

Chronologies

Other Cooperation Initiatives in the Mediterranean

1. NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue and Istanbul Cooperation Initiative

At the end of the Cold War, NATO started to rethink its role and mission and realised that the best way to prevent possible threats to its members was to extend security and stability beyond its borders. To this end, in 1994 NATO launched the Mediterranean Dialogue (MD), targeting the southern shore of the Mediterranean. In June 2004, the Alliance re-booted its cooperation with Arab countries by launching the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI), aimed at Gulf countries, and by upgrading the MD to a "genuine Partnership."

The MD started in late 1994 with five countries: Morocco, Mauritania, Tunisia, Egypt and Israel. They were joined by Jordan (1995) and Algeria (2000). Its aims are to contribute to stability and security in the region, to prevent misunderstanding and to promote relations between the participating countries. It is based on the principles of self-differentiation and non-discrimination, mutual benefit, and complementarity with other international security organisations. It has both political and practical dimensions. Bilateral political consultations (NATO+1) are regularly held and provide a chance for sharing views on a wide range of issues. Meetings in the NATO+7 format are usually held after NATO summits and other major NATO events. The practical dimension includes seminars, workshops and practical activities in the field of modernising armed forces, civil emergency planning, border security, crisis management, scientific and environmental cooperation and NATO/PfP

military exercises. In 2004 the Dialogue was upgraded to "genuine Partnership" thus entailing an opportunity for MD partners to participate in selected military exercises, improving interoperability, share intelligence and contribute to military operations (Morocco and Israel participated in Operation Active Endeavour and Morocco contributed forces to the stabilisation of Kosovo). Considering the changes experienced by the MENA region, a more tailored assistance is envisaged through Individual Partnership Cooperation Programmes. The Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) is a new initiative aimed at promoting essentially practical cooperation on a bilateral basis, with interested countries in the broader region of the Middle East. After a series of high-level consultations between the NATO Secretary General (SG) and the GCC countries (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates) the ICI was launched at the NATO Istanbul Summit in 2004. Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar joined the Initiative in 2005, and the UAE joined shortly after. It offers a menu of bilateral activities in several areas of cooperation, including: tailored advice on defence transformation, budgeting and planning; military-to-military cooperation to attain interoperability; and participation in NATO PfP exercises and NATO-led operations (in Afghanistan and in Libya, where Qatar and the UAE contributed air assets). Since the Initiative's launch, its political dimension has been enhanced and its public diplomacy activities have been strengthened.

Another initiative carried out by NATO is the NATO Parliamentary Assembly

(NATO PA) which gathers parliamentarians from all the 28 Member States of the Alliance and Associates to discuss security and defence issues. The increasing attention to security in the Mediterranean region gave rise to the creation of the Assembly's Mediterranean and Middle East Special Group (GSM), a forum for cooperation and discussion with parliamentarians from the MENA region focused on political, economic, social and security issues. The GSM was launched in 1996 as a formal mechanism to address regional challenges, and engage leaders from the region in constructive dialogue. The GSM conducts two annual seminars, bringing together parliamentarians from NATO countries and their counterparts in the region, to explore specific topics and discuss the annual GSM Report. GSM seminars and reports cover a broad range of issues, including: security-related matters pertaining to the Mediterranean Area, the Middle East, and the Arabian Peninsula; practical security cooperation among NATO member countries and their partners; developments in MD and ICI partnerships; the dynamics of political change in the region and its potential economic, social, and security implications; religion and cultural forces; and common challenges including: energy security, migration, the environment and economic development. In 2005 the Standing Committee created the new status of Mediterranean Associate Members, opening the door for increased cooperation with MENA parliamentarians. The new status was soon granted to Morocco, Algeria, Israel and Jordan. Reflecting the increased strategic importance of the Gulf region and

following the launch of NATO's ICI in 2004, the NATO PA has also started establishing links with parliamentary institutions and advisory councils in countries of the Gulf region. Invitations to Mediterranean seminars are also extended on an ad hoc basis to Cyprus, Malta, and other parliaments in North Africa and the Middle East (such as Palestine).

Chronology of the Main Events: January 2012 – December 2012

- 14 February, NATO HQ, Brussels: Permanent representatives of NATO meet with senior officials from ICI countries Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. The seminar serves to discuss objectives: peace, security and stability; the way to solve security challenges and threats; the situation and security challenges in the MENA region; maritime security, energy security, and cyber security.
- 1 March, NATO HQ, Brussels: NATO SG Rasmussen welcomes the Qatari Prime Minister to discuss Partnership in view of the NATO Chicago Summit in May. During the meeting, the NATO SG underlines the role played by the country in the 2011 Libyan crisis and the Alliance's will to make partnerships even more effective.
- 3-4 April NATO HQ, Brussels: Bahraini diplomats visit NATO Headquarters. The topics discussed on the occasion include NATO's history and current issues, NATO's new Strategic Concept and NATO's outreach to the Middle East and the Gulf region. This includes NATO's military cooperation in the framework of the ICI; NATO-Russian relations, NATO's operations in Libya and Afghanistan; and the emerging security challenges.
- 11-13 April, Marseille (France): Parliamentarians from 20 NATO member countries, representatives from seven partners in the Southern Mediterranean and the Middle East and delegations from partner parliaments in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Afghanistan participate in a meeting co-organised by the NATO Parliamentary Assembly and French Parliament. Countries like Egypt, Libya and Tunisia are undergoing political and economic transitions

while other governments are resisting change or have employed violence to quell popular protests. EU, US and NATO officials highlight the need for a nuanced approach, taking into account the differences among countries of the region. NATO is likely to continue its approach combining multilateral frameworks provided by the MD and ICI but also bilateral relationships with individual countries in the region.

- 17 April, NATO HQ, Brussels: The NATO SG Rasmussen holds talks with King Abdullah II of Jordan during his official visit to NATO HQ. They use this meeting to review NATO-Jordanian cooperation in the framework of the MD as both Jordan and the 28 Alliance members face the same security challenges (terrorism, weapons of mass destruction and failed states). Jordan is one of the most active partners in the MD partnership and has an ambitious Individual Cooperation Programme aimed at enhancing cooperation in such areas as military-to-military ties, language training and emergency planning. The Jordanian Armed Forces benefits from two Trust Fund projects aimed at improving its operational and technical capacities. The country contributed to NATO-led missions in Afghanistan, the Balkans and, more recently, Libya.
- 20 May, Chicago (USA): in the NATO Chicago Summit Final Declaration, the Alliance takes stock of the unprecedented change in the Mediterranean and broader Middle East and support the aspirations of the people of the region for democracy, individual liberty and rule of law. The Libya crisis illustrated the benefit of regular consultation between the Alliance and regional organisations (the GCC and League of Arab States). The Alliance affirms its readiness to provide assistance to Libya on a case-by-case basis in areas where NATO can add value and welcomes Libya's stated interest to deepen relations with the Alliance. The MD helps to strengthen mutual understanding, interoperability, political dialogue and practical cooperation. Concerning the ICI, NATO welcomes Kuwait's offer to host an ICI Regional Centre, and ICI and MD partners are encouraged to be proactive in exploit-

ing the opportunities offered by their partnership with NATO.

- 18 June NATO HQ, Brussels: The Saudi Foreign Affairs Minister visits NATO HQ to meet with the NATO SG Rasmussen. Discussions focus on political dialogue and practical cooperation in the ICI context, where Saudi Arabia is considered a key player. The bilateral structure of the Initiative allows NATO to tailor cooperation to its partners' specific security needs and to hold regular political consultations with them.
- 21 June, Amman (Jordan): Deputy SG Vershbow meets the Minister of Foreign Affairs Nasser Judeh and Prince Al-Hussain. Topics discussed include the achievements in the implementation of the NATO-Jordan Individual Cooperation Programme in different areas, from political consultations to practical cooperation. The areas of potentially enhanced cooperation are: military interoperability, education and training, civil emergency planning and trust funds to eliminate obsolete ammunitions and unexploded ordnance for the safety of the civilian population. During the visit the Ambassador delivers a keynote address on "NATO in the New Global Security Era" at a public diplomacy conference attended by diplomats, academics and representatives of regional think tanks.
- 26-27 September, NATO HQ, Brussels: The NATO-Morocco Working Group, consisting of high-level representatives from Moroccan Ministries and the Royal Armed Forces, visits NATO HQ for a series of discussions and briefings with the Alliance's officials. Discussions include NATO's Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programme; military cooperation under the MD; NATO's role in the fight against terrorism; and NATO-Morocco cooperation under the Science for Peace and Security Programme. They also discuss the different opportunities of cooperation in crisis management and civil emergency planning.
- 8-10 October, Catania (Italy): Parliamentarians from NATO, and Associate and Mediterranean Partner countries gather for a seminar surveying the economic, strategic and political situation in the MENA region. The seminar focuses on the deep changes sweep-

ing across the region and specifically on the international efforts to cope with the security situation in Syria.

- 6-7 November, NATO HQ: The 8th NATO Regional Cooperation Course (NRCC-8) visits NATO HQ on a field study visit. The NRCC was launched after the NATO Riga Summit in 2006 in the framework of the NATO Training Cooperation Initiative with MD and ICI countries. Among the issues tackled, they review: NATO's current political agenda, its New Strategic Concept and NATO's Military Cooperation in the MD and ICI frameworks

- 22 November, NATO HQ, Brussels: In the framework of NATO's Public Diplomacy activities under MD, a delegation of Diplomats from Algeria has a prime opportunity to discuss NATO's transformation and outreach to the Mediterranean and Middle East region, the operation in Libya, the fight against terrorism and the scientific cooperation between NATO and its partners.

- 7 December, NATO HQ, Brussels: Political Affairs and Security Policy Division receive a delegation of Diplomats from the MENA region, including participants from Jordan, Morocco, Libya and Tunisia. They discuss NATO's transformation and outreach to the Mediterranean and the Middle East region; its operation in Libya; and its current agenda.

- 12-13 December, NATO HQ, Brussels: a delegation of high-level policy makers from Egypt, including representatives from several Ministries, visits NATO HQ to hold talks with the Alliance Staff in the MD framework. Among the topics discussed are: the Individual partnership and Cooperation Programme between NATO and Egypt, military cooperation, NATO-Egypt cooperation under the Science for Peace and Security Programme and other fields such as: crisis management, civil emergency planning, counter-terrorism, cyber-defence, armament, logistics and medical cooperation.

For further information:

Mediterranean Dialogue

www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_52927.htm

Istanbul Cooperation Initiative

http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_52956.htm

Chicago Summit Declaration

www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-1D16C652-576710B1/natolive/official_texts_87593.htm?selectedLocale=en
NATO PA Mediterranean Special Group
<http://www.nato-pa.int/default.asp?SHORTCUT=743>

2. Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation in the OSCE

Six Mediterranean countries, namely Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia, maintain special relations with the OSCE. The relation with Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation (MPC) dates back to the Helsinki Process and the Helsinki Final Act where security in Europe was considered closely linked with security and stability in the Mediterranean region as a whole. The OSCE has been able to share its experience with the MPC on different issues: confidence-building; security and new threats to security and stability; OSCE human dimension commitments; OSCE economic and environmental dimensions; media and the new technologies; a comprehensive approach to security; and migration and integration policies. Cooperation with Mediterranean countries increased over the years and in 1994, following the Budapest Summit decision, a Contact Group with the Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation was established within the framework of the Permanent Council. This informal group meets periodically to facilitate the interchange of information and the generation of ideas, as well as consider recent developments in the area, to address possible ways for the OSCE to support a peaceful democratic transition in the southern Mediterranean based on individual MPCs' requests to their needs. MPCs participate in different meetings and events in the framework of political cooperation with the OSCE, summarised below.

Mediterranean Contact Group

The OSCE Mediterranean Contact Group in 2012 is chaired by Ukraine

and it is driven by an open and interactive dialogue with Mediterranean Partners so as to respond to their interests and priorities. Through informal discussions, a list of potential projects and topics of cooperation is developed as a working tool to identify concrete activities and prioritise their implementation. In the course of the year six meetings are held where the Partners actively contribute with regular presentations on the situation and developments in their respective countries and regions thus contributing to enhance mutual knowledge. The OSCE's three dimensions are tackled on different occasions, along with the interest expressed by Libyan deputy Foreign Minister in exploring the possibility for Libya to become an OSCE Partner for Cooperation. A couple of meetings are devoted to preparing the 2012 OSCE Mediterranean Conference and to assess its outcomes. The annual joint meeting of the Asian and Mediterranean contact groups focuses on "Regional Organisations as Contributors to Comprehensive Security" and provides the opportunity to assess the progress achieved in the OSCE Partnerships with a view to be more interactive and action-oriented.

www.osce.org/mc/97787

Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC)

26 - 28 June 2012, Vienna (Austria): This year's ASRC theme is "Building the Security Community – Taking Stock and Looking Forward: A Building Blocks Approach." A special working session is devoted to OSCE Partners for Cooperation (Mediterranean and Asian) to discuss the OSCE's potential to promote stability and security in its surrounding areas (through intensified political consultations, strengthened practical cooperation and best practice sharing) and assess recent developments in the Middle East and Afghanistan.

www.osce.org/cio/91484

21st Annual Session of the OSCE PA

6 July Monaco (Monaco): The Mediterranean Forum takes place in the frame-

work of the OSCE PA Annual Session and is held under the theme “The OSCE Mediterranean partnership in a changing region: the impact of elections since the events of 2011.” The Ukraine Chair of the Mediterranean Contact Group says that its mission is to serve as a platform for sharing experiences and good practices in the areas of preventing or settling conflicts, developing confidence building measures and promoting democratic institutions. In this sense he encourages the OSCE MPC to take into account OSCE assistance in supporting democratic transition in the MENA region. For the first time Libyan officials are invited by the host country to participate in the Forum and call for international assistance to handle the country’s challenges: border security, containing internal divisions, advancing judicial cooperation and holding democratic elections. In the debate Mediterranean delegates ask for further privileges within the PA and discuss the possibility of extending the partnership to the Palestinian Authority and Libya. They also express their concern regarding the unstable situation in Syria.

www.oscepa.org/publications/reports/doc_download/1291-2012-monaco-annual-session-report-english

2012 OSCE Mediterranean Conference

30-31 October, Roma (Italy): Following the priorities expressed by Mediterranean Partners in preparation for the event, the agenda of the meeting is focused on “Economic Cooperation with Mediterranean Partners in the Democratic Transition Processes and Political Reforms.” The conference is the Partnership’s most important annual event and participants include the representatives from OSCE Member States, six Mediterranean partners and representatives from Libya and the Palestinian Authority as well as from financial institutions and international organisations such as the World Bank and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). The issues tackled range from how to enhance MPCs’ economies through

OSCE best practices, how to promote dialogue, developing cooperation on sustainable energy, addressing transnational threats to security and enhancing women’s participation in public life. This year, the Mediterranean Conference is characterised by an interactive exchange of views, the adoption of a more focused and operational approach through the implementation of concrete projects in the economic and social development areas. Among the specific proposals is the celebration of a seminar on human-trafficking and a specialist workshop on sustainable energy to share good practices.

www.osce.org/ec/98692

OSCE Ministerial Council

6 -7 December, Dublin (Ireland): The Irish OSCE Chairmanship hosts the 19th Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council (central decision-making and governing body of the OSCE) gathering Foreign Ministers and officials of the 57 OSCE participating States, Asian and Mediterranean partners and a number of NGO and civil society representatives, who have developed a set of recommendations on racism, xenophobia and human rights to be given to the participants of the OSCE Ministerial Council. Participants hold talks on the OSCE’s three dimensions: politico-military; economic and environmental; and human. Among the main decisions is the adoption of a road map to reinvigorate the organisation as the 40th anniversary of Helsinki Final Act in 2015 approaches. In response to the 2011 Vilnius Ministerial Council’s call for renewed attention to OSCE Partners for cooperation, the OSCE Secretary General (SG) initiates a process of informal consultations with both partners to engage in political dialogue with high-level representatives. Another occasion to tackle important issues with partners is the OSCE Ministerial Troika meeting with Mediterranean Partners at the Dublin Conference. The OSCE SG supports more practical cooperation and high level political dialogue and informs about projects to be implemented in

2013 on anti-terrorism, combating human-trafficking, sustainable energy and partner participation in the Helsinki +40 process. The incoming Swiss Chair of the Mediterranean Contact Group states that Switzerland hopes to consolidate the partnership with civil society and other international organisations such as the League of Arab States and EBRD. Special attention will be given to areas such as: border management, transnational threats, the fight against human trafficking, democratic elections and empowering populations.

www.osce.org/event/mc_2012

3. The 5+5 Dialogue

The 5+5 Dialogue was set up on 10 October 1990 during a ministerial meeting in Rome of the ten countries of the Western Mediterranean Basin: five countries from the Arab Maghreb Union (Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania, Libya and Tunisia) and five members of the European Union (France, Spain, Italy, Portugal and Malta). The 5+5 Dialogue has a flexible and informal nature. Over the years, it has been transformed from a merely political forum to one for strengthened regional and multidisciplinary cooperation in the Western Mediterranean. Its flexibility and informality have enabled a gradual opening up, and the participating ministers and senior officials now meet to discuss an increasing number of issues. Originally just a politic compromise between Foreign Ministers, it later expanded to include other spheres, such as education, the environment and renewable energies, as well as home affairs (since 1995), migration (since 2002), inter-parliamentary relations (since 2003), defence (since 2004), tourism (since 2006) and transport (since 2007). Due to its practical and operational nature, it is an ideal forum for the exchange of ideas and the launch of new initiatives. It can also capitalise on its restricted geographical scope, which is limited to the Western Mediterranean. This initiative has encouraged the insertion of Libya and Mauritania in the regional context.

Main meetings in 2012

- 6-7 February, Algiers (Algeria): The Western Mediterranean expert seminar on agricultural cooperation gathers experts from the 10 countries of the 5+5 Dialogue to adopt a series of recommendations on strengthening cooperation in agriculture and food security to be presented to their respective Agriculture Ministers. They recommend optimising agricultural production, increasing the food supply, monitoring prices and developing a regional mapping of supply and demand in order to strengthen complementarity in the trade of agricultural products.

www.ensa.dz/IMG/pdf/Recommandations_finales_du_seminaire_securite_alimentaire_dans_les_pays_5_5_Alger_6_et_7_fev_2012.pdf

- 21 February, Roma (Italy): The 9th meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the 5+5 Dialogue is held under Italian and Tunisian co-chairmanship. The Foreign Ministers of the Western Mediterranean Dialogue countries participate in the meeting as well as a number of observers: the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) Secretary General Ben Yahia, ENP European Commissioner Füle, UfM Deputy Secretary General (SG) and vice-President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM). In terms of political issues the main topics tackled are: the democratic process in the region (participants express satisfaction for the ongoing changes in the countries of the southern shore and stress the need to provide the necessary support for the success of this process, which depends on the resumption of economic development and the creation of employment); the war in Syria (ministers condemn the repression against the Syrian population and express their concern on the worsening of the humanitarian situation while supporting the initiative of the Arab League); the Peace Process in the Middle East (referring to the previous meeting in Tunis in 2008, ministers reiterate the urgency to implement a two-state solution, a resumption of peace talks while considering all Israeli settlements in the occupied territories a violation of international law). Econom-

ic issues are also discussed: the financial and economic crisis (participants recognise that a collective response is necessary, which involves the international community, as well as a reform of the global financial markets); strengthening Euro-Mediterranean economic cooperation (ministers welcome the resumption of the southern regional integration process through AMU institutions and call for support for SMEs in the region); migration and development (a global and comprehensive approach on circular mobility is required and the importance of remittances for growth is recognised). Participants also call for a consolidation and deepening of the Dialogue with a series of proposals that touch on a wide range of aspects: holding an annual Foreign Ministers meeting; strengthening the fight against terrorism, organised crime and illegal trafficking (in view of the new challenges posed by the Sahel region to the 5+5 countries); exploring the possibility of an early warning mechanism for potential risks in the Western Mediterranean; calling for a follow-up committee of the 5+5 Environment and Renewable energy conference held in 2010; calling for regional cooperation in the areas of Higher Education and Scientific Research; expressing their will to open the 5+5 Dialogue to representatives of civil society and other frameworks such as interparliamentary dimensions, Chambers of Commerce, Employers Associations and local communities; stressing the strategic role of tourism in the economies of the Western Mediterranean and calling for a common approach to boost this sector; intensifying high-level political meetings to monitor the follow-up of the conclusions of the conference. The next meeting will be held in Mauritania and co-chaired by Italy. On the occasion of the 5+5 conference, the meeting is enlarged to the FOROMED dimension later in the afternoon, involving Egypt, Greece, Turkey, the Arab league and the UfM.

www.esteri.it/MAE/approfondimenti/2012/20120220_Conclusions_des_Co_Presidences.pdf

- 12 March, Algiers (Algeria): The 7th Conference of the Group of Transport

Ministers of the Western Mediterranean gathers the Transport Ministers of the 5+5 countries as well as senior civil servants from France, Malta and Mauritania and the AMU Secretary General, UfM Deputy SG and a representative of the European Commission. Since the Group of Transport Ministers of the Western Mediterranean (GTMO 5+5) was created in 1995, its main mission has been to encourage cooperation in the transport sector in the region and to contribute actively to strengthening the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. This Conference has two main objectives: transferring the presidency from Italy to Algeria, and ratifying the Activity Report. The Italian Activity Report emphasises the work done to intensify Euro-Mediterranean cooperation through the stimulation of existing relations and the search for new ways to cooperate. In this regard, the UfM's labelling of the project "Completion of the Central Section of the Trans-Maghreb Motorway Axis" reflects the good institutional relations between the GTMO 5+5 and the different institutions for cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean region. Numerous studies and activities in the work areas were carried out during the year. Algeria's main priorities are: developing the motorway project within the UfM label, completing the Trans-Maghreb Motorway and implementing logistic platforms to promote trade between the countries of the Western Mediterranean. The next conference will be held no later than 2014 in Portugal to assess the implementation of the decision and transfer the presidency to Portugal.

www.cetmo.org/pdf/Conclusions%202012.pdf

- 5-6 October La Valletta (Malta): The 2nd Summit of the Heads of State and Government (HoSG) of the 5+5 Dialogue declares its support for the strengthening of the integration process between Maghreb countries and condemns violence committed by the Syrian government. At the 5+5 Summit some representatives of European and regional institutions (the President of the EC, ENP Commissioner, AMU SG, UfM SG, PAM SG and Arab League representatives) participate as observ-

ers. In the conclusions the HoSG call for an increased collaboration with regional formations, for ensuring regular sectoral meetings (also on new thematic areas like employment, investments, trade and energy, among others) and encouraging the participation of civil society and parliamentarians. In terms of security issues they call for addressing terrorism, organised crime, illicit trafficking and threats coming from the Sahel region. On economic issues they affirm the need to support SMEs in the region and intensify cooperation on transport and tourism. The forum places special emphasis on education and youth, which is considered a fundamental element for development in the Mediterranean, stressing the importance of youth mobility within the region. To this end they call for the organisation of a Youth Conference of the Western Mediterranean. On the topic of migration, the participants express their concern for the respect of fundamental rights and dignity of migrants. The HoSG invite the Foreign Affairs Ministers to ensure a follow-up of the conference conclusions.

<http://gov.mt/en/Government/Press%20Releases/Documents/pr2192b.pdf>

- 10 December, Rabat (Morocco): The 8th Meeting of the 5+5 Defence initiative is held under the Moroccan Presidency. Defence Ministers gather to discuss issues such as the importance of cooperation and multilateral activities for the stability and security of the area, the need to strengthen maritime and air security and the fight against clandestine immigration and arms trafficking. They also approve the Annual Cooperation Plan for 2013.

4. FOROMED

The 16th session of the Mediterranean Forum (Foromed) gathering Algeria, Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, Turkey and Tunisia, takes place in Rome on the occasion of the Foreign Affairs Ministerial Conference of the 5+5 Dialogue. The last Foromed meeting took place in 2008 and discussions were focused on the birth of the UfM. Libya and Mau-

ritania attend the meeting as guests of the Chair, while other European and regional initiatives representatives attend as observers (ENP Commissioner, UfM SG and AMU SG, among others). It is conceived as an informal forum for brainstorming and engaging in free and open discussion. Ministers review the ongoing transitions in the region, underlining the role played by civil society. They stress the need to urgently give answers to the needs expressed by the Mediterranean peoples and in this sense stress the importance of regional integration of the two shores of the Mediterranean in order to enhance employment opportunities and a sustainable economic system. Ministers welcome the renewed Southern Neighbourhood Policy and the assistance provided by the Deauville Partnership. Tackling the key issue of migration is considered a common concern and requires a global approach. They also call for the revitalisation of the UfM and strengthening of other complementary fora in the field of security (NATO, OSCE and Arab League). Ministers exchange views on human dimensions of cooperation including Higher education, professional training, human mobility and interreligious dialogue. On Syria and the Middle East Peace process the same views as expressed in the 5+5 Ministerial conference are supported. Morocco will hold the next presidency of the Mediterranean Forum

www.esteri.it/MAE/EN/Sala_Stampa/ArchivioNotizie/Approfondimenti/2012/02/20120220_chairfor.htm

5. Adriatic Ionian Initiative (All)

The Adriatic and Ionian Initiative (All) was established at the Summit on Development and Security on the Adriatic and Ionian Seas, held in Ancona (Italy) in 2000 and attended by the Heads of State and Government of Italy, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece and Slovenia. At the end of the Conference, the Foreign Ministers of the participating Countries signed the "Ancona Declaration" in order to strengthen regional cooperation to promote political and economic sta-

bility, thus creating a solid base for the process of European integration. The Initiative was later extended to Serbia and Montenegro, both of which, following the referendum in Montenegro, remained All Participating Countries. Following the recent EU approach to support multilateral sub-regional cooperation and the example of the adoption of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea, the All has started working, since the beginning of 2010, on the idea of a Macro-Region for the Adriatic Ionian Basin, which considers the common historical and cultural heritage, the use of the common sea, the need to protect the marine environment from pollution, the opportunity of sustainable development and growth and the common goal to make this basin an internal sea of the EU. This initiative is supported by all Adriatic Ionian actors at all levels of government. In order to bring it to the attention of the EU authorities, the last Adriatic Ionian Council (the decision-making body of the initiative) was held in 2011 in Brussels at the premises of the Committee of the Regions. The initiative's Chairmanship rotates every May/June according to an alphabetical criteria. The Serbian Chairmanship ends in May 2012 and Slovenia will take over until May 2013.

Main events under the Serbian Chairmanship

The Serbian Chairmanship's main objectives are focused on strengthening good neighbourly relations, stability and prosperity of the All Participating Countries and developing closer relations between the West Balkans region and the EU.

- 14 February, Athens (Greece): The Workshop of the Stakeholders of the Macro-region focuses on ways to support the EU Strategy for the Adriatic Ionian Region. Some of the topics discussed are management projects to improve the environment; transport conditions on the coastal area of the Adriatic and Ionian Seas; strategies to benefit from cross-border cooperation; and a maritime strategy for the Adriatic Ionian region.
- 22 March, Belgrade (Serbia): A round table is held on environmental

protection. Participants, All Member States and international organisations, as well as the representatives of Serbia's business and civil sectors, meet under the framework "On the Road to Rio +20" (UN Conference on Sustainable Development), supported by the UNEP, UNP and OSCE. Attendees present their plans for the transition to the Green Economy and the Summit on Sustainable Development.

- 26 April, Belgrade (Serbia): At the 10th Conference of the Speakers of the All Parliaments the main topic tackled is the strengthening and improvement of regional cooperation in the Adriatic-Balkan basin, with the aim of accelerating the process of European integration. It is decided to further deepen the cooperation among the parliaments of the All particularly through the establishment of parliamentary delegations to the All.

- 26 April, Belgrade (Serbia): Meeting of the All Ministers of Agriculture. Representatives of the All Participating States discuss the future course of reforms for agriculture and rural development and opportunities of regional cooperation.

- 30 April, Belgrade (Serbia): The 14th All Council meeting concludes the Serbian Presidency. The meeting is attended by representatives of All Participant States, representatives of the Regional Initiatives and the EU. Participants express their satisfaction on the progress of the Western Balkan States in their respective EU integration processes and discuss the current situation in the region. The Belgrade Declaration is adopted with the wish that the European Council approves the mandate to the European Commission for the start-up of the action plan of the strategy this year.

www.aii-ps.org/index.php/news-events/news/item/download/164_79c790d963a20dd021c15d2a40bca652

Main events under the Slovenian Chairmanship

One of the main goals of the All-PS Slovenian Chairmanship is to develop and strengthen relations, in a project directed by local and regional authorities, as well as the three Adriatic Ion-

ian Fora located in Ancona: UniAdrion, the Forum of the Chambers of Commerce, and Forum of Cities and Towns. Slovenia advocates cooperation within the All with a focus on issues related to the sea and the coastal region.

- 6-8 June, Brindisi (Italy): The 12th Adriatic Ionian Forum of Chambers of Commerce is organised into six different round tables: the environment, agriculture, female entrepreneurship, fishing, transport and tourism. The main focus of this year's edition is "The Role of the Forum for the establishment of the Adriatic Ionian Macro-Region."

- 12-13 June, Trieste (Italy): In the second "Workshop on Maritime Affairs in the Adriatic Ionian Macro-Region" stakeholders present their proposals on how to benefit from maritime activities in terms of employment, sustainable growth, accessibility and better quality of life in coastal area, and discuss "blue growth," sustainable and secure maritime transport, protection of the marine environment and fisheries.

- 22 November, Ancona (Italy): The 2nd Committee of Senior officials focuses on the latest update of the construction process of the Adriatic Ionian Macro-Region. The representatives of the All Governments are informed about the high-level meeting between Commissioner Hahn and the eight All Ministers of Foreign Affairs. The eight All Countries give their full commitment, while Commissioner Hahn expresses his appreciation for their efforts towards the shared objective of reaching the common goal of attaining approval of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic Ionian Macro-Region by 2014. Senior Officials approve the Regional Cooperation Programme 2012. The representatives of the three Adriatic Ionian Fora for civil society (Chambers of Commerce, Universities and Cities) also participate in the meeting informing the Senior Officials of the latest updates of their international activities and supporting the Adriatic Ionian Macro-Region.

- 30 November, Brussels (Belgium): The EC adopts a maritime strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Seas that will boost smart, sustainable and inclusive

growth in the region. The strategy rests on four pillars: a stronger blue economy, a healthier marine environment, a safer maritime space, and responsible fishing activities. The vision behind the initiative: making the sea a central space of innovation, economic opportunities and prosperity for all the countries around it. Certain priority areas are identified, for example: stimulating the creation of maritime clusters and research networks; increasing skills and mobility of the workforce; optimising transport links by developing an integrated, demand-based, low-carbon maritime transportation network; and supporting the sustainable development of coastal and maritime tourism. The strategy will be implemented in 2013 through an Action Plan to be jointly developed with the region's stakeholders. The new strategy is part of the overall Integrated Maritime Policy of the EU, which already includes maritime strategies for the Baltic and the Atlantic Seas. It could be the first building block of a wider macro-regional strategy that the Adriatic and Ionian countries are willing to develop.

http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/policy/sea_basins/adriatic_ionian/index_en.htm

- 6 December, Zagreb (Croatia): High-level stakeholder conference "Setting an Agenda for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth from the Adriatic and Ionian Seas." Participants of the eight All countries welcome the EC communication on the Maritime Strategy for Adriatic and Ionian Seas and support the priorities identified in it. They stress the need to increase connections in order to strengthen commercial links among countries; develop the exchange of know-how; recognise the role of cultural heritage; put in place initiatives for a safer maritime space; and underline the need to coordinate all available funding resources.

http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/policy/sea_basins/adriatic_ionian/documents/20121206-conclusions_en.pdf

For further information:
Adriatic Ionian Initiative (All)
<http://www.aii-ps.org/>

6. The Deauville Partnership

The Deauville Partnership with Arab Countries in Transition (PACT) is launched in 2008 during the G8 meeting in Deauville, France. It is an international effort to support the Arab countries undergoing transitions towards “free, democratic, tolerant societies.” It includes five transitioning countries (Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia, Morocco and Libya), the G-8 countries, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, Turkey and ten international financial Institutions (IFIs). During 2012 Yemen also joined the Partnership. The transitioning countries have moved towards democracy and economic development. However they face growing economic challenges that in some cases delay their political transition. The Partnership aims to be a platform through which the international community can engage in helping these transitioning countries to achieve their objectives. The four key priorities areas identified by the G8 countries are: stabilisation (promoting economic stabilisation is necessary to pursue reform), job creation, participation/governance (support with reforms that support transparency, accountability, governance) and integration (opening up their economies to increase their trade and investment with the G8 and each other).

Main meetings in 2012

- 11-12 April, Dead Sea (Jordan): representatives of the Deauville Partnership countries and IFIs gather to launch the trade, investment and integration pillar in order to improve the environment for trade, foster SMEs and attract investments.
- 20 April, Washington (USA): Meeting of Finance Ministers and key IFIs to advance in the work of the Partnership. They welcome steps taken by the partnership countries to implement home-grown reforms and programmes to restore growth and confidence while protecting the most vulnerable groups. The Partnership agrees to explore a new transition fund that will provide grants, technical assistance and knowledge exchange to help countries to

develop home-grown reforms. Participants also agree to launch a new initiative to help countries regain access to private capital: the Capital Market Access Initiative.

www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Generic-Documents/Deauville%20Partnership%20Communique%20FINAL.pdf

- 24 April, Paris (France): Meeting of Partnership members on the Governance Pillar. Participants reach agreement on a number of concrete steps focusing on open governance and corruption (to foster the rule of law and enhance citizen confidence in democratic institutions), asset recovery, improving the business climate for SMEs and international exchanges (Partnership countries will support exchanges and training programmes).
- 18 July, Rome (Italy): the Partnership countries gather to discuss policies on SMEs, in order to develop and promote them. Given the challenges related to reforming the regulatory environment and access to finance, multilateral institutions will help to provide arrangements, useful advice and solid start-up to sustain SMEs.
- 28 September, New York (USA): Foreign Ministers of the Deauville PACT meet on the margins of the United Nations General Assembly to review the ongoing progress in the Partnership and affirm their multilateral commitment to the political and economic transitions in Egypt, Jordan, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia, while supporting the reform actions being taken by these countries.
- 12 October, Tokyo (Japan): Finance Minister and regional and international financial institutions meet on the margins of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund Annual Meeting. They all welcome Yemen to the Partnership and discuss the economic challenges facing the new Yemeni government. At the meeting the Partnership launches a new Transition Fund to provide countries with technical assistance to undertake policy reforms to build more inclusive and transparent economies. They also assess the efforts carried out: the Capital Market Access Initiative, Asset Recovery and the expansion of the EBRD to the Mid-

dle East and North Africa (decided in 2011 but whose first investment in the region was approved in September 2012).

7. The Arab Maghreb Union (AMU)

The Arab Maghreb Union was founded in 1989 in Marrakesh by Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and Mauritania to materialise their shared desire for greater unity among Maghreb countries, based on the links existing between the peoples and their complementarity. The main goals of this union are the free circulation of goods and people, eventually constituting a free trade area, a customs union and a common market, the adoption of common policies in all possible domains as well as fostering the progress and well-being of the people. The main decision-making bodies are the Presidential Council, consisting of Heads of State, the Council of Foreign Affairs Ministers and the Specialised Ministerial Commissions. The Secretariat-General is based in Rabat and the incumbent Secretary-General is the Tunisian, Habib Ben Yahia. Its principal projects are the creation of a Maghrebi investment and foreign trade bank, a Maghrebi university and a Maghrebi academy of sciences. Nonetheless, the AMU is struggling to become fully operative because a number of issues hinder the development of good relations between the Maghrebi partners: the Algerian-Moroccan border, closed since 1994, and the matter of Western Sahara, which embitter relations between Morocco and Algeria, and the international embargo on Libya from the 1990s to 2003. As a consequence, the Council of Heads of State has not met since 1994 and the future of the AMU remains contingent to the normalisation of relations between the partners.

Meetings in 2012

- 18 February, Rabat (Morocco): The 30th Session of the Council of Foreign Affairs Ministers convenes in Rabat in the hope of relaunching the AMU, which has been at a stand-still for years. This will to revitalise the Union

and establish greater cohesion among Maghrebi countries falls within the broader context of the political upheaval experienced in the Maghreb since 2011. The Ministers decide to hold a Summit of Heads of State before year's end in Tunisia, a first since 1994, without, however, setting a specific date. The decision to convene a meeting in Algiers to discuss security matters is taken. The Ministers indicate their wish to intensify consultations with a view to the 5+5 Dialogue meeting to be held in Italy in the next few days. The sensitive issues that had paralysed the organisation are deliberately avoided. In any case, the proposal by the head of Moroccan diplomacy, Saad-Eddine El Othmani, to change the organisation's name to Maghreb Union, justified by the fact that the Maghreb is composed of Arabs and Imazighen, is rejected by the Tunisian, Libyan and Algerian ministers.

- 9 July, Algiers (Algeria): The Meeting of Foreign Affairs Ministers programmed at the 30th Session to address security matters focuses on the need for co-operation and, for the first time, reflects a common security strategy, primarily in response to the ag-

gravated security situation in the Maghreb, affected by the crisis in Mali. The head of Libyan diplomacy hopes to see his counterparts co-operate by extraditing Libyan criminals having taken refuge in their countries. Algeria proposes holding such a security affairs meeting on an annual basis.

- 9 September, Nouakchott (Mauritania): Maghrebi Ministers of Religious Affairs meet for the first time on the topic of "Moderate Sunni Islam and its Role in the Cultural Immunity of Maghrebi Societies," at a time when a wave of protests has broken out against the film, "*Innocence of Muslims*," and the caricatures in the French newspaper, *Charlie Hebdo*. The participants advocate the implementation of a common security strategy in order to struggle against Islamist extremism. They likewise call on Ulemas to preach moderation and condemn extremism.

- 17 December, Brussels (Belgium): A joint communication by the European Commission and the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy declares their support for stepping up co-operation and regional integration in the Maghreb. The Commission and High Representative

welcome the new impetus of Maghrebi countries towards greater co-operation and suggest the EU's contribution via a series of proposals in a number of fundamental areas such as security, the struggle against unemployment, a solidarity-based economy, trade, energy, environment, etc. The communication invites the EU and the AMU to initiate a high-level dialogue on these proposals and establish contacts with civil society and the business world.

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

- 26 December, Rabat (Morocco): The 13th meeting of the Ministerial Commission on Human Resources closes the year, once again without the Summit of AMU Heads of State being held, though it had been announced. The primary aim of this commission is to address the situation of AMU institutions and organisms having to do with human resources. The Maghrebi Ministers of Education, accompanied by the head of the Moroccan government, Abdelilah Benkirane, announce the forthcoming creation of the Maghrebi University and the Maghrebi Academy of Sciences.