

**Meeting of the Ad-Hoc Committee on Energy, Environment and Water
of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly
Linz, 12 and 13 October 2009**

**Preparation of the Copenhagen Climate Conference,
with a special focus on the Mediterranean region**

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Your Excellencies,
Friends,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

please don't apologize for the bad weather. For us it's a great weather and we are very happy to see the rain. Coming from a country that is among the four poorest in the world of water resources – this is heaven for us. We appreciate your good weather receiving us when we arrived and we actually also appreciate the very nice smiles of the people of Linz since we have arrived. Even the robot in the museum was smiling to us last night when we visited the museum next door to our hotel. We really appreciate all your positive welcome today. I feel great honour in addressing your committee today, aiming to utilise this platform for an in depth discussion of the Mediterranean perspective for the Copenhagen conference that will be hopefully set new standards and principles for our collective efforts under common and differentiated responsibilities in combating climate change.

During the past decade the Euro-Mediterranean region was bound in a productive framework of cooperation in various sectors with a common interest of cultural dialogue taking centre stage and paving the way for specific cooperation programs in many political, developmental and educational aspects. As our region is characterised by different economic, environmental and social and cultural patterns, it will be an exciting challenge to develop a common perspective to the most suitable tools in combating climate change and reflecting them in Copenhagen. Our accumulated experience in dialogue and trust can be of immense help in climate discussions.

Distinguished audience, we all know what a profound challenge it is to reach global agreement on post-Kyoto climate change regime, that would balance the rights and responsibilities of the developed and developing world. The Bali action plan has set out the

main principles: it demands developed countries to consider measurable, reportable and verifiable nationally appropriate mitigation commitments or actions including quantified emission limitation and reduction objectives. On the other hand developing countries have been also assigned with an important responsibility to consider. Nationally appropriate mitigation measures in the context of sustainable development supported and enabled by technology, financing and capacity building in a measurable, reportable and verifiable manner. It is vital at this stage to emphasize that the Bali action plan did not commit developing countries with quantified emission reduction targets. But many developing countries have introduced voluntary and nationally based measures for mitigation that would pave the way for a comprehensive partnership provided that an agreement was reached and it should be reached in Copenhagen.

We are aware of the challenges, but still we should focus on the opportunities. It can be a positive irony that the latest economic recession acted as an alarm bell to help us realize the opportunities embedded in the recession. In 2009, global carbon emissions have already dropped 2.6 per cent which is the largest reduction in forty years. This is a moment in time that can be used to enhance emission reductions by gradual transition to green economy. Such a transition will require consensus on the issues of financing and technology transfer in Copenhagen and a clear commitment to make the adaptation fund operational. In our region the opportunities for partnerships in technology transfer are immense and they will provide the driver for effective mitigation and adaptation measures. Just last week the Arab ministers of Environment have declared the position on climate change and discussed the adaptation fund extensively.

One of the most innovative and promising regional initiative that was mentioned, the Mediterranean solar plan, that was set up as a part of the broad-union for Mediterranean which aims at creating twenty gigawatt renewable energy capacity for electricity production in MENA region by 2020.

Distinguished members, I would like to provide a perspective about Jordan's position in relation to climate change and our efforts: although Jordan does contribute to a mere 0.1 per cent of global carbon emission it maintains strong commitment to the objectives developed by the international community for the integrated environmental and economic response to the threat of climate change. Global climate scenarios developed by the IPCC have also indicated that Jordan and the Middle East will suffer from reduced agricultural productivity and water availability among other negative impacts. At the heart of our environmental

agenda and climate change mitigation measures lies the issue of energy which is considered as a challenge and as an opportunity.

Jordan is currently undergoing a paradigm shift in terms of energy policy planning. A combination of both necessity and conviction has worked together to drive a much needed vision for the development of renewable energy as a major contributor to the energy mix. The increasing oil crisis plus the growing awareness of vital need of developing green energy options have its energetic impact on the political decision-making process. To fulfil his Majesty's vision on energy, water and environment Jordan has recently developed its modified national energy strategy 2020. The strategy has suggested a robust package of legislative, administrative and technological innovations aiming to steer the country into more reliable, sustainable and environmentally friendly energy resources. In the new strategy the share of renewable energy resources will be increased from one per cent to ten per cent by 2020 and the target in the previous agenda was three per cent.

This transition will require capital investments, technology transfer and human resources development to produce a solid base to maintain and enhance this positive change. This transition should be done through a package of investments of an estimated 2,2 billion dollars. The investment package includes Build-Operate-Transfer deals for wind energy with a total capacity of about 650 megawatts and solar energy of about 400 megawatts. This will be parallel with a reduction of energy produced from oil from currently 58 per cent to 40 per cent by 2020.

The strategy includes other recommendations on energy conservation that includes grant exemptions to energy saving vehicles, exempting solar water heaters from sales tax and implementation of building code regulations that conserve the energy and create a national award for rationalisation of energy consumption.

The strategy will be supported by an energy law. The draft law includes regulations and incentives for renewable energy from investments in areas designated to be utilised to build renewable energy facilities. The law provides investors with a lot of incentives including 100 per cent exemption from income tax for ten years. The government of Jordan has also established a new energy fund to support the infrastructure development of new renewable energy facilities. In addition the government is seeking to provide tax incentives to remove the barriers from the comprehensive use of energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies in the Jordanian market.

At the adaptation front Jordan is facing a severe challenge in water scarcity to be magnified by the impacts of climate change. Jordan is statistically the fourth most water scarce country in the world with a per capita share of 150 cubic metres per capita per year and the poverty line, everybody knows, is 1,000 cubic metres per capita per year. In a harsh natural environment with limited surface water and rapidly utilised country ground water, lack of adaptive financial resources for desalination, Jordan is at the frontline in the regional fight for innovative solutions for water scarcity problems. The findings of Jordan's second national communication on climate change suggests a reduction of 20 per cent in precipitation in some of the major watersheds in Jordan in the coming 50 years which will increase the burden and challenge of water resources management in Jordan.

One of our main objectives is to maximize the use of available water through water conservation, modification of allocation schemes to respond to growing needs for clean and sustainable drinking water and substitution of fresh water with reclaimed water for agriculture. Jordan is currently undergoing a comprehensive assessment and planning process to enhance the adaptive capacity of the water sector to the potential impacts of climate change. Priority actions and choices will be developed within the context of integrated water resources management and the focus on providing liquid water to meet the millennium development goals and national water and environmental objectives.

Long-term solution for water scarcity have to be crafted out from the most daring and unconventional resources. Jordan's landmark project is the water conveyor from the Red Sea to the Dead Sea which will provide Jordan with enough water for drinking purposes through a conveyor that will pump two billion cubic metres of water per year from the Red Sea to the Dead Sea. Of these, 850 million cubic metres will be desalinated per year providing almost 550 million cubic metres of water to Jordan and the remaining will be allocated to both Palestine and Israel. The water resulting from the desalination process will be used for the restoration of the water level of the Dead Sea which is subject to rapid reduction. The Dead Sea lost almost 300 km² of area within the last 50 years, almost the area of Gaza Strip. This project is currently subject to an extensive environmental and social feasibility study that will determine the most environmentally suitable guidelines for implementation.

To turn such an objective into reality Jordan will require the political and technical support from strategic partners. In this aspect Jordan highly regards a commitment shown by the EU and its individual countries for the support of transition to renewable energy around the world. The leadership of the EU in renewable energy innovations and technology transfer is

vital in a situation where brave and illuminating decisions have to be taken in the global energy production and management systems.

Distinguished members, we have the technology know-how and the resources base for the transition to the green economy, but still we need to reach consensus on financial and political principles and details of implementation. And we look forward together to the much anticipated success in Copenhagen. Thank you very much!