



MINUTE FOR MISSION

July 1, 2006

Country Update: Jordan

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, which was founded by a League of Nations mandate under British Administration in 1946, has always benefited from, or suffered because of ,conditions or circumstances taking place in the countries that border it to the East (Iraq) and to the West (Israel and the Palestinian Territories).



It is not uncommon to see Bedouin encampments, complete with herds of sheep, in sight of the sprawling metropolis of Amman, Jordan's capital and largest city.

Jordan has also hosted the largest number of Palestinian refugees of any country since the Arab-Israeli wars of 1948 and 1967. Today, over 60 percent of Jordan's population is of Palestinian descent. In addition, close to 500,000 Iraqi civilians have become refugees in Jordan due to the war and instability in neighboring Iraq.

Jordan is a relatively small, Arab country of mostly young people. The average age of Jordan's citizens is below 23. Today's Jordan is a unique blend of traditional and modern. Heavily dependent on tourism and outside investments, Jordan is fast being thrust into the twenty-first century. It is not uncommon to see Bedouin encampments, complete with herds of sheep, in sight of the sprawling metropolis of Amman, Jordan's capital and largest city. With a population of approximately 1.5 million people, Amman is larger than any city in neighboring Israel.

Despite recent economic, political, and social reforms, Jordan has retained its mostly conservative, clan-based societal standards and way of life. Women and children continue to suffer from abuse and exploitation, and honor killings are not uncommon within the kingdom.



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The Amman Message, issued by Jordan's King Abdullah II in November 2004, seeks to proclaim a message of tolerance and humanity and rejects extremism as a deviation from Islamic beliefs. It stresses the true values of Islam and promotes a proper understanding of the Islamic faith, which honors all human beings and provides common ground among different faiths and peoples.

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Doug Dicks
PC(USA) Mission Worker
Jerusalem

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For more information on the Witness Season mission education emphasis contact Billie Healy, Associate for Mission Education Resources (888) 728-7228, ext. 5689, or Bhealy@ctr.pcusa.org.

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