

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our honored guests

In December 2007, His Majesty King Abdullah II addressed the European Parliament in Strasbourg, where he outlined a vision for the future of the Middle East and its relationship with Europe, a vision based on the idea of a larger neighbourhood, one that stretches from north of the Baltic Sea to south of the Mediterranean, one that is shared by all people of Europe and the Middle East.

Jordan indeed aspires to continue and develop its partnership with Europe to the fullest and to act as a

platform for cooperation and development with great shared interests and unlimited potential.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Jordan is embarking on building a regional model through the implementation of a comprehensive reform agenda, with the aim of propelling growth and realizing a sustainable improvement in the welfare of citizens. Jordan's vision is to develop a modern, tolerant, and open society, and to establish itself as a successful model of reform and development conceived and implemented from within.

In particular, the Higher Education Sector plays a vital role in the overall process of society's

development. Higher Education in Jordan has developed steadily over the past few years regarding content, programmes, and methods of teaching and learning that affect both quality and quantity. A Higher Education Development Forum was conducted under royal patronage in February 2007 to address these issues and come up with a development plan.

Since 2002, Tempus has played an important role in Jordan, with most higher education institutions participating in the programme. A multitude of joint projects with European partners have been implemented with subject areas that cover almost all academic disciplines.

Tempus has indeed assisted in improving the quality of teaching and learning in Jordanian educational institutions by upgrading teaching methods, course contents, course delivery techniques, staff skills and knowledge, and facilities, and also by providing exposure to new ideas and concepts. In several projects, academic staff and students from Jordan and other partner countries have had the opportunity to work together with European staff and students in projects and case studies both in Jordan, the Mediterranean region, and in Europe. These collaborative cases have had an excellent impact on the experiences of all involved, in addition to bridging their mutual understanding and cultural differences. Collaboration through Tempus

projects helped to strengthen the regional cooperation in partner countries, in addition to establishing contacts and cooperation with many European institutes.

Although Tempus had excellent impact at the level of individuals involved in the higher education sector in Jordan, it has not yet affected higher education policy development and thus has had a lesser impact on the operation and management of higher education institutions. It is hoped that the present Tempus IV programme will lead the way towards achieving this goal.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We are proud at El Hassan Science City of our early involvement in EU programmes and projects. As you know, the RSS has been participating in the Framework Programme for many years and the Higher Council for Science and Technology has been the focal national point for many of the EU programmes and actively leading and taking part in several EU projects. PSUT, too, has taken a noticeable role in educational and research projects ever since its first involvement in MEDFORIST. For example, last year, PSUT was a leading member in 2 out of 3 Tempus projects selected for Jordan. PSUT is also a member of an ongoing Erasmus



Mundus External Cooperation Window project for student and staff exchange with EU universities. In addition, 3 projects have recently been submitted to FP7, one led by the Higher Council for Science and Technology entitled “EU-JordanNet”, the second led by Durham University entitled: “Research Capacity Building in Jordan”, and the third project entitled “Technology-enhanced Learning Approaches and Strategies to support Open Innovation Clusters”, led by Athens Research and Education Laboratory in Information Technologies. In all these projects, El Hassan Science City is playing an active role and setting an example for good international cooperation.

As Jordan looks forward to working in partnership with the EU institutions in translating these valuable initiatives into concrete results for our people, I would like to call on you, our university professors and managements, to bridge the education gap, to link with our EU counterparts, to build on our genuine past and culture with a promised future.

I thank you all for the energetic support you have lent to initiating a new phase in EuroMed relations and we are delighted to host this 5<sup>th</sup> Jordan Tempus day for the 4<sup>th</sup> year running. I wish you luck and I hope your consultations and deliberation will bring about the best Tempus projects for Jordan.

Thank you.