



Conclusions of the

3rd Meeting of the Circle of Mediterranean Parliamentarians for Sustainable Development (COMPSUD)

and

3rd Regional dialogue of Parliamentarians, NGOs and other stakeholders on the Protection of the Environment and prospects for the Sustainable Development of the Region

1. The 3rd Meeting of the Circle of Mediterranean Parliamentarians for Sustainable Development (COMPSUD) and the 3rd Regional Dialogue of Parliamentarians, NGOs and other Stakeholders on the Protection of the Environment and Prospects for the Sustainable Development of the region were organized on 12 and 13 October 2004 in Istanbul, Turkey (Kadir Has University).

2. The meetings were attended by 18 Members of National Parliaments and politicians of 12 Mediterranean countries (EU and non-EU), 29 NGO representatives from 15 Mediterranean countries and by 7 Journalists from 7 Mediterranean countries.

The new Core Group (Board) of COMPSUD was elected for a period of two years and has as follows: HE Mr. N. Georgiadis (Greece) and HE Prof. Dr. H. Rezkanna (Egypt) as Chair and Co-Chair respectively, while the new members of the Core Group are HE Dr. Y. Abu-Safieh (Palestine), HE Mr. A. Zaidi (Morocco), HE Mr. K. Al-Rassi (Lebanon) and HE Mr. Yasar Yakis (Turkey).

3. MPs and NGOs acknowledged the on-going efforts, initiatives and advances in the protection of the environment and the promotion of sustainable development in the region and their respective countries. However, it was also recognized that degradation of environment and biodiversity, many kinds of pollution, as well as poverty and lack of peace, which are not irrelevant with the state and sharing of natural resources, still constitute major problems for the Mediterranean.

4. This is the reason why the work of COMPSUD and the Regional Dialogue of Parliamentarians, NGOs and other Stakeholders on the Protection of the Mediterranean Environment and Prospects for the Sustainable Development of the region, inaugurated 2 years ago, are still important and perhaps even more necessary today than before. In other words, it was agreed to maintain and enhance the dialogue among MPs and Civil Society, particularly for regional issues. However, if we want to witness tangible progress, such dialogues should be expanded also at national and even at local level.

The latter is the responsibility of MPs, NGOs and other actors in each country and MIO-ECSDE and GWP-Med are willing to support and facilitate this process to the extend possible.

5. In order to enhance the efficacy of the COMPSUD intervention it is necessary also to raise its profile and visibility. It was proposed to address the Speakers of the Parliaments and inform them of COMPSUD and its dialogues in order to gain the maximum possible support and willingness to get involved.

6. Among the instruments that might help MPs and NGOs in this endeavor, at national and regional level, are:

- information on the existence of National Commissions on Sustainable Development and their functioning

- survey of good examples concerning the organization of dialogues in the various countries

The participants committed themselves to collect this information in their respective countries and communicate it to the Secretariat. Once the information is processed it will become available in the form of a booklet or CD-Rom to be used for sensitization of others in the region.

7. Recommendations were also formulated in order to make more effective the political intervention of COMPSUD and of the Dialogue in major on-going processes (see Appendix I).

8. The Dialogue agreed on a resolution addressing specifically one of these process, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (see Appendix II). The Chairman and the Secretariat were authorised to make all the necessary actions for their presentation to the relevant bodies.

9. It was also suggested to support the process towards the promotion of Sustainable development in the region through:

- the facilitation of access of Journalists and other interested Parties to information about environmental and sustainable development issues in the Mediterranean
- further capacity building at all levels and promotion of improved methodologies

To this purpose MIO-ECSDE is willing to make the necessary links in its web page with a series of appropriate bodies that collect and treat information.

10. It was recognized that the increased awareness on Mediterranean issues relating to environment and sustainable development is related not only to journalists but also -and perhaps more- to owners of the media and editors, who have other criteria, mostly commercial and political, in selecting and presenting information. Market forces are always important. However, in order to be used in a productive way sound legal frameworks must be in place. COMPSUD will try to promote cooperation with journalists and media and contribute in setting up the necessary legal suitable framework.

11. It was decided that MPs will be assisted whenever possible directly and indirectly in their training, awareness raising and development through the facilitation of National Dialogues.

Furthermore coordinated efforts by MPs assisted by COMPSUD in the areas of education and legislation are also needed so that the concept of Sustainable

Development and of responsible citizenship can be integrated and promoted at national level.

12. Concerning the organization of the next (4th) COMPSUD meeting it will be organized in Lebanon, by invitation of the National Parliament of Lebanon, while there was an invitation to organize the 5th COMPSUD in Israel in the year 2006, a proposal which has been accepted in principle.

Appendix I

Decisions of COMPSUD and Recommendations of the Dialogue

In order to make more effective the political interventions of the COMPSUD and of the members of the Dialogue in the various on-going processes in the Mediterranean it is recommended to:

1) Prepare in the immediate future a joint position paper and submit to UNEP/MAP within the framework of the drafting of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD).

2) Intervene at Euro-Mediterranean level (Barcelona Process) in order to ensure that the MSSD is considered in sectoral decisions (agriculture, energy, etc.) of the Partnership. To this purpose it is foreseen to intervene during up-coming relevant events/meetings such as:

- a) The mid-term Council of Foreign Ministers of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership taking place next 29 and 30 November in the Netherlands
- b) The Barcelona VII Meeting of the EMP Foreign Affairs Ministers that will take place next May 2005 in Luxemburg.

3) Link to the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and the UNECE Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). COMPSUD will participate in the scheduled by MIO-ECSDE and others regional (Mediterranean) meetings on ESD. This intention will be presented in Geneva on October 14th during the meeting of UNECE and any other relevant fora.

Political interventions of this kind are essential if Sustainable Development concepts are to be integrated in existing regional processes and be promoted at national level. The experience shows that policy for environment and sustainability can be promoted more easily at national level through 'environmental solidarity' mechanisms, i.e. through good practices promoted from the regional or sub-regional level towards the national and local levels.

Appendix II

The Resolution of the Dialogue addressed to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership in view of their meetings:

- a) *The mid-term meeting taking place in The Hague on 29-30 November 2004*
- b) *The Euro-Med Foreign Ministers Meeting Barcelona VII in Luxemburg planned in May 2005*

The Dialogue urges the Foreign Ministers of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership to clearly express their endorsement of the Millennium Development Goals and the forthcoming Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development within the conclusions of their mid-term meeting in the Netherlands and of Barcelona VII in May 2005.

The Dialogue urges the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership to launch at Barcelona VII a supportive regional framework to facilitate and enable fulfillment at national level of the Millennium Development Goals and to formally commit to the rapid and complete eradication of poverty afflicting 100 million citizens of the South Partners.

The Dialogue considers that this unique North-South Partnership must present a strong regional commitment to poverty eradication and Sustainable Development at the Special Session of the UN General Assembly in September 2005 which will review progress on the Millennium Development Goals.