

Chronology of the Barcelona Process

The chronology that follows includes the most notable events that took place during 2006 as regards the Barcelona Process.

January 2006

12th January 2006

Austrian Presidency

Brussels: The priorities of the Austrian Presidency of the EU include the strengthening of the European Neighbourhood Policy and the consolidation of the Barcelona Process, as well as the implementation of the Association Agreements with Algeria and the continuation of dialogue with Syria.

www.eu2006.at/en/The_Council_Presidency/Priorities_Programmes/index.html

12th/13th January 2006

Industrial Cooperation

Brussels: Meeting of the working party on Euro-Mediterranean Industrial Cooperation to look at progress in implementation process of the Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Enterprise.

16th/17th January 2006

Politics and Security

Brussels: Meeting of the Senior Officials of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership where they discuss the implementation of the Five-Year Work Programme adopted in Barcelona and of the Code of Conduct on Countering Terrorism. Other issues discussed are the follow-up of the three Media seminars concluded in Barcelona on November 2005 and the setting up of a Euro-Med Media Task Force

16th/17th January 2006

Euromed Committee

Brussels: During the meeting the main

priorities of the Austrian Presidency in Chapters I and II of the Five-Year Work Programme Plan are presented. The Committee deals with the activities and events planned for the first semester of 2006 and make an evaluation on the progress of the Anna Lindh Foundation.

16th January 2006

MEDA/Transport

Brussels: The European Commission launches the "Motorways of the Sea" project, financed with 4.8m euros and concerning Mediterranean partners This project aims to encourage the development of intermodal transport in the region and intermodal integration through land connections and land-sea platforms.

16th/20th January 2006

Politics and Security

Malta: The EuroMed Police Regional Seminar on "The Fight against Money laundering" aims at reinforcing Euro-Mediterranean Police cooperation on regional matters such as cross-border cash trafficking, the role of specialised police in fighting money laundering and alternative electronic money transferring.

20th January 2006

Neighbourhood

Athens: First Meeting of the Short and Medium-term Priority Environmental Action Programme (SMAP) Working Group on the future of the SMAP correspondents' Network in the context of the European Neighbourhood Policy and new developments such as the initiative for the de-pollution of the Mediterranean Sea. SMAP is a MEDA-funded regional programme for environment managed by EuropeAid and EC.

22nd/26th January 2006

Terrorism

Amman: EuroMed Police Regional Seminar on "The Fight against Terrorism", organised in the framework of the MEDA-funded Regional Police Cooperation Project which aims at facilitating police cooperation on regional matters linked with terrorism such as radicalisation, recruitment, financing, prevention, repression and coordination among the various services dedicated to fighting terrorism.

26th/27th January 2006

Statistical Cooperation

Luxembourg: Launch of MEDSTAT II, a regional programme on statistical Cooperation which aims to improve the quality of statistical data in the Mediterranean Partner countries.

27th/29th January 2006

Higher Education

Catania: The third Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Higher Education aims to ensure greater convergence among the various university systems in the Mediterranean region. The conference approves a final Declaration in which education is recognised as a driving force for the development of human resources and dialogue among cultures.

30th January 2006

Parliamentary Assembly

Lisbon: Meeting of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly's Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs, Social Affairs and Education to exchange views on the measures in which education contributes to economic development;

on the role of social stability; and on the impact of the increase of oil in prices. www.europerl.eu.int/intcoop/empa/home/default_en.htm

February 2006

6th February 2006

MEDA Maghreb

Rome: The EU member States as well as the representatives of Maghreb countries eligible for MEDOCC (regional programme for the Western Mediterranean) meet in order to present the state of ongoing projects financed by MEDOCC and to discuss the next stages of the MEDA-Neighbourhood Programme aiming at financially supporting the participation of the Maghreb region in the INTERREG-MEDOCC Project.

www.interreg-medocc.org/fr/home-html.php

21st February 2006

Media

Brussels: Launching of the MEDA Regional Project dedicated to the training of MEDA journalists. The purpose of this project is to reinforce the capacity of the written press and electronic media journalists from the MEDA countries, and to help them increase their production of news and other materials on the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

22nd February 2006

Politics and Security

Brussels: Meeting of the Senior Officials of the Euro-Mediterranean. During the meeting, the Senior Officials participating spend a long time discussing on the "cartoons controversy" and exchange their views along with the EU High Representative for the CFSP, Javier Solana, who informs them about the organisation of the "Xenophobia and Racism in the Media" seminar.

22nd February 2006

Euromed Committee

Brussels: The meeting focuses on the "cartoons controversy". The Commission presents a Decalogue of ideas to involve Euro-Mediterranean networks in the strengthening of intercultural dialogue. Spain and Turkey present an

evaluation of the Alliance of Civilizations Project, while the Ministerial Conference on Trade, planned for March, is presented.

23rd February 2006

Education

Sibline: Launching of an education programme to improve access to employment for Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. The project, within the framework of the MEDA programme, is aimed at enabling access to employment by improving UNRWA's education system through its network of primary and secondary schools.

27th February 2006

Ministerial Meeting

Brussels: The meeting of the General Affairs and External Relations Council expresses deep concern at the events that followed the publication of cartoons in European media. It backs freedom of expression and strongly condemns all violent acts and threats. At the same time, the Council acknowledges and regrets that they were considered offensive by Muslims all over the world. The Ministers will actively promote dialogue, mutual understanding and respect through the existing mechanisms including the Barcelona Process and the Anna Lindh Foundation.

http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/gena/88541.pdf

March 2006

2nd March 2006

Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area (EMFTA)

Brussels: Presentation of the final report for Phase 2 of the gradual establishment of the Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area. An independent sustainability impact assessment (SIA) study of EMFTA carried out by external agents is expected to help the EC and its Partners to examine the potential impacts of agreed trade measures on sustainable development. The commission will define priority areas on which the SIA should concentrate under Phase 3, with particular consideration for the most sensitive sectors.

www.sia-trade.org/emfta/en/index.shtml

7th / 8th March 2006

Neighbourhood

Rome: The EC launches a consultation process to discuss the future European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). This conference aims to present to the ENPI stakeholders the proposed programming framework and the main elements of the CBC (Cross Border Component) strategy for ENPI. The four future CBC programmes are: the Multilateral Mediterranean Programme, Multilateral Black Sea, Spain/Morocco and Italy/Tunisia. This event has brought together representatives of the Member States and the 14 countries of the Neighbourhood and Russia in order to discuss the CBC 2007-2013 planning.

9th/11th March 2006

Euromed Audiovisual

Rabat: Meeting of the EUROMED Audiovisual II Programme that aims at enhancing audiovisual cooperation between Europe and MEDA countries by developing, distributing and promoting Mediterranean movies in Europe and within the 10 MEDA partners.

14th March 2006

Politics and Security

Brussels: Presentation of the actions carried out under the EuroMed Civil Protection Programme. During the meeting, the Senior Officials in the Barcelona Process also present a more ambitious long-term programme that would enable support and improved information for the Mediterranean populations in the event of catastrophes of natural or technological origin thus developing a real civil protection culture in the event of a crisis.

15th March 2006

Euromed Committee

Brussels: The Austrian Presidency announces its decision to prepare a report presenting the different cultural initiatives. The meeting also deals with the implementation of the Five-Year Work Programme and the activities for promoting intercultural dialogue. Finally, a symbolic decision is taken from now on the Board of Governors of the Anna Lindh Foundation will be chaired by a representative from a Southern Partner State.

16th March 2006

Rule of Origin

Brussels: Fifth Meeting of the Pan-Euro-Med Working Group on Rules of Origin addresses a number of practical issues related to the implementation of the system of pan-Euro-Mediterranean cumulation of origin. Participants include representatives from the customs administrations and other relevant ministries from all Mediterranean Partner countries, as well as Romania, Bulgaria, the EFTA countries and the Faeroe Islands

19th/22nd March 2006

Health

Cairo: European Union Experts visit Egypt to offer first-hand assistance to fight against bird flu which was officially declared in Egypt in February. Training sessions for Egyptian officers are organized on measures and policies implemented in the EU for avian flu containment, as regard avoiding human contamination and restricting the spread of the flu.

20th/ 21st March 2006

FEMIP

Vienna: During this preliminary meeting at expert level to prepare the 6th Ministerial Meeting of the European Investment Bank (EIB)'s facility for FEMIP, a think-tank has been set up, gathering delegates from finance ministries, technical ministries, public institutions, academic circles and private companies. The Experts' Committee is charged with the task of putting forward practical and operational recommendations on sectorial issues which FEMIP can help implement.

20th/ 21st March 2006

FEMIP

Vienna: In order to further develop a Mediterranean Energy Market, experts from EU and Mediterranean Partner countries encourage renewable energy and energy efficiency. Energy issues are of a geo-political and socio-economic nature. Sources are unequally distributed between countries; therefore, this situation represents a possible field for cooperation and a major threat to stability in the area.

22nd/23rd March 2006

Science & Technology Cooperation

Paris: The closing conference of the Euro-MEDANet/ Euro-MEDANet2 projects aims at reviewing the Euro-Mediterranean S&T cooperation and lay down the foundation for better coordinated cooperation in the future. The two projects will end with the inauguration of seven Information Points (InPs) on the eastern and southern rim of the Mediterranean that will disseminate information about the S&T cooperation and funding opportunities by the European commission.

www.euromedanet.gr

23rd March 2006

Health

Brussels: After the confirmation from Israeli authorities of an outbreak of avian flu in the country, the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health endorses a Commission proposal to ban imports of live poultry, poultry meat, poultry products and eggs from Israel.

24th March 2006

Trade

Marrakech: 5th Euro-Med Trade Conference to foster trade and economic relations across the Mediterranean. During the Euro-Mediterranean Trade Conference, the Trade Ministers reinforce their commitment to create the EMFTA by 2010 and to foster trade and economic relations across the Mediterranean with the formal opening of negotiations on the liberalisation of trade in services and investments between Europe and a first group of Mediterranean countries. Along with these topics, ministers also examine ways and means to reinforce south-south regional integration.

http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/issues/bilateral/regions/euromed/pr240306_en.htm

26th/27th March 2006

EMPA

Rabat: The President of the EMPA, Josep Borrell, states that Europe's major challenge in the years ahead will be its relations with the Muslim world. He also regrets the Danish cartoons incident and reiterates that freedom of expression is a central value of the

Barcelona Declaration. Despite the "gaping wound" of the Israel-Palestine conflict, which has always been the Achilles' heel of the Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, he insists on replacing an atmosphere of confrontation with one of dialogue. The EMPA ends with a call to the future Palestinian and Israeli governments to respect past commitments regarding the peace process.

At the end of the Assembly, President Borrell hands over the gavel to the Tunisian parliamentary Mr. Fouad Mebazaa.

www.europarl.eu.int/president/defaulten.htm

27th/31st March 2006

Terrorism

Brussels: Closing Seminar of a regional police cooperation project financed by MEDA that aimed at strengthening the Euro-Mediterranean police cooperation on regional matters. The actions undertaken have dealt with terrorism, money laundering, narcotics, human trafficking, cyber criminality and the use of new communications technologies by terrorist groups. The seminar also presented developments in European legislation as regards to fighting terrorism.

29th March 2006

EuroMed Heritage

London: Closing stages of the EuroMed Heritage II Project and launch of the multilingual interactive website and database www.med-voices.org. During the event, the project showcases the films and documentaries that have been created in and about partner cities and presents some of the ongoing work from around the Mediterranean.

www.med-voices.org

30th March 2006

FEMIP

Beirut: The EIB participates with 10 million euros in the setting of the Euro-Mena Fund focused on investments in mid-market companies in the Mediterranean countries, aiming at sectors in which to build regional groups:

www.eib.eu.int/news/press/press.asp?press=3082

30th March 2006

Journalism

Alexandria: The Anna Lindh Foundation

and the International Federation of Journalists call for a journalist award that aims at encouraging journalism that contributes to the dialogue between cultures and people by spreading awareness of diversity.

April 2006

1st April 2006

Association Agreement: EU-Lebanon
Brussels: The Association Agreement between EU and Lebanon enters into force. The Association Agreement, signed in 2002, sets out the principles governing political and economic relations. It is also considered a first step in Lebanon's participation in the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). The EU-Lebanon negotiations on ENP Action start on 6th April.

6th/7th April 2006

Education

Turin: The Annual Forum of the MEDA regional project "Education and Training for Employment" (MEDA-ETE) provides a cooperation framework for Euromed partners, encourages the exchange of experiences and good practices in the fields of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and employment, while it also facilitates network building for further cooperation among stakeholders in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

www.meda-ete.net

www.etf.eu.int

7th April 2006

Energy

Brussels: First meeting of the Maghreb Electricity Group as part of the regional Neighbourhood programme with the aim of creating an integrated electricity market between three North African countries (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia) and the European Union.

10th/11th April 2006

Water

Amman: In the framework of the "MEDA-Water" programme, a two-day sectoral workshop for MEDA water projects is organised in Amman. The objective of the workshop is to exchange information on project methodologies and results and to discuss ways of strengthening co-

operation on wastewater and/or wastewater reuse.

www.emwis.org/MEDA/meda_water.htm

20th April 2006

Lebanon

Brussels: The first EU-Lebanon Association Council is warmly welcomed by the Austrian EU Council Presidency and the Republic of Lebanon as a new era in their bilateral relations to deepen the existing political, cultural, social and economic ties. The Association Agreement entered into force on the 1st of April and will bring a significant contribution to Lebanon's endeavours in reforming its economy and strengthening its democratic system.

20th April 2006

Euromed Cinemas

Rabat: Euromed Cinemas is one of the twelve projects implemented by the Euromed Audiovisual regional programme, managed by the Delegation of the European Commission in Morocco. The objective of the project is to encourage the promotion and distribution of Mediterranean and European films in the Partner countries, as well as Mediterranean films in the 25 countries of the EU

www.europacineams.com/fr/programmes/euromed/index.php

www.ccm.ma

24th/26th April 2006

ENPI

Brussels: The European Commission organises a meeting to discuss the contents of the Cross-border Cooperation programmes. The CBC is a component of the ENPI, which aims at reinforcing cooperation with territories bordering the European Union and it will finance joint programmes bringing together Member States and Partner Countries sharing a common border. The CBC will be cofinanced by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/europeaid-projects/enpi_cross_border/index_en.htm

24th/25th April 2006

EuroMeSCO

Paris: The Euro-Mediterranean Network of Strategic Research and Foreign Policy Institutes holds its preparatory meet-

ing on "Democracy and Inclusion" to address the influence of migrant communities on political reforms in the Mediterranean area. EuroMeSCO's main aim is to disseminate research done by the institutes affiliated to the network for the construction of peace and stability in the Mediterranean area.

www.euromesco.net/euromesco/matrix.asp

25th April 2006

Tourism

Malta: Within the EUMEDIS regional MEDA programme, the "MEDINA" project is aiming at promoting cultural tourism in the Mediterranean area through the development of a Portal and nine national sites (Algeria, Cyprus, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, the Palestinian Territories, Syria and Tunisia).

www.medinaproject.net

27th April 2006

Anna Lindh Foundation

Brussels: First Board Meeting of the Anna Lindh Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures. The Jordanian President calls upon the 35 Governments of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership to support and activate the national networks of the Anna Lindh Foundation in order to develop a series of concrete and visible activities to build understanding and respect for differences.

www.euromedalex.org

May 2006

3rd May 2006

Fishery

Brussels: The Fisheries Committee gives the go-ahead to an EU-Morocco Agreement despite the reservations of some members of the European Parliament about its international ramifications regarding Western Sahara. The fishing agreement with Morocco covers 119 vessels, and includes a 60,000 ton quota for industrial pelagic fishing for several Northern European fleets. The Committee votes to add a paragraph ensuring that "in the event of evidence that the use to which the Agreement is being put is in contravention of international obligations, the Commis-

sion shall take immediate steps to suspend the Agreement.” This addition refers to the relationship between Morocco and Western Sahara.

4th/5th May 2006

Security

Vienna: Representatives from more than 50 countries and international organisations including neighbouring Arab countries participate in the Ministerial Conference. The participants express their wish to develop a “Partnership for Security” and emphasize the coherent framework offered by the ENP for co-operation on security-related matters. Concrete measures and actions are identified in three priority areas: combating terrorism, organised crime and corruption and migration.

5th/8th May 2006

Training

Malta: The Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies leads the Information & Training Seminar for Euro-Mediterranean Diplomats belonging to the 35 partner Countries. The primary objective of the Seminar is familiarization with the Euro-Mediterranean Process; other areas are examined such as: the EU institutional setting and decision-making patterns, the question on how to deal with the EU in practical terms, presentations of the Euromed Partnership Five-year Work Programme, the Code of Conduct Countering Terrorism and education and socio-cultural exchanges in the region.

www.euromed-seminars.org/mt/seminar20/programme.htm

6th May 2006

EMPA

Tunis: The Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly reiterates its warning against the chaos which would result from cutting aid to Palestinian people, after the EU decision to suspend aid to the Palestinian Authority. The Bureau also engages in a wide-ranging discussion on human rights in which the President raises the status of the Tunisian Human Rights League, which continues to face severe restrictions in attempting to carry out its work.

www.europarl.europa.eu/president/defaulten.htm

15th May 2006

Water

Nice: The 9th Meeting of the Euro-Mediterranean Information System on the Know-How in the Water Sector – EMWIS is held in the framework of the regional MEDA programme on local water management. During the Meeting the participants of 13 countries define the thematic priorities of EMWIS for the 2007-2010 period and the Terms of Feasibility of the Mediterranean Water Observatory.

www.emwis.org/documents/html/9th_sc_06.htm

15th May 2006

EU-Egypt

Brussels: The EU expresses its concern following the prolongation of the State of Emergency in Egypt. The government of Egypt states that it won't be used against political opponents but only to combat terrorism. The EU is also worried about the ongoing disciplinary proceedings against two Egyptian judges for criticism regarding the conduction of the Egyptian Parliamentary elections of 2005 and recalls the pledges of political reforms contained in the election programme of President Mubarak in 2005, especially the promise to lift the State of Emergency.

www.eu2006.at/en/News/CFSP_Statements/May/1505Egypt.html

16th May 2006

Association Agreement EU-Algeria

Brussels: First Association Council meeting with Algeria. During the meeting, the Council endorses the political decision to establish the work programme for implementation of the various sections of Association Agreement. The meeting identifies possible areas of cooperation: administrative reforms, economy, movements of persons, education, research, energy and the fight against terrorism. The Council notes the good conditions in which the trade section of the Association agreement is implemented and that since the launching of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, Algeria has received an overall amount of 560 million euros to finance technical assistance projects to support socio-economic development and structural adjustment.

16th May 2006

Euromed Market

Brussels: The Closing Conference of the Euromed Market Regional Programme brings together Euromed Market focal points, senior officials from ministries and representatives of the European Commission. Each of the ten Mediterranean Partners presents an evaluation of Euromed Market's third phase, which saw a large number of regional and intra regional information and training seminars to continue preparation work for the EMFTA. The participants also select six priority areas in order to deepen and consolidate their knowledge during a continuation of the present programme under the ENP: customs, taxations and rules of origin; public procurement, free movements of goods, competition rules, intellectual property rights and protection of personal data and electronic commerce.

www.euromedmarket.org
www.eipa.nl

18th May 2006

EU-Egypt Relations ENP

Brussels: The Egyptian authorities have requested direct co-operation with a counterpart in any of the 25 Member States in the areas of tourism and maritime transport. These two projects confirm Egypt's willingness to reform and to approximate EU legislation and best practices. This is the first materialisation of the Neighbourhood Policy for Egypt, whose Action Plan will be approved soon.

19th May 2006

EU-Syria

Brussels: The EU regrets that the positive steps taken in January 2006 regarding the human rights situation in Syria have not been continued and expresses its deep concern about the recent widespread harassment of human rights defenders and peaceful political activists, in particular arbitrary arrests and repeated incommunicado detention.

www.eu2006.at/en/News/CFSP_Statements/May/1905Syria.html

22nd/23rd May 2006

Media

Vienna: Seminar on Racism, Xenophobia and the Media: Towards Respect

and Understanding of All Religions and Cultures". After the trilogy of regional conference in 2005 and the task force meeting during February 2006, during this seminar the participants discuss and suggest actions and activities to tackle the shared problem of racism or hate discourse and the issue of religious and cultural diversity in the media. The seminar has considerable domestic and international visibility. The need for intercultural and inter-religious dialogue is expressed both by the Austrian State Secretary, Hans Winkler, and the European Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, who also calls for action urging the media to fully engage in the fight for mutual respect and understanding. Beate Winkler, director of the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia stresses the importance of dialogue between media, civil society, faith groups and policy makers as the only way to eradicate racism.

<http://eumc.europa.eu/eumc/material/pub/MR/PR-06-05-06-euromed-EN.pdf>

www.eu2006.at/en/News/Speeches_Interviews/2205Winkler.html

29th /31st May 2006

Tourism

Tunis: Final Symposium of the MEDINA project aiming at promoting cultural tourism in the Mediterranean area. The Symposium is the occasion to present the activities carried out and the results obtained within the project.

www.imednet.it

29th /31st May 2006

Media

Brussels: First Activity of the "Europe for Mediterranean Journalists" Project. It aims to raise awareness of EU activity in the Mediterranean countries by empowering journalists to have greater, more informed knowledge when they present Euromed Partnership-related information to their audiences. It also aims to create a network among journalists in the region. Sixty editors of the main Mediterranean media organisations have been invited and they participate also in a special session with leading journalists, broadcasters and publishers to discuss recent events and

their impact on the work of the media in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

30th May 2006

Politics and Security

Brussels: The Senior Officials of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, during their 62nd Meeting, discuss the working methods of the EMP on the basis of Partners' proposals. These proposals concentrate on enhanced co-ownership of the EMP, increased awareness of the EMP amongst public opinion, civil society and media.

31st May 2006

Twinning project EU-Lebanon

Beirut: launching of three institutional twinning projects, in the framework of the Association Agreement with Lebanon entered into force on April 1st 2006, involving the United Kingdom, Spain and Italy. The projects will deal with consumer protection, institution building and modernisation of petroleum warehousing operations.

June 2006

1st June 2006

Intercultural Dialogue

Brussels: The European Parliament welcomes the European Commission's proposal to declare 2008 "European Year of International Cultural Dialogue". MEPs are keen to bring intercultural dialogue into the mainstream of Community policies. The campaign should highlight the contribution of different cultures to Europe's Heritage and lifestyles. 2008 should be concluded with an Intercultural Forum in the European Parliament bringing together civil society and political and religious representatives.

www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/037-8631-152-06-22-906-20060531PR08609-01-06-2006-false/default_en.htm

1st June 2006

SAFEMED

Brussels: The Regional MEDA programme "Euromed Cooperation on Maritime Safety and Prevention of Pollution from Ships" (SAFEMED) launches its new website: www.safemed-projetc.org. The primary objective of the

project is to mitigate the existing imbalance in the application of maritime legislation in the region between the EU Member States and Mediterranean partners that are not members of the EU.

www.safemed-projetc.org

1st/2nd June 2006

Eurocities

Fes: The meeting of Eurocities Euro-med Working Group deals with the progress of the Group's initiatives and new cooperation projects within the framework of the MED-Pact programme, training stages within the context of bilateral exchanges, and the promotion of dialogue in the Mediterranean region.

www.eurocities.org/main.php

6th/7th June 2006

Neighbourhood

Brussels: During the 10th Euro-Mediterranean Economic Transition Seminar, European Commissioner for external Relations and ENP, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, highlights how the ENP can bring neighbours closer and give them a stake in the internal EU market. She affirms that the core principle of the ENP is to extend the prosperity, stability and security enjoyed by the EU's members to neighbouring countries and the jointly agreed Action Plans signed with each country offer the opportunity to build a qualitatively better relationship with the EU. The ENP complements the Association Agreements of the Barcelona Process by strengthening bilateral relations.

www.europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleaseAction.do?reference=SPEECH/06/346&format=HTML&aged=0&LANGUAGE=en&guiLanguage=en

7th June 2006

EMPA

Brussels: MPs from Europe and the Arab world who are members of the Political Committee of the EMPA meet to call for the swift creation of the planned international fund to provide aid to the Palestinian people, based on the European commission blueprint, through a "temporary international mechanism." They argue that the decision to suspend direct aid to the Palestinian Authority was taken hastily.

8th June 2006

European Commission

Brussels: The European Commission adopts proposals in order to strengthen the Union's role as a global actor. The president of the European Commission, Jose Manuel Durão Barroso, states that the EU can have a greater impact by acting collectively.

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleaseAction.do?reference=IP/06/752&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

10th/12th June 2006

Health

Malaga: The Euro-Mediterranean Internet-Satellite Platform for Health, Education and Research (EMISPHER) is presented at the high level European eHealth Conference organised by Spanish health authorities and the Austrian EU-Presidency that gathers more than 900 experts, representatives from industry and authorities in the field of health, information and innovation technologies.

11th/12th June 2006

EUMEDIS

Alexandria: Final International Conference of the Euro-Mediterranean Information Society (EUMEDIS). The Conference takes place under the auspices of the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology of Egypt that was created to facilitate Egypt's transition into the global Information Society. The conference promotes pilot project outputs providing opportunities for continued efforts in the field. The 300 participants from 24 countries around the Mediterranean work together in 4 workshops dedicated to the ICT environment: the improvement of intercultural dialogue, benefits of this technology for the population, news aspects of intellectual property rights and collaboration with private actors.

www.eumedisconference.org

13th June 2006

EU-Egypt

Luxemburg: 2nd EU-Egypt Association Council. During the Council, the participants discuss the current state of EU-Egypt relations regarding the implementation of the Association Agreement and future prospects relating to the Action Plan.

13th June 2006

Med Committee

Brussels: The member states give a favourable opinion on national Financing Plans (NFP) 2006 for Morocco and Jordan, as well as part II and III of the Neighbourhood Regional Financing Plan (2006). The NFP for Morocco consists of four programmes for a total amount of 123 million among which 2/3 are dedicated to an ambitious support programme for fiscal reform.

13th/14th June 2006

Environment

Amman: MEDSTAT-ENVIRONMENT II Final Forum puts the emphasis on three specific topics: air pollutant emission, biodiversity and the calculation of environmental indicators for sustainable development. During the Final Forum the 2005 regional compendium on environmental statistics in the Mediterranean countries is also presented.

14th/15th June 2006

Women

Rabat: The Preparatory Conference "Towards a Plan of Action on Strengthening the Role of Women in Society" brings together 130 civil society organisations, governments, parliaments and donors representatives of Euromed partner countries. The object of the conference is to review key aspects of women's and gender issues under three themes: human rights and democracy, economic status and social participation and cultural issues. The aim is to contribute to the preparation of the plan of action to be endorsed by the Euromed Ministerial Conference of Istanbul.

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/external-relations/euromed/women/index.htm>

15th June 2006

Human Rights

Brussels: The EU expresses its concern at the events surrounding the obstruction of the 6th congress of the Tunisian Human Rights League in May 2006. The EU hopes that the League will be able to resume its normal functions as soon as possible and regrets that European representatives have been subjected to harassment by the security forces. The European Parliament also adopts a resolution on the human rights situation in Tunisia; it expects explana-

tion for the ban imposed on the Congress of the League, which is considered to be the first Arab and African Human Rights League and one of the pillars of independent civil society in Tunisia, and reiterates its request to the Council and Commission to organise a meeting of the Association Council in order to discuss the human rights situation in Tunisia. www.eu2006.at/en/News/Press_Releases/June/1606Tunisia.html

15th June 2006

Syria

Strasbourg: The European Parliament adopts a resolution on human rights violation in Syria, where it calls for the immediate release of all activists still detained for signing a petition for improved Syrian-Lebanese relations, of all prisoners of conscience. The MEPs call on Syria to respect its commitments within the framework of the Barcelona Process and along the lines of the ENP.

15th/16th June 2006

Peace Process and Lebanon

Brussels: The European Council endorses the proposed temporary international mechanism drawn up by the commission; it also calls on Palestinian political forces to engage in a national dialogue and to establish law and order. The EC also calls on Israel to desist from any action threatening the viability of a two-state solution or contrary to international law. In its declaration on Lebanon, the European Council reaffirms the importance of sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence and reiterates its call for Security Council Resolution 1559 to be fully implemented. It also urges the Lebanese government to undertake the agreed economic and political reforms. The implementation of the action plan in the ENP framework will assist the reform process in the country.

www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/90111.pdf

17th June 2006

Quartet

Brussels: The Quartet (EU, US, UN and Russia) endorses a European Union proposal for a temporary international mechanism. The mechanism facilitates needs-based assistance to the Palestinian

people, including essential equipment, supplies and support for health services.

23rd June 2006

Palestine

Brussels: The European Commission announces that it will make a contribution of €105m to the Temporary International Mechanism for the Palestinians. This Mechanism was developed by the EU at the request of the Quartet and endorsed by the European Council; it will facilitate the delivery of assistance to the Palestinian people without the money passing through the PA government.

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/gaza/intro/index.htm

25th/26th June 2006

ECOFIN/FEMIP

Tunis: The joint 2nd Euromed ECOFIN/6th FEMIP Ministerial meeting takes place in Tunis under the Austrian Presidency hosted by the Tunisian authorities. The Finance Ministers of the 25 EU Member States and the 10 Mediterranean Partner Countries take part in the meeting as well as representatives of the European Commission and other international institutions dealing with economic and financial matters.

July 2006

6th July 2006

Euromed Market

Brussels: Representatives of the 10 MEDA partner countries and representatives of the EU Member States and EC services concerned, discuss the content of four main domains: Customs, Taxation and Rules of Origin, Public Procurement, Competition and Intellectual Property Rights.

www.euromedmarket.org

6th July 2006

Foreign Policy

Strasbourg: The European Parliament adopts three reports on three instruments laying down the provisions for the financing of EU foreign policy under the 2007-2013 financial perspectives.

10th/11th July 2006

Migration

Rabat: Euro-Africa Conference on Mi-

gration and Development. The EU and West, Central and North African countries discuss concrete ways to ensure migration flows are effectively managed and that migration positively contributes to the development progress of countries of origin, transit and destination. External Relations and ENP Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner underlines the need to intensify action and cooperation especially in border controls, legal migration and the rights of migrants and asylum seekers. The EU Council President Tuomioja notes the increasing link between migration and development and finally the Vice-President Frattini affirms the need for a common global strategy to tackle migration.

11th July 2006

Finnish Presidency

Brussels: The priorities of the Finnish EU Council Presidency are presented during the 63rd Euromed Senior Officials Meeting: Middle East crisis, the ENP, the Barcelona Process and migration. The Finnish Presidency became effective as of 1st July. The Council President, Erkki Tuomioja, says that the developments of the previous week complicated the launch of the Temporary International Mechanism (TIM) but in response to an urgent appeal from the Palestinian President, Mahmoud Abbas, the TIM is providing fuel for hospitals in Gaza.

www.eu2006fi/news_and_documents/speeches/vko28/en_GB/1152635360574/

August 2006

28th August – 7th September 2006

Cinema

Venice: The first Training Seminar for Cinema Distribution and Exhibition Professionals from the MEDA countries takes place during the celebrated Venice Film Festival. The training included formal lectures on economics, digital technology and a wide variety of hands-on case studies. The profiles of the participants from Israel, Turkey, the Palestinian Authority, Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Morocco ranged from top executives of cinema consortia to entrepreneurs in the process of opening art-house cinemas.

www.euromedaudiovisuel.net/index.aspx?treeID=1&lang=en

September 2006

4th September 2006

Lebanon

Strasbourg: First Plenary Session of the European Parliament after the summer recess. The EP President Borrell recalls the Parliament's call on the 20th July for immediate ceasefire of the war in Lebanon and the declaration agreed by the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly noting that it was "the first time that European and Arab political decision-makers had issued a joint declaration on the crisis"

www.europarl.europa.eu/news/public/default_es.htm

5th September 2006

Environment

Brussels: The European Commission proposes a long-term environmental strategy for cleaning up and protecting the Mediterranean Sea. The major oil spill that occurred during the recent conflict in Lebanon has dramatically highlighted the vulnerability of the region's environment. The proposed strategy aims to revitalise and strengthen cooperation between the EU, its Mediterranean neighbours and international organisations.

<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/enlarg/med/index.htm>

6th September 2006

UNIFIL

Strasbourg: The European Parliament adopts a resolution welcoming the UN decision to send 15,000 troops to southern Lebanon. MEPs stressed that UNIFIL should have a clear mandate and rules of engagement.

www.europarl.europa.eu/news/public/default_es.htm

7th September 2006

Euromed Fund

Milan: A new Euromed Fund is launched in Milan to encourage investment in small and medium-sized enterprises in Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia and other Mediterranean Partner Countries. The European Investment Bank (EIB) is participating in the launch of the Euromed Fund with €10m, under its facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP).

www.eib.org/site/index.asp?designation=med

11th/20th September 2006

Transport

Paris/London: Seminar/Study Tour on the Railway *Acquis*. During this week-long seminar organised in the framework of the Euromed Transport Project, MEDA representatives from transport Ministries and railway operators discuss EU legislation in the sector, as well as implementation issues and best practices. Participants in the seminar include officials from the EC, the Arab Maghreb Union and the World Bank.

www.euromedtransport.org

14th/15th September 2006

Environment

Brussels: Preparatory meeting of the Euro-Mediterranean Environment Ministers' conference. It includes a particular presentation of the "Environmental Strategy for the Mediterranean" prepared by the Commission as well as discussions on the "Horizon 2020" timetable and coordination mechanisms. The findings of an external evaluation of the SMAP, the regional MEDA-funded environmental programme, are also presented. The results and achievements of the programme are found to be positive.

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/enlarg/med/horizon_20_20en.htm

15th September 2006

Refugees

Brussels: The European Commission announces that it will provide other €10m for the Sahrawi refugees living in camps in south-west Algeria. The aid is to be channelled through the Humanitarian Aid Department and represents the expression of European solidarity for the victims of this 'forgotten crisis'.

http://ec.europa.eu/echo/field/algeria/index_en.htm

15th September 2006

Lebanon

Brussels: EU Foreign Ministers reiterate EU's commitments to Lebanon and ask for a report on a possible EU contribution to implementation of UN resolution 1701 on the Lebanon-Syria border. The Foreign Ministers commit themselves to promoting progress towards the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

www.consilium.europa.eu/cms3_fo/previousFocus.ASP?lang=en&focusID=135&1=go&keyWord

15th September 2006

Neighbourhood

Brussels: Meeting on the Cross Border Cooperation/ENPI Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme. All the participating countries decide that Sardinia will host the Joint Managing Authority of the programme with the establishment of one antenna in Valencia and another in a partner country (location to be confirmed).

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/europaid/projects/enpi_cross_border/calendar_en.htm

18th September 2006

Politics and Security

Brussels: 64th meeting of the EuroMed Senior Officials. A political dialogue on the situation in the Middle East was the only point on the agenda. The Finnish Presidency presents a general overview of the EU positions in the Lebanon Crisis.

19th September 2006

Migration

Profondval: First Meeting of the Commission's Task Force on Migration. The president José Manuel Durão Barroso states that the issue of Illegal immigration calls for an urgent and strong answer from the whole EU because it is a European challenge and requires a coordinated European response. According to him "*the Task Force provides a real opportunity to demonstrate the ability of the EU to deliver concrete results in complex policy areas*".

19th September 2006

EuroMed Committee

Brussels: The European Commission makes presentations on the state of preparations for the next Euro-Med Ministerial Conferences: on Industry in Rhodes (21-22 September), on Environment in Cairo (20 November), on Strengthening the Role of Women in Society in Istanbul (14-15 November). The EC also outlines its proposals for the Tampere Foreign Affairs Conference.

20th September 2006

Quartet

New York: The Quartet members meet

to discuss developments in the Middle East. The Quartet stresses the "urgent need to make progress towards a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East" and expresses its concern at "the grave crisis in Gaza and the continued stalemate between Israel and the Palestinians".

www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/declarations/91035.pdf

21st/22nd September 2006

Industry

Rhodes: Sixth Euromed Conference of Ministers responsible for Industry. The Ministers confirm their commitment to establish a mutually beneficial Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area by 2010 and explore how to take advantage of the ENP and the ENPI, which will have a higher budget than previous instruments. Finnish Minister and EU Council President affirms that one of the key objectives over the coming years will be deepening economic integration between EU and the Mediterranean countries alongside south-south regional integration. The energy sector is an example of this cooperation. Regarding the challenges of globalisation for the textile industry, the EC Vice-President responsible for Enterprise and Industry, notes that there has been a decrease of textile imports from the Mediterranean Partners adding that EU policy makers' goal will be to ensure them the right framework for business.

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/enterprise_policy/ind_coop_programmes/med/index.htm

21st September 2006

Migration

Brussels: The European Commission adopts the Aenas Work Programme for co-financing initiatives to support third countries in their efforts to ensure a more effective management of migration flows. €45m will be allocated this year to initiatives supporting dialogue and cooperation on migration and asylum issues with countries bordering on the enlarged EU and in other regions where asylum issues are acute. ENP Commissioner, Benita Ferrero-Waldner says "Aenas is a very useful instrument to strengthen cooperation between the EU, third countries and international or-

ganizations dealing with migration.”
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/projects/migrations/index_en.htm

21st September 2006

Justice and Home Affairs

Tampere: EU Interior Ministers discuss EU border management strategy and measures against terrorism and organised crime. Finnish Interior Minister and EU Council President, Kari Rajamäki, calls for a collective action to assist southern EU member states facing illegal immigration, as well as for the introduction of measures enabling the EU to tackle illegal immigration. Really effective measures require countries of origin to cooperate, either by discouraging illegal movement or at least by readmitting their own citizens and citizens of other countries transiting the country concerned.
http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/euomed/synopsis/2006/365_en.pdf

21st September 2006

Energy

Brussels: The Euro-Mediterranean Energy Forum meets in Brussels at the level of Directors General. Participants discuss the results achieved for the period 2003-2006, based on the orientations provided at the Energy Ministerial Conferences held in Athens and Rome in 2003. The Forum welcomes the achievements in developing regional energy actions aiming at convergence of energy policies between the Mediterranean Partners and the European Union, thus contributing to enhanced energy security in the region. Over €55m from the MEDA budget have been allocated to projects in the region over the past eight years to support the gradual integration of the Euomed energy markets. The participants also agree on the three main priorities for the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership for the 2007-2010 period: integration of the Euro-Mediterranean Energy Markets, development of energy projects of common interest and sustainable energy development.
http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/energy_transport/international/regional/euomed/energy/forum_en.htm

27th/28th September 2006

Euomed Heritage Forum

Istanbul: The Forum presents the

achievements and best practices of the programme, as well as the Draft strategy paper on Cultural Heritage in the Mediterranean within the European Neighbourhood Policy (2007-2013), and it hosts the ceremony for the Euromed Heritage Journalistic Award 2006.
www.euomedheritage.net/forum/

28th/29th September 2006

FEMISE

Marseille: Annual Conference of the Euro-Mediterranean Network of Economic Institutes. The network presents 12 studies on issues identified as priorities for the future of the region: agriculture; development and reduction of poverty; health and labour policies; education training and the role of women in the society; integration and cooperation among the countries of the Southern Mediterranean and the role of the state. A draft of FEMISE 2006 Annual Report as well as the report on “The Role of Women in the Economy” is presented. Both reports are available on the network’s website.
www.femise.org

29th September 2006

Agriculture

Strasbourg: 2nd Euomed Conference on Agriculture. Agriculture and Rural Development Commissioner, Mariann Fischer Boel, outlines the opportunities and challenges of a Euro-Mediterranean agricultural policy recalling that the EU is the largest buyer of agricultural products from the Mediterranean, while 37% of the Mediterranean area’s agricultural imports come from the EU.
www.euoparl.europa.eu/committees/agri_home_en.htm

October 2006

6th October 2006

Temporary International Mechanism

Brussels: The European Commission has begun paying social allowances to 40,000 of the neediest Palestinian families through the Temporary International Mechanism (TIM). Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner says that “to really tackle the economic gridlock in the Palestinian Territories, we need both parties to implement the Agreement on Access and Movement and the Israelis to re-

sume transfers of tax and customs revenue that belong to the Palestinians.”
http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/euomed/synopsis/2006/365_en.pdf

10th October 2006

ENP

Brussels: Presentation of the results of the Eurobarometer’s Special Report on the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). According to 68% of Europeans cooperation will bring mutual benefits and they tend to have a positive perception of relations with neighbouring countries. Most Europeans also believe that supporting reforms in neighbouring countries will benefit them in terms of economic and social development as well as good governance. 64% of those polled believe that close collaboration with neighbouring countries would help reduce illegal immigration in the EU.
http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb_special_en.htm

11th October 2006

Maritime Safety

Trieste: Vessel Traffic Monitoring and Information System (VTMIS) Information Day is taking place within the framework of the EU-funded MEDA Regional Project, “Euomed Cooperation on Maritime Safety and Prevention of Pollution from Ships – SAFEMED.” The main objectives of the VTMIS Info Day are to familiarise participants, around twenty government officials from the Mediterranean region, with the latest developments in VTMIS and enable them to benefit from the experience of the EU Member States and non-EU Member States that have already developed and implemented VTMIS. The primary objective of SAFEMED is to harmonize the application of maritime legislation in the region between the EU Member States and its Mediterranean partners.
www.safemedproject.org

14th /17th October 2006

Youth

Alexandria: Dialogue 21: Youth Workshop organised by the Anna Lindh Foundation with the Euro-Med Youth Platform and the Goethe Institute in Alexandria, as a follow up of the Youth campaign Dialogue 21 on Mutual Respect between Cultures and Reli-

gions in the Euro-Mediterranean Region. The campaign was launched to contain the “cartoons crisis,” to strengthen dialogue and overcome cultural barriers. Almost 2,000 young people submitted their proposal on how to overcome the crisis. The outcomes of the workshop will be submitted to the 8th Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Foreign Ministers in Tampere.

www.euromedalex.org

15th October 2006

Inter-religious Dialogue

Alexandria: Meeting organised by the Anna Lindh Foundation and the League of Arab States on “Major Misconceptions in Inter-cultural and Inter-religious Dialogue.” The main Objective was to exchange views and examine ways and means of establishing a functioning Dialogue between cultures as well as creating mechanisms for advancing cultural relations.

www.euromedalex.org

17th October 2006

External Affairs Council

Brussels: EU Foreign Ministers recall the ‘urgent need’ for settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. In the External Affairs Council, Palestinians were called upon to join the efforts of President Abbas for national unity and to form a government with a platform reflecting the Quartet principles. On Lebanon, the Foreign Ministers reiterated the EU’s commitment to work towards the implementation of UN Resolution 1701.

www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/gena/91336.pdf

17th October 2006

Neighbourhood

Brussels: The EU Foreign Ministers approve the regulation establishing the legal framework for the provision of assistance within the context of the ENP. A total of €11.18 billion will be allocated in the 2007-2013 period to support the European Neighbourhood Policy. Some 95% of the budget will be spent on country and multi-country programmes and the remaining 5% on cross-border cooperation.

www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/misc/91317.pdf

19th October 2006

Environment

Brussels: The European Commission approves funding for 16 new environment projects on the Mediterranean and Baltic regions, under the LIFE-Third Countries programme 2006. These projects will be implemented in seven MEDA countries – Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey – as well as in Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Croatia and Russia. The projects address major environmental issues, from waste management and air pollution prevention and control, to river basin management and sustainable tourism, as well as promoting harmonisation with EU environmental regulations.

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/info/products/lifetcycompilation_06.pdf

20th October 2006

Tourism

The MEDINA portal goes online. This is one of the results of the MEDINA project co-financed by the European Commission in the framework of the EUMEDIS programme. The website includes the Tourist Guide as well as links with national websites (Algeria, Cyprus, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Syria and Tunisia). The objective of the MEDINA project (MEDiterranean by InterNet Access) was to support “cultural tourism”. The MEDINA Portal highlights the common cultural background of the different countries and the contribution of the different civilization.

24th October 2006

ENP

Brussels: The European Commission adopts its work programme for 2007, in which it identifies a series of 21 strategic initiatives that will be the main focus of its work. In addition to strengthening the ENP, it also gives priority to implementing better management of migrant flows to the EU.

http://ec.europa.eu/atwork/programmes/docs/clwp2007_es.pdf

24th October 2006

FEMIP

Brussels: The European Commission notes in a statement that FEMIP has significantly contributed to investment and economic growth in the

southern Mediterranean region, but it can do more to foster private sector development, especially of small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and to involve partner countries in its operation.

26th October 2006

FEMIP

Luxembourg: The EIB announces that under FEMIP it will be taking part in the Kantara Fund for private equity support in the Mediterranean region, with a budget of up to €10m. The EIB will collaborate with the Group Société Générale. This multi-sector private equity investment, which is expected to reach €120m, is aimed at private companies operating in Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon and Jordan.

www.eib.org/news/press/press.asp?press=3188

28th October 2006

Press Freedom

Paris: Reporters without Borders present the annual “Worldwide Press Freedom Index 2006” making special reference to the consequences of the difficult situation in the Middle East on the region’s Media. Lebanon fell from 56th to 107th place on the Index as the country’s media continue to suffer from the region’s political atmosphere while the inability of the Palestinian Authority to maintain stability in the territories and the behaviour of Israel outside its borders seriously threaten freedom of expression in the Middle East.

www.Rsf.org/article.php3?id_article=19385

November 2006

7th November 2006

Human Rights

Copenhagen: The Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN) issues a new report entitled “Achieving Gender Equality in the Euro-Mediterranean Region: Change is Possible and Necessary.” The EMHRN also asks EU and Euro-Mediterranean Ministers meeting in Istanbul this month to confirm their commitment to the principle that women’s rights should be dealt with according to international standards and not to religious norms or

cultural traditions.

www.euromedrights.net/pages/275/news/focus/20571

8th November 2006

Enlargement

Brussels: The European Commission adopts a strategy for EU enlargement, which includes a special report on the Union's integration capacity, in which it concludes that the Union must be able to maintain and deepen its own development while pursuing its enlargement agenda. The Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn says that "the current enlargement strategy - based on consolidation, conditionality and communication - must be combined with better ways and means to ensure EU's capacity to integrate new members." The Commission also reviews the progress achieved in each candidate and potential candidate country; as regards Turkey, it concludes that the country has continued political reforms, but the pace of the reforms has slowed during the past year. http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/key_documents/reports_nov_2006_en.htm

8th/9th November 2006

Euromed Quality

Brussels: The third Annual Conference of the Euromed Quality Programme. The conference is attended by Mediterranean Partner Countries, the European Commission and the European Committee for Standardization (CEN). The objective of the conference is to propose future activities and to report what has been achieved in 2006 with regard to improving the quality infrastructure of MEDA enterprises, including standardization, certification and accreditation. www.euromedquality.org

9th/10th November 2006

Transport

Monaco: FEMIP Conference on Regional Integration in the Euro-Mediterranean Area through Transport Systems. The Conference brought together 250 experts and professionals in this sector. During the past 25 years the partner countries have only benefited to a limited extent from globalisation. The situation is due to inadequate regional integration in terms of available infrastructure; for this reason, the creation of an efficient integrated Euro-Mediterranean

transport system is crucial for the development of socioeconomic stability in the region.

<http://www.eib.org/news/events/event.asp?event=157>

14th November 2006

Peace Process

Brussels: EU Foreign Ministers express their "deep concern" over the escalating violence in Gaza and the West Bank and deplore Israeli military action in Gaza. In the conclusion of the External Relations Council, the EU recognises Israel's right to self-defence but calls for restraint. The council urges the Palestinians to form a government of national unity in order to support the re-launching of the Peace Process.

www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/gena/91661.pdf

14th/15th November 2006

Women

Istanbul: First Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Strengthening the Role of Women in Society. The EU and its Mediterranean Partners agree to work within a common framework of action to strengthen the role of women in political, civil, social, economic and cultural spheres and to fight against discrimination. This holistic approach is based on three interdependent priorities: women's political and civil rights; women's social and economic rights and sustainable development; and women's rights in the cultural sphere and the role of the mass media.

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/euromed/women/index.htm

15th/19th November 2006

Youth Platform

Istanbul: The meeting of the Euro-Med Youth Platform aims at improving the network capabilities of young people in the region. The platform has been facilitating networking for the past three years. Participants in the meeting will take stock of what has been achieved and analyse available networking tools. This year Bulgaria and Romania participate for the first time in Euro-Med Youth Platform cooperation in addition to young people from the EU and its partner countries. The main objectives of the Platform are to bring young people together in an environment of tolerance and mutual

understanding, increase participation, share relevant information and exchange best practices.

www.euromedp.org/en/home.asp

15th/17th November 2006

Economic and Social Council

Ljubljana: The Euro-Mediterranean Summit of Economic and Social Councils calls for policies and objectives aimed at raising the profile of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership to be implemented in a more determined way. Participants examine four essential elements for the development of the Mediterranean region: combating poverty, supporting young people, gender equality and strengthening EU involvement through the ENP.

http://eesc.europa.eu/sections/rex/euromed/events/index_en.asp?id=304001rexen

20th November 2006

Environment

Cairo: Third Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on the Environment. The main topic is Horizon 2020 for the De-pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by 2020. Conference participants endorse a timetable for the initiative and invite the European Commission to coordinate the Horizon 2020 partnership. http://ec.europa.eu/environment/enlarg/med/pdf/cairo_declaration_pdf

22nd November 2006

Fisheries

Brussels: Council of Fisheries Ministers. A political agreement is reached on three important Commission proposals related to conservation measures for Mediterranean fisheries, the use of new technology in deterring illegal fishing activities and the setting of fishing possibilities for deep sea species for 2007 and 2008.

http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/index_en.htm

22th/23th November 2006

Migration

Tripoli: Conference on Migration and Development in which EU and African States participate. The conference adopts the Joint Africa-EU Declaration on Migration and Development and the Plan of Action on Trafficking in Human Beings. They will provide a basis for cooperation between EU and Africa in

years to come.

www.eu2006.fi/news_and_documents/press_releases/vko47/en_GB/175415/

26th November 2006

Euro-Med Award for Dialogue between Cultures

Tampere: The first Euro-Mediterranean award for dialogue between Cultures is accorded to the Syrian Monastery of Deir Mar Moussa el-Habachi (St. Moses the Abyssinian), located 80 km north of Damascus. The theme of the award "Mutual respect among people of different religions or any other belief" was jointly established by the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between cultures (ALF) and the Fondazione Mediterraneo. The jury of the Euro-Med Award is composed of the heads of all 35 national Networks of the ALF, representing more than 1,000 institutions and organizations committed to concrete and sustainable steps towards dialogue, understanding and respect between cultures.

www.medalex.org

27th November 2006

EU-Arab Group

Tampere: Euromed Ministers of the EU-Arab Group troika meet in the margins of the Tampere Euro-Mediterranean Conference to discuss the current developments in the Middle East, being optimistic about the ceasefire in Gaza. The EU Council President says that the Arab Group has been of great support to the EU on the issue.

www.eu2006.fi/news_and_documents/other_documents/vko48/en_GB/1164650535497/

27th/28th November 2006

Foreign Ministers

Tampere: The eighth Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Foreign Ministers reviews the progress made in implementing the five-year work programme adopted in November 2005 and sets out guidelines for 2007. Other issues tackled are: inter-cultural dialogue, the ENP and the related financial instrument, funding issues and working methods relating to the Euromed Partnership. The Conference ends with the adoption of the Tampere Conclusion, it is the second time that Foreign Ministers have been able to adopt con-

clusions unanimously. In view of the positive developments in the Middle East, participants envisage the resumption of aid to the Palestinian Authority.

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/euromed/2006_tampere_conclusions.pdf

27th/28th November 2006

Arco Latino

Brussels: Seminar entitled "Which Mediterranean for 2010?" at the Committee of Regions, organised by Arco Latino, attended by representatives from various European Institutions, the Seminar will reflect on future prospects in the Mediterranean Region, thus focusing on six strategic topics: competitiveness, sustainable development, culture, women of the Mediterranean, migration flows and relations with the countries of the Southern shore.

[www.cor.europa.eu/document\(activities/med_2010_fr.pdf](http://www.cor.europa.eu/document(activities/med_2010_fr.pdf)

27th/30th November 2006

Rules of Origin

Rome: Regional Seminar on the Rules of Origin in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, in the framework of the 4th phase of the Euromed Market Programme. The seminar aims to a deeper understanding and interpretation of the Pan-Euromed system of origin as one of the key elements of the Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area; to promote a common approach in the interpretation and implementation of Pan-Euro-Mediterranean rules of origin among Euro-Mediterranean Partners; and to identify some of the difficulties which the customs administrations will be confronted with when implementing the new rules of origin.

www.euromedmarket.org

28th November 2006

ECOFIN

Brussels: Economic and Financial Affairs Council. The EU Finance Ministers propose improving the linkages of FEMIP with the ENP by a better integration of the European Investment Bank's activities into EU country strategies and by better combining EIB loans and EU budgetary resources.

www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/91877.pdf

30th November 2006

Migration

Brussels: The European Commission presents two communications on migration: one reinforcing the framework for developing a comprehensive European migration policy and the second covering maritime border management.

December 2006

2nd December 2006

Trade

Cairo: At the 6th Conference of the Ministers of Agriculture from CIHEAMs' member countries Commissioner Fischer Boel, responsible for Agriculture and Rural Development, outlines efforts to strengthen agricultural trade relation and foster sustainable rural development. She states: "Our Mediterranean partners are more than just trade partners; you are also valued political partners in the search for common solutions to more general common challenges that we face."

www.medobs.org/themes/default1.htm

3rd December 2006

Anna Lindh Foundation

Alexandria: The ALF signs a Memorandum of Understanding with the Permanent Conference of the Mediterranean Audiovisual Operators (COPEAM) in the context of both organisations' interest in fostering relationships within the framework of the Euromed Partnership. The agreement concerns the preparation of the European Year for the Dialogue between Cultures (2008); exchanges and best practices, while envisaging joint initiatives among the main audiovisual operators and women's projects as promoters of intercultural dialogue in the media.

www.euromedalex.org/En/News/3dec2006.htm

11th December 2006

Neighbourhood Policy

Brussels: General Affairs and External Relations Council. EU Foreign Ministers believe significant progress has taken place in the first 18 months of implementation of the first seven ENP Action Plans. The Council welcomes the Commission's proposal on "strengthening the ENP" and invites future Pres-

idencies to take the work forward.
www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/gena/92078.pdf

11th/12th December 2006

Palestine

Brussels: General Affairs and External Relations Council. ENP Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner proposes to extend the Temporary International Mechanism (TIM) for aid to the Palestinian people for another three months. TIM support was provided since June 2006 for the uninterrupted supply of public utility services, social allowances to public sector employees, social hardship cases such as female-headed poor households, unemployed women, widows, orphans, disabled and handicapped persons, elderly people in need, as well as farmers, Bedouins and daily wage earners.

www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/gena/92123.pdf

11th/15th December 2006

Migration

Florence: Thematic Session on International Migration and Cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean Area in the framework of the Euromed Migration I regional initiative. The aim of the project is to create an instrument for observing,

analysing and forecasting migration flows, their causes and impact. The thematic session will review and discuss the various aspects of international cooperation that can help to make migration a win-win process, profitable to countries of origin as well as those of destination, and to the migrants themselves.

www.carim.org

12th December 2006

EU-Morocco

Brussels: Signature of two new EU-Morocco Agreements. The first one on aviation opens up markets and approximates the legislation of the two parties. The other, for cooperation on the European satellite radio navigation programme GALILEO, covers joint activities in the field of scientific research and training, industrial cooperation, trade and market development.

http://ec.europa.eu/transport/air_portal/international/pillars/common_aviation_area/morocco_en.htm

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/energy_transport/newsletter/dg/2006/nl206-2006-12-15_en.html#t08

15th December 2006

FEMIP

Tunis: The Minister of Development and International Cooperation of Tunisia and

the EIB Vice-President, responsible for the Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP), sign a contract for a total amount of € 154m to be destined to energy production (the construction of a natural gas-fired, combined-cycle power plant) and environmental protection (to finance investment in wastewater collection networks and treatment plants).

www.bei.europa.eu/news/press/press.asp?style=printable&press=3226

21st December 2006

FEMIP

Paris: The European Investment Bank under the FEMIP is investing the equivalent of 5.6m Egyptian pounds in a 9% shareholding in Beltone Capital, an Egyptian investment company. The EIB, with its representation on the Board of Directors of Beltone Capital, will support the development of private equity in Egypt and widen sources of funding available to local private enterprises.

Together with loans and technical assistance grants, risk capital is one of the main instruments used by FEMIP to help the Mediterranean partner countries meet the challenge of economic and social modernisation.

www.eib.org/news/press/press.asp?press=3236