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UfM: Joint Conclusions by the Jordanian and EU co-presidency on the Seventh Regional Forum of the Union for the Mediterranean

Barcelona, 24 November 2022

The Seventh Regional Forum of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) gathered Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Euro-Mediterranean region on 24 November 2022 in Barcelona under the Co-Presidency of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the European Union to take stock of achievements and of our common protracted challenges in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

We welcomed North Macedonia as a new member of the UfM and look forward to their contribution to the collective work of the UfM towards regional integration, stability and human development.

Our Forum today has reiterated the crucial importance of the UfM partnership. In the present volatile and complex geopolitical new reality, our dialogue and cooperation is more important than ever, to create a political environment conducive to address conflicts and political tensions affecting UfM members.

The need to strengthen efforts to solve protracted conflicts and crises that are depriving the region from its right to peace and stability was emphasised. Many ministers drew special attention to the new reality created by the Russian aggression against Ukraine. They highlighted the wide-ranging consequences on both shores of the Mediterranean including inflation, disruptions in trade and energy flow, food and supply shortages, aggravating the already difficult socio-economic situation following the COVID-19 pandemic and the global climate emergency. In this context, the UN and Türkiye's efforts and contributions in reaching the Black Sea Grain Initiative that is crucial in preventing a food crisis in the region were welcomed.

Ministers recognised that it will only be possible to achieve real and rapid results through a collective effort. To this end, we committed to helping each other across the Mediterranean region, both politically and economically, in coping with destabilizing factors. Ministers also recognized that the region has plenty of opportunities for trade, investment and partnerships in areas including climate action/energy transition, digital transformation and connectivity.

What is needed are new arrangements for the production and supply of basic food products, connected energy systems in line with the Paris Agreement, a stronger integration of economies, interconnection of transport and mobility lines, upgraded digital networks, more

investments in education and innovation, and the identification of new types of jobs required for the necessary transformation processes of our industries.

Youth represents an immense human capital in the Euro-Mediterranean region and will remain at the heart of UfM action. We highlighted the need to amplify an inclusive youth voice in public policy-making as global actors of change across the Mediterranean region. With this preoccupation in mind, we have listened to a presentation by two Youth representatives highlighting their recommendations and expectations.

The civil society is playing a crucial role in the UfM partnership. In this respect, the Anna Lindh Foundation, presented its work done with civil society in relation to Youth at the Forum.

We welcomed the positive outcomes of the thematic work undertaken during the last year by the UfM, including related Ministerial Declarations, capacity-building projects, and the sectorial networks across the region.

The UfM Ministerial declaration on employment and labour adopted in Marrakech last May focused on employment and employability of the most vulnerable, especially youth and women. UfM Ministers endorsed in June the Research and Innovation Roadmaps and their implementation around the three priorities of Health, Climate Change and Renewable Energy. The UfM Ministerial Declaration on Strengthening the Role of Women in Society adopted in Madrid last October contains concrete actions focused on enhancing legal frameworks; improving women's access to leadership in public life and decision-making; raising women's participation in economic life; and combatting and preventing violence against women and girls.

We commended the success of the Mediterranean Pavilion and the active role of the UfM during the Conference of the Parties' (COP27) in Egypt. This initiative highlighted both the urgent challenges the Mediterranean is currently facing, and the innovative solutions already being developed.

We commended the Parliamentary Assembly of the UfM and ARLEM for their roles respectively in reinforcing inter-parliamentary cooperation and in amplifying the voices of local and regional authorities.

To promote further people-to-people interaction, we agreed that, as of 2023, UfM members will designate on an annual basis two "Mediterranean Capitals of Culture", one from the North and one from the South. This initiative, as well as the Day of the Mediterranean will enhance the diversity and sense of identity of the Euro-Mediterranean region and contribute to a better mutual understanding of its peoples.

Regarding the Middle East peace process, commitments to the two-state solution expressed recently by both Israel and Palestine were welcomed, while efforts to de-escalate the deteriorating situation with increased violence in the occupied West Bank were called for. All steps were encouraged that contribute to creating political horizons to achieve a just and comprehensive Middle East peace and to relaunch effective negotiations to solve the Palestinian Israeli conflict on the basis of the two-state solution and in accordance with international law. It is important that both parties avoid decisions that undermine trust,

including the building of new settlements. The importance of upholding the historical status quo for the Holy Sites in Jerusalem, including with regard to the Hashemite custodianship, was recalled. The indispensable role of UNRWA and the need to support it politically and financially in order to allow it to continue to fulfil its UN mandate was also reaffirmed.

Ministers expressed support for international and regional efforts to promote a Libyan-led and Libyan-owned political process under UN auspices, with the aim of achieving a sustainable political solution to the Libyan crisis on the basis of the Libyan road map, and relevant UNSC resolutions including 2570 & 2571, that preserves the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Libya, stops all foreign interference, and achieves national reconciliation, sustainable peace and stability. Ministers welcomed the nomination of the UN Special Representative of the Secretary General Abdoulaye Bathily and expressed support for his mission. Furthermore, the importance of holding presidential and parliamentary elections was reiterated, as well as the need for the implementation of the 23 October 2020 ceasefire agreement, including agreed upon comprehensive Action Plan resulting in the complete withdrawal of all foreign forces, foreign fighters, and mercenaries from the Libyan territories.

We stressed the continued need to push for a political solution to the Syrian crisis through the full implementation of all aspects of UNSC resolution 2254 and the 2012 Geneva communiqué, aiming at sustainable, genuine and inclusive political solution that preserves the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria; restores peace and stability; and creates conditions for the safe, voluntary and dignified return of refugees. We expressed our full support for UN Special Envoy Geir Pedersen and his efforts, including his steps-for-steps approach. We renewed our commitment to supporting the Syrian people through providing humanitarian aid to those in need in Syria and to supporting Syrian refugees and their host countries and communities.