



EUROPEAN UNION

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EU-EGYPT TASK FORCE Fact Sheet

NEW EU DIPLOMACY

The largest-ever meeting between the European Union and Egypt took place 13-14 November, co-chaired by the EU High Representative Catherine Ashton and Egyptian Foreign Minister Kamel Amr, as agreed with President Morsi on his recent visit to Brussels.

The Task Force is a new form of European diplomacy, to enhance the EU's engagement with countries in transition through the mobilization of all EU assets and working with both public and private sectors.

The Task Force in Cairo was on a much bigger scale than any previous such event – with more than 500 participants, committed to launching a new EU-Egypt relationship.

EU participants included representatives of the European External Action Service, the European Parliament, the European Commission, the European Investment Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and Member States.

Over two days, participants discussed an exceptionally wide range of issues including commercial ties, economic co-operation, tourism, political reform, asset recovery, human rights, governance, infrastructure, ICT and science.

STARTING A NEW EU-EGYPT RELATIONSHIP

President Morsi received members of the Task Force in his first-ever meeting with senior European business leaders, European foreign ministers, European Commissioners, Members of the European Parliament, the President of the EIB and the senior leadership of the EBRD. In one of his first overseas trips, President Morsi came to Brussels and declared his wish for the EU to be Egypt's main partner.

P R E S S

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The EU undertook to provide a total of nearly €5 billion (cLE38 billion) in the form of loans and grants for 2012-2013. The EU already provides 80% of inward investment into Egypt and the Task Force confirmed the European Union as Egypt's largest economic partner.

Vice-President of the European Commission Antonio Tajani organised a Business and Tourism Summit, ahead of the Task Force, where European and Egyptian CEOs discussed investment opportunities in Egypt.

102 European business leaders came to Cairo representing companies with a combined turnover of 600 billion euros - equivalent to the GDP of the Netherlands. Around 200 Egyptian business leaders were also present.

Tourism was a particular focus with a new action plan and a bilateral dialogue established.

The Task Force was addressed by Prime Minister Hisham Kandil. Several Egyptian, Arab and European foreign ministers attended a Gala Dinner at the Manial Palace for Task Force dignitaries.

DEEPENING ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

The European Commission committed to provide additional financial support to Egypt for an overall amount of nearly 800 million euros. (LE 6.2 billion) This is made up of 303 million euros in the form of grants and 450 million euros in loans. This is on top of the 449 million already provided by the EU to Egypt for the period 2011-2013.

The President of the European Investment Bank (EIB), Werner Hoyer, announced potential lending of up to one billion euros per year (nearly LE 8 billion), more than doubling the bank's recent activity in Egypt and making the country the biggest recipient of EIB loans in the Middle East and North African Region.

The EIB also announced a new Task Force fund, which can provide up to 60 million euros (LE 470 million) for countries in transition.

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) confirmed the start of operations in Egypt this month and announced plans to ramp up lending volumes to 1 billion per year (nearly LE 8 billion).

The EBRD also announced a special food security initiative, which combines official funding with private sector investments.

The EU and Egypt will start a high-level dialogue on agriculture.

The EU and Egypt agreed to implement the MoU on energy cooperation.

The Task Force also agreed to an enhanced bilateral dialogue on economic reform, as an important step to building confidence among investors.

The EU and Egypt agreed to jointly explore how to deepen trade and investment relations, including via technical assistance, which could lead to a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA).

DEEPER BILATERAL CO-OPERATION

Three agreements were signed between the EU and Egypt covering SMEs in rural areas, extension of the Cairo Metro and measures to boost trade.

Before the Task Force, the European Commission, Egyptian government and the ICT industry discussed its potential for economic growth. Future cooperation will focus on establishing a competitive regulatory ICT framework in Egypt, ensuring effective Egyptian research capacity and open use and access of the internet for all.

This week the EU adopted new measures to help the recovery of misappropriated assets linked to the previous regime and the Task Force agreed to develop an Asset Recovery Road Map in the next three months to drive progress.

The Task Force announced a doubling of the Egyptian participation in Erasmus Mundus and Tempus programmes aimed at bringing Egyptian students and researchers to Europe. Alongside the Task Force, an exact replica of the Tutankhamen tomb was unveiled on the 90th anniversary of its discovery, which has been donated to the Egyptian people and which is expected to be transferred to Luxor.

The EU and the Egyptian authorities also agreed to an EU-Egypt Cultural Platform. Cultural ties between Egypt and Europe are long-standing and can help promote Egypt's social and economic development.

HUMAN RIGHTS, GOVERNANCE AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Human Rights, including women's rights, the rights of minorities and gender equality, were discussed in a number of meetings. The EU and the Egyptian government agreed on the important role of Civil Society in Egypt's transition.

European Parliamentarians and politicians from Egypt's Upper House (the Shoura Council) and the Constituent Assembly, tasked with drafting Egypt's constitution, met to discuss the socio-economic and political aspects of Egypt's transition.

The EU Special Representative for Human Rights hosted more than 40 different civil society organisations to discuss Egypt's transition, including issues such as human rights, NGO registration, freedom of assembly, trafficking, police methods, media freedom, and Internet freedom.

During the Task Force, the first formal discussion between Egyptian and European civil society organisations took place. Discussions focused on the range of socio-economic issues -- the role of women, poverty-alleviation and transitional governance.

The EU reiterated its offer to send an electoral observation mission for Egypt's Parliamentary elections when requested by Egypt.

For more information:

[EU-Egypt Task Force co-chairs conclusions](#)