



Amman, 14 March 2010

RECOMMENDATION

of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly

Proposed by Eduardo Cabrita, Chairman of the Committee on Improving Quality of Life, Exchanges between Civil Societies and Culture, on:

1. ‘Our common history: culture and education (Euro-Mediterranean University/EMUNI and Erasmus Mundus programme)’

Rapporteurs:

Guido Milana (European Parliament)

Carmen Romero López (European Parliament)

2. ‘Our common sea: its conservation, sustainability, transport, tourism, fisheries and aquaculture’

Rapporteur:

Ioannis Kasoulides (European Parliament)

The Committee on Improving Quality of Life, Exchanges between Civil Societies and Culture of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly,

- having regard to the Barcelona Declaration establishing a Euro-Mediterranean Partnership which was adopted at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs held in Barcelona on 27 and 28 November 1995,
- having regard to the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council entitled ‘Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean’ (COM(2008)0319),
- having regard to the Cairo Declaration adopted at the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Higher Education and Scientific Research, held in Cairo on 18 June 2007,
- having regard to the approval of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean by the Brussels European Council of 13 and 14 March 2008,
- having regard to the conclusions of the Third Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers of Culture, held in Athens on 29 and 30 May 2008, and advocating the devising of a Euro-Mediterranean Cultural Strategy,
- having regard to the Declaration adopted by the Bureau of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA) in Paris on 12 July 2008 and the EMPA Recommendation adopted on 13 October 2008 and forwarded to the First Meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean, held on 13 October 2008,
- having regard to the Barcelona Convention of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and its various protocols which constitute the main multilateral framework for environmental cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean region,
- having regard to the National Action Plans (NAPs) devised to implement the Protocol on land-based sources of pollution to the Barcelona Convention and adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention in 2005,
- having regard to the Horizon 2020 initiative for the depollution of the Mediterranean and, in particular, to its four components: pollution reduction investment projects; capacity-building measures to help neighbouring countries create environmental administrations; developing and sharing knowledge of environmental issues; and developing indicators to monitor the progress achieved in the implementation of the Horizon 2020 initiative,
- having regard to the Third Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on the Environment, held in Cairo on 20 November 2006, which resulted in the establishment of a Steering Group (SG) whose remit was to provide a platform for the discussion of Euro-Mediterranean environmental policy developments and offer overall guidance or advice to the appropriate Euro-Mediterranean fora,
- having regard to the Second Meeting of the Horizon 2020 Steering Group, held in Tunis in June 2008, which culminated in measures being taken to monitor the progress of each action identified in the Cairo road map,

- having regard to the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) initiative where the depollution of the Mediterranean constitutes one of six priority areas supported by the Euro-Mediterranean Heads of State and Government at the Summit held to launch the UfM in Paris in July 2008,
- having regard to the Final Declaration of the Meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the UfM, held in Marseilles on 3 and 4 November 2008, at which a number of key initiatives were launched such as the depollution of the Mediterranean, maritime and land highways, civil protection and the development of alternative sources of energy under the Mediterranean Solar Plan,

On ‘Our common history: culture and education (Mediterranean University and Erasmus Mundus programme)’

1. Calls on the member states of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the European Commission to develop the potential of Action 2 of the Erasmus Mundus programme by making specific lots available to the Mediterranean countries and to provide facilities to ensure the quality and comparability of higher education and provide greater support for cooperation between universities;
2. Takes the view that the specific financial allocation for the Mediterranean area should be increased, even though the budget for the Tempus and Erasmus Mundus programmes (Action 2) has been set until 2013;
3. Deems it essential to promote the Erasmus Mundus programme among the universities on the southern shore of the Mediterranean and to improve the profile, visibility and accessibility thereof, since this constitutes the key element in the education of a new generation and in the promotion of equal opportunities, with the result that more students from Mediterranean countries would take part in this programme;
4. Recommends that the technical assistance provided locally to Euro-Mediterranean universities be increased, since that would lead to an improvement in the quality of the applications and requests for admission to the Erasmus Mundus programme;
5. Stresses the key role given by the UfM to the EMUNI in bringing together the North and South of the Mediterranean through culture and education and in strengthening cooperation in higher education, research, training and exchanges between universities on the two shores of the Mediterranean; welcomes the EMPA’s commitment to this objective with the creation of the working party on the EMUNI which will monitor its activities and help it in its task of establishing a Euro-Mediterranean area of higher education, science and research;
6. Considers it essential for the acquisition of competence in the languages of the Mediterranean countries to be improved in order to facilitate educational and cultural cooperation and to promote the Euro-Mediterranean Higher Education Area and, in this connection, for greater emphasis to be given to translation as a means of ensuring access to creative works and ideas and as an essential element of cultural dialogue and understanding between nations;
7. Recommends that an assessment should be made of the needs that the countries would have to address in order to increase the number of their students taking part in the

Erasmus Mundus programme on the basis, for example, of a reasoned study of applications, carried out by the European Commission, with that institution being given appropriate access to admission statistics;

8. Recommends that consideration be given to the possibility of increasing the number of visas granted between Partnership countries with a view to facilitating the mobility of students, teachers and researchers in particular in order to achieve a genuine exchange of ideas and knowledge;
9. Advocates that synergies should be actively sought between the various programmes in the fields of education, research and culture in the Mediterranean region;
10. Emphasises that the Erasmus Mundus programme should ensure, in the medium term, that educational programmes between European and Mediterranean universities are brought more closely into line, since that would result in more students taking part in such programmes;
11. Recommends that universities' capacities be developed to promote distance learning programmes and technological cooperation and that coordination should be strengthened between the various networks of national cultural institutes, such as the Instituto Cervantes, the Institut Camões, the Alliance Française, the Goethe Institut and the Dante Alighieri Cultural Centre, particularly with a view to establishing a Euro-Mediterranean Institute where students might study the languages of the region;
12. Recommends that the financial resources of the Anna Lindh Foundation should be increased so as to improve its capacity to act in the field of culture and considers, in this connection, that an award to celebrate Euro-Mediterranean literature, painting and cinema might be instituted by the MEDA (Euro-Mediterranean Partnership) fund and managed by the Foundation;
13. Considers that additional incentives should be given to audiovisual cooperation, which serves, in particular, to promote cultural diversity and mutual understanding in the Euro-Mediterranean region;
14. Takes the view that mutual understanding and tolerance between the peoples of the Mediterranean could be strengthened by the teaching of the history of civilisations and of the various regions;
15. Considers that the cultural heritage of the member countries of the UfM, as a vehicle of identity, must be preserved and expresses its concern at the Israeli decision to list sites in Hebron, Bethlehem and Jerusalem as Israeli cultural heritage sites;
16. Recommends that an instrument be set up for the promotion of cooperation and exchange links between local authorities and supports in this connection the Euro-Mediterranean Assembly of Local and Regional Authorities (ARLEM) which was recently set up;

On 'Our common sea: its conservation, sustainability, transport, tourism, fisheries and aquaculture'

Conservation and sustainability:

17. Urges the Euro-Mediterranean states to ratify at an early date the new Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the Mediterranean (ICZM Protocol) to the Barcelona Convention;
18. Calls on Jordan, which shares the Dead Sea with Israel, to sign the Barcelona Convention and its six Protocols (Barcelona system);
19. Calls on the Israeli, Jordanian and Palestinian authorities, in view of the international cultural and religious symbolism of the Jordan Basin and the immediate need to preserve it, to submit an official request to UNESCO to ensure that the entire valley be recognised as a world heritage site so as to safeguard and protect this unique region;
20. Suggests that a Euro-Mediterranean instrument, one which establishes common standards for better management of urban development along the Mediterranean coast and which might take the form of a protocol to the Barcelona Convention, should be adopted by the Euro-Mediterranean states;
21. Calls on the Euro-Mediterranean states to establish their Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) so as to ensure maximum protection;
22. Calls on the Euro-Mediterranean states to support proposals for large-scale projects such as the Desertec project, which aims to connect several large solar thermal power plants as well as other renewable energy plants (wind farms) to each other and to the grid that supplies electricity to North Africa, Europe and the Middle East in order to meet a large part of the energy needs of the producer countries and provide 15% (initially) of Europe's electricity needs, whilst simultaneously making the process of water desalination a more viable solution to the problem of lack of drinking water caused by drought;
23. Calls for the energy and environmental impact of desalination operations using water from the Mediterranean Sea to be assessed, measured and monitored by both the European Commission and the Euro-Mediterranean states;
24. Is concerned that several Mediterranean coastal areas are having to face a serious challenge in ensuring freshwater extraction and believes that this is partly because of technological advances that have helped lower the cost of groundwater extraction and led, in some cases, to the uncontrolled over-exploitation of this finite natural resource;
25. Emphasises that the combination of legal and illegal freshwater extraction has transformed naturally dry landscapes into heavily irrigated areas that have a short life-span and has immediate consequences on the long-term degradation of precious resources such as soil and water;

Transport:

26. Takes the view that the progress that has been made on the actions proposed by the Euro-Mediterranean Transport Forum (Brussels, 29 and 30 May 2007) should be assessed and that a follow-up study should be undertaken to evaluate their implementation;
27. Proposes the establishment of a Euro-Mediterranean Monitoring Centre for Mediterranean Maritime Transport;

28. Calls on the Euro-Mediterranean states to comply with the instruments of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) relating to maritime transport;
29. Calls on the UfM states to take into account the risks and dangers linked to the lack of controls on industrial concentrations and energy infrastructures and thus on maritime traffic;
30. Asks the Secretariat of the UfM, once it has been established, to keep it regularly informed of the implementation of projects such as the Motorways of the Sea (MoS);

Tourism:

31. Deems it essential for national strategies to be adopted that promote responsibility for the effects of tourism in the Mediterranean by integrating innovative techniques for the management and reuse of water in hotels, which are major consumers of this resource;
32. Recommends that the cultural and natural heritage of the Mediterranean be upgraded by the encouragement of responsible ecotourism through the establishment of new tourist routes and the provision of financial support to 'sustainable' tourism projects;

Fisheries and aquaculture:

33. Calls for the establishment, as a matter of urgency, of an operational framework for the regulation and monitoring of fisheries and aquaculture in the Mediterranean Sea, since marine biodiversity in the Mediterranean is currently in an alarming state;
34. Calls on the countries on the southern shore of the Mediterranean to continue to ratify the Protocol concerning specially protected areas and biological diversity in the Mediterranean;
35. Supports the creation of a specific framework of standards and incentives for the establishment of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the Mediterranean;
36. Recommends that traditional Mediterranean fisheries should be encouraged in order to ensure their continued existence;
37. Calls for a strengthening of regional cooperation on the exchange of information and statistics on the state of the resource in the Mediterranean and on fisheries and aquaculture activities in the region;

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38. Instructs its President to forward this Recommendation to the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the European Commission, the Euro-Mediterranean Ministers for Culture, Education and the Environment in preparation for future ministerial meetings, the Secretary-General of the Union for the Mediterranean and the appropriate institutions of the member countries of the UfM.