



General Assembly of the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission FINAL DECLARATION

3rd of July 2015 – Nafplio (Region Peloponnese)

In continuity with its previous Declarations (Barcelona 2013, Patras, Venice and Marseilles 2014), the members of the Intermediterranean Commission of the CPMR gathered in Nafplio, today 3rd of July 2015 wish to transfer the following political messages to the European Institutions and the main key players and stakeholders of the Mediterranean area:

I. PEACE, SOLIDARITY, MIGRATION AND DIALOGUE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

First of all the Intermediterranean Commission express its **deep solidarity to the citizens of Tunisia and France**, after the last terrifying terroristic attacks, recalling the slogan and the spirit of its campaign **"We are all Mediterranean"** which ask to widely support. In this sense, we must be **all united in solidarity to face a common threat**, no matters if we live in the north or the south of the Mediterranean and Europe. In this sense, we stress our support **to peace, the principle of secularism, dialogue between cultures and religions, and development in the southern and eastern part of the basin¹**, where **democracy** and **decentralisation** could play a key role for the reinforcement of Euro-Mediterranean relations. **Europe must be a protagonist of the peace process in the Mediterranean** and fight against all organized crime and terrorist networks.

The EU shall take more responsibility not only for the sake of Mediterranean populations but together with them, considering also its extensions at east in the Gulf and in the south with the Sahel. As a matter of fact, what the Mediterranean is living today in many territories is more about a real "co-habitation" than a "neighborhood" relation: there are many families which are spread all over the basin and therefore, any socio-economic or geopolitical event (war, economic crisis, famine, drought), has - in a way - a direct consequence in another place also at a human and societal level. Therefore we have **the duty to set away and fight the specter of the "rejection of the other", xenophobia, racism, antisemitism and fundamentalism, and promote intercultural and interreligious dialogue in and outside our regions**. To this end, the cooperation in the field of education shall be specially promoted for fostering that youth Mediterranean citizens could grow-up taking solidarity and freedom as main values, being aware of the challenges of the civilization of the XXI century. In this sense, the role, action and possible **synergies of the Regions with the Anna Lindh Foundation**, which plays a key role in the frame of intercultural dialogue at basin level, must be underlined.

Concerning **migration**, the EU shall foster its global approach. Recalling the principles described in our policy paper **"Migration policy and the challenges of managing the mobility of people in the Mediterranean"** released in 2014 and the recent works of the "CPMR Task Force on Migration", our *open letter to the EU leaders* (23/4/2015) and *solidarity campaign*, **we welcome the proposal of the EC on the EU "Agenda on Migration"** but more efforts shall be done first of all by the EU Council to stop humanitarian tragedies, fight against smugglers and find **practical solutions based on the respect of human and asylum rights and on a sharing system of responsibilities**. Furthermore, migration shall be tackled not only with short terms solutions concerning emergency situations but also with real long lasting measures for fostering **long term policies for legal mobility, cooperation with the countries in the fields of development and security** as with sound **cultural and socio-economic integration policies**, capable of turning migration in an asset for territories. **Territories and regions must be more and systematically involved in the identification and set-up of solutions** as they are often in the frontline² but without the appropriate resources and means for responding to the emergency situations.

Moreover, the Intermediterranean Commission Regions would like to express their **solidarity with Greece and the Greek people** who are facing a dramatic situation concerning the impact of the economic crisis. They also call for solutions at EU level that shall be based on solidarity principles for both reception of migrants and the measures to be taken at economic, social and financial level, towards a different concept of Europe

¹ Egypt, Libya, Syria, Palestine, Israel, Lebanon etc.

² Regions have often human, financial and technical responsibility for saving lives and accompanying migrants in their socio-economic integration.

that should put at the center its citizens more than the banking sector. In this context, the **EU must look resolutely towards the Mediterranean, the South and Africa**, and strengthen cooperation as it represents an opportunity at all levels and because of its potential for inclusive growth, dialogue and peace.

II. THE REVIEW OF THE EU NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY

The Intermediterranean Commission recalls the political messages included in the [CPMR joint answer to the EC Consultation on the European Neighbourhood Policy \(ENP\) review](#)³. It is clear that the context of the policy since 2011 has evolved into an even more complex geopolitical situation at the borders of the EU, with several ongoing conflicts⁴, the consequences of the Arab Spring, increasing threats for security⁵, humanitarian crisis related to migration issues and in the frame of the long wave of the economic and financial crisis. Therefore a further reorientation and update of the global strategy of the ENP is needed. In this sense, we agree on the main questions pointed out by the EC in the consultation paper but we underline the need of:

- Improving the **coordination of the ENP with other policies of the EU**⁶ and the relevant financial instruments, but also with other external instruments, funds and key organizations operating in the Med area, and **fully exploiting the potential of the Union for the Mediterranean**⁷;
- Adopting a **balanced multi-level but differentiated approach concerning the Eastern and Southern** components of the ENP;
- Increasing the **co-ownership and the “territorialisation”** of the policy associating much more Local and Regional Authorities (LRAs) and the Civil Society, also through the implementation of a better communication on the field and accompanying decentralization processes;
- **Adapting the concepts, principles and methodology of the EU Cohesion Policy** in the ENP frame;
- Considering, developing, improving and efficiently using specific instruments as **Macro-Regional (MRs) or Sea-Basin strategies (SBs)**⁸ and **Territorial Cooperation**⁹ which shall be boosted at financial and operational level and made more effective in the whole Med region;
- Foster **capacity building as a cross-sectoral goal** of the ENP for empowering local and regional authorities, promoting decentralization, democratic governance and territorial integrated development.
- Finding more **flexible funding mechanism** to be introduced into the European Neighborhood Instrument (ENI) implementation arrangements, **aiming to encourage joint actions between regional authorities, associations of regions and other stakeholders**.
- **Extending the Local Administration Facility** in Med Partner Countries and promoting **twining projects** involving more often LRAs
- **Fostering South-South cooperation**, possibly through specific thematic programmes and the cross-border cooperation, exploiting the role of EU delegations in the partner countries.

III. ENTREPREUNERSHIP, SOCIAL AND SOLIDARITY ECONOMY AND DIASPORA

The Euro-Mediterranean region renewed its instruments for accompanying the economic development in a double logic of reinforcing the economic performance of enterprises and concerning cooperation and solidarity, through the creation of poles for competitiveness, incubators, nurseries, specific instruments of financial engineering and the social entrepreneurship. Face to the classic lucrative economy, **the Social and Solidarity Economy is offering a new alternative way of socio-economic development**, towards a collective economy, responsible and based on citizenship, respectful of people and resources, creating at the same time an added value which is both economic and social on the territories. It offers thus an answer to the challenges for the creation of employment and social cohesion of this region. Being characterized on a **social aim** (fight against exclusion, creation of sustainable employment, valorization of territories) the **ESS can be considered as a vector for local and regional development which could engage civil society together with local, regional and national**

³ Joint position of the CPMR together with its Intermediterranean and Balkans & Black Sea Regional Commission

⁴ E.g. in Libya, Syria and the Middle East, Ukraine etc.

⁵ the raise of the Islamic State and terrorism.

⁶ Common Foreign and Security Policy, Development Policy, Migration Policy and the new agenda for migration, Research & Development, Transport, Integrated Maritime Policy, Environment, Energy and Cohesion.

⁷ In terms of political inclusive dialogue and concerning concrete projects

⁸ See the set of specific recommendations in the CPMR answer to the consultation and the [ARLEM Report 2014 on a “Cohesion Policy for the Mediterranean”](#), the Intermediterranean Commission 2014 “[Road Map for Macro Regional and Sea Basin Strategies in the Mediterranean](#)” and the [Policy Paper of the Med Maritime Projects](#) released in June 2014.

⁹ See set of specific recommendations in the CPMR answer to the consultation.

institutions. In this sense, regions could be highly mobilized and help advancing in the creation of south-north socio-economic balanced relations, based on the mutual exchange of experience.

In this frame, the **EU and the Euromed key stakeholders shall promote ESS as new dynamic capable of producing social innovation and the participation of the Regions** for a more sustainable, inclusive, and smart socio-economic development in the Mediterranean. In particular new and innovating processes shall be supported as the **MEDESS – the spring for involvement in solidarity** - with its Med forums, towards a long term vision and multilateral cooperation for a social and solidarity Mediterranean area which could have also a positive influence on democratic processes and reduction of fanaticism.

Furthermore, the **role of Diasporas in the creation of new enterprises shall be highly emphasized and promoted**, as a mean for the reduction of the disparities between the Med shores, contributing to overcome the economic crisis and to foster a more supportive, shared and strategic approach to development, towards a balanced socio-economic fabric¹⁰. The creation of business incubators by citizens from the diasporas coming from southern Mediterranean remains among the most important actions linked to economic development in the Mediterranean region. This is possible thanks to local and regional financial resources. In this context, **new initiatives and projects shall be promoted at Euro-Med level¹¹.**

IV. EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND MOBILITY FOR YOUTH IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

The youth employment situation has deteriorated significantly in both North and South of the basin. Among the Arab countries, the countries bordering the Mediterranean, especially the Maghreb, are particularly affected by youth unemployment, with rates ranging from 20 to 50%. Paradoxically, young graduates are more affected than others, reinforcing the finding that in its current state education no longer delivers the skills required by companies. Despair generated by this situation weighs heavily on the stability of the countries concerned. **Youth unemployment** whether or not graduates, whether they have received vocational training that should be qualifying is fertile ground for marginalization of the populations concerned. The stakes are current but also future. The answers and necessary reforms must integrate these two dimensions. We must seek ways to face the short-term situation but also create conditions in the longer term to reduce this gap between supply and demand for jobs. **Education and training remain major challenges for Arab countries** and the main problem is related to the quality of education, which does not always allow the development of essential life skills, citizenship and integration in the labor market. Thus, there is a growing mismatch between the education and training products and labor market needs, leading many young people to feel excluded or marginalized.

A Regional action at Euro-Mediterranean level appears relevant. The Presidency of the European Union proposed an initiative on vocational training for youth employment in the Maghreb including the **creation of a North-South networking platform for training institutions**. This partnership between governments, Euro-Mediterranean institutions, the UfM, companies and training centers will not happen without the regions, which in many European countries have the competence in vocational training. **In this context, the Intermediterranean Commission affirms its will to cooperate providing the experience of its regions.**

Moreover, access to **international mobility** is a chance in the construction of the journey of youth, as their horizon today is worldwide. Continue the studies abroad, gain work experience in another country, be volunteer outside the own borders are irreplaceable opportunities for learning new knowledge, cultural enrichment or acquisition of autonomy. **This chance should be encouraged as mobility is a major step forward to meet the challenges of knowledge, competitiveness and employability of young people¹².** The real **challenge of international mobility** is now to **allow more young people to access these opportunities without discrimination** of resources and whatever their social origin, so that they are not reserved for a privileged few or overqualified people.

In this frame the Intermediterranean Commission Regions stress the importance of keep **supporting concrete initiatives as the CPMR Vasco da Gama** for the youth mobility in the frame of the Blue Economy¹³, adapting them to the Mediterranean context, as other **specific initiatives promoted by its regions in cooperation with the States, and/or the Union for the Mediterranean** for a better governance in the domain of the youth international mobility (aiming at improving transparency and coordination of the mobility offer, dissemination on the territory etc.)

¹⁰ Bringing together key stakeholders, local and regional authorities, business leaders, investors and business networks from both sides of the Mediterranean

¹¹ As an example actions for setting up mechanisms to obtain more accurate information on institutional, legislative and financial frameworks of the countries of the Mediterranean region promoting the creation of business nurseries.

¹² After a mobility experience youth come back stronger, better equipped to integrate the labor market, to create a business and jobs

¹³ Please see the results of the first project funded by DG MOVE of the EC - www.vasco-da-gama.eu

V. EU COHESION POLICY

The European Commission is due to undertake a review of the Structural Funds allocations for Cohesion Policy by the end of 2016, in order to compensate Member States and regions which have suffered from the effects of the crisis. The latest regional Gross Domestic Product figures released by Eurostat in May 2015 are particularly alarming for CPMR Intermediterranean Commission Members, and these will result in positive adjustments in terms of Cohesion Policy allocations. The CPMR has carried out projections to estimate how these recent statistics would affect the allocations of CPMR regions. Based on these statistics, eight Spanish regions (six of which are CPMR Members), seven Greek regions, and two Italian regions would change eligibility within the Cohesion Policy architecture if the most recent baseline statistics (average of 2011, 2012 and 2013) were used.

The CPMR Intermediterranean Commission Regions **note the widening levels of regional disparities within Europe, as confirmed by the latest GDP figures, and warn about the potential impacts on the socio-economic development of its territories.** The Intermediterranean Commission calls on the European Commission to **take note of the precarious situation in light of the review of the European budget which will be carried out in 2017.** In this perspective, the Intermediterranean Commission asks for a strengthening of EU Cohesion Policy in the future which should improve its efficiency and impacts on the territories.

VI. MARITIME AFFAIRS AND TRANSPORTS

The Intermediterranean Commission **endorses and call the EU institutions and key stakeholders of the Mediterranean to take note of the political messages included in the [Final Policy paper of the project MarInA-Med COM&CAP](#).** The document capitalizes the most important findings and recommendations to core multilevel stakeholders, the Med Programme (and other cooperation programmes in the basin) of the 13 Maritime projects, approved under the “**Integrated Maritime Approach**” call of the MED transnational cooperation programme¹⁴. The specific **topics** addressed range from the promotion of blue energies and the support to Blue Growth in different key sectors; sustainable maritime transport and air quality issues, smart ports and environmental monitoring systems; sustainable maritime and coastal tourism, including fishing tourism; the management of Maritime and Protected Areas and “ecosystem services”; as well as the monitoring of environmental pressures exerted by the main economic drivers in the different Med “eco-regions”. A specific attention is also paid to the role of Local and Regional Authorities as to specific tools and instruments for the sustainable management of the coexistence of maritime activities as Maritime Spatial Planning, Integrated Zone Management, Data and R&D.

From the **governance** point of view, the paper also insists on the possibility to **introduce and apply the macro-regional and sea-basin approaches in the Mediterranean** with a specific reference to the possible added values concerning a **maritime integrated approach in the Mediterranean**, starting from the implementation of the Macro-Regional Strategy for the Adriatic Ionian Region (EUSAIR) as a pilot and a **Maritime strategy for the Western Mediterranean**. This new approach could foster synergies among different key policies¹⁵, normative¹⁶ and financial instruments and key players, in order to better tackle priority common challenges at a basin and sub-basin scale. Furthermore, the Intermediterranean Commission also wishes that the **axis 4 of the new INTERREG Med programme could contribute to the gradual introduction of this approach. In particular to the set-up of a global integrated strategy for all the Mediterranean in the long term perspective, improving the multilevel governance of the basin**, based on a dialogue and a shared vision between the Member States and the Regions. This axis shall foster the drawing-up of joint and integrated approaches to common issues as maritime safety and security, transport, pollution but also energy, economic development, among others.

The Intermediterranean Commission also strongly enlighten its **commitment to develop at Mediterranean basin level the [Maritime Agenda of the CPMR](#).** In particular its regions will collaborate in the implementation of the initiatives concerning: the set-up of a Platform on maritime investments linked to regional strategies for smart specialization, the strengthening of the maritime dimension in macro-regional strategies, the work on marine resources (including in particular CFP and blue biotechnology), coastal management and protection (in connection with the [Bologna Charter](#) and the implementation of its [Joint Action Plan](#) and giving a special attention to the implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and Coastal Data), education and training (promoting specific spin-offs in the Mediterranean of Vasco da Gama), Maritime industries (with a special attention on the promotion of blue energies), Maritime & Coastal Tourism and sustainable maritime transport. A special attention will be paid to the synergies with DG MARE of the EC and the Intergroup [SEARICA](#) of the European Parliament.

Concerning Transports and accessibility related issues the Intermediterranean Commission supports the **[CPMR response to the mid-term review of the white paper on transport of the EC](#)** and its **Mediterranean specific**

¹⁴ On maritime innovation and economic development, environment protection, transport and accessibility, governance and policy response.

¹⁵ Including the ENP, the Cohesion Policy or the Integrated Maritime Policy, Energy, R&D, among others.

¹⁶ Maritime Spatial Planning Directive, Convention of Barcelona and Protocol ICZM, Marine Strategy Framework Directive etc.

recommendations underlined in the [annex](#) elaborated by its working group “Integrated Maritime Policy & Transport” (which include hints on the grey zones for accessibility and towards a better governance of the CEF corridors), as the **need to implement gradually and efficiently the Regional Transport Action Plan for the Mediterranean Region (RTAP) 2014-2020**¹⁷ elaborated by the Euro-Mediterranean Transport Forum, which constitute a great step ahead a real future integrated multimodal Euro-mediterranean transport network.

VII. OTHER ISSUES OF INTEREST AND COOPERATION WITH EXTERNAL KEY STAKEHOLDERS

The Intermediterranean Commission also recalls its joint messages with the MED Commission of UCLG on [Climate](#) of December 2014 and entirely supports the [CPMR position on Climate Change](#), the conclusions and the [declaration](#) of the [MED COP 21](#) (Marseilles, 4-5 June 2015) and its “*Positive Agenda for the Mediterranean*” (to be sent to the COP 21 of Paris). The latter in particular concerns territorial authorities, entrepreneurs, decision makers at economic and social level, researchers and all players of civil society of the whole Mediterranean, towards the **definition of concrete solutions in the frame of the fight against Climate change, the adaptation to its effects and the creation of a Mediterranean of projects.**

On **water issues** it recalls its political messages included in the [position on the implementation of the Water Framework Directive in the Mediterranean Regions](#) and reaffirms its will to foster the exchange of best practices in the future.

In the frame of its constant link and **collaboration with a wide range of key players in the Mediterranean**, the Intermediterranean Commission **welcomes the Memorandum of Understanding signed today with the Center for Mediterranean Integration** of the World Bank, which constitute a formidable platform for the exchange of knowledge in the Mediterranean among development agencies, governments, local authorities and civil society. The potential for synergies with the Mediterranean Regions is high and will be made operational in the following months, aiming to promote a frame for multilevel governance and multi stakeholders coordination in the Mediterranean basin, fostering a more effective dialogue in the whole area, enabling the exchange of experiences, the transfer of best practices, and enforcing the creation of a Mediterranean knowledge based community.

The cooperation will focus on a set of **common themes of interest** as territorial cooperation and macro-regional strategies, institutional capacity building in the field of territorial integrated development, water, energy efficiency and renewable energies, economic and social development, including sustainable tourism, education, vocational training, economic promotion and youth policies and mobility.

¹⁷ In a frame of coordination between the UfM, the ENP and key relevant stakeholders.