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from: "Mashraq/Maghreb" Working Party
to: Coreper/Council
Subject: **Union for the Mediterranean**
Draft EU Guidelines and Proposal for a Work Programme for 2010

The "Mashrek/Maghreb Working Party" examined the above-mentioned draft EU Guidelines and proposal for a Work Programme for 2010 for the Union for the Mediterranean and reached agreement on the document as attached.

Subject to confirmation by the Permanent Representatives Committee, the Council is invited to adopt the draft EU guidelines as set out in the ANNEX.

Union for the Mediterranean
Draft EU Guidelines and Proposal for a Work Programme for 2010

Introduction

After the first Summit of the "Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean" (Paris, 13 July 2008), the 10th Euro-Mediterranean Foreign Ministers Meeting in Marseille (3-4 November 2008) took crucial decisions to develop the Union for the Mediterranean initiative. In particular, Ministers discussed the future development of the Partnership and agreed on the institutional arrangements of the Union for the Mediterranean.

Among the main decisions taken in Marseille were those related to the tasks, composition, funding and seat for the future Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean. Ministers also mandated senior officials to adopt the statutes of the Secretariat (on the basis of proposals to be prepared by a drafting group).

Since the meeting in Marseille progress has been made in a number of areas of the Partnership, although, overall, the regional partnership has been hindered by the persistence of the Middle East conflict and its impact in regional cooperation.

The main activities during 2009 and the suggested follow-up for 2010 in the different areas of work can be summarised below taking into account that in the 2010 UfM Summit a biennial working programme will be adopted:

1. Political and Security Dialogue

1.1 Political and security dialogue

Stocktaking 2009

Since the Marseille Foreign Affairs' Ministers meeting, political and security dialogue was pursued in the four Senior Officials meetings held on 16 December 2008, 23 April 2009, 7 July 2009, 29-30 September, 27 October and 23 November. The three senior officials' meeting held in 2009, after the Gaza crisis and the suspension of activities that followed, were devoted to discuss the situation in the Middle East and its impact in the Union for the Mediterranean.

Senior Officials on 23 April supported the proposal made during the last meeting of the Political Commission of the EMPA to invite EMPA representatives to Senior Officials meetings.

Proposed initiatives and objectives for 2010

- a) Regular review of the political situation in the region, and exchanges on the MEPP.
- b) Implementation of the Code of Conduct on countering terrorism, building on the recommendations of previous international and regional initiatives.
- c) Deepening of the dialogue on ESDP and crisis management.
- d) At the Paris Summit, the Heads of State and Government underlined their commitment to strengthen democracy and political pluralism through expansion of participation in political life and respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms. In this context, the following ideas could be further developed in 2010: 1) experiences with and exchanges on national human rights plans and strategies; 2) freedom of expression and association.
- e) Deepening of regional dialogue on joint cooperation, best practices and exchange of experience in the area of elections. Development of joint cooperation and exchange of experience could be developed on a voluntary basis upon the request of any of the partners.

- f) At the Paris Summit, the parties committed themselves to pursue a mutually and effectively verifiable Middle East Zone free of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical and biological, and their delivery systems and to take practical steps in this regard. In this context, the EU plans to organise a follow-up event to the Paris seminar organised in June 2008 "Middle East security, WMD non-proliferation and disarmament", which should take place in early 2010 before the start of the NPT Review Conference.

1.2 Confidence building measures - Civil protection

Stocktaking 2009

Civil protection was earmarked as one of the priority initiatives in the UfM at the Paris summit and the Marseille (France) ministerial meeting.

Activities of the Euro-Med Programme for the Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Natural and Man-Made disasters (PPRD South, 2009-2012) started in 2009 and will aim at strengthening prevention, preparedness and response capacities in civil protection of Mediterranean Partner countries in order to ensure more effective protection of people, infrastructures, cultural heritage and the natural environment in the event of major disasters.

On 17 February 2009 the Council's Senior Officials Meeting in its European format (COMED) mandated the Commission to prepare documents serving as a base for the conclusions of the forthcoming 2009 sectoral UfM ministerial meetings. In view of this, on 12 March 2009 the Commission presented its non paper "UfM: Cooperation in civil protection with Mediterranean partners" for discussion in the Council. The Council discussions finally led to adopting the EU guidelines.

A civil protection UfM Directors-general meeting took place on 17-18 June 2009 in Marseilles in view of preparing a future UfM JHA ministerial meeting. The Directors-general agreed on certain recommendations that would first be discussed at another UfM civil protection Directors-general meeting taking place in January 2010 in Morocco. The Directors-general agreed on actions to progressively establish a wider Euro-Mediterranean Area for Civil Protection by progressively associating the Southern partners into the European Civil Protection Mechanism. In order to prepare the meeting in Morocco a technical meeting discussing the recommendations took place in Aix-en-Provence (France) in November 2009.

Proposed initiatives and objectives for 2010

Continue the implementation of the ongoing PPRD MED and actively participate in its activities, especially as regards bringing Med partners closer to the EU Civil Protection Mechanism.

Together with the EU presidency the Commission should ensure close EU coordination of any recommendations leading to the conclusions of a future UfM JHA ministerial discussing civil protection.

Follow up of the Euro-Med Programme for the Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Natural and Man-made Disasters - PPRD (2008-2011).

Implementation of the actions in the framework of the UfM civil protection projects adopted by the UfM JHA ministerial meeting.

1.3 Maritime safety

Stocktaking 2009

The growing number of transit vessels, the increasing risks of accidents, the persisting terrorist threat, the rise in organised crime, including piracy, and illicit trafficking, especially drug trafficking, could tend to port infrastructures inefficiency and jeopardise trade flows.

To enhance cooperation in the fight against drugs, the Maritime Analysis and Operations Centre – Narcotics (MAOC-M) has broadened its activities and a centre to coordinate the fight against drugs in the Mediterranean region (CECLAD-M) was launched in December 2008 by France.

On May 6th and 7th, 2009, Italy hosted in Genoa the First "Mediterranean Coast Guard Services Forum" (MEDFORUM), aimed at strengthening maritime safety and security, restraining trafficking of people and cargoes, as well as protecting marine environment and spreading the use of new technologies in these fields. The Forum created a new co-operation instrument in the Mediterranean for the development of regional partnerships.

In the maritime domain, a regional Automatic Identification System (AIS) centre started up in Italy on 1 January 2009, in order to collect data from all Mediterranean EU Countries.

Proposed initiatives and objectives for 2010

In 2010, a forum of Mediterranean Coast Guard Services and Maritime Administrations should be organised. This forum represents an opportunity to exchange experiences in the fields of marine and coastal environment protection from pollution, as well as safety of navigation, maritime search and rescue and safeguard of human life at sea.

Following the establishment of AIS, and to improve initiatives in the maritime domain, a Pan-Mediterranean system, connected to SAFEMED II project, could be promoted in 2010.

In view of the ministerial meeting on Integrated Maritime Policy to be held in the near future, ministers recommend to study the possibility to develop initiatives in the maritime domain, for instance the implementation of integrated Vessel Traffic Management systems, systems for the management of intermodal transport and sea ports, integrated systems for the management and control of environmental risks and sea pollution.

2. Economic and Financial Partnership

2.1 Towards the establishment of a Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area

Stocktaking 2009

Progress was made towards the objective of establishing a Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area by 2010, involving a network of North-South and South-South Free Trade Agreements.

On North-South relations, Euromed Association Agreements are being complemented with a number of on-going negotiations, in particular on agriculture, services and establishment and also made progress on a set of complementary negotiations with Mediterranean partners.

Bilateral negotiations on the liberalisation of trade in services and the right of establishment with Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia and Israel have continued in 2009 and are expected to be concluded by 2010.

Bilateral negotiations also continued on the establishment of a more efficient dispute settlement mechanism for the trade provisions of the Association Agreements. Negotiations were concluded with Tunisia (agreement initialled), Lebanon (agreement initialled in July 2009) and Jordan (agreement to be initialled soon). They are advanced with other Mediterranean partners (Morocco, Egypt and Palestine) and the objective is to conclude bilateral protocols as soon as possible.

Negotiations in agriculture trade aims at achieving further liberalisation of reciprocal trade in agricultural, processed agricultural and fisheries products. During the negotiation process, sanitary and phytosanitary measures and the protection of geographical indications should form an integral part of this negotiation process. These negotiations were concluded with Jordan in 2007, with Israel and Egypt in 2008. They continue with Morocco and were launched with Tunisia in February 2008.

The first agreement on conformity assessment and accreditation (ACAA) was initialled with Israel in July 2009. Discussions are on-going with other Med countries, with a view to start negotiating as soon as possible.

Though some progress was made in the **South-South dimension**, the network of Free Trade Agreements is likely to remain incomplete by 2010. South-South economic integration is strongly encouraged by the EU as an essential element towards the establishment of a fully fledged Free Trade Area and the EU supports the Agadir Agreement (Tunisia, Morocco, Jordan and Egypt), which is in force since 2007 and welcomed Free Trade Agreements which have been concluded by Israel and by Turkey with some Mediterranean partners.

Proposed initiatives and objectives for 2010

Following the Euromed Trade Ministerial of 2007 in Lisbon, a Reflection Group at Senior Official level was established to present proposals to complement our Euro-Mediterranean trade agenda. These proposals are set out in a Euromed Trade Roadmap until 2010 and beyond to be endorsed at the December 2009 Trade Ministerial. The Euromed Trade Roadmap until 2010 and beyond includes in particular : 1) concrete short term proposals to address the current weaknesses of the Euromed trade integration, such as a Euro-Mediterranean Trade and Investment Facilitation mechanism; 2) completing the current negotiations on services, agriculture, dispute settlement and ACAAs; 3) Beyond 2010, new negotiations to be launched to turn the current Association Agreements into deep and comprehensive free trade agreements, mostly on non tariff and regulatory issues such as public procurement, intellectual property rights, competition, trade facilitation, trade and sustainable development or transparency matters; 4) The establishment of a network of free trade agreements amongst Southern Mediterranean countries to be pursued and reinforced beyond 2010 by moving beyond trade in goods to cover services, investment and regulatory issues as well as sustainable development/alternative forms of development.

2.2 Energy and the Mediterranean Solar Plan

Stocktaking 2009

The latest Euromed Energy Ministerial Conference (Limassol, Cyprus, 17 December 2007) decided that for the coming years (2008-2013 Priority Action Plan) efforts in the energy field should focus on i) improving harmonisation and integration of markets and legislation, ii) promoting sustainable development in the sector, iii) develop initiatives of common interests in key areas, such as infrastructure extension, investment financing and R&D. The following developments can be mentioned:

Progress was achieved regarding the Mediterranean Solar Plan during the informal UfM ministerial on Sustainable Development held in Paris on 25 June 2009. Its prime objective is to implement up to 20 GWs of new capacity of electricity production from renewable energy sources, by 2020, along with energy efficiency and energy saving. A draft "Strategy Paper" as well as draft "Guidelines for Coordination of Efforts Towards the Development of the Mediterranean Solar Plan" were elaborated by a group of member states of the UfM and presented during the ministerial meeting for comments. Discussions on these proposals and the outlined governance structure will be continued in the coming weeks with partners of the UfM. As far as the guidelines are concerned, it is of paramount importance that there is continuity and coherence with the existing Euromed structures without prejudice to any expert level discussions on the UfM level.

Several financial institutions (the EIB, AfD and KfW) presented a joint non-paper in which they announced their intention to work closely together on these issues and earmark funds dedicated to renewable energy and energy efficiency. Further discussions will take place. These announcements complement the World Bank efforts. The latter intend to carry a high scale solar energy development in the region through the Clean Technology Fund. Moreover, the European Commission highlighted ongoing efforts to further regional reforms that will contribute to establishing favourable conditions for the development of renewable energy in the framework of the UfM.

Furthermore, progress has also been achieved in the context of the Euro-Mediterranean energy co-operation. A series of programmes supported by the European Union directly aim at integrating the Maghreb and Mashrek energy markets (e.g. MED-EMIP, MEDREG projects) and at co-operation in the field of energy efficiency and renewable energy (Med-ENEC project). These projects also closely collaborate with the Regional Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (RCREEE) based in Cairo. Additionally, UfM Partner Countries support a number of relevant initiatives, such as the Mediterranean Renewable Energy Centre (MEDREC) based in Tunis as the focal point of the MEDREP Initiative.

On 18 November 2009, the European Commission adopted a project, entitled "Paving the Way for the Mediterranean Solar Plan" (EUR 5 million) that supports improvement of framework conditions for renewable energy including required reforms of legislation and regulation in the Mediterranean partner countries. The European Commission has also financed a study mission that will provide recommendations to contribute to the preparation and implementation of a Mediterranean Solar Plan, inter alia addressing issues of coordination between the various key actors and stakeholders.

An experts meeting organised through the MEDEMIP project took place in Brussels on 4-5 May 2009 focusing on the introduction of renewable energy in the Southern Mediterranean and in the EU. The need for new energy infrastructure development in the Southern Mediterranean was also highlighted in the Second Strategic Energy Review, November 2008, in particular with respect to gas and electricity interconnections. The latter proposed that further measures will be outlined in 2010 aiming to complete a Mediterranean Energy Ring in electricity and natural gas.

In the area of natural gas, and upon partner countries' request, based on an evaluation of previous results, the European Commission will continue its support to the ongoing work on the integration of gas markets in the Mashreq and with the EU through the Euro-Arab Mashreq Gas Master Project.

As for the trilateral energy dialogue between the Commission, Israel and the Palestinian Authority, which includes the Solar for Peace Project, two scheduled High Level meetings were postponed in 2009 due to political developments in the region. A solar energy meeting with the PA is scheduled for later this year.

Proposed initiatives and objectives for 2010

It is suggested to convene a Euromed Energy Ministerial in the near future centred on the implementation of the Limassol Action Plan, on advancing the progressive integration of energy markets in the region, on defining a strategy to develop the Mediterranean Solar Plan, on supporting the development of regional energy infrastructure, in particular electricity and gas interconnections on supporting renewable energy production and use in the Mediterranean as well as in cooperation as appropriate with partners in the Gulf region. The ministerial conference should also take note of progress in implementing concrete solar projects.

In the framework of the Mediterranean Solar Plan, an action plan will be developed on "renewable energy production" and "electricity transmission". The action plan should duly cover aspects relating to the improvement of framework conditions (regulation, legislation, technology transfer and business environment). Activities along the fields of "energy efficiency and energy savings", as well as "transfer of know-how and technology" will also be taken into consideration.

In May 2010, Spain will host in Valencia a conference regarding Mediterranean projects of renewable energies.

The project "Paving the Way for the Mediterranean Solar Plan" is expected to start in the first half of 2010. The main results expected from the project are inter alia: progress in the establishment of a harmonised legislative and regulatory framework in the Euro-Mediterranean region favourable to large-scale renewable energy adoption and use, renewable electricity trade, energy efficiency and energy savings and improvements in intra- and inter-regional knowledge transfer.

Furthermore, the European Commission will work, in consultation with all involved parties, on a Mediterranean Interconnection Plan.

Israel, the Palestinian Authority and the Commission should continue the trilateral dialogue.

2.3 Transport and the motorways of the sea

Stocktaking 2009

The need to set up an integrated Euro-Mediterranean transport system and to improve connections with the trans-European Transport network is at the core of the Regional Transport Action Plan (RTAP). The last EuroMed Transport Forum, which took place in December 2008 under the co-presidency of the UfM, agreed on further developing the methodology to define a Trans-Mediterranean Transport Network. A first proposal for such a network will be made in the near future.

In parallel the Transport Forum, and more specifically its dedicated working group on Infrastructure and Regulatory Issues, developed a short-list consisting of 17 priority infrastructure project which are in need of financing. This list was already presented during the Ministerial conference on sustainable development which took place in Paris on 25 June 2009 and it will be confirmed during the next Ministerial Conference on Transport. For the remaining part of 2009 the Transport Forum will actively work on the promotion of the projects on this list to accelerate their possible financing.

On the regulatory side most progress has been made in 2009 on maritime safety and security and in the domain of aviation. Early 2009 the SAFEMED II project was kicked off as a follow-up to the successful SAFEMED I project.

The EuroMed Aviation project will come to an end this year. During these last months of the project an ambitious road map towards the establishing of a Euro Mediterranean Open Aviation Area will be prepared and presented.

Euro Med Transport has been an important project in the context of the neighbouring policy for the MEDA countries, especially in the aviation field where we support the transposition of the *acquis communautaire*, which enhances safety and capacity in the area.

According to the Single European Sky regulations, Italy, Greece, Malta and Cyprus have founded the Blue Med Functional Air Block (FAB), which is now in the definition phase. Albania, Tunisia and Egypt have been invited and are now participating as associated partners in the Blue Med FAB, while the Civil Aviation Authority of Jordan and Lebanon as observer, in order to jointly study the feasibility of implementing Functional Air Blocks (FAB) over the area, as required by the Single European Sky Legislation.

As for the development of the Mediterranean Motorways of the Seas, the ongoing project is currently fully implementing the in-depth technical assistance for the four selected pilot projects.

Until the end of 2009 two Working Groups on Infrastructure and Regulatory Issues are foreseen followed by a Forum early 2010. In addition a Motorways of the Seas subgroup meeting will be organised in November 2009.

Proposed initiatives and objectives for 2010

A EuroMed Transport Ministerial meeting should take place in the near future to provide further political guidance on the establishment of a Trans-Mediterranean Transport Network, to finalise the shortlist of transport infrastructure priority projects and to explore the sources of financing of priority infrastructure projects. Further reflection on the cooperation with EU transport regulatory agencies, especially about maritime security in the Mediterranean Sea with the EMSA, is necessary.

A EuroMed Transport Infrastructure Financing conference in line with the conclusions of the EuroMed Transport Forum of December 2008.

Discussions about the establishment of a permanent Mediterranean Transport Observatory for the Eastern Mediterranean should be continued and further reflection on the cooperation with EU transport regulatory agencies (countries (EMSA and EASA) for the Mediterranean partner is necessary.

2.4 Sustainable urban development

Stocktaking 2009

With nearly 100 millions additional city dwellers between 2000 and 2025, the southern Mediterranean towns will see major social and environmental changes. As much historically as through its environmental (consumption of spaces, water and energy resources, pollution, etc.), social (social cohesion, gender equality, housing, UN Habitat Agenda etc.) and economic (competitiveness, accessibility, etc.) implications, the urban question is at the centre of the problem of sustainable development in the Mediterranean region. This dynamic, mentioned under the Mediterranean Sustainable Development Strategy, matches the permanent guidelines of the European Union as a continuation of the Leipzig Charter. It is also relayed by several local authority networks.

The Marseille declaration highlighted the significance of this question for the Union for the Mediterranean and set general guidelines for it to be considered in the process.

The theme of sustainable urban development was examined during the meeting of ministers on Sustainable development held 25 June 2009 in Paris. A high level technical expert workshop gathering representatives from EU and most of the Mediterranean countries, financial institutions and NGOs was held to propose concrete actions.

A high level technical expert workshop is to be held in Jordan (November 2009) to identify and examine the first exemplary projects, discuss a policy paper on common guidelines, define an action plan and organise technical work (core groups).

Proposed initiatives and objectives for 2010

Urban development will be a priority field of intervention for next millennium for the PAM according to the proposed work programme adopted in October 2009 in Cairo.

For the UfM, following the Paris June 25th meeting, the core groups are to work on setting the guidelines in the form of an orientation scheme for sustainable urban development in Mediterranean cities and continuing to identify exemplary and operational projects in priority fields that are to be agreed in Jordan. A new level technical expert meeting will take place during the first semester. Besides the Leipzig Charter, the EU Green Paper "Towards a new Culture of Urban Mobility" should also be considered and taken into account during any future discussions for the production of a policy paper on common guidelines as well as for introducing an Action Plan for the Sustainable Urban Development in Mediterranean Cities.

A Ministerial meeting evoking specifically Sustainable Urban Development and Housing could be organised in the near future in order to examine projects and to approve orientations for sustainable urban development of the Mediterranean cities.

2.5 Environment and de-pollution of the Mediterranean and maritime governance

Stocktaking 2009

In November 2006, the 3rd Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Environment held in Cairo agreed on a 2007-2013 timetable of concrete actions (Cairo road map) to be developed under the Horizon 2020 in order to lead towards a thorough depollution of the Mediterranean Sea and on planning a ministerial meeting in 2009 to review the H2020 initiative on the basis of progress made.

The development of the Union for the Mediterranean and its focus on concrete projects has given a positive boost to the implementation of environment activities under Horizon 2020.

Following the Marseille Foreign Affairs' Ministers meeting the Horizon 2020 capacity building sub-group was launched with a first meeting in Rome in December 2008. This means that all three Horizon 2020 sub-groups are now underway.

On 25 June, the first Ministerial Meeting of the Union for the Mediterranean on Sustainable Development projects was held in Paris. The technical workshop on environment and water preceding this meeting focused mainly on the first steps to take for drawing up a long-term Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean, along the outcomes of the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Water held in Jordan in December 2008 and potential water projects.

In view of the next meeting of Euro-Mediterranean Environment Ministers the Commission has produced a progress report on the first three years of Horizon 2020, adopted on 6 August 2009 (SEC (2009) 1118 final) and presented at the 3rd annual meeting of the H2020 Steering Group in Dubrovnik on 13 October 2009. This progress report will provide the opportunity to Ministers to acknowledge the progress achieved within Horizon 2020.

Regarding pollution reduction projects, the Commission has provided €800.000 of EC budgetary funding through the FEMIP¹ support fund, to finance the first phase of the Mediterranean Hot-Spot Identification Programme (MeHSIP) Project Preparation and Implementation Facility (PPIF). Launched by the European Investment Bank (EIB) in March 2009 this will support upstream work on project concepts (scoping/feasibility studies, etc.) to facilitate the application process for future IFI loans. The EIB has remained in close contact with a small group of key donors with the aim being to develop the pipeline for the H2020 pollution reduction project based on the analytical work carried out for the Mediterranean Action Plan of UNEP (MAP/UNEP).

Regarding regional capacity building, a regional support programme under the ENPI of € 4.5 million has started in 2009 and run for three years. This programme aims at supporting the implementation of H2020 through capacity building and awareness raising activities and at promoting integration of environment issues in other sector-based policies.

Regarding the review, monitoring and research group, a Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) for the Mediterranean region is being established with the support of the EEA and UNEP/MAP.

¹ Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership

The Communication from the European Commission "Towards an Integrated Maritime Policy for better governance in the Mediterranean" (COM (2009)466, 11.09.2009) calls for an overall stronger co-operation concerning the EU Integrated Maritime Policy with non-EU Mediterranean partners with the objective of promoting a more integrated approach to maritime affairs in the basin, where necessary and appropriate.

The Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 17 June 2008, establishing a framework for Community action in the field of marine environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive) which is, according to a European Council decision, the environmental pillar of the Integrated Maritime Policy, aims at achieving a good environmental status.

In this framework, the next Environment Ministerial Conference will be an opportunity to study the progress of Horizon 2020 and the UfM projects including energy matters, notably the last steps of the Mediterranean Solar Plan, which is aiming at developing sustainable energies in the region.

Proposed initiatives and objectives for 2010

Implementation of the measures in the timetable of actions (Cairo roadmap) approved at the third Euro-Mediterranean meeting of Environment Ministers in Cairo will continue to be the mainstay of Horizon 2020 work. The annual meeting of the Horizon 2020 Steering group will be held along as will meetings of each of the three sub-groups (pollution reduction, capacity building along with review, monitoring and research).

If the first phase of the MeHSIP PPIF proves successful, a second phase may be undertaken, with possible EC budgetary funding through the FEMIP support fund, on a case by case basis. The necessary funds for this second phase are estimated to be up to € 5.4 million. The second phase would aim to support implementation by treating broader issues linked to the sectors addressed by the various projects (urban waste water, municipal waste or industrial emissions).

It is also proposed to continue co-operation on marine issues and hold a ministerial meeting on Integrated Maritime Policy in the near future including the application of the ecosystem approach, in particular to fisheries management, a culture of compliance in the exploitation of fisheries resources, Integrated Coastal Zone Management and the conservation and sustainable use of the sea bed, maritime safety notably in the fields of marine and coastal environment protection from pollution, as well as safety of navigation and integrated research efforts on marine and maritime issues. This cooperation should also take into account the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Seas (UNCLOS).

Towards this end, and following the Communication from the European Commission "Towards an Integrated Maritime Policy for better governance in the Mediterranean" (COM (2009)466, 11.09.2009) non-EU partners could be invited to appoint contact points for an integrated approach to maritime affairs. With EU IMP focal points, those contact points could participate in a basin-wide high-level dialogue for UfM. A dedicated meeting of high officials could be a first step to discuss the best way to work all together to define the way to work on the integration of marine environment considerations and sustainable development. This should possibly lead to elaborate an integrated maritime strategy for the Mediterranean Sea based on the existing ongoing mechanisms and initiatives which would take into account the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, the related work of the Mediterranean Action Plan, the Mediterranean Strategy on Sustainable Development (MSSD) and the necessary balance between environment protection and other existing activities to avoid overlaps and ensure synergies. It is also proposed to convene back to back meetings of the UfM with the Mediterranean Action Plan in order to coordinate the different agendas. Further activities to based as much as possible on existing ongoing processes to enhance coherence and avoid duplication and fragmentation and should take into account the UNCLOS.

2.6 Water

Stocktaking 2009

The Third Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Water was held on 22 December 2008 in Jordan. The main outcome was that Ministers agreed on the need to define a long term Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean and they approved the guidelines for the Strategy together with its elaboration calendar. In addition, a first indicative list of projects, proposed by some countries, identified in an informal way examples of potential future projects.

On 30 April, a meeting on financing for water projects was held in Alexandria. The EIB organised a conference on water financing on 11 May that went beyond projects, and looked also at issues like water pricing.

During the Paris meeting on sustainable development in June 2009, the ministers noted the challenges of water scarcity in the region, especially in the South and its vulnerability to climate change effects.

According to the Declaration of the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Water (22 December 2008, Dead Sea, Jordan) a Water Expert Group (WEG) was mandated to elaborate a long term Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean (SWM).

On 7-8 September 2009, the first meeting of the Water Expert Group (WEG) took place in Athens and started the process of detailed elaboration of the Strategy with the adoption of the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the process, which included a roadmap for the SWM elaboration and the establishment of a Technical Drafting Group (TDG), composed of 14 WEG members, chaired by ES. It was also decided that the Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative (MED EUWI) mechanism to provide overall technical and administrative support to the process. This group met on the 26th October in Madrid and agreed on a number of documents to be approved at the 2nd WEG meeting.

The 2nd WEG meeting took place on 4 November 2009 back-to-back with the joint Egyptian-Dutch Water Conference that took place in Cairo, Egypt, on 2-3 November 2009 to contribute to the Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean as well as to the UN Climate Conference in Copenhagen. Other meetings for elaborating the Strategy are scheduled in 2009 at the margins of major relevant events. During the 2nd WEG, the documents submitted by the TDG were finally approved: guidelines to drafters, overall work plan for the TDG and role country table. Another meeting related to the process is the conference on 23 and 24 November 2009, in Lyon (France), on the contribution of local and regional authorities to the water strategy of the Union for the Mediterranean.

Proposed initiatives and objectives for 2010

The Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean (SWM) is scheduled to be agreed at the next Ministerial Conference on Water, 12-14 April 2010, in Spain and endorsed by the next Union for the Mediterranean summit later in 2010. This Strategy will be subsequently developed in a related Action Plan, specifying the modalities through which the objectives of the strategy will be achieved for the related years, and will be regularly reviewed. The Strategy will cover effective governance for integrated water resources management; adaptation to climate change and enhancement of drought and flood management; water demand management including non-conventional water resources and optimisation of water financing. Cross-cutting issues such as water information will be embedded in each priority theme of the full strategy. The Strategy will be translated into policies, initiatives and actions. The projects to be developed should relate to the following indicative list of priority concerns, as described in the Jordan Ministerial Declaration: i) adaptation to climate change; ii) balance between supply and demand; conservation and rehabilitation of natural environments, iv) de-pollution of the Mediterranean and v) technologies and efficient use of water.

The SWM, to be adopted at the ministerial meeting in Spain on 13 - 14 April 2010, should include inter alia a framework for the selection of projects without prejudice to the outcomes of the setting up of the UfM Secretariat process. A first indicative list of projects, proposed by some countries, in an informal way, shows examples of potential future projects subject to financial support and official selection criteria.

In 2010, the process of elaboration of the Strategy will continue through further meetings of the Water Expert Group and of the Technical Drafting Groups leading up to the Ministerial Meeting on Water. Work of the Water Expert Group will continue after the Ministerial Conference on Water in Spain in April 2010. The Water Expert Group will assist the implementation and follow up of the Strategy, including the further development of the Action Plan.

2.7 Mediterranean Business Development Initiative (MBDI)

Stocktaking 2009

Finance Ministers from the countries of the "Union for the Mediterranean" gathered in Brussels on 7 July 2009 for a Euro-Mediterranean ECOFIN meeting. Ministers reviewed progress with the reform process and reaffirmed their commitment and full support to implementing key structural reforms suited to each country, focusing on four priority areas: (i) further liberalizing trade and opening the economy; (ii) upgrading public institutions and governance systems; (iii) consolidating macroeconomic stability; and (iv) improving the business climate - especially for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises - to facilitate firms to invest, creating jobs and promoting growth.

The reform of the financial market to facilitate the access of micro and SMEs to external finance is one of the key elements of the strategy towards the Mediterranean region. We then reiterate support to the Mediterranean Business Development Initiative (MBDI), one of the priority projects of the Union for the Mediterranean, which will facilitate the development of entrepreneurship and the reform of financial systems, leading to economic growth.

Proposed initiatives and objectives for 2010

As stated in the Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean, "the Med Initiative is aimed at assisting the existing entities in partner countries operating in support of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises by assessing the needs of these enterprises, defining policy solutions and providing these entities with resources in the form of technical assistance and financial instruments".

To this end, the FEMIP Trust Fund will deliver a study on the MBDI to further investigate on the Mediterranean SMEs financing needs, the demand for focalised technical assistance, under the guiding principles of value added, market orientation and co-ownership, as well as to analyse possible provision mechanisms in order to satisfy those needs.

According to the outcome of this study that makes recommendations on the operational structure of the MBDI in terms of capital and human resources requirements, as well as its business plan, a roadmap will be defined. Contributions by countries from both rims of the Mediterranean will be done on a voluntary basis.

2.8 Economic cooperation

A growing involvement of the private capital in the UfM economic cooperation is essential. Therefore it is necessary to keep the dialogue with the business world open, on the basis of the experience of the informal Milan Economic and Financial Forum for the Mediterranean, held in July 2009.

2.9 Information society, administrative reform and e-government

Stocktaking 2009

In the year 2009 important steps forward have been made for the development of the Euro-Mediterranean Information Society. The second phase of EUMEDCONNECT has been launched in order to ensure the continuity of the connectivity of the Mediterranean research networks and with the European Union. A major meeting for monitoring EUMEDCONNECT II will be organised in Rabat in October 2009 and a major Conference would be organised in the course of 2010. Based on the monitoring results, it will be decided, how the extension of the project after 2010 could be supported by the European Commission and the Mediterranean Partners .

The Euro-Mediterranean Group of European Regulators (EMERG) held a contact group meeting in Brussels on 29 April 2009 and a workshop on market analysis has been organised in Malta last July.

As regards activities related to ICT Research and Development, meetings of the Sub-committees on Research and Innovation have been organised with Morocco in Rabat (January) and with Algeria in Brussels (March). Sub-committees meetings are planned before the end of 2009 with Jordan in Brussels (October) and with Egypt in Cairo (November). In addition the final Conference of the project MED-IST and the launching Event of JOIN-IST took place in Egypt on 13/14 May 2009.

Concerning media activities, the new Euromed Audiovisual III Programme recently adopted by the Commission will contribute to the strengthening and further development of the Mediterranean audiovisual sector. A future Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial meeting on Culture will provide an opportunity to broach the convergence of standards and legislation on audiovisual matters as a further tool to improve and facilitate the circulation of audiovisual works across the Mediterranean.

Proposed initiatives and objectives for 2010

For 2010, it is expected to organise the next Forum of Senior Officials on the Information Society in Brussels with the view to prepare the next Information Society Ministerial Conference (date and venue to be confirmed). Meetings of the Sub-committees for Research and Innovation will be organised with Tunisia, Lebanon, Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

A Plenary meeting of EMERG is planned at the beginning of 2010 in Rabat and additional regulatory workshops will be organised in 2010 with the support of the NATP3 project.

2.10 Tourism

Stocktaking 2009

The first Euro-Mediterranean conference on tourism held in Fes on 2-3 April 2008 decided to prepare a work programme for adoption at a future Ministerial conference. Ministers considered that major areas of cooperation could include vocational training in the area of tourism, quality upgrading in the tourism industry, cooperation in the area of classification of hotels, and further cooperation between tourism administrations in the areas of statistics and best practices on sustainable tourism including agro-tourist co-operatives and protection of cultural heritage.

Ministers also shared the view that the launching of the Union for the Mediterranean will allow tackling one of the issues of major concern for the tourism industry: the need to develop tourism infrastructures. At the same time, negotiations during 2009 allowed to make progress in the liberalisation in trade in some services sectors, particularly in the area of air transport.

Proposed initiatives and objectives for 2010

Spain will host the second conference on Tourism in May in Barcelona.

A meeting of Tourism senior officials should be held in 2010 to elaborate a work programme on tourism cooperation. Within the European Neighbourhood and Partnership instruments, TAIEX and TWINNING could be used as cooperation tools in the areas identified during the ministerial meeting held in Fes.

2.11 Industrial cooperation

Stocktaking 2009

At the 7th Euro-Mediterranean conference on industry in Nice in November 2008, Ministers approved a work programme for 2009-2010 within the broader UfM context. The work programme encompasses the following six areas: implementation of the Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Enterprise, investment promotion, trade facilitation for industrial products, innovation and technology transfer, dialogue on the future of the textile and clothing sector, sustainable industrial development and energy efficiency. In 2009, activities described in the work programme have been implemented in all six areas. Concerning the Charter, national meetings have gathered stakeholders from the public sector and the business community in each country to review progress following the 2008 evaluation of the Charter implementation. Work has also continued at regional level.

Mediterranean partner countries are preparing amendments to the Charter paying more attention to SMEs' needs and concentrating on the following five areas: access to finance, market access, skills development, innovation, and sustainable development. As a result, the EuroMed Charter will be more in line with the European Small Business Act and with EU policies in the five above-mentioned areas. In cooperation with the Commission, the OECD, the European Training Foundation and the European Investment Bank, Mediterranean partner countries are also fine-tuning the indicators for monitoring the Charter implementation.

Concerning investment promotion, the Commission, the European Investment Bank, the ANIMA network and the regional "Invest in MED" programme, have jointly published 20 testimonies by European CEOs who have invested in Mediterranean partner countries.

Concerning trade facilitation for industrial products, Mediterranean partner countries have made progress in preparing ACAA Agreements. An ACAA Agreement with Israel in the sector of pharmaceutical products will be ready for signature by the end of 2009. Tunisia would be in a position to finalise the preparation during the second half of 2010 in the areas of electrical products and construction products and start the negotiations before the end of 2010. Technical assistance provided by the European Commission is up and running in all partner countries and the Commission services are organizing a number of technical seminars financed by TAIEX in Brussels.

Concerning innovation, Egypt and Syria have joined the Enterprise Europe Network, made up of close to 600 partner organisations in more than 40 countries, promoting competitiveness and innovation in Europe and beyond. Tunisia has applied to join the Network. Israel participates in the EU's Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme.

The EuroMed dialogue on the future of the textile and clothing sector is continuing paying particular attention to innovation and to the role of social partners in managing the structural changes.

In the area of sustainable industrial development, information and good practice are being exchanged and efforts are made to "green" the Charter as indicated above.

Proposed initiatives and objectives for 2010

The work programme approved in Nice will continue being implemented in 2010 and the 8th Euro-Mediterranean conference on industry could be organised in the second semester to take stock of progress and set priorities for 2011 and 2012.

Further work should also be done to improve arbitration procedures in the region.

2.12 Cooperation in statistics

Stocktaking 2009

The regional MEDSTAT II programme on cooperation in statistics came to an end in September 2009. The countries on the Southern and Eastern shores of the Mediterranean have made considerable progress in producing reliable statistics in line with European and international standards. This progress was widely recognised during the meeting of the General Directors of the statistical offices held in June 2009 in Brussels and by an external evaluation. Among the main achievements is the exchange of an increasing number of statistical indicators which are now freely accessible via Eurostat's website. However, the gap between the countries covered by IPA and those of the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean remains wide.

Proposed initiatives and objectives for 2010

The follow-up programme MEDSTAT III is expected to start in early 2010. It will focus on a reduced number of thematic areas and put more focus on the dissemination and use of statistical data. For this purpose, a preparatory conference will be held in autumn 2009 to bring together the European and Mediterranean statistical offices as well as the relevant Commission services and international (donor) organisations active in the field. The aim of the meeting is to further refine the priority actions within MEDSTAT III and to better coordinate the on-going initiatives.

2.13 Agriculture

Stocktaking 2009

In the Mediterranean basin, agriculture is a key element in economy. It is also linked to food safety. Demographic pressure, difference of levels of development and climate change transform radically the order of things on these issues and Euro-Mediterranean countries have already started suffering the consequences. Our Mediterranean partners rely largely on agricultural products exchanges for their food supply.

If a progressive liberalisation of exchanges can be one of the means used to face this challenge, taking into account respective sensibilities, it could not be the only one.

It is important to accompany a progressive liberalisation of food trade by developing structuring projects in favour of southern rural and agricultural areas which could be hurt by liberalisation. In this regard, the following priorities have been identified (sustainable rural development, development and promotion of quality products, the coordination of agricultural research on topics such as water stress resistant plant species and water resources management and the pursuit and reinforcement of activities in the areas of sanitary and phytosanitary norms).

Proposed initiatives and objectives for 2010

Partners will identify concrete projects on the four areas identified in order to launch a win/win dynamic and to create new solidarities. A ministerial conference on agriculture could reflect on the most adapted way to tackle the regional food security, see how the countries of both banks can work together to find solutions in the middle and the longer term and have some exchanges on the contribution of fisheries and the role of agricultural policies is to sustain agricultural production.

3. Social, Human and Cultural Cooperation

3.1 Employment and social dimension

Stocktaking 2009

At the first Euro-Mediterranean Employment and Labour Ministers Conference in Marrakesh in November 2008, partner countries agreed on working together at regional level on the challenges that they are facing in the fields of employment, employability and decent work. The Ministers committed to a comprehensive Framework of Actions that sets out the policy objectives for these three areas, namely Employment policies – more jobs; Enhancing employability – human capital, and creating decent employment opportunities – better jobs. Particular emphasis was put on cross-cutting issues in this context, notably the promotion of equal opportunities between men and women; the integration of youth; the transformation of informal employment into formal employment, and labour migration management. Ministers agreed on a reporting and follow-up mechanism, building on national action plans and reports on national progress. Ministers also reaffirmed the crucial importance of further developing an effective social dialogue in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

Proposed initiatives and objectives for 2010

The strong impact of the global economic and financial crisis on employment in the Euro-Mediterranean region puts the employment and social dimension more than ever at the centre of the Union for the Mediterranean, reinforcing the necessity of speeding up the implementation of the Marrakesh Framework of Actions on employment, employability and decent work. The second Euro-Med Employment and Labour Ministers Conference in autumn 2010 will review progress based on a follow-up report on progress under the Framework of Actions, and discuss how the Euro-Med employment and social dimension can best contribute to recovery in the labour markets, both in the short and long term. Developing skills meeting the future needs of labour markets and improving the employment prospects particularly of young people will be of key importance in this regard.

In preparation of a future Ministerial Conference, the UfM Euro-Med Employment and Labour High-Level Working Group set up in line with the Marrakesh conclusions and in charge of the follow-up process adopted in Marrakesh in 2008, met for the first time in Brussels on 26-27 November 2009

The first meeting of this Working Group was the opportunity to share information on national trends and policy developments and to identify and exchange best practices but also to stress the necessity to give a more concrete understanding of the social priorities in the region and to promote more concrete projects at regional level, as a EuroMed network of enterprises and companies socially responsible. Three targets have indeed been pointed out by this group : quality of work; knowledge of labour markets, migration et mobility; involving of enterprises and companies socially responsible.

Social partners have been strongly invited to set up a Euro-Med Social Dialogue Forum, which would contribute to the follow-up to the Marrakesh Conference, and which should aim at promoting social dialogue in the Euro-Mediterranean countries and within the region as a whole. A next meeting of social partners should take place in Barcelona in the beginning of March 2010.

3.2 Technical education, vocational training and equal opportunities

Stocktaking 2008 - 2009

The first Euro-Mediterranean forum organised in Marseille at a ministerial level on the 18th of December in 2008 highlighted the main points in what could be a regional agenda for reforming vocational education in the Mediterranean basin countries with the aim of making it both more attractive to the relevant target groups (young people in initial education programmes and wage- and salary-earners) and more efficient in economic and social terms.

Proposed initiatives and objectives for 2010

The year 2010 should be used as an opportunity to lay the foundation of a regional agenda for vocational training. The following initiatives might be undertaken:

- Building on the expertise of international and national institutions, a regional vision of training needs and resources could be developed both in each partner country and in the Euro-Mediterranean area as a whole. This mapping exercise could be launched in the year 2010 and scheduled for completion in 2011.
- Experience and best practices could be systematically shared. This would involve peer review arrangements, and therefore periodic progress reports to evaluate the growth and upgrading of vocational training systems in the UfM member countries. A first peer review meeting might be convened in the fall 2010.
- Efforts in the field of training could be pooled, for example by establishing regional training platforms in the areas covered by the six key initiatives listed at the Paris Summit.
- Occupational mobility across the Euro-Mediterranean Area could be promoted. This mobility could be facilitated by creating regional transfer arrangements that would ensure transparency and comparability of qualifications and competencies between UfM countries. Working groups might be set up in 2010, which would be entrusted with the task of reviewing the feasibility of the aforementioned mechanisms taking into account the current discussions on national qualification frameworks and the European Qualifications Network.

We should also enhance equality of access to education and educational programmes for all social groups. Furthermore, we should promote the training of educational staff, life-long learning, research and innovation.

3.3 Health

Stocktaking 2009

The 2nd Euro-Med Ministerial Conference on Health took place in Cairo on 17 November 2008. Participants agreed to strengthen the health dimension of the Union for Mediterranean. Ministers adopted a declaration which constitutes a framework for dialogue and cooperation between the EU and the Mediterranean partners emphasising the importance of cooperation in the health sector. The declaration aims at the strengthening of health systems notably through sufficient and sustainable financing, enhanced training of health professionals and strategies to minimise the negative impact of the migration of health professionals. The declaration also highlights the need for increased cooperation to address the growing burden of non-communicable and chronic diseases, and to improve surveillance and disease control before the common threat of communicable diseases. Actions recommended by the declaration include promoting sustainable development, enhancing coordination of international activities, and ensuring equal access to quality health care on a sustainable basis and addressing the challenges of non-communicable, communicable and chronic diseases. Participants agreed to review, on a regular basis the various cooperation actions and projects within the Euro-Mediterranean region.

In 2009, interesting developments took place in several networks and cooperation initiatives which were presented and discussed during the Ministerial Conference. The Episouth project (Network for Communicable Disease Control in Southern Europe and Mediterranean countries) proved useful in the exchange of experience in the context of the global influenza A H1N1 pandemic. A food induced diseases-celiac disease network and a cancer registries network were launched in Rome respectively in December 2008 and in July 2009 and a similar meeting for cancer screening and early diagnosis has been held. Experts from Euro-Med countries also met in Grand Canary in June to intensify cooperation on paediatric cardio-surgery. The implementation of an important portfolio of bilateral cooperation programmes financed by the European Commission and by EU Member States with most countries in the region, focusing on primary care, quality of care, health financing and equal access and the introduction of social health insurance has continued during this period.

Proposed initiatives and objectives for 2010

The idea to hold a Euro-Med Health Forum was welcomed at the Conference. The Forum will take place in 2010. This forum could, among other issues, take stock of programme experiences and results of the bilateral cooperation programmes in the areas of primary care, quality of care, health financing, improving equal access and the introduction of social health insurance. At the moment Euro-Med countries will continue their participation in the EpiSouth Project enhancing the coordination, regional cooperation and networking in sharing information and expertise within the Mediterranean region in the field of communicable diseases. Moreover, they could develop further activities in areas of joint interest, including the fight against cancer and paediatric cardio-surgery. A new Ministerial Conference could be convened in the near future in order to assess progress made and follow up on the implementation of the Cairo Declaration. Within the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, TAIEX and Twinning could be used as cooperation tools in the areas identified during the ministerial meeting held in Cairo.

Our countries will continue to cooperate to meet emerging new threats and epidemics with pandemic potential as well as promote regional exchange on universal access to quality health services.

3.4 Higher Education, Euro-Mediterranean University

Stocktaking 2009

In promoting regional cooperation in higher education, the Commission encourages EuroMed partner countries to make full use of possibilities offered by projects, students and academics exchanges, conferences and related activities within the framework of existing higher education cooperation programmes such as Tempus and Erasmus Mundus and Jean Monnet. The Commission considers that particular attention should be given to further promoting appropriate academic mobility, enhancing quality assurance mechanisms and to issues concerning the recognition of degrees and study periods which may lead to the development of joint degrees between institutions in European and Mediterranean countries.

The Euro-Mediterranean University (EMUNI) in Slovenia, one of the six key initiatives of the Union for the Mediterranean, was established in 2008 as network of networks, with 118 institutions from 32 partner countries having signed the founding charter. In its first year EMUNI developed and implemented pilot projects in relation to the priority areas of the Union for the Mediterranean, which will advance the Euro-Mediterranean Higher Education, Science and Research Area.

Proposed initiatives and objectives for 2010

A second meeting of the Euromed Ministers of Higher Education and Scientific Research shall be convened in the first semester of 2010 in Slovenia, once the results of projects, conferences, studies and other activities under the new Tempus IV, Erasmus Mundus I and Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Windows programmes are available. The ministerial meeting would be an opportunity to acknowledge the activities of EMUNI towards deepening of the higher education cooperation in the region. We should also commonly enhance equality of access to education and educational programmes for all social groups. Furthermore, we should promote training of educational staff, life-long learning, research and innovation.

3.5 Research

Stocktaking 2009

The 12th Meeting of the Monitoring Committee for Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation in Research and Technological Development (MoCo) on 6-8 November 2008 recommended to reinforce the role of RTD in the Union for the Mediterranean and to prepare joint activities between European and Mediterranean countries on a voluntary basis to reinforce the efficiency and impact of ongoing bilateral cooperation. MoCo suggested to the Commission to develop competence building activities for research organisations and universities of the MPCs through the Capacities Programme of the 7th Framework Programme for R&D. As a result, in July 2009, the Commission published the call ERA-WIDE, aiming at improving research excellence in the ENP countries. The Commission also continued to stimulate the participation of MPCs in the People Programme and particularly in the Marie Curie International research Staff Exchange Scheme (IRSES) and to develop specific programmes aiming at facilitating the brain circulation in MPCs.

The overall FP7 (2007-2009) participation of Mediterranean countries is substantial and amounts to about 37% of the total participation from third countries.

The S&T dialogue between Europe and MPCs has been also supported in 2009 by the Bi-regional Inconet Platform "MIRA" (Mediterranean Innovation and Research Coordination Action). Five thematic workshops respectively on Themes "Energy", "Environment", "Health", "ICT", "Food, Fisheries, Agriculture and Biotechnologies" have been implemented between January and July 2009 to identify main regional challenges and priorities to be considered in the future research agenda of Framework Programme 7. Moreover MIRA supports the building of the Euro-Mediterranean Innovation Space (EMIS). In a first step a web-based Innovation Dialogue Platform has been prepared in order to connect the MPC innovation key stakeholders to the EU.

The S&T policy dialogue with Mediterranean Partner Countries is also supported by the implementation of the S&T Cooperation Agreements between EU and Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt. An S&T Cooperation Agreement between EU and Jordan has been successfully negotiated and will be signed by the end of 2009. The negotiation of a new Cooperation Agreement with Algeria will start in 2009 and continue in 2010.

Proposed initiatives and objectives for 2010

At the 12th MoCo Meeting the MPCs and EU member states underlined the need to strengthen RTD and increase the capacities of Mediterranean Partner Countries to participate in the European Research Area. In addition to continuing to use all available FP7 tools and supporting the activities of MIRA, the following ideas could be developed further: to increase the complementarities between Community programmes and national programmes managed by EU Member States on a voluntary basis; and to favour the use of the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) to build S&T capacity in MPCs in complementarity to the specific international cooperation actions of the FP, to contribute to the formulation of research agendas related to the UfM priorities, to support the linkages between R&D on the one hand and innovation on the other hand through

appropriate measures (EMIS) and to support activities for the Horizon 2020 initiative. These planned activities were reaffirmed and endorsed at the 13th Meeting of the MoCo on 16 November 2009 and the following MoCo/UfM Meeting on 17 November 2009. In coherence with the new guidelines of the MoCo, which are adapted to the new landscape and the objectives of the UfM in the area of research and innovation, the MoCo will act as the Senior Officials Forum for the research part of the upcoming Ministerial Meeting on Higher Education and Research and will hold a preparatory meeting on 4-5 March 2010 in Alicante.

3.6 Promoting dialogue between cultures, cultural diversity and access to local culture

Stocktaking 2009

Following the 3rd meeting of Euromed Culture Ministers (Athens, 29-30 May 2008) -which decided to launch a process leading to the elaboration of a Euromed Strategy on Culture by 2010 – the European Commission has been engaged in a consultation process during 2009 addressing public entities and civil society organisations in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean partner countries of the Union for the Mediterranean. For the South-Mediterranean countries a needs assessment report has been drawn up by two experts and for the Western Balkans partner countries and Turkey a separate written consultation process has been conducted. With a view to completing this process and providing an opportunity for the cultural sector of partner countries to exchange views on the needs in the context of the new Strategy, a consultation seminar was organised by the European Commission on 12 October 2009. Furthermore, as outlined in the Athens Conclusions of May 2008, an ad hoc working group (composed of cultural experts of the partner countries of the Union for the Mediterranean) will be established and meet for the first time at the beginning of December 2009 with the responsibility of elaborating the new Strategy.

Following the approval of its new statutes and the appointment of its new leadership, the Anna Lindh Foundation for Dialogue between cultures has been further strengthened. Henceforth, the Foundation has consolidated its capacity to promote intercultural dialogue, diversity, and mutual understanding and raise its profile as a bridge between Euro-Mediterranean cultures, religions and beliefs co-operating also with the Alliance of Civilisations, under the auspices of the UN, including its programmes for the city to city diplomacy as started in Reggio Calabria (October 2009) meeting of the Mediterranean Coastal Cities. The partnership welcomes the elaboration of the triennial programme 2009-2011 and the work done to invigorate the networks and revitalise its advisory council and underlines the interest of the yearly report on intercultural trends to be developed by the Foundation.

Concerning audiovisual activities, the new Euromed Audiovisual III Programme recently adopted by the Commission will contribute to the strengthening and further development of the Mediterranean audiovisual sector.

The IV phase of the Euromed Heritage Programme, centred on the appropriation of cultural heritage by local populations, access to knowledge of cultural heritage, and institutional and legislative strengthening, has been fully put into place by the total selection and contractualisation of 12 specific projects.

Euro-Med cooperation in the field of youth has been enhanced by the approval by the Commission of the Euro Med Youth IV Programme which will continue to run in conjunction with the Youth in Action Programme, both of which share similar objectives, such as promoting mobility, active citizenship, non-formal learning and mutual understanding among young people as well as supporting youth organisations.

Ministers agree that, in the framework of the future strategy on culture, action in the following areas should be further explored: prevention, prohibition and condemnation of trafficking and trade-import, export and transfer of ownership- in cultural property and treasures that have been illicitly acquired through illegal excavations and pillaging of monuments in the light of the relevant UNESCO Convention of 1970.

A Joint EC-Arab League Liaison Office was established in Malta during 2009 following the approval on 1 July 2009 of the ENPI Annual Action Programme in favour of the Mediterranean region.

Proposed initiatives and objectives for 2010

The ad hoc working group of experts should complete its work and submit the draft Strategy on Culture in view of a future meeting of Euromed Culture Ministers. This Strategy will be built around two distinct, but interlinked components: dialogue between cultures and cultural policy.

Other than approve the EuroMed cultural strategy, this meeting should provide an opportunity to broach the convergence of standards and legislation on audiovisual matters as a further tool to improve and facilitate the circulation of audiovisual works across the Mediterranean.

They are willing to enhance the significance of the mobility of artists, intellectuals, academicians and cultural workers and trainers along with the works of art, knowledge and creativity, under the framework of cultural exchange. Ministers are interested in examining the further engagement of small and medium-sized enterprises in the cultural and creative sectors in order to create jobs and income through cultural tourism.

The regional conference for the Euromed Heritage IV programme will be held in spring 2010 in Palermo, as a substitute of the cancelled launching conference.

The launching conference for the Euromed Audiovisual III programme shall take place at the end of 2010.

3.7 Strengthening the role of women in society

Stocktaking 2009

As part of the follow up to the Istanbul Ministerial Conference held in 2006 on "Strengthening the role of women in society", a second Ministerial conference took place on 11 and 12th November 2009 in Marrakesh. This meeting took stock of the actions undertaken by the partner countries on implementing the Istanbul Framework of Action agreed in 2006 and centred the priorities for the next two years in implanting the Istanbul framework and supported the development of joint activities within the partner countries. In that sense, Ministers welcomed that the following new projects had been proposed for the Union for the Mediterranean:

- The Foundation of Women for the Mediterranean (France, Lebanon, Jordan, Morocco) ;
- Educational and Training project for vulnerable girls and women (Jordan);
- Women Safety project for vulnerable girls and women(Jordan);
- Women Empowerment and Protection Media Network (Jordan);
- ICT for Poverty Reduction (Egypt) ;
- Centre for the Political Empowerment of Women (Egypt).

In order to prepare this ministerial Conference, one ad hoc working group was organised in October 2009. To this end, the Commission produced an implementation report on the basis of a questionnaire sent to all EuroMed partners as well as other stakeholders (EMPA, EESC, civil society organisations).

Proposed initiatives and objectives for 2010

During 2010, the main activities should focus on:

1. Following up the implementation of the Istanbul and Marrakesh conclusions. To achieve this, a focused and realistic action plan needs to be drawn up that has an operational character with strategy goals, timeframe and an appropriate follow-up mechanism as well as personnel.

To this end and following the Marrakesh's Conclusions, senior officials/experts meetings should be organised to share views on national trends and policy developments, identify and exchange best practices, as well as address issues, which arise in the implementation of the Common Framework of Action. The meetings will start to draw up an outcome document on progress under the Common Framework of Action 2006-2011 to be submitted to the next Ministerial Conference on Strengthening the Role of Women in Society.

2. The development of joint activities within the partner countries. The proposed projects in Marrakesh for the Union for the Mediterranean could be implemented by the concerned parties, inter alia the creation of the Foundation of the Women for Mediterranean.

3.8 Cooperation with civil society and local actors

Stocktaking 2009

In the Euro-Mediterranean context, the Declaration of the Paris Summit of July 2008, as well as the Marseille Declaration of November 2008, both underscore "the importance of the active participation of civil society, local and regional authorities and the private sector in the implementation of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean".

To this end, a Euro-Mediterranean Local and Regional Assembly (ARLEM) of local actors and civil society partners, based at the Committee of Regions, has been initiated and should be fully operational in early 2010.

One of the EC programmes strengthening the role of local actors and civil society in the Euro-Mediterranean region already today is the interregional programme CIUDAD (Cooperation in Urban Development and Dialogue). It was launched in 2009 and will co-fund almost 20 local cooperation projects between the EU and its Southern and/or Eastern neighbours. Other cross-border cooperation (CBC) and thematic programmes on the cooperation of non-state actors and local authorities are also active.

Commission launched a new regional programme in 2009 aiming at strengthening the role of civil society in the Euro-Mediterranean relations. This programme should promote structuring at national and regional level and should encourage interaction between civil society and governments and parliaments.

Furthermore, the EuroMed non-governmental platform continued its important work through the organisation of EuroMed civil society meetings and its participation in the UpM meetings.

Proposed initiatives and objectives for 2010

Implementation of the programme launched during 2009 and to encourage the EuroMed non-governmental platform to organise a Civil Forum before the Foreign Affairs Ministerial meeting in 2010.

A forum of the civil society in the UfM area will take place in Spain, in the first half of 2010, before the summit.

Moreover, the holding of a second edition of the Euromed Youth Parliament could be considered for 2010.

3.9 Enhancing the visibility of the partnership

Stocktaking 2009

Under the 2nd Euromed Regional Information and Communication Programme 2009 witnessed an increasing number of media activities aimed at raising public awareness of the partnership; outreach events that involved and engaged the public and civil society and training and networking exercises for journalists that contributed towards media development in the region.

12 projects under the collective banner "Maximising EU presence in the region's media" allowed several of the region's audiovisual and printed media highlight different elements of cooperation and the Partnership. The ENPI Info Centre serves as an important information portal, while also combining regular media monitoring and opinion research and polling activities in order to gauge popular perceptions about EU policies in the region. This information will provide vital input to future communication strategies. Training and networking activities have involved over 300 journalists in the different modules of the programme.

The Euromed and the Media Task Force participated in the UN Alliance of Civilisations forum in Istanbul where the joint (ALF, AoC, EU) Rapid Reaction Media Mechanism was launched. Two Task Force meetings took place in Sofia and Stockholm as well as a preparatory meeting for an international conference in Morocco on press freedom. Efforts continued to forge greater relations and organise joint activities with the ALF and AoC on themes such as the media and counter terrorism, conflict prevention/resolution and intercultural dialogue.

The Malta Euromed Information and Training Seminars for young Euro-Mediterranean diplomats have been acknowledged by Foreign Ministers as an official confidence building measure of the partnership, contributing to the improvement of its knowledge, visibility and co-ownership. To date 27 seminars have taken place, on a biannual basis, dating back to 1996. Over 1,400 young Euromed diplomats are numbered among the alumni. As Euro-Mediterranean relations continue to widen and deepen, the continuation of these seminars is a necessary element in that evolution. Efforts will be made to fulfil this through a new and enhanced programme of seminars.

Two further training sessions for young Euromed diplomats took place in Malta in May and October. In total almost 80 participants from over 25 Euromed countries participated in the four-day exercises of presentations, debates and simulation exercises covering various aspects of European relations with Southern neighbours.

Proposed initiatives and objectives for 2010

A positive public awareness of the Partnership is a necessary factor for its acceptance, as well as its accountability and legitimacy. Visibility actions to raise awareness among stakeholders about the benefits of the Partnership will continue through the different strands of the second Euromed Regional Information and Communication Programme. These modules include: commissioned media activities, journalist training and networking, development of information portals and public opinion polls and surveys. An important element of this approach includes actions towards regional media development with the engagement and involvement of media through the Task Force consultations and activities. These efforts will continue in 2010, and will be further enhanced by joint media/communication/information activities with the Anna Lindh Foundation and through the support of key audiovisual projects, especially those operators which have a specific focus on the Mediterranean.

4. Justice, Freedom and Security

Stocktaking 2009

The Euro-Mediterranean area has the ambition to fully respect and promote the rule of law, human rights, fundamental freedoms and respect for international conventions.

The implementation of the regional Programme on Justice and Home Affairs, namely cooperation in the field of Migration (Euromed Migration II project), Justice (Euromed Justice II project) Police (Euromed Police II project) continued during 2009.

Euromed Migration II project (2008-2011), aimed at developing cooperation in the management of migration in order to build capacity to provide an effective, targeted and comprehensive solution for the various forms of migration. The project carried out the 14 Working Group sessions under the four themes of legislative convergence and the need for reforms of migration law and its institutional framework; labour migration; illegal immigration and migration and remittances. The Regional Conference of the project to review results of the first part and plan future activities took place on 8 December 2009.

As for Euromed Justice II project, the project has carried out 12 Working Group sessions under the three different components covering the legislative reform in the field of access to justice, the resolution of cross-border family conflicts and the adaptation of legislation in line with the relevant international conventions on criminal and prison law. The Regional Conference of the project to review results of the first part and plan future activities took place in October 2009.

Regarding the Euromed Police II project, activities for 2009 focused on combating terrorism, trafficking of human beings and drugs trafficking. The first meeting of the general directors of police and security services took place at the end of 2008, the second one in November 2009, as well as specific seminars and meeting of the special interventions units along 2009.

Furthermore, practitioners, universities and legal actors are working to facilitate best practices and ensure, in the interests of the rule of law, the proper execution of conventions and judicial decisions and awards, including their participation in a network on a national level and Euro-Mediterranean level. In June 2009 in Marseille, the project of the network of prosecutors and investigators to combat voluntary marine pollution in the Mediterranean was launched.

The Communication from the European Commission "Towards the integration of maritime surveillance: A common information sharing environment for the EU maritime domain" (COM (2009)538, 15.10.2009) and the pilot project on the integration of maritime surveillance in the Mediterranean Sea as are recent activities. The purpose of this two-year project, which is expected to start at the end of 2009, is to test the capacity of six Member States in this region to exchange surveillance information relating to border control, combating of narco-trafficking, fighting terrorism, combating the smuggling of illegal goods and preventing marine pollution.

Proposed initiatives and objectives for 2010

Activities under the three areas of the regional Programme on Justice and Home Affairs, Euromed Migration II, Euromed Justice II and Euromed Police II should continue in 2010. Preparation of the third phase of the Programme on Justice and Home Affairs (Euromed Migration III, Euromed Justice III and Euromed Police III) has already started to ensure proper continuation of the cooperation in these fields from 2011.

Ministers also underline the political need for an appropriate implementation and follow-up framework with regard to the conclusions of the first EuroMed Ministerial meeting on migration held in Albufeira.

Together with the EU presidency the Commission should ensure close EU coordination of UfM JHA ministerial to be held in the near future.

Projects of creation of networks in the field of juridical and judicial cooperation for civil and commercial matters in order to facilitate best practices and encourage the use of alternative dispute resolution (arbitration and mediation) and the exchange of knowledge between law practitioners, in the field of judicial training and in the field of investigating and prosecuting marine pollution in the Mediterranean, should be launched under the UfM process.

Following the Communication from the European Commission "Towards the integration of maritime surveillance: A common information sharing environment for the EU maritime domain" (COM (2009)538, 15.10.2009) and the results of the pilot project for the Mediterranean sea non-EU partners could be invited to be involved, whenever deemed appropriate.

5. Statutes of the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean

Stocktaking 2009

Ministers in Marseille mandated Senior Officials to adopt the statutes of the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean. In spite of the difficulties undergone by the Partnership, four meetings of the drafting group of the statutes have been held in Barcelona on 25 May, 16 June, 16 July and 23 September. These meetings have allowed for an extensive exchange of views among many EU and Mediterranean partners and have made considerable progress in the task of drafting the statutes of the Secretariat. A provisional version of the statutes was discussed by Senior Officials on 30 September and 27 October.

On 7 July 2009, the Commission approved the 2nd part of the 2009 Annual Action Programme for the Mediterranean region. This action programme includes in its global allocation the co-financing by the Community budget (ENPI South) of the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean.

Proposed initiatives and objectives for 2010

The Secretariat is expected to be established in early 2010. All the partners of the Union for the Mediterranean are urged to make available their voluntary contributions as soon as the statutes are adopted so that the body can present a preliminary budget for adoption by Senior Officials.

Under the leadership of its Secretary General, the Secretariat should gradually establish it self in 2010 as a key player in the Union for the Mediterranean in the promotion of regional and transnational projects. In this respect the Senior Officials should adopt as soon as possible in 2010 project guidelines to be drafted by the Secretariat.

6. Work programme for 2010

The following meetings are a proposed indicative list for 2010:

- Euro-Mediterranean FEMIP Ministerial Meeting
- Euro-Mediterranean ECOFIN Ministerial Meeting
- Euro-Mediterranean Trade Ministerial Meeting
- Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meetings on Foreign Affairs
- Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on Water
- Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on the Environment
- Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on Tourism
- Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on Higher Education and Scientific Research
- Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on Energy
- Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on Employment and Labour
- Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meetings on Justice, Freedom and Security and Civil Protection
- Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on Integrated Maritime Policy
- Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on Food Safety, Agriculture and Rural Development
- Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on Culture
- Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on Industry
- Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on Sustainable Urban Development

The abovementioned meetings, if confirmed, should be duly prepared at EU level in accordance with the EU procedures in force as well as with the adoption of EU guidelines.

Moreover, the senior officials responsible for monitoring the UfM in all its components will continue their regular meetings.