



European Union

BESP

Business Environment Simplification Programme



Official Press Release

19 January 2010

Economic Committee of the Cabinet gives go-ahead to new Regulatory Reform initiative in Syria

In order to further enhance progress towards the establishment of a social market economy through the implementation of future Five Year Plan programmes, the Economic Committee of the cabinet has approved a new initiative to inventory, review and reform the regulatory environment for enterprises in Syria. The goal of this reform is to make easier to do business in the country.

Experts from the EU funded Business Environment Simplification Programme (BESP) introduced a systematic approach to regulatory reform, termed the 'Regulatory Guillotine' which has been successfully implemented in over 40 countries around the world, including Egypt, where this approach was started three years ago and is currently under successful implementation.

The approach focuses upon improving the regulatory environment by inventorying relevant regulatory information, performing a series of standardised reviews and recommending changes to existing regulations, to simplify administrative procedures and reduce the information required from business by Government. The process involves the collection of all Legislative Documents (laws, decrees and bylaws) from participating ministries and making these publicly available to the private sector through the establishment of a national Electronic Registry.

In approving the initiative, Committee Chairman Dr. Abdulla Al Dardari, Deputy Minister for Economic Affairs, highlighted the importance of such a project in simplifying the Syrian regulatory environment for business and confirmed that all relevant ministries would participate.

Dr. Dardari added; *'To ensure high level co-ordination and Government of Syria support for the project, a special unit will be established in the Prime Minister's office with subsidiary reform units in each of the relevant ministries. The Economic Committee is taking a close interest in the initiative and will be reviewing progress on a quarterly basis to ensure that the momentum of reform is maintained'*

Dr. Amer Lutfy, Minister of Economy and Trade and chairman of the BESP Steering Committee endorsed the proposed initiative, stating *'Without doubt this is an extremely significant part of the macroeconomic reform of the Syrian economy addressing a key pillar of developing a new economic framework for business – the regulatory environment.'* Lutfy added, *"We shall work through BESP to implement this programme over the next two years to eliminate the many duplications and overlapping of economic regulations and to establish simplified regulations that are appropriate to the modern economy of Syria."*

Mr. Vedran Antoljak, regulatory reform at BESP, identified the many advantages arising from the initiative; *"On the national level, this initiative will help to reduce the time and costs of doing businesses in Syria, it will improve access to regulatory documents and improving the transparency of administrative processes. In addition, this should improve investment climate, performance of the enterprises, and service delivery of Syrian administrations. From the international perspective, this reform should increase flows of foreign direct investments and Syria's ranking in international economic reports."*

ENDS.

Note to Editors

Content of this press release can be freely edited. No prior approval for publishing required from BESP.

About BESP

BESP is a 5M Euro EU-funded programme (2009-2013) established by the Government of Syria in partnership with the EU Delegation to Syria to contribute to the Syrian economic reform agenda through the improvement and simplification of the business environment in the country in line with national requirements. The purpose of the project is to establish and implement a range of actions in the area of competition policy, procedures for business registration and new and revised business legislation that will remove bottlenecks, reduce unnecessary red-tape and promote transparent and fair practices for the Syrian business community.

For more information:

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BESP is a programme funded by the European Union and implemented through the SEBC