

EMPA – Bureau Declaration

Paris, 12 July 2008

Increased cooperation in the Euro Mediterranean region is of vital and strategic importance for all partners in political, economic and cultural terms. The Barcelona Process has been the central instrument for the Euro-Mediterranean relations since 1995 – and the EMPA has its roots in the Declaration of that year. Formally established in December 2003, the Assembly is an integral part of the Barcelona Process.

The Bureau of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA) at its meeting on 12 July 2008 in Paris, defined its position on the role of the EMPA within the institutional framework of the “Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean” and expressed its support for the reinforced and newly designed process, the subject for discussions and deliberations of the Summit of the Euro Mediterranean Heads of States and Governments on 13 July 2008.

The Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly Bureau welcomes and shares the aim of this new initiative which gives fresh political and practical impetus to the multilateral relations of the partners from the North and South of the Mediterranean by upgrading the political level of relations, through greater co-ownership and enhanced sharing of responsibilities, as well as by developing regional projects responding to the needs of the citizens in the region, and, in particular of citizens on the southern shore of the Mediterranean.

Enhancement of the democratic legitimacy of the Euro-mediterranean partnership is necessary. EMPA should, therefore, become an integral part of the institutional framework of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean as its legitimate parliamentary dimension. The EMPA Bureau considers that the Assembly, as a scrutinizing parliamentary body, should make proposals and assessments. As is the case in every democratic political system, a legitimately-elected Assembly should hold the new institutional structure of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean to account.

The Members of the EMPA-Bureau encourage the participants of the 13 July Summit in Paris to endorse the upgrading of the Barcelona Process : Union of the Mediterranean, notably by holding bi-annual summits, establishing a co-Presidency, a Joint Permanent Committee based in Brussels and a Secretariat.

The EMPA Bureau is confident that the 13 July Summit will be a historical turning point in the Euro-Mediterranean relations. It is in our power to contribute to the edification of our common future, by strengthening the dialogue, including the intercultural dialogue, the cooperation and the exchange between our peoples, in view to overcome common challenges and achieve the aims of creating an area of peace, stability and shared prosperity.