

Brussels, 20 February 2008

Euro-Mediterranean Conference to place Financial and Banking Services at the Heart of Economic Transition

Leading government ministers, bank governors, international financial personnel, academics and media from both sides of the Mediterranean will meet in Brussels on 20 and 21 February for the 12th Euro-Mediterranean Conference on Economic Transition. These annual conferences are a regular part of the economic dialogue between the EU and its Mediterranean partners and strive to foster a better understanding of the policies and issues related to the process of economic transition in the Mediterranean partner countries. This year's conference will examine the role of financial and banking services and their pivotal position at the heart of economic transition.

During the conference's two days of plenary sessions and working groups more than 300 visitors will participate in discussions on comparative advantages and drawbacks of the Mediterranean region in various financial fields, on reforms implemented and still to be implemented, on challenges results achieved and challenges, on the heterogeneity of the region with respect to all these issues. Among the key speakers are Didier Reynders, Deputy Prime Minister of Belgium; Andrej Bajuk, Minister of Finance of Slovenia; Jihad Azour, Minister of Finance of Lebanon; Durmus Yilmaz, Governor of the Central Bank of Turkey; Jihad Al Wazir, Governor of the Palestine Monetary Authority, Lobna Helal, Sub-Governor of the Central Bank of Egypt; Marek Belka, Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Europe; and Fathallah Oualalou, former Finance Minister of Morocco.

This year's conference follows the Euro-Mediterranean Foreign Ministers' conference in Lisbon, November, 2007 at which ministers renewed their commitment to support investment, job creation and economic and social reforms, while also welcoming strategies based on a wider range of financial instruments for the fostering of private sector development.

Economic Transition Conferences

The Economic Transition conferences are an annual event under the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. They provide an informal forum for open debate on key economic policy issues under the Partnership.

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (Barcelona Process), launched by Euro-Mediterranean Foreign Ministers in November 1995, formed an innovative alliance based on the principles of joint ownership, dialogue and co-operation. The Partnership has been driven since by a common political will to build together a space of peace, security and shared prosperity. It has been successful in creating long-term political and institutional links between Europe and its Mediterranean partners, in establishing the foundations for free trade and in engaging Mediterranean partners in the path of reforms. The priority of the Barcelona Process is to develop the regional dimension of the Partnership between Europe and the Southern Mediterranean. With the European Neighbourhood policy working to complement and reinforce the Barcelona Process, through action plans agreed with the Partner countries, an added impetus has been given to bringing about a qualitative change in Euro-Mediterranean relations

More

information

at:

http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/euromed/etn/12mtg_0208/index.htm