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Barcelona process: Union for the Mediterranean

Greens/EFA motion for a resolution

Tabled by ***Hélène Flautre, David Hammerstein, Raül Romeva i Rueda, Daniel Cohn-Bendit, Monica Frassoni and Cem Özdemir***

on behalf of the Greens/EFA Group

The European Parliament,

 having regard to the Barcelona Declaration, adopted at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference of 27-28 November 1995, establishing a Euro-Mediterranean Partnership with a detailed work programme,

 having regard to the Communication of 21 May 2003 from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on 'Reinvigorating EU actions on Human Rights and democratisation with Mediterranean partners Strategic guidelines',

 having regard to the conclusions of the Euro-Mediterranean Summit held in Barcelona on 27-28 November 2005 to mark the 10th anniversary of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership,

 having regard to the Communication of 4 December 2006 from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on 'Strengthening the ENP' and to the non-papers relating to that communication, ENP Thematic dimension, Strengthening the Civil Society Dimension of the ENP and ENP a path towards further economic integration,

 having regard to the conclusions of the EU-Morocco Association Council of 23 July 2007 on the possibility of a substantial reinforcement of relations with Morocco and the prospect of advanced status,

 having regard to the conclusions of the EU General Affairs and External Relations Council of 15 October 2007 on the negotiation of a framework agreement with Libya,

 having regard to the Communication of 5 December 2007 from the Commission entitled 'A strong European Neighbourhood Policy',

 having regard to the Commission Communication on 'A European Agenda for Culture in a Globalising World' (COM(2007)0242) and its ensuing resolution on this issue (P6_TA (2008) 0124),

 having regard to the endorsement of the principle of establishing the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean by the European Council of 13-14 March 2008,

 having regard to the Final Declaration of the Presidency of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA) and to the EMPA recommendations adopted at its fourth plenary session in Athens on 28 March 2008,

 having regard to the Communication of 20 May 2008 from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on 'The Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean',

 having regard to its previous resolutions on the Mediterranean policy of the European Union,

 having regard to Rule 103(2) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas the Mediterranean region is an area of vital and complementary strategic importance to the European Union in both political and economic terms, and stressing in this regard the importance of reinvigorating and revisiting relations between the European Union and its Mediterranean partners so as to give them greater political prominence,

B. pointing out that the Barcelona Process represents a strong commitment to regional stability and democracy and has been the central instrument for Euro-Mediterranean relations since 1995, providing a framework for a political, economic, cultural and social partnership between the countries and peoples on the two shores of the Mediterranean,

C. stressing that the European Neighbourhood Policy aims to enhance that partnership, offering a further opportunity to deepen relations, strengthen political dialogue and integrate partner countries into Community agencies and programmes,

D. whereas, in accordance with the decision of the European Council of 13 and 14 March 2008, and looking ahead to the Summit on 13 July 2008, the Commission has presented a Communication on the 'Barcelona process: Union for the Mediterranean' which aims to enhance multilateral relations, increasing co-ownership of the process and making it more visible and relevant for the people of the region,

E. whereas the project dimension should be at the core of this new initiative, with the objective of further promoting regional cohesion and economic integration; whereas the Commission has identified four major projects which have to be endorsed at the 13 July Summit: the motorways of the sea, including the motorway interconnection through the Maghreb, the de-pollution of the Mediterranean and sound environmental governance, the Mediterranean solar plan and reinforced cooperation in the framework of civil protection,

F. whereas at the constituent Summit of 'The Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean' to be held on 13 July 2008 in Paris clear guidelines should be set for establishing its main goals and its structure and working methods, to be based on the principle of co-ownership,

G. pointing out that the analysis of the achievements and shortcomings of the Barcelona Process should be duly taken into consideration so that Euro-Mediterranean relations can be revisited in an efficient way and new impetus lent to the Barcelona Process; stressing, in this regard, the importance of addressing the difficulties encountered in developing cooperation and deepening the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, such as the persistence of the conflict in the Middle East, serious political tensions in the region, for example in Western Sahara, the lack of progress made in the area of democracy and human rights and the lack of public awareness of the process,

H. whereas the creation of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA) must be regarded as a step forward in terms of parliamentary involvement in the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, but pointing out the need to further strengthen the role of the EMPA in framing and implementing the new Euro-

Mediterranean policy,

I. whereas the declaration of 2008 as the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue should boost the EU´s efforts to promote cultural cooperation and exchange as both a conflict-prevention factor and a facilitator of social and economic development,

1. Welcomes the recent Communication from the European Commission on 'The Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean' and endorses the aim of this new initiative, that of lending freshpolitical and practical impetus to the EU's multilateral relations with its Mediterranean partners by upgrading the political level of these relations, providing for increased co-ownership and developing regional and sub-regional projects which respond to the needs of the people of the region;

2. Agrees on the need for a reinvigorated Barcelona Process, which should remain the central element of EU cooperation with the Mediterranean region, as the only forum where all its Mediterranean partners exchange views and engage in constructive dialogue; considers that the objectives and areas of cooperation set out in the Barcelona Declaration are and will continue to be central to Euro-Mediterranean relations; calls, therefore, on the countries which are not part of the Barcelona Process to endorse the Barcelona *acquis* so as to move forward towards the same goals;

3. Considers that this new initiative has raised relevant issues which need to be addressed, such as the political and economic performance of the southern Mediterranean states and matters of political and institutional organisation on the EU side; considers, at the same time, that the bilateral approach adopted by Mediterranean partners, including Mediterranean coastal states, in their relations with the EU should be duly taken into account in the development of this new process;

4. Shares the view that this new initiative should build on the gains in Euro-Mediterranean cooperation since 1995 and, at the same time, lend fresh impetus to the Barcelona Process in order to overcome its deficiencies and shortcomings;

5. Reaffirms that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the ongoing occupation of the Arab lands have hampered the deepening of Euro-Mediterranean relations and that only a just and lasting solution to this conflict in accordance with the Arab Peace Initiative can unleash the potential of the partnership; points out, in this respect,the need for greater EU involvement, in the context of cooperation with its Mediterranean partners, in the efforts to pursue the Annapolis Conference objective of reaching a negotiated solution to the Middle East conflict by the end of 2008;

6. Points out that one of the main goals of Euro-Mediterranean policy is to promote the rule of law, democracy, respect for human rights and political pluralism and considers, in this regard, that the Euro-Mediterranean partnership has not yet produced the expected results in the area of human rights; calls, therefore, on the Council and Commission to clearly enshrine the promotion of human rights and democracy in the objectives of this new initiative and to further strengthen the implementation of existing mechanisms, such as the human rights clause included in the association agreements (also involving the incorporation of a mechanism implementing this clause in the new generation of agreements), the ENP bilateral Action Plans and the new subcommittees on human rights; calls, furthermore, for the setting-up of a Euro-Mediterranean Court of Human Rights to give all the citizens of the countries which signed the Barcelona Declaration the possibility of lodging complaints concerning human rights violations;

7. Shares the view that the upgrading of the EU's relations with its Mediterranean partners should reflect the importance of our links and the depth of our cultural and historical relations; welcomes, in this respect, the Commission proposal to strengthen relations with our Mediterranean partners at political level by organising biennial summit meetings of Heads of Government to adopt political declarations and take decisions on the main programmes and projects to be developed at regional level; takes the view that the

EMPA should be involved in the preparation of these summits and should decide systematically to send a delegation to each summit so as to monitor closely the discussions and the outcome;

8. Notes the need to build a stronger partnership based on increased co-ownership of the various processes; welcomes, in this respect, the Commission proposal to establish a Co-Presidency, a joint Permanent Committee, based in Brussels, and a secretariatof thePartnershipwith the aim of increasing co-ownership of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation; welcomes in this regard the Commission proposal, with effect from the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, to nominate as Co-Presidents the Presidents of the Council and of the Commission, at the level of Heads of State and Government, and the High Representative/Vice-President of the Commission, at the level of Ministers of Foreign Affairs; stresses at the same time the proposal to nominate the Co-President from the Mediterranean partner countries on a consensus basis; calls, however, on the Council and Commission to require from the host country of the secretariat full compliance with the Barcelona Process commitments on democracy and human rights;

9. Welcomes the Commission proposal to recognise the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA) as the legitimate parliamentary representation of a Union for the Mediterranean and strongly supports the strengthening of the role of the EMPA in relations with the EU's Mediterranean partners; stresses, therefore, the importance of further formalising the role of this Euro-Mediterranean parliamentary body, as a consultative body involved in the framing and implementation of Euro-Mediterranean policy; considers that the question of opening up the EMPA to parliamentary representatives of the countries which are not part of the Barcelona Process and which will join this new initiative should necessarily be addressed within the relevant structures of this body;

10. Points out that the budgetary implications of this new initiative need to be considered in detail by all the EU institutions, on the basis of sound cooperation, in accordance with the results of the forthcoming summit;

11. Takes the view that development of the non-governmental dimension should go hand in hand with development of the parliamentary one in order to involve civil societies on both shores, improve exchanges and relations and raise public awareness of the 'Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean';

12. Underlines the important conflict-prevention aspects of cultural cooperation and exchanges and the importance of dialogue between cultures and civilisations in building bridges and fostering the conditions required for peace and stability, where conflicts exist;

13. Stresses thatculture should be also recognised as an economic factor and as an instrument for social integration and underlines the importance of developing, alongside the economic projects already envisaged, cultural cooperation projects and, in particular, expanded exchange programmes for young people in the region; such projects will make our enhanced partnership more concrete and visible and more relevant to ordinary citizens; underlines, in this respect, the need to propose an interesting range of cultural cooperation programmes to our Mediterranean partners, through better use of ERASMUS MUNDUS and the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument;

14. Welcomes the new efforts proposed by the Commission in its Communication to further develop regional programmes with the EU's Mediterranean partners with the view to promoting regional cohesion and developing infrastructural links; calls on the Commission to keep both it and the EMPA regularly informed about the development of these projects; points out that these projects must be consistent with the objectives of Euro-Mediterranean policy and calls on the Commission to agree to the establishment of a scrutiny mechanism which would involve both it and the EMPA in such a process;

15. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Member States and the governments and parliaments of the partner countries.

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