

REPORT:

**Secretary General Khouja as key note speaker
at the Austrian Parliament, 5 December 2011**



Great potential for Arab-European relations

On 5 December 2011, the Secretary General of the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce Dipl.-Eng. Mouddar KHOUJA was invited to give a key note speech at the Austrian Parliament during Meeting of the Committee on Energy, Environment and Water of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean (EUROMED).

The Meeting, organised by Prof. Stefan SCHENNACH, the Head of Parliamentary Assembly and Delegate of the Austrian Federal Council, was convened at Austrian Parliament in Vienna under participation of 39 international delegates from European and Mediterranean countries. During the one-day meeting program, the participants were discussing a broad range of topics covering issues of environment, energy and water supply as well as green technology and waste management.

The Secretary General of the AACC, Dipl.-Eng. Mouddar KHOUJA gave his key note speech about "Euro-Arab & Arab-Arab Relations" during the session focused on the reduction of barriers in international cooperation in the areas of mobility, energy, communication and transport networks.

In his expert presentation, he presented to the interested audience areas of opportunities in the cooperation between Europe and the Arab countries, e.g. in agriculture and food industries, irrigation, transportation, IT and telecom, education, health services, manufacturing, oil and petro-chemical industries, banking and tourism, and named recent strategic developments - for example the GAFTA agreement - as a potential step to a future Arab Common Market. A particular focus of the presentation was drawn on the great challenges of Arab-Arab economic relations, as well as the considerable economic potential between the Arab countries and Europe promoted and supported by different agreements such as the MEDA I & II and the EIB financial initiatives, or other multilateral or bilateral agreements.

The Secretary General supported his presentation with current facts, figures and numbers on trade volume, financial contracts and energy capacities installed in the Arab countries and concluded his speech with an outlook on the potentials and challenges between European-Arab Economic relations, where he pointed – among other topics - on the necessity of the implementation of EUROMED initiatives to bring partnerships into business, and the urge for more transparency for the national investment funds.