

Euromed Chronology

January

Summit of Southern European Countries 10 – Rome: Leaders of Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal and Spain participate in the 4th Summit of Southern European Countries. The Summit Declaration, titled “Bringing the EU forward in 2018” builds upon the EU agenda settled last March 2017 in Rome on the anniversary of the Rome Treaty. The Declaration calls for the consolidation of a common European approach on security and the management of migration flows, stresses the importance of a Common Migration Policy and urging a reform of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) and highlights the importance of reinforcing existing financial instruments, including the EU Trust Fund for Africa and the EU-Turkey facility. The Declaration does not feature prominently the EU regional dimension as such; no reference is made to the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and to the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM).

<https://europeanstudentcard.eu/declaration-of-4th-summit-of-south-eu-states-bringing-the-eu-forward-in-2018/>

Palestine

31 – *Brussels:* The HRVP Mogherini and Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs Soreide host an extraordinary meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee (AHLC), the principal policy-level coordination mechanism for development assistance to the occupied Palestinian territory and seek to promote dialogue between donors, the Palestinian Authority, and the Israeli government. The AHLC adopts a new assistance package of €42.5 million, including for activities in East Jerusalem and support towards building a democratic and ac-

countable Palestinian state through targeted policy reforms, fiscal consolidation, reinforcing businesses and small and medium sized enterprises, strengthening the Palestinian civil society and providing access to water and energy. https://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-18-368_en.htm

EU – United Arab Emirates relations

31 – *Brussels:* The HR/VP Mogherini and United Arab Emirates Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan sign a Cooperation Arrangement that scales up the relation between the EU and the UAE through an intensification of political dialogue and strengthened cooperation on key strategic issues of mutual interest, notably trade facilitation and research. These key areas accompany the UAE’s Vision 2021 plans to boost growth, accelerate economic diversification and shift towards a knowledge based society. The situation in the Sahel was also raised and Mogherini welcomed the UAE’s announced pledge of over €24 million to the Sahel Joint Force.

https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/iran/39186/press-release-eu-and-uae-sign-cooperation-arrangement_en

February

Urbanism

12 – *Kuala Lumpur:* The UfM Secretariat hold in Kuala Lumpur Malaysia the Networking Event: “Towards implementing the New Urban Agenda in the Euro-Mediterranean Region,” in the framework of the World Urban Forum (WUF9) in continued efforts to raise awareness about the UfM Urban Agenda with a

view to ensuring a more sustainable urban future in the Euro-Mediterranean region and beyond. This Networking Event chaired by Amb. Ihab Fahmy, UfM Deputy Secretary General, and organized in cooperation with the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the European Commission and the European Investment Bank (EIB), brought together representatives of several UN agencies and other key partner organizations and IFIs, as well as urban development actors and potential partners active in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

<https://ufmsecretariat.org/wuf9/>

Water

15 – *London:* EU helps EBRD to bring first sanitation services to one million Egyptians. The EBRD has received €38 million in grants from the European Union (EU) to blend with its own investment of €186 million in the extension and upgrade of wastewater services in the Egyptian governorate of Fayoum, where three million people live. The EBRD financing to the Fayoum Water and Wastewater Company is complemented by an EU grant investment grant of €30 million and over €7 million for technical assistance. In addition, the European Investment Bank is providing a loan of €172 million. The funding will support the construction of eight new wastewater treatment plants, the expansion of nine units and the rehabilitation of 10 plants as well as the installation of over 3,400 kilometres of pipes and 139 pumping stations. In addition, 350 sewage removal trucks will be procured to serve remote rural communities.

<https://www.ebrd.com/news/2018/eu-helping-ebrd-to-bring-first-sanitation-services-to-one-million-egyptians.html>

Syria

16 – *Sofia*: HR/VP Mogherini announces a second Brussels Conference on Syria after a two day informal meeting of EU ministers in Sofia. The discussions focused on Syria, the Western Balkans and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Conference will focus on two goals, Mogherini explained: "First and foremost, humanitarian support to Syrians, both inside Syria and in neighbouring countries, namely Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey and support to the UN-led political process in Geneva." Mogherini explained that all diplomatic efforts must strengthen the Geneva talks. Speaking at a press conference in Sofia, the HRVP highlighted that "the situation on the ground is deteriorating" and "this is something the world shouldn't forget." She confirmed that EU Ministers discussed "how to mobilize this humanitarian support, but also how to use the convening power of the European Union to support the UN-led political process that, as you know, is facing difficult moments in these weeks."

https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/59581/remarks-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-upon-arrival-ministerial-meeting_en

Security

16 – *Doha*: Qatar calls for EU-style security pact for Middle East. Middle Eastern states should put their differences behind them and forge a security pact modelled on the European Union in order to pull the region back from the brink, Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani said on 16 February. He asked the international community to keep up diplomatic pressure on the countries concerned to achieve that, but offered few other details. "I believe that it is time for wider regional security in the Middle East. It is time for all nations of the region to forget the past, including us, and agree on basic security principles and rules of governance, and at least a minimum level of security to allow for peace and prosperity," Sheikh Tamim told a security conference in Munich. Sheikh Tamim referenced violent conflicts in Syria, Yemen and Libya which have sparked humanitarian catastrophes and one of the largest refugee

crises ever with millions of people washing up in Europe in recent years. "

<https://af.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idAFKCN1G01SY>

Migration

22 – *Tripoli*: A high level mission of the African Union, the European Union and the United Nations visits Tripoli on 22 February to take stock of progress made and to further enhance cooperation with Libyan authorities in the joint response to migration and protection challenges. The visit to Libya is a direct follow-up to the meeting of the joint African Union – European Union – United Nations Task Force in Brussels, in December 2017. The Mission includes Commissioner of the African Union Amira El-Fadil, representatives of the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the European Commission, the UN Support Mission in Libya, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). They met with the Libyan Minister of Foreign Affairs Mohammed Sialla and other Libyan officials, and visited a detention centre for migrants and a shelter for internally displaced people.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/libya/high-level-au-eu-un-mission-visits-tripoli-enhance-co-operation-migration-and>

Migration

26 – *Brussels*: EU adopts new programmes worth over €150 million under the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa. The new programmes complement ongoing efforts of the European Union to protect migrants and provide them with sustainable reintegration options in Libya, along the Central Mediterranean Route and in Ethiopia. As announced by Federica Mogherini an additional €115 million have been made available to support migrants in Libya. This programme will be implemented together with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). This new regional programme aims at protecting and evacuating additional 3,800 refugees from Libya, as well as providing protection and voluntary humanitarian return to 15,000 migrants stranded in Libya and support them with reintegration assistance in

their countries of origin, as committed by the EU in the framework of the Joint Taskforce. It will also support the resettlement of more than 14,000 people in need of international protection from Niger, Chad, Cameroun and Burkina Faso. Another measure worth €20 million will be dedicated to improve the assistance provided to vulnerable migrants, particularly young people and women, in transit countries in the Sahel region and the Lake Chad Basin.

https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/news-and-events/delivering-commitments-new-programmes-protect-migrants-and-support-return-and_en

Energy

28 – *Alexandria*: EU inaugurates Thermodynamic Solar project in Egypt. Head of the European Union Delegation to Egypt Ambassador Ivan Surkoš, along with Minister of Electricity and Renewable Energy Dr. Mohamed Shaker, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Dr. Khalid Abdul Ghaffar, President of Academy of Scientific Research and Technology Dr. Mahmoud Sakr, and a number of ambassadors of EU Member States, inaugurated on Tuesday the Multipurpose Applications by Thermodynamic Solar (MATS) project in Borg El Arab, Alexandria. MATS project, co-funded by the European Union, is a research facility and unique multipurpose solar plant with the goal of identifying and exploiting the appropriate technologies that can conveniently integrate solar energy in the current energy system and secure a stable supply to consumers.

https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/egypt/40503/mats-research-facility-and-solar-plant-excellent-model-collaboration-between-eu-and-egypt_en

March*PESCO*

6 – *Brussels*: The Foreign Affairs Council adopts a roadmap for the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO). On 6 March the first Council meeting in formation of PESCO took place. PESCO was established by the EU Council on 11 December 2017 with the objective of deepening defence cooperation amongst EU Member States. During the

FAC meeting, a roadmap has been adopted in order to provide strategic direction and guidance on how to structure further work on both processes and governance, including for projects and in relation to the sequencing of the fulfilment of commitments. The roadmap also provides a timeline for agreement on possible future projects, as well as a common set of governance rules for projects to be adopted by the Council by the end of June 2018. Furthermore, Ministers formally adopted the first 17 PESCO projects as well as a list of the respective Member States participating. According to HR/VP Federica Mogherini, this FAC has represented a historical moment as PESCO means the birth of the European Union of Defence and Security after years of talks, and it will be necessary to make sure that resources to meet the expectations are provided, and instruments to mobilize the resources are created.

<https://www.euromesco.net/news/the-foreign-affairs-council-adopts-a-roadmap-for-pesco/>

EU – Tunisia

6 – Brussels: EU and Tunisia agree to boost civil protection & disaster management cooperation. The European Commission signed an administrative arrangement with Tunisia to boost ties in civil protection and disaster risk management. The document, signed at this year's European Civil Protection Forum in Brussels, outlines key areas of cooperation on disaster prevention, preparedness, and response on issues such as forest fires, floods, and search and rescue missions. The signature of this arrangement is an important step in the reinforcement of the EU-Tunisia Privileged Partnership. Under the new arrangement, Tunisia will benefit from training for experts, the setting up of joint emergency response plans as well as closer cooperation with the EU's Copernicus satellite system. The move is part of the EU's increasing cooperation with Tunisia in a number of fields.

https://ec.europa.eu/echo/news/eu-and-tunisia-agree-boost-civil-protection-disaster-management-cooperation_en

EU – Qatar

7 – Brussels: EU and Qatar sign a Cooperation Arrangement. On 7 March, HR/VP Federica Mogherini meets in

Brussels with Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Emir of Qatar. They discussed ways to enhance bilateral relations between the European Union and Qatar around areas of common interest. In this context, the EU HR/VP and the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Qatar, Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, signed a Cooperation Arrangement between the European External Action Service and the Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This Cooperation Arrangement will serve as basis for an enhanced political dialogue and strengthened cooperation on sectoral areas of mutual interest, notably private sector development and research and innovation. Federica Mogherini reiterated the European Union's support for the Kuwaiti mediation to achieve Gulf reconciliation and its readiness to assist. They also discussed counter-terrorism as well as several regional issues, including Syria, the Middle East Peace Process, Iran and Libya.

https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en/40967/EU%20and%20Qatar%20sign%20a%20Cooperation%20Arrangement

Refugees

14 – Brussels: The Commission proposes to mobilize additional funds for Syrian refugees. On 14 March, the EU Commission establishes the legal framework for the second tranche of €3 billion of the Facility for Refugees in Turkey, as foreseen in the EU-Turkey Statement, mobilizing €1 billion from the EU budget. The first tranche of the Facility set up in 2016 was made up of €1 billion from the EU budget and €2 billion from Member States' contributions, which were submitted by the end of 2017. With this announcement, the Commission proposes to complete the EU commitment, and calls on Member States to honour their pledged contributions under the aforementioned agreement. The announcement on the mobilization of the funding takes place about two weeks ahead of the upcoming EU-Turkey Summit on March 26 in the Bulgarian city of Varna. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-18-1723_en.htm

Palestine

15 – Rome: The EU supports UNRWA with €82 million. During a meeting be-

tween HRVP Mogherini and UNRWA Commissioner-General Pierre Krähenbühl in the margins of the extraordinary UNRWA Ministerial Conference in Rome €82 million in funding to UNRWA is announced. The Conference focuses on solving the acute funding crisis the Agency is facing and on moving forward necessary Agency reforms, following President Trump's announcement of cutting US funding to UNRWA. In 2016 and 2017, the EU and its Member States together provided €424 million and €391 million respectively to UNRWA, making the European Union by far the largest and most reliable donor to the Agency. Today's €82 million support is allocated as a part of the EU's regular annual contribution for 2018, and has been made available through a sped-up procedure. The EU also host the annual spring meeting of the international donor coordination group in support of the Palestinian economy, the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee (AHLIC), in Brussels on 20 March 2018. https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/58840/european-union-announces-vital-eur-82-million-contribution-unrwa_en

Sustainable economy

28 – Amman: EU Commissioner visits Jordan to promote sustainable economic development. Johannes Hahn, Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations was in Jordan on 27 and 28 March to launch the External Investment Plan with the country and support its economic development. Johannes Hahn met with key political authorities of the country including Deputy Prime Minister Jafar Hassan, Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi and Minister of Planning and International Cooperation Imad Fakhoury. The meetings focused on how the EU can further support economic development in Jordan and in particular, how the EU can help Jordan to attract foreign investors. The External Investment Plan has been launched as a concrete proof of EU engagement to respond to the demands of Jordanian citizens for economic growth and jobs.

<https://www.euneighbours.eu/en/south-stay-informed/news/eu-commissioner-visits-jordan-promote-sustainable-economic-development>

April

Elections

6 - *Tunis*: EU deploys election observation mission in Tunisia. Upon the invitation of the authorities, the EU deploys an election observation mission on 6 May to Tunisia for the local elections. It is the third election observation mission deployed by the EU to Tunisia since 2011, and a sign of the EU's ongoing support for the democratic transition of the country. The mission of seven electoral analysts and more than 80 observers will be headed by Fabio Massimo Castaldo, Member of the European Parliament. Launching the mission, EU High Representative Mogherini underlined the importance of the upcoming vote as part of Tunisia's move to political decentralization as foreseen in the Constitution adopted in 2014.

https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en/42586/Tunisia:%20EU%20deploys%20election%20observation%20mission

Economic cooperation

6 - *Brussels*: The EU announces a package of €1.5 billion in investments in Lebanon over three years. On 6 April, the European Union announces a package of up to €150 million to support the revitalization of the Lebanese economy at the CEDRE conference in Paris, an international donor meeting in support of Lebanon. This support can generate up to €1.5 billion loans for Lebanon until 2020, on condition that the country's financial institutions identify and propose projects that are bankable and adopt relevant reforms. This package includes up to €50 million in grants funding that could be mobilized in each of the coming three years (2018-2020) to provide technical assistance and ensure a sufficient level of concessionality of loans. The package will be made available in the framework of the European External Investment Plan (EIP).

<https://brusselseconomic.wordpress.com/category/eu/>

Human rights

10 - *Rome*: Anti-Torture Committee calls for a coordinated European approach to address mass migratory arrivals in Italy. The European Committee

for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) publishes on 10 April a report on an ad hoc visit conducted in Italy to examine the situation of foreign nationals deprived of their liberty in the so-called "hotspots" and immigration detention centres, in a context of large-scale arrivals from North Africa. The CPT recognizes the significant challenges faced by the Italian authorities regarding the influx of new arrivals by sea. It also acknowledges the substantial efforts in carrying out rescue operations and in providing shelter and support to the hundreds of thousands of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants currently present in the country. In this framework, the CPT recalls the need for a coordinated European approach and support system to address the phenomenon of mass migratory arrivals.

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/-/anti-torture-committee-calls-for-a-coordinated-european-approach-to-address-mass-migratory-arrivals-in-italy>

Research and innovation

10 - *Rabat*: Morocco joins the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area. The European Union and Morocco sign on 10 April an international agreement on Morocco's participation in the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA). This is the last international agreement signed with countries outside the EU not associated to Horizon 2020, the EU's research and innovation programme, to ensure their participation in PRIMA. Morocco formally joins Member States and non-EU countries from both shores of the Mediterranean to work on developing responses to water scarcity and food security, two of the major challenges of the region. Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation Carlos Moedas, Ambassador Dimitar Tzantchev, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Bulgaria to the EU, and Mr. Saaïd Amzazi, Moroccan Minister of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education and Scientific Research signed the agreement in Brussels.

https://ec.europa.eu/info/news/morocco-joins-partnership-research-and-innovation-mediterranean-area-2018-apr-10_en

Youth Employment

16 - *Algiers*: EU-co-funded Program in Algeria in the Service of Social and Solidarity Economy. As a result of the cooperation between the country and the European Union, a seminar on social and solidarity economy (SSE) is held by the Support Program Youth Employment (PAJE). The main objective is to inform about the PAJE activities in terms of SSE, and the emergence of this last one as a leading path towards innovation and economic diversification in Algeria. A study about the legal framework as well as a diagnosis of potentially job-generating and job-creating sectors was carried out in 2017, with the aim of becoming a basis for what the PAJE is helping build as the next national development plan of SSE to support the action and reforms of the Algerian government in terms of national policies for youth. Furthermore, the program has financed, with a budget of €4 million, the activities of the SSE employers.

<https://www.euneighbours.eu/en/south/stay-informed/news/algeria-eu-co-funded-programme-paje-service-social-and-solidarity-economy>

May

Energy

8 - *Rabat*: The EU Backs Morocco's Energy Strategy with more than €1 million Funding. On 8 May, a kick-off seminar of a two-year long twinning project between the EU and Morocco is held in Rabat. The project aims to strengthen the Moroccan energy sector while promoting energy transition towards the use of sustainable sources for energy. The EU will back Morocco's national energy strategy seeking to ensure the security of its supplies, generalize access to energy and meet growing demand while protecting the environment. In this context, the EU funds the program with around €1.3 million to enhance the capacities of the Moroccan energy department in regulating electricity market and developing a mechanism to monitor the implementation of the energy strategy at national & regional levels.

https://www.iemed.org/publicacions/euromed-insights-1/euromed-insights-no95-05-08-05-14-2018/at_download/arxiu_relacionat

Transport

9 – Alexandria: UfM launches project to improve transport connectivity and logistics sector in the Mediterranean. On 9 May, during the first Mediterranean Conference on Maritime Transport and Logistics, held in Egypt, the Union for the Mediterranean announces the start of the TransLogMED project. The main goal of the five year period initiative with a total budget of €1.5 million is to contribute to the development of an efficient and sustainable transport infrastructure network in the EuroMediterranean region and, therefore, to foster regional integration. First concrete step that is planned to be realized in practice - providing certified training and knowledge-transfer programmes to more than 1,000 professionals of the transport and logistics sector in Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Italy, Morocco, Spain and Tunisia.
<https://ufmsecretariat.org/ufm-launches-project-translogmed-transport/>

EU – Algeria

14 – Brussels: On the occasion of the Association Council between the EU and Algeria, the EU and Algeria renew their commitment to implement the common Partnership Priorities and the conclusions of the joint evaluation of the Association Agreement, as well as their commitment to deepening their relations with a view to achieving a common area of stability, democracy and shared prosperity.
<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2018/05/14/eu-algeria-association-council-joint-declaration-14-may-2018/>

Women

14 – Brussels: EU-funded project supports female visibility in Libyan economic growth. As part of the EU-funded CSO WINS project, the Libyan association Jusoor Center for Studies and Development launches an advocacy campaign targeting female entrepreneurs with the aim of highlighting the consequences of the shadow economy, the effective participation in the national economic growth and increasing the percentage of Libyan women who formally register their businesses. In the same line and within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Instru-

ment, and implemented by the European Institute of the Mediterranean through the Euro-Mediterranean Women's Foundation, the Neighbourhood Civil Society Facility funded a one-minute calling on local associations to strengthen their ability to mobilize public opinion with the aim of asserting women's rights and encourage them to monitor women-related policies in the political, professional and social sectors at a local, national and Euro-Mediterranean level.
<https://www.euneighbours.eu/en/south/stay-informed/news/eu-funded-project-supports-female-participation-libyan-economic-growth>

EU – Tunisia

15 – Brussels: The 14th EU-Tunisia Association Council takes place on 15 May in Brussels, gathering HR/VP Federica Mogherini and European Neighbourhood Policy & Enlargement Negotiations Commissioner Johannes Hahn as EU representatives, and Foreign Minister Khemaies Jhinaoui on the Tunisian side. The EU keeps its commitment made in the 2016 Joint Communication to raise the annual level of new grants to €300 million. The 2018-2020 Partnership Priorities are adopted, with strong focus on the inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development; democracy, good governance and human rights, the rapprochement between different people, mobility and migration; as well as security and the fight against terrorism.
<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2018/05/15/declaration-conjointe-a-la-presse-a-l-occasion-de-la-14eme-session-du-conseil-d-association-ue-tunisie/>

SME's

18 – Cairo: EU's SANAD Fund launches Sandah for Microfinance in Egypt. The EU co-founded SANAD Fund, aimed to the developing of the micro, small and medium enterprise sector in the MENA region, on 8 May which was officially launched in Cairo. It is Egypt's first microfinance lending institution, backed by international investors, which has received a license within the new framework introduced by the Egyptian Financial Regulatory Authority. The company may play a leading role in providing financial services to the micro and very

small enterprise (MVSE) segment, as well as in meeting demand for MVSE financing in the governorates of Upper Egypt and the Delta Region.
<https://www.euneighbours.eu/en/south/stay-informed/news/eus-sanad-fund-launches-sandah-microfinance-egypt>

Infrastructures

23 – Suez: European Bank for Reconstruction and development finances upgrade of Egypt's Suez refinery. Supporting the modernization of Egypt's oil industry, the EBRD is providing a US\$200 million for major investments in energy efficiency and refurbishment of the oil refinery owned by Suez Oil Processing Company. The agreement was signed on 22 May. In addition to improving the operational performance of the refinery, the investments will increase the flexibility of the plant's crude intake and allow for the production of higher quality fuels and lower sulphur fuels.
<https://www.ebrd.com/news/2018/ebrd-finances-upgrade-of-egypts-suez-refinery.html>

June

Migration

4 – Brussels: The EU Mobilizes New Assistance for Migration Worth €467 million. The EU has adopted new programmes and projects of €467 million to continue to deliver on its commitments to assist vulnerable migrants and refugees as well as address root causes of irregular migration. Thanks to EU-IOM joint work, 150 migrants received assistance to return from Libya to Mogadishu, Somalia, in one day. These measures operate in line with the work of the African Union-EU-UN Joint Taskforce.
https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_hy/45586/

Palestine

11 – Brussels: The EU provides around €15 million to support families in need in Palestine. European Union allocates €15 million to the Palestinian Authority payment of social allowances. This money will be used to help around 65,839 vulnerable families, most of whom live in the Gaza Strip and in the West Bank. Overall, the EU supports the Ministry of

Social Development of Palestine in serving about 110,000 families in need through an inclusive and equitable social protection system.

https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/palestine-occupied-palestinian-territory-west-bank-and-gaza-strip_uz/46175/

Energy

12 – *Istanbul*: The EU welcomes the inauguration of Turkish-Azeri gas pipeline TANAP. On 12 June, Turkey and Azerbaijan open the TANAP pipeline that will bring gas produced in the Caspian Sea to Europe while bypassing Russia. The €7.2 billion project, which is a part of the Southern Gas Corridor, aims to turn Turkey into an energy hub, to diversify the EU natural gas suppliers and, finally, to play a key role in maintaining the energy security of Europe.

<https://www.dw.com/en/turkey-opens-tanap-pipeline-that-will-bring-azeri-gas-to-europe/a-44192422>

Peace

13 – *Brussels*: HR/VP Federica Mogherini presents the creation of the European Peace Facility, an off-budget instrument that will cover the common costs of all EU military missions and operations, enabling the financing of operational actions under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) that have military or defence implications. The aim is to ensure that EU funding is available on a permanent basis, thus facilitating rapid deployment and enhancing flexibility. The idea under this programme is to strengthen the EU's role as a major global military actor and give it the capability to contribute to the financing of military peace support operations led by international partners on a global scale. Mogherini put on the table a figure of 10.5 Billion Euros over the next seven years of the multiannual financial framework for Member States to discuss and negotiate it. Until now, CSDP military missions were funded under the so-called Athena mechanism, that could however not be mobilized in order to provide military equipment to third parties.

https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/46285/european-peace-facility-eu-budget-fund-build-peace-and-strengthen-international-security_en

Health

13 – *Brussels*: The EU starts launching projects in support of the health sector in Lebanon. The first two projects of a recently approved package of €70 million, aimed at raising the quality of health care in Lebanon and allocated by the EU Regional Trust Fund, were launched on 13 June. Their main aim is to provide quality medical services for all people in need across the country. More specifically, the first project will focus on the support of the primary health care system in Lebanon and ensure that more than 500,000 vulnerable people will have a chance to use quality and affordable services of the health sector. The other project specializes in secondary health care and includes facilities such as emergency and obstetric hospital admissions for refugees.

https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/lebanon/55677/european-union-support-lebanese-healthcare-system-reaches-%E2%82%AC173-million_en

Economic growth

19 – *Brussels*: On 19 June, the European Union and Morocco have officially launched the EU External Investment Plan in the country in order to improve a business environment and stimulate economic growth, job creation, and sustainable development. Moreover, the Plan implies technical assistance for improving the quality of projects and mobilizing investment from financial institutions, public institutions and private investors. The EU's External Investment Plan aim is to encourage investment in the EU's partner countries in Africa and the European neighbourhood region while promoting inclusive growth, job creation and sustainable development as a way to tackle some of the root causes of irregular migration.

http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-18-4190_en.htm

Syria

20 – *Brussels*: EU Syria Trust Fund approves aid package of €165 million for Lebanon. The EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis adopted largest ever support package to Lebanon and Jordan on 20 June. The total amount of the financial aid reaches

€165 million, which will be directed to the improvement of the educational system of Lebanon, providing social assistance to the local communities and vulnerable groups, and, finally, strengthening the resilience of Palestine refugees from Syria. Also, €2 million from this package will be dedicated to the support of Palestinian refugees in Jordan.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/eu-syria-trust-fund-adopts-largest-ever-aid-package-165-million-lebanon-support>

Terrorism

27 – *Kenitra*: Euromed Police hold a workshop on online terrorist investigation. In the Moroccan city Kenitra, ten countries participated in the Euromed Police Action targeting terrorist investigation in the cyberspace. The workshop that lasted for three days, has allowed experts from partner countries to share their experience concerning investigation techniques on the Internet and social media on all the aspects and steps of a terrorist investigation online: from open source intelligence methods, the work of undercover agents to the ways of processing the information collected. Judicial protocols for the admissibility of the information in court were also discussed. The experts voiced their common challenges and how to overcome them through promoting transborder cooperation.

<https://www.euneighbours.eu/en/south/stay-informed/news/euromed-police-held-workshop-online-terrorist-investigation>

Migration

29 – *Brussels*: After a nearly 10-hour long session that ended just before sunrise in Brussels, EU leaders come up with an agreement on migration policies. They agree there should be a common effort in order to alleviate the burden on southern European Countries, but “only on a voluntary basis,” thereby eliminating the refugee redistribution quota system under great pressure from many European countries. The geographical and ideological divisions have been exposed again on the occasion of this summit. Still, some concrete ideas have been put on the table. The EU has decided to foster the creation of new migrant centres for housing and processing asylum petitions along the rim of the Mediterranean Sea, but a number of questions

remain on their location and how they would be implemented. Some EU leaders raised the possibility of implementing these migrant processing centres in North Africa under EU funding and upon African countries' consent, but these have already on several occasions expressed their total opposition.

<https://www.euromesco.net/news/european-council-on-migration/>

Infrastructures

29 – *Khalladi*: The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development launches a private renewable project in Morocco. The inauguration of the Khalladi wind farm in Morocco on 29 June marks the official launch of the EBRD's first private renewable project financed in the country. In 2015, the EBRD, the Banque Marocaine du Commerce Extérieur (BMCE) and the Climate Investment Funds' Clean Technology Fund (CTF) extend a loan of €120 million to the project company ACWA Power Khalladi, without state support. The funding goes towards the development and construction of the wind farm, which began generating power in December 2017 and is now fully operational.

<https://www.ebrd.com/news/2018/ebirds-first-private-renewable-project-in-morocco-launched.html>

July

Migration

6 - *Brussels*: The EU allocates additional €90.5 million for migration-related programmes in North Africa. On 6 July, the European Commission has approved new programs under the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, aimed at solving a number of migrant-related problems and totalling more than €90 million. This money will contribute to three main actions. First, through the programme on border Management for the Maghreb, the EU will help the authorities of Morocco and Tunisia to strengthen maritime border management. Second, the EU will reinforce its support to the protection of refugees and migrants in Libya, including the development of labour opportunities. Third, providing support to the 2014 Moroccan National Strategy on migration, the European Union will

increase its assistance to vulnerable migrant groups.

https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/news_corner/news/eu-trust-fund-africa-new-migration-related-actions-protect-vulnerable-people-and_en

Police

19 - *Brussels* The Council extended the mandate of EUPOL COPPS until 30 June 2019. The Mission is mandated to assist the Palestinian Authority in building the institutions of a future state of Palestine in the areas of policing and criminal justice since January 2006. Through its contribution to security and justice sector reform, the Mission supports efforts to increase the security of the Palestinian population and to reinforce the rule of law. The Mission's budget for the period between 1 July 2018 and 30 June 2019 amounts to €12.667 million.

Business

23 - *Brussels* July 2018, the Union of Mediterranean Confederations of Enterprises (BUSINESSMED) and the Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association (EMEA), sign a Memorandum of Understanding in the framework of the project "Enhancing Business Support Organisations and Business Networks in the Southern Neighbourhood" (EBSOMED). The purpose is to enhance the Euro-Mediterranean business ecosystem and to support the social and economic development of the economic stakeholders. EBSOMED is co-funded by the European Commission and is aimed at boosting the Mediterranean business ecosystem promoting an inclusive economic development and job creation, by enhancing private sector organizations in the Southern Neighbourhood countries.

<https://euneighbours.eu/en/south/stay-informed/news/eu-supports-euro-mediterranean-business-ecosystem>

August

Palestine

2 - *Brussels*: The European Union and the Netherlands make a contribution of 10 million euros and 0.62 million euros respectively to the Palestinian Authority's

payment of nearly 55,000 Palestinian civil servants and pensioners in the West Bank.

http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-19-2341_en.htm

Social Dialogue

23 – *Beirut*: The European Union finances a seminar to promote social dialogue in Lebanon. An EU-funded seminar under the project "Technical Assistance to Support the Promotion of Social Dialogue in Lebanon" on the role of the Ministry of Labour as a key element in the promotion of social dialogue in Lebanon is attended by more than 50 representatives of the social partners in the Saida Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture.

September

Palestine

27 – *New York*: In the UNWRA ministerial meeting, held in New York on 27 September, the European Commission proposes additional €40 million to allow the agency to keep providing access to education, primary healthcare and assistance to Palestinian refugees. The additional amount of €40 million brings the overall European Commission contribution to UNRWA to €146 million in 2018.

<https://www.euneighbours.eu/en/south/stay-informed/news/eu-proposes-additional-eu40-million-palestine-refugees-keep-schools-and>

Migration

27 – *Rome*: Tunisia and Italy agree to step up efforts to send Tunisian migrants identified as illegally staying in Italy back to their home country and to improve the cooperation between their governments. During an official visit to Tunisia, Italian Interior Minister Matteo Salvini said both countries agreed to fight "against the trafficking of human beings ... and to limit the number of deaths." Salvini also pledged to work on additional Italian investments to create jobs especially in southern Tunisia, where most Tunisian migrants come from. His counterpart, Hichem Fourati, said Tunisian authorities were ready to accept returns of confirmed Tunisian citizens. He referred to a 2011 agreement between Tunis and Rome that

allows authorities to send back 45 people to Tunisia per week. Salvini also met with Tunisian President Beji Caid Essebsi. <http://www.arabnews.com/node/1379421/middle-east>

October

Pre-accession

2 – *Brussels*: MEPs cut support to Turkey by €70 million. The European Parliament decides to cancel €70 million in pre-accession funds earmarked for Turkey, as conditions to improve the rule of law were not met. Last year, during the budgetary negotiation, the EC and the EP agreed to reserve €70 million in the pre-accession instrument under the condition that “Turkey makes measurable, sufficient improvements in the fields of rule of law, democracy, human rights and press freedom, according to the annual report of the commission.” This report was published in April 2018 and states clearly that “Turkey has been significantly moving away from the EU, in particular in the areas of the rule of law and fundamental rights and through the weakening of effective checks and balances in the political system.” Therefore, MEPs consider that the condition set by the budgetary authority has not been met. The Commission proposes to transfer the amount earmarked for Turkey “to cover actions linked to the central Mediterranean migratory route and fulfil part of the EU pledge for Syria.” <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20180926IPR14407/turkey-meps-cut-support-by-EU70m-due-to-no-improvement-in-respect-for-eu-values>

Union for the Mediterranean

8 – *Barcelona*: III Regional Forum of the Union for the Mediterranean. The Third Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Regional Forum, entitled “10 years: Building together the future of regional cooperation” is held in Barcelona on 8 October, coinciding with the 10th anniversary of the institution. The ministerial meeting on foreign affairs coincided with a dialogue session on the UfM youth occupation initiative as part of the Med4Jobs initiative. This Regional Forum was hosted by Spanish Foreign

Minister Josep Borrell and UfM Secretary General Nasser Kamel, and was chaired by HR/VP Federica Mogherini and Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi as co-presidencies of the UfM. It was attended by high representatives of the 43 member-states of the UfM, including 13 at minister or vice-minister level. <https://ufmsecretariat.org/regional-forum-2018/>

Migration

19 – *Vienna*: The 3rd Vienna Migration Conference (VMC), “From Crisis Management to Future Governance,” organized by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), takes place on 18-19 October. This year, the conference focuses on two priority areas for migration partnerships where political progress is needed the most and where a comprehensive debate can contribute towards substantial gains: regulation in addressing the global refugee crisis and ensuring access to international protection on the one hand, and building a system of functioning labour migration on the other. Attendees of this year’s conference include a high number of ministers from Europe and neighbouring countries, as well as other high level panellists. <https://www.euromesco.net/news/the-3rd-vienna-migration-conference/>

Migration

21 – *Brussels*: The EU will give €140 million to Morocco to contain migration. European Council President Donald Tusk and European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker back the Spanish-led proposal of an EU support plan for Morocco to manage migration flows, presented at the Summit of EU Heads of State and Government on 17-18 October. According to the deal, the EU will give Morocco €140 million in the shortrun in an attempt to strengthen cooperation with origin and transit migration countries to control migration flows. Half of that money (70 million) will be injected directly into the Moroccan budget, but the amount is expected to be mostly devoted to buy border control material. <https://www.euromesco.net/news/the-eu-will-give-e140-million-to-morocco-to-contain-migration/>

Infrastructure and Energy

22 – *Barcelona*: The Union for the Mediterranean continues consultations with the African Union. According to press release by the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), the African Union (AU) Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy, Dr Amani Abou-Zeid, pay a courtesy call to UfM Secretary General Nasser Kamel. Secretary-General Kamel and Commissioner Abou-Zeid discuss the respective roles of the two organizations and the mutually reinforcing objectives in North Africa, especially regarding the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 2030 Agenda to achieve integration, as well as inclusive and sustainable growth. They also acknowledge the positive role of the European Union as a strategic partner in the implementation of agenda 2063 and SDGs in Africa. <https://www.euromesco.net/news/the-union-for-the-mediterranean-to-continue-consultations-with-the-african-union/>

Refugees

22 – *Brussels*: The European Union supports the economic integration of refugees in Morocco. A project co-financed by the EU (with a rate of 75%), Switzerland, Monaco and Japan aim to facilitate the economic integration of refugees in Morocco. The United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), leader of the project, signs a Convention, on 22 October, together with the Moroccan Association of Support to the Promotion of Small Business (AMAPPE), the National Agency for Promotion of Employment and Skills (ANAPEC) and the Office for the Development of Cooperation (ODCO) to allow refugees to benefit from integrated access to the services of these agencies, an unprecedented step towards the development of entrepreneurship initiatives and cooperatives among refugees in Morocco. The support to the development of entrepreneurship and cooperative projects among refugees in Morocco has a duration of two years, February 2018 - January 2020, for a total amount of €828,000. <https://www.euneighbours.eu/en/south-stay-informed/news/european-union-facilitate-economic-integration-refugees-morocco>

November

Immigration

14 – *Brussels*: Council of the EU decides to improve coordination between EU immigration liaison officers in third countries. Almost 500 immigration liaison officers are deployed by Member States and the EU in order to maintain contacts with the authorities of third countries on migration issues, such as prevention and combatting of illegal migration, return facilitation or managing legal migration. The EU aims to strengthen the cooperation and coordination between liaison officers. To do so, the proposal to improve the functioning of the existing European network of immigration officer, agreed on 14 November by EU ambassadors, includes provisions such as introducing a steering board at EU level to strengthen the management of the network and the coordination of liaison officer, strengthening the role of liaison officers in combating migrant smuggling as well as making available funds in support of activities of immigration officers that will be allocated in agreement with the steering board.

<https://www.euromesco.net/news/council-of-the-eu-decides-to-improve-coordination-between-eu-immigration-liaison-officers-in-third-countries/>

Civil society

20-21 – *Brussels*: EU strengthens cooperation with civil society: EU-Majalat Civil Society Forum 2018. The EU-Majalat Civil Society Forum 2018 brings together representatives of the EU and NGOs, trade unions, business associations, think tanks and practitioners mainly from the EU's Southern Neighbourhood partner countries. The Forum is organized around four key topics, namely, good governance and rule of law, security and countering violence, migration, and economic development and social dialogue. https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/news_corner/news/eu-strengthens-cooperation-civil-society-southern-mediterranean-region-during-eu_en

Energy

20 – *Algiers*: The European Union and Algeria strengthen their energy partner-

ship. The EU Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy Miguel Arias Cañete visits Algeria on 20 November for a high level meeting to relaunch the energy partnership between the EU and Algeria, where he meets with Mustapha Guitouni, Algerian Energy Minister. The energy dialogue between both countries covers natural gas, renewable energy and energy efficiency, and the common objective is to improve the legislative and regulatory framework for gas to make it more attractive to investors, and to diversify the energy sources.

https://ec.europa.eu/info/news/european-union-and-algeria-strengthen-their-energy-partnership-2018-nov-19_en

EU-Turkey

22 – *Ankara*: On Thursday 22 November, HR/VP Federica Mogherini and Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, Johannes Hahn, are in Ankara for the High Political Dialogue between EU and Turkey. Among other topics, they exchange views with the Turkish Foreign Minister, Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu on issues such as cooperation on migration and counter terrorism, energy, economy, and transport.

<https://www.euromesco.net/news/eu-turkey-high-political-dialogue/>

EU – Iran

26 – *Brussels*: EU - Iran High Level Political Dialogue. On 26 November, the European External Action Service's Secretary General, Helga Schmid, and the Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister, Abbas Araghchi, hold the fourth meeting of the High Level Political Dialogue, in Brussels, with the presence of the EU Special Representative for Human Rights, Stavros Lambrinidis, and the EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator, Gilles De Kerchove. The meeting focuses on bilateral issues, such as trade, energy, environment, drug policy, as well as counter-terrorism and regional issues, notably Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Lebanon and Afghanistan. In parallel, discussions on human rights are held, as an integral part of EU Iran political dialogue and as a continuation of similar exchanges held in November last year and in February 2016. The meeting coincides with the third EU-Iran High Level Seminar on

International Nuclear Cooperation which focuses on aspects of civil nuclear cooperation in line with Annex III of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/54494/eu-and-iran-hold-high-level-political-dialogue_en

December

Blue Economy

4 – *Algiers*: WestMED Conference on blue economy. The Ministerial conference on cooperation on blue economy in the western Mediterranean takes place in Algiers on Monday 4 December. The ministers from the countries participating in the WestMED initiative (Algeria, France, Italy, Libya, Malta, Mauritania, Morocco, Portugal, Spain and Tunisia) adopt a declaration in which they commit to strengthen maritime regional cooperation. The idea is to generate growth, create jobs and provide a better environment for Mediterranean populations, at the social level while preserving its ecosystem.

https://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/node_pt?page=3

Palestine

11 – *Brussels*: The EU, Finland and Spain make a €12.6 million contribution (€10 million, €1.6 million, and €1 million respectively) to the Palestinian Authority for the payment of social allowances to poor families in the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The aim is to provide an inclusive and equitable social system for Palestinians, and it is expected to cover the social allowances of around 62,000 families, of which 80% live in the Gaza strip. Since February 2008, over €2.5 billion have been disbursed through PEGASE ("Mécánisme Palestino-Européen de Gestion de l'Aide Socio-Economique"), the Direct Financial Support to the Palestinian Authority Reform and various National Development Plans.

<https://www.euromesco.net/news/eu-finland-and-spain-to-provide-e12-6-million-for-the-payment-of-social-allowances-to-palestinian-families/>

Migration

15 – Brussels: The European Union has reinforced its support to Morocco to address irregular migration by bringing the total amount mobilized in 2018 under the EU emergency Trust Fund for Africa to €148 million. “The additional funding adopted under the EU emergency Trust Fund for Africa will bring the overall migration related assistance to Morocco to €148 million in 2018,” according to a European Commission’s press release. The new funding, which is part of the EU’s “continuous support” for Morocco’s National Strategy on Migration and Asylum, “helps step up the fight against migrant smuggling and trafficking of human beings, while improving the Moroccan authorities’ capacity to

manage their borders,” notes the Commission, adding that the EU is intensifying its support to the kingdom to address irregular migration “in response to increased migratory pressure along the western Mediterranean Route.”

http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-18-6705_en.htm

Energy resources

20 – Beersheba: The 5th Trilateral Summit: Israel, Greece and Cyprus. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Cypriot President Nicos Anastasiades, and Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, hold on Thursday 20 December the 5th trilateral meeting in Beersheba, southern Israel. Few inter-governmental agreements are signed, such as the laying of the East

Med gas pipeline which is expected to facilitate the export of gas from Israel through Cyprus and Greece to [the rest of] Europe, cyber-security, disaster relief and environmental protection. On the bilateral level, Israel signs an agreement with Greece on cooperation in satellites and their applications, and with Cyprus on technical cooperation in meteorology and exchanges of information and they make a joint declaration on the mutual desire to enter into negotiations on a framework agreement between the governments. In recent years, Israel, Greece and Cyprus have increased geo-strategic cooperation in many fields.

<https://www.euromesco.net/news/the-5th-trilateral-summit-israel-greece-and-cyprus/>