



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Brussels, 26 October 2010
15539/10
PRESSE 288

**NINTH MEETING OF THE
EU-JORDAN ASSOCIATION COUNCIL
(Brussels, 26 October 2010)
Statement by the European Union**

1. The European Union warmly welcomes this ninth Meeting of the EU-Jordan Association Council. Our meeting provides an excellent opportunity to take stock of our relations and the advancement of our bilateral cooperation since the last meeting of the Association Council of 16 November 2009. The EU values Jordan as a very important partner in both the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and the Union for the Mediterranean and is committed to strengthening and further developing a close, constructive and mutually beneficial partnership with Jordan.
2. The EU welcomes the successful conclusion of negotiations over the new EU-Jordan ENP Action Plan that gives concrete substance to the “advanced status” of our partnership and commences the next stage of our relations.
3. The EU highly values Jordan’s commitment to the implementation of the measures agreed in the previous ENP Action Plan, based upon Jordan’s objectives of political and economic reform and a further integration into European economic and social structures. The EU has acknowledged the efforts made and the results achieved in the four progress reports on the implementation of the Action Plan (the latest one released in May 2010).
4. In December 2008 the EU Foreign Ministers welcomed and endorsed Jordan's desire to enhance its relations with the EU, which Jordan had declared during the 2008 Association Council by presenting the "Paper on the upgrading of Jordan-EU relations". Jordan further specified its approach in the "Working Paper on an Advanced Status with the European Union" in June 2009 by putting forward concrete proposals in a range of areas.

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5. During the 2009 Association Council, the EU further appreciated Jordan's proposals and expressed its readiness to strengthen co-operation by a range of means at the political as well as at sectoral levels, in line with the shared interest of both sides. To that aim Jordan and the EU jointly undertook to negotiate a new ENP Action Plan. In the negotiation process the sub-committees played a vital role in examining the content and scope for enhancing relations between Jordan and the EU. The respective meetings were tasked to undertake the necessary analysis of Jordan's proposals and the EU's responses, and to develop, each in its sector, the content for an enhancement of cooperation.
6. The EU is pleased that this Association Council can announce the political agreement on the new EU-Jordan ENP Action Plan, whose formal adoption process will be completed in the forthcoming weeks. The new Action Plan reflects the ambitious character of our partnership as well as our shared, deep understanding of the mutual commitment to achieving closer integration; of the pace and scope of reforms required; and of the continued support by the EU in order to overcome some of the remaining impediments in developing our relations.
7. The EU looks forward to increased political dialogue with its Jordanian counterpart in all areas of mutual interest. The EU also looks forward to seizing the momentum gathered around the Action Plan negotiations to support and reinforce Jordan's reform efforts in the governance, democratisation and other areas. Furthermore, the EU looks forward to maintaining the commitment of both sides to fully implementing the priorities set out in the new Action Plan. Finally, the EU looks forward to working jointly toward increasing the visibility and understanding of our advanced-status partnership among citizens in Jordan and the EU Member States.
8. The EU welcomes the Jordanian government's continued determination to achieve the objectives and commitments laid down in the National Agenda and the Kulluna al-Urdun initiative, and the fact that its National Social and Economic Development Programme builds upon these reform agendas. The EU encourages Jordan to implement policies conducive to maintaining macroeconomic stability and supportive of the policies and sectoral strategies set out in the National Agenda.
9. The respect for democratic principles, human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law constitutes an essential element of the Association Agreement between the EU and Jordan and remains a priority in the new ENP Action Plan. The EU acknowledges that Jordan has made significant progress over the last years in reinforcing the rule of law.
10. The EU has taken a careful note of the temporary Elections Law adopted in May 2010. The EU continues to encourage Jordan to implement specific recommendations of its National Agenda Committee with regard to further reforming the electoral framework so as to ensure true and representative political pluralism. The EU looks forward to Jordan's holding of the forthcoming parliamentary elections in a free, fair and transparent manner.

11. The EU appreciates Jordan's commitment to strengthening cooperation in the justice sector. At the same time, the EU encourages Jordan to continue reinforcing the independence of the judiciary. The EU welcomes the zero-tolerance policy pledged by the Jordanian government regarding corruption.
12. While acknowledging the positive effects of Jordan's Press and Publications Law, the EU encourages Jordan to maintain full respect for freedom of expression with regard to the application of the Penal Code. At the same time, the EU invites Jordan to fully implement its recently adopted code of conduct on relations between the government and media, including the internet.
13. Regarding freedom of association, the EU takes positive note of the application of the Associations Act of 2009, and encourages Jordan to further bring the law in line with international standards and address the remaining concerns regarding registration, dissolution and funding of associations and civil society organisations. The EU expresses its hope that the law will be fully implemented. The EU acknowledges that civil society brings added value by promoting participatory governance and plays a positive role in an overall reform process. The EU underlines the importance of fostering civil society by allowing it to operate with sufficient freedom, and emphasises the benefits of maintaining consultations with civil society representatives.
14. Concerning freedom of assembly, the EU continues to hope that the application of the Public Gathering Law strikes the right balance between the need to ensure public security and safety, and the goal of guaranteeing citizens the possibility to participate in public life. With regard to further increasing public participation, the EU notes positively Jordan's continued objective of administrative decentralisation. The EU also acknowledges the sustained activity of the Jordanian Ombudsman Office.
15. The EU welcomes positive developments in the area of protection of women and children, such as Jordan's progress on protection against domestic violence and equal treatment of women, notably the recently adopted "Personal Status Law". At the same time, the EU encourages Jordan to further such efforts, particularly regarding honour crimes, and invites Jordan to lift the two remaining CEDAW reservations. The EU welcomes Jordan's efforts regarding the protection of the rights of the child, especially on child labour, and calls on Jordan to strengthen its endeavour to combat violence against children in all settings.
16. The EU encourages Jordan to continue pursuing efforts aimed at fighting discrimination on all grounds.
17. The EU encourages Jordan to make further efforts on the fight against torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, including by implementing the recommendations of the Committee against torture adopted in May 2010. The EU invites Jordan to ratify the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture.

18. The EU refers to the historic trend towards the progressive abolition of the death penalty worldwide. The EU acknowledges Jordan's de facto moratorium on executions in place since May 2006 and strongly encourages Jordan to proceed towards a de iure abolishment of the death penalty.
19. The EU invites Jordan to continue implementing the recommendations endorsed by it at the conclusion of the Universal Periodic Review process, to which Jordan was subject, as stated in the 2009 report of the UPR working group.
20. The EU commends the positive attitude to the International Criminal Court that Jordan has maintained since its early ratification of the Rome Statute. The EU looks forward to an enhanced cooperation with Jordan in promoting the universality and full implementation of the Rome Statute.
21. The EU remains fully committed to a successful development of the Union for the Mediterranean. The EU welcomes the work that has been done to ensure the proper functioning of the Barcelona Secretariat, including the appointment of Ambassador Ahmad Masa'deh as its first Secretary-General. The EU looks forward to the formal adoption of the budget and work plan of the Secretariat. It is essential that the Union for the Mediterranean, building on the achievements of the Barcelona Process, be able to deliver as soon as possible. The EU believes it is paramount to make progress in the common objectives agreed in Paris and Marseille, which will be further strengthened at the forthcoming Summit in Barcelona on 21 November. Concrete progress and joint efforts also need to be made concerning projects aimed at fostering regional integration. In this respect the EU welcomes Jordan's constructive contribution and commitment to further developing this joint initiative.
22. Regarding the Middle East Peace Process, the EU commends the important role Jordan plays in promoting the stability of the region and the special role of Jordan regarding Holy Sites in Jerusalem. The European Union will spare no effort, along with its partners in the Quartet as well as Arab partners, to support US-led efforts for successful negotiations that lead to a framework agreement within one year. The European Union regrets that the partial settlement freeze has not been extended by the Government of Israel. The European Union recalls that settlements including in East Jerusalem are illegal under international law. If there is to be genuine peace, a way must be found through negotiations to resolve the status of Jerusalem as the future capital of two states. The European Union remains committed to a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict on the basis of the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions, the terms of reference of the Madrid conference, including land for peace, the Roadmap, the agreements previously reached by the parties and the Arab Peace Initiative. The EU reiterates its commitment to a two-state solution with the State of Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous and viable State of Palestine, comprising the West Bank and Gaza, living side by side in peace and security.

23. The EU welcomes the elections in Iraq on 7 March 2010 and underlines the urgent need to form a stable government in Iraq which is able to take decisive steps towards national reconciliation and to deal with all challenges confronting the country. The EU reaffirms its support to the Government of Iraq in building an independent, sovereign, secure, stable, unified, democratic and prosperous Iraq, where human rights are respected. The EU remains ready to co-operate with Iraq's neighbouring states and the rest of the international community on issues of mutual concern, such as the spread of terrorism. It pays tribute to Jordan's constructive role in assisting Iraq to re-establish relations with neighbouring countries.
24. The EU reaffirms its longstanding commitment to work for a diplomatic solution of the Iranian nuclear issue and fully supports the efforts of the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to resume talks in this regard. The EU underlines the importance of full and universal implementation of UNSCR 1929 in order to convince Iran to engage in meaningful negotiations about its nuclear programme and other issues of mutual concern. The EU adopted a Decision implementing the measures contained in the UNSCR 1929 as well as accompanying measures, with a view to supporting the resolution, through negotiations, of all outstanding concerns regarding Iran's development of sensitive technologies in support of its nuclear and missile programmes. The aim of the EU is to achieve a comprehensive long-term settlement that would rebuild international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme, while respecting Iran's legitimate rights to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy under the NPT. The EU deplores the continued violations of human rights in Iran and remains deeply concerned about the use of the death penalty, the violent repression of human rights defenders and political activists.
25. Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery remains one of the most serious threats to international peace and security. The EU remains committed to close cooperation with all countries, including Jordan, in support of the multilateral system of non-proliferation and disarmament. The EU underlines the importance of full compliance with and national implementation of existing disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements and other relevant international obligations and will continue to strengthen the NPT and the non-proliferation regime. The EU welcomes the outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference and the renewed consensus within the international community in favour of the NPT and the international non-proliferation regime. It is also aware of the need to progress toward the implementation of the 1995 NPT Resolution on the Middle East and toward achieving the Middle East Zone Free of Weapons of Mass Destruction and their means of delivery, in line with the outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. The EU is particularly concerned about the growing threat presented by proliferation of ballistic missiles.

26. Terrorism is a threat to all states and all peoples. Both Jordan and the EU have repeatedly been victims of terrorist attacks. The EU looks forward to continuing its fruitful cooperation with Jordan to counter the terrorist threat, including in the framework of the EU-Jordan Action Plan. The EU places the utmost importance on respect for human rights and international humanitarian law. This respect and the fight against terrorism are two complementary and mutually reinforcing goals. The EU supports the United Nations as the only worldwide forum for combating terrorism and remains committed to reaching an international consensus on the draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.
27. On the economic side, the EU acknowledges that growth in the Jordanian economy has gained momentum in 2010 led by exports and investment as the global economic climate has improved. Rising demand from Iraq has boosted exports while domestic demand is likely to remain subdued in the short-term, given cuts to government expenditure. The deficit has been reduced in 2010 in line with a long-term effort to improve the stability and sustainability of public finances. While revenues have improved compared to last year, cuts to government expenditure have been the main source of consolidation. The EU is supportive of the structural reforms that contribute to the reduction of macroeconomic vulnerabilities, promote growth by increasing the role of the private sector, generate employment and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of public finances.
28. The EU encourages Jordan to take advantage of the existing EU funding mechanisms, such as the Neighbourhood Investment Facility and the European Investment Bank, inter alia in the areas of transport and energy.
29. In the transport sector, the EU welcomes the conclusion of the negotiations on the Euro-Mediterranean comprehensive aviation agreement with Jordan, which was initialled on 17th March 2010, and declares its readiness to proceed to its signature without delay. Jordan is the first country in the Near East concluding such an agreement that will ensure the establishment of common standards in the field of air transport, the progressive opening-up of the markets, boost economic relations and tourism and offer new opportunities for consumers and operators. The EU reaffirms its support to the implementation of Jordan's National Transport Strategy 2009-2011. The EU commends the establishment on 1st October 2010 of the Land Transport Regulatory Commission.
30. The EU welcomes the latest developments in the energy sector, including the adoption of the new legislation on renewable energy and on energy efficiency that will contribute to the realisation of Jordan's commitment in pursuing concrete targets in this area. The EU reaffirms its readiness to assist Jordan's efforts in the promotion of its Energy Sector Strategy and is keen to see Jordan taking further steps in the Energy market integration around the Mediterranean, such as the Mediterranean Solar Plan; the EU takes note that Jordan wishes to become a regional hub.

31. With regard to Research and Innovation, the EU welcomes the signature of the Science and Technological Cooperation Agreement with Jordan on 30th November 2009 and trusts that it will reinforce the existing cooperation in the fields of common interest and increase the Jordanian participation in the research Framework Programme (FP). In the framework of the FP7, 31 Jordanian applications were retained for an EC contribution of € 2.54 million to the Jordanian institutions.
 32. The EU commends Jordan's efforts towards further liberalisation of trade and removal of all obstacles, including technical barriers to trade. The EU welcomes Jordan's interest to expand trade ties with the EU through further liberalisation of trade in services and establishment. The EU encourages Jordan to engage as soon as possible in bilateral negotiations with the EU in this field. The EU welcomes the imminent signature of the Protocol for the establishment of a new mechanism for the settlement of bilateral trade disputes. This will take place on 11 November in Brussels, in the margins of the 9th Euro-Med Trade Ministerial meeting. The EU has always been and continues to be strong supporter of the Agadir Agreement. It encourages Jordan to make full use of the possibilities offered by the Agadir Agreement, including the system of Pan-Euro-Med cumulation of origin, and to facilitate the extension of the Agadir Agreement to new potential members.
 33. The EU commends on the transparent approach followed by Jordan as regards its plan to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, while respecting internationally recognised safety, security and non-proliferation standards and requirements, including the provisions of the Additional Protocol with the International Atomic Energy Agency and of the Convention on Nuclear Safety ratified in 2009. The EU congratulates Jordan's membership on the IAEA's board of governors.
 34. The Memorandum of Understanding regarding the National Indicative Programme 2011-2013 was signed in Amman on 31st May 2010. The important financial allocation of € 223 million proves the extent of the EU strong cooperation which has steadily increased over the last few years. This programme, encompassing four main priorities, aims at supporting: 1) Jordan's political and security reform in the areas of democracy, human rights, good governance, justice and the fight against extremism; 2) trade and investment development; 3) sustainability of the development process; and 4) institution building, financial stability and support to regulatory approximation.
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