

## King of Jordan Calls for Regional Cooperation at Opening of World Economic Forum on the Middle East and North Africa

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- Political and humanitarian solution needed for Syria, says King of Jordan
- Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas calls for investment and joint ventures in tourism, energy and industry
- World Economic Forum Chairman Klaus Schwab announces high-level meeting with US Secretary of State John Kerry, Israel's President Shimon Peres and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas
- More information about the meeting is available at <http://wef.ch/mena13>
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**Dead Sea, Jordan, 25 May 2013** – H.M. King Abdullah II Ibn Al Hussein of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan opened the World Economic Forum on the Middle East and North Africa on the 67th anniversary of Jordan Independence Day. "Openness is a strategic choice for Jordan, but regional cooperation is the backbone of sustainable growth throughout the region," the King said. "It is also necessary for stability and peace."

In that context, he called for greater efforts to find a political solution in Syria to prevent further fragmentation. With Syrian refugees in Jordan now equal to 10% of the country's population, the King called for immediate action to end the violence and start the process of rebuilding the country. The King also called for progress on what he described as the core crisis in the region: the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

More than [900 participants](#) from over 50 countries are taking part in the World Economic Forum on the Middle East and North Africa. The three-day meeting, convening under the theme *Advancing Conditions for Growth and Resilience*, will focus on shaping the region's economic, social and governance systems of the future.

In a special address, Mahmoud Abbas, President of the Palestinian Authority, said the Palestinian Authority has done everything necessary to push ahead with a peace agreement based on a two-state solution. He also underlined progress made by the Palestinian Authority in introducing administrative and legal reforms and upgrading infrastructure. He called on international investors to explore promising new opportunities for partnerships and joint ventures in tourism, energy and industry.

World Economic Forum Founder and Executive Chairman Klaus Schwab paid tribute to Jordan for its role in providing a safe haven for refugees from the civil war in Syria. "Jordan's hospitality towards Syrians in need has been exemplary," he said. He added that resolving the conflict would be a key focus during the meeting. He also announced a special meeting to address the Arab-Israeli conflict, which will include the participation of US Secretary of State John Kerry, Israel's President Shimon Peres and Mahmoud Abbas.

The Co-Chairs of the meeting are [Mohammed H. Al Mady](#), **Vice-Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Saudi Basic Industries Corporation (SABIC), Saudi Arabia**; [Samer S. Khoury](#), **President Engineering and Construction, Consolidated Contractors Company (CCC), Greece**; [Ibrahim S. Dabdoub](#), Group Chief Executive Officer, National Bank of Kuwait, Kuwait; [Jin-Yong Cai](#), Executive Vice-President and Chief Executive Officer, International Finance Corporation (IFC), Washington DC; [Martin Senn](#), **Group Chief Executive Officer Zurich Insurance Group, Switzerland**; and [Mina Al Oraibi](#), **Assistant Editor-in-Chief, Asharq Al-Awsat Newspaper, United Kingdom**.

## Notes to Editors

More information is available at <http://wef.ch/mena13>

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