

Chronology of the Barcelona Process

January

EU Danish Presidency

1 – *Brussels*: According to the programme the EU Danish Presidency will support relations with the EU's neighbours and implement the revised Neighbourhood Strategy promoting better coherence in the EU's efforts in southern and eastern neighbourhood regions. In particular in the light of developments in the southern neighbouring countries, the Danish Presidency will prioritise discussions on additional trade liberalisation and migration aspects within the framework of the revised EU Global Approach to Migration.

<http://eu2012.dk/>

Arab Spring

17 – *Strasbourg*: The EU and Council of Europe join forces in a €4.8 million programme for strengthening democratic reform in the southern Mediterranean. The joint programme supports democratic reforms, the independence and efficiency of the judiciary and good governance. It also targets corruption and human trafficking and aims to promote human rights and democratic values. Complementarity and coherence with other EU initiatives (such as the SPRING programme or the future European Endowment for Democracy) will also be ensured.

ENP - Morocco

18 – *Rabat*: The progress of reforms as well as a range of bilateral issues are at the top of the agenda for the EU's Commissioner for Enlargement and ENP Füle in the first high-level visit to the country by an EU official since the November elections and the

appointment of the new government headed by Benkirane. During his visit, the Commissioner signs two financing agreements in the framework of the Neighbourhood Investment Facility. The first relates to the Ouarzazate Solar Power Plant for a total of €30 million of EU funding, and the second relates to the Drinking Water Efficiency Programme for a total of €7 million of EU funding. His talks focus on important dossiers of EU-Morocco relations, such as the agreement on liberalising trade in agricultural products; preparations for a new Action Plan towards "advanced status"; the preparation of negotiations on a deep and comprehensive free trade area (DCFTA); negotiations to liberalise trade in services; and the dialogue on a mobility partnership.

EU - Syria

23 – *Brussels*: EU Foreign Ministers tighten the EU's restrictive measures against those responsible for human rights violations in Syria, adding 22 people and eight entities financially supporting the regime to the list of those subject to an asset freeze and a ban from entering the EU. In the Council's conclusions, Foreign Ministers also welcome the League of Arab States' decision to extend its observation mission and to reinforce its capacity to report independently on the situation in Syria. In response to the widespread human rights violations, the EU has gradually imposed a comprehensive set of restrictive measures on Syria, including an arms embargo, a ban on the import of Syrian crude oil and on fresh investment in the Syrian petrol sector.

Refugees

25 – *Gaza City*: EU and UNRWA sign a €55.4 million agreement. The EU contribution is the largest single donation to UNRWA's core budget, which supports the Agency's regular activities in education, health, relief and social services and camp improvement. The grant will fund these essential services to Palestinian refugees throughout Gaza, the West Bank, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon.

ARLEM

30 – *Bari*: Euromed regions and cities meet at the Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly (ARLEM) focused on climate change, renewable energies, cultural heritage and the role of small and medium enterprises in the development of Euromed economies. A year after the start of the Arab Spring, the discussion and adoption of a report on "The territorial dimension of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)," drafted by the ARLEM co-Presidents, provides the chance to exchange views and expertise on the implementation of partnerships and joint projects among regions and cities of the three shores of the Mediterranean. Discussions also focus on the new cooperation opportunities brought about by the recent evolution of several Mediterranean countries toward regionalisation and devolution of powers to local authorities.

<http://cor.europa.eu/en/activities/arlem/>

Solar Plan

30 – *Barcelona*: The Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfMS) and the industrial consortium Medgrid sign a Memorandum of Understanding by which Medgrid will support the UfMS in the implementation of the Mediterra-

near Solar Plan (MSP), aimed at the large-scale development of renewable energy and energy efficiency. The two entities will share their experts and analysts and will participate in each other's working groups, especially concerning finance, infrastructures and projects of common interest.

www.ufmsecretariat.org

February

EU - Tunisia

2 – Brussels: After talks with the new Tunisian PM Jebali, European Commission (EC) President Barroso stresses that the EU is determined to support the country's reform process and to move towards a privileged partnership (advanced status). In the joint declaration Barroso hails the special relationship between the two sides. The declaration spells out clear priorities for cooperation, including in particular: the resumption of negotiations to finalise a privileged partnership; the resumption of trade liberalisation talks, the opening of negotiations aiming at signing a DCFTA between Tunisia and the EU; the resumption of the dialogue on mobility, migration and security, aimed at the agreement of a Mobility Partnership.

http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-12-62_fr.htm

EU - Lebanon

6-9 – Brussels: The EU and Lebanese government hold sub-committee meetings focusing on three main areas: social and migration policies; justice, freedom and security; and human rights, democracy and governance. The meetings underscored Lebanon's commitment to advance the implementation of reforms jointly agreed in the Lebanon-EU action plan. The topics of human rights, democracy and governance are especially relevant at a time when the EU is revising its ENP to ensure a greater linkage between further EU assistance and a commitment amongst neighbourhood countries to implement reforms related to 'deep democracy.'

Youth

7-10 – Lyon: A set of nine recommendations for youth policy across the Euro-

Mediterranean area is drawn up by 150 civil society representatives, decision-makers and experts from both shores of the Mediterranean at a conference organised by the Youth in Action programme. The recommendations seek to promote human security and development, employability and entrepreneurship through non-formal education and access to information society and knowledge economy. The conference 'From indignation to contribution' is organised by EU-funded SALTO-YOUTH and Euromed Youth IV programmes and the University of Lyon 2.

www.euromedyouth.net/Nine-recommendations-for-youth

Infrastructure

10 – Brussels: During the last UfM Senior Officials meeting, the UfM Member States adopt the Trans-Maghreb Motorway Axis project which will contribute to a closer integration between the countries of the Mediterranean. The project is for the Algerian, Moroccan and Tunisian national motorway networks to provide a corridor from Agadir (Morocco) to Ras Jedir (Tunisian-Libyan border), which will make transport connections faster, cheaper and more efficient to the benefit of citizens and businesses.

www.ufmsecretariat.org

UfM Secretariat

10 – Brussels: The UfM Senior Officials meeting adopts by consensus the nomination of Moroccan Fathallah Sijilmassi as Secretary General of the UfM, succeeding his compatriot Youssef Amrani, who stood down in January after being appointed as Minister-Delegate at the Moroccan Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

EU-Morocco

14 – Brussels: The European Parliament (EP) votes in favour of a Protocol which provides a legal basis for Morocco's participation in EU programmes. This participation will allow Morocco to become more familiar with EU policies and support its gradual efforts to transpose the EU acquis. The Protocol will enable Morocco's full participation in seven Union programmes in the areas of customs, energy, entrepreneurship,

ICT policy, consumer policy, air traffic management, research and health.

www.europarl.europa.eu

Agriculture and Fishery

16 – Brussels: The EP gives its consent to liberalise EU-Morocco trade in agricultural and fishery products. The agreement will lift 55% of tariffs on Moroccan agricultural and fishery products (rising from 33%) and 70% of tariffs on EU agricultural and fishery products within 10 years (rising from 1%). It includes safeguards by allowing only moderate increases to quotas of certain products, such as tomatoes, strawberries, cucumbers and garlic. The deal also stipulates that Moroccan imports should meet European sanitary standards. A significant minority of MEPs oppose the inclusion of the disputed Western Sahara region in the deal as being incompatible with international law.

www.europarl.europa.eu

EU-Jordan

22 – Dead Sea: The first meeting of the EU-Jordan Task Force, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Jordanian Prime Minister. The EU is determined to accompany Jordan on its process of democratic reforms towards a just and inclusive society with democratic rights, social justice and economic opportunity as key features. The EU-Jordan Task Force was set up to help address the challenges Jordan is facing in its political and economic reform process. It also aims to coordinate more efficiently the support of the EU, of its Member States and a number of European and international bodies.

Syria

27 – Brussels: The Council decides to reinforce restrictive measures against the Syrian regime following an EU foreign affairs meeting because of the regime's continued use of violence against civilians. Trade in gold, precious metals and diamonds with Syrian public bodies and the central bank is no longer permitted. Cargo flights operated by Syrian carriers will not have access to EU airports; the assets of the Syrian central bank within the EU will be frozen. The Council welcomes the appointment of

former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, as the Joint Special Envoy of the UN and League of Arab States on the Syrian crisis.

www.consilium.europa.eu

March

UfM Co-Presidency

Brussels: France hands over the Northern Co-Presidency of the UfM to the EU, following a decision at a European Foreign Ministers meeting. The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy takes over the co-Presidency for meetings of Foreign Ministers. The EC will assume the co-Presidency for Ministerial Meetings concerning matters in areas of exclusive EU competence, and will do so in cooperation with the Member State holding the rotating presidency of the EU Council in other meetings. The EU External Action Service (EEAS) will take over the UfM's Northern Co-Presidency for Senior Official Meetings

<http://register.consilium.europa.eu>

Arab Spring

2 – Brussels: One year from the start of the Arab Spring, European Heads of State and Government in the European Council (EC) spell out their commitment to the democratic transformation in the EU's southern Neighbourhood. European leaders recognise the Syrian National Council as a legitimate representative of Syrians and warn of a new round of sanctions against the regime.

www.consilium.europa.eu

Industry Cooperation

8-9 – Tunis: EC vice-President Tajani travels to Tunisia to accelerate the preparations leading to negotiations on EU market access agreements with Southern Mediterranean Countries (SMCs). The visit will reinforce partnerships to allow industry and SMEs to fully exploit the potential for commercial relations between Tunisia and the EU. Tunisia's considerable progress in aligning the legislative system and infrastructure quality with those of the EU could soon enable full access to the Single Market for those products that meet requirements. This will be negotiated within the

scope of an Agreement on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of Industrial Products (ACAA).

<http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/single-market-goods/international-aspects>

FEMIP

8 – Tunis: The European Investment Bank (EIB), in collaboration with the Republic of Tunisia, hosts the 10th FEMIP Conference on the theme "Mediterranean SMEs: Ready to break new ground." The event gathers representatives of banks and leading companies, fund managers, SME entrepreneurs and managers, academics in management/entrepreneurial education, researchers, SME associations and public officials. It addresses three main themes: the access to diverse and competitive sources of financing as a primary obstacle to the development of the private sector; the promotion of entrepreneurship and management education as a condition to ensure growth; and the enhancement of the international competitiveness of Mediterranean enterprises by repositioning them in the global market.

www.eib.org/projects/regions/med

Youth

14 – Cairo: More than 300 people, mostly youths, take part in a debate on the topic of "Creativity between Freedom of Speech and Censorship," organised by the Young Arab Voices programme, supported by the Anna Lindh Foundation (ALF). The debate has been highly animated and touched on a number of topics, including creativity in science and arts and the need for fair legislation to protect freedom of speech. The purpose of the programme is to train young people in debating skills and facilitate youth participation in new processes of democratic transition and reform.

www.euromedalex.org

EU-Algeria

19-20 – Algiers: EU support for reforms and strengthening bilateral cooperation are the main topics during the visit of the Commissioner for Enlargement and ENP Füle. During his talks with Algerian counterparts the Commissioner outlines the support which the EU is ready to

provide for the reform efforts based on the principles of the reviewed ENP, including the 'more for more' principle. He also meets representatives of civil society, underlining the importance the EU attaches to discussions with non-governmental stakeholders, including civil society organisations, the private sector and trade unions. Algeria announced its willingness to start exploratory negotiations for the elaboration of an ENP Action Plan in December 2011, and the government recently invited the EU to observe the legislative elections on 10 May. This will be the first time EU observers are present during elections in the country.

http://ec.europa.eu/commis-sion_2010-2014/fule

Aviation

22 – Tel Aviv: Israel and the EU finalise negotiations on a comprehensive aviation agreement. As well as gradually opening up the respective markets, the agreement also aims to integrate Israel into a wider Common Aviation Area with the EU. Israel will implement regulatory requirements and standards equivalent to EU aviation rules in areas such as aviation safety, environment, and consumer protection. Similar comprehensive aviation agreements with neighbouring countries have already been negotiated with the Western Balkan countries, Morocco and Jordan.

http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/air/international_aviation/

UfM Parliamentary Assembly

24-25 – Rabat: A political solution to the conflict in Syria, a resumption of the Middle East peace process and support for the transition to democracy in countries on the Mediterranean's southern shore are the key issues in the 8th Parliamentary Assembly of the UfM. The European Parliament will now chair this Assembly for a year. This meeting is the first to bring together MEPs and MPs newly elected on the Mediterranean's southern shore since the "Arab Spring."

www.europarl.europa.eu

COPEAM

29 March-1 April – Marrakesh: The 19th annual Conference of COPEAM (Permanent Conference of the Mediter-

ranean Audiovisual Operators) tackles the issue of "Changes in Euro-Mediterranean societies: the Media on the move." During the three working sessions, a panel of experts from the media and audiovisual sectors give special focus to the issue of sport rights. CO-PEAM members adopted, as a final Declaration of the 18th General Assembly, a call for the right for viewers to have free access to general-interest events and to the most important sporting competitions.

Agriculture

30 – *Tunis*: The EU launches a programme aimed at supporting agriculture and rural development in the southern Mediterranean, as part of its response to the Arab Spring under the renewed ENP: the ENPARD, the European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development. With the launch of this programme, the EU aims to meet the needs of SMCs and to further a more inclusive growth.
<http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/>

April

Research and Innovation

2-3 – *Barcelona*: Some 350 top-level scientists and policy-makers from more than 30 countries around the Euro-Mediterranean region launch a new partnership in research and innovation. The aim of the conference, the first of its kind, is to map out a pathway to establishing a Common Research and Innovation Agenda, aimed at addressing the major societal challenges affecting the region, notably in the field of energy, water, food, transport and health. Participants say that the new partnership should be based on the principles of co-ownership, mutual interest and shared benefit.
<http://ec.europa.eu/research>

Euromed Police

16-20 – *Madrid*: A training seminar to discuss ways of countering the threat posed by cyberterrorism is held in the framework of the EU-funded Euromed Police III project. It hosts 28 delegates from Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority and Tunisia. The themes include: analysing

how terrorist groups use the Internet or social networks, in order, to spread their propaganda and carry out recruitment; and explaining investigation techniques liable to detect such activities while complying with legal requirements.

www.euromed-police3.eu/

ALF

25-28 – *Alexandria*: Writers, journalists, artists and cultural activists gather for the third edition of the literary encounters "Écrire la Méditerranée," organised by ALF in collaboration with the French Institute of Egypt. The programme includes a series on conferences, round-table debates, film screenings, and exhibitions with the purpose of exploring the new cultural dynamics initiated by youth in the Mediterranean area. Topics covered include: the potential of arts in changing societies, the contribution of women to contemporary literature in the Mediterranean, and the role of youth in reinventing democracy.

www.euromedalex.org/news/ecriture-la-mediterran-e-2012

May

EU-Israel

2 – *Jerusalem*: The EU-Israel Association Committee takes place at the level of senior officials. The Committee reviews the implementation of the EU-Israel Action Plan starting with an exchange of views on political issues including the Middle East Peace Process, Iran, the situation in the Arab world, human rights, combating terrorism, combating anti-Semitism, shared values and cooperation in the UN and international organisations. It also reviews the main conclusions of other sub-committees: economic and financial matters; social affairs, migration and health; customs cooperation and taxation; agriculture and fisheries; internal market; industry, trade and services; justice and legal matters; transport, energy and environmental research; innovation, information society, education and culture.

Vocational Training

7-11 – *Casablanca*: Trade union officials and representatives of employers'

organisations from Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon visit Morocco to study the country's approach to social partnership in the governing, policy making and delivery of Vocational Education and Training (VET). The visit is organised by the European Training Foundation (ETF) as part of its regional effort to support social partners' engagement in VET. During the visit, the participants learn how their hosts develop and implement policies in the area of VET.

Invest In Med

10 – *Brussels*: The EP calls for the launch of the second stage of the Invest In Med Project. It adopts a motion which highlights the fact that the Arab Spring and its call for a democratic ideal and the freedom of peoples, constitutes the most important political change ever in the EU neighbourhood. The EP also mentions the economic opportunities in the MENA region, particularly concerning natural resources. It reaffirms its support to update the sectoral agreements and the creation of bilateral EU Chambers of Commerce and reiterates the need for diversification for the economies of South Mediterranean Countries (SMC), especially in order to attract foreign investors.

Euro-Med Diplomats

11-14 – *Malta*: Diplomats from most of the 27 EU Member States and the Mediterranean Partner countries and UfM partner states, including first time participants from Libya, attend the 32nd Euro-Mediterranean Information and Training Seminar. It is a unique opportunity to reflect upon and openly discuss the historic transformation sweeping across the southern Mediterranean. Particular attention is dedicated to identifying the progress registered in the implementation of the UfM agenda and EU's policy decisions towards the Mediterranean since the start of the Arab Spring. Academic specialists and other professionals from Europe and the Mediterranean present a series of lectures on developments pertaining to the political, security, economic, financial, and socio-cultural and human dimensions of contemporary Euro-Mediterranean relations.
www.euromed-seminars.org/mt/seminar32/papers/EMS32-Malta-PR.htm

ENP

15 – *Brussels*: The External Relations Chief Ashton and Enlargement and Neighbourhood Commissioner Füle present the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) 2012 package, during which progress from last year is presented, along with a number of documents, including a road map for the east and the south, as well as country progress reports. Both officials underline the three principles that have guided the review: that the EU should focus its support on those countries and governments most committed to political and economic reform; “mutual accountability,” i.e. that the EU should live up to its side of the bargain in response to those who live up to their side; and that the EU should reach out directly to populations, civil society and opposition groups, especially when governments block reform and refuse to engage with their people.

http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/docs/2012_enp_pack/delivering_new_enp_en.pdf

Transport

16-17 – *Tunis/Rabat*: UfMS delegation headed by Deputy SG Alpogan conducts a mission to Tunisia and Morocco in an effort to raise awareness for two key UfM labelled projects: one on the completion of the central section of the Trans-Maghreb Motorway Axis; and the other on the development of a network of Euro-Mediterranean logistics platforms (LOGISMEDTA). The UfM Delegation meets the Tunisian and Moroccan Ministers of Transport who agree on providing financial contribution to the LOGISMEDTA project. Regarding the Trans-Maghreb Motorway Axis project, Morocco is ready to launch the next phases of design and construction.

Solar Plan

18-19 – *London*: The UfM SG, Sijilmassi, holds discussions with Senior Executives from the EBRD to develop synergies and further involve the Bank in UfM projects, at the margins of the annual summit of the EBRD. The UfM SG presents to an audience of business leaders and delegates of the Bank the main features of the Mediterranean Solar Plan's Master Plan and holds bilateral meetings and contacts at the high-

est level with representatives of multilateral and bilateral financial institutions and development agencies. Discussions include collaboration with the International Financial Institutions' Platform of the financial pillar of the G8 Deauville Partnership, particularly in the fields of private sector development, support to MSMEs and job creation.

Human rights

24 – *Amman*: The 7th round of the Human Rights, Governance and Democracy Subcommittee between Jordan and the EU focuses on the ongoing process of reforms-related legislation and on the human rights matters linked to the implementation of the ENP EU-Jordan Action Plan.

Migration

30 – *Brussels*: The EU-funded Euromed Migration III project holds its regional opening conference, setting out a series of activities that the project aims to pursue. The project seeks to foster cooperation on migration issues between SMCs and EU Member States, as well as between SMCs themselves, and to help partner countries find solutions to the various forms of migration. The conference is attended by, among others, representatives from eight Southern Mediterranean Countries, 17 EU Member States, FRONTEX, the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), the ETF, the EC and the EEAS.

Agriculture

31 May-1 June – *Brussels*: Senior agriculture officials from ENP partner countries discuss the modernisation of the agricultural sector in their countries at a Conference on the European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture & Rural Development (ENPARD). ENPARD is a new policy initiative which recognises the potential importance of agriculture in terms of food security, sustainable production and rural employment. The objective of the conference is to present the programme's vision and approach to high-level officials in charge of agriculture, rural development and international cooperation from all the ENP partner countries

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/news/31-05-2012_enpard_en.htm

June*Journalism*

2 – *Beirut*: A Jordanian and an Egyptian journalist win the 2012 edition of the Samir Kassir Award for Freedom of the Press for their entries for the best opinion article and investigative report respectively. They have been chosen from 160 entries. The Samir Kassir Award for Freedom of the Press is granted by the EU, and rewards journalists who have distinguished themselves through the quality of their work and their commitment to democracy and the rule of law. It honours the memory of the Lebanese journalist Samir Kassir who was assassinated on 2 June 2005 in Beirut.

<http://prixsamirkassir.org/>

PA UfM

7-8 – *Brussels*: Re-launching Euro-Mediterranean relations and improving the effectiveness of the UfM are the core issues of a two-day working session of the Bureau of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean (PA UfM) with the participation of the EC, the UfMS, the EIB and the ALF. The working days include discussions between members of the PA-UfM Bureau with experts and think tanks on operational orientation for the future of the Union for the Mediterranean, as well as meetings with the leadership of the four main institutions involved in the various aspects of the Euro-Mediterranean process, in order to consider ways to improve the financing and implementation of projects under the umbrella of the UfM.

Committee of Region

11 – *Rabat*: A delegation of the Committee of the Regions (CoR) attends high-level meetings with Moroccan ministries and the ARLEM Bureau. The discussions focus on finding ways to better support the democratic decentralisation of powers in the Arab Spring area and how to strengthen the regional dimension of the Euromed partnership. The meetings address issues ranging from the rules related to the election of regions' Presidents and Assemblies to defining regional competences in different policy areas, and from the vital questions related to regions'

own resources, fiscal reform and equalisation, to the relations between the public and private sectors and the promotion of new investments. The challenges and options of the ongoing regionalisation process were also among the priority issues in the meetings between Bresso (CoR President) and top level representatives of Moroccan national and regional government.

Civil Society

11-13 – Beirut: The “Civil Society” Regional Programme ENPI-South organises in collaboration with ANND (Arab NGO Network for Development) the Regional Seminar on “European – Southern Mediterranean Relations: Discussing Policies and Partnership to Support Economic and Social Rights and the Role of Civil Society.” The participants to the Seminar are representatives of civil society organisations of SMCs, representatives of International, Regional and Sub-Regional networks and organisations of the associative field, namely associations for the protection of human rights, workers trade unions, students and journalists associations, etc., women and youth associations and lawyers and judges associations.

www.euromedcivilsociety.net

Energy

12 – Istanbul: The Association of Mediterranean Regulators for Electricity and Gas (MEDREG) holds its 13th General Assembly meeting approving the new MEDREG Action Plan for the period 2012-2014, which includes a long-term strategic vision to 2015-2020 in view of supporting a possible creation of a Mediterranean Energy Community as its ultimate goal by 2020. The Electricity Group, which focuses on both internal and regional electricity market developments, presents a report on a master plan for the establishment of an integrated Mediterranean electricity market.

www.medreg-regulators.org

Youth

25 June-1 July – Tunis: A week of activities takes place around the theme of youth work and youth policy in the wake of the Arab Spring. The event brings

together participants from the Euromed Youth Programme countries and from EU Member States. The series of meetings and visits is co-organised by the Tunisian Ministry of Sport and Youth, SALTO Euromed, and Support Unit for the EuroMed Youth IV Programme, among others. The activities offer an opportunity to discover, reflect and share experiences about youth work in society and to create partnerships for cooperation. The programme tackles topics such as the place and role of youth in the revolution, the current situation of youth and its needs, and the reality of youth work in Tunisia.

www.euromedyouth.net

UfM

28 – Barcelona: At the UfM Senior Officials meeting Jordan expresses its willingness to assume the southern Co-Presidency of the UfM. The Jordanian announcement is welcomed unanimously by all the representatives. The meeting is also attended by the vice-President of the EIB who confirms the readiness of the EIB to provide €500 million with the aim of supporting mature UfM projects. During the meeting, the UfM Secretariat presents three new projects: Skills for Success: Employability Skills for Women; Creation of a Euro Mediterranean University in Fez; and Overcoming Governance Challenges to the Mobilisation of Financing for the Mediterranean Water Sector. Furthermore, a progress report on the projects underway is presented: the LOGIS-MEDTA and Trans-Maghreb Highway; the Gaza Desalination Project; and the Mediterranean Solar Plan.

July

EU Cyprus Presidency

1 – Brussels: Four key priorities are outlined in the six-month programme of the Cypriot Presidency of the Council of the EU: Europe in the world, closer to its neighbours; alongside an efficient and sustainable Europe; a better performing and growth economy; and a Europe, more relevant to its citizens, with solidarity and social cohesion. The four priorities are based on the 18-month Trio Programme, prepared in

close cooperation with Poland and Denmark. In external relations, the programme stresses that the Cypriot Presidency will support the High Representative’s efforts in ENP, notably its southern dimension, where the EU has committed to supporting the democratic transformation of its southern partners.

www.cy2012.eu/en/page/home

Higher Education

2-3 – Brussels: Ministers and senior officials from SMCs gather to assess the challenges they face in higher education and to see how the EU can strengthen its cooperation in the future. In response to the events of the Arab Spring, the EC has significantly increased funding for the southern Mediterranean through its international higher education programmes: Tempus and Erasmus Mundus. The objectives of the dialogue with SMCs on higher education policies and programmes are: to provide a regional platform for policy dialogue on education, higher education, vocational education and training and youth issues; to share good practice and experience; to support partners in their modernisation and reform of higher education systems and promote their voluntary convergence towards the Bologna Process and the European Research and Higher Education Area. The new policy dialogue covers Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia and the occupied Palestinian territories.

Enterprise

10-11 – Brussels: The EC and its Mediterranean partners review progress and plan the next steps in implementing the 2011-2012 work programme on Euro-Mediterranean Industrial cooperation, besides discussing the 2013-2014 work programme and the adaptation of the Charter for Enterprise focusing on SMEs and job creation. The first day concludes with a session on the EU’s support to private sector development in Mediterranean neighbour countries. Among the topics addressed on the second day of the meeting is the survey on sustainable enterprise development, activities of the EIB in Mediterranean neighbour countries and future priorities

in Euro-Mediterranean industrial cooperation:

<http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/international>

Euromed Police

11 – Madrid: The first conference of the General Directors of Police and Security forces of EU and ENPI South countries is held in the framework of the Euromed Police III Project on the “Fight against Drug-Trafficking and Money-Laundering.” Seven delegations from the ENPI South countries, as well as delegations from 20 EU countries, Europol and Interpol take part in this meeting. The main features of the conclusions are: a statement of the tendencies of drug-trafficking in the regional area; a statement of good practices to be shared and extended (on efficient security controls in airports, quick exchange of operational information).

Libya

13 – Brussels: The EC adopts a decision, which officially adds Libya to the list of countries participating in the activities of its regional cooperation projects and programmes designed for the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. The ENPI Regulation of 2006 included Libya as an eligible country. However, the Regional Strategy Document (2007-2013) and the Regional Indicative Programme 2007-2010 and 2010-2013 didn't include Libya due to the political circumstances.

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/aap/2012/aap_2012_enpi-s_en.pdf

CBC

17-18 – Rome: More than 450 representatives of institutions, governments, local authorities, the business sector and civil society of both EU Member States and SMCs gather for the mid-term conference of the EU-funded Cross-border Cooperation Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme (CBC-Med). Participants in the conference analyse the results achieved by the Programme and reaffirm its importance as a tool to enhance cooperation in the Mediterranean region. The EU response to far-reaching changes in the Mediterranean area and new perspectives for

the ENP; the inclusion of countries that did not take part in the Programme so far (namely Algeria, Libya and Morocco); and the increase of funds dedicated to the Programme are the main issues under view.

www.enpicbcmec.eu

Research and Innovation

20 – Nicosia: EU Research Ministers affirm their commitment to Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in research and innovation, as well as the readiness of their countries to engage in the preparation of a joint research programme for the Euro-Mediterranean region. They also express their willingness to work towards simplification of research programmes in order to reduce the administrative burden and ease access to participants.

August

Youth

28-29 – Tunis: One hundred and twenty policy-makers, experts, researchers, youth organisations and young people from Europe and the southern Mediterranean participate in the symposium “Arab Spring: Youth Participation for the Promotion of Peace, Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms,” organised jointly by the EC and the Council of Europe (CoE). EU representatives underline young people's role in the democratic development of post-revolutionary Arab countries and call for the development of national youth policies, youth research and support of civil society and in particular of youth organisations.

<http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/euromed/Tunisia1.html>

September

Media

18 – Brussels: New funding of €9 million for the media and civil society is approved by the EC to support free, independent and high quality journalism through the development of training programmes and institutions for media professionals. Ensuring freedom of expression and of the media is one of the

key priorities of the joint EU-Jordan ENP Action Plan and a cornerstone of democracy. This programme represents an additional concrete example of the EU's commitment to support a close partner country such as Jordan in its endeavours to reinforce fundamental freedoms. The new package will also help to set up a Civil Society Fund (CSF).

World Bank

20 – Barcelona: UfMS Sijilmassi and UfM representatives hold talks with Jonathan Walters, Director of Regional Programmes in the MENA region at the WB. The aim of the meeting is to look into the new opportunities that can result from concrete cooperation between the two institutions. The working sessions focus on projects in the technical areas of water, transport, energy and SMEs, as well as social issues like job creation and employability for women and young people. Support for regional and sub-regional integration and initiatives designed to aid economic transition were also discussed as issues of common interest.

ETF

25-27 – Dead Sea: The regional conference of the ETF “New Challenges for Skills Development in the Arab States of the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean” gathers nine ministers of education and employment from Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the occupied Palestinian territories and Tunisia, and several senior policymakers from both sides of the Mediterranean. They discuss different approaches to tackling the employment crisis and the role of education and training in the region's new social and economic context. The data and analysis come from the UfM Employability Review and the latest round of the Torino Process. The new reports provide several policy recommendations on how to improve youth employability through, among other things, enhancing vocational education and training, and more efficient labour market policies.

www.etf.europa.eu

Agriculture

87 – La Valletta: At the invitation of the Maltese Authorities, the Ministers of

Agriculture of CIHEAM countries hold their 9th Meeting to discuss food security and price volatility in the Mediterranean region. The occasion allows participants to exchange ideas and experiences regarding actions to be undertaken to improve food security and move towards resilience and stability in a region that is especially vulnerable to the effects of global price volatility. www.ciheam.org/images/CIHEAM/PDFs/AlaUne/en.pdf

ALF

27-29 – *Luxembourg*: The Indignation Forum, supported by the ALF, gathers around 70 young prominent participants of the Arab Spring and European Indignant movements from 20 European and Arab countries. It serves as a platform to exchange ideas and for meetings, debates etc. The Forum ends with a joint declaration affirming the commitment to establish a common networking platform. The Indignation Forum provides spaces for mutual knowledge and dialogue, allowing exchanges among the participants about their experiences on the ground. Open space sessions allow people to discuss topics chosen by them, and envision initiatives and projects.

October

EU-Tunisia

2 – *Brussels*: EU Foreign Policy Chief Ashton meets Tunisian PM Jebali. The topics on the agenda include: the consolidation of democracy, freedom and human rights. The Tunisian PM also meets the EP's Foreign Affairs Committee whose members assure him that the Parliament would do everything possible to support the democratisation process in his country. The meeting addressed a number of issues, from the timeline for drafting a new constitution, the preparation of parliamentary elections and the protests against an anti-Islam film, to the situation of women in his country. EU and Tunisia also sign two financing agreements worth a total of €37 million in the field of support for the judiciary and healthcare. During the meeting, the state of bilateral relations is reviewed, in particular the final steps of the negotia-

tions on the EU Tunisia action plan for a privileged partnership.

http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014

Goods circulation

3 – *Taormina*: An EU-funded project to improve the goods circulation between the Middle East and the EU by networking and adopting shared procedures and technologies (CUSTOM MED) is presented at the Mediterranean Initiative Conference. The project is funded by the Cross-Border Cooperation Programme in the Mediterranean (ENPI CBCMed). The Mediterranean Initiative aims to increase cooperation and coordination of actions between the customs authorities of Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Algeria, Libya, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey in the following strategic fields: the fight against drug trafficking; integrated border controls; customs simplification and trade facilitation.

www.enpicbcmmed.eu

UfM

3 – *Barcelona*: Experts and representatives from 40 different Euro-Mediterranean think tanks gather for a seminar entitled "The Multilateral Track of Euro-Mediterranean Relations: The role of the UfM," organised by the UfMS, the EuroMeSCo network and the IEMed. It focuses on the prospects for the multilateral framework of Euro-Mediterranean relations within the new political context on the southern shore and the economic crisis in the north. They call for Euro-Mediterranean cooperation initiatives in youth employability, job creation or higher education and research. This seminar represents a fundamental step in a series of consultations that the UfM is developing to improve dialogue and cooperation with major Euro-Mediterranean stakeholders.

www.iemed.org/llista_activitats/the-multilateral-track

Heritage

8-10 – *Sidi Bou Said*: A set of seminars is organised in the framework of the Mare Nostrum project, funded under the Euromed Heritage IV programme. Mare Nostrum's partners from Lebanon, Greece, Malta, Italy and Tunisia, will

meet with ministers and key stakeholders in Tunis to discuss integration and sign agreements and road maps for the future of the Mare Nostrum legacy in Tunisia. Mare Nostrum is aimed at providing a sustainable mechanism for the protection and management of cultural heritage resources in the targeted countries, raising public awareness of cultural heritage.

Media

11-12 – *Nicosia*: The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) holds a civil society seminar that focuses on Media freedom in the Euro-Mediterranean. The sessions focus on how media freedom can reshape Arab societies; the challenges facing a new media landscape in post-Arab uprising countries; and the way forward.

www.eesc.europa.eu

Vocational Education and Training

15-16 – *Istanbul*: Employers, trade unionists and public authorities in charge of vocational education and training (VET) from eight SEM countries gather under the aegis of the ETF to take stock of almost two years of activities in a regional project on social partnership in VET in Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia. The three countries have different traditions and structures of social dialogue. But there is one common element: real cooperation between the labour market and government is not always easy. The participants stress the need for tailored support from the ETF to different target groups, as countries have different education and legal structures.

www.etf.europa.eu

EESC Summit

17-19 – *Amman*: The Summit of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) focuses on key challenges affecting the countries of the region, especially those that are currently in a process of political, economic and social transition, and the role that civil society can play in meeting those challenges. The Summit brings together some 150-200 participants from a range of economic and social councils, representatives of employers, trade unions, other economic and social interests groups and NGOs

from all the UfM countries. Civil society representatives express their views on issues such as freedom of expression, guarantees for basic human rights (especially for women) and how civil society is consulted by policymakers. The aim of the discussions is to produce recommendations for policymakers in governments in the Euromed region and the European Union.

www.eesc.europa.eu

Environment

22-23 – Athens: In the framework of the Horizon 2020 initiative, more than 120 Members of Parliament, journalists and NGOs from 22 Mediterranean countries gather to pledge to accelerate their efforts towards a depolluted Mediterranean by the year 2020. During the two days, participants improve their understanding of the main challenges and urgencies to be addressed in the Mediterranean and the regional frameworks, initiatives and cooperation opportunities such as Horizon 2020, the MedPartnership and Sustainable Water Integrated Management (SWIM). Participants also gain knowledge on the available resources and the ways these can be used throughout the process of the development and implementation of policies.

www.h2020.net

EU-Palestine

24 – Ramallah: EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs Ashton and Palestinian Prime Minister Fayyad announce the conclusion of negotiations between the EU and PA on a new ENP Action Plan. The EU and the PA outline a number of commitments to deepen bilateral relations in preparation for an Association Agreement between the EU and the future state of Palestine. These include: ensuring sustainable PA finances and economic development throughout the occupied Palestinian territory; and supporting the political, economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian population in East Jerusalem. The Action Plan also provides the framework for an EU-PA work programme across a wide variety of sectors including justice and home affairs, economic cooperation, trade-related issues, energy, water and transport.

November

EU-Algeria

6 – Algiers: Three financing agreements for a total of €58 million are signed between the EU and Algeria to enhance the protection of cultural heritage, support for reform in the transport sector and support for youth employment. In a meeting with President Bouteflika, EU High Representative Ashton underlines the importance of support for SMEs across the country, which she described as the backbone of the economy. They also talk about human rights and the further development of the political structures, as well as the challenges in Mali and Sahel.

www.consilium.europa.eu

Migration

6-9 – Turin: First training session on the topic of legal migration in the framework of the Euromed Migration III project attended by representatives of Southern Mediterranean Partner Countries, from Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and the Palestinian Authority. This session is the first stage in what will be a two-year programme of four training events in legal migration. This first training was focused on labour migration issues.

www.icmpd.org/Legal-Migration-Training-November-2012.2367.0.html

Libya

7 – Tripoli: More than 70 newly elected Libyan MPs attend the opening session of a five-week long Introduction Programme organised by the EU as part of its support to the General National Congress (GNC). Over the coming weeks, a wide range of high profile European experts, including former Prime Ministers, active politicians and officials from other European parliaments, will deliver several training courses covering the main functions of a parliament and the constitutionalisation process. The support for the GNC is one of the components of the EU Public Administration Facility for Libya.

ENP

12 – Brussels: The EC allocates €6 million to ensure the swift launch of the European Endowment for Democracy

(EED) conceived in the framework of the renewed ENP and aiming at helping political parties, non-registered NGOs, trade unions and other social partners in an effort to promote deep and sustainable democracy as well as respect for human rights and the rule of law. The EED will aim to help actors of change and emerging players who face obstacles to accessing EU funding. Such actors may include: journalists, bloggers, non-registered NGOs, political movements (including those in exile or from the diaspora), especially when these actors are operating in highly uncertain political contexts.

UfM

12 – Brussels: The first inter-institutional meeting of the UfM is aimed at mobilising political support for key UfM projects as well as giving a major impetus to UfM work in the southern Neighbourhood region. EU High Representative Ashton and Jordanian Foreign Minister Judeh represent the co-Presidency of the UfM at the meeting. Participants discuss important examples of good UfM projects such as: the Gaza desalination plant, the Trans Maghreb Highway project, the efforts to promote employability of young women in the region and the Euromed University in Fez.

EU-Egypt Task Force

13-14 – Cairo: A delegation composed of representatives of 102 European companies and industry associations from 13 Member States accompanied by EC vice-President and responsible for Industry and Entrepreneurship, Tajani, visit Egypt in a so-called “Mission for Growth” to help European enterprises to better profit from fast growing emerging international markets. They participate in the first EU-Egypt Task Force that is the concrete manifestation of the reinforced cooperation between the new Egypt and the EU, which is committed to providing support that is tailor-made to the needs of the country. The Task Force agrees on a major package of economic and political assistance to help Egypt with its ongoing transition. Earlier today, the EU approved two programmes for Egypt worth €120 million in new support for jobs and voca-

tional training targeted at young people. In order to help provide policy recommendations for the EU-Egypt Task Force, the EC has also organised a Business and Tourism forum. The Forum mobilises more than 150 European business representatives and tourism stakeholders, to engage in debate and to network with the Egyptian business and tourism community. They propose action points to help get Egypt's economy and tourism sector back on track. Both sides are aware of the pivotal role the tourism sector has traditionally played in the Egyptian economy.

<http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/international/promoting-neighbourhood>

Entrepreneurship

14-16 – Brussels: The ETF, the EU agency that supports EU neighbouring countries reform their education, training and labour market systems, holds a conference on entrepreneurship training whose recommendations will be taken up by the ETF in 2013. The event focuses on good practice in promoting entrepreneurship and enterprise skills and is attended by entrepreneurship trainers and policymakers from the EU and some 30 neighbouring countries. The 12 training providers, who will present their work, operate across three themes: training for youth start-ups, skills for the internationalisation of SMEs and training for female entrepreneurs.

www.etf.europa.eu

MEDREG

15 – Lisbon: The Association of Mediterranean Energy Regulators (MEDREG) holds its 14th General Assembly which is an opportunity to review the current state of the activities of the Ad-hoc Working Groups and Task Forces. It discusses the work of the Gas Working Group regarding the creation of a transparency template on data collection for the MEDREG website. The Electricity Working Group presents a survey on benchmarking and performance evaluation on the quality of supply within distribution grids in the Mediterranean Basin. It also addresses the implementation of actions concerning the process of electricity markets' integration in Maghreb countries.

EU-Tunisia Association Council

19 – Brussels: The EU and Tunisia agree a new Action Plan defining a political agreement on a Privileged Partnership during the first Association Council since the Tunisian revolution of January 2011. The new Action Plan defines the common priorities guiding bilateral cooperation, and provides the strategic framework for the EU's support to reforms and the democratic process in Tunisia. EU Commissioner Füle outlines four concrete points of assistance: Privileged Partnership and a New Action Plan (delivered on that occasion) and negotiations of trade agreements, a new agreement in the aviation area to boost tourism and a mobility partnership. The last three points will be discussed in future meetings.

www.consilium.europa.eu

Euromed Police

19-23 – Bucharest: 30 delegates from eight SMCs attend the fifth training seminar organised by the EU-funded project Euromed Police III on the fight against trafficking in human beings. The results of the seminar are: a complete statement of the various types of trafficking in human beings (THB); and an analysis of the modus operandi of traffickers, the origin of victims and the legal framework in the EU. Euromed Police III aims to enhance the professional capacities of the police/security services of the SMCs and develop international police cooperation between EU Member States and SMCs, as well as between SMCs.

Euromed-UM

24 – Fes: In accordance with the statutes of the Euro-Mediterranean University (Euromed-UM) adopted by the General Constituent Assembly, the Euromed-UM is called to train executives to meet the requirement of excellence, promote understanding between cultures and people, as well as disseminate knowledge and culture in general and, more specifically, scientific, technical and technological culture. It also aims to provide education, diversify training and adapt to changing needs and knowledge, particularly in the areas of Mediterranean history, cultural heritage and civilisations, political and

economic sciences and law, solar energy and related fields in materials engineering.

Enterprises

26 – Rabat: EC vice-President Tajani, responsible for Industry and Entrepreneurship, travels to Morocco accompanied by a delegation composed of representatives of 38 European companies and industry associations from 10 Member States. This visit is part of the new series of "Missions for Growth" to help European enterprises, in particular SMEs, to better profit from fast growing emerging international markets. Discussions with Moroccan Ministers and high representatives emphasise the need for more integrated markets, through the improvement of technical infrastructure and common rules aligned with those of the EU.

FEMIP

26 – Marseille: The 11th FEMIP Conference is held on the theme of sustainable tourism addressing the issue of Eco-tourism as a potential suitable response to market trends and the market's potential. Small business leaders, key planners and financial partners in the tourist industry gather for the event. EIB vice-President Philippe de Fontaine Vive states that considering the difficulties of the countries involved in the transition process, tourism is a key growth and employment sector for the future of these countries. The EIB and Association of the Mediterranean Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ASCAME) renew their partnership signing an agreement to share responsibilities and resources to sustain the private sector.

www.eib.org/projects/regions/med

EU-Tunisia

28 – Brussels: The EU approves a financial assistance programme for Tunisia providing €68 million to support far-reaching reforms in the economic and social sectors and in the field of good governance. Special attention is given to economic recovery with actions especially targeting the more disadvantaged regions and social groups, such as unemployed graduates and the poorest families. The Programme also plans actions to improve the business

environment and the Tunisian economy's competitiveness. In the field of economy and in the framework of an EU-Tunisia Task Force follow-up, an Economic Consultative Council for investments between the European Union and Tunisia is also launched. Its main missions will be to: generate proposals to improve the business environment; explore new opportunities for European companies in the country; and reinforce industrial cooperation and the role of the SMEs.

Neighbourhood Civil Society

30 – *Brussels*: The EC adopts the second phase of the Neighbourhood Civil Society Facility to enhance involvement of civil society organisations in the European Neighbourhood area, with a budget allocation of €45.3 million for 2012-2013. The goal is to support civil society organisations in the European Neighbourhood area in the policy dialogue with partner governments; to strengthen civil society's role in fostering public accountability; and support their increased role in national reform processes and local development.

December

Health

5-7 – *Rome*: The EU-funded project EpiSouth-Plus holds its first project in order to present the current status of the project's activities and discuss future developments and strategies. Almost 150 participants discuss, among other issues, the challenges for coordinated action at regional level; the integration between laboratory and epidemiological surveillance; the early warning systems and epidemic intelligence. The EpiSouth-Plus network focuses on increasing health security in the Mediterranean Area and southeast Europe by enhancing and strengthening preparedness to common health threats and bio-security risks at national and regional levels.

www.episouthnetwork.org

EU-Algeria

6 – *Brussels*: The EU-Algeria Association Council meeting provides further evidence of the new dynamic of bilateral relations between Algeria and the EU. The EU reaffirmed its readiness to support this process, in particular through the further negotiation of a first Action Plan in the framework of the ENP. The Association Council also expressed its satisfaction with the conclusion of the consultations on dismantling tariffs for industrial products. The meeting also provides an opportunity to discuss many regional issues of common interest, such as regional integration, the Euro-Arab and Euro-African dialogues, Libya, Syria, the Sahel and the Middle East Peace Process. On the same day the EC adopts two new cooperation programmes to support Algeria's reform and modernisation, worth a total of €45 million. The first programme will support diversification of the economy and in particular the promising sector of fishing and aquaculture, while the second will focus on supporting the modernisation of public administration.

Human rights

10 – *Brussels*: As part of its SPRING initiative, the EC adopts a €2.8 million programme to support the action of two key institutions in the protection and promotion of human rights. EU priorities, i.e. strengthening the rule of law and respect of human rights, are also two of the main commitments made by the Moroccan government in the Action Plan for the implementation of the Advanced Status jointly negotiated with the EU. Cooperation between Morocco and the EU to strengthen democracy and respect of human rights is part of an established dynamic.

Energy

13 – *Paphos*: At the Ministerial Conference on "Energy Cooperation between the EU and countries of the south-eastern Mediterranean region" EU Member States and countries from the south-eastern Mediterranean unanimously

adopt a Joint Declaration calling for their cooperation to be strengthened on safety and environmental protection from offshore oil and gas activities, while also recognising the important role that the SEM countries can play in enhancing the energy supply of the EU due to the recent discoveries of natural gas.

Maghreb Integration

19 – *Brussels*: The EU issues a set of policy proposals to support the five countries of the Maghreb in their efforts towards closer cooperation and deeper regional integration. They come in a Joint Communication issued by High Representative Ashton and the European Commission, developed in further response to the transformation of the countries of the southern Mediterranean. Although rich in development potential and joined by common cultural and linguistic ties, the Maghreb (Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia) is one of the least integrated regions in the world. Studies have repeatedly shown that the removal of barriers in the region could have significant economic benefits and help in common efforts to combat instability and address a number of regional challenges.

http://eeas.europa.eu/mideast/docs/2012_joint_communication_maghreb_en.pdf

UfM-Algeria

22-24 – *Algiers*: The Algerian authorities have confirmed their strong support to the development of UfM activities at regional and sub-regional levels following a two-day working visit of the UfM Secretary General Sijilmassi. During the visit, Sijilmassi had extensive talks with Prime Minister Sellal and Foreign Affairs Minister Medelci regarding the perspectives of enhancing relations between Algeria and the UfM. The energy, transport, water, and economy sectors constitute the focus of the discussions. Decisions are taken to follow up these meetings with visits from UfM sectorial delegations in order to ensure the quick implementation of the next steps.