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Euromed Civil Forum

Opening day of Euromed Civil Forum focuses on equality as a "transversal" concept

14-05-2010



Port of Valletta, Malta. EFE

Equality, understood as a "transversal" concept and a key issue for civil society, was the central theme of the first day of the Mediterranean Civil Forum, which opened on Friday in Alicante.

The Chairman of the Euromed Non-Governmental Platform, Morocco's Abdelmaksoud Rachdi, said in his speech that "equality is a strategic issue that must come about between citizens, and it must involve the fair distribution of wealth, respect for human rights and north-south dialogue in the Euro-Mediterranean region".

The General Director of Casa Mediterráneo, Yolanda Parrado, highlighted that equality is the lynchpin for this forum, since "without it, the Mediterranean as a region will not move forward".

Meanwhile, Spain's Foreign Ministry advisor on Mediterranean Unity Affairs, Agustín Rebollo, said that the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) is one of the priorities of the current Spanish Presidency of the EU.

Rebollo stressed this by pointing out that Spain is working with the French and Egyptian Co-Presidency of the UfM to establish cooperation as one of the main issues to be discussed at the Barcelona summit, along with the economic crisis and governance standards.

All the speakers during the Forum's first session expressed their concerns about the delicate economic situation in Europe, and the repercussions that this could have on cooperation relations with its southern neighbours.

The conclusions of the Forum, which will come to an end on Sunday, will be presented at the summit of Euro-Mediterranean heads of state and government, which will be held on 7 June in Barcelona.

The Forum represents 250 independent organisations and civil-society representatives from various countries within the Mediterranean Basin.

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