

Under the Patronage of  
**H.E. Mr. Najib Mikati**  
**President of the Council of Ministers**

**Euro-Arab Economic Forum - 2012**  
**«Partnership for Better  
Economic Complementarity»**



**Organized by**



**Strategic Partner**



**In Cooperation  
with Joint Arab - Foreign Chambers**

12 – 13 September 2012  
Beirut - Lebanon

## Why this Forum?

The political transformations that occurred in some Arab countries have deeply affected the Arab structural foundations and which have not yet fully matured. But certainly these transformations will continue and will be accompanied by changes on the economic, social and developmental levels in the concerned countries, and in the Arab region in general. On the other hand, the EU countries are currently facing a serious moment in history that is threatening the structure of the Union. This is caused by the turbulence in most important features of the European unity i.e. the monetary union, as a result of the debt crisis in the euro zone and EU countries as a whole. It is evident that these developments require a new vision for the European Arab organizations with the new Euro-Arab neighboring policy.

The common factors that gather the Arab and European countries are many and diversified, in politics, culture, civilizations and economic field. These countries are working effectively and seriously to convert these common factors through cooperation policies and mechanisms to activate the potentials and resources that are inherent in the Arab and European countries. These

potentials and resources, if well utilized, will benefit more the two partners. The Arab countries strongly support this objective, and the General Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture for Arab Countries will strive to achieve it in cooperation with the Arab Governments.

In fact, economic, administrative and financial reform programs in the Arab countries didn't achieve its objectives in full. Likewise, the Euro-Mediterranean partnership agreements didn't fully achieve its goals in this regard, due to significant distortions in the Arab political system. The Arab spring requires a new vision of the requested reform, hopefully supported by a new European approach to the Arab-European neighborhood policy. Such policies need to assist the Arab countries in formulating a new reform vision with appropriate economic models that match the needs of these countries. These models should consider a leading role for the Arab private sector in redirecting investment to the real economic sector for the sake of creating more job opportunities. They should also empower the role of the public sector in the fields of

health, social care and education, in conjunction with the social responsibility of the private sector. The reforms should focus on sound governance, transparency and anti- corruption.

The translation of these new directions could be implemented based on the new vision of the Arab European neighboring policy. As a matter of fact, the Arab countries are the closest courtyard to the European Union. They embrace a lot of resources and investment projects for the future. The EU countries are the main trade and investment partner for the Arab countries, besides being an effective political bloc on the international platform, having achieved a distinguished level in scientific, technological and industrial sectors. The efforts of Europe to overcome its financial and economic crisis on one hand, and the efforts of Arab countries to fulfill their eagerness to adopt new policies for economic and social reform on the other hand, could actually converge through activating joint capacities and investment projects in the sectors that are really needed for Arab

economic development. The sectors cover industry, agriculture, services, clean energy, communication, technology, education, health and environment, as well as construction projects and others. These projects are available for European investments and companies.

The European support for the rebuilding of economic structures in the Arab region, in addition to technical training programs and technology transfer, SMEs support, development of financial and banking sector, and clean energy and the environment sector, all of them serve the common Arab-European interests for cooperation in the trade and investment fields.

## Objectives

The Forum aims to achieve the following main broad objectives:

- Shedding light on the current status of the Arab-European economic relations, and exploring the future of these relations in light of the major developments that we are currently witnessing in the Arab region and in the EU.
- Exchanging views on the new fields and opportunities to develop economic, trade, investment and financial cooperation between the Arab world and the European Union, in light of the increasingly rapid Arab, European and global developments.
- Identifying the areas where the European Union can support the Arab world in its new transformations, particularly on the economic level to overcome the repercussions of political developments that are taking place, namely towards formulating new economic and social reform policies for the coming period.
- Exploring the scope of the European role in supporting the implementation of core projects decided by the Arab Economic Summits especially those related to linking the Arab countries' infrastructure in rail roads, land roads, sea and air routes and electric grids.
- Identifying the investment opportunities and projects in the Arab world in various economic fields, such as infrastructure, clean energy, communication and technology, industry, education, health, SMEs, banking and financial sector and others, and exploring the role of EU in supporting and financing these projects.
- Understanding the dimensions of the new European role, within the framework of the new Arab-European neighboring policy for the Arab region in the light of its current transformations, to provide the necessary aid and assistance for reconstruction of countries in transformation.
- Developing new business partnerships between Arab and European businessmen and with international businessmen in general, given the strong activity of investment projects in some Arab countries.



## Topics

This Forum will address the following key issues:

- Prospects of the Euro-Arab economic relations under the new directions of the Euro-Arab neighboring policy.
- Programs for reconstruction and economic development in the Arab region, and Euro-Arab cooperation avenues in this regard.
- Proposed investment projects in economic sectors in the Arab countries, and the potential financial role of the European Union and European Investment Bank.
- New economic prospects for cooperation in the sectors of infrastructure, clean energy, information communication and technology, banking and finance, education, health, industry, and SMEs.
- Role of Arab financing and development funds and the European Investment Bank in financing reconstruction, rehabilitation, and development projects in the Arab region.

## Structure

The structure of the Forum is as follows:

- Keynote speeches by a number of senior Arab and European officials.
- Dialogue and open discussion sessions among selected key Arab and European economic officials, businessmen, experts and media specialists.
- Presentations of investment projects in the Arab countries that require various regional and European financing.
- Bilateral meetings between leaders of Arab and European financial funds, banks, companies and projects.



## Participants

The following parties from the Arab and European countries will be invited to participate in the Forum:

- Chambers of commerce, industry and agriculture.
- Financial and development funds.
- Banks, financial institutions, and investment companies.
- Economic and financial unions and organizations.
- Businessmen and businesswomen.
- Economic and financial experts.
- Exports and investment guarantee institutions.
- Credit rating agencies.

## Date and venue

- The Forum will take place on 12-13 September 2012.
- It will be held in Beirut – Lebanon, at the headquarters of the General Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture for Arab Countries «Adnan Kassar Edifice for Arab Economy».

## For more Information contact:

**General Union of Chambers of Commerce,  
Industry and Agriculture for Arab Countries**  
POBox: 2837-11  
Tel: +961 1 826021/22/23  
Fax: +961 1 826020  
E-mail: [conferences@uac.org.lb](mailto:conferences@uac.org.lb); [uac@uac.org.lb](mailto:uac@uac.org.lb)  
Web site: [www.uac.org.lb](http://www.uac.org.lb)

**The European Investment Bank**  
POB: 98-100, Boulevard Konrad Adenauer,  
L-2950 Luxembourg  
Tel: +352 4379 94139  
Fax: +352 4379 64150  
E-mail: [info@eib.org](mailto:info@eib.org)  
Website: [www.eib.org](http://www.eib.org)





## General Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture for Arab Countries

### Establishment

The Union was founded on December 16, 1951, and assigned Beirut to be the headquarters of its General Secretariat and settled in 2008 in “**Adnan Kassar Edifice for Arab Economy**”.

The basic motive for the establishment of the Union was the far sightedness of the Arab businessmen to the importance of the regional cooperation as means to accelerate the Arab economic development. Thus the Union became the first Arab economic organization operating on a non-governmental level to develop the basics of cooperation and economic integration between the Arab Countries. The Union played a major role in enhancing the cooperation between the Arab Countries on both commercial and investment levels.

The Union was the first to bring forward the idea of founding the Arab Common Market and to lay down its general principles that should be executed in an effort to achieve full economic unity between the Arab countries.

### Vision

To be the true representative of the Arab private sector in trade, investment, and economic fields with the aim of developing the status of this sector and its role in the process of development, growth and economic integration of the Arab economies.

### Mission Statement

To be:

- A referral center and a vital link for all business communities in the Arab countries.
- A developer of the Arab economic thought on a sustainable basis.
- A bridge for the Arab private sector to the fundamental rules of the international economy, thus facilitating its integration with the world economy.

### Objectives

The Union has set its objectives to:

- Ensure the integration of the Arab economy in an overall, effective and developed framework, thus making the Arab world one whole and united economic bloc sector which is able to deal and cooperate with other economic blocs on reciprocal basis.
- Represent all Arab economic sectors whether national, regional or international from the businessmen's perspective.
- Enhance the role played by the chambers of and their unions as representatives of the private sectors of their respective countries.
- Identify the needs of its members and eliminate all obstacles that hinder development aspirations.
- Develop cooperation among Arab businesses and between them and foreign businesses.
- Enhance the status, and support the interests, of the business enterprises in all sectors in their regional and international relations.
- Strengthen of the Union's position as a recognized reference to Arab and international organizations and institutions.
- Assure the Union's essential and leading role in the process of economic development and integration among the Arab countries.

### Activities

Over the years, the Union developed a wide range of activities that mainly aim at pushing forward the Arab economic common action, strengthening Arab and international trade and investment cooperation relations. The Union has a wide variety of publications that include research studies, qualitative reports and specialized books, bulletins and a magazine, that aim at reflecting the views of the Arab private sector with respect to various affairs pertaining to development, integration and international cooperation. Standing on a rich experience in organizing conferences, forums and specialized seminars in various subjects and cooperation domains of interest to the Arab businessmen, the Union aims to be always up to the new economic and trade regional and international development challenges.