

Jordanian, Swedish businessmen explore means to boost bilateral trade



Industry and Trade Minister Amer Hadidi (3rd from left) speaks during the Jordanian-Swedish meeting on Monday (Petra photo)

AMMAN (JT) - A Jordanian-Swedish business forum convened on Monday providing a platform for businessmen from the two sides to explore ways to boost bilateral trade and examine the possibility of launching new business partnerships.

At the opening of the forum, Industry and Trade Minister Amer Hadidi underlined the importance of such meetings, saying they have proved to be “efficient” in marketing commodities and services as well as creating job opportunities and joint partnerships, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

Yesterday’s forum, which was attended by Swedish Trade Minister Ewa Björling, who is currently visiting the Kingdom, brought businessmen and representatives of Jordanian and Swedish companies together to examine business prospects.

In his address, Hadidi called on Jordanian businessmen and their counterparts to benefit from the meeting and enhance cooperation between the two countries.

He said the joint commercial exchange volume is below expectations, accounting for less than \$100 million during the last year.

Highlighting the Kingdom’s economic developments in the past 10 years, he called on the two countries’ private sectors to take the initiative and start up joint investments.

He underscored Jordan’s economic openness and legislative amendments to draw and facilitate the launch of business ventures, besides the signing of free trade agreements with the European Union, the US and several economic blocs.

Jordan Investment Board Chief Executive Officer Maen Nsour was among the main speakers at the forum.

Nsour emphasised Jordan’s favourable investment environment, citing the results of international reports in this regard, Petra said.

He called on Swedish businessmen to benefit from the incentives provided to foreign investors, stressing the importance of partnerships between the Jordanian and Swedish private sectors, especially amid challenges facing world economies at present.

In light of the global financial crisis and the recession in many world markets, the Swedish minister said it is important to consider what is beyond that, and start building towards future growth by activating trade with emerging markets.

Charlotta Sparre, Sweden’s ambassador to Jordan, voiced hope that the forum would bear fruit leading to the establishment of future relations and new business relations, stressing the Swedish government’s interest in boosting trade with the Middle East region.

According to the Swedish embassy website, Swedish exports to Jordan amounted to approximately SEK630 million in 2008 while imports to Sweden totalled SEK42 million, reflecting an increase in both exports and imports compared to previous years.

A few Swedish companies have their own branches in Jordan while many are represented via Jordanian agents, according to the website.

Prime Minister Nader Dahabi yesterday met with the visiting Swedish minister of trade. Dahabi and Björling reviewed means to boost Jordanian-Swedish relations in different areas.

During the meeting, which was attended by Hadidi, the premier emphasised that the two sides need to tap investment opportunities and foster economic cooperation.

He also valued the visit by the Swedish minister leading the trade delegation to the Kingdom.

Talks also addressed the possibility of benefiting from the Swedish expertise in the areas of environment protection and renewable energy.

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