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# 'Israel, Arab Water' symposium opens today

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan will open at the Yarmouk University Liaison office here Saturday a symposium on "Israel and Arab Water".

The two-day symposium, which is being organised in co-operation with the London-based Arab Studies Centre, is designed to focus on the importance of Arab water resources in integrated agricultural projects.

Research papers on Arab water will be submitted to the symposium by local, Arab and international experts. The papers deal with development projects in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon as well as projects in the Nile Valley and the adverse effects of Israel's water policies on these projects.

According to the centre's director, Mr. Abdul Majid Farid, Israel's wars against the Arabs since 1948 were aimed at gaining control of Arab water sources.

In a statement to the Jordanian press published Thursday, Mr. Farid called these wars "water wars", and said that Israel's invasion of Lebanon was designed to take control of the Litani River in pursuance of its goals in the Arab region.

We hope that the symposium will focus the world's attention on Israel's practices that impede the implementation of Arab agricultural projects which rely on water sources, Mr. Farid said.

'Israeli exploitation of Arab water much neglected'

## Hassan: Symposium helps highlight water as issue

By Salameh B. Ne'matt  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

**AMMAN — A two-day international symposium entitled "Israel and Arab Waters" concluded here Sunday at the Yarmouk University Liaison Office where participants discussed Israel's exploitation of Arab water resources, Israel's water projects and their repercussions on the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the impact of Israel's water policy on Jordan.**

In an exclusive interview with Radio Jordan, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, who inaugurated the symposium, said that over the past three decades Israel has tapped Arab water resources.

Regrettably, he continued, as we look towards the development of the 80's, we find that water issues have not been given the significance or the priority which they deserve as a result, few papers have been presented regionally over issues related to the use of water and interdisciplinary questions relating to food and water security.

Prince Hassan said that this symposium will produce some very interesting reading. "We hope", he continued, that this is the first step in a series of similar seminars both in the Arab and the international context.

### Israeli exploitation

On the impact of Israeli exploitation of water resources in the area, Prince Hassan said that the issues were clearly summarised in the context of Israel's economic exploitation in the occupied ter-

ritories.

He said that to Israel, the occupied territories represent \$2 to 3 billion of annual national income which forms 20 per cent of its Gross National Product (GNP) which, he added, used to be \$4 billion with the oil income of the Sinai Peninsula.

Prince Hassan told Radio Jordan that Israel continues to occupy and exploit the Arab territories including their water resources.

Of course, he added, one cannot speak of a settlement related to water alone. A comprehensive settlement would have to include a clear-sighted view of the management of natural resources as a whole, and such a view can only be assisted by impartial and objective third party analysis and recommendations.

Prince Hassan pointed out that it is very difficult at this stage of "irrational exploitation" to consider the possibilities of a solution to the Arab-Israeli issue coming from Arabs and Israelis alone. Hence the objective perspective of such an international symposium holds such great importance.

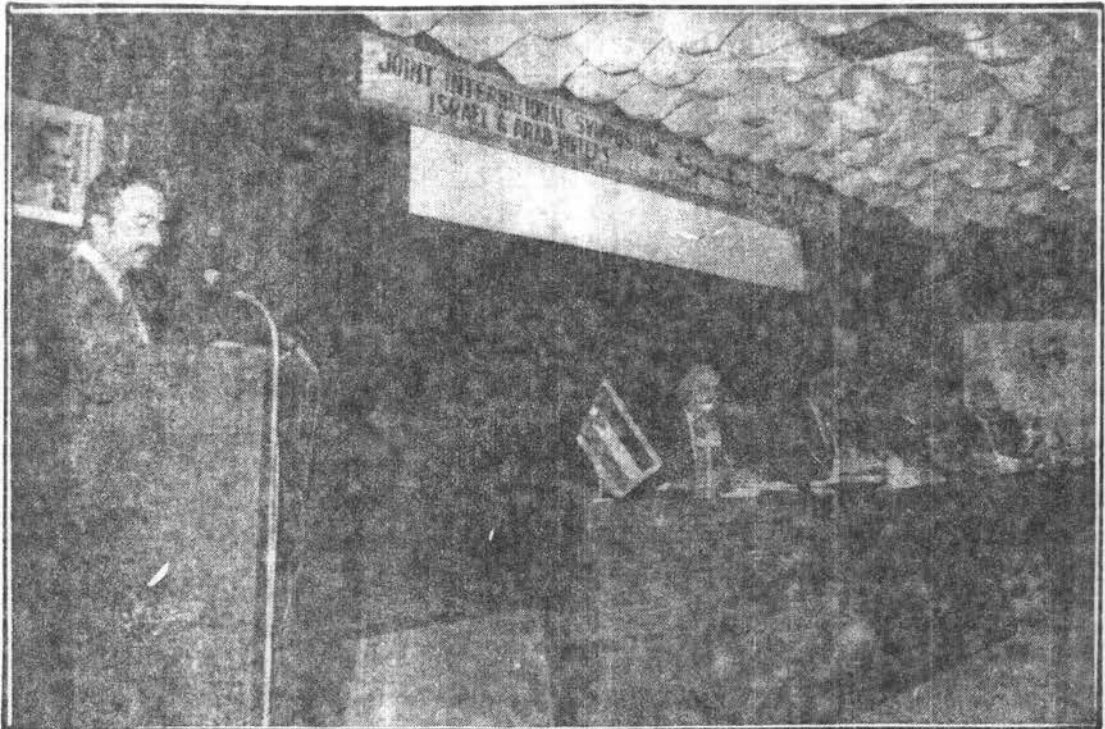
Speaking at the symposium, Prince Hassan said that since the early 50's, Israel has drawn up plans to direct the water of the Jordan River and its tributaries in order to irrigate the Naqab desert in southern Palestine and to settle Jews in that region.

In occupying the West Bank and the Golan Heights, which is a flagrant violation of international principles, Israel has thus been able to control the Jordan River and thwart any Arab project for exploiting water resources, Prince Hassan said.

He added that what is happening in the West Bank at present provides the best proof of Israel's intentions. It has so far built 165 settlements in the West Bank and confiscated half the lands of that territory.

Prince Hassan called on Arab leaders to co-ordinate their plans and to mobilise their resources to confront these threats. "We have to realise that the time factor is against the Arabs and benefits only Israel and its own plans in our region," he added.

Attending the symposium organised by the London-based Arab Research Centre in co-operation with Yarmouk University, were experts on water from Jordan, Iraq, Egypt, Lebanon and the United States as well as representatives from the National Planning Council (NPC), the Natural Resources Authority (NRA), the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA), the University of Jordan, Yarmouk University, the Arab Research Council and the Water Authority of Jordan.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan addresses the recently concluded joint international symposium on "Israel and Arab Waters" (Petra photo)