

The Barcelona Declaration

Adopted at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference 27 and 28 November 1995

The Council of the European Union, represented by its President, Mr Javier SOLANA, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Spain,

The European Commission, represented by Mr Manuel MARIN, Vice-President, Germany, represented by Mr Klaus KINKEL, Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs,

Algeria, represented by Mr Mohamed Salah DEMBRI, Minister for Foreign Affairs,

Austria, represented by Ms Benita FERRERO-WALDNER, State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

Belgium, represented by Mr Erik DERYCKE, Minister for Foreign Affairs,

Cyprus, represented by Mr Alecos MICHAELIDES, Minister for Foreign Affairs,

Denmark, represented by Mr Niels Helveg PETERSEN, Minister for Foreign Affairs,

Egypt, represented by Mr Amr MOUSSA, Minister for Foreign Affairs,

Spain, represented by Mr Carlos WESTENDORP, State Secretary for Relations with the European Community,

Finland, represented by Ms Tarja HALONEN, Minister for Foreign Affairs,

France, represented by Mr Hervé de CHARETTE, Minister for Foreign Affairs,

Greece, represented by Mr Károlos PAPOULIAS, Minister for Foreign Affairs,

Ireland, represented by Mr Dick SPRING Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs

Israel, represented by Mr Ehud BARAK, Minister for Foreign Affairs,

Italy, represented by Ms Susanna AGNELLI, Minister for Foreign Affairs,

Jordan, represented by Mr Abdel-Karim KABARITI, Minister for Foreign Affairs,

Lebanon, represented by Mr Fares BOUEZ, Minister for Foreign Affairs,

Luxembourg, represented by Mr Jacques F. POOS, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Cooperation,

Malta, represented by Prof. Guido DE MARCO, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs,

Morocco, represented by Mr Abdellatif FILALI, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs,

the Netherlands, represented by Mr Hans van MIERLO, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs,

Portugal, represented by Mr Jaime GAMA, Minister for Foreign Affairs,

the United Kingdom, represented by Mr Malcolm RIFKIND QC MPI, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs,

Syria, represented by Mr Farouk AL-SHARA-A, Minister for Foreign Affairs,

Sweden, represented by Ms Lena HJELM-WALLEN, Minister for Foreign Affairs,

Tunisia, represented by Mr Habib Ben YAHIA, Minister for Foreign Affairs,

Turkey, represented by Mr Deniz BAYKAL, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs,

the Palestinian Authority, represented by Mr Yasser ARAFAT, President of the Palestinian Authority.

Taking part in the Euro-Mediterranean Conference in Barcelona:

- * stressing the strategic importance of the Mediterranean and moved by the will to give their future relations a new dimension, based on comprehensive cooperation and solidarity, in keeping with the privileged nature of the links forged by neighbourhood and history;

- * aware that the new political, economic and social issues on both sides of the Mediterranean constitute common challenges calling for a coordinated overall response;

- * resolved to establish to that end a multilateral and lasting framework of relations based on a spirit of partnership, with due regard for the characteristics, values and distinguishing features peculiar to each of the participants;

- * regarding this multilateral framework as the counterpart to a strengthening of bilateral relations which it is important to safeguard, while laying stress on their specific nature;

- * stressing that this Euro-Mediterranean initiative is not intended to replace the other activities and initiatives undertaken in the interests of the peace, stability and development of the region, but that it will contribute to their success, The participants support the realization of a just, comprehensive and lasting peace settlement in the Middle East based on the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions and principles mentioned in the letter of invitation to the Madrid Middle East Peace Conference, including the principle land for peace, with all that this implies;

- * convinced that the general objective of turning the Mediterranean basin into an area of dialogue, exchange and cooperation guaranteeing peace, stability and prosperity requires a

strengthening of democracy and respect for human rights, sustainable and balanced economic and social development, measures to combat poverty and promotion of greater understanding between cultures, which are all essential aspects of partnership,

- hereby agree to establish a comprehensive partnership among the participants - the Euro-Mediterranean partnership - through strengthened political dialogue on a regular basis, the development of economic and financial cooperation and greater emphasis on the social, cultural and human dimension, these being the three aspects of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership.

POLITICAL AND SECURITY PARTNERSHIP: ESTABLISHING A COMMON AREA OF PEACE AND STABILITY

The participants express their conviction that the peace, stability and security of the Mediterranean region are a common asset which they pledge to promote and strengthen by all means at their disposal. To this end they agree to conduct a strengthened political dialogue at regular intervals, based on observance of essential principles of international law, and reaffirm a number of common objectives in matters of internal and external stability.

In this spirit they undertake in the following declaration of principles to:

- * act in accordance with the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as other obligations under international law, in particular those arising out of regional and international instruments to which they are party;

- * develop the rule of law and democracy in their political systems, while recognizing in this framework the right of each of them to choose and freely develop its own political, socio-cultural, economic and judicial system;

- * respect human rights and fundamental freedoms and guarantee the effective legitimate exercise of such rights and freedoms, including freedom of expression, freedom of association for peaceful purposes and freedom of thought, conscience and religion, both individually and together with other members of the same group, without any discrimination on grounds of race, nationality, language, religion or sex;

* give favourable consideration, through dialogue between the parties, to exchanges of information on matters relating to human rights, fundamental freedoms, racism and xenophobia;

* respect and ensure respect for diversity and pluralism in their societies, promote tolerance between different groups in society and combat manifestations of intolerance, racism and xenophobia. The participants stress the importance of proper education in the matter of human rights and fundamental freedoms;

* respect their sovereign equality and all rights inherent in their sovereignty, and fulfil in good faith the obligations they have assumed under international law;

* respect the equal rights of peoples and their right to self-determination, acting at all times in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and with the relevant norms of international law, including those relating to territorial integrity of States, as reflected in agreements between relevant parties;

* refrain, in accordance with the rules of international law, from any direct or indirect intervention in the internal affairs of another partner; respect the territorial integrity and unity of each of the other partners;

* settle their disputes by peaceful means, call upon all participants to renounce recourse to the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity of another participant, including the acquisition of territory by force, and reaffirm the right to fully exercise sovereignty by legitimate means in accordance with the UN Charter and international law;

* strengthen their cooperation in preventing and combating terrorism, in particular by ratifying and applying the international instruments they have signed, by acceding to such instruments and by taking any other appropriate measure;

* fight together against the expansion and diversification of organized crime and combat the drugs problem in all its aspects;

* promote regional security by acting, inter alia, in favour of nuclear, chemical and biological non-proliferation through adherence to and compliance with a combination of international and regional non-proliferation regimes, and arms control and disarmament agreements such as NPT, CWC, BWC, CTBT and/or regional arrangements such as weapons free zones including their verification regimes, as well as by fulfilling in good faith their commitments under arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation conventions.

The parties shall pursue a mutually and effectively verifiable Middle East Zone free of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical and biological, and their delivery systems.

Furthermore the parties will consider practical steps to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons as well as excessive accumulation of conventional arms;

- * refrain from developing military capacity beyond their legitimate defence requirements, at the same time reaffirming their resolve to achieve the same degree of security and mutual confidence with the lowest possible levels of troops and weaponry and adherence to CCW.

- * promote conditions likely to develop good-neighbourly relations among themselves and support processes aimed at stability, security, prosperity and regional and subregional cooperation.

- * consider any confidence and security-building measures that could be taken between the parties with a view to the creation of an "area of peace and stability in the Mediterranean", including the long term possibility of establishing a Euro-Mediterranean pact to that end.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL PARTNERSHIP: CREATING AN AREA OF SHARED PROSPERITY

The participants emphasize the importance they attach to sustainable and balanced economic and social development with a view to achieving their objective of creating an area of shared prosperity.

The partners acknowledge the difficulties that the question of debt can create for the economic development of the countries of the Mediterranean region. They agree, in view of the importance of their relations, to continue the dialogue in order to achieve progress in the competent fora.

Noting that the partners have to take up common challenges, albeit to varying degrees, the participants set themselves the following long-term objectives:

- * acceleration of the pace of sustainable socio-economic development;
- * improvement of the living conditions of their populations, increase in the employment level and reduction in the development gap in the Euro-Mediterranean region;

- * encouragement of regional cooperation and integration.

With a view to achieving these objectives, the participants agree to establish an economic and financial; partnership which, taking into account the different degrees of development, will be based on:

- * the progressive establishment of a free-trade area;

- * the implementation of appropriate economic cooperation and concerted action in the relevant areas;

- * a substantial increase in the European Union's financial assistance to its partners.

a) Free-trade area

The free-trade area will be established through the new Euro-Mediterranean Agreements and free-trade agreements between partners of the European Union. The parties have set 2010 as the target date for the gradual establishment of this area which will cover most trade with due observance of the obligations resulting from the WTO.

With a view to developing gradual free trade in this area: tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade in manufactured products will be progressively eliminated in accordance with timetables to be negotiated between the partners; taking as a starting point traditional trade flows, and as far as the various agricultural policies allow and with due respect to the results achieved within the GATT negotiations, trade in agricultural products will be progressively liberalized through reciprocal preferential access among the parties; trade in services including right of establishment will be progressively liberalized having due regard to the GATS agreement. The participants decide to facilitate the progressive establishment of this free-trade area through the adoption of suitable measures as regard rules of origin, certification, protection of intellectual and industrial property rights and competition;

- * the pursuit and the development of policies based on the principles of market economy and the integration of their economies taking into account their respective needs and levels of development;

* the adjustment and modernization of economic and social structures, giving priority to the promotion and development of the private sector, to the upgrading of the productive sector and to the establishment of an appropriate institutional and regulatory framework for a market economy. They will likewise endeavour to mitigate the negative social consequences which may result from this adjustment, by promoting programmes for the benefit of the neediest populations;

* the promotion of mechanisms to foster transfers of technology.

b) Economic cooperation and concerted action

Cooperation will be developed in particular in the areas listed below and in this respect the participants:

* acknowledge that economic development must be supported both by internal savings, the basis of investment, and by direct foreign investment. They stress the importance of creating an environment conducive to investment, in particular by the progressive elimination of obstacles to such investment which could lead to the transfer of technology and increase production and exports;

* affirm that regional cooperation on a voluntary basis, particularly with a view to developing trade between the partners themselves, is a key factor in promoting the creation of a free-trade area;

* encourage enterprises to enter into agreements with each other and undertake to promote such cooperation and industrial modernization by providing a favourable environment and regulatory framework. They consider it necessary to adopt and to implement a technical support programme for SMEs;

* emphasize their interdependence with regard to the environment, which necessitates a regional approach and increased cooperation, as well as better coordination of existing multilateral programmes, while confirming their attachment to the Barcelona Convention and the Mediterranean Action Plan. They recognize the importance of reconciling economic development with environmental protection, of integrating environmental concerns into the relevant aspects of economic policy and of mitigating the negative environmental consequences which might result. They undertake to establish a short and medium-term priority action programme, including in connection with combating desertification, and to concentrate appropriate technical and financial support on those actions;

* recognize the key role of women in development and undertake to promote their active participation in economic and social life and in the creation of employment;

* stress the importance of the conservation and rational management of fish stocks and of the improvement of cooperation on research into stocks, including aqua-culture, and undertake to facilitate scientific training and research and to envisage creating joint instruments;

* acknowledge the pivotal role of the energy sector in the economic Euro-Mediterranean partnership and decide to strengthen cooperation and intensify dialogue in the field of energy policies. They also decide to create the appropriate framework conditions for investments and the activities of energy companies, cooperating in creating the conditions enabling such companies to extend energy networks and promote link-ups;

* recognize that water supply together with suitable management and development of resources are priority issues for all Mediterranean partners and that cooperation should be developed in these areas;

* agree to cooperate in modernizing and restructuring agriculture and in promoting integrated rural development. This cooperation will focus in particular on technical assistance and training, on support for policies implemented by the partners to diversify production, on the reduction of food dependency and on the promotion of environment-friendly agriculture. They also agree to cooperate in the eradication of illicit crops and the development of any regions affected.

The participants also agree to cooperate in other areas and, to that effect:

* stress the importance of developing and improving infrastructures, including through the establishment of an efficient transport system, the development information technologies and the modernization of telecommunications. They agree to draw up a programme of priorities for that purpose;

* undertake to respect the principles of international maritime law, in particular freedom to provide services in international transport and free access to international cargoes. The results of the ongoing multilateral trade negotiation on maritime transport services being conducted within the WTO will be taken into account when agreed;

* undertake to encourage cooperation between local authorities and in support regional planning;

* recognizing that science and technology have a significant influence on socio-economic development, agree to strengthen scientific research capacity and development, contribute to the training of scientific and technical staff and promote participation in joint research projects based on the creation of scientific networks;

* agree to promote cooperation on statistics in order to harmonize methods and exchange data.

c) Financial cooperation

The participants consider that the creation of a free-trade area and the success of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership require a substantial increase in financial assistance, which must above all encourage sustainable indigenous development and the mobilization of local economic operators. They note in this connection that:

* the Cannes European Council agreed to set aside ECU 4 685 million for this financial assistance in the form of available Community budget funds for the period 1995-1999. This will be supplemented by EIB assistance in the form of increased loans and the bilateral financial contributions from the Member States;

* effective financial cooperation managed in the framework of a multiannual programme, taking into account the special characteristics of each of the partners is necessary;

* sound macro-economic management is of fundamental importance in ensuring the success of the partnership. To this end they agree to promote dialogue on their respective economic policies and on the method of optimizing financial cooperation.

PARTNERSHIP IN SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND HUMAN AFFAIRS: DEVELOPING HUMAN RESOURCES, PROMOTING UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN CULTURES AND EXCHANGES BETWEEN CIVIL SOCIETIES

The participants recognize that the traditions of culture and civilization throughout the Mediterranean region, dialogue between these cultures and exchanges at human, scientific and technological level are an essential factor in bringing their peoples closer, promoting understanding between them and improving their perception of each other.

In this spirit, the participants agree to establish a partnership in social, cultural and human affairs. To this end:

- * they reaffirm that dialogue and respect between cultures and religions are a necessary pre-condition for bringing the peoples closer. In this connection they stress the importance of the role the mass media can play in the reciprocal recognition and understanding of cultures as a source of mutual enrichment;

- * they stress the essential nature of the development of human resources, both as regards the education and training of young people in particular and in the area culture. They express their intent to promote cultural exchanges and knowledge of other languages, respecting the cultural identity of each partner, and to implement a lasting policy of educational and cultural programmes; in this context the partners undertake to adopt measures to facilitate human exchanges, in particular by improving administrative procedures;

- * they underline the importance of the health sector for sustainable development and express their intention of promoting the effective participation of the community in operations to improve health and well-being;

- * they recognize the importance of social development which, in their view, must go hand in hand with any economic development. They attach particular importance to respect for fundamental social rights, including the right to development;

- * they recognize the essential contribution civil society can make in the process of development of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership and as an essential factor for greater understanding and closeness between peoples;

- * they accordingly agree to strengthen and/or introduce the necessary instruments of decentralized cooperation to encourage exchanges between those active in development within the framework of national laws: leaders of political and civil society, the cultural and religious world, universities, the research community, the media, organizations, the trade unions and public and private enterprises;

- * on this basis, they recognize the importance of encouraging contacts and exchanges between young people in the context of programmes for decentralised cooperation;

- * they will encourage actions of support for democratic institutions and for the strengthening of the rule of law and civil society;

- * they recognize that current population trends represent a priority challenge which must be counterbalanced by appropriate policies to accelerate economic take-off;

* they acknowledge the importance of the role played by migration in their relationships. They agree to strengthen their cooperation to reduce migratory pressures, among other things through vocational training programmes and programmes of assistance for job creation. They undertake to guarantee protection of all the rights recognized under existing legislation of migrants legally resident in their respective territories;

* in the area of legal immigration they decide to establish closer cooperation. In this context, the partners, aware of their responsibility for readmission, agree to adopt the relevant provisions and measures, by means of bilateral agreements or arrangements, in order to readmit their nationals who are in an illegal situation. To that end, the Member States of the European Union take citizens to mean nationals of the Member States, as defined for Community purposes,

* they agree to strengthen cooperation by means of various measures to prevent terrorism and fight it more effectively together,

* by the same token they consider it necessary to fight jointly and effectively against drug trafficking, international crime and corruption;

* they underline the importance of waging a determined campaign against racism, xenophobia and intolerance and agree to cooperate to that end.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE CONFERENCE

The participants:

* considering that the Barcelona Conference provides the basis for a process, which is open and should develop; - reaffirming their will to establish a partnership based on the principles and objectives defined in this Declaration; - resolved to give practical expression to this Euro-Mediterranean partnership; - convinced that, in order to achieve this objective, it is necessary to continue the comprehensive dialogue thus initiated and to carry out a series of specific actions;

* hereby adopt the attached work programme:

The Ministers for Foreign Affairs will meet periodically in order to monitor the application of this Declaration and define actions enabling the objectives of the partnership to be achieved.

The various activities will be followed by ad hoc thematic meetings of ministers, senior officials and experts, exchanges of experience and information, contacts between those active in civil society and by any other appropriate means.

Contacts between parliamentarians, regional authorities, local authorities and the social partners will be encouraged.

A "Euro-Mediterranean Committee for the Barcelona process" at senior-official level, consisting of the European Union Troika and one representative of each Mediterranean partner, will hold regular meetings to prepare the meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs, take stock of and evaluate the follow-up to the Barcelona process and all its components and update the work programme.

Appropriate preparatory and follow-up work for the meetings resulting from the Barcelona work programme and from the conclusions of the "Euro-Mediterranean Committee for the Barcelona process" will be undertaken by the Commission departments.

The next meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs will be held in the first semester of 1997 in one of the twelve Mediterranean partners of the European Union, to be determined through further consultations.

ANNEX

WORK PROGRAMME

I. Introduction

The aim of this programme is to implement the objectives of the Barcelona Declaration, and to respect its principles, through regional and multilateral actions. It is complementary both to

the bilateral cooperation, implemented in particular under the agreements between the EU and its Mediterranean partners, and to the cooperation already existing in other multilateral fora.

The preparation and the follow-up to the various actions will be implemented in accordance with the principles and mechanisms set out in the Barcelona Declaration.

The priority actions for further cooperation are listed below. This does not exclude Euro-Mediterranean cooperation being extended to other actions if the partners so agree.

The actions may apply to States, their local and regional authorities as well as actors of their civil society.

With the agreement of the participants, other countries or organizations may be involved in the actions contained in the work programme. The implementation must take place in a flexible and transparent way.

With the agreement of the participants, future Euro-Mediterranean cooperation will take account, as appropriate, of the opinions and recommendations resulting from the relevant discussions held at various levels in the region.

The implementation of the programme should start as soon as practical after the Barcelona Conference. It will be reviewed at the next Euro-Mediterranean Conference on the basis of a report to be prepared by the European Commission departments, particularly on the basis of reports from the various meetings and Groups mentioned below, and approved by the "Euro-Mediterranean Committee for the Barcelona process" set up by the Barcelona Declaration.

II. Political and Security Partnership: Establishing a common area of peace and stability

With a view to contributing to the objective of progressively creating a zone of peace, stability and security in the Mediterranean, senior officials will meet periodically, starting within the first quarter of 1996. They will:

- * conduct a political dialogue to examine the most appropriate means and methods of implementing the principles adopted by the Barcelona Declaration, and

- * submit practical proposals in due time for the next Euro-Mediterranean Meeting of Foreign Ministers. Foreign policy institutes in the Euro-Mediterranean region will be encouraged to establish a network for more intensive cooperation which could become operational as of 1996.

III. Economic and Financial Partnership: Building a zone of shared prosperity

Meetings will take place periodically at the level of Ministers, officials or experts, as appropriate, to promote cooperation in the following areas. These meetings may be supplemented, where appropriate, by conferences or seminars involving the private sector likewise.

Establishment of a Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area

The establishment of a free trade area in accordance with the principles contained in the Barcelona Declaration is an essential element of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership.

Cooperation will focus on practical measures to facilitate the establishment of free trade as well as its consequences, including:

- * harmonizing rules and procedures in the customs field, with a view in particular to the progressive introduction of cumulation of origin; in the meantime, favourable consideration will be given, where appropriate, to finding ad hoc solutions in particular cases;

- * harmonization of standards, including meetings arranged by the European Standards Organisations;

- * elimination of unwarranted technical barriers to trade in agricultural products and adoption of relevant measures related to plant-health and veterinary rules as well as other legislation on foodstuffs;

* cooperation among statistics organizations with a view to providing reliable data on a harmonized basis; -possibilities for regional and subregional cooperation (without prejudice to initiatives taken in other existing fora).

Investment

The object of cooperation will be to help create a climate favourable to the removal of obstacles to investment, by giving greater thought to the definition of such obstacles and to means, including in the banking sector, of promoting such investment.

Industry

Industrial modernisation and increased competitiveness will be key factors for the success of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, In this context, the private sector will play a more important role in the economic development of the region and the creation of employment. Cooperation will focus on:

- * the adaptation of the industrial fabric to the changing international environment, in particular to the emergence of the information society;
- * the framework for and the preparation of the modernisation and restructuring of existing enterprises, especially in the public sector, including privatisation;
- * the use of international or European standards and the upgrading of conformity testing, certification, accreditation and quality standards.

Particular attention will be paid to means of encouraging cooperation among SMEs and creating the conditions for their development, including the possibility of organising workshops, taking account of experience acquired under MEDINVEST and inside the European Union.

Agriculture

While pointing out that such matters are covered under bilateral relations in the main, cooperation in this area will focus on:

- * support for policies implemented by them to diversify production;
- * reduction of food dependency;
- * promotion of environment-friendly agriculture;
 - * closer relations between businesses, groups and organizations representing trades and professions in the partner States on a voluntary basis;
- * support for privatization;
- * technical assistance and training;
 - * harmonization of plant-health and veterinary standards; - integrated rural development, including improvement of basic services and the development of associated economic activities;
 - * cooperation among rural regions, exchange of experience and know-how concerning rural development;
 - * development of regions affected by the eradication of illicit crops.

Transport

Efficient interoperable transport links between the EU and its Mediterranean partners, and among the partners themselves, as well as free access to the market for services in international maritime transport, are essential to the development of trade patterns and the smooth operation of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership.

The Transport Ministers of Western Mediterranean countries met twice in 1995 and, following the Regional Conference for the Development of Maritime Transport in the Mediterranean, the Mediterranean Waterborne Transport Working Group adopted a multi-annual programme.

Cooperation will focus on:

- * development of an efficient Trans-Mediterranean multimodal combined sea and air transport system, through the improvement and modernization of ports and airports, the suppression of unwarranted restrictions, the simplification of procedures, the improvement of maritime and air safety, the harmonization of environmental standards at a high level including more efficient monitoring of maritime pollution, and the development of harmonized traffic management systems;

- * development of east-west land links on the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean, and

- * connection of Mediterranean transport networks to the Trans-European Network in order to ensure their interoperability.

Energy

A high-level Conference was held in Tunisia in 1995 with a follow-up meeting in Athens and an Energy Conference in Madrid on 20 November 1995. With a view to creating appropriate conditions for investment in and activities by energy companies, future cooperation will focus, inter alia on:

- * fostering the association of Mediterranean countries with the Treaty on the European Energy Charter;

- * energy planning;

- * encouraging producer-consumer dialogue;

- * oil and gas exploration, refining, transportation, distribution, and regional and trans-regional trade;

- * coal production and handling;

- * generation and transmission of power and interconnection and development of networks;

- * energy efficiency;

- * new and renewable sources of energy;

- * energy-related environmental issues;

- * development of joint research programmes;

- * training and information activities in the energy sector.

Telecommunications and information technology

With a view to developing a modern, efficient telecommunications network, cooperation will focus on:

- * information and telecommunications infrastructures (minimum regulatory framework, standards, conformity testing, network interoperability, etc.);

* regional infrastructures including links with European networks; and access to services new services in priority fields of application.

Intensification of Euro-Mediterranean exchanges and access to the nascent information society will be facilitated by more efficient information and communications infrastructures.

A regional conference is planned for 1996 with the aim of paving the way for pilot projects to show the concrete benefits of the information society.

Regional Planning

Co-operation will focus on:

* defining a regional planning strategy for the Euro-Mediterranean area commensurate with the countries' requirements and special features;

* promoting cross-border cooperation in areas of mutual interest.

Tourism

The Ministers for Tourism, meeting in Casablanca, adopted the Mediterranean Tourism Charter in 1995. The cooperation actions to be initiated will relate in particular to information, promotion and training.

Environment

Co-operation will focus on:

* assessing environmental problems in the Mediterranean region and defining, where appropriate, the initiatives to be taken;

- * making proposals to establish and subsequently update a short and medium-term priority environmental action programme for intervention coordinated by the European Commission and supplemented by long-term actions; it should include among the main areas for action, the following: integrated management of water, soil and coastal areas; management of waste; preventing and combating air pollution and pollution in the Mediterranean sea; natural heritage, landscapes and site conservation and management; Mediterranean forest protection, conservation and restoration, in particular through the prevention and control of erosion, soil degradation,

- * forest fires and combating desertification; transfer of Community experience in financing techniques, legislation and environmental monitoring; integration of environmental concerns in all policies;

- * setting up a regular dialogue to monitor the implementation of the action programme;

- * reinforcing regional and subregional cooperation and strengthening coordination with the Mediterranean Action Plan;

- * stimulating coordination of investments from various sources, and implementation of relevant international conventions;

- * promoting the adoption and implementation of legislation and regulatory measures when required, especially preventive measures and appropriate high standards.

Science and Technology

Cooperation will focus on:

- * promoting research and development and tackling the problem of the widening gap in scientific achievement, taking account of the principle of mutual advantage;

- * stepping up exchanges of experience in the scientific sectors and policies which might best enable the Mediterranean partners to reduce the gap between them and their European neighbours and to promote the transfer of technology.

- * helping train scientific and technical staff by increasing participation in joint research projects.

Following the Ministerial meeting at Sophia Antipolis in March 1995, a Monitoring Committee was set up; this Committee will meet for the first time immediately after the

Barcelona Conference. It will focus on making recommendations for the joint implementation of the policy priorities agreed at Ministerial level.

Water

The Mediterranean Water Charter was adopted in Rome in 1992.

Water is a priority issue for all the Mediterranean partners and will gain in importance as water scarcity becomes more pressing. The purpose of cooperation in this area will be as follows:

- * to take stock of the situation taking into account current and future needs;
- * to identify ways of reinforcing regional cooperation;
- * to make proposals for rationalising the planning and management of water resources, where appropriate on a joint basis;
- * to contribute towards the creation of new sources of water.

Fisheries

In view of the importance of conservation and rational management of Mediterranean fish stocks, cooperation in the framework of the General Fisheries Council for the Mediterranean will be reinforced.

Following the Ministerial Fisheries Conference held in Heraklion in 1994, appropriate follow-up action will be taken in the legal sphere through meetings to take place in 1996.

Cooperation will be improved on research into fish stocks, including aqua-culture, as well as into training and scientific research.

IV. Partnership in Social, Cultural and Human affairs: Developing Human Resources, Promoting Understanding between Cultures and Exchanges between Civil Societies

Development of human resources

The Euro-Mediterranean partnership must contribute to enhancing educational levels throughout the region, whilst laying special emphasis on the Mediterranean partners. To this end, a regular dialogue on educational policies will take place, initially focusing on vocational training, technology in education, the universities and other higher-education establishments and research. In this context as well as in other areas, particular attention will be paid to the role of women. The Euro-Arab Business School in Granada and the European Foundation in Turin will also contribute to this cooperation.

A meeting of representatives of the vocational training sector (policy makers, academics, trainers, etc) will be organised with the aim of sharing modern management approaches.

A meeting will be held of representatives of universities and higher-education establishments. The European Commission will strengthen its ongoing MED-Campus programme.

A meeting will also be called on the subject of technology in education.

Municipalities and Regions

Municipalities and regional authorities need to be closely involved in the operation of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. City and regional representatives will be encouraged to meet each year to take stock of their common challenges and exchange experiences. This will be organised by the European Commission and will take account of previous experience.

Dialogue between cultures and civilizations

Given the importance of improving mutual understanding by promoting cultural exchanges and knowledge of languages, officials and experts will meet in order to make concrete proposals for action, inter alia, in the following fields: cultural and creative heritage, cultural and artistic events, co-productions (theatre and cinema), translations and other means of cultural dissemination, training.

Greater understanding among the major religions present in the Euro-Mediterranean region will facilitate greater mutual tolerance and cooperation. Support will be given to periodic meetings of representatives of religions and religious institutions as well as theologians, academics and others concerned, with the aim of breaking down prejudice, ignorance and fanaticism and fostering cooperation at grass-roots level. The conferences held in Stockholm (15/17.6.1995) and Toledo (4/7.11.1995) may serve as examples in this context.

Media

Close interaction between the media will work in favour of better cultural understanding. The European Union will actively promote such interaction, in particular through the ongoing MED-Media programme. An annual meeting of representatives of the media will be organised in this context.

Youth

Youth exchanges should be the means to prepare future generations for a closer cooperation between the Euro-Mediterranean partners. A Euro-Mediterranean youth exchange programme should therefore be established based on experience acquired in Europe and taking account of the partners' needs; this programme should take account of the importance of vocational training, particularly for those without qualifications, and of the training of organizers and social workers in the youth field. The European Commission will make the necessary proposals before the next meeting of Euro-Mediterranean Foreign Ministers.

Exchanges between Civil Societies

Senior officials will meet periodically to discuss measures likely to facilitate human exchanges resulting from the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, especially those involving officials, scientists, academics, businessmen, students and sportsmen, including the improvement and simplification of administrative procedures, particularly where unnecessary administrative obstacles might exist. Social Development

The Euro-Mediterranean partnership must contribute to improving the living and working conditions and increasing the employment level of the population in the Mediterranean

partner States, in particular of women and the neediest strata of the population. In this context the partners attach particular importance to the respect and promotion of basic social rights. To that end, actors in social policies will meet periodically at the appropriate level.

Health

The partners agree to concentrate cooperation in this area on:

- * action on raising awareness, information and prevention;
- * development of public health services, in particular health care, primary health centres, maternal; and child health care services, family planning, epidemiological supervision systems and measures to control communicable diseases;
- * training of health and health-administration personnel;
- * medical cooperation in the event of natural disasters.

Migration

Given the importance of the issue of migration for Euro-Mediterranean relations, meetings will be encouraged in order to make proposals concerning migration flows and pressures. These meetings will take account of experience acquired, inter alia, under the MED-Migration programme, particularly as regards improving the living conditions of migrants legally established in the Union.

Terrorism

Drug Trafficking, Organised crime

Fighting terrorism will have to be a priority for all the parties. To that end, officials will meet periodically with the aim of strengthening cooperation among police, judicial and other authorities. In this context, consideration will be given, in particular, to stepping up exchanges of information and improving extradition procedures.

Officials will meet periodically to discuss practical measures which can be taken to improve cooperation among police, judicial, customs, administrative and other authorities in order to

combat, in particular, drug trafficking and organised crime, including smuggling. All these meetings will be organised with due regard for the need for a differentiated approach that takes into account the diversity of the situation in each country. Illegal Immigration.

Officials will meet periodically to discuss practical measures which can be taken to improve cooperation among police, judicial, customs, administrative and other authorities in order to combat illegal immigration.

These meetings will be organized with due regard for the need for a differentiated approach that takes into account the diversity of the situation in each country.

V. Institutional contacts

Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Dialogue

An Inter-Parliamentary Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean was held in Valletta from 1 to 4 November 1995. The European Parliament is invited to take the initiative with other parliaments concerning the future Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Dialogue, which could enable the elected representatives of the partners to exchange ideas on a wide range of issues.

Other institutional contacts

Regular contacts among other European organs, in particular the Economic and Social Committee of the European Community, and their Mediterranean counterparts, would contribute to a better understanding of the major issues relevant in the Euro-Mediterranean partnership.

To this end, the Economic and Social Committee is invited to take the initiative in establishing links with its Mediterranean counterparts and equivalent bodies. In this context, a Euro-Mediterranean meeting of Economic and Social Committees and equivalent bodies will take place in Madrid on 12 and 13 December.