



**EURO-MEDITERRANEAN
PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY**



Brussels, 16 March 2009

RECOMMENDATION

of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly

**Tabled on behalf of the Committee on Improving Quality of Life, Exchanges
between Civil Societies and Culture**

by Mr Alberto Antunes, Chair of the Committee,

based on the proposals presented by the rapporteurs:

Mr Jean-Claude Guibal (National Assembly, France) and
Mr Ioannis Varvitsiotis (European Parliament)

**on "intercultural dialogue as a platform for common understanding in the
Mediterranean: the role of civil society"**

Mrs. Béatrice Patrie (European Parliament) and
Mr Christos Verelis (Hellenic Parliament)

on "migratory flows as a vehicle for regional development"

The Committee on Improving Quality of Life, Exchanges between Civil Societies and Culture of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly,

- having regard to the Barcelona Declaration of 18 November 1995, which establishes the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, whilst recognising the promotion of greater understanding between cultures as one of its essential aspects;
- having regard to the Action Programme for the Dialogue between Cultures and Civilisations, adopted by the Euro-Mediterranean Ministers of Foreign Affairs (Valencia, April 2002; Crete 2003).
- having regard to the Five-Year Work Programme of the Barcelona Summit (28 November 2005) calling for enhanced cooperation in the fields of migration, social integration, justice and security;
- having regard to the conclusions of the eighth and ninth Euro-Mediterranean conferences of Foreign Affairs Ministers (Tampere, 27-28 November 2006 and Lisbon, 5-6 November 2007) and having regard also to the need to strengthen the management of migratory flows in a comprehensive, integrated and balanced manner which benefits the peoples of Euro-Mediterranean peoples;
- having regard to the conclusions of the first Euro-Mediterranean ministerial conference on migration (Albufeira, 18-19 November 2007) committing ministers to taking specific and appropriate measures in the fields of regular migration, migration and development and irregular migration;
- having regard to the Final Declaration of the fourth EMPA plenary session adopted on 28 March 2008 in Athens;
- having regard to the conclusions of the third Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers of Culture held in Athens on 29-30 May 2008, which calls for the drawing-up of a Euro-Mediterranean Cultural Strategy;
- having regard to the Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit of 13 July 2008;
- having regard to the outcomes of the final declaration issued by Euro-Mediterranean Ministers of foreign affairs, meeting in Marseille on 3rd and 4th November 2008, which declared that “*the ministers underline that the position of the EMPA should be strengthened and its work better coordinated with that of other institutions in the partnership*”,

as regards intercultural dialogue as a platform for common understanding in the Mediterranean: the role of civil society:

a. whereas intercultural dialogue requires strategies for open and mutually respectful exchanges between individuals, groups and organisations of different cultural backgrounds or opinions, through an interactive process involving all partners on an equal basis;

b. whereas the combat against prejudices opens up new possibilities of thinking and behaving, and whereas education increases the ability to call into question established means of mutual comprehension and existing preconceptions;

c. whereas civil actions and the involvement of local communities are instrumental in the development of intercultural dialogue and should be promoted at all levels;

d. whereas the Euro-Mediterranean intercultural dialogue can contribute in a decisive manner to meeting the three challenges which must be faced together by all members of the partnership: the challenge of bridging the gulf between the elite and the people and new relations between the governing and the governed brought about by new technologies; the challenge of sharing common values and accepting differences within the Euro-Mediterranean area; and the challenge of new stakes in world competition.

1. Emphasises the important role played by EMPA, which is the only parliamentary assembly enabling dialogue and cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean area, and expresses its determination to contribute to this endeavour;

2. Calls on the Member States of the Union for the Mediterranean to step up their efforts in exploring different platforms in the field of social engagement and supports the exchange of ideas and best practices;

3. Approves the direction and priorities given to Euro-Mediterranean cultural strategy, and requests the rapid implementation of the Euro-Mediterranean cultural strategy and its monitoring by a group of Euro-Mediterranean experts on culture, in order that the next meeting of ministers of culture in the first half of 2010 may evaluate initial results;

4. Asks that EMPA be represented, as an observer, with the right to speak but with no right to vote, on the one hand at the Anna Lindh Foundation's Board of Governors by three members designated from within the Commission of Culture, including its chairman, in compliance with the recommendation adopted by the EPMA in March 2006 in Brussels, and on the other hand at the next meeting of ministers of culture in 2010;

5. Emphasises that policy co-ownership instituted by the Union for the Mediterranean concerns citizens as much as it does governments and that particular care should be taken not to marginalise civil societies in the development, implementation and monitoring of projects; wishes that the flexibility of this approach, in particular the development of projects of variable geometry and both public and private financing, be fully used for the initiative concerning further education and research and that it be extended in the future to other cultural domains.

6. Calls on the Member States of the Union of the Mediterranean to host and support the academic activities of the EuroMed University (EMUNI), thus enhancing the mobility of scholars and ideas throughout the region;

7. Supports the participation of the Member States of the Union for the Mediterranean in the European Union's regional programmes and corresponding policies on the basis of priorities and objectives set by mutual agreement; points out the importance of extending and intensifying the scope of Community programmes to develop the participation of partner

countries, not least in the fields of education, research and professional training (student exchanges, etc.);

8. Approves the Anna Lindh Foundation's new strategy proposed by Chairman André Azoulay and Executive Director Andreu Claret, which is promising in its principle and whose success depends on how it is implemented, subject to the following observations: the choice of flagship projects in each of the six strategic domains should be made in collaboration with the heads of networks and the advisory body according to a truly open and transparent procedure; the increase in the Foundation's budget to 14 million Euros for the cycle 2009-2011 consolidates the Foundation's position, but it does not fill the gap between its ambitions and its means; the networks should gradually designate their members and heads of network more independently from their governments, so that the convening of the first general State Networks in 2010 will enable them to fully contribute to the Foundation's ambition of becoming a place of reflection and expertise for the human and cultural dimension of the partnership; the creation of an Observatory for Intercultural Trends in the Euro-Med area should be implemented in a transparent and plural manner and should draw on university networks and centres of reflection that already deal with these issues;

9. Urges Member States of the Union for the Mediterranean to encourage the participation of national networks of civil society organisations in the Anna Lindh Foundation network and to support projects and initiatives that promote intercultural dialogue and stimulate intellectual, cultural and civil society exchanges; supports the organisation of regular meetings between leading networks of the Anna Lindh Foundation and the EMPA Culture Committee; calls for the intensification of the teacher training programme of the Anna Lindh Foundation, which provides teachers with the pedagogical skills and materials on cultural and religious diversity.

10. Requests that the reconstruction plan for Gaza financially supported by donor countries include a cultural part allowing the essential and immediate needs of youth to be met, especially with the exceptional assistance of the Anna Lindh Foundation network, and supports all the combined efforts to bring about the political conditions for the opening of crossing points and for peace.

on migratory flows as a vehicle for regional development:

e. whereas the possibility of a 'large-scale migration' from South to North is totally unrealistic, and migration plays a positive role in maintaining the birth rate in Europe, since 8% of children born in the European Union are born to foreign mothers, which is not, however, sufficient to check the decline in population in northern countries owing to the ageing of the population of Europe;

f. whereas there is every likelihood that emigration from countries on the southern shores of the Mediterranean will continue, or even increase, in the next ten years, since labour will continue to be available there and, unless there is a severe recession, Europe will continue to develop as a magnet for this labour;

g. whereas, over the last few years, subsistence migration has come essentially from the countries of the Sahel and sub-Saharan Africa, and whereas Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and Mauritania are now transit countries for migrants from south of the Sahara; whereas Lebanon, Syria and Turkey play this role for migrants from the Middle East or Central Asia, while

Egypt for the same reasons receives many Sudanese, Somali and Ethiopian emigrants and migrants from the Horn of Africa transit through Yemen on their way to the Gulf States;

h. whereas the reality of emigration viewed as a one-way phenomenon and the issues involved in terms of integration in the host countries (family reunification, the granting of social rights...) remain, but account must also be taken of the more recent reality of circular migration, linked to the increase in the level of education in the countries of origin, combined with the decline in population and the fall in transport costs,

11. Affirms the importance of a Euro-Mediterranean economic migration policy, in particular within the framework of the Union for the Mediterranean, and encourages the European Union and its Member States to play their part in the management of illegal immigration while opening up new legal channels of economic migration by adopting a comprehensive approach which is not limited only to flows from the southern to the northern shores of the Mediterranean and does not amount merely to a system of sub-contracting the management of migratory pressures;

12. Recalls that the ultimate purpose of a concerted migratory policy is to 'manage' flows in keeping as far as possible with the economic needs of the host countries, in close cooperation with the countries of origin and transit and that the adoption of detailed information arrangements is therefore a priority; stresses that, in this connection, the EURES network which coordinates the public employment services of the Member States of the European Union is an interesting starting point, but that agreement should also be reached on the criteria and detailed rules governing the admission of workers from third countries;

13. Recalls the essential contribution made by migration to the construction of host countries, for instance Algeria's contribution to the construction of the French State;

14. stresses the importance of supporting the economies of southern countries in order to help them tackle the consequences, in particular in terms of emigration, of the global financial crisis;

15. Notes that the European Union which is taking measures to improve the management of legal migration has also shown great ineffectiveness in controlling Europe's borders; recalls the absolute necessity for Euromed Partnership countries of acquiring instruments in line with international arrangements;

16. Takes the view that the policy of discouraging transit countries used by illegal immigrants on their way to the Member States of the European Union from adopting such attitudes must be reviewed and that it should be accompanied by new activities on the basis of a European Union initiative in respect of all the relevant international organisations;

17. Foresees that the spectre of the international crisis will inevitably lead to a significant increase in the pressure of immigration and illegal migration, since the conditions of life in developing countries are set to deteriorate; points, for example, to the illegal migrants currently trying to cross Greece or remain in that country, whose numbers could soon increase owing to the economic crisis;

18. Stresses that the countries of origin and host countries have a common interest in fostering the establishment of firms carrying out independent projects by establishing the conditions for

their admission to a host country (submission of a detailed business project, a funding plan, beneficial consequences in terms of jobs for the European country in question);

19. Emphasizes the beneficial nature of circular migration, in particular for the countries of origin which are rightly afraid of a 'brain drain', and calls for a Euro-Mediterranean policy to facilitate this mobility between the two shores of the Mediterranean, both at a human level and as regards capital flows; stresses that the transfer of emigrants' savings constitutes a major stake in the economic development of the countries of origin and a new manner of envisaging Euro-Mediterranean relations, providing obstacles to investment are overcome (lack of investment opportunities, of support for adequate savings and of confidence) and the countries of origin are helped to retain these savings and to promote their transformation into job creation;

20. Supports the proposal to create a Mediterranean Bank responsible in particular for facilitating the accumulation of savings through simple financial products (such as cash savings books, health savings books, pensions, housing and investments) and for ensuring the security of management, of conservation and above all the productive reemployment of these savings; stresses the importance of such a benchmark financial institution which would rapidly become a powerful lever for the creation of an area of common prosperity;