

COVER NOTE

Subject : Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean
Paris, 13 July 2008
- Joint Declaration

Delegations will find attached the following document:

ANNEX I: Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean, Paris, 13 July 2008

Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean
Paris, 13 July 2008

*Under the co-presidency of
the President of the French Republic and the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt*

In the presence of

The EUROPEAN UNION represented by

HE Mr Nicolas SARKOZY

President of the European Council

HE Mr José Manuel BARROSO

President of the European Commission

HE Mr Javier SOLANA

Secretary-General of the Council of the European
Union / High Representative for the Common
Foreign and Security Policy

ALBANIA represented by

HE Mr Sali BERISHA

Prime Minister of the Republic of Albania

ALGERIA represented by

HE Mr Abdelaziz BOUTEFLIKA

President of the People's Democratic Republic of
Algeria

AUSTRIA represented by

HE Mr Alfred GUSENBAUER

Federal Chancellor of Austria

BELGIUM represented by

HE Mr Karel DE GUCHT

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of
Belgium

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA represented by

HE Mr Haris SILAJDŽIĆ

Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and
Herzegovina

BULGARIA represented by

HE Mr Georgi PARVANOV

President of the Republic of Bulgaria

CROATIA represented by

HE Mr Stjepan MESIĆ

President of the Republic of Croatia

CYPRUS represented by

HE Mr Demetris CHRISTOFIAS

President of the Republic of Cyprus

CZECH REPUBLIC represented by

HE Mr Alexandr VONDRA

Deputy Prime Minister for European Affairs of the
Czech Republic

DENMARK represented by

HE Mr Anders FOGH RASMUSSEN

Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Denmark

EGYPT represented by

HE Mr Mohamed Hosni MUBARAK

President of the Arab Republic of Egypt

ESTONIA represented by

HE Mr Andrus ANSIP

Prime Minister of the Republic of Estonia

FINLAND represented by

HE Ms Tarja HALONEN

HE Mr Matti VANHANEN

President of the Republic of Finland

Prime Minister of the Republic of Finland

FRANCE represented by

HE Mr Nicolas SARKOZY

President of the French Republic

GERMANY represented by

HE Mrs Angela MERKEL

Federal Chancellor of the Federal Republic of
Germany

GREECE represented by

HE Mr Kostas KARAMANLIS

Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic

HUNGARY represented by

HE Mr Ferenc GYURCSÁNY

Prime Minister of the Republic of Hungary

IRELAND represented by

HE Mr Brian COWEN

Taoiseach of Ireland

ISRAEL represented by

HE Mr Ehud OLMERT

Prime Minister of the State of Israel

ITALY represented by

HE Mr Silvio BERLUSCONI

President of the Council of Ministers of the Italian
Republic

JORDAN represented by

HE Mr Nader DAHABI

Prime Minister of the Hashemite Kingdom of
Jordan

LATVIA represented by

HE Mr Valdis ZATLERS

President of the Republic of Latvia

LEBANON represented by

HE General Michel SLEIMANE

President of the Lebanese Republic

LITHUANIA represented by

HE Mr Gediminas KIRKILAS

Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania

LUXEMBOURG represented by

HE Mr Jean-Claude JUNCKER

Prime Minister of the Grand Duchy of
Luxembourg

MALTA represented by

HE Mr Lawrence GONZI

Prime Minister of the Republic of Malta

MAURITANIA represented by

HE Mr Sidi Mohamed OULD CHEIKH ABDALLAHI President of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania

MONACO represented by

His Serene Highness ALBERT II

Sovereign Prince of Monaco

MONTENEGRO represented by

HE Mr Milo DJUKANOVIĆ

Prime Minister of Montenegro

MOROCCO represented by

HRH Prince Moulay RACHID

PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY represented by

HE Mr Mahmoud ABBAS

President of the Palestinian Authority

POLAND represented by

HE Mr Lech KACZYŃSKI

President of the Republic of Poland

PORTUGAL represented by

HE Mr José SOCRATES

Prime Minister of the Portuguese Republic

ROMANIA represented by

HE Mr Traian BĂSESCU

President of Romania

SLOVAKIA represented by

HE Mr Robert FICO

Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic

SLOVENIA represented by

HE Mr Janez JANŠA

Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia

SPAIN represented by

HE Mr José Luis RODRÍGUEZ ZAPATERO

Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Spain

SWEDEN represented by

HE Mr Fredrik REINFELDT

Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Sweden

SYRIA represented by

HE Mr Bachar AL-ASSAD

President of the Syrian Arab Republic

THE NETHERLANDS represented by

HE Mr Jan Peter BALKENENDE

Prime Minister of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

TUNISIA represented by

HE Mr Zine EL ABIDINE BEN ALI

President of the Republic of Tunisia

TURKEY represented by

HE Mr Recep Tayyip ERDOGAN

Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey

UNITED KINGDOM represented by

HE Mr Gordon BROWN

Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great
Britain and Northern Ireland

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UNITED NATIONS represented by

Mr BAN KI-MOON

Secretary-General of the United Nations

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT/EMPA represented by

Mr Hans-Gert PÖTTERING

President of the European Parliament and President
of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary
Assembly (EMPA)

COOPERATION COUNCIL FOR THE ARAB STATES OF THE GULF represented by

His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa AL THANI Emir of Qatar; President-in-office of the

Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the
Gulf

LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES represented by

Mr Amr MOUSSA

Secretary-General of the League of Arab States

AFRICAN UNION represented by

Mr Jean PING

Chairperson of the African Union Commission

ARAB MAGHREB UNION represented by

Mr Habib BEN YAHIA

Secretary-General of the Arab Maghreb Union

ORGANISATION OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE represented by

Mr Ekmeleddin IHSANOGLU

Secretary-General of the Organisation of the
Islamic Conference

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AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK represented by

Mr Donald KABERUKA

President of the African Development Bank

EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK represented by

Mr Philippe MAYSTADT

President of the European Investment Bank

WORLD BANK represented by

Mr Juan Jose DABOUB

Director General of the World Bank

* * *

ALLIANCE OF CIVILISATIONS represented by

Mr Jorge SAMPAIO

UN High Representative for the Alliance of
Civilisations

***ANNA LINDH EURO-MEDITERRANEAN FOUNDATION FOR THE DIALOGUE
BETWEEN CULTURES*** represented by

Mr André AZOULAY

President of the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean
Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures

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Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean
Paris, 13 July 2008

Euro-Mediterranean Heads of States and Government meeting in Paris on 13 July 2008, inspired by the shared political will to revitalise efforts to transform the Mediterranean into an area of peace, democracy, cooperation and prosperity, agree to adopt the following joint declaration:

The Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean, building on the Barcelona Declaration and its objectives of achieving peace, stability and security, as well as the acquis of the Barcelona Process, is a multilateral partnership with a view to increasing the potential for regional integration and cohesion. Heads of State and Government also reassert the central importance of the Mediterranean on the political agenda of all countries. They stress the need for better co-ownership by all participants and for more relevance and visibility for the citizens.

They share the conviction that this initiative can play an important role in addressing common challenges facing the Euro-Mediterranean region, such as economic and social development; world food security crisis; degradation of the environment, including climate change and desertification, with the view of promoting sustainable development; energy; migration; terrorism and extremism; as well as promoting dialogue between cultures.

It will encompass all EU Member States and the European Commission, together with the other States (members and observers) of the Barcelona Process. The Arab League shall be invited to the meetings of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean, in pursuance of its participation in the Barcelona Process. Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean welcomes Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Monaco and Montenegro which have accepted the acquis of the Barcelona Process.

A strategic ambition for the Mediterranean

1. Europe and the Mediterranean countries are bound by history, geography and culture. More importantly, they are united by a common ambition: to build together a future of peace, democracy, prosperity and human, social and cultural understanding. To achieve these common objectives participants agree to continue with renewed dynamism the quest for peace and cooperation, to explore their joint problems and transform these good intentions into actions in a renewed partnership for progress.
2. Heads of State and Government underline the important role played by the Barcelona Process since 1995. The Barcelona Process has been the central instrument for Euro-Mediterranean relations. Representing a partnership of 39 governments and over 700 million people, it has provided a framework for continued engagement and development. The Barcelona Process is the only forum within which all Euro-Mediterranean partners exchange views and engage in constructive dialogue. It represents a strong commitment to peace, democracy, regional stability and security through regional cooperation and integration. The Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean aims to build on that consensus to pursue cooperation, political and socio-economic reform and modernisation on the basis of equality and mutual respect for each other's sovereignty.
3. Heads of State and Government underscore the importance of the active participation of civil society, local and regional authorities and the private sector in the implementation of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean.

4. To take advantage of the opportunities offered by an enhanced framework of multilateral cooperation, Heads of State and Government decide to launch a reinforced partnership - The Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean.
5. This initiative is also the expression of a common aspiration to achieve peace as well as regional security according to the Barcelona Declaration of 1995, which, inter alia, promotes regional security by acting 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.

6. It shows the determination to favour human resource development and employment in line with the Millennium Development Goals, including alleviating poverty. Heads of State and Government underline their commitment to strengthen democracy and political pluralism by the expansion of participation in political life and the embracing of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. They also affirm their ambition to build a common future based on the full respect of democratic principles, human rights and fundamental freedoms, as enshrined in international human rights law, such as the promotion of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights, strengthening the role of women in society, the respect of minorities, the fight against racism and xenophobia and the advancement of cultural dialogue and mutual understanding.
7. Heads of State and Government reaffirm their support for the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process, as referred to in the Lisbon Euromed Ministerial Meeting (November 2007) and according to the Annapolis process. They recall that peace in the Middle East requires a comprehensive solution and in this regard welcome the announcement that Syria and Israel have initiated indirect peace talks under the auspices of Turkey, in accordance with the Madrid conference terms of reference for peace.
8. Heads of State and Government reiterate their condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and their determination to eradicate it and to combat its sponsors and they reaffirm their commitment to fully implement the Code of Conduct on Countering Terrorism in order to enhance the security of all citizens within a framework that ensures respect of the rule of law and human rights, particularly through more effective counter-terrorism policies and deeper co-operation to dismantle all terrorist activities, to protect potential targets and to manage the consequences of attacks. They emphasise the need to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations without qualification, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes.

They also reiterate the complete rejection of attempts to associate any religion or culture with terrorism and confirm their commitment to do their utmost effort with a view to resolving conflict, ending occupation, confronting oppression, reducing poverty, promoting human rights and good governance, improving intercultural understanding and ensuring respect for all religions and beliefs. Such actions serve directly the interests of the people of the Euro-Med region and work against the interests of the terrorists and the networks.

Scope and main objectives

9. Heads of State and Government agree that the challenge of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean is to enhance multilateral relations, increase co-ownership of the process, set governance on the basis of equal footing and translate it into concrete projects, more visible to citizens. Now is the time to inject a new and continuing momentum into the Barcelona Process. More engagement and new catalysts are now needed to translate the objectives of the Barcelona Declaration into tangible results.
10. The Euro-Mediterranean partnership continues to be an inclusive process driven in all its aspects by the principle of consensus, for which the modalities in terms of projects will be decided by the next Foreign Affairs Ministerial meeting in November 2008.

11. The Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean will build on the acquis and reinforce the achievements and successful elements of the Barcelona Process. The Barcelona Declaration, its goals and its cooperation areas remain valid and its three chapters of cooperation (Political Dialogue, Economic Cooperation and Free Trade, and Human, Social and Cultural Dialogue) will continue to remain central in Euro-Mediterranean relations. The Five-Year Work Programme adopted by the 10th Anniversary Euro-Mediterranean Summit held in Barcelona in 2005 (including the fourth chapter of cooperation on "Migration, Social Integration, Justice and Security" introduced at that stage) and the conclusions of all ministerial meetings will remain in force. Heads of State and Government acknowledge the progress and economic benefits of the creation of a deep Free Trade Area in the Euromed region by 2010 and beyond, and the strengthening of regional economic integration in all its dimensions. They support the main lines of the Euromed Trade Roadmap till 2010 and beyond, and, in particular, to study the establishment of a smooth, efficient and business-friendly trade facilitation mechanism which would bring further transparency and trade and investment opportunities.
12. Heads of State and Government underline that the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean aims to achieve a future of peace and shared prosperity in the entire region by implementing projects that will enhance the flow of exchanges among the people of the whole region. In this regard they acknowledge the human and cultural dimension of this initiative. They underline the commitment to facilitate legal movement of individuals. They stress that promoting orderly managed legal migration in the interest of all parties concerned, fighting illegal migration and fostering links between migration and development are issues of common interest which should be addressed through a comprehensive, balanced and integrated approach.

13. The Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean will be complementary to EU bilateral relations with these countries¹ which will continue under existing policy frameworks such as the Association Agreements, the European Neighbourhood Policy action plans, and, in the case of Mauritania, the African Caribbean Pacific framework. It will also be coherent and complementary with the Joint Africa-EU Strategy. While complementing activities concerning its regional dimension, the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean will be independent from the EU enlargement policy, accession negotiations and the pre-accession process.
14. The Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean gives a new impulse to the Barcelona Process in at least three very important ways:
- by upgrading the political level of the EU's relationship with its Mediterranean partners;
 - by providing for further co-ownership to our multilateral relations; and
 - by making these relations more concrete and visible through additional regional and sub-regional projects, relevant for the citizens of the region.

¹ The countries concerned are: Algeria; Egypt; Israel; Jordan; Lebanon; Mauritania; Monaco; Morocco; Palestinian Authority; Syria; Tunisia. Croatia and Turkey, negotiating candidate countries to the EU. Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro, potential candidates to the EU. Libya, invited by the Presidency since the Euromed Stuttgart ministerial meeting of 1999.

Upgrading of relations

15. Heads of State and Government agree to hold biennial summits. The summits should result in a political declaration and a short list of concrete regional projects to be set in motion. The conclusions should endorse a broad two-year work programme for the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean. Annual Foreign Affairs Ministerial meetings will review progress in the implementation of the summit conclusions and prepare the next summit meetings and, if necessary, approve new projects.
16. The summit meetings should take place alternately in the EU and in Mediterranean partner countries. The host country should be selected by consensus. All countries party to the initiative will be invited to Summits, Ministerials and other plenary meetings of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean.
17. The Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly will be the legitimate parliamentary expression of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean. Heads of State and Government strongly support the strengthening of the role of the EMPA in its relations with Mediterranean partners.
18. The Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures as a Euro-Mediterranean institution will contribute in an effective manner to the cultural dimension of the initiative in cooperation with the UN Alliance of Civilizations.

Increased co-ownership and institutional governance

19. Heads of State and Government agree on the creation of a co-presidency and also decide that a joint secretariat will be established. Participation in the co-presidencies and the secretariat will be open to all members of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean.
20. The current structures of the Barcelona Process should be preserved and adapted when new modalities are approved by the Euro-Mediterranean Foreign Affairs Ministers.

Co-Presidency

21. Heads of State and Government establish a co-presidency in order to improve the balance and the joint ownership of their cooperation. One of the co-presidents will be from the EU and the other from the Mediterranean partner countries. The co-presidency shall apply to Summits, all Ministerial meetings, Senior Officials meetings, the Joint Permanent Committee and, when possible, experts/ad hoc meetings within the initiative.
22. The establishment of a co-presidency
 - from the EU side must be compatible with the external representation of the European Union in accordance with the Treaty provisions in force;
 - from the Mediterranean side, the co-president must be chosen by consensus for a non-renewable period of two years.

Institutional governance and Secretariat

23. Heads of State and Government agree to establish new institutional structures which will contribute to achieving the political goals of this initiative, especially reinforcing co-ownership, upgrading the political level of EU-Mediterranean relations and achieving visibility through projects.
24. They agree that a joint **Secretariat** for the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean will be established, with a key role within the institutional architecture. The Secretariat will give a new impulse to this process in terms of identification, follow-up, promotion of the projects and the search for partners. The funding and implementation of projects will be pursued on a case by case basis. The Secretariat will work in operational liaison with all structures of the process, including by preparing working documents for the decision-making bodies. The Secretariat would have a separate legal personality with an autonomous status.
25. The mandate of the Secretariat is of a technical nature while the political mandate related to all aspects of the initiative remains the responsibility of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Senior Officials.
26. The **Joint Permanent Committee** based in Brussels will assist and prepare the meetings of the Senior Officials and ensure the appropriate follow-up; it may also act as a mechanism to react rapidly if an exceptional situation arises in the region that requires the consultation of Euro-Mediterranean partners.

27. The **Senior Officials** will continue to convene regularly in order to prepare the Ministerial meetings, including projects to be endorsed, take stock of and evaluate the progress of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean in all its components and submit the annual work programme to Ministers of Foreign Affairs.
28. **Details of the mandate** of the new institutional structure, the functioning of the co-presidency, as well as the composition, seat and funding of the Secretariat will be decided on the basis of consensus by the Foreign Affairs Ministers in November 2008, taking into account thorough discussions and proposals submitted by all partners.

Projects

29. The project selection process will be in conformity with the Barcelona Declaration objectives notably achieving peace, security and stability. The partners will set up a favourable environment for the implementation of projects taking into account the regional, sub-regional and trans-national character of proposed projects as well as their size, relevance and interest for the parties involved, in line with the scope and main objectives of the initiative. The potential to promote balanced and sustainable development, regional and sub-regional integration, cohesion and interconnections will be considered and their financial feasibility including the maximization of private sector financing and participation will be sought. Senior Officials will prepare the criteria for the selection of projects to be approved by Foreign Ministers.

30. Heads of State and Government underscore the potential offered by the reinforced cooperation through the principle of variable geometry projects in line with the scope and main aims of the initiative. Such an approach will enable member countries with affinities, shared objectives and complementarities to give momentum to the process and reach the goals of the Barcelona Declaration.

Funding

31. The Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean will mobilise additional funding for the region, mainly through regional and subregional projects. Its capacity to attract more financial resources for regional projects, with a high degree of donor coordination, will constitute its added value mainly through the following sources, inter alia: private sector participation; contributions from the EU budget and all partners; contributions from other countries, international financial institutions and regional entities; the Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership Facility (FEMIP); the ENPI Euro-Med envelope, the Neighbourhood Investment Facility and the cross-border cooperation instrument within the ENPI, as well as the other instruments applicable to the countries covered by the initiative, for which the usual selection and procedural rules will continue to apply.

Concluding points

32. The Participants stress that the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean is an historic opportunity to revitalise the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership Process and upgrade it to a new level. The ultimate success of the initiative also rests in the hands of citizens, civil society and the active involvement of the private sector.

33. Heads of State and Government invite Ministers of Foreign Affairs to finalise, during their next meeting in November, the modalities for the institutional set-up of the initiative. The new structures for the initiative should be fully operational before the end of 2008. All participating countries and the European Commission will work in close coordination to achieve this objective.

ANNEX

The future of the Euro-Mediterranean region lies in improved socio-economic development, solidarity, regional integration, sustainable development and knowledge. There is a need to increase co-operation in areas such as business development, trade, the environment, energy, water management, agriculture, food safety and security, transport, maritime issues, education, vocational training, science and technology, culture, media, justice and law, security, migration, health, strengthening the role of women in society, civil protection, tourism, urban planning, ports, decentralised co-operation, the information society and competitive clusters.

In addition, they stress the importance of strengthening food security, especially taking into account the consequences of climate change on food crops within the context of sustainable development policies.

The importance of water is acknowledged: the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference in Jordan in October 2008 will define a Mediterranean water strategy, promoting conservation of water resources, diversifying water provision resources and efficient and sustainable use of water.

The priorities set out in the Regional Indicative Programme for the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, as well as those of future programmes, will continue to apply and any potential Community contribution to the new regional projects listed below will not be financed at the expense of the existing bilateral allocations under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument or the Pre-accession Instrument (or in the case of Mauritania the European Development Fund).

It is crucial to translate the goals set by the Barcelona Declaration of 1995 and the work programme of 2005 into major regional concrete projects. As a first stage, it is decided to launch a number of key initiatives, listed hereafter, which the future Secretariat is mandated to detail.

De-pollution of the Mediterranean: The Mediterranean is resonant with culture and history. But it is much more than a symbol or an icon for the region. It also provides employment and pleasure for its people. However, its environmental quality has suffered serious degradation in recent times. Building on the Horizon 2020 programme, the de-pollution of the Mediterranean, including coastal and protected marine areas, particularly in the water and waste sector, will therefore be of major benefit for the lives and livelihoods of its people.

Maritime and Land Highways: The Mediterranean is a sea that joins, not separates, its people. It is also a highway for commerce. Easy and safe access and flow of goods and people, on land and sea, is essential for maintaining relations and enhancing regional trade. The development of motorways of the sea, including the connection of ports, throughout the entire Mediterranean basin as well as the creation of coastal motorways and the modernisation of the trans-Maghreb train, will increase the flow and freedom of the movement of people and goods. Particular attention should be devoted to cooperation in the field of maritime security and safety, in a perspective of global integration in the Mediterranean region.

Civil Protection: The global landscape is littered with examples of the devastation caused by man-made and natural disasters. The effects of climate change are evident for all. The Mediterranean region is particularly vulnerable and exposed to such disasters. A joint Civil Protection programme on prevention, preparation and response to disasters, linking the region more closely to the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, is, therefore, one of the main priorities for the region.

Alternative Energies: Mediterranean Solar Plan: The recent activity on energy markets in terms of both supply and demand, confirms the need to focus on alternative energy sources. Market deployment as well as research and development of all alternative sources of energy are therefore a major priority in efforts towards assuring sustainable development. The Secretariat is tasked to explore the feasibility, development and creation of a Mediterranean Solar Plan.

Higher Education and Research, Euro-Mediterranean University: A Euro-Mediterranean University (with its seat in Slovenia) can contribute to the understanding among people and encourage cooperation in higher education, following up on the objectives of the Catania Process and of the First Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Higher Education and Scientific Research (Cairo, June 2007). Through a cooperation network of partner institutions and existing universities from the Euro-Med region, the Euro-Mediterranean University will develop postgraduate and research programmes and thus contribute to the establishment of the Euro-Mediterranean Higher Education, Science and Research Area. Partner countries are encouraged to make full use of possibilities offered by existing higher education cooperation programmes such as Tempus and Erasmus Mundus, including the External Cooperation Window. Particular attention should be paid to enhancing quality and to ensuring the relevance of vocational training to labour market needs.

The Mediterranean Business Development Initiative is aimed at assisting the existing entities in partner countries operating in support of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises by assessing the needs of these enterprises, defining policy solutions and providing these entities with resources in the form of technical assistance and financial instruments. It will be based on the principle of co-ownership and its activities are expected to be complementary to those of the existing entities working in the field. Contributions by countries from both rims of the Mediterranean will be done on a voluntary basis.

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