

Speech of H.E. Mr. Sharif Zu'bi
Minister of Justice/
Acting Minister of Industry and Trade
Closing Ceremony
‘European Jordanian Twinning Project’

Dear guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to be part of the closing ceremony of the Twinning Project for Strengthening the Jordan Institution for Standards and Metrology, whose propitious kick-off ceremony, in which I personally participated, I can still recall.

These days, the irrepressible forces of competition, technology, and globalization have given rise to a plethora of innovations and set an abundance of new discoveries upon the world, and, as a result, excess new products have emerged from everywhere that are dramatically transforming our world and the way we live. But even with these Earth-shaking developments, the government mandate to protect the consumers' health, ensure their safety, and safeguard their public interests, remains absolute – to be carried out in the same integrity and transparency that characterize and connect the markets of the world together. This applies to all countries of the world, regardless of the level of their technological development.

Years ago, the European Union and the Mediterranean countries jointly announced the Barcelona Declaration, which has been urging all partners to the manifesto to dedicate themselves to the promotion of peace and stability, to work together to create an area of shared prosperity, and to facilitate dialogue between their peoples and societies. In the years since, eleven Association Agreements between the European Union and Mediterranean partners have been concluded, of which the EU-Jordan Association Agreement offers a good example.

The European Neighbourhood Policy has been set in place to enhance and intensify the Barcelona Declaration. It is a mechanism to develop a policy for EU neighbours to foster a closer relationship with the Union based on agreed action plans that are designed to pave the way for the pursuance of the European ethos and prosperity model. The Neighbourhood Policy and the implementation of the Palermo Action Plan for the free movement of industrial products will lead to the signature of the Agreement on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of Industrial Products, which is a key element towards achieving our common objective to create the Euro-Jordan Free Trade Area in 2010. With this Agreement and its implementation we shall be creating an increasingly attractive market for investors from around the world who are interested in exporting to European countries. This would in all probability enhance the chance of success for businesses and would certainly improve trade relations between Jordan and the European Union.

Recognizing that there are different legislative and regulatory requirements in application in the territories of the two trading partners, a direct equivalence between the regulations, approximation of the laws, rules and conformity assessment procedures, as well as technical regulations and standards that cover the various industrial sectors, should be created, since this is most vital for the progressive implementation of these legislations in order to develop the quality infrastructure. The quality infrastructure systems, specifically standardization, conformity assessment, accreditation, market surveillance and metrology, have to be based on international requirements, taking the European specifics into consideration. Moreover, competence and equal reliability have to be demonstrated for bodies functioning in conformity assessment of regulatory areas, for instance notified bodies, as well as for accreditation bodies through the signature of multilateral agreements.

I am optimistic about our chances for creating a free trade area with the European Union. Never before have I seen such enthusiasm, eagerness and determination to support the future of our industry and exports. We can talk about several barriers that hinder market entrance and penetration, but there is nothing that cannot be overcome

with a suitable legislative environment, proper technical infrastructure, high quality of products, and willpower.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the management team of the Project for their immense and sustained efforts, to express gratitude to the European Commission, whose support to Jordan through bilateral projects has been truly enormous, and to congratulate JISM management and staff on their great success in accomplishing the Project's results. I firmly believe that these results should greatly facilitate the conclusion of the Acceptance of Industrial Products Agreement (ACAA) at the end of the negotiations that will be entered into in the near future.

Thank you!