



REUTERS/THE BETTMANN ARCHIVE

Israel and Jordan Make Peace

In July 1994 Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, *right*, and King Hussein of Jordan, *left*, came together in the United States, in the presence of US president Bill Clinton, to sign a peace agreement, ending 46 years of war and tension between their countries. This initial agreement paved the way for a full peace treaty, signed in October 1994 on the Israeli-Jordanian border. The treaty settled long-standing disputes over land and water rights, and pledged cooperation in areas including trade and tourism.

Microsoft ® **Encarta** ® **Encyclopedia 2002**. © 1993-2001 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

Hussein I

Hussein I (1935-1999), King of Jordan (1952-1999). He was born in Ammān, the grandson of King Abdullah ibn Husein. Educated in Jordan, Egypt, and Britain, he was proclaimed king, succeeding his mentally ill father, in 1952. Hussein's early reign was marked by numerous attempts on his life, and his position was made otherwise difficult by disagreements with more radical Arab leaders, who took exception to his pro-Western policies. After the Six-Day War with Israel in 1967, Arab guerrilla organizations, demanding a Palestinian homeland, gained great strength in Jordan. Hussein opposed them, and civil war erupted in 1970. Hussein's army was victorious and forced the guerrillas out of the country. The Palestinian question continued to dominate Jordanian politics throughout the 1970s and 1980s; in July 1988, after months of demonstrations by Palestinians in the Israeli-held West Bank, Hussein ceded to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) all Jordanian claims to the territory. Hussein's refusal to condemn the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait helped him retain popular support within Jordan, but his neutral stance in the ensuing Gulf War strained relations with the United States and some of his former Arab allies, in alliance against Iraq.

Following the signing of a peace accord between Israel and the PLO in 1993, Hussein, as head of the Arab nation with the highest population of Palestinian refugees, asserted Jordan's role in the formulation of regional peace settlements. In November 1993

Jordanians participated in the country's first multi-party elections since 1956 and endorsed Hussein's strategy for establishing peace with Israel. Hussein signed a joint declaration with Yitzhak Rabin in Washington in July 1994, formally ending hostilities between Jordan and Israel. He was warmly received in Israel when he made his first official visit there in January 1996 to attend the funeral of Rabin. However, the relationship cooled after the election of Binyamin Netanyahu as Israel's new prime minister. Hussein responded harshly to bread riots in the Jordanian city of Kerak, prompted by cuts in grain subsidies, blaming them on Iraqi subversion and ordering troops into the city. In October 1996 he visited Yasir Arafat in Jericho, becoming the first Arab leader to visit the autonomous regions of Palestine. Following his denunciation of Israeli plans to expand Jewish settlements in Jerusalem in a letter to Netanyahu, he personally expressed his sympathy with the families of seven Israeli schoolgirls killed by a Jordanian soldier on the Israel-Jordan border in March 1997, but rejected suggestions from the Israeli government that his words had incited the attack.

The general election held at Hussein's instigation in November 1997 met with a low turnout and a wide boycott by Islamicist parties; however, Hussein declared himself satisfied with the result. In February 1998 he pleaded for calm after rioting in Jordan that followed rising tension throughout the region over neighbouring Iraq. In February 1999 Hussein died from cancer. His funeral was attended by dignitaries and heads of state from around the world, in tribute to his role in the Middle East. His son Abdullah, whom he had designated his successor in January, became King Abdullah II.

Microsoft ® Encarta ® Encyclopedia 2002. © 1993-2001 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.