

Press Release | 26.11.2012

Successful Launch of the „1st EMA Forum for the Mashriq and Gulf Region“ hosted at the Federal Foreign Office, November 19th and 20th 2012

Berlin-The premiere of the “1st EMA Forum for the Mashriq and Gulf Region” initiated by the German-Arab organisation EMA together with the Federal Foreign Office was ill-fated: the crisis in the Middle East between Israel and Palestine is about to escalate while the end of confrontations in Syria is nowhere in sight. Due to these circumstances, Dr. Guido Westerwelle, the patron of this event, decided to travel to the Middle East on the conference’ opening day. Therefore Viktor Elbling, the Director General of Economic Affairs and Sustainable Development of the Federal Foreign Office, thanked the EMA all the more for its great dedication. Furthermore, his colleague Boris Ruge, the Head of the Middle East Department, pointed out that in this politically insecure time lots of entrepreneurs and businessmen are hesitant to invest in the Mashriq and Gulf Region. Nevertheless, the EMA succeeded in bringing together 200 German, Turkish and Arabic representatives of the business, political, science and civil society sector on November 19th and 20th 2012 in order to further intensify Germany’s external economic relations: German exports in the member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council alone amounted to nearly 18 thousand million Euro. The current project volume of German companies in these countries accounts for 1.8 billion US-Dollar.

In addition to relevant topics for successful foreign trade, the high-ranking German and Arabic representatives also analyzed key industries for sustainable development in eight workshops: water management, environment and renewable energies; infrastructure, urban planning and (green) logistics as well as health care and life sciences. Experiences were exchanged, current projects presented and goal-oriented concepts for increased networking between German entrepreneurs with Arabic partners were discussed. Particularly the important role of Egypt as political mediator became apparent during the Forum. Although the country itself is currently at a turning point, at the same time it offers also new opportunities for German-Arab relations: “Germany is a strong and reliable partner. I invite German business leaders to consider investing in Egypt. When investing in Egypt you support democracy and you also consolidate stability in the Mediterranean”, said H.E. Dr. Mohamed Higazy, the Egyptian ambassador.



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Furthermore, this year's framework programme allowed the participants to gain an insight in the business location Brandenburg: in addition to a historic tour of Potsdam, the reception at the Federal State Government of Brandenburg offered lots of possibilities for B2B talks. The viewing of the airport Berlin-Brandenburg gave reason to review best practice and future-oriented infrastructure for a better Arab-German connection. The exclusive gala dinner in the delegates' restaurant in the German Federal Parliament found great favour with the guests. The keynote speech was given by Klaus Brandner, a member of the German Federal Parliament and chairman of the German-Egyptian Group of Parliamentarians. On the whole, the "1st EMA-Forum for the Mashriq and Gulf Region" received lots of positive feedback: "The EMA has by far organized its best event. Particularly in these turbulent times a small miracle!", according to a participant.

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The German-Arab Organisation

The EMA is working towards a deepened economic, political and cultural cooperation between Germany and the countries of North Africa and the Middle East (EMA-region). Please find more information on our homepage: www.ema-germany.org

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