

## **EU to support Arab reform, democratization**

Europe is following the events in the Arab region closely and is ready to support its people's pursuit of fairer societies, an EU representative in Jordan said on Thursday.

Jean-Marc Dewerpe, head of the finance, contracts and audit section at the EU Delegation to Jordan, said the European Commission has reviewed its Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity with its southern neighbours, while a new programme called "Spring" has emerged to increase support for the region, "specifically for countries that are effectively implementing democratic change".

In the area of higher education, he said, the European Union has decided to double the budgets of its higher education programmes Tempus and Erasmus Mundus.

"Through these programmes, we invest in facilitating the access for students, academics, university staff and researchers of the region to new experiences by coming to European universities and having the chance to enrich themselves," Dewerpe said.

The EU official made the remarks at a conference organised by the University of Jordan (UJ), the embassy of Poland and the EU delegation in Amman to discuss Jordanian-Polish and Jordanian-European cooperation.

Krzysztof Bojko, head of mission at Poland's embassy in Amman, said the conference and other joint activities aim at deepening the relations between Jordan and Poland, especially in the fields of business and education.

He added that his country is keen to bolster its relations with Jordan by signing cooperation agreements, noting that last week Poland signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Ombudsman Bureau to enhance cooperation in public sector monitoring.

Furthermore, UJ President Adel Tweissi said the event would provide a roadmap to follow in promoting cooperation between the University of Warsaw and UJ.

"This conference will hopefully also boost a more comprehensive cooperation between Jordan, Poland and Europe, a step in the direction of a productive Arab-European dialogue," he added.

The conference also covered economic cooperation between Jordan and Europe, and means to improve it.

Issa Murad, president of the Jordan Europe Business Association, said Europe is an important trading partner for Jordan and the Middle East.

"This partnership has yielded a lot for both sides in all sectors, and the opportunities are still strong and promising despite the challenges faced by both parties," he said, adding that the private sector is seeking to take advantage of the EU's open market.

**Jordan Times**  
**16-12-2011**