

Your Excellency Prof. Khaled Touqan,  
Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research,  
Mr. Gilles Rebattet,  
Prof. Ahmad Abu-El-Haija,  
Ladies and Gentlemen.

Good morning.

We are indeed honoured to host this important Euro-Jordanian gathering at the Princess Sumaya University for Technology, an important part of whose mission is to participate in the endeavour to unify scientific resources in the area and concentrate them within a wide knowledge – producing network for the benefit of the whole Mediterranean region. After all, this region is already historically deeply intermeshed and interlinked in all sorts of ways. It is time we systematize this great historical heritage of interconnection, and utilize it for unifying efforts and potentialities.

The name of the game in all such activities is knowledge production. And the challenge facing us today is how to organize the production of knowledge regionally and globally.

I tend to interpret the significance of the Tempus programme, and other such European programmes, in these terms and within this context: how to build regionally and globally extended knowledge industries and firms, as it were.

Of course, ultimately, partnerships can only be successful if they are conducted between equal, or nearly equal, partners. This means that the

Arab Mediterranean partners are faced with the challenge of how to nationally organize their knowledge potential to make it possible to actualize it via such collaborative endeavours. What is truly lacking in the modern Arab world is the will to knowledge, or the will to produce knowledge, which is the hallmark of modernity. The challenge facing us today is how to rebuild and reactivate the will to knowledge in the modern Arab world. This is essential if we want to truly modernize Arab society, and if we do not want to miss the opportunity offered by this great collaborative European initiative.

The Princess Sumaya University for Technology, which is a leading IT and Engineering University in Jordan and the region, and which has succeeded in forging fruitful links with leading educational institutions, feels the urgency of this national task, and would like to stimulate this feeling of urgency in our distinguished guests and participants. I, therefore, urge the participants to actively debate the issues that will be raised today in the light of their knowledge needs and potentialities.

I wish both the organizers and participants success in this collaborative endeavour and a fruitful discussion.