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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Relations with Jordan - European Union's position for the Association Council's 14th meeting (Amman, 2 June 2022)

Delegations will find attached the European Union's position for the 14th EU-Jordan Association Council.

**14TH MEETING OF THE EU-JORDAN ASSOCIATION COUNCIL
(AMMAN, 2 JUNE 2022)**

Statement by the European Union

1. On the occasion of the **fourteenth meeting of the EU-Jordan Association Council**, the EU restates its commitment to further developing the strong partnership between the EU and Jordan. The EU's strategic priorities for a democratic, more stable, greener and more prosperous Southern Neighbourhood are outlined in the Revised European Neighbourhood Policy¹, the European Council conclusions of 10-11 December 2020², the Agenda for the Mediterranean on a renewed Partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood of 9 February 2021 and subsequent Council conclusions of 16 April 2021.³

2. **The European Union and Jordan have a strong and mutual partnership.** This is demonstrated by many meetings, including on the highest level, between Jordan and the European Union's Institutions since June 2019, senior-level dialogues in the context of multilateral and regional fora, the EU-Jordan Association Committee in May 2021 and Sub-committee meetings in 2020 and 2021 as well as the co-chairing of the Union for the Mediterranean, highlighting the mutual benefit of our sustained engagement.

3. The Partnership Priorities 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. It supports the efficient and timely implementation of flagship initiatives of the Economic and Investment Plan⁴ that will reinforce the EU's partnership with the Southern Neighbours, including 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.

¹ JOIN(2015) 50 final of 18/11/2015.

² EUCO 22/20.

³ JOIN(2021) 2 final.

⁴ Joint Communication 'A Renewed Partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood - a New Agenda for the Mediterranean' – JOIN(2021)2 final of 09/02/2021

4. With a view to further enhancing the solid and multi-faceted relationship, the Partnership Priorities support the implementation of the EU-Jordan Association Agreement, which will guide the partnership. **The EU-Jordan Partnership Priorities are an expression of co-ownership and embody our shared goals of a common area of peace, democracy and human rights, rule of law, prosperity and stability.** They offer the framework for our continuous and strengthened political and operational engagement, while allowing flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances.

5. Therefore, the EU and Jordan commit to further deepening their dialogue and their cooperation around the three **mutually reinforcing objectives reflected in the EU-Jordan Partnership Priorities 2021-2027**: 1) Strengthening cooperation on regional stability, security including counter-terrorism; 2) promoting sustainable economic stability, a green, digital, inclusive and knowledge-based growth, quality of education and decent job creation; and 3) strengthening good governance, the rule of law, democratic reform and respect for human rights. Cooperation will also be pursued on a number of **cross-cutting priorities** such as migration and mobility, including further implementation of the Mobility Partnership. The EU will continue to prioritise post-COVID-19 recovery and economic, social and political inclusion of vulnerable groups, youth and women, across the different areas of engagement with Jordan. In this context, the EU reiterates its commitment to assist Jordan in providing support to refugees seeking protection in Jordan and strengthening Jordan's resilience.

6. **The European Union's political priorities for 2019-2024** (a new Strategic Agenda 2019-2024 for the Union⁵), which serve to address the main challenges faced by the EU, include transforming the EU into a modern, climate-neutral resource-efficient and competitive economy (the European Green Deal); migration, embracing digital transformation by investing in business, research and innovation; boosting EU's relations with neighbouring countries and partners; and upholding fundamental rights and the rule of law worldwide. These priorities will also shape the EU's cooperation with Jordan.

7. The EU and Jordan will build on their partnership. The EU recognizes the importance of and stands ready to support the implementation of Jordan's political and economic reform agendas in line with the recommendations of the Royal Committee to Modernise the Political System, the National Vision and Strategy "Jordan 2025" and the Government's Indicative Executive Programme for 2021-2024 (GIEP).

⁵ EUCO 9/19 of 20/06/2019

8. At the **Brussels VI Conference on the Future of Syria and the Region**, hosted by the European Union on 10 May 2022, the EU reiterated the acknowledgment on behalf of the international community of the commendable generosity of the people and authorities of Jordan in providing refuge to Syrian refugees. The EU reiterates that conditions for returns of refugees in a safe, dignified and voluntary manner, in line with international law and the UN standards, are not in place. The EU will continue supporting Jordan in its holistic approach to the refugee crisis, taking note of the external dimension components of the Communication of the European Commission on a Pact on Asylum and Migration⁶, and in maximising impact, including in terms of the key mutual commitments from this and past conferences. The EU will continue to assist Jordan in providing support to refugees and vulnerable host communities seeking protection and assistance in Jordan and in strengthening at the same time Jordan's resilience and social cohesion, including a continuous engagement in mitigating the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The EU and Jordan will continue to work towards durable solutions for refugees and host communities through, inter alia, further supporting inclusive national approaches in policy-making and programming in terms of access to work opportunities, social services, education, livelihoods and self-reliance. In our shared view, this will allow for more sustainable inclusive approaches and contribute to a more resilient economy and society.

9. At the Brussels V Conference in 2021, the international community pledged EUR 5.3 billion for 2021 and beyond. Of this amount, EUR 3.7 billion were announced by the EU, with EUR 1.12 billion coming from the European Commission and EUR 2.6 billion from EU Member States. The EU as a whole remains the largest donor with EUR 24.9 billion of humanitarian, stabilisation and resilience assistance collectively mobilised since the onset of the crisis in 2011 to address its consequences. Since the start of the Syria crisis, the EU has allocated almost EUR 3.5 billion to Jordan, of which around EUR 1.2 billion as a response to the Syrian crisis including humanitarian assistance and support to the resilience of vulnerable host communities and refugees from Syria, notably via the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis and around EUR 1.3 billion of bilateral assistance.

10. The EU continues to be fully committed to politically and financially supporting **the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA)**, which is key in responding to Palestine refugees' human development and protection needs. In this regard, the EU and UNRWA signed a Joint Declaration on 17 November 2021⁷. The EU highly values Jordan's role in advancing sustainable support for UNRWA, as well as in hosting Palestine refugees and UNRWA's headquarters. The EU also notes that the situation of Palestine refugees and UNRWA itself remains difficult. The EU recognizes and highly values Jordan's crucial contribution to the maintenance of security, stability and development in the region, as highlighted by its traditional commitment to the Middle East peace process and its efforts to mitigate the humanitarian consequences of the crises in Syria, Iraq and Lebanon.

⁶ COM (2020) 609 final of 23/09/2020

⁷ A Joint declaration between the EU and the UNRWA on the EU's support to UNRWA (2021-2024).

11. The EU commends Jordan's COVID-19 health response efforts, including with regard to the refugees Jordan is hosting. The EU has supported the national **COVID-19 preparedness and response** plan in Jordan, contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals through supporting the provision of quality, equitable and affordable health care services to Syrian refugees and vulnerable Jordanians, and through assisting the Ministry of Health to cope with the pandemic. The EU assisted the Ministry of Health in the procurement of routine immunisation vaccines for 20 % of the population residing in Jordan for the year 2021. The EU supported the procurement of 438,000 doses of the COVID-19 vaccines through the COVAX Facility funded under the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis, making Jordan one of the world's first countries to start COVID-19 vaccinations for refugees. **In helping Jordan to address the impact of the pandemic**, the EU made available EUR 418 million for emergency response, strengthening of the health care system as well as to deal with the socio-economic impact. The EU encourages Jordan to accompany the loosening of the COVID-19 restrictions in economic sectors with a speedy lifting of the Defence Orders.

12. Regarding **Russia's military aggression against Ukraine**⁸, the EU condemned in the strongest possible terms this unprovoked and unjustified aggression, which is grossly violating international law and principles of the United Nations Charter and undermines European and global security and stability. The EU demands that Russia immediately ceases its military actions, unconditionally withdraws all forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine and fully respects Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence within its internationally recognised borders. The EU deplores the tragic loss of life and human suffering caused by the Russian aggression. The Russian military aggression against Ukraine has forced millions of people to flee their homes.

12bis. Against this background, the EU welcomes Jordan's support for the United Nations General Assembly resolutions of 2 March 2022⁹ and 24 March 2022¹⁰ demanding that Russia immediately end its military aggression against Ukraine, and calling for civilian protection and humanitarian access in Ukraine. The EU is confident that Jordan will continue to lend its support in multilateral fora in this regard and encourages Jordan to condemn the Russian aggression against Ukraine.

13. The EU is concerned by Russian state-sponsored disinformation and massive information manipulation used to justify and support its military aggression against Ukraine as well as undermine the EU's position on this issue, targeting the societies of the EU and neighbouring countries, gravely distorting and manipulating the facts. It is of major concern that pro-Kremlin false narratives are being spread intensively in the media and social networks in Arabic language across the MENA region, including Jordan. The EU stands ready to share with Jordan and all partners its practices and expertise in countering pro-Kremlin disinformation.

⁸ EUCO 18/22 of 24/02/2022 and EUCO 1/22 of 25/03/2022.

⁹ United Nations General Assembly Resolution GA/12407 of 02/03/2022.

¹⁰ United Nations General Assembly Resolution GA/12411 of 24/03/2022.

Strengthening Cooperation on Regional Stability, Security including Counter-Terrorism

14. The EU reiterates its appreciation for Jordan's active diplomatic role including its constructive and effective engagement within the **United Nations**, to the benefit of the global good, multilateralism and the rules-based order. The EU and Jordan are solid partners in foreign and security policy and will aim at strengthening cooperation on regional stability and security, including counterterrorism.

15. The EU commends the constructive role that Jordan has been playing as co-president of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) since 2012. 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 UfM has increased ownership and developed meaningful solutions to tackle common challenges and create common opportunities in crucial areas such as environment and water management, decent employment creation, youth inclusion and women empowerment.

16. The EU recognises **Jordan's strategic role for the stability of the region** and will continue to coordinate actively with Jordan in pursuing a just and comprehensive resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, based on the two-state solution that ends the occupation, with the State of Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous, sovereign, and viable State of Palestine living side by side in peace and security and mutual recognition, with Jerusalem as the future capital of both states. The EU and its Member States will continue to respect the international consensus on Jerusalem embodied in the relevant United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions, including the UNSC Resolution 478, until the final status of Jerusalem is resolved. The EU recalls the specific significance of the Holy Sites and makes a strong call for upholding the status quo put in place in 1967 for the Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount in line with previous understandings and with respect to Jordan's special role, acknowledged also in the 1994 Jordan-Israel peace treaty.

16bis. The EU welcomes the trilateral cooperation between Jordan, Egypt and Iraq and its contribution to regional stability.

17. The EU reconfirms the imperative of a viable, credible and inclusive political solution to the **Syria crisis** in line with the Geneva communiqué and all aspects of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254 and will continue to work with Jordan towards its implementation. On 24 January 2022, the EU Foreign Affairs Council reiterated that no normalisation, lifting of sanctions or reconstruction would be possible until the Syrian regime engaged in a political solution of the conflict. The EU continues to call for respect of the de-escalation agreement in the Northwest, stability in Southern Syria, which is crucial for Jordan, the protection of civilians and the unhindered, safe and sustainable humanitarian access. The EU also calls for the stabilization of North-East Syria and reminds its full commitment to fight Da'esh's resurgence through the action of the Global coalition against Da'esh. The reduction of violence will contribute to support the UN-facilitated political process in Geneva in order to find a lasting solution to the conflict. The EU recognises Jordan's security concerns, especially pertaining to drug smuggling. At the same time, the EU continues to support the efforts of United Nations Special Envoy Pedersen, including for his proposed "steps-for-steps" policy.

17bis. Recognising the right of the Syrian refugees to return safely, voluntarily and in dignity to their homes when conditions for returns as stipulated by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) are in place, the EU will continue promoting cooperation in the region in the interest of all Syrians. The EU notes that for the time being, due to the continued violations of international humanitarian law and other human rights violations, such conditions for the return of refugees in line with the international law are not in place. The EU acknowledges the crucial role played by Jordan alongside other countries in hosting the Syrian refugees who fled the conflict and commends the government and the people of Jordan that have welcomed and hosted Syrians for so many years. The EU encourages Jordan to continue adopting an inclusive approach in hosting Syrian refugees.

18. The EU notes that Jordan continues to be exposed to threats posed by **terrorism** and violent extremism. The EU welcomes Jordan's multi-faceted approach, including engaging in the Global Coalition against Da'esh, which despite having lost its territorial dimension, continues to operate in the form of an insurgency in Iraq, Syria and, through its affiliations, in other areas of the globe, in Africa and Asia. The EU also appreciates the role of Jordan in promoting the Prevention of Violent Extremism within the United Nations. The EU commends Jordan, and in particular His Majesty King Abdullah II, for the Aqaba Process and his commitment to the Christchurch Call to Action. The EU reiterates its position that all counter-terrorism measures must be conducted in full compliance with international law, in particular international human rights law, humanitarian law and international refugee law¹¹.

¹¹ Council conclusions on the EU external action on preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism of 15/06/2020 8868/20.

19. The EU and Jordan will continue to work together on preventing and **countering violent extremism** in particular among youth and children. The EU encourages Jordan to continuously address the drivers behind radicalisation through a whole of society approach. The EU calls on Jordan to strengthen its regulatory and institutional framework to prevent and fight against money laundering and the financing of terrorism to swiftly remedy the shortcomings identified by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) in October 2021 and to comply with Anti-Money Laundering (AML)/Countering the financing of terrorism (CFT) international standards. The EU will continue to assist Jordan in that regard and provide technical assistance and expertise through the Global Facility for AML/CFT with a view to a rapid de-listing of Jordan. The EU encourages the Jordanian authorities to engage in the negotiations with Europol concerning a Working Arrangement, in order to facilitate a structured cooperation, as well as start negotiations with the European Commission on an international Agreement enabling Europol and Jordan to exchange personal data.

20. The EU is committed to enhancing its support to Jordan on all issues related to **integrated border management**, including with a view to stabilizing Jordan's external borders and fighting against the regional threat of drug trafficking in line with international human rights law, humanitarian law and international refugee law. The EU and Jordan will continue their cooperation in the area of aviation security.

Promoting Sustainable Economic Stability, a Green, Digital, Inclusive and Knowledge-Based Growth, Quality of Education and Decent Job Creation

21. **The COVID-19 pandemic** has added further pressure on the health, education and economic sectors. The EU will continue to work with Jordan in its post-crisis recovery effort, emphasising a green and digital transformation, increasing resilience and creating prosperity and decent work opportunities in an inclusive manner. On 16 February 2022, the European Commission adopted an implementing decision recognising Jordan's vaccination certificates as equivalent, and linking the country to the EU Digital Covid Certificate system.

22. The EU encourages Jordan to effectively implement economic and administrative reforms, and reiterates its support to this end, and its willingness to work closely with European donors and international financial institutions in order to further coordinate and align the collective support to help Jordan to achieve timely and concrete progress in its reform priorities. Also to this end, full advantage should be taken of the different types of financial assistance opportunities made available by the EU to its neighbourhood partners.

23. The EU encourages Jordan to implement, through enhanced inter-ministerial coordination and with EU's continued support most-needed structural reforms focusing on improved public service delivery and resource management, accountability and transparency and on enhancing the business and investment environment and job creation notably for youth and women, including in knowledge-based sectors. Social security, decent labour conditions and pay are essential aspects of the protection of livelihoods and of boosting the private sector and investments; this should be reflected in the upcoming amendments of the labour law.

24. The EU commends and supports initiatives to increase the **participation of women** in the public sphere, including the economy and the political arena at local and national levels, including to increase their presence in the labour force and among decision-makers, taking note of the Joint Communication on the EU Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in External Action 2021-2025¹². This represents an important step in promoting gender equality and is likely to increase the level of economic activity and contribute to Jordan's economic growth. The EU notes the particular importance of civil society organisations and of activists' work in supporting women's rights and in promoting gender equality. The EU welcomes the National Strategy for Women in Jordan 2020-2025 and the 2022 Constitutional amendments, and encourages Jordan to advance further equality of rights, economic participation and social empowerment of women. The EU calls on Jordan and stands ready to support Jordan in its effort to promote gender equality, including through advancements in the legislative framework, the practical implementation of national laws as well as labour market reforms tackling barriers to female and youth employment.

25. Following the successful two **Macro-Financial Assistance** (MFA) programmes with Jordan of EUR 180 million and EUR 200 million, which were fully disbursed in 2015 and 2019, respectively, the EU made available EUR 700 million in MFA to Jordan in 2020. This amount includes additional EUR 200 million due to COVID-19 pandemic, on the already agreed MFA-III of EUR 500 million, as part of the EU's increased support to Jordan. The first two tranches of EUR 250 million each were disbursed in November 2020 and July 2021, respectively. The third tranche of EUR 200 million remains available until April 2023. The MFA is conditional on a set of structural reform measures in the areas of public finance management, utilities, social and labour market policy, and governance, which were agreed with the Jordanian authorities in a Memorandum of Understanding. This is important to encourage reforms that make the country's economy more resilient and apt at dealing with the challenges it faces.

¹² Joint Communication JOIN(2020) 17 final of 25/11/2020.

26. The EU will continue to foster the **enhancement of bilateral trade and investment relations** with Jordan, as an important vehicle for investment, growth and job creation. The EU will continue to support Jordan in its efforts to improve its export performance by boosting its general export capacity and competitiveness and achieving a closer integration into global value chains. To this end, the EU will support Jordan in its efforts to assist Jordanian producers in meeting specific technical, sanitary and phytosanitary requirements, allowing business operators to take fuller advantage of the preferential access to the EU market that Jordan already enjoys. Recalling the importance of properly implementing the Free Trade Area established under the Association Agreement, including by ensuring transparent and predictable regulatory environment for economic operators, the EU stands ready to explore ideas for additional steps to mutually facilitate bilateral trade and investment, including deepening the existing Free Trade Area.

27. The EU commends Jordan for and encourages to pursue its efforts to facilitate the access and participation of refugees into the formal labour market in an inclusive way. The EU welcomes the major progress achieved in registering a record 62,000 work permits to Syrian refugees in 2021 and calls on Jordan to examine the possibility of opening additional sectors to allow participation in the labour market which would be mutually beneficial. The EU also encourages Jordan to maintain efforts to reduce the number of undocumented refugees. The EU encourages Jordan to intensify efforts to continue the implementation of the relaxed rules of origin scheme, to publicise its benefits to potential investors in the private sector, and to take forward more general initiatives to improve the investment climate, which would also be likely to have wider spill-over benefits for the economy beyond the rules of origin initiative. The EU remains willing to explore, in close cooperation with the Jordanian authorities, other measurable means corresponding to employment in relation to the scheme, taking into account fair working conditions.

28. The EU will continue to provide support to policies and programmes designed to improve the access to and quality of **education and vocational education and training responsive to the labour markets**, increasing the focus on analytical thinking, entrepreneurship, private sector development and new technologies, notably in view of enhancing the employment opportunities of young people.

29. In the same spirit, increased **student and staff mobility** as well as capacity building projects through Erasmus+ and other programmes will be pursued. The EU in particular welcomes the success of Jordanian universities in the Capacity-Building strand of the Erasmus+ programme until 2020, and looks forward to a good level of participation in the new programme as of 2021, which will also offer opportunities for cooperation between Jordanian and European Vocational Education and Training as well as Youth organisations.

30. The EU will keep working closely with Jordan to help ensure that all children, girls and boys, living in the country without exception have equal opportunities to attend school and receive basic **quality education**. The EU has provided important support to construct schools, allow the enrolment of Syrian students in the formal education system as well as to hire and train teachers. The EU stands ready to support efforts to develop and modernise the education curriculum, including in light of the constitutional amendments, and in particular to promote the civic education of children, to prepare them to be active and responsible citizens, thereby accompanying the efforts to modernise the political system in Jordan.

31. The EU remains committed to enhancing the integration of **research and innovation** in education and in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) programmes, as well as in public and private sector investment. Increased cooperation between research and innovation centres and small and medium enterprises will have a positive effect on Jordan's competitiveness. The EU encourages Jordan to make full use of Horizon Europe and of research mobility and partnership initiatives, as well as to join the Creative Europe programme of the EU.

32. The EU welcomes the signature on 11 December 2018 of the Implementing Arrangement for Jordan's participation in the **Partnership on Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area** (PRIMA) enabling Jordan to integrate an ambitious agenda for jointly funded research in the key areas of water management and its relationship with agriculture and food production.

33. The EU welcomes Jordan's interest in space cooperation including the European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service (*EGNOS*)/Galileo, and looks forward to entering into negotiations for the extension of the *EGNOS* coverage to Jordan and the broader region.

34. The EU welcomes Jordan's significant progress in implementing its National Determined Contribution. Fighting climate change remains a top priority for the EU. The measures adopted so far, including the Green Growth Plan, represent important steps forward in the transition towards a sustainable and climate-neutral economy. The EU seeks to intensify its cooperation with Jordan to accelerate the clean energy transition and boost green recovery policies. Increasing climate change adaptation capacities and disaster risk reduction, as well as fighting environmental degradation, will be priorities for joint action in Jordan. The EU is keen to continue active engagement in the areas of renewable energy and energy efficiency (aligned with the Jordan Energy sector strategy 2020-2030), electricity grid interconnections, and the transition to a safe and sustainable low-carbon economy. The EU supports resource efficient growth, sustainable natural resource management and the **green growth** agenda in Jordan. The EU will reinforce strategic engagement with International Financial Institutions and the private sector to support the development of sustainable investment opportunities in line with national priorities. The EU will cooperate with Jordan in fostering innovative research and knowledge-based solutions on combating climate change and promoting the transition to clean, safe and sustainable energy.

35. The EU supports **environment mainstreaming** within development sectors notably water supply, including wastewater treatment and networks, solid waste management and green energy applications. Recognising the importance of water security in Jordan, the EU reiterates the willingness to cooperate with Jordan to further improve the efficiency and sustainability of management of water resources and thus its support to the Team Europe Initiative for “Sustainable Water Management” and within that, to implementation of the **Aqaba-Amman Water Desalination and Conveyance** (AAWDC) project. The EU is pleased by the positive outcome of the 31 March 2022 pledging conference for this project and, in addition to its pledge announced on this occasion, it remains committed to further supporting it. In this particular context, the EU encourages sound water management through several prior or concurrent sectorial reforms to ensure the project’s efficiency and viability: national water grid rehabilitation, pricing reform and agricultural reform in order to reduce water waste and stands ready to support. The EU also reiterates its support to regional projects that may also benefit the Palestinian side in the spirit of fostering regional cooperation (e.g. King Hussein Bridge upgrade). The EU also welcomes Jordan’s agreement in setting up the “EU-Jordan Investment Platform”, 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 that would also allow Jordan to take full advantage of the opportunities offered under the Neighbourhood Investment Platform and the new system of guarantees the European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus (EFSD+).

Strengthening Good Governance, the Rule of Law, Democratic Reform and Respect for Human Rights

36. The respect of **democratic principles, fundamental freedoms and human rights** constitutes one of the main pillars of the EU-Jordan Association Agreement. The EU continues to value strongly the constant dialogue at political and senior official level and will continue to encourage and support efforts to advance the rule of law, enhance transparency and establish effective and accountable institutions, while protecting and promoting human rights for all. The EU would welcome further cooperation with Jordan in this regard. The EU commends the efforts underway to promote an effective, independent and well-functioning judicial system, which should continue, while it will keep on working with Jordan to encourage expanding the legal aid system, supporting also the role of civil society therein. The EU will continue supporting Jordan in the implementation of its Justice Reform Strategy, including by promoting the interface between the rule of law and security, and international judicial cooperation. In this light, the EU underlines the need of ensuring transparency and legal safeguards at all stages of criminal trials, including in State Security courts but also introducing legal safeguards when administration detention is applied, while noting the need to limit the use of administrative detention and to provide judicial oversight on such cases.

37. The EU welcomes the objectives put forward by the Jordanian leadership as regards **political modernisation, strengthening of the role of Parliament** and promoting a **political party system** in the country. In this regard, the EU welcomes the recommendations of the Royal Committee to Modernise the Political System and stands ready to support their implementation wherever possible. The EU attaches importance to the inclusion of youth and women and encourages further efforts to ensure that institutions are fully representative. The EU notes the importance of civic and political participation and, in this regard, welcomes the adoption of Political Parties and Election laws and looks forward to their implementation; the EU stands ready to support civic education programs in cooperation with the Ministry of Education. The EU attaches importance to safeguarding freedoms of opinion, expression, association and peaceful assembly as well as the critical role of media, independent journalists and civil society. The EU also encourages and stands ready to support the revision of the relevant legal framework, including the Cybercrime Law and the Defence Orders so that they are in line with international standards.

37bis. The EU welcomes the establishment of a committee to modernise the public sector and the ambitious timeline set for the development of a roadmap until the end of June 2022. The EU encourages and stands ready to support the development of concrete activities to improve public service delivery, efficient and effective public institutions and enhanced public participation. The EU also welcomes the ongoing dialogue carried out by Jordanian authorities with relevant stakeholders on identifying areas for growth for a number of important economic sectors in view of developing a Comprehensive economic plan.

38. The EU reiterates the importance of ensuring a safe and enabling space, both online and offline, for civil society, media and journalists that can contribute to the development and modernisation of the country, and encourages Jordan to adopt a sound legal framework in this regard. Taking note of reported challenges facing civil society, the EU encourages and remains committed to supporting a thriving civil society as a contribution to building peaceful, just, inclusive and democratic societies as well as supporting service provision and raising awareness about the political modernisation effort underway. While recognising Jordan's legitimate security and counter terrorism concerns, the EU view remains that the best antidote for radicalisation and instability is an open, inclusive and resilient society where all human rights and fundamental freedoms are promoted and protected.

39. The EU encourages Jordan to engage in further strengthening its legal framework to make it fully compliant with the standards of the United Nations Convention against Torture, to which Jordan is a party, including through the criminalisation of all forms of torture and ill-treatment. The EU encourages Jordan to ratify the Optional Protocol of the UN Convention against Torture, calls on Jordan to continue investigating all alleged torture cases and to prosecute the perpetrators. The EU further calls on Jordan to implement its Universal Periodic Review (UPR) recommendations.

40. The EU encourages Jordan to achieve further progress towards gender equality, the full realisation of human rights of women and girls and their empowerment, as well as the elimination of sexual and gender-based violence. In this context, we would encourage a particular focus on child, early and forced marriage, and “protective custody”, access to justice for women and the full implementation of a legal framework protecting women’s enjoyment of human rights and victims of sexual and gender-based violence. The EU is ready to support Jordan’s National Strategy for Women and its National Action Plan for the Implementation of the United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

41. The EU commends and stands ready to support Jordan's efforts to maintain peaceful religious co-existence. It welcomes initiatives that will seek to promote multiculturalism and cultural diversity, which would also constitute a positive example for the entire region.

42. Even though the latest execution took place in March 2017, the EU regrets Jordan's interruption of the de facto moratorium on the **death penalty** in 2014 and calls on Jordan to re-instate the moratorium with a view to ultimately abolishing the death penalty.

43. The EU looks forward to the reform of the Jordanian legal and institutional framework pertaining to the human right to privacy as well as data protection, and stands ready to support Jordan’s efforts to this end.

Implementing the EU-Jordan Mobility Partnership

44. Migration and mobility are a cross-cutting issue in the cooperation between the EU and Jordan, including in the context of addressing trafficking in human beings, particularly of women and minors in vulnerable situations. The EU welcomes the initiatives undertaken in the context of the Mobility Partnership and encourages active exploration of the further cooperation opportunities in this framework. The EU welcomes that bilateral discussions on **visa facilitation** and **readmission** of persons residing without authorisation started in November 2016, and is ready to advance in the negotiation process with a view to reaching a comprehensive agreement.