Mr. Muhanna Al Suffiani:

Investment in Saudi Capabilities is AACC Top Strategy

Mr. Muhanna Al Sufiani, the Chief Executive Officer of Aircraft Accessories and Components Company Ltd. (AACC) confirmed that his company has placed the national manpower development as a cornerstone for the company's success. To achieve this goal the company has allocated a large part of its budget to train and qualify the Saudi youth inside and outside the kingdom to support the company to play its vital role satisfying the needs of the kingdom's aviation sector. Despite the fact that AACC is working in a highly critical technical activity Mr. Al Suffiani, was happy during the dialogue with Okaz because the suadisation rate in the company has reached 72%.

- **AACC is one of the few companies in the region working in aircraft spare parts and components. Brief us on the company's activity and objectives?**

  The aviation industry on its both commercial and military sides is basically leaning on maintenance, repair and the overhaul operations which play a magnificent role in aircrafts capability and readiness to perform the assigned missions whether on commercial or defensive basis. Periodical (MRO) operations play a major role in improving aircraft readiness.

  AACC is a fruit of the offset program established as per the ministerial decree number (332) and works in the field of maintenance, repair and overhaul of aircrafts spare parts and components. It is a highly technical activity based on the latest technology science in aviation industry. The company aims to effectively contribute in creating a wide industrial base playing an outstanding role in the kingdom's economic growth through qualifying the Saudis for in kingdom technology transfer. Also the company aims to extend its activity to cover the Middle East region and paving the way to an advanced international position. The company objectives are fully harmonized with the offset program mission and fundamentals that urge and encourage technology transfer inside the kingdom and consequently improve Saudi armed forces readiness through training and hiring of national cadres to directly increasing the saudization rate.

- **What is the strategy that the company counted on to realize the objectives for which it is established?**

  The company's strategy to achieve its objectives for which it is established was based upon investment into three basic fields: -

  1. **Investment in human resources**

     The human element is a basic pillar for any success to any project. Investment in human resources is on the top of the company strategy because the trained and qualified manpower will much contribute in such a distinguished field of technology. For that end the company has allocated an annual budget for in kingdom and abroad technical and general training. As

for capital investment the company has actually begun building a new technical complex and a group of specialized workshops in addition to a group of offices for the company administration at KAIA in Jeddah. The construction and furnishing works are expected to be completed at the early beginning of the year 1432 H. The company has placed annual allocations to purchase numerous technical equipments and tools and to commission the test stands plus the supporting workshops necessary to achieve maintenance, repair and overhaul operations.

2. **Investment in Information Technology**
   AACC began to apply the electronic archive system. This project will be completed by the end of the current year and it aims to archive and maintain all the company old records pertaining to (20) years back in a protective electronic way to refer to whenever required. The company is currently engaged in an investment study of an integrated electronic technological system in order to put it into action by the end of this year. This project will directly and effectively contribute to the improvement of work performance efficiency, updating the work planning and the technical follow up practices that may indirectly lead to improve the quality level and increase production rate.
3. **Investment in Engineering Resources, Research and Development**
   AACC places the investment in research and development on the top of its growth strategy. A large portion of the annual budget is dedicated to research and development. Currently the company is building technical and strategic relationships and agreements with the world biggest aviation companies. The purpose of these agreements is to obtain technical and technological training cooperation and to qualify AACC on various technical aviation systems. Also cooperation in scientific and engineering research guarantees the continuity of technical data and experiences exchange. AACC is keen enough to build logistics partnerships with the original equipment manufacturers to pave the way for logistics support agreements. By these logistics agreements we will enhance in kingdom technology transfer process.

- **The aviation industry sector is one of the sectors characterized by the scarcity of trained qualified technical cadre. How did you face this problem?**
  Due to the distinguished feature of the activity, AACC used to bring the experienced experts from Europe, USA and Asia to train the Saudi youth. Such action leads to create a multi –cultural work environment characterized by cooperation and compatibility. AACC has adopted an on job training program (OJT) for technical colleges and institutes fresh graduates. The OJT aims at qualifying and giving the graduates the required training before being permanent employees. The OJT program includes intensive English Language courses in addition to practical training at OEM companies in order to acquire the know how and the technical skills necessary for in kingdom technology transfer.

- **With the full support given to the offset program companies. What are the chances for Saudi nationals to be hired and how do you evaluate the Saudi nationals' performance in AACC?**
  AACC plans to expand and develop its technical capabilities in the next ten years to become the pioneer company in aircraft maintenance, repair and

overhaul business in the Middle East and Gulf region. A five years plan was prepared targeting to increase technical qualification level in work scope and increase the number of Saudi technicians in the company. A plan to develop AACC manpower in the next ten years was completed targeting to hire hundreds of Saudi fresh graduates in the company's various specialties. The saudization rate in AACC has reached 72%. It's a high rate compared with the saudization rate in the local market. We are looking forward to achieve our declared saudization rate of 75% in the next five years.
Praise be to God, the work performance of Saudi employees was and still is at an advanced level and with the coarse of time the accumulated technical know how will positively be reflected on their performance.

- **Saudi industry has gone far achieving a number of successes. How do you look at the future of Saudi industry sector?**
  The Saudi industry sector is one of the major concerns of the government five years plan. The government has kept encouraging and motivating the national industry in different ways. The Saudi industry experiment is considered as a pioneer one at world wide level. When we point out to aviation industry we would obviously see that the government has saved no effort offering support and motivation. The aviation industry in the kingdom witnesses perpetual development on both commercial and military sides. The kingdom's airports have experienced a permanent number of development projects aimed at providing excellent services for both Saudi and non Saudi people. The military aviation has approached history from the widest doors by achieving the assembly of TYPHON fighter in KSA. This experiment represents a kick off towards the diversification and development of the Saudi aviation industry horizons.

- **After this achieved success, what are your future plans to enhance and strengthening this successfulness?**
  Our future plans count on the establishing of the new technical complex which will include the administration offices and the new technical workshops. The new technical complex is located at KAIA in Jeddah and it is expected to be completed in the year 1430H. The complex includes sophisticated workshops for maintenance, repair and overhaul of aircraft landing gear systems. Also we will assemble the jet turbine engine parts for TYPHON fighter then we will work partially on the maintenance, repair and overhaul the subject engine systems. At the same time we will inaugurate the work in the turbines workshop which will include various aircraft engine accessories and components.
  The new technical complex with the new workshops are built on the latest modern construction technology and equipped with the most sophisticated tools and machinery. AACC new technical complex is a turning point in the Saudi aviation industry and it is by all means a source of pride and glorious trait to all Saudi people that would not be achieved without the generous endless support of our judicious and wise government.