NOTE

from: General Secretariat

to: Council

Subject: Union for the Mediterranean: Ministerial Conference on 15 and 16 June 2010, Cairo, Egypt
– Information from the French delegation

Delegations will find attached (in Annex) a note submitted by the French delegation, to be presented under "Other Business" at the Council (Agriculture and Fisheries) on 29 March 2010.
At the Paris Summit of 13 July 2008 which set up the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), the 43 Heads of State and Government identified food security as one of the major challenges facing the Euro-Mediterranean region and stressed the strategic importance of agriculture, from an economic, social, health, cultural and environmental point of view.

With this in mind, at Egypt's invitation a ministerial conference will be held on 15 and 16 June 2010 in Cairo to discuss agriculture, rural development and food security.

This meeting should focus on six priorities: food security in the Mediterranean, market regulation, agricultural research, sustainable rural development; health and plant health issues, increased investment in agriculture, and agricultural product quality policy.

The aim of the meeting is to adopt a charter on food security, define priority actions and decide on the working methods and timetable, determine the Secretariat's mandate, mobilise the various actors and the providers of funds and make an initial inventory of the projects already developed.

France considers that this should be regarded as a meeting to launch a long-term process.

In view of the strategic importance of these topics for the future of Euromed, it is vital that this first UfM ministerial conference be a success, with wide ministerial participation, and that it lead to concrete, visible action of relevance to the daily lives of the people of the Mediterranean.