



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

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Subject: **Relations with Algeria**

- Adoption of the European Union's position for the eighth meeting of the Association Council (Brussels, 13 May 2014)

Delegations will find attached the European Union's statement as approved by the Council on 12 May 2014.

**EIGHTH MEETING OF THE
EU-ALGERIA ASSOCIATION COUNCIL
(Brussels, 13 May 2014)**

Statement by the European Union

Political relations

1. The European Union (EU) welcomes **this eighth meeting of the EU-Algeria Association Council**, at which the EU and Algeria have confirmed their wish to build a bilateral relationship based on mutual respect, dialogue and cooperation. Algeria is an important partner of the EU, including in relation to the European Neighbourhood Policy. The EU reiterates its willingness to develop cooperation with Algeria towards shared objectives and to intensify and deepen high-level political dialogue on matters of common interest.

2. The EU is convinced that, within the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), the **Association Agreement** remains the most effective framework for developing bilateral relations in all spheres. We need to fully harness the potential of the Association Agreement, in particular by adopting an Action Plan, whilst respecting all aspects of the Association Agreement.

3. The EU welcomes the meeting of the **Association Council**, held in Brussels on 18 and 19 March 2014, and its discussions on the draft Action Plan. The EU expresses its wish to make progress in the negotiations on a rapid adoption of the **Action Plan**. In this context, the EU underlines the need to consult civil society and the private sector in order to guarantee an inclusive process.

4. Following the **presidential election** in Algeria on 17 April 2014, the EU strongly encourages the country's president, government and Parliament to continue the process of political, economic and social reform to satisfy the demands of the Algerian people, particularly in terms of strengthening democracy, ensuring that fundamental rights and civil liberties are respected, and developing a more diverse and efficient economy in which jobs can be created for all Algerians. The EU welcomes Algeria's intention to reform its Constitution and is willing to support the democratic reform process.

The EU reiterates its wish to start discussions with the Algerian authorities on the recommendations made by both the election observation mission deployed during the May 2012 parliamentary election and the electoral experts group sent to Algeria during the presidential election on 17 April 2014.

5. The EU considers that increased participation by all of **civil society** in public life is a key component of democracy, including elections. The EU underlines the importance of representatives of all of Algerian civil society being fully and actively associated with the reform process.

6. Algeria's election to the United Nations Human Rights Council should encourage the country to strengthen respect for **fundamental rights and civil liberties**, particularly freedom of association, opinion and expression. The EU encourages Algeria to implement measures and mechanisms to promote human rights in accordance with international conventions, paying particular attention to the rights of women. The EU reiterates its willingness to work with the Algerian authorities in this area.

Economic, trade and sectoral relations

7. Regarding trade, as Algeria's main trading partner the EU would like to strengthen commercial links with the country and support regional integration. The EU hopes that the discussions on the Action Plan will give new impetus to bilateral trade links through agreement on new pragmatic medium- and long-term objectives.

8. The EU believes that in order to attract new investors and diversify the economy the **business climate** should be improved, particularly in terms of the conditions applicable to direct European investments. The EU therefore encourages Algeria to take part in the implementation of the 2014-2015 work programme on industrial cooperation and in European standardisation. In the same vein, the EU invites Algeria to be more flexible on the rule stating that 49% is required for all direct foreign investments, in order to facilitate the bilateral talks on Algeria's accession to the WTO, which the EU supports.

Regarding the regional level, the EU urges Algeria to ratify the Convention on pan-Euro-Mediterranean (PEM) preferential **rules of origin** as soon as possible. Speedy ratification of that Convention will enable Algeria to benefit fully – and at the very outset – from the revised rules of origin currently being negotiated.

9. Following on from the UfM Ministerial Conference on transport which took place in November 2013, the EU welcomes Algeria's commitment to Euro-Mediterranean transport cooperation and encourages Algeria to put together a national plan for **maritime transport**. The EU invites Algeria to bring about a quick and positive resolution of the issue of European maritime operators' call accounts.

10. Concerning the environment, the EU urges Algeria to improve cooperation under the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and regarding the implementation of protocols to the Convention. By adopting a joint declaration, the partner countries will have the opportunity to renew their commitments regarding shared environmental challenges and their support for the Horizon 2020 initiative to clean up the Mediterranean.

11. Algeria and the EU can work together to make the **energy sector** progressively safer, more sustainable, competitive, integrated and open, and they share the wish to develop energy cooperation in all areas of common interest in order to lend substance to their mutually beneficial interdependence and contribute to economic diversification. The EU welcomes the signing, in Algiers in July 2013, of the Memorandum of Understanding on the establishment of a strategic partnership between the President of the European Commission and the Prime Minister of Algeria. The EU would like swiftly to set up a coordination body to implement the Memorandum in the form of an annual "energy dialogue" meeting.

12. With regard to **cooperation on migration**, the EU reiterates its willingness to engage in dialogue as part of the overall approach on migration and mobility. In this connection, the EU recalls the importance of enhancing cooperation with Algeria on the subject of mobility and the management of migratory flows, including the fight against illegal migration and readmission. In line with existing cooperation with some Member States, the EU emphasises the relevance of the existing structures in the Association Agreement for deepening the current dialogue, with a view to developing enhanced cooperation in the medium and long term.

13. With regard to **climate change**, the EU urges Algeria to finalise and implement the national climate plan and to prepare its mitigation "contribution" for the new climate agreement, applicable to all. The EU asks Algeria to boost its efforts to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions up to 2020 and beyond so as to contribute to global efforts to keep the global mean temperature increase below 2° C compared to pre-industrial levels. The EU reconfirms its support for Algeria in this area and asks it to explore all possibilities for international cooperation.

14. The EU welcomes the strengthening of **dialogue and cooperation on security and regional issues** since 2013 in the context of bilateral political dialogue and several visits by the EU Special Representative for the Sahel and the EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator. The EU reiterates its willingness and its interest in establishing a partnership and deeper cooperation in this area based on a memorandum of understanding to be negotiated.

15. The EU welcomes progress in **technical and financial cooperation** and in the promotion of social cohesion. The EU's continued commitment to accompany Algeria in the reform process is symbolised by the recent signing of new programmes in the fields of governance, environment, fisheries and support for implementation of the Association Agreement. With regard to our future cooperation, the priorities identified jointly concern judicial reform and the enhancement of civic participation, the labour market, employment, getting young people into work and the diversification of the economy. The EU also welcomes the active participation of Algeria in the Euro-Mediterranean programmes.

16. The EU welcomes the signing by the two parties, in March 2012, of an agreement on **scientific and technological** cooperation and the holding of the first joint committee meeting in 2014. The EU invites Algeria to become more involved in European programmes in this area, in particularly under Horizon 2020.

Regional context

17. In line with the joint communication of 19 December 2012, the EU considers that **regional integration in the Maghreb** is essential for economic growth and social cohesion, as well as for regional stability and security. The EU notes with satisfaction Algeria's commitment in regional fora, particularly the **5 + 5 dialogue, the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU)** and the **Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)**, in close synergy with the European Neighbourhood Policy. It welcomes Algeria's active involvement in specific initiatives in these fora, such as the Water Strategy for the Western Mediterranean. The EU reiterates its support for the southern partners in creating a region of prosperity, security and democracy in the Mediterranean.

18. The EU reaffirms its commitment to a resolution of the **conflict in Western Sahara** and thus supports the efforts of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and his Personal Envoy to find a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution leading to self-determination for the people of Western Sahara in a framework of arrangements in conformity with the goals and principles set out in the United Nations Charter and with the relevant resolutions of the UNSC, including UNSC 2152 (2014). The EU is confident of the support that Algeria can provide in this context.

19. With regard to the **situation in the Sahel**, the EU remains concerned at the seriousness of the development and security crisis and at the risks this poses to international stability. The EU reiterates in particular its support for existing regional and international coordination mechanisms in the field of security and border control, including under the Nouakchott process facilitated by the African Union. The EU remains determined to step up implementation of its strategy for security and development in the Sahel and to strengthen its political dialogue with Algeria on aspects of conflict prevention, stabilisation and security in the region.