



Speaking "International" Dr. Yossi Beilin

Dr. Yossi Beilin (R) at Malta Seminar with Mr. Tom McGrath, EC, External Relations DG (L) and Prof. Stephen Calleya, MEDAC Director (middle).

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I WAS VERY PLEASED TO HAVE RECEIVED THE OPPORTUNITY TO APPEAR IN THE MALTA SEMINAR DURING THE COURSE OF MAY 2009. The issues we discussed were of importance to the participants and I am convinced that they completed the seminar with additional knowledge and understandings; however, I believe that of no less importance is the opportunity these young diplomats were granted to meet and speak to one another during the interims and between formal assignments.

Naturally, most participants who take part in such conferences are about to become Ambassadors and man key positions in their foreign ministries. They are in need of a network that will secure ongoing communication between them, and which will enable them

to overcome formal hurdles in order to converse and solve problems.

A large part of international problems emanates from misunderstandings and different interpretations of a given situation. One can provide ample examples from the history of the past generation to illustrate that dialogue between two sides could have prevented unnecessary disasters.

We speak very different languages; act differently, and despite globalization processes: despite video conferences and conference calls, despite the fact that most of us speak English and read the Herald Tribune - deep disparities still exist. Still - we live in different thinking systems and still we need to meet, talk, explain, and at times use our body language to signal, convince

and send a message across.

Should state representatives be wise enough to create their own communication systems, they will be able to create wonders for their states in the foreseeable future; to talk directly with one another and to solve problems. I write these words based on my own somewhat different experience in the field of political negotiations. Since the 1990s informal relations have been forged between Israeli negotiating teams and our Palestinian colleagues. These relations did not change the core perceptions of neither of the sides; however they enabled us to skip superfluous introductions, not to take offence when none should be taken, to know when to laugh and also when to be gravely serious.

2 I believe that our ability to draft the Geneva Accord (a document which was written by a group of previous Israeli and Palestinian negotiators and which details an informal Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement) in 2003 was largely owing to the fact that we were

acquainted with one another, and had forged a significant measure of confidence and trust. We still have not invented a replacement for personal relations, and meetings of the type that take place twice a year in Malta are likely to facilitate the creation of a better world.

(Dr Yossi Beilin is former Israeli deputy Secretary of State, a leading proponent of peace initiatives in the Middle East is the Chairman of the Geneva Initiative.) ✨

WATER DIPLOMACY IN A CHANGING WORLD

Ambassador Dr. Magdy A. Hefny

Director of The Regional Center for Studies and Research of Water Uses Ethics (RCWE),
Cairo, Egypt

THE ISTANBUL FIFTH WORLD WATER FORUM OF MARCH 2009 REPRESENTED A SPECIAL OCCASION IN WHICH THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY EXAMINED THE STATE OF WORLD WATERS AND RESPONDED TO THE NUMEROUS URGENT QUESTIONS. THESE QUESTIONS INCLUDED:

- What is the state of world waters? Is water crisis a real crisis or a myth? Is it reaching a staggering point of a magnitude that is threatening world peace and security in the 21st Century? If so, what could be the impact on diplomacy in theory and practice?
- What about Arab Regional Water Realities?
- Is diplomacy coping with these developments in the water arena especially as new paradigm shifts are emerging? Most notably, the worldwide adoption and implementation of the concept of integrated water resources management. In this case does water diplomacy have a theoretical monopoly? Or does it need to be a separate discipline in itself?
- The fourth angle of these questions is on how diplomats, in practice, will cope with the emerging trends of the new world water developments? Do we need new skills for water negotiation? Do we need shared language of different concepts and jargons? Do we need new approaches and

methods in dealing with water conflicts? Suggesting some innovative tools for application, and tips for gaining success in water negotiation.

- In conclusion, what is new in the 5th World Water Forum, in Istanbul, Turkey (March 2009)? The overarching theme this time is "Bridging Divides for Water". It seems that the theme represents a new focus, and a new shift in concept and methodology, if compared with last Four Rounds of WWF.

Reviewing literature on this issue, it is well recognized that the water scene of the 21st century is confronted with profound changes: complexity, vulnerability and uncertainty are becoming the order of today. This is because of the fast pace of scientific and technological development, as well as ongoing globalization processes of world production and markets, the climatic changes, the trans-boundary dependencies, and the changing socio-political context in dealing with water challenges. So, the water sector is becoming more sensitive and vulnerable to these changes. In the meantime, water resources are planned and managed under a higher degree of uncertainty.

In the Arab Region, water scarcity, uneven geographical and seasonal distribution, incomplete access to water and sanitation services in remote areas, as well as pollution and degradation of aquatic eco-

systems have in some cases had severely limiting effects on development options for poor communities and other marginalized groups.

Water Diplomacy is applied to bilateral and multilateral negotiations on water issues between and among states. Water diplomacy is about dialogue, negotiation and reconciling conflicting interests among riparian states. It involves the institutional capacity and power politics of states.

There is a wealth of diplomatic experiences, where the technical and political approaches are integrated within the same negotiation process. Most notable examples are: The negotiation under the United Nations Convention of 1997, on Non-Navigational Uses of The International Watercourses, and the Madrid formula of a multi track peace process in the Middle East.

BUILDING A SHARED VISION RELATED TO USING WATER AS A CATALYTIC MEDIUM FOR PEACE AND HUMAN SECURITY, AND HAVING A MONITORING MECHANISM

The prospect for an Arab Water Vision, in respect to concepts and main strategic components, implies a critical review of the previous endeavors towards sustainable water resources development, and identifying the constraints, which impeded their adequate implementation, in order to learn lessons and to be used as constructive guidelines. In

Water Diplomacy in a Changing World, Amb. Magdy Hefny, Cairo

view of the above, the Arab Water Vision 2030 includes the following approaches and trends:

1. Vision for Optimizing Water Resources Supplies
2. Vision for Rationalizing Water Resources Demands
3. Vision for Water Conservation and Protection
4. Vision for supporting institutional and legislative frameworks

However, there is a need to monitor the implementation of such a vision. And there is a need to have special attention to water in its relation to peace and human security.

Since 1997, the World Water Council¹ organizes together with a host country a World Water Forum. Such Fora have been held in Morocco (1997), The Netherlands (2000), Japan (2003) and Mexico (2006). The most recent 5th World Water Forum (WWF5), was held in Istanbul, Turkey, in March 2009. The overarching theme of this Forum was "Bridging Divides for Water". An assessment of the meeting highlights that there has been a new shift in concept, principles and methodology of the Forum when compared to previous Forums. This time a set-up of the program was chosen, consisting of six themes and the main theme

of WWF5 was Bridging Divides for Water (for more details see: www.worldwaterforum5.org)

The Istanbul Fifth World Water Forum also served the purpose of reviewing the state of world waters and examining the extent to which the world is facing a real water crisis. Concepts and methodology create a momentum for more investigation in this area. The Forum commenced a learning journey, in which diplomats should have a candid reflection on the Forum results and its impact on the formulation of foreign policy of states, in general, and on water diplomacy approaches and tools in particular. ❁

¹ its head office is in Marseille, France, web site: www.wwc.org

Amb. Magdy Hefny (middle) among participants at the XXVI Malta Seminar (L to R): Prof. Naima Hamoumi, Executive Board Member, ADFM, Morocco; Hadi SHEBLI, Palestinian Authority; Ms. Rawan SULAIMAN, Director of European Affairs Dept. - MFA, Palestinian Authority; Amb. Magdy Hefny, Egypt (behind him doyens of Maltese diplomacy Amb. Alfred ZARB, Euro-Med Coordinator MFA of Malta (left) and Amb. Ives DEBARRO (right); Dr. Derek Lutterbeck, MEDAC lecturer; Ms. Asal AL-TAL, Jordan; and Eberhard RHEIN, consultant - European Policy Centre, Brussels.



Working Group Report on “Enhancing Intercultural Relations”

DURING THE WORKSHOP UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF PROFESSOR FOUAD M. AMMOR (GERM MAROCCO), PARTICIPANTS UNDERLINED THAT ALTHOUGH INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE CONSTITUTES ONE OF THE THREE BASKETS OF THE BARCELONA DECLARATION (TOGETHER WITH ITS POLITICAL AS WELL AS ECONOMIC/FINANCIAL BASKETS), THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ITS PROVISIONS IS LEAST DEVELOPED. The group thus concentrated its discussion on the reasons of the above said status quo.

The workshop was divided in separate parts. Firstly the group was of the understanding that one of the reasons of multifaceted difficulties in the process of the implementation of the Declaration may be a different understanding of various definitions (for example the concept of culture/values/identity). It was underlined in this context that we speak here not only about the differences between the North and the South of the Mediterranean, but also about the two worlds functioning in parallel, namely about the world of the international community with its specific language as well as about the real world of everyday people who should in the end own the dialogue. Without this ownership a progress on the intercultural exchange will continue to be difficult to be obtained.

Secondly, as the result of this discussion it was understood that we have enough declarations, conventions and resolutions adopted in the international or regional fora. Moreover the language of internationally adopted documents is not necessarily well understood by citizens. What is needed thus is to agree on the meaning of basic definitions and basic recommendations. In other words, we need to deepen and widen the dialogue and make the whole process inclusive. It means that the dialogue should go deep into the societies, even to the grass roots level.

In order to make this dialogue successful both sides need to listen to each other, show flexibility, understanding, openness and respect. The group agreed also that our strength lies in our diversity. Despite the fact that our difficulties may result from our differences, certain values agreed as common shall not be put in question. This concerns for example the freedom of the media, human rights or rights of individuals, including gender equality.

Lastly, having put this framework and these principles in place, the group concentrated on the modalities and on the tools to advance intercultural exchange. Among the practical recommendations, participants mentioned enhancing education at every level (e.g. working together on the language in school books on different cultures); enhancing exchange programmes between artists, intellectuals, towns; having more dialogue instead of regular cultural monologues. Another interesting idea is to strengthen social networks and enhance the intercultural dialogue through making more use of the new technology such as video-conferences, and use of the Internet (such as Facebook), which is financially more effective than a traditional costly cooperation. (Euro-Med Seminars www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=80685676465 and the Anna Lindh Foundation www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=49647963067 for instance, are already available on the Facebook. Ed.)

In short, this workshop was a good illustration of how intercultural dialogue should be: an open and frank discussion where there was room for everyone’s ideas with a good understanding of tolerance, cooperation and sharing of good ideas.

Sunday, 17 May 2009

Working Group Report on “Enhancing Intercultural Relations”



The workshop session under the supervision of Professor Fouad M. Ammor (head of table).



EMS XXVI group photo at the opening day with The Hon Dr. Tonio Borg, Deputy PM and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malta.

First row (L to R) Mr. A.T. MOCILNIKAR, Union for the Mediterranean, French Republic Presidency, Paris, France; Ms. Natasha A. SHAWARIB, SIGI, Amman, Jordan; Prof. Stephen CALLEYA, Director MEDAC; Dr. Tonio BORG; Amb. Alfred ZARB, MFA Malta; Dr. Sharon PARDO, Director of the Centre for the Study of European Politics and Society at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel; Ms. Maria Isabel VICANDI, Ambassador of Spain to Malta.

Second row (L to R, behind Prof. Calleya): Prof. Zafiris Tzannatos, Former Advisor to the World Bank; Ms. Varvarigou (GR); Amb. Alexander SLABÝ, Euro-Med Coordinator, Prague, Czech Republic; Mr. Andreu CLARET, Executive Director Anna Lindh Foundation, Alexandria, Egypt; Ms. Rawan SULAIMAN, Director of European Affairs Dept. - MFA, Palestinian Authority; Mr. Tom McGRATH, European Commission, External Relations DG, Brussels.

Outer circle (L to R): Dr. Christian JOURET, Head of Unit for the Middle East, the Mediterranean and the UfM, General Secretariat, European Council, Brussels; Amb. Nassif HITTI, League of Arab States, Paris; Mr. Shebli (PS); Dr. Fouad M. AMMOR, GERM, Morocco; Prof. Naima HAMOUMI, Executive Board Member, ADFM, Morocco; Ms. Gueblaoui (TN), Ms. Luchtmeijer (NL); Mr. Jan HEIDSMA, ambassador of The Netherlands to Malta, Dr. Mejda M'RAH, Legal advisor, ILO, Geneva, Switzerland, Mr. Jubran TAWHEEL, ambassador of Palestine to Malta.



ALUMNI: Map of the Mediterranean with statistics of EMS participants and speakers per countries *

EMS on Facebook

Country	Participants	Speakers
Austria	7	2
Germany	21	9
Belgium	16	11
The Netherlands	27	5
Luxembourg	10	2
France	20	16
Spain	21	12
Portugal	11	5
Italy	30	8
Greece	14	6
Finland	23	3
Sweden	25	8
Denmark	14	4
UK	16	16
Ireland	22	1
Estonia	7	0
Latvia	8	0
Lithuania	5	0
Poland	17	1
Czech Republic	10	1
Slovakia	3	0
Slovenia	15	2
Hungary	11	0
Romania	6	0
Bulgaria	6	0
Malta	52	58
Cyprus	30	0
EU	5	108
Morocco	47	9
Algeria	43	3
Tunisia	50	13
Libya	0	1
Egypt	51	15
Israel	50	7
Palestinian Authority	45	1
Jordan	43	3
Lebanon	33	0
Syria	17	0
Turkey	53	3
Albania	2	0
Mauritania	2	0
Other		40
	888	373
Total I-XXVI EMS		1261

CHRONOLOGY

Barcelona Declaration was signed in November 1995 by EU15 countries and 12 Med-countries, in total 27 countries.

Libya has had observer status since 1999.

In May 2004 EU was enlarged with 10 new member countries, two of which – Malta and Cyprus – were already part of Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP). After January 2007 when Romania and Bulgaria also joined the EU, EMP included: EU27 countries and 10 Med-countries, in total 37 countries.

Mauritania, which already had Observer status in 2005, and Albania were included in November 2007 at the IX Lisbon Ministerial Conference, raising number of countries in EMP to 39.

In July 2008 43 Heads of State and Government met in Paris to launch the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM): 39 EMP countries plus Monaco and 3 countries on the Adriatic sea of the Mediterranean: Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro.

Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, i.e., Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean, thus currently has 43 member countries.

EMS on Facebook

At the beginning of the 21st century the Mediterranean, the cradle of civilization, is faced with numerous challenges that can only be addressed through concerted regional co-operation between Northern and Southern littoral countries. The EU's consistent policies towards the Mediterranean, in particular the Euro-Med Partnership (EMP), and now the Union for the Mediterranean have been promoting peace, stability and prosperity across the Mediterranean. Since 1996, the 25 Euro-Med Information and Training Seminars for Diplomats, the long standing official EMP confidence building exercise, has brought together more than 1,200 diplomats, scholars and experts from thirty-nine partner countries. The Malta Seminars have become a unique people to people network that facilitates informal interaction and open dialogue between practitioners directly involved in the implementation of Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.



As Facebook social network on the Internet became *de facto* the place to communicate with friends spread all over the world, and promote business, groups and events activities you are cordially invited to join the EMS place on the Facebook, where you can write your comments, upload photos of EMS related events and people, discuss issues of common interest and find your colleagues. This FB page is another activity to bring together EMS Alumni in a social network.

Find us on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=80685676465

and join also the Facebook if you already did not.

* updated

EMS on Facebook



From I to XXVI EMS: (below) Family photo of participants of the 1st Euro-Med Seminar for Diplomats with Prof. Guido de Marco, President Emeritus of Malta and then Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malta and Marc Pierini, Head of Unit, DG 1B, EU. (up) A view to the seminar hall during the opening day of XXVI Information & Training Seminar for Diplomats.



EMS Alumni

Comments by Participants of the XXVI Euro-Med Information and Training Seminar for Diplomats



Salvador PINTO da FRANÇA
Portugal

It was a privilege to participate in the XXVI Malta Euromed Seminar and I am very grateful to all the lecturers for the outstanding interventions and for the academic material provided. Because of the informal character of the Seminar, many of the views and exchanges were more open than they could be in a more formal framework. There was a good balance between speakers from the EU and from our Mediterranean partners, which permitted a refreshing and instructive diversity of views, in a constructive way. Some of the opinions expressed are precious as food for thought in the development of the Euromed Partnership.

The whole event, comprising academic and social activities, was organized in a way to facilitate contact between the participants and to build bridges between the two shores through personal relations, which are essential to the deepening of our relations. It was very interesting to meet colleagues from the EU and from our partner countries and to notice how close our opinions could be in many crucial issues. I really consider initiatives like the Euromed Seminar are an essential contribution to create the confidence and mutual knowledge necessary between officials participating in the development of the Partnership.

I am also deeply grateful to the Euromed Seminar staff, which always attentive to the smallest of our needs, but also because of their fine organization, made us feel so comfortable and helped make the event a



Luis CACHO
Spain

The XXVI Information and Training Seminar for Euro-Med Diplomats (15-18 May 2009) has been a success. Behind this success it is possible to find a meticulous preparation work, a great panel of speakers and thirty five attendants from twenty three different countries, most of them from the Mediterranean basin, willing to participate putting forward not only their ideas but also their personal opinions. Allow me to highlight the latter, because this Seminar has had a main peculiarity, the frankness of all the participants, providing the debates with original ideas and cruel but actual explanations of the reality.

Last but not least, the chance to meet during four days very interesting colleagues and representatives of the civil society eager to interact and willing to share different viewpoints and personal experiences has been 'the cherry on the cake'.

full success. Finally, the quality of the services, of the staff and of the restaurant of the Westin Dragonara Hotel is fantastic. This, coupled with the personal treatment given to the guests, in spite of the hotel's size is a key factor to the success of the Seminar. (*S. Pinto da França*)



Souad GUEBLAOU
Tunisia

I extend my deep thanks to MEDAC for the opportunity given to me and to my colleague M. Wahid Deb Younes, to participate in Malta, a close friend country of Tunisia, in this interesting and perfectly organized seminar related to the different dimensions of the Euro-Mediterranean cooperation.

We listen with interest to the high quality of the interventions and took part to the rich and useful exchange of views among the participants, coming from more than 20 Euromed countries. The problems, the challenges and the perspectives of our Euro-Med region were discussed and we noticed that despite some divergences of opinion, Europeans et Mediterranean are determined to establish a strong partnership between the North side countries of Mediterranean sea, developed and integrated, and the South side countries, which are trying courageously to maintain peace and security in their region and to reach economic and social development.



Matilde BARRETO
Portugal

Participating in the Euromed Seminar for Young Diplomats was a unique opportunity to get acquainted with some of those who work in a daily basis with Mediterranean related subjects.

Not only did we have the chance to hear experts and academics specialised in the Mediterranean but also had the occasion to exchange ideas and develop concepts with the other participants from all the corners of the Mediterranean basin.

I firmly believe that its informality, openness and constructive environment constitute the major and more positive characteristics of this initiative. To be able to frankly and with no constraints express our points of view allowed some fruitful and productive discussions on subjects that matter all of us in the Mediterranean basin.

The Euromed Seminar for Young Diplomats is not only an opportunity but should also be a primary requirement for all those who work, direct or indirectly, with the Mediterranean Partnership.



Uri ROTHMAN
Israel

Participating in the Euro-Med Seminar was for me a unique opportunity to witness the various perspectives on cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean region. On one hand it was encouraging to observe the enormous potential that exists in the Middle East and the growing understanding for the need to cooperate in many sectors such as water management and energy consumption. On the other hand it was sad to see the growing gap that still exists between expectations for regional cooperation and the attempt to monopolize the process for political ends.

However the seminar showed us how important is the cooperation between European and Middle Eastern countries. The excellent hospitality of Malta and the thorough preparations by MEDAC provided us with a rich and varied program. After the seminar I remain optimistic with regard to the enormous potential that we have in the region and of the significant goals that could be reached in cooperating together for a better future. I do believe that all of us could achieve much more from the Union for the Mediterranean.



Anneli VARES
Estonia

It was a great opportunity and experience to participate at the XXVI Information and training Seminar for Euro-Med Diplomats. Thanks to MEDAC and its unique mission to bring together the diplomats not only from both shores of the Mediterranean Sea but also from the other EU countries has also Estonia got the opportunity to learn from Euro-Med experience.

Some may think why Estonia, a little Nordic country, should be interested at all in the Mediterranean affairs. There are actually many reasons for that, but just to mention the most important: everybody knows that it is important to know your neighbours as well as make yourself familiar to them. In the EU we have common neighbours - the eastern and the southern neighbours are equally neighbours for Malta and for Estonia. Therefore it is very important for Estonia too to get to know its southern neighbours. Also, Estonia as a country from the EU's eastern border has a lot to learn from the different forms of cooperation in the southern border. The seminar has offered exactly all that - the interesting and very informative presentations have given a comprehensive overview of the Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, of its achievements but also problems, and the personal contacts with the diplomats from our neighbour-countries have given the opportunity to get to know each other better. I am convinced that the contacts and friendships created during only four days in Malta will contribute a lot for further co-operation and mutual understanding.

Let me thank again the organizers for this beautiful intercultural experience. This is definitely an example to follow.



Rawan SULAIMAN
Director of European Affairs Dept.
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Palestinian Authority

I have to say that I was a little bit hesitant to participate in the seminar for many reasons, but I finally decided to do so. I felt how important is to exchange views of common interest in particular to make our region a different one. As a representative of Palestine I had the opportunity to share thoughts and positions with the other participants to clarify the current debates. We, as Palestinians, have been supportive of this partnership from the beginning. We were hoping that the peace process launched a few years before would provide the favourable environment required to ensure regional cooperation. It was obvious that the peace process and the Barcelona process were profoundly interlinked. As the peace process derailed, the Euromed process had to face increasing difficulties. When the Union for the Mediterranean was launched, we reminded our partners of this simple fact: one partner in the Euromed process is still occupying the land of three other partners. Can we really call each other partners then? One partner cannot enjoy equal rights because it is still under occupation. Palestine has an Interim Association agreement with the EU since 1997 that is not recognized by Israel.

This process will succeed, neither by bypassing the political question, nor by ignoring it. This process must be a tool for peace, and to achieve this aim, it must hold all parties accountable for the commitments they took. We have a declaration adopted by our Foreign Ministers in Marseille. Let us



Asal al-TAL
Jordan

I feel quite privileged to have participated in the twenty sixth Euro-Med Information and Training Seminar for Diplomats. This exercise serves to demonstrate how steadily the Euro-Med partnership continues to advance, evolve and encompass new areas of cooperation.

This is my third Euro-Med related visit to Malta, and I can tell you that each time I fall deeper in love with this beautiful island and its kind, hospitable people. A word of thanks is also due to the organizers of the seminar, whose promptness and thoughtfulness made this Seminar nothing short of a memorable experience.

all as equal partners respect the Marseille declaration. Euromed is first and foremost a political partnership. Finally, I had an excellent opportunity to share my thoughts with my colleagues from the Mediterranean during the seminar, during the formal sessions or the activities that were organized by the organizers. The seminar made me believe that it is extremely possible that we as neighbours who share this region work together and we should work very hard to make it a better and safer one. (*R. Sulaiman*)



Gülce KUMRULU
Turkey

I deem myself lucky, since I had the opportunity to participate in the Euro-Mediterranean Seminars twice, in 2004 and 2009. In fact, I observed that the seminar standards have been retained in these five years. The seminar has been once again carried out very professionally. Furthermore, the agenda of the seminar has been as relevant as before in terms of reflecting the ongoing debates and the developments in the Euro-Mediterranean area. I benefited not only from the presentations on different aspects of political and technical cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean region, but also from the thought-provoking exchange of views with fellow diplomats on future prospects. However, there are two most essential assets that I have brought back from Malta: friendships and optimism. Observing that we all share the same aspiration has fortified my optimism and determination regarding the future prosperity of the Euro-Mediterranean region.



THE SWEDISH PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EU *and* THE LISBON TREATY

The European Union today stretches across most of the continent of Europe. Travelling from the North of EU to the South there is a wide range of diversity in everything from culture to climate patterns. The European Union is also encompassed by several seas: the Baltic Sea, the North Sea, the Mediterranean Sea and adjacent Adriatic and Black Seas. The Swedish presidency of the European Union is currently focusing its efforts on the Baltic Sea. It is the sea around which 8 EU countries are located: Denmark, Germany, Poland, Baltic countries: Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Finland and Sweden.

The EU's Baltic Sea Strategy as promoted by Sweden is to boost competitiveness in the region and save the marine environment. As only one country, Russia with St. Petersburg and enclave Kaliningrad is the Baltic sea state not in the EU, Swedish State Secretary Maria Åsenius is quite optimistic that Baltic EU agenda focusing on the attached goals is a viable one, that is: cleaner sea (no algal blooming, over-fishing, prohibit the use of phosphates in detergents), dynamic economic growth with improvement of regional market, and making the region safer and more secure by combating human trafficking and intensifying police cooperation, naval surveillance and military cooperation between the Baltic Sea countries (source: se2009.eu Information from the Government Offices on the Swedish EU Presidency 2009).

The 18-month programme of the Council entitled "The future French, Czech and Swedish Presidencies", COUNCIL OF THE EU, Brussels, 30 June 2008, 11249/08 on page 84 states: "Relations with the southern neighbours will be revitalised through the launching of the 'Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean' ". Sweden's Presidency remains "in close consultation on the follow-up of this process. The Union's strategic

relations with its Mediterranean partners will be developed through concrete projects with a view to deepening the political and security dialogue, creating a space of shared prosperity and implementing a social, environmental, cultural and human partnership."

The "Work programme of the Swedish Presidency of the EU" also



states that: "The Presidency will also work for deepened cooperation with the EU's neighbours in the Mediterranean region, both via commitment to EU negotiations with these countries and within the framework of the Union for the Mediterranean."

ADDITIONAL SWEDISH PRIORITIES

The economic and financial crisis currently enveloping the world is one of the toughest and most important issues facing the Swedish EU Presidency. For Sweden at the helm of the EU presidency in the latter part of 2009, the economic and financial affairs of Europe is

among highest priorities. "Our first economic objective will be to manage the EU's efforts to combat the downturn. Our starting point will be the current agenda for growth, competition and employment. Two challenges stand out: restoring the functioning of, and confidence in, financial markets, and countering the negative impact on employment and growth. To address the first of these issues, we need to continue working on the design and implementation of schemes to restore credit supply. This is imperative if the EU is to return to sustainable growth in the short term," wrote Swedish PM Fredrik Reinfeldt and Finance Minister Anders Borg, in the Financial Times on 5th June 2009.

THE FUTURE OF THE LISBON TREATY

When answering media questions concerning what she expects of the Swedish Presidency Margot Wallström, Vice-President of the European Commission said: "At this moment in time, presiding over the EU is no easy task, since the institutional issues have not been resolved. But Sweden should focus on important matters, look ahead and plan for unforeseen developments, and also be flexible – ready to adjust to whatever situations arise. If I had to name a specific issue, I'd say the EU is hoping for a climate agreement this autumn."

Ms. Wallström was referring to still pending Lisbon Treaty ratification, and UN Climate Change Conference 2009 in Copenhagen, in December. The Republic of Ireland goes to the second referendum vote on the Lisbon Treaty on 2nd October 2009.

Irish government and EU worked together to sort out the concerns believed to have led to rejection of

THE SWEDISH PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EU *and* THE LISBON TREATY

the treaty in last year's referendum, and made the agreement about those issues. According to Irish PM Brian Cowen legal guarantees are now given so that Ireland retains control over its own taxes, neutrality and ethical issues. The EU also agreed to an Irish request to incorporate guarantees as a protocol, legally binding them in the Lisbon treaty. The rest of Europe will be watching to see if this time around Ireland gives the green light for the Lisbon Treaty to come into force and allow the EU to implement more effectively its internal reform process (See ref. 2).

With Germany's Constitutional Court decision that the Treaty of Lisbon is compatible with German law, and Poland and the Czech Republic waiting for an Irish 'Yes' in order to themselves ratify the Lisbon Treaty, the prospect that the Swedish Presidency may be able to proceed with putting the Lisbon

Resources

1) Website of the Swedish Presidency of the Council of the EU (July - December 2009):
www.eu2009.se/en

2) "Lisbon Treaty - EU Institutional Way Forward", EMS Network - Euro-Med Seminars Newsletter, Autumn 2008, pp. 8-9

3) se2009.eu Information from the Government Offices on the Swedish EU Presidency 2009 (available as PDF document on www.eu2009.se)

4) EU Baltic Sea Strategy paves the way:
www.se2009.eu/en/meetings_news/2009/9/18/eu_baltic_sea_strategy_paves_the_way

Treaty into force by the end of 2009 are in hand. Such an outcome would allow the EU to nominate a President of the European Council for the first time and also commence procedures to implement an agenda that would lead to an EU common external action service. ✨



Meeting on the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. Phillipe MAYSTADT, President, European Investment Bank; Pawel SAMECKI, European Commissioner for Regional Policy; Swedish Minister for EU Affairs Cecilia MALMSTRÖM.
(Photo: Gunnar Seijbold/Government Offices, Sweden)