

PA-UfM



AP-UpM

PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY– UNION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN
ASSEMBLÉE PARLEMENTAIRE – UNION POUR LA MÉDITERRANÉE

الجمعية البرلمانية للاتحاد من اجل المتوسط

Committee on Political Affairs, Security and Human Rights

15.4.2016

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

on the Union for the Mediterranean: achievements and future prospects

Committee on Political Affairs, Security and Human Rights

Recommendation of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean on the Union for the Mediterranean: achievements and future prospects

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean,

1. Deems it necessary, eight years after setting-up the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), to initiate a reflection on the achievements and future prospects of the UfM, notably in the light of the political developments in the Euro-mediterranean region since 2011 in response to the peoples' legitimate aspirations to democracy and freedom;
2. Recalls, in this context, the efforts of Tunisia to cope with a difficult economic and political situation and calls on the UfM partners to renew their commitment to support the consolidation of democracy in the country through an intensive political dialogue and enhanced economic co-operation;
3. Invites all UfM Member States to actively support the establishment of the Government of National Unity in Libya as the sole legitimate government and to offer assistance to address the urgent challenges and, chief among them, the setting-up of institutions, strengthening the rule of law, improving the situation of human rights, the fight against the smuggling of migrants and terrorism;
4. Is concerned about the deteriorating human rights situation in Egypt and calls on Egyptian authorities to respect their obligations in respect of international law and fundamental rights, in particular as regards the freedom of expression and of assembly and pluralism;
5. Considers it necessary, in the context of strengthening policy co-operation in the region, to actively support the efforts made by the United Nations to find a rapid and inclusive solution to the conflict and rebuild the country once peace has been restored, in association with the international actors involved in the peace negotiations;
6. Acknowledges the significant effort deployed by some UfM Member States in hosting refugees from Syria, Iraq and Libya, and calls for more solidarity in order to better share the effort between the countries of the region and the European Union, in full respect of the international conventions on human rights;
7. Calls in particular on all stakeholders, following the UfM roadmap unveiled by the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean (hereinafter 'the Secretariat') in April 2016, to reflect on the extent to which progress has been made in attaining the three key objectives entrusted to the UfM in the Joint Declaration (paragraph 14) adopted at the Paris Summit of 13 July 2008, namely (1) upgrading euro-Mediterranean political ties, (2) improving co-ownership of responsibilities by a new governance (Vice-President and Secretariat) and (3) the need to make these relations more concrete and visible through additional regional and sub-regional projects;
8. Notes, as regards political aspects, that the biennial summits of Heads of State and Government provided for under the Paris Declaration have been replaced by sectoral

ministerial meetings that are unable to give the UfM a strategic framework and in particular to provide it with the two-year work programme originally planned; welcomes the fact that a meeting of the foreign ministers of the UfM Member States was held in Barcelona on 26 November 2015 co-chaired by EU High Representative / Vice-President Federica Mogherini and Mr Judeh, the Jordanian Foreign Minister, which may herald a political re-launch of the UfM and greater support from Member States;

9. Notes the fact that, as regards the governance of the UfM, the transition to an EU 'Northern' Co-Presidency from 2012 altered the intergovernmental nature of the project without this institutional change being accompanied by any strategic review or increased coordination of UfM activities with the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP); welcomes, however, the central role played by the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Commission in preparing, coordinating and following up the ministerial meetings of the UfM and, together with Member States, funding its Secretariat, whose work, including the many initiatives it has taken to give substance to the UfM since 2010, deserves to be highlighted here;
10. Is concerned about the third objective assigned to the UfM regarding the implementation of regional and sub-regional projects, particularly with regard to (1) progress made by the 41 projects approved to date by the UfM and the lack of transparency and centralised statistics on the actual financial commitments made by the organisations and institutions carrying out these projects and on payments made to implement them, (2) the continuation of process of approving new projects independently of progress on projects that have already been approved, already totalling EUR 5 billion, at the risk of exceeding existing funding capacity in the region and the Secretariat's technical and human resources and (3) the truly regional and sub-regional nature these projects and their effective complementarity with bilateral projects funded by the ENP and the Member-States;
11. Supports the proposal made by the UfM roadmap to revitalise political cooperation (1) by extending the Secretariat's activities to include intercultural dialogue, mobility and migration and the fight against terrorism and (2) by linking issues of security and development more broadly, including by the priority given to human development and youth employment, which the Committee notes with satisfaction is already one of the Secretariat's priority objectives;
12. Wonders, however, about how the Secretariat's activities will be extended to include these new areas and wishes the UfM Secretariat to further clarify the role it will play and its added value vis-à-vis the institutions (UN, EU ...), the dialogue and coordination structures (5 + 5, Anna Lindh Foundation ...) and existing projects;
13. Calls on the Secretariat to continue supporting the development of regional civil society platforms, which, by allowing the participation of the most active components of Euro-Mediterranean society, may contribute significantly to the democratisation of UfM initiatives, particularly in the new priorities set out in the UfM roadmap which include intercultural dialogue, mobility and migration;
14. Strongly backs the Secretariat's proposal to improve the governance of the UfM by holding annually in Barcelona, in November, a 'Regional UfM Forum' involving a

meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, an inter-institutional summit and a forum of project promoters and institutions active in the region in order (1) to give the UfM policy guidelines in line with current developments, (2) to improve coordination between all stakeholders and (3) to better assess progress;

15. Calls, however, on the co-presidency not to overlook the importance of regular summits at the level of Heads of State and Government, as originally provided for in the Declaration of Paris, in order to set out a broader strategic vision geared to the future of the UfM's political activities and policy initiatives;
16. Calls, in the context of this renovated governance, on (1) the European External Action Service (EEAS), the Commission and the Secretariat to better coordinate the activities of the UfM with those funded by the ENP, the ongoing review of which provides an ideal opportunity finally to clarify matters, in particular by involving the UfM in shaping decisions and policies affecting the euro-Mediterranean region; (2) the Secretariat to ensure the participation in the UfM ministerial meetings of the relevant committees' Bureaux of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean (PA-UfM) and (3) PA-UfM to seek better coordination between the activities of the Assembly and those of the UfM, whose Co-Presidents should systematically attend the plenary sessions and the summits of the Presidents of the Parliaments of the PA-UfM;
17. Recommends that the Co-Presidency, the European External Action Service (EEAS), the Commission and the Secretariat give fresh impetus to the management of the UfM project portfolio (1) by conducting an audit of the 41 projects that have been approved to establish their status from the point of view of securing funding, operational implementation and payments to final beneficiaries actually made; (2) by following up the results of this audit by on-site monitoring missions (in which the relevant PA-UfM committees will be able to participate) and by developing a scoreboard to allow the centralised and regular monitoring of the audited data; (3) by presenting the 'UfM Regional Forum' with an annual management report on audited projects; (4) by regularly reviewing the composition of this portfolio, which could be achieved in particular by adapting the project budget to existing funding capacity and, where necessary, by closing and de-committing funds from projects that have not been implemented after a standard period still to be determined; and (5) by suspending, except in duly substantiated cases, the approval of new projects until these new monitoring and review mechanisms have become operational;
18. Proposes to the PA-UfM Bureau that the European External Action Service (EEAS), the Commission and the Secretariat support these efforts to monitor UfM projects by appointing rapporteurs, by project or sector of intervention, drawn from each of the committees of the PA-UfM;
19. Suggests that the Secretariat make operational the many partnerships and agreements signed by the UfM in order to create synergies with the players and organisations active in the region (such as organisations representing regional and local bodies and the management authorities of cross-border cooperation programmes) in order to ensure a better coordination of efforts and resources in the implementation of projects on the ground;

20. Considers it crucial to invest more effort and resources in facilitating the regional and sub-regional integration of the southern shore of the Mediterranean, which can be instrumental in stabilising the region and favouring South-South development whilst reinforcing South-North relations;
21. Calls on the Secretariat therefore to discuss with the Commission, the Committee of the Regions, the Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly (ARLEM), with the participation of the relevant PA-UfM committees, the opportunities to deploy EU territorial cooperation programmes and methods for the benefit of the Mediterranean partnership countries, as suggested by the Committee in its communication on the review of the ENP;
22. Points out that it appears premature, before the projects are audited, before they have actually been monitored in practice and before the portfolio has been revised as it should have been, to support the proposals set out in the UfM roadmap to (1) give UfM-approved projects privileged access to financing from the EU budget and (2) set up a mechanism pooling the contributions of the various contributors to fund the approved projects;
23. Calls on the Co-Presidency of the UfM, the European External Action Service (EEAS), the Commission, the Secretariat, the Bureau, the committees and all the members of the PA-UfM to address these proposals and urges them to respond to them at a future meeting of this Committee.

2015/2016 Activity Report

The Committee on Political Affairs, Security and Human Rights held a meeting in Brussels on 29 February 2016 to discuss the following points:

1) Palestine Working Group:

Following the recommendation approved by the plenary session in Lisbon in May 2015, this meeting enabled the Committee to approve the mandate of the Palestine Working Group. On the basis of a call for interest among members of the Committee, this working group is currently being set up.

2) Union for Mediterranean:

Following an exchange of views with Ms Delphine Borione, Deputy Secretary General of the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean, the Committee has chosen to devote its 2016 recommendation to a review of the achievements of the Union for the Mediterranean and its future prospects.

3) Syria:

The intervention by Mr Michael Docherty (Commission, DG NEAR) was devoted to the impact of the Syrian crisis on the Syrian people and the Commission's intervention on the ground.