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COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION  
TO THE COUNCIL AND THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

on the preparation of the Tampere Euro-Mediterranean Foreign Affairs  
Ministers Conference  
(27-28 November 2006)

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: Time to deliver

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The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: Time to deliver

1. For more than ten years the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership has been a central framework of relations between Europe and Southern Mediterranean Partners<sup>1</sup>. At the 2005 Barcelona Summit, Heads of State and Government agreed on a Five-Year Work Programme designed, among other things: to advance political dialogue and reform; tackle the regional and global threats to security and stability; support sustainable socio-economic development; accelerate moves towards a free trade area; work toward the de-pollution of the Mediterranean; increase cooperation in the field of education and culture; and address migratory flows by way of a comprehensive and integrated approach.
2. In the difficult prevailing circumstances in the Middle East, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership assumes even greater importance as an inclusive structure of regional cooperation. The violence and suffering witnessed in the Palestinian territories, Lebanon and northern Israel in the summer of 2006 have underlined the importance of reinvigorating the Peace Process. The European contribution to the implementation of UNSCR 1701 is significant, as was the EU's rapid reaction to humanitarian and environmental needs during and after the conflict. The EU's commitment to assist the Lebanese government implement necessary political, security, economic and social reforms is also significant, and provides the context for EU reconstruction and rehabilitation assistance. The Council expressed its strong will to see all parties in the region playing a constructive role in helping to implement UNSCR 1701.
3. Events in the Palestinian territories underline the importance of EU assistance in the provision of essential services to the Palestinian population, as well as the need to remain engaged on issues of movement and access. The EU has mobilised more resources than ever before to meet the urgent needs of the Palestinian people, including through the Temporary International Mechanism (TIM). This mechanism has allowed substantial resources to be channelled directly to the Palestinian people in the last few months, and it has been further extended. Recent dramatic developments also highlight the urgent need to move from violence and hatred to peace and confidence. The EU remains convinced that there are no military or unilateral solutions to the challenges in Middle East. Lasting peace and security in the region can only be ensured by a comprehensive settlement with a negotiated two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict at its core.

1. Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia, and Turkey.

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4. The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership is entering a critically important new phase, one that should see it focus on achieving the objectives agreed at the Barcelona Summit in an effort to meet the high expectations of governments and civil society. The priority of the Barcelona Process is to develop the regional dimension of a comprehensive Partnership between Europe and the Southern Mediterranean based on the result-oriented European Neighbourhood Policy. Acting in synergy with the European Neighbourhood Policy, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership remains the only regional forum where political and security dialogue among all Euro-Mediterranean partners is possible; where regional integration as a factor of stability and growth can be discussed and agreed upon; and where the regional component of strategic issues such as sustainable energy, the environmental policy, transport, poverty reduction, strengthening the role of women in society and migration can be addressed.
5. The objective of the present communication is three-fold:
  - a) reviewing the work undertaken since the 2005 Barcelona Summit;
  - b) preparing the next Conference of Euro-Mediterranean Foreign Affairs Ministers in Tampere by proposing priorities for implementation of the Five-Year Work Programme for 2007 and the Code of Conduct on Countering Terrorism; and
  - c) taking forward the issue of the working methods within the Partnership to improve the functioning of the Barcelona Process in line with the suggestions made by some EU Member States and Mediterranean Partners.

A) WORK UNDERTAKEN SINCE THE BARCELONA SUMMIT

1. The 35 partners of the Barcelona Process and the European Commission started to work on the implementation of the Five-Year Work Programme immediately after the Barcelona Summit. Being the first year of implementation, 2006 is therefore a critical year.
2. Under the Austrian Presidency, in the first half of the year, Partners held the Ministerial Conference on Trade in Marrakech on 24 March where they reviewed the implementation of the Palermo Action Plan, confirmed further trade liberalisation efforts notably South-South and, most importantly, launched negotiations on services and right of establishment. Later in the year, the Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance in Tunis (25-26 June) discussed how to improve the management of public finances, a key part of a broad agenda covering economic and financial issues. On 22-23 May 2006 in Vienna, the Presidency and the Commission jointly organised an important meeting on 'xenophobia, racism and the media' which gathered together media professionals from the Euromed region to discuss ways of addressing the problems of racism, xenophobia and hate discourse and how to encourage respect for all religions and cultures. This conference underscored the significant role that the Partnership can play in bridging cultural divides across the Mediterranean. Moreover, the yearly Economic Transition Seminar was held in Brussels on 6-7 June ("Giving the Partners a stake in the Internal Market") and a preparatory meeting for the 1<sup>st</sup> Euro-Med Conference on the role of women in

society took place in Rabat on 14-16 June. The dialogue on the information society endorsed by the 2005 Ministerial meeting in Dundalk started in April 2006, with the holding of the 1<sup>st</sup> Euro-Med Forum on Information Society.

3. In the run-up to the Tampere Conference, under the Finnish Presidency in the second half of the year, Partners will continue to work in the areas of gender equality and the role of women in society. A first Euro-Med Ministerial meeting in this area will be held in Istanbul in November 2006. In the aftermath of the Barcelona Summit which launched the Mediterranean de-pollution initiative (Horizon 2020) and subsequent discussions with the partner countries and other stakeholders in the region (civil society, business, regions and cities of the Mediterranean area), the Commission has prepared a Communication with proposals for a timetable of measures. The meeting of Euro-Med Environment Ministers scheduled for 20 November 2006 in Cairo is expected to finalise and adopt this timetable which will set out the steps for implementing Horizon 2020. Euro-Mediterranean Ministers of Industry have also met in Rhodes to agree on priority areas for economic cooperation under the European Neighbourhood Policy and to reinforce their cooperation on competitiveness, market access, innovation and investment. Partners have also continued to work on the preparation of the Euro-Med Migration Ministerial meeting with the holding of a second Senior Officials Expert meeting. The Euro-Med Energy Forum reconvened (21 September 2006) in Brussels at Directors-General level to review the progress of energy cooperation and to start to develop a Euro-Mediterranean energy strategy for the future (2007-2010 and beyond).
  4. For its part, the European Commission is preparing the National and Regional Strategy Papers and Indicative Programmes, which will provide the framework for Euro-Mediterranean national and regional financial cooperation from 2007 onwards under the new European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). From 2007, subject to formal approval, the Regional Strategy and Indicative Programme will focus principally on funding the priorities identified in the Five-Year Work Programme agreed at the Barcelona Summit.
  5. The European Commission attaches great importance to the role of civil society in the Barcelona process. The Conference of Euro-Mediterranean Foreign Affairs Ministers in Tampere will give an opportunity to the representatives of the NonGovernmental Platform to present the results of the Marrakech Civil Forum (3-5 November), the first ever to take place in a partner country. In this framework, Ministers should support the initiatives to strengthen the role and place of civil society in the Partnership including the establishment of consultation mechanisms at all levels. This could include the creation, in the near future, of national nongovernmental platforms as instruments reinforcing the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.
- B) TEN GUIDELINES FOR ACTION IN THE SECOND YEAR OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FIVE-YEAR WORK PROGRAMME
- I. Political and security dialogue
    1. Since its inception in 1995, the Barcelona Process has helped to foster cooperation on political and security issues, with several important partnership-building measures

already in place. Furthermore, Euromed partners have regularly emphasised the need to shape a culture of dialogue and cooperation to help achieve the objective of a region in peace and stability. At the same time, it is commonly agreed that since 1995, threats to the security of Euromed partners have significantly changed. These threats are nowadays less predictable, more diverse and they include issues such as terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts and organised crime. The illicit trafficking and spread of small arms and light weapons is one of the main factors in the destabilisation of states, and it is part and parcel of all the abovementioned threats. It is therefore one of the key security issues that Euromed partners are facing.

2. It is widely understood that the Barcelona Process has the potential to strengthening regional peace and security, notably through promoting universal standards, implementation of and compliance with all the relevant multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation agreements. In this context and with the support of the Presidency and the Council, the Commission encourages all Partners to work towards holding both the regional seminar on anti-personnel landmines and the ad hoc Euromed meeting on WMD and their means of delivery. Furthermore, the Commission proposes to hold a Euromed Seminar on human security issues in 2007, which could help to forge a common understanding of key regional security issues.
3. The Barcelona Process provides an important framework for deepening political dialogue, thus enabling Euromed partners to strive towards the establishment of a peaceful, secure and stable Euromed region, underpinned by sustainable development, rule of law, democracy and human rights. At the Barcelona Summit, Euromed partners agreed to reflect on deeper co-operation in the area of 'internationally agreed standards in the conduct of elections'. In this context, the Commission proposes to hold a regional Euromed seminar in 2007 on co-operation, best practices and exchange of experience in the area of elections.
4. The Commission is a strong supporter of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA), since it firmly believes that the Barcelona Process is a politically-driven process in which legislative bodies, the cornerstones of all democratic systems, are able and willing to assume an active role. The Commission remains fully committed to further reinforcing exchanges with the parliamentary body of the Barcelona Process in order to attain the ambitious objectives set at the Barcelona Summit. In this context, partners should also consider enabling technical cooperation between national parliaments.

## **11. Implementation of the Code of Conduct on Countering Terrorism**

1. Adoption of the Euromed Code of Conduct on Countering Terrorism is a significant political achievement which reflects a common awareness that the regional Euromed framework can play an essential role in sharing experience and providing an appropriate platform for enhanced co-operation. Progress has been made in increasing co-operation among police, judicial and other authorities, notably through the regional "JAI" programme. This will be further developed under the second phase of the programme. Partners should now focus on what practical steps to take to implement the jointly agreed Code of Conduct.

2. To help implement the Euromed Code of Conduct on Countering Terrorism, and in line with the latest ad hoc meetings (15 May and 16 October 2006) in the Euromed framework, the Commission proposes to hold a Euro-Mediterranean Seminar in 2007 on the role of the media in preventing incitement through effective and professional communication. The Commission proposes to use existing frameworks of dialogue and co-operation in this field, such as the 'Euromed and the Media' initiative, as input for the planned seminar. The objective is to provide policy-makers and media practitioners with a forum in which to share concrete experiences on the role of the media in this field.
3. Furthermore, in line with the Human rights provisions of the Neighbourhood Action Plans and the Code of Conduct on Countering Terrorism, the Commission also plans to hold a regional Euro-Mediterranean Seminar in 2007 on ensuring respect for human rights in the fight against terrorism in accordance with international law. The Seminar will bring together government officials, judges and lawyers, and representatives of civil society, in an attempt to draw up a series of recommendations.

### **III. A Euro-Med Area for Free Trade and Investment**

1. Further to the orientations agreed upon at the Barcelona Summit in November 2005, several initiatives have been launched in the context of the Euromed partnership to help achieve the objective of a Euromed Free Trade Area by 2010. As confirmed at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference held in Marrakech earlier this year, the agenda for 2007 will focus on the implementation of these initiatives, namely negotiations on the liberalisation of trade in services and the right of establishment, negotiations on progressive agricultural liberalisation, the establishment of a dispute-settlement mechanism and regulatory convergence. The results of the Sustainable Impact Assessment of the Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area expected for the end of 2006 will be relevant in further negotiations on trade liberalisation. To take stock of the progress made in these areas, Euro-Mediterranean Trade Ministers might envisage a Ministerial meeting in the second half of 2007.
2. On services and establishment, talks have started with seven Mediterranean partner countries (Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Authority and Tunisia). The talks are taking place at regional level in an effort to define the general principles of liberalisation common to all Mediterranean partners. Bilateral negotiations will follow in due course on specific commitments with each Mediterranean partner.
3. Concerning processed agricultural and fisheries products, negotiations on progressive liberalisation of trade based on the Rabat Roadmap (2005) have begun with a number of Mediterranean partners with a view to concluding agreements and starting to implement them, possibly by 2007. The Commission underlines the importance of progress on accompanying measures on non-tariff aspects of agricultural trade and on other issues, such as rural development, as a premise for successful and efficient implementation to the benefit of all parties. Furthermore, the Commission calls for a timely undertaking of related actions as laid down in the Neighbourhood Action Plans.

4. In order to solve disputes in the field of trade, negotiations have been launched jointly with all Mediterranean partners to agree on the establishment of a Dispute Settlement Mechanism containing specific rules of procedure to this effect.
5. The 2007-2008 work programme on Euro-Mediterranean Industrial cooperation that Ministers for Industry adopted at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference in September 2006 in Rhodes encompasses five strands: enterprise competitiveness, innovation, facilitation of trade in industrial products, dialogue on the future of the textile and clothing industry and investment.
6. Proposals for 2007-2008 to enhance enterprise competitiveness are to rally further support in Mediterranean partner countries for the Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Enterprise across all relevant sectors at national, regional and local level, seeking in particular to involve the private sector including business organisations, more closely into Charter decision making and implementation. Moreover, a number of programmes and activities conducted in the EU to promote innovation will be open to the participation of Mediterranean partners.
7. In sectors where legislation is harmonised at EU level, Mediterranean partner countries will be further encouraged to align their legislation, standards and conformity assessment procedures with the EU system with the objective of removing technical barriers to trade deriving from divergent technical rules and standards. Mediterranean partner countries will receive assistance in order to accelerate reforms and regulatory convergence, and to put in place, or upgrade, the necessary quality infrastructure and legislation, with a view to concluding Agreements on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of Industrial Products (ACAAs) in sectors of common interest as soon as conditions are met.
8. The Five-Year Work Programme provides for the establishment of an ad-hoc group to examine ways and means of enhancing investment flows across the Mediterranean region. During the first half of 2007, the Commission intends to call a first meeting of the ad hoc group in consultation with the relevant Euro-Mediterranean authorities. The objective of the ad hoc group should be to identify the structural and regulatory obstacles to inward investment in the countries of the region, to propose measures to address these obstacles including convergence towards regional best practices, and to highlight investment promotion activities. In response to the high priority Mediterranean Partners attach to investment as a cooperation sector, the Commission intends to include a cooperation programme on investment in the Regional Indicative Programme for 2007-2009.
9. In accordance with the ECOFIN Council decision of November 2003, which recommended a review of the FEMIP facility before the end of 2006, and building on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Euro-Med ECOFIN/FEMIP Ministerial Conference held in Tunis on 25-26 June 2006, the Commission and the EIB will submit a joint review report to the ECOFIN Council, which will take a decision on the future of FEMIP in November 2006. The next Euro-Med ECOFIN/FEMIP Ministerial Conference is planned for May 2007 in Cyprus.

#### IV. Energy and Transport

1. Energy and Transport issues, whose "pivotal role" in the economic dimension of the Euro- Mediterranean Partnership was already acknowledged by the 1995 Barcelona Conference, are of growing importance to Euromed partners. This was also underlined by the Presidency Conclusions of the European Council of 15 and 16 June 2006 calling for the "development and implementation of an external energy policy" for the EU, namely through "the extension of the EUs internal market in energy to its neighbours".
2. Adoption of the priorities for Euro-Mediterranean energy cooperation at the 2003 Athens and Rome Energy Ministerial Conferences, and their implementation over the period 2003-2006, was an important step towards creating a fully interconnected and integrated Euro-Mediterranean energy market. The Euro-Mediterranean Energy Forum.. held in Brussels in September 2006 agreed on recommendations for the period ahead, namely: examining the possibility of extending the sub-regional electricity initiative in the Maghreb to natural gas, and extending the sub-regional gas initiative in the Mashrek to cover electricity, provided conditions permit it; integrating energy markets in the Euro-Mediterranean and Sub-Saharan regions; and completing the necessary energy infrastructure projects. Moreover, the Forum took note of the conclusions of the European Council of March 2006 which highlighted the importance of the external aspects of the EU energy policy, including in the development of a Priority Interconnection Plan for the electricity and gas networks. The Forum also discussed the sustainable development of the energy sector and the need to diversify sources of energy supply, promote development of renewable energies and make more efficient use of energy. The next Euro-Mediterranean Energy Conference will be held in 2007 with the aim of agreeing on the priorities for energy cooperation in the period ahead.
3. The adoption of the priorities for the Euro-Mediterranean Transport cooperation at the 2006 Marrakech Transport Ministerial Conference and their implementation over the period 2007-2012 represented an important step towards the creation of an integrated multimodal Euro-Mediterranean Transport network and the implementation of the main strategic lines for future Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in the Transport sector, notably the modernisation and reform of maritime and air Transport, the strengthening of multimodal Transport, as well as the promotion of the GNSS Programme in the region. These priorities are based on the Blue Paper on Transport in the Mediterranean region, a joint document elaborated in the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Transport Forum. This paper identifies the main orientations for the development of a Euro-Mediterranean integrated Transport system in the period ahead and on the Final Report of the High Level Group on the extension of the Trans-European Transport priority axes to neighbouring countries, in particular its implications for the Mediterranean region. The Commission has significantly taken up these challenges, by launching in the last twelve months projects in the fields of civil aviation reform, as well as for the development of Mediterranean Motorways of the Sea. Furthermore, the Euro-Mediterranean Transport Forum also acted upon the Five-Year Work Programme's objective of fighting pollution in the Mediterranean by launching a three year project, SAFEMED, against maritime pollution in the region. In the coming months it is expected that the Euro-Mediterranean Transport Forum will adopt a Regional

Transport Action Plan for the next five years to implement the recommendations included in the Blue Paper and in the Final Report of the High Level Group.

## **V. Environment**

1. For 2007, implementation will start on the Horizon 2020 initiative for the depollution of the Mediterranean with the identification of priority projects for pollution reduction, and a start on the priority capacity building measures in partner countries. This work will be undertaken in close coordination between the partner countries, donors such as the EIB and the World Bank, and environmental stakeholders and networks such as UNEP/MAP and the Mediterranean Committee for Sustainable Development. The focus will also be placed on identifying priority needs in environment-related research. A steering group will be established to steer the Horizon 2020 initiative, based on indicators and a 'scorecard' to be developed jointly by the European Environment Agency, the Mediterranean Action Plan and the European Commission, with the active involvement of the countries in the region.
2. Cooperation between the Community and Mediterranean partners for the sustainable management of fisheries resources in the Mediterranean will be intensified, in particular within the relevant regional bodies (General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean and International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas), in line with the Declaration of the Ministerial Conference for the Sustainable Development of Fishery in the Mediterranean held in Venice (November 2003). Furthermore, in the framework of the open consultation process on the European Commission's Green Paper "Towards a Future Maritime Policy for the Union: A European Vision for the Oceans and Seas" partners are invited to contribute to the ongoing discussion process about new approaches for strengthening cooperation on the maritime economy, governance and resource management in particular in the Mediterranean Sea.

## **VI. Education and Social Development**

1. Education and Vocational Education and Training (VET) were high on the agenda of the Barcelona Summit. Euro-Mediterranean Heads of State and Government agreed to increase education funding significantly to boost enrolment rates, to expand and improve illiteracy eradication, especially for girls and women, and to enhance the capabilities of universities, including by encouraging networking between them and introducing a standard for university education. Some of these objectives have been successfully addressed by the Commission's Tempus and Erasmus Mundus programmes as well as through bilateral education programmes. Bilateral cooperation and Community programmes will further continue in the period ahead. Moreover, at regional level, the Commission will launch a scholarship scheme in 2007 for university students from countries covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy, and propose holding a Euro-Mediterranean Higher Education and Research Conference in 2007 to discuss higher education cooperation and standards of university education. Furthermore, the Commission will continue to support Mediterranean efforts in the field of Vocational Education and Training at regional (MEDA-Education and Training for Employment project) and bilateral level.
2. In line with the Five-Year Work Programme priorities related to sustainable socio-economic development and reform, the Commission intends to develop a more

systematic approach to cooperation in this field which constitutes a major sector for enhancing social cohesion and economic development. The Euromed framework can play a role in sharing experience and providing an appropriate platform for enhanced co-operation. Partners should now focus on how to take practical steps in order to implement the social development-related priorities as laid down in the Neighbourhood Action Plans. The Commission proposes holding in 2007 a Euromed workshop on employment policy and on practical measures to create job opportunities. In this context, a structured exchange would aim at reviewing best practices and at elaborating appropriate support to reform measures with relevant stakeholders and social partners. The proposed Workshop could pave the way for a Euro-Med Ministerial Conference on Employment to be held in 2008.

3. As part of the Five-Year Work Programme, the Commission intends to develop ~ more systematic approach to cooperation on health, which is one of the prime sectors where social cohesion and economic development can be enhanced. The Commission proposes to hold a Euromed workshop in 2007 on surveillance and control of communicable diseases. Such co-operation would serve clear mutual interests in containing health threats for the benefit of all populations on a regional basis. In this context, a structured exchange on external cooperation experiences and best practices would help to take stock of lessons learned from cooperation programmes and national efforts, to develop a common understanding of goals, objectives and terminology and to provide proper support for reform measures. The proposed workshop could pave the way for a Euro-Med Ministerial Conference on Health to be held in 2008 which could deal among other things with health systems and practical measures and activities for reconciling quality, sustainability and equity of health care.

## **VII. Strengthening the role of Women in society**

The first Euromed Ministerial Conference on strengthening the role of women in society, to be held on 14-15 November 2006 in Istanbul should adopt a Five-Year Plan of Action (2007-2011) promoting the full participation of women in the economic, political and social life of the Euro-Mediterranean region. All Euro-Med partners should commit themselves to mobilise financial resources to support the implementation of this Plan of Action (national funding, ENPI, bilateral contributions from Member States, FEMIP and other relevant financial instruments). The Commission will work towards the objectives enshrined in the Plan of Action over the next five years and will prepare in 2007 a new regional programme (follow-up to the Euromed regional programme "Enhancing opportunities of women in economic life") containing concrete proposals for initiatives and projects structured around three main clusters: women's rights and political participation, socioeconomic integration; changes of gender stereotypes through education and media. As a result of the Istanbul conference an independent high-level group will be set-up to elaborate a set of indicators in order to monitor and evaluate the overall implementation of the Plan of Action. The high level group will prepare a first report in 2007 that will be presented to the Euro-Med Committee and its recommendations will be submitted to the Euro-Mediterranean Foreign Ministers Conference. A follow-up Euromed Ministerial Conference to discuss issues related to the implementation of the Plan of Action will take place in 2009.

## VIII. Information Society

The 1<sup>st</sup> Euro-Mediterranean Information Society Conference in Dundalk (Ireland) in April 2005 established the Euro-Med Dialogue on the development of the Information Society including electronic communications regulation The Commission proposes to hold a 2<sup>nd</sup> Euro-Mediterranean Information Society Conference in 2007, preferably in a Mediterranean partner country, to assess progress on regulatory harmonisation and cooperation between regulatory authorities, opening of telecommunication markets, and exchange of experience in education and e-government. This second Euro-Med Information Society Conference will be an opportunity to assess progress on the implementation of the objectives set out in the National Neighbourhood Policy Action Plans. In this respect Ministers may wish to review steps taken to liberalise the telecommunication markets, develop harmonised regulatory frameworks, and promote the information society through, among other things, internet penetration.

## IX. Cultural Dialogue

1. In terms of intercultural dialogue the Barcelona Process should be capable of delivering a series of new actions designed to act as a pole of attraction and to counteract attempts to drive a wedge between our cultures and societies. In this respect the Euromed Heritage Programme and the Anna Lindh Foundation - ALF will continue to contribute to this objective. The 35 networks of the ALF (which now include more than 1000 organisations) should play an important role by launching a series of initiatives for a better mutual understanding in the Euro-Mediterranean region. Ministers in Tampere could take note of the ideas/proposals put forward at the meeting of Heads of Networks prior to Tampere. The ALF should also be invited to contribute in the preparations of the '2008 EU Year of Intercultural Dialogue'. A Meeting of Euromed Ministers of Culture could be called in 2007 to discuss the Barcelona Process intercultural agenda, examine the results of the first 3 years of the ALF and propose a linkage with other initiatives such as the follow-up to the adoption of the UNESCO Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions or the Alliance of Civilisations.
2. Following the Euromed Committee discussions on the cartoons issue, general support was given to the proposals put forward by the Commission ('Decalogue' DS 29/06) on how to make better use of the various Euromed instruments to promote intercultural dialogue, notably by improving the involvement of the media and opinion leaders and reaching out to civil society. Ministers should endorse these suggestions and give a mandate to the Euromed Committee to follow through with the implementation of the Decalogue.

## X. Migration

- I. Migration, social integration, justice and security have become major policy issues in the Barcelona Process. The political commitments undertaken at the Barcelona Summit must be translated into concrete measures and actions to address these phenomena by way of a comprehensive and integrated approach. The adoption in Valencia in 2002 of the regional framework document and the subsequent implementation of the regional "MEDA-JAI" programme represented an important step forward, which also encouraged co-operation at bilateral level. The monitoring

of ENP Action Plans in the "Justice and security" sub-committees and "Migration and social affairs" working groups provides a solid basis for implementation of the Association Agreements and the ENP Action Plans.

2. Focusing in particular migration at regional level, the Euromed framework, notably through its legal and financial instruments, permits a strategic approach designed to optimise the benefits of migration for all Partners. In line with Chapter IV of the Five-Year Work Programme adopted at the Barcelona Summit and further to the successful Senior Officials expert meetings held on 20 June and 20 October 2006, the Commission proposes to enhance the regional dialogue on migration through operational co-operation.
3. In consultation with all Euromed Partners, the Commission proposes to prepare a detailed and focused work programme containing concrete proposals for initiatives and projects structured around three main clusters: legal migration, migration and development, and illegal migration. In this context, contributions from other international initiatives such as the Rabat Euro-African Ministerial meeting on migration or the EU-Africa Ministerial meeting on migration and development should also be considered. To develop a common understanding of the current migration-related activities, an overview of existing bilateral and Community funded projects in the areas of migration and development, legal and illegal migration will be made on the basis of information provided by all Partners. Once prepared, this Work programme will provide the basis for the Euromed Ministerial meeting on migration due to take place in 2007 and aimed at agreeing on a series of further measures to promote co-operation on all issues relating to migration.

#### **C) Working methods**

1. The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership has been successful in creating long-term political and institutional links between Europe and its Mediterranean Partners in two complementary dimensions: a) a multilateral dimension with the Euro-Mediterranean Foreign Affairs Ministerial Conferences and Euro-Mediterranean Conferences in a wide variety of sectors; and b) a bilateral dimension with the conclusion of Association Agreements reinforced by the ENP and its national Action Plans. However, it is widely recognised that the regional and multilateral dimensions of the Barcelona Process need to be improved to respond to the needs of complex and evolving political, economic, social and cultural relations involving 35 partners and the European Commission. The Partnership needs to communicate better, it needs to improve co-ownership by all stakeholders and participants, and it needs to be more operational, efficient and results-oriented.
2. The Commission will support Partners' efforts to improve the visibility and co-ownership of the process, and to ensure efficient and effective implementation of the agreed commitments adopted by the Barcelona Summit for the next five years. The Commission calls for better coordination between line ministries, for closer involvement of civil society, including private sector representatives and for more efforts to improve the working methods of the Partnership as an essential step towards making the regional framework more efficient and operational. The objective is to ensure better prepared and better structured Euro-Med Foreign Affairs Conferences. Good preparation of Foreign Affairs Conferences includes adopting the Presidency's priority document and the Commission Communication well in advance

of the Ministerial Conference, as well as consulting and taking due account of the priorities expressed by all Partners. Euro-Mediterranean Ministers may also wish to meet every year, during the second half of the year, to agree on priorities in the implementation of the Five-Year Work Programme for the following year. These operational improvements, together with more detailed proposals to be put forward by the ad hoc Study Committee, will pave the way for further progress on the institutional structure of the Partnership once the political circumstances allow.