

‘Jordan Gate’ would not normalize Jordan-Israel ties — ex-Israeli envoy

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AMMAN — The former Israeli ambassador and member of the **Institute for National Security Studies** in Tel Aviv, **Oded Eran**, expressed doubt that accelerating a neglected project to build a joint Israeli-Jordanian industrial zone straddling the banks of the Jordan River, recently announced by Israel, would improve the normalization of relations between the two countries.

“I am hesitant to say this signifies a normalizing of relations between Israelis and Jordanians,” Eran told The Circuit news site last week.

“However, if this project does finally come to a conclusion, it will be an important step, psychologically, because it has become a lingering symbol of the failure of the relations between Israel and Jordan.”

“I think that in the Jordan-Israel context, this industrial park is very important and should not be underestimated,” said Eran, who served as the Israeli ambassador in Amman from 1997 to 2000, and was head of the Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations delegation in 1999–2000.

“General unemployment in Jordan stands at 25 percent, while for women and the younger generation it reaches 50 percent, so every additional place of employment is important, and in general, it is important for Jordan’s economy,” he explained.

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