

**SUGGESTED SPEAKING POINTS MRS. KATARINA RANGNITT, COUNSELLOR, DELEGATION OF SWEDEN TO
THE OECD**

**GOOD GOVERNANCE
FOR DEVELOPMENT
IN ARAB COUNTRIES
INITIATIVE**



Steering Group Meeting at technical level

Mrs. Katarina RANGNITT

Counsellor

Delegation of Sweden to the OECD

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OECD Conference Centre

- Thank you very much, Minister Darwish. I am happy to be here today as representative of the outgoing co-chair and I take great pleasure in welcoming you. After three and a half years, the Good Governance for Development in Arab Countries Initiative is still a young venture, but has rooted itself in the Arab region as a new useful approach towards promoting good governance for development. This is an achievement.
- The Swedish government has taken a leading role in this regional Initiative since its inception. Since May 2006, H.E. Ambassador Gun-Britt Andersson has co-chaired the GfD Steering Group, providing strategic guidance to the implementation of the Initiative and contributing to shaping and designing the prospects of the Initiative in 2008-10. From this platform Sweden has been a direct witness of the solid approach that inspires the GfD Initiative and its programme of work.
- This Initiative has a clear mission supported by both OECD and Arab countries, which is to encourage and support public sector and governance reforms in order to improve the environment for social, economic and human development in the Arab region. Two elements are key for the achievement of this mission: first of all, a clear inspiration in a set of values and principles guiding the public sector activities; secondly, strong technical capacities to implement good policies in view of increasing the levels of development.
- The principles of good governance are at the core of this process. The public sector cannot be only an efficient manager, it has to be accountable and transparent. We are particularly glad that the second phase of the Initiative is addressing substantive issues such as civil society participation, gender equality and environmental awareness. By this means, the Initiative embarks in a direction that is essential for OECD countries: putting the citizens at the center of the public concern and promoting a model of integrative development which is environmentally sustainable. We are particularly glad that our contribution to defining the Initiative together with our partners has ensured an important role to these aspects of the public governance agenda.
- Sweden has been impressed to note how political leaders and practitioners in the Arab region have embraced the OECD approach of promoting governance reform through policy dialogue, best practices, evidence based analysis, mutual learning and evaluation. These instruments are key to ensuring the technical capacities for sound public policies which I was referring to.
- Sharing the policy experiences of practitioners from a large variety of countries can be highly rewarding: It allows for learning from each others' good practices and to avoid the pitfalls that others have experienced. It serves to seek answers to common problems and brings to the fore a large variety of alternative solutions. But it is also demanding: It demands trust to share the reform challenges that lie at the very core of your countries' governments. It demands openness to look at other countries' experiences and to accept the advice that their policy experts provide. And it demands a strong will and commitment to contribute to such a joint effort of Arab and OECD countries.
- Today our task is to take full advantage of present and future co-operation opportunities by discussing and agreeing on the detailed Programme of Work for the next two and a half years. I am very much looking forward to our discussions today.
- Sweden enjoyed contributing actively to the design of this promising initiative. We are very pleased that Belgium will take over the co-chairmanship. I would like to express my best wishes to you, Ambassador Hoornaert, for your new tasks.
- Thank you very much. I now will give the floor back to H.E. Minister Ahmed Darwish.