



MENA-OECD Investment Programme

Draft Agenda

Working Group 2

**“ENCOURAGING INVESTMENT PROMOTION
AGENCIES AND BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS
TO ACT AS DRIVING FORCES TO
ECONOMIC REFORM”**

**13 September (pm) 14 September (am) 2005
Manama, Bahrain**

Organised by
MENA/OECD Co-Chairs of Working Group 2

Hosted by
Economic Development Board
Bahrain

MENA-OECD Investment Programme - Working Group 2

“Encouraging investment promotion agencies and business associations to act as driving forces to economic reform”

Objectives

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss recommendations regarding the agreed output areas of WG2 that could be presented to the MENA Investment Ministerial Meeting in November 2005. The Working Group will also be invited to discuss the preparation of the Business Day that will precede the Ministerial meeting.

WG 2 contributes to building a positive image of the MENA region, through multi-stakeholder dialogue and sharing of good practices between the MENA and OECD countries, private sector, civil society and other partners. WG2 seeks to identify success stories and assess weaknesses, where OECD and other partners can help identify solutions and provide practical policy advice to governments.

Background

Most MENA countries have created Investment Promotion Agencies (IPAs) that focus on: (i) image building, (ii) investor servicing and facilitation, (iii) investment generation and targeting, and (iv) advocacy for a better investment climate. Despite some success stories, IPAs still encounter difficulties in changing the perceptions of investors or influencing policy-making.

Ideally IPA should be well placed to provide feedback to government policy-makers. MENA IPAs should be in a position to act as effective advocates for changing the regulatory framework, and for introducing investment-friendly legislation and policies.

Participants

As for the last meeting in February, MENA countries are invited to send investment promotion experts to the meeting. Investment policy and promotion experts from OECD countries will participate in the meeting. Business and Industry Advisory Committee to the OECD (BIAC), Arab Business Council, Union of Arab Banks, Federation of Arab Businessmen's Associations, and other partner organisations have been invited to attend the meeting. Representatives of the World Bank Group, UNIDO, WAIPA, European Commission/ANIMA, UNIDO, Islamic Development Bank, and the Arab League have also been invited.

Documentation

The relevant meeting documents will be sent to you in a separate mail or posted on the following OECD Website: www.oecd.org/mena/investment.

Draft Agenda

Tuesday, 13 September 2005

13:00 - 14:30 Networking Lunch with delegates from WG1

Venue: to be determined

SESSION I

14:30 – 15:00 Opening remarks and setting the scene

- **Mr. Martin Berlin**, Chief Strategy Officer, Dubai Development and Investment Authority
- **Mr. Paul Obrist**, Counselor, Permanent Delegation of Switzerland to the OECD

SESSION II

Outputs to be completed by the 2005 Investment Ministerial Meeting

15:00 – 18:30 The purpose of the session is to report on the progress regarding the outputs identified at the last meeting and to decide on recommendations to be presented to Investment Ministerial Meeting in November 2005.

15:00 – 15:15 Output 1: An effective communication tool and assessment of “Who is doing what” in MENA region

The new internet presentation of the Programme will be demonstrated. The new Flyer for the Programme and the databases will be presented. Discussion will focus on how to further improve these and other communication tools of the Programme.

15:15 – 16:00 Output 2: Assessment of Challenges faced by MENA IPAs and Development of Investment Promotion Guidelines for the MENA Region

Introduced by
Rainer Geiger, Deputy Director, OECD

A draft report and a first set of Guidelines will be presented and discussed with MENA participants.

First conclusions will be agreed upon and inserted into the draft Ministerial Investment Charter developed by Working Group 1.

16:00- 17:00 Output 3: Assessing incentives-based strategies to attract investment in MENA region

Introduced by Bahrain, Egypt

Many MENA countries use tax incentives, financial subsidies and regulatory exemptions to attract FDI projects. The cost-effectiveness of incentive programmes in the region will be assessed, using the OECD Checklist for FDI Incentive Policies, in co-operation with WG1 and WG3.

The regional co-chair of WG3 will give a report on the outcome of a Task Force meeting on Incentives conducted in late June and the conclusions of the meeting of WG 3 to be held in Cairo on 6 and 7 September.

Delegates are invited to comment on a draft report and discuss recommendations to be presented to the Ministerial

17:00 – 17:15 Output 4: Investment Success Stories in the MENA Region – Investment of the Year Award

Introduced by Declan Murphy, OECD Secretariat

Presentation of the Concept of the Investment of the Year Awards for the best employment creator, the most efficient privatization, the best start-up company.

Discussion and conclusions on the way forward to the business day before the Ministerial

17:15 – 17:45 Output 5: Regional network of business associations and organization of a Ministerial Business

Introduced by Alexander Böhmer, OECD Secretariat

Presentation on the established private sector dialogue of the Programme.

Preparation of the Business Day, 16 November.

The Business Day is scheduled on the 16th November, the day before the Ministerial Meeting. The main items for the event will be the finalisation of the Business Statement to Ministers and the distribution of the Investment of the Year Awards.

17:45 – 18:30 Output 6: Improving International Investment Statistics

Introduced by Lebanon/Egypt

Reliable and timely FDI data is essential for policy-making and performance evaluation. Yet the quality of FDI statistics is uneven across MENA countries. A Task Force on FDI Statistics consisting of WG1 and WG2 experts had its first meeting mid-June and a report will be distributed. The next steps in stocktaking of FDI data availability will be discussed with a view of eventually elaborating an annual publication of MENA FDI Statistics.

Report on conclusions of a Task Force meeting in June.

Conclusions and Next Steps

18:30 - 19:00 WG 2 Co-Chairs

Introduced by Dubai, Egypt, Syria and OECD

The Co-chairs will present a summary of recommendations to the Ministerial and propose next steps.

If necessary the meeting will continue on 14 September a.m. with a drafting session.

Contact persons

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