

**Services for companies and business-starters now offered  
by the Business Development Academy in Erbil**

The Erbil Business Development Academy (BDA) was inaugurated on the 24th of January 2007. Many high-ranking representatives of public and business sector took part in this event. In his introduction, the Minister for Energy of Iraqi Kurdistan and Chairman of the Board of the Erbil Business Council emphasized that by this BDA will play an important role towards the development of the local economy and its cooperation potentials. This Academy shall also contribute to an improvement of further education of local companies in areas like marketing and technology transfer.

The Governor of the Region as well as the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Denmark accentuated in their greetings the importance of such a first activity with regard to the development of a networking of economic and developmental interests in the region. This is also an important contribution to stability and peace in the region.

The BDA project is being implemented by the German Association of Experts in the Field of Migration and Development Cooperation (AGEF) which is already operating other development related activities in Erbil, in cooperation with the Business Council of Erbil. It is sponsored by the Danish Foreign Ministry.

A training course for small enterprises and business-starters was one of the first activities of the Academy. Participants consisted of women entrepreneurs aiming to gain know-how in marketing and cost planning as well as returnees from various EU countries aiming to reintegrate themselves into their country of origin by starting a business.

In the series of lectures for international active Erbil enterprises a financial expert from Berlin presented different options of international export and import funding.

At the end the CEO of AGEF Berlin summarized the objectives and fields of action once again and referred to the spectrum of target groups for whom the Academy will become a kind of incubator. Services and further education will be offered to local employers and their staff. But also business-starters, among them returnees will be counseled and trained. Furthermore an open discussion forum on current economic topics is planned.

Companies from EU Countries who want to get an impression of the comparatively safe markets in Northern Iraq can receive support from the BDA through information, contacts and logistical assistance.

For more information, please address any queries to: [ikr\\_bda@agef-meca.org](mailto:ikr_bda@agef-meca.org)  
(active from 1 February 2007)