

Speech of H.E. Dr. Yaseen Khayyat
Director General
The Jordan Institution for Standards and Metrology
Closing Ceremony
‘European Jordanian Twinning Project’

Your Excellency, Mrs. Suhair Al-Ali, the Minister of Planning and International Cooperation;

Your Excellency, Mr. Sharif Al-Zu'bi, the Minister of Justice, Acting Minister of Industry and Trade;

Your Excellency, Mr. Patrick Renaud, the EU Delegation Ambassador;
Mrs. Ina Hofmann, honourable representative of the German Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology;

Ladies and gentlemen;

Good morning!

I am pleased to welcome you all to the closing ceremonies of the ‘European Jordanian Twinning Project for Strengthening the Jordan Institution for Standards and Metrology’, a project configured to enable JISM to acquire the wherewithal to come into compliance with EU-Jordan Association Agreement.

In October 2005, we inaugurated this Project in an atmosphere charged with optimism and eagerness. The Project Team set out a detailed plan of progress with a definite schedule involving co-operation and partnership between mid- and short-term experts and JISM counterparts. JISM staff

was all so eager and prepared to back up the experts' efforts with enthusiasm and hard work.

Looking at what has been accomplished throughout this Project in the last two years, I must say that I am very proud and most contented with the results that have been achieved, and of how the challenges and difficulties that we were faced with at the onset were dealt with and overcome with informed and calculated decisions and constructive actions, and often with an ample dose of patience and endurance. I am happy to say that harvest time is upon us, and it seems that the fruits of our joint labour are quite plentiful and very fine indeed!

The Project results have established systems and set in place procedures. The practical experience and knowledge obtained and the evaluations subsequently made – which I shall present in their entirety later today – have led to external recognition of the competence of our services. For instance, accreditation has been recommended for the testing and certification activities, and, furthermore, the Jordanian National Metrology Institute and the Jordan accreditation body are on the right track to sign multilateral agreements for recognition at the European and international levels.

This initiative has clearly contributed to the development of the necessary quality infrastructure to support business and industrial development and has demonstrated the Government's firm commitment towards the EU-Jordan Association Agreement. Thanks to this Project, we are now familiar with the key role that the quality infrastructure plays in enhancing Jordan's level of economic growth. The investment in the quality infrastructure underpins the economy and helps to provide opportunities for growth and employment.

The ethos of our organization has undergone a significant transformation: from an institute that was once devoted to traditional and habitual ways of doing business, to one that has set in place professional practices and, in consequence, has its competence recognized by renowned international accreditation bodies. And it seems that this trend will continue after the Project, as the seeds of reliability and professionalism have been implanted in JISM and have taken strong roots there.

It was absolutely crucial that this cultural shift should envelope all participants in this Project, including directors and employees. Its foundation is the unwavering commitment to quality. This culture is safeguarded by the documentation of best practices in the form of laws, regulations, working procedures, and even forms and checklists, as well as the knowledge embedded by application, all of which I can describe as a 'recipe for success'.

Whilst building the technical capacity of the quality infrastructure components has been a sheer struggle, the strengthening of administrative and legislative structures remains yet another formidable challenge. Moreover, the difficulties that are expected to be faced by the private sector, specifically the industrialists and traders, are of great significance in this regard. I am certain that these complexities were confronted head-on by regulators, standardization and conformity assessment bodies, in addition to economic operators, when the European Union got on board the reform wagon years ago.

Our main focus now should be to ensure that all the positive advances and headways made in this project are built upon through other complementary and more definite projects, with parallel projects for economic operators.

These projects have to be initiated and defined based on master-plans for implementation of EC Directives relevant to the priority sectors. These master-plans would have to categorize stakeholders affected by the EC Directives, such as regulators, market surveillance authorities, conformity assessment bodies, businesses, etc., and would also have to define their roles in implementation, the encountered obstacles and difficulties, and the impact of the whole thing on national industry and the economy. The projects set off as a result have to be customized to the stakeholders' particular needs and requirements.

In this area, Jordan's priorities for strategic projects should include providing consultancy and training services on the appliance of EC Directives and referenced harmonized standards, in addition to applying new modules of conformity assessment, such as self-declaration. Additionally, technological development might be required to have the products in compliance with these new technical requirements. A critical issue with projects of this kind is the integration of interfacing systems between the private and public sectors.

Notwithstanding all the excellent results and impressive progress made grace to this superb Project, we still have major shortfalls in key areas that we still need to address and resolve in a resolute and direct manner.

To conclude, we have to put in place the right projects and keep up our unshakable resolve and continue our hard efforts to maximize the potential of Jordan in this area and optimize the accruing dividends for the benefit of all citizens of Jordan.

Thank you for your good audience and attention!