



الدورة الأولى للجمعية البرلمانية الأورومتوسطية

First Session of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly

Première Session de l'Assemblée parlementaire euroméditerranéenne

Cairo 12-15 March 2005



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**Conclusions of the First Session
of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly**

**Conclusions de la Première Session
de l'Assemblée parlementaire euroméditerranéenne**

Cairo, 12-15 March 2005

**Resolution
of the Euro-Mediterranean
Parliamentary Assembly**

**on the assessment of the Barcelona Process on the
eve of its tenth anniversary**

adopted on 15 March 2005 in Cairo

**on the basis of the resolution tabled by Mrs Tokia Saïfi,
Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee on Political,
Security and Human Rights Issues**

The Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly:

- having regard to the Barcelona Declaration of 28 November 1995 and its programme of work,
 - having regard to the conclusions of all the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conferences and Sectoral Ministerial Conferences that have taken place since the launch of the Barcelona Process,
 - having regard to the declarations of the five plenary sessions of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Forum issued between its establishment in November 1998 until its transformation into the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA) on the occasion of the 6th Ministerial Conference in Naples on 3 December 2003,
 - having regard to the undertaking entered into by the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference at its meeting of 5-6 May 2004 in Dublin as regards consultation of the EMPA,
 - having regard to Article 3, paragraph 1, of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Mediterranean policy constitutes one of the priorities of the external relations of the European Union; recalling that the Barcelona Ministerial Conference marked an historic turning point in Euro-Mediterranean relations,
- B. whereas the Barcelona Declaration and the programme of work annexed thereto established a multilateral, sustainable, essentially intergovernmental framework based on a spirit of comprehensive partnership centering

upon three aspects, which form the three elements of the partnership*:

- strengthened political dialogue on a regular basis,
- the development of economic and financial cooperation,
- greater emphasis on the social, cultural and human dimension; recalling in this connection that the multilateral framework goes hand in hand with a strengthening of bilateral relations,

C. underlining that, from the outset, all the signatory States have taken the view that the Barcelona Conference laid the foundations for an open process which should develop on the basis of the principles (equality, co-responsibility, solidarity and joint participation) and objectives set out in the final declaration,

D. whereas the Barcelona Process was born of the spirit of optimism that emerged from the Madrid Peace Conference and the Oslo Peace Accords, which represented a window of opportunity for the resolution of the conflict in the Middle East,

E. whereas, however, the events of the beginning of this century (the stagnation of the plan to establish peace between Israel and Palestine, the terrorist attacks on New York then Madrid, the war in Iraq and the long, conflict-and violence-strewn road to peace in that country)

* The Syrian delegation had reservations concerning the resolution in full. The Turkish delegation had reservations regarding the quotation reading "especially the Cypriot question" in paragraph 24.

have profoundly altered the international scene, thereby affecting the outcome of the Barcelona Process,

- F. whereas the conflict in the Middle East continues to be a major political problem which the Euro-Mediterranean community cannot allow to remain unresolved and which seriously impedes the effectiveness of the Barcelona Process,
- G. whereas, from the outset, the interdependence between the European Union and its Mediterranean partners has become increasingly clear, from security of energy supply to protection of the environmental heritage, not to mention emigration, sustainable development, trade, investment, cultural and civilizational contacts, and the fight against terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction,
- H. whereas the peoples of the European Union and its Mediterranean partners do not believe in a clash of civilizations, and Euro-Mediterranean public opinion is to a large extent united in rejecting this dangerous hypothesis,
- I. underlining that the Barcelona Process is the sole initiative in the entire Euro-Mediterranean region that has for the past ten years, attempted to create an area of stability and prosperity based on shared values through a new approach to international relations which places the emphasis on ever closer, solid, symmetrical cooperation among all the Euro-Mediterranean States and peoples,
- J. recalling that respect for and defence of human rights, democracy and the rule of law in the countries around the shores of the Mediterranean are the essential foundation stones of the Barcelona Process, consisting on the one hand in association agreements and on the other in the

multilateral framework of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation,

- K. whereas the expansion of the European Union to 25 Member States must be seen as an opportunity for the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, and bearing in mind that the increase in the number of political players poses numerous challenges for the working methods of the Barcelona Process,**
- L. whereas the Barcelona Process has encouraged the institutionalisation of a multilateral (region-to-region) dialogue, which, as well as being intergovernmental, is also interparliamentary, taking place as it does between the national parliaments of the Euro-Mediterranean Barcelona Process States and the European Parliament,**
- M. whereas 11 Euro-Mediterranean Conferences of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and 21 joint ministerial meetings in almost every area of activity have taken place over the past nine years, bearing witness to the intensity of this official multilateral dialogue,**
- N. whereas, despite the budgetary and financial resources deployed (6.4 billion euros from the Community budget allocated to financial cooperation between the European Union and its Mediterranean partners since 1996, and 1.8 billion euros in subsidies to the Palestinian Authority since the beginning of the peace process in 1994), the economic gap between the two shores of the Mediterranean has widened still further,**
- O. whereas, notwithstanding the efforts already accomplished, the process of political, economic and social modernisation needs to be speeded up in the Arab partner countries, and whereas, as stressed by international institutions, the challenge is a large-scale one: 65% of the population of**

these countries is under 25, and in the period from 2000 to 2010 the number of new entrants in the labour market will on average be of the order of 4.2 million persons annually, i.e. twice the number in the previous two decades,

- P. recalling that the Arab countries have stressed that they are ready to meet this challenge as a result of the Tunisia Declaration on Reform and Modernisation adopted by the Arab League in May 2004,
- Q. whereas other political initiatives have been launched recently with the 'Sea Island' declaration by the G-8 ('the Greater Middle East and North Africa'), the European neighbourhood policy and the strategic partnership between the European Union and the Mediterranean region, as well as the Middle East,
- R. whereas the effectiveness of the action taken by the European Union, under the impulse of the political determination expressed within the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, should equally take account of the context of transatlantic relations,
- S. recognizing that the bilateral friendship, cooperation and good neighbourhood treaties, as well as the strengthening of political consultation instruments that link a number of States in the Euro-Mediterranean region, contribute to the objectives of peace, stability and prosperity for the region,

- T. whereas subregional North-South initiatives such as the '5+5 dialogue' may help to better articulate the Euro-Mediterranean partnership in its entirety, as well as to reinforce South-South cooperation between the countries of the western and eastern Mediterranean,
- U. whereas trade relations between the European Union and Mediterranean partners are founded on very solid bases and the European Union continues to obtain a significant trade surplus with its Mediterranean partners,
- V. whereas the weakness of the commercial chapter of the Barcelona Process resides in the narrowness and stagnation of trade among the 10 partner countries on the south shore of the Mediterranean, which makes it difficult to establish a free trade area by 2010,
- W. underscoring in this regard that the Agadir Accord, which liberalised trade between Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt and Jordan, is a good example of the path to be followed if we wish this objective to be achieved,
- X. whereas 2005 was declared the 'Year of the Mediterranean' by the Hague Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference,
- Y. convinced that institutionalisation of the parliamentary dimension of the Barcelona Process is likely to redynamise the Euro-Mediterranean partnership,

The Barcelona Process: a concept for cooperation which remains valid

1. Notes that the Barcelona Process has become a major economic and political asset for all the partners; recalls that, in comparison with other recent bilateral and

multilateral initiatives associated with the region, the Barcelona Process can pride itself on having a conceptual framework validated by long experience of cooperation, and financing efforts which have already borne fruit;

2. Observes the fundamental importance attached by the partners to the Barcelona Process, which is the essential reference framework for relations of cooperation and solidarity between the European Union and the Mediterranean partner countries;
3. Notes that the objectives and philosophy of cooperation set out in the Barcelona Declaration in 1995 continue to be essentially valid and that they have even become more relevant to the Euro-Mediterranean partnership; takes the view, in this context, that a great deal has been accomplished since then in pursuit of the objectives, but a great deal still remains to be done if they are to be achieved;
4. Considers that, even if it has failed to produce the expected benefits and has not contributed to lowering tension in the long term, or significantly reduced divisions between North and South of the Mediterranean, there is a strong conviction that, because it can be improved, the Barcelona Process continues to be the appropriate framework for political consultation and economic cooperation, capable of contributing effectively to promoting peace, security and cooperation in the Mediterranean;
5. Considers that the Barcelona Process is a unique experiment as a multilateral framework for dialogue and cooperation; takes the view that the institutionalisation of a multilateral dialogue is one of the most significant advances, since it has allowed ministers and senior officials from the two shores of the Mediterranean to meet at

intervals to discuss the problems of the region and to collaborate in seeking solutions;

6. Hopes, nonetheless, that practical ways will be found to allow the Mediterranean partner countries to play a more important role in this official political dialogue in order to strengthen co-responsibility and a spirit of initiative and mutual agreement which should characterize the partnership; considers, in this connection, that the principle of a co-presidency and alternating venues for ministerial meetings should be put into effect as soon as possible;
7. Notes that the dynamism of the institutional dialogue is beginning to influence the world of entrepreneurs and unions, local authorities, major cities, universities and civil society; encourages all these players to contribute more to building this 'network of contacts', which is so necessary for promoting dialogue and mutual understanding, exchanges of experience and 'best practices' and investments that create jobs;
8. Underlines that the recent establishment of the Anna Lindh Foundation for Dialogue between Cultures and Civilizations, the setting up of the platform for NGOs for the civil Forum and the creation of this Assembly in 2004 as a parliamentary institution of the Barcelona Process are also tangible results which should encourage cooperation on democratisation and human rights and bring the Euro-Mediterranean partnership closer to citizens;
9. Points out that the signing of Euro-Mediterranean association agreements with the nine partner countries and the initial signing of the agreement with Syria is a significant result of the Barcelona Process; takes the view in this context that this 'network of accords', which establishes the required legal security necessary for

investment, should become completely operational and be supplemented with South-South agreements along the lines of the Agadir Accord, but open to all partners;

10. Points out that the partnership's financial instruments (the MEDA I and MEDA II programmes, EIB loans and the FEMIP financial facility) also constitute, as regards their utilization, a positive outcome of the Barcelona Process, but recognizes that countries on the southern shores of the Mediterranean have not benefited equally;
11. Notes that, while little progress has been made on the *Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Peace and Stability*, the adoption of which is currently impeded by the Middle East conflict, the political and security dialogue has recently become more intense and effective; notes that the Euro-Mediterranean partners are beginning to discuss sensitive issues such as anti-terrorism measures and non-proliferation; insists on the fact that combating terrorism should be undertaken by strictly respecting human rights and international law, including humanitarian law and law of refugees; also recalls that these commitments include the prohibition of torture and other inhuman and degrading acts or punishments;
12. Is concerned that, under the pretext of combating terrorism, a number of countries have adopted or announced the adoption of legislation that constitutes a derogation from international obligations regarding human rights, international humanitarian law, the law governing refugees and the principle of the rule of law;
13. Praises in this regard the introduction of clauses on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in forthcoming agreements and action plans; underlines that such measures should be implemented by all partners without exception in order to render the Mediterranean a

zone free of weapons of mass destruction; demands more involvement by partner countries in the European Common Security and Defence Policy; demands that all Euro-Mediterranean countries accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT);

14. Recalls that progress on respect for human rights and the development of the rule of law and democracy in the Mediterranean region were among the expectations raised by the Barcelona Declaration;
15. Recognizes the development, in various forms, of the process of parliamentary democracy in the region;
16. Requests the setting up of sub-committees for human rights within the framework of association agreements in order to develop a structured dialogue on human rights and democracy; hopes that such sub-committees will constitute a key element in the action plans; underlines the importance of consulting and involving civil society in the work of these sub-committees in order better to monitor the human rights situation;
17. Takes the view that the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) should play a crucial role in promoting the fundamental values of the European Union incorporated in the Barcelona Process; demands in this regard that the action of this instrument be strengthened within the Euro-Mediterranean partnership in order to support the development and consolidation of civil societies and other non-governmental players;
18. Notes that there is a considerable gap between objectives and achievements in other areas of the partnership, and observes that in a certain number of cases (information society, health) tangible results are relatively modest and efforts are lacking in continuity;

The 'centrality' of the Barcelona Process

19. Considers it desirable to dispel the current confusion arising from the multiplicity of political initiatives involving the Mediterranean region, whether they are launched exclusively by the European Union or merely involve the participation of Member States; takes the view, in this connection, that the revitalised Barcelona Process should be integrated in European neighbourhood and strategic partnership policy as two projects which complement the Barcelona Process and would open up new prospects for it, enriching it and adding synergy to the Euro-Mediterranean partnership as a whole;
20. Calls on the Council of Ministers of the European Union and the European Commission to clarify the institutional and operational linkage between the Barcelona Process and the neighbourhood policy and the strategic partnership;
21. Wishes the revitalised Barcelona Process (*'Barcelona Plus'*) to retain a central position in the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, remaining the cornerstone of the partnership and the dialogue between the European Union and the Mediterranean region;
22. Notes that the Barcelona Process will be strengthened by the new European neighbourhood policy, which aims to promote good governance and the economic and financial aspects of the partnership, and also by the increased importance that the strategic partnership between the Union and the region gives to strengthening cooperation in the fight against terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, as well as to dialogue and cooperation on immigration and security and defence policy;
23. Stresses that the European neighbourhood policy, being a complement to the Barcelona Process, should on no

account eclipse either the principles – equality, co-responsibility, solidarity and cooperation – or the multilateral framework of Barcelona; draws attention to the risk of increasing the bilateral dependence of the partner countries on the European Union if we concentrate exclusively on a differentiated bilateral approach, thus undermining the already low level of existing subregional cooperation;

Towards 'Barcelona Plus' within the framework of an 'Alliance of Peoples'

24. Takes the view that the tenth anniversary of the Barcelona Declaration offers an opportunity to evaluate the results of its implementation and to raise cooperation between the two shores of the Mediterranean to a higher level; hopes that the negotiations for Turkish membership of the European Union will be able to commence as scheduled in 2005, in compliance with the terms of the decision adopted by the European Council in December 2004;
25. Stresses that the success of development policies in the Mediterranean region and the guarantee of a more effective partnership between the countries of both shores depend greatly on the establishment of a climate of security and stability in the region;
26. Expresses concern over the establishment in the Mediterranean countries, at the request of some Member States of the Union, of "Initial Reception Centres" for immigrants targeting the Union's territory, which fail to provide minimal guarantees for the fundamental rights of the persons concerned; recalls that management of migration flows should be based not exclusively on security considerations, but also on the management of sustainable and social development of the Mediterranean countries;

27. **Recalls the shared responsibility of all the Euro-Mediterranean countries in the management of South-North migration flows, involving, on the one hand, – particularly on the southern shores – the fight against illegal immigration and the trade in human beings, and, on the other hand, – particularly on the northern shores – the development of economic conditions favourable to the social development of South of the Mediterranean, as well as a reception which respects human rights;**
28. **Recalls that the common challenge facing the Barcelona Process is the same today as it was ten years ago: security for States and their peoples from wars, terrorism and other forms of violence, and economic and social security, affording greater opportunities for growth, investment, trade, employment and social progress for all the Mediterranean partners;**
29. **Welcomes the election of M. Mahmoud Abbas to the presidency of the Palestinian Authority, on the 9th of January 2005, as a result of elections judged to be free and democratic by a group of a national and international observers in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem which have opened up new prospects for dialogue in the Middle East;**
30. **Welcomes the new and encouraging climate of political dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians, the resumption of high-level contacts between the parties, the common will to achieve a peaceful settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict with the assistance of the international community; calls on all parties concerned to solve the outstanding issues through political and direct negotiation within the framework of the Road Map for Peace accepted by both parties;**

- 31. Calls upon the international community to support this process, which must be based on the envisaged two-State solution and on the relevant UN resolutions as well as on the fundamental right of the Israeli and Palestinian peoples to live in peace and security within internationally recognised borders; calls on both parties to refrain from any action which may undermine the process of achieving lasting peace;**
- 32. Takes fully into account, in this framework, the concerns of the Palestinian delegation on important issues such as security, the decision of the International Court of Justice on the Israeli separation wall (the so-called security fence), refugees, settlements and issues linked to final status negotiations; takes also fully into account the concerns of the Israeli delegation on important issues such as security; the EMPA strongly condemns every kind of terrorism and incitement to hatred of whatever origin;**
- 33. Calls upon the parties to take advantage of the new climate of cooperation generated by the enhanced Barcelona Process, particularly in its parliamentary dimension embodied by the permanent EMPA, which constitutes a unique framework to foster dialogue as well as an opportunity to contribute to a peaceful, just and lasting solution; in an effort to contribute to the necessary political dialogue between the parties, takes note of the commitment of its Political Committee to hold a broader debate on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and decides, according to Rules of Procedure to be established, to create a working group, which should lead to an improvement in the dialogue for peace and security in the region;**

34. Notes, however, that progress in the Middle East peace process should not be a precondition for the implementation of economic and political reforms in the region, or vice versa; peace and reform are both necessary in their own right and should both be pursued, and mutually reinforce each other, with the same determination;
35. Recognizes the political evolution of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya towards accepting the spirit and principles of the Barcelona Process, which could pave the way to the full integration of this country in the Process;
36. Commends the recent reform of the Family Code in Morocco which wisely extended women's rights as well as their rights before the law in that country;
37. Welcomes the extensive political participation recently demonstrated by the peoples of countries on the southern shores of the Mediterranean, such as Lebanon, Palestine and Morocco, and believes that the demand by the peoples of the region for democratic participation and good governance should be increasingly heeded;
38. Condemns firmly the attack which killed the former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri as well as other innocent civilians; expresses the hope that, in compliance with the Declaration made by the President of the United Nations Security Council, on 15 February, the reasons, circumstances and consequences of this attack will be fully elucidated; requests the Lebanese authorities to continue to cooperate fully with the UN fact-finding missions in this regard;
39. Expresses the hope that this murder and the resignation of the government do not affect the electoral process of Lebanon and underlines the importance of holding

democratic and transparent legislative elections in this country; suggests that, if the Lebanese government extended an invitation, it would be for the European Parliament to decide to participate in an observation mission of the legislative elections in Lebanon, jointly with other institutions of the European Union, as well with the national Parliaments of Member States of EMPA;

40. Recalls the importance of the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution No. 1559 which reaffirms the attachment of the international community to the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Lebanon and calls for the complete withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon; take notes of the announcement of the first redeployment of these troops, but requests that this withdrawal be completed as soon as possible;
41. Considers that the intensification of contacts between parliamentarians within the framework of the Barcelona Process, at both regional and subregional level, should henceforth be one of the major political objectives of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership;
42. Stresses that by incorporating Mediterranean policy in the first part of the Constitutional Treaty (Title VIII, Article 56), the European Union has demonstrated unequivocally the extent to which the Union's 'immediate environment' is regarded as a region of strategic interest;
43. Notes that the establishment of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly has raised the hopes of civil society, which takes the view that the Assembly is an instrument likely to generate a new dynamism which will enable concrete progress to be made in the areas of human rights and democratisation; favours the involvement of civil society in the activities of the Assembly and its

committees; proposes in this regard to grant civil society representatives a specific status;

44. Instructs its Political Committee on Security and Human Rights to monitor the following:

- the political and security situation between Israel, Palestine and neighbouring countries in the Middle East;
- other political problems pertaining to security and neighbourhood between partner countries, in particular the Cyprus issue;
- cooperation between Euro-Mediterranean countries regarding security and the fight against terrorism and against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction;
- the strengthening of democratic processes in all the partner countries, particularly the sound organisation of elections;
- the implementation of the recommendations and action programme administered by the European Commission (EIDHR: European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights);
- respect of human rights and women's rights in every partner country and the promotion of women's rights in their social, economic and political dimension;
- within this context, the implementation of the decisions of the Beijing platform of action, and documents of the special session of the UN General Assembly entitled "Women 2002: equality between sexes, development and peace for the 21st century", as well as the

conclusions adopted by the sessions of the UN Commissions on the Status of Women since the 4th World Conference of Women;

- the ratification and implementation of international human rights conventions by all partners;**
 - the implementation of the Sana'a Declaration of January 2004;**
 - the outcome of the civil society and non-governmental organisations meetings held in the region in the context of pursuing development, modernisation and reform efforts in the Mediterranean region;**
- 45. Hopes that greater efforts will be made to promote women's rights within the framework of Barcelona Process; demands in this respect the setting up a regional action plan aimed at enhancing women's rights and equality between sexes in the spirit of the report of the UN Programme for Development; calls upon all member countries of the Barcelona Process to withdraw their reservations concerning the Convention of the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW);**
- 46. Hopes that this process will improve the status and rights of women and strengthen their participation in social and political life in each of the countries concerned; charges its Committee on Political, Security and Human Rights Issues to follow up this matter;**

47. **Wishes also to address the practicalities of increasing the role of civil society in promoting human rights in the region;**
48. **Commends in this regard the creation of the non-governmental Euro-Mediterranean Civil Forum which will hold its constituent meeting in April in Luxembourg; underlines therefore the importance of developing close cooperation with this platform;**
49. **Supports the extension of the Barcelona Process to include new dimensions such as possible participation of the Mediterranean partner countries in the European Security and Defence Policy and United Nations peacekeeping operations;**
50. **Takes the view that the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for Dialogue between Cultures should be the vehicle of choice for a genuine 'Alliance of Civilizations' in the Mediterranean region; considers it essential to this end that its activities should be directed not only at youth and intellectual elites but at the whole of society, in particular the most disadvantaged sectors of the population;**
51. **Wishes the Assembly and the Foundation to work closely together to make good the 'visibility deficit' from which the partnership suffers in the eyes of civil society on both shores of the Mediterranean; calls in this connection for practical modes of cooperation to be put in place as soon as possible by creating an appropriate network that brings together associations and universities in Mediterranean countries;**

- 52. Calls for a common strategy to be drawn up with a view to effectively combating natural disasters in the Mediterranean, inter alia through the establishment of an early warning system; calls also for cooperation programmes for the reconstruction of devastated regions, also covering the Atlantic coast of member countries considered as risk zones, and taking into account the results of the work of World Conference on the Prevention of Disasters held in Kobé, Japan, on 18-22 January 2005;**

- 53. Decides to set up a working party to study the problem of landmines laid by European armies in the territory of Egypt and all the other countries of the region during the Second World War;**

- 54. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the next Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Foreign Affairs Ministers, the Council of Ministers of the European Union, the European Commission, the parliaments and governments of the countries participating in the Barcelona Process and the European Parliament.**

**Resolution
of the Euro-Mediterranean
Parliamentary Assembly**

**on the Economic and Financial Issues,
Social Affairs and Education**

Adopted on 15 March 2005 in Cairo

Following the recommendations adopted at the second meeting of the Committee on Economic and Financial Issues, Social Affairs and Education of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA) (14-15 February 2005, Jordan), the Committee has adopted at its third meeting, held on 12 March 2005 in the framework of the first session of the EMPA in Cairo (Egypt), the following resolution:

1. The Committee is convinced that the Barcelona process is directly linked to the Middle East peace process. The stability, development and prosperity of the Mediterranean region depend to a great extent on achieving a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East.

The Committee emphasizes the special character of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, which is not just a form of development aid, but rather a project with common objectives and shared responsibility.

The Committee emphasizes that there is a vital and fundamental link between the security, stability and economic prosperity of the Mediterranean region. It therefore calls on all the Euro-Mediterranean partners and the international community involved in the Middle East Peace process to make every effort to put an end to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and to play a more active role in helping in the implementation of the Road Map in order to achieve the ultimate goal, namely two viable, sovereign States with clearly demarcated borders living side by side, one Israeli and the other Palestinian.

The Committee also calls on all the parties concerned to work together to relaunch the Syrian-Israeli and Syrian-Lebanese peace process within the framework of the resolutions and international law in order to achieve a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East.

Peace and security in the region will constitute an essential factor in regional economic cooperation, integration and prosperity.

- 2. The Committee calls for the adoption of effective means to enhance South-South and South-North economic integration by providing increased means of technical and financial assistance and contributions in order to help the Mediterranean partner countries adapt to the regulations and repercussions of the free trade area due to be set up by 2010.**

The enhancement and better utilization of the financial instruments of MEDA II partnership, EIB loans and the FEMIP financial facility are also a decisive factor in the development of the partner countries. In this context it considers the Agadir initiative a key instrument for promoting South-South cooperation, through strengthening and deepening economic regional cooperation, and for fostering trade between the countries of the region, leading in turn to an increase in new investment and export potential as well as the creation of new employment and business opportunities in various sectors.

These efforts should be accompanied by the encouragement of social and development programmes and the opening of the relevant European Union programmes to partner countries.

- 3. Calls on the European Union to redouble its efforts to ensure that the financial resources allocated to the Mediterranean region within the framework of the 2007-2013 financial perspective, both under the Community budget and in the form of EIB loans, are substantial enough to contribute to economic and social modernisation in the partner countries;**
- 4. Calls for the creation a working group charged with examining the advisibility of and the conditions for transforming FEMIP into a Euro-Mediterranean Development Bank, with an increase in the appropriations allocated to the southern partner countries, with the aim of fostering the flow of European investment and promoting employment, in those countries and of improving their educational and professional structures;**
- 5. The Committee calls for every effort to be made to encourage and facilitate the flow of EU direct investment to the Mediterranean region. This will also facilitate the transfer of the technology and know-how necessary for the countries of the region which will in turn help them develop their economies and reduce poverty, the brain drain and illegal immigration. In this regard the Committee strongly recommends that every effort should be made to support the private sectors in the Mediterranean region, to ensure better access for the region's exports to the EU market and to proceed with a progressive improvement of trade in agricultural products. Special attention should also be given to education, vocational training and respect for equality by addressing all forms of discrimination.**

6. The Committee believes that financial, technical and technological assistance plays a key role in the process of reform and the economic and financial development of the Mediterranean region, in particular for the establishment of a genuine knowledge economy and to reduce the numerical gap between North and South . It calls for the funding priorities which must be identified for the next few years to be determined by the time of the establishment of the Euro-Mediterranean free trade area in 2010.

In this regard, the Committee supports the establishment of a working party for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP)), which will aim at promoting private sector development and improving the economic and social investment climate in the Mediterranean countries. The Commission has proposed that the EIB, other international financial institutions and representatives of the European Commission should be able to take part in its meetings (where the Committee deems this necessary), exchange views and answer questions from members. It calls on the EU to commit itself to assisting and supporting its partners in achieving their socio-economic sustainable development during the third phase of the MEDA program which will begin in 2007. The Action Plans arising from the EU neighbourhood policy have to play a key role in this regard.

7. The Committee is aware that reform has become a vital aspect of the overall policy of the Mediterranean region and considers that reforms are no longer a luxury, but a necessity for the future of the region. The Committee therefore calls for the necessary

means to be provided to support the document adopted at Tunis Arab Summit on "The Process of Development, Modernization and Reform in the Arab World". Such support will consolidate the democratic principles and broaden the base of political participation in the region. It will also enable efforts to be stepped up to improve performance in political, economic, social and educational areas. The Committee believes that the reforms, whatever their nature, have to be carried out from within, by the societies of the region. At the same time, the two sides must work closely together to overcome the visibility deficit affecting civil society on both sides of the Mediterranean.

8. In the aftermath of the tragic consequences of the Tsunami in South-East Asia, and bearing in mind that this phenomenon has occurred before in many parts of the world including the Euro-Mediterranean region, the Committee calls for a joint effort by all the Euro-Mediterranean partners to create at the earliest opportunity an early warning system for Tsunamis and all other natural disasters in the Euro-Mediterranean region. This early warning system will naturally cover all the costs of Member States considered to be at risk. The Committee calls for existing systems to be used, through developing them or through making use of the experience of those countries that already have such a system. The Committee calls for the immediate launching of a process that will lead to the establishment of such a system.
9. Convinced that scientific and educational cooperation is a necessity for good relations between peoples in

the Euro-Mediterranean region, the Committee also considers that systems of education developed in this region will play a vital role in its socio-economic sustainable development. In this regard, the Committee calls for an enhancement of educational and scientific cooperation between the Euro-Mediterranean partners, including cooperation between universities and scientific research centers. The Committee also calls the Mediterranean partners to be integrated in the EU educational programmes like the TEMPUS and ERASMUS programmes and the other scientific research activities and programmes.

10. The Committee calls for the establishment of an ad hoc committee within the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly to deal particularly with women's issues in the Euro-Mediterranean partner countries.

It would like women to be more equitably represented in the committees.

15 March 05

**Resolution
of the Euro-Mediterranean
Parliamentary Assembly**

**on Improving Quality of Life, Exchanges Between
Civil Societies and Culture**

Adopted on 15 March 2005 in Cairo

The committee on improving quality of life, exchanges between civil societies and culture,

Considering

- i. the extensive debate held at the sittings of 22 September 2004 and 31 January – 1 February 2005;**
- ii. the observations on migration made by Mr Frattini, Vice President of the European Commission responsible for Freedom, Security and Justice, at the sitting of 31 January;**
- iii. the information on Euro-Mediterranean cultural cooperation provided by the European Commission departments, at the sitting of 1 February; and new partnership prospects launched by the European Neighborhood Policy;**
- iv. the three-year (2005-2007) programme of the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation, presented at the Hague ministerial conference, and the conclusions thereof;**

on the subject of migration

- 1) Notes that immigration represents a multi-cause phenomenon to be addressed through a common European policy and an effective partnership with countries of origin and transit;**
- 2) Welcomes the initiatives by the European Commission, with special reference to the Green Paper on the Management of Economic Migration; insist on the fact that any initiative taken in this domain should comply with the rule of law and international conventions; hopes that the European Union and Member States assume their responsibilities in terms of reception and integration; in particular States should be more flexible and humane regarding granting visas procedures;**

3) Expresses the wish that during the debate following the presentation of the Green Paper – which is expected to lead to the adoption of a true European strategy on legal immigration – Mediterranean partner countries will be extensively involved at governmental and civil society level, (including NGOs and associations representing legal immigrants in EU countries); it also expresses the wish that in addressing illegal immigration phenomenon, the frequently mentioned principle of joint responsibility of partners will be fully implemented as a necessary step to develop a common Euro-Mediterranean strategy; expresses its appreciation for the extensive efforts exerted by countries in transit to eradicate or fight this problem.

4) Stresses that the negotiations on the 2007-2013 financial prospects should be considered a test of EU member countries' willingness to adopt an effective common policy on migration and meet the objectives set in the Hague Programme. To this end, it stresses the need to develop a European approach to share the costs related to the reception of migrants;

5) Recalls that immigration is mainly an economic factor and affirms the necessity to establish a co-development strategy between partner countries on both sides of the Mediterranean;

6) Reiterates the importance of measures and programmes aimed at preventing a brain drain from migration countries by redressing economic imbalances and pursuing policies favouring the return to their countries of origin of those who could contribute to the strengthening of societies and economies in the countries of origin.

on the subject of Furthering Dialogue between Euro-Mediterranean Cultures and Civilizations

7) Expresses the wish that, in promoting dialogue between cultures and civilizations, there is need to identify and maintain a common basis of shared values, indivisible and

universal, taking into account the national identity of each State respectively and cultural diversity which are always to be considered as a potential value added and an enriching element for the whole area;

8) Believes that the programmes and projects included in the third basket of the Euromed partnership should focus on highly significant topics, including the protection and enhancement of cultural heritage, cultural diversity as well as historic and artistic heritage; dialogue and understanding between religions and different philosophical beliefs; the promotion of youth exchanges; a new impetus to inter-cultural dialogue, including in those EU countries where the phenomenon of immigration has a greater impact; promoting the culture of human rights; promoting the principle equality between sexes; a privileged role for the projects addressing the vulnerable groups of society and promoting literacy programmes and higher schooling rates; the promotion of environment awareness campaigns; stronger involvement of the national media in disseminating and advertising the results of Euro-Mediterranean partnership to sensitize objectively mutual civilizations; the fight against dissemination of propagation of false perceptions and stereotyped peoples on both sides of the Mediterranean in the media and literature;

9) Underlines the central importance of university-level cooperation in the context of the third partnership area; to this end, it calls for intensified exchanges between faculty and students and stresses that the eventual creation of a Mediterranean University might favour a more effective coordination among the various cooperation actors;

10) Reiterates the fundamental need for a debate on the status of women within society and at work that will identify common areas and objectives. In this connection, it invites the Bureau of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly to examine the necessary forms of coordination with the Euro-Mediterranean Forum of Women Parliamentarians with a

view to undertaking a common action vis-à-vis the governments of the partner States of the Barcelona Process;

11) Welcomes the three-year Programme of the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation, and invites the Foundation to provide information on a regular basis with regard to the implementation of the Programme. It also stresses that only constant and concerted efforts of national networks will ensure the full operation of the Foundation;

12) Expresses its satisfaction for the solution to the problem of the Foundation's financing, which currently counts on €11 million from voluntary contributions from all partner States. It hopes that in the future the Foundation will be able to count on a stable funding system, open to contributions from new donors, e.g. local authorities and private organisations;

13) Expresses the hope that full synergy may be established between the Foundation and the Parliamentary Assembly, whose members, as they directly represent the peoples of partner States, will be able to give further impulse to cultural cooperation activities. To this end, it deems appropriate for the Bureau to consider involving a representation of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly in the work of the Foundation's steering bodies.

14) Hopes for a new impulse in sustainable development in the Euro-mediterranean region for the preservation of rare natural resources in particular water;

15) Deems that a strategy based on cooperation in favour of integrated rural development as well as promoting sustainable agricultural is necessary to foster social, economic and territorial cohesion and prevent the environmental degradation of scarce resources that are already polluted in this area.

FINAL DECLARATION

- 1- **The First Session of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA) was held in Cairo, from 12 to 15 March 2005 at the invitation of Egypt's People's Assembly, as a result of the outcome of EMPA's inaugural session in March 2004, and the decisions taken by EMPA Bureau.**

- 2- **Official delegations from the ten Mediterranean Partners' parliaments, the EU Member states parliaments, and the European Parliament took part in the deliberations. Representatives from the Libyan, Mauritanian, Romanian and Bulgarian parliaments took part as observers. Representatives from the Arab Parliamentary Union, the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe took part as special guests.**

- 3- **The First Session of EMPA was chaired by Dr. Ahmed Fathi Sorour, President of Egypt's People's Assembly and President of EMPA. The three Standing Committees of EMPA held parallel meetings on 12 March and were chaired by Madame Tokia Saifi (Committee on Political ,Security and Human Rights Issues), Dr. Hashim El-Dabbas (Committee on Economic and Financial Issues, Social Affairs and**

Education) and the joint chairmanship of Mr. Miloud Chorfi, and Mr. Mohamed EL Mansouri (Committee on Improving Quality of life, Exchanges Between Civil Societies and Culture).

- 4- The inaugural sitting of EMPA was held in the morning of 14 March. The opening address was made by Dr. Ahmed Fathi Sorour, President of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly. The inaugural sitting listened to statements by Mr. Nicolas Schmit Minister Delegate for Foreign Affairs and Immigration of Luxembourg, currently President-in-office of the Council of the European Union, on the topic "Review of the Barcelona Process"; by Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Foreign Minister of the Arab Republic of Egypt, by Mrs Margot Wallstrom, Vice - President of the European Commission on "European Neighbourhood Policy and Euro-Mediterranean Partnership"; by Mr. Amre Moussa, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, on "The Barcelona Process and EU Strategic Partnership with the Mediterranean Countries"; and by Mr. Fouad EL MUBAZA'A, President of the Tunisian Chamber of Deputies on "Views of Mediterranean Partners Regarding the EU Strategic Partnership". A debate followed each statement and showed the great interest

of EMPA Members in the Barcelona Process and their keenness on imparting fresh momentum to the Process in the run-up to the 10th Anniversary of the signing of the Barcelona Declaration.

- 5- The Working Sitting of EMPA was held in the afternoon of 14 March. The Chairpersons of the three Standing Committees of EMPA presented the Final Reports of their respective committees to the EMPA Plenary. Mr. Tragott Schofthaler, Executive Director of the “Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for Dialogue Between Cultures” made a statement before the Plenary.
- 6- The general debate at the Plenary focused on the main theme of the First Session: “The EU Strategic Partnership with the Mediterranean and the Middle East, and European Neighbourhood Policy”, and on the Final Reports of the Standing Committees.
- 7- The debates on the statements made at the inaugural sitting, and the general debate at the working sitting allowed participants to:

(a) Emphasize the centrality of the Barcelona Process as the main instrument for partnership and dialogue between the Euro-Mediterranean Partners.

(b) Welcome the decision of Euro-Mediterranean Foreign Ministers in the Hague on 30 November 2004 that 2005 will be the Year of the Mediterranean.

(c) Welcome the Arab League Tunis Declaration on “The Drive of Development, Modernisation and Reform” as the Arab Mediterranean partners’ overarching framework for their efforts at pursuing political, economic, social and educational reforms and for their cooperation with international partners in support for those efforts.

(d) Welcome the progress made in developing the European Neighbourhood policy, as a policy to enhance the Barcelona Process, provided it does not eclipse either the principles - equality, co-responsibility, mutual respect, solidarity and cooperation - or the multilateral framework of Barcelona.

(e) Stress the importance they attach to the extraordinary Euro-Mediterranean Conference which will celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Barcelona Process in November 2005, and to the substantive contribution of EMPA to this Conference.

(f) Recall the principles undertaken in the Barcelona Declaration, *inter alia*, that Euro-Mediterranean Partners should “Refrain, in accordance with the rules of international law, from any direct or indirect intervention in the internal affairs of another partner; Respect the sovereign equality and all rights inherent in their sovereignty; Develop the rule of law and democracy in their political systems, while recognising in this framework the right of each of them to choose and freely develop its own political, socio-cultural, economic and judicial system”.

(g) Parliamentary debate is based on a free and frank exchange of views on political matters; the Rule of Law and Democracy are the principles governing this.

(h) Underline the principle of co-ownership of the Barcelona Process and the often-repeated request of Mediterranean Partners to participate fully in the

formulation and implementation of policies and programmes within the framework of the Barcelona Process.

(i) Praises in this regard the introduction of clauses on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in forthcoming agreements and actions plans; underlines that such measures should be implemented by all partners without exception in order to render the Mediterranean a zone free of weapons of mass destruction.

(j) Call on the European Union to enhance its efforts to ensure that the financial resources allocated to the Mediterranean region in the framework of the 2007-2013 financial perspectives reach the necessary volume to enable the pursuit of economic and social modernisation in the Mediterranean Partner countries.

(k) Reaffirm their commitment to a negotiated solution agreed between the parties to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in accordance with the Road Map and the Sharm El-Sheikh understandings and commend Egypt on convening that meeting; reiterate that a just, lasting and comprehensive peace, in accordance with relevant UN resolutions, the terms of reference of the

Madrid conference, and the principle of land for peace, should guide the negotiations towards the two-state solution, and that a comprehensive peace must include Syria and Lebanon.

(l) Call on the European Union to play a more pronounced political role in the peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, given the strategic, political, security, economic and cultural interests of the EU in the region, and the positive impact of peace on Euro-Mediterranean relations as a whole.

(m) Invite all Iraqi parties to participate fully and actively in the ongoing political process, and in the formulation of an Iraqi constitution that meets the aspirations of the Iraqi people in a democratic system, and in a free, peaceful, sovereign, unified and prosperous Iraq.

(n) Call for the utilization of all means to encourage and facilitate the flow of European direct investment into the Mediterranean region.

(o) Underline the necessity for financial and technical assistance, easier access of Mediterranean agricultural and industrial exports to EU markets, and practical translation of facilitating benefit from

the four freedoms by Mediterranean Partners into actions, in accordance with the Commission's communication of 11 March 2003, and in the run-up to the completion of the Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area by 2010.

(p) Call on the EMPA committees to examine the proposal for setting up a civil protection mechanism combating natural and man-made disasters and submit proposals after appropriate consultations and opinions from national experts of the signatory states of Barcelona process and from the European Commission and Council of the European Union including, inter alia, the implementation of an early warning system for civil protection in the Mediterranean and the Atlantic.

(q) Emphasize the importance of the role of the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for Dialogue between Cultures in promoting mutual understanding between the Euro-Mediterranean peoples, in eliminating prejudices and stereotypes, in enhancing pluralism and respect for "The Other", in projecting the common heritage of the

Euro-Mediterranean region, and in deepening the role of the civil society and non-governmental

organizations as boosters for development, modernisation, reform and mutual understanding and respect.

- 8- The closing sitting was held in the morning of 15 March 2005. The sitting voted on the amendments and adopted the Final Resolution of the First Session (Text annexed).
- 9- Mr. Josep Borrell Fontelles, President of the European Parliament made closing comments at the closing session. Dr. Ahmed Fathi Sorour, President of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly made a closing statement and handed over the Presidency of EMPA to Mr. Josep Borrell Fontelles, President of the European Parliament, who will assume the Presidency as of 23 March 2005 for one year.
- 10- The participants expressed their sincere thanks to the Arab Republic of Egypt and to the People's Assembly for their hospitality and the excellent organisation of the First Session of EMPA. They extended special thanks and appreciation to Dr. Ahmed Fathi Sorour, President of EMPA for his dedicated efforts during the term of his Presidency and for the wise manner in which he steered the proceedings of the First Session of EMPA. They noted with pleasure the invitation from the European

Parliament to host the second session of EMPA in Brussels, and the envisaged extraordinary session in order to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Barcelona Process which, preferably, should take place in the Mediterranean partner region.

11- The Assembly instructed its President to forward this Declaration, together with the annexes thereto, to the presidents of the parliaments and the governments of the 35 members of the Barcelona Process, to those of Libya, Mauritania, Romania and Bulgaria as well as to the EU and other participating institutions.