

PARTENARIAT EUROMED

DOC. DE SÉANCE N° : 57/03 REV2[EN]

EN DATE DU : 12.11.2003

ORIGINE : Secretariat

EURO-MEDITERRANEAN FOUNDATION FOR A DIALOGUE OF CULTURES

PREAMBLE

- a) The 1995 Barcelona Declaration states the need, in chapter III, to develop a dialogue of cultures and civilisations within the framework of the Mediterranean societies. The Action Plan adopted at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Foreign Ministers in Valencia, 22-23 April 2002 includes a mandate for the setting up of a Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for a dialogue of cultures and civilisations.
- b) The establishment of this new instrument within the framework of the Barcelona Process is a priority, for the following reasons:
- in the first place, on account of the need, in this essential sphere, for a dynamic structure, which should contribute decisively to the development of a true sense of joint ownership of the Barcelona Process by its members;
 - the importance of having an instrument that would disseminate the goals of the Barcelona Process and its development amongst the European and Mediterranean societies. Therefore, the implementation of Chapter III of the Barcelona Declaration requires actions whose objective is to reach the greatest possible number of citizens, while aspiring to overcome barriers in the way of access to information and to achieve a greater level of mutual knowledge between them;
 - the need to set up an institution that is able to promote the coherent identification and execution of projects that are relevant to the dialogue of cultures and increased cultural co-operation;
 - the need to set up an institution that catalyses and provides an inventory of co-operation between the existing networks of foundations, NGOs and other institutions of civil society, whether public or private, national or international, which operate in the Euro-Mediterranean area.

1. Goals and Objectives

The objectives shall be established as set out in the statute of the Foundation, which will be proposed to the institutions of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership. The main objectives are:

- to identify, develop and promote areas of cultural convergence between the countries and peoples of the Mediterranean, with the aim in particular of avoiding stereotypes,
- to hold a close and regular dialogue between cultural circles often kept outside the main diplomatic and cultural exchanges,
- to serve as a catalyst for promoting exchanges, co-operation and mobility between people at all levels, targeting in particular the young and activities relevant to young people.

2. Activities

In the framework of these main objectives the activities of the Foundation should take into account existing achievements within and beyond the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, thus avoiding any duplication of effort. The activities should also be in line with the non-governmental nature of the Foundation.

The areas of heritage, audio-visual information technology, professional training, to name but a few, are to a large extent already covered by the Euro-Mediterranean regional programmes (Euromed Heritage, Euromed Audio-visual, Eumedis, Euromed Youth, etc).

Similarly, many government and non-governmental agencies (Associations, Foundations, Cultural Centres, Festivals, etc) are already active in the cultural field. Existing activities or entities should not be duplicated or financed; instead the Foundation should bring its own added value to activities. In that respect lessons should be learned from the old decentralised co-operation programmes (Med Media, Med Campus, etc) and existing regional programmes (Euromed Heritage, Euromed Audio-visual).

In this framework the following types of activities should be agreed for the Foundation:

- exchanges between cultural and intellectual circles in the wider sense,
- promoting a continuous cultural debate using in particular multi-media techniques (television, radio, periodical magazine, Internet) in co-operation with important existing media and with the participation of people from both shores including journalists and the young ,
- patronage of important events which symbolise mutual understanding (for example, a limited number of concerts, exhibitions, etc on relevant themes), co-financed by large media groups and/or festivals and institutions already active in these areas,
- promoting the activities of the Barcelona Process including through means of the Foundation itself (periodical magazine, Internet site).

In this spirit, an indicative list of possible activities is annexed hereto. It is to be noted that the discussion on the objectives and activities of the Foundation should also take into account the results of the work of the High Level Advisory Group set up by Commission President Romano Prodi.

3. Establishment

- a) The Foundation will be created through a step by step procedure. At least in the initial stage, it will function as a network of networks. There will be a light independent administrative structure, which will be responsible for the co-ordination of the network of national networks.
- b) Each country will identify appropriate institutions and organisms that at national level are working to develop a dialogue of cultures and civilisations within the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean societies and will select the institution/organism that will play the role of head of the national network;
- c) The Foundation would play a pivotal role in mobilising the relevant networks existing within the EU and in its Mediterranean partners dealing with the dialogue of cultures and civilisations. It would assist members of the network in securing access to funding, bring

- people and organisations together, spreading knowledge and sharing best practice with the aim of furthering the dialogue on cultures and civilisations.
- d) Since linkage of the Foundation to the Barcelona Process is essential, the following evolutionary model could be considered:
 - i. The Board of Governors will at an initial stage be the Euromed Committee itself; the Board could be assisted for its decisions by highly qualified personalities.
 - ii. The Director(s) of the Foundation (that is the Director (s) of the co-ordinating body/bodies) will report to the Euromed Committee at regular intervals.
 - e) In general terms the funding of the Foundation should be devoted to promoting in the most effective manner possible concrete projects; expenditure on administration and institutional aspects should be kept to an absolute minimum.

4. Legal status

The host country should guarantee free access to its premises by all partners. It should provide for a favourable treatment, in particular tax exemption.

The Foundation is set up as an important component of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. However, in its functioning it will be independent of the member states of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, of cultural associations and civil society, and of private donors.

The functioning of Foundation bodies and relations among them will be fixed in detail by the statute to be adopted by the Euromed Committee.

5. Structure and staffing

The structure of the Foundation and its different bodies would be the following:

- **Board of Governors**

The Board of governors will consist, at all times, of representatives of the Euromed partners and will, for an initial stage of three years, be made up of all members of the Euromed Committee.

The main tasks of the Board of Governors will be to lay down the general guidelines for the work of the Foundation, establish its operational priorities, approve the annual programmes and budgets drawn up by its Executive Director as well as that Executive Director 's annual report and financial statements.

Consideration will be given, after the initial three-year period, to reviewing the number of Members of the Board of Governors taking into account various factors including a comprehensive review of its functioning.

- **Advisory committee**

A Committee with advisory status shall be set up. This Advisory Committee will be consulted by the Executive Director for the preparation of the three year plan, the draft budget and, where appropriate, on other issues related to the quality of the work of the Foundation.

This Advisory committee will be made up of individuals chosen for their background in the field of intercultural dialogue and their independence in relation to both governments and private financial interests. They will be selected by the Board of Governors, from proposals made by the Euromed partners. This selection will draw, on members of the network of national networks and on personalities of civil society and in the cultural field of the Euromed region. The aim will be to guarantee a balanced representation of private and public sector and gender equality.

They will be selected amongst Members countries of the Barcelona process, taking into consideration the partners' geographical diversity, 6 from EU countries and 6 from Mediterranean partner countries, appointed for three years, non-renewable. The Board of Governors might also draw on the advisory committee.

- **The Executive Director**

The Board of Governors appoints the Executive Director of the Foundation¹ on a proposal from the European Commission. He/She serves for three years renewable one time.

The Executive Director's main tasks would include, notably, the following:

- To head the administrative staff and prepares the meetings.
- To be the permanent link with the network of national networks.
- To represent the Foundation in its external relations.
- To ensure the implementation of the activity programme approved by the Board of Governors and reports back on progress with it each year.
- To submit a report on the financial management of the Foundation, on the financial statements of the year past and on the budget for the upcoming year.
- To report to the Board of Governors and through the latter to the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on the Foundation's overall activity.
- To prepare the Foundation's three-year plan of activities and its draft budget and submit them to the Board of Governors for adoption.
- To submit an annual progress report to the Board of Governors on the implementation of the Foundation's three-year activity plan, in order to collect its observations and receive instructions.

- **Administrative staff.**

The Foundation will have, at the initial stage, a light administrative structure, of not more than eight staff, to assist the Executive Director for the management of activities executed by the Foundation itself as well as co-ordination of initiatives being carried out through the national networks. The composition of the administrative staff, which will be recruited by the Executive Director, should reflect the diversity of the Euromed partnership. The administrative staff will work at the Foundation's Headquarters.

6. Financial resources

Initial financing will come from two sources: a) the EU budget and b) contributions from the members of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

The European Commission will provide a start-up grant of EUR 5 million under the MEDA programme (regional component), on the understanding that the members of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership will make initial voluntary contributions -either financial or in kind- which should be at least equivalent to the Commission grant.

After a running-in period, the Foundation will be allowed to accept private donations, under

¹ " In the framework of the selection process of the Euromed Foundation's Executive Director, the Commission will inform all Euro-Mediterranean partners of candidatures presented and will take their views into account before submitting a short-list of a minimum of two names to the Board of Governors".

conditions to be established. Such donations must be for specific activities (cultural events) so that they cannot influence the Foundation's general approach. Contributions must under no circumstances be tied to policy or operational considerations.

Financial control and audit mechanisms of the Foundation's funding will be ensured in full respect of the principles of good financial management.

7. Headquarters

The Foundation's Headquarters, which will be located in one of the member states of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, will be chosen by the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference. The choice of location must on no account be influenced by the prior existence of a cultural body, nor can it subject the Foundation to any policy or operational constraints that would interfere with its independence.

8. Schedule for Establishment

Following this decision by Ministers, the Foundation and its related bodies will be established within 6 months (i.e. by 1st July 2004). To this end, each Euro-Mediterranean Partners will set up its own national network by selecting the lead institution as well as the other members, from amongst institutions actively involved in the dialogue between cultures and civilisations.

By 1st July 2004 the Board of Governors (Euromed Committee) will:

1. present the general guidelines for the work of the Foundation and
2. approve the nomination of the Executive Director.

During the same period, the Advisory committee should be established.

Before 30th September 2004, the Executive Director will submit to the Board of Governors the Foundation start-up procedures, along with the draft plan of activity for the first three-year period.

INDICATIVE LIST OF ACTIVITIES

a) Intellectual exchanges: The Foundation would contribute to the debate and elaboration of the third chapter of the Barcelona Declaration and notably the creation of a framework for dialogue and research available to all strata of the academic fraternity, from school teachers to education experts and academics to enable the furthering of the dialogue on cultures, societies and civilisations in the Euro-Mediterranean region. The focus should be on those who can further disseminate the dialogue. Specifically, and as practical examples, the Foundation could be responsible for activities such as:

- organising seminars and conferences on Euro-Mediterranean relations as a programme of continuous meetings, talks and publications,
- endowing research scholarships on Euro-Mediterranean relations, the translation of books,
- launching cultural exchange programmes, in the event that this were possible financially and operationally,
- co-ordinating with international organisations such as UNESCO in order to create synergy and avoid unnecessary duplication of projects and programmes,
- encouraging the production of textbooks on the heritage and values of successive civilisations that have marked the history of the region,
- encouraging participation in debates, meetings, exhibitions, seminars and workshops of scholars, academics, universities, cultural ministries and institutions, civil societies and universities,
- preparing programmes on cultures and arts of the Mediterranean and encouraging TV channels on both shores of the Mediterranean to broadcast them with subtitled translation,
- inviting Governments to encourage North-to-South and South-to-North youth cultural tourism, with book and heritage exhibitions, and traditional musical and theatre festivals which will be a suitable environment to connect and build friendships,
- promoting the use of videoconferencing and other means of modern technology to supplement mobility programmes,
- instituting an award system to recognise excellence and reward due merit to individuals who have made substantial contributions towards the development of Euro-Mediterranean relations.

b) Cultural and artistic exchanges: The Foundation would, taking into account programmes and projects under MEDA and other donors, promote cultural dialogue through additional programmes and/or projects found to be relevant to a dialogue of cultures in the Mediterranean. It would avoid duplication between existing activities including those under MEDA, and would promote synergies among them. The Foundation will notably support and promote the Action Programme for the Dialogue between Cultures and Civilisations, adopted by the Foreign Ministers of the Barcelona Process at their meeting in Valencia on 22-23 April, 2002, and the three themes of the Action Programme: youth, education and the media.

The Foundation should also provide support for the development of cultural and artistic knowledge between the partners, by supporting projects, which encourage the mutual

knowledge of cultures, intercultural training, exchanges of practices, translations and publications. In this context, the conclusions of the Stockholm workshop (first half of 1998) should be taken into account; in particular, the Foundation could support the following projects:

- The "Euromed Humanities" regional programme establishing co-operation between institutions specialised in the study of and research into Mediterranean societies and civilisations, which was adopted in May 1998 and mentioned in the Valencia Action Plan;
- The project on books and translation, which was also adopted by the Committee in November 1998 and could make a very useful contribution to the dialogue between cultures;
- The organisation of the event "Year of the Mediterranean" destined to promote the cultural, artistic and archaeological heritage of the Mediterranean countries.
- Encourage and undertake actions to promote the Mediterranean artisanal heritage.
- The setting-up of Euro-Mediterranean networks of museums and of libraries, for possible inclusion in the area of the Foundation's activities devoted to cultural and artistic exchanges.

c) **The visibility of the Barcelona Process:** The Foundation would aspire to disseminating the ideas of the Barcelona Process, complete information on its activities and projects, and the establishment of a "Euromed label" as recognition for all those projects in which it has a presence. These activities should be carried out in close co-ordination with the future Euromed regional programme on Information and Communication called "Euromed Dialogue".
