

## 59 MPs spent a total of 450 days outside Jordan with expenses exceeding 250 thousand Jordanian Dinars

Within RASSED monitoring program of the 18<sup>th</sup> Parliament performance, RASSED team tracked the parliamentary delegations abroad of members and personnel of the Parliament since the convocation of the first ordinary session until March 31, 2017 having passed a total of 145 days. The report showed that parliamentary delegates spent 450 days outside Jordan with expenses exceeding 250 thousand Jordanian dinars (JOD).

The report indicates that 59 MPs traveled within 23 diplomatic delegations, while 71 MPs did not participate in any diplomatic delegation. 49 MPs traveled once, 9 MPs twice, and one MP traveled three times, having 10 female MPs out of 20 participated in diplomatic delegations. As for expenditures in diplomatic delegations, the House of Representatives spent more than 260 thousands JOD in flight tickets, per diems of MPs and personnel, in addition to advances to the personnel and MPs participating in these delegations. In this same context, RASSED highlights that the House of Representatives receives official invitations from multiple international bodies, which cover all the expenses and, therefore, the Parliament pays per diems to the members representing the delegation.

Tracking the distribution of travels in terms of parliamentary blocs, the results showed Watan Bloc members, representing 15% of the House, had the biggest share of participants in diplomatic delegations, reaching the 22% of the total MPs participating in diplomatic delegations. In second place are Al-Democratiya Bloc members, with a representation of 15% in the House members, who reached 17 % of the MPs participating in diplomatic delegations. The participation of members of Al-Adala, Al-Tajded and Al-Wefaq Bloc in official delegations represented 14%, while El-Eslah Bloc members had the least number of participants with 8% of all official participants. The graphics attached show the distribution of participation in diplomatic delegations as per each parliamentary blocs.

It is worth mentioning that 6 out of 11 members of the Foreign Affairs Committee did not participate in any official delegation representing Jordan, although the rule of procedures of the House of Representatives under Article 44 entrusted the Foreign Affairs Committee to arrange the relations with other parliaments, federations and parliamentary societies, and consider all matters linked to foreign policy. The report shows that the personnel of the Parliament officially participating in the delegations, reached a total of 34 employees and spent 280 days abroad, exceeding a total of 30 thousand JOD.

RASSED confirms the need and importance of having the elected MP representing Jordan's Parliament to strengthen the MPs' representing capabilities and acknowledge the attitudes, visions, and aspirations of the constituents of different actors in the world. However, in this context, there must be clear, objective and declared principles that preserve transparency in the selection of MPs with membership in parliamentary delegations. During the monitoring of the diplomatic delegation performance, RASSED could not have access to any final report on the outcomes and results of the different diplomatic delegations. The Secretariat did not provide information that documents the performance indicators. None of these dispatches were discussed previous or subsequently in parliamentary meetings or sessions.

### Based on the findings of the report, RASSED's recommendations are as follows:

- First: The House of Representatives should publish a list including all the per diems paid to delegations according to the country of destination and the mechanism to calculate expenses in detail.
- Second: Issuing a monthly calendar that includes the travels in which the MPs will be participating, their names and purpose of participation.
- Third: The House of Representatives must adopt an application form to be filled in by the MPs willing to participate in parliamentary delegations. This form should include the standards and conditions that should apply in the MP submitting the form and be available for all MPs.
- Forth: Preparing a final administrative and financial statement of each delegation participating in an international event and informing the Parliament on the expenses that were disbursed on the participating delegation.
- Fifth: Publishing on the House of Representatives' website the details on the parliamentary delegations, including date, purpose and pictures that prove the MPs participation as a way to promote transparency and inform electoral constituents of their representatives' achievements.
- Sixth: Submitting an internal memorandum from the MP interested in participating to designate the importance of his/her participation, not only to avoid the disbursement of per diems, but also to save the time MPs should be dedicating to oversighting and legislating.
- Seventh: Displaying parliamentary delegations and include them in the sessions' work agendas to be presented before the House.
- Eighth: Preparing and disseminating a final report clarifying the importance and purpose of their participation, highlighting the achievements accomplished for Jordan through their participation.
- Ninth: Expanding the Parliament's relations with international bodies and replacing the expenses of participation by participating through official invitations submitted by the organizing body as a way to save expenses spent on delegations, and not to spend per diems on participants within delegations that are covered by inviting organizations.
- Tenth: RASSED calls for the Parliament to review the best comparative practices in democratic parliaments, such as the parliaments of The United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and Germany (Bundestag), to transfer these practices to Jordan's Parliament.



## RASED Report on Parliamentary Delegations by the 18<sup>th</sup> House of Representatives

Bloc	No. of MPs	% out of total MPs	No. of members traveled	No. of members traveled once	No. of members traveled twice	No. of members traveled 3 times	% of members traveled within the bloc	% of members traveled out of total MPs traveled
Watan	19	%15	13	10	2	1	%68	%22.0
Democratea	19	%15	10	7	3	0	%53	%17.0
Wafaq Al-Watani	24	%18	8	6	2	0	%33	%13.5
Adala	24	%18	8	8	0	0	%33	%13.5
Tajded	14	%11	8	7	1	0	%57	%13.5
Eslah	14	%11	5	5	0	0	%36	%8.5
Independent MPs	16	%12	7	6	1	0	%44	%12.0

**450 Days**  
Number of days that the MPs spent outside Jordan

**250 JOD**  
Total expenditures of parliamentary delegations in JOD

Number of MPs participated in parliamentary delegations **59 MPs**

Number if MPs have not participated in parliamentary delegations **71 MPs**

**49 MPs**  
Number of MPs traveled once

**9 MPs**  
Number of MPs traveled twice

**1 MP**  
Number of MPs traveled three times

**10 Female MPs**  
Number of MPs traveled once

**34 Staff**  
Number of traveled parliament staff

**280 Days**  
Number of days that the staff spent outside Jordan