

SAM SHURDOM



It is with regret that we have heard of the passing of General Ihsan "Sam" Shurdom, Royal Jordanian Air Force (RJAF) of 82 Entry on 9th June 2024 (although Sam graduated with 82 Entry, he always supported his original 81 Entry at reunions).

Sam had joined the RJAF in January 1959 and, as well as Cranwell, Sam attended the Junior Commanders School of the Pakistan Air Force, the RAF Staff College and the USAF Air War College. After defending Jordan as a fighter pilot in the disastrous (for Jordan) 1967 war with Israel, Sam was one of the pilots chosen to fly the Lockheed Starfighter when they were delivered in 1968.

After helping set up the air element of the Bahrain Defence Force in 1975, Sam rose to be promoted to RJAF Chief of Air Staff from 1983 to 1993, when he retired. He then facilitated initial contacts between retired Jordanian and Israeli military officers under the sponsorship of the Initiative for Peace and Cooperation in the Middle East, as well as taking part over many years in peace dialogues both in the region and beyond.

After serving as an advisor to HM King Hussain of Jordan, he worked as Chairman for the Middle East Australian Trading Company as well as a director and Chairman of the Board for the Century Investment Group.

It was with the Commonwealth Partnership for Technology Management (CPTM) that Sam was a recipient of the Peace Award from the European Foundation for Culture, and the Rose Prize from the Labour Movement of Denmark. Sam's wife Margaret, duly honoured as a CPTM Companion, joined him at many CPTM events.

He also received an Honorary Doctorate from Kalamazoo College in Michigan for his commitment to international peace. Through his earlier service career, he received (amongst many others) the Jordanian Military Gallantry Medal, the Bravery Medal of Iraq and the Medal of Bahrain. He was also a Board Member and Treasurer of the Petra National Trust which looks after the protection of that UNESCO World Heritage site.