

Remarks by High-Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the joint press conference with Adel bin Ahmed Al-Jubeir, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia

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Today's meeting was a demonstration of our joint commitment to deepen our relationship and to work together on different issues - first of all on regional issues.

We started our meeting today with the common concern about what is happening in both our regions with the recent attack in Nice, but also in Saudi Arabia just a few weeks ago and in so many others countries across our common space.

This remind us that the European Union and the GCC have a mutual interest to work closely together on countering terrorism and we decided to do so more and more in the coming months and years. We will continue to work together to fight against Da'esh and other terrorist movements. But we will also work together to prevent radicalisation and find ways to be more effective in our fight against terrorism.

We also agreed on the need to work to create more opportunities for the prosperity of our citizens and most of all the prosperity of our youth.

Trade flows have been growing between the EU and the GCC to reach more than €155 billion last year. The GCC is now the EU's 4th largest export market. And we will continue to further deepen our trade relations, by removing concrete obstacles to trade, protecting and promoting investments and regulatory convergence.

During our discussions, we also decided to work together to support economic diversification strategies, such as the Saudi Vision 2030. We discussed it when I was in Jeddah recently. And the European Union is more than ready to support this process across the region for the mutual benefit of our citizens.

We also had an exchange on human rights. I stressed the importance to be able to have an open, frank and constructive dialogue on this issue.

On the foreign policy front, we all agreed that we feel a sense of growing urgency to jointly tackle regional challenges and crises. The list is long.

We focused this afternoon our attention to the situation in Yemen. We share the determination to encouraging the parties in Yemen to agree on a political settlement. The EU is ready to continue playing its part in supporting the current efforts led by the UN. And I would like to thank, on behalf of all the European Union Member States, Kuwait for

hosting these important talks but also Saudi Arabia and the other countries for a common approach in these recent months to try and support this process on the most effective and united way.

We also exchanged views on important other issues of common interest. The Middle East Peace Process - where we work hand-in-hand especially with the views of operationalising the Arab Peace Initiative and implementing the Quartet's report recommendations - but also the situation in Libya and the relations with Iran.

We will continue our exchanges over dinner, focusing our attention in the situation in Syria, Iraq and Lebanon. And I am sure that it will be interesting but mostly useful, because we don't only exchange views, we also come to agree on common lines our approaches. And we know very well that when the European countries and the countries in the Gulf share an approach and a strategy, this has an impact on the ground and that is quite significant.

So again, I would like to thank you, Minister, for this visit to the European Union and I am very much look forward to working together with you and all the other friends in the Gulf on this broad set of common issues. Thank you.

Link to the video: <http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/video/player.cfm?ref=I124688>

Q. On Yemen

We agreed to work together in Kuwait - and the EU is represented there by our Head of Delegation to Yemen - to work together to help the parties to find common ground. Again this was one element where convergence was complete between us and among the respective partners. I have to say that today we are really together in encouraging and trying to provide space to the parties to find a political solution. We agree that there is only a political solution to the conflict in Yemen and we are trying to join forces to facilitate this process. I recently met the UN Special Envoy guaranteeing all the EU support in this respect. I would like to stress again the extremely relevant role that, first of all, Kuwait is playing as not only generous host, but also as a political sensible host to the talks. But also the role of all GCC countries, partners and friends in what is today really a shared approach.

Link to the video: <http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/video/player.cfm?ref=I124690>