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NOTE

From:	Portuguese delegation
To:	Council
Subject:	Ministerial Conference EU-MENA, Strategic police partnership towards a trustful security cooperation, Lisbon, 13 - 14 February 2023

Delegations will find attached the conclusions of the Ministerial Conference EU-MENA held in Lisbon on 13 - 14 February 2023.



Ministerial Conference EU-MENA

Strategic police partnership towards a trustful security cooperation

Lisbon, 13 - 14 February 2023

The Ministers of the Interior and in charge of Security Affairs and High-Level representatives met in Lisbon on 14 February 2023 at the invitation of the Minister of the Interior of Portugal. The meeting brought together, in Lisbon, representatives from some 40 delegations, including Participating States, European Agencies (EUROPOL, FRONTEX and CEPOL) and other International Partners (including INTERPOL and the Council of Arab Interior Ministers Council).

The Conference culminated in the adoption of a Joint Declaration | **Lisbon Conclusions** at the highest level which follows:

- (a) The establishment of a **Regional Policy Dialogue Process**, involving all relevant partners and agencies, and strengthening the ties of cooperation, between the parties, on preventing and combating all forms of crime;
- (b) The adoption, in the short term, of a Law Enforcement Cooperation Strategy, based on common criminal threats and the results of ongoing programmes and initiatives, benefiting from the reinforced operational cooperation between European Members States and the MENA Countries, with the support of Agencies such as EUROPOL, FRONTEX and CEPOL as well as the full support of INTERPOL's programmes and databases,
- (c) The adoption of an Action Plan with a roadmap and sectoral objectives, that is inclusive of strategic and operational partners,
- (d) The establishment, within no more than 2 years, of the legal framework and governance of a **Regional Political Dialogue Process**.

As concrete initiatives to be highlighted as results of this Lisbon meeting, we would like to highlight 4 actions, to take place in the coming months:

1. The holding of a High-Level Conferences in Portugal, with the support of EUROPOL, which can contribute to strengthening cooperation, identifying threats, risks and opportunities, as well as improving the mechanisms and instruments for joint work;
2. The holding in Portugal, with the support of FRONTEX, of a Euro-Arab Conference on border control, taking advantage of Portugal's experience and knowledge in the area of border management and control and ensuring the creation of joint mechanisms (EU - MENA) to prevent and combat phenomena such as trafficking in human beings and aiding illegal immigration, as well as all the criminal phenomena that may occur at our borders;
3. The holding in Portugal or in one of the other States that make up the Council of Arab Interior Ministers Council, of a High-Level Conference, with CEPOL's support, and that may contribute towards the reinforcement of joint (EU - MENA) mechanisms and

processes in the field of training and capacity building for our Security Forces and our Security Services;

4. The deepening of the EUROMED Police initiative, which has CEPOL and EUROPOL as its main partners. This operational cooperation should benefit from specific training tools, in particular with the purpose of formulating and implementing joint training initiatives and, also, seeks to strengthen the mechanisms for exchanging information and alerts in the prevention and fight against transnational and organised crime.

Committed to building this Dialogue and in line with the political and strategic orientation, Portugal has already showed its readiness to host new initiatives in the next two years, on a sectoral dimension, with the support of the European Agencies and Institutions and other international partners, contributing to the strengthening of operational cooperation between the countries of these important regions.