

**CONCLUSIONS FOR THE
VIIth EURO-MEDITERRANEAN CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
(LUXEMBOURG, 30-31 MAY 2005)**

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The VIIth Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Luxembourg on 30-31 May ('Barcelona VII') allowed Ministers to assess what has been achieved so far and to discuss general guidelines for the future of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, thus preparing the way for the Extraordinary High Level Meeting that will be held in Barcelona on 27-28 November in order to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Partnership and define a set of actions for the future. These two events constitute the political highlights of the "Year of the Mediterranean".

The adoption of the Barcelona Declaration on November 28, 1995 marked a turning-point in relations between the European Union and its neighbours on the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean. A partnership was launched which is unique in its scope. The Barcelona Declaration set out medium and long-term goals to be achieved on a basis of joint ownership, dialogue and cooperation.

The Hague Ministerial Meeting, which took place in November 2004, agreed that a comprehensive review of the process should be submitted to Ministers in Luxembourg for approval, which should provide the basis for decisions on the future of the process, to be adopted at the Extraordinary Meeting in Barcelona.

II. REVIEW OF THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN PARTNERSHIP

2. Senior Officials have conducted a review of the ten years of the Barcelona Process based on input from a number of different sources. The Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly has adopted various resolutions at its first plenary session from 12-15 March 2005 in Cairo. Arab partners have circulated a paper with their views which has provided a very useful contribution to the exercise and reinforced the sense of joint ownership. Other partners also have submitted ideas and suggestions. The Commission has issued its Communication entitled "A work programme to meet the challenges of the next five years", which includes an assessment of the achievements during the past ten years. The EuroMeSCo and FEMISE networks of Euro-Mediterranean policy institutes have carried out their own assessments, entitled "Towards a Euro-Mediterranean Community of Democratic States" and "The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, 10 Years After Barcelona: Achievements and Perspectives". The Euromed Non-Governmental Platform has also presented its ideas, which were developed at the Civil Forum in Luxembourg from 1-3 April 2005. The present document contains an overall assessment highlighting the main achievements and shortcomings of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, while its Annex proceeds to a more detailed description of actions undertaken under the three chapters (political, economic, social) of the Barcelona Declaration since the Ministerial Meeting in The Hague.

3. The result of this review process is a mixed picture. While there are many positive achievements, much remains to be done in order to realise the full potential of the Barcelona Declaration. Indeed, while the world has undergone major changes, while the European Union's enlargement has added new positive elements to the Partnership and while the Union's institutions have continued to evolve, the Barcelona Declaration is still the cornerstone of the Partnership and is actually more relevant than ever. Its vast potential is far from being exhausted and sets the objectives for many

years to come. The centrality of the Barcelona Process is a unanimously accepted principle, as shown by the strong attachment of all partners to this special relationship. Indeed, one of its most fundamental achievements is an enhanced climate of trust that has been created through a systematic and structured dialogue and cooperation over the years, thus enabling partners to develop a better understanding of each other.

4. At the institutional level of the Partnership, substantial progress has been made. Whereas all Association Agreements have been negotiated and whereas most are in force, some still need to be signed and/or ratified. Once the signature with Syria is confirmed, all Association Agreements will be in place. The Association Councils and Committees meet regularly and a series of technical sub-committees ensures practical implementation. This structure also provides a solid basis for the implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy, which enhances the Barcelona Process. Multilaterally, Ministers, senior officials and experts meet regularly both at the general coordinating level (Foreign Ministries) and in a wide range of sectors and agree on the main areas of their cooperation. The process has also been a catalyst to encourage coordination among the partners themselves. Compared to 1995, Euro-Mediterranean relations now have a solid framework where only an intermittent pattern of contacts existed before. European public administrations attach more importance to the Mediterranean than before and public administrations in all Mediterranean partners have significantly increased their awareness of the process of European integration and its importance to them; contacts among the administrations of the Mediterranean partners themselves have also increased. Some additional progress has been made in asserting joint ownership of the process, for example through co-chairmanship of sectoral Ministerial meetings, closer consultations on the outcome of Ministerial meetings as well as the co-development of the Neighbourhood Policy.

5. A very positive achievement in this context is the establishment of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA) which is to be welcomed both as a contribution to democracy and as evidence of the successful implementation of the policy of joint ownership. Following the successful EMPA inaugural meeting, held in Athens on 22-23 March 2004, the EMPA has now formed its 3 committees and a first successful plenary session was held in Cairo from March 12-15, 2005. The Presidency was represented at this meeting by its Minister Delegate of Foreign Affairs and has been in close contact with the EMPA's Presidency and Secretariat in order to develop proper institutional links.

6. A major breakthrough has been achieved with the setting up of the "Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures." It is the first common institution of the Barcelona Process financed with contributions from all the Partner countries and the Commission. It is an original creation and acts as a Network of Networks (35 national networks) established by the partners, thus giving civil society in the region an important role to play. Its objective is to promote the dialogue between all the cultures of the region and to contribute to the visibility of the Partnership through intellectual, cultural and civil society exchanges. Ministers welcomed its successful inauguration on April 20 in Alexandria as well as the fact that after a very short start up period, it is now fully operational with an adopted three-year action plan, budget for its first year of operation, agreed administrative and financial procedures, as well as most of its staff recruited.

7. Awareness of the partnership among civil society has progressed and has led to the setting up of a non-governmental Euromed Platform at the recent Civil Forum in Luxembourg. The adoption of a Charter as well as the election of a representative Board have helped to structure the activities of an independent civil society and should provide a better interface with the official activities of the partnership in the future. Networking among civil societies both North-South and South-South has been reinforced, exchanges of people have increased, particularly among youth, and cooperation

has developed among NGOs in areas as diverse as human rights, the environment, sustainable development, cultural heritage, women's empowerment, as well as among trade unions, business organisations, Social and Economic Councils etc.

8. Building on the achievements of the Barcelona Process, and based on the principle of co-ownership and differentiation, the European Neighbourhood Policy should reinforce existing forms of cooperation within the Euromed framework with the objective of offering Partners a stake in the EU internal market and the possibility to participate in EU programmes and policies on the basis of the fulfilment of jointly agreed priorities, reflecting shared values and joint policy objectives. It will enhance the Barcelona Process and bring it forward, also in its regional dimension, provided that care is taken to ensure that all partners are advancing towards compatible overall objectives. Various action plans with partner countries have already been concluded, while others are in a preparatory phase. One of the main goals of the ENP is to support and promote reform efforts based on national plans and priorities of the respective Mediterranean Partners. Thus, the bilateral Action Plans concluded so far set out an ambitious agenda for gradual regulatory convergence with the EU.

9. Political and security cooperation at official level has grown although the pace has been slower than hoped for. The partnership has not had any direct effect on the major unresolved conflicts in the region. However, it has been possible to put into place a number of partnership building measures and a more flexible approach (bilateral or sub-regional) has been adopted. Dialogue has been initiated on concrete endeavours in the framework of working groups. In February, the groundwork has been laid for an early warning system against tidal waves in the Mediterranean. Substantial discussions have taken place in order to start a dialogue and cooperation on mine action and de-mining in the Partner Countries and to prepare a seminar in this regard.

10. While Mediterranean partners have embraced the objective of reform, progress has been uneven. Ministers welcomed the growing momentum for reform, deepening democracy and consolidating the rule of law in the Mediterranean partner countries. Ministers also noted actions on human rights and democracy within the Mediterranean countries. Ministers reiterated their full commitment to the realisation of all the goals in the Barcelona Declaration, namely turning the Mediterranean basin into an area of dialogue, exchange and cooperation guaranteeing peace, stability and prosperity, strengthening democracy and respect for human rights, securing a balanced economic and social development, adopting measures to combat poverty and promotion of greater understanding between cultures. Overall, the Barcelona Process has led to the creation of a structure of cooperation and partnership building measures. At the end of 2003, institutionalised or informal Human Rights dialogues have been initiated with several Partners and in the context of the European Neighbourhood Policy, action plans concluded so far containing mutually agreed priorities for cooperation in the field of the promotion of human rights are being developed with those countries which have already ratified the Association Agreements. The National and Regional Indicative Programmes 2005-2006 in some partner countries provide support for the objectives of strengthening Human Rights, civil society, democracy, as well as, in some cases, cooperation and technical and other kinds of assistance to modernise the judicial sector.

11. Today, in an increasingly globalised world, the EU remains the main partner of Mediterranean countries both in trade of goods and services. This is a mutually beneficial partnership. More than 50% of the trade of the region is with the EU, and for some countries the EU represents the destination of more than 70% of their exports. Mediterranean partners are progressively opening their markets, thus allowing for an increase in EU exports. Europe is the largest direct foreign investor and the EU is the region's largest provider of financial assistance and funding, with nearly € 3 billion per year in loans and grants. The EU is also the main source of tourism and the first destination for migrants.

12. The creation of an area of shared prosperity continues to be a central objective of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. Some essential groundwork has been laid. Partners have made considerable progress on macroeconomic stability and the liberalisation of trade in goods is largely on schedule. A new dimension of the Partnership has been added with the establishment in 2002 of the FEMIP (Facility for the Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership) in the framework of the European Investment Bank with its substantial financial transfers, its institutional framework and its valuable action on microeconomic matters.

Under the MEDA programme a comprehensive array of programmes has been developed covering all aspects of the partnership. Though mainly bilateral, it also has an important regional dimension and has provided support for economic transition, a better socio-economic balance and regional integration. Through the MEDA I and MEDA II programmes, more than € 9,7 billion have been allocated and grant support is now over €800 million per year.

In recent years substantial progress has been made on speeding up project and programme implementation, notably because of the radical overhaul of the Commission's assistance programming. These results have gone hand in hand with improved ownership by the Partners, a deepened Partnership, and better follow-up, owing to devolution. Decision-making is now mainly in the hands of actors on the ground. One of the reasons for this good performance is that sector reform programmes in support of economic and social reforms have become the pillar of financial co-operation under MEDA. As technical assistance continues to make genuine contributions to the development process in the Mediterranean partner countries, it remains an instrument for making institutional development happen.

Although financial and technical assistance has made a positive contribution to the development process in the Mediterranean partner countries, it has not been possible to realise all of the economic objectives embodied in the Barcelona Declaration.

In the South-South trade dimension, the most significant development was the signing in February 2004 of the Agadir Free Trade Agreement between Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia. Other FTAs have been concluded between Mediterranean countries, thus reflecting the progress made in regional integration in the Mediterranean area.

13. Despite these positive developments, Ministers noted that progress in the liberalisation process has been slow in some important areas. Though most Association agreements have now been put in place between the EU and the Mediterranean partners, the process of creating a truly regional market remains to be completed, notably in order to facilitate the attraction of FDI. Intra-regional trade in the southern Mediterranean is currently below 15% of the total, and expected to increase with the entry into force of the Agadir Agreement and the implementation of the Pan-euromed cumulation system.

14. Since the inception of the Partnership, important work has also been done in many other areas, like the Environment and Sustainable Development, Industrial and Business Cooperation, Transport, Energy, Information and Communication technology, Education and Vocational Training, Cultural Heritage, Audiovisual, Justice and Home Affairs, Youth Exchanges, Social Issues, Science and Technology etc, as is reflected in the annex of the Commission's communication of 12 April 2005.

15. While the Barcelona Declaration and its overall approach remain valid, progress towards a number of the goals set out in it has been slow. The Barcelona Process remains however the central instrument for partnership and dialogue for the Mediterranean, which in its turn will lead to achieving the objectives of the political, social and economic development plans and reforms

generated from within the societies concerned as also stipulated in the Statement of the Arab Summit in Tunis in 2004 “On The Drive for Development and Modernization in The Region”, reaffirmed in the Algiers Summit in 2005, as well as in the EU Strategic Partnership with the Mediterranean and the Middle East. The UNDP Arab Human Development Reports and the Declarations of Sana’a and Alexandria are to be noted.

III. ORIENTATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

16. In light of the main ideas produced in the review, Ministers considered the need to upgrade the activities of the Partnership, taking into account the opportunities provided by the European Neighbourhood Policy in order to bring it closer to the people. Turkey’s special situation as a candidate country, as well as a member of the EMP was acknowledged. While recognising the comprehensive character of the partnership, as encompassed in its three chapters, Ministers recommended that particular focus be placed on a selected number of activities to be jointly agreed where the pace should be speeded up and where action should be more result-oriented, in particular in the fields of peace, security, stability, good governance and democracy; sustainable economic development and reform; education and socio-cultural exchanges; as well as justice, security, migration and social integration.

17. In order to increase prosperity and security and create a better quality of life in the region and in view of the Tenth Anniversary Euromed Event in November 2005, Ministers mandated Senior Officials to consider establishing agreed targets in the above-mentioned fields.

18. As progress is made in the implementation of commitments to common values as contained in the Association Agreements and ENP Action Plans concluded so far, partners should become more and more involved in EU programmes. The provision of adequate financial resources should be considered, taking into account the importance attached to the southern Mediterranean countries. The European Neighbourhood Policy, which will be supported by the proposed European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, will build on the experience of MEDA and will envisage new forms of co-operation.

19. Ministers agreed that the working methods of the Partnership need to be improved. Ministers decided to maintain the practice of one formal Ministerial Conference at the level of Ministers of Foreign Affairs every 18 months, with one informal session in between. In this context, partners should endeavour to jointly formulate conclusions for the Ministerial meetings. Ministers also instructed the Euromed Committee to reinforce its coordination and review function in order to ensure implementation of the adopted priorities.

1. Peace, Security, Stability, Good governance and Democracy

20. The review shows that unresolved conflicts are affecting progress in the partnership. This is particularly true of the Arab- Israeli conflict. Since the last Euromed Ministerial meeting in The Hague, there have however been encouraging signs of progress. Ministers expressed satisfaction regarding the commitments made by both parties at the summit of Sharm el Sheikh, including to stop all acts of violence. Ministers stressed the need for both parties to fully implement their commitments according to the understanding of Sharm el Sheikh. They welcomed bases laid out for a peaceful and negotiated settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Ministers reaffirmed that no party should take unilateral measures which might prejudice the outcome of negotiations on a final settlement.

The Barcelona Process provides an important contribution to promoting progress and to furthering mutual understanding, even if it is not the forum in which a settlement will be reached. Ministers recalled their attachment to the Road Map and underlined the central and unified role of the Quartet. They called for the rapid implementation of the Road Map and encouraged the parties to continue on the path of direct dialogue and negotiation in the fulfilment of the vision of two states, a safe and secure Israel and a viable, sovereign, contiguous, democratic Palestine, living side by side in peace and security. Final status issues, including border issues, have to be agreed by the two parties.

Ministers recalled that a just, lasting and comprehensive peace should be based on the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, the terms of reference of the Madrid Conference and the principle of land for peace. They also noted the importance of the Arab Peace Initiative.

Ministers also called for the reinvigoration of efforts to promote progress in the peace process on all tracks, Palestinian, Syrian and Lebanese.

Ministers reiterated that the decision by the Israeli government to withdraw from Gaza and parts of the Northern West Bank would, within parameters as formulated by the EU, represent a significant step towards the implementation of the Road Map. The economic viability of the Palestinian Territories was considered crucial in this respect. Ministers welcomed to this effect the appointment of the Special Envoy of the Quartet for Disengagement and pledged their support to the success of this mission.

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership should provide continued support for cooperation among the parties, particularly in the industrial and economic sectors, to complement the political process.

21. Ministers underlined the importance of the establishment of a peaceful, secure and stable Euromed region, which is underpinned by sustainable development, rule of law, democracy and human rights. The Euromed Partners are encouraged to consider how to make progress in these areas, including developing policies to promote gender equality, pluralism, institution building and how to better associate and engage social partners and civil society, as well as encourage its development, while adhering in accordance with the rules of international law, to the principle of non-intervention, directly or indirectly, in the internal affairs of another partner and while recognising the specificity of each society. An important issue in this respect, is to strive towards common perceptions of the challenges of democratisation; the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly can contribute to this goal. In light of Ministers' discussions, and in view of the Tenth Anniversary Euromed Event in November 2005, Ministers mandated Senior Officials to consider establishing possible agreed objectives in those areas.

Ministers sought to continue actively to promote the role of women in society, north and south of the Mediterranean, as agreed by the Mid-term Meeting of Euro-Mediterranean Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Dublin, 5-6 May 2004.

Furthermore, Senior Officials could also reflect on how to deepen the political dialogue. An element for discussion could be *inter alia* the possibility of developing, on a voluntary basis, joint cooperation and exchange of experience in the field of elections, upon request of the concerned country.

22. Ministers underlined that Libya should be included in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. They encouraged the Libyan authorities to take the steps required to join and take note of ongoing consultations in view of addressing outstanding issues.

23. Ministers took note of the application presented by the Islamic Republic of Mauritania to join the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, which will be given due consideration.

24. The fight against terrorism is another important element of the political and security partnership. Progress has been made in strengthening cooperation among police and other authorities and this will be further developed under the second phase of the regional cooperation programme in the field of justice; but more should be done to build the confidence necessary to step up exchanges of information on the threat from terrorist organisations and individuals. State-to-state cooperation has proved important, but should be reinforced by mutually agreed measures to tackle the global threat of terrorism. Ministers underlined the importance to adopt all relevant UN Conventions and to fully implement the commitments pertaining to the ones they have ratified, as well as those commitments which derive from UN Security Council Resolutions concerning the fight against terrorism. In this context, Ministers also encouraged the signature, ratification and implementation of the recently agreed Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. They reiterated their commitment to a fruitful dialogue to develop a comprehensive approach in dealing with terrorism and welcomed the successful meeting of May 18 in this respect.

Serious terrorist attacks have hit Euro-Mediterranean countries, but regional dialogue is too often beset by disagreements on definitions. In this context, Ministers supported the joint efforts with a view to reaching the largest possible consensus on the text of a comprehensive Convention on Combating Terrorism. Ministers agreed to pursue the parallel tracks of greater practical cooperation and political dialogue on the fight against terrorism.

25. Ministers noted that consultations are ongoing, with the assistance of the Personal representative of HR Solana on non-proliferation of WMD, in order to reach the necessary agreement on the Terms of Reference and modalities for the organisation of the ad hoc meeting on WMD in the Mediterranean region, in accordance with principles enshrined in the Barcelona Declaration.

26. In light of the successful meeting between Senior officials and the PSC troika of April 11 2005, Ministers stressed the importance to develop and deepen dialogue on ESDP on a regional, sub-regional or bilateral basis with a view to improving awareness of opportunities for cooperating on civil protection, conflict prevention and crisis management activities, such as the forthcoming seminar due to be held in Athens in June 2005.

Ministers reiterated their support to existing partnership building measures which have been successfully pursued under the MEDA programme, notably the Malta seminars, the EuroMeSCO network of foreign policy institutes and cooperation on civil protection, in particular under the current Euromed intermediate Bridge project 2005-2007, waiting for the implementation of a long term project.

2. Sustainable Economic Development and Reform

27. Ministers reflected on how to reduce the economic gap between the northern and southern rim of the Mediterranean by defining ways to deepen north-south and south-south economic integration. In order to meet the goal of achieving a Euromed Free Trade Area by 2010 and in view of the Euromed Tenth Anniversary Event in November, Ministers mandated Senior Officials to consider defining economic reform and growth objectives to increase prosperity and provide a better quality of life in the Mediterranean Region through effective development and job creation. These objectives should focus on, amongst other issues, strengthening relevant legal systems, further trade integration including South-South integration, further diversification of trade, ensuring that the skills of the work force meet the demands of private sector companies, developing a Euromed

transport network, establishing a Euromed energy market, encouraging environmentally sustainable economic development, facilitating access to each other's markets, as well as increasing FDI.

a) A comprehensive trade approach to reach the 2010 goal of a Euromed Free Trade Area

28. Ministers recommended the elaboration of a road-map for the creation of a Free Trade Area by 2010, including the liberalisation of services and establishment, the liberalisation of trade in agriculture, processed agricultural and fisheries products, taking into account the differences and individual characteristics of the agricultural sector in different countries and building on existing bilateral and regional free trade agreements, including the Agadir agreement, as well as on the pan Euro-Med protocol of origin.

29. The objective of liberalisation of trade in services and the discussion on the right of establishment is provided for by the Association Agreements with all the EU's Mediterranean partners. It constitutes a priority for achieving a free trade area in the Euro-Mediterranean region. Ministers agreed to embark on a new chapter of integration by engaging negotiations on a voluntary basis, taking into account the conclusions of the Istanbul meeting of July 2004, notably the paragraph concerning the non-binding Framework Protocol on Services.

Ministers noted that the pace of foreign and domestic direct investment in the partner countries is too slow. Increasing integration of the Mediterranean partner countries and cooperation among themselves should have a positive impact on attracting domestic and foreign direct investment. Efforts undertaken by the Mediterranean Partners to address the absence of a large regional market, the lack of sufficient legal security and the simplification of bureaucratic procedures should be supported. Ministers agreed that the implementation of the Barcelona Declaration should contribute to a substantive increase in the level of FDI to the region.

30. On the basis of the work done by the sectoral Senior Officials meetings on agriculture in Brussels and Rabat, Ministers agreed to recommend to the competent Ministers the adoption of a road map for trade liberalisation in agricultural, processed agricultural products and fisheries providing for continuing liberalisation with a selected number of exceptions and timetables for gradual implementation consistent with the provisions and objectives of the Association Agreements and Article XXIV of the GATT. Accompanying measures providing for the structural, institutional, legal and administrative support necessary in order to ease access to export markets should be considered; measures of co-operation and technical assistance in the sanitary and phytosanitary sectors should also be taken into consideration. This would be accompanied by a commitment to the launching of a regional cooperation programme on rural development, in light of the Ministerial statement in Venice, consistent with the objectives of the Barcelona Declaration and the Neighbourhood Policy and with a view to aligning the liberalisation of trade in agriculture and fisheries with 2010 Free Trade Area objectives. Ministers discussed the opportunity of support measures in order to balance out the effects of the structural changes in the affected sectors.

31. Approximation of technical legislation in the area of standards and conformity assessment bears an important potential in terms of trade facilitation, investment attraction and, eventually, integration of the economies. The objective is to promote trade by aligning standards and technical requirements, reducing costs related to duplicative testing and certification and thus facilitate market access. Work to harmonise economic legislation has already started on the basis of the work programme adopted at the Euromed Trade Ministerial Conference of Palermo (July 2003) and a number of important steps towards eventual harmonisation and/or mutual recognition of trade-related standards across the Euromed region have been achieved.

32. Ministers recognised that the expansion of South-South trade links in the region is of vital economic interest for the Mediterranean countries. In order to achieve a fully fledged free trade area in the Euromed region by the agreed deadline of 2010, it is necessary that many more agreements be concluded and existing ones upgraded. Ministers advocated that the Mediterranean countries should accelerate the conclusion of Free Trade Agreements between themselves. These FTAs will enable the implementation of the pan-Euromed cumulation of origin. This system of cumulation of origin presupposes in effect the existence of preferential relations between the partners involved. The pan-Euromed cumulation of origin should bring substantial benefit to partners.

b) New Methodology for Cooperation

33. Ministers agreed that EU regional policy could serve, among other policies, as a source of inspiration for regional development in Mediterranean countries, in collaboration with the relevant regional structures. Provided adequate management structures are put in place, the Commission should examine whether the methodology of EU regional policy instruments could be applied in pilot-regions in the South of the Mediterranean from 2007, also taking into account the aim of South-South and cross-border cooperation, as well as cooperation between regions. The regions would be identified in consultation with all interested partners. Such decentralised action would represent a reinforcement of the partnership approach and would help the development of a structural policy originating from the Southern partners themselves. Ministers welcomed the Commission's intention to supply technical assistance to all interested partner countries in order to prepare the way, from 2005 onwards, to a regional development policy according to these methods. This methodology could also be used to promote cooperation between regions of different countries as part of South-South cooperation and cooperation across borders.

c) A sound macroeconomic environment

34. A healthy macroeconomic environment, through appropriate fiscal and monetary policies, needs to be maintained and accompanied by structural reforms aimed at lifting obstacles to growth, investment and job creation. Particular attention should be paid, in this context, to creating an enabling environment for businesses and improving economic governance. The key role of SMEs and other forms of business management was stressed, such as the so-called 'economía social'¹, and should be welcomed in order to pursue greater job creation. In this context, Ministers encouraged Mediterranean Partners to make full use of the Economic Dialogues provided for in the Association Agreements in order to consolidate progress in macroeconomic stabilisation and growth policies. Ministers agreed that these issues be raised at the Euro-Mediterranean ECOFIN/FEMIP Ministerial meetings that will take place in Rabat in 19-20 June 2005.

d) The role of the Euro-Mediterranean Facility for Investment

35. Major progress has been made by the EIB through the Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP), especially since it has been reinforced and is now lending to Mediterranean partners at a rate of € 2 billion per year. FEMIP's concrete contribution on specific economic areas (SMEs, Water, Transportation, Financial, Products etc.) as well as its action in risk capital should be underlined. Its success in supporting the activities of the private sector will be assessed by the end of 2006, date set by the ECOFIN Council in November 2003 to review the FEMIP mandate. Ministers noted again that the possibility of the incorporation of an EIB majority

¹ A term used to describe other forms of business management, such as cooperative enterprises, where the workers are capital owners and provide the basis for the management of the firm

owned subsidiary dedicated to the Mediterranean partner countries will be fully assessed in December 2006, on the basis on an evaluation of FEMIP's performance as agreed in the Naples Euro-Mediterranean Conference.

e) Transport

36. Developing a Euro-Mediterranean transport network based on good interconnections (between the EU and the Mediterranean Partners, and among the Mediterranean Partners themselves) and shared policy objectives is an essential precondition to make the FTA work effectively. Necessary regulatory reform and opening of markets should also be accompanied by significant infrastructure investment. Important resources for investment should be continued to be made available, including through FEMIP. Ministers welcomed the planned Euro-Mediterranean Transport Ministerial to be held in December 2005 in Marrakech with the participation of the EIB which should endorse a regional transport infrastructure network with a list of priority projects and adopt a set of recommendations in order to boost Euro-Mediterranean transport cooperation and transport sector reform in the Mediterranean partner countries.

f) Energy

37. The gradual establishment of a Euro-Mediterranean energy market plays a central role in achieving the objectives of the Barcelona Declaration and overall economic and social development in the region. With a view to developing such a market, important sub-regional projects are being pursued, such as the progressive integration of Maghreb countries' electricity markets with those of the EU, the integration of gas markets in the Mashreq region, energy projects of common interest to Israel and the Palestinian Authority and the construction of Medgaz and Arab Gas Pipeline. Ministers encouraged Ministers concerned to explore ways on how to make progress on sub-regional integration of energy markets and infrastructures. Ministers encouraged the continuation of activities being carried out by the Rome Euro-Mediterranean Energy Platform (REMEP).

g) Environment and sustainability

38. Ministers supported the successful conclusion of the drafting of the Mediterranean Strategy for sustainable development as this will become an important vehicle for mainstreaming sustainable development throughout the partnership.

The quality of life of the average citizen in the Mediterranean should be improved by launching an initiative for the de-pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by 2020. The goal should be to tackle all the major sources of pollution including industrial emissions, municipal waste and particularly urban wastewater. This initiative would improve the prospects for the development of tourism, contribute towards stemming the decline in local fishery stocks as well as providing safe drinking water to millions of citizens. Ministers encouraged the mobilisation of financial resources to support Euro-Mediterranean countries in that respect.

h) Information and Communications Technology

39. Cooperation in the field of Information and Communications Technology is and will continue to be an important contributing factor to the sustainable growth of the Mediterranean region. Ministers encouraged the intensification of cooperation in this field, including in particular the implementation of the concrete actions agreed by Ministers in Dundalk, Ireland on 10-11 April 2005. Ministers expressed their intention to cooperate and contribute to the success of the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society to be held in Tunis from 16th to 18th

November 2005. They expressed their support for joint Euromed cooperation in this framework

i) Industrial Cooperation

40. Ministers discussed ways and means to reinforce industrial cooperation, as decided by the Fifth Euromed Ministerial Conference on Industry (Caserta, 3-4 October 2004), with a view to tackle the challenges of competitiveness in an increasingly globalised context, especially for sectors that are highly at risk. Acknowledging the vital role of research and development, they underlined the importance of facilitating access to information, technology transfer and networks, as well as increasing links between universities and enterprises.

3. Education and Socio-Cultural Exchanges

a) Education and vocational training

41. Ministers acknowledged the paramount importance of the development of education and vocational training for the economic and social development of the Mediterranean countries. For this purpose, the Commission has € 704 million in ongoing support programmes in the Mediterranean Partner Countries under the current MEDA programme for 2000-2006. Ministers discussed the possibility of a significant increase in funds devoted to these sectors. Ministers stressed that any cooperation in the area of education should be based on the ownership of the Partner governments.

They also underlined the principle of equality: it implies a special emphasis on underprivileged groups such as illiterate populations, girl-students and populations in rural and suburban areas. Ministers agreed on a more strategic approach to support the efforts of the Mediterranean Partners on education reform. This means support for institutional modernisation that will help Mediterranean Partners raise standards and quality of education at all levels, especially primary and secondary, drastically reduce adult illiteracy and better prepare students for the workplace in a competitive economic environment within a developing knowledge economy. Ministers mandated Senior Officials to consider setting education targets and objectives, in line with the UN Millennium Development Goals, in these areas at the Euromed Tenth Anniversary Event.

Ministers stressed that the aim of the Partnership should be to improve the quality, relevance and effectiveness of education and vocational training in order to fulfil the objectives of the Millennium Development Goals, i.e. by 2015: eradication of illiteracy in the region, all girls and boys enrolled in primary school and the elimination of gender disparity at all levels of education, requiring a particular effort to ensure the participation of women in education at all levels. Ministers stressed the importance of promoting programmes and initiatives promoting education for tolerance and pluralism, aimed at improving understanding between the peoples of the region.

Ministers also supported the efforts of modernisation of the systems and the extension of access to information and communications technology in education on the basis of the recommendations made by the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial meeting on the Information and Communications Technology held in Dundalk.

In this context, Ministers recognised the role of the *Anna Lindh Foundation*, which, with the

support from existing regional programmes, could set up virtual networks of schools and Universities in the Euromed Region.

b) Mobility in Higher Education

42. Since 2002, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership has adopted a number of initiatives in the area of mobility and academic contacts in order to improve mutual understanding and awareness at the formative stage. Following the Valencia Ministerial Conference in 2002, it was agreed to extend the Tempus programme to Mediterranean Partners and to enhance cooperation under the Euro-Mediterranean Youth programme. These activities are complementary to the support to systemic reforms. Partners have agreed to pursue socio-cultural and educational exchanges. Ministers noted the Commission's intention to strengthen in 2006 the existing mobility programmes by launching a substantial scheme of scholarships for university students and professors co-funded by the Commission and host countries within the Euro-Mediterranean region.

To facilitate exchange of people between the EU and partner countries, Ministers recommended working together to develop a system of recognition of both academic and vocational qualifications. In order to achieve this, partner countries could consider a generic university qualification across the region that would be recognised in the EU and internationally.

c) Civil Society

43. Civil society has a role to play in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. The Luxembourg Civil Forum has contributed to the establishment of a platform which holds potential for the future. Further efforts to broaden and diversify civil society in the framework of the Barcelona Process should be encouraged through increased networking as well as people-to-people contacts. Ministers noted the recommendations contained in the Final Declaration of the 2005 Civil Forum and encouraged reaching an agreement on mechanisms to strengthen its presence in the partnership. The Anna Lindh Foundation has an important role to play in promoting and activating civil society.

d) Culture

44. Furthermore, the opportunities offered by the common cultural, historical and environmental heritage should be adequately utilised for promoting and strengthening exchanges in all the interrelated sectors. In this context, Ministers recognised the role of the *Anna Lindh Foundation* in the field of culture. Also, the importance of the Euromed Audiovisual, Heritage and Youth Programmes is a clear signal of the relevance of pursuing dialogue among partners in this field.

e) Regional and local authorities

45. Taking into account the need to bring the Partnership closer to citizens' concerns and of the increasing importance of the cities and regions in the Euro-Mediterranean partner countries, Ministers recalled that the local and regional authorities need to be more closely involved in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership to take stock of their common challenges, and exchange experiences and best practices.

f) Visibility of the Partnership

46. The tenth anniversary and the celebration of 2005 as the Year of the Mediterranean provide a major opportunity to address the need for increased visibility by developing a sustained strategy of

activities and events to raise awareness. As agreed at the last Foreign Ministers meeting in The Hague, effective communication depends on the convergence of the messages transmitted by all partners. Partners should be urged to mobilise governmental and non-governmental channels to achieve this.

The Euro-Mediterranean Partners have launched a region-wide campaign called Euro-med Dialogue designed to raise awareness and understanding of the EU and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, and create a sense of shared vision and local ownership.

Improving visibility requires a number of jointly agreed, clear and consistent messages to be addressed to the man and woman in the street using the most effective means of communication and dissemination. In this context, Ministers welcomed the recent adoption of the Euromed logo and encourage its systematic use to label Euromed activities.

4. Justice, Security, Migration and Social Integration

47. The adoption in Valencia of the regional framework document and the subsequent implementation of the corresponding regional programme have represented a real step forward, which also encouraged cooperation at bilateral level. New programmes and actions aiming at encouraging reform of and co-operation between judicial authorities, the facilitation of the resolution of family conflicts; combating organised crime, drugs and terrorism, and ensuring a joint approach to the management of migratory flows should now be realised. The role played by the Association Agreements and Neighbourhood Action Plans, notably thanks to the institutional dialogue taking place in the “justice and security” subcommittees and “migration and social affairs” working groups that have been created so far, is particularly important. Twinning between the EU and Mediterranean partners’ administrations has proven to be particularly useful in this specific area and should be further promoted. Building on the Valencia regional framework document and the subsequent corresponding regional programmes, Ministers mandated Senior Officials to consider establishing targets and objectives in this area.

48. Migration and social integration of migrants is a central issue of the Euromed Partnership. Partners should agree on a strategic approach that aims to optimise the benefits of migration for all partners. Such an approach would include intensified cooperation aimed at encouraging cooperation programmes with countries of origin of potential migrants. Ministers examined the possibility to hold specific Ministerial meetings prepared in advance by relevant Senior Officials meetings. Association Agreements and Neighbourhood Action Plans will help in promoting joint management of the movement of people as well as the integration of migrants. Efforts need to continue to foster integration within the host country, including through intensifying the fight against discrimination and social exclusion. The new ENPI can be used to promote a comprehensive approach including cross-border cooperation among the partners and between them and the countries of origin. All aspects should be taken into account, including the fight against racism and xenophobia as well as a study of the labour markets in the EU and in partner countries. Ministers agreed that a regional strategy against racism, xenophobia and intolerance should be designed in the framework of the partnership instruments, including the Anna Lindh Foundation.

49. In light of the common problem of illegal migration to the EU, characterised by human suffering and tragedy, there is a need for intensified co-operation that addresses root causes as well as negative effects of illegal migration, including transit migration. This co-operation should involve all aspects of illegal migration, such as the negotiation of re-admission agreements, the fight against human trafficking and related networks as well as other forms of illegal migration, border management and migration related capacity building.

ANNEX

Overview of recent developments in the Barcelona Process

This annex contains a detailed overview of recent developments in the Barcelona process. A wide range of activities took place, demonstrating the breadth of the co-operation between the EU and its Mediterranean partners both at the bilateral and regional level. While this overview lists the activities that took place between The Hague Ministerial Meeting of November 2004 and the Luxembourg Barcelona VII Conference of May 2005, a more detailed description of activities in the Barcelona Process since 1995 has been provided by the Commission in the Annex of its Communication on the Tenth Anniversary of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

Association Agreements

1. Ratification of the Agreements with Lebanon and Algeria are well advanced. Lebanon has ratified the Association Agreement with the EU in late 2002. On 31 March 2005, Algeria completed the ratification procedure for its Association Agreement which was signed in Valencia in 2002. Ratification by all EU Member States' Parliaments is about to be completed. Negotiations with Syria have been concluded. Association Councils and Committees are held regularly under the Agreements in force. Since the beginning of the Luxembourg Presidency, the following meetings took place:

- The 5th EU-Tunisia Association Council meeting was held on 31 January 2005 in Brussels.
- The 4th EU-Israel Association Committee was held on 14 April 2005 in Jerusalem.
- The 3rd EC-PLO Joint Committee was held on 11 May 2005 in Brussels.

2. Furthermore, the following Subcommittee meetings took place:

- The EU-Jordan Subcommittee on Agriculture and Fisheries was held on 11 January 2005 in Brussels.
- The EU-Jordan Research and Innovation Subcommittee met on 13 February 2005 in Amman, followed by the Subcommittees on Industry, Trade, Services and Investment promotion, as well as on Internal Market issues on 14-15 February, also in Amman.
- The EU-Morocco Justice and Security Subcommittee held its 2nd meeting on 25 February 2005 in Rabat (with a view inter alia to examine how to implement the Neighbourhood action Plan in the same area).
- The EU-Tunisia Subcommittee on Industry, Trade and Services met on 1 March in Tunis.
- The EU-Morocco Subcommittee on Agriculture and Fisheries held its first meeting on 16 and 17 March 2005 in Rabat.
- The EU-Morocco 1st Internal Market Subcommittee met on 25 April 2005 in Brussels.

European neighbourhood Policy

3. Consultations with Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian Authority for Action Plans have been finalised in December 2004. The first Action Plans under the ENP (Israel, Jordan, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority and Tunisia) were approved by the Commission on 9 December 2004, and endorsed by the EU Council on 13-14 December 2004. They aim at helping the promotion of democracy, good governance, the rule of law and human rights as well as support for economic modernisation. The plans, building on the existing Association Agreements, provide an agenda for work with the EU for the next 3 to 5 years. The implementation of the Action Plans will be taken forward to a large extent by the subcommittees set up in the framework of the Association Agreements.

Euro-Mediterranean Assembly

4. The first Plenary Session of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA) was held from 12 to 15 March 2005 in Cairo. Delegations from the 35 Euro-Mediterranean Member states' Parliaments and the European Parliament emphasised the centrality of the Barcelona Process as the main instrument for partnership and dialogue between the Euro-Mediterranean Partners. In their Final Declaration, participants to this consultative Assembly welcomed the progress made in developing the European Neighbourhood Policy as a policy to enhance the Barcelona Process. They called on the EU to play a more pronounced political role in the peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. They also called for all means to be used to facilitate European direct investment in the Mediterranean region. In addition, participants called on the EMPA Committees to examine the proposal for setting up a civil protection mechanism including an early warning system, as well as that of a working group on the issue of mines in the region. The Assembly endorsed the setting up of a working party within the EMPA on the Middle East conflict, as proposed by the Political Committee.

Human Rights and democratisation

5. The EU Council of Ministers on 2 December 2004 adopted a Regulation extending until the end of 2006, EU support to the development and consolidation of democracy and respect for human rights in third countries with Euro 134 million for aid programs worldwide, including Mediterranean partners.

Political and Security Cooperation

6. The political and security dialogue was pursued at the regular meetings of the Senior Officials of the Barcelona Process and covered a wide range of issues of concern to all partners. They included a successful meeting on ESDP on 11 April 2005, aiming at furthering dialogue in this field. A seminar on this issue was agreed to be held in Athens on 27-29 June 2005. Active consultations with a view to organising an ad hoc meeting on disarmament and non-proliferation of WMD in the Middle East were pursued by the personal representative of the HR/SG Ms Annalisa Giannella as well as the EU Presidency. The informal ad hoc Group on Partnership building measures met on 9 February in Brussels: work with a view to hold a seminar on de-mining has started; the setting up of an early warning system against tidal waves in the Mediterranean was discussed; it was agreed to use ongoing cooperation on civil protection, with a view to the drawing up of emergency and contingency plans through the holding of a seminar on this issue, due to take place in Marseilles by the end of June 2005.

7. Furthermore, the existing partnership building measures under MEDA continued:

The regular Malta seminars for junior diplomats continued, with the 17th Training seminar, being held from 3-6 December 2005. The Malta seminars are held every six months and offer information and training on the Partnership and the EU institutional set-up and decision-making process for Euromed desk officers from the 35 partner countries. Work-shops have become a regular feature, allowing for an exchange of ideas and in-depth analysis of current Euromed issues.

The EuroMeSCo network of foreign policy institutes, another one of the partnership building measures within the framework of the first chapter of the Barcelona Declaration, focussed its work on a comprehensive report on the re-launching of the Barcelona Process, entitled "Towards a Euro-Mediterranean Community of Democratic States". Its recommendations were discussed by the Euromed Senior Officials as a contribution to the ongoing work in the run-up to the Luxembourg and Barcelona Conferences.

Civil protection activities under the intermediate bridging project 2005-2007 (proposed by France, Italy, Egypt and Algeria) continued with notable success, in advance of the implementation of a long-term project. It aimed to build gradually on the successful completion of the "pilot project for the creation of a "Euro-Mediterranean System of Mitigation, Prevention and Management of Natural and Man-Made Disasters", intended to contribute to improving trust by promoting cooperation and interaction between the different authorities and institutions concerned. It addresses the prevention and management of disasters, bringing together prevention, risk reduction, response capability (including pre-disaster planning), response capabilities in an emergency, post emergency rehabilitation and reconstruction. It includes seminars and training courses, exchanges of experts, reinforcement of sub-regional cooperation, technical assistance, operational assistance where needed, activation of the network of National Civil Protection Schools, Headquarters exercise and preparation of the long-term project.

Justice Freedom and Security

8. At the bilateral level, the Association Agreements progressively started including provisions on Justice, Liberty and Security, reflected in the implementation of ENP action plans concluded so far, which contain sections referring to legal systems, corruption, asylum, migration, the movement of people, readmission, border controls, the fight against organised crime including human trafficking, drugs, money laundering and the financing of terrorism, as well as policing and legal co-operation.

9. At the regional level, the Euromed Justice programme covering the justice, police and migration sectors continued its activities aiming at allowing experts and trainers from the Euromed countries to work together in judicial co-operation, civil and penal matters, fight against terrorism, drugs and organised crime and in a joint approach to migration. Those activities have involved the European Institute of Public Administration in Maastricht, the European Police College (CEPOL) and the European University Institute-Robert Schumann Centre in Florence. Thus:

- the second part of the Euromed Justice Programme was launched on 20 December 2004, in Brussels, aiming at creating an inter-professional community of magistrates, lawyers and legal practitioners in the framework of an open and modern justice service, strengthening the rule of law and the effective implementation of human rights.
- The 5th Training Seminar on EU Basics for Mediterranean Civil Servants took place from 14 to 18 March 2005, in Brussels, as part of the "Training of Public Administrations" Regional Programme.

Information and Communications Technology

10. The Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) took place on 10-11 April in Dundalk, Ireland. The meeting was organised by the Irish Government, in co-operation with the Luxembourg Presidency of the EU and the European Commission. In their final Declaration, Ministers recognised the need to intensify co-operation in this field and stressed that this was in line with the goal of establishing a Euromed free-trade area by 2010. Ministers envisaged setting up a Working Group on the Information Society entrusted with creating a continuing dialogue in this area. They agreed to exchange knowledge and experience on network security, consumer protection, and privacy-related issues. They considered that e-Government should be a priority area for assistance to Mediterranean Partners. They agreed to encourage a Euromed initiative on promoting greater use of ICT in education. They planned to review current Euromed co-operation, including MEDA projects, managed by the European Commission's EuropeAid Co-operation Office and Commission Delegations in the region. Lastly, they agreed to develop a joint strategy for development to allow the Mediterranean Partners to fully benefit from the positive effects of ICT.

11. The first International Conference for the EUMEDIS Regional Programme (Euro-Mediterranean Information Society) took place on 17-18 April 2005 in Jordan. The conference allowed participants to take stock of results, exchange experiences and increase the visibility of the programme and its pilot projects inter alia, EMISPHER (tele-medicine), MEDNETU distance learning).

Trade

12. The EU and the Mediterranean partners pursued the objective of setting up the Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade areas with concrete activities:

- Senior officials from the Southern Partners and the Commission met on 4-5 April in Rabat to discuss the liberalisation of trade in agriculture. In their conclusions, they recommended that Ministers in Luxembourg on 30-31 May adopt the Euro-Mediterranean Road Map for Agriculture, the main achievement of the meeting.
- The 3rd ANIMA Webmasters seminar took place from 6 to 10 December 2004, in Marseilles, with the aim to analyse the existing IPA (Investment Promotion Agencies) websites and provide recommendations for future improvements. Equally, a regional seminar on "Tailoring the offer to Investors Needs" was held from 7 to 10 December, in Ankara.
- The launching meeting for the Euro-Mediterranean Industrial Co-operation Dialogue on Textiles and Clothing took place on 13 December, in Brussels, at Senior Officials level; this meeting was held against the background of the phasing out of the multi-fibre agreement in January 2005 (concerning import quotas on textile and clothing products). Senior Officials of the 10 Mediterranean partners, 17 EU Member States, Bulgaria and Romania recognised the need for strategic industrial synergies and complementarities to be developed jointly in order to respond to the increasing competitive challenge from other parts of the world.
- The 2nd meeting of the Euromed Working Group on rules of origin took place on 15 December 2004, in Brussels, and provided an opportunity for participating countries to inform each other where they stand with the introduction of the Pan-Euro-Med protocol on rules of origin in their free trade agreements.
- A Euro-Mediterranean Investment Summit was held on 13-14 January 2005, in Marseilles, which gathered decision makers from both sides of the Mediterranean and

discussed practical ways to boost investment in the Mediterranean region.

Financial Cooperation

13. The experts Committee of FEMIP met in Luxembourg on 7-8 March, and recommended a number of steps for modernising financial markets to the FEMIP Ministerial Committee, due to meet in Morocco on 20 June 2005.

14. On the 9th December 2004, the first “local” office of the Facility for the Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP) was officially inaugurated in Tunis. The EIB’s increased presence in the field began with the opening of the Cairo “regional” office, the first EIB office outside the EU, in October 2003

15. Statistics of Budgetary implementation for the Mediterranean area in 2004 were released on 11 January by the Commission. Credit commitments in 2004 were worth more than 1 billion Euro and payments over 1.1 billion. Payments of the MEDA Programme alone stood at over 800 million Euro while commitments were at 700 million (payment/commitment ratio of 115%). MEDA II covers the period 2000-2006 and amounts €5.35 billion. In 2004 alone, payments under MEDA were practically as high as the amounts paid out under the whole MEDA I programme between 1995 and 1999.

Other Economic issues

16. The 9th Seminar of Experts on Economic Transition took place on 11 and 12 April in Brussels. In advance of the 10th anniversary of the Barcelona Process, this year’s seminar focussed on the economic achievements of the Partnership and the Association Agreements. On the occasion, the European Commission’s Directorate General for Economic and Financial Affairs published a document entitled «10 years of Barcelona Process: taking stock of economic progress in EU Mediterranean Partners».

17. The 5th meeting of the Euro-Mediterranean Transport Forum took place on 21-22 December 2004 in Brussels, at Senior Officials level. It reviewed the state of play of the infrastructure project whose activities are incorporated in the work of the High-level Group for the Extension of the Trans-European Transport network to the new neighbourhood countries; they discussed the possibility of holding the first Euro-Mediterranean Transport Ministerial Conference in late 2005. Furthermore, the Forum was updated on the two new Euromed Transport activities, Euromed GNSS (Global Navigation Satellite System or GALILEO) and the maritime safety project (SAFEMED).

18. The Working Group on Euro-Mediterranean Industrial co-operation met on 1-2 February 2005 in Brussels, and discussed the follow-up to the Euro-Med Charter for Enterprise.

19. A seminar on Water in the Euro-Mediterranean region was held on 15-17 March 2005, in Marseilles, and gathered industrialists, representatives of local authorities and experts to discuss the challenge of water for the region, at the Hydrotop Scientific and Technical Seminar organised in partnership with with the Euro-Med Water Information System (EMWIS), part of the MEDA Water Regional Programme.

Sustainability

20. A Workshop on Mainstreaming the Environment in Sectoral Policies, at expert level, took place on 27-28 January 2005, in Rabat, under the SMAP ("Short and Medium Term Priority Environmental Programme"). It discussed the mechanisms through which sustainable development goals can be effectively promoted in different policy areas at national level and to encourage cross-

sectoral thinking.

Dialogue between Cultures

21. The Anna Lindh Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures was officially inaugurated in Alexandria on 20 April, 2005. The Foundation will seek to promote dialogue between cultures and contribute to the visibility of the Barcelona Process through intellectual and cultural exchanges, notably by acting as a network of networks of the 35 Partners and reinforcing the role of civil society.

Civil Forum

22. The Euromed Civil Forum took place in Luxembourg 1-3 April 2005, and was the first to be prepared and organised by the Euromed Non-governmental platform. It gathered 350 participants representing the civil society of 42 countries. Its conclusions underline the need for public policies to take into account human rights, gender equality, rights of migrants, asylum seekers, the respect of international law in the resolution of conflicts, employment policies, sustainable development, environment, cultural diversity, and the fight against poverty and Aids.

Youth, Education and Culture

23. In the framework of the ENP, partners have agreed to pursue socio-cultural and educational exchanges as complementary to systemic reforms.

24. The Euro-Mediterranean Youth Platform held its 3rd Targeted Meeting from 25 to 28 February 2005, in Gammarth, Tunisia. This event aimed at increasing the participation of young people from EU countries least present in Euro-Mediterranean youth activities.

Co-operation between Cities

25. The Eurocities network of 121 European cities, which has a Euro-Mediterranean Working Group, met on 19 April in Brussels in the European Parliament premises and presented its position on the future of the Barcelona Process and the role of the region's cities. It urged governments and EU institutions to acknowledge cities as partners in Euro-Mediterranean relations and within the ENP.

Visibility

26. Increased visibility of the Barcelona process has been an issue of much debate during this period. The tenth anniversary and the celebration of 2005 as the Year of the Mediterranean both provided the opportunity to discuss in depth a sustained strategy of activities and events to raise awareness. The Hague ministerial conclusions stressed the need to aim at a convergence of messages transmitted by all partners. The Commission has already presented Partners with a detailed list of information and communication actions planned on a regional and national basis, which continued to be discussed.

The Euro-Med Dialogue, established with the full agreement and cooperation of Member States and Partner countries, will include over 200 hours of TV programmes on a major Arabic satellite TV channel. There will be dedicated TV programmes on national TV (and/or radio) channels in up to 5 of the MEDA countries and live events on the occasion of the November Barcelona 10 celebrations. Press supplements and editorial coverage in mainstream national press in up to 7 of the MEDA

countries, is expected.

To encourage and support the communications effort to the journalist community, a series of activities will be carried out, including the convening of a first Euro-Mediterranean senior journalists' conference. These efforts will considerably increase the visibility of the Barcelona Process and facilitate the public awareness of what has been done since 1995.

Preparation of the 10th Anniversary of the Barcelona Declaration

27. The preparation of the tenth anniversary was already called for at The Hague ministerial; during the period under review, the following contributions were discussed by the Euromed Committee:

- The EuroMeSCo Report which assesses 10 years of the Barcelona Process
- An Economic Assessment of 10 Years of Barcelona drawn up by the Euro-Mediterranean Forum of Economic Institutes (FEMISE)
- The Commission Communication on the 10th Anniversary of the Euromed Partnership which includes a 5 Year Work Programme
- The contribution by the Arab Group in the Euromed Senior Officials on the evaluation and enhancement of the Barcelona Process
- A UK contribution on the future of the Barcelona Process
- A German contribution: "Deepening the Euro-Mediterranean Political Dialogue".
- A Greek contribution: "The future of the Euro-Mediterranean co-operation".
- A Turkish contribution: "Turkey's Views on the Future of the Euromed Process"
- The resolution of the Euro-Med Assembly on the assessment of the Barcelona Process on the eve of its tenth anniversary.