



The Old Year out and the New Year in, which is, however, an unprecedented one after the year-long COVID-19 pandemic all over the world. It is now possible to move across the borders of Jordan where the international commercial flights had been suspended until September, if we abide by quarantine measures and take PCR test in advance. However, we still face loads of difficulties and inconvenience in going back to Japan and re-entering Jordan. I am sure that many people saw 2021 in with anxiety.

In Jordan, we saw a surge of the number of total cases of COVID-19 infection, which was approximately 2,000 in September, but later increased rapidly to 70,000 at the end of October and 220,000 at the end of November. In light of the worrisome situation, on 30 October 2020, the Government of Japan decided to raise travel advice and warning on infectious disease for Jordan from level 2 to 3. Therefore, it became mandatory for all passengers who are willing to enter Japan to undergo self-quarantine, refrain from using public transportation, and take Antigen test upon arrival. Even in December, Jordan saw approximately 2,000-3,000 daily cases.

Against this background, the Embassy of Japan has been committed to provide precise information on epidemiological situation and details of the restrictions in a timely manner through emails from the consular section of the Embassy. Since it may be too early to optimistically anticipate future epidemiological situation and it seems that we are going to see further changes in the restrictions, the Embassy will continue to deliver updated information. I would like all to pay enough attention to the measures to avoid infections and implement them by yourselves.

In this regards, I would like to inform you that, respecting the current restrictions of the Government of Jordan and committing the measures to avoid infection, the Embassy decided not to hold a New Year's Celebration in January and an Emperor's Birthday Reception in February.

Regarding the importance of safety and health, security situation in this country is also worth mentioning. Especially at night, it is more likely for crimes such as robbery to happen, and sexual harassments are also reported. I would like to ask all to pay enough attention to safety. Additionally, although the total number is now small, we sometimes see demonstrations, which can partly be incited by the COVID-19 pandemic. Please be careful so that you can avoid being caught in these events.

Despite the difficult epidemiological situation, I gradually started my activities as ambassador last year. I paid courtesy visits to, for example, H.E. Mr. Ayman Safadi, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates and H.E. Mr. Nasser Shraideh, Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, and had a fruitful discussion. Furthermore, on 18 December 2020, the Government of Japan disbursed the third tranche of “Business Environment, Employment and Fiscal Sustainability Reform Development Policy Loan” amounting to 100 million dollars. I hope the assistance from Japan support Jordan in dealing with the damages on Jordan’s economic and fiscal situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and contribute to strengthening stability in Jordan and the region. Moreover, in the cultural field, the Embassy of Japan and University of Jordan are going to co-host the Online Japanese Speech Contest on 9 January 2021. In 2021, I am willing to develop manifold relations between Japan and Jordan, paying enough attention to the epidemiological situation.

Finally yet importantly, I would like to conclude my greetings on the New Year by wishing all continued success, prosperity, and health. I am looking forward to meeting you soon.

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