



AACC

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R E P O R T:

Agreement on the development of relations between the AACC and UNIDO

23 January 2012



On Monday, 23 January 2012, the Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), H.E. Mr. Kandeh K. YUMKELLA, welcomed the Vice President of the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce, Commercial Advisor Mr. Nabil KUZBARI and AACC's Secretary General, Engineer Mr. Mouddar KHOUJA, at the VIC in Vienna.

There they discussed ways and methods to develop and strengthen relations between the UN Organisations and the AACC, as well as the possibilities of cooperation in several subjects such as the fight against unemployment in the Arab world, the environmental protection and the subjects of energy and in particular renewable energy. The AACC made a presentation of its mission to build bridges of positive relations between the Arabs and Austrians. The briefing also highlighted the vast network of relationships between the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce and the General Union of Arab Chambers.

Moreover the AACC highlighted its efforts in promoting economic and trade relations between Austria and the Arab countries, as well as their contributions to upgrading the Austro-Arab relations in all fields.

During the meeting Mr. KUZBARI reviewed the model of the Qatari social enterprise "Silatech" which by developing different programs seeks to support and create the necessary expertise and set up development projects contributing to fight unemployment among the youth in the Arab world. The Qatari institution "Silatech" includes internationally renowned personalities and experts from many Arab countries in its board of directors.

Mr. KUZBARI explained that "Silatech" – founded by Her Highness Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser Al Misnad – launched a global initiative in 2008 in Qatar to improve the economic and social situation of young people by creating jobs and promoting economic feasibility of several projects in progress. "Silatech" was able to actually accomplish its goals by creating around 49.000 jobs throughout the Arab world. Mr. KUZBARI also mentioned that the participation of the private sector in the economies within the Arab world is only 67 per cent, which emphasizes the need for more private sector participation in the effort to reduce unemployment among the Arab youth.

The Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce expressed its desire to cooperate closely with UNIDO, establish joint activities and discuss the role of the private sector providing more employment opportunities. The Secretary General of the AACC, Mr. KHOUJA, pointed out to the efforts undertaken by the AACC in the field of environmental conservation and by the consultation with the Parliamentary Commission for the Mediterranean in the areas of energy, renewable energy, environmental protection and water resources. He expressed his strong belief in new prospects that will be opened up in this area through collaboration between the Chamber and UNIDO.

Director-General YUMKELLA expressed his satisfaction in developing relations between the UN organization and the Chamber and the follow-up of activities that focus on reducing unemployment and creating job opportunities for young people. The effective step taken by the joint organization with Silatech and Qatar Charity is expected to be discussed in partnership.

It was also suggested to enable effective participation of the heads of Arab Chambers in order to discuss the role of the private sector and the possibilities of providing expertise in the field of employment, methods of financing and ways to address unemployment.

In this regard Mr. YUMKELLA stressed that the Arab spring was able to change political systems, but at the same time was not able to overcome the problems which caused the revolutions, especially the high unemployment and poverty rates in their countries. YUMKELLA draw the attention to the industrial development in the Arab region and Africa. The Director-General also pointed out that there is a considerable rise in the levels of education in North Africa; on the other hand the southern countries of Africa face a decline, which requires another "spring" in those countries.

The Secretary General of the AACC Mr. KHOUJA, and the Director of Investment and Technical Services at UNIDO, Dr. Muhammad al-AMIN, were asked to follow-up the results reached during the meeting and to work together to implement the outcome recommendations.

KHOUJA expressed his appreciation and gratitude for the efforts of UNIDO, and his pleasure to fulfil the invitation he received by UNIDO to attend and participate in a seminar organized on unemployment and youth issues in the Arab world.

The AACC was highly grateful to the UNIDO staff including Dr. Mohamed AMIN, Mr. Sarwar HOBHOM and Dr. Azza MORSSY for their cooperation.