

Presentation

Senén Florensa

General Director of the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed), Barcelona

Narcís Serra

President, Fundació CIDOB, Barcelona

In what had been declared by the European Union as the year of the Mediterranean, and a decade after the Barcelona Summit of 1995, the Euro-Mediterranean project has faced one of its biggest challenges. The celebration in Barcelona in November 2005 of an extraordinary conference gave an incentive to evaluate the process and, at the same time, encouraged the holding of an interesting debate about the methods and even the objectives of the project.

The “Barcelona+10” Summit ended with two important decisions: the adoption of the Code of Conduct against Terrorism, and the Working Programme for the next five years. Thus, the Mediterranean partners renewed their commitment to establish a shared area of peace, stability and prosperity in the Mediterranean region by means of continuous dialogue, exchange and cooperation.

In the light of the significance of the Barcelona Process in 2005, the third edition of the *Mediterranean Yearbook* has tried to contribute to this process of mutual dialogue and knowledge among the Mediterranean societies by focusing from different perspectives and viewpoints on the tenth anniversary of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership as being one of the key topics/issues of the year.

Apart from the Barcelona Process, *Med.2006* also highlights other key topics/issues of the past year. Firstly, the situation in the Middle East, the eternal

geopolitical context that defines the future of the Mediterranean and the rest of the world. Secondly, a subject with a significant impact on the future development of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: the debate concerning European frontiers and identities in the context of the relationship with Africa, the position of Turkey, or the role of Islam in Europe. The Yearbook’s assessment of the year, as in previous editions, gives a vision based on a diversity of authors and viewpoints which reinforce the analysis of the various sectorial topics. These are in turn complemented by the addition of more purely informative elements through box paragraphs and through the very extensive information provided in the form of chronologies, graphs and statistics.

The thematic dossier of the year was centred/based on the subject of democracy and governability in the Mediterranean. The Yearbook’s special dossier seeks to go beyond the merely conjunctural factors by presenting a series of different articles that lead to a deeper analysis of one of the most complex and profound topics/issues that the Mediterranean region has to face, and which will mark the direction of its future development.

For the Fundació CIDOB and the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed), this third edition of the *Yearbook* confirms its role as a means of extending knowledge of the region both to those specifically interested in the Mediterranean and to the general public. It is a tool for the diffusion of knowledge that is continuing to grow with the inclusion of its contents on its website. *Med.2006* represents the desire of both institutions to offer a useful product for helping to feel the pulse of a region that is constantly searching to define itself.