

TUNISIA

**STATEMENT BY MR MOHAMED FADHEL ABDELKEFI,
GOVERNOR FOR TUNISIA**

It is an honour for the Tunisian delegation to be here with you today to participate in the work of the 26th Annual Meeting of the Governors of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), and to represent Tunisia at this essential meeting for the Bank's shareholders that is being held in Nicosia this year.

Let me also take this opportunity to congratulate the Cypriot authorities for organising this event so well.

In addition, I would like to commend the EBRD for its unceasing support to the processes not only of development, but also of democratic transition, which is currently taking place in several countries around the world, particularly those in the SEMED region.

Tunisia certainly appreciates the true value of the interest that the EBRD is showing in stepping up its activities in Tunisia, particularly through having opened an office in Sfax in 2016.

Furthermore, this interest has been clearly reflected in the substantial increase in the volume of the Bank's financial commitments to Tunisia, including in the public sector, and in the energy sector more specifically. The Bank officially reaffirmed this commitment during the Tunisia 2020 conference held in Tunis in November 2016, at which we had the pleasure of having the Vice President of the EBRD with us.

Today, Tunisia would like to move towards implementing this commitment by finalising current financing operations as soon as possible. Where necessary, this will allow the EBRD to better position itself among Tunisia's financial partners and enable the Bank's financing to be better deployed between the public and private sectors.

Tunisia notes that the Bank is interested in adjusting its investments among recipient countries, as announced in its Strategy Implementation Plan 2017-2019. During the forthcoming period, however, Tunisia hopes to consolidate this positive surge in cooperation, which ought to feature more clearly in the EBRD's vision of supporting political transition processes and efforts towards related economic development. The first country strategy document, which is currently being drafted by EBRD experts, should focus explicitly on this approach.

In 2017, and within a relatively challenging national and international context, Tunisia has been able to pass its new Investment Act and adopt its new Economic and Social Development Plan.

Tunisia now offers a clearer picture of its investment climate and more incentives to foreign investors who will be backing Tunisia as a location.

The Economic and Social Development Plan will enable Tunisia's partners, as well as the Tunisian authorities, to concentrate on development projects and priority areas of activity up to 2020.

In this regard, Tunisia is expecting the EBRD to have a better understanding of the urgent nature of that country's needs in terms of financing and technical assistance. Indeed, it needs to speed up the implementation of the objectives in its development plan and so ensure the success of its economic recovery in the wake of successful democratic change.