

*The 2nd Meeting of  
The Arab Japan Economic-Forum  
Workshop 3  
Business Activities of Japanese Companies*

*Excellencies,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

It is a privilege for me to have the opportunity to address such a distinguished gathering of high representatives of the Japanese and the Arab business community on the occasion of the 2nd meeting of the Arab Japan Economic Forum.

First of all, on behalf of the large family of the Tunisian exporters companies I would like to welcome you in Tunisia « the land of the historical city of Carthage » and to wish all of you a pleasant stay and a fruitful business contacts.

In my address, I will focus on three major messages going straight to the heart of the subject that I hope may help you to do profitable business activities with the Arab world.

**My first message** for the representatives of Toshiba, Kawasaki, Sumitomo, Sojitz, Hitachi, Toyota, Fujitsu, Itochu, Komatsu, Mitsubishi and all the other Japanese companies attending this forum is that, **not only Japanese companies are welcomed to do business in the Arab world but it is also the right time to boost trade and investment opportunities with the Arab countries taking into consideration the highly appreciated Japanese technology by Arab companies.**

Most of the Arab countries are enjoying relatively high economic growth and are heavily investing to create a friendly business environment.

Countries like Morocco, Algeria, Lybia, Tunisia, Egypt, Jordan are continuously improving their positions in « the annual doing business rankings ». Sustainable efforts to get access to their market easier and to attract foreign direct investment are achieved. Many free trade zones are created, and reliable financial and fiscal incentives are granted.

Countries like Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Sultana of Oman, and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are mostly investing in knowledge cities, in industrial parks, information and communication technologies and are in a growing demand for Japanese know how.

Japan is therefore in a position to extend its support to Arab Nations based on its own developmental experiences, and to further forge economic relations with them.

There is no doubt that the 2022 football world cup to be held in Qatar will create additional opportunities to increase and to boost trade and investment between Japan and all the CGC countries.

**My second message is that Arab region is the right place to do business for the next decade.**

The region represents not only a massive market of more than 360 millions consumers with a growing middle and high income class enjoying an increasing purchasing power, but also a demanding market for a wide range of products and services based on sophisticated technologies such as renewable energies, power generator, chemical plants, water desalinations, waste processing, friendly industries, health care, higher education, tourism related activities.

The Japanese companies are perceived as being among the best in the world to be able to provide top-level technologies and know-how through an appropriate partnership in both directions private-private and private-public to achieve a shared, balanced and sustainable common economic growth.

**My third message** is specially addressed to the Japanese business community. **You should not consider each Arab country as a single market but let's look at the region as a whole.** You may think that there are still barriers to market access and there are still some restrictions on the circulation of foreign capitals. This is partially true. **Efforts are made by all the Arab Countries to implement the Arab free trade zone to overcome such barriers and trade business between Arab countries is showing a real progress.**

**Besides, many countries are positioning themselves as a hub:** hub of transit trade, hub of finance, hub of international transportation, hub of healthcare services.

A more active Japanese involvement in the region could offer a real potential for Japanese products, services and technology to gain market share in the neighborhood countries: Sub-Saharan countries in the South West, Central Asian countries in the East and South European countries in the North West.

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

This forum offers an occasion to build confidence, to create links between the companies and to learn about business opportunities, business culture and business environment in the Arab countries.

It is indeed a great chance for the Arab Countries to draw the attention of companies coming from the world's second largest economy where the potential of boosting trade and investment is real.

Let's make together business opportunities more effective.

Thank you for your attention.