

HRH Prince El Hassan bin Talal

His Royal Highness Prince El Hassan bin Talal was born in Amman, on 20th March 1947, to a branch of the Hashemite family directly descended from the Prophet Muhammad, in the forty-second generation of descendants. His Royal Highness is the youngest son of Their late Majesties King Talal and Queen Zein El Sharaf, and is the brother of His late Majesty King Hussein.

His Royal Highness was officially invested as Crown Prince to the Hashemite Throne of Jordan, in April 1965. Until the changes in succession brought about by His late Majesty King Hussein, in January 1999, he served as the King's closest political advisor, confidant and deputy, as well as acting as Regent in the King's absence from the country.

Prince Hassan had his early schooling in Amman, largely through private tuition, then attended the English preparatory school, Summer Fields. In 1963, HRH went to Harrow School, where he was in Park House, and then matriculated to Christ Church College, Oxford. HRH graduated from Oxford with a B.A. (Hons.) in Oriental Studies, followed by an M.A.

Prince Hassan has initiated, founded and is actively involved in a number of Jordanian and international institutes and committees. In Jordan, HRH established:

- The **Royal Scientific Society**, in 1970;
- The **Arab Thought Forum**, in 1981;
- The **Higher Council for Science and Technology**, in 1987;
- The **Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies**, in 1994.

Prince Hassan chaired the committees overseeing the first development plan (1973-1975) and the three subsequent development plans (1976-1980, 1981-1985 and 1986-1990). HRH also established the **annual Bilad Al-Sham Conference**, in 1978, the **Al al-Bait Foundation**, in 1980, the **Islamic Scientific Academy**, the tri-annual conferences on the **History and Archaeology of Jordan**, the **Hashemite Aid and Relief Agency**, the **Centre for Educational Development**, the **Institute for Diplomacy** and the **Al al-Bait University** in Mafraq.

Having always been interested in young people, and believing in the importance of their community, His Royal Highness founded the Forum Humanum, in 1982 (renamed the **Arab Youth Forum**, in 1988); the Crown Prince Award, in 1984 (renamed the **El Hassan Youth Award**, in 1999), and its affiliate programme, the **Sabilat El Hassan**, in 1988.

On the international stage, many of Prince Hassan's ideas and initiatives have been catalytic to international decisions and resolutions. Addressing the 36th Session of the United Nations in 1981, His Royal Highness proposed the establishment of the

New International Humanitarian Order, which led to a request by the Secretary General to found and co-chair the Independent Commission on International Humanitarian Issues (ICHI). The final report of the Commission was adopted as a resolution at the 42nd General Assembly of the United Nations. In July 2002, Prince Hassan founded the **International Cultures Foundation** with Professor Ihsan Doğramaci, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Bilkent University in Ankara. The **Parliament of Cultures** was then formed in 2004, to fulfil this agenda of promoting understanding among different cultures and enhancing dialogue between their thinkers and intellectuals. In July 2003, HRH launched **Partners in Humanity** as a joint initiative with John Marks from Search for Common Ground (SFCG), which aims to improve understanding, build positive relationships and promote dialogue between the Muslim and western worlds. In 2009 HRH launched the **West Asia-North Africa (WANA) Forum** which is a regional initiative intended to facilitate the exchange of information and ideas surrounding shared social, environmental and economic challenges.

Prince Hassan initiated and hosted ongoing consultations with the Orthodox Centre of the Ecumenical Patriarchate at Chambesy, Switzerland, the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue at the Vatican and the The Interfaith Foundation in the United Kingdom through the aegis of the St. George's House, Windsor. Prince Hassan is a founder and now President of the Foundation for Inter-religious and Intercultural Research and Dialogue (FIIRD) which was established in Geneva in 1999.

Prince Hassan chairs and is a member of a number of international committees and organisations. These include:

- Founding Member and President of the **Foundation for Interreligious and Intercultural Research and Dialogue**;
- Member of the Board of Directors of the **Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI)**, Washington, D.C. (since 2002);
- Chairman of the Board for the **Center for Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution** at the University of Oklahoma International Programs Center;
- Co-president of the **International Tolerance Foundation for Humanities and Social Studies**, St. Petersburg (since 2006);
- International Patron of **Rights and Humanity**;
- Member of the **Trilateral Commission**;
- Member of the International Advisory Board of **Forum 2000**;
- Member of the International Board of the **Council on Foreign Relations**;
- Member of the Committee of Notables of the **Institut Català de la Mediterrània** (since 2001);
- Chairman of the **Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues**;
- Commissioner of the **Commission for the Legal Empowerment of the Poor**;
- Honorary Fellow of the **Royal Society of Edinburgh** (2008);
- Member of the Advisory Council for Research of the **Center for Democracy and Community Development** (2010)

In June 2003, following the U.N. General Assembly resolution 56/266, HRH was elected as one of five regional experts in the **Independent Eminent Experts**

group, appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, to implement the Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance that took place in Durban, South Africa, in 2001.

In November 1999, at the Seventh World Assembly of the World Conference of Religions for Peace (WCRP), held in Amman, Prince Hassan accepted the position of Moderator of the WCRP, until the Eighth World Assembly, in 2006 after which HRH was awarded the title of President Emeritus.

HRH served as Chairman of the Policy Advisory Commission for the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) from 1999–2002 and was a Member of the Board of the **South Centre** (2001–2006), the Committee of UNESCO International Inter-religious Advisory Committee and an Honorary Member of UNESCO World Commission on Culture and Development. HRH was also a Member of the Informal Advisory Group to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and a Member of the Executive Committee and Trustee of the International Crisis Group.

Prince Hassan received the Abu Bakr Al-Siddique Medal of the Organisation of Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Societies, in September 1996, and the 1995 Science and Society Prize in Madrid, in 1997. In April 2001, HRH received the inaugural Gandhi/King/Ikeda Community Builders Medal and Torch of Nonviolence, at the Martin Luther King, Jr. International Chapel, during Morehouse College's International Reconciliation Sunday. HRH was awarded the Distinguished Foreign Visitor Award at the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation in Boston, in April 2002, and in June 2003, HRH received the 2003 Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum Award for the Advancement of Inter-religious Understanding. In January 2004, Prince Hassan received the Abraham Fund Pioneer of Co-existence Award (New York) and, in October of the same year, HRH was awarded the Grand Decoration of Honour in Gold with Sash (1st Class), for his services to the Republic of Austria. Prince Hassan received the 2005 Eternal Flame Award by the Annual Scholars' Conference of the U.S. On 13th February, 2006 HRH was appointed Ambassador of the International Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (ISESCO). In November 2006, the Berlin Committee for UNESCO nominated Prince Hassan as the 2006 laureate for the Berlin Peace Clock Award, in recognition of HRH's exemplary contribution to overcoming human divides, on the basis of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. At the inaugural meeting of the Tolerance Foundation held at the Yusupov Palace, St. Petersburg, Russia, in May, 2007, Prince Hassan was awarded a medal to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the adoption of UNESCO's Constitution; in March, 2008 in Berlin, His Royal Highness was awarded the 2008 Abraham Geiger Award for Peace and in April, 2008, he was awarded the Calgary Peace Prize for 2007. HRH was awarded the Niwano Peace Prize 2008 in Japan in May, 2008. In June, 2008, HRH was inducted into the Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques of the Institut de France. In October 2008, HRH was awarded the Peace Prize of the City of Augsburg, Germany and in November, 2010, HRH was awarded the *Markgräfin-Wilhelmine-Prize* in the City of Bayreuth, Germany.

Decorated by over twenty nations, His Royal Highness is the holder of the Order of Al Hussein bin Ali, Jordan's highest decoration, which HRH was awarded in

March, 1987, by His late Majesty King Hussein. HRH also held the rank of Honorary General in the Jordanian Armed Forces.

His Royal Highness is a prolific contributor to newspapers, journals, magazines and periodicals, as well as specific publications on regional and international issues. Prince Hassan is also the author of nine books:

- *A Study on Jerusalem* (1979) (English);
- *Palestinian Self-Determination* (1981) (English, Arabic);
- *Search for Peace* (1984) (English, Arabic);
- *Christianity in the Arab World* (1994) (English, Arabic, French, Greek, Spanish, Russian, German, Swedish);
- *Essere Musulmano* – Co-authored with Alain Elkann – (2001) (Italian, French, Spanish) *To Be A Muslim* (English - 2003, Arabic - 2010);
- *Q and A: Contemporary Issues*, 2003. (Arabic)
- *Continuity, Innovation and Change: Selected Essays* (2001);
- *In Memory of Faisal I: The Iraqi Question* (2003) (Arabic);
- *El Hassan bin Talal Collected Works: Volume One*, 2007 (Arabic).

Prince Hassan has been awarded the Honorary Degree of Science, Boşaziçi University, Turkey (1981); Honorary Degree of Doctor of Civil Law, University of Durham, U.K. (1990); Honorary Degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies, Chicago, U.S.A (1995); Honorary Degree of Doctor of Letters, University of Ulster, Northern Ireland (1996); Honorary Doctorate from Moscow State Institute for International Relations, Russia (1997); Doctorate of Laws, University of Birmingham, U.K. (1999); Honorary Doctorate from Bilkent University, Turkey (1999); Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws (Hon LLB) from the University of Hertfordshire, U.K. (2000); Honorary Doctorate of Theology from the Faculty of Catholic Theology at the Eberhard-Karls-University, Tübingen, Germany (2001); Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters, University of Oklahoma, U.S.A. (2002); Honorary Doctorate, University of York, U.K. (2002); Honorary Doctorate of Laws, University of Portsmouth, U.K. (2002); Honorary Doctorate of Laws from the International Islamic University of Islamabad, Pakistan (2005); Degree of LLD *Honoris Causa* from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) at the University of London, U.K. (2005); Honorary Degree and the Medal of the World Academy from Old Dominion University, Norfolk, U.S.A (2005); Doctorate *Honoris Causa* from the Candido Mendes University (UCAM), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2006); Doctorate *Honoris Causa* from the Institute of Higher Education of Brasilia (IESB), Brazil (2006); Doctorate *Honoris Causa* from the Faculdades Metropolitanas Unidas (FMU), São Paulo, Brazil (2006); Honorary Degree in Human Letters from Brandeis University, Boston, U.S.A; Honorary Degree from Soka University, Tokyo, Japan (2006); Honorary Doctorate from the Faculty of Humanities, University of Lund, Sweden (2007); Doctorate *Honoris Causa* from Eötvös Loránd University, Hungary (2007). Prince Hassan received the Degree Doctor of Laws *honoris causa* from the University of Calgary (2008).

Prince Hassan actively promotes sports within Jordan and beyond. As President of the Federations for Martial Arts, Polo and Squash, HRH has overseen the development of these three activities to the competitive international level. In

addition to holding a 8th Dan Black Belt in Tae Kwon Do and captaining the Royal Jordanian Polo Team, HRH enjoys skiing, hiking, mountaineering, scuba diving, swimming and water-skiing. HRH is a qualified helicopter pilot, and has several parachute jumps to his name.

Prince Hassan is fluent in Arabic, English and French, and studied Biblical Hebrew as part of his degree course. HRH also has a working knowledge of German, Spanish and Turkish. Among Prince Hassan's interests are reading, cinema and Latin American and Flamenco music. Above all, His Royal Highness derives the most pleasure from spending time with his family.

His Royal Highness married Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath, in 1968. Princess Sarvath comes from a distinguished family of the Indian-subcontinent. They are blessed with three daughters: Princesses Rahma, Sumaya and Badiya and a son, Prince Rashid; and with six grandchildren.

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