



EU-LAS RELATIONS



Europeans and Arabs have a long and rich history of cultural, economic, commercial and political exchanges. This, together with the geographical proximity and interdependence, has contributed to institutionalise a strong relationship between the EU and the League of Arab States (LAS). Within this framework, the common aim is to develop closer cooperation to realise their shared aspirations to ensure peace, security and prosperity in both regions.

The LAS is the only pan-Arab grouping gathering all Arab countries and is the EU's main regional counterpart in the Arab world.

The EU and the LAS maintain advanced and cordial relations, structured by a Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2015. The EU and the LAS meet regularly at different levels. Senior Officials Meetings are organised regularly during the year. Meetings between EU Political and Security Ambassadors and LAS Permanent Representatives take place annually, while Ministerial meetings at the level of Foreign Ministers take place biennially. The High-Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini has been invited and attended for the past two years the LAS Summits.

THE FIRST EU-LAS SUMMIT WILL TAKE PLACE ON 24-25 FEBRUARY IN EGYPT.

The EU and the LAS engage together to address through a collective, cooperative and multilateral approach the common challenges faced by both sides at different levels: political, economic, social, environmental and security.

MULTILATERALISM



Stronger regional cooperation is key to finding solutions to the current challenges to which both the European countries and the Arab States are confronted. The EU and the LAS share the commitment to promote multilateralism and an international system based on International Law with a view to increase cooperation with the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU). In this framework, the EU's High-Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini is part of the Quartet on Libya, together with the LAS/AU/UN Troika.

The EU and the LAS are cooperating on several UN files such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, global efforts to tackle climate change and non-proliferation.

POLITICAL DIALOGUE



Political dialogue and cooperation between the EU and the LAS encompass various regional files and horizontal topics high on their respective agendas. From the Middle East Peace Process, Syria, Yemen, Libya and Iraq to counter-terrorism and migration, the single common objective is to look for long-lasting solutions to ensure regional peace and stability.

ARMS CONTROL



The EU and the LAS cooperate to counter illicit arm trafficking with a project worth €2.7M for capacity building and training in the area of conventional arms control in LAS member states.

A working group on **Weapons of Mass Destruction, Small Arms and Light Weapons and Arms Control** was created in 2015 as part of the EU-LAS Strategic Dialogue and meets regularly to assess progress.

COUNTER-TERRORISM



The growing threats and common challenges of transnational terrorism and radicalisation faced by Europe and the Arab world necessitate that both sides stand united against it.

In full respect of human rights and the rule of law and International Humanitarian Law, the EU and the LAS are committed to the global fight against terrorism with their common work to support the efforts of the Global coalition against Da'esh.

In the framework of the EU-LAS Strategic Dialogue, the EU and the LAS have created working groups on Counter-Terrorism and the Fight against Organised Crime.

EARLY WARNING AND CRISIS RESPONSE



Since 2012, the EU also supports a project on **Strengthening crisis response capacities of the League of Arab States**. €4.4M have helped fund and equip the LAS Crisis Room and aim to enhance LAS capacities to deliver on Crisis Response.

DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGES



An EU-funded project *Training and information course on Euro-Arab diplomacy* (El-Hiwar – the Arabic word for dialogue) aims at promoting dialogue among officials working in EU institutions and the LAS Secretariat.

A second phase of this initiative aims at further reinforcing EU-LAS cooperation and expanding it to a diverse set of actors and areas of mutual interest, including through concerted efforts within the EU-LAS Joint Work Programme.