

# Jordanian king warns of “massive conflict” if Israel annexes parts of West Bank

King Abdullah II of Jordan said in an interview with the German magazine Der Spiegel that Israeli annexation of parts of the West Bank “will lead to a massive conflict with Jordan.”

**Why it matters:** This is the harshest statement by the King regarding the possible annexation of parts of the West Bank by Israel. It comes days after Secretary of State Mike Pompeo visited Israel for talks with Israeli leaders and ahead of the swearing-in of the new Israeli government on Sunday.

**What he’s saying:** When asked if Jordan would suspend its peace treaty with Israel if the annexation takes place, King Abdullah said: “I don’t want to make threats and create an atmosphere of loggerheads, but we are considering all options.”

- **The King stressed** that all parties in the region should focus now on fighting the coronavirus together rather than dealing with unilateral annexation of the West Bank.
- **“Leaders who advocate** a one-state solution do not understand what that would mean. What would happen if the Palestinian National Authority collapsed? There would be more chaos and extremism in the region,” he said.

**The backstory:** The coalition deal that allowed Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to form a new government says he can bring “the understandings with the Trump administration” on annexation up for a vote in the cabinet or parliament as early as July 1 — but only with the full agreement of the White House.

- **The Trump administration** does not view the new Israeli government’s July 1 deadline to begin the process of annexing parts of the West Bank as a “do or die” date, a senior U.S. official told me.

**What's next:** Jordan has been lobbying the U.S. and EU member states for the last several weeks to discourage the new Israeli government from moving forward on the annexation of the West Bank. The foreign ministers of the 27 member states of the EU met today via video conference to discuss the issue.

- **Jordanian foreign minister** Ayman Safadi made several phone calls in the last few days to his counterparts from France, Spain, and other countries in the EU and asked them to take steps to deter the new Israeli government from annexing parts of the West Bank.
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