

DECLARATION

Initiative on Good Governance for Development In the Arab States

WE, Governments of Arab States participating in the Conference on Good Governance for Development, held at the Dead Sea in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on 6-7 February 2005,

Reconfirming the provisions of the Tunis Declaration and the need to continue the reform and modernization processes in our countries through enhancing and broadening participation in the public domain and consolidating the comprehensive development program to secure a better future for generations of our societies;

Reaffirming our commitment to accelerate the development process to enhance the standard of living of our people to occupy an appropriate position in the world;

Reaffirming our commitment to work for achieving the prosperity of our people and the advancement of our societies and assisting the countries that are still facing the impact of conflicts to achieve stability;

Resolving to utilize appropriate mechanisms and methodologies for continuous modernization of public institutions to achieve sustainable development;

Recognizing the extent of challenges generated by globalization and the necessity of self-development for integrating our economies into the world economy;

Realizing also that the creation of an enabling environment for investment in the Arab region requires strong confidence in the performance of public institutions and in the quality of services offered by these institutions;

Recognizing that implementing good governance and accountability measures, especially those measures and principles set forth in the UN Convention Against Corruption, constitutes a basic element for combating corruption, reducing poverty and paving the way for an environment conducive to achieving sustainable development focused on human beings;

Realizing that good governance is based on creating effective and efficient public institutions that respond to people's needs, establishing social justice and securing high quality services provided equally to all people;

Recalling the achievements of Arab countries and considering the successful achievements of other countries in their efforts for developing public institutions and reinforcing the tenets of good governance;

Recognizing that inter-Arab regional cooperation, which has been and remains a strong demand of our peoples, should be activated as a basic element for enhancing the development policies and processes in the Arab countries, especially through exchange of knowledge and best practices;

Acknowledging the importance of international-Arab cooperation in this field and considering that the specificity of Arab countries should be respected and that joint efforts should be made through partnerships based on mutual interests, to help Arab countries achieve their objectives;

Confirming our respect of the principles of fairness and equality before the law and the need to maintain a high level of integrity;

Taking into consideration the principles on which good governance is based, namely: public participation, transparency, accountability and the rule of law, and undertaking to activate these principles;

Realizing that the efforts for administrative, financial and judicial development are mutually reinforcing and constitute a basic pillar for achieving sustainable human development insofar as they derive from the experiences and needs of each country and are consistent with its legal system;

Realizing also the decisive importance of developing the civil service, increasing efficacy and effectiveness of public institutions and administrative processes, instituting good financial management and effective judicial system and recognizing the challenges of measuring results;

Recognizing the need establish a solid partnership between the State, the public sector and the civil society to enhance efforts for achieving and consolidating development;

Drawing in all the above, on the decisions and recommendations of the Arab Summit and the meetings of Arab ministerial councils and Arab regional bodies, particularly the recommendations of the Arab Summit held in Tunisia on 22-23 May 2004;

Resolve as follows:

1. Launch the Initiative of Good Governance for Development in the Arab Countries, which is supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).
2. Approve the Programme Document attached to this Declaration (the Document) and the six themes¹ of the Initiative contained in the Document, as field for reform and development, namely:
 - Civil Service and Integrity
 - E-Government, Administrative Simplification and Regulatory Reform
 - Governance of Public Finance
 - Role of the Judiciary and Enforcement of Judgments
 - Role of the Civil Society and Media in the Reform of the Public Sector
 - Public Services Delivery and private-public partnership.
3. Solemnly declare our commitment to effectively Implement the Initiative's action plan contained in the Document and contribute to the activities of different working groups.
4. Thank the six Arab countries: Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia and the UAE/Dubai, each of which will lead a theme of the above six themes and coordinate all activities as described in the Document. Our thanks are also due to the OECD countries that will co-chair these themes with them.
5. Increase the efforts of acceding, ratifying and implementing the UN convention Against Corruption.
6. Develop national plans, activate the principles, ideas and projects of the Initiative, consolidate the national commitment to this process, which will cover all the State's institutions and public agencies with the support of the private sector, civil society organizations and Arab media.
7. Commit ourselves to develop meaningful standards, criteria and indicators to usefully monitor and assess implementation progress.

¹ The order of these themes has been changed for operational purposes.

8. Invite the G8, the European Union, the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme and the OECD to provide technical and financial support to implement the Initiative and to increase their fruitful cooperation.
9. Invite the donor countries, the Arab Funds, the regional and international organizations to support the programmes and activities of the Initiative by providing the necessary financial and technical resources.

We wish to address our sincere thanks to the Hashemite Sovereign, King Abdallah II for sponsoring the Initiative and wish His Majesty and the people of Jordan continued development and prosperity.

We also thank Dr. Salah Al Bashir, Minister of Justice, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for his tireless efforts in organizing this Conference and the meetings that preceded it. We also thank the two collaborating institutions, UNDP and OECD, for their supporting this Initiative and hope that such support will be sustained and increased.