MENA Transition and International Response: Challenges and Prospects
International Workshop
Friday, 2nd December 2011, Vienna

Venue:

Oesterreichische Kontrollbank (OeKB), Strauchgasse 3, 1010 Vienna, Austria

The current social and political turmoil in the **Middle East and North Africa (MENA)** is an indication that this region is entering a process of transition with far-reaching political, economic, social and institutional consequences whose outcomes are far from certain. A careful analysis of socio-economic starting conditions in the region, similarities and distinct features of individual countries, are highly relevant for the adoption of appropriate policies both within and without the MENA region. The outcome of the processes of democratization and economic transition will crucially depend upon the ability of the MENA countries to provide appropriate economic opportunities to its citizens, in particular the young. In turn, political and institutional changes are necessary for these economies to grow and embark on a process of inclusive and sustainable catching-up. The experiences with recent transitions in Central, East and Southeast European countries (CESEE) may provide interesting references. The European Neighbourhood Policy and IFI programmes may play an important role in supporting the transition process.

PROGRAMME

9.00-9.15 **Welcome & Introduction**

Rudolf Scholten,
Member of the Board of Directors, Oesterreichische Kontrollbank AG

9.15-10.30 **MENA Transitions: Background & Overview**

Chair: **Vladimir Gligorov**,
Senior economist, Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies

The economic and political dimensions of the Arab Spring, **Ghassan Dibeh**, Professor of Economics, Lebanese American University

The Arab Spring: social conditions and labor market bottlenecks, Alia El Mahdi, Vice President of Modern Science and Arts University, Cairo

CESEE and MENA transitions: economic challenges and prospects, Peter Havlik, Deputy Director, The Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies

10.30-10.45 **Coffee break**

10.45-12.15 **Transition Challenges and the Role of IFIs**

Chair: **Wolfgang Nitsche**, Deputy Head of Division for European Integration and General Trade Policy, Austrian Ministry of Finance

Lessens from European Transitions, Vladimir Gligorov, Senior Economist, The Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies (wiiw)

Socio-economic transformation in MENA: Challenges and the role of the international community, Taline Koranchelian, Advisor to the Middle East and Central Asia Department, IMF

EBRD in southern and eastern Mediterranean, **Kurt Bayer**, Member of the Board of Directors, EBRD

12.15-13.15 **Lunch buffet**

13.15-14.45 **Challenges for EU Neighbourhood Policy**

Chair: **Peter Havlik,** Deputy Director, Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies

Opportunities and prospects for EU Partnership and Neighbourhood policies, **Alar Olljum**, Advisor to the Managing Director for MENA, European External Action Services

European Neighbourhood Policy from a southern perspective, Ahmed Ghoneim, Professor, Faculty of Economics and Political Sciences, Cairo University

European Neighbourhood Policy from an outside perspective, **Francis Ghilès**, Senior Research Fellow, Barcelona Centre for International Affairs

EIB strategy towards MENA, Claudio Cortese, Deputy Director General, Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership, EIB

14.45-15.00 **Coffee break**

15.00-16.30 **Policy panel: MENA Perspectives and the Role of the International Community**

Chair: **Alfred Katterl**, Head of Division General Economic Policy, Austrian Ministry of Finance

Panelists: **Kurt Bayer**, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

Claudio Cortese, European Investment Bank

Ghasan Dibeh, Lebanese American University

Alar Olljum, European External Action Services

Francis Ghilès, Barcelona Centre for International Affairs

16.30 **Cocktail reception**

Note: After the workshop, the presentations will be available at: www.wiiw.ac.at/?action=events&opt=details&id=121