

**JOINT DECLARATION
ON THE STRATEGIC AND COMPREHENSIVE PARTNERSHIP
BETWEEN THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT
AND THE EUROPEAN UNION**

The Arab Republic of Egypt and the European Union have mutually agreed to elevate their relationship to the level of a strategic and comprehensive partnership, based on the values of equity and on mutual respect and trust. The two parties, cognizant of the historical relationship that has bound them for millennia, have reiterated their commitments to build on their long-standing relationship that was forged by close geographic, cultural, political, economic and people to people ties, with the aim of deepening their shared stability, peace and prosperity.

The European Union acknowledges Egypt as a reliable partner, as well as Egypt's unique and vital geo-strategic role as a pillar of security, moderation, and peace in the region of the Mediterranean, the Near East and Africa.

Both parties recall their commitment to the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter, and other relevant multilateral agreements as well as to the Association Agreement and the Egypt-EU partnership priorities 2021-2027 that binds them.

Accordingly, Egypt and the EU decided to formulate and sign an inclusive Document on the comprehensive and strategic Partnership, during the first quarter of 2024. The Strategic Partnership Document will clearly identify specific areas of cooperation, namely: political relations, macroeconomic stability, sustainable investment and trade, including energy, water, food security and climate change, migration, security and human capital development. The implementation of these areas should unleash the full potential of Egypt-EU relationship.

On political relations

Egypt and the EU will continue to work on building and implementing a positive agenda for shared prosperity and stability. Egypt and the EU will continue to work on their commitments to further promote democracy, fundamental freedoms, and human rights, gender equality and equal opportunities, as agreed in the Partnership Priorities. The EU stands ready to assist Egypt in the implementation of its National Strategy for Human Rights in alignment with the provisions of the Association Agreement and the Partnership Priorities 2021-2027.

Regional and international challenges highlight the significance of enhancing the political dialogue between the two sides by holding a summit, once every two years, gathering the Presidents of the Arab Republic of Egypt, the European Commission, the European Council, alternately between Cairo and Brussels, in addition to the annual Association Council, which constitutes the cornerstone of our bilateral engagement in the framework of the Association Agreement and the existing activities of cooperation schemes involving Egypt and EU Member States.

On economic stability

The European Union stands ready to support Egypt's 2030 development Agenda to secure long-term macro-economic stability and sustainable economic growth, based on jointly defined priorities and reform objectives along the Egyptian development agenda. Financing will support and accompany progress along these jointly defined priorities and objectives and will unlock the full potential of private sector investment. This will help to mitigate the impact of the current international and regional crises in favor of a shared stability and security for both sides.

The EU stands ready to support the Egyptian economy by providing timely support as it is facing heightened balance of payments pressures stemming from the global economic environment, including a sharp increase in borrowing costs. This support would usefully complement the IMF financing and will support Egypt to implement economic policies aimed at highlighting credibility, boosting confidence, and unlocking private inflows. To this end, the European Union supports the high-level bilateral dialogue between Egypt and the International Monetary Fund to enable the continuous implementation of Egypt's comprehensive and structural reforms.

The European Union stands ready to provide support to both short-term stabilization needs and medium-term economic development needs. In the short-term, the EU stands ready to provide support in form of budget support, concessional finance, and grants. This EU support would facilitate access to development finance. Tools like possible debt swaps, to be decided by the respective Member States, could enhance the fiscal space needed for essential investment.

On investments

Furthermore, the EU stands firmly committed to enhance aspects of cooperation with Egypt in multiple fields of modern economy, including renewable energy and renewable hydrogen, advanced industrialization, agriculture, food security, connectivity and digitalization, water security and water management. These areas will attract up to EUR 5 billion European investments supported by guarantees under the European Fund for Sustainable Development and Economic Investment Plan. The EU will also support Egypt's ongoing efforts to enhance its business and investment environment facilitating trade and investment flows in line with its international obligations, in particular those in relation to the EU.

The EU is prepared to support the International Investment Conference in 2024, where strengthened Egypt-EU business exchanges will also enhance the overall business environment and boost public and private investments. The European support will enable the European business community to benefit from the available investment potentials in Egypt, including the privileges provided by the Suez Canal being the most important Commercial and Maritime corridor connecting the East and the West of the globe and Suez canal economic zone which would strengthen Egypt's role in EU supply chains and has the potential to attract EU industries to Egypt.

The EU and Egypt acknowledge that the new geopolitical and energy market reality requires deepening their existing partnership to support their energy security. For this purpose, the EU and

Egypt agree to step up the cooperation with a particular focus on renewable energy sources, energy efficiency actions as well as the cooperation on other safe and sustainable low-carbon technologies, building on Egypt's significant potential for the cost-effective expansion of renewable power generation, through projects such as the GREGY Interconnector. The EU is also committed to supporting the work of the East Med Gas Forum with a view to strengthen energy cooperation and security of gas supply in the region and gas trade with the EU.

On Trade

The Strategic Partnership stands ready to enhance co-operation between the European Union and Egypt to fully implement and unleash the full potential of the Free Trade Area of the Association Agreement. In the context of the Partnership we will explore various forms for the modernization and review of the Association Agreement on the issue of trade and investment relations to better adapt them to today's challenges.

On water issues

Guided by the shared vision for a more sustainable management of water resources and tackling the challenges posed by water management in the context of a growing population, competing water demands, and a changing climate, Egypt and the EU agree on areas of cooperation on bilateral, regional, and international levels in the water domain in line with the Joint Declaration on an Egypt-EU Water partnership signed at COP28 in Dubai.

Recognizing Egypt's heavy reliance on the Nile River in a context of its water scarcity, the EU reiterates its support to Egypt's water security and the compliance with international law, while recalling that the 'do no harm' principle serves as a guiding principle in the European Green Deal.

On Migration and Mobility.

Guided by the principles of Partnership, shared responsibility and burden sharing, Egypt and the EU adopt a holistic approach to migration governance. The European Union will further provide the necessary financial support to assist Egypt on migration-related programs that entail developing a holistic approach to migration including legal migration pathways in line with national competences, and mobility schemes such as the Talent Partnerships, tackling the root causes of irregular migration, combating smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons, strengthening border management, and ensuring dignified and sustainable return and reintegration. The EU and Egypt will continue to cooperate in order to support Egypt's efforts in hosting refugees and both sides are committed to the protection of the rights of migrants and refugees.

On security

Both parties further reaffirm their endeavors to combat all security challenges, particularly, in the context of the Global Counter Terrorism Forum, where Egypt and the European Union are co-chairs since May 2023. The EU and Egypt agreed on the need to deepen their cooperation, through the Counter-terrorism Dialogue, and strengthen it in the field of preventing and countering security

threats and challenges, including cybersecurity threats. Egypt and the EU will further explore cooperation in the field of law enforcement, serious and organized crime, and training and capacity building. Both parties will explore operational cooperation in areas related to preventing the trafficking of cultural goods, and restitution of illicitly trafficked cultural properties in the line with international law.

On Demography and Human Capital

In light of Egypt's awareness of the importance of the human component in achieving development, the European Union reaffirms its support on the technical and vocational education and training. This support, working also through the jointly identified priorities and objectives, will assist with matching skills and labor market needs, including through labor mobility, seasonal worker schemes and continued support for the socio-economic reintegration of Egyptian returnees in Egypt.

In addition, the EU will step up cooperation on research and innovation and work towards continued and enhanced participation in PRIMA and Erasmus+. It will also allow Egypt to negotiate accession to the European Union programmes such as Creative Europe, Horizon Europe and Digital Europe Programme. Building on that, the EU stands ready to consider an EU-Egypt University initiative to encourage deeper engagement of European universities in Egypt.

The EU will provide technical assistance to optimize the implementation of the strategic and comprehensive partnership.