

**The WCP's 5th Conference on
"Trade Facilitation in the Arab Region"**

7th October 2015

**Organized by WTO Chair Program
School of Business
University of Jordan**

Policy Brief

The conference provided an opportunity to get acquainted with the certain contemporary economic issues such as different ways for Arab trade facilitation, different forms of non-tariff barriers that restrict Arab trade.

The conference gave the researchers from Jordan and the Arab countries the opportunity to provide and present theoretical and empirical research in the areas of trade policy and the role of the World Trade Organization in economic development. The conference also aimed to increase the interaction between the academics and the practitioners to better understand the effects of trade policies and non-tariff barriers on intra Arab trade and WTO related issues including trade facilitation and its implication to promote regional Arab trade.

Many researchers and academics from inside and outside the Kingdom participated in research papers that covered all the themes of the conference and contributed to reach a set of conclusions and recommendations at the end of the conference.

In the final session the participants recommended the followings to enhance intra Arab trade:

- 1- Gradually eliminates the country's list of exceptions related to trade in goods and services under GAFTA

- 2- Policy emphasis should shift from tariff to non-tariff barriers in order to expand the regional trade, including the development of various transportation means among countries of the region, shorting paper time requirement at border, and reducing cost of custom procedures, fighting Wasta and other forms of corruption, increasing transparency...etc.
- 3- To achieve better results in the front of economic integration among Arab countries, more attention should be paid to building production capacities and product diversification among countries of the region.