

SEMDOC

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affairs in the European Union

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TRANSMISSION NOTE

Subject: Follow-up to the Barcelona Conference

- **16th meeting of the Euro-Mediterranean Committee for the Barcelona Process: summary of proceedings (Brussels, 8 June 1999)**
- **17th meeting of Senior Officials (Brussels, 7 June 1999)**

1. Delegations of the Member States of the European Union and its Mediterranean partners will find attached for information the summary record prepared by the Council Secretariat on its own responsibility of the sixteenth meeting of the Euro-Mediterranean Committee for the Barcelona Process which was held in Brussels on 8 June 1999.

2. Following the procedure agreed by the Euro-Mediterranean Committee at its meeting on 26 February 1998, the Secretariat has drafted an informal record of operational decisions adopted by the Senior Officials on 7 June 1999. This record, drawn up by the Secretariat on its own responsibility for the information of delegations, covers only operational decisions adopted by the Senior Officials and does not, therefore, include an exhaustive report on the discussions and proceedings of the meeting. The record is given in Annex I.

1. The sixteenth meeting of the Euro-Mediterranean Committee for the Barcelona Process was held in Brussels on 8 June 1999. The meeting was chaired by Mr Christoph HEUSGEN. The task of the Committee, as agreed in the Barcelona Declaration and reaffirmed by the Malta and Stuttgart ministerial conclusions, is to prepare for the Foreign Ministers' meeting, to review the Barcelona Process and evaluate all aspects of its follow-up, and to update the work programme. A list of the participants is attached (Annex II).
2. The agenda consisted of the following items:
 - Item 1: Evaluation of and follow-up to the Third Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting held at Stuttgart (15 and 16 April 1999)
 - Item 2: Update and approval of the programme of priority actions on the basis of the June 1999 edition of the Commission timetable, and examination of new initiatives on the basis of the forms distributed to delegations
 - Item 3: Exchange of views on the improvement of methodology for regional projects
 - Item 4: Assessment of main activities since the last meeting of the Committee
 - Euro-Mediterranean Transport Forum (Malta, 23-24 March)
 - 6th meeting of the Monitoring Committee on RTD cooperation (Bremen, 18-20 April)
 - Medstat Directors' Committee (Lugano, 26 April)
 - Technical seminar on information, training and tourism promotion (Nice, 11-12 May)
 - Information Society Forum (Palma de Mallorca, 21-23 May)
 - Item 5: Other business

Item 1 on the agenda: Evaluation of and follow-up to the Third Euro-Mediterranean meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs held at Stuttgart (15 and 16 April 1999)

The Presidency underlined that the Stuttgart meeting had been a success, despite the difficult political context of the peace process. The meeting had confirmed that the Partnership was a solid and viable instrument which had now acquired irreversible momentum. The meeting had given the Partnership new impetus, and marked a development towards a more action-oriented transition stage in the Partnership.

To guide the future work of the Committee, the Commission presented a table showing, section by section, the list of priority actions to be implemented following the conclusions of the Stuttgart meeting. It was agreed that, on the basis of remarks made by delegations, a definitive list would be drawn up by the General Secretariat of the Council. Several participants asked the Commission for some clarification on the transition from MEDA I to MEDA II.

Syria, on behalf of the Arab group, made a general statement in which it pointed out that, in Stuttgart, Ministers had underlined the need to achieve durable and balanced economic and social development, the fundamental importance of cooperation and regional integration, and the key role of financial cooperation for the Partnership, notably MEDA II, where the sums involved had to be increased and the procedures simplified in order to bring about maximum transparency.

Item 2 on the agenda: **Update and approval of the programme of priority actions on the basis of the June 1999 edition of the Commission timetable, and examination of new initiatives on the basis of the forms distributed to delegations**

(a) The Committee approved the following new initiatives:

- A plan by Spain for a meeting of representatives of public administration (15/99 REV 1) to be held in Barcelona on 29 and 30 November 1999.
- A plan by Belgium, co-sponsored by Portugal, the Palestinian Authority, Morocco, Egypt, Tunisia and Cyprus, for a meeting on the promotion of women in development (16/99) to be held in Brussels in February 2000.
- A plan by the United Kingdom for a meeting on the social impact of free trade (17/99) to be held in November 1999 at Wilton Park. The UK delegation undertook to take up the remarks presented by Tunisia on this initiative.
- A plan by Cyprus, co-sponsored by Portugal, to organise a third Euro-Mediterranean meeting of Industry Ministers (18/99) which would be held in Cyprus in April 2000. The Turkish delegation indicated that it would contribute actively to preparations for this meeting, but that it would not be able to participate unless the venue were changed. The Jordanian delegation, while recording agreement on the contents of the initiative, said that it would not be able to co-sponsor it.

(b) Other initiatives examined by the Committee:

- A plan by Morocco for a Euro-Mediterranean women's forum (19/99); the Presidency pointed out that there was a risk of duplication with the Belgian initiative and asked them to examine how they related to one another, to see if links could be established between the two projects;
- plans presented by Egypt relating to locusts, to the mobilisation of European nationals of Mediterranean origin and to the Arab free trade area; the Committee took note that new contacts with the Commission were required to clarify them further, and that the Committee would come back to these subjects at a future meeting;
- a plan by Tunisia, co-sponsored by Algeria, for the creation of a regional observatory for information about and the promotion of the participation of the private sector in the management of the environment (20/99); the Presidency took note of the preliminary positive opinion of the Committee on this initiative which had been delivered very recently (although two weeks had been judged necessary for its examination). It still needs to be the subject of consultations with the Commission, in particular to examine links with the SMAP environmental programme.

(c) The Committee reviewed the programme of priority activities on the basis of the June 1999 edition of the Commission's briefing note. Syria reminded the meeting of its difficulties in participating in certain meetings held in Arab countries.

Item 3 on the agenda: Exchange of views on the improvement of methodology for regional projects

The Presidency underlined the need to introduce more consistency, efficiency and clarity into procedures. With a view to greater efficiency in the approval of initiatives, it made the following proposals which were approved by the Committee: every initiative should comply with a standard presentation model including several elements – the contribution of the initiative to implementing the priorities of the Partnership, the originality of the initiative and the absence of duplication, estimated costs on the basis of the greatest possible efficiency and what long-term results were envisaged. It proposed that the Commission should be asked to present a model framework which would be examined by the Committee at its next meeting.

The Committee noted that, in accordance with paragraph 18 of the Stuttgart conclusions, the Commission would be transmitting, by September, a document to simplify and make more effective the methods and procedures of cooperation. This document would be examined at the next meeting of the Committee.

Item 4 on the agenda: Assessment of main activities since the last meeting of the Committee

(a) The Committee undertook an assessment of the results of the following activities:

– *Euro-Mediterranean Transport Forum*

The Commission presented the results of the Forum, which took place on Malta on 23 and 24 March (see 21/99) at Senior Official level, and which established an evolving work programme.

– *6th meeting of the Monitoring Committee on RTD cooperation*

The Presidency noted that the Committee was not yet at a stage where it could approve the conclusions of this meeting, which was held in Bremen from 18 to 20 April. Italy remarked that, while it considered the outcome to be encouraging, the conclusions still had to be subject to thorough examination. It entered a reservation on the priorities involved, judging that agro-industry and agriculture should have been included. Finally it underlined that the conclusions mentioned the selection of 21 projects to be financed by MEDA, when it had been agreed that sectoral meetings were not competent to decide which projects should be financed by MEDA. Furthermore, the contents of these projects were not known, and so it was not possible to judge whether they were consistent with priorities.

Tunisia was in favour of the creation of an RTD network as a regional support.

– *Medstat Directors' Committee*

The Commission gave an oral presentation of the results of this meeting, which was held in Lugano on 26 April, and of which a complete assessment will be made in the autumn.

– *Technical seminar on information, training and tourism promotion*

The Committee agreed to reexamine at its next meeting the results of this seminar, which was held in Nice on 11 and 12 May and of which the conclusions had not yet been finalised, with a view to studying means of developing cooperation in this area.

– *Information Society Forum*

The Commission presented the results of the Forum which was held in Palma de Mallorca from 21 to 23 May (23/99), underlining the importance of this meeting for the implementation of the EUMEDIS programme.

- (b) Jordan underlined the importance of continuing the initiatives in the health care field, particularly child development, and of following-up the two Conferences which had taken place in the Netherlands on health and social welfare. Contacts should take place with the Commission to see how to continue activities in this sector with a view to highlighting the benefits produced at a regional level.

Item 5 on the agenda: Other business

- (a) The incoming Finnish Presidency indicated the dates of Committee meetings during the second half of the year, namely 30 September and 25 November. Israel asked for the date of 30 September to be reconsidered as it coincided with a Jewish festival.
- (b) Syria, on behalf of the Arab group, renewed its request for Arabic to be used as a working language of the Committee. The Presidency repeated the arguments which it had brought forward at the last Committee meeting in Bonn, recommending that the status quo should remain. Given the Syrian request for the issue to be re-examined, the Presidency proposed to return to it at a later stage, to see if it might be possible to amend the linguistic arrangements by consensus.
- (c) The Commission presented the Committee with an information document on the results of the call for proposals for the Euro-Med audio-visual programme, for which six projects have been adopted. (22/99)
- (d) The Committee said farewell to Ambassador El-Shazli of Egypt and welcomed Ambassador Kronfol, the new coordinator for Lebanon.



EURO-MEDITERRANEAN PARTNERSHIP

17TH MEETING OF SENIOR OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE POLITICAL AND SECURITY PARTNERSHIP IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE BARCELONA PROCESS

Brussels, 7 June 1999

INFORMAL RECORD OF OPERATIONAL CONCLUSIONS

As regards partnership-building measures and in particular the follow-up to the Euro-MeSCo/Senior Officials' informal seminar held in Bonn on 20 March, Senior Officials agreed on the following lines of action:

- systematic circulation of EuroMesSCo papers/reports to Senior Officials;
- informal contacts of the Presidency with the EuroMeSCo Steering Committee;
- formulation by Senior Officials of requests for joint reports on specific subjects to be worked on by EuroMeSCo and presented to Senior Officials;
- annual joint meetings of EuroMeSCo and Senior Officials (explore possibilities of Meda funding).

BARCELONA PROCESS
SIXTEENTH MEETING OF THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN COMMITTEE

Brussels, 8 June 1999

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