



## **Fourth Interparliamentary Meeting 1 November 2021**

### **Joint Declaration**

The Head of the European Parliament Delegation for Relations with the Arabian Peninsula, Dr. Sven Simon, and the Chair of the Committee on Foreign Relations, Defense and National Security in the Council of Representatives of the Kingdom of Bahrain, H.E. Mohamed Ibrahim Al-Sisi Al-Buainain.

Welcome the outcomes of the fourth international parliamentary meeting between the European Parliament and the Council of Representatives of the Kingdom of Bahrain that took place in Manama on 1 November 2021. Emphasize the constructive discussions that took place in a friendly and cordial atmosphere.

Reaffirm their common interest in moving forward towards deep rooting cooperation at the political and technical levels. In this regard, agree to the possibility of establishing an enduring mechanism for cooperation between the European Parliament and Bahrain Council of Representatives.

Guided by the importance of strengthening parliamentary relations, both sides stress the necessity of carrying out and promoting regular visits and mutual contacts and strengthen them at the level of parliamentary Speakers, delegations and relevant official committees. Express readiness to encourage the parliaments of both sides in this process. Call upon the European Parliament and the member-states of the GCC to double their efforts to establish an effective joint parliamentary association between the European Union and GCC countries.

Agree to highlight the importance of equal partnership in cooperation and dialogue, and the prospects of developing bilateral cooperation in multiple sectors. Both sides stress on the importance of adhering to the genuine and effective commitment to the universal values of respect for democracy, human rights, freedom of conscience, expression, and opinion, as well as freedom of religion and belief.



Renew the support for the process of regional integration in the Gulf region under auspices of the GCC. Express hope that the recent rapprochement of relations within the GCC would lead to restoring dialogue at the regional level, and ensuring a joint response to the challenges currently facing the Gulf region and the Middle East.

Underline the significance of vital shared interests in terms of promoting regional stability. The two sides agree to develop joint and coordinated responses to global challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, terrorism, political and religious extremism. Both sides seek to explore opportunities of cooperation between the European Union and the Kingdom of Bahrain in other areas of common interest, such as economic diversification, education, research, innovation and green and digital recovery in the post-pandemic world.

Stress the need of developing a comprehensive relationship between the European Union and the Kingdom of Bahrain at all levels. Agree that dialogue between different cultures and exchanges at the human, scientific and technological levels are essential factors in bringing the peoples of the European Union and the people of the Kingdom of Bahrain closer. The two sides recognize that this dialogue can enhance spaces for understanding between both peoples and improve their perception of each other.

Welcome the signing on 10 February, 2021 of a cooperation agreement between the European External Action Service and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Bahrain, which will help to promote relations between the European Union and the Kingdom of Bahrain through the intensifying of political dialogue and enhancing cooperation on key strategic issues of common interest, such as trade, research, innovation, clean and renewable energy, and security.

Call on the European Union and the Kingdom of Bahrain to sign a short-stay visa waiver agreement (similar to the agreement signed with the United Arab Emirates in 2015) that stipulates a visa-free travel for EU citizens to Bahrain and the same for Bahrainis upon travelling to the European Union, whenever the basic legal requirements are met.



Emphasize the importance of strengthening cooperation between Bahrain and the EU in the field of promotion and defence of universal human rights. In this context, welcome the decision to launch an informal Human Rights dialogue between the European Union and the Kingdom of Bahrain whose latest meeting was held on 22 February 2021 in a virtual format. Welcome follow-up activities held in implementation of the annual human rights dialogue.

Affirm the strong economic relations between the Kingdom of Bahrain and the European Union, in terms of trade flows and foreign direct investments. The two sides reaffirm that it is strategic for the European Union, as a natural partner of the Kingdom of Bahrain, to contribute further to the strengthening of the national economy of the Kingdom of Bahrain, its economic diversification, and promote the integration of regional economics.

Underline the protection and promotion of gender equality and women empowerment as one of the main drivers of future human, economic and social development in the European Union and the Kingdom of Bahrain alongside the protection and promotion of workers' rights.

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Agreed to hold the next meeting in Brussels or Strasbourg in 2022.