

Opening Speech on Workshop on Institutional Assessment Program

Tempus1 Project

Strengthening Institutional Capacity in Arab Countries

"ALTAIR"

17-18/11/2009

Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and gentlemen

First, I would like to welcome you all to BAU's Debbieh Campus. We are delighted to host the workshop entitled: "Strengthening Institutional Capacity in Arab countries" in our new campus.

I would also like to thank the European Union for its efforts to support and finance this tempus project, and to welcome participants from partner countries, Germany, Spain, Egypt, Morocco, Jordan, and Palestine as well as the Lebanese participants.

Beirut Arab University (BAU) is one of the largest private higher education institutions and one of the oldest Universities in Lebanon. The university celebrates its 50th year this year. Beirut Arab University, which was founded in 1960, started with only four faculties and has expanded over the past years into ten academic faculties with 35 departments distributed across many disciplines. The university has two campuses in Beirut and Debbieh, and future campuses in Tripoli and the Bekaa are under construction.

BAU is committed since its foundation to promoting quality education. We continuously look to improve the academic and administrative services by consistently upgrading these services to conform to international standards.

BAU has established in 2007 a Centre for Academic Development CAD and quality assurance. The main objective of this center is to get institutional and program accreditation for all its faculties. Self assessment and action plans are periodically conducted to target areas that require improvement.

On the national level, BAU is member of the quality committees in the ministry of education and higher education; the technical Committee which is in charge of the quality of higher education relative to licensing and auditing higher education institutions and programs and the equivalence committee which is responsible for the recognition of program degrees.

Regarding BAU commitment to quality assurance, the university organized a workshop in collaboration with UNESCO regional office in Beirut in March 2007, entitled (Quality Assurance in Higher education “Practices and Experiences”). The main recommendation of this workshop is to create a quality assurance agency in Lebanon.

Furthermore, BAU participated in two TEMPUS projects related to this topic. The first one is entitled “Creation of a Lebanese Engineering Programs Accreditation Commission (LEPAC)”, where a draft of accreditation criteria for all engineering programs was provided. The second was related to Quality Assurance for Higher Education in Lebanon (QAHEL) from which three guides for quality management, self evaluation and quality audit were produced.

Ladies and Gentlemen.

With the attendance of experts and people with different backgrounds, more beneficial ideas and experiences could be shared in this workshop. I look forward to seeing positive outcome from this event and I hope you all will enjoy your stay in Lebanon.

Thank you.