



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



RECOMMENDATION

**Tabled on behalf of the Working Group for the Euro-Mediterranean
University (EMUNI)**

By

Mrs. Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou
Chair of the Working Group

Based on the proposals presented by the Rapporteurs,

- Mrs. Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou, Chair of the EMUNI Working Group, Vice-President of the European Parliament

And

- Mr. Hamid Narjisse, Vice-Chair of the EMUNI Working Group, Member of the Moroccan Chamber of Representatives, President of the political group "Authenticity and Modernity"

on "Policy coordination for a better knowledge and competitiveness in the Euro-Mediterranean region: perspectives and challenges for EMUNI"

3 March 2011

- Having regard to the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation on "Education and Human Capital Development in the Euro-Mediterranean Countries " (12 March 2010);
- Having regard to the Green Paper "The European Research Area: New Perspectives", European Commission, 4 April 2007;
- Having regard to the Cairo Declaration "Towards a Euro-Mediterranean higher education & research area" of the first Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial conference on higher education and scientific research (Cairo, 18 June 2007);
- Having regard to the Resolution of the European Parliament of 23 September 2008 on the Bologna Process and student mobility;
- Having regard to the European Council conclusions of 19 and 20 March 2009, notably the part on 'making full use of the renewed Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs';
- Having regard to the Council of the European Union conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('ET 2020') which highlights the central role that education and training should play in overcoming the challenges facing Europe and the need of efficient investment in human capital through education and training systems;
- Having regard to the Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean (Paris, 13 July 2008), which launched the Union for the Mediterranean;
- Having regard to the Marseille Declaration of the Euro-Mediterranean Foreign Affairs Ministers Conference (Marseille, 3-4 November 2008);
- Having regard to the European Commission Communication of 2 April 2009 entitled 'A new partnership for the modernisation of universities: the EU Forum for University Business Dialogue' (COM(2009)0158);
- Having regard to the Report of the European Parliament on university-business dialogue: a new partnership for the modernisation of Europe's universities (29.03.2010);

A - Whereas education is a major priority of the Euro-Mediterranean cooperation and constitutes a significant investment in human capital, promoting cultural closeness and civil dialogue reducing the disparities of both shores of the Mediterranean, increasing competitiveness as well as social, economic and territorial cohesion within a framework of sustainable development;

B - Noting that the Cairo Declaration (18 June 2007) provides the framework, the guiding principles and the general objectives of the Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in Higher Education, Research and Technological Development;

C - Noting that the Marseille Declaration underlines the Euro-Mediterranean University (EMUNI), inaugurated in Slovenia (Piran, 9 June 2008) marks an important step in building cultural and educational bridges between the North and South of the Mediterranean, and that EMUNI is expected to encourage cooperation in higher education following up the objectives of the Catania Process and of the Cairo Declaration;

D- Noting the importance of the Euro-Mediterranean University for the efficient dialogue between North and South, but also for the promotion of excellence and competitiveness of the Universities in the Euro-Mediterranean region;

E - Noting that the European Union already promotes programmes in the field of cooperation and mobility between Universities from the North and South of the Mediterranean, and that the network created by EMUNI contributes to coordinating and enhancing these initiatives, as well as to foster a balanced and attractive region of research and excellence;

F – Noting that the joint declaration of the July 2008 Paris Summit included Higher Education and Research among the priorities for the Union for the Mediterranean;

G – Based on commitment of the Anna Lindh Foundation to address as a priority, the Education Systems in the Euro-Mediterranean Region to feed the gap and to challenge the “Choc of ignorances” when it comes to the mutual knowledge and the dual perception in between the two shores of the Mediterranean.

1) Highly supports the objectives of the Marseille Declaration and the commitment of the Euro-Mediterranean states to give particular

attention to further promoting academic mobility, enhancing quality assurance mechanisms as well as to issues concerning the recognition of degrees and study periods which may lead to the development of joint degrees between institutions in European and Mediterranean countries;

2) Upholds the goals of the Foundation Charter of the Euro-Mediterranean University adopted at the launching event of the EMUNI (Slovenia, Piran, 8 June 2008), in the presence of the EU Presidency, the President of the European Parliament, the President of the European Commission, and the Secretary General of the Arab League;

3) Welcomes EMUNI's dynamic development and evolution (141 member institutions from 37 Euro-Mediterranean countries, in February 2011), and its focus on the priority fields of UfM: Depollution of the Mediterranean, Maritime and Land Highways, Civil Protection, Alternative Energies: Mediterranean Solar Plan, The Mediterranean Business Development Initiative and welcomes and encourages EMUNI to take all necessary actions in view of offering the adequate knowledge and human dynamism in order to achieve convergence and an economic integration, and calls on the continuous improvement of Education standards

4) Notes though that despite achievements in developing cooperation, many of the EMUNI objectives are still far from being achieved;

5) Regrets that the second meeting of the Euro-Mediterranean Ministers of Higher Education and Scientific Research could not take place, as foreseen, in 2010, and express the hope that the conference will be held, as soon as possible, in 2011, in order to give the necessary impulse for an enhanced implementation of the cooperation measures in the sector. The holding of regular high level political meetings could contribute to efficiently achieve EMUNI's goals, particularly cooperation and excellence within the Euro-Mediterranean region;

6) Supports the measures emphasized by the EU strategy in the field of education and training (12 May 2009) aimed to enhancing competitiveness, quality standards and the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area, as well as supporting policy developments and modernisation efforts in the Mediterranean Partner Countries;

7) Supports the vision of the European Research Area (4 April 2007) and emphasizes the pertinence of its objectives to the whole

Euro-Mediterranean area. In this regard, accentuates the importance of researcher mobility for knowledge sharing, or joint infrastructures for the emergence of European and global research communities and institutions

8) Underlines that a greater importance should be given to the support of crucial interactions between research, higher education innovation and labour market on both sides of the Mediterranean and in the context of a globalised economy. Increased efforts are needed for developing the various mechanisms enable to promote these areas, such as financial incentives, increased budgetary allocations, private and public partnership, reinforced coordination and guidelines;

9) Encourages a largest participation of the Mediterranean Partner Countries in the EU programmes dedicated to this sector, namely, Research Framework Programme, Jean Monnet, Tempus, Erasmus Mundus and Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Windows, and supports the role of the EMUNI for fostering cooperation in this respect;

10) Underlines the importance that all Euro-Mediterranean Partners consider education as a priority sector in their national strategies and grant the necessary attention to the institution building and supporting mechanisms in this field. In this respect, it encourages a larger use of TAIEX and twining;

11) Emphasizes the need of allocating increased funds for education programmes, at national level, from EU budget, respectively through the European Partnership and Neighbourhood Instrument, both within bilateral agreements, as well as through horizontal instruments, as well as from Union for the Mediterranean projects in the field;

12) Requests further efforts to be undertaken in the field of mobility of students, researchers, academics, and calls on the European Institutions and the governments of partner countries for the elaboration of a proposal for a system facilitating mobility. Upholds brain circulation while drawing the attention on the danger of brain drain;

13) Calls for an increased cooperation between the Mediterranean Network of National Information Centres on the Recognition of Qualifications (MERIC) and the European Network of National Information Centres on academic recognition and mobility (ENIC Network), in view of increasing comparability of higher education degrees;

14) Asks for a better coordination and valorisation of EU's programmes, reinforcement of the cooperation between Universities and development of Education and Research in the Mediterranean partner countries, and supports the efforts of EMUNI in this respect;

15) Calls for an enhanced cooperation between EMUNI and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean, as well as with the Secretariat of UfM, in view of the evaluation of the goals in the field of Higher Education and the forthcoming perspectives.

16) Encourages the collaboration of EMUNI with all stakeholders, organizations and/or international, European and regional institutions having as goal the development of education, of knowledge and of learning in the Euro-Mediterranean region, such as the Marseille Centre for Integration in the Mediterranean, joint initiative of the World Bank, European Investment Bank, governments of North and South of the Mediterranean and the City of Marseille (France) or the European Training Foundation (ETF) European Union agency based in Turin (Italy)

17) Acknowledges the importance of EMUNI as academic think-tank in the Euro-Mediterranean region and as higher education institution within the framework of the Union for the Mediterranean and calls for continuing support of EMUNI, both financially and at the level of expertise from the Euro-Mediterranean Partners

18) Underlines that further studies need to be undertaken on the international dimension of the Bologna process and that EMUNI could bring its contribution in this respect;

19) Asks for a more balanced exchange between North and South when promoting EMUNI's activities and Academic mobility, notably by organising a larger number of events in Southern Mediterranean Partner Countries.

20) Stresses the importance of creating various antennas EMUNI in the Euro-Mediterranean region, as well as Observatories of Euro-Mediterranean Studies in partnership with EMUNI Universities, in order to provide EMUNI's activities with further value and efficiency;

21) Underlines the importance of development and reinforcement of EMUNI by political and economic support at National and

European level in order to efficiently promote its activities and meet its objectives;

22) Emphasizes the need that EMUNI values diversity, quality, development of human resources and research dynamism in the Euro-Mediterranean region and grants a maximum of attention to the participation at its activities of students, professors and researchers from the largest socio-economic categories;

23) Accentuates on the importance of continuous cooperation of EMUNI with International Educational and Research Centres and Institutes worldwide, based in exchanges, common activities and possibilities offered by new technologies;

24) Promotes, through close partnership with the Anna Lindh Foundation, the dialogue of cultures as a key factor and the central asset to forge and to build new education programs with different inputs and logic of parity, of co-ownership and a vision for a common destiny nursed by Mediterranean values;

25) Stresses the imperative of appropriating adequate financial resources to secure funding for collaborative research programs involving scientists from southern and northern shores as well as exchanges of Mediterranean universities staff, faculty and students.