July 2001, police and University of Jordan security personnel refused to allow students holding an anti-Israeli protest to exit the campus. No force was used in the incident.

The Government restricted freedom of association. The Government required and routinely granted approval for conferences, workshops, and seminars. Currently, professionals must join their respective professional associations.

The Government routinely licensed political parties and other associations. There were 30 licensed political parties. Membership in an unlicensed political party was illegal. The Government may deny licenses to parties that it decides do not meet a list of political and other criteria contained in the Political Parties Law. The High Court of Justice may dissolve a party if it violates the Constitution or the Political Parties Law.

In January 2001, security officials arrested seven members of the Anti-Normalization Committee, a group that opposes the country's relations with Israel, on charges of belonging to an illegal group (see Section 2. a.). The State Security Court also charged two of the seven persons with possession of explosives and with terrorist activities. The arrests followed the publication of the Committee's blacklist, which included the names of companies and persons with ties to Israel or Israeli businesses. All seven detainees were released on bail while awaiting trial. The trials had not yet begun by year's end.

In October 2001, the Government arrested or detained more than 50 persons for violating the public gathering laws. Included in the October detentions were at least 10 students from Jordan University, 15 members of the Muslim Brotherhood and its political arm, the Islamic Action Front (IAF), and members of extremist groups. The Government had released all 50 persons by the end of 2001.

c. Freedom of Religion

The Constitution provides for the safeguarding of "all forms of worship and religious rites in accordance with the customs observed in the Kingdom, unless such is inconsistent with public order or morality." Within that constitutional framework, the Government imposes some restrictions on freedom of religion. The Constitution also states that "there shall be no discrimination" between Jordanians "as regards their rights and duties on grounds of race, language, or religion." However, some members of unrecognized religious groups and religious converts from Islam faced legal discrimination and bureaucratic difficulties in personal status cases.

According to the Constitution, Islam is the state religion. The Ministry of Religious Affairs and Trusts managed Islamic institutions and the construction of mosques. It also appointed imams, provided mosque staff salaries, managed Islamic clergy training centers, and subsidized certain activities sponsored by mosques. The Government loosely monitored sermons at mosques and required that speakers refrain from criticizing the Royal Family or instigating social or political unrest. The Political Parties Law prohibits the use of houses of worship for political party activity. The law was designed primarily to deny government opponents the ability to preach politically oriented sermons in mosques.

Persons enjoy freedom of belief, and there were no reports that the practice of any faith was prohibited. However, the Government does not officially recognize all religious groups. Some religious groups, while

allowed to meet and practice their faith, complained of societal and/or official discrimination. In addition, not all Christian denominations have been accorded legal recognition as religions. The Prime Minister unofficially conferred with an interfaith council of bishops representing local churches on all matters relating to the Christian community, including the registration of new churches in the country. The Government used the following criteria when considering recognition of Christian churches as separate official religions: the faith does not contradict the nature of the Constitution, public ethics, customs, or traditions; the faith is recognized by the Middle East Council of Churches; the faith does not oppose the national religion; and the group includes some citizen followers.

Religious institutions, such as churches that wish to receive official government recognition, must apply to the Prime Ministry for registration. Recognized non-Muslim religious institutions did not receive subsidies; they were financially and administratively independent from the Government and were tax-exempt. Some churches were registered with the Ministry of Justice as "societies," rather than churches.

According to the Government, the role of the State in religious affairs is limited to supervision. Groups that have practices that violate the law and the nature of society were prohibited; however, there were no reported cases of religious groups being banned in practice.

The Government did not recognize the Druze or Baha'i faiths as religions but did not prohibit the practice of the faiths. Druze faced official discrimination but did not complain of social discrimination. Baha'is faced both official and social discrimination. The Government did not record the bearer's religion on national identity cards issued to Druze or Baha'is. The small Druze and Baha'i communities did not have their own courts to adjudicate personal status and family matters; such matters are heard in Shari'a courts. The Government did not officially recognize the Druze temple in Azraq, and four social halls belonging to the Druze were registered as "societies." The Government did not permit Baha'is to register schools or places of worship.

The Government did not recognize Jehovah's Witnesses, the Church of Christ, or the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, but each denomination was allowed to conduct religious services and activities without interference.

The Government did not interfere with public worship by the country's Christian minority. Although the majority of Christians were allowed to practice freely, some activities, such as encouraging Muslims to convert to the Christian faith were prohibited.

The Jordan Evangelical Theological Seminary (JETS), a Christian training school for pastors and missionaries, had still not been accredited by the end of the year. As a result, students and faculty from the U.S. and elsewhere wishing to attend JETS were still unable to obtain student visas. JETS continued its operations with students studying on tourist visas.

Shari'a prohibits non-Muslims from proselytizing Muslims. Conversion to the Muslim faith by Christians was allowed; however, a Muslim may not convert to another religion. Muslims who convert to other faiths complained of social and government discrimination. The Government does not fully recognize the legality of such conversions. Under Shari'a, converts are regarded as apostates and legally may be denied their property and other rights. However, in practice, this principle was not applied. According to the Government, it neither encourages nor prohibits apostasy. Converts from Islam do not fall under the jurisdiction of their new religion's laws in matters of personal status and are still considered Muslims under Shari'a. Conversely, converts to Islam fall under the jurisdiction of the Shari'a courts. Shari'a prescribes the death penalty for Muslims who convert to another religion; however, there is no corresponding statute under national law, and such punishment has never been applied.

Government policy requires that foreign missionary groups (which the Government believes are not familiar with the customs and traditions of the country) refrain from public proselytizing "for the sake of their own personal safety from members of society that oppose such practices." The Government has taken action against some Christian proselytizers in response to the complaints of recognized Christian groups who charge that the activities of these missionaries "disrupt the cohesiveness and peace between religious groups in society." In December, an American pastor asserted that the Government harassed him and his wife, and threatened to cancel their residency permits. The pastor claimed that the Government intimidation was in response to his refusal to verify whether or not Muslims attended his church's services.

In the past, there were some reports of local government officials encouraging Christian females involved in relationships with Muslim males to convert to Islam to diffuse family or tribal disputes caused by the relationship (see Section 5). However, there were no known cases in which local officials harassed or coerced persons to convert during the year.

Jordan

According to the Constitution, religious community trusts ("Awqaf") and matters of personal status, such as marriage, divorce, child custody, and inheritance fall within the exclusive jurisdiction of the Shari'a courts for Muslims, and separate non-Muslim tribunals for each religious community recognized by the Government. There is no civil marriage. The head of the department that manages Shari'a court affairs (a cabinet-level position) appoints Shari'a judges, while each recognized non-Muslim religious community selects the structure and members of its own tribunal. All judicial nominations are approved by the Prime Minister and commissioned officially by royal decree. The Protestant denominations registered as "societies" come under the jurisdiction of one of the recognized Protestant church tribunals. There are no tribunals assigned for atheists or adherents of unrecognized religions. These persons must request one of the recognized courts to hear their personal status cases.

During the year, a child custody case was adjudicated through the court system (both Shari'a and civil) and custody of two minors who were raised as Christian was transferred from their Christian mother to her Muslim brother-in-law.

Shari'a is applied in all matters relating to family law involving Muslims or the children of a Muslim father, and all citizens, including non-Muslims, are subject to Islamic legal provisions regarding inheritance. Men are able to divorce their spouses more easily than women are, although a law passed in December 2001 allows women to divorce their husbands in Shari'a Court. Since the law went into effect, Shari'a courts have granted at least two divorces brought by women (see Section 5).

All minor children of a male citizen who converts to Islam are automatically considered to be Muslim. Adult children of a male Christian who has converted to Islam become ineligible to inherit from their father if they do not themselves convert to Islam. When a Muslim converts to Christianity, the act is not recognized legally by the authorities, and the subject continues to be treated as a Muslim in matters of family and property law, and the minor children of a male Muslim who converts to Christianity continue to be treated as Muslims under the law.

Some Christians are unable to divorce under the legal system because they are subject to their faith's religious court system, which does not allow divorce. Many of these individuals convert to another Christian denomination or the Muslim faith in order to divorce legally.

The Government notes individuals' religions (except for Druze and Baha'is, and other unrecognized religions) on the national identity card and "family book" (a national registration record that is issued to the head of every family and that serves as proof of citizenship) of all citizens. Atheists must associate themselves with a recognized religion for official identification purposes.

The Government traditionally reserves some positions in the upper levels of the military for Christians; however, all senior command positions have been traditionally reserved for Muslims. Division-level commanders and higher are required to lead Islamic prayer for certain occasions. There were no Christian clergy in the military.

Despite efforts by religious extremists, in 2001 the criminal court and Shari'a court acquitted poet Musa Hawamdeh of charges that he had "insulted religious values and defamed prophets" in his poetry.

The Press and Publications Department continued its April 2000 ban on a book of poetry by Ziyad Al-Anani; the book contained a poem that reportedly was offensive to Islam (see Section 2.a.).

In June 2000, due to a dispute stemming from an intrachurch rivalry between the Jerusalem Patriarchate and the Antioch Orthodox Patriarchate, the Government closed an Arab Orthodox church that was aligned with the Antioch Patriarch in Damascus. The Government closed the church following a request from the local Orthodox hierarchy to enforce a 1958 law that grants the Jerusalem Patriarchate authority over all Orthodox churches in the country. In December 2000 the church reopened with permission from the Government, but was closed again a week later based largely on pressure from the Orthodox hierarchy. The Government stated that the church was free to open under a different name that would not imply affiliation with the Orthodox Church. The church remained closed at year's end.

Non-Jordanian Christian missionaries operated in the country but were subject to restrictions. Christian missionaries may not proselytize Muslims. During the year, U.S.-affiliated Christian mission groups in the country continued to complain of bureaucratic difficulties, including refusal by the Government to renew residence permits.

In February 2000, the governor of the Amman municipality closed the office of Life Agape—an organization

associated with the Baptist Church—after the director refused to sign a letter stating that he would not "deal with Muslims." The office remained closed at the end of the year.

In April and September 1999, a foreign employee of a small language school in Amman applied for a residence permit from the Ministry of Interior. His application was denied, reportedly because government officials believed that he had been attempting to convert Muslims to Christianity. He reapplied in April 2000, and was awaiting a response from the Government at the year's end.

For a more detailed discussion, see the 2002 International Religious Freedom Report.

d. Freedom of Movement Within the Country, Foreign Travel, Emigration, and Repatriation

The law provides for the right of citizens to travel freely abroad and within the country except in designated military areas; however, there are some restrictions on freedom of movement. The law requires that all women, including foreign women married to citizens, obtain written permission from a male guardian—usually their father or husband—to apply for a passport. The current passport laws do not state that a woman must have permission from her male guardian to renew her passport. In the past, there were several cases in which mothers reportedly were prevented from departing with their children because authorities enforced requests from fathers to prevent their children from leaving the country (see Section 5).

The GID sometimes withheld passports from citizens on security grounds. In August a reporter claimed that government security forces confiscated his passport. Local governors have the authority to invoke the Preventing Crimes Law, which allows them to place citizens under house arrest for up to a year without formally charging them (see Section 1.d.). House arrest may involve requiring persons to report daily to a local police station and the imposition of a curfew. Persons who violate the terms of their house arrest may be imprisoned for up to 14 days.

Persons with full citizenship received passports that are valid for 5 years. Most Palestinians living in the country were citizens and received passports that are valid for 5 years. However, the Government estimated that there are 150,000 Palestinian residents who are refugees or children of refugees who arrived from Gaza after 1967 and do not qualify for citizenship. They receive 2-year passports valid only for travel. In the period following the country's administrative and legal disengagement from the West Bank in 1988, Palestinians residing in the West Bank received 2-year passports valid for travel only, instead of 5-year Jordanian passports. In 1995, King Hussein announced that West Bank residents without other travel documentation again would be eligible to receive 5-year passports. However, the Government emphasized that these passports are for travel only and do not connote citizenship, which may be proven only by presenting one's "national number," a civil registration number accorded at birth or upon naturalization to persons holding citizenship. The national number is recorded on national identity cards and in family registration books, which are issued only to citizens.

During the year, there were allegations that the Government did not consistently apply citizenship laws. There were 32 cases reported in which passports were taken by the Government in efforts to implement 1988 West Bank disengagement laws. In 2001, there were reports of 52 complaints from persons or families claiming that the Government denied their right to citizenship. All 52 reported complainants disputed the Government's claim that they were ineligible for citizenship under the regulations, and many filed appeals with the Ministry of Interior.

In July 2001, there were reports that immigration officials at the King Hussein/Allenby Bridge crossing with Israel confiscated the Jordanian passports belonging to Jordanians of Palestinian origin who were carrying both Jordanian and Palestinian Authority travel documents. The Government stated that such confiscations were consistent with laws that prohibit citizens of Arab League countries from holding passports of any other Arab League member. Human rights observers claimed that no such law exists, and that the policy against dual nationality is based on an informal agreement of Arab League countries.

Human rights activists reported that approximately 1000 Jordanians of Palestinian origin remained outside the country at year's end, due to the Government's refusal to renew their passports at embassies overseas. The majority of such persons now live in Syria, Lebanon, and Libya as stateless persons. Diplomatic representatives or human rights observers who inquired about the situation received no government response.

The Constitution specifically prohibits the deportation of citizens. In June 2001 the Government permitted the return of Ibrahim Ghosheh, one of four HAMAS leaders allegedly expelled in 1999. Although initially refused entrance, Ghosheh was admitted in return for his pledge to cease his activities with HAMAS. The three other expelled HAMAS leaders remained outside the country at the year's end (see Sections 1.d. and 1.e.).

There is no law or statute that provides for the granting of refugee status or asylum. The Government generally cooperates with the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The UNHCR must resettle refugees in other countries. However, in April 2001 the Ministry of Interior signed a memorandum of understanding with the UNHCR concerning the status and treatment of refugees. Under the agreement, the Government admits asylum seekers, including those who have entered the country clandestinely, and respects the UNHCR's eligibility determinations under the refugee definitions set forth in the 1951 U.N. Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. The agreement provides protection against the forcible return of refugees from the country, and recognizes the legal definition of a refugee as set forth in the U.N. Convention. The UNHCR regularly trains law enforcement officials in international refugee law, including specialized courses for policewomen. The Government provides first asylum. According to UNHCR figures, 55,626 persons sought asylum through the UNHCR between October 1990 and 2000.

The Government estimates that over 300,000 Iraqis resided in the country. Since 1991 thousands of Iraqis have applied for refugee status and received legal and material assistance from the UNHCR. In addition to applications from Iraqis during the year, the UNHCR also received applications for refugee status from Sudanese, Russians from Chechnya, Somalis, and Eritreans.

For the 2001-2002 school year, the Government continued its policy of denying Iraqi children admittance to school unless they are legal residents of the country or recognized as refugees by the UNHCR.

Almost 1.6 million Palestinian refugees were registered in the country with the U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA). The UNRWA counts another 800,000 Palestinians as either displaced persons from the 1967 war, arrivals following the 1967 war, or returnees from the Gulf between 1990 and 1991.

Section 3 Respect for Political Rights: The Right of Citizens to Change Their Government

There are significant restrictions on citizens' right to change their Government. Citizens may participate in the political system through their elected representatives in Parliament; however, the King has discretionary authority to appoint and dismiss the Prime Minister, Cabinet, and upper house of Parliament, to dissolve Parliament, and to establish public policy. Appointments made by the King to high level government posts do not require legislative approval. Executive power is vested in the King (or, in his absence, in the Regent), who exercises his power through his ministers in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution.

In June 2001, the King dissolved Parliament and directed the Government to draft a new election law. In August the King again announced postponement of elections and indicated that they would be held by spring 2003. As of year's end, the King had not announced a specific date for elections and the Parliament remained dissolved.

According to the provisions of a temporary election law approved by the King in July 2001, the Parliament is composed of a 40-member Senate appointed by the King, and a popularly elected 104-member Chamber of Deputies. The Chamber of Deputies previously contained 80 members. The Parliament is empowered by the Constitution to initiate legislation, and it may approve, reject, and amend legislation proposed by the Cabinet. A group of 10 senators or deputies may submit draft bills for consideration; however, in practice legislation is initiated and drafted by the Cabinet of Ministers and submitted by the Government to Parliament for consideration.

Opposition Members of Parliament have claimed that attempts by members of the lower house to initiate legislation receive no response from the Government. The King proposes and dismisses extraordinary sessions of Parliament and may postpone regular sessions for up to 60 days. If the Government amends or enacts a law when Parliament is not in session, it must submit the law to Parliament for consideration during the next session; however, such "temporary" laws do not expire and, while technically subject to action by Parliament when it returns to session, may in practice remain in force without legislative approval.

Municipal elections in July 1999 featured the participation of the parties that had boycotted the 1997 parliamentary elections; however, low voter turnout necessitated a second day of balloting. The municipal elections were regarded generally as free and fair.

The July 2001 election law increased the number of electoral districts by redrawing district boundaries and redistributing seats among districts. The Government also included provisions, such as those requiring verification of polling results by members of the Judiciary, that are designed to increase transparency and accuracy. The voting age was lowered from 19 to 18 years. The law did not include quotas for women or opposition political parties. Observers believed that the new law continues to favor electorates in the rural and

southern part of the country as well as in regions with populations known for their traditional, pro-Hashemite views.

The law retains the so-called one-man, one vote provision, which allows voters to choose only one candidate in multiple-seat districts. In the largely tribal society, citizens tend to cast their first vote for family members, and any additional votes in accordance with their political leanings. The amendment also limits representation in the largely Palestinian urban areas. As a result, the amendment in practice tended to limit the chances of other nontribal candidates, including women, Islamists, and other opposition candidates, to be elected.

From July to September 2001, the Government initiated a series of consolidations designed to merge many of the country's 328 municipalities into approximately 100. The Ministry of Municipal, Rural, and Environment Affairs stated that these mergers were taken to reduce municipal operating costs and improve local services. Opponents of the measure claimed that the consolidations were an attempt to undermine the strength of Islamist parties in local Government, and that it will weaken the democratic process at the municipal level by reducing the number of locally elected officials. The IAF sought to enjoin the Government from making the consolidations, but the courts held that the IAF had no standing to initiate such an action.

Women have the right to vote, and women's groups encouraged women to vote and to be active in the political process. There was one female minister. In the previous Parliament there were two female senators, and one female member of the Chamber of Deputies.

Of the 104 seats in the lower house scheduled for election in 2003, 9 are reserved for Christians, 9 for Bedouins, and 3 for either the Circassian or Chechen ethnic minorities.

The Palestinian community, estimated at more than half of the total citizen population, contributed 6 of 28 ministers. In the most recent Parliament, 6 of 40 senators and 11 of 80 lower house deputies were of Palestinian origin. There were no Palestinians in any of the 12 governorships throughout the country. The electoral system gives greater representation to areas that have a majority of inhabitants of non-Palestinian origin.

Section 4 Governmental Attitude Regarding International and Nongovernmental Investigation of Alleged Violations of Human Rights

Domestic and international human rights groups investigated allegations of human rights abuses and published and disseminated findings critical of government policy. The 1999 amendments to the Press and Publications Law removed restrictions on the publication of information about the military and security services, which had prevented the publication by domestic groups of reports alleging torture and other abuses committed by the security services; however, similar restrictions still exist in the Penal Code and other laws (see Section 2.a.).

The local chapters of the Arab Organization for Human Rights (AOHR) and the Jordanian Human Rights Organization (JHRO) were registered with the Government. On October 29, the Ministry of Interior dissolved the Jordanian Society for Citizens' Rights (JCSR), one of the few human rights groups not affiliated with any political movements or the Government. The Government reported that it closed the NGO because of legal infractions and internal disputes related to finances. However, the JCSR claimed the closure was for political reasons, including the JCSR's reporting of Palestinian citizens losing their passports as a result of 1988 disengagement laws.

The groups drew public attention to alleged human rights abuses and a range of other political issues. They also pressed the Government either to bring formal charges against political detainees or to release them promptly. The AOHR and JCSR (before it was dissolved) published human rights reports during the year. In 2001, the AOHR asserted that the Government responds to only about 10 percent of the complaints that the NGO submits on behalf of individuals who allegedly were subjected to human rights abuses by the authorities; the JCSR claimed the Government responds to 20 percent of its cases. Before it was dissolved, the JCSR reported that the Government generally supported its public workshops during which citizens discussed their viewpoints on sensitive social and political topics. Local NGOs reported that the Government did not generally interfere with their actions. Local NGOs were not permitted to receive funds from foreign sources, and some NGO workers reported that they feared they would be accused of accepting illegal funds from abroad. In September 2000 the Jordan Press Association expelled its vice president, Nidal Mansour for allegedly receiving foreign funding for the NGO he headed, the Center for Defending Freedom of Journalists. In February 2001, the Higher Court of Justice denied Mansour's appeal of his expulsion (see Section 2.a.).

In March 2000 the Government formed the Royal Commission for Human Rights, chaired by Queen Rania.

Jordan

The mandate of the Commission is to present recommendations on reforming current laws and practices to King Abdullah and to institutionalize human rights in the country. In November 2000, the Commission sponsored two human rights awareness seminars with police and judicial officials in Amman and Aqaba. In June 2001 the Commission presented a draft law designed to create an independent National Center for Human Rights. The Government had not released the draft nor taken any further action on the legislation at the end of the year.

The Government established in 2000 the National Team for Family Protection and the Child Protection Center (see Section 5). The Government controlled the Parliamentary Public Freedoms Committee, the Ombudsman, and the Human Rights Office at the Prime Ministry.

The Government generally cooperated with international NGOs. The ICRC usually was permitted full and unrestricted access to detainees and prisoners, including those held by the GID and the military intelligence directorate (see Section 1.c.).

Section 5 Discrimination Based on Race, Sex, Disability, Language, or Social status

The law does not distinguish between citizens on the basis of race. However, women and some minorities were treated differently under the law and faced discrimination in employment, housing, and other areas.

Women

Violence against women was common. Reported incidents of violence against women did not reflect the full extent of the problem. Medical experts acknowledged that spousal abuse occurred frequently. However, cultural norms discouraged victims from seeking medical or legal help, thus making it difficult to assess the extent of such abuse.

Abused women have the right to file a complaint in court against their spouses for physical abuse but in practice, familial and societal pressures discouraged them from seeking legal remedies. Marital rape is not illegal. NGOs such as the Jordanian Women's Union, which had a telephone hot-line for victims of domestic violence, provided assistance in such matters. Wife-battering technically was grounds for divorce, but a husband may seek to demonstrate that he has authority from the Koran to correct an irreligious or disobedient wife by striking her.

The Criminal Code provides for leniency for a person found guilty of committing an "honor crime," a violent assault with intent to commit murder against a female by a relative for her perceived immodest behavior or alleged sexual misconduct. Law enforcement treatment of men accused of honor crimes reflected widespread unwillingness to recognize the abuse involved or to take action against the problem. Although the press was in the past reluctant to report on honor crimes, many honor crimes committed during the year were reported, including the total number of 21. The actual number of honor crimes was believed to be significantly higher. Human rights observers believed that many more such crimes were committed but not documented as honor crimes. According to women's rights activists, there was some evidence of a societal trend toward condemnation of honor crimes. However, in 2001 one forensic medical examiner estimated that 25 percent of all murders committed in the country were honor crimes. The police regularly imprisoned women who are potential victims of honor crimes for their own protection. In 2001 there were up to 40 women involuntarily detained in such "protective" custody during the year.

According to Article 340 of the Penal Code, a "crime of honor" defense may be invoked by a defendant accused of murder who "surprises his wife or any close female relative" in an act of adultery or fornication, and the perpetrator of the honor crime is judged not guilty of murder. Although few defendants are able to meet the stringent requirements for a crime of honor defense (the defendant personally must have witnessed the female victim engaging in sexual relations), most avoided trial for the crime of murder, and were tried instead on the charge of manslaughter. Even those convicted of murder rarely spent more than 2 years in prison. In contrast to honor crimes, the maximum penalty for first-degree murder is death, and the maximum penalty for second-degree murder is 15 years. Such defenses also commonly relied on the male relative having acted in the "heat of passion" upon hearing of a female relative's alleged transgression, usually without any investigation on the part of the assailant to determine the veracity of the allegation before committing the assault. Defenses in such cases fall under Article 98 of the Penal Code. In December 2001 the Government passed a temporary law amending Article 340 to apply equally to men and women. However, this legal change did not substantially affect the sentencing of perpetrators of honor crimes as no defendant in an honor crime invoked Article 340 during the year.

In February, a 37-year-old man was sentenced to 1 year in prison for killing his pregnant sister and her alleged

lover. Her brother, Mohammad Ahmad shot Farjeh Ahmad, after she confessed to him that she was pregnant out of wedlock. Mohammad Ahmad subsequently shot and killed Farjeh's lover. The Criminal Court found that "Farjeh's unlawful and dangerous actions caused the defendant to lose his temper and to kill both of the victims without realizing the consequences of his actions."

In June, the Criminal Court reduced a felony charge of murder against 31-year-old Faisal Hassan to a misdemeanor, exactly 1 year after he shot and stabbed his pregnant sister. The Criminal Court reduced his charge to misdemeanor in accordance with Article 98 "because the defendant committed his crime in a fit of fury and his family dropped charges against him." Hassan was sentenced to time served and released.

In September the Court of Cassation overturned a 3-month sentence given to a 35-year old man for murdering his sister, Fadia Mohammad to "cleanse his honor." The court remanded the case to the Criminal Court with an instruction to return with a harsher sentence. On November 9, the Criminal Court imposed a 10-year prison sentence. In June 2001, Fadia Mohammad had been shot and stabbed by her brother, who killed her after learning that she was pregnant.

During the year, a 39-year-old man was formally charged with the premeditated murder of his wife. After shooting her, he subsequently surrendered to local authorities. His wife had just finished serving a 2-year prison sentence for adultery and allegedly had returned to her Egyptian lover after her release from prison. The husband found her in a busy marketplace in Irbid and shot her four times in the head.

In July 2001, a 15-year-old boy from Irbid confessed to killing his 20-year-old sister. He claimed to have acted in defense of his family's honor. The boy repeatedly struck his sister in the head with a club before covering her body in kerosene and setting it on fire. A coroner's report found that the girl had not been sexually active. Her brother surrendered himself to police and was sentenced to 4 years in juvenile detention for his crime.

There were no developments in the April 2000 death of Fathieh Mohammad, who reportedly was shot and killed by her father to "cleanse his honor." The police subsequently arrested and charged both her father and brother for the crime.

Most activists believe that even if Article 340 were repealed, honor crimes likely would persist, with sentences continuing to be reduced under Article 98.

Female genital mutilation (FGM) was rarely practiced. However, one southern tribe of Egyptian origin in the small village of Rahmah near Aqaba reportedly practiced FGM. In 2001, one local Mufti issued a fatwa stating that FGM "safeguards women's chastity and protects them against malignant diseases by preventing fat excretions." However, the Mufti also stated that since FGM is not a requirement of Islam, women who do not undergo this procedure should not be embarrassed.

According to the law, sexual harassment is strictly prohibited and subject to criminal penalties including fines and imprisonment. Sexual harassment, assault, and unwelcome advances of a sexual nature against women did not appear to be widespread problems.

Women experienced legal discrimination in matters of pension and social security benefits, inheritance, divorce, ability to travel, child custody, citizenship, and the value of their Shari'a court testimony in certain limited circumstances (see Section 1.e.). The Government provided men with more generous social security benefits than women. The Government continued pension payments of deceased male civil servants but discontinued payments of deceased female civil servants to their heirs. Current laws and regulations governing health insurance for civil servants do not permit women to extend their health insurance coverage to dependents or spouses. However, divorced and widowed women may extend coverage to their children.

Under Shari'a as applied in the country, female heirs receive half the amount of male heirs and the non-Muslim widows of Muslim spouses have no inheritance rights. A sole female heir receives half of her parents' estate; the balance goes to designated male relatives. A sole male heir inherits both of his parents' property. Male Muslim heirs have the duty to provide for all family members who need assistance. Men are able to divorce their spouses more easily than women, although the most recent personal status law does grant women the right to bring a divorce action in certain limited circumstances (see section 2.c.). Marriage and divorce matters for Christians are adjudicated by special courts for each denomination (see Section 2.c.). There were 11 female judges in the country, up from 6 in 2001.

The law requires a married woman to obtain her husband's permission to obtain, but not renew, a passport (see Section 2.d.). Married women do not have the legal right to transmit citizenship to their children. Furthermore, women may not petition for citizenship for their non-Jordanian husbands. The husbands

themselves must apply for citizenship after fulfilling a requirement of 15 years of continuous residence. Once the husbands have obtained citizenship, they may apply to transmit the citizenship to their children. However, in practice such an application may take years and, in many cases, citizenship ultimately still may be denied to the husband and children. Such children become stateless and, if they do not hold legal residency, lacked the rights of citizen children, such as the right to attend school or seek other government services.

Civil law grants women equal pay for equal work, but in practice this law often was ignored. Press and union leaders reported during the year that a small number of employers in the private sector reportedly paid their female employees well under the legal minimum wage, despite the fact that the women were under contract.

Social pressures discouraged many women from pursuing professional careers. Nonetheless, women had employment opportunities in many professions, including government, engineering, medicine, education, the military, and law. According to 2001 NGO reports, women constituted approximately 16.5 percent of the work force and 50 percent of university students. While female employees held approximately 52 and 39 percent of jobs in the education and health sectors respectively, they held only 7.5 percent of managerial posts and 10 percent of all jobs in the private sector. Women's groups stressed that the problem of discrimination was not only one of law, but also of women's lack of awareness of their rights or unwillingness to assert those rights. The Business and Professional Women's Club held seminars on women's rights and assists women in establishing small businesses. The chapter also provided several programs for potential female voters and candidates for the upcoming 2003 parliamentary elections. Members of the royal family worked actively to improve the status of women.

Children

The Government is committed to children's rights and welfare in the areas of education and health. However, government efforts in these areas were constrained by limited financial resources. Education is compulsory until the age of 16; however, no legislation exists to enforce the law or punish guardians for violating it, and absence of children from school is without penalty. The overall school attendance rate was 92 percent and the total secondary school attendance rate was 92 percent. Since the beginning of the 1999-2000 school year, the Government denied Iraqi children admittance to public school unless they were legal residents of the country or recognized as refugees by the UNHCR (see Section 2.d.).

The Government attempted to address the issues of educational development and quality, and the relevance of education to job-market demand, with few concrete results. The Government also grants fee reductions and food and transportation supplements to families with many children or to very poor families to make education more affordable.

Students must obtain a good behavior certificate from the GID in order to qualify for admission under the university quota system. Activists reported that the GID sometimes withholds these certificates from deserving students due to a family member's allegedly problematic record.

The Government provided free inoculation programs typically administered through the school system for children. In addition, children had access to government-subsidized public clinics, which offer reduced fees for most services.

In March 2000, Queen Rania established the National Team for Family Protection (NTFP) to consolidate all issues concerning family safety. In August 2000, the Government opened "Dar al Amman," the nation's first child protection center. The facility provides temporary shelter, medical care, and rehabilitation for children ages 6 to 12 years who have suffered abuse.

Although the problem was difficult to quantify, social and health workers believe that there was a significant incidence of child abuse in families, and that the incidence of child sexual abuse was significantly higher than reported. The law specifies punishment for abuses against children. Rape or sodomy of a child under 15 years of age carries the death penalty.

The Family Protection Unit of the Public Security Department (PSD) works with victims and perpetrators of domestic and sexual violence. The Unit deals primarily with child and spousal abuse, providing multiple in-house services, including medical treatment for patients. The Unit cooperates with police to apprehend perpetrators of domestic violence, facilitates participation in education and rehabilitation programs, and refers patients to other facilities.

Illegitimate children are entitled to the same rights under the law as legitimate children; however, in practice, they suffered severe discrimination in a society that does not tolerate adultery or premarital sex. Most

illegitimate children become wards of the State or live a meager existence on the fringes of society. In either case, their prospects for marriage and gainful employment are limited. Furthermore, illegitimate children who are not acknowledged legally by their fathers are considered stateless and are not given passports or identity numbers.

The Government attempts to safeguard some other children's rights, especially regarding child labor (see Section 6.d.). Although the law prohibits most children under the age of 16 from working, child vendors worked on the streets of Amman. The Ministry of Social Development has a committee to address the problem and in some cases removes the children from the streets, returns them to their families or to juvenile centers, and may provide the families with a monthly stipend. However, the children often return to the streets. Stagnant economic conditions and social disruption have caused the number of these children to increase over the last 10 years. Selling newspapers, tissues, small food items, or gum, the vendors, along with the other children who pick through trash dumpsters to find recyclable cans to sell, sometimes were the sole source of income for their families.

Persons with Disabilities

High unemployment in the general population restricts job opportunities for persons with disabilities, estimated by the Ministry of Social Development to number 220,000. Thirteen percent of citizens with disabilities received monetary assistance from the Government. The Government passed legislation in 1993, reinforced in 2000, requiring future public buildings to accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities and to retro-fit existing public buildings; however, implementation has been slow.

The law requires that 2 percent of the available jobs be reserved for persons with physical disabilities. Private organizations and members of the royal family actively promoted programs to protect and advance the interests of persons with disabilities.

Indigenous People

The country's indigenous people, nomadic Bedouin and East Bank town-dwellers, traditionally have been the backbone of popular support for the Hashemite monarchy and are represented disproportionately in senior military, security, and civil service jobs. Nevertheless, many Bedouin in rural areas were severely disadvantaged economically. Many persons of East Bank origin complained that the dynamic private sector largely is in the hands of the Palestinian majority.

National/Racial/Ethnic Minorities

Palestinians residing in the country, who made up more than half of the population, suffered discrimination in appointments to positions in the Government and the military, in admittance to public universities, and in the granting of university scholarships. The Government granted citizenship to all Palestinians who fled to the country in the period after the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, and to a large number of refugees and displaced persons who arrived as a result of the 1967 war. However, most refugees who fled Gaza after 1967 were not entitled to citizenship and were issued 2-year passports valid for travel only. In 1995 then-King Hussein announced that West Bank residents without other travel documentation would be eligible to receive 5-year Jordanian passports. However, the Government emphasized that these passports are for travel only and do not connote citizenship (see Section 2.d.).

Section 6 Worker Rights

a. The Right of Association

Workers in the private sector and in some state-owned companies have the right to form and join unions. Unions must be registered to be considered legal. Union by-laws limit membership to citizens, effectively excluding the country's approximately 150,000 foreign workers. However, some unions represented the interests of foreign workers informally. Over 30 percent of the work force were organized into 17 unions. Although union membership in the General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions (GFJTU), the sole trade federation, was not mandatory, all unions belonged to it. The Government subsidizes and audits the GFJTU's salaries and activities. Union officials are elected by secret ballot to 4-year terms. The Government cosponsors and approves the timing of these elections and monitors them to ensure compliance with the law. Union leaders complained about the requirement to have government oversight of their elections.

The GFJTU belongs to the Arab Labor organization, the International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions, and to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU).

b. The Right to Organize and Bargain Collectively

Unions have and exercise the right to bargain collectively. The Constitution prohibits antiunion discrimination, but the ICFTU claimed that the Government did not protect adequately employees from antiunion discrimination and that the Government has dismissed public sector employees for political reasons. Workers may lodge complaints of antiunion discrimination with the Ministry of Labor, which is authorized to order the reinstatement of employees discharged for union activities. There were no complaints of antiunion discrimination lodged with the Ministry of Labor during the year.

Labor laws mandate that workers must obtain permission from the Government in order to strike. Unions generally do not seek approval for a strike, but workers use the threat of a strike as a negotiating tactic. Strikes are prohibited if a labor dispute is under mediation or arbitration. If a settlement is not reached through mediation, the Ministry of Labor may refer the dispute to an industrial tribunal with agreement of both parties.

The tribunal is an independent arbitration panel of judges appointed by the Ministry of Labor. The decisions of the panel are legally binding. If only one party agrees, the Ministry of Labor refers the dispute to the Council of Ministers and then to Parliament. Labor law prohibits employers from dismissing a worker during a labor dispute.

During the year, there were three strikes reported in the textile sector. These employees went on strike claiming that, among other issues, the employers failed to pay wages in a timely manner. There were other labor incidents during the year in the construction and cement sectors. In most cases, labor and management reached agreements quickly, and the Government assisted in mediating disputes.

The national labor laws apply in the free trade zones in Aqaba and Zarqa. The QIZs (Qualified Industrial Zones), or export zones which produced manufactured goods with at least 8 percent Israeli input, applied national labor laws as well.

c. Prohibition of Forced or Bonded Labor

The Constitution forbids bonded labor, except in a state of emergency such as war or natural disaster, and it generally was not practiced. However, foreign domestic servants, almost exclusively female, often were subject to coercion and abuse and, in some cases, worked under conditions that amounted to forced labor (see Section 6.e.). The law does not prohibit specifically forced or compulsory labor by children; however, such practices were not known to occur.

d. Status of Child Labor Practices and Minimum Age for Employment

Labor law forbids children under the age of 16 from being employed, except as apprentices, and prohibits children under the age of 17 from working in hazardous jobs. Children under the age of 18 may not work for more than 6 hours continuously, between the hours of 8 p.m. and 6 a.m., and during weekends, religious celebrations, or national holidays. Provisions in the labor laws do not extend to the informal sector, which consists of agriculture, domestic labor, and family businesses.

According to the law, employers who hire a child under the age of 16 must pay a fine ranging from \$140 to \$710 (100 to 500 dinars). The fine is doubled if the offense is repeated. However, the Government did not provide training for government officials who are responsible for enforcing child labor laws and did not enforce laws regarding child labor during the year. All child labor enforcement responsibilities rest in the hands of 85 Ministry of Labor inspectors. Government officials claimed that if children were barred from working in practice, they will lose important income on which their families depend, and may turn to more serious activities, such as drug trafficking and prostitution, for income.

In late 1999, the Ministry of Labor established a new division to deal with issues of child labor. The division was established to receive, investigate, and address child labor complaints and related issues. Assistance received from the International Labor Organization (ILO) and increases in the Government's funding for the Ministry of Labor this year and in 2001, allowed the Ministry to staff the division.

Financial assistance received from ILO during the year and in 2001 supported government efforts to implement the provisions of ILO Convention 182 on Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor. Government policy also facilitated the work of NGOs in this area. There were no specific mechanisms for receiving, investigating, or addressing child labor complaints relating to allegations of the worst forms of child labor.

Anecdotal evidence suggested that child labor, especially of child street vendors, was more prevalent now than it was 10 years ago due to declining economic conditions (see Section 5).

The law does not specifically prohibit forced or bonded labor by children; however, such practices are not known to occur (see Section 6.c.).

e. Acceptable Conditions of Work

The national minimum wage was \$121 (85 dinars) per month for all workers except domestic servants, those working in small family businesses and those in the agricultural sector. The national minimum wage did not provide a decent standard of living for a worker and family. The Government estimated that the poverty level was at a monthly wage of about \$125 (89 dinars) per month for a family with 7.5 members. A study completed by the Ministry of Labor in July 1999 found that 18.7 percent of the population lived at or below the poverty level and that 1.5 percent lived in "abject" poverty, defined by the Government as \$58 (40.5 dinars) per month for a family with 7.5 members. The Government provides minimal assistance to at least 45,000 indigent families.

The law requires overtime pay for hours worked in excess of the standard workweek, which generally is 48 hours. Hotel, restaurant, and cinema employees may work up to 54 hours per week. Workers may not work more than 10 hours in any continuous period or more than 60 hours of overtime per month. Employees are entitled to 1 day off per week.

The law specifies a number of health and safety requirements for workers, which the Ministry of Labor is authorized to enforce. The law does not require employers to report industrial accidents or occupational diseases to the Ministry of Labor. Workers do not have a statutory right to remove themselves from hazardous conditions without risking the loss of their jobs.

Labor law does not apply to the agricultural sector, small family businesses, or domestic servants. Domestic servants do not have a legal forum to address their labor grievances and have no standing to sue in court for nonpayment of wages. Abuse of domestic servants, most of whom were foreign, was widespread. Imprisonment of maids and illegal confiscation of travel documents by employers was common. Victims, who fear losing their work permits and being returned to their home country, generally did not report complaints of beatings, insufficient food, and rape to officials. Domestic servants generally were not given days off and frequently were called upon to work at any hour of the day or night.

f. Trafficking in Persons

The law does not specifically prohibit trafficking in women or men and the practice was not known to occur. A 1926 law specifically prohibits trafficking in children. There were no reports that persons were trafficked, to, from, or within the country.