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Joint statement
European Union-Morocco Summit
Granada, 7 March 2010

The European Union-Morocco Summit was held in Granada (Spain) on 7 March 2010 at the invitation of the Prime Minister of Spain, Mr José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero. The European Union (EU) was represented by Mr Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council, and Mr José Manuel Durão Barroso, President of the European Commission. The Kingdom of Morocco was represented by the Prime Minister, Mr Abbas el Fassi.

This summit between the EU and Morocco constitutes an unprecedented event for both parties. It is the first summit between the EU and a Mediterranean partner country since the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, a Treaty which offers new prospects for distinctive relations with EU partners. It bears witness to the pioneering and distinctive nature of the EU-Morocco partnership. It illustrates the degree of maturity and confidence attained in the political dialogue and highlights the strategic importance of the EU-Morocco partnership.

The summit caps an intense period of acceleration in EU-Morocco relations, initiated by the entry into force of the Association Agreement in March 2000 and strengthened by the establishment of the European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan in July 2005 and by the adoption of the joint document on advanced status at the meeting of the Association Council in October 2008.

This partnership is the embodiment of an intense process of dialogue covering all political, economic, social and human domains and reflects both parties' aspirations to consolidate the distinctive nature of their partnership.

P R E S S E

Noting that Morocco has made its rapprochement with the EU a fundamental political choice, both Parties agree that advanced status is an important stage in that rapprochement and that, in line with the purpose and principles of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), they will continue the process of reflection on the nature and form of the contractual relationship to replace the Association Agreement.

I. THE EUROPEAN UNION AND MOROCCO: PARTNERS IN A GLOBAL WORLD

The EU and Morocco have the same desire to construct their partnership in the field of foreign relations on the basis of their adherence to the shared values of democracy, the rule of law and human rights. Their common desire and ambition are evidence of their shared vision in responding to the many regional and global challenges.

Morocco and the EU emphasise that this Summit is part of an ambitious move to deepen relations between the two shores of the Mediterranean in order to make the region an area of stability, peace and shared prosperity.

The Parties reviewed the main regional and international issues.

Morocco and the EU fully support the efforts being made by the United Nations Security Council, the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy to Western Sahara to find a definitive, lasting and mutually acceptable solution. They express their support for the current negotiating process, in the context of the Security Council directives, particularly Resolution 1871 (2009). They stress the role and the responsibility of all parties concerned in this respect.

With regard to the Maghreb, highlighting the strategic, political and economic importance of the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) as a framework for cooperation in the face of the many challenges facing its five Member States, the EU and Morocco stress their particular attachment to integration in the Maghreb region and regret the difficulties it is encountering. The two Parties agree on the need to accelerate integration in the Maghreb region via a responsible and constructive dialogue between the members of the AMU on the basis of the principles enshrined in the Treaty establishing the AMU which was signed in Marrakech on 17 February 1989. The Parties call for advantage to be taken, in this connection, of the positive dynamic which has recently developed in bilateral relations between certain countries in the region and the initiatives promoted by the private sector.

Both Parties reaffirm their support for the dialogue between the EU and the AMU and express a desire to see the EU-AMU concertation process begun in Rabat in January 2008 continue. The parties also recall the useful role played by the 5+5 initiative.

Both Parties reiterate their commitment to consolidating the stability and prosperity of the Euro-Mediterranean area and promoting the values of concertation, solidarity and complementarity, particularly in the context of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM).

The EU and Morocco welcome the appointment of the Secretary-General and the establishment of the UfM Secretariat. They will cooperate to ensure the success of the UfM summit to be held in Barcelona in June 2010. They welcome the holding of the ministerial conference on strengthening the role of women in society in Marrakech on 11 and 12 November 2009.

Aware of the important role of non-State actors in implementing the objectives of the UfM, Morocco and the EU commend the active contribution made by the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA) and the Anna Lindh Foundation to cross-cultural dialogue in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. They welcome the creation of the Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly (ARLEM), which will bring added value to cooperation in the region. The Parties also welcome the appointment of a Moroccan elected representative to the co-presidency.

With regard to the Middle East peace process, the EU and Morocco agree that there is an urgent need to achieve a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. They encourage the Parties to participate actively in credible negotiations on all subjects relating to final status with a view to implementing the two-state solution on the basis of the 1967 borders. Morocco and the EU call on the Parties to abstain from any unilateral measure which would jeopardise the chances of a definitive solution to the conflict, particularly settlements. They also stress the need to provide political and economic support for the Palestinian Authority and to ensure that the common heritage and the identity of the city of Jerusalem are protected and respected.

The EU welcomes the constructive and conciliatory efforts which have been made by His Majesty King Mohammed VI, Chairman of the Al-Quds Committee, with regard to the question of Jerusalem, and his role in and commitment to promoting tolerance, mutual understanding, peace and stability in the region.

Both Parties stress that the African continent remains at the centre of their common concern and agree to pursue their commitment, particularly in the framework of the Africa-EU Strategy and Action Plan, to stability, development, the promotion of human rights, democracy and good governance, and the development of investment and economic growth.

They stress the active part played by Morocco in the Africa-EU common strategy, in particular on climate change and strengthening cooperation in the field of peace and security. The EU and Morocco will actively cooperate to improve the structures for implementing the Africa-EU strategy and, where appropriate, renew the action plan with a view to the Third Africa-EU summit to be held in the second half of 2010. They also point to the measures taken to lay the foundations of a partnership of solidarity between African Atlantic countries.

The precariousness of the situation in the Sahel region and the many associated challenges show the need for increased regional cooperation and an integrated approach in the fields of security and development. Morocco and the EU consider that the Sahel is a priority zone for action to combat terrorism and radicalisation. Cooperation must be developed between the EU, Morocco and the other countries in the Sahel-Saharan region to take effective action against the threats to security which hang over the region.

With regard to migration, Morocco and the EU agree to reinforce the mechanisms for cooperation between the countries of origin, transit and destination by pursuing the dialogue between the two Parties and supporting the process of reinforcing the capacity of the parties concerned to combat illegal immigration, promote legal migration, optimise the contribution of migrants to development and deal with the underlying causes of migration. Such a comprehensive and balanced approach to migration issues, also involving cooperation on the return and readmission of illegal immigrants, must constitute a fundamental element of the EU-Morocco partnership.

Morocco and the EU welcome the achievements of the Euro-African process on migration and development launched in Rabat in July 2006 and reinforced in Paris in November 2008, a process in which Morocco played a leading role.

The EU and Morocco reaffirmed their attachment to respect for and protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the consolidation of the rule of law, democracy and good governance, which are one of the fundamental pillars of the EU-Morocco partnership. The EU welcomes the reforms in this regard undertaken by Morocco in recent years, while stressing the importance of pursuing this process of legislative, political and institutional reform, particularly in matters of justice, freedom of expression, press freedom and freedom of association. The EU and Morocco consider that implementation of all the recommendations made by the Justice and Reconciliation Commission ("Instance Équité et Réconciliation" (IER)) will enable Morocco to consolidate the work accomplished and make progress in consolidating respect for and promotion of human rights, and they welcome, in this connection, the publication of the report from the Advisory Committee on Human Rights in December 2009 on the implementation of those recommendations.

The EU and Morocco expressed their support for an effective multilateral international system, based on the United Nations, as a key element in responding to global challenges.

With regard to the Alliance of Civilizations, Morocco and the EU confirmed their commitment to freedom of religion and belief, tolerance and the peaceful coexistence of different cultures. On the basis of those principles, they clearly reaffirmed their rejection of all forms of extremism, discrimination and xenophobia. The EU and Morocco support the UN's efforts to promote cross-cultural dialogue and support the Alliance of Civilizations initiative in its philosophy and its approach which is to encourage operational projects and the involvement of civil society, NGOs and universities in cultural diversity.

The EU and Morocco share a desire to seek peaceful solutions to conflicts. The European Union welcomes the strong interest being shown by Morocco in the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). The Parties welcome Morocco's participation in peace-keeping operations, particularly the EU's operation ALTHEA in Bosnia and Herzegovina which was an important signal of Morocco's practical support for the development of the CSDP.

The EU and Morocco underlined that climate change is one of the greatest global challenges, with a particular impact on the Mediterranean and African regions. Both Parties acknowledge the importance of the Copenhagen Accord and the need to support it, to intensify the international commitments already made in this area and to continue to work towards securing a legally binding agreement within the framework of the United Nations.

The EU welcomes Morocco's environmental policy initiatives, particularly its decision to adopt a national environment and sustainable development charter.

Both parties reaffirm their desire to counter the negative impact of the economic and financial crisis. The EU and Morocco are committed to taking coordinated action to adopt effective measures in the field of economic and financial policy in order to re-establish confidence in the markets, in line with international commitments, and – on the basis of the G20 guidelines – to conduct a dialogue on exit strategies.

II. FIRST STEPS TOWARDS CONSOLIDATION OF ADVANCED STATUS

The adoption in October 2008 of the joint document on establishing Morocco's advanced status in its relationship with the EU marked a new stage in the strengthening of relations between Morocco and the EU. This ad hoc summit has provided an opportunity to take stock of its implementation. Both Parties welcome the progress which has already been made since the adoption of this joint document.

Convinced, as they are, that advanced status offers them new opportunities to further their bilateral relations, both Parties reiterated their firm commitment to implementing it in optimum concerted fashion.

Political dimension

The Parties welcomed the initiatives taken in 2009, which show their commitment to the success of the political cooperation objectives of advanced status. Attention needs to be drawn here to consultation between Morocco and the EU in multilateral fora, particularly in the United Nations, and to meetings in the margins of meetings of the Political and Security Committee (COPS), the Working Party on Terrorism (COTER) and Working Party on Human Rights (COHOM).

Mindful of the usefulness of consolidating contacts between Moroccan institutions and EU institutions, the parties welcomed the decision taken in January 2010 by the Conference of Chairmen of political groups of the European Parliament to set up the EU-Morocco Joint Parliamentary Committee in 2010.

Both Parties encourage cooperation between the Committee of the Regions and Moroccan regional bodies. The EU notes with interest Morocco's initiatives with regard to decentralisation, regionalisation and the reform of local authorities.

The Parties also call upon the European Economic and Social Committee and the Moroccan Economic and Social Council to initiate fruitful cooperation.

Both Parties also note with satisfaction the promising prospects for cooperation opened up between Morocco and the Council of Europe, particularly as a result of Morocco's accession to the Council of Europe's North-South Centre.

Political dimension

The EU and Morocco welcome the work initiated to bring Morocco's legislative framework closer to the Community acquis. The Parties agree that the process of regulatory convergence with the EU is one of the key elements of the implementation of the joint document on advanced status. They consider it important to intensify the work in order to achieve that objective.

The two Parties also welcomed the significant progress achieved in recent months in trade negotiations, which has made it possible to conclude negotiations on trade in agricultural products, processed agricultural products and fishery products, as well as on the agreement on settling trade disputes, an important step towards a deep and comprehensive Free Trade Agreement. In that connection, they stress that substantial progress must be made in the current negotiations on liberalising trade in services and the right of establishment.

Both Parties reaffirmed their resolve to put in place a common economic space between the EU and Morocco involving advanced integration of the Moroccan economy with that of the EU and drawing on the rules governing the European Economic Area. Both Parties confirm that this objective is to be attained by implementing joint action in four inter-related areas: approximation of Morocco's legislative framework with the Community acquis; the conclusion of a deep and comprehensive Free Trade Agreement; economic and social cooperation; Moroccan accession to trans-European networks and sectoral cooperation.

Human dimension

The EU and Morocco reiterated the importance of developing the human dimension of the EU-Morocco partnership by increasing cultural, educational and scientific exchanges, involving new stakeholders and encouraging spaces for mutual consultation in civil society. The EU and Morocco reaffirmed their attachment to consolidating social rights and combating poverty and precariousness and improving living conditions through education, health and social protection as the foundation stone for human dignity.

The EU and Morocco consider that the reforms in the context of the National Human Development Initiative are designed to contribute to achieving sustainable human development and putting the Millennium Development Goals into practice by 2015.

Morocco and the EU note with satisfaction the efforts to bring the Moroccan higher education and research and vocational training systems closer to those of the European space for higher education and scientific research and vocational training.

Morocco and the EU note with satisfaction the consensus emerging at international level on the need to examine migration issues as part of a global approach based on shared responsibility and concerted collective action, linking actions to combat illegal migration, the management of legal migration and the relationship between migration and development.

Morocco and the EU agreed on the need to conclude the negotiation of the readmission agreement as soon as possible. Concluding that agreement will help increase cooperation in the area of migration, since the shared objective is to combat illegal migration, promote the use of lawful channels for mobility and migration, and promote the positive impact of migration on development. Completing the negotiation of the readmission agreement will allow overall cooperation on migration, including visa facilitation.

III. AN OPERATIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FUTURE

The efforts made by both Parties in the context of the implementation of the joint document are considerable. The Parties also recognise that the reform process undertaken by the Moroccan authorities and supported by the EU is a key element of their cooperation. The Parties agree nevertheless on the need to intensify joint proceedings in all the areas covered by advanced status. In that light, the EU and Morocco undertake to attend particularly to the following areas:

Setting up the EU-Morocco Joint Parliamentary Committee: The Parties welcome the imminent setting up of the EU-Morocco Joint Parliamentary Committee and wish to see it begin work rapidly as this Committee will play an important role in developing relations between the Parliaments of the two Parties in the future.

Participation of Morocco in EU programmes: The Parties warmly welcome their agreement on the protocol to the Association Agreement on a framework agreement concerning the general principles of Morocco's participation in the programmes of the European Union, and the forthcoming signing of that protocol. Morocco's participation will further help to bring the Parties closer together in several sectors.

Technical and financial cooperation: The Parties stress that the work envisaged under the advanced status, an expression of their common desire for rapprochement, requires appropriate financing in line with the high common ambitions aimed at. In the context of EU funding to neighbouring countries for 2011-2013, the EU and Morocco welcome the adoption of the National Indicative Programme (NIP) 2011-2013. In that context, financial support to Morocco will increase substantially as compared with the previous NIP. This increased funding will attest to a recognition of Morocco's reform efforts, and to the EU's wish to continue and enhance its support. During this period, a joint reflection exercise will be undertaken so as to open up a new stage, as from 2013, for access to adequate Community financial resources to accompany Morocco from the perspective of the EU's regional and cohesion policy and the adoption of new implementation procedures.

Trade agreements: The parties agreed to intensify current negotiations on liberalising trade in services and the right of establishment, the objective being to arrive at an ambitious agreement by the end of 2010. Substantial progress in these negotiations on the liberalisation of trade in services and of the right of establishment will be needed to make it possible to launch negotiations on a Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (CFTA) which will contribute to the gradual integration of their markets. The Parties undertake to carry the procedures forward with a view to signing the Agreement on trade in agricultural products, processed agricultural products and fishery products and bringing it into force as soon as possible. In parallel with those negotiations, the Parties will be able to begin exploratory talks on the future CFTA.

Green and renewable energies: Morocco and the EU note with satisfaction the objectives of the new horizon 2030 energy strategy adopted by Morocco, which is designed to reduce its dependence on foreign energy sources, giving priority to renewable energy sources by implementing the national solar plan recently launched by His Majesty the King which will cover 42 % of the country's electricity needs by 2030. The two parties believe that that new Moroccan Solar Plan could become a model in the Mediterranean region and could contribute to the implementation of the Solar Plan for the Mediterranean in the framework of the Union for the Mediterranean.

Integrating the trans-European networks: Both Parties confirm their determination to continue their cooperation to improve the connections with trans-European transport and energy networks in particular.

New instrument to take over from the EU-Morocco Action Plan: Since the current EU-Morocco Action Plan adopted in 2005 for a five-year period is coming to an end, the parties stress the importance of finalising the new instrument, which should be adopted in 2010 and will take over from the current Action Plan. This new document will be designed to give operational content to the objectives of advanced status, integrating the reforms approved and the actions provided for in the Action Plan which have not yet been implemented, as well as new features set out in the joint document. It will also include elements of the government regulatory convergence programme.

The objective is to enable Morocco to achieve optimum approximation with the EU, to confirm its dynamic of political modernisation, economic openness and social cohesion and to promote its concertation and coordination with the EU on strategic issues of mutual interest. The harmonious and balanced implementation of this new instrument will be accompanied by a more thorough process of reflection on the nature and form of a new contractual relationship to replace the Association Agreement.
