

**Inaugural Speech at the Opening of  
West Asia Sub-region Office in Tehran, Iran  
by  
Dr.Ghada Hijjawi-Qaddumi  
President of WCC-Asia Pacific Region (2013-2020)  
February 17, 2017**

**Dear Vice Presidents of West Asia subregion:** Dr.Bahman Namvar Motlagh, Deputy for Handicrafts – Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts & Tourism Organization (ICHTO) and Mr.Ahmed Saleh al-Farsi - Representative of H.E.Shaikha Ayisha al-Siyabiya, Chairperson of Public Authority for Craft Industries (PACI)

**Dear WCC-Asia Pacific Region Members  
Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen**

It is a happy moment to stand in this magnificent historical-cultural building with my colleagues, the two Vice Presidents of West Asia Subregion, Dr.Bahman Namvar Motlagh, from the Islamic Republic of Iran, and Mr.Ahmed Saleh al-Farsi, from the Sultanate of Oman, to inaugurate the first physical office of one of the Asia Pacific subregions namely West Asia. The commendable initiative of Dr.Bahman Namvar Motlagh, VP of APR West Asia Sub-region, Deputy for Handicrafts in the Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts & Tourism Organization (ICHTO), to establish this Office in collaboration with the Public Authority for Craft Industries (PACI), will definitely help in activating the West Asia Sub-region, and networking with the other 5 subregions of Asia Pacific Region (APR) as well.

The Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts & Tourism Organization (ICHTO), and the Public Authority for Craft Industries (PACI) are well established organizations and hence will be influential in the West Asia handicrafts sector, especially that both, with a solid ground, are supported by their governments. Being strong handicrafts entities in West Asia, the largest subregion in APR, they will definitely bring together the other handicrafts players from the other 11 member countries in your subregion.

The APR Board consent to this move, of establishing the Office, has been given with the hope that the West Asia subregion, which comprises 13 countries be more activated. This definitely needs sincere efforts, patience and perseverance. So, hopefully, this Office will contribute to easier networking and collaboration among its member countries.

Both of the Vice Presidents of West Asia subregion proved to be very active in their respective countries, and with this merge, the more interaction and closeness between both of them will, for sure, activate the subregion by involving the individual countries in multi-national events, and by recruiting more effective members to fulfill the WCC-APR mission, in promoting the industry of each subregion in local, and international markets.

With such collaboration they can launch a number of projects together such as :

- establishing a database for crafts and craftspeople in West Asia subregion,
- establish active networking among the national crafts sectors,
- exchange expertise, through inviting experts from other West Asia countries in particular and APR in general.

Before ending my speech, I would like to say that I am confident that both Vice Presidents will work jointly with continuity and commitment for the benefit of the craftspeople and the crafts sector.

I wish both Vice Presidents of West Asia subregion success and prosperity in their joint endeavours,

**Dr.Ghada Hijjawi-Qaddumi**  
**President of WCC-Asia Pacific Region (2013-2020)**