





Chair's Conclusions

Third G*f*D Steering Group Meeting at Ministerial Level

Good Governance for Development (G*f*D) in Arab Countries Initiative

Under the high patronage of H.E. Dr. Ahmed Nazif, Prime Minister, Arab Republic of Egypt

Chair
H.E. Dr. Ahmed Darwish, Minister of State for Administrative Development, Arab Republic of Egypt

Co-chair
H.E. Ms. Gun-Britt Andersson, Ambassador, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sweden

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29 November 2007

It has been a great pleasure for us to chair this 3rd Steering Group meeting at ministerial level of the Good Governance for Development (GfD) in Arab countries Initiative and we would like to thank all participating Ministers and high-level representatives for contributing to its success. We would like to thank in particular H.E. Dr. Ahmed Nazif, Prime Minister, Arab Republic of Egypt for having the meeting under his high patronage.

Good Governance is about achieving better policy outcomes and building trust in government. In our meeting today, we recognised that successful reforms in the public sector and the judiciary system have been undertaken by many Arab governments in recent years. Ministers emphasised that the GfD Initiative has been a valuable and effective input to their reform roadmaps. Achieving good governance outcomes requires constant efforts and participating countries have reconfirmed today their reform commitment and renewed their support to the GfD Initiative.

The objective of the GfD Initiative is to contribute to enhanced public sector performance, transparency and accountability in Arab Countries. The programme aims at ensuring gradual progress on public sector and governance reform, which in turn would lead to an improved environment for social, economic and human development in the Arab region. By addressing cross-cutting issues such as participation, gender and environment, the GfD policy dialogue can become a decisive tool to promote common values between Arab and OECD countries.

<u>The Chair summarises the results as follows:</u>

1) Participating countries considered the implementation process of the past three years as an appropriate follow-up to the Initiative's Dead Sea Declaration, adopted by eighteen Arab countries in February 2005. They thanked Egypt and Sweden for chairing the GfD Steering Group since 2006. Without their engagement and leadership, the successful implementation of the GfD Initiative would not have been possible. Participants thanked in particular Minister Darwish, for hosting this meeting and the preceding Steering Group Meeting in Sharm el Sheikh.

2) Participants welcomed the continuation of the GfD Initiative and renewed their political commitment to the Initiative.

3) Participants stressed the importance of further adapting the Initiative to Arab countries needs in view of increasing the benefits of the regional policy dialogue. This will contribute to:

- Strengthening government's capacity to design, implement and evaluate public policies;
- Benchmarking modernisation in specific policy areas;
- Enhancing policy coherence by co-ordination of reforms in the different policy areas and across levels of governments;
- Enhancing interrelations between government and surrounding actors (business, NGO's, individual citizens);
- Strengthening citizens buy-in to reform through better communication of policies and enhanced civil society participation in policy making.

4) More specifically, participants agreed on the suggested strategic directions for 2008-10, as outlined in the main meeting documents. They expressed their strong interest in:

- Participating in the regional policy dialogue on the management of public sector as well as the judiciary system;
- Undertaking joint peer-learning activities and capacity building ;
- Monitoring and benchmarking reform progress;
- Establishing regional training and capacity-building centres.

5) Participants also backed the process initiated to establish the Arab network on Anti-Corruption as a regional mechanism to support co-operation and networking on anti-corruption and transparency in order to support the implementation of the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). They invited the OECD/UNDP Secretariat to provide the necessary support towards its establishment.

6) Participating countries thanked OECD and UNDP for their continued support to the Initiative in 2008-10. Participants approved the integrated design of the OECD/UNDP working programmes.

7) Participants appreciated the continuation of the working group structure and endorsed the focus themes for 2008-10, which will be addressed in the framework of the working groups.

8) Participants recognised that governance and investment reforms are intertwined and welcomed the continued close co-operation with the MENA-OECD Investment Programme.

9) Participants expressed their appreciation of the opportunity the GfD is providing for forging networks of Arab and OECD experts and policy makers.

10) Participating countries jointly called for increased financial and human resources support for the Initiative from international and bilateral donors, both from OECD and Arab countries. Some countries stated their continued support to the GfD Initiative with a public announcement of funding for 2008-10. Participants called on the OECD/UNDP Secretariat to develop a strategy for resource mobilisation.

11) Participants welcomed the continued involvement of regional organisations like the Arab League and ARADO in the GfD Initiative and called for close linkages to activities run by the World Bank and the European Union to strengthen GfD results.

12) Participants welcomed the opportunity to provide written proposals for amendments to the strategic directions and programme of work before 20 December 2007.

13) Participants look forward to the next GfD Steering Group Meeting at technical level, which could take place early in 2008. In view of preparing this meeting, they suggested that the OECD/UNDP Secretariat develops specific terms of reference and roadmaps for the working groups.