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Jordan to host World Economic Forum in 2013

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His Majesty King Abdullah and Klaus Schwab, founder and executive chairman of the World Economic Forum, during the World Economic Forum special meeting on economic growth and job creation in the Arab world that was held on the eastern shores of the Dead Sea on October 22, 2011. (Photo courtesy of World Economic Forum)



AMMAN — Jordan will host the World Economic Forum (WEF) meeting on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) for the seventh time at the Dead Sea, slated for May 24-26, 2013.

The meeting will include over 1,000 participants from governments, businesses, civil societies and academia.

The announcement came on Monday as His Majesty King Abdullah received WEF Founder and Executive Chairman Klaus Schwab in New York on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly meeting, a Royal Court statement said.

The King Abdullah II Fund for Development (KAFD) and WEF signed a memorandum of understanding on Monday that marks the official start of preparations for the 2013 WEF on MENA.

King Abdullah said the ongoing developments in the MENA region warrant efforts to shape the new regional context to positively support socio-economic development and address youth issues, especially youth unemployment; and to “answer our young people’s cry for a normal future, in dignity and opportunity, in view of all the developments and challenges taking place in our MENA region”.

His Majesty praised Schwab’s efforts in placing the key international issues on the table, shedding light onto them during the WEF meeting.

During the meeting, His Majesty and Schwab also discussed the latest developments in the region, especially the current situation in Syria, and the efforts to reach a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

Schwab said the next WEF on MENA will take a practical look at the policies and business strategies that are necessary to support the aspirations of the region’s economies. He praised the King’s continuous efforts in dealing with issues in the region.

He also praised the King’s role in seeking the revival of the Palestinian-Israeli peace negotiations.

Miroslav Dusek, director and head of MENA at WEF, was quoted in a WEF statement as saying: “Building on Jordan’s recognised role in the region and internationally, the aim of 2013 meeting is to drive the dialogue needed to overcome long-standing fault lines and foster the spirit of multi-stakeholder partnerships that are so essential for ensuring peace and security at this time of fundamental change.”

KAFD Chairman Nasser Lozi voiced Jordan’s pride in hosting WEF for the seventh time.

“[Jordan] looks forward to playing a very active role in helping achieve its [WEF] goals of enhancing regional cooperation and partnerships,” he was quoted as saying.

According to the organisers, the meeting is set to address national policies and regional mechanisms that need to be in place to safeguard the prosperity of economies facing resource scarcity and rapid population growth and find the proven best practices for creating the conditions for youth-driven entrepreneurial growth.

Additionally, the forum will shed light on how new governments in North Africa can respond to public expectations while also managing sustainable economic transitions, and the implications of the situation in Syria for interfaith and inter-communal relations in the MENA region.

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