



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Lisbon, 6 November 2007
14743/07 (Presse 255)

**Agreed Conclusions of the 9th Euro-Mediterranean Meeting of
Ministers of Foreign Affairs**

Lisbon, 5-6 November 2007

Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership met on 5 and 6 November 2007 in Lisbon, under the Presidency of H.E. Luis Amado, Foreign Minister of Portugal. This meeting offered an appropriate opportunity to assess the progress made during 2007 in implementing the Tampere programme which is derived from the 5-year Work Programme adopted in Barcelona in 2005, and to agree on the priorities for next year.

Ministers reaffirm their commitment to pursue their efforts to realise the Barcelona Declaration objectives: to establish a common area of peace and stability, to create an area of shared prosperity and to develop a partnership in social, cultural and human affairs.

P R E S S

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Ministers are pleased to note that 12 years after its creation, the Barcelona Process has led to an enhanced dialogue and cooperation in a wide range of fields of common interest for the Euro-Mediterranean partners. Notwithstanding the positive results achieved to date, Ministers acknowledge that new developments should be taken into consideration to consolidate the Barcelona Process in the future. Ministers emphasise the important role that the Barcelona Process can play in addressing common challenges facing the Euro-Mediterranean region, such as: economic and social development, climate change and energy, civil protection, migration, and countering terrorism and extremism.

Ministers also emphasise that while the Barcelona Process could be enriched by other initiatives aiming at strengthening the political, economic and cultural ties between the Euro-Med countries, they underline the strong attachment of all partners to the Barcelona Process and reiterate its centrality for the EU relations with Mediterranean countries.

Ministers reaffirm their commitment to maintain the comprehensive approach implemented since the inception of the Barcelona Process to achieve the objectives of the Euro-Med partnership. They welcome the fact that despite the prevailing tension in the Middle East, the Euro-Med partners have succeeded to maintain a constructive dialogue covering key issues such as efforts contributing to achieve further progress in the MEPP, partnership building measures and joint Euromed sectorial projects aiming at promoting a peaceful, stable and secure Euro-Med region, sustainable development, promoting and supporting reform based on a common commitment to shared principles, strengthening rule of law, democracy, political pluralism, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression and association, the role of civil society as well as strengthening the role of women in society. This systematic and structured dialogue and cooperation has enabled the partners to develop a better understanding of each other based on a common commitment to shared principles, promoting respect for all religions, cultures and beliefs.

Ministers welcome the progress on the ongoing work regarding the improvement of working methods aiming at enhancing co-ownership, increasing efficiency and ensuring visibility of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

Ministers reiterate their support to ongoing negotiations to establish a Euro-Mediterranean free trade area in accordance with the provisions of the Barcelona Declaration and the Associations Agreements. Substantial progress has been achieved to date with the scope of the negotiations gradually extended to services and right of establishment and agricultural and fisheries products. Ministers note with satisfaction the rising trend of foreign direct investments in the Euro-Mediterranean region and stress the significant role played by the Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP). They are also pleased to note that Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in the fields of environment, transport, energy and information society has increased and that common objectives have been defined.

Progress has also been registered in the social and cultural partnership, with joint initiatives launched to promote the role of women, young people and civil society. Ministers underline the important role of the Anna Lindh Foundation, established by the Euro-Mediterranean partners to promote dialogue between cultures and to convey universal principles and shared values and ensure better knowledge, mutual understanding and respect among Euro-Mediterranean peoples.

Ministers are pleased to communicate that most of the commitments made at their last meeting in Tampere have led to concrete initiatives in 2007, which are described below. They herewith present the main objectives and events planned for 2008.

Ministers stress the importance of the European Neighbourhood Policy, which contributes to reinforcing and complementing the Barcelona Process through implementing bilateral Association Agreements and the Action Plans in accordance with agreed priorities. They welcome the participation of Euro-Med partner countries in the International conference on 3rd September 2007 in Brussels “Working together – strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy”. Ministers emphasise the importance of consultations regarding all new initiatives with the aim of enhancing cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean region. In this context, Ministers take note of a presentation on the Mediterranean Union as an initiative to complement the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

They remind that the political objectives of the Barcelona process are sustained by a substantial budget of more than € 3.3 billion for 2007-2010, which has been earmarked for Mediterranean regional and bilateral cooperation in the framework of the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). They also take note of the establishment of a ENP Governance Facility to support willing Mediterranean partners in carrying out their reforms and welcome the progress towards establishing a substantial ENP Investment Facility.

Ministers acknowledge the EU-Africa Joint Strategy and Plan of Action and look forward to the EU/Africa Summit in Lisbon in December 2007.

Ministers welcome Albania and Mauritania into the Barcelona Process.

I - Political and Security Partnership

Political and security dialogue

The Barcelona Declaration launched a partnership which is unique in its scope. The Barcelona Process is the only forum within which all Euro-Med partners exchange views and engage in a constructive dialogue in spite of the persisting conflict in the Middle East and in the other parts of the region. Political dialogue has become a regular item on the agenda of the Euro-Med Senior Officials meetings.

Since the Euro-Mediterranean Tampere Ministerial Conference which concluded that the Barcelona Process is not intended to replace the other activities and initiatives undertaken in interests of peace, stability and development of the region and that it will also contribute to their success, the political and security dialogue has focused on a regular review of the political situation in the Middle East.

- a. In this context, Ministers reaffirm their commitment to achieve a just, comprehensive and lasting solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, consistent with the terms of reference of the Madrid Conference and its principles, including land for peace and based on the relevant UNSC resolutions and the Road Map. Partners also call for the reinvigoration of efforts to promote progress in the Middle East Peace Process on all its tracks.

Ministers welcome the positive role played by the EU in the Middle East, notably in the framework of the Quartet. They encourage the resumption of substantial bilateral talks between Israel and the Palestinian Authority which should pave the way to the fulfillment of the vision of two national states, a safe and secure Israel and a viable, sovereign and democratic Palestinian State, living side by side in peace and security. Final state issues, including border issues, have to be agreed by the parties.

- b. The implementation of the Code of Conduct on countering terrorism.

Ministers reiterate their condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and their determination to eradicate it and to combat its sponsors and they reaffirm their commitment to fully implement the Code of Conduct on Countering Terrorism in order to enhance the security of all citizens within a framework that ensures respect of the rule of law and human rights, particularly through more effective counterterrorism policies and deeper co-operation to dismantle all terrorist activities, to protect potential targets and to manage the consequences of attacks. They emphasise the need to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations without qualification, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes. In this context the Ministers welcome the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy adopted in September 2006. They also reiterate the complete rejection of attempts to associate any religion or culture with terrorism, and confirm their commitment to do their utmost effort with a view to resolving conflict, ending occupation, confronting oppression, reducing poverty, promoting human rights and good governance, improving intercultural understanding and ensuring respect for all religions and beliefs. Such actions serve directly the interests of the people of the Euro-Med region and work against the interests of the terrorists and the networks.

Ministers underline the importance of the Euro-Med ad hoc meetings on terrorism which should be more oriented to the practical implementation of the code of conduct. They agreed to concentrate efforts for 2008 on technical issues such as reinforcing the international co-operation in criminal matters. They note that the Euro-Med ad hoc meeting on terrorism will take place in Brussels on 13th November. They also take note of the Euro-Med seminar which will take place in Morocco during the first semester of 2008 co-organised by Morocco and the United Nations office on Drugs and Crime. They also consider that all Partners should seek to meet commitments reflected in the Code of Conduct, on sharing experiences in managing the consequences of terrorist attacks and enhancing capacity building in this respect as well as addressing radicalisation and other issues.

Furthermore, Ministers took note of the conclusions and recommendations of the conference on 'Preventing incitement to terrorism and radicalisation: what role for the media?' (Dublin, 21 May 2007) co-organised by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and the European Commission for follow up at appropriate level.

- c. The deepening of the dialogue on ESDP and security issues. The Euro-Med ad hoc meeting on ESDP (Brussels, 13 June 2007) provided a good opportunity to review previous and upcoming ESDP dialogue and activities (civilian and military) between the EU and Mediterranean Partners. such as a Euro-Med seminar co-organised by European Institute on Security Studies and Morocco which will take place in Rabat in the first semester of 2008, such as Orientation courses under the auspices of the European Security and Defense College or EU crisis management exercises. An orientation course on ESDP for Euro-Med partners will take place from the 5th to the 9th November. An Euro-Med Senior Officials ad hoc meeting on ESDP is also foreseen in November 2007.
- d. The launching of a regional dialogue on joint cooperation, best practices and exchange of technical experience in the area of elections. An initial dialogue on cooperation and best practices in the area of elections was launched at Senior Officials' level, where it has been agreed that such a dialogue could take place. Ministers expressed their wish that the useful discussions on the subject of elections at the Euro-Med senior officials meetings in 2007 can be continued at experts' level. Ministers agreed that joint cooperation and exchange of experience could be developed on a voluntary basis upon the request of any of the partners.

Ministers are convinced that the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA) is a major asset that should improve dialogue and understanding between all peoples of the Euro-Med region. They take note of the results of the EMPA Plenary meeting held in March 2007 in Tunis. Ministers lend their full support to Greece, as the current Presidency of the EMPA, for a successful Plenary Assembly in 2008.

Enhancing the partnership building measures

- a. EuroMeSCo initiatives related to civil society, human rights and democracy. Two EuroMeSCo sub-regional seminars (Meknès, 21-23 September 2006/Alexandria 26-28 April 2007) on civil society, human rights and democracy and the EuroMesCo-seminar on “Governance, Reform, Human Rights in the Euro-Med region” held in Berlin, on 31 May 2007, provided local and regional civil society actors with a meaningful platform to address the various challenges linked to political reform and democracy.
- b. Towards a Euro-Mediterranean system of civil protection

The rising trend in vulnerability to natural and manmade disasters in many parts of the Mediterranean confirms the need for greater safety and security measures to be in place to the benefit of its citizens. The Commission has over the past years funded the Euro-Med Pilot Project (1998-2003) and the Euro-Med Bridge Programme for the Development of a Euro-Med system for the reduction, prevention and management of natural and man-made disasters (2005-2008) to strengthen and build up capacity of civil protection agencies in Mediterranean partner countries. Ministers welcome the continued support to this highly pertinent initiative with a new phase (2008-2010, Euro-Med Programme of Prevention, Reduction and management of natural and manmade Disasters) that should benefit from improved strategic approach and the recommendations put forward in the Mid-Term evaluation of the Bridge Programme. In this context, Ministers acknowledged the importance of strengthening the Mediterranean Partners national structures in charge of prevention, protection, preparedness, and response to all natural, and man-made risks, as well as of setting a network of permanent national correspondent.

- c. Ministers welcomed the Commission proposal to offer a partnership between the Commission and Mediterranean partner country administrations in the exchange of professional experience. The offer from the Commission includes the secondment and exchange of officials and trainees.

II- Sustainable Socio-Economic Development and Reform

Towards establishing a Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area

- (1) Ministers note that significant progress has been achieved in 2007, as highlighted at the 6th Euro-Mediterranean Trade Ministerial Conference on 21 October in Lisbon, especially in the negotiations on services and the right of establishment, for which most negotiating partners have shown interest and commitment. Ministers note with satisfaction that the Commission will launch negotiations with a number of Mediterranean partners at the beginning of 2008, with a view to concluding bilateral protocols expected to be concluded within a timeframe that should deliver progressive liberalisation of services and establishment by 2010. A Euro-Mediterranean Trade ministerial Conference will be held in France in the second semester 2008.
- (2) Ministers welcome the decision to set up a Euro-Med Senior Officials working Group to reflect on the completion of the Euro-Med free trade area.

- (3) Ministers also note with satisfaction that negotiations launched in Marrakech to establish a dispute settlement mechanism in the area of trade have achieved good progress with a number of negotiating partners.
- (4) Ministers welcome progress achieved in the negotiations on further liberalisation of agricultural, processed agricultural and fisheries products, in accordance with the Rabat Euro-Mediterranean Road Map for Agriculture which are ongoing with Egypt, Israel and Morocco. Discussions are also being held with some Mediterranean countries on recognition and protection of geographical indications for agricultural products.
- (5) Ministers acknowledge that the entry into force of the Agadir Agreement establishing a Mediterranean Free Trade Area between Morocco, Jordan, Tunisia and Egypt in July 2006 was an important step forward in the creation of a Euro-Mediterranean free trade area. The implementation of this agreement, providing for diagonal cumulation of origin, will allow economic operators to reap the full benefits of this cumulation system, thus pursuing the south-south economic integration.
- (6) Ministers welcome the proposal by Morocco to host the first Euro-Med technical meeting on customs cooperation and the fight against fraud in 2008 in Tangiers. Such meeting will enhance cooperation between customs at regional scale and will thus contribute to prevent illegal trade.

Stimulating economic cooperation and investments

- (7) Ministers renewed their commitment to support investment, job creation, economic and social reforms in the Mediterranean region. They note with satisfaction that the Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP) has invested some € 6 billion in support of the economic development of the nine Mediterranean partner countries in four years. They welcomed the commitment to enhance the FEMIP expressed in the ECOFIN Council in November 2006, and also the strategy agreed upon by Ministers at their Conference in Cyprus on 13-14 May 2007, based on a wider range of financial instruments to foster private sector development. A Euro-Mediterranean FEMIP ministerial conference will be held in 2008. The 12th Euro-Mediterranean Economic Transition conference planned in 2008 will also focus on financial and banking services.

- (8) Ministers welcome the results of the 3rd Euro-Med ECOFIN Ministerial meeting held on 15 September in Porto, in particular the decision to create a Euro-Med network of public finance experts to discuss the main challenges in fiscal policy and to exchange knowledge, experience and good practices in the field of public finance. The 4th Euro-Mediterranean ECOFIN ministerial Conference will take place in Luxembourg in 2008.
- (9) Ministers underline the importance of investment in achieving Socio-Economic development in the partner countries. In this regard, they take note with satisfaction of the first meeting of the Ad-Hoc Group on Investment in Brussels on 23 April 2007. They also stress the importance of defining a precise mandate for the Ad hoc Group, its responsibilities, and the interactions between the various Euro-Mediterranean fora for discussion and decisions on investment. They also stress the importance of holding other meetings in 2008 to ensure appropriate follow up of this initiative. The ANIMA network pointed out that foreign direct investment in the Mediterranean region increased from \$30 billion in 2005 to \$48,7 billion in 2006.
- (10) Ministers reiterate the importance of creating an environment conducive to investment and private sector development. Considerable progress has been made in the implementation of the Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Enterprise, since the meeting of Euro-Mediterranean Ministers for Industry in Rhodes in September 2006. The next Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on Industrial Cooperation scheduled for November 2008. The meeting will take stock of progress achieved so far and define a work programme on industrial cooperation for 2009-2010.
- (11) Ministers emphasise the great importance they attach to innovation. In this regard, Mediterranean partner countries were invited to a seminar in Brussels on 19-20 July to receive detailed information on the EU Competitiveness and Innovation programme (CIP), which is open to their participation. To accelerate regulatory convergence and improve market access, further technical assistance has been provided through regional technical seminars and bilateral missions of experts and EU Twinning projects within the ENP.
- (12) In the textile and clothing sector, a conference on managing structural changes in the sector was organised in Istanbul, on 12 June 2007. A conference on research and innovation in the textile and clothing sector was held in Cairo, on 6-7 September 2007. Industrial cooperation activities are monitored by a public-private Euro-Med Working Party on industrial cooperation that met in Brussels in February 2007 and in October 2007. Concerns were expressed vis-à-vis the challenges facing the Euro-Med textile industry due to the current developments on the international market.

- (13) Ministers stressed that tourism is one of the major economic sectors in the Mediterranean. In 2005, more than 50 million tourist arrivals were registered in Mediterranean partner countries, and, in most countries, the majority of the arrivals were from EU Member States. Ministers agreed to hold a ministerial meeting in Morocco in the first semester 2008 in response to the initiative from Morocco, Portugal and Slovenia.

Enhancing cooperation in the fields of Energy and Transports

- (14) Ministers reiterate the need to further reinforce cooperation in the field of energy and welcome the agreements and arrangements signed with some southern partners. To this end Ministers welcome the setting up of the Euro-Med Energy Forum experts' group in 2007 with a threefold objective: to enhance integration of the Euro-Med energy markets, particularly in the fields of gas and electricity, to support infrastructure projects of common interest and to promote sustainable development through e.g. renewable energy projects and measures to improve energy efficiency and saving, in particular, through the transfer of technology.
- (15) A Euro-Med Energy Ministerial meeting, to be hosted by Cyprus, will take place in late 2007 to adopt the "Priority Action Programme for Euro-Mediterranean Energy Cooperation" for the forthcoming period, including the operational take off of the Rome Euro-Mediterranean Energy Platform (REMEDI).
- (16) Ministers welcome the results of the 8th Euro-Mediterranean Transport Forum held in May 2007 which adopted a five-year Regional Transport Action Plan (RTAP) for the Mediterranean (2007-2013). Ministers also stress the importance of the conclusions of the December 2005 Marrakech Ministerial conference for the establishment of an integrated, safe and efficient transport system in the Mediterranean area as a key factor for the development of the region and for the increase in interregional trade. In this regard, the Ministers support the proposal to hold a high level meeting (end of 2007 or beginning 2008) on transport which will focus on two main points: presentation of the Regional Transport Action Plan and steps towards implementation of its actions and the extension of the trans-European transport network to Mediterranean region.

Ongoing work on statistics cooperation

- (17) Reliable statistics are an important factor in decision making. Technical assistance to the statistical services in the Mediterranean partner countries is being provided through the MEDSTAT II programme. Ministers agree that it will be necessary to explore available mechanisms to allow continued support for the development of the statistical capacity of the countries beyond that date, particularly in areas not treated so far, for example, services and health.

Environment, Climate Change and sustainable development

- (18) The 11th Euro-Mediterranean Economic Transition conference on 18 and 19 June 2007 constituted a major event to raise awareness among economic experts and policy decision makers on the challenges of climate change and their economic implications. Ministers acknowledge the importance of launching further initiatives to respond to the growing concerns on the impact of climate change in the Mediterranean region and mandated Euro-Med partners to work on raising awareness, support studies on regional impacts, facilitate technical co-operation and exchange of expertise, tackle the interrelated issues of climate change and energy.

In this respect, fostering cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean region is recommended to help the Mediterranean partner countries' low-lying coastal areas – proved to be endangered by climate change.

- (19) Ministers welcome that the Horizon 2020 initiative relating to the de-pollution of the Mediterranean will continue to implement the measures agreed under the timetable of actions approved at the third Euro-Mediterranean meeting of Environment Ministers held in Cairo and put forward by the first meeting of the Steering Committee in June 2007. The European Environment Agency will cooperate with its counterparts to design a coherent indicator process and a framework for regular indicator-based analyses, including a “scorecard” to compare and measure progress. The European Investment Bank has begun to identify the pollution reduction projects arising from the regional work of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) which appear to have the best possibility of being bankable. This is the first step to develop a project pipeline under Horizon 2020.
- (20) Ministers welcome the upcoming 4th Conference of Water Directors of the Euro-Mediterranean and South Eastern European Countries on 10-11 December 2007, which that will build on the conclusions of the third Conference, 6-7 November 2006, in Athens. Furthermore, Ministers take note of the possible organization of a special ad hoc Euro-Mediterranean ministerial Conference on water to take place in the second semester of 2008. The terms of reference for the Conference shall be agreed upon by all partners in due time.

Information Society

- (21) Ministers welcome the setting up of a Forum of Senior Officials to discuss the future development of the Euro-Mediterranean Information Society, following the first Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on the Information Society organised in Ireland in 2005. A second meeting of the Euro-Med Forum took place on 25 October 2007 in Brussels in order to elaborate on the priorities for the Information Society policies and to prepare the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference that will be hosted by Egypt in February 2008.
- (22) In preparation for the 2nd EUROMED Ministerial Conference on the Information Society and in cooperation with the European Commission, it is aimed to activate the EUROMED Senior Officials' Forum on the Information Society. It was also agreed that a mapping exercise is required to match the existing programmes on one side and identified priorities for the Euro-Mediterranean region on the other. In this regard, the suggested cooperation was based on a peer to peer level of partnership and in principle of cost sharing. Acting on these recommendations, it is targeted to enhance cooperation in ICT in the region.

Developing a more systematic approach to cooperation in the field of employment

- (23) Ministers consider that employment creation and the modernisation of labour markets are among the most pressing challenges for the Euro-Mediterranean partner countries in a globalised world and changing economic environment. They welcomed progress on the implementation of the commitment to support market-based reform of technical and vocational education and learning, the involvement of commerce and industry, and rationalisation of qualifications. In this regard, upon the recommendation of Tampere Conference, a workshop will take place on 12 and 13 December 2007 and will pave the way for a Euro-Med Ministerial Conference on Employment to be held in the second semester of 2008 that will bring together government representatives, social partners, and international organisations. The Ministerial meeting, which will cover various aspects related to human development, should envisage concrete initiatives and proposals to promote employment creation, the modernisation of labour markets, and decent work.
- (24) The high-level conference on "Employment and Social Dialogue" organised by the German Euro-Mediterranean Presidency in Berlin on 16 March 2007 focused on employment and social-policy issues. It placed employment firmly on the Euro-Med agenda as part of a genuine social dimension and established the basis for the Ministerial Conference.

Towards enhanced cooperation on health issues

- (25) Ministers stress the importance of health issues in the Euro-Med context, and confirmed the necessity of holding a Euro-Med workshop on communicable diseases and health systems which will take place on 4 and 5 December 2007. A Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Health will take place in the second semester 2008 in Egypt to be prepared by senior officials expert meetings.

Human development

- (26) Ministers agreed to organise a Ministerial Conference in Morocco in 2009 with the objective of supporting national programmes on human development and initiating work towards a joint Euro-Mediterranean Strategy on Human Development. To this end ministers mandate experts/senior officials to hold a preparatory meeting.

III – Education and Socio Cultural Exchanges

Towards a Euro-Mediterranean Area of Higher Education and Scientific Research

- (27) The participants of the first Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Higher Education and Scientific Research held in Cairo on 18 June 2007 jointly adopted the ‘Cairo Declaration’ which clearly defines guidelines for future co-operation among all Euro-Mediterranean partners. The conference recognised the crucial role of education for political, social and economic development, as well as the key importance of research, innovation and human resources development to the modernisation of Euro-Med societies. Ministers welcome that the conference discussed the creation of a Euro-Med area of higher education and research and agreed on a number of actions, including the approximation of higher education systems, enhancing the participation of Mediterranean Partners in the Erasmus Mundus Programme and in the take-up of the Euro-Med scholarship scheme and the integration of the Mediterranean partner countries in the European research area. In the academic year 2007-2008 the programme will provide grants to 549 students from Mediterranean countries totaling nearly € 15 million. Ministers recognised the Slovenian initiative for the establishment of a Euro-Mediterranean University, for which Slovenia has offered to provide the seat, as an important step forward through a cooperation network of existing universities.
- (28) Ministers also underline the importance of Euro-Med cooperation in supporting the development and modernisation processes in higher education through the TEMPUS Programme, as well as fostering scientific research in Mediterranean Partner Countries in particular through the 7th Framework Programme.

- (29) Furthermore, Ministers welcomed the adoption of the ‘Alexandria Declaration’ by the IV Euro-Mediterranean University Forum (11-12 June 2007) which emphasises the needs for exchanges of researchers and members of the academic community between all of the institutions of higher education of the Euro-Mediterranean area.
- (30) Ministers stressed the importance attached to RTD, the Monitoring Committee for Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation will be complemented with the creation of an expert group to cover higher education which will meet periodically to review progress on most crucial issues. Ministers agree that the most relevant issues are the introduction and implementation of structural reforms in Mediterranean partner countries structured around the three main areas identified, namely, curricular changes including those foreseen by the Bologna process, governance and funding. The expert group will report to the Euro-Med Committee, not later than the second semester of 2008. The first reporting exercise should focus in particular on the contribution to the overall objective of approximation of the Euro-Med Higher Education systems with relevance to the Bologna process and the ECTS system.

Civil Society

- (31) Ministers consider that the Third Chapter of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation on social, cultural and human affairs has undergone a considerable development. The Civil Society Forum, which met in Morocco in November 2006 prior to the Ministerial meeting in Tampere, was a successful event at which Euro-Med civil society had the opportunity to exchange views and express its positions on the main aspects of the Barcelona Process. The Civil Society Platform will change its management structure in a general assembly to be held before the end of 2007.
- (32) Ministers recognise the importance of fostering the role of local and regional authorities in developing the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. Cooperation between local administrations constitutes an important factor for establishing contacts and building fruitful partnerships between Euro-Mediterranean local actors and civil society. To this end Ministers agreed to hold a Euro-Mediterranean Seminar in 2008 on developing citizens’ participation in public life.
- (33) Ministers take note of the contribution of the Euro-Med network of Economic and Social Councils and similar institutions in deepening the ties among the economic and social interest groups in the region and of the conclusions of the Euro-Med Summit of Economic and Social Councils and similar institutions held in Athens on 15-16 October 2007.

The Role of Women in Society

- (34) The Ministerial Conference on strengthening the role of women in society was held in Istanbul on 14-15 November 2006. For the first time, Euro-Mediterranean partners agreed on a comprehensive set of actions on strengthening the role of women in society at social, cultural, economic, civil and political levels. Euro-Med partners also undertook to put in place a follow-up mechanism to review the implementation of the agreed measures. Ministers welcome the fact that the first Euro-Med ad hoc meeting, that took place in Brussels on 22 October 2007, to review the implementation of the 2007 Istanbul Ministerial Meeting conclusions and to discuss further initiatives. Ministers also welcome the proposal made by Morocco to host, in 2009, the second Ministerial conference on strengthening the role of women in society.

Enhancing the Anna Lindh Foundation and promoting dialogue between cultures

- (35) A Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on culture and cultural dialogue to be held in the first semester in Greece in 2008 will be an important event that is intended to allow partners to set out political guidelines for the future activities of the Foundation. Ministers take note of the EU initiative to declare 2008 as the “Year of Intercultural Dialogue”, as well as of the Arab decision to designate Damascus as the 2008 Arab Culture Capital. In parallel with this, Ministers agreed to declare 2008 the Euro-Mediterranean year on dialogue between cultures.
- (36) The Anna Lindh Foundation for the dialogue between cultures since its official inauguration in April 2005 in Alexandria, has meanwhile fully established itself as the common Euro-Mediterranean institution dedicated to ensure a better knowledge, mutual understanding, freedom and respect for all religions, other beliefs and cultures among Euro-Mediterranean peoples, embracing their cultural diversity, through intellectual, cultural and civil society exchanges based on common principles which prevail among partners. Ministers welcome the approval of the new statutes as well as the appointment of a new leadership, consisting of a President and an Executive Director.
- (37) Ministers acknowledge the importance of building on our cultural heritage to improve dialogue between cultures, aiming at promoting understanding: in this context the Euro-Med Heritage Programme should play an important role.

- (38) Ministers encourage the Anna Lindh Foundation to look for further ways to involve a broad spectrum of society in its work. To this end they suggested seminars could be held in 2008 on combating all forms of discrimination, racism, xenophobia and religious intolerance as well on the role that citizens can play in promoting moderation and rejecting extremists' views.
- (39) Ministers welcome the Alliance of Civilizations Initiative and its possible contribution to the Barcelona Process.

Media activities

- (40) Ministers recognise the value of the various activities in the media sector (training of young journalists, TV and radio programmes in local languages, press supplements, opinion research polling and surveys, etc...) which will help to enhance the visibility of the Euro-Med Partnership in the Euro-Mediterranean region as well as contributing to a mutual understanding between the peoples of the Euro-Mediterranean region, with the contribution to the Information and Communication programme.
- (41) Ministers agree that the Euro-Med and the Media Task Force will reconvene to explore ways of consolidating the media's voice and role in the Partnership. They will also advise on practical proposals to deal with the various problems raised during the different media conferences and seminars. There will be a follow-up to the Conference on 'Preventing incitement to terrorism and radicalisation: what role for the media?' (Dublin, 21 May 2007), and a large conference will be held on Euromed media development.
- (42) The Euro-Med Audiovisual conference met in Berlin in February 2007 in order to assess progress made in this sector and to discuss transfer of knowledge. A reflection group has also been set up with the goal to identify the priorities for the audiovisual industry in the coming years in the Mediterranean region.

Youth

- (43) Ministers take note of the first meeting of the Euro-Mediterranean Youth Parliament in (Berlin 26 May – 3 June 2007) to allow young people from both sides of the Mediterranean to discuss their views about the region and the prospects for future cooperation and welcome the second edition of the Euro-Mediterranean Youth Parliament to take place next year in Morocco.

- (44) Ministers stressed that the activities of the Euro-Med Youth Programme contribute to the young people's active citizenship and to the dialogue between civil societies and they take note of the Moroccan proposal to host a ministerial conference on Youth.

IV – Migration, Social Integration, Justice and Security

- (45) On 18 and 19 November 2007 Euro-Med partners will meet for the first time at ministerial level to hold a comprehensive, integrated and balanced discussion on the issues related to migration. The upcoming Euro-Med ministerial meeting on migration will be a good opportunity to underline the added value of the regional cooperation framework, stressing the need for continued progress by all Partners to achieve the strategic goal of optimising the social and economic benefits of migration for countries of origin, transit and destination, as well as continued cooperation in efficiently tackling illegal immigration.
- (46) In this context Ministers stress the importance of the contributions and follow-up from other international initiatives such as the Rabat Euro-African ministerial meeting on migration and development, held on 10-11 July 2006, as well as the EU-Africa ministerial meeting on migration and development held in Tripoli on 22-23 November 2006.
- (47) Ministers mandated the senior officials to undertake a reflection on ways and means to increase the added value of regional cooperation in the fields of Justice and Security in accordance with the Five Year Work programme.

Summary of planned initiatives for 2008

A) Promoting a common area of peace and stability

On-going initiatives:

- Implementation of the Code of Conduct on countering terrorism: regional Euro-Med workshop on technical issues;
- Ad-hoc meeting on ESDP;
- Euromed Seminar during the first semester 2008, co-organised by Morocco and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime ;
- Euromed Seminar on ESDP issues, co-organised by the European Institute on Security Studies and Morocco, in Rabat.

B) Creating an area of shared prosperity

On-going initiatives:

- Ministerial Meeting on Trade during the second semester 2008;
- FEMIP Ministerial Meeting;
- 4th ECOFIN Ministerial Meeting in 2008;
- Ministerial Meeting on Information Society, planned in Egypt in February 2008;
- Ministerial Meeting on Water during the second semester of 2008;
- Meeting of Euro-Mediterranean Ministers for Industry, planned for November 2008;
- Euro-Mediterranean Economic Transition Conference on “financial and banking services at the heart of economic transition”, planned for the first semester 2008;
- Implementation of the de-pollution of the Mediterranean initiative ‘2020 Horizon’: Steering Committee meeting;

New initiatives:

- Ministerial Meeting on Employment during the second semester 2008;
- Ministerial Meeting on Tourism, during the first semester (Morocco);
- First meeting of the Euro-Med network of public finance experts;
- EuroMed meeting on customs cooperation and fight against fraud, in Tangiers (Morocco);

C) Developing human resources, promoting understanding between cultures and exchange between civil societies

On-going initiatives:

- Further actions in the programme adopted in the Ministerial Meeting on the Role of Women in society;
- 2nd meeting of the Euro-Med Youth Parliament, in Morocco;

New initiatives:

- Ministerial Meeting on Culture and Cultural Dialogue in May 2008 in Greece
- Ministerial Meeting on Health during the second semester of 2008, in Egypt;
- Seminar on developing citizens' participation in public life.
- Possible Conference by the Anna Lindh Foundation on the role that citizens can play in promoting moderation and rejecting extremist views

Euro-Mediterranean Ministers of Foreign Affairs will meet in the second semester of 2008 in order to take stock of the progress achieved and agree upon the Programme for 2009.

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT AS ANNEXED TO THE LISBON CONCLUSIONS

- All members of the Barcelona Process have unanimously accepted the Lisbon conclusions, which is an important achievement.
 - The Barcelona Process continues to provide an important framework for building regional co-operation, confidence-building measures, mutual understanding, expanding support for reconciliation and contributing to promoting progress in the Middle East Peace Process.
 - Although it is not intended to replace other activities and initiatives undertaken in the interests of Peace, it provides an important political framework for 37 states: the Arab states, Israel and EU. We are happy to welcome Mauritania and Albania to the Barcelona Process.
 - The paragraphs on the Middle East Peace were – as in the past - discussed at length, and as you understand it has not been easy to find common language.
 - In the agreed common text on the Middle East, we refer in general terms to recent developments.
 - We express our commitment to contribute to the preparation of the upcoming international meeting as set out in the Quartet Statement of 23 September, 2007, as well as the forthcoming donors meeting in December.
 - In this context, we welcome the work being carried out by the Quartet Representative, Tony Blair.
 - The Chairman would like to highlight ongoing initiatives *inter alia* the Arab peace initiative, as reaffirmed in the Declaration of the last Arab League Summit (Riyadh, 29 March 2007) and the efforts of the Quartet that met with the Arab League follow-up Committee in the margins of the UNGA in New York. We also refer to a first joint informal meeting in the margins of GAERC on 14 May 2007 with a delegation of the Arab League, in which the Arab Peace Initiative was presented to EU Foreign Ministers.
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