

microwave part of the regional transmission project linking Jordan to Saudi Arabia and boosting telephone connections, and radio and television capacities in southern Jordan. A connection with Egypt opened in early May (MEED 13:5:88).

### Two road projects under way

Bidding is under way for two road contracts. The first is for construction work on the second section of the Thagrat Asfour-Sale Jerash bridge on the road between Irbid and Jerash. Work entails building two 18-kilometre dual carriageways linking Thagrat Asfour to the Sale Jerash bridge and two parallel 750-metre tunnels and a grade-separated interchange and underpass.

The 11 international companies or groups that have prequalified for the work are:

- **National Engineering & Contracting** (Jordan) with **Energoprojekt** (Yugoslavia)
- **General Equipment Company** (Jordan)
- **Hudhud Shand** (Jordan) and **Mount Kassiouun Company** (Syria)
- **Ret-Ser Engineering Agency** (Taiwan)
- **Consolidated Contractors Company** (Jordan)
- **Bes Engineering Corporation** (Taiwan)
- **China State Construction Engineering Corporation**
- **SCT** (Yugoslavia)
- **The Mohammed Binladin Organisation** (Saudi Arabia)
- **Rio Trading & Construction Company** (Saudi Arabia)
- **National Building Construction Corporation** (India).

The project is financed by a Japanese loan and is open to contractors from Japan, Jordan and other developing countries. Offers are due in on 29 June.

The second road contract on offer is for consultancy work. Twelve local consultants in joint venture with foreign partners have submitted bids to the Public Works Ministry for design and feasibility studies for roads between Maan and Al-Jafer, and Ras al-Naqab and Wadi al-Yitem, and for the Greater Amman circuit road and the Tafleeh to Ghor Fifa road.

Bidders will only be awarded one contract. Offers were received from the following:

- **Jouzy & Partners** with **Parsons Brinckerhoff** (US)
- **Madi & Partners** with **Rendel Palmer & Tritton** (UK)
- **Bilbeisi & Dabbas Engineering** with **Mott, Hay & Anderson International** (UK)
- **Masar Engineering** with **R Trevor Morgan International** (UK)
- **Ruqn al-Handasah** with **Sir Frederick Snow International** (UK)

- **Consulting Engineering Centre** with **Scott Wilson Kirkpatrick & Partners** (UK)
- **Jordan Consulting Engineer Company** with **Development & Engineering Consultants** (**Denco** — Greece)
- **Associated Consulting Engineers International** with **Bureau Central des Etudes pour les Equipements d'Outre-Mer** (**BCEOM** — France)
- **Habib Associates** with **Transprojekt** (Poland)
- **Shubeilat & Badran Associates** with **N D Lea & Associates** (Canada)
- **Arabtech Consulting Engineers** with **Sir Alexander Gibb & Partners** (UK)
- **Mohammad A R Jardaneh** with **Hughes Economic Planning** (UK).

### US trade links to be boosted

Increased trade links with the US have been sought during a top-level trade and investment mission to America in late May. The delegation, headed by Crown Prince Hassan, has been seeking to step up business ties with the private sector.

More than 45 US companies attended the first part of the US Agency for International Development (USAID)-sponsored mission which took place in Atlanta: even more were expected to take part in the second half in Pittsburgh.

Interested US firms include **Morgan Stanley & Company**, accountant **Arthur Young & Company**, **Merrill Lynch, General Motors** and several banks. "Several deals were struck on the sidelines," USAID says. These are expected to emerge in the next few weeks.

Crown Prince Hassan told the Atlanta conference that **Coca Cola** may be removed from the Arab boycott list.

In the team were around 40 Jordanian business people representing manufacturing, computing, engineering, trading and investment companies, banks, the stock exchange, and the key phosphate and fertiliser sector. Also attending were Supplies, Trade & Industry Minister Hamdi Tabbaa, Planning Minister Taher Kanaan, central bank deputy governor Maher Shukri and other officials.

New York-based consultant **Columbia Resources Corporation** fixed appointments between the Jordanians and their potential business partners. US firms were introduced to the potential in Jordan through briefings, presentations and access to key contacts.

In 1987, USAID set up a \$7 million fund, the Private Enterprises Technical Resources Assistance (PETRA), to support Jordanian organisations working on income-generating projects. PETRA could be used by some of the joint ventures which may result from the mission, USAID says.

Amman imported more than \$238 million worth of American goods in 1987,

compared with \$200 million in 1986. Exports to the US were worth \$2.3 million in January-November 1987, up from \$783,000 in the corresponding period of 1986. The US provides about \$20 million in aid to Jordan every year, Reuter says.

In the past three years, Washington has given an additional \$250 million to fund development projects and US imports, and to stimulate private-sector activity, Reuter adds.

### IN BRIEF

● The EEC will begin preliminary talks in June on studies for construction of the Walaa dam. Funds for the project may come from the EEC's ECU 100 million (\$122.4 million) third protocol for Jordan, which runs from 1988-91. The allocation for each sector has been confirmed, with agriculture and related projects getting 45 per cent, education, training and scientific co-operation 31 per cent, and technical assistance, regional co-operation studies and industry the rest (MEED 13:2:88). At the same time, the European Investment Bank (EIB) has made ECU 63 million (\$77 million) available in loans. Part of the EEC's ECU 35 million (\$43 million) grant allocation will be used to pay a 2 per cent subsidy on interest for the EIB loans. No specific projects have yet been identified for approval, but progress is expected in the next two or three months, the EIB says. The bank says it will concentrate its funds on agriculture and agriculture-related industries, water resource development, industry and industry-related investments, and energy and other economic infrastructure projects.

● Prices a tonne for the 1988 cereal crop have been set at JD 144 (\$443) for wheat, JD 90 (\$276) for barley, JD 150-180 (\$461-553) for lentils and JD 162-170 (\$498-523) for chickpeas. The Agriculture Ministry is confident the locust plague affecting the region will not reach Jordan. The locusts are expected to move south of the Arabian peninsula by mid-June. Jordan valley farmers have, however, been hit by the recent hot weather: they have lost up to 50 per cent of their tomato crop and suffered damage to other crops, including melons, peppers, beans, grapes and guavas. The ministry has now authorised the import of 50 per cent of the fruit grown in the occupied territories for sale in Jordan.

● Teachers from the UN Relief & Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) planned to sit-in on 29 May as part of a dispute with UNRWA about pay and health insurance. Around 4,000 teachers work at 200 UNRWA schools throughout Jordan.

● The Water Authority of Jordan (WAJ) has resumed pumping water to Marka, in the east of Amman, following an outbreak of poisoning. The poisoning arose when water became polluted while the network was being repaired.

● Dubai-based **Cormix Middle East**, which makes constituents for concrete, has named the local **Al-Faiha for Engineering Products** as its agent and distributor in Jordan. Al-Faiha, which has construction and associated industry experience, will stock all the main Cormix products and will be supported by an extensive technical service team.

● Amman Chamber of Industry had 4,344 industrial companies registered in 1987. The largest group was metal and wooden furniture firms with 1,404 members, followed by 1,063 engineering companies.