



Die Junge Akademie

**WAY** World Academy of Young Scientists  
Arab-WAYS

**- First German-Arab Young Scientists Forum - 1<sup>st</sup> GAYSF  
Berlin (Germany), 16-19 June 2011**

**Press release** – 05/07/2011

## **German-Arab Scientific Cooperation: Challenges and Perspectives The 1<sup>st</sup> German-Arab Young Scientists Forum (GAYSF), Berlin**

The first German-Arab Young Scientists Forum (GAYSF) took place in Berlin, Germany on June 16-19, 2011. The Forum was organized by Die Junge Akademie (the Young Academy) at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities and the National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina and the Arab Academy of Young Scientists (Arab-WAYS), and gathered about sixty German and Arab participants. The working sessions of the Forum were held in the Brugsch-Pascha-Saal at the Egyptian Museum and Papyrus Collection of Berlin.

Both Young Academies have been strongly engaged in strengthening the institutional capacity of youth and promoting dialogue between their members, governmental institutions and other representatives of different cultural and scientific areas. Nowadays, while the Arab World is experiencing a critical post-revolution period with youth being at the forefront of the “Arab Spring”, it was especially important that a selected group of young Arab and German scientists came together in Berlin to support a safe transition in Science and Technology and to promote scientific cooperation between Germany and Arabic countries.

The first Forum aimed at reinforcing the German-Arab cooperation in Science and Research and creating a platform for networking between the young researchers in both parts of the world and in various disciplines. The Arab delegation included participants from several Arabic countries such as Bahrain, Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Palestine, Tunisia and Yemen, as well as young Arab scientists currently conducting their research activities in Europe including the Arab Fellows of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. On the German side members of Die Junge Akademie and selected members of several Berlin universities and research institutions were present.

The participants were all young scientists and researchers working on different topics such as: Water, Biology, Environmental Sciences, Medicine, Political Sciences, Chemistry, Architecture, Arabic and German Literature, Islamic Art, Human Rights, Conflict and Peace Studies, etc. Thus, the Forum had an interdisciplinary character bringing together scholars from all major academic areas: Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities.

During the meeting, the German side represented by Prof. Dr. Klaus Lucas, the Vice-President of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Dr. Verena Lepper, Dr. Kirill Dmitriev and Dr. Marc Helbling, members of Die Junge Akademie, and the Arab partners represented by Dr. Alaa El-Sadek, President of Arab-WAYS, Dr. Jauad El Kharraz, the General Secretary, and Dr. Olfa Mahjoub, member of Arab-WAYS Steering Committee, presented their visions of cooperation between German and Arab young researchers and highlighted the multi-disciplinary character of this forum.

Three topics were raised and discussed within the working groups of the Forum: (i) the Arab Spring and its impact on young Arab researchers, (ii) instruments and forms of cooperation between German and Arab institutions, and (iii) strengths and weaknesses of the research systems in Germany and Arab countries that have to be developed and/or reinforced.

Roundtables, group sessions and discussions took place in the presence of representatives of German institutions, outstanding and eminent experts, lecturers, who shared their experiences and views, and conveyed their expectations in the context of the German-Arab cooperation.

The Forum gave the young Arab researchers also the opportunity to visit some of the academic research institutions in the Berlin area, such as the Leibniz-Institute of Freshwater Ecology and Inland Fisheries (IGB), the Social Science Research Center Berlin (WZB) and the Berlin Museum of Natural History. During these visits further opportunities for cooperation were explored.

Moreover, representatives from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, the Center for international Cooperation at the Freie Universität Berlin, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the Volkswagen Foundation presented their institutions, the cooperation programs as well as the potential areas in which they provide support for the activities of German and Arab young scholars. They expressed their will to contribute to improving the scientific cooperation between Germany and the Arab world, in particular with regard to the sponsorship of existing and new networking activities.

As a next step, a proposal emanated from the Arab side and welcomed by German participants, was an invitation to host the second German-Arab Young Scientists Forum in one of the Arab countries in 2012. In addition, drawing upon the relevance and importance of the German-Arab young researchers exchange, the Forum agreed to further elaborate on a joint proposal to be submitted soon to international donors. This initiative should aim at institutionalizing the cooperation between Die Junge Akademie and the Arab-WAYS by means of creating a joint network of excellence. Pursuing new knowledge as a motor for innovation, such an international network could play a significant role in developing the scientific and cultural environment in both regions.

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***The Junge Akademie** was founded in the year 2000 as joint project of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, BBAW) and the National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina (Nationale Akademie der Wissenschaften Leopoldina). Following its institutionalization in 2010, Die Junge Akademie continues to promote interdisciplinary discourse and co-operation between outstanding young scientists and scholars, and to support initiatives at the interface between science and society.*

***Arab-WAYS:** is an initiative of the World Academy of Young Scientists (WAYS) that launched its Arab branch at the first Arab regional meeting held in 2005 in Alexandria, Egypt. The objective of this association is to contribute towards strengthening the capacity of young Arab researchers to conduct relevant and high quality research that covers science and technology, environment, and their inter-linkages, and to advance science and enhance the situation of young scientists throughout the Arab world.*

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**Contact:**

*Die Junge Akademie:*

Dr. Verena Lepper, Dr. Kirill Dmitriev, Dr. Marc Helbling  
[v.lepper@smb.spk-berlin.de](mailto:v.lepper@smb.spk-berlin.de), [dmitriev@gmx.net](mailto:dmitriev@gmx.net), [helbling@wzb.eu](mailto:helbling@wzb.eu)

*Arab-WAYS:*

Dr. Alaa El-Sadek, Dr. Jauad El Kharraz, Dr. Olfa Mahjoub  
[alaasa@aqu.edu.bh](mailto:alaasa@aqu.edu.bh), [jauad.el-kharraz@semide.org](mailto:jauad.el-kharraz@semide.org), [olfama@gmail.com](mailto:olfama@gmail.com)  
Forum's webpage: <http://www.emwis.net/topics/ways/1st-german-arab-young-scientists-forum>