

Joint press statement following the 13th Association Council meeting between the EU and Jordan

The thirteenth meeting of the Association Council of the European Union and Jordan took place in Luxembourg on 17 June 2019.

The Association Council confirmed the strong and solid partnership between the European Union and Jordan, which has further matured in recent years. The EU and Jordan stressed that their cooperation advances the global good, multilateralism and the rules-based international order. The Association Council confirmed that the EU and Jordan share views on key regional matters, including the Middle East Peace Process, and the Syria conflict. The EU and Jordan have worked constructively together as co-presidency of the Union for the Mediterranean since 2012. Both the EU and Jordan agreed to continue working together to foster regional stability, peace, security and beyond.

The EU and Jordan reiterated that there is no viable alternative to a just and comprehensive resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, based on the two-state solution, that ends the occupation that began in June 1967, with the State of Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous, sovereign, and viable State of Palestine, living side by side in peace and security and mutual recognition. In this context, the EU and Jordan recalled UNSCR 478. The EU and Jordan also reiterated the importance of upholding the historic status quo of the holy sites in Jerusalem, including with regards to the Hashemite Custodianship as referred to in the LAS-EU Summit Declaration in Sharm El Sheikh.

The EU and Jordan stressed the crucial role of UNRWA for security and stability in the region, in accordance with its UN mandate stipulated in relevant UN resolutions, and expressed their commitment to continue supporting the Agency politically and financially.

The EU and Jordan welcomed the outcome of the Brussels III Conference on Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region of 12-14 March 2019. The EU and Jordan reconfirmed the imperative of a credible political solution to the Syria crisis in line with the Geneva communiqué and UNSCR 2254 and the central role played by the UN in that regard. The session recognised the right of the Syrian refugees to return safely, voluntarily and in dignity to their homes. The EU recalled that the conditions for returns as stipulated by the UNHCR are not yet met.

Acknowledging Jordan's extraordinary generosity in hosting Syrian refugees over many years and the adverse impact of the Syria crisis on the country, the EU reaffirmed its commitment to continuing to provide assistance to the local Jordanian communities and the Syrians; as such, Jordan confirmed its commitment to maintain the protection of refugees, widen their possibilities for self-sufficiency and, while doing so, contribute to the country's economic development. The EU indicated that it has mobilized over EUR 2.1 billion to Jordan since 2011, across different instruments, including the EU Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis. The support includes bilateral assistance as well as aid addressing the impact of the Syrian crisis, benefiting both the local host communities and the refugee population. This includes humanitarian assistance, together with longer-term resilience and development support in areas such as education, livelihoods, water, sanitation and health, plus Macro-financial assistance. Further significant funding is foreseen for 2019 and 2020.

The EU and Jordan expressed satisfaction with the progress achieved in the implementation of the EU-Jordan Partnership Priorities and confirmed their commitment to further deepen dialogue on issues of mutual interest starting with bolstering security, counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism, integrated border management to knowledge-based and inclusive growth, job creation, innovation, employability, strengthening the rule of law, human rights and democratic governance.

The meeting provided an opportunity to identify areas where the EU and Jordan could enhance cooperation. The EU and Jordan agreed on the importance for Jordan to pursue its ambitious economic reform agenda and to proceed with a long-term strategy on political reforms. The EU and Jordan acknowledged the contribution of the Jordan Conference held in London on 28 February 2019, and looked forward to the joint High-Level Mission to Amman to be led by Commissioner Hahn on 25 June 2019 with European and International financial institutions. The EU stressed that it will continue to use the range of political, security and financial instruments in its toolbox in support of Jordan's efforts on its comprehensive reforms pathway.

The EU welcomed Jordan's compliance with the conditions for the second and final disbursement under its second programme of macro-financial assistance (MFA) for Jordan. The EU reiterated the commitment to consider a third MFA package to Jordan. The EU valued the efforts made by Jordan to implement and maximise the benefits from the revised rules of origin scheme and encouraged Jordan to further intensify endeavours towards this end, including publicising and promoting the scheme benefits to potential investors in the private sector.

The EU and Jordan agreed on the importance of policies and programmes designed to improve the quality of education and vocational education and training, to enhance employment opportunities for young people and to bring women into the workforce.

The EU welcomed progress in Jordan's implementation of its Monitoring, Reporting and Verification obligations under Article 13 of the Paris Agreement on climate change. The EU and Jordan also reiterated support to the implementation of the Red Sea/Dead Sea project that also benefits the Palestinian side in the spirit of fostering regional cooperation.

The EU and Jordan exchanged views on human rights and agreed to continue their regular dialogue. The EU commended Jordan's efforts to improve the general human rights situation in the country, as well as its efforts on the rule of law. The EU encouraged Jordan to continue making progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment and on women's rights.

The meeting was co-chaired by Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-President of the Commission, and by Ayman Safadi, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of Jordan, in the presence of Johannes Hahn, the Commissioner of European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations.

In the margins of the Association Council, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-President of the Commission Federica MOGHERINI and the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of Jordan Ayman SAFADI signed a Framework Participation Agreement (FPA) on the participation of Jordan in EU Crisis Management Operations. This is the 19th FPA with a third country and the first FPA in the MENA region. This further deepens the EU and Jordan cooperation in the field of common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) allowing the secondment of Jordanian personnel to CSDP missions and operations.

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