



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Council conclusions on Tunisia

*3065th FOREIGN AFFAIRS Council meeting
Brussels, 31 January 2011*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. The Council pays tribute to the courage and determination of the Tunisian people and their peaceful struggle to assert their rights and democratic aspirations. It regrets the violence, repression and loss of life during the recent disturbances. It reaffirms its total solidarity and its support for Tunisia and Tunisians in their efforts to put in place a stable democracy, the rule of law and democratic pluralism with full regard for human rights and fundamental freedoms.
2. Today, thanks to the process of democratic transition, the partnership between Tunisia and the European Union is set to be strengthened to lend support to the affirmation of democracy and to economic and social reform.
3. The Council welcomes the commitments given by the transitional government and urges it to proceed with implementation of measures for the release of political prisoners, the legalisation of democratic political parties and associations and the widening of the role of civil society and the media, which are the first necessary steps towards democratisation and stabilisation of the country.
4. The Council welcomes the decision to hold democratic, free and transparent presidential and legislative elections as soon as possible. The European Union is ready, at Tunisia's request, to lend its political support and its legal, technical and material assistance in preparing and organising the electoral process, *inter alia* by sending a preparatory mission and by observing the elections.

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5. In the context of greater regard for human rights and fundamental freedoms, the Council also welcomes the creation of the High Commission for Political Reform and the national commissions set up to investigate the violence which took place during the demonstrations, as well as corruption. It stresses the importance of the integrity and independence of these commissions and is ready to offer them its assistance if required.

6. In consultation with the Tunisian authorities, the Council has adopted restrictive measures against individuals responsible for misappropriation of State funds.

7. The European Union is also ready to mobilise every instrument at its disposal to help ease the passage of political, economic and social reform in Tunisia, to strengthen its democratic institutions and to give greater support to civil society in the country. At the same time, the European Union intends, under the European neighbourhood policy, to update its strategy and assistance for Tunisia to reflect the new context and the aspirations of the Tunisian people, *inter alia* by bringing the talks on advanced status to a conclusion with the government that emerges from the forthcoming democratic elections, since such status constitutes a fundamental instrument for fully enhancing political, socio-economic and sectoral cooperation between the EU and Tunisia."
