

Press Release

The Energy Crisis in Jordan and the Issue of the Al-Attarat Project Economic Corruption, Political Subservience, and Rising Debt

(Translated)

A news report by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, dated 6 August 2024, stated that "the International Arbitration Tribunal ruled that neither the government nor the National Electric Power Company is required to pay any part of the costs to the Al-Attarat Power Company." This misleading news is intended to cover up the expected loss that the Jordanian government will incur due to the reality of the ruling, which states: "The International Arbitration Tribunal rules that the contract is valid and does not involve gross unfairness." In other words, the government lost the case in international arbitration, which lasted for four years, and was obliged to cover the costs of filing the case, estimated at eight million dinars, despite prior confirmation that it would lose the arbitration case before it was filed in 2020!

In the face of this media deception, which accompanies the cover-up of the regime's corruption by hiding and distorting facts instead of honestly standing with the nation's issues by revealing the truth and the corruption that surrounds it, and presenting the correct reality to the people so they can take serious and informed positions on the regime's games in Jordan and its governments, this deception necessitates an investigation into the energy problem in Jordan, specifically the Al-Attarat Project and what lies behind it:

- The Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources recently indicated that Jordan possesses more than 116 billion tons of oil shale, which is located within more than 60% of Jordanian land. The average oil content of Jordanian oil shale is 10.5%, and oil shale can be exploited to produce oil and generate energy, specifically electricity.

- The ministry's comprehensive strategy for the energy sector for the years 2020-2030 states that the contribution of oil shale to electricity generation will reach 15% by 2030, in addition to natural gas and renewable energy as sources of energy.

- The agreement with the Al-Attarat Power Company was made during the government of Abdullah Ensour in October 2014. It is a coalition of companies from China, Malaysia, and Estonia, with 45% ownership for both China and Malaysia and 10% for Estonia. The project aims to produce electrical energy from oil shale in the Al-Attarat Um Al-Ghudran area and sell it to the National Electric Power Company. It is expected to provide 15% of the Kingdom's annual electricity needs for 30 years, with an investment cost of \$2.1 billion, most of which, \$1.6 billion, was financed by Chinese banks. In early July 2023, the Al-Attarat Power Plant was inaugurated, operating at full capacity of 470 megawatts.

- This project was estimated to enhance Jordan's strategic energy security level because it is a safe, locally-produced source that is not affected by the potential for external gas supply cuts from the Zionist entity, as occurred when gas supplies were halted for several days after its war on Gaza. However, corruption, poor planning, faulty contracting, and political subservience pushed the Jordanian government to seek arbitration at the International Chamber of Commerce in Paris.

- In 2016, an agreement was signed between the Jordanian National Electric Power Company, which is fully owned by the government, and the American (Israeli) company

Noble Energy. The agreement stipulates that the Zionist entity will supply Jordan with about 45 billion cubic meters of gas over 15 years, starting from January 2020, in exchange for \$10 billion.

- The reason the government resorted to arbitration is that in 2020, it found that Jordan had a surplus of electricity production after signing the humiliating and widely rejected agreement to import gas from the occupying Zionist entity for \$15 billion over ten years. Instead of canceling the gas agreement with the occupier, the government preferred to ignite the crisis with China over the Al-Attarat project under the pretext of gross unfairness. Additionally, it complied with the reviews of the International Monetary Fund, which attributed the costs of energy production to generation projects, specifically mentioning the oil shale project.

- It has become clear that the intersection between Jordan's economic interests with China and the political, economic, and military subservience of the Jordanian regime to the United States in its pursuit of global dominance is one of the main obstacles hindering Chinese projects, most notably the Al-Attarat project. Previously, the government canceled a contract with Huawei for 5G in favor of Nokia and Ericsson due to direct American threats.

- In a special interview with Arabi Post, Hossam Al-Abdullat, the head of the Jordanian Organization for Change, highlighted the issue of responsibility, stating that "the energy and petroleum file in Jordan is not finalized before it is first approved by the Royal Court itself, through the Economic Department in the Court, and it is presented to the King personally. After that, the Jordanian government works on its implementation.

- A report by the Associated Press on Wednesday, July 5, 2023, titled "Beijing Traps Amman in Debt," caused a significant media stir regarding the legal disputes between Jordan and China over the partnership agreement between the two countries for the Al-Attarat power plant, which generates electricity from oil shale. The report revealed U.S. displeasure, with David Schenker, former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, stating, "We were indeed concerned about democracy, transparency, and corruption, but authoritarian states align with China and draw closer to it." The report promotes the continuation of the natural gas import agreement from the Zionist entity and its dominance over the energy sector while portraying the Jordanian-Chinese partnership agreement as "debt-trap diplomacy," a label more fitting for America.

- The 2020 State of the Country report by the Jordanian Economic and Social Council, a governmental body, stated: "Energy security continues to waver between political and economic decisions. The entry of the 'Israeli' gas agreement, although it appears superficially as part of diversifying energy sources, has necessarily weakened energy security in the long term, and the 'Israeli' gas agreement is highly ambiguous logistically, administratively, and financially."

- The 2021 State of the Country report by the same council stated: "The direct burning project for oil shale by the Al-Attarat Company is currently being implemented. It is one of the strategic projects in the energy sector due to its utilization of local energy sources."

- Finally, the Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources, Engineer Saleh Kharabsheh, predicted that the electricity sector's losses would reach ten billion dinars by 2030. The value of energy generator imports at the end of 2022 was approximately 3.5 billion dinars, while the government shows little interest in importing gas from Gulf countries rich in it, such as Qatar, the UAE, and Algeria, at competitive prices.

This is just a glimpse of the energy crisis in Jordan and the corruption and waste of funds associated with it. All of this stems from the political positions employed by the regime in its subservience and submission to the Western colonialists, led by America and Europe, along with their allies, who disregard Allah and morality. These include governments and

men who have sold their afterlife for the worldly gains of subservient rulers who show no regard for Allah or morality. Based on the above, we clarify the following:

- The core of the problem lies in the political system and the complete lack of political will when it comes to utilizing the country's resources, along with the procrastination, deception, and corruption in economic projects that could help the country's economy.

- Oil shale in Jordan is one of the inexhaustible minerals and is public property for all citizens. Therefore, the state should not grant ownership of it to individuals or companies. Instead, it must extract these minerals itself on behalf of the Muslims and in care of their affairs, and everything extracted should be owned collectively by all citizens.

- The circumstances faced by the people of Jordan amid the war on Gaza and Palestine—where the armed forces are shackled from aiding them, and the regime stands by the Zionist entity, providing it with life support through a land bridge for food supplies and continuing its economic projects with it—place Jordan and its people at the mercy of a ruthless and reckless enemy. This enemy would not hesitate to cut off electricity and water in a potential war if the conflict expands. This situation necessitates serious and sincere opposition to anyone who wastes the country's resources and works in the interest of its enemies.

- Although the people of Jordan, with their own capabilities, could live a better economic life than the current dire situation caused by the Jordanian regime, the ultimate solution to the crises facing Jordan and other countries lies in establishing the Khilafah (Caliphate) on the method of the Prophethood. This would make these lands parts of a single state, integrating their resources and launching projects to harness energy, funded internally without foreign dominance or debt. The Caliph would govern with the Islamic system, including the economic system.

O Muslims in Jordan: You have reached the pinnacle of humiliation and disgrace, and the regime in Jordan has greatly oppressed you. It steals the sustenance of your children, seizes your properties, plunders your wealth, and conspires against your Ummah for the benefit of the Zionist entity and the kufar West, while you remain silent, taking no action, which only emboldens it in its tyranny and oppression!

O Muslims in Jordan: There is no salvation for you from your current state except through the Khilafah (Caliphate). It is the command of your Rabb, the source of your honor, the vanquisher of your enemy, and the liberator of your land. It is the Khilafah that will protect your country and its resources, and safeguard the public properties that Allah Almighty has made a right for you.

﴿وَاللَّهُ غَالِبٌ عَلَىٰ أَمْرِهِ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

“And Allah is predominant over His affair, but most of the people do not know.”

[Yusuf:21]

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