



Message from
HE Dr Marouf Bakhit
Prime Minister
of the Hashemite
Kingdom of Jordan

Over the centuries, many civilizations rose in Jordan, or chose it as their habitat. Merchant caravans on the spice route always stopped here for rest and provisions. As a result, traits such as openness, tolerance, and hospitality, as well as hard work and business acumen became second nature to the people of Jordan.

Today, these qualities continue to be defining hallmarks of modern Jordan, which has made a strategic commitment to creating an enabling environment for enterprise. We believe that this is the way to make Jordan a regional centre for prosperity and excellence, where people from all over the world come and work together for their individual and collective benefit. This kind of partnership is a vehicle for prosperity for all concerned.

To make it possible, Jordan embarked on a program of reform and market liberalization that has touched virtually every aspect of life. Laws were amended and new legislation was promulgated to regulate the rapidly expanding entrepreneurial activity. Judicial systems were updated and new dispute resolution mechanisms were introduced. State monopolies were privatized and a separation was created between the functions of the policymaker, regulator, and service provider.

In addition, institutions were created to help potential investors. Their services include providing information to help investors that can include preliminary feasibility studies. Even more importantly, they listen to the observations, suggestions and complaints of investors, and work to constantly improve the business climate in the country by streamlining administrative procedures and offering new incentives that are more pertinent to investors.

Then, to overcome the limitation of its small market, Jordan established an impressive network of bilateral and multilateral trade and investment agreements that include membership of the WTO, a partnership agreement with the European Union, a free trade agreement with the US, an FTA with

Singapore and a number of intra-regional trade and investment agreements that give to investors in Jordan access to 1 billion consumers the world over. Thanks to this network of agreements Jordan has truly become the investment ally of the world.

As a result, more and more companies are moving to Jordan to invest, establish strategic partnerships, or to establish a base for regional operations. At the start of 2006, we set ourselves a goal to attract JD2 billion (£1.5 billion) and today we appear set to surpass this objective by reaching JD2.2 billion. In the first three quarters of this year, investments in Jordan were 113 per cent more than total investments in 2005. Thanks largely to these investments, Jordan averaged 6 per cent annual real GDP growth since 2003.

Challenges still exist, to be sure; but this is true everywhere. The point here is that there are opportunities to forge a win-win relationship in which low-risk investments bring high-returns to investors, and at the same time they fuel economic growth, create new job opportunities and improve the standard of living for all.

These achievements would not have been possible without help from our friends, for which we are grateful. But we are also realists. We do not ask our friends to make sacrifices on our behalf. Instead we invite British companies, investors and the financial institutions to take a serious look at the opportunities that Jordan offers them, and to make the investment decisions that serve their interests best. Your success will be our success. Our growth, together, will benefit the region and the whole world because prosperity enhances stability by inspiring hope for a better future for all.

Jordan is a country endowed with many blessings that compensate for its limited natural resources. Its temperate climate made it the cradle of civilization, and its strategic location interconnecting three continents made it, since the dawn of history, a natural hub for the globalization movement of antiquity. **F**