



EUROPEAN UNION

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EU-Egypt Task Force agrees major package of economic and political assistance for Egyptian transition

The EU-Egypt Task Force, the largest-ever meeting between the European Union and Egypt, today agreed a major package of economic and political assistance to help Egypt with its ongoing transition. The Task Force, co-chaired by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton and Egyptian Foreign Minister Kamel Amr, confirmed the EU as Egypt's largest economic partner. The EU undertook to provide nearly 5 billion euros in the form of loans and grants for 2012-2013. Over two days, participants discussed issues including commercial ties, economic cooperation, tourism, political reform, asset recovery, human rights, infrastructure and information technology. Commission Vice-President Antonio Tajani organised a business and tourism summit, which attracted more than 100 European business leaders, representing companies with a combined turnover of 600 billion euros. Human rights, including women's rights, were the subject of a number of meetings and the EU Special representative for Human Rights hosted more than 40 civil society organisations. Members of the European Parliament met with politicians from Egypt's upper house (the Shoura Council) and the Constituent Assembly, tasked with drafting Egypt's constitution.

Catherine Ashton said: *"I am delighted with the results of the Task Force. The past two days confirm the EU as Egypt's main partner in its historic transition. The Task Force is a new type of European diplomacy, mobilising all EU assets and working with both the public and private sectors. You cannot have a successful political transition without economic growth. The Task Force is the perfect illustration of how to bring together economic and political reform. Through the Commission, the European Investment Bank and the EBRD, we pledged to provide nearly 5 billion euros in loans and grants for 2012-2013. We also brought more than 100 European business leaders together with their Egyptian counterparts to discuss investment possibilities. We also stressed once again in a number of meetings with civil society groups and politicians the importance of ensuring the full respect of human rights, not least the rights of women, in the new constitution and in the future of the country."*

P R E S S

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Werner Hoyer, President of the EIB, said: "*The key challenge for the new Egyptian government is to restore confidence in the economy, and the European Investment Bank will support this. The EIB will provide up to EUR 2 Billion over the next two years. Today we signed already a first tranche of EUR 200 Million of the EUR 600 Million loan approved by the Bank for the extension of the Cairo Metro and a loan of EUR 45 Million for the Community Development Program. Both projects represent the Bank's first response to the new administrations' priorities in this sector.*"

The European Union committed to provide additional financial support to Egypt worth nearly 800 million euros for 2012-2013 (303 million in grants and 450 million in loans). This is on top of the 449 million euros already provided for the period 2011-13. The European Investment Bank announced potential lending of up to 1.7 billion euros for 2012-13, and a new Task Force fund, which can provide funds of up to 60 million euros for countries in transition. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development confirmed the start of operations in Egypt and announced plans for lending of up to 1 billion euros per year. Three financing agreements were signed between the EU and Egypt covering SMEs in rural areas, extension of the Cairo Metro and measures to boost trade.

For further details of the results of the Task Force, see [EU-Egypt Task Force Fact Sheet](#)
