

Chronology of the Barcelona Process

January

1 January 2009

Czech EU Presidency

Brussels: The Czech Republic takes over the Presidency after France and ahead of Sweden. The three countries have elaborated an 18-Month Trio Presidency Programme. The main priorities of the Czech Presidency can be summed up as “the 3 Es”: Economy, Energy and External Relations. The Czech Presidency intends to increase Europe’s competitiveness, deal with the financial crisis, continue with the Common Agriculture Policy and promote employment. In the field of energy there is a search for balance between environmental demands and energy security in Europe. External Relations involves an emphasis on Euro-Atlantic relations, further enlargement of the EU, continuing the integration process of the Western Balkans and improving the Eastern Partnership.

www.eu2009.cz

4 January 2009

EU-Palestine

Brussels: The Enlarged European Troika headed by the new Czech EU Council President Karel Schwarzenberg begins a visit to the Middle East as part of the EU’s efforts to secure a ceasefire and facilitate humanitarian relief for the victims of the conflict. They will meet with Israeli and Palestinian leaders.

22 January 2009

Environment

Brussels: The European Commission (EC) and the Mediterranean countries that are parties to the Barcelona Convention reach an agreement on the text of a new Protocol on Integrated Coast-

al Zone Management, which was adopted in January 2008. The objectives are to facilitate the sustainable development of coastal zones by ensuring that the environment and landscapes are taken into account in harmony with economic, social and cultural development; to preserve coastal zones for the benefit of current and future generations; and to prevent and/or reduce the effects of natural hazards and, in particular, of climate change.

www.unepmap.org

26 January 2009

Neighbourhood

Brussels: A Trust Fund will allow EU Member States to provide additional funds to the Neighbourhood Investment Facility (NIF), a key lever of the European Neighbourhood Policy. The NIF Trust Fund Agreement is signed during the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC). The Fund has been opened by the European Investment Bank (EIB) to receive Member States’ bilateral contributions for the funding of infrastructure projects in the Union’s Eastern and Southern States.

31 January 2009

Euromed Quality

Brussels: The Euromed Quality Programme finishes at the end of January, having trained more than 1,600 participants from Mediterranean Partner Countries (MPCs), involved more than 300 experts and organised more than 220 activities over the five years of its operation. Its objective was to establish a stable environment to help enterprises in Partner countries present quality products able to compete in export markets. The programme, which has been running since January 2005, has succeeded in creating a quality

infrastructure network in the region reinforcing cooperation and regional integration.

February

5 February 2009

Gender

Brussels: The new programme “Enhancing Equality between Men and Women in the Euromed Region” (2008-2011) publishes the first edition of its trilingual newsletter Gender Dynamics. The Programme builds upon the achievements of the Euromed Programme, the Role of Women in Economic Life (RWEL). Its three main objectives are: the full implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); the strengthening of strategies on fighting gender-based violence against women; and the support to the follow-up of the 2006 Istanbul Conference held on “Strengthening the Role of Women in Society.”

www.euromedgenderequality.org/

9-10 February 2009

Neighbourhood

Tripoli: ENP Commissioner Ferrero Waldner holds key talks on developing EU-Libya relations. She says Libya has the potential to become a key partner for the EU in the Mediterranean. The visit marks the opening of a second round of negotiations for an EU-Libya Framework Agreement. The agreement would provide for cooperation on foreign policy and security issues; a free trade area; and cooperation in key areas of common concern, such as energy, transport, migration, visa, justice and home affairs, and the environment.

11-12 February 2009

Energy

Cairo: The Euro-Arab Mashreq Gas Co-operation Centre (EAMGCC) hosts a round table on energy tariffs and investment. The agenda includes issues such as energy security and climate change. The EAMGCC supports the development of an integrated gas market between four countries (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria) in order to create a regional gas market and as a step towards integrating with the EU gas market.

www.eamgcc.org/archive/docs/File/Conclusions%20FINAL.pdf

12 February 2009

Neighbourhood

Brussels: The EC announces a 149 million euro assistance package for Egypt. The focus of the programmes financed under this package will be on education, reforms in the transport sector, improvement of the water and waste water services and support for civil society.

13 February 2009

Solar Plan

Brussels: The ENP Commissioner underlines the EU's commitment to the Mediterranean Solar Plan, described as a necessity and not an option in the face of climate change, in the context of the EU's Sustainable Energy Week. She sets three priorities for the Mediterranean Solar Plan: to continue supporting the development of a stable legislative and regulatory framework in the Euro-Mediterranean area; to share with MPCs the EU's experience in its efforts to meet renewable energy targets; and to facilitate the development and adoption of modern technologies.

www.eusew.eu/

15-16 February 2009

EU-Syria

Damascus: Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner visits Syria and holds talks with President Bashar al-Assad. They discuss EU-Syria bilateral relations, which includes the process for concluding the Association Agreement that the two sides have negotiated, as well as recent regional developments. The Commissioner values the recent positive developments in Syria's regional policy, in particular the establishment of diplomatic ties with Lebanon and the indirect peace talks with Israel.

16-17 February 2009

EU-Lebanon

Beirut: The ENP Commissioner visits Lebanon and meets Lebanese President Sleiman, Prime Minister Siniora, and other senior ministers. She puts special emphasis on the continued implementation of the Doha agreement, which brought an end to the political crisis in Lebanon, national dialogue, the strengthening of the State's authority and the next Parliamentary elections scheduled for June. The EU will provide 43 million euros to assist Lebanon in reforming its education sector, improving prison management and furthering human rights and electoral reform.

18 February 2009

ENPI

Brussels: The EP adopts a report reviewing the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument. It calls on the Commission to develop further mechanisms for consultation with civil society and local authorities, in order to enhance their involvement in the design and monitoring implementation of the ENPI and national reform programmes. It also states that sectoral and general budget support under the ENPI should be made available only to governments which are able to implement it in a transparent and accountable manner and where it constitutes a real incentive.

18-19 February 2009

SMAP

Alexandria: SMAP Partners are holding the final regional workshop entitled "Achievements and Prospects for the Future." More than 150 officials and experts from the region and from Europe attend the event, which crowns a decade of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in the field of environment and sustainable development.

19 February 2009

UfM

Brussels: The European Parliament (EP) adopts a report on the "Union for the Mediterranean" stating that the proposal for a UfM "delivers its promises and yields concrete and visible results", contributes towards peace and prosperity and constitutes "a step towards economic and regional integration, as

well as ecological and climatic cooperation between the Mediterranean countries." The EP calls for the UfM Secretariat to be brought into operation as a matter of urgency and considers it necessary that the strategic value of Euro-Mediterranean relations and the Barcelona Process acquis, including the involvement of civil society, be reaffirmed.

www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/FindBy-Procnum.do?lang=en&procnum=INI/2008/2231

23 February 2009

Environment

Brussels: The EC adopts two Communications related to disasters: a Community approach to reducing the impact of natural and man-made disasters within the EU, and a strategy for supporting disaster risk reduction in developing countries. The main priorities are: strengthening of political dialogue with developing countries; integration of disaster risk reduction into both EU and developing countries' policy and action; and the development of regional plans, including support for awareness-raising campaigns.

27 February 2009

Migration

Brussels: The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) holds a debate on a common EU asylum and immigration policy with EC representatives for Justice, Freedom and Security. Commissioner Barrot emphasises the positive impact of immigration on the EU market in an era of demographic ageing, and underlines the need for dialogue with third countries with a view to ensuring efficient and optimal management of migratory flows. He also stresses the importance of respecting fundamental rights in Immigration and Asylum policies.

www.eesc.europa.eu

March

3-4 March 2009

Aviation

Brussels: The 3rd Euromed Air Traffic Management (ATM) Seminar is attended by 40 people from eight Mediterranean countries and eight international organisations. The objective of this seminar is to gather ATM executives in

the region and agree with them on future actions for the extension of the Single European Sky.

www.euromedtransport.org

6 March 2009

SME

Rabat: The participants at the 5th FEMIP conference discuss, among other topics, how to update the funding required by Mediterranean SMEs for start-ups and expansion and the conditions that favour the emergence of regional champions, which could raise the profile of businesses and increase the attractiveness of the MPCs.

13 March 2009

FEMIP

Brussels: For the first time the FEMIP signs for three operations for large private projects in key sectors of the economy in Algeria and Tunisia. The projects to be financed are: a letter of intention to lend up to 500 million euros to MEDGAZ, the first direct gas pipeline between Algeria and Europe; 70 million euros to build a new airport in Enfidha, in Tunisia; and 130 million euros for Tunisian Indian Fertilizers to build a phosphoric acid plant in Skhira, in Tunisia.

15-17 March 2009

EMPA

Brussels: The Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA) focuses on the Middle East and backs the Arab Peace Initiative and efforts to achieve intra-Palestinian reconciliation, in a recommendation addressed to the UfM. The EMPA adopts recommendations on the Mediterranean Solar Plan seeking to increase the use of renewable energy in the region. Jordan takes over the Assembly's one-year Presidency and the number of EMPA members increases as Albania, Mauritania and Monaco are welcomed into the Assembly, thus bringing the number of members to 280.

18 March 2009

Bank

Luxembourg: The European Court of Auditors presents a Special Report on "Banking measures in the Mediterranean area in the context of the MEDA programme and previous protocols." The report examines banking measures under the MEDA programmes to deter-

mine whether the ongoing projects were adequately monitored by the EC and EIB and whether the projects had achieved their objectives; it also makes recommendations.

19-20 March 2009

Gas

Paris: EC Energy Commissioner Piebalgs takes part in the Euro-Arab Gas Forum. It is the first meeting devoted to discussing the specific implications and prospects for the rapid development of gas trade between MENA countries and the EU.

20 March 2009

UfM

Brussels: During the European Council, EU Heads of State and Government call for the acceleration of the work to establish the UfM's permanent secretariat and the resumption of the implementation of identified projects. They also reiterate their support to strengthening the partnership with the southern Mediterranean partners.

21 March 2009

Water

Istanbul: during the 5th World Water Forum, Euro-Mediterranean regional water programmes are showcased: the MEDA Water Programme, the EMWIS and the EU Water Initiative. Water management is one of the priority issues for Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, with extreme water scarcity as a growing problem. Euro-Mediterranean Water Ministers have repeatedly underlined the fact that these problems cannot be solved by large-scale infrastructure measures alone and need to be alleviated by improving the local management of water resources.

www.medawater-rmsu.org/documents/Fact_sheet_MedaWater_Istanbul.pdf

20 March 2009

Enterprise

Rabat: During a meeting with key stakeholders the conclusions of a pilot exercise to evaluate the implementation of the Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Enterprise in Morocco are presented. The report is the result of monitoring and reviewing the progress achieved under the Charter, adopted by Industry Ministers in 2004. The implementation of the Charter is one of the priorities under the

Enterprise Policy chapter of the bilateral Action Plans, agreed by most Mediterranean partners under the ENP.

23-27 March 2009

Fishing

Tunis: In the annual meeting of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) the EU proposes a landmark package to protect fish species in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. The proposal contains measures to improve control and the monitoring and selectivity of trawler gear.

www.gfcm.org/gfcm

25 March 2009:

Syria-Lebanon

Brussels: External Relations and ENP Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner and EU High Representative for CFSP Solana welcome the approval by the President of Lebanon of the appointment of the Syrian Ambassador to Beirut. They both affirm this is an historical moment towards the normalisation of relations between Syria and Lebanon and will help to bring stability to the whole region.

April

1-2 April 2009

Energy

Amman: The Euro-Jordanian Renewable Energy Conference is launched to achieve the following aims: address the challenges of the emerging energy and environmental areas; support the development of a sustainable energy future for Jordan by creating a platform for scholars, technologists, entrepreneurs and policymakers to exchange ideas, know-how and technologies in the renewable energy field; and educate the participants by offering a technical programme consisting of presentations, panel discussions and academic sessions.

www.ejrec.org/e2009.html

3 April 2009

Migration

Brussels: After a boat carrying over 300 refugees sinks off the coast of Libya, the EP President warns that the Mediterranean could turn into an enormous graveyard if solutions are not found to put an end to these tragedies.

6-7 April 2009

Alliance of Civilisations

Istanbul: The second Forum of the AoC seeks to address some of the ongoing tensions and divides across cultures and religions and to examine broader challenges of good governance. The Forum is action-oriented and features an international platform for participants to develop joint initiatives and programmes and specific working sessions. The event brings together policymakers, international organisations and civil society groups to exchange ideas for better practices.

www.unaoc.org

6 April 2009

Migration

Brussels: EU Ministers debate immigration examining plans for establishing a single permit and a common set of rights for third country workers in the EU. In its fight against human trafficking, the Justice and Home Affairs Council seeks to reinforce the commitment of Member States to prevent and combat this practice, whose victims are mostly women and children.

8 April 2009

Human Rights

Brussels: The EC is prepared to raise a number of human rights issues with the Algerian authorities under its Association Agreement (AA) with the country, as affirmed by the ENP Commissioner. The AA provides a solid framework to address issues of human rights and public freedoms in a more sustained way than before, in a spirit of dialogue and with full respect for Algeria's sovereignty.

8 April 2009

EESC

Nice: More than 200 civil society representatives from across the Mediterranean take part in a conference organised by the EESC on "Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean Region." Participants are introduced to a number of concrete examples of initiatives showcasing best practices in partnership between the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean. Other important issues examined are: the challenges of environmental degradation and climate change, unemployment, demography and inequality.

9-11 April 2009

EMUNI

Rabat: EMUNI and the GRET Association from Morocco organise the 14th International GRET forum, on the topic "Euro-Mediterranean: the history of the future", which focuses on human rights and rights to identity in the Euro-Mediterranean Region.

20-23 April 2009

Women

Tunis: The programme Enhancing Equality between Men and Women in the EuroMed Region organises a regional meeting on gender-based violence (GBV). The meeting aims to assess methods used in GBV research, and suggest technical assistance to build consensus on a common definition and coherent conceptual framework to be tested in three pilot surveys in the Euromed region.

28-29 April 2009

Free Trade

Barcelona: The EuroMed Market Programme holds its final conference. The Programme paved the way for the establishment of a Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area by 2010, welcoming the establishment of a number of thematic and institutional networks. The EU funded EuroMed Market programme aimed to support the development of efficient administrations in the MPCs in order to facilitate the fulfilment of their obligations under the AA. It also helped develop a shared understanding of necessary regulatory frameworks and enforcement mechanisms in priority sectors.

www.euromedmarket.org/ingles/FC2009_list.asp

29 April 2009

EU-GCC

Muscat: The Joint Council between the EU and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) discusses a number of regional issues, including the situation in the Middle East, terrorism and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In the joint communiqué both parties reaffirm the shared position that a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East is vital to international peace and security, and express support for the Arab Peace Initiative.

May

1 May 2009

Energy

Cairo: The EU Delegation in Cairo and the Euro-Mediterranean Energy Market's integration project (MED-EMIP) reach an agreement with the League of Arab States Energy Department to foster technical cooperation in the fields of energy efficiency and the Mediterranean Solar Plan. To facilitate such cooperation, the EC and MED-EMIP will have an observer member in the meetings of the Council of Arab Ministers for Electricity.

4-5 May 2009

Energy

Brussels: The MED-EMIP project holds the first Experts' Group/Steering Committee meeting to discuss important energy related issues. MED-EMIP is working in cooperation with the Regional Centre for renewable Energy and Energy efficiency (RCREEE) and has been mandated by the EC to ensure the overall coordination of the ongoing study on strategy towards a Mediterranean Solar Plan, one of the six priority projects of the UfM.

8 May 2009

Southern Corridor

Prague: At the Southern Corridor Summit, which brings together the EU and representatives of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Turkey and Egypt, President Barroso says the initiative would provide security of energy supply, transportation and demand through sustainable projects, thereby being of benefit to everyone.

www.eu2009.cz

10-11 May 2009

FEMIP

Monaco: According to the recommendations of the 6th FEMIP conference, solutions to the challenge regarding the Mediterranean water supply in the face of climate change must be global and integrated. The conference brings together political leaders, water specialists and representatives of financial institutions and international organisations.

www.eib.europa.eu

15-18 May 2009

Politics and Security

Malta: At the 26th Malta seminar for Euro-Mediterranean diplomats, the main

topics tackled are: the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the UfM; the Human and Cultural Dimension of the EMP, Euro-Med Technology Transfer; Climate Change, Women's Rights; and the Middle East Peace Process.

18 May 2009

Civil Protection

Brussels: The EU Foreign Ministers during the GAERC Council adopt draft lines on civil protection cooperation with Mediterranean Partners, with a view to a Union for the Mediterranean ministerial meeting on justice, liberty and security.

18 May 2009

EUPOL COPPS

Brussels: The External Relations Council welcomes EU police work in Palestinian territories in the area of policing and criminal justice. The Council also agrees to work on addressing further action towards broader rule of law in the Palestinian Territories.

19 May 2009

EU-Turkey

Brussels: The Association Council meeting provides a timely opportunity to review EU-Turkey relations. The EU notes progress made by Turkey in its preparations for accession: out of 35 chapters, 10 have been opened and one provisionally closed. The EU also welcomes Turkey's progress towards alignment with the *acquis communautaire*, but underlines that reforms and substantial efforts are still needed in various areas, such as continued judicial reform, anti-corruption strategy, effective protection of citizens' rights, ensuring freedom of expression and of religion for all religious communities, respect for property rights and protection of minorities.

www.consilium.europa.eu

19 May 2009

Crisis

Brussels: The External Relations Council in its conclusions on "supporting developing countries in coping with the crisis" affirms that the EU will take targeted measures aimed at sustaining economic activity and employment. It says that the EU would support investments that have a quick impact on productive activities and job creation. Ministers also call on the EIB to reinforce

its support for SMEs and to the EC to make optimal use of the FEMIP and NIF.

19 May 2009

Water

Brussels: The EIB signs a loan of 100 million dollars in support of a water pipeline which will bring 100 million m³ of water a year from Disi in the south of Jordan to Amman. The project will help address water scarcity in Jordan.

26-27 May 2009

Aviation

Cairo: The Euromed Aviation project held its first Road Map Workshop bringing together 22 representatives from seven Mediterranean countries, three international organisations and the Project Team. The objective of the workshop is to present, discuss and refine the draft documents prepared by the project on the Road Map towards the implementation of the Euro-Mediterranean Common Aviation Area.

www.euromedtransport.org/550.0.html?&L=0

26 May 2009

Bank

Brussels: EU Ministers welcome the Court of Auditors report examining banking measures under the MEDA programme to determine whether they have been adequately monitored by the EC and the EIB and whether the projects have achieved their objectives. The EC, EIB and other international/local partners need to improve their coordination.

27 May 2009

Migration

Brussels: EU Ministers adopt a directive aimed at fighting illegal immigration by prohibiting the employment of illegal immigrants and putting an end to cases of abuse by unscrupulous employers. Ministers also adopt the 'Blue Card' directive aimed at facilitating conditions of entry and residence in the EU of third-country citizens for the purpose of highly qualified employment.

June

4 June 2009

Western Sahara

Brussels: The EC allocates 10 million euros for the Sahrawi population living

in camps near Tindouf, western Algeria. The funds will help to meet the refugees' basic needs for food, health-care, clean water and proper sanitation. The Sahrawi refugees have been living in four camps located in the desert region of Tindouf for over three decades.

4 June 2009

Migration

Luxembourg: According to the Conclusions of the Justice and Home Affairs Council, the EU will examine ways to prevent human tragedies and strengthen the fight against illegal immigration. They take note of the Commission's proposals, which relate in particular to asylum and humanitarian protection, border control and maritime operations, and dialogue with neighbouring countries.

9 June 2009

Energy

Cairo: The Association of Mediterranean Regulators for Electricity and Gas (MEDREG) holds its 7th General Assembly, attended by 17 Energy Regulators of the Mediterranean Basin together with representatives from international organisations. The main objective of MEDREG is to strengthen cooperation between EU energy regulators and those of the MPCs in order to promote a stable, harmonised regulatory framework in the EU-Mediterranean energy market.

<http://medreg.ipi.it>

9 June 2009

Lebanon

Brussels: High Representative of the CFSP Solana and the EU Presidency welcome the peaceful and orderly way in which the Lebanese parliamentary elections were held and which were observed by the EU Election Observation Mission. The EC's final report by its observer mission commends the degree of civic awareness and the commitment to democratic values shown by the Lebanese population, Lebanese candidates and political parties. However, the dominance of confessionalism, the majority vote system and the pre-electoral agreements between parties reduce the level of electoral competition.

http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/human_rights/index_en.htm

15 June 2009

EU-Israel

Luxembourg: In a position adopted by the GAERC after the 9th EU-Israel Association Council, the EU confirms the great importance the EU attaches to its relations with Israel, its readiness to continue strengthening the bilateral partnership and that any upgrade of this relation must be based on shared values and common interests, including the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through the implementation of the two-state solution.

18-19 June 2009

Migration

Brussels: EU leaders pledge a determined European response based on firmness and solidarity to tackle the growing illegal immigration and prevent human tragedy. The European Council calls for strengthened border controls coordinated by FRONTEX and cooperation with countries of origin and transit.

22 June 2009

EU-Israel

Jerusalem: The EC and Israel sign a Financing Agreement for the implementation of the 2008 Annual Action Programme for Israel under the ENP. The objective is to achieve a significant level of economic integration and enhance political cooperation. The 2008 Annual Action Programme for Israel will promote legislative approximation and strengthen the dialogue between the EU and Israeli public administrations in the areas of equal employment opportunities and veterinary services.

24 June 2009

Crisis

Brussels: The EC Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs publishes an occasional paper on "The Impact of the Global Crisis on Neighbouring Countries of the EU." It concludes that although financial indicators may lead to the conclusion that the CIS region is more exposed, the Mediterranean region is not sheltered and is equally vulnerable. The authors point to combinations of vulnerabilities in both regions, which compound the risk of fiscal unsustainability and financial stress, including weak private sectors, high unemployment, and a lack of buffers.

25 June 2009

Sustainable Development

Paris: The Egyptian-French Co-presidency gathers the parties of the UfM for the First Ministerial Conference on Sustainable Development, together with representatives of the EU, EC and the League of Arab States. The Ministers welcome the recommendations of the expert sessions in the fields of Energy, Water and the Environment, Transport and Sustainable Urban Development. They welcome the list of UfM projects and applaud the progress made on the projects that are expected to be launched in 2009.

www.ufm-water.net

28 June 2009

Environment

Sharm el-Sheikh: The MED-EMIP project holds a workshop entitled "MENA Energized: Regional Challenges to Green the Power Sector", which tackles four of the main sustainable energy challenges of the region: the emergence of a regulatory framework in the MENA Region, the Mediterranean Solar Plan, financing renewable energy projects, technology transfer and local production.

www.medemip.eu/WebPages/Common/showpage.aspx?pageid=160

30 June 2009

EU-Turkey

Brussels: At the 7th meeting of the Intergovernmental Conference, negotiations are opened on a new negotiating chapter, Taxation. This chapter covers areas that are of crucial importance to Turkey's preparations in implementing European policies. The EU underlines that Turkey should make significant progress towards alignment in the fields of VAT and excise duties and fully eliminate the discriminatory taxation of alcoholic beverages, imported tobacco and imported cigarettes.

July

1 July 2009

EU Swedish Presidency

Brussels: Among the EU's priorities under the Swedish Presidency are: dealing with the economic downturn; restoring the financial market to working order; and guaranteeing the sus-

tainability of Member States' public finances.

www.se2009.eu

1 July 2009

Audiovisual

Brussels: The EC approves a contribution of 11 million euros for a new Euromed Audiovisual programme. It builds on the achievements of its predecessors, Euromed Audiovisual I and II, aiming to tap into the potential of a developing audiovisual market in the region and to assist films from the Mediterranean in securing a place on the global stage. Its general objective is to contribute to the development of intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity through support for the development and reinforcement of cinematographic and audiovisual capacity in the Mediterranean partner countries, sectors seen as favouring regional integration and civil society.

4 July 2009

EMPA

Amman: EMPA reaffirms its commitment to the Middle East peace efforts supporting the establishment of a two-state-solution: a State of Israel in safe and internationally-recognised borders that peacefully coexists with a free, sovereign, democratic and viable State of Palestine on its own internationally-recognised territory. This can only be achieved through the active involvement of all parties, the end of violence from all sides and through on the ground confidence-building measures.

7 July 2009

ECOFIN

Brussels: The Finance Ministers from the UfM countries underline the need for cooperation and welcome the coordinated actions to stabilise the financial sector and the stimulus measures to support economic growth. Ministers reaffirm their commitment to implementing key structural reforms suited to each country to help their economies to recover in the aftermath of the crisis. They take note of the launching of InfraMed, a long-term investment fund to complement existing instruments such as FEMIP.

8 July 2009

Education

Luxembourg: The EIB is to lend 200 million euros to Morocco to help finance

an ambitious school modernisation programme, improving access to education for 6 to 15-year-olds. Improving education in the Mediterranean is a key FEMIP goal. This loan brings FEMIP support for human capital in the Mediterranean to nearly 500 million euros. Between 2004 and 2008, the EIB signed loans in Morocco for a total of 1.3 billion euros.

8-9 July 2009

FEMISE

Aix-en-Provence: FEMISE organises a workshop to address issues related to productivity measurements, and the relation between openness and firm efficiency with the objective of a better understanding of the micro-economic adjustment mechanisms and the necessary policy actions.

www.femise.org

8-10 July 2009

Invest in Med

Athens: The EU funded Invest in Med project holds its annual conference, bringing together the members of the consortium and their networks on the eve of the Athens Business Forum. The Forum meets to reaffirm its strong commitment to fostering economic ties, which generate development, growth and employment in the Euro-Mediterranean region. More than 800 businessmen and officials from across the Mediterranean attend.

www.invest-in-med.eu

10 July 2009

Energy

Ankara: EC President Barroso and Energy Commissioner Piebalgs welcome the signing of the Nabucco Intergovernmental Agreement, which sets out the terms and conditions under which gas can be exported from the Caspian Sea and the Middle East to the European Union and Turkey. Potentially Nabucco can supply up to 5-10% of the European gas demand.

10 July 2009

UfM

Brussels: The EC issues a background memo outlining the state of affairs of the Union. The memo details the six project priorities identified at the Paris Summit and also details the administrative structure and function. In the

wake of the suspension of UfM meetings and activities due to the Gaza crisis at the end of 2008, the document details the gradual resumption of meetings since the end of April. It also breaks down the 90 million euros in funding, earmarked by the European Commission to various priority projects of the UfM.

13-14 July 2009

Neighbourhood

Cagliari: The Conference is launched for the ENPI Cross-border Cooperation in the Mediterranean (CBCMED) programme. The conference gathers national and regional political representatives from participating countries to discuss Programme strategy on the basis of the needs and expectations of the eligible territories. The Programme provides the framework for the implementation of cross-border and cooperation activities in the context of the ENP.

www.enpicbcmec.eu

20-21 July 2009

Economy

Milan: The Economic and Financial Forum for the Mediterranean gathers many high representatives from European and Mediterranean countries. It is the first forum of this kind and is conceived to develop cooperation in the UfM and focus on projects that have a bearing on the economic integration of small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as the initiation of major infrastructure and energy projects. The meeting also discusses the energy dependency of these countries, in terms of long-term sustainability and cooperation and trade.

21 July 2009

Audiovisual

Turin: A training programme organised by the EU-funded MED-MEM audiovisual heritage project takes an important step towards efforts to digitise audiovisual archives across the Mediterranean. The training is part of a cycle that will provide television technicians with the opportunity to digitise their archives and regularly enhance MED-MEM's website with important audiovisual documents. From 2011 onward, the collected material will be available to the public.

August

6 August 2009

Environment

Brussels: A progress report on the first three years of Horizon 2020 is published on the initiative's website. One of its main conclusions is that there has been rapid progress on pollution reduction under the EU's Horizon 2020. While warning against complacency, the report concludes with a positive message since the project has demonstrated that when stakeholders work together they are much more effective. <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/enlarg/med/pdf/sec1118.pdf>

9-11 August 2009

Medibtikar

Damascus: The EuroMed Innovation and Technology Programme Medibtikar organises a course on the "Creation and management of incubators" in Syria. Medibtikar is an EU-funded project that aims to provide the MPCs with instruments that will stimulate innovation and networking between the countries of the region and with the EU states.

15-16 August 2009

Environment

Damascus: The MED-EMIP project organises a workshop on "Lost CDM Opportunities in the Power Sector." It focuses on the identification of supply side and demand side measures in the power sector that may qualify as CDM projects with power utilities as investors and project promoters. The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) is an arrangement under the Kyoto Protocol allowing industrialised countries with a greenhouse gas reduction commitment to invest in projects that reduce emissions in developing countries, as an alternative to more expensive emission reductions in their own countries.

September

7-8 September 2009

Water

Athens: The Water Expert Group (WEG) of the UfM holds its first meeting focusing its efforts on developing the Strategy on Water in the Mediterranean, as well as concrete projects

proposed by the UfM. It also discusses the follow-up of the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Water, held in 2008.

www.ufm-water.net/

11 September 2009

Environment

Brussels: The EC presents a strategy to improve maritime governance in the Mediterranean that would act as an important driver for more sustainable growth while addressing common issues of concern. Competition for marine space, threats to maritime safety, environmental degradation and the effects of climate change all point to the need for a more coordinated response not only from the EU, but also in partnership with all Mediterranean neighbours. The EC strategy includes technical assistance, exchange of best practices and capacity building.

16 September 2009

MEDA

Brussels: The EC commissions experts to evaluate its cooperation with the Mediterranean Partner Countries implemented under the MEDA II. The objective is to analyse the performance of the EC assistance to the MPCs, in order to improve implementation of the current strategy and aid preparation of the future strategy under the ENPI. According to the authors of the report the positive results achieved in the economic and social sectors have not been accompanied by commensurate consolidation of human rights and democratisation and a strengthened involvement of Civil Society in the development process.

17 September 2009

FRONTEX

Warsaw: The European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders (FRONTEX) publishes a report on "The Impact of the Global Economic Crisis on Illegal Migrations to the EU," which looks at the possible connection between the impact of the economic crisis and the decrease in the migratory pressure on the external borders of the EU.

www.frontex.europa.eu

21 September 2009

Journalism

Stockholm: Regional cooperation and

the potential contribution of journalists to post-conflict situations are discussed in an event organised by the Anna Lindh Foundation, with the participation of the EU-funded European Neighbourhood Journalism Network (Euromed) Task Force. Media and civil society representatives also attend the meeting.

www.journalismnetwork.eu/index.php/_en

25-26 September 2009

EMUNI

Portoroz: The Euro-Mediterranean University organises the second conference on Higher Education and Research on the topic of "Internationalisation and the Role of the University Network." University networks offer a modern way for universities to be more open to the public and to assure the quality of Higher Education and competition of students and professors. They enable the mobility of students, professors and university staff and generate important multi-cultural experiences and good practice.

www.emuni.si

30 September 2009

Water

Luxembourg: The EIB grants two loans to Egypt. The first loan of 70 million euros will improve the supply of safe drinking water and sanitation for four million inhabitants of the Nile Delta and will contribute to saving additional water resources, reducing the uncontrolled discharge of untreated wastewater, and improving health conditions. The second loan of 50 million euros will finance an ambitious offshore wind farm in the Red Sea to further expand power generation from renewable energy sources.

October

1 October 2009

Environment

Brussels: The European Economic and Social Committee approves the climate information report at a plenary session. The report points out that the governance of environmental and sustainable development policies in the Mediterranean presents core problems, and that the lack of common policies will

have a negative impact on people across the whole region. This is why it will be extremely important to strengthen social cohesion in the UfM to develop a major North-South cooperation agreement.

1-4 October 2009

FAL

Rhodes: Over 50 experts and activists working in the field of arts and culture are gathered by the Anna Lindh Foundation to discuss the role of arts in promoting intercultural dialogue within the Euro-Mediterranean region in a workshop entitled "Creativity, Mobility and Dialogue." The event includes five main working sessions: Arts & Education, Media, Mobility, Networks and Translation.

6-7 October 2009

Aviation

Brussels: The Euro-Med Aviation project assesses the impact of the Euro-Mediterranean Common Aviation Area and discusses the road map for its implementation during a two-day workshop. The event gathers experts, EC representatives and country representatives to assess the costs and benefits of the establishment of the Common Aviation Area.

6-8 October 2009

Water

Beirut: The Mediterranean Network of Basin Organisations (MENBO) organises its General Assembly concentrating on three main topics: water and agriculture in Mediterranean Basin Management; adaptation to climate change and water saving; and usefulness of the tools of the European Water Framework Directive in the Mediterranean Partner Countries. On the sidelines of the General Assembly, the EMWIS project organises workshops focusing on the results of the water monitoring networks survey, recently conducted in Mediterranean countries.

www.emwis.net

8-9 October 2009

Mediterranean Cities

Marseille: The EIB hosts a seminar on the Rehabilitation of Historic Cities in the Mediterranean in the framework of its "Medinas 2030" initiative. The his-

toric centres of southern and eastern Mediterranean cities play a vital role in preserving the cultural and social capital of Mediterranean countries. It is therefore imperative to develop a comprehensive and integrated approach to the rehabilitation of Medinas with the implementation of investments.

9 October 2009

World Bank

Marseille: The World Bank, together with the EIB, the Governments of Egypt, France, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia and the City of Marseille, launches the Marseille Centre for Mediterranean Integration (MCMI). The Centre will facilitate access to best knowledge and practices and improve cooperation to support development policies. The MCMI areas of engagement include: urban and spatial development; sustainable development; transport and logistics; employment and labour mobility challenges; and knowledge economy, innovation and technology.

9 October 2009

Energy

Brussels: Some 60 Foreign and Energy Ministers, together with representatives from international organisations, industry, research institutes and financial institutions, attend the EU-Mediterranean-Gulf Renewable Energy Conference addressing the challenges and possibilities for practical cooperation to facilitate the development of local renewable energy opportunities. According to the ENP Commissioner the three main areas where efforts should be focused are: a framework of policies and regulations to enable a Green Energy Market to function efficiently; the necessary physical infrastructure; and the research and development activities to make renewable energy increasingly economically viable.

http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/energy/index_en.htm

13 October 2009

UfM

Brussels: During the plenary session of the American Chamber of Commerce, EC Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner affirms that the Union for the Mediterranean has given renewed vigour to Eu-

rope's relationship with its southern neighbours; she underlines that establishing a Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area remains an important objective and acknowledges the weight of political obstacles affecting the UfM.

13-14 October 2009

Transports

Brussels: During a two-day meeting the Euromed Transport Programme discusses infrastructure and regulatory issues with the countries participating in the programme. Representatives of all the partner countries gather to present the state of infrastructure projects in their countries. They will also assess the progress of projects funded by the Euromed Transport Programme, i.e. Motorways of the Seas, SAFEMED, GNSS and EuroMed Aviation.

www.euromedtransport.org

16-17 October 2009

FAL

Alexandria: The Anna Lindh Foundation organises the first annual Mediterranean cultural festival, which aims to use the arts to promote a better understanding of foreign cultures and facilitate mutual knowledge between different communities living within the Euro-Mediterranean region. It will consist of a variety of cultural activities, including traditional dancing from Palestine and Greece, theatre performances, storytelling and handicrafts presented by artists from around Egypt, including Cairo, Assiut, Siwa and Port Said.

18-19 October 2009

EESC

Alexandria: The Euromed Summit of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions gathers organised civil society representatives from the 43 countries participating in the UfM. The main topic of the debate will be the active participation of organised civil society in the UfM. The economic and social impact of the financial crisis on the Euromed region will also be discussed, as will the effects of climate change on the region.

19 October 2009

Justice

Brussels: Euromed Justice II holds its second regional conference to present

the topics and methodology of the training sessions and study visits foreseen for the second phase of the project. It also introduces the work developed through the 12 working group meetings carried out during the first phase. The project aims at supporting the development of the Mediterranean partners' institutional and administrative capacity and good governance in the field of justice, including modernisation and improved access to justice.

www.euromed-justice.eu

20 October 2009

Agadir Agreement

Paris: The Agadir Technical Unit organises the Partnership Forum in the Textile and Garment Sector. Partnership between the EU and the four member countries of the Agreement (Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia) is considered one of the main objectives of the Agreement itself, with the textile and garments sector playing a major role in achieving partnership between the two shores of the Mediterranean, as well as enhancing integration and investment.

www.agadiragreement.org

20-21 October 2009

Transport

Naples: The annual conference on Trans-European Transport Networks seeks to develop a common approach on the external dimension of Europe's transport networks, looking at links with neighbouring countries. The ultimate policy objective of the TEN-T is the establishment of a single, multimodal network covering both traditional ground-based structures and equipment to enable safe and efficient traffic. The TENT-T will be established gradually by integrating land, sea and air transport infrastructure components.

23 October 2009

Civil Protection

Brussels: The first Steering Committee meeting is held of the Programme on Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Natural and Man-made Disasters, gathering National Civil Protection Authorities from the 27 EU Member States and the 14 Mediterranean and Balkan Partner Countries. The Steering Committee is in charge of endorsing the strategies of the Programme and

approving the work plan, which includes workshops on topics such as earthquakes, floods, drought, tsunamis, wild fires, sea pollution and industrial accidents.

23-26 October 2009

Politics and Security

Malta: The 27th Malta Seminar for Euro-Mediterranean diplomats addresses, among other topics: the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the Lisbon Treaty and the Mediterranean; the UfM, Challenges and Prospects; Economic Trends in the Euro-Med Area and the Global Crisis; and the Challenge of Irregular Migration and Human Rights in the Euro-Mediterranean Area. Malta Seminars is a project that carries out training for EU and Mediterranean diplomats with the aim of providing them with regular and updated information on the European Institutions and the key aspects of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

www.euromed-seminars.org.mt

24-25 October 2009

Gender Equality

Istanbul: The Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network organises a conference aimed at preparing recommendations for the Euro-Med Ministerial meeting on "Strengthening the Role of Women in Society," which will take place in Morocco in November. The conference will gather around one hundred participants from major women's and human rights organisations in the Euro-Med region, as well as EU and government representatives. The main objectives are increasing awareness of the Istanbul Plan of Action (IPA); exploring synergies between the national, regional and international frameworks for the promotion and protection of gender equality; and strengthening civil society cooperation and coalition building in the Euro-Med region on gender equality and women's rights.

<http://gender.euromedrights.org>

29-30 October 2009

Customs

Istanbul: 130 representatives from 43 UfM countries gather to discuss ways to strengthen the fight against smugglers in the Mediterranean region in a conference on "Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters within

the Framework of the Union for the Mediterranean." A final statement contains recommendations underlining the importance of strengthening mutual administrative assistance in customs matters.

November

2-6 November 2009

Economy

Barcelona: The Barcelona Chamber of Commerce and the Association of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the Mediterranean (ASCAME) organise the 3rd Mediterranean Week of Economic Leaders. This Mediterranean economic and business week aims to support and consolidate the economic pillar of the UfM and its Permanent Secretariat in Barcelona. It includes three main events: the North Africa Business Development Forum, the Mediterranean Women Entrepreneurs Forum and the Economic Forum of the Mediterranean City.

www.mediterraneanweek.org

5 November 2009

Journalism

Monaco: Prince Albert II and André Azoulay open the international ceremony for the 2009 Anna Lindh Foundation Journalist Award. Journalists working in communities across the UfM region receive the highest regional recognition for their reports on issues of cultural diversity. The ceremony also includes a special recognition for conflict reporting in the aftermath of the Gaza conflict. The Principality of Monaco will play host for the next three years to the international ceremony of the Mediterranean Journalist Award.

www.euromedalex.org/journalist-award/about

9-11 November 2009

EuroMed Heritage

Beirut: The EuroMed Heritage 4 organises a workshop on "Preventing and fighting illicit traffic of cultural property." The workshop compares existing legislations and specialised services in the partner countries with the norms set by major international conventions. EuroMed Heritage 4 is a programme which contributes to the exchange of experiences on cultural heritage, cre-

ates networks and promotes cooperation with the MPCs.

www.euromedheritage.net

11-12 November 2009

Gender

Marrakesh: Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on "Strengthening the Role of Women in Society." Ministers meet to follow up and agree on new measures to achieve the objectives of the document adopted in Istanbul in 2006. The EU funds a regional gender equality project in the Mediterranean Partner Countries. The three-year 4.5 million euro programme has three main objectives: the full implementation of the CEDAW, the strengthening of strategies on fighting gender-based violence against women, and support to the follow-up of the 2006 Istanbul Ministerial Conference.

13 November 2009

Energy

Nicosia: Energy Regulators meet for the 8th General Assembly of the Association of Mediterranean Regulators for Electricity and Gas (MED-REG) to define their 2010-2012 Action Plan aimed at developing the regulatory framework necessary for the creation of a stable, harmonised and integrated Euro-Mediterranean energy market. Participants also focus on and approve the work carried out by the four ad hoc groups: Institutional Issues; Electricity; Gas; and Environment, Renewable Energy Sources and Energy Efficiency.

13-16 November 2009

Employment

Cairo: The EU Commissioner on Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities visits Egypt to exchange experience with his counterpart on tackling the social impacts of the economic crisis and discuss progress towards social and employment objectives under the ENP. The visit also helps to enhance cooperation between the Commission and the Egyptian co-Presidency of the UfM in implementing the framework for actions agreed by EuroMed employment and labour ministers at their 2008 Conference in Marrakech.

14-15 November 2009

FEMISE

Brussels: At FEMISE's annual confer-

ence, participants from the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean address and exchange views on issues related to the EU-Med Partnership, ENP and UfM, as well as their effects on economic and social matters in the MPCs. The plenary sessions address the issue of convergence of the South Med Countries towards Europe in two sessions: Convergence of the South MPCs, and Impediments to Convergence in the South Med Countries.

www.femise.org

14-16 November 2009

Youth

Malta: The Salto Youth project organises a conference to discuss the role of NGOs in youth policies in the Mediterranean region and their experiences at an organisational and management level with stakeholders, policymakers, board members and representatives of youth NGOs from the EU and MPCs. Among the themes addressed during the meeting is youth policy in the regional context; realities of NGOs in the Euro-Mediterranean area; good practices; information about the key actors in the Euro-Med area and project management tools.

16 November 2009

EU-Jordan

Brussels: In a statement issued after the 8th EU-Jordan Association Council, the EU values Jordan as a very important partner in the ENP framework, as well as in the UfM. The establishment of a sub-committee on human rights deserves special mention. The statement recalls Jordan's proposal to enhance relations with the EU in an Advanced Status Framework and affirms that the EU has undertaken a preliminary evaluation of this proposal.

16-17 November 2009

Solar Plan

Brussels: During the 3rd European Renewable Energy Policy Conference, EU Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner outlines ambitious targets for the Mediterranean Solar Plan, announcing its aim to reach 20GW of new renewable energy production and achieve significant energy savings around the Mediterranean by 2020. She also points out that the EU and the Mediterranean had

one of the world's largest potential markets for renewable energy.

17 November 2009

Enterprise

Brussels: During a Euro-Mediterranean Seminar on sustainable enterprise development, experts from southern Mediterranean countries and from the OECD develop a proposal to "green" the Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Enterprise. The workshop also presents the latest developments and good practices in MED and EU policies regarding sustainable industrial development. The draft amendments to the Charter will be presented to Industry Ministers for their approval at the 8th Euro-Mediterranean ministerial conference on industry in 2010.

20-22 November 2009

Rules of origin

Brussels: European Ministers at the Education, Youth and Culture Council adopt a decision authorising the Commission to open negotiations with a view to a regional convention on Pan-Euro-Mediterranean preferential rules of origin. At the 2007 Euro-Med Trade Conference in Lisbon, ministers agreed to draft a convention for the pan Euro-Med area in order to replace the current network of protocols on rules of origin. The convention includes countries participating in the Stabilisation and Association process.

20-22 November 2009

EMPA

Cairo: The EP President takes part in the EMPA Bureau meeting and underlines the need for strong cooperation to create a closer partnership between all countries and societies of the Euro-Mediterranean region. In a final statement the EMPA expresses concern at the postponement of the UfM Foreign Ministers meeting and welcomes the discussions on the establishment of the UfM Secretariat in Barcelona, recommending that it be fully operational in the near future.

www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/empa/home/20091120bureau_ufm_en.pdf

23-24 November 2009

Water

Lyon: The Mediterranean Committee of

United Cities and Local Governments organises an international conference focused on the contribution of local and regional authorities to the water strategy of the UfM. This meeting results in recommendations for the UfM water strategy, identifies decentralised cooperation projects to be presented and strengthens the support from important donors for projects led by the Mediterranean authorities.

www.ufm-water.net

23-25 November 2009

Audiovisual

Brussels: The EuroMed Audiovisual II programme holds a workshop to present a report on the progress of its legal database. The legal database is considered a unique legal tool for legislation governing copyright and related rights, as well as film and audiovisual law in the ENPI South Countries, and brings together the laws of the ENPI South Countries. The workshop is attended by around 20 representatives of national audiovisual authorities from the nine ENPI South Partner Countries.

30 November 2009

EU-Jordan

Brussels: The EC and Jordan sign a Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement to help enhance cooperation in areas of common interest and bring mutual benefits. Jordan became the fifth Mediterranean Partner Country to sign an S&T Cooperation Agreement with the EC (the other four being Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco and Israel). Jordan has identified energy, sustainable development, health and agriculture as priorities for international cooperation in research.

December

5 December 2009

FEMISE

Marseille: FEMISE presents a new report concerning "Mediterranean Partner Countries facing the Crisis", according to which these countries appear resilient in the face of the global financial and economic crisis. The report nevertheless predicts that the crisis will mainly spread via revenue effects linked to the drop in external demand, employment difficulties for migrant workers and

its effect on fund transfers, tourist flows and the decrease in direct investment.

6-16 December 2009

Enterprise

Middle East: A team of EU officials and experts from the EC, the OECD and the European Training Foundation tours Egypt, Israel, the occupied Palestinian Territories, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria to review progress achieved under the Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Enterprise since the last evaluation in April 2008. In each country, between 30 and 60 stakeholders from the public sector and business community actively debate the 2008 results, latest developments and next steps. In addition, a regional seminar in Brussels brings together experts from the nine countries to examine proposals for amending the Charter and for improving its evaluation tool in four areas: skills development, access to market, access to finance, and innovation.

7 December 2009

EU-Morocco

Brussels: The 8th EU Association Council with Morocco marks a new step in relations. The task of the Association Council is to monitor implementation of the Association Agreement, the Action Plan and the agreement on Morocco's "advanced status." The EU declaration gives a broad overview of Morocco's progress in fields ranging from regional cooperation to human rights and economic and social policy, and praises the advances made across the board.

8-9 December 2009

Heritage

Rabat: A seminar organised by the EuroMed Heritage 4 programme is organised to examine how to reconcile conservation requirements for old buildings with uses adapted to contemporary needs, while taking into account imperatives of economic and social revitalisation. It aims to contribute to the improvement of regional legislation and practices for the safeguard of Mediterranean cultural heritage.

9 December 2009

Trade

Brussels: Euro-Mediterranean Trade

Ministers meet to discuss ways to enhance economic integration and diversification and boost Euro-Mediterranean trade and investment with a view to achieving a genuine Free Trade Area by 2010. Ministers take stock of progress made towards an EMFTA, involving a network of North-South and South-South Free Trade Agreements. The Euro-Mediterranean Trade Roadmap till 2010 and beyond includes both concrete measures to address the current weaknesses of Euromed trade and economic relations, and proposals to turn the existing Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements (AA) into deep and comprehensive Free Trade Agreements. Ministers also welcome the progress made in the negotiations on the establishment of a more efficient dispute settlement mechanism for the trade provisions of the AA.

10-11 December 2009

Neighbourhood

Rome: During the annual conference of the ENPI Cross Border Cooperation (CBC), participants exchange experience and discuss the strategic initiatives relevant to the ENPI CBC area such as the Eastern Partnership. The ENPI Cross Border Cooperation aims to promote economic and social development in border areas. It strives to address common challenges, ensure efficient and secure borders and promote people-to-people cooperation.

14-16 December 2009

Heritage

Annaba: During a workshop organised by the MANUMED project under the EuroMed Heritage 4 programme, participants examine ways of saving priceless ancient manuscripts, which bear witness to centuries of Mediterranean history. The workshop, "Safeguarding and Transmitting Mediterranean Written Heritage" brings together a number of experts and professionals in the field in order to create a network for safeguarding and transmitting this precious historic heritage and stimulating historical research. The event also serves as a platform to present the Virtual Library developed by the MANUMED project.

www.manumed.org/

15-17 December 2009

Euromed Justice II

Lisbon: The EuroMed Justice II organises a seminar entitled "International judicial cooperation in the field of cross-border family conflicts: special reference to problems involved in serving decisions abroad made in cross-border family conflicts." Most experts consider that training is the core issue in any process of change affecting well-functioning institutions and good governance.

<http://euromed-justice.eu>

17 December 2009

EU-Morocco

Brussels: Moroccan and EU negotiators sign a Minute of Agreement concluding negotiations that have been ongoing for almost four years, in view of a future agreement on improving bilateral trade conditions for products from the agri-food and fisheries sector. This agreement will allow both parties to take full advantage of changing consumption and market potential, while reinforcing cooperation and safeguard mechanisms. It marks an important stage in trade relations between the EU and the Kingdom of Morocco, in line with political commitments made in the framework of the Barcelona Process.

22 December 2009

FEMIP

Ramallah: The EIB through the FEMIP pledges to make a 5 million euro "anchor" investment in the first venture capital fund to target investments in export-oriented IT companies being launched in the Palestinian territories. The EIB's commitment is announced at a signature ceremony. The Middle East Venture Capital Fund will support the development of high-growth, export-oriented IT and communications companies through equity investment in early stage ventures. Development of the Information and Communication Technology sectors is a key priority for the Palestinian Territories, as it is the only economic activity to have seen near continuous growth over the last decade. Software exports are not subject to the effects of political uncertainty, such as obstacles to movement and access.