

SOCIETAL VIOLENCE IN JORDAN

REASONS AND SOLUTIONS

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Preface

Societal Violence in Jordan

Jordan has recently witnessed a noticeable rise in incidents of societal violence which manifest in different ways, ranging from verbal acts of violence and vandalism to shootings or even murder. These acts of societal violence find their expressions in sexual assaults of students, violence in schools and universities, destruction of private or public property, and inter-tribal conflicts. Reports from 2011 show that about one million unlicensed firearms circulate in Jordan. This increasing physical violence is also accompanied with a rise in verbal violence, especially in the social media. In this context, however, one must take into account that societal violence is a global problem which not restricted to a specific country or society. Yet, societal violence affects citizens, properties and possibly also the security of the nation; and will lead to the diminishment of the rule of law.

What are the reasons for this significant amount of societal violence in Jordan? What are its impacts? What is the role of state, society and individuals in order to facing this dangerous grievance?

This book sheds light on the factors of violence from different perspectives: the political, economical and social. Above all, practical approaches to solve the rising societal violence in Jordan should be pointed out. Thus, the book presents one step to meet these major challenges to the Jordanian society in order to raise public awareness and prevent instability of the country.

“Societal Violence in Jordan: Reasons and Solutions” is the outcome of the successful cooperation between the Action on Societal Violence – KAFA and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung’s Jordan Office, a product of the fruitful seminar organized by the two institutions in September 2013.

Konrad Adenauer Stiftung is a political foundation promoting democracy, rule of law, and social market economy. Partners are, amongst others, civil society organisations like KAFA which was established as a non-profit company in 2012, in response to the increase in societal violence in Jordan.

The authors of this contribution have diverse backgrounds, ranging from politics, economics, sociology and civil service; and are professionals in different areas of specializations therefore presenting varying approaches to solve the phenomena of societal violence in Jordan.

I would like to thank Mrs. Lina Abu Nuwar and KAFA for the successful cooperation in this topic. Our recent experience has shown that the relationship between our organizations is invaluable and unique. Furthermore I would like to thank the participants and authors, whose contributions only made this book possible. The articles of so many respected authors from various backgrounds show the significance of the topic. I am convinced of the importance of this book and hope that we can apply the results of this book in the near future.

I wish you an insightful reading and look forward to further interesting and fruitful discussions.

March 2014, Dr. Otmar Oehring

Introduction

Jordan has witnessed an increase in societal violence in the past few years. A shift in paradigm may be occurring in the country with people more likely to resort to violence, instead of the law, to solve their disputes. More and more incidents occur where fists, knives, batons, guns and Molotov cocktails are used by civilians against each other and against police. Violent riots causing damage to private and public properties, as well as clashes, are on the rise on the streets of Jordan. We are also seeing a huge increase in brawls at universities and schools, often resulting in fatalities, injuries, destruction of property and the disruption of education for days.

On the short run, violence infringes on human rights, affects social cohesion and livelihoods and obstructs the educational process when they occur in universities and schools. On the long run, it will hamper development in all areas, including in political reforms towards further democracy, and will also put a stress on the oftentimes already meager economic, and public health sectors.

Action on Societal Violence- Kafa was established in response to this emerging phenomenon in the country as an organized attempt to pre-empt it from developing into an intrinsic part of the social norm. We are aware of the enormity of our stated mission and the challenges ahead, but we feel that it is part of our civic duty to do something before it is too late.

The Seminar on Societal violence in Jordan: Reasons and Solutions was organized by Kafa and Konrad Adenauer Foundation in

2013. It was brought together representatives of relevant public institutions, civil society, as well as activists who formulated a number of recommendations to end the phenomenon of societal violence in the country.

This book presents the working papers presented by specialists in their respective fields of politics, economics, sociology, as well as the role of the Jordanian Ministry of Interior in this regard. It also includes the final report and recommendations of the seminar. Action on Societal Violence- KAFA wishes to thank the speakers at the seminar as well as all the participants, for enriching its deliberation, and rendering the event a big success. Our thanks also go to Konrad Adenauer Foundation- Amman Office, for its continuous support of our work.

Lina Abu Nuwar Ghazi
Director of Action on Societal Violence- KAFA

Societal Violence: Definition, Manifestations, Reasons and Solutions

Eng. Musa Maayta – Member of the Jordanian Upper House of Parliament

The Definition of Societal Violence and its Manifestations

Societal violence is an abusive behaviour that is based on the denial of others, and is practiced through physical and verbal abuse, assault, and transgression against the law, in order to achieve illegal personal benefits. The phenomenon of societal violence in our society (group fights, crimes, and university violence) has been constantly, and dramatically increasing over the years, and has reached an alarming level, especially that it has changed from individual conflicts or crimes, to the formation of violent groups of students or parents, and sometimes against the government institutions or members of the police force.

During such incidents, tribal, sectarian or even national prejudices are provoked. What is most dangerous about this phenomenon is that the majority of those who are acting with violence are the youth and university students. Violence has spread to all the other sectors, including representative organizations (Parliament).

Physical and verbal abuse is becoming more and more common among those who are considered the political elite, whether it is during their deliberations within the parliament, or the various talk shows (the use of weapons).

The Reasons of Societal Violence:

The most prominent studies carried out on societal violence all indicate that there are social, economic, legal and political reasons for this phenomenon. Namely, they stem from a feeling of injustice, and lack of equality with regards to many rights, in addition to frustration regarding public administration especially with regard to job opportunities, daily undertakings, and acceptance at universities due to the widespread nepotism and preferential treatment. All this has led to a lack of trust in public institutes, especially the elected ones, like the parliament, the various political parties, and civil society organizations.

Additionally, the economic changes that Jordan has undergone over the past two decades, and the resulting privatization, diminishing role of the public sector, and the appearance of massive wealth among a small group of people at the expense of the majority, have all led to an increase in the percentages of poverty, and a rise in the rates of unemployment especially among the youth who are most vulnerable to carry out acts of violence. Obviously, poverty does not lead to security, and unemployment does not lead to safety, on the contrary, they are the perfect breeding grounds for the appearance of violence and rebellion.

As for the legal reasons of societal violence, they revolve around the lack of legal awareness among the majority of the people, and their ignorance of the law as the only legal method of acquiring rights. In addition to a feeling of mistrust among groups of people regarding the application of the law equally on all, and this causes people to resort to violence to get what is rightfully theirs by their own hands.

Additionally, changes occurred during the early 1990s on the role of the government, and by this I mean the economy, whereby the various government institutions were, until then, the employers of a major sector of the work force. However, this role began to recede since the economic changes gave the private sector a bigger role to play, especially after the privatization of most of the industrial and commercial sectors that the government owned.

Some of the political elite tried to force the Jordanian government to give up its role in the organization of the social and economic situation; the provision of the basic services (education and healthcare), in addition to providing equal opportunities for the youth and allowing them to become part of the work force, which further increased the tension.

Moreover, the economic transformation that began in the early 1990's was not accompanied by any political openness, and the process of political openness and reform was moving very slowly. This came with a remarkable increase in nepotism and favoritism, and a feeling that social justice was missing among people, and from one region to another. The government and social organizations also failed to develop a democratic pluralism based on political parties and civil models of political work, all of which unite the people and render their differences politically based.

The failure to develop political life has led to an increase in the role of sub-identities (regional, tribal and sectarian) in the local communities, as well as on a political and social level. Many have replaced the civil and political frameworks with the traditional frameworks to achieve political and social ambitions and benefits.

This gave rise to attempts to employ these loyalties to achieve personal benefits among those who are ambitious to succeed socially or politically.

One of the major contributors to the situation we are in today is the Electoral Law, whereby the employment of the tribe or even its sub-components in the parliamentary and local elections has become one of the reasons for the appearance of violence, especially among the youth and the students. What made matters worse was the amendments that occurred on the number of electoral districts in 2003, and the division of governorates into small districts, which turned the elections into a competition among representatives of sub identities who worked on provoking primal emotions. Even the larger cities, like Amman, did not go untouched by this, and people resorted to family ties and ethnic origins for election purposes. Ultimately, this led to the absence of group work in all the political and social sectors.

The changes in the various Arab countries (the Arab Spring) also contributed to the increase in societal violence, whereby the democratic rights of assembly and demonstration to express a political stance or demand, was confused with the abuse of this right through resorting to violence, attacking public property, and banditry to defend individual interests. What is happening during the high schools examinations (Tawjihi) may be the best example of this.

Some media channels are playing an obvious role in inciting this tension and provoking it among people in their day-to-day life. Mobile phones have become a means of constant contact hour upon hour, and have become a means for transferring domestic

issues into the workplace, or to the car while the person is driving, and texting or calling. Additionally, some of the foreign and dubbed series and programs are exposing viewers to a world of violence without limits, laws, consequences, penalties, or moral restraints, whereby the perpetrators are practicing the exclusion, denial and annihilation of the other with ease and pleasure, and are in this manner acquiring the admiration of the viewers as heroes. On the other hand, reality TV, and their focus on the day-to-day details have given suicide an entertainment status among the people, who watch it hour by hour.

The Solution for Social Violence

The treatment of societal violence, which is constantly increasing, requires promoting and consolidating the culture of law and the rule of law regarding all individuals in society, and ensuring that fairness and justice prevail in employment, by eradicating favoritism and nepotism inside and outside institutions. Additionally, this requires a commitment to apply the rules and regulations firmly, and with fairness and justice, and evaluate decisions made by government officials and hold them accountable to all that they do. As for relationships at home and among neighbors, the various educational institutions, and public places such as malls, shopping centers, on the road, and places that are densely populated, it is very important to focus on instilling the concepts of morality and ethics when dealing with one another, in addition to tolerance, forgiveness, respect of others, using dialogue to solve problems, and respect for the right of the other to get what they need in quantities that will preserve their dignity, time and feeling. All of this should be done within a framework of a sense of collective belonging to one nation, the

united Jordanian identity, and real citizenship which guarantees equality and dignity to all individuals and groups.

Some people think that the ideal way solve the problem of societal violence, is to make penalties stricter. Therefore the Penal Law was amended, through Temporary Law (No. 12) of 2010, to face violence, with more severe punishments for those who physically attack, threaten or raise a weapon in the face of a public servant while on duty. The amendments were further expanded to include those in the private sector as well. Undoubtedly, more severe punishment will not lead to the eradication of societal violence in its various forms, if this is not accompanied with the realization of social justice among the people, the correct application of the law by the judiciary system, especially given the slow procedures of the court proceeding, and the passive role that judges play during legal conflicts, all of which hinder the prevalence of justice.

Judges must be given more authority to manage court cases in order to seek the truth and achieve justice, since many legal systems agree that a more positive role by the judges will help expedite proceedings. This will also make the person who is fighting for a right within the judicial system feel the speediness with which his case is being dealt with and the speed in reaching a decision. Thus, it is imperative to create new means to expedite the implementation of court sentences since a society without law is equal to a society whereby laws are not implemented.

As for the feelings of mistrust in the judicial system due to the slowness in realizing justice, it will create a negative reaction, and will cause people to go back to the old ways of realizing justice, like revenge and taking the law into their own hands, or by using illegal methods to regain rights, thus creating more violence due to these feelings of oppression and injustice.

It is well known that the state, in its modern sense, must bear the responsibility of realizing justice between the people, and implementing and protecting the law. The job to undertake this task is one of the most important jobs of the state. It is the judicial task that is conducted within the various judicial entities which are monopolized by the state, are a manifestation of its authority, and with the Judicial Authority being one of the three major authorities of any state.

Therefore, the prestige of the law should be reinstated, since it represents the prestige of the state. This is done by ensuring the rule of law above everyone without bias or prejudice towards any person or entity (society, community, university.)

The state was in charge of the economic reform process at the beginning of the 1990's; therefore political reform is also the responsibility of the state. This requires amending the basic laws that are relevant to political action, especially the Elections Law which could play a role in decreasing these social tensions. Therefore, we require an Elections Law that meets the following objectives:

- Create an environment for the people to work as one group or team, and contribute to the realization of the social fabric, and decrease sub-loyalties, whether they are regional, tribal or sectarian.
- Contribute to the realization of an efficient democracy based on political justice, and supported by political parties.

- Lead to a parliament comprising political parties and program-based blocs with clear political, economic and social orientation.
- Finally, to contribute to the formation of a Parliamentary Government based on a party majority within the Parliament, with a minority of opposition forming a shadow government to monitor and hold the majority government accountable.

Social Violence in Jordan

The Causes and the Solutions from an Economic Point of View

Dr. Khalid Wasif Al Wazani – Chief Economist

The Jordanian Economy: Facts and Challenges

In economic terms, the Jordanian economy is considered a small open economy from regional and international perspectives. This has constantly caused numerous impacts on the Jordanian economy, mainly in turning this economy into a mirror image of the developments occurring in the Arab countries, namely economic, social and political changes. However, since the late 1990's Jordan has become more and more linked with the international economy, especially after becoming a member in the World Trade Organization, and after having signed numerous free trade agreements with many countries of the world, particularly the United States of America and Canada, in addition to becoming a member, since the start of this millennium, in the European Partnership Agreement. All of this has had a direct impact on the Jordanian economy, which is now not only affected by the changes in the Arab world, but also by what goes on internationally.

Probably, the changes that stormed the global economy since the last quarter of the year 2008, in addition to the European economic crisis which began in Greece at the beginning of 2010, have all had a direct impact on the national economy in Jordan, namely on the growth rate of per capita income in the country, which has declined from 5% during the years 2005-2008 to less than 1% during the years 2010-2013.

It is worth mentioning that the Jordanian economy, like all other economies in the Arab region, has a young population structure that exceeds two thirds of the population of the country, which is an economic capacity that is educated, qualified, and technologically-connected with the outside world (See Table (1) below for the most important economic and social indicators in Jordan).

Table (1) The Most Important Economic and Social Indicators in Jordan for the year 2012

Indicator	2012
Population growth %	2.2
The largest governorates in terms of the percentage of the population.	Amman (38.7), Irbid (17.8) and Zarqa (14.9)
The time needed for the population of Jordan to double (years)	31.5
The percentage of the population below the age of 15	37.3
The percentage of the population aged between 15-64	59.5
Average size of a family (persons)	5.4
The rate of illiteracy among those aged 15 years and above	6.7
The percentage of working women aged 15 years and above	16.7
Percentage of the houses linked to the electricity network	99.9
The percentage of families that own a personal computer or a laptop	57.7
The percentage of families that have internet access (%)	47.3
The percentage of families that own cell/smart phones	98.2
The percentage of families that own a television (%)	98.9

The Jordanian economy has always relied on the vital role of the private sector in the development process, since it is a mixed economy whose economic development roles are shared by the private sector and the public sector. It is, therefore, important to refer to the vital role that the Jordanian state plays as the legislator, organizer, and monitor of the market in light of the market liberalization, the freedom of capital transfer, and also the freedom of labor mobility to a large degree. What probably distinguishes the Jordanian economy is based on two basic issues; the presence of a higher political will that continuously supports the economic process and the partnership between the public and private sectors to ensure creativity and initiative, and the ability to resist and face all the challenges that the economy has encountered during its developmental process, and turning these challenges to opportunities that help in the development of the national economy.

However, the Jordanian economy, from its early days, has suffered from many economic distortions and imbalances, the most important of which is the distortions in the public budget deficit, and the balance of payments, or what is known as the internal and external gap. There is also the structural imbalance in the unemployment which has characterized the economy since the early 1980's, in addition to the distortion of the woman's participation rate in the national economy, the challenges in the investment environment in the country, and last but not least, the imbalance in the social security network in the country, especially during the past 6 years. We shall discuss some of the indicators that are linked to these distortions and imbalances in the following section of this study.

Some Macro Socio-Economic Indicators in Jordan

Table (2) below shows the economic growth rates during the period 2005-2010, which have been divided into 3 stages: the period prior to the global financial crisis, the period during the global crisis, and the period from 2011 when the popular movements in the region, or what is called the “Arab Spring”, began.

In light of the population growth rate indicated in Table (1) above, the indicators of Table (2) show that there has been a tangible increase in per capital income of the individuals during the first period, about 6% annually, and a growth of about 2.5% annually during the 2008-2010 period, and then a period of relatively constant rate since the year 2011. All of which reflects the impact of the regional and international economic development on the Jordanian economy, proving it as a mirror image of what is happening economically, socially and politically, on a regional and international level.

Table (2) The Real Economic Growth Indicators for the period 2005-2012

The Period	Percentage
2005-2007	8.24
2008-2010	4.96
2011-2012	2.70

Additionally, Table (3) shows more economic and social indicators in Jordan during the year 2012, as per the available official statistics. It is obvious from this table that the indicators of eradicating illiteracy and the dissemination of education in Jordan have progressed dramatically. The table also reflects the current challenges in the field of unemployment, poverty and the indicators in the state's public budget deficit and its sustainability.

The figures indicate an increase in the rate of unemployment to about 13% in 2012, as opposed to 11% in the previous year. We also see an increase in the fiscal deficit, including government and independent institutions, to about 16% of the gross domestic product (GDP), which is three times the deficit recorded in the year 2006, and five times the deficit that is acceptable internationally. Additionally, the size of the public debt compared to the GDP is more than 78%, which poses a real danger to the national economy given the structure and the source of this debt. Structurally, it is a debt whose basic aim is to cover the current expenditure, and the source shows that the larger part of this debt is a commercial. The two facts mean that this debt is not likely to generate any new income, or revenues which can be used to pay off debts in the future, and on the other hand, it is a real burden to the budget because it is basically from a commercial source.

Table (3) Some Socio-Economic Indicators for the year 2012

The Indicator	2012 Estimates
The Gross Domestic Product (Million Dinars)	20912 (growth rate of 3%)
The population	6.4
Life expectancy:	
Males:	71.6
Females:	74.4
Rate of illiteracy among those aged 15 years and more:	3.7%
Males:	10.3%
Females:	
Rate of unemployment in 2012:	13%
Males:	10.5%
Females:	Almost 24%
The public financial indicators:	
Fiscal deficit to GDP (%)	16
The rate of coverage of domestic revenues to the current expenditures	73%
The size of the public debt	16.4 billion JOD
Rate of the public debt to GDP (%)	78%

On the other hand, Table (4) below shows some of the structural distortions in the national economy, especially in the field of the continuous increase in poverty pockets which have risen from 22 pockets in 2006, to more than 36 pockets in 2012, indicating an increase of 64% in the poverty pockets during the last five years, with an average annual increase of about 13%, this should reflect a failure in the policies drafted to eradicate poverty in the country. If we add this to the increase in the unemployment rates, as the official figures quoted in Table (4) show, we will find ourselves faced with what in socially and economically known as the “Twin of Evil”, or the “Twin of Violence”, and they are the fuel that generates violence in any economy. Diagram (1) also

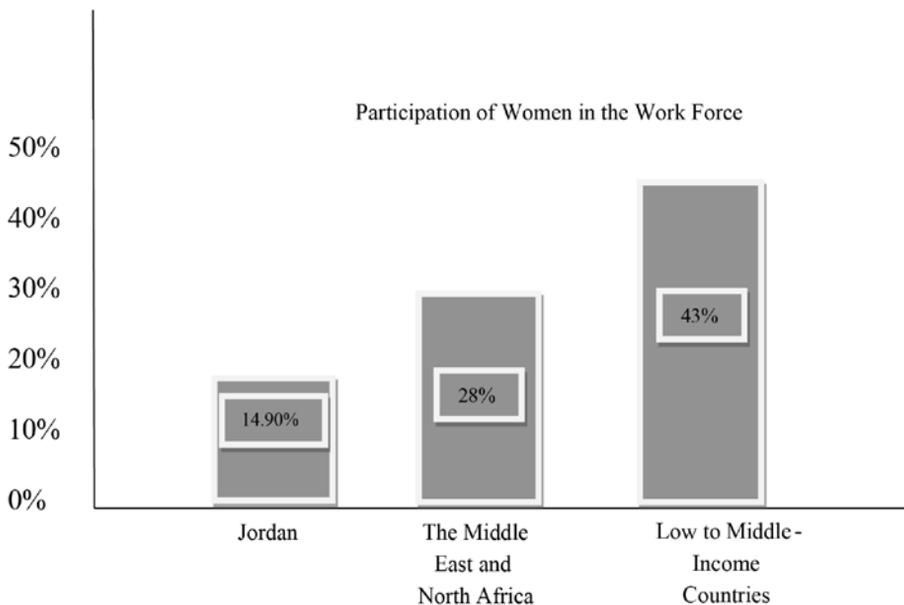
shows the reality of the social economy in the country, which is poor participation of women in the national economy, with Jordan rating among the countries of the Middle East and North Africa who have the lowest participation rate of women in the national economies, with the rate in Jordan barely rising above 15%, whereas the percentage in the Middle East and North Africa is around 28%, while countries with a similar income to Jordan, worldwide, have a percentage of 43%. The social and economic indicators in Jordan, especially since the end of the year 2010, indicate the major challenges that serve to incite all the factors that cause violence to become widespread. During the following section, we shall discuss the most important economic components that cause social violence.

Table No. (4) Indicators of the Main Distortion in the Jordanian Economy

Indicator	2010	2011	2012*
Budget Deficit before foreign assistance as a percentage of GDP	7.7	10.4	16.6
The Overall Public Debt Value (Billion JoD)	11.4	13.1	16.4
Percentage of GDP (%)	59	63	78
Unemployment rate (%)	12	13	13.4
Poverty Pockets 2006-2012	22	32	36
Average Per Capita Income (JD)	3069	3096	3439

*Preliminary Figures

Diagram (1) Women Participation Rate in the National Economy 2011



The Economic Determinants of Social Violence

It is fair to say that the most important economic determinants of societal violence are the unfair distribution of income, the rise in unemployment rate, poverty and poverty pockets in the society, the increase in financial and administrative corruption, the nature and quality of investment in the human capital, and last but not least the empowerment of the rule of the law, and the power of the state.

If we look at the above-mentioned elements, we see in Table (5) below, the distribution of income in Jordan, as per a study conducted by the Economic and Social Council in 2008, which

indicates that more than 50% of the society are considered poor, and 13% of these live under the poverty line, bearing in mind that this percentage has risen in 2012 to more than 14%. The table also indicates that the middle class forms only 41% of the society, and that 85% of this stratum are considered middle to low income, and that most of them are very close to being considered poor. The Table also indicates that the rich do not exceed 8.2% of the Jordanian society.

Group	Average annual expenditure per person (JoD)	Average size of the Family	Percentage of the Population (%)
Below poverty	Less than 680	7.1	13.3
Below the middle class	- 680 <1360	5.8	37.5
The middle class	- 1361 <2000	4.8	35.5
The upper middle class	- 2001 <2720	3.9	5.6
Total middle class	- 1361 <2720	4.5	41.1
The rich	+2721	3.9	8.2

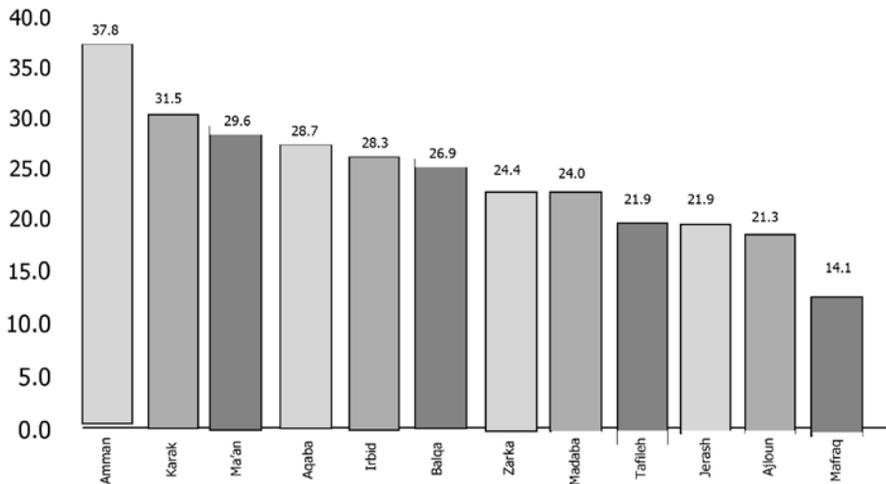
Source: the Economic and Social Council Study 2008

Table (5) also shows that the average family size is inversely proportional to the level of income, and this is a common status in developing societies. Diagram (2) below shows the relative distribution of the middle class in the governorates of the Kingdom, and it is clear that the capital, Amman, comprises the largest number of middle income families, and naturally the largest number of rich families. While in Mafraq, which is considered the second largest governorate in the kingdom, and which is currently suffering for a severe crisis due to the influx of Syrian refugees, only 14% of its residents are middle class families. This means that 85% of those living in this governorate are poor, whether

they fall above or below the poverty line. The diagram also shows that about four fifths of the residents of Ajloun, Jerash, and Tafleeh are poor, and that about three quarters of the residents of Madaba, Zarqa and Balqa, are also poor. Overall, these elements and their implications serve as fertile ground for societal violence. The spread of poverty and the increase in the gap between the different strata of society in this manner is the ideal breeding ground for societal violence, whether this is in universities, in the work place, or even in day-to-day life.

Diagram (2) The relative distribution of the middles class in the Jordanian Society - 2008

The Percentage of Middle Class Families in the Various Governorates



As for the impact of the rate of unemployment on societal violence, economists know that the Twin Evil, poverty and unemployment, have a very negative impact on societies, especially regarding all

forms of societal violence. In the Jordanian case, it is easy to notice that the rate of unemployment has risen over the past decade, in a rather dramatic way exceeding 10%, according to official statistics. The major problem with unemployment in Jordan is that it is a structural burden, meaning that it is the outcome of the mismatch between the outputs of the educational system and the requirements of the work market, and this is an issue that requires the restructuring of the educational system on the one hand, and the mapping of a work market that is consistent with the quality of the Jordanian graduate, on the other. Both entail a restructuring process that will need 5 to 10 years to bear fruit.

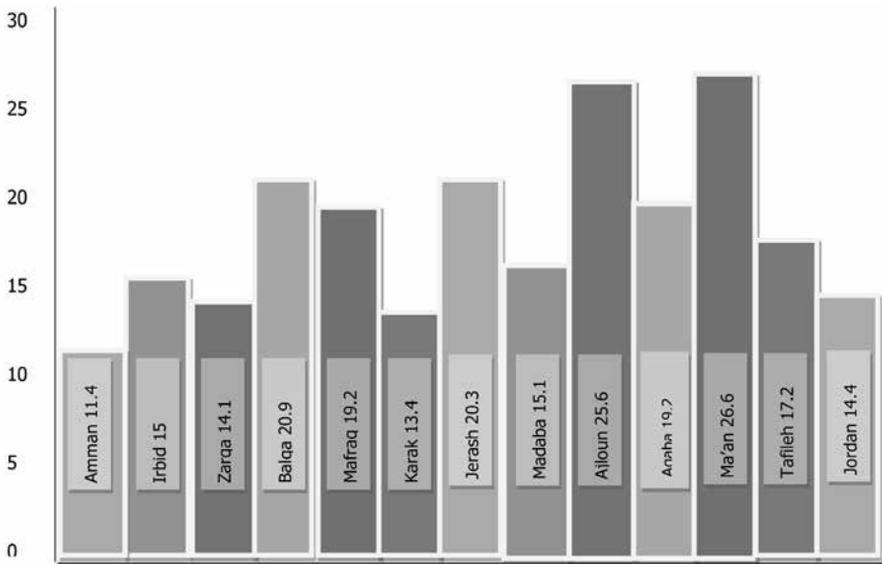
It is also obvious that no one is doing anything to repair this imbalance in Jordan, which consequently leads to its escalation without any real solution, and this makes it yet another fertile environment for the emergence of societal violence and hostility. This is especially true for university graduates who are compelled to work in jobs that are not consistent with their academic qualification, often for low salaries. As for the other dilemma regarding unemployment, and its social impact, it is that the unemployment rate among the Jordanian youth is one of the highest in the world (2013 figures), reaching to about 30% among youth aged 15-19, whereas the international unemployment rate for this age group is barely 13%, while regionally this figure stands at about 28%. As for the unemployment rate among 20-24 year olds, this is about 29.1% in Jordan, also making it one of the highest regionally and internationally.

It is a well-known fact that unemployment among the youth is the most dangerous type of unemployment, since this too creates a fertile breeding ground for all forms of societal delinquency and

violence, given all the possible directions that these youth could be pulled towards by different parties which may pose a serious threat to societies, their culture and modes of thinking and life.

Going back to poverty, and its impact together with its twin, unemployment, we see in table (5) above that the Jordanian society suffers from an increase and spread in the numbers of the poor, forming about one half of the society, in addition to a low-income-middle class, both of which form about 85% of the population. It is well known that the poverty rate has risen from 13.3% in 2008 to about 14.4 in 2012, and the poverty pockets have increased from 22 in 2006, to 36 in 2012. This means that the number of poverty pockets have risen by 64% over the past five years. As for the poverty rates, they have risen by more than 8% according to official figures, with an annual increase of 2% per annum, during the years from 2008 to 2012. The bottom line of all this is that poverty is one of the most important stimulants of all forms of violence, the criminal, the societal, and the violence in universities and work places. Diagram (3) shows the poverty rates in the various governorates of Jordan, according to the official figures available for the year 2010 from the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation. We notice that the highest poverty rates in Jordan are in Ma'an, Ajloun, and Mafraq.

Diagram (3) Poverty Rates in the Jordanian Governorates - 2010



The outburst of the popular movement in the region gave birth to various forms of societal violence, which was the result of the increased use of the concept of corruption, without having any concrete and objective facts in many instances; and the increased number of demonstrations and strikes, both peaceful and violent. More than 691 sit-ins and strikes in 2012 were counted. It was obvious in many cases of alleged corruption that the media played an ostentatious role, and overshadowed the objective investigative and professional role that it should play when dealing with such cases. Technically in cases of corruption, the investigation should be secret and the trial public, but what happened was the exact opposite, and these cases turned into character assassinations and not investigations. Actually, the fact that the investigations were not kept a secret allowed some of the corruption cases to flee before any real, criminal investigation was conducted. I think that the eradication of societal violence from the perspective of

administrative counter corruption and the dignity of the state, necessitates the establishment of a Jordanian integrated system that focuses on integrity, transparency, and good governance, which will strive to uproot corruption, prevent it from reoccurring, and allows the judicial system to handle the real cases of corruption.

Finally, financial and administrative corruption, and the decline in the power of the executive authority are two very important factors that cause the eruption of all forms of societal violence. This by itself is a representation of what is called a soft state where unbalanced, unjust, rentier system prevail, and whereby each individual decides what are his or her rights and his responsibilities, and decides how he or she shall obtain his or her rights without any respect for the law or the system. Whereas a state governed by its laws and institutions is a state where the executive authority can maintain its prestige by implementing the law among its entire people, by treating everyone equally and fairly, and by being transparent and honest when making its decisions. As opposed to this, a soft state involves an executive authority that strives to realize special benefits for specific individuals, and favors one group of people at the expense of another, thus compelling people to take their rights in accordance to their own understanding of “rights and responsibilities” and to take the decision on what they want and how to obtain it. In the end the presence of an authority like this, societal violence is bound to occur.

On the other hand, when talking about the importance of investment in human capital, as one of the most important factors that helps in the eradication of societal violence, it is evident that focusing on the nature of the investment is very important. This

means that we need to improve the standard of the individual who emerges from the educational system in Jordan, within a value system that is based on the quality of the Jordanian citizen who is considered the most important economic resource in the country.

Thus, improving the quality of this resource starts with improving the quality of the education, the quality of its outputs, and giving great attention to the inputs and outputs of the educational process in the country, which has been open to questioning for quite a long time. The cheating that goes on, nation-wide, during the high school (Tawjihi) examinations is only one of the faces of societal violence that are so obvious in Jordan, and which is increasing in an alarming manner every year. The reformation of education, through the improvement and development of the educational process, which includes teachers, students and the teaching methods, is the key to resist the spread of societal violence. In fact, education reform is considered as the first step towards any real economic, political and social reform worldwide. In all cases, economics is the science of alternatives, and for every opportunity seized as part of this science, there is an opportunity that is lost that should be evaluated. On a realistic base, not dealing with elements pertaining to societal violence will result in the loss of several economic and social opportunities, which should be carefully considered in order to identify the real cost of societal violence on the economy; and this what we shall discuss in brief in the following section.

The Opportunity Cost of Societal Violence

The idea of opportunity cost from an economic point of view is based on the calculation of lost revenues that result from making a decision while foregoing an alternative decision. Here, we can project the concept of opportunity cost to study the impact of not treating societal violence and its economic elements on the national economy, and the cost that are incurred as a result of failing to treat the said economic elements which we discussed above, and which reinforce the thought around societal violence in the economy. We can start by saying that societal violence, and the energy it consumes in youth is a direct waste of the human resources in an economy which badly needs all productive resources that are able to be of added value to the national economy. Whether this waste of energy comes in the form of criminal violence, or any other form of violence; or education of a low quality, or of an educational system producing human resources that are inefficiently productive. This all means that the economy will sacrifice the most important elements of its productivity, development and prosperity. Therefore, the mismanagement of economic resources reflects a weakness in the production of these resources, and their inability to enhance their contribution to the GDP of the country.

On the other hand, all forms of societal violence, the loss in the power of law and institutions, and the increase in poverty and unemployment rates, are all a recipe for the loss of investment in any country. Whether we are talking about local or foreign investments, neither will prosper in an environment where the power of the executive authority is declining, where poverty and unemployment are increasing, and where the human resources

are neither professionally nor academically qualified. Despite the fact that societal violence was never a widespread phenomenon in the Jordanian economy, the occurrence of violence in universities, in the workplace, and in the business field, especially during the last few years, means that it is of utmost importance to deal with these cases in order to prevent them from spreading. This can be achieved through a comprehensive social and economic reform system, which begins with reforming all the levels of the educational system, and linking it in a realistic manner with the requirement of the national economy. Finally, societal violence is a group of negative social phenomena which lead to a decline in the economic performance of the state, and result in the demise of economic and social development, and thus the loss of numerous development economic opportunities in the society.

Concluding Remarks: A Matrix of Economic Values in Dealing with Societal Violence

Finally, it is worth saying that there is a constant need to enact an integrated system, or matrix, of economic requirements that serves to enhance the standard of dealing with societal violence in any economy, and which will contribute to alleviating the economic and social impact of these phenomena on the economic and social development of any country. We can summarize the most important components of this matrix in the following:

- The importance of improving the education system, at all levels, especially the basic level. The reform of the educational system is the pillar of economic and social reforms of any country. This involves reforming the infrastructure and the superstructure of the educational system, meaning the teaching/learning methods and the

tangible structure of education like schools, laboratories, and financial resources, in addition to the quality of the education, the curriculum and the students.

- The importance of focusing on transparency, accountability and integrity in all private and public transactions, and identifying a specialized entity to disseminate the concept and system of transparency and integrity without stigmatizing the economy as financially and administratively corrupt in the absence of any realistic and actual facts.
- To strive to use the technological means of communication to spread moral and virtuous social values.
- To pay attention to decentralized development programs that aim to reach poverty pockets, and marginalized groups in society, and raise their capacities so they can become part of the society, and contribute to the national economy, in the context of concepts of leadership, creativity, and the development of small and medium-sized projects, and finding the proper investment for them. All of this will contribute to the integration of these communities in the national economy instead of leaving them to fall victim of all kinds of recruitment and polarization.

The qualitative investment in human capital at all levels of human productivity, in accordance to an on-going learning and professional process, throughout all the levels of human productivity, starting from home and ending with the professional life, and even beyond retirement in many cases, since the incorporation of human energy does not cease to exist at a certain age or stage in life.

- True investment in the methods of empowering women

in society, considering them one of the tools of the national economy, and a necessity for developing a society economically, socially and politically. Women in Jordan, according to statistics, make up half the population and they make up more than half of the university graduates in the country. Therefore, empowering women means empowering the national economy and allowing it to prosper and gain more added value, which will ultimately lead to a growth in the GDP of the country, and will create more income for every individual in the society.

- Enhance the capabilities of the Jordanian Economy in dealing with challenges, and resisting them. In addition to strengthening the economy's ability to manage crises in an efficient manner, and create opportunities by improving performance and planning. This can be accomplished by drafting short, middle, and long-term plans that serve to enhance the benefits of the youth in society, and seize the population opportunities which shall reach its peak in 2030-2050, ensuring that the economy and the society will benefit from this opportunity instead of letting it become a population crisis by the year 2030.
- Last but not least, the current stage requires the pooling of the efforts of all the active economic units in the private and public sectors, the government, and the civil society organizations in order to draft a comprehensive system of work ethics and moral principles that will be able to resist all forms of societal violence, and that strives to integrate all the strata of society within a civil national system that is based on the civil rights of the society, the civil and institutional responsibilities, and the rule of law.

Societal Violence in Jordan

Societal Violence from a Social Viewpoint

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Introduction

Social phenomena do not occur on the spur of a moment, and are not linked to one cause only. They are a cumulative process that requires several factors, and internal and objective reasons in order to grow and become an event that can be researched and whose causes can be sought. Consequently, it then becomes possible to find solutions for this phenomenon consistent with its force and impact on society. Additionally, such phenomena are not subject to testing standards in a laboratory, nor is there a right and wrong way to measure them.

These phenomena are linked to human behavior that is affected by political, social, cultural, environmental and economic circumstances. It is also a changing phenomenon, and does not come in one single form. Therefore, research into the human phenomena requires the study of all the circumstances and causes that lead to the appearance of a phenomenon, and only from this complex angle, can it be explained.

In the case of Jordan, the most important questions are: is societal violence a Phenomenon in the Jordanian Society? Or are the conflicts that are happening here and there just incidents that are caused by temporary circumstances that could be abolished? Did the media contribute to the escalation of this phenomenon?

These intertwined questions are a good reason to explain this phenomenon, and portray it in its natural frame, in order to identify the reasons and causes that lead to the increase of this problem, which could, in the long run, become alarming, if the causes are not identified, and solutions are not found.

The Linguistic Meaning and Definition of Violence

To begin with, it is of utmost importance to give the linguistic meaning and definition of any social phenomenon, and violence, like any other phenomenon, requires a very detailed and specific definition, and a knowledgeable identification of its causes, reasons, factors and implications. This is important because we cannot identify the nature of the roots and factors that caused this phenomenon to appear, without a clear and accurate scientific explanation.

The Linguistic Meaning

Violence, linguistically, is the opposite of mildness or gentleness. This means that violence is in fact the opposite of compassion, and appears as the use of force against another person, whether verbal or physical. Some of the sayings of the Prophet (PBUH) define compassion as the opposite of violence. The Prophet (PBUH) says “God is compassionate and loves compassion, and rewards you for compassion what he does not reward for violence, or anything similar”, and “Whoever prevents compassion will be deprived of goodness.” Thus violence in language means is any force or action that is in opposition to compassion, clemency and leniency.

The Legal Aspect

In terms of criminal legislation, criminal law experts have defined violence on the basis of two theories: the traditional theory, that is limited to physical force, and the modern theory that is prevalent in the criminal doctrine, and which includes force and compulsion, without focusing on the methods, but on the outcome, and involves compelling someone to do something. In light of this, some have defined violence as endangering the body of someone, and that even if the damage is not severe, it is still considered harmful. Others define it as using physical force to cause physical harm to another person. And others still consider it a crime if any forceful method is used to assault another person or his honor, and that violence against assets is not considered a crime unless it involves material methods.

Consequently, violence in the criminal legislations is defined as: any action that endangers the body of the victim, harms or assaults him/her.

Violence from an Islamic Viewpoint

When we look into the definition of violence by religious scholars, we find that, at all levels and throughout history, they do not distinguish between “compulsion” and “violence”, and use both as synonyms.

The scholar, Al Imam Al Sarjasi, defines compulsion as an action done *by one person to another person in which he denies him his satisfaction or spoils his choice*. Along the same lines, Al Imam Al Shafi’, defines compulsion as *“for a man to fall in the hands of someone he is unable to*

escape from, whether it is a ruler, thief, or someone who is dominant, whereby the victim is afraid that should he fail to do what is asked of him, he would be beaten or harmed”.

There is almost a consensus among the scholars that compulsion could be physical when there are threats being launched, therefore threats are considered violent if they imply physical harm to the victim, as opposed to forcing the victim to do something, whereby this is considered “compelling someone to do something”.

In this regard, any of the following are considered acts of violence that should be punishable: preventing someone from eating or drinking, even if this is meant as a form of torture, preventing a traveler from drinking water with the full knowledge that he should not do that, or if he dies of thirst, in which case the person who prevented him from drinking has killed him even if he did not actually kill him with his hands, whether he meant to kill him or just torture him. Additionally, anyone who prevents someone from eating and drinking until he dies, is then obliged to pay “blood money”, which also applies to a mother who prevents her child from suckling until he dies, if she did this to kill him, then she shall be killed, if not, then she is obliged to pay the “blood money”.

Based on the above, we find that violence, from an Islamic viewpoint is achieved when physical force is directed at the victim, in addition to verbal force, threats, neglect and prevention that results in bodily harm to the victim.

Violence from a Social Viewpoint

Violence is defined as: harming someone either physically or verbally, or with action or words, when in a conflict with another. There is no difference between whether the act of violence or harm is committed by an individual or by a group.

Violence is an act of abuse, based on the denial of the other as having a similar value to the self (me) or the group (us) that is worthy of life and respect,. It also concentrates on excluding someone from the scope of domination, either by subjugating him, or excluding him from the game, or by destroying him physically or morally.

Therefore, from a sociological viewpoint, the definition of violence is the denial of the other, the refusal to recognize him/her, and changing him/her into something to serve the “violent” needs. Refusing to recognize someone does not mean not knowing this person, it implies a selective (stereotypical) knowledge, in which the violent perpetrator observes the other and visualizes him/her in a manner that he finds suitable (victim) in order to control him/ her.

Therefore, violence is a social phenomenon that has historical roots. It is produced by the egotistical authoritarianism or the group authoritarianism urged the race to possess the other, in the absence of any form of rationality, democracy or fairness.

The Justice and Crime Encyclopedia defines violence as: any behavior, whether it involves action or threats, that results in, or could result in, the destruction of property, or harm or death to

an individual, a group or a community. Luka in his book “The Mechanism of Violence” defines violence as a concept that indicates an explosion of force that directly violates people and their belongings, whether they are individuals or groups, in order to gain control by killing, destroying, subjugating, or defeating them.

Violence, from a social viewpoint, is any harm resulting from words or actions directed at the other, whether the other is an individual, or a group. The process of harming others can be individual, whereby one person using his hands or words in a violent manner to inflict harm on another person a process which is defined as the “the egotistical authoritarianism”. Or it can involve a group, which is defined as the “the group authoritarianism”, whereby a group of individuals, with common characteristics, use force and violence, as a means to achieve their aspirations, or apply their context in the outside world. In both cases, the phenomenon of violence and intolerance are not detached from the social or historical contexts, which have created this phenomenon in a society.

Thus, it is a phenomenon that cannot be played down or taken at face value, because it is born from a number of complex factors and tools.

From a theoretical and intellectual point of view, we find that most cases of violence are born of an abstract knowledge based on a predetermined that is passed from one generation to another, and a stereotyping that has been programmed about the others: where the mental idols with all its reactors and priorities, are combined with the material idols. The other is molded into a prepared cast;

like the legendary bandit, Brokst, who kidnapped “people” from the roads, and placed them on a bed (a symbol of the stereotype); if the kidnapped individual was taller than the bed he would squeeze him until his length was appropriate to the length of the bed; and if he was shorter, he would stretch him to achieve the same result. In both cases, the kidnapped is a two times a victim: a victim of the violent perpetrator’s choice (both the conscious and the subconscious), and a victim of the perpetrator’s ready tools.

Violence, as an individual or collective phenomenon, is an expression of a defect in the context of its perpetrator; be it the mental, economic, social, or political level. This defect has led him/ them to the use of violence, imagining that the choice of violence and force will fulfill all his needs, or achieve all his goals. In reality, the use of violence and force in any social relationship, irrespective of what reason spurs it, is a clear violation of the social laws, which define social interaction. If this violence is not controlled, and if societies do not rid themselves of its consequences should it become a daily occurrence, societal violence will lead to the breakup of societies, and the regression to the pre-state societies,

A violent action is the result of interlinked, complicated, circumstances and factors which include subjective factors and conditions, in addition to objective ones. The nature of one’s culture, to a certain degree, determines the nature of one’s actions and words; if the culture is violent then words will become a tool to inflict harm, in all its different forms, and the hand is able to kill or destroy, and cause all kinds of material damage. However, if this culture encompasses all forms of compassion, tolerance and forgiveness, words will then become a tool for all of these principles and values, and the hand will be giving and good.

The frustrated, the impotent and the failures, regardless the reasons and causes of their frustrations, impotency and failure, will try and justify their situation. They will find this justification in their history, their culture and in their political environment, and even among other people, and, in any case, will express it on the basis on their own culture.

Thus we find ourselves faced with the manifestations of violence, in the cultural vision and discourse, including in the acts of verbal assassinations (character assassination of individuals by attacking their reputation, characteristics, standards, values, etc.)

Violence, as a social phenomenon, has cultural and cognitive roots, and it cannot be identified without understanding its roots, and its economic, political and cultural “incubators”. Undoubtedly, the absence of a healthy national political life, and the absence of organizations and systems for popular participation in public affairs, have created a social, cultural and political environment that increase the chances of a “social explosion”, and one that contributes to convincing many people from various social strata to choose violence.

Ultimately, this leads to a reality, which must always be taken into consideration: violence is a tool for the oppressor and the oppressed, in different degrees and for different reasons. The presence of obvious and dormant tensions between the state and the society in the Arab world, contributes to the creation of violence. The bitter experiences of civil wars in some Arab countries all indicate that a conflict in the major choices between the authorities and the society lead to the creation of violence and its appearance.

This contradiction and regression was expressed in its clearest extreme manifestations in the mutual aggression of the components of the political scene against each other in scenes of violence and mutual exclusion, thereby rendering the political process unable to express itself in its natural form, i.e. an efficiently competitive entity. This reached the extent where both symbolic and physical violence were the sole languages used by everyone to express their needs against the others. (Modern-day social political science distinguishes between a strong state and an oppressive state, and says that a state that is unified with its society in its projects and choices is a strong state, even if it does not have massive natural resources. A strong state institutionalizes for national consensus and its tools to realise it. Its political choices and powers are based on the power and choice of the people.

As for the oppressive state, with all its social, mental and political implications and sequences, it is one of the main reasons for the failure of the Arab and Islamic societies to attain welfare and prosperity, because they have become a big pot that consumes the capabilities and resources of the nations for irrelevant issues, and have resorted to abuse and oppression of the people in order to prevent the construction of a self-made independent national entities.

Political failure, and the unfair distribution of wealth from development, whether by the government institutions or the civil society organization, has compelled people to express their objectives, needs and interests in a violent manner, causing the absence of a deep and healthy relationship between the authority and the people. Consequently, we find ourselves coming to an important conclusion: one of the main reasons for the appearance

of violence is the absence of a healthy and sound political life, and the absence of fair distribution of the profits of the development process.

Violence in Jordan – Universities as a Model

Violence appears more clearly in the universities in Jordan, which have been voided of their political, cultural and knowledge-based content, and have become a war zone for tribal and regional conflicts. Everyone is a partner in this devastating state that education has reached.

Academics and employees in the universities are a main part of the violence that is becoming predominant in the universities, since they lack the political and cultural background that would enable them to contribute to the knowledge building process. They too think in a tribal or regional manner, and see that life on campus is an extension of their thoughts, which are burdened with regional and tribal residues, and which all their academic achievements failed to eradicate.

They treat their students based on these attitudes and distorted ways of thinking, encouraging them to express their tribal and regional emotions. Therefore, blaming only the students for the violence is inaccurate. Academics are unable to use their knowledge to create a generation that can see the importance of a civil society built on the spirit of the law, cooperation, participation and the instilling and deepening of citizenship. Therefore we should revise our idea that the students are entirely to blame for the violence in universities.

Additionally, the punishment decreed by the universities is not implemented effectively, and therefore does not prevent others from committing the same act. People intervene on behalf of perpetrators all the time, and the punishments are delayed or disregarded, and therefore are by no means a deterrent that others can take into consideration. This alone expresses the magnitude of the imbalance that is dominating our universities, and is causing us to ask, how are these universities changing from educational institutions into war zones for the students?

Everyone is a partner in this state of violence that is becoming widespread in universities. The parents are partners when they fail to deter their children with upbringing and values, and instead encourage the culture of violence among them when they allow their children to act in this manner, or even reward them for such acts, if they are not punished by the university.

Additionally, many of the popular songs that are broadcast over the various media channels have deepened the culture of segregation in society, and have reinforced tribalism and narrow regional allegiances. This in itself is proof of how deeply-rooted the idea of segregation has become in our society. Instead of a cultural foundation of citizenship and collective national identity, the culture of narrow allegiances are being reinforced which will continue to hit all strata of society, and prevent the emergence of a society where citizenship and the rule of the law prevail.

Moreover, preventing universities from playing a political role, and turning them into tribal and regional war zones has disastrous consequences that we are now beginning to feel in all the universities. What happened at the University of Mu'ta, the

University of Al Al-Beit, and Al Hussein University, among others, is a dangerous indicator of the political void that is prevalent in the universities. All the activities and the celebrations that take place in these universities encourage narrow identities and do not strive to promote the emergence of a student with open-minded knowledgeable and political horizons. Therefore, we find ourselves standing before a bitter reality whereby we are losing our universities and our students, and this loss is a challenge whose consequences we will feel very soon in all aspects of the society. Turning the universities from fields of knowledge to fields of violence is a major responsibility that the current ministers shall have to bear, and they should revise the policies that they are implementing in these universities.

Draining the universities of any real social and political contents is a major reason for the emergence of violence. In addition to the economic factor which enhances the concept of violence. In the case of Jordan, the past years have witnessed a dramatic economic change, and the state has changed from a Rentier state to a capitalist state, causing people to lose faith in the state and its value. Additionally, the state failed to provide new alternatives to compensate for this dramatic change, which in turn caused an increase of violence. This increase was expressed in the form of unorganized reactions with a limited impact, and consequently cannot be considered a phenomenon, as such. Therefore, it must be treated before it does become a phenomenon that is hard to control.

Societal Violence in Jordan: The Role of the Ministry of Interior in Limiting Societal Violence

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Introduction

The Ministry of Interior is considered one of the main sovereign ministries that strive to achieve justice and development together with the realization of security and stability, while maintaining peace and tranquility among the people. This is its basic work, which it conducts through its various departments. There is a direct relationship between security, development and the economy, and it constitutes one of the basic pillars on which the state relies to ensure the continuity of its various activities. Based on this, the vital and important role of the Ministry of Interior emerges in confronting societal violence, which, throughout the past five years has become apparent, and which has taken on various forms, like violence among the students in the universities, conflict with and attack on public servants, violence in sports, family violence, and even environmental violence.

A decree was issued by the Cabinet of Ministers to form a ministerial committee, headed by His Excellency the Deputy Prime Minister/Minister of Interior, and their Excellencies the Ministers and experts, whose mission was to investigate the reasons why societal violence was escalating, and present their

recommendations to confront this issue. This Committee met periodically, and a specialized technical committee was formed to study all the relevant papers and studies, in addition to the recommendation of the various concerned organizations and civil society organizations, and seek the opinion of experts in the field of behavior and sociology. Having identified the most important reasons for the development of societal violence, the committee made the necessary recommendation for each reason, identified the entity responsible for implementing this recommendation, and submitted its report to the ministerial committee, which in turn, submitted it to the Cabinet of Minister.

The above-mentioned efforts led to a relative control of the societal violence, particularly the fights. However, the Ministry of Interior, based on its belief in the importance of giving this issue all its attention, ensured that providing all the parties concerned with limiting societal violence received adequate assistance and support, especially in light of the increase in violence among students in universities, and the impact of this on higher education, which is one of the most important industries in Jordan.

The various academic studies conducted on societal violence, were extremely useful, particularly the study conducted by the Societal and Economic Council, the Societal Violence Studies conducted by the Center for Strategic Security Studies in the Directorate of Public Security, and the study by the Scientific Research Fund at the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. Thus it identified the reasons for societal violence, and presented recommendations to combat this phenomenon, along with the entity responsible for implementing these them.

These recommendations were divided into the following major groups:

- The legal aspect
- The economic aspect
- The societal aspect
- The media aspect

The Legal Aspect

- (1) The slowness of the litigating procedures. This requires: increasing the number of judges, speeding up the implementation of the preparatory decisions which are issued during a trial, and establishing a judicial record in order to make punishment more severe in the case of repeated crimes, in addition to broadcasting programs and talk shows in the various media channels in order to raise awareness of the people regarding the laws and legislation, as well as of their legal and civil rights and responsibilities. It is also vital that people know that taking the law in their own hands is criminalized by the law. The responsibility for this lies with the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Information.
- (2) Some of the penal laws are not adequate or efficient enough to act as deterrents for perpetrators, especially those related to acts of violence in general. This requires making substantial amendments in the current penal law and ensuring it clearly stipulates punishment for the perpetrators of all forms of societal violence, and introduce stricter punishment for the acts of violence committed

in schools, universities, hospitals and government organizations. This also requires conducting dialogue sessions regarding human rights, with the specialized concerned organizations, and allocating budgets for programs that focus on the rights of victims, and the rights of society, in order to deal with the results of the acts of societal violence. These should also focus on the victims, including their families, to alleviate the negative impact of these acts. The responsibility for this lies with the Ministry of Societal Development, the Ministry of Justice, and the Ministry of Interior, in addition to the National Center for Human Rights and the various civil society organizations.

- (3) The lack of rehabilitation for convicts who have served their sentences and are released into society: This requires the establishment of a specialized department within the Ministry of Societal Development to study the social conditions of the convicts and their families, and follow up with them. The responsibility for this lies with the Ministry of Societal Development, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Interior's national Center for Human Rights, civil society organizations and the Directorate of Public Security.

The Economic Aspect

- (1) The rise in the rate of unemployment and its consequent negative impact on the society, like mental pressure, financial difficulties, social problems, broken homes, and an increase in the crime rate in the Jordanian society. This requires the revision of the government's

economic programs and policies, namely those that are related to unemployment, and amend them in order to enhance economic activity by systematically raising the turnover rate of goods and services, in order to provide new and sustainable work opportunities to improve the standard of living of individuals, in addition to expediting the implementation of the development zones, establishing new opportunities for investment in the investment-attractive regions, providing the appropriate conditions and infrastructure in the regions that are not yet investment-attractive, increase cooperation opportunities for the marketing of Jordanian labor and capabilities abroad, establishing a national database for the requirements of the Jordanian work market and linking it to the outputs of the academic and technical education outputs in the public and private universities, as well as establishing an official social support network in the various governorates of the Kingdom concerned with educating and encouraging youth who are seeking employment, and those who wish to and are able to work, to apply to employment in jobs available in both the public and private sector irrespective of the nature of these jobs.

The responsibility for this lies with the Prime Ministry, the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, the Ministry of Labor, the Ministry of Societal Development, the Higher Council for Youth, and the Department of Public Statistics.

- (2) The low income of the majority of Jordanians, especially in the underdeveloped areas, and the lack of confidence

among the people in the social system which is based on a massive gap between the rich at the expense of the middle class and lower class, and the negative impact of this on the attitudes regarding the value of legitimate work as a source of wealth, respect and dignity. This requires the following:

- Revise the taxation policies with regards to the percentage of taxes imposed on the individual's income, and the income of companies, in order to ensure the redistribution of wealth among individuals in the society.
- Annual revisions of salary, benefit and compensation scales bearing in mind inflation rates in order to protect and decrease number of the poor in society by improving their income, and supporting and increasing the size of the middle class.
- Impose effective supervision on the minimum wage rate, and the basic benefits and compensations in all fields of employment, and conduct an annual review thereof in the private sector.
- Establish and maintain a national database managed by a specialized national center, in which the National ID number is used for all information whether is personal, job-related, demographic, tax-related, and fixed and movable assets, in all the government organizations, in addition to the history of financial personal or public transactions, for all Jordanian citizens. In addition to using this data as a standardized basis to calculate the indicator of the ceiling of credit of the Jordanian individual, in order to be used to provide private and

public loans, as in the case of advanced countries, through what are called National Credit Bureaus.

- Request non-profit organizations, and regional and international donor organizations, and those who provide small loans, to design a loans project targeting the youth from poor families, in order to encourage them to invest in small and local income-generating projects that are appropriate for them and which have a low-risk; ask Jordanian banks to facilitate concessional loans to youth with a low rate of interest to allow them to invest in small income-generating projects that are low-risk and appropriate for them, and facilitate the repayment conditions, by giving them benefits and tax exemptions and facilitate the provisions of loans from the specialized government organizations like the Employment and Financing Fund, the Fund for the Enhancement of Orphans' Monies, the Agricultural Loans Organization... etc. All this will serve to empower the youth from poor families and allow them to invest in small, low-risk, income-generating projects.
- Expedite the ratification of the Decentralization Law, provided it includes allocating budgets for the governorates that would allow them to undertake their role in the development process, and to bear their social responsibilities by establishing developmental projects to enhance the income of the people in their governorate, bearing in mind the fair distribution of the outcomes of the local development process among all the individuals of the society in the capital, Amman, and all the governorate of the kingdom. This

should be implemented in accordance to a clear and public methodology to allow anyone interested to be informed with it, together with the modernization of the working procedures of the organizations concerned with the monitoring of those causing or benefiting from the means of quick and illegal wealth. This is to be done by automating a national database that depends on the national ID number of each individual in order to gather personal, employment-related, demographic, and tax-related information, and any and all information related to movable and fixed assets from all the various government entities about all Jordanian citizens and local organizations, and use a similar database about non-Jordanians residing in Jordan, particularly investors. It will also require the design and linking of information systems that are able to extract and analyze the above-mentioned data in an on-going manner in order to detect any changes that are unnatural or sudden, as soon as they occur, to the income of a person, or catch suspicious financial and real-estate activities, in order to identify their source and legitimacy, bearing in mind all the relevant legislation and laws.

- Organize and coordinate the work of the government entities concerned with anti-corruption in a professional and comprehensive manner, to eradicate duplication and conflict of interests, in addition to allowing each individual in the society to undertake his role as a citizen by passing along any information related to corruption and the squandering of public funds in any of the government organizations, and providing him

with legal protection (Whistle Blower Legal Protection). In addition to providing toll-free phone numbers (hot lines) to be used for this purpose by the people.

As for the entities responsible for this, they are: the Prime Ministry, the Ministry of Finance, The Ministry of Labor, the Ministry of Justice, The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, the Central Bank of Jordan, the Department of Public Statistics, The Regulatory Bodies, the Civil Service Bureau, and the Anti-Corruption Commission.

- (3) The obvious disparity in the salary scale and basic benefits and allowances packages in the similar levels public positions in the country (the Customs Department, the Societal Security Organization, the Radio and TV Organization, the Special Developmental Zones....etc.) This requires the revision of the minimum and maximum ceiling of the salary scale, and the basic allowances and benefits package, in all the public organizations in order to ensure they comply with the job descriptions of all public offices at all levels that have similar job descriptions in the various organizations of the public sector.

As for the organizations responsible for this, these include: the Prime Ministry, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Labor, the Ministry for the Development of the Public Sector, and the Civil Service Bureau.

- (4) Nepotism and favoritism with regards to the provision of services among some people in a manner that leads to the oppression of others. This requires stressing the importance of transparency, accountability, and justice when devising specific, easy and public methodologies to set the priorities of public expenditure with regards to establishing the infrastructure and providing public services in all the government organizations, and ensuring that all the citizens have access to them when they require them.

As for the organizations responsible for this, they are: the Prime Ministry, the Ministry of Finance, The Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, the Anti-Corruption Commission, and the Bureau of Grievances.

- (5) Nepotism and preferential treatment in employment process, at all levels, causing predominance of some over others. This requires activating regulations for job description and classification for all the jobs in the civil service system, and regulations for the selection and recruitment of employees in government posts at all levels. It is also vital to apply the principles of transparency, justice and efficiency through a clear and public monitoring and accountability system, in order to eradicate nepotism and favoritism with regards to employment at all levels.

As for the entities responsible for this, these are: The Prime Ministry, the Ministry for the Development of the Public Sector, the Bureau of Auditing, the Civil Service Bureau, and the Anti-Corruption Commission.

The Social Aspect

- (1) The families' inability to focus on the properly raising their children in an integrated manner with the social context, and the appearance of a series of new social values resulting from the introduction of globalization, and the various nationalities that have penetrated the society. This requires concerned government and non-government entities and the various media channels to organize specially-tailored activities and programs to raise awareness, and focus on the role of the family in the correct upbringing, and encouraging the option of dialogue among family members, in addition to raising awareness about the dangers of alcohol consumption, drug abuse, and their negative impact, in addition to the inappropriate use of the internet.

As for those responsible for undertaking this, these are: the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, the Ministry of Culture, Media, civil society organizations, the Directorate of Public Security – the Family Protection Department, and the Higher Council for Youth.

- (2) The relative failure of the educational policies in the schools, and the decline in the role of school principals and teachers in directing and raising future generations: this requires introducing themes like the dangers of violence, its negative impact on the students, the society and the country; how to protect oneself from violence and curricula that instill the values of tolerance and amity into the National Education/Societal Studies, Arabic, Religion...etc. into

school curricula at (both the secondary and high school levels. A sample of schools should be selected according to geographical locations, their capacity, characteristics and capabilities, to serve as centers for permanent activities, in coordination with the Higher Council for Youth. These would undertake non-curricular voluntary activities, competitions, and camps, after school hours, thus bridging the gaps between the youth, enhancing the positive values, and achieving social integration. Training for the teachers and educational counselors should also be made available on communication skills, principles of cultural diversity, moderation, and the culture of dialogue, and how to instill the spirit of good citizenship among the students. Additionally, programs to decrease the number of students who drop out of school should also be conducted, bearing in mind the negative impact this will have on the mental and physical wellbeing of these students, the increase in the rate of illiteracy, and the consequent abuse of minors in the work market, along with the dangers of the verbal, physical and sexual abuse that they could become victims of.

As for the entities responsible for undertaking these tasks, they are: the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Labor, the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, the Directorate of Public Security – the Department of Family Protection, the Higher Council for Youth, and the Civil Service Bureau.

- (3) The procedures of the student union elections in the universities, their outcomes, repercussions, and the

inadequacy of the procedures undertaken by the universities' administrations before, during and after the elections. Necessary measures should be taken by the university prior to, during, and after the student council elections, and punitive measures should be undertaken against the students who conduct themselves violently. Attention should also be given to the training of the university' security staff to enable them to deal with the outcomes of students' elections. It also requires activating the role of the university's security staff in the process of controlling the doorways leading into the universities, to prevent the entry of visitors and intruders to the university.

- (4) The inefficiency of the procedures to punish the perpetrators of violence in the universities, which cause students' disrespect for the rules and regulations. This requires better coordination between the university administrations regarding the acceptance of students who have records of violence in other universities, and against whom disciplinary and legal measures have been taken as a result. It is also vital to compel the universities to place cameras to monitor the university campus, namely the doorways, the main squares, and the entrances of the various faculties, and advertise this through posters that can be seen by all. In addition to clarifying and advertising the penal measures that will be taken against any students within the university, in a manner that ensures that the maximum number of students is made aware of this. It also requires urging the student deanships of the universities to cooperate with the Directorate of Public Security, in enhancing the role of the social police by making students

aware of the negative impact of violence, and finding ways to communicate and participate in order to prevent any phenomena or behaviors that could lead to academically unacceptable practices, or legally criminal ones, and conduct periodical, public, dialogue sessions between the university students and the Directorate of Public Security, including the Director of this Directorate and its field staff.

As for those in charge of undertaking these tasks, these are: the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Private and Public Universities, and the Directorate of Public Security – the Public Relations Department.

- (5) The role of the universities in encouraging positive behavior in students. This requires conducting seminars, conferences, and workshops, and organizing celebrations and festivals to celebrate national holidays, along with other non-curricular activities that help to enhance the positive relationships between the students and the faculties within the campus of the university or other universities, and activate the role of the Student Deanship in the university to constantly communicate with the students, and direct and guide them through pre-programmed meetings during each semester, and in all the faculties.

As for the entities in charge or undertaking these tasks, these are: the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, and the Private and Public Universities.

- (6) Too much free time between lectures: which requires filling this free time for the students, particularly those

studying human and social sciences. This involves providing additional courses during the semester in a manner that will balance the free time they have with their lectures, and activating the role of university professors in guiding and caring for the students, training them on how to conduct dialogue and how to accept other opinions. (As well as diversifying the teaching methods like evaluations and examinations, research papers, workshops, and the discussion of graduation projects, so that the evaluation of a student is not limited to his score in an examination, thus increasing his interest in the subject).

With regards to the entities in charge of undertaking these tasks, these are: the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research.

- (7) The regression in the academic and educational role of educational counselors in the universities. This requires reinforcing the very important role of the academic, educational and psychological counselors, by adopting the principles of the “university family”. The on-line registration methods used by the students for the various subjects available during the semester should also be amended by linking the registration process to the prior approval of the specialized academic counselor for each academic year, as was done in the past, in order to guarantee the proper interaction and guidance for the student by the academic counselor, bearing in mind the importance of revising the student’s behavioral and academic record when he registers.

As for the entities in charge of this issue, they are the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, and the private and public universities.

- (8) The weakness in the legal knowledge of the university students. This requires making civic education mandatory for first year students, and integrating a curriculum of Security studies within the Military Science Program, in order to create an interactive and participatory environment between the university's administration and the students, and ensure that the civic science curriculum is relevant to the Jordanian political system. This curriculum should be taught throughout the various levels of education within the Ministry of Education. A subject called "The Student's University Behavior", that counts as one university credit hour should be introduced. It should include theoretical and practical applications, and should be a mandatory requirement for graduation.

As for those in charge of realizing this, they are the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, private and public Universities, and the Ministry of Education.

- (9) A decline in resorting to tribal elders and dignitaries, mayors and influential members of society in case of conflicts, due to the appearance of alternative leaderships to these elders (leaderships with agendas of their own), and moving away from the tribal values and principles. This requires reinforcing the role of the Tribal Affairs Departments which were established within the Police Directorates in the various governorates nation-wide, and

assigning them personnel from the Directorate of Public Security with adequate experience in tribal affairs, and the ability to continuously communicate with the elders and dignitaries in the tribes, the mayors and influential individuals in the regions. Additionally, every support must be given by the concerned government organizations to the tribes' elders, dignitaries, and mayors and influential individuals to allow them to practice their role within their tribes and in their regions in order to maintain security and stability. It also involves revising the current structure of the local council in the various governorates and choosing the tribal elders that actually represent their tribes and who have high credibility.

As for those responsible for this, they are: The Prime Ministry, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, The Directorate of Public Security, and the Consultants in Tribal and Bedouin Affairs in Jordan.

- (10) Tribes' reactions to murders and the consequent group fights (fits of anger), and the inadequate follow up of tribal measures in this regard. ``This requires designing the necessary tribal and administrative measures relevant to issues that have a "tribal" nature, by the security personnel, headed by the Governors.

As for those charged with undertaking this, they are: the Ministry of Interior, the Directorate of Public Security, and the Jordanian Tribal and Bedouin Affairs Directorate.

- (11) Harboring criminals and those fleeing from justice by

sympathizers, and not reporting them to the authorities, which encourages and facilitates the occurrence and continuation of violence by some people in the society, who are acting outside the law, given the support and encouragement they get and expect by some members of the society. This requires conducting periodical meetings between the Governors, the security agencies, and the sheikhs and dignitaries in the tribes, in addition to the mayors of the various regions, to discuss issues related to the security aspects, including the close cooperation among them to hand over those who are wanted by the law, and those who are wanted for acts of violence. They should also provide the Directorate of Public Security with data related to issues related to tribes. This will help to document acts of violence in terms of their nature, duration, reasons, and location, and the parties involved in them, thus making the decision-making process easier, since it will facilitate predictions and the implementation of a proactive approach. It is vital that such data be updated continuously as matters arise, and that administrative governors are made aware of any and all changes.

As for those I charge of this matter, they are: the Ministry of Interior, the Directorate of Public Security and the Directorate of tribal and Bedouin affairs.

- (12) The widespread use of firearms and live ammunition among civilians, especially automatic weapons. This requires stronger implementation of the Firearms and Weapons Law; follow up by all the security agencies, and the application of the legal procedures which were

stipulated to deter violators of these laws. It also requires amending the law that stipulates punishment for owners of automatic weapons for illegal purpose, to ensure it forbids ownership of automatic weapons, irrespective of the purpose for ownership.

Those in charge of handling this are: the Ministry of Justice, and the Directorate of Public Security.

- (13) The negative intervention of some security personnel and government officials in the acts of violence. This requires improving the communication skills of some of the staff by conducting specialized courses on communication skills and ways to deal with crowds, and enhancing principles of citizenship among public servants who should reflect a balance between their official and personal roles as members of a society.

As for the entities in charge of doing this, they are: the Public Administration Institute, and the National Training Center.

- (14) The practice of nepotism and favoritism, and disregard, indifference and discrimination between those who receive services by some of the employees who provide such services. This requires the design and application of Standard Operating Procedures for use by public employees when undertaking their day-to-day work, in order to improve their performance. It also requires activating the role of the internal monitoring units in all government and public sector institutions in order to reject and eliminate

nepotism, favoritism, indifference and discrimination, and instill a system to organize this.

As for those in charge of doing this, these are: all the ministries, and the public institutions.

The Media Aspect

- (1) The widespread presence of electronic media websites, and the lack of control and regulation of these sites, in the absence of a law for this purpose. This requires the application of the 2010 Information Technology Crimes Law, and making the necessary amendments to it, in order to ensure its consistency with the professional, organizational and legal standards governing the electronic media channels, particularly regarding news and articles about societal violence, and the comments that are published in this regard which sometimes lead to repercussions that are more serious than the incident itself. These websites should be made to abide to rule of law. These websites must abide by the principles of responsible institutionalism and professionalism; and they should publish this clearly on their main pages. Chief Editors, or their deputies, should bear responsibility of the published comments and they should have the adequate experience to decide what should and should not be published. Positive comments which enrich the culture of tolerance and dialogue, reject prejudice, and encourage the acceptance of different opinions should be published. , refuse Character assassination” under the pretext of freedom of expression and constructive criticism must be stopped. Legislations

should also be drafted and implemented to punish the perpetrators. The staff of electronic websites should be trained on issues of tolerance, and the rejection of violence. Models of excellent articles or investigative reports must be encouraged.

Those in charge of achieving this are: the Office of the Minister of State for Media and Communication, the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, the Telecommunication Regulatory Commission, the Audio Visual Media Commission, and the Professional Association of Journalists.

- (2) The widespread presence of visual media channels (satellite channels), and audio channels, and the information they broadcast, which contains violence directed at both adults and children thereby negatively affecting their behavior. This requires encouraging the satellite channels to allocate hours to broadcast programs and talk shows that enhance awareness and stress the importance of citizenship, the importance of positive behavior, tolerance, respect of other opinions, and social interaction among the people of the Jordan, and encourage these channels to advertise who they are and issue a code of conduct for their work. Additionally, they should be encouraged to issue warnings prior to broadcasting programs that contain violence, as material that is not appropriate for certain age-groups, and place a sign that indicates this during the shows.

As for the entities in charge of undertaking this task, they are: the Office of the Minister of State for Media

and Communication, the Telecommunication Regulatory Commission, and the Audio Visual Commission.

- (3) The misuse of cell phones and electronic messaging, their common use as means of social media especially among the youth, and the consequent wrongful behavior in the society. This requires finding a way and amending the legislations relevant to these issues, and providing alternative solutions.

As for the entities in charge, they are: the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, the Telecommunication Regulatory Commission, the Audio Visual Commission in charge, and all media channels.

Finally, I would like to stress that the control of societal violence requires the united efforts, and the presence of a true partnership among all the sectors of the Jordanian society. All social entities should bear their responsibilities and make use of the opportunities for qualitative integration among all sectors of society.

Seminar on Societal Violence in Jordan: Reasons and Practical Solutions (28 September 2013)

Final Report and Recommendations

Introduction

The Seminar on Societal Violence in Jordan: Reasons and Practical Solutions was organized by Konrad Adenauer Stiftung - Amman Office and Action on Societal Violence- KAFA. It was attended by around 50 participants representing different governmental and security institutions, political parties and trends, civil society and youth groups.

Working Papers

Working paper 1: Societal Violence from a Political Perspective was resented by ENG Musa Al-Maayta, former Minister of Political Development. It suggested that the failure in developing political life in Jordan has contributed to the strengthening of sub identities (tribal, ethnic, religious, etc.) The regression of the rule of law and one-man-one-vote election law is one of the most important reasons of this violence, especially amongst youth.

Working Paper 2: Societal Violence from an Economic Perspective, presented by Dr. Khaled Al-Wazani, Senior Economist and Strategist, reviewed the economic status quo in Jordan. He identified the main economic reasons for societal violence as the unjust distribution of income, rate of unemployment, financial

and administrative corruption, the level and quality of investment in human capital, the presence of a soft state and the weakness of the rule of law.

Working Paper 3: Societal Violence from a Social Perspective, was presented by Dr. Jihad Al-Muheisen, Director of Al-Mashreq Al-Jadeed Research Centre, touched on violence from the Islamic and legal points of view crossing these two concepts with the concept of a soft state. He also addressed the question of whether societal violence is inherent in Jordan or merely the result of political, social, and economic conditions.

Working Paper 4: The Role of the Ministry of Interior in Combatting Societal Violence, presented by Dr. Safwan Al-Mubaideen, officer in charge of Societal Violence in the Ministry. He explained the steps which the ministry has been undertaking in this regard, including the formation of a ministerial committee which identified the reasons of societal violence, and drafted recommendations pertaining to each reason and forwarded them to the concerned authorities for implementation.

Recommendations

1. To amend basic laws related to political action, especially the electoral law - which may be instrumental in alleviating these tensions. What is required is an election law that achieves the following goals:
 - a. Encourage citizens to engage in collective action in order to strengthen the social fabric and mitigate sub loyalties whether tribal or sectarian.
 - b. Contribute to the development of a functioning

democracy based on political pluralism and founded on political parties

c. Leads to parliament composed of political parties and blocks of with clear directions regarding political, economic and social issues, and ultimately contributes to the formation of parliamentary governments by the majority party, with a minority opposition forming a shadow government and monitors and accountable government majority.

2. To focus on concepts of transparency, accountability and integrity instead of stigmatizing the Jordanian economy with corruption.
3. To review policies and the current government's economic programs on unemployment, and adjust them so they raise the level of economic activity by systematically and sustainably raising the turnover of goods and services. This will provide sustainable new jobs and improve the standards of living.
4. To put in place decentralized development programs to reach the pockets of poverty and marginalized classes.
5. To qualitatively invest in human capital at all stages of human production and this is a continuous process which does not end with recruitment.
6. To effectively invest in the empowerment of women as a key element in the development of the community economically, socially and politically.

7. To concert efforts of the public and private sector and civil society institutions to formulate a system of work and production ethics
8. To use traditional and social media in promoting a culture of good social values
9. To carry out studies of the parties and systems which have an influential role in the societal violence: such as: the media, institutions, and laws.
10. That parties concerned including governmental and non-governmental institutions as well as the media conduct awareness programmes focusing on the role of the family in the process of sound education, dialogue among family members, the dangers of abuse of alcohol and drugs and the possible risks of using the Internet.
11. To improve the education system, especially at the basic level, whereby curricula would include lessons on societal violence and its negative effects on the students, the community and the state, as well as the methods of prevention. They would also promote a the culture of harmony
12. To train teachers and counselors in communication skills, and reinforce in them the concepts of cultural pluralism, moderation and culture of dialogue.
13. To strengthen the role of educational institutions in raising awareness the risk of societal violence.

14. To involve young people, especially university students in various political and social activities and volunteer work; and integrate them into productive projects; as well as to ensure that their leisure time is filled (especially students in the faculties of humanities and social sciences). University professors should also play a role in guiding students in methods of dialogue and acceptance of different opinions.
15. To provide assistance and support to organisations working to combat societal violence.
16. To carry out effective awareness raising campaigns on the reasons and results of societal violence.
17. The Ministry of Political Development to take active steps in reinforcing values of citizenship and democracy amongst all sectors of the Jordanian society, especially adolescents and youth.
18. To apply the arms and ammunition law and take the proper legal deterrent action against violators. Also, to amend the automatic arms possession law for unlawful reasons, so that it prohibits all their possessions for any reason.