Final Statement

The 13th Annual Conference

The State of Governance and Public Administration in the Arab Countries

Recent Options or Challenges and Requirements

Amman – Jordan

09-11 December 2013

We the top administration officials in the ministries, government authorities, the public and private enterprise sector, non-governmental organizations in the Arab countries, representatives of the international organizations: United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Organization of Economic Cooperation & Development (OECD), World Bank (WB), European Training Foundation (ETF), Integrity Institute of Malaysia (IIM), United Nations Economic, Social Committee of West Asia (UNESCWA), Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC), Transparency International (TI), Ministry of State of Administrative Development (MSAD) in ARE, and Ministry of Public Sector Development – Jordan participating in the 13th Annual Conference entitled “The State of Governance and Public Administration in the Arab Countries-Recent Options or Challenges and Requirements” which was held in Amman during the period 9-11 December, 2013 under the auspices of HE. Dr. Nabil El Araby Secretary-General of the Arab League.
We express our sincere appreciation to His Excellency Dr. Nabil El Araby Secretary-General of the Arab League for hosting the conference.

We express our sincere thanks and appreciation to His Royal Highness Prince El Hassan Bin Talal, for his participation in the conference as a keynote speaker, presenting his insight about the contemporary state of governance and public administration in the Arab countries- a participation which constituted a great value added to the conference.

We express also our appreciation to the Ministries, Government Authorities, the Public and Private Enterprise Sector, Non-Governmental Organizations in the Arab countries which participated by their delegates, and also to the international organizations which covered the conference topics by high-level blueprints and a distinguished group of specialized experts

The 11th and 12th conferences of 2011 and 2012 of the Arab Administrative Development Organization, which were held in Cairo, approved some indications for the roadmap of the promotion of the Arab communities by initiation if actual changes at the top of which is the enhancement of good governance, fighting corruption, build up of the state of institutions, effecting the sovereignty of law, practices of accountability, provision of the conditions of integrity, transparency, enhancement of public participation and interest in the international cooperation.
The Participants hereby take into their due consideration the following goals of the conference:

The conference seeks to contribute to the efforts of the Arab administrative systems to identify specific challenges to governance and public administration system, and introduce the new requirements for the development of sustainable strategy for serving the public interest. Therefore, the core goal of the conference is to introduce the following questions and try to find answers for them:

I. What are the points of weakness in the applications of governance, public administration systems, which were discovered due to the political, economic and institutional conflicts and their nonstop consequences? Was the failure due to the values and culture related problems or to the inadequacy of control, rules, legislations, human or structural resources and policies?

II. What are the processes of governance and their new methods and features of the public administrations, which may fulfill the short and long-term requirements of the state institutions? What are the priorities and obligations in an environment of crises? May we lose confidence in the market-oriented models and practices, and in turn return to more traditional public services models- even though some are ineffective?

III. What are the characteristics of good governance and new public administration, needed to be applied on ground to respond to the sociopolitical changes? Are there new lessons and positive changes in the indications of transparency, accountability, participation, equality, administrative liability, competence, ethics of public service performance
and the available opportunities for the enhancement of the practices of governance and new public administration?

IV. Do the state and government institutions, specifically, have the required competencies and jurisdiction for performing new roles and tasks? What are the new requirements for the human and institutional capacities? What are the new skills, abilities, and orientations required for the public sector to be able to meet, successfully, the ever-changing national needs and people’s ambitions and to cope with the globalization requirements as well?.

V. How do we face the challenges threatening sustainable development, sovereignty of law, people’s welfare and their health and clean environment? How can transnational organized crime and all illegal practices endangering the social peace and safe living, including marginalization, exclusion and segregation, be faced?

**First Session: Challenges of governance and public administration capacities and the changing role of the government**

- We acknowledge that obvious overlap among various authorities, as well as compromising of their independence, has its direct negative impacts on the performance of governance and public administration.
- The conflicts witnessed in the Arab world have proven the fragility of the states' systems and the degradation of their institutions.
- Participants call for the provision of institutional and organizational requirements for enabling the state institutions to play their new roles which were imposed by the recurrent political and economic conflicts in the Arab region.
- The participants acknowledge that there are significant queries for which accurate responses shall be addressed; namely the institutional and organizational points of weakness which were disclosed by the recent political and economic conflicts in the Arab region.

- We are aware that there must be an objective assessment of the emerging problems, taking into consideration the problems of the implementation of governance, practices of public administration and, most specifically, the enforcement of integrity, transparency and accountability.

- We highlight the significant role of information technology in the provision of the requirements of governance in order to handle the consequences of the conflicts in the light of the scarcity of resources, shortfall of time and the need for timely decision taking in respect of such conflicts.

Second Session: Arab security sector reform amidst transition: towards a new paradigm

- The objection of some people to the roles and some practices of the security institutions in the Arab region coincide with the emergence of conflicts, the need for the redefinition of the security institution according to its new roles; that is, the protection of the state and the provision of security and local peace to the community.

- It is necessary to seek the upmost transparency and clarity in the definition of the tasks of security institutions away from the multiple roles and stakeholders looking after security and peace in the community.
- We highlight the importance of developing a security methodology based on professionalism; a methodology that consists with the basic requirements for the provision of government services with no bias, marginalization or exclusion in terms of the relationship between the security system and its operations.

- We look forward to paying attention to the reform of the organizational aspects in the security institutions in an innovative manner including training, development of equipment, devices, work mechanisms, selection, employment and promotions.

- We are well aware of the importance of giving priority to the transformation and development in the security sector, with focus on the national participation, without involving it in politics; this is in addition to monitoring its progress according indicators for the improvement of security services, respect of law, non-discrimination, consolidation of unique professional practices, as well as making benefit of global experiences in the development of security institutions and raising their capacities and efficiency.

- Participants call for the study of successful international practices in the field of transitional justice in a way that assures the highest degree of societal cohesion and provides the opportunity for mobilizing national energies and calibers in serving successful transition.

- We look forward to the support of relevant international institutions in the field of human security for national efforts to enhance national security.

- Participants agree that success in achieving transitional justice goals requires highlighting the appropriate mechanisms for smooth transition in the structure of Arab security; transition that takes into
account the job, structure, administrative and legislative challenges; thus, attention should be paid to the following:

1. Activation of parallel levels for social, self and public monitoring.
2. The civil nature of the national security sector.
3. Setting effective policies to deal with flabbiness and inflation in the security services.
4. Paying attention to capacity building programs in the national security sector, providing it with the relevant competencies as well as technology that help in its improvement and development.
5. Improvement of the living and work conditions in the national security institutions.

Third Session: The Role of Anti-Corruption Agencies

- We acknowledge the roles of the anti-corruption bodies in the new governance system while avoiding politicization and discrimination in their practices.
- We are well aware of the importance of the anti-corruption bodies' independence and the activation of their roles through the provision of relevant legislative and legal frameworks.
- We pinpoint the relevance of the anti-corruption bodies' interaction and integration with the legislative bodies, control institutions and non-governmental organizations.
- We agree with the call for legislations and mechanisms for the protection of employees of the anti-corruption bodies.
Fourth Session: Measuring progress in governance performance

- We reiterate the necessity of the development of new policies according to the indicators of good governance.
- We are looking forward to the governments’ expeditious approval of vital reform policies for the monitoring of the advancement in the development of public administration and identification of the gaps in their institutions’ performance.
- We call for the approval of clear indicators that reflect the actual dimensions of good governance; namely; security, sovereignty of law, participation, human rights, full-fledged development, provision of services and competence…etc.
- It is important to find clear and transparent answers to the following questions:
  1- What are the most significant dimensions of good governance according to the needs and conditions of the Arab region?
  2- How can we build national methodologies and indicators for good governance?
  3- How can a regional dialogue be initiated in respect of such indicators along with its institutional measurement and control?

5- Fifth Session: Sustainability and strategic approach in public administration reform

- It is worth mentioning that the recurrent conflicts in some of the countries in the region have led to the overflow of short-term reforms at the expense of the balanced laws and strategic legislations.
- We call for highlighting the factors involved in the formulation of sustainable and non-sustainable policies, and most specifically the contradictory values, inaccurate and inconsistent data, structural complexities; the goal is to set governmental structures that ensure the approval of sustainable, powerful and firm policies.

- We call for learning sharing between the public and private sectors. Besides, we acknowledge the necessity for clear identifications of the boundaries of the activities of each in a way that does not allow corruption. Participation within the current context would lead to deviation, as well as weak practices in respect of integrity, transparency and accountability.

**Conclusion**

The general processing of the dialogue, discussions, blueprints and participants feedback were concluded as follows:

- Emphasis on high commitment to the activation of reform practices in the state institutions, policies and laws for the initiation of a paradigm shift in the public administration systems for governance purposes, raising the standards efficient use of resources, taking into account public interest, as well as solving the basic problems of unemployment, housing, health, education and the environment. This entails the visualization of the main dimensions of governance tasks, and building up of the state of institutions, and enforcement of the principles of integrity, transparency and fighting corruption.
- Acknowledgement that the fast change at the top of the state hierarchy or approval of higher reform policies shall not necessarily mean the reach of such change to the other levels of the state institutions.
- Top officials of the government authorities are called upon paying attention to the human, structural and organizational aspects; particularly the reform of public administration in parallel with the applications of new governance in a transparent manner in terms of policy formulation and implementation, including the structural changes in the relationship between the government and other sectors.
- High tribute is paid to the positive interactions between the government, non-government participants and experts of the international organizations participating in the conference.
- Gratitude and appreciation for the participating international organizations and their delegated experts who introduced excellent blueprints and provided significant experiences that culminated in clearer vision for the nature of the current challenges in the Arab region.
- Based on the final statement of the 12th annual conference, which was held in Cairo on 8-11-9-2013, we hereby confirm that more efforts shall be exerted for the implementation of its recommendations which are deemed proper for the current phase.
- We hereby endorse all recommendations of this statement and propose its referral to the 14th conference.
- Participants express their many thanks and gratitude to Jordan; Monarch, People and Government, for the splendid hospitality and unique reception. Special thanks go to his Majesty King Abdulla Ibn
Al Hussein, praying to Allah to grant Jordan peace, progress and prosperity.

- Consider the 9th of December which is the Anti – Corruption Fight day to be the day of the Annual conference of ARADO

- Confirm the Title of the upcoming Conference which will be held during the period 9 – 11 December 2014 to be “Cooperation in Establishing Resilience toward Global Risks In the Arab Region