

Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean obtains observer status in the International Organization for Migration on the initiative of the Portuguese Parliament

The International Organization for Migration, which works with the United Nations, decided, at the 105th Session of the Council which took place in Geneva in November, to accord observer status to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean. The status was requested, for the first time, by the President of the Assembly of the Republic, since the Portuguese Parliament holds the Presidency of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean and established the theme of migration for the year of its mandate, focusing particularly on migration in the Mediterranean region.

During this year of the Portuguese Presidency, the Parliamentary Assembly has invited the major actors in the migration field to its Bureau meetings. The International Organization for Migration, the mayors of municipalities that serve as transit and receiving locations for immigrants, Ceuta, Melilla, Lampedusa and others, have shared their experiences and proposals.

In October this year, the Portuguese Presidency organized a ceremony in Lampedusa to pay homage to those who have died crossing the Mediterranean. Also in Lampedusa, it organized a conference on the theme, with the Italian Parliament and the European Parliament, which was preceded by a discussion with members of the victims' families. Some will be invited to the next major conference, which will take place in Lisbon in February and will include leaders of the European institutions.

Before the conference, the Bureau will meet at the Assembly of the Republic on 9 December, and will hear more statements by political actors from transit locations.