



**PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY
OF THE
UNION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN**



Committee on Political Affairs, Security and Human Rights

MEETING
Thursday, 3 March 2011
10.30 to 13.30
Palazzo Montecitorio, Rome

MINUTES

The meeting was chaired by Tokia Saïfi (EP).

1. Adoption of draft agenda

The agenda was adopted.

2. Approval of minutes of meeting of 27 January 2011

The minutes were approved.

3. Chair's announcements

The Chair called for the current work to be concluded through the adoption of the recommendations prepared by the rapporteurs. In light of the upheavals that had been taking place in the Mediterranean region since the beginning of 2011, she suggested that considerable time be set aside during the meeting for an exchange of views on those current events. She herself would be putting forward an additional recommendation in response to the popular uprisings in the Arab world.

4. Exchange of views on the ongoing political upheavals in North Africa and the Middle East

The Chair said that the democratic aspirations of the Arab peoples had brought about the fall of the regimes in Tunisia and Egypt and expressed her concern at the escalating violence in Libya which had prompted the Security Council, on 26 February 2011, to impose sanctions under Chapter VII of the UN Charter.

She presented the text of her recommendation on the issue and stressed that respect for the right of association, freedom of expression and the right to demonstrate was paramount, as was unimpeded access to media, particularly Facebook, Twitter and the internet, which had been key channels for mobilising protest. She criticised the way in which some countries' resources were

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being pillaged by their irresponsible leaders and said that the EU was partly responsible for the current situation, as it had wrongly believed for far too long that maintaining stability meant preserving the status quo. Finally, she called for an EU response that would measure up to people's expectations and called for the existing UfM structures to be made operational so that they could support the historic processes of change taking place in the Mediterranean.

The text proposed by the Chair was adopted following a debate during which amendments were added on the issues of how to tackle the refugee crisis, the role of women in transition processes and the involvement of civil society.

5. Adoption of draft recommendations:

The Chair said that the 10 January deadline for tabling reports and the deadline for tabling some amendments had not been met. The rules of procedure stipulated that amendments must be tabled at the latest 25 days prior to plenary. In light of delays with the reports and the time required to translate them, the deadline for tabling amendments had had to be set for 28 February. The amendments by the Syrian members had arrived on the evening of 1 March, only in Arabic and in a form which had made processing them impossible. Although the amendments by the Algerian members had arrived within the deadline, they were available only in French.

The Chair hoped that the work could be concluded with the full support of all members and strongly urged them to meet deadlines in the future.

The committee discussed the adoption of three recommendations:

- The Arab Peace Initiative - rapporteurs: Mr David (EP), Mr Chiheb (Algeria)

The text was discussed in the temporary absence of Mr Whebee (Israel). The Palestinian delegation vetoed the text on principle and its adoption was postponed until the next meeting of the committee.

- The role of civil society in the institutional set-up of the UfM - rapporteurs: Mr Pedret (Spain), Mr Aferiat and Mr Moro (Morocco), Ms Flautre (EP)

The report was adopted with minor modifications.

- The human dimension of security in the Mediterranean - rapporteurs: Mr Panzeri (EP), Mr Rezgui (Algeria), Ms Daği (Turkey)

The report was adopted with minor modifications.

6. Date and place of next meeting

The next meeting would take place before the summer of 2011.
