

Speech of the National Tempus Office Director
Professor Ahmad Abu-El-Haija
Fifth National Tempus Conf., 14th December 2009

Your Excellency Prof. Walid Ma'ani, Minister of Higher Education & Scientific Research,

Your Excellency Mr. Patrick Renault, Ambassador & Head of Delegation of the European Union to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

Your Excellencies, Honorable Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to have you with us today, and we would like to thank you for taking the time to participate in the fifth national Tempus Conference.

Tempus is the European Union programme that supports the modernization of higher education in the partner countries. It contributes to creating an area of cooperation in the field of higher education between the European Union and partner countries.

Over the past six years, the National Tempus Office has promoted the Tempus program and encouraged Jordanian institutions to benefit from this program. This was accomplished through number of activities. These included conducting five main conferences, such as this one, holding about 30 seminars & presentations at Jordanian universities, publishing and disseminating about 10 quality brochures and booklets, holding hundreds of meetings at the NTO with interested faculty members, and arranging press and media coverage for main events. As a result, the Tempus program is now well known, respected, and admired in Jordan. Faculty members compete very hard to participate in Tempus projects, the European higher education system and institutions are now better known to Jordanian academicians and students, and more Europeans know the higher education in Jordan and have better understanding of the Jordanian culture and people.

Tempus III that took place in the period 2002-2007 funded a total of 23 projects and 26 individual mobility grants, which involved the participation of Jordanian institutions. Out of these projects, those that are national (only Jordan from MEDA countries is involved as the beneficiary) had a total budget of over 4 Million Euros, while multi-county projects had a budget of over 3.7 Million Euros. In these projects, 12 Jordanian institutions have participated, which included most of the public and some private universities, in addition to about 10 other organizations and NGOs. Also, cooperation with 14 European countries and seven Mediterranean countries took place through these projects. Exchanges of hundreds of academic staff and students between Jordan / MEDA and Europe took place over the past period. We were happy to coordinate, facilitate and monitor the execution of these projects over the past years. Providing counseling, advice and assistance to faculty members on number of issues they faced during project implementation ensured the conformance with the EC guidelines and maximum benefit to the participating institutions and to Jordan.

We are today proud to say that due to above dedicated efforts of the NTO, the Tempus program in Jordan has been quite visible, well-respected and admired by the academic community, and extremely competitive. Success rate (ratio of projects that were selected compared to those submitted) was between 10-15%. This enabled Tempus to fund only the very best projects that are in line with the Jordanian strategy of higher education and where the need is greatest. Also, due to close monitoring and assistance provided to projects and institutions, impact and benefits of the Tempus funds were maximized. The competitive nature of Tempus projects has indeed helped beneficiary institutions in Jordan to enhance the quality and relevance of their higher education programs and align themselves with world class European universities.

Today, we are here to present to you the third call of Tempus IV and the second call of the Erasmus Mundus II program. Because these programs were carefully designed based upon lessons learnt from the previous phases, they include several enhancements as compared with

their predecessors and number of new elements to partner countries. All this will be explained today by Mrs. Eva Valle Casanova, who came from the European Commission in Brussels especially for meeting you and talking to you.

The European Union has paid good attention to the reform and development of its higher education system and established what is known as “European Higher Education Area”. We are pleased to have with us today Professor Yasser El-Shayeb, Director of the National Tempus Office in Egypt, who will inform us about the latest developments in the Bologna Process and the Erasmus-Mundus II program.

We hope that today’s presentations will provide you with the appropriate knowledge and equip you with the necessary tools and resources to enable you to benefit from these programs. The Tempus conference also gives you the chance to network and talk about possible consortia that may work together. Because funds are quite limited, we strongly encourage Jordanian universities to collaborate together in Tempus projects.

For us, at the National Tempus Office, we aim at making the Tempus projects involving Jordan more and more competitive. This will enhance the quality, and will in turn contribute to the on-going process of the higher education reform in Jordan. We look forward to strengthening further the collaboration between Jordanian higher education institutions and their European counterparts, through the Tempus, Erasmus Mundus and other programs in higher education and research.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

We take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to their Excellencies Prof. Walid Ma'ani and Mr. Patrick Renauld for patronizing the Tempus day and being with us today. We thank the European Commission for including Jordan in the Tempus program and providing the necessary funds, and the Ministry of Higher Education and

Scientific Research for hosting and supporting the Tempus Office. We also thank the University of Jordan for hosting this Day. The team from the National Tempus Office and the counterpart team from University of Jordan who worked very hard on all the details of this day also deserve our thanks and appreciation. Last but not least, our warmest thanks to all of you who came from different parts of Jordan to participate in this activity.

Thank you so much again, and we wish you a pleasant and successful day.