

EN

E-000687/2025

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas
on behalf of the European Commission
(8.5.2025)

Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms constitutes a key element of EU-Tunisia relations, as enshrined in the Association Agreement¹. Since 2021, the EU has regularly raised matters of concern with the Tunisian authorities, mainly in direct conversations with them, but also publicly through statements and declarations of the High Representative/Vice-President on behalf of the 27 Member States and EU statements in multilateral human rights fora.

The EU maintains a keen interest in the continued strengthening of its strategic partnership with Tunisia and it is in the shared interest of both parties to continue effective and comprehensive cooperation in various sectors within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in July 2023. The Commission has taken note of the European Ombudsman's decision (EO)² to close its own-initiative inquiry on how the Commission intends to guarantee the respect for human rights in the context of the EU-Tunisia MoU and welcomes that the EO has recognised that the 'various monitoring measures described by the Commission, should produce periodic assessment of the human rights impact of actions under the MoU' with Tunisia. On 18 February 2025³, the Commission replied to the European Ombudsman suggestions for improvements.

The EU will continue to stand by the Tunisian people and their legitimate aspirations in terms of human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy and sustainable development. The EU is committed to do so in the framework of the Association Agreement, which governs its relations with Tunisia.

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A21998A0330%2801%29>

² <https://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/en/decision/en/193851>

³ C(2025) 982 final.