



MENA-OECD GOVERNANCE PROGRAMME



4th ANNUAL MEETING OF MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA SENIOR BUDGET OFFICIALS (MENA-SBO)

DRAFT ANNOTATED AGENDA

Tuesday 20 September 2011

from 18:00 *Welcome Reception*

Wednesday 21 September 2011

8:00 – 8:30 **Registration**

8:30 – 9:00 **Opening by the Chair and OECD Secretariat**
Delegates' Introductions

9:00 – 9:30 **Welcome Address**

- **H.E. Mr. Mohamad SAFADI**, Minister of Finance, Lebanon

Family photo

9:30 – 10:30 **Country Presentations I: Budgeting in Lebanon**

The country presentations will allow for a more in-depth examination of the budgeting systems of Lebanon and Morocco, in particular budget – related reforms that are in the planning stage, or in the process of being implemented.

OECD's Budgeting and Public Expenditures Division regularly undertakes country reviews of budgeting systems. The objective is to provide a comprehensive overview of the budget process in the country under examination, to evaluate national experiences in the light of international best practice and to provide specific policy recommendations, and to offer other countries an opportunity to comment on specific budgeting issues in the country under examination ("peer review"). While such a review has not yet been undertaken in the MENA region, these reviews often form the basis for discussion in the OECD Senior Budget Officials (SBO) network and other regional SBO network meetings.

Following a lead presentation by a **Representative of the Ministry of Finance**, Lebanon, the floor will be opened for questions and discussion.

10:30 – 11:00 *Coffee Break*

11:00 – 12:00 Country Presentations II: Budgeting in Morocco

Following a lead presentation by **Mr. Mohammed HADDAD**, Director for Budget Reform and Budget Execution, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Morocco, the floor will be opened for questions and discussion.

12:00 – 13:30 Luncheon

13:30 – 14:30 Restoring Public Finances in OECD Countries

Public finances in many OECD countries were severely affected by the recent economic crisis. Deficits and debt ratios have soared to unsustainable levels, forcing governments to undertake credible consolidation plans. In 2010, the OECD's Senior Budget Officials (SBO) Network emphasized the need to establish a comprehensive overview of how OECD member countries are implementing consolidation plans to restore public finances. The resulting OECD SBO publication – *Restoring Public Finances* – contains an analysis of different consolidation plans and useful comparisons of key consolidation indicators. In addition, individual country notes provide detailed information on budget figures and consolidation measures.

Following a lead presentation by **Mr. Jón BLÖNDAL**, Head of Division, Budgeting and Public Expenditures Division, OECD, the floor will be opened for Delegates to discuss current debates and experiences in their own countries.

14:30 – 16:00 Public Private Partnerships

Public Private Partnership (PPP) arrangements are an established practice in countries worldwide and are flourishing throughout the MENA region, for example in energy and water projects. This session will explore emerging principles for the institutional and procedural treatment of PPPs based on lessons learnt over the past decade, as well as opportunities for peer-to-peer learning in this area.

Following lead presentations by **Mr. Ian HAWKESWORTH**, Policy Analyst, Budgeting and Public Expenditures Division, OECD, **Mr. Michael FOX**, Senior PPP Specialist, World Bank Institute (WBI), and a **Representative from the United Arab Emirates**, the floor will be opened for Delegates to discuss current debates and experiences in their own countries.

16:00 – 16:15 Coffee Break

from 16:15 Departure for Byblos. Sightseeing tour followed by Gala Dinner.

Thursday 22 September 2011

9:00 – 10:30 The Impact of Democratic Transitions on Budgeting and Public Expenditures

Countries across the MENA region have seen citizen's protests calling for increased democracy and political freedom, denouncing the corruption and lamenting the incapacity of the economic system to deliver jobs and social cohesion. As governments seek to meet citizens' demands, new pressures are being put on national budgets. The anxiety to respond to pressing social needs and to gain political legitimacy may easily lead to economic imbalances that could destabilize any nascent political regime. For example, many Latin American governments that emerged in the late 1980s did so in the context of social turmoil in the aftermath of the debt crisis and tried to gain legitimacy by distributing benefits to the population. In some cases, (e.g. Peru, Argentina and Brazil) this generated major fiscal imbalances and hyperinflation that amplified people's dissatisfaction and political instability. This session will explore challenges for budgeting and public expenditures following the "Arab Spring", as well as lessons from other regions which have gone through similar transitions.

Following lead presentations by **Mr. Mario MARCEL**, Deputy Director, Public Governance and Territorial Development Directorate, OECD, **Mr. Balázs ROMHANYI**, Director General, Fiscal Responsibility Institute, Hungary, and **Ms. Jelassi HABIBA**, Director General, National School of Finance, Tunisia, the floor will be opened for Delegates to discuss current debates and experiences in their own countries.

10:30 – 11:00 *Coffee Break*

11:00 – 12:30 Transparency and Citizen Information

Efforts are underway worldwide to make government budgeting more transparent and participatory in order to identify and inform national priorities, reduce corruption, and more generally improve efficiency and effectiveness. Governments are investing in new tools such as citizen budgets or new information systems that ease citizen access. Nevertheless, the Open Budget Survey and other studies have found that while governments produce a considerable amount of information on their budgets and other policy activities, this information is often not publically available, or presented in a way that is too technical or complex for the average citizen. This session will explore specific country initiatives, as well as provide broader comparative data and examples from the MENA region and beyond.

Following lead presentations by a **Representative from Egypt**, a **Representative of the Ministry of Finance, Lebanon**, and **Mr. Warren KRAFCHIK**, Director, International Budget Partnership (IBP), the floor will be opened for Delegates to discuss current debates and experiences in their own countries.

12:30 – 14:00 *Luncheon*

14:00 – 15:30 Building Capacities of Budget Officials in the MENA Region

This session will explore current training and capacity building opportunities in the region for budget officials at all levels. This includes for example, institutes at the country level, initiatives such as GIFT-MENA, and, most recently, the IMF-Middle East Center for Economics and Finance (CEF) which is hosted and financed by the Kuwaiti authorities. Delegates are asked to identify in advance the capacity building needs that they believe are most useful and of highest priority.

Following lead presentations by **Ms. Lamia MOUBAYED BISSAT**, Director, Institute of Finance Basil Fuleihan, Ministry of Finance, Lebanon, **Mr. Abdelhadi YOUSEF**, Director, IMF Middle East Centre for Economics and Finance (CEF), and **Mr. Carlos CONDE**, Senior Programme Coordinator, MENA-OECD Governance Programme, OECD, the floor will be opened to Delegates for discussion.

15:30 – 16:00 Coffee Break

16:00 – 16:30 Report by the OECD Secretariat and Future Work Programme

This session is designed to update participants on current and future projects by the OECD in the field of budgeting and public expenditures. It is also an opportunity for participants to identify emerging priority areas for future work, the nature of their interest in the subject and their willingness to participate in particular studies.

16:30 Closing by Chairman and Secretariat