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Program and Panel Descriptions

16th Arab-German *Business* Forum

The Ritz-Carlton, Berlin – June 12th-14th, 2013

Partner Country: The Kingdom of Bahrain

In cooperation with:



THE ARAB-GERMAN BUSINESS FORUM: PROGRAM

Wednesday, June 12th, 2013

18.00 h **Reception**
Rotes Rathaus (Red Townhall)
Rathausstr. 15, 10178 Berlin

Welcoming
Abdulaziz Al-Mikhlafl
Secretary General

H.E. Anne Ruth Herkes
State Secretary at the Federal German Ministry of
Economics and Technology

H.E. Kamal Ahmed
Minister of Transportation & Acting Chief Executive of Economic
Development Board Bahrain

10.30 h **Coffee Break**

11.00 h **Session 1**
Security and ICT:
Saving the Future

Chair: *Dr. Bernhard Rohleder*
Director General, BITKOM e.V., Germany

Dr. Zakareya Al-Khajah,
Vice CEO, E-Government Authority of the Kingdom of Bahrain
Topic: *“Security and ICT: Saving the Future”*

08.30 h **Registration**
at The Ritz-Carlton Hotel
Potsdamer Platz 3, 10785 Berlin

09.30 h **Opening Ceremony**

Dr. Thomas Bach
President, Ghorfa Arab-German Chamber of Commerce
and Industry

Hans Wolfgang Kunz
Member of the Management Board and Group Executive,
Giesecke & Devrient GmbH, Germany
Topic: *“Security and ICT: Perspectives and New Trends from G&D”*

H.E. Prof. Dr. med. Ossama bin Abdul Majed Shobokshi
Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in Germany,
Doyen of the Arab Diplomatic Corps

Selim J. Eddé
Vice President Government Relations, SAP Middle East & North
Africa LLC, Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Topic: *“Cybersecurity & Trends in the New Digital World:*
Big Data, Mobility, Social Media, Cloud and Government role in
shaping our Future”

Georg Fichtner
Member of the Executive Committee, Association of
German Chambers of Commerce and Industry (DIHK)

Univ. Prof. Dr.-Ing. habil Prof. e.h. Dr. h.c. Radu Popescu-Zeletin
Director, FOKUS Fraunhofer Institute for Open Communication
Systems, Germany
Topic: *„ICT for Smart Cities“*

H.E. Dr. Esam Abdulla Yousif Fakhro
Chairman, Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry

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	<p><i>Khédija Hamouda Ghariani</i> Secretary General, Arab Information and Communication Technologies Organization (AICTO), Republic of Tunisia Topic: "ICT development in the Arab region & partnership opportunities"</p>	
11.00 h	<p>Session 2 Logistics & Mobility: Moving Goods and Passengers</p> <p>Chair: <i>Wolf Schwippert</i> Attorney at Law, Schwippert Law Office, Germany</p> <p><i>Hamad Mohamed Fakhro</i> Director, Logistics Zones Directorate, Kingdom of Bahrain Topic: "Moving the Smart Way"</p> <p><i>Jörg Scheifler</i> CEO, Siemens Infrastructure & Cities Sector, Middle East Topic: "Meeting Growing Transport Needs"</p> <p><i>Prof. Michael ten Hompel</i> Chair of Materials Handling and Warehousing at TU Dortmund University, Managing Director at Fraunhofer Institute of Material Flow and Logistics IML, Germany Topic: "Moving People and Goods"</p> <p><i>Michael Radunz</i> Managing Director, Consaero GmbH, Germany Topic: "Does the demand for "brand new" aircraft generate oversupply in the market?"</p>	
12.30 h	<p>Networking Lunch</p>	
		<p>14.00 h</p> <p>Session 3 Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises: Engine of Societies</p> <p>Chair: <i>Dr. Florian Amereller</i> Founding Partner, Amereller Legal Consultants, Germany</p> <p><i>Yousif Ali</i> Senior Manager, Customer Engagement and Support, Tamkeen, Kingdom of Bahrain Topic: "Tamkeen: a Catalyst of Growth for the Bahraini Private Sector"</p> <p><i>Simone Schreiber</i> CEO, RMA Middle East S.P.C., Germany Topic: "Joining forces: Contributions from a German perspective for enriching the Bahraini economy"</p> <p><i>Musa Al-Saket</i> Board Member of Jordan Chamber of Industry, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Topic: "SMEs: Engines of Growth in Jordan"</p> <p><i>Souad M. Al Hosani</i> President, Nexus, United Arab Emirates Topic: "Exploring opportunities in the UAE"</p> <p><i>Felix Neugart</i> Deputy Managing Director, International Economic Affairs, Association of German Chambers of Industry and Commerce (DIHK), Germany Topic: "The German perspective – Opportunities, Challenges and Best Practices"</p>

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14.00 h	<p>Session 4 <i>Women in Business: Unfolding Leadership</i></p> <p>Chair: <i>Dr. Gabi Kratochwil</i> <i>Managing Director, CrossCultures, Germany</i></p> <p><i>Afnan Rashid Al Zayani</i> <i>Board Member, Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Kingdom of Bahrain</i></p> <p><i>Stephanie Bschorr</i> <i>President of the Association of German Women Entrepreneurs (VdU), Partner and Managing Director of HTG Wirtschaftsprüfung GmbH and HTG Rechtsanwalts-gesellschaft mbH, Germany</i></p> <p><i>Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani</i> <i>Founder and Chairwoman of the Arab International Women's Forum (AIWF) / Muslim Woman of the Year 2013, United Kingdom</i></p> <p><i>Ursula Schwarzenbart</i> <i>Director Global Diversity Office, Daimler AG, Germany</i></p>	<p><i>Eng. Thomas Lücking</i> <i>Managing Director, Gerber Architekten, Germany</i> Topic: <i>"Enhanced Urban Living"</i></p> <p><i>Oliver Alexander</i> <i>Attorney at Law and Founding Partner, Alexander & Partner Law and Finance, Germany</i> Topic: <i>"Common disputes between main contractors and sub contractors in the GCC"</i></p> <p>Session 6 <i>Industrialization in the Arab World: Boosting Potentials</i></p> <p>Chair: <i>Detlev Daues</i> <i>CEO, V-LINE Europe GmbH Germany, President, V-LINE USA Inc. & V-LINE Saudi Arabia Ltd KSA, Germany</i></p> <p><i>Khaled Alohal</i> <i>Investment Advisor, Saudi Arabian General Investment Authority (SAGIA), Kingdom of Saudi Arabia</i> Topic: <i>"Major Regulatory Adjustment to the Foreign Engineering Firms Ownership Practice in the Kingdom - Expected Soon by the Saudi Government"</i></p>
15.30 h	<p>Coffee Break</p>	<p><i>Eng. Joachim Schares</i> <i>Partner and Member of the Managing Board, AS&P – Albert Speer & Partner GmbH, Germany</i> Topic: <i>"Industrial Masterplanning in Saudi Arabia"</i></p>
16.00 h	<p>Session 5 <i>Construction: Housing and City Development</i></p> <p>Chair: <i>Olaf Hoffmann</i> <i>CEO and President, Dorsch Holding GmbH, Germany</i></p> <p><i>H.E. Istabraq Ibrahim Alshouk</i> <i>Deputy Minister of Housing and Construction of the Republic of Iraq</i> Topic: <i>"Housing projects in Iraq"</i></p>	<p><i>Khalid Rashid Al Zayani</i> <i>Honorary Chairman, Al Zayani Investments, Kingdom of Bahrain</i> Topic: <i>"Downstream Industries in Bahrain; Golden Opportunities for German Manufacturers"</i></p>

THE ARAB-GERMAN BUSINESS FORUM: PROGRAM

Friday, June 14th, 2013

Dr. Claus Rettig
President of the Care & Surface Specialties business unit, Evonik Industries AG, Germany
Topic: "Opportunities in the Middle East Consumer Markets"

Dr. Werner Schnappauf
Partner, Graf von Westphalen Rechtsanwälte Steuerberater Partnerschaft, Germany
Topic: "Success Story of the Industrialization in Germany: Experiences, Chances and Challenges"

Prof. Dr. Bernd Hoefler
Chairman & CEO, A9C Capital, Kingdom of Bahrain
Topic: "Industrial Partnership through Private Equity Investments"

19.30 h **Reception & Gala Dinner**
at The Ritz-Carlton Hotel
Potsdamer Platz 3, 10785 Berlin

Keynote

H.E. Dr. Guido Westerwelle
Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, Germany

09.00 h **Session 7**
Family Businesses in the Arab World: Tradition meets Trends

Chair: *Peter Brock*
Head of Family Offices Services, Ernst & Young, Germany

Fawzi Kanoo
Deputy Chairman, YBA Kanoo, Kingdom of Bahrain
Topic: "Family Business: Tradition meets Trends"

Ali Al-Othaim
Saudi National Committee for Young Businessmen, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Topic: "Young entrepreneurs role in the success and continuity of family businesses in GCC countries"

09.00 h **Session 8**
Financial Services & Insurance: Supporting Arab-German Business

Chair: *Ralph Nitzgen*
Senior Executive Officer & General Manager, Commerzbank AG Dubai Branch, United Arab Emirates

André Arrago
Chairman, Hannover Re Takaful, Kingdom of Bahrain
Topic: "Reinsurance in the Gulf Region"

Achim P. Klueber
Executive Director of the Board of Europe Arab Bank pbc, Germany
Topic: "Financial Services & Insurance: Supporting Arab-German Business"

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Hassan Sohbi

Lawyer, Taylor Wessing, Germany

Topic: "German-Arab Partnerships - A Model for the Future"

Jörn Grabowski

Head of Unit Middle East, Euler Hermes Deutschland AG, Germany

Topic: "Hermes Cover for Export Financing to the Arab World"

Jamal Ali Al Kishi

Managing Director and CEO, Deutsche Bank Saudi Arabia, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Topic: "Deutsche Bank in the Middle East and North Africa"

10.30 h **Coffee Break**

11.00 h **Session 9**

Infrastructure Megaprojects: Rails, Ports and Roads

Chair: *Andreas Hergenröther*

Delegate of German Industry & Commerce for Saudi Arabia and Yemen, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

H.E. Waleed Al Saie

Undersecretary, Ministry of Works, Kingdom of Bahrain

Topic: "Infrastructure Mega Projects - Kingdom of Bahrain"

Dr. Jürgen R. Koffler

CEO, Dornier Consulting GmbH, Germany

Topic: "Integrated Development Strategies for Infrastructure Megaprojects in the KSA: The Saudi Railway Master Plan 2010 – 2040"

Marco Neelsen

CEO, APM Terminals, Kingdom of Bahrain

Topic: "Khalifa Bin Salman Port – Gateway to Growth Markets"

Klaus Schmöcker

Managing Director, HPC Hamburg Port Consulting GmbH, Germany

Topic: "Khalifa Port the new Container Competitor"

Hans-Joachim Bliss

Member of the Executive Board, BAUER Spezialtiefbau GmbH, Germany

Topic: "Infrastructure Challenges - Rails, Ports, Roads"

Dr. Jens André Gräfer

Head of International Projects, Department for International Business Development, Deutsche Bahn AG, Germany

Topic: "Railway Infrastructure Projects in the GCC-Region – Global Outlook and DB's engagement"

12.30 h

Plenary Session

Political Outlook of Arab-German Business Cooperation

H.E. Elsidig Mohamedl ElShiekh

Minister of Finance & Economy, Khartoum State, Republic of Sudan

Topic: "Business and investment opportunities in Sudan"

Chair: *Jürgen Hogrefe*

CEO, Hogrefe Consult, Germany

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H.E. Dr. Mohammad Halaiqah

*Former Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs,
Chairman of the Board, ConsultUS, Hashemite Kingdom
of Jordan*

H.E. Boris Ruge

*Regional Director for the Near and Middle East,
Federal Foreign Office, Germany*

H.E. Dr. Hussain M. F. Alkhateeb

Ambassador of the Republic of Iraq in Germany

H.E. Dieter W. Haller

*Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany in the
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*

H.E. Dr. Esam Abdulla Yousif Fakhro

*Chairman, Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry,
Kingdom of Bahrain*

13.30 h **Get-Together & Networking Lunch**

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THE ARAB-GERMAN BUSINESS FORUM: PANELS

Opening Ceremony 09.30 h Thursday, June 13th, 2013

Arab-German Cooperation: Continuing Growth

The boom in economic relations between the Arab world and Germany in 2012 is reflected in a trade increase of more than 18% up to a total volume of 49 billion euro. As diverse as the twenty-two countries of the Arab world are, so do the economic and social dynamics vary across the region. What the countries of the Arab world yet all have in common is a young population with a medium age of less than 25 years, representing growing labor forces and consumer markets. A commonality even more relevant for Arab-German business cooperation is the need for investments in infrastructure and other economic sectors as represented by the nine sessions of

the forum. Megaprojects are expected in all of these sectors and convert into a myriad of ongoing bids and tenders across the whole Arab region. Therefore the key issues of the opening session of this year's forum are how to increase Arab-German business relations and, at the same time, to contribute to the development of prosperous economic structures.

German products and services are widely appreciated in the Arab world for their state-of-the-art quality and sustainability. The Arab countries have an enormous growth potential and with their large hydrocarbon reserves are of strategic importance

for the German economy at large. Germany is one of the region's most important economic partners and the potential of Arab-German economic cooperation has not even been utilized to its maximum yet.

This panel discussion will introduce economic developments and ceremonially open up the 16th Arab-German business forum. High ranking speakers will display their vision about the development of the bilateral economic relations in future. Especially the Kingdom of Bahrain as this year's partner country will provide excellent insights into the strategy and unfolding opportunities in the country.

THE ARAB-GERMAN BUSINESS FORUM: PANELS

Session 1 11.00 h Thursday, June 13th, 2013

Security & ICT: Saving the Future

ICT is a growing sector in the Arab region with its very young populations and thriving economies. In an increasingly globalized and connected world, achieving multidimensional security is the challenge for the public and private sectors from both the Arab countries and Germany. External as well as internal threats of both physical and virtual nature oblige companies, such as in the telecommunications or financial sector, as well as governments, to invest in the necessary technologies. This worldwide development constitutes a promising

opportunity for the global security technologies market, which was estimated at EUR 100 billion in 2010. With an overall turnover of almost EUR 20 billion, the German security technologies industry is the largest in Europe and the Arab world provides for a growing market for these quality products and technical know-how. German companies offer state-of-the-art technology and high system competence, consequently enjoying global brand recognition. In this first session of the Arab-German business forum, we will discuss the following

questions: Which are the most common vulnerabilities of critical infrastructure such as gas, oil, energy and telecommunications? How can we best foster the exchange of knowledge? Which particular challenges do governments and state authorities face when exchanging sensitive information? How can German-Arab technology cooperations be established in this field? How can private users protect their identity and other information when using ICT?

THE ARAB-GERMAN BUSINESS FORUM: PANELS

Session 2 11.00 h Thursday, June 13th, 2013

Logistics and Mobility: Moving Goods and Passengers

Like in the ancient days of the Silk Route as the major trade route between Europe and Asia, the Middle East has remained central in connecting these regions. Easily accessible by air, sea and land, this natural advantage attracts a rising movement of goods and people through and inside the Arab world. Regional governments have recognized the need for efficient logistics and transportation structures as essential for any kind of economic activity, and hence substantially invested in their establishment and modernization. As a global transit

hub for multiple modes of transport, the Arab region offers various business opportunities for internationally operating enterprises. This holds especially true for the aviation industry, with the Europe-Asia Pacific route being the busiest between any two regions in the world: The Middle East serves as the major stopover point for air carriers to refuel and reload. On a local level, increasing mobility needs in Arab cities represent a major pull factor for the construction of public transport structures. While there is no energy shortage, an absence of public

transport and high rate of private vehicle ownership leads to other problems such as traffic congestion and air pollution in urban areas. While in Dubai and Algiers, modern metro systems have recently been installed, the cities of Jeddah, Riyadh, Kuwait, Doha and Abu Dhabi are about to follow. This session will discuss those different trends in the sectors of logistics, transport and mobility. One challenge to focus on will be the realization of inter-modal solution combining different logistical modes and the resulting necessity to standardize transport.

THE ARAB-GERMAN BUSINESS FORUM: PANELS

Session 3 14.00 h Thursday, June 13th, 2013

Small and Medium Sized Enterprises: Engine of Societies

Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) are the major driver of the private sector and engine of societies as they stimulate job creation, growth and economic diversification. Particularly the German economy is marked by a strong participation of SMEs (up to 500 employees per definition) who account for almost all of German companies and provide for 60% of the country's employment. In the Arab economies, SMEs are likewise dominant, constituting over 85% of the companies in the region. However, the private sector in Arab countries generally is not large enough to absorb the growing

number of job seekers, with SMEs representing only one third of employment. Hence, there is often a strong reliance on the public sector as an employer. The SME sector in the Arab world is further characterized by a high level of informality and concentration in low-growth, low-quality sectors, serving local markets with little use of modern technologies. In general, there is need for improvement of corporate governance for SMEs, in order to enhance transparency and accountability, to encourage positive competitiveness, to increase access to diverse forms of capital and to improve overall SME

performance. A strong middle class in Arab countries would be also able to act as a stabilizing factor against external economic shocks and other volatilities all too common in a region consisting of oil-based economies. The session will focus on opportunities for cooperation; provide examples of success stories and recommendations on how cooperation can be initiated successfully between German and Arab SMEs. Besides that the challenges of SME promotion and development will be discussed to enable a fruitful exchange of experiences and knowledge between Arab and German SMEs.

THE ARAB-GERMAN BUSINESS FORUM: PANELS

Session 4 14.00 h Thursday, June 13th, 2013

Women in Business: Unfolding Leadership

The empowerment of women is one of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals to be achieved by 2015. This goal has translated into the policies of many Arab states aiming at the promotion of women in all fields of society and with this also in the economy, empowering women in business at many levels. Yet, there is still a long way to go. According to the UN Development Program, recent achievements by Arab women in education such as an increasing fe-

male enrolment at all levels of education could not yet be fully translated into greater economic participation. The share of women employed in the non-agricultural sector has remained constant since decades. However, Arab businesswomen did succeed to establish themselves more profoundly as economic actors in almost all Arab countries, showing a strong desire to organize and articulate their interests. And: Women in the Arab world increasingly hold leadership

positions. While the proportion is still too low, like in many parts of the world, things are on the move in the region. This session will discuss legal, institutional and cultural challenges and opportunities for female leadership both in the Arab world and Germany. What are the key factors to boost women in leadership positions? How can this female potential be unfolded in order to better face global challenges and to enrich dynamic economic growth?

THE ARAB-GERMAN BUSINESS FORUM: PANELS

Session 5 16.00 h Thursday, June 13th, 2013

Construction: Housing and City Development

The demand for modern infrastructure and housing in the Arab world is increasing due to its growing populations and diversifying economies. Ongoing mega city projects in the Arab region of several hundred billion US\$ invest volume are showing evidence of this trend. This year's Jeddah Economic Forum has identified the requisite to create 143.000 new apartments in Saudi Arabia alone. Conciliating such urgent needs for buildings with environmental concerns is a challenge that has contributed to the increasing success of the industry of sustainable construction. An eco-friendly architecture and sustainable master planning allows for a significant reduction of pollution, whether noise, gas,

sewage or other, and an investment in such more expensive buildings may not only serve ecological, but also economic interests due to lower operating costs. Several Arab governments have recognized these benefits in their national development plans and focused on sustainable construction. Masdar City in the United Arab Emirates represents the visionary fulfillment of eco-friendly life space, blending modern technology with traditional Arab construction. The Kingdom of Bahrain has likewise set to become a leader in sustainable construction by introducing new building regulations using international environmental standards since 2013. But also other Gulf countries as well as Iraq and Algeria plan high-

scale development programs for the next decade, accompanied by massive governmental spending plans. While there is an official preference to support regional companies, local actors will find it difficult to implement these large and complex projects alone. Consequently, chances for profitable cooperation arise for foreign companies, particularly those from the "green economy" for which Germany is known worldwide. Arab economies will benefit from the resulting transfer of eco-technological know-how. These trends and business opportunities within the framework of upcoming construction projects in various Arab countries will be identified by this session.

THE ARAB-GERMAN BUSINESS FORUM: PANELS

Session 6 16.00 h Thursday, June 13th, 2013

Industrialization in the Arab World: Boosting Potentials

Industrialization is one of the key priorities in the Arab world. Many Arab governments have paved the way for strengthening the industrial sectors in their respective countries by focusing on specific sectors with comparative advantages and creating industrial zones or completely new industrial cities. Particularly in the Arab Gulf states, an industrialization agenda is actively promoted in order to diversify the national economies and lessen the dependence on hydrocarbons. On

the Arab peninsula, energy-intensive industries such as petrochemicals, cement and metallurgical industries including aluminum, copper and steel are very successful and thus offer various possibilities for foreign investors. Above all, the petrochemical industry has been an area with large growth rates in the GCC. In the long run, with oil and gas being finite resources, the energy sources for those industries have to be diversified as well. Specific downstream industries like

plastics for example, which strongly depend on technology, will be central for a sustainable future of the Arab industrial sector. In the whole Arab region, further industries such as the automotive sector, textile and food and agriculture industries are also of great importance and key to economic growth. In light of the effective expansion of infrastructure such as rail systems, the industrialization of the Arab world is set to continue its prosperous path in the future.

THE ARAB-GERMAN BUSINESS FORUM: PANELS

Session 7 09.00 h Friday, June 14th, 2013

Family Businesses in the Arab World: Tradition meets Trends

Both in Germany and in the Arab world, family businesses play a decisive role in their respective economies. Family enterprises show some unique features as opposed to other companies in the private sector, for instance in those businesses an increased company loyalty and corporate social responsibility may be observed. Philanthropy by family companies as manifested in funding social, educational or cultural activities, particularly within the communities in which they are embedded, is a phenomenon particularly frequent in the Arab world. Family businesses are further defined by an

overlapping owner- and leadership structure, which inherently has both advantages as well as drawbacks: While there often is a high sense of responsibility and incentive to offer high quality products and services, as success and failures are usually tied to the family name, family enterprises often display deficiencies as regards their corporate governance. Therefore, even more than for other SMEs, professionalization of management and oversight structures pose a challenge for companies under the leadership of families. Another challenge for them is the issue of succession and the bridging

of generational gaps. This session on traditions and trends will focus on the special characteristics, issues and the future of family businesses in a globalized world and enable an exchange between Arab and German players in this area. We are convinced that tailored exchange between family businesses from different regions leads to innovation and collaboration. This enables family businesses to forge new business relationships, thereby advancing the state of development of their enterprises while contributing to economic growth.

THE ARAB-GERMAN BUSINESS FORUM: PANELS

Session 8 09.00 h Friday, June 14th, 2013

Financial Services & Insurance: Supporting Arab-German Business

Financial services and insurances play a crucial role to flank business relations between the Arab world and Germany. Traditionally, German companies active in the region tend to regard their branch offices in the Arab world as a place for selling of services or merely handling of imports and exports. In recent years, however, locations such as Dubai have grown to become "hubs" for a variety of commercial services undertaken by German companies reaching out to the whole Arab

world from there. The corresponding legal framework accompanying this trend will be one focus of this session. "Supporting Arab-German Business" also includes instruments such as project finance and export finance. As Arab-German trade reached an all-time peak of around 49 billion euro in 2012, the financing and insurance of these exports remain likewise important. The growth of the general insurance sector was stimulated by the introduction of health insurances in the GCC

countries and rising premiums. This session will cover these segments of the financial and insurance sector supporting Arab-German business relations and inform about latest developments and trends.

THE ARAB-GERMAN BUSINESS FORUM: PANELS

Session 9 11.00 h Friday, June 14th, 2013

Infrastructure Megaprojects: Rails, Ports and Roads

The growing interdependence between markets, the increase in the exchange of goods and growing mobility needs of people lead to an increase in the demand of improved and expanded infrastructure. In addition we are facing energy issues as well as higher environmental protection requirements. These factors play a decisive role in the planning of a sustainable infrastructure program to the Arab region. Seaports in the Arabian Gulf, the Red Sea as well as the Mediterranean Sea have been positioning as major regional trans-shipment hubs. They offer a range of services that include handling different types of cargo and reloading it between vessels in

addition to storage and maintenance. Rail in the Arab world is an area still under development as many countries do not yet have substantial networks and there are only few international connections between major cities. Europe is intensifying the plans to enhance the Euro-Asian Rail network to the Middle East and to Asia. This may lead to substantial opportunities for the Arab World to participate in the intercontinental rail freight and to build up modern and economic cross-border rail corridors. Whereas geographic limitations and affordable fuel prices have traditionally constrained rail as a mode of transport, there are now major projects underway in the

Arab region. The most ambitious one is the GCC rail network planned to stretch from Kuwait in the north to Oman in the south, with construction beginning in 2013 and the network to become operational in 2017. The construction of roads, highways and bridges is likewise ranking high on the Arab agenda. These encouraging developments entail numerous opportunities for German companies to engage in these large-scale projects. The focus of this session will hence be on overseeing the dynamic ports, rails and roads infrastructure in the Arab region and identifying the future potentials for Arab-German cooperation in this field.

THE ARAB-GERMAN BUSINESS FORUM: PANELS

Plenary Session 12.30 h Friday, June 14th, 2013

Political Outlook of Arab-German Business Cooperation

The political dynamism in the Arab world has experienced profound change in the past years with wide-reaching implications for the economic and social spheres. This ongoing transformation process has set free a lot of enthusiasm and creativity among the Arab populations – especially among the youth. At this moment it is essential to consolidate this process, find the right balance and channel the new energy into coherent strategies for the political and economic develop-

ment. The plenary session will discuss how Germany and the Arab countries can effectively support the economic development and identify key areas, where government backing is needed. In this transformation stage it is particularly important to attract foreign investment and to promote trade between the Arab world and Germany. Furthermore, with changing global economic dynamics – particularly with growing economic powers in East Asia – the Arab-German cooperation is of great

importance and mutual benefit. Not only do policy-makers influence the economic framework in which business relations take place by i.e. defining investment laws, but they can also actively support enterprises in the development of new markets abroad. To achieve this according to the needs of German and Arab businesses, the discussants of the plenary session will integrate the contributions of the previous speakers into their outlook, thus summing-up the main points of the various sessions.