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REPORT

on the Commission Communication on relations between the EU and the
Mediterranean region: reinvigorating the Barcelona Process
(COM(2000) 497 – C5-0630/2000 – 2000/2294(COS))

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence
Policy

Rapporteur: Sami Naïr

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PROCEDURAL PAGE

By letter of 8 September 2000 the Commission forwarded to Parliament its Communication on relations between the EU and the Mediterranean region: reinvigorating the Barcelona Process (COM(2000) 497 - 2000/2294 (COS)).

At the sitting of 29 November 2000 the President of Parliament announced that she had referred this Communication to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy as the committee responsible and the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, the Committee on Industry, External Trade, Research and Energy, the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Policy, the Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport and the Committee on Citizens' Freedoms and Rights, Justice and Home Affairs for their opinions (C5-0630/2000).

The Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy appointed Sami Naïr rapporteur at its meeting of 7 November 2000.

It considered the Commission Communication and its draft report at its meetings of 4 December 2000 and 16 January 2001.

At the latter meeting it adopted the motion for a resolution by 32 votes to 2, with 1 abstention.

The following were present for the vote: Elmar Brok (chairman), Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne (1st vice-chairman), Catherine Lalumière (3rd vice-chairman), Sami Naïr (rapporteur), Alexandros Balta, Bastiaan Belder, Gunilla Carlsson, John Walls Cushman, Rosa M. Díez González, Pere Esteve I Abad, Bertel Haarder, Magdalene Hoff, Jan Joost Lagendijk, Pedro Marset Campos, Hugues Martin, Emilio Menéndez del Valle, Philippe Morillon, Cristiana Muscardini, Pasqualina Napolitano, Raimon Obiols i Germa, Jacques F. Poos, Luís Queiro, Jannis Sakellariou, José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra, Jürgen Schröder, Elisabeth Schroedter, Ioannis Souladakis, Francesco Enrico Speroni, Ursula Stenzel, Hannes Swoboda, Johan Van Hecke, Geoffrey Van Orden, Jan Marinus Wiersma, Matti Wuori, Christos Zacharakis, Danielle Auroi (for Daniel Marc Cohn-Bendit), Marie-Arlette Carlotti (for Klaus Hänsch), Vitalino Gemelli (for Silvio Berlusconi), Willi Görlach (for Mário Soares) and Maj Britt Theorin (for Freddy Thielemans).

The opinions of the Committee on Industry, External Trade, Research and Energy and the Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport are attached (the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Policy and the Committee on Citizens' Freedoms and Rights, Justice and Home Affairs decided on 23 November 2000, 25 October 2000, 9 January 2001 and 16 January 2001 respectively not to deliver an opinion).

The report was tabled on 22 January 2001.

The deadline for tabling amendments will be indicated in the draft agenda for the relevant part-session.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

European Parliament resolution on the Commission Communication on relations between the EU and the Mediterranean region: reinvigorating the Barcelona Process (COM(2000) 497 – C5-0630/2000 – 2000/2294(COS))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission Communication (COM(2000) 497 – C5-0630/2000¹),
- having regard to Articles 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 23, 27 and 28 of the EU Treaty,
- having regard to Rule 47(1) of its Rules of Procedure,
- having regard to the common strategy of the European Union on the Mediterranean region which was adopted by the Feira European Council on 19 June 2000²,
- having regard to the Final Declaration issued at the end of the First Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Forum, which was held in Brussels on 27 and 28 October 1998,
- having regard to its resolution of 11 October 1995 on the Mediterranean policy of the European Union with a view to the Barcelona Conference³,
- having regard to its resolution of 14 December 1995 on the Euro-Mediterranean Conference in Barcelona⁴,
- having regard to its resolution of 13 March 1997 on the Joint Report by the Presidency of the Council and the Commission on Mediterranean policy: follow-up to the Barcelona Conference⁵,
- having regard to its resolution of 14 May 1998 on Euro-Mediterranean agreements⁶,
- having regard to its resolution of 11 March 1999 on the Commission Communication entitled ‘The role of the European Union in the peace process and its future assistance to the Middle East’⁷, and its recommendation to the Council on the European Union’s Mediterranean policy⁸,
- having regard to its resolution of 30 March 2000 on Mediterranean policy⁹,

¹ OJ L 183, 22.7.2000, p. 5.

² OJ L 183, 22.7.2000, p. 5.

³ OJ C 287, 30.10.1995, p. 121.

⁴ OJ C 17, 22.1.1996, p. 178.

⁵ OJ C 115, 14.4.1997, p. 159.

⁶ Minutes of 14 May 1998, PE 269.044.

⁷ OJ C 175, 21.6.1999, p. 282.

⁸ OJ C 175, 21.6.1999, p. 286.

⁹ OJ C 378, 29.9.2000, p. 71.

- having regard to its resolution of 15 November 2000 on EU-Mediterranean policy in the run-up to the Fourth Meeting of Euro-Mediterranean Ministers for Foreign Affairs in Marseille¹,
 - having regard to its many resolutions on the conflict in the Middle East and, in particular, that of 5 October 2000²,
 - having regard to the Barcelona Declaration and the 28 November 1995 work programme which was adopted at the Barcelona Conference,
 - having regard to the conclusions of the 15-16 April 1997 Malta Conference,
 - having regard to the conclusions of the 3-4 June 1998 Palermo Conference,
 - having regard to the conclusions of the 15-16 April 1999 Stuttgart Conference,
 - having regard to the conclusions of the 16-17 November 2000 Marseilles Conference,
 - having regard to the conclusions of the Malta, Naples, Stuttgart and Marseilles Civic Fora,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Commons Security and Defence Policy on the common strategy of the European Union on the Mediterranean region as laid down by the Feira European Council of 19 June 2000 (A5-0008/2001),
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy and the opinions of the Committee on Industry, External Trade, Research and Energy, the Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport and the Committee on Committee on Citizens' Freedoms and Rights, Justice and Home Affairs (A5-0009/2001),
- A. whereas the new revised Barcelona Process must above all be based on mutual trust, democratic parliamentary dialogue and the principles of solidarity and equity,
- B. whereas, at the Marseilles Conference, the uncertainty regarding the Middle East situation undermined the process launched at Barcelona but whereas, in spite of that fact, most of the participants reaffirmed the value of the process,
- C. noting, however, that in the Union's political and economic agenda, the absolute priority being accorded to enlargement to include the countries of northern, central, and eastern Europe is unacceptably at odds with the attention being focused on the Barcelona Process, which has seen virtually no significant progress in recent years,
- D. whereas the EU's role in the Middle East peace negotiations must be reviewed and its true political role must be recognised,
- E. pointing out that positive developments in the Middle East peace process are basic to

¹ Minutes of 11 November 2000, PE 297.758.

² Minutes of 5 October 2000, PE 297.000.

the consolidation, the strengthening and the relaunch of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership,

- F. having regard to its calls for the establishment of a programme for interregional and transnational cooperation which would be devoted to complementarity and socio-economic integration, for the establishment of effective measures for reducing or converting the external debt of the Mediterranean countries, and for the latter to be offered technical assistance based on that offered to the countries of central and eastern Europe with a view to harmonising the investment laws of the Mediterranean countries,
- G. calling once again for an ambitious overall strategy to be pursued in the Mediterranean and for all the partners to display a common political determination, so as to ensure that the regional-cooperation programmes which are currently underway can be brought to a successful conclusion and new ones can be launched, thereby promoting, among other things, South-South trade,
- H. whereas the partnership must be pursued through an open parliamentary dialogue, focusing not least on fundamental issues such as agriculture, fisheries and the free movement of persons,
- I. regretting that, despite the signing of association agreements incorporating democracy and human rights clauses, the situation is none the less increasingly deteriorating in some countries,
- J. noting that the sustainable-development and environment aspects have not been properly encompassed within partnership activities as a whole,
- K. whereas the Euro-Mediterranean parliamentary dialogue may be regarded as one of the keys to the new Barcelona Process and willing, therefore, to do all it can in order to ensure that the second Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Forum takes place in the very near future,
- L. having regard to the inadequacy of the budget adopted in Marseilles for the 2000-2006 period (5.35 billion),
- M. whereas the Euro-Mediterranean partnership suffers at one and the same time from a lack of political will on the part of the EU, the lack of a strategic vision and the weakness of an institutional system overburdened by an excessive workload,
 - 1. Insists that the Union implement an external policy for the Mediterranean region which is commensurate with its great ambitions and points out that in the Barcelona Declaration the Member States emphasised the strategic importance of the Mediterranean and the special nature of the bonds forged by proximity and history;
 - 2. Reiterates its conviction that the Barcelona Process aims at the establishment of a common area based on respect for human rights, individual freedom and democratic principles;
 - 3. Draws attention, notwithstanding the difficulties encountered in the Middle-East peace process, to the need to pursue the Barcelona objectives, stressing the importance of the

spirit of partnership, developing economic exchanges, simplifying procedures and continuing the dialogue on various issues, such as human rights, the safety of individuals and improvement of their living conditions, sustainable development and decentralised cooperation;

4. Maintains that a solution to the conflict in the Middle East is an essential condition for achieving peace and stability in the Mediterranean region, which means the right to security for Israel and for all the other countries in the region, and in particular recognition of the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to have a viable State and of the Israeli people's equally legitimate right to security;
5. Calls on the Council and the Commission to consider eventually setting up an Association of Euro-Mediterranean States which would be capable of developing a more integrated partnership, of managing the funds allocated to it, of laying down broad guidelines and of both implementing and monitoring development projects;
6. Recommends that, when the Barcelona Process is revised, there should be no ranking within the order of priorities and that the qualitative importance to be attached to social aspects (such as health, education, training, the rights of women and children, the preservation of a sustainable environment and infrastructure projects) and to cultural and immigration issues should be equivalent to that given to economic, trade and security considerations;
7. Insists that the Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Peace and Stability be adopted without delay;
8. Renews its call for the association agreements to be replaced eventually by a single multilateral agreement;
9. Hopes that the association agreements with countries with which negotiations are still in progress will be concluded as rapidly as possible and that all the parties will cooperate to ensure that the negotiations may soon be concluded;
10. Recommends that each country which ratifies an association agreement with the EU should sign free-trade agreements with all other association agreement signatories within five years;
11. Stresses the objective laid down at the Marseille meeting of establishing a free-trade area encompassing all sectors and helping to improve the quality of life in all the countries involved, and calls for impact studies with regard to the social and environmental consequences on both sides of the Mediterranean;
12. Hopes that a sustainability study will be conducted to gauge the social and environmental consequences of the economic measures to be implemented for the purposes of the free trade area, since this will make it possible to deal more effectively with the problems and threats hanging over the region, for example public health problems, water management, pollution, desertification, the rapid growth of tourism and population pressure;
13. Believes that the experience acquired in completing a single market should be turned to

account with a view to laying down a body of rules to govern the Euro-Mediterranean free trade areas and that, by 2002, a timetable of harmonisation measures should be drawn up for certain priority sectors (rules of origin, customs matters, standards, and intellectual property); considers that that timetable must be established in strict cooperation with the competent authorities in the countries concerned;

14. Points out to the Commission that the introduction of the structural adjustment programmes entailed in the association agreements leads too often to adverse economic consequences (not least for SMUs and SMI) and social damage (rising unemployment) that need to be forestalled;
15. Calls on the Council and the Commission, in the wake of the decisions taken in Nice, to envisage negotiations on a revision of agricultural access schemes and to consider converting the planned free-trade area into a genuine 'common market' encompassing goods of all kinds;
16. Stresses the importance of cumulation of origin as a means of promoting, in particular, the introduction of harmonised rules of origin in free-trade agreements, enabling wider use of diagonal cumulation and subregional cooperation between partners; more extensive diagonal cumulation should be introduced between all partners concluding free-trade arrangements and applying harmonised rules of origin;
17. Calls for the development as soon as possible of extensive South-South trade, allowing greater integration between the economies of Mediterranean countries and steady investment growth;
18. Considers, in particular, that the necessary steps should be taken to invite partner countries to implement policies aimed at convergence with the Euro and intra-Mediterranean legislative harmonisation policies;
19. Calls on the Commission and Council to consider whether they might draw up an 'agriculture-oriented Euro-Mediterranean development policy', bearing in mind that agriculture has important social, spatial and environmental dimensions;
20. Calls for the Barcelona Process to operate within a cohesion policy covering the Euro-Mediterranean area as a whole, taking account in particular, in keeping with the views endorsed by the Nice European Council, of the need for specific measures in support of island regions and backward inland regions, given their structural disadvantages, which are obstructing their economic and social development;
21. Believes that a greater effort should be made to establish a suitably frank and responsible dialogue on matters such as human rights, the prevention of terrorism, and migration, and to work towards consolidation in the social and cultural sphere and further progress in the trade sphere by encouraging liberalisation of the Mediterranean partners' economic systems and implementing the structural reforms required to enable them to compete on more open markets in a mutually beneficial fashion and with due respect for social rights;
22. Calls on the Council and the Commission to open a broad debate involving the public authorities in the fifteen Member States, representative associations and the European

Parliament with a view to identifying means and legal instruments for introducing harmonised laws in all the Member States for the purpose of regulating migration;

23. Believes that the object of that debate should be to enable migration (including measures to combat illegal immigration and the mafias which profit from it) to be managed jointly, lay down policies on temporary migration (without entitlement to family reunification or residence), introduce a special travel visa for those involved in the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, harness immigration to assist development in countries of origin (aid for migrants' projects in their countries of origin), and bring about an explicit integration policy in host countries in relation to legally established immigrants;
24. Expresses the wish that the Commission will carry forward the planned regional programme on justice and home affairs, giving special consideration to cooperation in action to combat illegal immigration and trafficking in human beings geared to an improved understanding of the link between the phenomenon of economic and commercial globalisation and migration and the establishment of co-development strategies.
25. Calls on the Euro-Mediterranean Forum to set up a migration committee;
26. Proposes that the Commission set up a migration monitoring centre to keep all matters related to migration in the Mediterranean region under constant and detailed review, working in conjunction with the appropriate committee of the Euro-Mediterranean Forum;
27. Calls on the Council and Commission expressly to recognise the role of Mediterranean capital cities, to encourage them to establish relations, and, under decentralised programmes focusing on specific urban problems such as the provision of public utilities, the flight from the land, transport and communication networks, health and housing policy, conservation of cultural assets, and pollution control, to foster an exchange of experiences among Mediterranean towns and cities, whether lying on the northern or southern shore of the Mediterranean;
28. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to facilitate the participation of Mediterranean island regions of both the EU and partner countries in the various regional cooperation actions and projects;
29. Calls on the Council and the Commission to ensure that decentralised cooperation is effectively relaunched on a long-term basis, to suggest means of encouraging dialogue between civil societies and of involvement of local power and institutions and, within a reasonable period of time, to propose clear, transparent alternative arrangements to complement or to replace the MED programmes which are currently frozen;

30. Recommends improving the European Union's strategy vis-à-vis the Mediterranean region by strengthening cross-border projects and decentralised cooperation, centred on sustainable development;
31. Welcomes the proposal to develop regional cooperation programmes with smaller numbers of Member States and Mediterranean countries and calls on the Commission to ensure that this process takes place in an open and transparent manner so as to guarantee that it will be possible for partner countries to participate if they so wish;
32. Stresses the importance, in relation to the proposal for subregional cooperation, of guaranteeing and maintaining a balanced relationship between the western and eastern Mediterranean;
33. Calls for regional cooperation projects to be brought into line with environmental requirements and sustainable development: partner countries are asked to take the necessary measures with regard to integrated management of water resources, waste disposal, critical points (polluted areas and biodiversity risks), integrated management of coastal areas and measures to combat desertification, making use of the European Union's know-how and experience;
34. Calls on the Commission to give special consideration in regional programmes to the social sector, paying particular attention to the participation of trade union organisations both at the level of the countries concerned and at supranational level, ensuring that training policies are geared towards labour market needs, creating social security networks and modern methods of cooperation in social security systems;
35. Calls on the Council and the Commission to promote a policy on microprojects and to propose rules for implementing them since the importance of such projects, particularly in terms of democratisation, must be boosted by civil society at local level;
36. Considers it desirable to encourage the investment essential for economic development, taking advantage of the experience resulting from the MEDA Programme and the financial support granted under it, and, with that end in view, working in collaboration with the Member States' chambers of commerce, to update the guides aimed at investors;
37. Calls on the Council, the Commission and the associated Mediterranean countries to give priority to support to private investment, this being a crucial factor for the success of the Barcelona Process and of mutual economic development;
38. Points in particular to the importance of approximation of local laws on foreign direct investment and of correct and transparent enforcement of the rules governing the industrial development programmes already being implemented;
39. Considers that steps should be taken to promote investment for the purpose of job creation and socially sustainable development, an essential factor of economic development, taking advantage of the experience and financial assistance of the MEDA programme; it should be possible for technical assistance to be granted to potential investors by the Commission and guides for their use updated in cooperation with the Chambers of Commerce of EU Member States;

40. Calls on the Commission and Council, given that the matter is one that is very severely impeding the development efforts of the Mediterranean partner countries, to study the various options for debt conversion; believes that debt conversion should serve to finance any project combining investment and employment, especially for the benefit of young people;
41. Calls on the Commission, within the framework of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, to develop appropriate mechanisms for the promotion of business activities, including legislative and administrative regulations to create a climate favourable to investment and private initiative, under a procedure geared to transparency and trust;
42. Hopes that a particular place will be assigned to SMEs and very small businesses in strengthening the Euro-Mediterranean industrial partnership; calls for the development of technical and financial assistance programmes specific to SMEs and very small businesses in the Mediterranean countries in order to encourage the diversification of the industrial fabric in these countries;
43. Calls on the Council and the Commission to ensure that, under MEDA, financial commitments accompanied by fixed timetables for each funding project are efficiently implemented;
44. Calls on the Commission, as part of the MEDA programme, to promote the possibility of developing the necessary infrastructure for the further expansion of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation;
45. Calls on the Commission to put forward regional cooperation programmes in the field of training and occupational retraining and to encourage exchanges of experience and staff in the context of the reform and modernisation of education and training systems, in particular with regard to migration flows;
46. Recommends that the Commission and the Member States pursue the objectives of technological development and scientific research in the countries of the southern Mediterranean; in this connection, calls for the establishment of synergies and exchanges between universities, and support for the establishment of centres of excellence in these countries by involving them in European research activities and allowing them to participate in the current Sixth Research Framework Programme;
47. Stresses the importance of innovation as a factor in the development of the Mediterranean countries; encouragement should be given to the construction and development of innovation centres and sectoral technical centres, and to networking among them; the good practices found in some countries should be supported, as should increased cooperation with laboratories, research centres and centres of technology in the European Union;
48. Calls on the Council and Commission to impress upon the Mediterranean partners at all times that they must respect human rights and, when the occasion demands, to employ the procedures set out in the association agreements with a view to enforcing them;
49. Calls on European governments to respect the rights of migrants working in the European Union (freedom of movement within the European Union, education,

training);

50. Declares its opposition to the practice of capital punishment and appeals to the Mediterranean partner countries to impose a moratorium on executions; calls also on the Commission to take steps to support the awareness campaigns seeking a moratorium on executions;
51. Insists on a much more active role for civil society (migrants, local communities, businesses, universities, associations) as a way of ensuring that society as a whole is more extensively involved in the activities, and derives greater benefit from the Barcelona Process;
52. Is convinced, in this regard, that more efforts should be made so as to develop and support truly independent NGOs, including the possibility for international NGOs to be established and operate freely in all the 27 countries of the Barcelona Process;
53. Calls on the Commission to ensure that among the priority areas the following are emphasised: (a) integrated cultural tourism management to ensure that the cultural and natural heritage is protected; (b) mobility and training programmes for trainers and the teaching profession; (c) cooperation and training programmes between universities in Mediterranean countries; (d) teaching of the languages and common culture of the Mediterranean; (e) teaching of new technologies and provision of the requisite infrastructure in education centres; (f) joint Euromed initiatives on sport activities; (g) development of sport for girls and boys as an emancipating factor;
54. Calls on the Commission to promote the Euromed Heritage programme, with particular emphasis on the creation of partnerships and networks in connection with the common archaeological heritage, the study and identification of the cultural legacy of the past, including the dissemination of the literature of the great writers of the past, and research and technologies for the protection of the dead cities or historic cities of the desert;
55. Calls on the Commission to draw up programmes aimed at educating and including women in university life, work and business;
56. Proposes in this connection that Mediterranean universities intensify their inter-university cooperation and that the necessary financial resources be earmarked to enable them to do so;
57. Calls on the Commission to make education a priority objective, in order for the people of the Mediterranean countries to feel free and to be able to be responsible for their own futures;
58. Calls on the Commission to prevent aid going to bodies, firms or environments which discriminate against women in the educational, social and sport spheres;
59. Calls on the Commission to reactivate the Med-Media programme, and to require it to be open to all the Mediterranean countries;
60. Calls on the Commission to foster decentralised cooperation programmes and initiatives which promote exchanges between all the agents involved in development, as set out by

the Barcelona Declaration in the section on collaboration in social, cultural and human affairs, in order to liberalise and invigorate the system, and thus create more potential for cultural development;

61. Considers that information and dialogue with citizens are key elements in giving impetus to the Barcelona process; calls on the Commission to include a chapter on the Euro-Mediterranean partnership in its communication on the European Union's information and communication strategy.
62. Calls on the Commission to introduce an information and communication programme as soon as possible to inform EU citizens about partner countries;
63. Calls for the introduction of information campaigns *inter alia* for business circles such as Chambers of Commerce and the organisations concerned to be promoted in order to draw the attention of potential investors to long-term investment opportunities in productive sectors in the countries of the Mediterranean Basin;
64. Calls on the Commission to endeavour to promote the information society and, in particular, electronic commerce activities so as to modernise the economies of the southern Mediterranean and create skilled jobs;
65. Calls for appropriate measures to be taken to develop the information society and the use of the Internet and all new electronic communication systems and to encourage partner countries to invest in training and education at school level;
66. Calls on the Commission to make an effort in the future to adapt its calls for tenders and programmes to the scale of some countries which are accustomed to family businesses and to forms of civil society groupings very different from those in continental Europe;
67. Calls on the Commission, in view of the difficulties encountered to date in trying to ensure that the programmes are well managed, to institute the specific checks necessary to ensure that the associations or organisations which receive aid are solidly anchored within the social security system and meet their obligations;
68. Calls on the Commission, when implementing the aid programmes, particularly the MEDA programme, to use the universities, museums and cultural centres of the countries themselves as support, since these are bodies where civil society operates, and are therefore strongly linked with the fabric of society and the system of production, and can collaborate closely in disseminating technologies and management and innovation models;
69. Hopes that the Euro-Mediterranean Forum will be a genuine contact point for Members of Parliament from the EU and the Mediterranean countries, thereby helping to revitalise and expand the Euro-Mediterranean partnership;
70. Calls in addition for a standing body to be set up to bring together Members of the European Parliament and Members of the parliaments of partner countries;
71. Calls on the Council and Commission, as part of the reforms now taking place in the external service, to increase the volume of human resources allocated to the partnership,

to set up a structure which is specific to the Commission and to take further steps to devolve the management of aid, by transferring responsibilities from the seat of authority to the delegations, and also to decentralise it, by transferring responsibilities from the Commission to the recipient countries (as the Commission has undertaken to do in general terms in its communication to the Council and Parliament concerning the development of the external service, COM(2000) 456);

72. Welcomes the Union's proposed action plan for Morocco and notes that its aim is development cooperation and that practical solutions to outstanding issues must therefore be found quickly; calls on the Council and Commission, therefore, to ensure that the programme abides by that aim;
73. Calls on the Council to exert the pressure needed to bring about a change in policy and on the Council and Commission to ensure that the Union assumes a more ambitious political role in the Mediterranean region;
74. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission and to the governments and parliaments of the Member States and the Mediterranean partner states which are signatory to the Barcelona Declaration.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Introduction

1. The Commission Communication entitled 'Reinvigorating the Barcelona Process' serves a dual purpose: to assess the achievements of the Barcelona Process and to put forward recommendations in preparation for the ministerial conference to be held in Marseilles in November 2000.
2. This report constitutes Parliament's response to the Commission Communication. The latter was originally intended as a basis for the position to be adopted by the Union at the Fourth Meeting of Euro-Mediterranean Foreign Affairs Ministers, but since it was submitted at such a late stage, Parliament preferred to consider at one and the same time both the Communication and the results of the Council meeting held in Marseilles. A common strategy for the Mediterranean region was drawn up by the Feira European Council on 19 June 2000 and is the subject of another report by the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy.

Remarks on the text submitted by the Commission

3. In its text the Commission once again sets out the *three main goals of EU-Mediterranean policy*, namely:
 - the creation of an area of peace and stability based on respect for human rights and democracy;
 - the creation of an area of shared prosperity through the progressive establishment of free trade with a view to creating a Euro-Mediterranean free-trade area by 2010;
 - the improvement of mutual understanding amongst the peoples of the region and the development of an active civil society.
4. The *progress achieved* to date and described by the Commission (which refers to the Barcelona Process as the only forum for meetings between Arabs and Israelis and mentions the establishment of new regional networks, the association agreements which are currently in force and the marshalling by the EU of over 9 billion euros in grants and loans, etc.), is in actual fact much less obvious than the Commission appears to believe.

The rapporteur prefers to concentrate on *the difficulties* encountered - this being the only way of drawing conclusions for the future.

Firstly, the Commission is right that the *difficulties in the Middle East peace process* have greatly restricted the potential of the Barcelona Process, but it should be pointed out that in many cases this is due to the behaviour and the unwillingness to negotiate that have been demonstrated by certain parties involved in both processes.

Secondly, it is also obvious that the *process of negotiating and ratifying the*

association agreements has been slower than expected, this being mainly due to the fact that the association agreements concluded between the EU and the Mediterranean countries are in effect bilateral agreements between each of the fifteen individual EU Member States and each of the individual Mediterranean states. This results in inequalities and a slow procedural pace which are almost an insult to the South: it takes an average of three years for an agreement signed by a Mediterranean country to enter force, during which period it will have toured the various European capitals in search of ratification. For example, the agreement concluded with Jordan in November 1997 has still not come into force because four countries have failed to ratify it. Association agreements should be replaced by a single multilateral agreement - as has on a number of occasions been proposed by the European Parliament.

Furthermore, it is equally clear that there has not so far been a sufficiently frank and serious dialogue on issues such as *human rights, the prevention of terrorism and migration* - as the Commission itself recognises.

Similarly, the rate of economic transition has obviously not been sufficient in a number of Mediterranean partner countries. South-South trade is still at an excessively low level and EU investment in the area is still very limited.

In brief, there are serious failings in the application of the *MEDA programme* and not solely on account of the complexity of the procedures, as the Commission appears to think. The Commission tends to be highly critical of the Mediterranean partners. Although certain partner countries have had difficulty in absorbing the promised aid (on account of inadequate administrative or logistical infrastructures), it is nonetheless true that the Commission must accept most of the responsibility. The under-consumption of MEDA funds stems only partly from shortcomings in the partner countries and is principally the result of the Commission's inability to manage those funds (on account of inadequate numbers of staff and cumbersome administrative procedures) and its failure to involve players who are capable of using them at grass-roots level (local communities, economic operators, associations, training bodies, etc.).

5. Of the three Barcelona Process goals, only the one involving the establishment of a *free-trade area* between European and Mediterranean countries by 2010 has actually got off the ground; in the case of the other two, meetings have been held but nothing more. The fact of the matter is that the free-trade area is not so much an original project as an unavoidable requirement imposed by the general move towards liberalisation which began in Europe with the common market and within the world as a whole by means of GATT and the WTO. However, it is quite obvious that, in the midst of profound inequalities, liberalisation alone cannot bring about economic development nor the integration of deeply divided societies, less still the creation of 'an area of shared prosperity'. Moreover, the free-trade area would be run on Europe's terms: initially it would apply only to industrial products, a sector in which the countries of Europe are significantly more competitive than those of the Mediterranean. The free-trade area is only a partial response to the challenges posed by a fractured Mediterranean region and is really no more than a short-term response to European interests, as may be illustrated by a single statistic: total transfers from the EU budget to the Mediterranean countries amount to 1 billion euros per year, whilst those resulting from the Mediterranean countries' trade deficit with the EU amount to

34 million euros per year. In other words, the Union's financial contribution to the Mediterranean countries represents less than one-thirtieth of the advantages which Europe derives from the free-trade area¹.

6. From the strategic point of view as well, the Union must set aside the tentative policy which it has hitherto conducted in the region and it must seek ways of exerting political influence, since the areas of conflict are many in number and they may jeopardise the Barcelona Process as a whole.
7. Furthermore, it is clear that a regrettably inadequate effort has been made to *raise public awareness* regarding the Barcelona Process. To date, society has demonstrated a clear lack of interest and involvement in the Barcelona Process and in general terms it may be said that the people who actually benefit from the MEDA programmes are mainly ones who have had previous contact with Europe or who have close links with governments. However, the MEDA programmes should also have an impact on the rest of civil society and this is an area in which there is still a huge amount to be done. The programmes for decentralised cooperation (Med-Urbs, Med-Campus and Med-Media), which are supposed to enable representatives of civil society from both sides of the Mediterranean to meet for the purpose of devising joint projects, have been frozen since 1995 on account of poor internal management. It would appear that the Commission has now decided to lay them to rest on the grounds that running micro-projects is extremely difficult because it demands considerable resources, both human and financial. Some people also fear that such reluctance indicates a desire to have projects run by governments and to exclude civil society from any involvement in them. The alternative programmes mentioned by the Commission, such as Med-Heritage, clearly do not play the same role as the programmes for decentralised cooperation.

Conclusions

8. The grand vision of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership which was inaugurated in Barcelona in November 1995 has now given way to a negotiating process which lacks any genuine strategic perspective. It is as though Europe is interested in the Mediterranean solely for security reasons (the conflict in the Middle East, migrant flows, etc.) and conceives its economic involvement solely as a means of opening up the markets of the countries of the South. The Commission is proposing to establish a clearer link between access to the MEDA programmes and the signing of association agreements. This obviously means that the Commission wishes to secure the opening up of markets with a subsequent view to providing aid in order to assist social and economic transition. The basic objective of the MEDA programmes is to help societies in the South to implement the reforms which will enable them to compete in the future free-trade area, hence the results of the MEDA programmes in terms of aid to assist economic transition and social development are what should determine the signing of association agreements, rather than the other way round. The fact that neither agricultural products nor the organised movement of persons are covered by such agreement is yet another consideration.

¹ Jean-Claude PASTY, *Assessment of and prospects for the Barcelona Process: relations between the European Union and Mediterranean third countries*, Economic and Social Council, October 2000.

Beyond the free-trade area

9. For Europe the question arising in connection with the free-trade area is as follows: is the purpose thereof solely to increase Europe's immediate comparative advantages by eliminating all competition in the South, or is it to lay the foundations of an associate common market which is capable of interacting satisfactorily with Europe's economy? In the former case the EU would experience the social effects resulting from a strictly mercantile approach. In the latter case it would have to take into consideration the local terms and conditions of development in the South.

This latter approach is the one which should be adopted. The planned free-trade area must be developed into a genuine 'common market' encompassing the full range of goods and the sectors in which the South is competitive, such as agriculture. Such a market would require a much more extensive flanking policy to bring products into line with technical and health standards to modernise and convert certain sectors, and so on and so forth.

10. The first recommendation is that the *order of priorities* in the Barcelona Process should be changed with a view to attaching as much qualitative importance to social, cultural and immigration aspects as to economic, trade and security issues. However, the European Union must become much more involved in social-development issues such as health, education, women's and children's rights, the protection of the environment and infrastructure projects. Three major sectors (transport, energy and water) are crucial in this respect since they have an essential role to play in reducing unemployment and encouraging South-South economic integration.

Making migration a central aspect of development

11. There will be no genuine partnership between the two sides of the Mediterranean until proper arrangements have been made for the movement of persons. Failing to respond to the demand for such movement is tantamount to encouraging clandestine immigration and this is why migration must be made a central aspect of cooperation and a migration policy tailored to the requirements of co-development must be drawn up. Such a policy must be based on:

- Mutual commitment by North and South to *joint administration of migration flows*, which involves combating irregular immigration.
- The introduction of *policies relating to temporary migration* between the two sides of the Mediterranean. Germany could serve as a model since it one of the few European countries with a long-standing tradition of organising worker mobility: workers come under a temporary employment contract (covering a maximum period of two years) and they are required to leave the country again once their contract expires. They can be given a further contract provided that they have resided for at least two years in their country of origin. Other types of employment contract allow for shorter and more frequent stays. Migrants

thus take advantage of their mobility in order to improve their skills and their lives in their country of origin. This type of temporary migration does not under any circumstances give entitlement to family reunification or permanent residence.

- The *introduction of a special travel visa for those involved in the partnership*: this could be applied for not by individuals but by cooperation bodies - NGOs, local communities, associations - which would give an undertaking to the EU authorities.
 - The *harnessing of immigration to assist the development of the country of origin* by means of policies to assist migrants' projects in their country of origin, training programmes for students linked to arrangements which will help them to find a job in their country of origin, the provision of places for young trainees in companies in Europe on the basis of temporary contracts and the creation of a financial instrument which enable immigrants' savings to be better directed towards production sectors in their countries of origin.
 - A clearly stated integration policy in the host countries which will ensure that the rights of legally established immigrants are upheld.
12. In this connection an *Interparliamentary Monitoring Centre on Migration* should be set up. Its task would be to monitor, continuously and in detail, all issues relating to migrant flows in the Mediterranean region, in conjunction with the relevant committee of the Euro-Mediterranean Forum.

Placing decentralised cooperation at the service of co-development

13. In a new approach, co-development policy would reach out to civilian society and focus on permanently settled *immigrants*, some future migration, the workers and students which the countries of origin need in order to meet the challenge of development, and also on others active in civil society: *businesses, training institutes, associations, NGOs and local communities*.
14. In this connection, *local communities* have a special role to play in Euro-Mediterranean cooperation for at least three reasons:
- they can act as a vehicle for genuine local-development projects,
 - they are essential to strengthening the rule of law,
 - they have an important role to play in raising public awareness by organising exchanges between companies, elected representatives, young people, etc.

Facilitating the enhanced association of the Euro-Mediterranean states which so wish

15. The Euro-Mediterranean partnership suffers both from a lack of political will on the

part of the EU and from the weakness of a centralised institutional system overburdened by an excessive workload. To remedy this state of affairs the partnership institutions must be thoroughly reviewed and highly specific reforms must be envisaged.

16. Euro-Mediterranean relations could be restructured on the basis of a closer association amongst the countries around the Mediterranean basin which want such an association. Possibly by means of 'enhanced cooperation', the Member States which are more directly involved in the Mediterranean and which would like to deepen their cooperation could eventually propose to their partners in the South who so wish a closer association designed to reform the partnership on a more integrated basis and to give it a stronger strategic and political dimension. This tallies with the Commission proposal to extract greater benefit from the multilateral nature of programmes for regional cooperation by drawing up projects involving a smaller number of Member States and Mediterranean partners. The Commissioner responsible for external relations – Chris Patten – has also said that certain regional projects should be accessible to a variable number of directly interested Member States and Mediterranean partners on the basis of configurations which could vary from one project to another¹.
17. This enhanced association would have a policy-based role and it could take on the following tasks:
 - establishing basic guidelines (national/regional indicative programmes),
 - managing the funds allocated to the Euro-Mediterranean partnership (distribution of bilateral/regional aid),
 - monitoring projects in order to ensure coordination between Community aid and bilateral aid,
 - the establishment of a permanent political and cultural dialogue intended to increase security in the region and to bring all the countries around the Mediterranean together in a Euro-Mediterranean security system.

Reforming the management of the MEDA programme

18. The first reform designed to remedy the dysfunctions would be to impose *binding time limits* on the various implementation procedures for releasing MEDA funding.

¹ Le Monde of 14 November 2000; Chris Patten's views on the subject of reinvigorating the Euro-Mediterranean partnership.

19. There should also be an *increase in the human resources* allocated to the partnership and a structure specific to the Commission should be created in order to avoid the need to delegate the running of programmes and projects financed under the Euro-Mediterranean partnership to technical assistance offices.
20. Improving the running of Mediterranean programmes could be accompanied by a *decentralisation of aid management*. The current centralised management does not enable projects and their associated funding to be adapted swiftly to changes in local conditions. In this connection the Commission has proposed granting the Relex Joint Service (RJS) the status of cooperation agency. The Community's delegations in third countries would then play a role as the RJS's intermediaries. However, it appears that it will take another two years for this cooperation agency to become operational. It is highly regrettable that we should have to wait so long for such a body to be set up.

In its Communication the Commission proposes decentralising the implementation of the programme and entrusting it to the Commission's delegations in the partner countries. The entire project cycle should as far as possible be devolved to the Community's delegations in the partner countries: identification, selection, implementation, assessment and monitoring. This would also have the advantage of not marginalising micro-projects which the delegations, being closer to the grass roots, would be better able to run.

21. In this area the *European Cooperation Agency* would have a technical role to play and could take on the tasks of:
- co-ordinating and monitoring the work of the Community's delegations in the partner countries,
 - informing those involved in the partnership regarding the various possible sources of funding, by centralising all data.

Making extensive funding available: a prerequisite for Europe's political requirements

22. The stalemate in the Middle East peace process makes any subregional economic, social and/or cultural progress difficult (Jordan, Lebanon, Palestinian territories). In addition, the difficulty of political transition (Syria, Algeria) and the role of the USA could for a certain length of time invalidate the Euro-Mediterranean project, hence the need for the European Union to gear itself up to conducting a proper policy in the Mediterranean: the Union must match its political influence to its economic intervention. These days in the South there is a genuine *demand* for Europe, not just from the economic point of view but also and especially in the political field.

11 January 2001

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRY, EXTERNAL TRADE, RESEARCH AND ENERGY

for the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy

on the Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament to prepare the fourth meeting of the Euro-Mediterranean foreign ministers: 'Reinvigorating the Barcelona process'

(COM(2000) 497 – C5-0630/2000 – 2000/2294 (COS))

Draftsman: Francesco Fiori

PROCEDURE

At its meeting of 7 November 2000 the Committee on Industry, External Trade, Research and Energy appointed Francesco Fiori draftsman.

It considered the draft opinion at its meetings of 11 December 2000 and 9 January 2001.

At the last meeting it adopted the following conclusions unopposed with 3 abstentions.

The following were present for the vote: Carlos Westendorp y Cabeza, chairman; Renato Brunetta and Peter Michael Mombaur, vice-chairmen; Francesco Fiori, draftsman; Gordon J. Adam (for Elena Valenciano Martínez-Orozco), Konstantinos Alyssandrakis, Maria del Pilar Ayuso González (for Alejo Vidal-Quadras Roca), Guido Bodrato, Felipe Camisón Asensio (for Marjo Tuulevi Matikainen-Kallström), Massimo Carraro, Gérard Caudron, Luciano Emilio Caveri (for Astrid Thors), Giles Bryan Chichester, Nicholas Clegg, Willy C.E.H. De Clercq, Claude J.-M.J. Desama, Harlem Désir, Concepció Ferrer, Francesco Fiori (for Umberto Scapagnini), Colette Flesch, Christos Folias, Glyn Ford, Jacqueline Foster (for Werner Langen), Neena Gill (for François Zimeray), Norbert Glante, Alfred Gomolka (for Angelika Niebler), Lisbeth Grönfeldt Bergman (for Christian Foldberg Røvsing), Michel Hansenne, Philippe A.R. Herzog, Hans Karlsson, Bernd Lange (for Rolf Linkohr), Peter Liese (for Konrad K. Schwaiger), Caroline Lucas, Eryl Margaret McNally, Nelly Maes, Erika Mann, Elizabeth Montfort, Reino Kalervo Paasilinna, Elly Plooijs-van Gorsel, John Purvis, Godelieve Quisthoudt-Rowohl, Imelda Mary Read, Mechtilde Rothe, Paul Rübig, Ilka Schröder, Esko Olavi Seppänen, Claude Turmes (for Nuala Ahern), Jaime Valdivielso de Cué, Dominique Vlasto, Anders Wijkman, Joachim Wuermeling (for W.G. van Velzen) and Myrsini Zorba.

SHORT JUSTIFICATION

The ambitious objectives of the Barcelona process have come up against a series of problems: difficulties in the Middle East peace process have slowed progress and limited the extent to which full regional cooperation could develop; the process of negotiation and ratification of the Association Agreements has been slower than expected; the spirit of partnership has not led to a sufficiently frank and serious dialogue on issues such as human rights, prevention of terrorism or migration; implementation of the MEDA programme has also been hampered by complicated procedures both in the EC and in partner countries.

It is important, however, to recognise the strategic importance of relations with the Mediterranean countries. At the Marseille conference, the uncertainty with regard to the Middle East peace process and the latent pessimism among participants did not prevent the partners from reaffirming their commitment to the further development of the Barcelona process. It was agreed to hold a ministerial meeting during the Belgian presidency and a Euro-Mediterranean Conference during the Spanish presidency.

With specific reference to the issues of concern to the ITRE Committee, the rapporteur believes that an important objective must be to establish a free-trade area without penalising the European production system. It is also essential to promote the development of South-South trade to open up relations between the countries of the Mediterranean Basin as a means of furthering their economic integration. 'Cumulation of origin', which permits the use in one partner of material originating from one or more other partners, with the final product regarded as originating from the first partner is to be encouraged, in particular for the purposes of economic development and secure investment flows. The Commission should, in this connection, continue in its efforts to encourage the Mediterranean partners to adopt the harmonised protocol on rules of origin. In order to promote the Mediterranean market, the experience acquired through the European single market should be used and cooperation should be stepped up in a whole range of sectors.

Steps should continue to be taken to conclude association agreements with those partner countries which have not yet signed. It should also be emphasised that each country which signs an Association Agreement with the EU should, within five years, also sign free-trade agreements with all other Association Agreement signatories.

In the economic sphere, it is clearly important that partner countries implement policies aimed at convergence with the Euro, especially in the present situation where the high value of the dollar is influencing European and Mediterranean markets.

In order to ensure that all the partners are more fully involved, information campaigns, both at European level and in the Mediterranean countries, must be introduced, with the involvement of chambers of commerce and the various bodies concerned. This can have a dual impact: it will ensure that European citizens are informed about the populations of neighbouring countries and will make potential investors more aware of developments and existing opportunities. This will be even more effective if the MEDA provisions are implemented as soon as possible, in particular as regards a regional allocation in support of risk-capital funding.

Improvement of the legal, administrative and institutional framework, on the one hand, and development of financial intermediation mechanisms on the other will enable savings to be effectively mobilised and allocated. The removal of restrictions on foreign investments will

thus have a beneficial effect on investment flows towards the southern Mediterranean.

The modernisation of society and development of production, including the creation of skilled jobs, also calls for the promotion of the information society and, in particular, electronic commerce, starting at school, with a view to training and educating tomorrow's society.

Cooperation in the environmental and industrial spheres must not be neglected. Emphasis should be placed on political dialogue, the establishment of networks and the reform of the administrative framework to promote competition. It is therefore important to carry forward regional programmes relating to integrated management of water resources, waste disposal and desertification issues, making use of the European Union's experience in these fields.

Research and technological development are a vital driving force for any society and provide training for future generations. It is therefore important to involve the partner countries in European research measures, encouraging them to take part in the Sixth Research Framework Programme and to establish centres of excellence and exchanges between universities.

Neither should social issues be neglected. The coordination of training policies with the needs of the labour market and the establishment of social security networks are fundamental requirements, together with cooperation in the fight against illegal immigration and trafficking in human beings to ensure that socio-economic development can take place on a fair and sustainable basis.

Your rapporteur also considers that the adoption of the Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Peace and Stability is of vital importance. Especially in this time of crisis in the Middle East, the European Parliament must play an active part in Mediterranean policy. Europe's interest in enlargement should not cause it to neglect relations with the Mediterranean, especially in view of the possible socio-political and economic implications of such relations.

CONCLUSIONS

The Committee on Industry, External Trade, Research and Energy calls on the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following in its report:

1. Draws attention, notwithstanding the difficulties encountered in the Middle-East peace process, to the need to pursue the Barcelona objectives, stressing the importance of the spirit of partnership, developing economic exchanges, simplifying procedures and continuing the dialogue on various issues, such as human rights, the safety of individuals and improvement of their living conditions, sustainable development and decentralised cooperation;

2. Insists that the Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Peace and Stability be adopted without delay;
3. Hopes that the association agreements with countries with which negotiations are still in progress will be concluded as rapidly as possible and that all the parties will cooperate to ensure that the negotiations may soon be concluded;
4. Stresses the objective laid down at the Marseille meeting of establishing a free-trade area encompassing all sectors and helping to improve the quality of life in all the countries involved, and calls for impact studies with regard to the social and environmental consequences on both sides of the Mediterranean;
5. Recommends that each country which ratifies an association agreement with the EU should sign free-trade agreements with all other association agreement signatories within five years;
6. Recommends improving the European Union's strategy vis-à-vis the Mediterranean region by strengthening cross-border projects and decentralised cooperation, centred on sustainable development;
7. Calls for the development as soon as possible of extensive South-South trade, allowing greater integration between the economies of Mediterranean countries and steady investment growth;
8. Stresses the importance of cumulation of origin as a means of promoting, in particular, the introduction of harmonised rules of origin in free-trade agreements, enabling wider use of diagonal cumulation and subregional cooperation between partners; more extensive diagonal cumulation should be introduced between all partners concluding free trade arrangements and applying harmonised rules of origin;
9. Considers that the experience gained in the completion of the European Single Market should be used to build a legal framework for Euro-Mediterranean free-trade areas. A timetable should be established by 2002 for harmonisation measures especially in priority areas (rules of origin, customs and tax matters, necessary rules and standards and intellectual property, quality of industrial products), whereby that calendar must be established in strict cooperation with the competent authorities in the countries concerned;
10. Considers, in particular, that the necessary steps should be taken to invite partner countries to implement policies aimed at convergence with the Euro and intra-Mediterranean legislative harmonisation policies;
11. Welcomes the proposal to develop regional cooperation programmes with smaller numbers of Member States and Mediterranean countries and calls on the Commission to ensure that this process takes place in an open and transparent manner so as to guarantee that it will be possible for partner countries to participate if they so wish;

12. Stresses the importance, in relation to the proposal for subregional cooperation, of guaranteeing and maintaining a balanced relationship between the western and eastern Mediterranean;
13. Hopes that a particular place will be assigned to SMEs and very small businesses in strengthening the Euro-Mediterranean industrial partnership; calls for the development of technical and financial assistance programmes specific to SMEs and very small businesses in the Mediterranean countries in order to encourage the diversification of the industrial fabric in these countries;
14. Considers that steps should be taken to promote investment for the purpose of job creation and socially sustainable development, an essential factor of economic development, taking advantage of the experience and financial assistance of the MEDA programme; it should be possible for technical assistance to be granted to potential investors by the Commission and guides for their use updated in cooperation with the Chambers of Commerce of EU Member States;
15. Calls on the Commission, within the framework of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, to develop appropriate mechanisms for the promotion of business activities, including legislative and administrative regulations to create a climate favourable to investment and private initiative, under a procedure geared to transparency and trust;
16. Calls on the Commission, as part of the MEDA programme, to promote the possibility of developing the necessary infrastructure for the further expansion of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation;
17. Calls on the Commission to introduce an information and communication programme as soon as possible to inform EU citizens about partner countries;
18. Calls for the introduction of information campaigns *inter alia* for business circles such as Chambers of Commerce and the organisations concerned to be promoted in order to draw the attention of potential investors to long-term investment opportunities in productive sectors in the countries of the Mediterranean Basin;
19. Calls on the Commission to endeavour to promote the information society and, in particular, electronic commerce activities so as to modernise the economies of the southern Mediterranean and create skilled jobs;
20. Calls for appropriate measures to be taken to develop the information society and the use of the Internet and all new electronic communication systems and to encourage partner countries to invest in training and education at school level;

21. Calls on the Commission to put forward regional cooperation programmes in the field of training and occupational retraining and to encourage exchanges of experience and staff in the context of the reform and modernisation of education and training systems, in particular with regard to migration flows;
22. Stresses the importance of innovation as a factor in the development of the Mediterranean countries; encouragement should be given to the construction and development of innovation centres and sectoral technical centres, and to networking among them; the good practices found in some countries should be supported, as should increased cooperation with laboratories, research centres and centres of technology in the European Union;
23. Calls for regional cooperation projects to be brought into line with environmental requirements and sustainable development: partner countries are asked to take the necessary measures with regard to integrated management of water resources, waste disposal, critical points (polluted areas and biodiversity risks), integrated management of coastal areas and measures to combat desertification, making use of the European Union's know-how and experience;
24. Recommends that the Commission and the Member States pursue the objectives of technological development and scientific research in the countries of the southern Mediterranean; in this connection, calls for the establishment of synergies and exchanges between universities, and support for the establishment of centres of excellence in these countries by involving them in European research activities and allowing them to participate in the current Sixth Research Framework Programme;
25. Calls on the Commission to give special consideration in regional programmes to the social sector, paying particular attention to the participation of trade union organisations both at the level of the countries concerned and at supranational level, ensuring that training policies are geared towards labour market needs, creating social security networks and modern methods of cooperation in social security systems;
26. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to facilitate the participation of Mediterranean island regions of both the EU and partner countries in the various regional cooperation actions and projects;
27. Calls on European governments to respect the rights of migrants working in the European Union (freedom of movement within the European Union, education, training);
28. Expresses the wish that the Commission will carry forward the planned regional programme on justice and home affairs, giving special consideration to cooperation in action to combat illegal immigration and trafficking in human beings geared to an improved understanding of the link between the phenomenon of economic and commercial globalisation and migration and the establishment of co-development strategies.

12 December 2000

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON CULTURE, YOUTH, EDUCATION, THE MEDIA AND SPORT

for the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy

on the Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament to prepare the fourth meeting of Euro-Mediterranean foreign ministers: 'Reinvigorating the Barcelona process'

(COM(2000) 497 – C5-0630/2000 – 2000/2294 (COS))

Draftsman: Cristina Gutiérrez Cortines

PROCEDURE

At its meeting of 4 December 2000 the Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport appointed Cristina Gutiérrez Cortines draftsman.

It considered the draft opinion at its meetings of 8-9 and 15 January 2001.

At the latter meeting it adopted the following conclusions unanimously.

The following were present for the vote: Vasco Graça Moura, acting chairman; Ulpu Iivari, vice-chairman, Pedro Aparicio Sánchez, Lucio Manisco, Jens Dyhr Okking, Barbara O'Toole, Luckas Vander Taelen, Sabine Zissener and Myrsini Zorba, for Phillip Whitehead.

SHORT JUSTIFICATION

At the Barcelona Conference held in November 1995, several objectives were laid down for the development of the Mediterranean countries and the creation of a framework for aid cooperation in all fields with the aim of improving the living conditions, incomes, productivity and competitiveness of the countries in this historic and strategic area. In this connection, there have been numerous initiatives designed to take the plan forward. These include the Second Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference (Malta, 15-16 April 1997), the informal Euro-Mediterranean ministerial meeting (Palermo, 3-4 June 1998), the Third Euro-Mediterranean Foreign Affairs Ministers Conference (Stuttgart, 15-16 April 1999), the Fourth Euro-Mediterranean Foreign Affairs Ministers Conference (Marseilles, 15-16 November 2000), and the Malta, Naples, Stuttgart and Marseilles Civic Fora.

Of most interest to the Culture Committee were the First Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Culture Ministers (Bologna, 22-23 April 1996), the Second Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Culture Ministers (Rhodes, 25-26 September 1998) and the Euro-Mediterranean working group on dialogue between cultures and civilisations which was held in Stockholm on 23-24 April 1998.

The following documents should also be mentioned:

- the Final Declaration issued at the end of the First Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Forum, which was held in Brussels on 27 and 28 October 1998,
- the resolution of 11 October 1995 on the Mediterranean policy of the European Union with a view to the Barcelona Conference¹,
- the resolution of 14 December 1995 on the Euro-Mediterranean Conference in Barcelona²,
- the resolution of 13 March 1997 on the Joint Report by the Presidency of the Council and the Commission on Mediterranean policy: follow-up to the Barcelona Conference³,
- the resolution of 14 May 1998 on Euro-Mediterranean agreements⁴,
- the resolution of 30 March 2000 on Mediterranean policy⁵,

Preliminary considerations

1. The European Union should make a commitment to cultural development and the improvement of cultural education levels in countries on both sides of the Mediterranean, as a basis for facilitating their integration into the affluent society.

¹ OJ C 287, 30.10.1995, p. 121.

² OJ C 17, 22.1.1996, p. 178.

³ OJ C 115, 14.4.1997, p. 159.

⁴ Minutes of 14 May 1998, PE 269.044.

⁵ Minutes of 30.3.2000, PE 289.426.

2. The reason for the disappointing results obtained to date in implementing the measures concerning culture adopted in the Barcelona Declaration (the bilateral association agreements, the MEDA programme and regional cooperation) may be that the Commission was unable to adapt its methods and programme models to societies with different structures, whose behaviour is based on underlying assumptions different from those obtaining in the European Union.
3. Given that cultural heritage needs to be seen as an investment for economic development and for the consolidation of active and respectful cultural tourism, steps are needed to promote awareness of the historical resources and to publicise their existence.
4. In implementing the aid programmes, it should be borne in mind that culture, and more specifically cultural heritage, is an important source of job-creation.
5. In view of the wish for structural change and attempts to encourage development towards a society of affluence and freedom, it is essential to integrate enterprise, research and education.
6. Culture must be understood in a broad sense and it is therefore necessary to ensure the publication and dissemination of literature from the Mediterranean countries and the in-depth study of the writers, thinkers and philosophers who lived and worked in these countries.

CONCLUSIONS

The Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport calls on the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following points in its proposal for a resolution:

1. Calls on the Commission to make an effort in the future to adapt its calls for tenders and programmes to the scale of some countries which are accustomed to family businesses and to forms of civil society groupings very different from those in continental Europe;
2. Calls on the Commission, in view of the difficulties encountered to date in trying to ensure that the programmes are well managed, to institute the specific checks necessary to ensure that the associations or organisations which receive aid are solidly anchored within the social security system and meet their obligations;
3. Calls on the Commission, when implementing the aid programmes, particularly the MEDA programme, to use the universities, museums and cultural centres of the countries themselves as support, since these are bodies where civil society operates, and are therefore strongly linked with the fabric of society and the system of production, and can collaborate closely in disseminating technologies and management and innovation models;
4. Calls on the Commission to ensure that among the priority areas the following are emphasised: (a) integrated cultural tourism management to ensure that the cultural and natural heritage is protected; (b) mobility and training programmes for trainers and the teaching profession; (c) cooperation and training programmes between universities in Mediterranean countries; (d) teaching of the languages and common culture of the Mediterranean; (e) teaching of new technologies and provision of the requisite infrastructure in education centres; (f) joint Euromed initiatives on sport activities; (g) development of sport for girls and boys as an emancipating factor;
5. Calls on the Commission to promote the Euromed Heritage programme, with particular emphasis on the creation of partnerships and networks in connection with the common archaeological heritage, the study and identification of the cultural legacy of the past, including the dissemination of the literature of the great writers of the past, and research and technologies for the protection of the dead cities or historic cities of the desert;
6. Calls on the Commission to draw up programmes aimed at educating and including women in university life, work and business;
7. Calls on the Commission to make education a priority objective, in order for the people of the Mediterranean countries to feel free and to be able to be responsible for their own futures;

8. Calls on the Commission to prevent aid going to bodies, firms or environments which discriminate against women in the educational, social and sport spheres;
9. Calls on the Commission to reactivate the Med-Media programme, and to require it to be open to all the Mediterranean countries;
10. Calls on the Commission to foster decentralised cooperation programmes and initiatives which promote exchanges between all the agents involved in development, as set out by the Barcelona Declaration in the section on collaboration in social, cultural and human affairs, in order to liberalise and invigorate the system, and thus create more potential for cultural development;
11. Considers that information and dialogue with citizens are key elements in giving impetus to the Barcelona process; calls on the Commission to include a chapter on the Euro-Mediterranean partnership in its communication on the European Union's information and communication strategy.