



Jordan Tourism Board

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For immediate release

Jordan Tourism Board refuses link to regional turmoil

Jordan continues to be a safe tourist destination

Jordan's tourism sector is keeping a close eye on regional political developments while assuring its international partners that the Kingdom remains to be a very safe destination.

The sector's vigilance was prompted by international news reports covering the turmoil in Tunisia and Egypt which seems to have created some fears amongst international travelers to the region.

Jordan's Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities said it was leading an effort to clarify such reports and show that the Kingdom, while part of the Middle East, remains to be a very safe destination. In a statement to the local media, the Ministry said it was working with the Jordan Tourism Board (JTB), the Jordan Hotel Association (JHA), and The Jordan Inbound Tour Operators Association (JITOA) to correct any misconceptions or wrong perceptions that might arise from the global media's attention to the region.

The Jordan Tourism Board has issued a statement refusing linking Jordan to the current developments in Tunisia and Egypt, and stressing the Kingdom's long and credible history of being "an oasis of stability" despite a "turbulent" region.

JTB Managing Director Nayef Al-Fayez criticized any linking of Jordan to regional developments and said the Kingdom remains to be a safe destination. He said "tourists from all over the world continue to enjoy Jordan's countless and priceless treasures, as well as its unique and internationally renowned hospitality."

Mr. Al-Fayez also criticized any attempt to link the progress of Jordan's democratic reforms with the "political unrest" in Egypt and Tunisia. The JTB Managing Director said Jordan is a modern country that has been going through various stages of reform that was started by His Majesty King Abdullah II since he assumed his constitutional powers.



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He said some international media reports included references to protests spilling over to Jordan and that Jordan was a “victim” of political unrest, which he said was absolutely false, and irresponsible. “Any such link or characterization is not objective, is certainly unfair, and does great injustice to everything that Jordan stands for”, he added.

The president of the Jordan Hotel Association (JHA) Michel Nazzal expressed concern that the stereotypes of the region could frighten off tourists and cause unwarranted cancellations. He said Jordan remains to be a safe tourist destination for all tourists, and that some of the tour operators have moved their trips to Jordan.

His remarks were echoed by the Jordan Inbound Tour Operators Association. JITOA spokesman Muhannad Malhas said some groups were evacuated to Jordan while others diverted their programs to the Kingdom which they said was safe for their tourists.

Press reports and statements have revealed that some scheduled Red Sea cruises have changed their itineraries and are concentrating on calls at Jordan’s Red Sea city of Aqaba, from where tourists can visit attractions like Wadi Rum and World Wonder Petra.

The Jordan Tourism Board has said the Kingdom is blessed with a strategic location that places it in the heart of the Middle East, and at the crossroads of civilizations. It said, sometimes, this can have an adverse effect when “stereotypes” place us in the heart of a “turbulent” region. It stressed that Jordan has always prevailed as a safe, secure, and hospitable destination.

Jordan’s tourism sector has shown impressive growth patterns. During 2010, total arrivals grew by almost 20% over 2009 to reach 4.6 million overnight visitors (8.2 million total arrivals including day visitors). Visitors from the Americas grew by 12.0%, Europe by 22.3%, Asia-Pacific by 25.4%, while Asia scored a 31.2% increase during 2010.

We look forward to another successful year, and welcome you all to Jordan.