



HIGH REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
EUROPEAN UNION FOR
FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND
SECURITY POLICY

Brussels, 29.10.2014
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Joint Proposal for a

COUNCIL DECISION

on the Union position within 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 Republic of Tunisia, of the other part, with regard to the adoption of a recommendation on the implementation of the EU-Tunisia Action Plan implementing the privileged partnership (2013-2017)

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

Tunisia and the European Union are bound by a Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement that came into force in March 1998. On the basis of that agreement, an EU-Tunisia Action Plan under the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was approved by the two parties in May 2005 for a period of five years. Within this framework EU-Tunisia relations have developed and matured substantially. The presentation in March 2010 of a Tunisian proposal to attain an advanced status¹ gave a further impetus to these relations and marked a significant deepening of relations in the areas of political relations, security, economics, trade and various sectors, and in people-to-people contacts.

When the current ENP Action Plan expired in 2010, it was deemed appropriate to negotiate and conclude a new Action Plan based on the objectives and ambitions of the joint document on privileged partnership. However, pending the conclusion of the new Action Plan, both parties agreed in September 2010 to continue to apply the 2005 Action Plan.

EU-Tunisia relations are conducted in the broader context of a region where the overall political situation has been in a state of flux since early 2011.

The Joint Communication ‘A new response to a changing neighbourhood’² outlined a new approach which aims at a higher level of differentiation, allowing each partner to develop its links with the EU based on its own aspirations, needs and capacities, but also on mutual accountability and the degree of commitment to the universal values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, and the capacity to implement jointly agreed priorities. This new Action Plan clearly sets out the priority objectives of EU-Tunisia relations, while taking full account of the privileged partnership and the comprehensive scope of EU-Tunisia relations.

The European External Action Service (EEAS), in close cooperation with the European Commission and the EU Member States, has held exploratory talks with Tunisia which have resulted in an agreement on a draft Action Plan, including the list of priority measures to be carried out under the Plan. At the last EU-Tunisia Association Council meeting on 14 April 2014 both sides noted that they had reached an agreement. The finalisation of technical consultations on each side was notified through an exchange of letters.

The new EU-Tunisia Action Plan sets out specific measures for the fulfilment of the parties’ obligations under the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement. It also provides a broader framework for further strengthening EU-Tunisia relations to achieve a significant measure of economic integration and a deepening of political cooperation, in accordance with the overall objectives of the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement. Pursuant to the European Neighbourhood Instrument Regulation³, the Action Plan is a key point of reference for setting the priorities of the Union under the ENP. The ENP, as a single policy framework, will continue to act as a catalyst, based in particular on partnership and joint ownership, as well as performance-driven differentiation and tailor-made assistance. The European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (‘High Representative’) annex hereto the text of a joint proposal for a Council Decision on the position to be taken by the European Union within the EU-Tunisia Association Council on the adoption of a recommendation on the implementation of the Action Plan.

¹ Adopted by the EU-Tunisia Association Council on 11 May 2010.

² COM(2011) 303 of 25.5.2011.

³ (EU) No 232/2014 of 11.3.2014.

The European Commission and the High Representative therefore request the Council to adopt the attached joint proposal for a Council Decision.

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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 joint proposal from the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and 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 Republic of Tunisia, of the other part, was signed on 17 July 1995 and entered into force on 1 March 1998.
- (2) The Parties intend to approve the new EU-Tunisia European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) Action Plan implementing the privileged partnership (2013-2017), which reflects the EU-Tunisia special partnership and will contribute to the implementation of the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement through the formulation and adoption of specific measures with a view to achieving its objectives,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION

Article 1

The Union position within 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 Republic of Tunisia, of the other part, on the implementation of the EU-Tunisia ENP Action Plan implementing the privileged partnership (2013-2017) shall be based on the draft recommendation of the Association Council annexed to this Decision.

Article 2

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

Done at Brussels,

*For the Council
The President*