



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Council conclusions on Egypt

*FOREIGN AFFAIRS Council meeting
Brussels, 22 July 2013*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. The EU greatly values its relationship with Egypt and continues to stand with the Egyptian people in their struggle for dignity, democracy, social justice and a decent life.
2. The EU recalls its Declaration of 14 July 2013 and reiterates its deep concern of the situation in Egypt. Many Egyptians protesting have voiced legitimate concerns and expressed deep frustration at the fact that their concerns had not been heeded. At the same time, the armed forces should not play a political role in a democracy; they must accept and respect the constitutional authority of civilian power as a basic principle of democratic governance. It is now of utmost importance that Egypt embarks on a transition, allowing a transfer of power to a civilian-led and democratically elected government.
3. The EU welcomes the High Representative's recent and timely visit to Cairo and her meetings with the interim government, representatives of the previous government, representatives of the popular movement and civil society. The EU stresses that the struggle for democracy should remain central and calls on all political forces to engage now in a process of reconciliation and trust building for the good of the country and its democratic future. Inclusivity remains central to this process.
4. The EU calls on all parties to refrain from violence and reiterates condolences to the families of all those who lost their lives in recent incidents. Security and public order should be maintained with restraint and full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.
5. Egypt has to move rapidly to an inclusive democratic transformation process, including by the holding of democratic elections in the shortest possible time. In this respect the EU welcomes Egypt's intention to invite the international community to observe forthcoming elections and stands ready to provide the necessary support according to international standards.

P R E S S

6. Key priorities must be the inclusive and democratic drafting process of the constitution; free and fair elections; end to politically motivated arrests; the release of all political detainees, including Mohamed Morsi; full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all Egyptians, including the rights of women and persons belonging to religious communities; assurance of accountability for past violations and guarantees for peaceful political engagement. All political parties, including the Freedom and Justice Party, must be allowed to work freely and enjoy full freedom of expression. All media must be free to function and journalists must be allowed the necessary freedom to fulfil their role in a professional manner. The EU also recalls the important role of an active and independent civil society as a key component of any democratic society. The EU urges the interim authorities to make every effort to address these issues.
7. Stability can only be achieved through an inclusive process which produces a democratically elected government responding to the legitimate aspirations of all the Egyptian people. This will be the basis for returning to economic growth and regaining prosperity. The EU fully recognises the serious social and economic challenges that Egypt is facing and invites the Egyptian interim authorities to take urgent and concrete measures in this respect, including reengaging with the IMF. The political process has to move forward in an inclusive and democratic manner. In line with the principles and objectives of the European Neighbourhood Policy, the EU will continue to provide support to Egypt to face these challenges as expressed in the Task Force of November 2012.
8. The EU stands ready to assist the Egyptian people in their desire for a democratic and prosperous future."

