



Deauville Partnership Foreign Ministers' Meeting New York, 25 September 2014

German Chair's Statement (Final, 26 Sept.)

1. For the fourth time since its inception in 2011, Foreign Ministers of the Deauville Partnership with Arab Countries in Transition - Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Jordan and Yemen - met in New York to discuss developments in Arab Countries in Transition and consider future support through the Partnership.
2. Ministers recalled the profound changes in some Deauville Partnership countries in 2011 and discussed developments since then. To address them, G7-leaders, together with regional partners, International Organisations and International Financial Institutions, had committed themselves in May 2011 at the Summit in Deauville, France, to assist those Arab Countries in Transition in achieving progress on the path towards more democracy, prosperity and stability.
3. Ministers acknowledged the valuable work achieved under the previous French, US and UK presidencies. They noted that in 2013 the Partnership focused on support for open economies and inclusive growth. This included efforts to facilitate greater investment in the region, support for small and medium size enterprises and encouraging women's greater participation in the economy.
4. Ministers recognized, however, that progress towards reform goals has been uneven, and that Arab Countries in Transition continue to face huge challenges – politically, economically and socially. In that regard, Ministers took note of recent reports regarding the region by the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the OECD. They also recognized that political tension and instability in the broader region is a major obstacle towards its economic and social development, which must therefore be addressed urgently and more decisively.

5. With regard to regional stability, Ministers expressed their grave concern about the serious threat of religious sectarianism and extremism. They strongly condemned all terrorist acts, committed by the terrorist organization operating under the name “Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant” (ISIL) and other groups in Syria and Iraq, as violations of international humanitarian law and human rights. Terrorism in Syria and Iraq impacts the broader Middle East, including members of the Deauville Partnership, and is a threat to the broader international community. Ministers noted that these developments underlined the risks arising from the absence of inclusive political and economic processes which provide the foundation for more democratic and accountable societies. Bashar Al-Asad’s brutal repression and his fostering of sectarian division are major factors for the current gains of ISIL in Syria. Ministers therefore called for an immediate political settlement to the Syrian conflict through a genuine political transition in Syria that includes groups from all ethnic and religious backgrounds in accordance with the Geneva Communiqué.

Ministers also urged all Libyans to seek a political solution to the current impasse and affirmed their commitment to a unitary, civil, and democratic Libyan state. They welcomed the announcement of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General of the acceptance of Libyan parties to participate in a UN-facilitated political dialogue to put an end to the current conflict and to continue the democratic transition process.

With regard to Yemen, Ministers welcomed the Peace and National Partnership Agreement, signed by all political parties in Sanaa on 21 September 2014. They called for the full and prompt implementation of the agreement which forms a way ahead in deescalating tensions and fulfilling outcomes of the National Dialogue Conference. They underlined the importance of full adherence to the GCC Agreement and its Implementation Mechanism signed in November 2011 that paved the way for the peaceful political transition. They also welcomed the Security Council Press Statement of 23 September 2014 and condemned the use of force to disrupt the peaceful transition.

6. The Deauville Partnership is a key vehicle to assist Arab Countries in Transition in consolidating democracy, in developing accountable, effective and transparent institutions, protecting human rights, building open and inclusive societies promoting growth, sustainable private sector activity and employment (in particular for youth). In this regard, Ministers pledged to continue the urgent work of the Partnership.
7. Ministers agreed that reaching broader national consensus on reform goals - building on inclusive political processes and the principles of democracy, rule of law and the respect for human rights - is key in achieving greater political and economic stability. Building and sustaining democratic institutions, improving

political participation by fostering civil society involvement and educating the public on issues of general concern are fundamental elements for success.

8. Collectively, including through multilateral and bilateral activities, as well as the MENA Transition Fund, the supporting countries and institutions of the Partnership are providing significant technical and financial support to the Arab Countries in Transition. Greater coordination of ongoing and future assistance will be essential to ensure its effectiveness.
9. Ministers reconfirmed that assistance provided through the Partnership should be demand-led, responsive to prioritised needs of Arab Countries in Transition and sufficiently flexible to adjust to changing political and economic challenges. They also encouraged transition countries to elaborate policy programmes for stabilizing their economies over the medium term with a focus on priority measures for growth with lasting job creation impact. The Partnership should concentrate its efforts on jointly identified areas for priority action, such as institution- and capacity-building, good governance, regional integration, reforms to attract investment, promotion of small- and medium-sized enterprises, sustainable private sector development, and greater political and economic participation of women and youth. The Partnership will work with relevant institutions to assist countries in building effective, open, transparent and accountable institutions as a necessary condition for inclusive growth.
10. Ministers recognized that further contributions –also of new donors – could be essential to enhance the financial base of the Transition Fund which will be further oriented towards clear objectives, more impact and results. In response to the Foreign Ministers’ request in 2012 and with the assistance from partners, the German Presidency will update the Progress Report on the activities undertaken in the course of its Presidency.
11. Ministers agreed that the Deauville Partnership should seek greater involvement of civil society, and the private sector, in order to improve the Partnership’s effectiveness and visibility in Arab Countries in Transition and the understanding of its purpose and goals. They proposed a meeting of the governance track at Senior Officials level with civil society representatives in the course of 2015.
12. Ministers welcomed the planned meeting of Deauville Finance Ministers and Presidents of International Financial Institutions in Washington on 9 October 2014 to discuss the Partnership’s progress.
13. Ministers agreed to keep the Deauville Partnership high on their political agenda.