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Proposal for a

COUNCIL DECISION

on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union in the Association Council set up by the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement establishing an association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, of the other part, with regard to the adoption of EU-Jordan Partnership Priorities

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

1. SUBJECT MATTER OF THE PROPOSAL

This proposal concerns the decision establishing the position to be taken on the Union's behalf in the **EU-Jordan Association Council** in connection with the envisaged adoption of EU-Jordan Partnership Priorities for the period 2021-2027.

2. CONTEXT OF THE PROPOSAL

2.1. The Euro-Mediterranean Agreement

The Euro-Mediterranean Agreement (Association Agreement) was signed in Brussels on 24 November 1997 and entered into force on 1 May 2002 ('the Agreement'). It forms the legal basis for the bilateral relations between the EU and Jordan.

The Agreement aims to

- provide an appropriate framework for the political dialogue, allowing the development of close political relations between the Parties,
- establish the conditions for the progressive liberalisation of trade in goods, services and capital,
- foster the development of balanced economic and social relations between the Parties through dialogue and cooperation,
- improve living and employment conditions, and enhance productivity and financial stability,
- encourage regional cooperation with a view to the consolidation of peaceful coexistence and economic and political stability,
- promote cooperation in other areas which are of reciprocal interest.

2.2. The **EU-Jordan Association Council**

The **EU-Jordan Association Council** was created in the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement (Article 89) establishing an association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, of the other part, which was signed on 24 November 1997 and entered into force on 1 May 2002¹.

The Association Council has the power to take decisions for the purpose of attaining the objectives of the Agreement in the cases provided for therein. The decisions are binding on the Parties. According to the Rules of Procedure, the Association Council is presided over, alternately for a period of 12 months, by the EU and Jordan. The Association Council meets regularly at ministerial level once a year.

2.3. The envisaged act of the **EU-Jordan Association Council**

During its XIV meeting, the **EU-Jordan Association Council** is to adopt a decision regarding the EU-Jordan Partnership Priorities for the period 2021-2027 ('the envisaged act').

The purpose of the envisaged act is to guide and inform the EU-Jordan partnership during the period 2021-2027.

¹ Euro-Mediterranean Agreement establishing an Association between the European Community and its Member States, of the one part, and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, of the other part; OJ L 129/3; 15.5.2002

The revised European Neighbourhood policy² adopted in November 2015 sets a framework to define bilateral relations with partners. These should be captured in a political document defined as "Partnership Priorities", which are a key point of reference with partner countries in agreeing on a limited set of targeted priorities for the coming years. The EU and Jordan have a strong partnership. Jordan is a key partner of the EU, and the EU highly values the important moderating role that Jordan plays in the region. With a view to further strengthening the solid and multi-faceted relationship between the two partners, Partnership priorities have been identified to support the implementation of the EU-Jordan Association Agreement.

The "Partnership Priorities" reflect shared interests and focus on areas where cooperation between the EU and Jordan is of mutual benefit. The main political priorities identified in EU-Jordan relations for the period 2021-2027 are: (i) strengthening cooperation on regional stability and security, including counter-terrorism; (ii) promoting economic recovery and stability, a green, digital, inclusive and knowledge-based growth, quality of education and decent job creation, including for youth; (iii) strengthening good governance, the rule of law, democratic reform and human rights, including social and labour rights. It is in that light that the EU and Jordan are committed to furthering cooperation on cross-cutting issues ranging from stabilisation and security to rule of law and human rights, gender equality and empowerment of women, dialogue with civil society, migration and mobility and addressing violent extremism. Progress on the effective implementation of the different components of the Mobility Partnership is a cross-cutting priority.

3. POSITION TO BE TAKEN ON THE UNION'S BEHALF

The position to be taken on the Union's behalf should be to approve the draft EU-Jordan Partnership Priorities as annexed to this proposal.

The EU-Jordan Partnership Priorities embody the shared goals of the European Neighbourhood Policy as a common area of peace, prosperity and stability. They embody its main features, differentiation and co-ownership, but also flexibility to allow for the adaptation to changing circumstances as agreed by the EU and Jordan. Moreover, they match the aspiration stated in the European Council conclusions of 10-11 December 2020³ for a democratic, more stable, greener and more prosperous Southern Neighbourhood as a strategic priority for the EU.

The Partnership Priorities also embody the objectives of the new, ambitious and innovative Agenda for the Mediterranean, set out in the Joint Communication from the Commission and the High Representative on the Southern Neighbourhood of 9 February 2021⁴, and in the subsequent Council conclusions on a renewed Partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood of 16 April 2021⁵, that aims at relaunching the cooperation and realising the untapped potential of the relationship. It supports the efficient and timely implementation of mutually agreed flagship initiatives of the Economic and Investment Plan for the Southern Neighbours⁶ that will reinforce the EU's partnership with Jordan and help protect our Mediterranean common goods.

² Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy SWD(2015) 500

³ EUCO 22/20 of 11.12.2020

⁴ JOIN(2021) 2 final.

⁵ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-7931-2021-INIT/en/pdf>

⁶ Joint staff working document: Renewed Partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood Economic and Investment Plan for the Southern Neighbours. SWD/2021/23 final.

The new Agenda for the Mediterranean offers opportunities for new partnerships on strategic priorities of green and digital transitions that will contribute to sustainability, prosperity and resilience. In these efforts, the EU and Jordan will build on the partnership with Jordan and the continued implementation of Jordan's reform agenda. The EU and Jordan will continue to work constructively together as co-presidencies of the Union for the Mediterranean to foster a strong partnership across the Mediterranean.

The EU and Jordan have confirmed shared objectives and common interests in pursuing both a peace process and a return to stability and peace in Syria. This would eventually allow for the voluntary, safe and dignified return of refugees. Meanwhile, it is important to sustain assistance levels and access to protection, education, livelihoods and services for Syrian refugees in Jordan.

In accordance with the new Agenda for the Mediterranean, the EU-Jordan partnership will continue to be based on common values and dialogue, and will progress on a shared socio-economic and political agenda, including on reforms and their implementation in areas such as good governance, the rule of law, human rights, social cohesion and equal opportunities for all, non-discrimination, environmental and climate protection, macroeconomic stability and the business environment. It will aim at a green, digital, resilient and just recovery after COVID-19, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement and the European Green Deal.

Spurring long-term sustainable socio-economic recovery and job creation in the Southern Neighbourhood is a key shared priority and the innovative cornerstone of the new Agenda for the Mediterranean. The joint staff working document on an economic and investment plan for the Southern Neighbourhood annexed to the Joint Communication, in which Jordan features prominently, is a determined effort to give substance to this partnership and focus on key projects reinforcing EU's partnership with Jordan. The implementation of the flagship initiatives of the Economic and Investment Plan of the New Agenda for the Mediterranean will contribute to delivering on the Partnership Priorities and constitute an important part of the EU cooperation with Jordan.

The partnership and the priority areas of cooperation will continue to be sustained through regular high-level political meetings; economic, employment and social affairs, trade, justice, human rights, democratic processes, climate and environment dialogues; the EU-Jordan Mobility Partnership; the EU-Jordan Science and Technology Agreement and other existing areas of cooperation; the EU-Jordan commitment to strengthen dialogue and cooperation on security, including on countering violent extremism and terrorism and cybersecurity; as well as the on-going bilateral cooperation in support of Jordan.

The Partnership Priorities document takes into account inter alia the promotion of human rights and good governance, the external dimension of EU migration policies, the increased focus on international cooperation to counter terrorism and violent extremism and the potential of trade to generate fair growth and decent employment.

The EU-Jordan Partnership Priorities were drafted following close consultation with relevant Commission services and with EU Member States' representatives in the Council Working Group on Maghreb and Mashrek, as well as discussions with the Jordanian counterparts. Consultations with a wide range of civil society stakeholders took place through the EU Delegation to Jordan, including those working on social, economic, human rights and democratisation issues, as well as the business sector.

4. LEGAL BASIS

4.1. Procedural legal basis

4.1.1. Principles

Article 218(9) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) provides for decisions establishing *‘the positions to be adopted on the Union’s behalf in a body set up by an agreement, when that body is called upon to adopt acts having legal effects, with the exception of acts supplementing or amending the institutional framework of the agreement.’*

The concept of *‘acts having legal effects’* includes acts that have legal effects by virtue of the rules of international law governing the body in question. It also includes instruments that do not have a binding effect under international law, but that are *‘capable of decisively influencing the content of the legislation adopted by the EU legislature’*⁷.

4.1.2. Application to the present case

The EU-Jordan Association Council is a body set up by an agreement, namely the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement establishing an association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, of the other part, which was signed on 24 November 1997 and entered into force on 1 May 2002.

The act which the EU-Jordan Association Council is called upon to adopt constitutes an act having legal effects. The envisaged act is capable of decisively influencing the content of EU legislation, namely: its development cooperation policy vis-à-vis Jordan. This is because the EU-Jordan Partnership Priorities will guide and inform the future EU-Jordan relations, including the programming of aid in the context of development cooperation under the new Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), during the period 2021-2027. The envisaged act does not supplement or amend the institutional framework of the Agreement.

Therefore, the procedural legal basis for the proposed decision is Article 218(9) TFEU.

4.2. Substantive legal basis

4.2.1. Principles

The substantive legal basis for a decision under Article 218(9) TFEU depends primarily on the objective and content of the envisaged act in respect of which a position is taken on the Union's behalf. If the envisaged act pursues two aims or has two components and if one of those aims or components is identifiable as the main one, whereas the other is merely incidental, the decision under Article 218(9) TFEU must be founded on a single substantive legal basis, namely that required by the main or predominant aim or component.

4.2.2. Application to the present case

The main objective and content of the envisaged act relate to cooperation with a third country in the framework of an association agreement and the European Neighbourhood Policy. The measures whose adoption was envisaged concern, generally, the whole of the areas covered by the Association Agreement and aim at further implementing and deepening the association between the Parties. It follows that the field within which the contested decision falls must be determined in the light of the Association Agreement as a whole. Therefore, the substantive legal basis of the proposed decision is Article 217 TFEU.

⁷ Judgment of the Court of Justice of 7 October 2014, Germany v Council, C-399/12, ECLI:EU:C:2014:2258, paragraphs 61 to 64.

4.3. Conclusion

The legal basis of the proposed decision should be Article 217, in conjunction with Article 218(9) TFEU.

5. PUBLICATION OF THE ENVISAGED ACT

As the act of the EU-Jordan Association Council will replace the previous EU-Jordan Partnership Priorities adopted by Decision N 1/2016 of the EU-Jordan Association Council of 19 December 2016, it is appropriate to publish it in the *Official Journal of the European Union* after its adoption.

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THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 217, in conjunction with Article 218(9) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

Whereas:

- (1) The Euro-Mediterranean Agreement establishing an association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, of the other part ('the Agreement') was signed on 24 November 1997⁸ and entered into force on 1 May 2002.
- (2) Pursuant to Article 91(1) of the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement, the Association Council may take decisions for the purpose of attaining the objectives of the Agreement. The EU-Jordan Association Council, during its XIV meeting, is to adopt the EU-Jordan Partnership Priorities.
- (3) It is appropriate to establish the position to be taken on the Union's behalf in the EU-Jordan Association Council, as the decision will be binding on the Union.
- (4) The purpose of the envisaged act is to guide and inform the EU-Jordan partnership during the period 2021-2027. The EU and Jordan have a strong partnership. Jordan is a key partner of the EU, and the EU highly values the important moderating role that Jordan plays in the region. With a view to further strengthening the solid and multi-faceted relationship between the two partners, Partnership priorities have been identified to support the implementation of the EU-Jordan Association Agreement, which will guide the partnership for the period 2021-2027,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

The position to be taken on the Union's behalf in the XIV meeting of the EU-Jordan Association Council shall be based on the draft decision of the EU-Jordan Association Council adopting the EU-Jordan Partnership Priorities attached to this Decision.

⁸ Euro-Mediterranean Agreement establishing an Association between the European Community and its Member States, of the one part, and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, of the other part; OJ L 129/3; 15.5.2002

Article 2

This Decision is addressed to the Commission and to the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

Done at Brussels,

*For the Council
The President*



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ANNEX

ANNEX

to the

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ANNEX

DECISION No... OF THE 14th EU-Jordan ASSOCIATION COUNCIL of DD/MM/2022 agreeing on EU-Jordan Partnership Priorities

THE EU-JORDAN ASSOCIATION COUNCIL,

Having regard to the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement establishing an Association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and Jordan, of the other part,

Whereas:

- (1) The Euro-Mediterranean Agreement establishing an association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and Jordan, of the other part, was signed on 24 November 1997 and entered into force on 1 May 2002;
- (2) Article 91 of the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement gives the Association Council the power to take appropriate decisions, for the purposes of attaining the objectives of the Agreement;
- (3) In terms of Article 101 of the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement, the Parties shall take any general or specific measures required to fulfil their obligations under the Agreement and shall see to it that the objectives set out in the Agreement are attained.
- (4) The review of the European Neighbourhood Policy proposed a new phase of engagement with partners, allowing a greater sense of ownership by both sides;
- (5) The EU and Jordan have agreed to consolidate their partnership by agreeing on a set of priorities for the period 2021-2027 with the aim of supporting and strengthening Jordan's resilience and stability while seeking to also address the impact of the protracted conflict in Syria.
- (6) The Parties to the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement have agreed on the text of the EU-Jordan Partnership Priorities, which will support the implementation of the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement, focusing cooperation on commonly identified shared interests.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

The Association Council recommends that the Parties implement the EU-Jordan Partnership Priorities as set out in the Annex.

Article 2

The Association Council decides that the EU-Jordan Partnership Priorities as referred to in Article 1 replace the previous EU-Jordan Partnership Priorities adopted by Decision N 1/2016 of the EU-Jordan Association Council of 19 December 2016.

Article 3

This Decision shall enter into force on the day of its adoption.

Done at xx, day month year.

For the Association Council

The Chair

EU-Jordan Partnership Priorities 2021-2027

INTRODUCTION

The EU and Jordan have a strong partnership. Jordan is a key partner of the EU, and the EU highly values the important moderating role that Jordan plays in the region. With a view to further strengthening the solid and multi-faceted relationship between the two partners, priorities have been identified to support the implementation of the EU-Jordan Association Agreement, which will guide the partnership for the period 2021-2027.

The EU-Jordan Partnership Priorities embody the shared goals of the European Neighbourhood Policy of a common area of peace, prosperity and stability. They embody its main features, differentiation and co-ownership, but also flexibility to allow for the adaptation to changing circumstances as agreed by the EU and Jordan. Moreover, they match the aspiration stated in the **European Council** conclusions of 10-11 December 2020¹ for a democratic, more stable, greener and more prosperous Southern Neighbourhood as a strategic priority for the EU.

The Partnership Priorities also embody the objectives of the new, ambitious and innovative Agenda for the Mediterranean, set out in the Joint Communication from the Commission and the High Representative on the Southern Neighbourhood of 9 February 2021², and in the subsequent Council conclusions on a renewed Partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood of 16 April 2021³, that aims at relaunching the cooperation and realising the untapped potential of the relationship. It supports the efficient and timely implementation of mutually agreed flagship initiatives of the Economic and Investment Plan for the Southern Neighbours⁴ that will reinforce the EU's partnership with Jordan and help protect our Mediterranean common goods. The new Agenda offers opportunities for new partnerships on strategic priorities of green and digital transitions that will contribute to sustainability, prosperity and resilience. In these efforts, the EU and Jordan will build on the partnership with Jordan and the continued implementation of Jordan's reform agenda. The EU and Jordan will continue to work constructively together as co-presidencies of the Union for the Mediterranean to foster a strong partnership across the Mediterranean.

In accordance with the new Agenda, the EU-Jordan partnership will continue to be based on common values and dialogue, and will progress on a shared socio-economic and political agenda, including on reforms and their implementation in areas such as good governance, the rule of law, human rights, social cohesion and equal opportunities for all, non-discrimination, environmental and climate protection, macroeconomic stability and the business environment. It will aim at a green, digital, resilient and just recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement and the European Green Deal.

Spurring long-term sustainable socio-economic recovery and job creation in the Southern Neighbourhood is a key shared priority and the innovative cornerstone of the new Agenda for the Mediterranean. The Joint Staff Working Document on an Economic and Investment Plan for the Southern Neighbourhood annexed to the Communication, in which Jordan features

¹ EUCO 22/20 of 11 December 2020

² JOIN(2021) 2 final.

³ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-7931-2021-INIT/en/pdf>.

⁴ SWD(2021) 23 final

prominently, is a determined effort to give substance to this partnership and focus on key projects reinforcing the EU's partnership with Jordan. The implementation of the flagship initiatives of the Economic and Investment Plan of the New Agenda for the Mediterranean will contribute to delivering on the Partnership Priorities and constitute an important part of the EU cooperation with Jordan.

Taking as a basis the Joint Communication and its Economic and Investment Plan, as well as the Council conclusions, the EU will also work to join forces with its Member States to promote Team Europe initiatives around key areas of mutual interest, building on the successful Team Europe response to the COVID- 19 crisis both globally and in Jordan.

The Partnership Priorities constitute a living document and imply the fulfilment of mutual commitments.

The partnership and the priority areas of cooperation will continue to be sustained through regular high-level **political meetings, dialogues** on economic, employment and social affairs, trade, justice, human rights, democratic processes, climate and environment , the EU-Jordan **Mobility Partnership, the EU-Jordan Science and Technology Agreement** and other existing areas of cooperation, the EU-Jordan commitment to strengthen dialogue and cooperation on **security**, including on countering violent extremism and terrorism and cybersecurity, as well as the on-going **bilateral cooperation** in support of Jordan.

The Partnership Priorities confirm EU-Jordan ties, and define the scope for deepening mutual engagement.

The current context is particularly conducive for consolidating the relationship between the EU and Jordan, based on **shared objectives, values and interests in tackling common challenges.**

The COVID-19 pandemic has added further pressure on the health, education and economic sectors and poses significant socio-economic challenges. The EU and Jordan will build back better after the crisis, via, inter alia, a green and digital transformation of their economies, increasing resilience and bringing prosperity and decent work opportunities in an inclusive manner to their communities. The EU and their partners will step up their engagement to fight discrimination in all its forms, including based on religion or belief, and promote gender equality in all policy areas as part of the drive for an inclusive recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Syria crisis has heavily impacted Jordan since 2011, the region as well as the EU. The EU and Jordan have confirmed shared objectives and common interests in pursuing both a peace process and a return to stability and peace in Syria. This would eventually allow for the voluntary, safe and dignified return of refugees. Meanwhile, it is important to sustain assistance levels and access to protection, education, livelihoods and services for Syrian refugees in Jordan.

The EU recognises the key role Jordan has been playing in national, regional and international arenas and supports Jordan's engagement in the multilateral system. The EU commends Jordan's generous and continuous commitment to host and protect large numbers of refugees that include Syrians, Palestinians, Iraqis, Libyans and Yemenis, seeking a safe haven in Jordan and providing them with education, health, livelihoods and social protection services. The EU will continue to assist Jordan in providing support to refugees seeking protection in Jordan and strengthening Jordan's resilience, including a continuous engagement in mitigating the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. As previously, the EU support to Jordan for refugees' response comes in addition to the bilateral support programmes. It is crucial to fight poverty, discrimination and gender inequalities, provide adequate income support, non-discriminatory

access to social protection in line with national frameworks such as Jordan's National Social Protection Strategy, foster sustainable development, growth, protect human rights, and ensure equitable access to quality services. Moreover, Jordan has continued deploying exemplary efforts and plays a prominent and balanced role in promoting peace and security in the Middle East, particularly the Middle East Peace Process. In addition, Jordan's role in preventing and countering radicalisation and terrorism and violent extremism proved of great value. Jordan's co-chairing, with the EU, of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), through which it advocates for political solutions for various crises in the region, and regional integration and development, sustainable, green, low-greenhouse gas emissions and circular resource-efficient economies, is another example of Jordan's leading stabilising role.

Jordan and the EU will also continue their engagement on all aspects of migration within a comprehensive, mutually beneficial and tailor-made partnership, and in the framework of the Mobility Partnership, which provides a coherent framework for actions in the area of migration, mobility and security, tackling issues related to border management, preventing irregular migration and international protection⁵.

The Partnership Priorities build on joint achievements in areas of mutual interest, including the aim of promoting the continued implementation of reforms, thereby contributing to Jordan's macro-economic stability, in line with the priorities of the revised IMF programme, and taking into account the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. They also build on the 2016 London Conference 'Supporting Syria and the Region' as well as the International Compact commitments formulated by Jordan and the co-hosts of that Conference, which aimed at sustaining Jordan's development gains against a background of continued humanitarian assistance and adequate host community support. The five subsequent Brussels Conferences on 'Supporting the future of Syria and the Region' renewed and strengthened the political, humanitarian and financial commitment of the international community to support the Syrian people, the neighbouring countries and the host communities most affected by the conflict, and reviewed the progress that has been made by governments, donors and the United Nations (UN) in delivering on the commitments and pledges undertaken therein. Against a backdrop of continued extreme vulnerability of Syrian refugees and vulnerable host communities, further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the EU and Jordan reaffirm their commitment to provide assistance and effective protection to all refugees in Jordan. It is important to further improve their access to services, ensure the respect of their human rights, and continue working to enhance their potential for self-reliance, and creating opportunities for them to contribute to Jordan's economic development. In supporting refugees, including from Syria, the EU and Jordan will adopt a vulnerability-based approach paying due attention to the situation of vulnerable host communities.

The EU remains committed to providing continued assistance and protection to **the Palestinian refugees** including in Jordan. In this respect, the EU and Jordan stressed the crucial role of United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) for security and stability in the region, in accordance with its UN mandate stipulated in relevant UN resolutions, and expressed their commitment to continue supporting the Agency politically and financially. They recognise the important role UNRWA continues to play and they commit to support the agency in implementing its mandate within its fields of operations, as well as in the management and governance reforms for increased transparency, accountability and sound financial management that the agency has embarked on, and advocate with the donor community for a more sustainable and predictable multiannual funding and for a fair burden sharing.

⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/default/files/what-is-new/news/news/docs/20141009_joint_declaration_establishing_the_eu-jordan_mobility_partnership_en.pdf

PRIORITIES

The Partnership Priorities reflect shared interests and focus on areas where cooperation between the EU and Jordan is of mutual benefit. In line with the Joint Communication and the Council conclusions, the EU and Jordan are committed to furthering cooperation on a range of actions along the following key policy areas: strengthening resilience and interconnection/participation in the world economy, building prosperity and seizing the opportunities of the twin green and digital transitions; human development, good governance, the rule of law and human rights; peace and security; migration and mobility; climate action, energy, and environment.

Based on the above, three priorities are identified for the period 2021-2027:

The EU and Jordan will aim at **strengthening cooperation on regional stability and security, including counter-terrorism**. The EU and Jordan are solid partners in foreign and security policy. Strategic and operational cooperation will be pursued bilaterally, in multilateral fora, as well as regionally, including through the EU-Jordan co-presidencies of the UfM, and taking advantage of the proposed annual meetings between Foreign Ministers of the EU and Southern Partners, as well as possible sectoral ministerial meetings. It is in the mutual interest of the EU and Jordan to promote peace and stability in the region and globally, by working together on the Middle-East Peace Process, in accordance with international law and relevant United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions, as well as in support of a political transition and peace-building in Syria, based on UNSC resolution 2254, amongst other. Both the EU and Jordan aspire to be models of tolerant societies, which is another reason for enhancing cooperation in the foreign policy domain.

The partnership focuses on promoting economic recovery and stability, a green, digital, inclusive and knowledge-based growth, quality of education and decent job creation, including for youth, in line with the Government priorities, the Executive Indicative Development Programme, "Jordan 2025 – National Vision and Strategy" and the sectoral policies and strategies. The support seeks to enhance Jordan's resilience to deal with the impact of the Syrian crisis and regional instability, as well as the economic and social consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, while taking advantage of the opportunities to build back better after the crisis.

The EU and Jordan will enhance collaboration in dealing with climate change and environmental degradation by joining efforts to foster **green growth and energy transition towards climate neutrality** aligned with the Jordan energy sector strategy (2020-2030) and in line with Jordan's National Determined Contribution (NDC) and National Adaptation Plan. A strong, inclusive, green and connected Jordanian economy supported by the **free trade area** established under the Association Agreement between Jordan and the EU, the simplified rules of origin scheme, and an enhanced investment climate (through business environment reforms) and access to finance for entrepreneurs and Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in particular, including through fostering public-private dialogue and working more directly with the private sector, will act as powerful incentives for **decent job creation**. The modernisation, greening and diversification of the economy will be further enhanced by support to innovation-driven growth and knowledge sharing. Cooperation for sustainable, smart and resilient transport connectivity (including the EU-Jordan Aviation Agreement) and the implementation of the long-term National Transport Strategy 2015-2030 will also contribute to regional and economic integration.

Specific attention will be given to increasing the **employability and participation of youth and women in the economy**. Such attention will also be given to generate sustainable and equal economic opportunities, including on the basis of **high quality education and**

vocational training and providing appropriate public transport services, and to foster a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation and a transition to a green circular and digital economy. Initiatives in the cultural sector, including those aimed at the development of a cultural and creative industry, should be considered given its significant contribution to promoting intercultural dialogue and socio-economic development.

Full enforcement of the Association Agreement and continuation of joint work to strengthen the existing trade and investment relationship would also enhance Jordan's **integration into the EU market** and create new opportunities for trade, investment and development. In line with the Trade Policy Review Communication⁶, the EU will propose a new **sustainable investment initiative** to interested partners in the Southern Neighbourhood and Africa.

The partnership focuses on supporting Jordan's efforts and commitment to **strengthen good governance, the rule of law democratic reform and human rights, including social and labour rights**. Human rights and fundamental freedoms, as embodied in international, regional and national laws, constitute shared values. The respect of democratic principles and human rights constitutes an essential element of the relations between the EU and Jordan, and of the sustainable socio-economic development and stability in Jordan.

In the area of migration and mobility, taking note of the European Commission's Communication on the Pact on Migration and Asylum⁷, and Jordan's legislation, progress on the effective implementation of the different components of the **Mobility Partnership** is a cross-cutting priority, which would also contribute to ensure that persons can move regularly and more easily between Jordan and the EU, inter alia with the aim of enhancing tourism, facilitating educational exchange and engaging with the Jordanian expatriate communities abroad. A comprehensive and sustainable approach to migration and asylum, including return cooperation in line with EU and its Member States' national competences, could prove mutually beneficial to the EU and Jordan.

1. STRENGTHENING COOPERATION ON REGIONAL STABILITY, SECURITY INCLUDING COUNTER-TERRORISM

The EU recognises all relevant efforts made by Jordan. The EU and Jordan should continue close co-operation in addressing regional instability including the security threat of Dae'sh and other terrorist groups. In this respect, the EU is committed to assisting Jordan in its efforts to stabilize and secure its external borders. The EU and Jordan both support the need for durable and sustainable solutions to the Syria crisis in accordance with UN Security Council resolution 2254 (2015). Work on resolving the Syria crisis should continue in the appropriate international fora, as well as cooperation in the context of the EU-Jordan Enhanced Security/Counter-Terrorism Roadmap with a special emphasis on joint projects and information sharing.

The EU and Jordan should also intensify **'bridge building'** in other conflict contexts, including the Middle-East Peace Process. The EU recognises Jordan's indispensable and constructive role in the stability of the region and reiterates the importance of upholding the historic status quo of the holy sites in Jerusalem, including with regard to the Hashemite Custodianship. The EU and Jordan will continue to engage closely in pursuing a just and comprehensive resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict based on the two state solution, internationally-agreed parameters and international law. Beyond the immediate conflict dimension, in the context of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, they will strengthen

⁶ COMM(2021) 66 final of 18.2.2021

⁷ COMM(2020) 609 final of 23.9.2020

cooperation and resilience in disaster risk management and civil protection, enhance work on climate resilience and adaptation, and invest in preventive measures.

The EU and Jordan are partners in promoting and fostering inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogues, at global and regional levels where Jordan has been playing a leading role. The EU and Jordan will cooperate and identify ways to protect and preserve cultural heritage as an important vehicle for peace, democracy and sustainable development and as a means to generate positive dialogue and inclusion, and will propose actions to this effect.

Access to natural resources, notably to safe drinking water, will be another key aspect for long term stability. Jordan and the EU will continue to cooperate to further improve the efficiency and sustainability of management of water resources.

Prevention and countering of terrorism and violent extremism and radicalisation must remain high on the agenda. In that view and complementing regular political and thematic dialogue, the EU and Jordan will intensify concrete co-operation and information sharing to address these challenges within the rule of law and in full respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The EU and Jordan will work together in fighting the root causes of radicalisation, terrorism and violent extremism having regard to social cohesion, the important role of women and youth and of education, including through mutually agreed education programmes and the involvement of a broad scope of Jordanian civil society.

The EU and Jordan have also established a framework for the participation of Jordan in EU **crisis management operations**, which is another example of the close cooperation on security issues that can be built upon.

2. PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC STABILITY, A GREEN, DIGITAL, INCLUSIVE AND KNOWLEDGE-BASED GROWTH, QUALITY OF EDUCATION AND DECENT JOB CREATION

The Syria crisis and the protracted refugee presence it caused have heavily impacted the economic situation of Jordan, its scarce natural resources and the provision of basic services exacerbating an already challenging economic situation. The COVID-19 pandemic, has significantly aggravated socio-economic challenges, vulnerabilities and inequalities. **Economic dialogue, reforms and cooperation on macro-economic issues** will therefore be further developed and implemented with a view to promoting sound macro-economic and structural policies that foster sustainable and inclusive growth potential, increase the resilience of the Jordanian economy to economic shocks and enhance the sustainability of public finances in coordination with multilateral and bilateral donors. Efforts to preserve macro-economic stability should continue in the context of the revised International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme and Jordan's commitments with the international community following the London Conference in 2019 and Jordan's Reform Matrix. The EU is sustaining such efforts through its cooperation assistance, as well as via substantial macro-financial assistance programmes.

Besides sound fiscal and budgetary management, cooperation will be further pursued on **reforms in Jordan's public sector** in view of improving public finance management, but also its overall efficiency and service delivery capacities.

A main socio-economic challenge for Jordan, inter alia as a result of protracted regional crises, is unequal access to employment, including for women and youth, low economic growth, high unemployment, and growing debt. This ought to be overcome by creating decent work, supporting entrepreneurship and innovation - in particular in the green, digital and social economy - developing skills and qualifications - by fostering targeted training, education and research - and by developing a targeted and comprehensive social protection

system. The Partnership Priorities aim to address this by applying various policy tools: trade; business development; education, training and lifelong learning; increased mobility. The aim across these instruments is also to strengthen the economic empowerment and participation of all segments of society.

- (a) **Trade-for-Development** constitutes a key element of the Partnership Priorities. Job creation, supported by the uptick in exports to the EU under the simplified rules of origin scheme and accompanying measures, will benefit Jordan. The EU and Jordan will jointly identify suitable approaches to enhance the modernisation of bilateral trade and investment relations. Furthermore, the EU and Jordan will work together on SMEs, development, technology and know-how to strengthen bilateral and economic ties.
- (b) In parallel, the EU and Jordan will continue their **dialogue**, to encourage harmonisation in areas such as Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary Measures (SPS), Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) and services with a view to facilitating trade and strengthening the attractiveness of Jordan to investment. Moreover, to better protect the health and safety of consumers, and to facilitate trade, the EU will work with Jordan to support the development of effective product safety frameworks, in line with international standards, while avoiding non-tariff barriers.
- (c) The EU and Jordan will prioritise and multiply their efforts in view of: **improving the business climate** and attracting investments, in particular those supporting the transition to a low-emitting, resilient and circular economy; **supporting productivity and competitiveness of the private sector** and promote entrepreneurship (including through legal, regulatory and administrative reform including competition policies and subsidies control rules, lending to companies and making the best use of digital transformation and green transition); **creating the right set of knowledge and skills** required in the Jordanian labour market and for the green, digital and social economy. A new **sustainable investment initiative**, as mentioned above, could help pursue these objectives. Also, the EU and Jordan will work together on strengthening knowledge-based sectors, which is important for the creation of decent jobs, particularly among the youth and women as well as supporting and empowering companies, especially in the economic sectors most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- (d) **Education** is another powerful instrument for enhancing social and economic development. It will be central to for Jordan, working in cooperation with the EU, to deliver on this priority to benefit all those living in Jordan and overcome challenges associated with COVID-19 and bridging learning gaps. **Access to safe and quality public education for all children, youth and young adults at all levels** will guide EU-Jordan cooperation to ensure that everybody has an opportunity to study, to build an own future and to contribute to the economic growth and the country's development. Vocational training and education responsive to the labour market deserves particular attention, as well as higher education and life-long learning.

The EU and Jordan will also cooperate, bilaterally and in the context of the Union for the Mediterranean, in the fields of **science, technology, and innovation** strategy, including by implementing roadmaps to address joint priorities such as Climate Change, Health and Renewable Energies.

The EU and Jordan will foster innovative research and knowledge-based solutions and cooperation on **renewable energy, energy efficiency aligned with the Jordan Energy**

sector strategy (2020-2030), and sustainable natural resources management, including for sustainable agriculture practices and sustainable water and waste management, including safe drinking water. Their cooperation will be in line with the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement, including in the context of the European Green Deal, with strengthened action to promote the transition to a climate neutral, resilient and circular economy. Cooperation on research and innovation will continue through Horizon Europe, the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean programme (PRIMA) and the UfM Regional Platform on Research and Innovation.

The EU and Jordan will establish a forum for the identification and preparation of **future investment projects**, in line with Jordan's national priorities and in coordination with bilateral and multilateral donors. The EU will aim, among others, to support Jordan, in coordination with other donors, in its plans to implement the Aqaba-Amman Water Desalination and Conveyance (AAWDC) project as a strategic national project that aims at reducing the deficit in the country's crucial water resources.

The EU and Jordan will work together to ensure **coherence between Energy, Water, Food, Health and Climate Change priorities**, promote their implementation and ensure participatory processes at regional and international levels.

3. STRENGTHENING GOOD GOVERNANCE, THE RULE OF LAW, DEMOCRATIC REFORM AND RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

In line with Jordan's strong commitment to a continued reform process fostered by the Royal Committee to Modernise the Political System, the EU and Jordan will continue working together with the aim of further strengthening the democratic and justice system in Jordan, the rule of law, gender equality and the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The EU and Jordan will support steps to combat all forms of discrimination, all aspects relating to an effective and well-established civil society, including by setting up a legal working environment and operational space conducive to the development of a vibrant civil society.

Cooperation will focus on the implementation of the comprehensive and inclusive reforms, further strengthening the effectiveness, efficiency and the independence of the judiciary, as well as equal access to justice for all, in line with internationally accepted standards. It will encompass judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters, by promoting accession to, and implementation of, the relevant international conventions, and through working towards an international agreement on judicial cooperation in criminal matters together with Eurojust. Cooperation will further focus on the electoral process (including follow up on recommendations of EU Election Observation and Election Expert Missions), support to gender equality, including the fight against gender-based violence, and to the meaningful political participation of women and youth, and to women's empowerment in political and public life. Economic, social and cultural rights, civic education, strengthening of the political party system and the oversight and legislative role of Parliament, the links between local and national politics, a meaningful social dialogue, the process of decentralisation, pluralistic and independent media, transparency, including financial transparency, and accountability as well as the fight against corruption will also be part of EU-Jordan cooperation.

The EU and Jordan will continue to hold a regular **dialogue on democracy and good governance, justice, the rule of law and human rights**. The dialogue will build on Jordan's international, regional and national achievements and commitments. Civil society will be jointly invited to provide input.

As regards **human rights** specifically, regular dialogue will address amongst others: freedom of expression in all its forms; freedom of association including the working environment for civil society and social partners, such as trade unions and chambers of commerce; women's rights and women's empowerment in political, economic and public life, and the rights of the child. An accountable, transparent, efficient and inclusive public administration is essential to implement these targets, and to further promote and strengthen Jordan's democracy and good governance and its fight against fraud and corruption, including through effective and efficient cooperation with the European Anti- Fraud Office and the European Public Prosecutor's Office.

The dialogue will take duly into consideration existing commitments made by Jordan at the multilateral level. Economic, social and cultural rights, for example on education and labour, will also be covered in this dialogue. The dialogue will relate in particular to areas retained in the Partnership Priorities.

To ensure a high level of protection of personal data, the EU will continue to engage to promote further conversion with EU and international data protection standards. Jordan should take further practical steps to guarantee the respect for the rights to privacy and personal data protection in the public and private sectors, including in the law enforcement and criminal justice field.

RESPONSE TO THE SYRIAN CRISIS

The EU and Jordan will continue working together to find durable and sustainable solutions to the Syrian crisis in accordance with UN Security Council resolution 2254 (2015), so as to allow for the voluntary, safe, and dignified return of refugees. Their efforts will continue to provide access to protection, livelihoods and services for both refugees and vulnerable host communities, including through the following measures:

- Continue facilitating the administrative status of refugees and to ensure an effective protection, access to basic services and respect of their basic human and legal rights;
- Improve access and quality of essential services, including social assistance, waste water services, health care including mental health and psychosocial support and formal and non-formal education;
- Increase their livelihoods and their self-reliance by creating opportunities to contribute to the economic development of Jordan via, among others: improving the business climate and enhance productivity and labour market conditions; support policies to match skills and market needs; facilitating access to education and training; improving and expanding access to work opportunities including through supporting home-based business and work permits; strengthening the economic empowerment and participation of women and youth.
- Foster exports to the EU market, including through the effective implementation of the rules of origin scheme for Jordan, to promote investments and job creation benefiting both Jordanians and Syrian refugees.

MECHANISMS FOR DIALOGUE AND MUTUAL COOPERATION

The general framework for relations between the EU and Jordan is set by the Association Agreement, which entered into force in 2002 and the Advanced Status achieved in 2010. A **rationalisation of the implementation of the Association Agreement** has been successfully

achieved through grouping the sub-committees into a few thematic dialogues according to the Partnership Priorities and complementing the political dialogues.

In correlation with the review of the Agenda for the Mediterranean and of the Council Conclusions in 2024, a mid-term review is also foreseen to evaluate the impact of and, when necessary, to adapt the Partnership Priorities that will be mutually agreed between the EU and Jordan.

Also, to support the delivery of the **EU support in response to the Syrian refugee crisis**, a regular review of the relevant mutual commitments under these Priorities will take place in the context of the bilateral cooperation between the EU and Jordan as well as other relevant dialogues and meetings, and through the follow-up to the Brussels conferences.

In line with the **principle of greater ownership of the European Neighbourhood Policy**, the EU, in close coordination with Member States, will take part in coordinating mechanisms with the Government of Jordan at central and local level, and with partners, such as civil society and the private sector.

Pursuing the ambitions outlined in the Partnership Priorities, the EU is committed to continue providing financial support and engaging within the international community in support of Jordan, and Jordan commits to continue implementing its reform agenda, which will be central to enable the joint success of the partnership.