



ROYAL WEDDING

## The Kingdom's bride and joy

June 1 marks a historic union as Crown Prince Hussein of Jordan weds Saudi Arabia's Rajwa Al-Saif

Arab News Amman

**It is set to be a day to remember as Jordan's Crown Prince Hussein bin Abdullah II weds Saudi national Rajwa Al-Saif on Thursday at Zahran Palace in Amman, before the royal couple travel to Al-Husseiniya Palace for a lavish reception.**

Al-Saif will be known as Her Royal Highness the Crown Princess of Jordan. When the crown prince takes the throne, she will be Queen Rajwa.

The religious ceremony will be held at Zahran Palace, where the crown prince's parents — King Abdullah II and Queen Rania — wed in 1993. The ceremony will be attended by around 140 guests, including members of the Royal Hashemite family, invited royals and heads of state.

One of those royals is Japan's Princess Hisako of Takamado, who spoke to Arab News Japan before the wedding.

"It is a joyous occasion, I wish the young couple more future happiness. The future of Jordan rests on their shoulders," she said. However, she added that at the moment she believed "it's the time for them to enjoy a little bit of a romantic life and I wish them much, much happiness."

Al-Saif is set to arrive at Zah-

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ran Palace escorted by the crown prince's younger brother, Prince Hashem bin Abdullah II, and Princess Salma bint Abdullah II.

The bride and groom will then sign the marriage contract in the presence of Royal Hashemite Court Imam Dr. Ahmed Al-Khalaileh, before they travel to Al-Husseiniya Palace where a traditional zaffeh will welcome the newlyweds.

King Abdullah II held a celebratory gathering on Wednesday night that was attended by 4,000

people from across the country and featured poetry recitals and Jordanian folk tunes.

On May 22, Queen Rania hosted a pre-wedding henna night in honor of Al-Saif. Al-Saif, dressed in a white-and-gold gown by Saudi designer Honayda Serafi, attended alongside members of the Jordanian royal family, as well as her own mother.

Queen Rania also invited notable women from across Jordan's diverse socio-economic landscape to take part in the henna celebrations.

ARAB TIES

## 'Our relations are deeply rooted in history,' Jordan's ambassador to Saudi Arabia says

Lama Alhamawi Riyadh

The marriage between Saudi Arabia's Rajwa Al-Saif and Jordan's Crown Prince Hussein bin Abdullah II marks a special moment for both countries.

Arab News spoke to Jordanian Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Ali Al-Kayed to understand more about the relationship between both kingdoms and his hopes for the future in light of Thursday's royal wedding.

"The relations between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are deeply rooted in history in terms of strong fraternal and popular relations, as well as inter-marriage, kinship and neighborly relations," he said, when asked how the marriage would affect bilateral ties.

"The relations between the two brotherly countries are characterized by strategic and historical depth, united by civilization,

good neighborliness, similar geography and established brotherhood, in addition to the common, mutual and largely compatible interests, which differentiates it from other relations," the ambassador added.

Al-Kayed also noted both Jordan's and Saudi Arabia's missions to support causes beyond their borders, highlighting the desire for cooperation.

"These relations are consolidated at the highest level of communication, cooperation and permanent coordination between the governments of the two countries under the leadership of King Abdullah II ... and King Salman ... in the interest of both peoples, their security and stability, and in support of Islamic and Arab causes," the ambassador continued.

Jordan's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Ali Al-Kayed. Supplied

King Abdullah II was recently in Riyadh to attend the 32nd Arab summit. Before that, he completed a two-day visit to Saudi Arabia in April, during which he held talks



with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in Jeddah. For his part, Saudi Arabia's crown prince visited Jordan in June 2022, while King Salman last touched down in the country in 2017.

Al-Kayed gave his thoughts on the history of state visits between both kingdoms.

"The two kingdoms, previously and as of late, are similar in international and regional political positions with converging visions and starting points at the level of their two supreme leaderships regarding all international issues and events that concern the Middle East region or other international issues, in an atmosphere of deep understanding and mutual consultation embodied by the successive historical visits between the kings of the two states in mutual respect," he said.

When it comes to the culture of the two neighboring

countries, Al-Kayed said that he believes the new princess will not have to adapt to a different way of life in Jordan.

"There are no cultural differences between Jordan and Saudi Arabia," Al-Kayed stated. "They are united by an inherent brotherhood, a similar heritage, and neighborly relations cementing the bonds of love and strength between the two peoples, constituting — for any observer of customs, traditions, history and unity — a model of cohesion in Arab relations."

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