

## Several sectors benefiting from Jordanian-French ties

**AMMAN** - The Kingdom's transport and water sectors have benefited from closer ties between France and Jordan over the last year, the French Ambassador in Amman said on Tuesday.

France has extended a 200,000 euro grant to support feasibility studies for the National Railway Network project as part of support for the Kingdom's transport sector, French Ambassador in Amman Corrine Breuzé said during a press meeting yesterday to mark France's national day, observed on July 14.

The support for the Kingdom's transport sector comes as part of France's belief that Jordan is a strategic hub for reaching markets in Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and the rest of West Asia, she added.

Breuzé, who has been France's ambassador to Jordan for nearly a year, underlined that France sees Jordan as a model for moderation, co-existence, and a good example for modernisation, development and stability.

She pointed out that the French Development Agency extended soft loans worth \$200 million to carry out the Disi Water Conveyance Project, which entails the construction of a 325-kilometre pipeline to supply the capital with 100 million cubic metres of water annually from the ancient Disi aquifer in the south of Jordan.

The French government has also promoted the use of grey water and other water conservation practices in the Jordan Valley and elsewhere in the country, she added.

Regarding economic ties, French investments in Jordan have reached \$1.3 billion, with over 30 French companies and permanent representatives operating in the Kingdom, she said, noting that the number of French expatriates living in the Kingdom has increased by 11 per cent to reach 1,500.

Breuzé highlighted the role of the French Development Agency's office in Amman, which has provided the Kingdom with 270 million euros in financial support since it opened in 2006.

Regarding archaeology, the ambassador said French experts have been active in the preservation and conservation of Petra, Jerash and Iraq Al Amir.

She highlighted the close relations between the French Institute of the Near East and the Department of Antiquities, noting that last month Paris hosted the "11th International Conference on the History and Archaeology of Jordan", which gathered experts in archaeology from around Jordan and across the world.