

**Launch event of the EU support programme
to Social Protection**

Your Excellency, Mrs Hala Lattouf,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me start by expressing the EU's full support to Jordan and full appreciation for Jordan's role in hosting so many refugees fleeing violence in the region.

The EU has provided over EUR 1.8 billion to Jordan since 2011. We are fully delivering on the pledges announced in the London and Brussels conferences and on the commitments taken in the EU-JO Compact in 2016.

We are committed to maintaining our support, as shown by the second conference on supporting the future of Syria and the region that we hosted in Brussels in April, and by our readiness to host a third conference in 2019.

Still this year, the Commission will provide substantial **new grants to Jordan** amounting to the order of EUR 200m [not public: ENI: EUR 89m; Trust Fund Syria: EUR 90-100m; ECHO: EUR 36m].

It is in this context of profound cooperation and partnership with Jordan that I am pleased to participate in this launch ceremony for the EU-funded support programme to Social Protection.

Social protection ensures that individuals and their families can meet their basic needs. It may include benefits and services for children and families, health protection, maternity, disability, employment injuries and old age, building resilience to shocks. It helps those in need get back on their feet and contribute meaningfully to a country's development ambitions.

It is not a new concept, but it is becoming more and more recognised as a driver of sustainable development.

In Jordan, we have together identified social protection as one of the shared priorities of our partnership.

In turning this priority into actions on the ground, our work is fully aligned with Jordan's national policies, strategies and priorities.

This is best illustrated in the **€20 million programme funded by the EU and recently signed by Vice-President of the European Commission Federica Mogherini**, which is focused on improving the quality of service delivery to citizens and empowering women, disabled persons and disadvantaged and vulnerable people by:

1. rehabilitating and refurbishing at least 86 care centres including IT facilities;

2. supporting the modernisation of the social protection governance system and upgrading the quality of social work service delivery ;

3. strengthening the capacity of 250 Civil Society Organisations/Charities as actors in the development, service-delivery, monitoring and evaluation of social protection.

I would like to warmly congratulate all the Ministry of Social Development and Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation staff and experts who have participated in the preparation of this programme and also to commend the organizers of today's event. Let me also reiterate my appreciation for our cooperation with the Government of Jordan and the leadership of the

Minister of Social Development in particular in developing the Social Protection system. The effective involvement of all Social Protection stakeholders and civil society organisations is particularly important.

Thank you for your attention.