Public Governance and Territorial Development Directorate
Public Governance Committee

Working Party of Senior Budget Officials

5th Annual Meeting of Middle East and North Africa Senior Budget Officials (MENA-SBO)

Provisional Agenda

Tunis, Tunisia
15-16 November 2012

This meeting is hosted by the Tunisian Ministry of Finance and National School of Finance.

Chair: H.E. Mr. Slim BESBES, Minister of Finance, Ministry of Finance, Tunisia

Co-Chair: Mr. Mårten BLIX, Director, Prime Minister's Office, Sweden

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5th ANNUAL MEETING OF MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA SENIOR BUDGET OFFICIALS (MENA-SBO)

ANNOTATED AGENDA

**Wednesday 14 November 2012**

*from 18:00*  Welcome Reception

**Thursday 15 November 2012**

8:30 – 9:00  Registration

9:00 – 9:30  Opening by the Chair and OECD Secretariat

Delegates’ Introductions

9:30 – 10:00  Welcome Address

- H.E. Mr. Abderrahman LADGHAM, Deputy Prime Minister for Governance and Combating Corruption, Tunisia.
- H.E. Mr. Jens Uwe PLÖTNER, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Germany to the Republic of Tunisia.

10:00 – 11:00  Country Presentation: Budgeting in Tunisia

The country presentation will allow for a more in-depth examination of Tunisia’s process. It will touch on the full budget cycle (formulation, approval, execution, accounting and audit), as well as highlight any new or planned reforms being undertaken.

The MENA-OECD Governance Programme will carry out a study of the Tunisian budget process in 2012-2013. The objective is to provide a comprehensive overview of the budget process, to evaluate national experiences in the light of international best practice, to provide specific policy recommendations, and to offer opportunities for peer review. As a member of the MENA-OECD Senior Budget Officials Network and an ad hoc observer of both the OECD’s Regulatory Policy Committee and Public Governance Committee, Tunisia has a high level of familiarity with OECD principles and modus operandi.
This session will be chaired by Mr. Saadaoui ABDELMALEK, Director General, Ministry of Finance, Tunisia. Following a lead presentation by a H.E. Mme. Faouzia SAID, Présidente du Comité Général du Budget, Ministry of Finance, Tunisia the floor will be opened for questions and discussion.

11:00 – 11:30 Coffee Break

11:30 – 12:30 Building Sound Foundations for Budgeting
What are the absolute pre-requisites – the "basics" – that must be in place before embarking on new initiatives such as programme or performance budgeting, accrual accounting, sophisticated financial management and control systems, independent fiscal institutions etc? Drawing on experiences from a variety of countries, the session examines the essential ingredients for sound budgeting under the broad headings of the legal framework, budget process, structure, and outcome.

This session will be chaired by Mr. Mårten BLIX, Director, Prime Minister’s Office, Sweden and co-Chaired by H.E. Mme. Faouzia SAID, Présidente du Comité Général du Budget, Ministry of Finance, Tunisia. Following a lead presentation by Mr. Åke HJALMARSSON, President of the Budget Committee of the Council of Europe, and Director (ret.), Budget Department, Ministry of Finance, Sweden, the floor will be opened for questions and discussion.

12:30 – 14:00 Luncheon and Family Photo

14:00 – 15:30 Best Practices for Budget Transparency
Transparency – openness about policy intentions, formulation and implementation – is a key element of good governance. The budget is a government’s single most important policy document, where policy objectives are reconciled and implemented in concrete terms. Citizens in the MENA region and around the globe are calling on governments to strengthen transparency. Various tools are available to assist governments in this endeavour. The OECD Best Practices for Budget Transparency, agreed in 2001 by budget directors from OECD countries cover in a practical way i) budget reports that should be prepared; ii) specific disclosures that should be made; and iii) processes that should be in place to ensure their integrity. Among new initiatives to promote fiscal transparency is the Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency (GIFT). This multi-stakeholder group of governments, international and civil society organizations has released, and are seeking comment on, a set of "High Level Principles on Fiscal Transparency, Participation, and Accountability".

This session will be chaired by Mr. Nizar BARGOUTI, Head of Mission, Ministry for Governance and Combating Corruption, Tunisia. Following lead presentations by Mr. Knut KLEPSVIK, Senior Policy Analyst, Budgeting and Public Expenditures Division, OECD, Mr. Vivek RAMKUMAR, Manager, Open Budget Initiative, International Budget Partnership (IBP), the floor will be opened for questions and discussion.

15:30 – 16:00 Coffee Break
16:00 – 17:30 The Role of Parliaments in the Budget Process

Parliaments’ have an important role to play in increasing budget transparency and accountability. The presentation of the budget and related documentation in the legislature is often the first opportunity for public scrutiny of the government’s spending priorities. Legislative debate in both the plenary and committees can facilitate public participation in the budget process. Yet legislatures are frequently sidelined, lacking the information, technical knowledge, and analytical capacity to meaningfully engage in the budget process. This session will consider conditions for effective parliamentary engagement, in particular how parliamentary budget offices can assist legislatures to better play their role and promote budget transparency.

This session will be chaired by Mr. Ferjani DOGHMAN, Chair, Committee on Finance, National Constituent Assembly, Tunisia. Following lead presentations by Mr. Mostafa ASKARI, Director General/Assistant Parliamentary Budget Officer, Economic and Fiscal Analysis, Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer, Canada, Mr. Simon MOUAWAD, General Director, Head, Parliamentary Advisory Unit, National Assembly of Lebanon, and Mr. Nejib JERIDI, Westminster Foundation for Democracy Country Manager, Tunisia, the floor will be opened for questions and discussion.

From 18:30 Gala Dinner
Roundtable on Performance Budgeting: Where are we coming from? Where are we going?

In the past two decades, OECD countries and countries worldwide have sought to develop performance budgeting frameworks as part of broader efforts to improve expenditure control and public sector efficiency and performance. Yet the record of practices commonly labelled as “performance budgeting” is mixed at best. Some countries with long experience in this area appear to be stepping back and taking a more tailored approach. Others use performance information strategically without having adopted performance budgeting. This session will look at lessons from the OECD’s Performance and Results Network in the light of the specific experiences of Germany which has not moved to “pure” performance budgeting but has gained rich experience with performance and “value-for-money” approaches within the framework of a traditional cash-based budgeting system.

Following a lead presentation, delegates from a selection of countries will be called upon to present their country’s experience using performance, including if and how they are planning to use or using performance as part of their budget process and and the greatest challenges they have faced to date.

Chair: Mr. Mårten BLIX, Director, Prime Minister’s Office, Sweden
Co-Chair: Mr. Abdellatif KHARRAT, Court of Accounts, Tunisia
Lead presentation: Mr. Martin KELLENNERS, Deputy Director General, DG Budget, Ministry of Finance, Germany.

Presentation of country experiences:
- Mr. Hakan AY, Head of Department, Budget Policy and International Affairs, General Directorate of Budget and Fiscal Control, Ministry of Finance Turkey.
- Mr. Youssef FARHAT, Deputy Budget Director, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Morocco.
- Ms. Mariam AL AQEEL, Manager, Budget Department, Ministry of Finance, Kuwait.
- Mr. Bader QAYED, Director, Economic Policy, Strategic Planning and Performance Management and Dr. Mohamed ELSAYED, Economic Policy Advisor, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Qatar.
- Mr. Abderrahmen KHOCHTALI, Director General, Budgeting for Results, Tunisia.

11:30 – 12:00 Coffee Break

12:00 – 12:30 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, including a new project on Budgeting and Transparent Public Governance in Tunisia. Delegates are invited to indicate their direction and emphasis for the coming year’s work.

12:30 Closing by H.E. Mr. Slim BESBES, Minister of Finance, Ministry of Finance, Tunisia and the OECD Secretariat, followed by a second Family Photo.

13:00 – 14:30 Luncheon
PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Registration

All Delegates must complete the attached Meeting Registration Form and return it to the OECD Secretariat (to helene.leconte-lucas@oecd.org) and the National School of Finance (efn@topnet.tn) before Friday, 9 November 2012.

Entry Visas

Delegates are responsible for completing the necessary formalities for entry into Tunisia. For specific visa application procedures and forms, please contact the Tunisia Embassy in your country. If you experience difficulties, do alert us and the National School of Finance will do their best to assist in facilitating the visa procedure.

Airport Transport

To facilitate Delegates stay in Tunisia, the Organizers have arranged for transport to and from the airport for all Delegates.

Meeting Location

The meeting will take place in at the Hotel Africa in Tunis, Tunisia.

Accommodations

Please contact the hotel directly to make reservations. Rooms are limited and reservations should be made as soon as possible to guarantee the special rates. The Tunisian Ministry of Finance has made arrangements with special rates (prix de faveur) of 160 Tunisian Dinars (80 Euros) for a Classic Single and 187 Tunisian Dinars (94 Euros) for a classic double at the meeting venue:

**Hotel Africa**
Address: 50 Avenue Habib Bourguiba, BP 73 – 1001, Tunis, Tunisia.
Tél.: +216 71 34 74 77
Fax.:+216 71 25 79 52
E-mail: Sales2.africa@elmouradi.com; info.africa@elmouradi.com

Simultaneous Translation

Simultaneous translation between Arabic, French, and English will be available throughout the meeting.

Welcome Reception

All delegates (and spouses) are invited to a Welcome Reception on the eve of the meeting, Wednesday, 14 November at 18:00 in the Hotel Africa.

Gala Dinner

Following the conclusion of the first day of the meeting, Thursday, 15 November, all Delegates (and spouses) are invited to a Gala Dinner. An announcement will be made regarding the venue and transportation.
MEETINGS OF THE
MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA SENIOR BUDGET OFFICIALS

5th Annual Meeting
15-16 November 2012
Tunis, Tunisia

4th Annual Meeting
21-22 September 2011
Beirut, Lebanon

3rd Annual Meeting
31 October – 1 November 2010
Dubai, United Arab Emirates

2nd Annual Meeting
4-5 November 2009
Doha, Qatar

1st Annual Meeting
24-25 November 2008
Cairo, Egypt

Launch Meeting
20 May 2007
Istanbul, Turkey