

Jordan National Security in the Age of Uncertainty

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses Jordan national security in the age of uncertainty. It reflects on the concept of national security that has undergone a profound transformation in recent decades, moving beyond its traditional association with military defense and territorial integrity toward a more comprehensive and multidimensional understanding.

Jordan's national security experience illustrates how wise leadership, grounded in legitimacy, pragmatism, and long-term vision, can guide a state toward safety amid uncertainty, making governance itself a core pillar of national security rather than a peripheral factor. This paper analyzes six dimensions: Reconceptualizing security in an era of uncertainty, moving from traditional security to human-centered security, defining types and pillars of national security, in terms of political security, economic security, social security, and highlighting institutional and governance pillars, systemic interaction, based on security, stability, and strategic governance, discussing managing national security under continuous uncertainty, and finally reading in depth national security from both the classical strategic thought and contemporary Jordanian Practice. The study concludes with reframing national security through soft security concerns, reaching key recommendations, such as: Institutionalizing soft security within national security frameworks, strengthening governance and policy coordination mechanisms, prioritizing preventive diplomacy and confidence-building measures, linking economic and social development to security planning, and finally enhancing societal resilience and national cohesion.

KEYWORDS

Jordan; national security; uncertainty; preventive diplomacy; strategic governance; wise leadership.

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary security studies increasingly recognize that security is not a static condition achieved solely through coercive power, but a dynamic process shaped by political, economic, social, and human dimensions. In this sense, security reflects a state's capacity to manage risks, adapt to uncertainty, and sustain stability amid continuous change.

Jordan's national security experience illustrates how wise leadership, grounded in legitimacy, pragmatism, and long-term vision, can guide a state toward safety amid uncertainty, making governance itself a core pillar of national security rather than a peripheral factor.

Modern definitions of security emphasize its pluralistic nature. Security today encompasses various types, including political security related to governance and legitimacy, economic security linked to resilience and development, social security grounded in cohesion and inclusion, and human security focused on protecting individuals

from structural vulnerabilities and chronic threats. This shift from a state-centered model of security toward a human-centered approach reflects the recognition that threats are no longer exclusively external or military in nature, but increasingly internal, transnational, and non-traditional (UNDP, 2022).

Within this evolving framework, national security is best understood as an integrated system of pillars rather than a single instrument of power. These pillars include effective institutions, political stability, economic sustainability, social trust, and the ability to anticipate and absorb shocks. Security, therefore, is closely linked to stability, not as an absence of threats, but as the presence of adaptive capacity and institutional coherence.

As highlighted by contemporary strategic studies, insecurity has become a continuous condition rather than an exceptional moment, requiring states to govern uncertainty rather than merely react to crises (OECD, 2024).

The notion of continuous insecurity underscores the reality that modern states operate in environments characterized by ambiguity, rapid change, and overlapping risks. In such contexts, the role of security institutions extends beyond deterrence to include prevention, coordination, and resilience building. Strategic and political dimensions of security are thus inseparable, as national security increasingly depends on governance quality, policy coherence, and public trust (World Bank, 2023).

For states located in volatile regions, such as Jordan, these conceptual shifts are particularly significant. Jordan's national security must be framed within a landscape of regional instability, humanitarian pressures, and global uncertainty, where traditional security paradigms are insufficient. Understanding security as a dynamic, multidimensional, and human-centered process provides the analytical foundation for examining how Jordan navigates uncertainty while maintaining stability and safeguarding its national interests.

Within this complex and volatile regional context, the role of leadership emerges as a decisive factor in shaping national security outcomes. Jordan's ability to navigate an environment marked by protracted conflicts, geopolitical fragmentation, and successive waves of refugee influxes has been fundamentally anchored in the wisdom and strategic foresight of His Majesty King Abdullah II Ibn Al Hussein. Under His Majesty's leadership, Jordan has pursued a balanced national security approach that combines firmness in safeguarding sovereignty with humanitarian responsibility, moderation, and adherence to international legitimacy. Despite the immense pressures generated by regional wars, forced displacement, and humanitarian crises, Jordan has maintained internal stability and social cohesion while upholding its moral and legal commitments toward refugees. This leadership model has enabled the Kingdom to steer steadily toward stability and resilience, transforming vulnerability into strategic endurance. In this sense, Jordan's national security experience illustrates how wise leadership, grounded in legitimacy, pragmatism, and long-term vision, can guide a state toward safety amid uncertainty, making governance itself a core pillar of national security rather than a peripheral factor.

RESEARCH METHODS

This paper analyzes six dimensions: Reconceptualizing security in an era of uncertainty, moving from traditional security to human-centered security, defining types and pillars of national security, in terms of political security, economic security, social security, and highlighting institutional and governance pillars, systemic interaction, based on security, stability, and strategic governance, discussing managing national security under continuous uncertainty, and finally reading in depth national security from both the classical strategic thought and contemporary Jordanian Practice.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Dimension One: Reconceptualizing Security in an Era of Uncertainty

The concept of security has undergone a significant transformation in response to the structural changes shaping the contemporary international system. Traditional understandings of security, long associated with military power, territorial defense, and state survival, are increasingly inadequate for addressing the complex and fluid risks confronting states today. In their place, security has evolved into a multidimensional and dynamic concept concerned with managing uncertainty, sustaining stability, and enhancing resilience in environments characterized by continuous disruption.

Classical security paradigms were built on the assumption of identifiable threats, clear adversaries, and relatively predictable strategic contexts. Within this framework, national security was defined primarily as the protection of the state against external military aggression. However, the erosion of these assumptions has produced a security environment marked by non-state actors, internal vulnerabilities, transnational risks, and overlapping crises. As a result, security is no longer understood as a fixed condition, but as an ongoing process shaped by uncertainty and strategic adaptation (Buzan & Hansen, 2024).

Uncertainty has become a defining feature of modern security landscapes. It does not merely reflect the unpredictability of threats but also the ambiguity surrounding their origins, timing, and consequences. In this context, insecurity is no longer episodic or exceptional, but continuous. States increasingly operate under conditions of permanent risk, where political instability, economic volatility, social fragmentation, and informational threats intersect. This condition of continuous insecurity necessitates a shift from reactive security policies toward anticipatory and adaptive approaches capable of governing uncertainty rather than merely responding to crises (Kaldor, 2023).

The reconceptualization of security also entails a closer linkage between security and stability. Security is no longer achieved solely through coercive instruments, but through the capacity of institutions to absorb shocks, preserve legitimacy, and maintain social cohesion. Effective governance, institutional coordination, and economic resilience have thus become integral components of national security. From this perspective, security emerges as the outcome of coherent policies and institutional strength rather than the product of force alone (World Economic Forum, 2024).

A further dimension of this conceptual shift is the growing emphasis on human-centered security. While the state remains a central actor, contemporary security thinking increasingly recognizes that the protection and well-being of individuals and communities constitute the foundation of national stability. Human-centered security highlights vulnerabilities such as economic marginalization, social exclusion, radicalization, and institutional fragility, which can undermine national security from within if left unaddressed. These non-traditional threats challenge states to rethink security as a comprehensive framework integrating social, political, and economic dimensions (UNDP, 2023).

In regions exposed to persistent instability and geopolitical fluidity, security must therefore be understood as a strategic process rather than an end state. It involves continuous assessment, policy recalibration, and institutional learning. Strategic uncertainty does not eliminate the possibility of security, but reshapes its meaning. Security becomes the capacity to manage ambiguity, sustain resilience, and preserve national cohesion despite evolving internal and external pressures. This reconceptualized understanding of security provides the necessary analytical foundation for examining national security models in an age defined not by certainty, but by constant change.

Dimension Two: From Traditional Security to Human-Centered Security

The evolution of security thinking reflects a gradual but fundamental shift from traditional state-centered paradigms toward human-centered security frameworks. Classical security approaches defined security primarily in terms of protecting state sovereignty, territorial integrity, and regime survival, with military power as the core instrument. While this model was effective in explaining interstate conflict during much of the twentieth century, it has become increasingly limited in addressing the complex and multidimensional challenges characterizing contemporary security environments.

Traditional security assumes that threats are external, identifiable, and largely military in nature. However, the security challenges confronting states today increasingly originate from within societies and across borders, including economic fragility, social polarization, forced displacement, violent extremism, and institutional weakness. These threats often undermine stability without crossing borders or triggering conventional military responses. As a result, security can no longer be understood solely through the lens of state survival, but must incorporate the conditions that sustain societal resilience and political legitimacy (Acharya, 2022).

Human-centered security emerged as a response to these limitations, emphasizing the protection of individuals and communities as the foundation of national and international stability. Rather than replacing the state, this framework repositions it as a guarantor of human wellbeing, social cohesion, and inclusive development. Human-centered security highlights freedom from fear, freedom from want, and freedom from indignity as essential components of sustainable security. In this context, economic opportunity, access to services, social inclusion, and trust in institutions become security concerns rather than purely developmental or social issues (Tadjbakhsh & Chenoy, 2023).

This conceptual shift has important implications for how security is produced and maintained. Security becomes a shared responsibility involving state institutions, civil society, and communities, rather than the exclusive domain of military or security agencies. Governance quality, policy coherence, and social trust emerge as critical security variables. States that fail to address structural vulnerabilities such as inequality, marginalization, or weak institutions may experience chronic insecurity even in the absence of external threats (Paris, 2021).

The transition toward human-centered security does not negate the importance of traditional security instruments, but rather integrates them within a broader framework that prioritizes prevention, resilience, and long-term stability. In an age of uncertainty, where risks are diffuse and interconnected, national security depends increasingly on the capacity of states to align human security with strategic objectives. This integration provides a more robust foundation for managing uncertainty and sustaining stability in volatile regional environments, where societal cohesion and institutional strength are as vital as military preparedness.

Dimension Three: Types and Pillars of National Security

National security in contemporary analytical frameworks is understood as a structured system composed of interdependent types and foundational pillars rather than a single, uniform domain. This understanding reflects the recognition that security outcomes emerge from the interaction between political authority, economic capacity, social cohesion, and institutional effectiveness. In an age characterized by uncertainty and overlapping risks, national security depends less on isolated instruments of power and more on the coherence of the security structure as a whole. Examining the types and pillars of national security, therefore, provides a systemic lens through which stability, resilience, and vulnerability can be analytically assessed. And these are the core pillars of National Security:

1. **Political Security:** Political security forms the central pillar upon which other dimensions of national security rest. It refers to the stability and legitimacy of governing institutions, the effectiveness of political decision-making, and the durability of the constitutional order. As emphasized in the opening framework, insecurity often originates from internal governance weaknesses rather than external threats. When legitimacy is contested or institutions are fragmented, the state's capacity to manage uncertainty diminishes significantly. Political security thus anchors national security by ensuring institutional coherence and public trust, aligning directly with the systemic understanding of security outlined in the introductory paragraph (Fukuyama, 2022).
2. **Economic Security:** Economic security constitutes a critical structural component of national security, particularly under conditions of global volatility. It reflects the ability of the state to sustain growth, manage inequality, diversify resources, and absorb economic shocks. As suggested in the opening analysis, security in uncertain environments depends on resilience rather than static strength. Economic fragility can amplify political and social vulnerabilities, transforming economic stress into broader security risks. Economic security, therefore, reinforces national security by enhancing the state's adaptive capacity and crisis responsiveness (IMF, 2023).
3. **Social Security:** Social security focuses on societal cohesion, inclusion, and the management of social fragmentation. It is directly linked to the systemic nature of security highlighted in the introductory paragraph, as social divisions can undermine institutional effectiveness and political stability. Societies characterized by polarization, exclusion, or persistent inequality face elevated risks of internal instability and radicalization. Social cohesion functions as a strategic asset that sustains national unity and reinforces the broader security structure by reducing internal sources of uncertainty (UNRISD, 2022).
4. **Institutional and Governance Pillars:** The effectiveness of institutions and the quality of governance represent cross-cutting pillars that sustain all types of national security. Institutions translate policy into practice, coordinate across sectors, and maintain continuity under stress. As emphasized in the opening framework, national security does not emerge from isolated strengths but from systemic coherence. Weak institutions compromise political, economic, and social security simultaneously, exposing the entire security architecture to risk (Brinkerhoff & Brinkerhoff, 2021).
5. **Systemic Interaction among Pillars:** The interaction among political, economic, social, and institutional pillars determines the overall strength of national security. This reinforces the introductory argument that security is a product of structural coherence rather than singular capabilities. A deficiency in one pillar can cascade across the system, generating compound vulnerabilities. National security, therefore, is sustained through integration, coordination, and balance among its constituent pillars rather than through dominance in any single domain.

Dimension Four: Security, Stability, and Strategic Governance

In contemporary security thinking, the relationship between security and stability is increasingly mediated by the quality of governance and the effectiveness of strategic decision-making. Security is no longer produced solely through coercive instruments or emergency responses, but through governance systems capable of managing complexity, coordinating institutions, and sustaining legitimacy under pressure. In an age of

uncertainty, strategic governance emerges as the central mechanism through which states translate security objectives into durable stability. Examining security through the lens of governance highlights how institutional capacity, policy coherence, and strategic foresight shape national security outcomes over time. And these are the core determinants of Security, Stability, and Strategic Governance:

- 1. Governance as a Foundation of Security:** Governance constitutes the structural foundation upon which security and stability are built. Effective governance ensures policy coherence, institutional coordination, and accountability, all of which are essential for managing uncertainty. As emphasized in the opening framework, security in complex environments depends on the state's ability to organize and align its institutions toward shared objectives. Weak governance, by contrast, generates fragmented responses and amplifies vulnerability across security domains (World Bank, 2024).
- 2. Strategic Governance and Policy Coherence:** Strategic governance refers to the capacity of decision-making systems to integrate long-term vision with short-term responses. In uncertain environments, fragmented or reactive policies often undermine stability. Strategic governance aligns security priorities across political, economic, and social sectors, reinforcing the systemic nature of security highlighted in the introductory paragraph. Policy coherence enables states to anticipate risks, allocate resources effectively, and avoid contradictory interventions that weaken overall security performance (OECD, 2023).
- 3. Institutional Coordination and Crisis Management:** Institutional coordination represents a critical governance dimension linking security to stability. Modern security challenges are cross-sectoral by nature, requiring collaboration among political authorities, economic institutions, and social agencies. As suggested in the opening analysis, stability depends not on institutional strength in isolation but on coordinated action. Poor coordination during crises often exacerbates insecurity, while integrated institutional responses enhance resilience and adaptive capacity (DCAF, 2022).
- 4. Legitimacy, Trust, and Stability:** Public trust and institutional legitimacy are essential governance-based components of national security. Stability cannot be sustained through control mechanisms alone, particularly in uncertain environments where societal cooperation is vital. Legitimacy reinforces compliance, reduces internal friction, and strengthens the state's ability to mobilize society in times of stress. As the introductory framework implies, governance that maintains trust transforms stability from a fragile condition into a durable security asset (Levi & Stoker, 2023).
- 5. Strategic Foresight and Adaptive Governance:** Strategic governance increasingly relies on foresight and adaptive capacity to manage uncertainty. Rather than predicting specific threats, adaptive governance emphasizes learning, flexibility, and continuous adjustment. This aligns directly with the opening argument that security is a process rather than a fixed outcome. States that institutionalize foresight and adaptability are better positioned to sustain stability amid shifting geopolitical and regional dynamics (UN DESA, 2023).

Dimension Five: Managing National Security under Continuous Uncertainty

National security in the contemporary era is increasingly shaped by conditions of continuous uncertainty rather than episodic crises. Unlike traditional security environments, where threats were identifiable and time-bound, modern security landscapes

are characterized by ambiguity, rapid change, and overlapping risks that evolve across political, economic, social, and technological domains. In such contexts, national security depends fundamentally on the capacity of states to manage uncertainty through resilience, adaptability, and strategic learning. Security thus becomes a process of continuous governance aimed at sustaining stability amid persistent volatility. And these are the core drivers of managing National Security under continuous Uncertainty:

1. **Uncertainty as a Structural Condition:** Continuous uncertainty represents a permanent feature of the contemporary security environment rather than a temporary disruption. As emphasized in the opening framework, insecurity is no longer an exception but an enduring condition that shapes policy-making and institutional behavior. States must therefore design security strategies that function under ambiguity, incomplete information, and rapidly shifting threat configurations. Treating uncertainty as structural rather than episodic enables more realistic and sustainable security planning (Beck, 2023).
2. **Resilience as a Central Security Capability:** Resilience has emerged as a core pillar of national security under conditions of uncertainty. It refers to the capacity of institutions and societies to absorb shocks, adapt to stress, and recover without systemic collapse. As suggested in the introductory paragraph, security is no longer measured solely by prevention but by endurance and recovery. Resilient systems reduce vulnerability to cascading failures and enhance national stability despite prolonged exposure to risk (Linkov & Trump, 2019).
3. **Adaptive Institutions and Strategic Learning:** Managing uncertainty requires institutions capable of learning, adaptation, and policy recalibration. Static security doctrines are ill-suited for environments characterized by continuous change. Adaptive institutions institutionalize feedback mechanisms, scenario planning, and policy experimentation, allowing states to adjust strategies as conditions evolve. This adaptive capacity aligns directly with the opening argument that security is a dynamic process rather than a fixed outcome (Ansell & Boin, 2022).
4. **Risk Governance and Anticipatory Capacity:** Risk governance plays a critical role in managing national security under uncertainty. Rather than focusing solely on known threats, anticipatory governance emphasizes early warning, horizon scanning, and the identification of emerging risks. As highlighted in the opening framework, effective security governance prioritizes foresight over reaction, enabling states to mitigate risks before they escalate into full-scale crises (Renn, 2021).
5. **National Cohesion and Societal Endurance:** Societal cohesion functions as a critical enabling condition for managing uncertainty. Public trust, shared identity, and social solidarity enhance the state's capacity to mobilize collective responses to prolonged stress. As uncertainty persists, security increasingly depends on societal endurance as much as on institutional capacity. This reinforces the introductory assertion that security under uncertainty is sustained through integration between state structures and society rather than through coercion alone (Aspinall & Goh, 2023).

Dimension Six: National Security between Classical Strategic Thought and Contemporary Jordanian Practice

Classical strategic thought has played a decisive role in shaping modern understandings of national security, particularly through the contributions of influential policymakers and theorists such as Henry Kissinger and Robert McNamara. From Kissinger's perspective, national security is fundamentally linked to the maintenance of international order and

strategic balance among states. Security, in this sense, is achieved through equilibrium, diplomacy, and the careful management of power relations rather than through unilateral dominance. Kissinger's realist framework emphasizes that stability emerges when states recognize mutual limits and operate within an agreed strategic order, making diplomacy a core instrument of national security rather than a secondary tool (Kissinger, 2014).

In contrast, Robert McNamara advanced a broader and more human-oriented understanding of security, particularly in the post-Cold War era. McNamara argued that national security cannot be reduced to military superiority alone, but must address structural threats such as poverty, underdevelopment, demographic pressures, and social injustice. According to this perspective, insecurity often originates from human deprivation and governance failure rather than external aggression. McNamara's approach thus marked an early shift toward what later became known as comprehensive and human-centered security, in which development, social stability, and political legitimacy are integral to national security planning (McNamara, 1991).

These theoretical foundations resonate strongly with the contemporary Jordanian approach to national security, particularly under the leadership of His Majesty King Abdullah II Ibn Al Hussein. Jordan's security doctrine reflects a pragmatic synthesis between strategic realism and human-centered considerations. His Majesty's vision emphasizes balanced relations with neighboring states, moderation in regional politics, and the prioritization of stability through dialogue and cooperation. In managing repeated refugee crises resulting from conflicts in Palestine, Iraq, and Syria, Jordan has pursued a security approach that combines humanitarian responsibility with the preservation of social cohesion and state capacity. This reflects a clear understanding that refugee management is not merely a humanitarian issue, but a core national security concern that requires international burden sharing and sustained diplomatic engagement (King Abdullah II, 2011).

Within this framework, Jordanian diplomacy has played a pivotal role in confronting contemporary security challenges, particularly in addressing Israeli narratives surrounding forced displacement from Gaza. The Jordanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has actively worked to refute any proposals aimed at the transfer or resettlement of Palestinians outside their homeland, framing such proposals as violations of international law and direct threats to regional stability. This diplomatic effort has been reinforced through close coordination with Egypt, resulting in a unified and consistent stance rejecting displacement and affirming the centrality of Palestinian rights. Through this coordinated diplomacy, Jordan has demonstrated how soft security instruments, legitimacy-based arguments, and regional alignment function as essential tools in safeguarding national and regional security under conditions of uncertainty (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2024).

Jordanian National Security: An Integrated Framework from the Perspective of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Jordanian national security, as understood through the official orientation and position of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Jordan, is conceived as a comprehensive framework aimed at safeguarding the state's sovereignty, unity, political and social stability, protecting the security of its citizens, and preserving the legitimacy of the state and its institutions. This is pursued through a balanced foreign policy grounded in respect for international law, the prevention of regional threats, the rejection of forced displacement, and the support of just Arab causes, foremost among them the Palestinian cause, alongside managing the repercussions of regional crises, particularly refugee crises, in a manner that ensures they do not negatively impact national security and internal stability.

Risks Facing Jordanian National Security

Jordanian national security faces a complex set of interrelated risks arising from the Kingdom's geopolitical location at the heart of a turbulent region and from the intersection of political, security, economic, and humanitarian factors in its immediate surroundings. Jordan is not insulated from the repercussions of prolonged regional conflicts, nor from the spillover effects of rapid international transformations, which have subjected its national security to continuous stress tests. The seriousness of these challenges lies in the fact that they do not always manifest as direct military threats, but rather take non-traditional forms that penetrate through borders, economic pressures, or political and humanitarian constraints. This reality necessitates a comprehensive security approach based on foresight and prudence rather than reaction. Within this context, safeguarding internal stability, preserving sovereignty, and managing surrounding regional crises constitute central pillars of Jordan's national security equation.

Key Risks Facing Jordanian National Security

- The continuation of the Arab–Israeli conflict and its repercussions, particularly attempts to impose forced displacement at Jordan's expense
- Instability in neighboring countries and its security and economic spillover effects
- Successive refugee crises and their pressure on infrastructure and national resources
- Economic challenges, including unemployment and poverty
- Threats of extremism and cross-border terrorism
- Regional and international political pressures on Jordan's independent national decision-making
- Scarcity of natural resources, especially water, and its strategic implications

The Leadership of His Majesty in Overcoming Risks and Challenges

His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn al Hussein has successfully led Jordan in confronting these risks through a balanced approach that combines political firmness with strategic wisdom. His Majesty recognized early on that protecting national security cannot rely solely on hard power, but must be anchored in strong internal cohesion and proactive diplomacy. In addressing refugee crises, His Majesty pursued a responsible humanitarian policy without compromising state interests or internal stability, while consistently calling on the international community to share the burden. Moreover, His Majesty's steadfast position on the Palestinian cause and his categorical rejection of forced displacement have constituted a strategic line of defense for Jordanian national security. Through a balanced foreign policy and carefully calibrated regional and international relations, His Majesty has succeeded in neutralizing many risks and positioning Jordan as a resilient state capable of crisis management and sustained stability within an exceptionally challenging regional environment.

CONCLUSION

This article has argued that national security in the contemporary era cannot be understood through traditional military-centered frameworks alone, particularly in regions characterized by prolonged instability and structural uncertainty. The analysis has demonstrated that security has evolved into a multidimensional and continuous process, shaped by governance quality, institutional resilience, societal cohesion, and the capacity to manage uncertainty rather than eliminate it. This reconceptualization is not new, but rather reflects a long-standing intellectual trajectory in which Jordan has played an early and active role.

The discussions presented in *Challenges of Peace Support: Into the 21st Century*, published by the Jordan Institute of Diplomacy, provide a foundational reference for understanding this shift. As early as the late 1990s, security debates in Amman had already moved beyond a narrow focus on hard security threats toward a broader framework integrating political, social, economic, and human dimensions of security. The distinction drawn in that work between hard and soft security concerns remains analytically relevant, particularly in the current context of persistent regional volatility (Jordan Institute of Diplomacy, 1999).

Hard security challenges such as military imbalance, deterrence, arms control, terrorism, and border-related threats continue to shape the regional security environment. However, as the reference material clearly indicates, these challenges alone do not explain the durability of insecurity in the Middle East. Instead, the persistence of conflict and instability is deeply rooted in soft security concerns that operate beneath the surface of military confrontation. These include weak governance mechanisms, deficits in trust and legitimacy, economic mismanagement, social fragmentation, demographic pressures, and the absence of effective confidence-building measures.

Soft security concerns are not secondary or peripheral to national security; they constitute its underlying infrastructure. As highlighted in the Jordanian contribution to the 1998 conference, security in its expanded sense encompasses human resources, natural resources, economic systems, and social structures. Food security, water scarcity, population dynamics, development mechanisms, and investment patterns all function as security variables that directly affect stability. Where these dimensions are neglected, hard security measures become insufficient and often counterproductive (Jordan Institute of Diplomacy, 1999).

One of the most significant insights emerging from the soft security framework is the recognition that insecurity is frequently produced not by a lack of resources, but by the mechanisms governing their distribution and management. The failure to address disparities between societies and neighboring states, the exclusion of populations from development processes, and the erosion of social trust create fertile ground for radicalization, extremism, and political violence. In this sense, soft security concerns act as both early warning indicators and structural drivers of insecurity.

For Jordan, the relevance of soft security is particularly pronounced. Located in a region marked by protracted conflict, displacement, and geopolitical competition, Jordan's national security has consistently depended on its ability to balance hard security imperatives with investments in social cohesion, institutional legitimacy, and inclusive development. The Jordanian approach, as reflected in the earlier diplomatic and strategic discourse, emphasizes confidence-building measures, preventive diplomacy, and the integration of security with development and governance.

Ultimately, managing national security in the age of uncertainty requires a paradigmatic shift from reaction to anticipation, from control to resilience, and from militarization to integration. Soft security concerns provide the conceptual and practical bridge between stability and sustainability. They enable states not only to withstand shocks, but to prevent their escalation by addressing root causes rather than symptoms. By foregrounding soft security within a comprehensive national security framework, this article reinforces the argument that enduring security is produced through governance, trust, and societal endurance as much as through deterrence and defense.

Jordanian national security in the age of uncertainty cannot be confined to military preparedness or traditional defense paradigms. Instead, it is best understood as a comprehensive and dynamic system that integrates political stability, economic resilience, social cohesion, effective governance, and proactive diplomacy. In a region characterized

by persistent volatility and overlapping crises, national security emerges as a continuous process of managing uncertainty, preserving legitimacy, and sustaining societal cohesion.

A defining pillar of the Jordanian security model is the wisdom and strategic foresight of His Majesty King Abdullah II Ibn Al Hussein. His Majesty's leadership has consistently emphasized moderation, balance, and preventive diplomacy, enabling Jordan to navigate regional turbulence while safeguarding internal stability and national sovereignty. This approach has been particularly evident in Jordan's principled stance on regional conflicts and its commitment to international legitimacy.

Central to Jordan's national security calculus is the Palestinian cause and the ongoing Arab–Israeli conflict, which remain enduring sources of regional instability and strategic pressure. Jordan's advocacy for a just and comprehensive peace, grounded in the two-state solution and the protection of Palestinian rights, reflects a security vision that links regional justice to long-term stability. By integrating hard and soft security dimensions and anchoring policy in legitimacy, governance, and diplomacy, Jordan affirms that sustainable national security is achieved not by eliminating uncertainty, but by managing it wisely through leadership, resilience, and moral clarity.

Recommendations

The findings of this article underscore that managing national security in the age of uncertainty requires a deliberate shift from narrowly defined security responses toward a comprehensive framework that integrates soft security concerns as core strategic priorities. The persistence of instability in the region demonstrates that military preparedness alone is insufficient to generate sustainable security outcomes. Instead, national security must be anchored in governance quality, social cohesion, economic resilience, and preventive approaches that address the structural drivers of insecurity. Drawing on the analytical distinction between hard and soft security concerns articulated in the Jordan Institute of Diplomacy's foundational work, the following recommendations emphasize the need to institutionalize soft security as a central pillar of national security planning and policy formulation. And these are the key recommendations:

1. **Institutionalize Soft Security within National Security Frameworks:** National security strategies should explicitly integrate soft security concerns, including governance effectiveness, social cohesion, economic management, and demographic dynamics, as core components rather than supportive measures. This integration would enable a more accurate assessment of security risks and enhance the state's capacity to prevent instability before it escalates into hard security threats.
2. **Strengthen Governance and Policy Coordination Mechanisms:** Effective governance and institutional coordination should be prioritized as strategic security objectives. Enhancing transparency, accountability, and cross-sectoral cooperation would reduce fragmentation in decision-making processes and reinforce public trust, thereby strengthening the foundations of political and social stability.
3. **Prioritize Preventive Diplomacy and Confidence-Building Measures:** Preventive diplomacy and confidence-building measures should be expanded at both national and regional levels to mitigate tensions and manage disputes before they become securitized. These measures remain essential tools for transforming insecurity from a reactive condition into a manageable and anticipatory process.
4. **Link Economic and Social Development to Security Planning:** Economic development, resource management, and social inclusion policies should be systematically aligned with national security planning. Addressing unemployment, inequality, and development disparities would reduce structural vulnerabilities that fuel radicalization and social unrest, reinforcing long-term national resilience.

5. **Enhance Societal Resilience and National Cohesion:** National security policies should invest in strengthening societal resilience through education, civic engagement, and inclusive identity frameworks. By reinforcing social solidarity and shared national purpose, the state can enhance its capacity to withstand prolonged uncertainty and sustain stability without overreliance on coercive security measures.

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