

New US Defense Agreement: Free Entry of US Forces into Jordan

Move, which allows free entry of US forces, aircraft and vehicles onto the kingdom's territory, controversially bypassed parliament

By [Middle East Eye](#)

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Jordan on Sunday made public a defence agreement with the United States that allows free entry of US forces, aircraft and vehicles onto the kingdom's territory.

Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi told parliament that the defence accord was “the fruit of long negotiations”, according to AFP.

The agreement was signed in January and the government approved it last month, but in an exceptional move it bypassed parliament. The royal decree was published in the official journal this week.

The terms of the agreement, published on Jordanian news site Ammon, stipulate that “US forces may possess weapons and circulate with them on Jordanian territory while exercising their duties”.

It also states that US forces may transport and stock equipment and that personnel, their aircraft and ships are authorised to “freely enter and exit Jordanian territory”.

Islamist lawmaker Saleh al-Armuti decried the lack of parliamentary oversight and called on the government to cancel the accord, claiming it “violates the constitution and affects Jordan's sovereignty”.

‘A vital US partner’

But Safadi pushed back, saying the agreement “in no way affects Jordan's sovereignty, and everything it contains is subject to Jordanian law and is compatible with international law”.

“The agreement does not authorise American forces to carry out combat actions within the kingdom,” he told lawmakers.

“The agreement aims to frame defence cooperation and reinforce US support for defence programmes and the kingdom's security and stability through

military training and equipment,” Safadi said.

The US State Department considers the Hashemite kingdom “a vital US partner on a wide range of regional security issues”.

Jordan is a key recipient of American financial aid – including \$425m in military assistance annually, according to Safadi.

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