



ASSEMBLEA PARLAMENTARE EUROMEDITERRANEA



**PRESIDENZA
ITALIANA**



Bureau Meeting

(Rome, Senate of the Republic, 21 January 2011)

Minutes

The meetings of the Bureau and of the Enlarged Bureau including Committee Chairpersons were co-chaired by Senate President Renato SCHIFANI and Chamber Speaker Gianfranco FINI. Vice Presidents Abdelwahad RADI of Morocco, Abdulhadi A. MAJALI of Jordan and Gianni PITTELLA, representing Jerzy BUZEK of the European Parliament, were in attendance.

In his opening address of the Bureau meeting, President Schifani expressed the solidarity of the Italian presidency with the Tunisian people and with fellow parliamentarians Afifa Salah and Menaouar Khemila, who were unable to attend the meeting owing to the recent events in Tunisia, and expressed the hope that dialogue among all political and social forces in the country would resume soon.

President Schifani gave the floor to President Fini, who chaired the Bureau meeting.

The Bureau adopted the draft agenda, as illustrated by President Fini, and the minutes of the previous Rome meeting of 12 November 2010.

President Fini reported on the latest developments concerning the Secretariat and the funding of the PA-UfM. Mr Gianni Pittella, Vice President of the European Parliament and Chairman of the Working Group on Financing of the Assembly and Revision of the PA-UfM Rules of Procedure, informed the meeting that the Belgian Prime Minister is willing to find an ad hoc solution to define the legal status of the of the Secretariat, to be placed on an equal footing with NGOs and other international organisations based in Belgium. In this way, the Secretariat would be able to manage Assembly activities and budget. Mr Pittella invited any Bureau members intending to second staff to the Secretariat to start the relevant procedures, so that the Secretariat may be fully operational as soon as the infrastructure is in place. A bank account would be opened to receive the yearly contributions of member countries.

The Bureau agreed on a request submitted by the President of the Turkish Delegation to host a joint Economic and Political committee meeting on the elimination of barriers and visa liberalisation in the Mediterranean, to be held in Istanbul on 16 and 17 March 2011.

President Fini informed the meeting that the Italian Presidency had received a resolution adopted by European Parliament on Western Sahara on 25 November 2010.

Finally, the Draft Declaration submitted by the Italian presidency was passed with amendments.



ASSEMBLEA PARLAMENTARE EUROMEDITERRANEA



**PRESIDENZA
ITALIANA**



President Fini then illustrated the forthcoming Plenary Assembly, to be held in the Chamber of Deputies (Palazzo Montecitorio), Rome, on 3 and 4 March 2011: the meeting will be divided into one opening session and three themed sessions on immigration and integration policies, environmental protection policies in the Mediterranean, financial instruments for the development of the region.

Following on to a proposal by Vice President Majali, the Bureau agreed that the next Plenary Assembly should urge the UfM and the Governments to engage actively and positively in the promotion of Mediterranean policies, so as to enable such policies to effectively discharge their full potential.

President Fini announced that the Bureau would meet again on 3 March 2011, when the Plenary is also convened.

Meeting of the Enlarged Bureau including Committee Chairpersons

(Rome, Senate of the Republic, 21 January 2011)

Minutes

The meeting of the Enlarged Bureau including Committee Chairpersons was then opened. The following committee chairpersons were in attendance: Tokia Saïfi, Committee on Political Affairs, Security, and Human Rights; Mohammad Abul-Enein, Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs, Social Affairs and Education; Eduardo Cabrita, Committee on Improving Quality of Life, Exchanges between Civil Societies and Culture; Stefan Schennach, Committee on Energy, Environment and Water; Gianni Pittella, Working Group on the Rules of Procedure; Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou, Working Group on the Euro-Mediterranean University (EMUNI); Sergio D'Antoni, Working Group on Transferring the Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP) into a Euro-Mediterranean Development Bank.

President Schifani was in the chair. Following adoption of the draft agenda and the minutes of the meeting of 12 November 2010, the President briefly illustrated the outcome of the previous meeting of the Bureau and gave the floor to the chairpersons of committees and working groups. All chairpersons expressed concern over the latest developments in Tunisia and Egypt. Mr. Enein offered that the PA-UfM must do its utmost in order to remove flawed and twisted information on the events. Ms Saïfi announced that the Political Committee would follow closely the developments in the regions, while pursuing the essential goal of ensuring dialogue between leaders and the



ASSEMBLEA PARLAMENTARE EUROMEDITERRANEA



*PRESIDENZA
ITALIANA*



society at large. Mr D'Antoni stressed the need to call on Governments to take such urgent measures to tackle the present predicament as the establishment of a Euro-Mediterranean bank, for the anxieties of millions of young people in the region seem to stem from issues of freedom and democracy no less than from economic problems and a concern for the future. Mr D'Antoni proposed to invite the competent EU economic commissioner and the EIB President to the next Plenary Assembly.

The chairpersons then reported on the activities of committees and working groups and the subjects of draft recommendations to be submitted to the March plenary.

Vice President Majali emphasized the importance of the establishment a general secretariat for the AP-UfM, without which there would be no North-South communication, and which would be responsible for communicating PA-UfM decisions and actions to all Euro-Mediterranean countries.

President Schifani thanked all speakers for their contributions and read out the Declaration adopted by the Bureau. During the ensuing debate, the importance of inter-religious dialogue was stressed, as an essential element to spell out exploitative scheming aimed at political destabilisation. The President also underlined the need to publicise the Bureau Declaration.

President Schifani finally announced that the Enlarged Bureau would meet next on 3 March 2011 in Rome.