

**Informal consultations
EU and Southern neighbourhood partners**

Amman, 21 May 2023

Towards a **renewed
partnership**
with the **Southern
Neighbourhood**



Swedish Dialogue Institute
for the Middle East and North Africa

**sweden
2023.eu**

SUMMARY

The Swedish Dialogue Institute for the Middle East and North Africa, in collaboration with the Swedish and Spanish Foreign Ministries, EEAS, and the European Commission, invited senior officials from the Southern Neighbourhood countries (SN) for an informal consultation on the future of the Agenda for the Mediterranean.

The discussion was initiated by reflections by analysts from academia and think tanks. They stressed the ongoing geopolitical shifts in the region, the common responsibility to hand over a brighter perspective of the region to next generations and therefore the need to adapt to the new reality.

The renewed EU-Southern neighbourhood partnership was adopted during the Covid-19 pandemic in April 2021. Both EU member states and the southern partners were hard hit by the pandemic and access to vaccines, swift economic recovery, tourism, and job creation had initially been top priorities. Since then, major global geopolitical changes had taken place, changes that need to be taken into consideration for future work.

All participants underlined that Europe and Southern Partners are facing common challenges and that there is a unique opportunity create an ever-closer reinforcing partnership and to move towards a deepened partnership to build back better and promote a green, digitized and socially inclusive transition, in line with Agenda 2030. They also pointed to the complementarities that exist between the two regions, for example in the energy and food sectors. Other areas for increased cooperation included higher education and mobility.

In addition to deepened sectorial cooperation, participants expressed an interest in strengthening the political dimension of the Agenda for the Mediterranean and pointed to a need for more dialogue to better understand each other's interests, needs and positions.