

## Preparing Jordan King's Business Mission to Brazil

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Friday, 25 July 2008

Jordan King Abdullah II's visit to Brazil in October should encourage bilateral trade between Brazil and the Arab country. The statement was made by the Jordanian minister of Foreign Relations, Salaheddine Al-Bashir, after a meeting with the board of directors at the Arab Brazilian Chamber of Commerce, in the city of São Paulo. Al-Bashir came to Brazil to prepare the king's trip.

"We wish to encourage efforts by the private sector in order to boost bilateral trade figures," said the minister. During the visit of Abdullah II, a delegation of businessmen should also come to Brazil to meet with private sector representatives. One of the aims is to make trade between Jordan and Brazil more balanced, as it is currently highly skewed in favor of Brazilians.

According to Al-Bashir, Jordan may export to Brazil products like fertilizers, pharmaceutical products, textiles and technology. Being one of the world's leading agricultural producer countries, Brazil has a high demand for fertilizers, and approximately 70% of the total consumed in the domestic market is imported.

Jordan is also open to Brazilian investment, stated Al-Bashir. According to the minister, the country has a series of projects turned to foreign investment in areas such as services, textiles and foodstuffs. Jordan has also been attracting foreign interest in its financial market, claimed Al-Bashir, by means of the Amman Stock Exchange. Read below the full interview with the minister:

What is your expectation regarding Brazil-Jordan relations after the king's visit?

There have been several visits by Brazilian ministers to Jordan. We want to attain a significant level of regulation, so as to make it clear that there is political and official interest in building relations between Brazil and Jordan. On the other hand, we would also like to encourage efforts by the private sector in order to boost bilateral trade figures.

During the visit of king Abdullah II to Brazil, a forum for Brazilian and Jordanian businessmen will be held. How many businessmen do you plan to bring to Brazil?

We wish to bring as many businessmen as possible, but that bit of information remains to be seen.

What are the plans for this forum? Do you intend to attract Brazilian investors into Jordan?

We would like to see more concrete relations and successful partnerships in all levels: trade, investment, culture, universities, education and student exchange. We want better relations in the political, economic, entrepreneurial and cultural levels.

How do you rate current relations between Brazil and Jordan?

There has been much progress in recent years. Trade figures are going up, although they are heavily skewed in favor of Brazil. We are going to work to increase investment and bring more balance in terms of trade numbers.

What can Brazil import from Jordan?

Jordan has a lot of possibilities in terms of fertilizers, such as potassium phosphate. The country also sells pharmaceutical products to the whole world. We have a highly developed textile industry, and we can also export information technology and computer programs.

In what sector can Brazilians invest in Jordan?

All sectors are open to investment, be it in the services area - telecommunications, information technology, tourism, healthcare - or in the production area - textiles and foodstuffs.

Does the country receive much foreign investment?

Yes, there is a wide array of projects turned to foreign direct investment. There is also much of international interest in our stock exchange.

What is the country that invests in Jordan the most?

We receive a significant investment volume from the Gulf - Kuwait, United Arab Emirates - but we also have a high percentage of investment coming in from Europe, France, the United States and so forth.

Anba