



Conclusions of the 4th Meeting of the Circle of Mediterranean Parliamentarians for Sustainable Development (COMPSUD)

Opening of the Meeting

- 1. The 4th Meeting of the Circle of Mediterranean Parliamentarians for Sustainable Development (COMPSUD) took place at the UN ESCWA Headquarters in Beirut, Lebanon, on 15 November 2005. The meeting, organised in the framework of the Beirut Water Week (14-17 November 2005), was attended by twenty three (23) Members of National Parliaments and Politicians from ten (10) different Mediterranean countries (EU and non-EU)**
- 2. The meeting was chaired by the COMPSUD Chairman, Mr. Nikos Georgiadis and facilitated by the Secretariat, supported by MIO-ECSDE and GWP-Med.**
- 3. Mr. Naser Nassrallah Member of the Lebanese Parliament participated in the meeting also in his role of representative of the President of the Lebanese Parliament, Mr. Nabih Berri.**
- 4. The meeting also benefited from the participation of Mr. Emilio Gabbrielli, Executive Secretary of the Global Water Partnership (GWP) and of Ms. Elisabeth Catton, representative of the World Water Council (WWC).**

The role of COMPSUD

- 5. The significant role of COMPSUD in promoting a coordinated intervention of elected representatives and politicians in Sustainable Development issues critical for the region was acknowledged, also in light of COMPSUD's recent efforts to influence major on-going regional processes, such as the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the drafting process of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD).**
- 6. COMPSUD is, moreover, the only corresponding Parliamentary body linked to the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSDD) as well as the only Parliamentary body addressing the entire Mediterranean region (Europe, Balkans, Middle East and North Africa). The**





Euromed Parliamentary Assembly involves Parliamentarians of the countries of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

The role of COMPSUD's Dialogue

7. The importance of national, sub-regional and regional Dialogues focused on specific issues of concern and involving the participation of MPs, NGOs, journalists and other stakeholders - a practice developed in the framework of COMPSUD - was briefly evaluated by participants and it was confirmed as of critical importance.

8. Ms. Antigone Papadopoulou, Member of the Parliament of Cyprus, Vice-President of the Economic Committee of the Council of Europe (CoE) and COMPSUD Member proposed that COMPSUD be invited in one of the future meetings of the CoE's relevant Committees in order to raise its visibility and share with them its relevant experience on the region.

COMPSUD was also invited by the Croatian delegation to make a presentation of its initiatives at the Croatian Parliament. Several COMPSUD Members expressed similar wishes.

9. In order to improve the exchange of experiences and good practices developed in the framework of the Dialogues, especially the National ones (such the one organised in Beirut), but also in order to add political weight and prestige of the national efforts it was proposed to secure the participation of stakeholders from other countries in National Dialogues, wherever this is possible in financial terms.

10. This could be the case, for example, of the National Dialogues developed in the framework of the Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative (MED EUWI) that will be organized in many countries of the region in the near future.

11. The wish to promote a sub-regional Dialogue initiative for the Adriatic was also expressed and the COMPSUD Members of the sub-region will do their best to facilitate the raising of the necessary funds for its realization.

12. The cross fertilization between Parliamentarians and NGOs promoted in the framework of COMPSUD was again recognized as substantial. In fact this secures, on the one hand, that Parliamentarians get the scientific and technical background about the issues they are dealing with as well as an objective understanding of the society's needs and, on the other hand, that the insight





of Parliamentarians as legislators and “decision makers” is deposited and could be followed up even if their office in Parliament expire.

Therefore, it was proposed that a Declaration be drafted and sent to the Speakers of Parliaments, Assemblies etc. in order to highlight the significance of guaranteeing cooperation and exchange among elected people and the organized civil society.

COMPSUD’s interest in Water Issues and involvement in the 4th World Water Forum (WWF 4)

13. It is a shared opinion of COMPSUD’s members that water issues need to be approached from an ethical and humanist perspective as a priority even more than as a political issue and that they have to promote the right of access to adequate quantity of clean water as a human right.

14. COMPSUD shall coordinate closely with other Parliamentary Bodies attentive to this issue, such as the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, so that the access to an adequate quantity of clean water for all be strongly reiterated as a fundamental human right and be possibly included in the relevant existing Human Rights Charters.

15. Ms. Elsa Papadimitriou, Member of the Hellenic Parliament, Vice-President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and founding member of COMPSUD is willing to facilitate the links between CoE and COMPSUD, particularly in view of the forthcoming 4th World Water Forum (WWF 4, Mexico, 16-22 March 2006) during which the issue of ‘water as a human right’ will be brought again in the forefront.

16. To this respect COMPSUD will:

- Contribute to the preparation of a document dealing with this issue and drafted by Ms. Elsa Papadimitriou in the framework of the Council of Europe’s activities that will be presented in Mexico during the WWF 4.
- Draft a short Statement/Declaration (N. 1) on Water as a Human Right that will also be presented in WWF 4.

17. Concerning its participation in WWF 4 COMPSUD shall aim at:

- being recognized as an important regional pilot initiative bringing together Parliamentarians involved in Sustainable Development issues among which, water, is very high in rank.





- participating in the sessions dedicated to NGOs and trying to have NGOs representatives as key speakers in the Parliamentary panels as well.
- contributing to the formulation of the conclusions of the Forum.

18. In order to increase the chances of COMPSUD's Members to be appointed to participate in WWF 4 Mr. Nikos Georgiadis, Member of the Hellenic Parliament and Chairman of COMPSUD will prepare in collaboration with Ms. Elsa Papadimitriou and Prof. Michael Scoullou a letter to be sent to the Speakers of all Mediterranean Parliaments encouraging them to appoint COMPSUD's Members who are familiar with the issues and have indicated their commitment and interest to the initiative to participate in WWF 4.

A similar letter will be sent to the Speakers also on behalf of the International Parliamentary Union (IPU) with the help of Ms. Papadimitriou which is a very active member of the IPU Executive Committee.

19. COMPSUD shall draft a further Statement/Declaration (N. 2) stressing on the role of Water as a Uniting Factor other than a dividing one in geopolitical terms. This declaration will make a particular reference to the situation in the Middle East.

The Chair, in consultation with the Secretariat will decide if Statements/Declarations N. 1 and N. 2 will be merged in a single text or not.

Other issues COMPSUD shall continue focusing on.

20. Promoting gender balance and gender mainstreaming in all fields related to Sustainable Development.

21. Sensitizing both Northern and Southern Mediterranean countries on crucial sustainable development issues through declarations and other initiatives.

22. Extending the invitation to join the Circle to many other Parliaments so that COMPSUD will grow stronger and more effective.





Administrative issues of COMPSUD

23. Concerning the financing of COMPSUD and of its activities it was agreed that the Secretariat will look at potential available funding possibilities from different sources, including the Council of Europe, the EU etc.

24. Moreover, a *Communiqué* will be prepared calling Parliaments to contribute to the operation of the Circle, even with a symbolic amount, i.e. covering the participation of some of its Members to attend the COMPSUD meetings.

25. Upon the invitation of the Tunisian delegation the next meeting of COMPSUD (COMPSUD 5) will take place in Tunisia, if adequate funds will be secured, while it was also proposed to organize COMPSUD 6 in Cyprus. It is noteworthy that other options with high potential for funding or co-funding also exist and they will be considered if adequate support from Tunisia will not become readily available.

Closing of the Meeting

26. The Chairman, Mr. Nikos Georgiadis, thanked the participants and also ESCWA for hosting this meeting, the Lebanese Ministry for Energy and Water, MIO-ECSDE, GWP-Med and AMWAJ of the Environment for the support of the meeting and MIO-ECSDE and GWP-Med for the facilitation and continuous support of the COMPSUD's Secretariat.

