



Palau de Pedralbes, Barcelona, 23th and 24th May 2016

THE 5+5 DIALOGUE AS A

MECHANISM **of integration** and regional cooperation

For a common reflection on the Western Mediterranean

FINAL DECLARATION

Following the views expressed at the official Declaration of the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the 5+5 Dialogue in October 2012, the **1st Med Think 5+5 Forum** has been convened in Barcelona for 23 and 24 May 2016 at the invitation of the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed). The conference brings together representatives of thirty-six research think tanks and public diplomacy institutions from member states of the 5+5 Dialogue, fourteen residing in one of the Southern Mediterranean states and twenty-two residing in one of the Northern states. Participants in the Forum have been welcomed by the representatives of the co-presidency of the 5+5 Dialogue, currently exercised by France and Morocco, the Secretary General of the Union for the Mediterranean and the Secretary General of the Arab Maghreb Union, as well as the authorities of the host country.

The Forum entitled “**The 5+5 Dialogue as a mechanism of integration and regional cooperation**” has been structured around three consecutive sessions: 1/ “Political dialogue, regional security and stability”; 2/ “Economic and development challenges”; 3/ “Social challenges, migrations, education and youth”.

It has been noted that:

- The Western Mediterranean Forum, here referred to as Dialogue 5+5, is the only homogeneous geographical grouping that convenes together the members of the Arab Maghreb Union (Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia) with its immediate neighbours of the northern side of the Mediterranean (France, Italy, Malta, Portugal and Spain).
- As an informal sub-regional and intergovernmental forum officially established in 1990, but reconvened on a regular basis since 2001, it forges cooperation in fields such as political dialogue, security, defence, transport, migration,



THE 5+5 DIALOGUE AS A

MECHANISM of integration and regional cooperation

For a common reflection on the Western Mediterranean

water, renewable energies and environment, education and research, tourism, health, trade and investment.

- The informal and flexible nature of the 5+5 Dialogue has prompted a sound development of its ministerial formats and high-level working groups, not only by a rapid expansion of the number of thematic areas of cooperation, but also by cementing a useful partnership with the different regional cooperation organisations such as the Union for the Mediterranean, the European Union and the Arab Maghreb Union.
- As the core platform of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, it not only represents a model of co-ownership in which the principles of the Union for the Mediterranean and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership are built upon and fully reflected, but it can serve as a practical model for greater regional integration.

It has also been stressed that:

- The current challenges that the region is facing in terms of political transformation, security, stability and peace require more multilateralism and not less. In this respect, the 5+5 Dialogue offers a permanent and useful platform of political dialogue through which cooperation can be achieved at the highest level possible. However, there is a need to engage more actively in regional security issues to favour a stronger neighbourhood.
- Development challenges that are burdening the region require urgent solutions that can be realised more easily by boosting regional integration. The 5+5 Dialogue constitutes an undeniable ally to South-South cooperation and integration. In this regard, integration cannot only limit itself to an ideal objective if the region wants to reduce the endemic inequality gaps that have traditionally persisted and increased between the northern and southern states of the 5+5 Dialogue.
- Persisting social challenges such as youth unemployment, the existing high disengagement from the labour markets, insufficient job creation with an adequate supply of educated workers, the large but inadequately skilled supply of young workers with unrealistic employment expectations, as well as the weak regulatory framework can be better combated with regional integration.
- A greater and more effective involvement of civil society in the 5+5 Dialogue is a pre-condition for a more genuine space of co-ownership within the partnership. Moreover, regional integration must also be built from a bottom-up approach, and therefore the role of respective civil societies here is of the utmost importance.



THE 5+5 DIALOGUE AS A

MECHANISM of integration and regional cooperation

For a common reflection on the Western Mediterranean

- A reinforced cooperation and coordination of the 5+5 Dialogue with the existing regional and sub-regional multilateral partnerships, as well as the multilateral financial institutions operating in the region, is vital in order to continue fostering complementarities and optimise the existing policies, programmes and resources.

Likewise, the participants in the Forum have recalled that the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the 5+5 Dialogue, convened in La Valetta in October 2012, invited the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed) to launch a network of think tanks associated with the 5+5 Dialogue, an initiative that:

“Acknowledges that public opinion, civil society organisations and social networking are increasingly acquiring relevance and importance in the policy making process, underlines the importance of think-tanks and public diplomacy institutions in analysing regional trends and drivers for change, and welcomes the initiative by the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed) to set-up a sub-regional network of the think-tanks of the 5+5 countries to develop research on how to promote regional integration and cooperation between the countries concerned.”

Accordingly, **they have decided to set up a network of think tanks, research and public diplomacy institutions, in which all institutions represented at this Forum are invited to participate.**

This network, here referred to as “Med Think 5+5”, is established with the support of the European Institute of the Mediterranean, an institution that will host its technical unit at its premises in Barcelona and will finance the costs associated to the network, its activities and its research activities. Other sources of funding may be pursued appropriately.

A **scientific committee** composed of experts of a maximum of six institutions: three from the southern states and three from the northern states of the 5+5 Dialogue will be established in the course of the second half of 2016. This committee will plan the different activities of dialogue and research of the network.

It is foreseen that in the second half of 2016 a document of internal rules of the network, as well as a working plan for the next two years (2017-2018) will be examined by the scientific committee.



THE 5+5 DIALOGUE AS A

MECHANISM of integration and regional cooperation

For a common reflection on the Western Mediterranean

The network is expected to respond to three basic needs within the system of the 5+5 Dialogue:

- To become a **platform for dialogue** on the various thematic areas of cooperation within the 5+5 Dialogue
 - To become a **platform of joint research** amongst the research think tanks and public diplomacy institutions associated with the initiative
 - To become a **platform of dissemination and external communication** that will redound to the benefit of the 5+5 Dialogue
- Firstly, as a **platform for dialogue**, the network intends to serve as a forum for debate and exchange of views on the thematic areas of cooperation within the Dialogue 5+5. Associates of the network organising conferences will become an asset for the dissemination, impact and outreach of the research activities. Furthermore, it will actively promote dialogue among associates and interaction between northern and southern participants.

In this context, as a network of research institutes and think tanks, it will improve the understanding of key challenges, needs and trends that impact on the sub-regional cooperation scheme that the 5+5 Dialogue represents. Moreover, dialogue activities are the most useful tool to increase the ownership of policy-making processes, since they allow research institutions to transfer their messages to decision and policy makers.

A multi-stakeholder **Med Think 5+5 Forum** will be organised every year with the aim of enhancing dialogue, networking and contacts among key players in the region. This Forum will have an active participation of all associates of the network with designated researchers and experts. Representatives of the rotating co-presidency will be invited to address the Forum, alongside the focal contact points within each Ministry of Foreign Affairs from the member states of the 5+5 Dialogue, as well as representatives from the regional and sub-regional institutions.

In particular, it is proposed that a next meeting of the Med Think 5+5 Forum is held in the context of the UfM Regional Forum in November 2016 together with other think tanks' regional networks such as EuroMeSCo.

Additional activities, such as **seminars or symposia**, will be organised throughout the year in connection with the research packages undertaken.



THE 5+5 DIALOGUE AS A

MECHANISM of integration and regional cooperation

For a common reflection on the Western Mediterranean

- Secondly, as a **platform of joint research** the network will be able to provide a sound and comprehensive output to the policy-making leadership of the 5+5 Dialogue. The possibility of conducting papers and joint research packages among the different associates of the network will lead to increased research capacities of the think tanks by bringing together relevant researchers from southern and northern think tanks of the member states of the Dialogue.

The scientific committee of the network will decide in contact with the rotating co-presidency of the 5+5 Dialogue and based on the conclusions of the Ministerial Conference on Foreign Affairs and those of the sectorial ministerial conferences the subjects on which research packages will be conducted. Three research packages will be conducted annually, peer-reviewed by the technical unit and published in the framework of the network.

The Annual Forum Med Think 5+5 will serve as a platform to present the results of the research packages and pre-examine those to be conducted in the succeeding year. As indicated, seminars or symposia might well be organised in relation with these research packages if needed.

- Thirdly, as a **platform of dissemination and external communication**, the network will ensure visibility and impact of its outputs. Communication and dissemination will be key aspects of the network and will complement the work undertaken in research and activities. Just as we acknowledge that the informal and flexible nature of the 5+5 Dialogue has become one of its virtues by strengthening and maintaining the initiative, it is also certain that as an eminent intergovernmental forum it sometimes lacks the capacity to reach out to public opinion. The establishment of the Med Think 5+5 will help give visibility not solely to the research initiatives undertaken by its associates, but also to the whole Dialogue system.

A **web tool** will be created with a triple objective: disseminate the mission, objectives and activities of the Med Think 5+5, disseminate the official ministerial meetings of the 5+5 Dialogue, disseminate the network's own publications, and those of the associates related to the scope of the network.

In addition, a **newsletter** with information and documents from the web tool will be edited and sent to public decision makers, research institutions, experts, academics and civil society.