

**ASSOCIATION
BETWEEN
THE EUROPEAN UNION
AND JORDAN**

The Association Council

**Brussels, 10 July 2017
(OR. en)**

UE-RHJ 3302/17

MINUTES

Subject: Eleventh meeting of the EU-Jordan Association Council
9 October 2014
Brussels

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The **Association Council between the EU and Jordan** held its eleventh session on 9 October 2014 in Brussels.

This eleventh session was chaired by Ms. Federica MOGHERINI, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy representing the Presidency, and replacing Ms. Catherine Ashton the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

The European Commission was represented by Mr. Michael KÖHLER, Director.

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan was represented by Mr. Nasser JUDEH, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Jordan who led the Jordan delegation.

Opening remarks

Ms. Federica MOGHERINI opened the meeting by welcoming Minister JUDEH and thanking him for his participation in the eleventh session of the Association Council to discuss topics such as Jordan's political and economical reform process, the future of EU-Jordan relations, the state of affairs in the region including Syria, Iraq, and the Middle-East Peace Process. Minister JUDEH thanked Ms MOGHERINI for hosting the meeting and for the work done during the Italian Presidency, and congratulated her for her appointment as High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission.

1. POINT 1: ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA

The Association Council adopted the agenda of its meeting as outlined in document [UE-RHJ 3305/14](#).

2. POINT 2: ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF THE 10TH SESSION OF THE ASSOCIATION COUNCIL

Both sides agreed on the adoption of minutes from the tenth meeting of the Association Council as set out in document [UE-RHJ 3304/14](#).

3. POINT 3: STATE AND FUTURE OF EU-JORDAN BILATERAL RELATIONS

Mr. JUDEH recalled the historic friendship and strong partnership between the EU and Jordan, which was further enhanced in 2010 by the Advanced Status of the Association Agreement. He underlined Jordan's commitment to the partnership which had grown stronger also due to Jordan's efforts to obtain good and mutually benefiting results. He was pleased to see the participation of many representatives of Member States whom he knew since many years. Proud of the relationship, symbolised by solid bilateral and institutional interaction with the EU, he commended the progress made since the last Association Council. Referring to the example set by Jordan, particularly over the previous four years, he highlighted Jordan's ambitious political, economic and social reform programmes, put in place under the leadership of His Majesty the King and implemented by different institutions foreseen under the Constitution. Minister JUDEH thanked the EU for the continued political, economic and technical support in the different areas of cooperation.

Referring to the EU-Jordan Mobility Partnership Joint Declaration, Minister JUDEH indicated that the agreement represents a milestone in the Jordan-EU relations, as it would unlock new opportunities for closer cooperation in critical fields such as migration, mobility and security.

He also praised the successful co-presidency by Jordan and the EU of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) since a couple of years and affirmed his belief in this forum, which is based on the idea of putting aside political obstacles and seeking progress on economic projects notwithstanding difficult political circumstances. He considered that the EU and Jordan as co-presidents could attain results and raise awareness among the population of the positive impacts of the pursued projects on their lives. He appreciated the unanimous support given in September 2014 by all 43 UfM Member States for a continuation of Jordan's co-presidency. In the same spirit of cooperation, he looked forward to seeing tangible progress in relation to the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) with the EU.

Ms Federica MOGHERINI highlighted the very special nature of the EU-Jordan relationship, in full support of promoting peace, stability and prosperity in the region.

3.1 POLITICAL/ECONOMIC REFORMS IN JORDAN AND THEIR IMPLEMENTATION

Minister JUDEH mentioned the high number of events that had happened in Jordan since 2010 and highlighted Jordan's achievements in meeting the challenges, with the support of its institutions, the parliamentary system and the monarchy. He pointed out several milestones on the political, economical and social reform front and addressed the challenges faced by the region: the threat of extremism, the volatility in Syria and Iraq and the continuing volatility of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. He commended the progress with political reform, notwithstanding delays due to the different wars between 2003 and 2010 (Iraq, Gaza and Lebanon), i.e. prior to the Arab Spring. He mentioned the systematic approach to reform, starting with the Constitution (one third reviewed so far), in view of boosting confidence in Jordan's institutions and in the future. Next step includes the preparation of elections. Jordan builds on the reforms already put in place and is determined to pursue reform notwithstanding the regional context and challenges.

The comprehensive revision of the Constitution had led to additional amendments to expand the mandate of the Independent Commission for Elections, enlarging its scope beyond parliamentary elections to oversee and conduct all elections, from the national to municipal level. Other important constitutional amendments were related to the separation of armed forces and intelligence services from political affairs; the enhancement of the independence of the judiciary; the promotion of political parties, local government support; and further political decentralisation. Minister JUDEH referred to the vision for the near future outlined by His Majesty the King of Jordan, underlining that reforms would, in the long term, enhance security and stability overcoming current challenges.

Minister JUDEH emphasized the evolutionary political reform process in Jordan and linked it to the volatility in neighbouring countries (Syria, Yemen, Libya and Iraq) which caused great insecurity including a threat to North Africa, Central Africa, and the Horn of Africa. He indicated strong belief in the need to continue strengthening democratic processes and good governance frameworks and described Jordan's reform efforts aimed at further developing a democratic multiparty political system in response to people's aspirations for accountability, transparency and participation in the decision making process. Notwithstanding the turmoil in the region, Government and Parliament had been working hard towards political and economic reform. Another example are the two elections held in 2013; pa parliamentary and municipal elections.

With regard to the respect of Human Rights and the Rule of Law, Minister JUDEH stressed that Jordan has lived up to its international commitments. As regards Jordan's engagement on the international front, he referred to Jordan's important contribution to peacekeeping in the region and around the world.

Mr. KHARABSHEH, Secretary General of the Ministry for Planning and International Cooperation, provided an update on the economic reform in Jordan. Jordan has taken thorough decisions in a number of areas, such as subsidiary and tax issues, the income tax law, investment law, secure lending law and public-private partnership law. Legislation has been developed or amended to enhance the business and investment climate in the country and to improve conditions for foreign investment, in view of economic development and employment generation especially among young graduates. Significant economic challenges endured due to external vulnerabilities and to the fiscal situation. It is in that respect that His Majesty the King had directed the Government to prepare a comprehensive economic and social 10-year framework, called "Jordan 2025", which has been submitted to nation-wide consultation. This framework should focus on deliverable and realistic objectives, consist of action plans and be built around five topics: human resource development; economic development; social development; decentralisation and governance development; rule of law, justice and legislation.

In conclusion, Minister JUDEH recalled the importance of the national integrity charter and the five discussion papers that his Majesty the King had published in local and international press, representing the roadmap of Jordan's political, economic, and social reform for the next decade.

3.2 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT AND THE EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY ACTION PLAN

Minister MOGHERINI emphasized strong EU appreciation for the situation and developments in Jordan and for the strength of its institutions, notably against the background of the turbulent situation in the region. She highlighted the importance of the meeting, and recalled Jordan's Advanced Status. Minister MOGHERINI outlined the important progress made over the last years in the framework of EU-Jordan relations, including the signature of a Joint Declaration establishing a Mobility Partnership with Jordan on 9 October 2014.

On the political and human rights front, she mentioned a couple of points that were highlighted in the most recent Universal Periodic Review, such as: the fundamental freedom of expression including the media and the internet and the freedom of assembly as enshrined in the constitution, the principles of universality and equality of vote.

On the economic front and from an EU view point, the key objective was to continue ensuring the implementation of the "Stand-by Agreement" with the IMF, to open up new financial opportunities such as macro/economic support and enable access to other funds. She urged Jordan to tackle a number of challenges inherited from the past and to introduce tax reform, improve tax collection, limit tax exemptions, develop an energy strategy, implement the national integrity strategy. She commended the economic blue print for 2025, a positive initiative undertaken by the Jordanian government.

Minister MOGHERINI praised the role played by Jordan as co-chair of the UfM together with the EU. The UfM is considered a key instrument for enhancing regional multilateral cooperation, applying a challenging and motivating format reaching beyond politics and targeting projects which could be particularly valuable to the region.

On security and counter terrorism, Minister MOGHERINI referred to the agreement to launch security dialogue and have regular meetings between the EU and Jordan to review the situation and seeks ways to enhance the level of counter-terrorism cooperation between the EU and Jordan.

Concerning migration and mobility, the signature of the joint Declaration was considered a positive step forward following the launch of the EU-Jordan Migration, Mobility and Security dialogue in 2012. It was highlighted that Jordan was the first Middle East country to sign such an agreement linking areas of different competences (asylum, international protection and development, migration management) in an orderly manner.

On trade, the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) would build on the already very well developed trade relations within the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement, to progressively integrate Jordan into the EU's single market.

Mr MINGARELLI, Managing Director for North Africa, Middle East, Iran, Iraq, Arab Peninsula of the European External Action Service, made a brief intervention to emphasise that Jordan had been the first partner country in the Middle East and in North Africa which had got Macro-Financial Assistance from the EU. Despite some serious financial constraints on the EU side, the volume of the cooperation budget had been doubled over the previous three years, representing a strong sign of European commitment. He welcomed the progressive reform path chosen by Jordan and advised that the political reform should not be slowed down despite the regional context and the spill over of the Syrian crisis.

Mr. KÖHLER, Director at the European Commission (DG NEAR) confirmed that progress on the reform agenda could positively influence the availability of funds and recalled the upcoming visit of Commissioner Fühle to Amman to sign the Memorandum of Understanding establishing the priorities for cooperation for the next couple of years, including possible extension of cooperation. He assured that cooperation amounts had not been held hostage by the needs stemming from the Syrian crisis. There was, therefore, an increase in bilateral allocations for Jordan and also an increase in the EU's financial contribution to tackle the impact of the influx of refugees and the needs of refugees and host communities.

Notwithstanding the political challenges in the region, Minister JUDEH underlined Jordan's commitment to the milestones agreed under the "Stand-by Agreement" with the IMF and added that Jordan had implemented the required political and domestic reforms needed to obtain macro-financial support. He confirmed tax reform as a top priority for Jordan and announced that a new income tax law is in preparation, in view of improving tax collecting mechanisms in support of the economy.

With respect to freedom of press or publication and the freedom of expression, Minister JUDEH affirmed that these freedoms are in place and underlined his country's commitment in that regard. Although he affirmed to be politically confident in terms of security, he reported that, over the last months, other countries had been testing Jordan's ability to endure stability. He underlined that Jordan's armed forces are fully capable to uphold security at the borders.

As regards the formalisation of the security dialogue, highlighted by Foreign Minister MOGHERINI, he urged the respective parties to take action as soon as possible, given the many challenges.

He also referred to the impact of the refugee presence, equivalent to 21 % of the country's population, and conveyed the view that the international community had not done much to assist Jordan. Historically, Jordanians have always been extremely hospitable. However, with the subsequent waves of refugees, they had started questioning the presence of a large number of Syrian refugees on their territory, blaming them for loss of job opportunities and overstretched resources, such as water, energy, education facilities and health care services namely in locations closer to the refugee sites.

Minister JUDEH concluded by first highlighting the example set by Jordan in a troubled and challenging context and the need to further increase investment and support to a country that has upheld peace and security. Secondly, speaking on behalf of His Majesty the King, the Government and the People of Jordan, he emphasized that Jordan would not slow down its reform process regardless of what would happen in the region.

Mr. OKLAH AL-ZOUBI, Ambassador of Jordan to the EU, recalled that the Action Plan between Jordan and the EU was negotiated before 2010 and agreed in 2010, prior to the so-called Arab Spring. Since then, several drastic developments affecting the whole region, including Jordan, had happened. However these events and the current political situation had never been reflected in progress reports or the Action Plan. He added that Jordan's role has been appreciated, and has been reflected in EU Statements, but has hardly been translated into specific projects and partnerships. He considered that the EU benchmarks had been strictly applied, with little flexibility, and without taking into consideration peculiarities and the nature of the country involved. He referred to the discussions on the Mobility Partnership, stating that the EU had been insisting to applying the same benchmarks that are applied to other countries in the region. He claimed that Jordan has its own specificities, which should be considered in the context of a real partnership from a win-win perspective.

Referring to the UfM, he underlined that the full trust and confidence the 43 members had put in Jordan was most appreciated and reiterated his country's commitment to continue to work very closely with the EU in the context of co-chaired meetings (building on the successful six co-chaired ministerial meetings so far) and a diversity of projects.

Mr. KHARABSHEH referred to progress towards the DCFTA. He went back to the start of the Association Agreement, and its entry into force in 2002, mentioning that the trade balance between Jordan and the EU had witnessed a continuous deficit: in 2002 the deficit was almost 1.3 billion US dollars, and in 2013 it reached USD 4.5 billion, to the benefit of the EU. He indicated the rules of origin as major factor. Nevertheless, he expressed strong belief in the DCFTA, as an opportunity to further enhance the relationship. He referred progress on different issues related to the Agreement and made a specific call for the simplification of the rules of origin which is an important issue for the Jordanian side. He explained that Jordan's industrial sector consisted mainly of transformative industries, which had great difficulties to qualify for the rules of origin. He pledged therefore for the EU to consider this aspect with a view to enabling the finalisation of the agreement.

Closing remarks

Minister MOGHERINI concluded by saying that the new Commission would reflect and manage the future negotiations in the perspective of finding good solutions. She expressed her appreciation for Jordan's endeavours concerning the refugee situation. She insisted on the strong support of all European colleagues in the Foreign Affairs Councils, who are fully aware of the need to support Jordan work in all possible ways. Minister Mogherini affirmed that she was very much looking forward to start the security dialogue.

4. **POINT 4: POLITICAL DIALOGUE ON REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES**

This point was treated in the informal part of the Association Council.

5. **POINT 5: A.O.B**

No issue was raised under this item of the agenda.

AGENDA

ASSOCIATION
BETWEEN
THE EUROPEAN UNION
AND JORDAN

The Association Council

Brussels, 3 October 2014

UE-RHJ 3305/14

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

meeting : Eleventh EU-Jordan Association Council
date : 9 October 2014
in : Brussels

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Adoption of the minutes of the 10th session of the Association Council
3. State and future of EU-Jordan bilateral relations
 - Political/economic reforms in Jordan and their implementation.
 - Implementation of the Association Agreement and the European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan.
 - Regional consequences of the Syrian crisis and EU assistance in this context
4. Political dialogue on regional and international issues*
5. A.O.B.

* Points to be dealt with in the informal session

UE-RHJ 3305/14

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DELEGATION OF JORDAN

Head of Delegation

H.E. Mr. Nasser JUDEH Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriate Affairs of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

Members of delegation

H.E. Dr. Montaser Oklah AL-ZOU'BI Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Head of Mission, Mission of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the Kingdom of Belgium, the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg, the Kingdom of Norway, the European Union and NATO

H.E. Dr. Saleh AL KHARABSHEH Secretary General of the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

H.E. Ambassador Yousef AL-BATAINEH Director of the Private Office of H.E. Minister Judah

Mr Akram HAYAJNEH Deputy Head of Mission, Mission of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the European Union, Brussels

Mrs. Ala' ALGHIZZAWI Second Secretary, Mission of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the European Union, Brussels

Mr. Fadeel AL MOQBEL Third Secretary, Mission of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the European Union, Brussels

Mrs. Hala NUSAIRAT Third Secretary, Mission of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the European Union, Brussels

Mr. Sami SAMAWI

Diplomatic Attaché, Private Office of H.E. Minister
Judeh

Mr. Osama ODWAN

Private Office of H.E. Minister Judeh

Mr. Emad SHANAAH

Head of EU Partnership Section, Ministry of
Planning and International Cooperation of the
Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

DELEGATION OF THE EU

COUNTRY/INSTITUTIONS	NAME
Italy	<p>Ms. Federica MOGHERINI, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Italy, Head of the EU Delegation*</p> <p>Ambassador Ettore Francesco SEQUI, Head of the Minister's Private Staff*</p> <p>Ambassador Alessandro CORTESE, Italian Representative to the PSC*</p> <p>Dr. Sabrina BELLOSI, Minister's Counsellor for Communication*</p> <p>Cons. Domenico BELLATO – MaMa/MOG Delegate Representative of the press office of the PR (Dr. Michelangelo NERINI or Mrs. Annarita LIPPIELLO)</p>
General Secretariat of the Council	<p>Mr. Leonardo SCHIAVO, Director General, DG C - Foreign Affairs, Enlargement and Civil Protection*</p> <p>Mr. Dimosthenis MAMMONAS, Administrator in charge of the Maghreb/Mashrek Working Party, Co-Secretary of the EU-Jordan Association Council</p>
Commission	<p>Mr. Michael KOEHLER, Director, DG DEVCO, Neighbourhood Directorate*</p>

European External Action Service	<p>Mr. Hugues MINGARELLI, Managing Director for North Africa, Middle East, Iran, Iraq, Arab Peninsula*</p> <p>Mr. Vassilis BONTOSOGLOU, Head of Middle East Division</p> <p>Mrs Nacira BOULEHOUAT, Deputy Head of Middle East Division*</p> <p>Mrs. Joanna WRONECKA, Head of the EU Delegation in Amman*</p> <p>Mr. Fabrizio DI MICHELE, Chairman of the Mashrek/Maghreb Working Group*</p> <p>Mr. Pierre-Christophe CHATZISAVAS, Desk*</p> <p>Mr. Gianmatteo ARENA, Desk</p>
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* Participants to the restricted session.

ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE EU-JORDAN ASSOCIATION COUNCIL
(Brussels, 9 October 2014)

STATEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

1. The European Union welcomes this **eleventh Meeting of the EU-Jordan Association Council** which provides an excellent opportunity to take stock of the development of our relations and bilateral cooperation. In a troubled environment, Jordan continues to stand as a moderate, tolerant voice and to play a stabilizing role both regionally and internationally, including through its efforts in the United Nations Security Council. The EU values Jordan as a key partner in the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and is committed to further strengthening a close, constructive and mutually beneficial partnership with Jordan. The strength of this partnership has been particularly illustrated over the last two years by the EU-Jordan co-presidency of the Union for Mediterranean.
2. In 2010 the “advanced status” partnership and the EU-Jordan ENP Action Plan set the framework of our enhanced relations and reflected our mutual commitment to achieving closer integration. Today we need a more privileged relationship on the basis of the Association Agreement which continues to provide for many opportunities of cooperation and dialogue.

3. The political developments in the Middle East are at a critical junction. Violent conflicts, the threat to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of certain States in the region and the massive refugee crisis have a devastating impact on socio-economic development in the region. Religious fundamentalism, extremism and sectarian divides are fuelling the advancement of terrorist groups, threatening the stability and security of the region as a whole. Millions of civilians have fled and continue to flee the horrors of civil war and atrocious exactions. Ruthless confrontation is the approach of a growing number of groups that abhor the values of human rights and democracy, show the utmost disregard for human life and reject peaceful coexistence and decent living for all. More than ever, the **respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and democratic principles** need to guide the EU – Jordan relations, as stipulated in the Association Agreement and the ENP Action Plan.

EU-Jordan partnership

4. The EU is determined to **strengthen further its partnership** with Jordan in the light of those challenges. Where people truly feel that they will have the political, economic and social opportunities that they rightfully deserve, extremism and war will not find a footing to nurture. That is a basic premise in the European project and the EU aspire the same assurances of long-term peace and stability to be granted to Jordan.
5. The EU values **Jordan's commitment** to the implementation of the measures agreed in the ENP Action Plan, based upon Jordan's objectives of political and economic reform and of further integration into European economic and social structures.
6. The EU remains a **strong supporter of Jordan's reforms** and encourages Jordan to accelerate the continuous participatory and consensual political reform process, to protect peaceful political expression, open up political space to all partners and reaffirm its **concrete implementation through, among others, political parties and elections law and enhancing freedom of expression**, including on the Internet. Freedom of association and assembly shall be strengthened in order to give more weight and space for a thriving civil society and allow it to work in a favourable environment.

7. The EU invites Jordan to continue implementing the recommendations endorsed by it at the conclusion of the **Universal Periodic Review (UPR)** process, to which Jordan was subject in October 2013. The EU welcomes the work performed by the established committees in charge of the follow-up and supports the inclusive process of the elaboration of a new comprehensive strategy on Human Rights for the country. The EU stresses the importance of addressing the issues of the equal treatment of women and of the protection of children and encourages Jordan to continue its efforts to eradicate torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. A fair and independent judiciary system is a key component of the rule of law and enhances the trust in the institutions. The EU recalls its principled opposition to the death penalty, commends the de facto moratorium in Jordan, and calls on Jordan to join the growing group of abolitionist countries.
8. The EU also welcomes the definition of the **National Integrity Charter and its implementation** as an instrument to further intensify the **fight against corruption**. Corruption weakens citizens' trust in democratic institutions and their political leaders and undermines the country's economic and social development.
9. On the **economic side**, Jordan has continued to face a series of exogenous shocks impacting on local economy. The EU encourages Jordan to move forward with the structural reforms that contribute to the reduction of macroeconomic vulnerability, promote growth by increasing the role of the private sector while paying special attention to SME development and strengthening Euro-Mediterranean industrial cooperation, generate employment and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of public finances.
10. The EU welcomes Jordan's achievements in the framework of the **stand-by arrangement with the IMF** to address fiscal and external challenges and foster high and inclusive growth. Those achievements have made possible the allocation of EUR 180 million in Macro-Financial Assistance (MFA) for Jordan.

11. The EU welcomes Jordan's interest to initiate negotiations on a **Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area with the EU**. The DCFTA will improve market access opportunities and the investment climate and will constitute a comprehensive agreement on trade and economic relations covering a full range of regulatory areas of mutual interest. The preparatory process has made good progress over the past months and the EU looks forward to working with Jordan to finalise this process and launch negotiations in due course.
12. The EU has always been and continues to be a strong supporter of the **Agadir Agreement**. It encourages Jordan to make full use of the possibilities offered by the Agadir Agreement and to work with its Agadir partners to develop the agreement further as a way to promote further integration in the region. The EU welcomes Jordan's active participation in the ongoing regional negotiations on the revision of the **Pan-Euro-Med rules of origin** and the positive signal set by Jordan as the first Southern Mediterranean partner to have ratified the Pan-Euro-Med Convention on Rules of Origin in 2013.
13. The EU welcomes Jordan's progress in the preparations for the Agreement on Conformity Assessment (ACAA). The conclusion of a bilateral ACAA for specific industrial sectors will have the effect of facilitating the access of industrial products from Jordan into the EU internal market and vice-versa. Negotiations could be launched when preparations are completed.
14. The EU welcomes today's signature of the Joint Declaration establishing a **mobility partnership with Jordan**. This is a step forward following the launch in 2012 of the EU-Jordan Migration, Mobility and Security Dialogue whose overall objective is to foster closer cooperation in the field of migration and mobility. The signing of the mobility partnership strengthens the commitment on both sides to manage migration in an orderly manner, facilitating legal migration and fighting irregular migration in accordance with international standards, including those related to the protection of refugees, while at the same time ensuring that the benefits to Jordan's development are optimized. It provides a coherent framework for actions to be implemented together by the EU, participating Member States and Jordan in a comprehensive manner and in line with the EU's Global Approach to Migration and Mobility.

15. The European Union maintains its commitment to fully implement a partnership for democracy and shared prosperity in its Southern Neighborhood on the basis of mutual accountability and shared commitment to universal values of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law. In this regard, the **EU will provide greater support to partners engaged in building deep democracy and inclusive economic development**. The EU is ready to work with Jordan on these objectives in the framework of the ENP Action Plan.
16. In line with its commitment to support the reform processes in the Southern Mediterranean countries, the EU provided to Jordan until now an additional allocation of €116 million from the SPRING and Umbrella Programmes, linked to the delivery of reform measures, complementing the €210 million Jordan's National Indicative Programme 2011-2013.
17. The EU encourages Jordan to **take advantage of existing funding mechanisms** of the European Investment Bank (EIB) and of the European Bank for Development and Reconstruction (EBRD).
18. Given recent security developments in the region, a point of common concern is to stem the flow of foreign fighters, arms and funds, in order as far as possible to eradicate the longer term presence of terrorist groups in Syria, Iraq and beyond. This should be the core focus of a security dialogue that the EU looks forward to establishing with Jordan. It will meet regularly in order to review the situation and help pave the way for enhanced security and counter-terrorism cooperation between the EU and Jordan.

Regional issues

19. The EU and Jordan share the common objective to create conditions conducive to lasting peace, stability and development in the region and beyond.

20. The developments in **Syria and Iraq**, most notably, represent a threat not only to Jordan, but also to the EU. Jordan and the EU are equally concerned by the deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation in Syria and Iraq as a result of the occupation of parts of their territory by the terrorist organization operating under the name “Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant” (ISIL). We are appalled by and firmly condemn the indiscriminate killings and other considerable human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law perpetrated by this and other terrorist organisations, in particular against persons and groups targeted because of their religion or ethnic origin and against women, children and other vulnerable groups. Those responsible for such crimes must be held to account. We will, with other partners from within and outside the region, assist the people of Syria and Iraq to act decisively against the threat of ISIL.
21. Instability in **Syria**, caused by the Assad regime's brutal war against its own people, has allowed ISIL to flourish. A lasting solution urgently requires a political transition by mutual consent based on the Geneva communiqué in order to restore stability and peace in Syria. In **Iraq**, we will work together to support the Iraqi people to meet this challenge, and we fully support the new inclusive Iraqi government in its efforts to address the needs of all Iraqis, regardless of ethnic origin or religious belief.
22. What is also needed is **joint effective action against marginalisation**, equal application of the rule of law and for the peoples of the Middle East to see a future where they can provide a **decent living** for themselves and their families; **effective action to promote and protect the universal human rights** and to fight against incitement to ethnic, religious, cultural or racial hatred, radicalization and violent extremism and **effective action to counter terrorism and provide the security and stability that the vast majority of the peoples seek for themselves.**

23. **The EU will continue to support Jordan, notably through the European regional protection programme and the Mobility Partnership, to ensure that the refugee influx does not jeopardise the development gains achieved in recent years.** The EU welcomes efforts to further align international support with Jordan's response to the refugee crisis and looks forward to the high level international "Conference on the Syrian refugee situation – Supporting stability in the region" in Berlin on 28 October.
24. Taking humanitarian aid, development assistance and macro-financial support into account, the EU has provided €428 million of supplementary support to Jordan since the start of the Syrian crisis in 2011. The EU is currently preparing a package of €66 million, including €45 million to support the Ministry of Education, which is providing places for well over 100,000 Syrian refugee children in Jordanian schools. Support provided by member States complement these efforts.
25. Regarding the **Middle East Peace Process**, the EU praises the important part which Jordan continues to play in promoting stability in the region. The special role of Jordan with regard to the Holy Sites in Jerusalem is of particular relevance in this context and has been instrumental in defusing recent tensions. The EU is extremely concerned about the fragile situation on the ground following the recent conflict in the **Gaza Strip**. It calls on all the parties concerned to agree on and abide by a durable ceasefire on the basis of the 26 August ceasefire. The EU remains concerned about the disastrous humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip particularly the conditions of the displaced population and it pays tribute to the Jordanian solidarity in that context.
26. The EU recalls that the situation in the Gaza Strip has to be seen within the broader context of the **Middle East Peace Process** and the prospect of comprehensive peace where two democratic States, Israel and Palestine, live side by side in peace with secure and recognised borders. The Gaza Strip constitutes an integral part of the territory occupied in 1967 and will be part of a future State of Palestine. The situation in the Gaza Strip cannot and must not be seen separately from the broader challenges and developments on the ground that continue to make the prospect of the two-state solution increasingly difficult to attain.

27. The EU would like to reiterate the special importance of the EU-Jordan **cooperation in unconventional and conventional arms non-proliferation and disarmament**. With regard to the process for **establishment** of a WMD Free Zone in the Middle East, the EU calls on all States in the region to urgently and proactively engage with the Facilitator, the co-convenors and each other with the aim of convening the Conference as soon as possible, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at between the States of the region.
28. Since 2012, the EU and Jordan fruitfully share the co-Presidency of the **Union for the Mediterranean**. During their mandates, the EU and Jordan have been inspired by a shared political willingness **to revitalize the Mediterranean Dialogue and to increase the potential for regional integration and cohesion among Euro-Mediterranean countries**. In the framework of the strategy “Projects for Progress”, the EU welcomes the efforts carried out by Jordan to transform the Mediterranean into an area of peace, democracy, cooperation and prosperity.
29. The EU looks forward to a fruitful and constructive meeting of the **EU-Jordan Association Council**.
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ELEVENTH MEETING OF JORDAN- EU ASSOCIATION COUNCIL

BRUSSELS, OCTOBER 9, 2014

STATEMENT OF THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN

ELEVENTH MEETING OF JORDAN- EU ASSOCIATION COUNCIL

BRUSSELS, OCTOBER 9, 2014

STATEMENT OF THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN

Jordan welcomes the convening of the eleventh meeting of the EU-Jordan Association Council as the second meeting after the relationship reached a new level through the "advanced status" partnership.

This meeting convenes as the region continues to witness fundamental transformation while facing new challenges and threats. Under such hardships and challenges Jordan continues to address its reforms at various levels and sectors.

In light of the rapid regional developments and their implications, the raise of extremism, the spill-over of the Syrian crisis to the neighboring countries, Jordan will remain committed to promote values of moderation, openness, and respect of humanity. Jordan has always played an active role at international forums as a positive partner in building peace and promoting dialogue. Jordan continues to be an oasis of safety and stability, thus a shelter for those suffering from oppression.

Jordan will continue its regional and international efforts in coalition with partners to fight oppression and terrorism, in this context Jordan and through its non-permanent membership at the UNSC will continue to support and participate effectively in all UNSC meetings, statements and resolutions on fighting terrorism, radicalism and to promote human rights.

Jordan prides itself on its relations with the EU, and will continue to work for further enhancement of this relationship, and consolidating of its partnership with the European Union; such a solid partnership which is needed more than ever before especially in view of the accelerating challenges and threats that both sides are facing.

Jordan highly appreciates the EU recognition on Jordan's strong commitment to the implementation of the reforms and the measures as articulated in the ENP Action Plan towards further integration into European economic and social structures.

Jordan appreciates the longstanding commitment and the continued support it receives from the European Union in various fields.

Today, a new milestone in the history of the Jordan-EU relations has been realized by signing the joint declaration of the Mobility Partnership in Luxembourg

Jordan also prides itself to continue working together with the EU as the co-presidency for the UFM. While Jordan appreciates the trust given by the consensus of all 43 UFM members for a new 2 years term as co-presidency, Jordan reaffirms its commitment to the work and goals of the UFM to enhance and promote cooperation and coordination among all member states.

Part One: Foreign Policy

- 1) Under the leadership of His Majesty King Abdullah II, Jordan has spared no effort to steer the region towards peace, stability, and prosperity, and as core national interest for Jordan in the region; Jordan will remain a strong proponent for moderation as the key instrument to such goals.
- 2) Despite the transformations the region is witnessing, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict remains the core problem for the Middle East, and addressing this issue is essential to avoid derailments or setbacks in times of transition.
- 3) The two state solution, that culminates in the establishment of an independent, viable, and territorially contiguous Palestinian state on the territories occupied in 1967, with East Jerusalem as its Capital and that lives side by side with the state of Israel, remains the only path to end the conflict between the two parties, and the key prerequisite for comprehensive peace in the region, based on the internationally agreed upon terms of reference for Middle East Peace and the Arab peace initiative.
- 4) Jordan is a direct stakeholder in these negotiations and their outcomes and has a direct national interests in final status issues, particularly refugees, Jerusalem, borders and security, and water.
- 5) Jordan will remain committed continue to engagement with the all key actors so as to realize the Two State Solution and reaching an agreement on all final status issues between the two parties.
- 6) In this context, Jordan has done all it could to stop the recent aggression on Gaza and stop killing of civilians.
- 7) Through its membership of UNSC Jordan has played a vital role and will continue to do so aiming at bringing sustainable peace in the region.

Jerusalem

- 8) Jordan is deeply concerned by Israeli unilateral measures which adversely affect Occupied East Jerusalem and constitute a breach of International Humanitarian Law, which remains applicable at all times in relation to the Al-Aqsa Mosque Compound as part of the Cultural Property occupied from Jordan in 1967.
- 9) Through its continuous and illegal diggings and intrusive excavations, Israel as the Occupying Power in East Jerusalem, continues to violate International Humanitarian law; adversely affecting the integrity, authenticity and culture heritage of protected Sites therein.
- 10) Despite the Israeli Occupation of East Jerusalem in 1967, the Al-Aqsa Mosque Compound, and all other Muslim and Christian holy sites in the Occupied East Jerusalem, remain under continuous

Hashemite custodianship and safeguarding since 1921, recognized by the 1994 Jordan-Israel peace treaty, the "Historic" agreement between HM King Abdullah II and President Abbas in 2013, and protected as occupied territory by international law.

- 11) Any change in the status quo or division of the site of Al-Aqsa Mosque Compound would be viewed, not only as a breach of Israel's obligations under international law, and its treaty obligations to Jordan but as profound religious transgression to almost 2 billion Muslims. The international community must send a clear message that such a transgression - or any attempt to erase the Arab, Muslim, or Christian identity of Jerusalem - will not be tolerated.
- 12) Jordan is deeply concerned over the continued Israeli plans for the construction of settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories including East Jerusalem, and calls upon the European Union and the international community to take effective measures to uphold the principle of the illegality of all such settlement activities, which are circumventing the possibility for a contiguous and viable Palestinian State and the future of the Two- States solution itself.

Syria

- 13) Jordan from the outset of the crisis called for an end of violence immediately and for a transition to begin concurrently supporting a political solution that will end the bloodshed, restore security and stability, and preserve the territorial integrity of Syria and the dignity and unity of its people.
- 14) His Majesty King Abdullah II warned the international community that failing to put an early end to the violence in Syria would generate radicalism and terrorism based on sectarianism that would spill-over to the region.
- 15) Jordan believes that there must be a political solution based on reforms that give all communities a role in rebuilding their country. International influence is vital, to get the moderate opposition and the regime back to the negotiating table immediately.
- 16) Jordan is host to over 680,000 registered Syrian refugees who have sought refuge in Jordan and over 700,000 Syrians as economic migrants. This has placed significant pressures and burdens on Jordanian services, resources, sectors and infrastructure, particularly health, education and Labour.
- 17) Hosting such a vast number of people will inevitably also have indirect costs as well, including: the depletion of resources, competition with Jordanian youth on limited job opportunities, in addition to other social effects. The Ministry of Labour announced that over 160 thousand job opportunities have been already occupied by Syrian labourers replacing the Jordanian labour force.
- 18) Security concerns: The social pressure is becoming a matter of public security in host communities where friction between the refugees and locals over jobs and daily life is increasingly visible.
- 19) Nonetheless Jordan remains committed to provide the shelter and refuge to Syrians in search of security and safety, despite the economic hardships that the country is facing.

Iraq

- 20) Jordan remains fully committed to maintaining the unity of Iraq and its strength, and stresses the importance of the formation of a new inclusive Iraqi government.

- 21) Jordan believes that the new government paves the way for empowering Iraq and enabling it to consolidate its national unity and meet the aspirations of the Iraqi people towards democracy, pluralism and a prosperous future as Iraq assumes its "vital" role at the regional and international levels.
- 22) Jordan will utilize its capabilities to support efforts aimed at strengthening Iraq's internal front and ensuring the participation of all Iraqis in a comprehensive political process as partners in creating a better future.

Combating Terrorism

- 23) Jordan believes that terrorism in all forms and manifestations constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security and that any acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable regardless of their motivations.
- 24) Jordan strongly reaffirms that terrorism, including the actions of ISIS, cannot and should not be associated with any religion, nationality, or civilization.
- 25) Jordan is committed to the efforts of the international community to fight terrorism, and refers to HM King Abdullah II's three principles in supporting such efforts: the first is global reach and commitment, the second is an immediate action and the third key principle is transparency.

Jordan's Key Political and Economic Reforms

- 26) Faced with the challenges of the aftermath of the Arab spring and the threat resulting from the growth and the spill-over of sectarianism, radicalism and terrorism Jordan seized the opportunity and accelerated the pace of its political reform process to politically transit and transform through an evolutionary political reform national roadmap that received a wide consensus domestically.
- 27) Jordan strongly believes in the need to continue strengthening the country's democratic and good governance framework. Recent reform efforts aimed at further institutionalizing measures needed for the evolution of a democratic, multi-party political system, in response to people's aspirations for accountability, transparency and for an effective voice in the decision-making process.
- 28) In the end result, Jordan upheld its regional and international responsibility in the respect for human rights, the rule of law and deepening democratic practices, and wisely participated in the efforts to maintain peace and stability in the region and the whole Mediterranean area. The Jordan-EU advanced status association and partnership UFM co-presidency are a living example of this positive role Jordan is playing.
- 29) Domestically, both government and Parliament have worked intensively during the past three years to achieve the objectives of the National political and economic reform roadmap through the approval of new laws and amending what is necessary to flourish the political life in the country and achieve the maximum public participation.

Jordan's Key Political Reforms

- 30) While the region has been witnessing turmoil in 2013, Jordan has implemented two major democratic events; Parliamentary (23 January 2013) and the Municipal (27 August 2013) elections. Parliamentary elections for the 17th Lower House of Parliament were successfully conducted on 23 January 2013 (voter turnout of 56.7 percent) based on the new Elections Law. The Elections were supervised and administered for the first time by the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) in line with the constitutional amendments of September 2011.
- 31) Elections were observed by a significant number of local and international observers, including the European Union's Election Observation Mission, National Democratic Institute (NDI), International Republican Institute (IRI), and the Arab Network for Elections. Observers were given access to every level of election administration and were given full cooperation by poll workers and security forces at ballots centres.
- 32) The observers' overall assessment was positive, and commended the efforts of IEC in carrying out and administering a transparent Election Day process, confirming that the electoral process took place in accordance with the law and procedures, and that a suitable environment has been provided for the voting process, making it expressive of voters' opinion. Technical preparations for balloting and the conduct of the voting on Election Day compared favorably to accepted international practices. Statements, by the observers, added that balloting stations were well organized, the procedures for identifying voters were clear and the counting process was transparent.
- 33) Following the Parliamentary elections, Parliament got engaged on selecting a new Prime Minister, in a view of launching the parliamentary government experience, as declared by His Majesty in last year's Speech from the Throne. In this context, intensive consultations were conducted with the existing parliamentary blocs, and individual members of Parliament. Based on the outcome of these consultations, His Majesty appointed the new Prime Minister whose cabinet sworn in on 30 March 2013. This new approach to select the Prime Minister through direct consultations with Parliament comes as part of Jordan's political reform roadmap, paving the way for the formation of full-fledged parliamentary governments in the future.
- 34) As a continuation to these efforts, and as part of the political reform roadmap and the current Government's work plan for 2013-2016, the Government will be conducting consultations with Parliament, political parties, civil society, and labour unions on key political legislation including the Political Parties Law and the Election's Law in order to develop a new legislative framework that will further empower political parties and enhance their participation in Parliament leading to the formation of parliamentary governments in the future.
- 35) Building on key reforms undertaken over the past three years on the political front, Jordan

is continuing the process of developing and amending key laws and legislation that promote further political reform. The Government has recently submitted to Parliament a new Political Parties Law and a new Judicial Independence Law.

- 36) It is worth noting also that in December last year, and as per the directives of His Majesty the King, the Government launched the Charter on National Integrity, which was developed in an inclusive and participatory approach. This Charter serves as a medium-term time-bound road map for reforms with the aim of enhancing the national integrity system.

Economic Situation and Macroeconomic Outlook:

- 37) This year, GOJ anticipates some yet limited progress on the macroeconomic front. GDP growth rate for 2013 reached 3 percent, and recorded 2.8 percent in the second quarter of 2014, whereas it is expected to reach 3.3 percent for 2014. With the continued implementation of the fiscal and economic reform program, GDP growth rate is expected to reach 4 percent and 4.5 percent in 2015 and 2016, respectively.
- 38) GOJ is committed to its fiscal and economic reform program supported by the IMF SBA. Yet, the ongoing conflict in Syria continues to weigh on Jordan. Jordan has maintained an open border policy with Syria in order to provide safety and refuge to those fleeing the conflict (mostly women and children). Jordan is currently hosting over 617,000 registered Syrian refugees (of which about 20 percent are in camps), who together with the pre-existing Syrian population in Jordan amount to over 1.4 million in the country and account for approximately 20 percent of total population. The estimated cost of the impact of the refugees on Jordan is about US\$1.68 million. The increasing demand on services is impacting the quality and level of services not only for refugees but also for Jordanians in hosting communities. This influx is having an impact on Jordanians working in the informal labor market, both in terms of competition for jobs and downward pressure on wages, thus creating social tensions in areas that are facing high unemployment and difficult economic conditions. Overall, the conflict continues to pose significant downside risks to growth in Jordan.
- 39) The nature of the crisis in Jordan is challenging aid responses by the international community and coordination mechanism, and ongoing responses are at risk of not being sustainable in light of the protracted crisis. GOJ has launched the process of preparation of Jordan Response Plan for 2015, which will see the development of a single national document outlining a comprehensive response -including both refugee and resilience programming - in response to the impacts of the crisis on Jordan, this will enable a more efficient and coherent response to the crisis. Jordan Response Platform for the Syria Crisis constitutes the strategic partnership mechanism for the development of comprehensive refugee, resilience-strengthening and development response to the impact of the Syrian crisis on Jordan.
- 40) On the economic reforms, GOJ took some serious and tough decisions in difficult times,

including subsidy and tax reform. GOJ amended and developed new laws that will help in enhancing the business and investment climate, such as a new Tax Law, a new Investment Law, a new Secured Lending Law, all of which are currently being debated at Parliament. A new PPP Law was recently endorsed by Parliament.

- 41) External vulnerabilities and the fiscal situation will continue to pose significant challenges on the economy in the coming period. Nevertheless, in order to sustain economic growth and momentum, and upon the directions of His Majesty the King, GOJ is now looking at a new ten-year social and economic vision (Jordan 2025) being developed on nationwide consultations. "Jordan 2025" will combine action plans with tough performance management, locating delivery capacities at the center of the Government to ensure that outcomes meet expectations. This new framework will build on accumulated efforts, the Government work plan for 2013-2016, and existing sectoral strategies and studies, with the aim of further enhancing fiscal and monetary policies while ensuring their consistency; improving economic competitiveness; focus on added-value sectors that Jordan has a competitive edge in, and enhancing high productivity and self-reliance to realize sustainable and equitable distribution of growth and development.
- 42) The new framework is being developed around five components: human resources development; economic development; social development; justice and legislation; and decentralization and governorates development.

Jordan EU Bilateral Relations:

EU-Jordan Partnership

- 43) Jordan highly values its strategic partnership with the EU on all fronts, a partnership that contributed to advancing the EU-Jordan relations not only on the bilateral level, but also on the regional front.
- 44) The Joint Action Plan (2011-2015) of the Advanced Status Partnership continues to represent a key milestone in the EU-Jordan longstanding friendship, and constitute a roadmap to further strengthen the existing relations based on the core values of promoting peace, stability and prosperity.
- 45) Jordan is pleased to assume the Co-Presidency of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) with the European Union, and is keen to working closely with the EU towards meeting the UfM objectives. Jordan looks forward to a greater role for the Secretariat in supporting and coordinating projects labeled to date.
- 46) Jordan remains committed to maintaining its policy dialogue with the EU at all levels. Since the last Association Meeting held on 19 December 2012, both sides have already convened a series of meetings on different aspects. In this context, Jordan was satisfied with the outcomes of the ninth Meeting of the EU-Jordan Association Committee held in October 2013 in Amman, during which both sides have had the opportunity to resume their political dialogue and to debate on a number of key areas pertaining to the EU-Jordan development

cooperation as well as views on recent developments on the domestic and regional scenes. Jordan highly appreciates the EU recognition on Jordan's strong commitment to the implementation of the reforms and the measures as articulated in the ENP Action Plan.

- 47) In addition, both sides convened in Amman on 12 March 2014 the ninth EU-Jordan Macroeconomic Dialogue, including follow-up on Dialogue on Economic Reforms, where both sides discussed recent macroeconomic developments in the EU and Jordan and the status of the ongoing Stand-By Arrangement with the IMF. Both sides exchanged also views on Jordan's key structural reform challenges and on the progress achieved in recent years. Jordan is appreciative for the EU on the Macro Financial Assistance of Euro 180 million which will assist Jordan in meeting some of its fiscal challenges and part of the residual financing gap, while moving ahead with its economic and fiscal reforms.
- 48) Jordan also underlines the importance of continuing its sectoral dialogue with the EU through the EU-Jordan subcommittees, which have been vital towards reaching a common understanding of developments in the various sectors, particularly, in the context of the implementation of the Association Agreement and the Joint Action Plan, in addition to touching on important aspects of the EU-Jordan partnership.
- 49) During 2013-2014, both sides held a series of technical sub-committees on Transport, Environment, and Energy (25-26 June 2013); Agriculture and Fisheries (30 May 2013) and Customs Cooperation (18 March 2014). Jordan is keen on resuming the meetings of the other sub-committees during the coming months.

Trade and Investment Cooperation

- 50) The EU continues to be Jordan's main trade partner; yet, Jordan still faces a large deficit in its balance of trade. We aspire that the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) will further develop closer trade ties and maximize opportunities offered by the EU-Jordan Association Agreement. To this end, Jordan looks forward to the EU's positive consideration of the pending issues communicated within the three scoping missions of the DCFTA held in 2012 and 2013, namely the simplification of bilateral rules of origin. Taking these issues into account will guarantee further development of trade ties and opportunities maximization and an increase of Jordan's share in the EU Market within the expansion of the Association Agreement towards a DCFTA.
- 51) Jordan moved forward in its negotiations of the Agreement on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of Industrial Products (ACAA). Three priority sectors (*electrical products, gas appliance and toys*) were first included, and in September 2014, Jordan sent a request to add other potential sectors in the agreement.

Financial Cooperation

- 52) Jordan is grateful for the continued support and assistance extended by the EU over the

many years. The EU has been a key partner in Jordan's development and reform process. Jordan and EU worked closely towards the implementation of the agreed upon programs in the National Indicative Program (2011-2103).

- 53) Jordan highly appreciates the additional allocations extended in 2012 in the amount of Euro 70 million under SPRING I Program and Euro 21 million as a commitment for 2013 under SPRING II program as well as Euro 15 million under Umbrella program. This support is of crucial importance to assist the country in moving with key reforms, while maintaining fiscal and macroeconomic stability, in addition to supporting key areas such as the justice sector, job creation and SMEs growth, as well as solid waste management in Jordanian communities hosting Syrian refugees.
- 54) In this regard and in line with Jordan's commitment to reform, we call on the EU to increase the supplementary allocations from the budget earmarked by the EU in the amount of Euro 770 million to the multi-country Umbrella program over 2014-2017, while Jordan supports the incentive based approach.
- 55) Jordan is determined to further cooperate with the EU in the context of the proposed Memorandum of Understanding over the period 2014-2017, which frames the support under the Single Support Framework of the European Neighborhood Instrument (ENI). While Jordan expresses deep appreciation for the EU on its commitment to continue supporting Jordan, this support would consolidate the partnership in key priority areas: reinforcing the rule of law for enhanced accountability and equity in public delivery; employment and private sector development; renewable energy and energy efficiency; as well as the capacity development and institution building and the support to the civil society.
- 56) Jordan also reaffirms the significance of the EU's capacity and institutional building tools (*Twinning, TAIEEX, Sigma and TA projects*) towards achieving the aspired harmonization and approximation with the EU norms and standards in a view of bringing Jordan closer to the EU, and underscores the significance of these tools in the implementation of the "Advanced Status" Joint Action Plan.
- 57) Jordan has been a frontrunner in the Mediterranean region in the use of twinning arrangements since 2004. This instrument has been effective in assisting the Jordanian administration implementing the relevant sectoral strategies and adapting its legislation to EU and international standards. It has led to lasting professional partnerships that have brought the EU and Jordan closer together.
- 58) Jordan commends EU continuous support to the Neighbourhood Investment Facility, which would contribute in supporting investment projects, particularly in areas of transport, energy, environment, water and private sector development. The European Investment Bank has significantly contributed in assisting Jordan in its development efforts over the past years. Jordan is determined to further cooperate with the bank in the coming period and believes of the importance developmental role that the bank will continue to play. Jordan looks forward to the establishment and operation of representation of the European Investment Bank in Jordan.

- 59) Following the membership of Jordan in the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) in December 2011 and a country of operations in 2012, Jordan has also become a recipient country of the EBRD assistance as of November 2013; where Jordan met the membership and geographical requirement by maintain strong progress on the political and economic reform front. Jordan is also pleased with the opening of a permanent office for the bank in Amman in October 2013.
- 60) The four-year Country Strategy for Jordan was approved on 2 October 2014 as the first strategy in SEMED region, and it was developed through extensive consultations with many Jordanian stakeholders from both the public and private sectors and civil society, particularly on the proposed operational themes that it will focus on. Its strategic themes include enhancing energy sustainability and energy efficiency, enabling dynamic, private sector-led, inclusive growth, and support commercialization and private sector participation in infrastructure.

EU Assistance to Syrian Refugees in Jordan

- 61) Jordan is appreciative for the EU's prompt support in response to the increasing influx of Syrians who have sought refuge in Jordan, particularly the additional emergency support to Jordan in the amount of Euro 60 million extended in 2013 to assist in mitigating part of the impact of the Syrian crisis on the budget and on the Host Communities.
- 62) We are also pleased to learn that EU is currently preparing an additional package for Jordan to further assist in mitigating the impact of the Syrian crisis on Jordan.
- 63) We assured the International Community that Jordan will keep its borders open and is persistent in helping as much as it can in spite of national economic and social difficulties the Kingdom is facing and the high pressure hosting the refugees might cause to our infrastructure and publicly subsidized services.
- 64) It is vital to sustain the ability of the GOJ to provide essential and basic services to around 600 thousand Syrians in their host communities and camps.

Sectoral Cooperation

- 65) Jordan continues to attach great significance to cooperating with the EU in the *energy sector* in light of the challenges Jordan continues to face in this sector. Jordan and the EU have advanced the cooperation in this sector since the signing of the Joint Declaration in October 2007 between Jordan and the EU, which provides a framework for co-operation in priority areas in particular the green sources of energy, nuclear safety cooperation as well as help Jordan to continue being part of the energy and electricity networks in the region. Jordan appreciates the support extended over the period 2008-2013 through projects and budget support schemes, and the commitment to continue providing support over 2014-2017 as well as through the different regional cooperation programs in order to consolidate the Jordanian policy of sustainable energy development in particular through the promotion

- of an integrated energy demand management and development of renewable energy.
- 66) On cooperation in the field of *science and technology*, Jordan has been quite active in EU framework programs over the past years, and the general awareness of the EU programs in Jordan is steadily progressing. Jordanian researchers showed a significant development in their experience in research and writing skills during the Seventh Framework Program (FP7) for the period 2007-2013, a total of 244 eligible proposals were submitted involving 296 applicants from Jordan, and requesting Euro 34.76 million of EC contribution.
 - 67) Jordan is grateful for the EU continued assistance to the project "Support to Research, Technological Development and Innovation in Jordan-SRTD II" launched in June 2014, which will build on the research and commercialization elements of SRTD I, providing more focus on supporting applied research based on national priorities, involving the private sector with defining research needs, and supporting strong innovative ideas from research through to commercial viability.
 - 68) Moreover, Jordan looks forward to increase its participation in the EU research and innovation program (*Horizon 2020*) over 2014-2020 to advance the cooperation and partnership in research and innovation, and is determined to further promote the program and increase the awareness among the Jordanian researchers to enable eligible researchers and innovators to take part actively in program's activities with their EU and international partners in order to address societal challenges of common concern.
 - 69) It is of equal importance that the protocol "*Framework Agreement*" on the general principles for the participation in the Union's programs, which was signed during the last Association Council meeting held in Brussels on 19 December 2012, allows for Jordan the possibility of participating in EU programs open to ENP partners. Jordan and the EU agreed to list an item on the agenda of the sectoral Sub-committees in order to open technical discussions on the possibilities and advantages for this participation including the information on the entry ticket. To this end, and as a first step, both sides are currently exploring the requirements related to the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs COSME program.