

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 Kommzialrat Nabil KUZBARI



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