



AACC

جفوة التجارة العربية النمساوية
austro-arab chamber of commerce
österreichisch-arabische handelskammer

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AACC Activities

from January 2013 until December 2014

28 November 2014:**23rd General Assembly & 24th Meeting of the Board of Directors of the AACC**

On 28 November 2014, the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce invited Their Excellencies the Arab Ambassadors and Arab Diplomatic Corps, together with the AACC's board of directors and members to attend the chamber's 23rd General Assembly, together with the 24th Meeting of the Board of Directors at the "House of Trade" in Vienna.



AACC Board of Directors



The President of the AACC **Dr. Richard SCHENZ** opened the meeting by welcoming all participants and sharing an expert's view over the current economic situation and developments in Europe, the Arab countries and in the global context. The **Secretary General Eng. KHOUJA** informed the board and members about the position, activities and membership issues of the AACC as of November 2013 until November 2014. In the statement of the auditors, **Mr. Albert KRONBERGER** and Member of the Viennese Parliament **Dipl.-Ing. Omar AL-RAWI** certified the bookkeeping performance, whereas Treasurer **Mr. Wolfgang KABUREK** presented the financial report for 2013.



Left to right: VP Hafez – SG Khouja – President Schenz – VP Kuzbari – VP Gausterer – MR. Kaburek

In his statement, **Vice-President Nabil KUZBARI** pointed on the present conflicts in the Arab region, and the negative role of the media by blaming religion and "Islam" for the political crises happening in the region. He identified the AACC's duty to inform its members and partners about the "real" Islam, referring to its tolerance and true values. Serving the common interest to improve trade, **Vice-President Henry HAFEZ** identified the power of personal human relations and economy as the

key to overcome problems caused by media or other factors. He therefore recommended a strong cooperation with the AACC, to build up and strengthen the personal network and relations in the region. **Vice-President Prof. Reinhart GAUSTERER** also approved the statements.



During the Session, the General Assembly elected some high-profile new members of the Board of Directors: **Prof. DI Dr. Heinz BRANDL**, President of the Austrian Society of Engineers and Architects (ÖIAV); **Mr. Andreas GNESDA**, President of the Austrian Association for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises; **Dr. Leopold HENINGER**, CEO of Voith Hydro GmbH; **Dr. Kari KAPSCH**, CEO of Kapsch CarrierCom AG; **Ing. Karl-Heinz STRAUSS**, Director General of PORR AG and **Mr. Nafez ALAYYAN**, Member of the Board of Jordan Chamber of Commerce.



Left to right: Prof. Brandl – Mr. Gnesda – Dr. Heninger – Dr. Kapsch

In addition to a large number of AACC member companies and 11 representatives from the Arab Diplomatic Corps - including two Ambassadors that were present, this year's General Assembly was particularly honoured by the participation of Arab board representatives who were especially coming from abroad to attend this meeting: **H.E. Mr. Abdullah Sultan AL-OWAIS**, President of the Sharjah Chamber of Commerce, **Mr. Khaled AL-KUWARI**, representing H.E. Shaykh Khalifa Bin Jassim AL THANI, President of the Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and **Mr. Ahmed AL-CHIHABI**, Chairman & CEO from Aleppo Pharmaceutical Industries LLC.

23-24 November 2014:

AACC attends the 16th Arab Investors Forum in Cairo

The Vice-President of the AACC **KommR Nabil KUZBARI** and Secretary General **Eng. Mouddar KHOUJA** attended the "16th Arab Businessmen and Investors Forum" – focus on "Investment in

Egypt: Investing in the Future” and the First Egyptian Investment Forum in Cairo, Egypt from 23-24 November 2014. The high-level Forum gathered **state presidents, ministers, politicians, businessmen, and other high level representatives from Arab and other countries**, to discuss together prospects and future of investment in Egypt. **Mr. Herbert SCHEIBNER**, former Minister of Defense of Austria, was also attending this event.



Back row: Vice-President Nabil Kuzbari (3rd from left) – H.E. Adnan Kassar (7th from right)
Front row: SG Mouddar Khouja (3rd from left)

On the sidelines of the event, the Assistant Secretary General for Economic Affairs of the League of Arab States **H.E. Dr. Mohammad AT-TWAIJRY** and **H.E. Minister pp. Jamila MATAR**, Head of the Energy Department of the League of Arab States, received a delegation of Secretaries General of the Joint-Arab Chambers, to discuss new approaches and methods to intensify future cooperation with the Arab League especially in the field of renewable energy. It was agreed that official Arab institutions should be approached at least once a year to discuss this most important topic.



H.E. Dr. At-Twajry (center front row) with delegates

11 November 2014:**President of Amman Chamber of Commerce visits AACC**

Followed by a generous invitation for lunch by the Vice-President of the AACC, **Mr. Nabil KUZBARI**, the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce welcomed Senator **H.E. Issa Haidar MURAD**, Chairman of Amman Chamber of Commerce and **Mr. Nafez ALAYYAN**, Second Vice Chairman of the Amman Chamber of Commerce and designated member of the Board of Directors of the in Vienna on 11 November 2014. The meeting was attended by the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to Austria, **H.E. Mr. Hussam Al Hussein**.



The Secretary General of the AACC, **Eng. Mouddar KHOUJA** suggested to strengthen the cooperation between Austria and Jordan in the field of renewable energies, as Austria has achieved a great progress in the field on the European and global level.

H.E. Senator MURAD, who is also President of the Jordan-European Business Association (JEBA) expressed his support for the proposal, stressing that his visit is aimed on discussing ways to strengthen economic and trade cooperation between Austria and Jordan on the private sector level.

He pointed out that Jordan is pursuing a number of legislative and economic reforms to promote the development and intensification of the role of the private sector in Jordan, in addition to the promising investment opportunities and facilities offered by the Kingdom of Jordan to investors in many areas.

31 October 2014:**AACC hosting Closing Reception and Get-Together with UNIDO Delegates and Diplomatic Corps**

On Friday, 31 October 2014, the **Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce (AACC)** and its cooperation partners, the **Vienna Chamber of Commerce and Industry (WKW)**, the **Vienna Business Agency** and the **United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)** were hosting a Reception and Get-Together in the honourable historical hall of the “House of Trade” in Vienna.



The Reception marked the final closing event for the UNIDO Global Executive Programme with focus on “The Future of Manufacturing: Trends and Policy Options”, which was held from 27-31 October 2014 in Austria. The program brought decision makers, experts and representatives of numerous international industry ministries - including ministers, state secretaries and directors - together to discuss trends and concepts for sustainable industrial development and production in the global context, and to develop strategies for future implementation. The high-level delegates were coming Argentina, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, India, Iran, Jordan, Laos, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mongolia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Seychelles, South Africa, Sudan, St. Lucia, Swaziland, Timor-Leste, Turkey and Uruguay.



The President of the AACC **Senator Dr. Richard SCHENZ** welcomed the delegation and the honourable guests that were also present, including their Excellencies the Ambassadors and representatives from the Arab and international diplomatic corps, together with cooperation partners and representatives from other institutions and the Austrian industry sector. He also gave a short welcome address in the name of the Vienna Chamber of Commerce and Industry (WKW) in his

function as the Vice-President of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (WKO), the umbrella organisation of the federal chambers in Austria.



In a short presentation, the Secretary General of the AACC **Eng. Mouddar KHOUJA** gave an overview on historical and economic facts about Austria and introduced the AACC and its recent activities. He also presented to the audience the current trade volume statistics between Austria and the delegates' respective countries by comparing the data from 2013 and 2014 and indicating economic trends and developments in this context.

2 On behalf of UNIDO, **Mr. Ludovico ALCORTA**, Director of Research, Statistics and Industrial Policy Branch addressed the audience and cooperation partners with words of appreciation. On behalf of **Mag. Sabine OHLER**, Director of International Services from the Vienna Business Agency, **Mag. Daniel CHLADEK**, concluded the welcome notes with a final statement.



Left: Mr. Alcorta / Right: Mr. Chladek

The Get-Together afterwards offered the ideal the opportunity for personal discussion and networking with the delegates and exclusively invited guests.



Left to right: Eng. Mouddar Khouja, AACC – H.E. Mohammed ZAROUG, Ambassador of Sudan – Senator Dr. Richard SCHENZ, AACC – Dr. Oskar ANDESNER, WKO - H.E. Dr. Khaled SHAMAA, Ambassador of Egypt – H.E. Ghazi JOMAA, Ambassador of Tunisia

17 September 2014:**AACC participates in Panel Discussion on “Cooperation during Conflict - Possibilities of Technical Cooperation in the Middle East”**

On 17 September 2014, the Secretary General of the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce, **Eng. Mouddar KHOUJA**, was invited as one of four expert speakers at a panel discussion focusing on “Cooperation during Conflict – Possibilities of Technical Cooperation in the Middle East” at the Vienna University of Technology.



The panel discussion was organised by the **Engineering Cooperation**, an initiative of graduates of different scientific and technological universities in Austria, who want to combine their acquired knowledge and socio-economic engagement by taking responsibility through supporting innovative approaches in technical, economic as well as political collaborations.

Prof. Dr. Adalbert PRECHTL, Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs of the Vienna University of Technology, opened the panel with a warm address of welcome. **Eng. Stefanie PYKA** and **Eng. Magdalena BÄUERL** from the organisers gave a short introduction to the chosen topic of the panel by informing the audience about the challenges for technical experts to participate in projects and programmes in conflict areas such as some regions in the Middle East. The objective of the panel was to share and discuss possibilities of sustainable cooperation in conflict areas with experts from politics, economy and science, together with students and the interested audience.

Mag. Anton MAIR, Deputy Director General of Development Cooperation and Head of Evaluation, Development Policy and Strategy at the Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs presented an overview about Austria’s development cooperation policy in the field of education. He mentioned the dual and tertiary education as main focus areas, and informed the audience about recent programmes to strengthen and develop cooperation between educational institutions through scholarships, capacity and cluster building and student exchange programmes. Austria shares USD 5,9 Million on development aid in the Palestinian territories, and is working

together with the Palestinian National Authority, local NGOs and capacities, educational institutions and humanitarian organisations, he informed.

For **DI Helmut JUNG**, project leader and Professor at the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences of Vienna (in retirement), the transfer of scientific knowledge for technical cooperation in conflict areas needs the consideration of socio-economic factors and the dialogue with the local conflict parties. "Conflict" – in opposite to "war" – can also lead to new solutions and approaches; therefore, scientists should try to understand the conflict, and incorporate this knowledge, together with the consideration of natural and technical components, into their scientific approach, he advised. In a short field report, DI JUNG also referred to his own work experience in Gaza, Palestine in 1996-7, where a project for a water desalination plant was finally successfully installed in a joint project supported by the Austrian Development Agency, the Palestinian Water Authority, the Islamic University and the Bir Zeit University, while they had to overcome several conflicts, barriers and obstacles imposed to the Palestinian expert team.

Mag. Christian LASSNIG, Trade Delegate of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber in Israel and Palestine from 2007 until 2013, gave an insight about the challenges of operating economic offices in conflict areas, and referred to recent temporary closings of offices in Bagdad, Damascus and Tripolis. On the other hand, Austria's trade volume with Middle Eastern countries of crises such as Iraq, Egypt or Tunisia was nevertheless showing a stable continuity, except for Syria. By comparing Israel and the Palestinian territories regarding general economic data and Austria's flow of commodities, Mag. LASSNIG gave an indication about the immediate interrelation of economic disadvantages and conflicts. He defined the role of Austria's economy in active conflict intervention between Israelis and the Palestinians as reluctant, explaining that an apparent economic involvement towards one conflict party could immediately cause mistrust and irritation among the other party. The destruction of solar panels - installed by the NGO Comet-me to provide Palestinian Bedouins in Hebron with electricity - by Israeli settlers in March 2014, was just another recent example of how difficult it could be not only to implement cooperation projects, but to keep them sustainable in areas of conflicts and crises.

Eng. Mouddar KHOUJA, the Secretary General of the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce (AACC), presented an expert's insight on the great role and economic potential of the Arab countries. He stated that the region which covers a vast area of 13 million sqm, does not only hold 63% of the world's natural oil and 21% of the world's gas reserves, but is also considerable market and potential of human resources with its 330 million inhabitants. He identified various sectors for cooperation possibilities, including agriculture, transport, IT, health, banking, tourism, education and energy, and connected recent revolutions and political developments in some countries with tendencies to fight corruption, install proper governance and transparency and support economic growth. Successful economic cooperation does also depend on general conditions and requirements, as Eng. KHOUJA explained: Austrian companies are therefore recommended to involve into strategic partnerships with international enterprises to realize greater projects; the issuance of visas for businessmen should be less bureaucratic; Austrian politicians should offer their support and lobbying to back their country's economic activities and interaction with Arab partner countries. A thorough understanding, sensitivity and respect towards their partner's culture, language and religion was also a key factor for successful economic cooperation, he informed. In response to the question whether economic interests in a region can also enforce immediate involvement through external powers, Eng. Khouja referred to what was happening in Libya during the last revolution in this context. Political instability, corruption, different understandings of migration and economic interaction, as well as differing

interests to realize an economic partnership can impose challenges for sustainable economic cooperation, he concluded.

The following discussion with the audience was moderated by **Eng. Stefanie PICHLER** from the organizing Engineering Cooperation.

10-11 September 2014:

The AACC participates in Forum on “Investment Prospects in Food Security and Mineral Resources” in Sudan



The Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce (AACC) participated in the activities of "the Investment Prospects in food security and Mineral Resources Forum" which was held in the Sudanese capital Khartoum on 10 – 11 September, 2014 under the auspices of the President of the Republic of the Sudan, and jointly organized by the General Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture for Arab Countries (Union of Arab Chambers / UAC) and the General Union of Sudanese Businessmen and in cooperation with the Ministries of Finance, Investment, Agriculture and Minerals as well as the Union of Sudanese Banks.

The Forum was attended by a great number of officials, ministers, businessmen, Arab and foreign investors. At the opening session the Vice-President of Sudan H.E. Dr. Hassabu Mohamed ABDALRAHMAN, H.E. Adnan KASSAR, Honorary President of the UAC, H.E. Mr. Mohamadou Ould Mohamad MAHMOUD, President of the UAC, Mr. Musaed Mohammed AHMED, Head of the Union of Arab Banks and Mr. Saud AL BARBIR, President of the Federation of Sudanese Businessmen as well as the Forum’s guest of honor Sheikh Saleh Abdullah KAMEL delivered speeches.

During the four sessions of the Forum the discussions focused on a number of issues such as "the necessary reforms in the investment environment and food security, the ways to find a financial mechanism to support investment projects, the supporting initiatives to promote investment and the support of the Sudanese initiative to convert food security into reality, as well as a review of the prospects for investment in mineral wealth."

Vice-President H.E. Dr. Hassabu Mohamed ABDALRAHMAN focused in his speech on the measures taken in Sudan to facilitate the entry of Arab investments in the fields of agriculture, industry and minerals. He called for Arab investors to invest in his country's natural potential to achieve Arab food security. He also stressed on the efforts made by the country to overcome the obstacles for Arab investments and to facilitate the steps for investors in the country.

In his speech the Minister of Investment, H.E. Dr. Mustafa Osman ISMAIL mentioned that his country will adopt soon a new investment law to solve the problems faced by investors in Sudan. The measures to facilitate investment includes, according to Minister Ismail, the establishment of a special court to deal with settling disputes in the investment sector as well as a special public attorney's office and a special police force as operational tools. Minister Ismail also revealed a plan to invest 30 billion dollars in the agricultural field, which makes Sudan the second Arab country in terms of the value of investments in this area.

The Honorary President of the Union of Arab Chambers, H.E. Adnan KASSAR said that he believes in the faith of Arab investors in Sudan as the basis and future of the Arab food supply and as a source of natural resources. He pointed out in his speech to the Union's commitment in supporting Sudan to achieve Arab food security. In turn, the President of the Union of Arab Chambers H.E. Mr. Mohamadou Ould Mohamad MAHMOUD said that the Forum aims to enhance communication between all concerned sectors to achieve Arab food security, and to promote investment in Sudan and the Arab world.

The CEO of Al Baraka Banking Group and former President of the Union of Arab Banks, Mr. Adnan Ahmed YOUSEF, referred to some of the demands and concerns of investors, calling to adopt banking policies which support stability. He asked the Sudanese government to increase the funding of research in the field of agriculture and to establish special programs in this regard, in addition to providing the necessary economic and legislative facilities to businessmen. In turn, Mr. Musa FREIJ, Chairman of Wadi Group, stressed on the need to develop the necessary legislation to limit the influence of squatters on agricultural land, in order to preserve the rights of investors in the agricultural sector in Sudan.



On the sidelines of the forum, a meeting of the directors and secretaries-general of the Arab and Arab-foreign joint chambers was held and chaired by Dr. Imad SHEHAB, Secretary-General of the Union of Arab Chambers. The meeting focused on the social responsibility of the chambers in strengthening work culture and supporting entrepreneurship.

In this context, the Secretary General of the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce Eng. Mouddar KHOUJA mentioned six examples, namely:

The AACC's submission of a proposal to the King Abdullah b. Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious & Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID) in Vienna to hold a conference on the role of religious values in the global economy, planned for 2015.

The AACC's cooperation with the Institute of Oriental Studies of the University of Vienna to create a section for Arab Studies at the university that includes lecturers from Arab universities.

The AACC's initiative in collaboration with Austrian official bodies and sectors of the Austrian civil society to provide humanitarian relief to Syrian people in cooperation with the International Red Cross.

The AACC meetings with Austrian ministers and ambassadors in Arab countries, which made the AACC a reference for the different Austrian intellectual communities and institutions in view of Arab economic affairs.

The AACC's online Job Bulletin for both, job seekers and providers of employment opportunities such as Austrian companies, institutions as well as embassies operating in Austria.

The AACC's role as a hub in building scientific bridges through networking between Austrian universities and scientific institutions in Arab countries such as in Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Sudan. The AACC's activities in establishing good relations with international scientific personalities such as Professor Dr. Heinz BRANDL, a world expert in geotechnical engineering, dams and flood protection, road and railway engineering, municipal and hazardous waste deposits.

18-19 June 2014:**AACC participates in Ministerial Session of the Second Arab Forum for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency**

Upon the invitation of the Department of Energy of the League of Arab States, the Secretary General of the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce Eng. Mouddar KHOUJA, moderated the ministerial session of the Second Arab Forum on Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency. The forum was held from 18-19 June 2014, with the participation of the League of Arab States, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA), the Regional Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency and the EU-MED-ENEC Energy Efficiency in the Construction Sector in the Mediterranean.

H.E. Dr. Mohamed SHAKER, Minister of Electricity and Renewable Energy of Egypt, H.E. Dr. Omar KATTANEH, Minister of Energy, Palestine, H.E. Dr. Mervat TALLAWI, Chairperson of the National Council for Women, Egypt, the Ambassador of India to Egypt H.E. Navdeeb SURI, and Eng. Ahmed EL SEWEDY, President and CEO of Elsewedy Electric took part in this Ministerial Session.

In his speech, Eng. KHOUJA pointed out that the population in the Arab world is doubling every three decades, while in Western countries only every 114 years. The energy use per capita is in a continuous rise but the efficiency of the available energy is weak. The indicators show that the proportion of conventional energy exceeds 65%, while alternative and renewable energy is less than 35%.

Eng. KHOUJA emphasized the role of the Arab region with regard to energy resources, whether traditional or sustainable ones. The Arab countries have about 25-30% of the world's oil and natural gas, in addition to the sun, the largest source of sustainable and renewable energy, which is available in these countries throughout the year, along with the availability of wind power in some Arab countries. He pointed out that alternative energy is not alien to the Arab region, as the idea was already used in the waterwheels of Hama in Syria and the Maarib Dam in Yemen.

The Forum, which lasted for two days, discussed the issue of strengthening the role of small and medium enterprises in the fields of renewable energy and energy efficiency. It was divided in five working sessions: The ministerial round table which offered insights on the mechanisms of long-term transformation of the energy on the national level, followed by three sessions on the role of small and medium enterprises in the development and use of renewable energy, energy efficiency including challenges and solutions, based on the lessons learned and the enabling environment. The last session was a panel discussion about major renewable energy projects versus small capacity renewable energy projects. On the third day, the Regional Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency organized in collaboration with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization some sessions for professionals in the field of renewable energy.

On the sidelines of the forum, H.E. Eng. Jamila MATAR, Director of the Energy Department in the League of Arab States, presented the Memorial Shield of the Forum to Eng. Mouddar KHOUJA in recognition for his participation in this important event.



22 May 2014:**AACC celebrating its “25th Anniversary” with 7th Arab-Austrian Economic Forum & Exhibition and Gala Dinner**

On occasion of its **25th Anniversary** as the main reference institution for economic, cultural and scientific cooperation between Austria and the Arab countries, the **Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce (AACC)** organised the **7th Arab-Austrian Economic Forum & Exhibition** and a prestigious **Gala Dinner** under the patronage of **H.E. Dr. Heinz FISCHER**, the Austrian Federal President, on **22 May 2014** in the **Festival Hall of the Vienna City Hall**.



Left-to-right: Dipl.-Ing. Mouddar KHOUJA, Secretary General AACC -- Kommerzialrat Nabil KUZBARI, Vice-President AACC -- H.E. Dr. Wolfgang BRANDSTETTER, Austrian Minister of Justice -- Dr. Herbert STEPIC, Honorary President AACC -- H.E. Moustafa Osman ISMAIL, Investment Minister of Sudan -- H.E. Mag. Renate BRAUNER, Vice-Mayor and Vice-Governor of Vienna -- H.E. Adnan KASSAR, Honorary President of the General Union of Arab Chambers -- H.E. Karlheinz KOPF, Second President of the Austrian National Council -- Dr. Richard SCHENZ, President AACC -- H.E. Suleiman AL-HERBISH, Director General Opec Fund for International Development (OFID)

The Forum was festively opened by **H.E. Dr. Richard SCHENZ**, President of the AACC, in the presence of **H.E. Kommr. Nabil KUZBARI**, the AACC's Founder and its Vice-President. The Opening Session was honoured by the participation of numerous high-ranking personalities and speakers from both, Austria and the Arab region, beginning with **H.E. Dr. Wolfgang BRANDSTETTER**, Austrian Minister of Justice, **H.E. Mag. Renate BRAUNER**, Vice-Mayor and Vice-Governor of Vienna, **H.E. Minister Adnan KASSAR**, Honorary President of the General Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry & Agriculture for Arab Countries (GUCCIAAC), **H.E. Karlheinz KOPF**, Second President of the Austrian National Council, **H.E. Abdullah AL-MOGBEL**, Mayor of Riyadh of the Royal Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, **H.E. Dr. Mustafa Osman ISMAIL**, Minister for Investment of the Republic of the Sudan, **H.E. Salahaldin ABDALSHAFI**, Ambassador of the Mission of Palestine in Vienna and President of the Arab Ambassador Council, and **H.E. Suleiman AL-HERBISH**, Director General of the OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID).



Left picture: H.E. Abdullah AL-MOGBEL, Mayor of Riyadh (second left) exchanging greetings with H.E. Karlheinz KOPF, Second President of the Austrian National Council // Right picture: H.E. Minister BRANDSTETTER (standing right next to camera) with AACC Vice-President Kommerzialrat Nabil KUZBARI (standing left) during the Opening



The **Forum & Exhibition** was attended by a numerous international audience of some 800 visitors and guests, among them Their Excellences the Arab ambassadors from Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Tunisia, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, Libya, Egypt, Morocco, Yemen and the League of Arab States to Austria were also among the VIP attendees, together with Austrian ambassadors to Arab countries, representatives of the international diplomatic corps, chairmen, secretaries general and representatives of Arab chambers and joint Arab-foreign chambers of commerce from Saudi-Arabia, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Jordan,

Germany, the United States, Greece, Belgium and Italy, members of the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce, companies, businessmen and the interested public.

Session I of the Forum dealt with issues of **Energy & Water** and was chaired by **H.E. Prof. Stefan SCHENNACH**, Chairman of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union of the Mediterranean. The high-ranking speakers were: **H.E. Ahmed MESSILI**, Secretary General of the Ministry of Energy and Mines and Governor of Algeria to OPEC; **H.E. Mrs. Nawal AL FEZAIA**, Assistant Under Secretary for Economic Affairs and Governor of Kuwait to OPEC; **Mr. Faris HASAN**, Director Corporate Planning and Economic Services Unit at the OPEC Fund for International Development; **H.E. Dr. Khaled Klefeekh AL HAJRI**, Chairman and CEO of Qatar Solar Technologies; and **Mag. Isabel SCHMIEDBAUER**, Austrian Commercial Counsellor to Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq.



Panelists of Session I on “Energy & Water”

Session II focused on **Construction & Transport** and was chaired by **H.E. Dr. Imad SHEHAB**, Secretary General of the GUCCIAAC. The prominent speakers were: **O. Univ.-Prof. DI Dr. Heinz BRANDL**, President of the Austrian Society of Engineers and Architects (ÖIAV); **Dr. Khaled ZARRUGH**, Chairman of the Board of the Real Estate Investment & Business Serving Bank of Libya; **Mr. Karl-Heinz MÜLLER**, CEO of STRABAG International GmbH; and **Mag. Pierre PRUNIS**, Austrian Commercial Counsellor to Saudi Arabia, Oman and Yemen.



Panelists of Session II on “Construction & Energy”

Session III was focusing on **Food & Agro Industry** and chaired by **Dr. Kurt ALTMANN**, Austrian Commercial Counsellor to Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Djibouti, Eritrea and Somalia. The renowned speakers included: **H.E. Dr. Mustafa Osman ISMAIL**, Minister for Investment of Sudan; **Mag. Veronika NEUSSL**, Department II of the Austrian Life Ministry;

Mrs. Monica CARCO, Chief of Investment and Technology Unit at the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO); **Mr. Qu LIANG**, Director Joint FAO and IAEA Division at the United Nations (UN); and **Mag. DI Johann KÖLTRINGER**, Österreichischer Raiffeisenverband.



Panelists of Session III on "Food & Agro-Industry"

The connected "Exhibition" area was opened by **Dr. Herbert STEPIC**, the Honorary President of the AACC and Senior Advisor to the Board of the Raiffeisen Bank International, and presented **11 diplomatic representations of Arab countries in Austria**, together with **31 companies, enterprises and international institutions** that displayed their profiles – among them **VIMPEX HandelsgmbH**, the **Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (WKO)**, **Strabag**, **OMV**, **Österreichische Staatsdruckerei**, **Dr. Max Huber Realbüro**, **Swarco**, **Iveco**, **Wiesenthal** and many others - allowing for special networking opportunities and personal introduction to potential future business partners in the Austro-Arab context. The lunch buffet was sponsored by the company **Borealis**.



Impressions of the Exhibition area

In the evening the **Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce** invited its guests to an exclusive **Gala Dinner** to celebrate together its 25th Anniversary. The program comprised of a broad variety of entertainment acts, including also a performance of the Austrian star-violinist **Mrs. Lidia BAICH**, a sand artist performance and a **Tombola** sponsored by **H.E. Salahaldin ABDALSHAFI, Ambassador of Palestine**. The Gala Dinner was hosted by AACC Vice-President and Founder **Kommerzialrat Nabil KUZBARI**, the **Opec Fund for International Development (OFID)** and the **City of Vienna**.

In the course of the evening **H.E. Minister Adnan KASSAR**, Honorary President of the GUCCIAAC, and **Mr. Henry HAFEZ**, Vice President of the AACC and CEO of Hafez Group, were awarded **Decorations of Honour for Services to the Republic of Austria**; the decorations were handed over by **H.E. Dr. Wolfgang BRANDSTETTER**, Austrian Minister of Justice. **H.E. KommR. Nabil KUZBARI**, Vice-President & Founder of the AACC, and **H.E. Dr. Herbert STEPIC**, Honorary President of the AACC, also received awards of honour for their relentless and continuous support of the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce presented.



H.E. Adnan KASSAR (left picture / left side) and Mr. Henry HAFEZ (right picture / right side) presenting their Decorations of Honour in the presence of H.E. Minister Dr. Wolfgang BRANDSTETTER



Left picture: Vice-President KUZBARI receiving his award // Right picture: AACC Vice-President Prof. Reinhart GAUSTERER, AACC Vice-President Henry HAFEZ, AACC President Dr. Richard SCHENZ, AACC Honorary President Dr. Herbert STEPIC, AACC Vice-President & Founder Kommerzialrat Nabil KUZBARI



Left picture: Star-violinist Mrs. Lidia Baich // Right picture: H.E. Ambassador Salahaldin ABDALSHAFI during the Tombola

2 April 2014:**Forum on investment opportunities in the GCC countries**

On 2 April 2014 the **Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce (AACC)** organised the **Forum “Arabian Gulf – Yes, but how?”** in cooperation with the **International Forum for Business Communication (IFWK)** and the **Vienna Business Agency**.



During a very active discussion in **the Expat Centre of the Vienna Business Agency**, **Eng. Mouddar Khouja**, the AACC's Secretary General, emphasised the huge project volume in the GCC countries, especially in the infrastructure, energy and water sectors and advised Austrian companies to establish partnerships to increase their competitiveness for big projects in the region. Considering Europe's and in particular Austria's vital interest to diversify its energy resources, a further increase of the trade relations between Austria and the Gulf states could help to reach this goal, i.e. by importing liquid gas from the GCC countries.

Further participants of the forum were: **Mr. Yahya Al Dugaishi**, Counsellor at the Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman, **Mr. Werner Baumgartner**, President of the Austrian Business Council in the United Arab Emirates, **Mr. Klaus Billinger**, Consultant in the UAE, and **Eng. Franz Schauer**, Managing Director of the construction company AST Baugesellschaft. The discussion was anchored by **Mrs. Bettina Gneisz Al-Ani**, university professor and former Head of Business Communication at OMV.

In his presentation **Mr. Baumgartner** highlighted the enormous potential of the Gulf region, particularly with regard to the Expo Dubai 2020. He referred to recent positive developments in Dubai to emphasise this: the prices for real estate have increased by 20%, share prices have risen by approximately 140% and most hotels are already now nearly fully booked for the coming years. However, there is still potential in the tourist sector, as the number of visitors to Dubai is expected to increase significantly by approximately 150%, reaching 25 million visitors per year.

Despite the attractive market conditions in the GCC countries, bureaucratic barriers can present big challenges for Austrian companies, according to **Mr. Franz Schauer**. He described the intention to establish a company in this region as a long and often complicated process. However, as soon as the company was fully registered it could participate in tenders for large projects.



After the discussion the audience had the chance to direct their questions to the panelists. Among the esteemed guests of the forum were **Mr. Rudolf J. Melzer**, founder of the International Forum for Business Communication (IFWK), **Mag. Sabine Ohler**, Head of International Services at the Vienna Business Agency, **Ms. Isabella Mader**, MSc, Chairman of the Excellence Institute – Research & Solutions, **Mr. Walter Marchl** from Energie Effizienz Austria, **Mr. Kai von Buddenbrock**, Director of Bossard Austria, and **Ms. Raphaela Vallon-Sattler**, Secretary General of the International Advertising Association. Hereby the AACC would like to thank all participating parties for being part of this successful event.

29 March 2014:

AACC leading delegation to Investment Forum in Erbil

On 29 March 2014 the President of the **Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce (AACC)**, **Dr. Richard SCHENZ**, and the Secretary General, **Eng. Mouddar KHOUJA**, had the honour to lead an **Austrian delegation** to the **Forum “Invest in Iraq and the Kurdistan Region”**.

Under the Auspices of **H.E. Mr. Massoud BARZANI**, President of the Kurdistan Region, and in cooperation with the **General Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture for Arab Countries (GUCCIAAC)** and the **Federation of Iraqi Chambers of Commerce** the forum took place in Erbil, Iraq, and was visited by more than 750 visitors.

With its numerous participants the AACC delegation was the second biggest to attend the investment forum. The delegates had several meetings with important decision makers amongst others also with **H.E. Dr. Rosh Nuri SHAWAYS**, Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq. In an excellent German H.E. Dr. SHAWAYS discussed the Iraqi-Austrian relations with the AACC delegation. He talked about his stays in German-speaking regions and his close links to many

Austrian politicians and explained that he hoped for intensifying economic relations in future times. Here he emphasised the essential role of the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce.

President Dr. SCHENZ and Secretary General Eng. KHOUJA invited him officially to the 25th Anniversary Celebrations of the AACC and gave him detailed information about this event. He assured to come to Vienna, if it corresponded with his time schedule.



From left to right: Mr. Scheibner, H.E. Dr. Shaways, Dr. Schenz and Eng. Khouja

H.E. Sheikh Ismail BARZANJI, one of the most influential business men, also met with the AACC delegation and discussed possible cooperation in the infrastructure and construction sectors.

Apart from the forum, the AACC organised several meetings with Iraqi bankers and business men from the energy, industry and health care sectors. In honour of the Austrian delegation the Kurdistan Federation of Chambers of Commerce & Industry organised a business lunch, where the possibilities of mutual exchange in different branches were discussed. The AACC delegation consisted of **Dr. Peter WITTMANN**, Member of the Austrian Parliament and Former Secretary of State, **Mr. Herbert SCHEIBNER**, Former Minister of Defence, **Mag. Isabel SCHMIEDBAUER**, Commercial Counsellor for Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria, and participants from the Austrian companies **Vimpex HandelsgesmbH**, **VA Intertrading AG**, **Chalabi Architekten & Partner ZT GmbH** and **mthpower services GmbH** and **Darin Management Consulting**.

25 March 2014:**AACC Secretary General presents economic key figures about the Austrian Federal States to the Council of Arab Ambassadors to Austria**

On 25 March 2014 the Secretary General of the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce **Eng. Mouddar KHOUJA** was invited to present an overview of the Austrian economy and the economic key figures of the 9 Austrian federal states to the Council of Arab Ambassadors to Austria.

As indicated by Eng. KHOUJA, the Austrian GNP reached 361 billion USD in 2013, representing an increase of 4 billion USD compared to 2012. The GNP per capita was about 42.600 USD in 2013, occupying rank 21 internationally before Germany and Great Britain and after Luxemburg, Norway and Switzerland. Austria's national debt was 75.7% of the GNP in 2013, 3.7% more than 2012.



Eng. KHOUJA also pointed out the low level of unemployment in Austria compared to other states of the European Union. In the year 2013, the unemployment rate was 4.9% according to "Statistics Austria".

As the business and trade relations between Austria and the Arab countries is concerned, the Secretary General highlighted the trade volume between the two regions, which reached 4.86 billion EUR in 2013 and was composed of 59% exports and 41% imports. In the past year 2013, the business relations between Austria and the Arab states reached their maximum, whereas Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Libya and Kuwait were the most important trade partners for Austria.

Furthermore, the presentation to the Council of Arab Ambassadors included the most important Austrian exports to the Arab States, as well as the terms of trade between the Austrian Federal States and the Arab region in 2012. Additionally, economic figures of the 9 federal states were provided, stating the most important Austrian products exported to the Arab States.

Concerning the trade volume of the 9 Austrian federal states with the Arab region, Lower Austria occupies the first rank, followed by Upper Austria, Styria and Vienna. However, Salzburg and Vienna are the most attractive tourist destinations with the highest number of Arab visitors compared to the other Austrian federal states.

Eng. Khouja expressed the readiness of the Austro-Arab Chamber to coordinate visits of the Arab Ambassadors to meet governors of the Austrian federal states. He specially emphasized the possibility to benefit of the Chamber's cooperation with the national chambers of the federal states to organize meetings with the Ambassadors, as well as visits to major Austrian companies.



Additionally, Eng. Khouja referred to the decision of the Council of Ministers of the EU agreed on Monday, 24 March 2014 to tighten the terms of the Savings Taxation Directive of the European Union and the related secret bank accounts of Non-EU residents, which allows the Tax Authorities of the EU to exchange information about the savings income of Non-EU residents inside the EU which is hidden in secret accounts.

The national rules for transposing the revised Savings Directive have to be adopted by the Member States by 1 January 2016. The amendments of the Tax Directive are expected to be applied to the following Non-EU Member States: Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Monaco, San Marino and Andorra.

Upon request of the President of the Council of Arab Ambassadors, **H.E. Salahaldin ABDALSHAFI**, Ambassador of the State of Palestine to Austria, Eng. KHOUJA introduced the chamber's activities on 22 May 2014 on occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce, **the 7th Arab-Austrian Economic Forum & Exhibition** as an international business event.

10 Feb 2014

Secretary General meets with CEO of STRABAG

On Monday, 10 February 2014, **Dipl. Ing. Mouddar KHOUJA**, Secretary General of the **Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce (AACC)**, had the pleasure to meet with **Dr Thomas BIRTEL**, CEO of the Austrian construction company **STRABAG SE**, one of the biggest and leading construction companies in Europe.



Dipl. Ing. Khouja and Dr Birtel at STRABAG's premises

The aim of the meeting was to discuss possible cooperation between STRABAG and the AACC, not only in Austria but particularly in the Arab countries. Dr Birtel outlined the company's great interest in intensifying cooperation between STRABAG and the Arab countries. He explained that apart from the Eastern and South-East Europe region where the company is already active, also the Arab Gulf States had great potential for implementing projects. The AACC's Secretary General assured the chamber's entire commitment and promised to provide STRABAG with its excellent network to facilitate the company's activities, not only in Austria but in particular in the Arab region.

2-6 February 2014

Chairman of Saudi Austrian Business Council visits Vienna

From 2 to 6 February 2014, a high-ranking Saudi delegation, headed by **H.E. Ambassador Mr. Abdul-Aziz ARRUKBAN**, esteemed **member of the Board of Directors** of the **Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce (AACC)** and **Chairman of the Saudi Austrian Business Council**, came to Vienna on occasion of several meetings held by the Saudi Austrian Business Council. The delegation included: Mr Mohammed Bin Faisal AL-SAGER, Mr Ibrahim Abdullah AL-HEDAITHY, Eng. Abdul-Rahman AL NAFEA, Mr Abdullah Fahad AL-AJLAN, Eng. Sami AL-ANQARI, Eng. Mansour AL-MOBTY, accompanied by Dipl. Ing. Karl TOBLER General Manager of ILF-Tecon in Saudi Arabia.



H.E. Amb. ARRUKBAN (4th from right)

As part of the programme, H.E. Mr ARRUKBAN and the delegation members visited the Austrian Parliament on Monday, 3 February, where they were welcomed by **Dr Johannes JAROLIM, Member of the National Council**, who gave a presentation about the legal framework for investing and doing business in Austria. In the evening a reception was hosted by **H.E. Mr Mohammed AL SALLOUM**, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Austria.

On Tuesday, 4 February 2014, the delegates were participants at a special **Round Table** about the Saudi Austrian Business Council at the **Austrian Federal Economic Chamber**. The Meeting was opened by **Dr Richard SCHENZ, President of the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce** and Vice-President of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber, together with the Saudi-Arabian Ambassador to Austria **H.E. Mr. AL SALLOUM**, and **H.E. Dr. Gregor KÖSSLER**, the Austrian Ambassador to Saudi Arabia.



Opening of the Round Table by Dr. SCHENZ

In his introductory statement, **Mag. Pierre PRUNIS**, the Austrian Economic Counsellor to Saudi-Arabia informed the audience about key branches and prospective focus areas for Austrian companies in Saudi- Arabia. He introduced success stories of Austrian companies engaged in the market – among them the AACC member companies **DOKA** and **Lights of Vienna** and also identified potential challenges for Austrian companies in the Saudi market.

In his keynote address, **H.E. Ambassador ARRUKBAN** elaborated on aspects of cooperation between Saudi and Austrian companies, and shared valuable information for prospective Austrian investors and companies with interest in the Saudi-Arabian market. He offered his and the Council's support for companies

Dipl.-Ing. Karl TOBLER, Austrian Chairman of the Saudi Austrian Business Council and **General Manager of ILF-Tecon** in Saudi-Arabia, closed the Round Table with a report about his personal and professional experience in Saudi Arabia.

On the evening of Wednesday, 5 Feb 2014, **H.E. Ambassador ARRUKBAN** honoured his Austrian partners by hosting an exquisite dinner.

On Thursday, 6 Feb, the delegation accepted the generous invitation of **KommR. Nabil KUZBARI, Vice President of the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce (AACC)**, to a Business Lunch at the traditional and most famous Austrian Hotel-Restaurant **Sacher**. In the course of the lunch, **H.E. Ambassador ARRUKBAN** emphasised his active commitment as a newly elected member of the Board of Directors of the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce, and offered his cooperation, support and contacts for interaction with the AACC and its member companies, to strengthen the economic cooperation between Saudi Arabia and Austria.

22 January 2014

The Austrian Company STRABAG hosts Arab Diplomats

On Wednesday, January 22, 2013, the Austrian construction company **Strabag AG**, hosted a group of members of the Arab diplomatic corps in its main headquarters in Vienna to introduce the company, which is one of the largest construction companies in Europe, and its contributions and strategic projects in the Arab region. This meeting was held upon the initiative and coordination of the **Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce (AACC)**.

The Arab guests were: **H.E. Ambassador Dr. Mikhail WEHBE**, **H.E. Ambassador Dr. Yousif EL KORDOFANI** (Sudan), **Counsellor Mohammad MADANI** (Saudi Arabia), **Minister pp. Mr. Mohamed ALARWY** (Yemen), **Counsellor Hazem SHABAT** (Palestine), **Counsellor Labib Al-Khudiry** (Iraq), **Commercial Counsellor Mr. Mohamed DOWEIDAR** (Egypt), **Counsellor Wissem MOATEMRI** (Tunisia), **Counsellor Mahmood AL HASNI** (Oman), **Attaché Ms. Imen CHERBAL** (Algeria) and **Mr. Abdulmalek DEBABESH**, Second Secretary at the Mission of the League of Arab States in Vienna.



Members of the Arab diplomatic corps in a commemorative snapshot with the management of Strabag

The hosts were the board members of Strabag AG **Eng. Theodor KLAIS** and **Mr. Franz URBAN**, in addition to **Eng. Günter KÖBER**, **Mr. Heinz SUMPER**, **Eng. Walter BURGER** and **Eng. Omar AL-RAWI**.

At the beginning **Mr. Franz URBAN** welcomed the attendees, and gave a brief about the company and its role in the field of building and construction in many countries of the world. He pointed out that the company has been established since 1835, making it one of the oldest construction companies in the world. Mr. Urban explained that the area of Central and Eastern Europe is the main market for Strabag, in addition to strategic projects in the Arab region, such as the UAE, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, where Strabag is operating since more than 30 years, and Oman in which the company has projects since more than 20 years.

Mr. Urban stressed that Strabag relies on quality in the completion of their projects. He made a presentation about some reputable projects in Vienna, where Strabag managed to revitalize some of the famous old Austrian buildings as Sans souci, the Park Hotel Schönbrunn, Sofitel, the alteration of Burggasse 2 and the building of the new central station.



The Secretary General of the Austro-Arab Chamber **Eng. Mouddar KHOUJA** thanked the Strabag management for hosting this important meeting, to introduce one of the most prestigious European construction companies with an investment volume amounting to about 600 million Euros in the Arab region alone.

He stated that compared with other cities, Vienna managed to obtain its old flair and glamour through the renovation and restoration of the old buildings by maintaining their original features. This was mainly achieved with the know-how of the Austrian companies, especially Strabag. The Secretary General explained that this was the main and core topic of this visit.

Eng. Khouja gave some several historical facts about the Arab region, mentioning that the Kingdom of Morocco is one the oldest kingdoms in the world, the world's oldest civilizations were in Iraq, Syria and Egypt and that Oman is located on the oldest trade routes in the world. Eng. Khouja added that the Arab countries have more than 30% of the world reserves of oil and gas and that there are multiple opportunities available for development and joint action between the Arab countries and Austria. This could contribute in raising the trade volume between the two sides, which reached about 4.6 billion Euros in both directions in 2012.

Eng. Omar AL-RAWI, speaking as Chairman of the Employees Representative Union at Strabag, mentioned that Strabag has the highest level of performance and quality, especially with regard to dealing within the institution and with the employees. He added that the Union represents the company's employees and workers in all parts of the world and expresses their problems, concerns and demands. Strabag also invests in the implementation of social projects, especially in Eastern Europe, and obtains about 50% of the construction projects in Austria.

In a speech on behalf of the current President of the Council of Arab Ambassadors, **H.E. Salah ABDEL SHAFI**, Ambassador of the State of Palestine to Austria, **Counsellor Hazem SHABAT** thanked the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce for the initiative to communicate with the Austrian important institutions.



Mr. SHABAT also commended the outstanding performance of Strabag, calling at the same time for the expansion of the scope of projects implemented by the company in the Arab countries; a trend supported by the Arab ambassadors to Austria.

The members of the diplomatic corps asked a number of questions concerning the company's activities in the Arab region and in Eastern Europe.

At the end of the meeting, the public relations manager of Strabag accompanied the guests on a tour through the company, introducing the different sections and the company's interest in arts, represented in the annual competition it organizes and the permanent exhibition at the **Strabag Art Lounge**, located at the top floor of the company's representative headquarters.



9 January 2014:

The Director General of UNIDO receives AACC delegates

On Thursday, January 9th, 2014 the Director General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), **Mr. Li Yong**, received in the organization's headquarters in Vienna, the President of the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce (AACC), **Senator Dr. Richard SCHENZ**, and its Secretary General, **Eng. Mouddar KHOUJA** to find ways to strengthen and consolidate the relations between UNIDO and the AACC. They discussed the possibility of cooperation in the fight of unemployment in the Arab world, the support of entrepreneurship, education, development, vocational training, the preservation of the environment, and the fields of energy and renewable energy.



The **AACC delegates** made a presentation of the activities of the Austro-Arab Chamber and its mission to build bridges of positive relations between the Arab and Austrian side. They also gave a glimpse of the vast network of relations of the AACC through its connection to the General Union of Arab Chambers, the Arab Chambers and the Joint Arab Chambers, in addition to various public, private and official institutions in many countries of the world. They highlighted the role of the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce in the promotion of economic and trade relations between Austria and the Arab countries and its contribution to the strengthening of the Austrian-Arab relations in all fields.

The Austro-Arab Chamber expressed the desire to organize a joint event in cooperation with UNIDO focused on the discussion of the role of the private sector to provide employment opportunities and how to intensify the public-private cooperation.

Eng. KHOUJA pointed to the efforts made by the Chamber in the field of preservation of the environment, and the existing consultations with the Parliamentary Committee for the Mediterranean in the fields of energy, renewable energy, environmental protection and water. He expressed his belief that new opportunities in these fields can be found through cooperation between the AACC and UNIDO.

Mr. LI Yong welcomed the intention to intensify the relations between UNIDO and the AACC, especially through activities focused on reducing unemployment, creating job opportunities for young people, the development of vocational training and education.

Mr. Li Yong, who took over as Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in June 2013, has had an extensive career as a senior economic and financial policy-maker. As Vice-Minister of Finance of the People's Republic of China and member of the Monetary Policy Committee of the Central Bank for a decade, Mr. LI was involved in setting and harmonizing fiscal, monetary and industrial policies, and in supporting sound economic growth in China. He pushed forward financial sector reform, and prompted major financial institutions to establish corporate governance, deal with toxic assets and strengthen risk management. Mr. LI gave great importance to fiscal and financial measures in favor of agricultural development and SMEs, the cornerstones for creating economic opportunities, reducing poverty and promoting gender equality. He played a key role in China's cooperation with multilateral development organizations, such as the World Bank Group and the Asian Development Bank.

17 December 2013

AACC visits OFID Director-General Al-Herbish

The Director-General of the **OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID)**, **H.E. Mr. Suleiman AL-HERBISH**, welcomed the Secretary General of the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce **Eng. Mouddar KHOUJA** and **Eng. Omar AL-RAWI**, Member of Viennese

Parliament and spokesman of the Committee for Urban Development in Vienna on **Tuesday, December 17th 2013** in the famous headquarters of OFID in the heart of Vienna.



The talks focused on the outstanding development and achievements of the organization during the past ten years under the leadership of its Director-General **Mr. AL-HERBISH**. The guests commended the outstanding performance of the organization in support of humanitarian and development work in developing countries, and the help submitted to the poorest groups around the world through the implementation and financing of sustainable development projects. They also discussed the possibilities of presenting the work and achievements of OFID through a piece of art to be placed in the Austrian capital.

During their meeting, **Mr. AL-HERBISH** gave his guests a brief about the history of the famous OFID building. Speaking about OFID's activities, the Director-General pointed out that since its founding OFID has allocated 9 billion USD since for the financing of development projects. He stressed that humanitarian and development projects managed or funded by OFID are done without regard to color, race or religion of the beneficiaries. OFID also provides grants, technical assistance and emergency relief.

20-21 November 2013

Second Euro-Arab Economic Forum 2013 in Amman, Jordan

The **Secretary General of the AACC, Eng. Mouddar KHOUJA**, participated in the **Second Euro-Arab Economic Forum** held in **Amman, Jordan** on **20th and 21st November 2013** under the title "**Rethinking partnership for better growth and development**". It was organized by the **General Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture for Arab Countries**, the **European Commission**, the **European Investment Bank**, the **Jordan Chamber of Commerce** and the **Jordan Chamber of Industry**.

The Forum was held under the **patronage of His Majesty King ABDULLAH II ibn Al-Hussein of Jordan**, represented by **H.E. Dr. Hatem AL-HALAWANI, Minister of Industry, Trade & Supply**. It was opened by **H.E. Mr. Adnan KASSAR (President of the General Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture for Arab Countries / UAC)** in attendance of **Mr. Nael KABARITI (President Jordan Chamber of Commerce)**, **Ambassador Dr. Joanna WRONECKA (Head of EU Delegation to Jordan)**, **Dr. Ayman HATAHET (President of Jordan Chamber of Industry)**, a number of ministers, and more than 500 participants from the leaders of the Arab chambers and their unions, the Arab-foreign joint chambers, Arab and

European company owners and businessmen, as well as representatives of specialized Arab organizations, ambassadors and members of the diplomatic corps in Jordan.



19-20 November 2013

MENA-EU Business Salon in Sharjah, UAE

The Secretary General of the **Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce (AACC)**, **Eng. Mouddar KHOUJA** participated in the **MENA-EU Business Salon**, which was held in **Sharjah, United Arab Emirates**, on **19th and 20th November 2013**. The Salon was organized by the **Sharjah Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI)** and attended by senior leaders of public and private trading organizations, departments and companies from Europe and Arab countries.



The **Director General of the SCCI, H.E. Mr. Hussain Mohammed AL MAHMOUDI** opened the Salon in attendance of **H.E. Mr. Ahmed Mohamed AL DIDFA (Chairman SCCI)**, **H.E. Mr. Aziz RABAH (Minister of Equipment & Transport of Morocco)**, **H.E. Abdalla AL SALEH (Undersecretary of UAE Ministry of Economy)**, **H.E. Remy ROWHANI (Director General of Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry)**, and over 100 guests.

The Secretary General of the AACC, **Eng. Mouddar KHOUJA**, was part of the first Session moderated by **H.E. Mr. AL MAHMOUDI**, under the title **“MENA/EU business Status and future prospective”**. The Secretary General of the AACC **Eng. KHOUJA** stressed on the importance of intercultural understanding on both sides. Knowing and understanding each other and trying to see the positive aspects of the other has a great influence on successful relations and the realization of investment projects, he indicated. Both sides have to deal with each other as equal partners without any differences or preferences. He reminded that the past development in Europe was based on the Arabic sciences and knowledge.

Eng. KHOUJA also made a brief presentation about the Austrian economy and some Austrian companies such as **STRABAG**, **VAMED** and **KAPSCH**, and others. He focused on the fact that Austria is one of the leading countries in Europe in many areas such as renewable energy, water, e-government, health, hospitals, vocational and industry and called for investment in these areas.

14 November 2013

AACC organizes Renewable Energy Forum with Arab Ambassadors & Expert Companies

On Thursday, the 14th November 2013, the **Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce (AACC)** organized a **Forum on Renewable Energy** in the prestigious **Palais Hansen Kempinski Hotel** in Vienna. The Forum was opened after the **Meeting of the AACC's General Assembly and Board of Directors**, which was also convened at the same day.

Senator Dr. Richard SCHENZ, President of the AACC opened the Forum with a **welcome address** and brief overview on the global energy use and the share of renewable energies in Europe, Austria and the Middle East.



Commercial Advisor **Mr. Nabil R. KUZBARI**, Vice-President of the AACC and President / CEO of **VIMPEX** HandelsgmbH, pointed out that the return of stability in the region would help to restore confidence in the Arab market and the flow of investments therein; especially in the field of renewable energy, which constitutes an important hub toward the future in light of the growing global need for energy sources.

The Forum was divided into two sessions: in **SESSION 1** under the title **Renewable Energy in selected Arab Countries: Legal Framework for Investment**, ambassadors and representatives from Arab countries informed about the legal framework and other aspects of renewable energy in their countries.



In **SESSION 2** under the title **Renewable Energy Solutions for the Future**, representatives of renowned Austrian companies made presentations in their fields.



30 October 2013

Meeting with the Council of Arab Ambassadors in Vienna

On Wednesday, 30 October 2013, the AACC's President Senator Dr. Richard SCHENZ, together with Vice-President Nabil KUZBARI and Secretary General Eng. Mouddar KHOUJA, were invited to participate in the Meeting of Council of Arab Ambassadors in Vienna at the Mission of the League of Arab States in Vienna. The Meeting was coordinated by H.E. Ambassador Ramzy Ezzeldin RAMZY, Head of the Mission of the League of Arab States, and was attended by Their Excellences all the Ambassadors or their proxies, of countries belonging to the Arab League.



President SCHENZ expressed his appreciation to the Council for supporting the mutual cooperation between Austria and all member countries of the Arab League in all scientific, cultural and economic sectors including mutual investments, technical partnerships and trade. Vice-President KUZBARI and Secretary General KHOUJA presented a brief overview of the founding and history of the AACC, as well as report on about the activities of the chamber in the past two years. Particular focus of their presentation was put on the issue of document legalisation through the AACC, where they asked the Council for further and more intensive support in this context.

After the presentations by the AACC, H.E. Dr. Badr AL-HINAI, the Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman and Current Chairman of the Arab Ambassadors' Council made a very clear and positive statement in support of the chamber, its activities and legalisations, and at the same time assured the readiness of his country to continue and intensify the cooperation with the AACC on a bilateral basis.



9 October 2013

Exclusive Meeting with H.E. Rishad BATHIUEEN, Minister of Industry and Commerce of Sri Lanka

On Wednesday, the 9th October 2013, the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce (AACC) invited for an exclusive meeting with H.E. Mr. Rishad BATHIUEEN, Member of Parliament and Minister of Industry and Commerce of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, on the occasion of his visit to Austria. The Minister was accompanied by Mr. R.D.S. KUMARARTNE, Acting Director General of Commerce of the Department of Commerce of Sri Lanka, and H.E. Mr. Abdul Azeez ALIYAR LEBBE, the honourable Ambassador of Sri Lanka to Austria, together with other representatives of Embassy of Sri Lanka in Austria. The meeting was organised upon the kind initiative by H.E. Ambassador ALIYAR LEBBE, to offer to the members of the Board of Directors of the AACC an exclusive opportunity to discuss the economic potential and scopes of cooperation between Sri Lanka and Austria with the honourable Minister H.E. BATHIUEEN and his delegation.



From the Austrian side, the meetings was attended by Mr. Herbert SCHEIBNER, Former Austrian Minister of Defense and CEO of Scheibner Business Development; Dr. Christoph MATZNETTER, Former State Secretary of Finance and Vice-President of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber; Dipl.-Ing. Omar AL-RAWI, Member of Viennese Parliament and

Representative of Strabag; and Mr. Nadim KHALILI, Country Administration Manager of the Europe Arab Bank.

2-5 September 2013

AACC delegation pays visit to Khartoum State

Upon invitation of the Wali (Governor) of Khartoum, H.E. Dr. Abdul-Rahman AL-KHIDIR, the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce (AACC) paid a four-day visit to Khartoum from the 2nd to the 5th September 2013. The Austrian delegation was led by the AACC's Vice President, Prof. Reinhart GAUSTERER, CEO of the OeSD Group, and its Secretary General, Eng. Mouddar KHOUJA, and consisted of Dr. Dieter HORNBACHNER, Managing Director of the HEI Eco Technology GmbH, and Mag. Andreas ZECHMANN, International Sales Manager of the OeSD Group.



The purpose of this delegation was to discuss possible cooperation between Austria, Khartoum State and Sudan in fields of security printing and solar energy technologies.

29 August 2013

Arab Ambassadors to participate in Exclusive Driving Proficiency Training with Mercedes Cars at the Fahrtechnik Zentrum Teesdorf

On 29 August 2013, the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce (AACC), in joint cooperation with the Mission of the League of Arab States in Vienna, the Test & Training International Planning & Service GmbH and Wiesenthal, the authorized dealer for Mercedes-Benz in Austria, organized an Exclusive Driving Proficiency Training for T.E. the Arab Ambassadors and Arab Diplomatic Corps in Austria.



The event was honoured by the esteemed participation of H.E. Ambassador Mr. Ramzy Ezzeldin RAMZY, Head of the Mission of the League of Arab States in Austria; H.E. Dr. Khaled SHAMAA, Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt to Austria; H.E. Mr. Abdul Azeez ALIYAR LEBBE, Ambassador of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka to Austria; as well as Mr. Mohammad AL-MADANI, Counsellor at the Embassy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in Austria and Mr. Mooala Saeed MOOALA, Financial Attaché at the Embassy of the Republic of the Sudan in Austria; Mr. Nadim KHALILI, Country Administration Manager of Europe Arab Bank and member of the Board of Directors of the AACC, was also among the esteemed participants.

27 June 2013

Austrian President Dr. Heinz Fischer receives H.E. Dr. Adnan Kassar and high-ranking delegation during the "International Arab Banking Summit" in Vienna, 27 June 2013

The Austrian President H.E. Dr. Heinz FISCHER received a high-ranking delegation headed by and in honour of H.E. Dr. Adnan KASSAR, Former Minister of Finance of Lebanon and "Arab Banker of the Year 2012-13" in an exclusive reception coordinated by the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce and its President Dr. Richard SCHENZ, Vice-President KommR Nabil KUZBARI and Vice-President Mr. Henry HAFEZ.



The delegation for the visit to the Austrian President Dr. Fischer consisted of ministers from Jordan and Lebanon, as well as of a selection of highest representatives from the most important banking institutes in the Arab region, such as the Banque Misr (Egypt), Al-Baraka Banking Group (Bahrain), Fransa Bank, Association Des Banques Du Liban and Credit Libanais (Lebanon), Dubai Bank, and Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank (UAE), Central Bank of Oman (Oman), Doha Bank (Qatar), Council of Iraqi Banks (Iraq), Sudan Banks Union (Sudan), the Association of Banks, and the Capital Bank (Jordan), in addition to representatives from the AACC, the Union of Arab Banks and the General Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture for the Arab Countries (GUCCIAAC).

The reception was exclusively coordinated in the frame of the "International Arab Banking Summit" which took place on 27 June 2013 at the Austrian Presidential Palace (Hofburg Vienna), organized by the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce, in cooperation with the Union of Arab Banks, the World Union of Arab Bankers and UNODA under the special topic "Civil Capacity Building in Post Conflict Countries: The Role of Banks."

Under the esteemed patronage and presence of the Austrian Vice-Chancellor and Foreign Minister Dr. Michael SPINDELEGGGER, who also honoured the Opening Ceremony with his opening remarks, the IABS assembled a high-level delegation of directors-general, officials and representatives of the most important and largest banking institutions in the Arab region, and brought them together with high-ranking Austrian officials, decision-makers and directors.



The Opening Ceremony featured key note speeches from Dr. Joseph TORBEY, Chairman of the World Union of Arab Banks; Mr. Mohamed BARAKAT, Chairman of the Union of Arab Banks; H.E. Dr. Michael SPINDELEGGGER, Austrian Vice-Chancellor and Foreign Minister; H.E. Prof. Dr. Ewald NOWOTNY, Governor of Oesterreichische Nationalbank (Austrian Central Bank); Dr. Herbert STEPIC, Honorary President of the AACC and Former CEO of Raiffeisen Bank International; H.E. Dr. Jassim AL MANNAI, Director General of the Board of the Arab Monetary Fund; and Mr. Nikita SMIDOVICH, Office for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations.



The International Arab Banking Summit was honoured by the esteemed attendance of H.E. Mr. Walid EL-DAOUK, Minister of Information of Lebanon; H.E. Sakhar Ahmed AL-WAGEH, Minister of Finance of Yemen; H.E. Dr. Werner FASSLABEND and H.E. Mr. Herbert SCHEIBNER, both Former Ministers of Defense of Austria, together with T.E. Ambassadors and representatives of the Arab diplomatic corps in Austria. In total, the International Arab Banking Summit was attended by an audience of some 300 delegates, representatives, businesspeople, interested persons and AACC members coming from 16 Arab and 7 European and other countries, including Austria.



In the evening of the same day, a gala dinner was given in honour of H.E. Dr. Adnan KASSAR, who was awarded "Arab Banker of the Year 2012-13" – a distinction which was granted for the first time in total consensus by all members of the election board of the Union of Arab Banks.



The Award was handed over to H.E. Dr. KASSAR in an impressive and beautiful Celebration Ceremony that was attended by 200 exclusively invited guests in the Hofburg Vienna.

1 June 2013

Future cooperation between Khartoum and Austrian institutions

H.E. Dr. Abdul-Rahman AL-KHIDIR, Governor of Khartoum State, arrived in Vienna on a visit for a few days, accompanied by H.E. Eng. Azhari Khalafallah ABDULRAHMAN, Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation of Khartoum State.

On 1st of June 2013 the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce (AACC) arranged a meeting between H.E. Dr. AL-KHIDIR, Prof. Dipl.-Eng. Dr. Heinz BRANDL, President of the Austrian Society of Engineers and Architects (ÖIAV), and Dr. Dieter HORNBACHNER, CEO of the Austrian HEI Solar Light GmbH, specialised in solar energy technologies and its applications. The meeting was attended by H.E. Mr. Mahmoud ELAMIN, Ambassador of the Republic of the Sudan in Austria, and Dr. Yusuf AL KORDOFANI, a high-ranking diplomat ambassador at the Sudanese embassy in Vienna.



During the meeting both sides agreed to initiate a dialogue on aspects and prospects of development in the Khartoum State. HEI Solar Light GmbH put forward a proposal of lighting the public parks and streets of the state.

30 April – 2 May 2013**AACC participating in Annual Investment Meeting in Dubai**

From the 30th April to the 2nd May 2013 the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce (AACC) participated in the 3rd Annual Investment Meeting which was held in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates. The Austrian delegation was led by Dr. Richard SCHENZ, President of the AACC, and consisted of Eng. Mouddar KHOUJA, the AACC's Secretary-General, and Ms. Josipa LACIC, Client Service & Finances Officer. H.E. Dr. Werner FASSLABEND, former Austrian Minister of

Defence, and Dr. Max HUBER, member of the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce and CEO of the renowned real estate company Dr. Max Huber Realbüro, also, accompanied the delegation.

The meeting witnessed a large international participation with about 5.000 delegates, including presidents and about 40 ministers, in addition to foreign investors and businessmen from 80 countries. It was inaugurated under the patronage of H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid AL



MAKTOUM, UAE Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, and H.E. Mr. Sultan Bin Saeed AL MANSOURI, Minister of Economy in the UAE, and attended by a large number of officials from the United Arab Emirates.

12 April 2013**The AACC participates in Meeting of Secretaries General of Joint Arab-Foreign Chambers of Commerce in London**

Invited by Dr. Afnan AL-SHUAIBY, Secretary General and CEO of the Arab-British Chamber of Commerce (ABCC), the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce (AACC) took part in the Coordinative Meeting of the Secretaries-General of the Joint Arab-Foreign Chamber of Commerce, held on 12th of April 2013 at the headquarters of the Arab-British Chamber of Commerce in London.



The attendees discussed the topics of the agenda, which included a report submitted by the Committee entrusted to prepare a study on the Joint-Arab Chamber of Commerce, and to propose ways and means for coordinating joint meetings of the chambers for the exchange of experience and expertise among them.

18 April 2013

Governor of the North Darfur Province meets with AACC

During his visit to Austria, , the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce (AACC) had the honour to welcome H.E. Mr. Osman Yusuf KIBIR, Governor of the Province of North Darfur and delegation on Thursday, April 18, 2013, at the AACC's premises, where they were received by the Secretary-General Eng. Mouddar KHOUJA, and discussed opportunities for cooperation in development projects in various fields in the region.



16 April 2013**AACC coordinates meeting between Siemens AG Austria and the Iraqi Arab Contractors Co. for potential cooperation**

In a visit coordinated by the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce (AACC), an Iraqi Commercial Delegation, representing the "Iraqi Arab Contractors Co.", visited Vienna for a special business meeting with Siemens AG Österreich. The delegation comprised of Mr. Mahdi Kanbar AGHA, Vice Chairman of the Board, and Mr. Alaa Husam GHANI, a Member of Board of Directors at Iraqi Arab Contractors Co.



The AACC arranged a special meeting for the Iraqi delegation with Siemens AG Österreich – an esteemed member of the AACC - at Siemens City, the modern new headquarters of Siemens AG Austria which is characterized by an especially sustainable design and the use of state-of-the-art, highly-efficient building technology, on 16 April 2013.

15 April 2013**AACC organises Cultural Event for Arab Diplomatic Corps in Vienna**

On Monday, the 15th April 2013, the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce (AACC) had the honour and pleasure to organise an Exclusive Art and Culture Reception for the Arab Diplomatic Corps in cooperation with the prestigious Austrian auction house DOROTHEUM. The event was attended by Their Excellencies the Arab Ambassadors from Algeria, Egypt, League of Arab States, Palestine, Qatar, Sudan, Yemen and Tunisia; among the other distinguished guests were also Dr. Werner FASSLABEND, former Austrian Minister of Defence, Dr. Oskar WÜSTINGER, representative of the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and a number of diplomats accredited in Vienna. The reception also included a guided tour through some of the premises of the famous and renowned Austrian auction house DOROTHEUM.

Dr. Richard SCHENZ, President of the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce (AACC), and the AACC's Secretary General, Dipl. Ing. Mouddar KHOUJA, welcomed the approximately 40 guests.



11 April 2013

AACC participates in Lebanon Forum in Austria

On Thursday, the 11th of April 2013, an economic forum titled "Lebanon: A Gateway To The Middle East" was held at the headquarters of the Foreign Trade Department (Aussenwirtschaft Österreich) of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (WKO) in Vienna. The important event was jointly organised by the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce (AACC) and the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (WKO) and visited by a high-ranking delegation from the Lebanese Republic headed by H.E. Dr. Nader GHAZAL, Governor of the Municipality of Tripoli.

The Forum was co-chaired by Dr. Richard SCHENZ, President of the AACC and Vice President of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (WKO), and Mr. Henry HAFEZ, the AACC's Vice President and CEO of Hafez Group. H.E. Mr. Ishaya EL-KHOURY, Ambassador of the Lebanese Republic to Austria, honoured the forum with his attendance and introductory notes; a number of distinguished businessmen, representatives from Austrian companies and others concerned with Lebanese-Austrian relations were also participating in the Forum.



Participants of the Forum at the Foreign Trade Department

14 March 2013:**Libyan Delegation visits Vienna**

On the 14th of March 2013, the AACC's Secretary General, Eng. Mouddar KHOUJA, organised a meeting between the Libyan company Wadi al-Hera for General Contracting and Real Estate Investment, the Austrian company ODELGA MED Ges.m.b.H. , AST Bau- GmbH and the Scheibner Business Development GmbH headed by its General Manager and Member of the Austrian Parliament, Mr. Herbert SCHEIBNER, at the premises of the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce in Vienna.



During the important meeting, Eng. Omar Pharaoun ABU AGILA, General Manager of Wadi al-Hera for General Contracting and Real estate Investment reviewed the strategy of building hospitals and other health care facilities which is followed by the State of Libya. After both sides considered the financing mechanisms and partnership conditions, the present Austrian companies agreed to sending letters of intent to their partner company Wadi al- Hera only a few days after the meeting at the AACC.

28 February 2013**SG meets H.E. Mr. Ali Ahmed KARTI, Foreign Minister of the Republic Sudan**

Within the course of the 5th Global Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations and upon invitation of the Ambassador of the Republic of the Sudan in Vienna, H.E. Mr. Mahmoud Hassan ELAMIN, the Secretary General of the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce, Eng. Mouddar KHOUJA, had the great honour and pleasure to meet with H.E. Mr. Ali Ahmed KARTI, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Sudan and several Austrian ministries and members of parliament. During their meeting they discussed the results and the already implemented recommendations given during the 6th Arab-Austrian Economic Forum in last October, above all the achieved cooperation in the fields where Austria has already made progress on European level.



14-19 February 2013**SG travels to the United Arab Emirates**

From the 14th to 19th February 2013 the Secretary General of the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce (AACC), Eng. Mouddar KHOUJA, travelled to Sharjah and Dubai in the United Arab Emirates. During his stay in the United Arab Emirates, the Secretary General met with several high representatives to discuss potential projects and cooperation, among them H.E. Mr. Abdullah Sultan ABDULLAH, the Secretary General of the Federation of United Arab Emirates Chambers of Commerce and Industry; Mr. Hussain Mohamed AL MAHMOUDI, Director General of the Sharjah Chamber of Commerce;; Mr. Khalid BIN BUTTI, Assistant Director General of the Sharjah Chamber of Commerce; Mr. Mohamed Ahmed AL NEAIMI, the Executive Director of Communication & Business Sector of the Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce & Industry, and Mr. Dawood AL SHEZAWI, the CEO of the Annual Investment Meeting, which is belonging to the United Arab Emirates Ministry of Foreign Trade.



Left: Mr. Mohamed AL NEAIMI & SG; Middle: SG & HE Abdullah SULTAN;
Right: Mr. Hussain AL MAHMOUDI & SG

25 January 2013:**SG as panelist in Conference of the Diplomatic Academy Student Initiative(DASI) - "From the Arab Spring to Democracy"**

Upon invitation of the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna, the Secretary General of the Austro-Arab Chamber of Commerce (AACC), Eng. Mouddar KHOUJA, participated in the Conference of the Diplomatic Academy Student Initiative (DASI) titled "From the Arab Spring to Democracy" on Friday, the 25th January 2013, at the Diplomatic Academy's premises. He was asked to speak in the second panel, focused on "International Actors in the Region", about the interests and responsibilities of the international community in the North African region and on economic investments in this region.



22-23 January 2013

Tunisian delegation visits Vienna

On 22 February 2013, the Secretary General of the AACC welcomed a Tunisian Delegation consisting of 8 members from different business branches and headed by H.E. Ambassador Samir KOUBAA, at the AACC premises. The AACC further organized additional meetings for the delegation, such as the Meeting at the Austrian Federal Ministry for Life with Dr. Erhard HÖBAUS MSc, Director of the Central Section of the Department for Nutrition and Quality Management, and Mag. Claudia MÜLLER-ELSIGAN from the Central Section of the Department for Agriculture, Environment and INVEKOS. Further on, the AACC led the Tunisian delegates to the Austrian company GRESAM HandelsgesmbH, an esteemed member company of the AACC specialised in import and distribution of Oriental food and beverages, where they were warmly welcomed by the General Manager, Mr. Samuel NAHABEDIAN.

