



**Extraordinary meeting of the Political Bureau of the
CPMR Intermediterranean Commission**
25 January 2008 - Barcelona (Es)

Final Declaration

The Mediterranean Regions of the CPMR adopt the key priorities and methods of a proposed joint strategy for the Mediterranean as a central space between Europe, Africa, and Asia. Following on from the decisions voted unanimously at their General Assembly in Granada on 4 July 2007, they intend to take a more active part in relaunching and renewing the Barcelona Process, notably in order to adapt its policies to the challenges of the 21st century. Reflecting their determination to be a source of proposals, they declare their support for the document entitled:

“A renewed Euro-Mediterranean Partnership for peace, employment and sustainable development”
A new impetus for the Barcelona Process based on convergence

Welcoming the consensus expressed by the Euro-Mediterranean Foreign Affairs Ministers at their 9th meeting in Lisbon on 5 and 6 November 2007, and

Considering the political initiative taken by the Heads of State or Government of France, Italy and Spain on 20 December 2007 in Rome to give greater attention to the problems of the Mediterranean basin,

The Mediterranean Regions wish to:

- contribute to the meeting of Heads of State or Government of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership to be held in Paris on 13 and 14 July 2008;
- participate in the reflections launched by the President of the European Commission on the future of the European project and its financial perspectives after 2013;
- give a new impetus to the Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Foreign Affairs Ministers, under the French Presidency of the Union.

The Mediterranean Regions call in particular on the EU Member States to consider:

- that in the context of globalisation, the future of the Mediterranean cannot be dissociated from the future of the European project;
- that it is in the strategic interest of Europe to cooperate closely with the countries of the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean in order to tackle their problems of social and economic development, employment, and environment, and to work together to ensure that this area is no longer the greatest economic and social divide in the world;
- the need to match the means and the strategies that the European Union devotes to these countries with, on the one hand, the extent of the challenges that they will have to tackle and, on the other hand, the nature of the conditionalities that are today imposed on them.

The Mediterranean Regions propose that the European Union, gradually and by means of negotiation, puts in place a real policy of neighbourhood convergence benefiting all the States of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. In the light of the urgent nature of the problems to be dealt with (cf. attached document), they invite the European Commission and the Member States:

- to use the financial and political tools provided by the neighbourhood policy, which are available immediately, to put this idea into practice during the period 2008-2013, in particular by jointly developing with the States of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership:
 - o a report on cohesion concerning the countries and territories of the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean;
 - o a capacity building programme along the lines of those carried out in the framework of pre-EU accession programmes;
 - o a certain number of pilot projects for the South, using the *acquis* of European regional policy and rural development policy, in line with the 5-year action plan adopted in 2005 in Barcelona, taking account of the legislation of each of the Southern countries and their respective *acquis*;
 - o support for the setting up in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean of a network of specialist agencies whose tasks would include in particular the preparation of strategic development plans and the monitoring of actions and actors present on the ground to ensure complementarity between them. This group could work in two directions: encouraging administrative and legal reforms in the countries in the South, and proposing to the different partners the kind of “structural” projects needed for the South and the East and to which the partners from the North could contribute.
- To implement after 2013 a real structural policy, comparable in its intensity and methods to the one introduced in the context of the successive enlargements of the European Union.
- To conceive, on the basis of a development of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, an original institution framework and model for convergence adapted to the context of globalisation.

This structural policy, based on reciprocal conditionalities, could be based on four pillars:

- a structural pillar (MED-REGIO) which would mobilise the greater part of the funds for regional development strategies;
- an agricultural pillar (MED-AGRI) leading gradually to the putting in place of a real Euro-Mediterranean common agricultural policy;
- a Mediterranean cohesion fund (MED-FUNDS) in charge of mobilising multilateral funding to implement major transport, environmental and water resource projects necessary for the region, as well as a programme devoted to the question of emigration;
- a fund for culture (MED-CULT) in particular to foster intercultural dialogue and a vast programme of cultural investment, in both education and heritage.

The Mediterranean Regions wish to make clear again to all the Member States of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership their availability to contribute to the development of sub-national cooperation across the Mediterranean basin, working in cooperation with:

- o the European Commission and the European Investment Bank, in the framework of the ENPI-CBC cooperation programmes, and with the United Nations agencies especially in the context of the UNDP’s ART GOLD programme;
- o all the States and their devolved or decentralised administrations and aid development agencies;
- o all the cities, provinces and other local and regional authorities so as to coordinate as closely as possible the efforts of each in the framework of their respective powers.

They call to this end on all the regional and local authorities and other stakeholders concerned to meet together on 22 and 23 June 2008 in Marseilles, to prepare their contribution to the new perspectives for cooperation in the Mediterranean area.

In this context, the **Mediterranean Regions intend** to play a significant role in consolidating the Middle East peace process. The period opened in Annapolis calls for a courageous and long-term initiative, not only on the part of the States, but also on the part of the local and regional bodies in the Mediterranean. The challenge of peace and dialogue, of an alliance of peace and dialogue, implies a concrete, courageous and forward-looking commitment on the part of all concerned.

The subsequent Paris donors conference opens many avenues for cooperation activities by local and regional bodies. Programmes for institutional capacity building and aid for the Palestinian health system come under the remit of our alliance, in working to reconcile the two societies: Israeli and Palestinian.

The Mediterranean Regions are aware of the need to update the declaration adopted in Barcelona in 2005 on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Process, so as to respond to the urgent needs in the Mediterranean, to the challenges for development and peace in the region, but also to respond to the future of Europe in a more equitable globalisation.

To this end, **they announce** their intention to convene the Second Regional Euromed Barcelona +15 Conference in 2010 in Barcelona, in the framework of the 15th Anniversary of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.