Basic information

2008/2231(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
Relations between the European Union and the Mediterranean countries **Subject** 6.40.05 Relations with the Mediterranean and southern European countries	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
AFET Foreign Affairs	NAPOLETANO Pasqualina (PSE)	24/06/2008

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
INTA International Trade	ARIF Kader (PSE)	23/06/2008
AFCO Constitutional Affairs	MÉNDEZ DE VIGO Íñigo (PPE-DE)	15/07/2008
FEMM Women's Rights and Gender Equality	FIGUEIREDO Ilda (GUE/NGL)	16/10/2008

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
General Affairs	2915	2008-12-08

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
External Relations	FERRERO-WALDNER Benita

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
20/05/2008	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2008)0319	Summary
23/09/2008	Committee referral announced in Parliament		

02/12/2008	Vote in committee		Summary
08/12/2008	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		
12/12/2008	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0502/2008	
18/02/2009	Debate in Parliament		
19/02/2009	Decision by Parliament	T6-0077/2009	Summary
19/02/2009	Results of vote in Parliament		
19/02/2009	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2008/2231(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Strategic initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	AFET/6/66775

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE412.142	10/09/2008	
Committee opinion	AFCO	PE412.192	21/10/2008	
Committee opinion	INTA	PE412.166	06/11/2008	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE414.032	06/11/2008	
Committee opinion	FEMM	PE414.349	02/12/2008	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A6-0502/2008	12/12/2008	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T6-0077/2009	19/02/2009	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(2008)0319	20/05/2008	Summary
Document attached to the procedure	SEC(2008)2499	19/09/2008	Summary

Relations between the European Union and the Mediterranean countries

2008/2231(INI) - 19/09/2008 - Document attached to the procedure

This Commission working paper comprises a proposal for reinforced regional partnership on the Barcelona Process. The proposal concerns the 2009 work programme to be adopted at the 10th Euro- Mediterranean Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Marseille, on 3-4 November 2008.

The 10th Euro-Mediterranean Foreign Ministers Meeting in Marseille will take place at a crucial time for the development of the EU's relations with the Mediterranean. The purpose of the meeting should be threefold:

- to take stock of the progress made by the Partnership since the Lisbon Foreign Ministers' Meeting (5-6 November 2007), particularly in the implementation of the five-year work programme adopted at the 2005 Barcelona Summit;
- to discuss the future development of the Partnership, notably in the light of the 'Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean', and
- to agree on the institutional arrangements of the 'Barcelona Process.

Since the Euro-Med Ministerial Meeting in Lisbon (5-6 November 2007), important progress has been made in many areas of the Partnership, and regional cooperation has advanced in all four of its chapters (political dialogue; economic cooperation; cultural and human dimension; and migration, social integration, justice and security).

Most of the concrete initiatives agreed at the Lisbon Meeting have been implemented or will be before the end of 2008. Further steps need to be taken in 2009 to implement the five-year work programme in order to advance the regional integration process.

The paper details the meeting proposed for 2009 and discusses actions proposed under all four chapters.

Relations between the European Union and the Mediterranean countries

2008/2231(INI) - 19/02/2009 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted, by 521 votes to 44 with 13 abstentions, a resolution on the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean.

The resolution considers that this process, adopted by the Heads of State and Government at the Summit for the Mediterranean held in Paris on 13 July 2008, contributes towards peace and prosperity and that it will constitute a step towards economic and regional integration as well as ecological and climatic cooperation between the Mediterranean countries. Plenary **expresses its concern for the recrudescence of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict** which has already affected the political dialogue among the partners of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership. Parliament hopes that the cooperation will gather pace again as soon as possible, making its contribution to the shared goal of peace in the Middle East.

Institutional aspect of the Union of the Mediterranean: Parliament considers that the Secretariat will be able to demonstrate major potential for revitalising EuroMediterranean relations thanks to its operational capacity and the political value of its composition. It agrees that, from an EU perspective, the co presidency must be compatible with the external representation of the EU in accordance with the Treaty provisions in force and hopes in this regard, on the assumption that the Treaty of Lisbon will enter into force, that the European Union will ensure consistency and continuity in its representation in the new institutions of the Union for the Mediterranean.

Clarify projects and strengthen financing: Parliament points out that the projects financed within the framework of the Union for the Mediterranean should be supported by funding from the Community, from partner states and from private financing. It reiterates their support for the creation of a **Euro-Mediterranean Investment Bank**. Pending review of the financial perspective, MEPs state that the European Union’s share of funding for Mediterranean projects, while guaranteed, must not be to the detriment of the Euro-Mediterranean regional projects already in progress or scheduled. They hope that Parliament will be regularly updated on the stage reached in projects.

Reinforce democratic legitimacy of the Union for the Mediterranean: overall, Parliament supports the decision to bring a strong parliamentary dimension to the Union for the Mediterranean, thereby reinforcing its democratic legitimacy, however this should be further consolidated and its work better articulated with that of the other institutions of the Partnership, with the possibility being envisaged of granting it legal personality and entitling it to propose and assess economic and regional integration strategies and projects and allowing it to make recommendations to the meetings of foreign affairs ministers. It emphasises the need to include regional and local authorities in the new institutional framework as well as members of the civil society. Parliament underlines that **participation in the Union for the Mediterranean does not constitute an alternative to enlargement of the EU** and does not affect the accession prospects of any current or future candidate state.

Extend the scope of action: Parliament requests that all member countries of the Union for the Mediterranean are able to access the regional programmes already provided for under the Euro-Mediterranean partnership. It stresses the need for an extensive overhaul of Euro-Mediterranean policy as a whole that strengthens its **political dimension**. It also takes the view that the issues of peace and security, human rights and democracy, and cultural cooperation, must be addressed via the Euro-Mediterranean dimension. According to the Parliament, the Union for the Mediterranean should step up existing forms of cooperation under EuroMed in order to provide all partner countries with the chance of participating in the Union’s regional programmes and corresponding policies on the basis of priorities and objectives set by mutual agreement, pointing to the importance of extending the scope of Community programmes to include participation by partner countries, not least in the fields of education, research and professional training (student exchanges, etc.). In order to attain the ambitious objectives of the Barcelona Process, it is necessary rapidly to extend the areas of cooperation to cover water management, agriculture, food security, energy, professional training, culture, health, tourism, etc. Cooperation should also be sought in the area of energy.

Ease regional tension: Parliament hopes that the strengthening of Euro-Mediterranean relations will provide a boost to the development of an area of peace and prosperity. This aim can only be achieved through negotiated and comprehensive settlement of the conflicts in the region. Parliament believes that the **EU must assume the role of leadership in the resolution of those conflicts** by winning the confidence of all parties involved. Against this background, it welcomes the call made in the Marseilles Declaration to the parties concerned to endeavour to implement a process of gradual demilitarisation and disarmament of the Middle East with a view, in particular, to creating an area free of nuclear armaments and weapons of mass destruction.

Reinforcing the Human Rights aspect of the Barcelona Process: Parliament reiterates the importance of promoting human rights and the rule of law. It considers that, in order to ease tensions around the Mediterranean, intercultural and inter societal understanding among its peoples must be improved and it calls on all the parties concerned to further and promote respect for freedom of religion and belief and for minority rights and hope that a **joint policy-making and institutional framework** will be defined that facilitates greater mutual cooperation in the pinpointing of problems and in the search for **common solutions**.

Joint migration policies: Parliament calls on the different partners to inject fresh vigour into the management of joint migration policies in order to better harness human resources and exchanges between the peoples of the Mediterranean while also eschewing a ‘security-first’ approach. It considers that immigration issues must focus on the possibilities for legal migration, the combating of illegal migratory flows, on smoother integration of immigrant groups and on the exercising of the right of asylum. It highlights the importance of there being close cooperation and a spirit of **joint responsibility** between the Member States of the European Union and the Southern Mediterranean countries. Parliament urges the European Union and Member States to verify that human rights and fundamental freedoms are being fully respected in detention centres.

Fight poverty and reinforce exchanges: Parliament considers that all areas of cooperation should be covered. It also considers that, in order to permit the creation of a mutually beneficial Euro Mediterranean free trade area, the economic and commercial initiatives of the Union for the Mediterranean must favour the economic growth of the region, help improve its integration into the world economy and contribute to reducing the development gap between the Northern and Southern Mediterranean, whilst boosting social cohesion.

Relations between the European Union and the Mediterranean countries

2008/2231(INI) - 20/05/2008 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE: to propose a new framework for the “Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean”.

CONTENT: the European Council of 13-14 March 2008 approved the principle of a Union for the Mediterranean and invited the Commission to present proposals defining the modalities of what will be called “Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean”. In this context, the Commission has made an analysis of the achievements of the Barcelona process over the last 10 years and its contribution to dialogue, peace, stability and prosperity in this region. They have also taken into account the shortcomings and difficulties in this process of cooperation since 1995.

This communication sets out the Commission's proposals for developing the "Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean”. It assesses the achievements and outlines the future of the renewed processes.

Barcelona Process: assessment: the Barcelona Process has been the central instrument for Euro-Mediterranean relations since 1995. Representing a partnership of 39 governments and over 700 million people, it has provided a framework for continued engagement and development. It is also the only forum where all Mediterranean partners exchange views and engage in constructive dialogue. It represents a strong commitment to regional stability and democracy through regional cooperation and integration, and aims to build on that consensus to pursue the path to political and socio-economic reform and modernisation. However, the persistence of the conflict in the Middle East has challenged and stretched the Partnership to the limit of its abilities to preserve the channels of dialogue among all partners.

One of the main features of the Process is the institutionalised dialogue with different political and economic agents, including civil society, women’s organisations and the media.

In economic terms, the EU remains the main partner of Mediterranean countries both in trade of goods and services. Significant progress has been made towards the establishment of a Euro-Mediterranean free-trade area by 2010. Advances have been made in South- South economic integration but progress has been slow and remains below potential. Reforms are therefore needed if the EU's Mediterranean partners are to reap the potential benefits of globalisation and free trade with the EU.

Overall, the Partnership has witnessed a strong promotion of multilateral and bilateral relations, but now needs a qualitative and quantitative change, to spur investment and employment creation and optimise the use of human resources.

Scope and main objectives of the “Union for the Mediterranean”: the challenge of a new initiative is to enhance multilateral relations, increase co-ownership of the process and make it more visible to citizens. To do this, it should build on and reinforce the successful elements of the existing Barcelona Process. In this context, the elements of the original Barcelona Declaration should be retained alongside its goals (political dialogue, economic cooperation and free trade, and human, social and cultural dialogue) as well as the 5-year work programme adopted by the 2005 Barcelona Summit (migration, social integration, justice and security). The 2008 annual work programme adopted by Foreign Affairs Ministers in Lisbon in November 2007 should also be retained.

The new elements of the “Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean” shall be based on a **multilateral partnership**, focusing on regional and trans-national projects for regional integration and cohesion. It will encompass all EU Member States and the European Commission, together with the other members and observers of the Barcelona Process (Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Jordan, Palestinian Authority, Israel, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey and Albania), and the other Mediterranean coastal states (Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Monaco).

It will be complementary to the regional dimension of the EU enlargement policy. It will also be coherent and complementary with the EU- Africa Strategy.

This new initiative will give a new impulse to the Barcelona Process in at least three ways:

- by upgrading the political level of the EU's relationship with its Mediterranean partners;
- by providing more co-ownership to our multilateral relations;
- by making these relations more concrete and visible through additional regional and sub-regional projects, relevant for the citizens of the region.

Upgrading of relations: the proposed decision to hold biennial summits of Heads of Government is a clear signal of the intention to upgrade the relationship. In principle, the summit meetings should take place alternately in the EU and in Mediterranean partner countries. The role of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA) shall be confirmed as the Parliamentary dimension of the Barcelona Process.

Increased co-ownership: to build a stronger partnership, as envisaged by the Process, the establishment of a **co-presidency** and the setting-up of a joint secretariat have been proposed. Establishing a co-presidency would increase and improve the balance and the joint ownership of cooperation and would be compatible with the provisions on the external representation of the European Union in the Treaty of the European Union. For the first Summit (13 July 2008 in Paris), the rotating EU Presidency will hold the Presidency from the EU side. The selection of the co-president from the Mediterranean partner countries will require consensus and their mandate shall be for a period of two years. At the same time, another key instrument for enhancing co-ownership and promoting a more balanced partnership will be an improved system of institutional governance and the creation of a new secretariat. The secretariat shall perform the role of making proposals for joint initiatives to be decided by the political bodies and to ensure the necessary follow-up of project-related decisions taken at the highest level.

Projects and funding: the project dimension should be at the heart of the “Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean”. The programmes developed under this initiative should promote regional cohesion and economic integration, and develop infrastructural interconnections. They should constitute visible and relevant projects for the citizens of the region (the communication lists the type of projects that could receive funding through existing instruments).

The priorities set out in the Regional Indicative Programme for the countries concerned will continue to apply and any potential EC contribution to the new regional projects will not be financed at the expense of the existing bilateral allocations under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument or the Pre-accession Instrument. On the other hand, in order to bring added value to existing arrangements, the “Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean” should be designed to mobilise additional funding for the region, mainly through regional projects. The Commission believes that **additional funding** for regional projects and activities should come mainly from the following sources:

- private sector participation;
- bilateral cooperation from EU Member States;
- contributions from Mediterranean partners;
- international financial institutions, regional banks and other bilateral funds;
- the Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership Facility (FEMIP);
- the ENPI (approx. € 50 million per year already programmed for the period 2007-2010).

Conclusions and next steps: the Commission invites the European Council at its meeting in June 2008 to discuss and endorse the proposals contained in this Communication. They can then become the agreed position of the EU to be put to the inaugural meeting of the “Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean” planned for 13 July 2008 in Paris. The Commission will fully involve the European Parliament and the EMPA in the ongoing discussions on this new initiative.