

Speech of the National Tempus Office Director
Professor Ahmad Abu-El-Haija
EU-Jordan Higher Education Cooperation Conference
27th November 2011

Your Excellency Prof. Rowaida Maaitah, Minister of Higher Education & Scientific Research,

Ms. Irène Mingasson, Head of Operations of the European Union Delegation to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

Honorable Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are indeed very delighted to welcome you today. We would like to thank all of you for taking the time to participate in our seventh Tempus conference addressing cooperation in higher education and research between Jordan and Europe.

Over the past eight years, the National Tempus Office has been promoting the Tempus program and encouraging Jordanian institutions to benefit from this program.

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. Then Tempus IV that started in 2007 funded 14 more projects. Through these projects, about 15 million Euros were allocated to strengthen the relations between Jordan and Europe in higher education. In these projects, 14 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 16 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 EU guidelines and maximum benefit to the participating institutions and to Jordan.

We are proud today to say that the Tempus program in Jordan has been very-well known, quite visible, well-respected and highly admired by the academic community. Through Tempus, 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 is becoming extremely competitive. Faculty members compete hard to participate in Tempus projects. Success rate (ratio of projects that are selected compared to those submitted) is 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 results of fourth call and the launch of the Fifth Call for Proposals under Tempus IV. This will be presented by my colleague Ms. Roisin McCabe, from the Tempus Unit, Education, Audio-Visual and Culture Executive Agency of the European Commission in Brussels. We are fortunate that Roisin, who is in charge of the Jordan activities, was able to make it and come to Jordan this year. Because Tempus was carefully designed based upon lessons learnt from the previous phases, this includes several enhancements as compared with the previous calls. All this will be explained today by Roisin McCabe.

Roisin's presentations will be followed by two presentations by myself and Dr. Khaled Gharaibeh from Yarmouk University. We will both talk about how you can prepare a competitive Tempus proposal, with some very useful hints that can make your application up or down! Dr. Gharaibeh will talk about his personal experience in applying to Tempus with success.

After the coffee break, Mr. Abel Piqueras, the education and employment program officer at the Delegation of the EU to Jordan will present other EU programs in higher education, such as Erasmus Mundus II, Socrates, and others. Last but not least, education cannot succeed without research. The EU has a great program for cooperation in research, which is the famous Framework Program 7 (known as FP7). This fascinating program will be presented by Ms. Raghda Kilani and her colleague.

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 Her Excellency Prof. Maaitah and to Ms. Irène Mingasson for being

with us today. We thank the European Union 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 Conference. 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 event 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.