

# Framework Agreement

Between



Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority & Aqaba Development Corporation & University of Palermo

---

Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (**ASEZA**) the institution responsible for the management, regulation, and the development of the Aqaba Special Economic Zone (**ASEZ**) represented by Prof. Dr. Kamel O. Mahadin in his capacity as Chief Commissioner of ASEZA, Aqaba – Jordan.

**And**

Aqaba Development Corporation (**ADC**), a private shareholding company incorporated by the Government of Jordan and ASEZA, to act as a catalyst for the socio-economic development of ASEZ, represented by Eng. Ghassan Ghanem in his capacity as Chief Executive Officer of ADC, Aqaba – Jordan.

**And**

University of Palermo (**UNIPA**) a land-grant University founded in 1806 classified as a comprehensive doctoral research institute with very high research activity in its 5 faculties and 20 departments represented by Prof. Roberto Lagalla in his capacity as Rector of UNIPA, Palermo – Italy.

**Whereas**, **ASEZA** is mandated to transform Aqaba into a world class business hub and leisure destination on the Red Sea, acts as a development driving force for Jordan that improves the quality of life and prosperity for the community through sustainable development;

**Whereas**, **ADC** expressed the importance of this joint development socio-economic initiative that could serve to promote ASEZ and create real opportunities jointly for ASEZA & ADC through the partnership with UNIPA;

**Whereas**, **UNIPA** is a leading public University that is globally aware and involved, accessible and responsive to the many constituencies it serves, and fully integrated with the intellectual, social, and economic development of Palermo, while delivering excellent programs of teaching, research, and service;

**Whereas, ASEZA, ADC & UNIPA (the Parties)** acknowledge the importance of overseas cooperation, recognizing all areas of cultural, administrative and scientific relations that may develop between the Parties being indispensable for the reciprocal understanding of cultures, development of knowledge, and the diffusion / exchange of know-how. Such activities would further promote the strong existing ties of friendship and goodwill between the Hashimate Kingdom of Jordan and the Italian Republic, and shall contribute to the academic and cultural benefits of both nations.

It is therefore, in a spirit of goodwill & mutual understanding identifying such areas of common interest; the Parties intend to promote / execute one or more of the actions referred to below which must necessarily be governed via specific implementation protocols each time any specific action is to be executed. The contents of this agreement are to be taken as a declaration of intent by both Parties and becomes binding only for initiatives subsequently concurred upon by each, individual protocol.

Potential Actions may include:

1. **Collaboration in Common Research Projects / Capacity Building initiatives** which may involve:
  - 1.1. The mobility of administrative staff, researchers and academic staff of both Parties;
  - 1.2. The mobility of young researchers undertaking post-graduate courses;
  - 1.3. Capacity Building to ASEZA staff through: Short / Long term Internship exchange programs; Italian / English Language Courses; offering Post-Graduate / Higher-Degree Scholarships;
  - 1.4. The exchange of scholarly material.
  
2. **Joint Participation in:**
  - 2.1. Programs promoted by the European Union or other entities or foundations;
  - 2.2. The coordination of proposals intended for the attainment of funding, for the realization of facilities (and/or) the development of research (and/or) education and training programs.
  - 2.3. The constitution of joint research groups in fields of: (Coastal) Landscape Architecture; Urban Planning; Project Management; Environment; Health and well-being; Tourism; Energy Efficiency; Disaster Risk Management (etc)... Given that the above mentioned cooperation program(s) will be based on principles that draw together knowledge, experience and enhancing the operational capacity of both Parties; realizing interventions that are innovative and classifiable as excellent on both Jordanian and Italian territories.

With such synergy, the Parties agree to form Framework "Steering Committee" mandated to prepare detailed protocols as they develop, that would include details of funding and logistics arrangements per each Action agreed.

The Parties hereby agreed to launch immediately the incubator program; UNIPA having a 10 year success program shall extend the knowledge structure and know-how to be further studied by the Steering Committee.

The Parties have agreed to launch the exchange program where ten (10) nominees from each party shall be nominated after conducting the necessary due-diligence and to bring added value in needed areas of experience to help enhance exploitation of created opportunities, in this respect ASEZA shall conduct its internal screening which will include nominees from ADC as well.

The Parties have concluded that a "Medical School" (the faculty) with a differentiating factor could help transform Aqaba into a medical educational and operational hub through the allocation and insurance of access to nominated top notch European Union Medical Universities pool that shall give immediate post-graduate preference and access to the graduates of this Faculty; subject to rules followed in Italy and the European Union.

This agreement is valid for a period of three years as of the date indicated below by the Parties. It will be considered automatically renewed for a further three years subsequent to evaluation of the period it covers. Withdrawal from the agreement must be made formally in writing three months prior to its expiry date.

All signed protocols must refer to this Framework agreement. Moreover; all terms and conditions of this agreement, as well as protocols that are implemented and connected to it, must conform with the rules & regulations that govern the respective institutions involved; therefore, each Party is not obliged to abide by the contents of implemented protocols that do not comply with its rules & regulations.

This agreement has been drawn up in three original copies in English; any controversy that may arise shall be settled by mutual consent;

**In witness whereof**, the Parties have signed this letter of cooperation and goodwill in Aqaba – The Hashemite Kingdome of Jordan on this day: **(14) of (January) 2014**.

**On behalf of ASEZA**

**On behalf of ADC**

**On behalf of UNIPA**

---

Prof. Dr. Kamel O. Mahadin  
**Chief Commissioner**  
**Signature:**

---

Eng. Ghassan Ghanem  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Signature:**

---

Prof. Roberto Lagalla  
**Rector**  
**Signature:**