

Chronology of the Barcelona process

The chronology presented here assembles details of the most relevant events that have taken place between July 2002 and June 2003 within the framework of the Barcelona Process. During this period, two ministerial sector conferences have taken place: one related to the subject of the environment and the other involving the Ministers of Energy. The Association Agreements signed with Algeria, Lebanon and Egypt have been the highlights of this process, and negotiations for an agreement with Syria are well underway. The Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP) was launched within the framework of the European Investment Bank (EIB), and in 2002 the MEDA Programme donated a record amount of money to the Process. Further important steps have been the creation of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly, and the significant input of the EU's political and financial commitment to the Middle East Peace Process and to the advances in the definition of the Euro-Mediterranean Foundation.

July

8th July 2002

Association Agreement: Morocco
Brussels: EU-Morocco session of negotiations on agricultural protocol.

The fourth session of negotiations between the EU and Morocco, with the objective of concluding the agricultural protocol included within the Association Agreement.

10th July 2002

Environment

Athens: The second Euro-Mediterranean

anean ministerial conference on the environment.

During this conference the Ministers approve a report on the first years of the Euro-Mediterranean Regional Environmental Programme, and adopt a declaration. The declaration recognises that «environmental concerns must be better integrated into the policies, programmes and projects of the Partnership». The conference also approves a structure for Euro-Mediterranean strategies regarding environmental integration, of which the principal element is the formation of environmental policies at the centre of the key sectors of regional economic cooperation: water, industry, transport and the information associations. On the other hand, the Athens Declaration salutes the active role of the Mediterranean Partners in the preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, which is to be held in Johannesburg.

http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/smap/min_dec_en.pdf

16th and 17th July 2002

Transport

Brussels: Euro-Mediterranean Transport Forum.

The essential objective of the meeting is to take stock of regional cooperation in the transport sector and to evaluate instruments of more advanced cooperation in the sectors such as marine security and satellite navigation (the Galileo project). Other issues include short-distance marine transport, air travel and the financing of transport infrastructures. For the first time, representatives from the private sector, in the role of observers, attend the conferences.

19th July 2002

MEDA

Brussels: Meeting of the MED Committee about the MEDA Financing Plan. The Med Committee gives its favourable opinion of the MEDA national financing plan for the year 2002 with regard to Algeria, Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia. The maximum EU contribution to the four plans is increased to 311 million Euros: (Algeria: 38 million; Egypt: 104 million; Jordan: 95 million and Tunisia: 74 million).

22nd July 2002

Association Agreement: Lebanon

Brussels: EU-Lebanon Trade Agreement.

An interim agreement is reached that allows the trade arrangements of the EU-Lebanon Association Agreement to be put into motion before the agreement is endorsed. This agreement replaces the EU-Lebanon cooperation agreement that was signed in 1977.

http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/lebanon/ia/1.pdf

August

28th August 2002

Commercial relations

Damascus (Syria): The launch of the EU-Mashreck Partnership.

The EU-Mashreck Partnership is an EU initiative to promote business cooperation between small and medium-sized businesses of the EU and in the Mediterranean region. The initiative, which will be inaugurated in October 2003 with the participation of European companies as well as enterprises from Syria, Jordan and Lebanon, is organised by the Syrian European

Business Centre (SEBC) and financed by MEDA, in collaboration with the Chambers of Commerce Federation of Syria.

<http://www.eu-mashreck2003.com>

September

16th September 2002

*EU-Morocco economic dialogue
Rabat (Morocco): The second economic dialogue.*

This meeting focuses on macroeconomic perspectives and evolution. Both parties debate various issues, including the investment created and the impact caused by the EU enlargement for the Moroccan economy. The Moroccan representatives present their opinions and conclusions concerning free trade with the EU, other Mediterranean Partners and the United States. The Moroccan representatives also give an explanation of the role of the MEDA programme in supporting the transition programme.

18th September 2002

*Political and security Issues
Brussels: Meeting of senior officials from the Euro-Mediterranean Process regarding political and security issues.*
The Senior Officials of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership responsible for political and security issues present the priorities outlined by the Danish Presidency, and its work programme. The implementation of the Valencia Plan is also revised, in particular the project of the Euro-Mediterranean Assembly. The meeting addresses issues related to human rights, civil society and terrorism. Two members of the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN), Abdelaziz Bennani and Marc Schade-Poulsen, elaborate on the current state of the network's activities.

19th September 2002

*Barcelona Process
Barcelona: Meeting of the Euro-Mediterranean Committee.*

The meeting deals with the priorities established by the Danish presidency and its employment programme, and the monitoring of the Valencia Plan. The committee discusses the state of the Regional Cooperation Programme with

regard to justice, the fight against drugs, organised crime and terrorism, in addition to cooperation with respect to immigration and the movement of people. The committee also discusses trade relations between the Euro-Mediterranean countries. The European Commission reports on the MEDA regional programmes.

25th September 2002

*Association Agreement: Tunisia
Tunisia: Meeting of the EU-Tunisia Association Committee.*

In the context of political dialogue, the meeting addresses such issues as the situation of democracy and human rights within current international circumstances. In its discussions concerning trade, the committee recognises that thanks to the Association Agreement, EU-Tunisian relations have been strengthened. The most prominent debates are focussed on issues such as the dismantling of tariffs, ways to facilitate trade, various services and issues of intellectual property. Other issues are also addressed, such as professional training, industrial and financial preparation, social matters and immigration. Further issues concerning custom laws, in particular those relating to rules of origin, as well as administrative cooperation and the tariffs dismantling were motives for long discussion among the committee members.

26th September 2002

*MED Committee
Brussels: MED Committee meeting.*

The Med Committee gives its favourable opinion of four aid projects offered to Palestine, which represent a total of 22 million Euros. Of the four approved projects, one is focused on strengthening the structure of the Palestinian justice system, with the aim of developing an independent and operative system within a period of thirty-two months (financed by a total of seven million Euros). Another is an urgent aid programme directed at small and medium-sized businesses in East Jerusalem (five millions); and the two other projects pinpoint the healthcare sector: one of which consists of a two-year programme aimed at supporting the Health Ministry, in aspects of programming and financing the health-

care system (a sum of five million Euros), and the other which takes the form of an emergency aid package that will be made available to Palestinian hospitals in East Jerusalem (receiving five million Euros).

In the debates undertaken by the Committee, social aspects of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation are also tackled. More specifically, attention is given to the key components of the third chapter of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, a factor that is essential to development in Mediterranean countries.

October

3rd October 2002

*EU-Morocco Cooperation
Brussels: Meeting of the EU-Morocco Cooperation Committee.*

First meeting of the EU-Morocco Cooperation Committee. Aside from issues of internal organisation, the committee also takes on matters related to the dismantling of tariffs, rules of origin, the synchronization of legislation, the simplification of customs procedures, and mutual assistance between administrative organisations.

7th October 2002

*Palestinian refugee relief
Brussels: EU agreement with the United Nations' Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA).*

During the 2002 to 2005 period, the EU will contribute 237 million Euros to the general funds of the UNRWA. The new agreement will concentrate on the EU funding of regular UNRWA programmes that are directed at the 3.9 million Palestinian refugees in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, West Bank and Gaza. The UNRWA programmes are centred on areas such as education, healthcare and social services.

8th October 2002

*Association Agreement: Israel
Jerusalem: Meeting of the EU-Israel Association Committee.*

At the meeting the members of the committee exchange points of view about political issues such as Israeli-Palestinian relations, political tensions in the region, and terrorism. With regard to the Euro-Mediterranean Part-

nership, the follow-up to the Valencia Action Plan is discussed, as well as the Euro-Med Investment Facility. Other topics of debate include scientific and technological cooperation, Rules of Origin and other issues related to customs laws. Also on the agenda are questions related to money laundering, economic cooperation, the integration of immigrants into society, projects of cooperation between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, and dialogue between peoples and civilisations.

10th October 2002

*Association Agreement: Algeria
Brussels: Approval of the Association Agreement.*

The European Parliament declares its unanimous approval of the conclusion of the EU-Algeria Association Agreement. Furthermore, in a second resolution, which is adopted according to a wide majority, the European Parliament urges the Council of Europe and the Commission to put a range of programmes and measures aimed at fighting high levels of unemployment into motion, particularly for combating unemployment among young people. The resolution also urges Algerian authorities to continue its efforts to ensure more respect for fundamental rights. The Association Agreement, before put into force, must be sanctioned by the Algerian Parliament and by the national parliaments of the EU Member States.

http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/algeria/docs/index.htm

17th October 2002

*Association Agreement: Israel
Brussels: The second EU-Israel economic dialogue.*

The meeting of Senior Officials allows the European Commission to increase its knowledge of the Israeli economy, and the Israeli authorities to familiarise themselves with the objectives and workings of several EU economic policies.

The Israeli delegation gives a detailed explanation of the state of the country's economy, presents its government's fiscal consolidation strategy, and expresses its intention to reform the labour market. Projects aimed at developing periphery regions are also

presented. In turn, the European representatives provide details about the economic situation of the Euro-zone and elaborate on the strategies developed to eliminate fragmentation in the financial markets of the EU. The representatives also present the EU policies on structural reforms.

18th October 2002

Investments

Barcelona: Meeting of the Policy Dialogue and Coordination Committee (PDCC) of the Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP).

The Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership is set up by twenty-seven Euro-Mediterranean Finance Ministers, the President of the European Investment Bank, Philippe Maystadt, and the European Commissioner and Economic and Monetary Affairs, Pedro Solbes, at the first meeting of the Policy Dialogue and Coordination Committee (PDCC). Mr Solbes points out that the FEMIP will be used as an instrument for development in the private sector. In order to facilitate and accelerate the development of EIB involvement in the private sector of the Mediterranean region, the commission promises to set aside 255 million Euros of the community budget to be bequeathed to this field over the next four years. The presence of the EIB in the Mediterranean countries will be reinforced with the decision to open two regional offices, one in Egypt and another in Morocco.

<http://www.bei.org/lending/med>

21st October 2002

*Association Agreement: Israel
Luxemburg: The third meeting of the EU-Israel Association Council.*

At the meeting, the council addresses issues of common interest, with particular reference to the situation in the Middle East. The EU gives details of its concerns with regard to the access of humanitarian organisations to the West Bank and Gaza, and to the damage caused to development projects in those territories. Trade and economic relations are also addressed, in the presence of the Foreign Affairs Ministers from Israel and from Denmark (currently also serving as President of

the EU Council of Ministers), EU Senior Representative Javier Solana, and the European Commissioner of International Relations, Chris Patten.

23rd October 2002

Water

Amman (Jordan): EMWIS informative seminar on the water sector.

The seminar is given by the Euro-Mediterranean Information System on know-how in the Water sector (EMWIS), and the Jordanian Ministry of Water and Irrigation. Its objective is to raise awareness among figures from the Jordanian water sector in an exchange of information and know-how. The new presidency of the EMWIS directory committee, assumed by Spain, presents the strategic aspects of the second phase of the system, to take place between 2003 and 2005.

<http://www.emwis.org/>

25th October 2002

MED Committee

Brussels: Meeting of the MED Committee.

Reports are presented of the national financing plans for 2002 of Lebanon, Morocco and Syria, in addition to three bilateral programmes aimed at the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, dealing with emergency aid for the municipalities, economic assistance for the Palestine electoral process, and emergency aid offered to small and medium-sized businesses.

28th October 2002

Humanitarian aid

Brussels: The European Commission approves 29 million Euros in aid towards efforts at reform in Palestine, in response to the deteriorating situation there.

The European Commission approves the allocation of seven million Euros to humanitarian aid operations in the Palestinian territories, another seven million towards reform of the Palestinian judiciary, 5 million in emergency relief for the private sector and the remaining ten million for the Palestinian health-care sector. The aid will be managed by the EU Humanitarian Office (ECHO) and EuropeAid.

Since 2001, around twenty incidents have been reported involving NGOs, owing to which the Commission em-

ployees and officials have been unable to properly carry out their responsibilities. Chris Patten, Commissioner of External Relations, declares that the projects financed by the European Commission are specific initiatives in response to the current situation of crisis in the occupied territories and the reform process started by Palestinian institutions.

November

4th and 5th November 2002

Association Agreement: Cyprus
Brussels: Meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary EU-Cyprus Committee.
The twenty-second inter-parliamentary EU-Cyprus meeting. The meeting deals with issues such as the political situation in Cyprus, relations with the EU and Cyprus' accession to the EU. Günter Verheugen, EU Commissioner for the Enlargement, is also in attendance. The committee also discusses the EU policy on renewable energy sources.

7th November 2002

Association Agreement: Jordan
Brussels: Meeting of the EU-Jordan Association Committee.
The first meeting of the EU-Jordan Association Committee. With regard to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the EU presents an overview on the follow-up of the Valencia Plan, while the Jordanian representation addresses the progress being made by the Agadir initiative. Various issues are discussed in relation to trade, such as the simultaneous dismantling of tariffs in the EU and Jordan, as are the preparations for the reconsideration of the agricultural chapter. Rules of Origin, politics of partnership, the environment, cooperation on issues of terrorism, and organised crime are some of the additional topics tackled at this meeting.

8th November 2002

Association Agreement: Jordan
Brussels: Economic Dialogue Meeting EU-Jordan.
The meeting deals with different aspects of macroeconomic perspectives and its evolution in Jordan and the EU. The debates about the impact of the

policy of investments and about competitiveness on growth are particularly in emphasis, and Jordan's experience with free trade formulae with the EU, the United States and other Arab countries also receives attention, as does the EU enlargement and its eventual impact on the Mediterranean Partners.

8th November 2002

Humanitarian relief and refugees
Brussels: The European Commission gives 55 million Euros to the UNRWA for the year 2002.

The European Commission approves its annual contribution of 55 million Euros to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA) for the year 2002. The European Union funds are channelled toward the work carried out by the UNRWA with some 3.9 million Palestinian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The objective is to provide aid for education, healthcare and social programmes. The Commission makes the decision with regard to the new convention on financing that was signed between the EU and the UNRWA in September 2002, and which set the commission's contribution at 237 million Euros for the period 2002 to 2005. The EU aid is added to the sum of 38.2 million Euros that has been donated by the Humanitarian Aid Office of the European Commission's (ECHO) since 2000.

11th and 12th November 2002

Association Agreement: Syria
Brussels: EU-Syria sessions of negotiation.

The ninth round of negotiations for the EU-Syria Association Agreement. At the meeting, the two parties make progress on the preamble for the agreement and the political chapter. Despite advances on the issues of justice and internal affairs, the two delegations still encounter differences. Syria presents new proposals for industrial and agricultural cooperation, concerning which the European representatives will redact a new text. The parties also debate aspects of the general structure of issues of commerce, the circulation of merchandise, and the movement of capital.

13th November 2002

MEDA

Brussels: MED Committee Meeting. Regional Cooperation Programmes of the MEDA Financing Plan for 2002.

At the meeting, the committee gives its favourable opinion of the two programmes that make up the regional financing plan of the MEDA programme for 2002. The first programme is the Euromed Information and Communication Programme to create further awareness and dissemination of the Barcelona Process and to favour mutual understanding in the Euro-Mediterranean region. The second programme, which focuses on the issues of governance and improving democracy, deals with the reform and cooperation of the judicial systems in the fight against organised crime and drug trafficking, and offers an analysis of migration in the area. In further discussions, the Med Committee also praises the technical support provided in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

15th November 2002

Budgets

Brussels: The Commission approves 122 million Euros destined for Morocco in its national financing plan.

The European Commission approves the allocation of 122 million Euros destined for Moroccan aid in its 2002 national financing plan. The Commission plans four different programmes centred on the specific necessities of the country: development of professional training (designated fifty million Euros), financial support for companies and modernisation of the private sector (the sum of sixty-one million Euros), improving labour conditions of women in rural areas (a total of six million Euros), and the adaptation of the Moroccan economy to the conditions stipulated in the Association Agreement (five million Euros). The 2002 national financing plan for Morocco is approved on the basis of the Country Strategy Paper and the objectives of the MEDA Programme.

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/morocco/csp/02_06_fr.pdf

15th and 18th November 2002

Training

Malta: Training and information seminar for diplomats.

The thirteenth biannual Information and Training Seminar for Euro-Mediterranean Diplomats deals with issues such as the implementation of the Valencia Action Plan, the state of the Association Agreements, and dialogue between cultures and civilisations. Another one of the important themes is the role of the European Convention in the future of the EU. The Malta Seminars provide participants with regular and updated information on relations between the EU and the Med Partners, with regard to the three chapters of the Barcelona Process.

<http://www.euromed-seminars.org/mt/>

18th November 2002

Budgets

Brussels: The Commission approves the national financing plans for the Lebanon and Syria.

The European Commission approves the national financing plans for the Lebanon and Syria for 2002. A sum of six million Euros is approved to finance industrial modernisation in Syria, and project of twelve million Euros is planned in order to support the implementation of the Association Agreement in the Lebanon. With this decision, the Commission offers its support to the Lebanese government with the purpose of meeting the terms agreed in the Association Agreement signed in June 2002. The project is designed with the purpose of liberalising trade, improving the country's legislative and regulatory structures, and strengthening institutions.

The Syrian government recognises the central role of the industrial sector, and the six million Euros approved by the Commission will therefore go toward preparing the industrial sector for the forthcoming challenges of economic competition. The programme will aim to develop a clear industrial strategy, political backing, and institutional competence for the public institutions in charge of industry.

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/lebanon/csp/02_06_en.pdf

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/syria/csp/02_06_en.pdf

18th November 2002

Security

Copenhagen: Meeting of senior officials and EuroMeSCo.

Common meeting between senior officials and EuroMeSCo, the Mediterranean network of foreign policy institutes, in order to address topics under the heading «Security in the Mediterranean Region: Establishing a Global Concept». More specifically, the meeting deals with such issues as «cultural differences of Mediterranean security», «civil society and security» and «asymmetric violence». The meeting also addresses the possibility of elaborating a broader concept of security in the Mediterranean that encompasses the three chapters of the Barcelona Process.

19th November 2002

Security

Copenhagen: Meeting of senior officials responsible for political and security issues.

At the meeting, officials debate the implementation of the political and security chapter of the Valencia Action Plan. Morocco presents a discourse on human rights, which address the issue of the rights of children. Other subjects tackled are the current state of the disaster management project and the treaty register.

20th November 2002

Euro-Mediterranean Committee

Copenhagen: Meeting of the Euro-Mediterranean Committee.

At this meeting, the committee deals with the Valencia Action Plan with regard to the economic, financial, socio-cultural, and human chapters of the Barcelona Process. Morocco presents an account of the status of the Agadir Process. The European Commission reports on regional programs, and the Netd@ys and eSchola programmes open to the Mediterranean Partners after the decision taken at the ministerial meeting in Valencia.

The implications of creating a Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly are also discussed. The EU presents a document regarding the Euro-Mediterranean Foundation. The commission updates the committee on current and future regional MEDA activities. Other issues include programmes such as Euromed Heritage and Euromed Youth. The EIB presents the Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP).

December

3rd December 2002

Migration and asylum

Brussels: European Commission Communication on the integration of migration issues in EU external relations.

The Commission adopts a communication for the European Parliament and Council of Europe about the integration of migration issues in EU relations with third party countries. The Commission considers migration a priority strategy, which, if managed correctly, could become a positive growth factor for the EU as well as for the third party countries. The integration of issues related to migration in programmes and community foreign policy forms part of the overall effort to resolve problems related to this phenomenon coherently and effectively in the Union. The communication has three main chapters: migratory concerns in a broad context (effects on developing countries, the factors that propel international migrations, and specific cases that require special protection); migratory policies of the EU and the integration of migratory issues in its cooperation programmes; and finally, possible policies for development in order to improve the management of migratory flows.

http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/cnc/2002/com2002_0703en01.pdf

http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/pdf/2003/com2003_0355en01.pdf

10th December 2002

Association Agreement: Lebanon Beirut: Presentation seminar of the Aid Programme, initiated with the EU-Lebanon Association Agreement.

Representatives from the European Commission and officials from the Lebanese ministries meet in order to present the Association Agreement. The Lebanese government also presents their strategy to put the agreement in motion, and the EU presents its plans for the support of the agreement. In specific sessions issues are discussed such as competition/WTO, taxes and customs, and quality and consumer protection. In general, these kinds of seminars aim to identify the aspects for which collaboration is most necessary, the direct beneficiaries and the start-up structures.

13th December 2002

Terrorism

Brussels: Meeting of senior officials about terrorism.

Senior officials of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership responsible for political and security issues meet to address the matter of terrorism. In this important issue, experts from all twenty-seven Euro-Mediterranean Partners participate.

16th and 17th December 2002

Universities

Rome: Meeting of members of the Mednet'U Project (Network of Euro-Mediterranean Universities).

The first meeting of members of the Mednet'U Project is based mainly on the creation of a common technology platform aimed at distance learning. The project is included in the regional programme EUMEDIS. At the meeting are present the twenty-five members from eleven Euro-Mediterranean countries (Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, France, Greece and Italy). The project is coordinated by the Italian university distance-learning network (NETTUNO).

<http://www.uninettuno.it/mednetu/index.htm>

17th December 2002

Palestine

Brussels: The European Commission approves 5.45 million Euros in aid money for Palestinian reform.

The various negotiating parties consider that in order to advance toward a peaceful solution to the Mid-East conflict, a reform of the Palestinian National Authority is needed, and the members of the Quartet support the reform with an administrative, financial, economic and judicial aid package. Within this framework, the Commission approves the sum of 5.45 million Euros to back the implementation of the initiatives. The Commission also allocates 2.5 million Euros to the EU mission of electoral observation.

19th December 2002

Palestine

Brussels: The European Commission grants a further ten million Euros to humanitarian aid for Palestinian victims.

The funds are destined to cover the necessities of the most vulnerable

sections of the Palestinian population in the West Bank, Gaza and Lebanon. The areas of intervention include food provisions, healthcare, hygiene and water, and the funds are managed by the Humanitarian Office of the European Commission (ECHO). This decision brings the total of aid awarded up to 35 million Euros in 2002.

January

7th January 2003

Association Agreement: Lebanon

Brussels: Confirmation of the Association Agreement.

The Lebanese authorities notify the EU Council of Ministers that their country has approved the Association Agreement and the interim free trade agreement, which were signed in June of 2002. The interim EU-Lebanon Association Agreement comes into force on 1st March 2003. The agreement must also be approved by the European Parliament and by the parliaments of the fifteen EU Member States.

8th to 12th January 2003

Youth

Barcelona: Evaluation seminar on the Salto-Youth Project.

The Evaluation Seminar on the Salto-Youth Project (Support for Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities), supported by the programme EuroMed Youth, which has been organised by the French Institute for Youth and is hosted by the autonomous government of Catalonia, aims to evaluate the impact of the project's training courses and to formulate proposals for future schemes of the project, with particular regard to the creation of networks and to collaboration within a Euro-Mediterranean context.

<http://www.salto-youth.net>

15th to 16th January 2003

Association Agreement: Egypt

Strasbourg: EU-Egypt Inter-Parliamentary Meeting.

The sixth EU-Egypt Inter-Parliamentary Meeting. The Egyptian delegation holds discussion sessions with the delegation from the European Parliament with reference to relations with the Mashreck and Gulf countries, as

well as meetings with representatives from the principal political groups of the European Parliament.

16th January 2003

Association Agreement: Lebanon

Approval of the EU-Lebanon Association Agreement.

In a plenary session, the European Parliament approves the EU-Lebanon Association Agreement. More specifically, the European Parliament approves two resolutions on Lebanon. The first is the official ratification of the agreement. The second resolution, however, draws attention to certain problems involving human rights, freedom of expression, the presence of non-Lebanese troops in the country and the Palestinian refugee situation. The Association Agreement still has to be approved by the fifteen Member States of the EU.

23rd January 2003

Intercultural dialogue

Brussels: First meeting of the High Level Advisory Group on Dialogue between Peoples and Cultures.

The group, created by President of the European Commission, Romano Prodi, in order to boost Euro-Mediterranean dialogue and cooperation, includes seventeen important cultural figures, such as Moroccan law professor Assia Bensalah, French journalist Jean Daniel, Italian writer Umberto Eco and Swiss professor Tariq Ramadan. The group's objective is to examine means of combining the EU's desire for internal cohesion, the coherency of external actions and the integration of immigrants legally established in EU territories.

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/commissioners/prodi/group/spirit_en.htm

31st January 2002 and 1st February 2003

Civil Society

Brussels: NGO Meeting.

Meeting organised by the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network, with the objective of discussing and preparing recommendations in order to structure meetings of the Civil Forum and improve relations between civil society and the official Partnership process. This meeting also deals

with preparation of the Euromed Civil Forum, to be held in April in Greece.

February

1st and 2nd February 2003

EuroMeSCo

Malta: Annual EuroMeSCo meeting.

At the meeting, the focus of the debate is the impact that the enlargement will have on the framework of the Mediterranean dossier, and its effects on the southern Mediterranean region.
<http://www.euromesco.net/>

3rd February 2003

Political and security issues

Brussels: Meeting of senior officials of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

The representatives of the Greek Presidency present their priorities. Within political dialogue the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) is analyzed. The senior officials address the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly project, in terms of the forthcoming Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Forum to be held in March in Crete, which must approve the creation of the assembly. They also address the development of the Valencia Action Plan. For the first time, high EU representative Javier Solana participates in the debates.

3rd and 4th February 2003

The Euro

Athens: Conference about the Euro and the Mediterranean.

Conference divided into three sessions. The first, «The Euro, the Mediterranean and the Gulf», includes the participation of Commissioner of Economic and Monetary Affairs, Pedro Solbes. The second session, presided over by Jordan's Minister of Finance, Michael Marto, is based on «The Evolution of the Financial Markets in the Mediterranean». The third session addresses the issue of «The Euro as an International Currency».

4th February 2003

Euro-Mediterranean Committee

Brussels: Meeting of the Euro-Mediterranean Committee.

Aside from the Greek Presidency's presentation of its priorities, the committee addresses issues of internal

workings and of improving the work process, initiated by a proposal from Morocco. Within the framework of cultural dialogue, the committee discusses such issues as the Euro-Mediterranean Foundation and the meeting of the advisory group created by the Commission President.

The Commission reports to the committee on some of its regional programmes, such as the public management and democracy programme, the informational and communication programme and the extension of the Netd@ys and e-Schola programmes to the Mediterranean region. The committee also hears reports on the progress of the Agadir Process, aimed at establishing a free trade zone between Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia.

4th February 2003

Association Agreement: Tunisia

Tunisia: Seminar on the EU-Tunisia Association Agreement.

The seminar has the purpose of launching the programme that partners the EU-Tunisia Association Agreement, financed by MEDA. Officials from the Tunisian ministries and representatives of the states and the European Commission participate in the talks. Different discussion groups are organised to deal with the synchronisation of regulations, laws, processes of certification, the environment, merchandise and services.

24th February 2003

Association Agreement: Morocco

Brussels: Third session of the Association Council.

The debates are focused on the implementation of the Association Agreement and the perspectives of EU-Morocco relations. The council establishes the creation of six thematic subcommittees of the association committee, dealing with the internal market; industry, trade and services; transport, the environment and energy; investigation and innovation; agriculture and fisheries; and justice and security. The six subcommittees are in charge of supervising the implementation of the priorities decided by the association and of the adherence to legislation.

28th February 2003

Med Committee

Brussels: Med Committee Meeting.

At the meeting, the European Commission reports to the committee on the MEDA budget situation for 2002, its work programme for 2003 and the revision of national indicative programmes, among other issues. Social development and local coordination are also discussed.

March

1st March 2003

Association Agreement: Lebanon

The trade arrangements of the EU-Lebanon Association Agreement come into force.

The trade arrangements of the EU-Lebanon Association Agreement are brought into vigour by virtue of an interim accord that will be maintained until the final ratification of the Association Agreement can be obtained.

http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/lebanon/ia/1.pdf

4th March 2003

Professional Training

Brussels: The EU gives fifty million Euros in aid money for the development of professional training in Morocco.

Commissioner Chris Patten and the Finance Minister of Morocco, Fathallah Oualalou, sign a financing agreement for the development of professional training in the sectors of Morocco that generate the most employment (tourism, textiles and new information and communication technologies). The six-year project receives a total of sixty-five million Euros in aid, fifty million of which are to be provided by the EU.

7th March 2003

Relief for the Palestinian refugee situation.

Brussels: The EU contributes 57.5 million Euros to the UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees).

The European Commission approves contributions of 57.5 million Euros in 2003 for UNRWA. The funds will be used to support UNRWA's social, education and healthcare programmes for Palestinian refugees registered in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank and Gaza. The decision is taken with reference to the framework of the

agreement between the EU and UNRWA, signed in 2002, to provide relief to refugees in the Middle East, which has utilised funds totalling 234 million Euros for the 2002-2005 period.

11th March 2003

EIB

Brussels: The European Commission increases the Capital Risk Fund for Mediterranean countries.

The Commission decides to increase the Capital Risk Fund by 22 million Euros for the Mediterranean countries that benefit from MEDA funds, with the objective of improving the financial sectors, promoting the competitiveness of their industries, and supporting the privatisation process. Priority will be given to the countries that have signed Association Agreements with the EU. The fund, which is managed by the European Investment Bank, is a significant instrument for the EU in its support of transition economies and in strengthening the development of the private sector in MEDA countries.

<http://www.eib.org/lending/med/en/index.htm>

11th March 2003

Business

Rome: The final Conference of the UNIMED Business Network.

The closing conference of the UNIMED Business Network, financed by the MEDA programme, includes the participation of business representatives from the Euro-Mediterranean countries. At the conference, the business organisations call for all parties interested in the Partnership to implement measures in the areas of economic integration and in the human side of integration. The organisations also highlight the business community's proposals for the success of the Partnership after the conclusion of the UNIMED project. This project, developed between April 2000 and March 2003, has contributed to securing the bonds between the principal business institutions of the twelve members, through seminars, training visits, advisory missions and exchanges. The project has also established a network among the business organisations of the Mediterranean Partner countries with their EU counterparts. Lastly, UNIMED has helped in the cre-

ation of the Mediterranean Union of Business Confederations, which brings business representatives from the twelve partner countries together for the first time. At the conference, the UMCE and its European counterpart (UNICE) propose the continuation of their joint labour.

12th and 13th March 2003

Association Agreement: Syria

Damascus: EU-Syria Negotiation Session.

The tenth negotiation session between the EU and Syria, aimed at establishing an Association Agreement. The conversations deal with the content of the preamble, the format for political dialogue, the circulation of merchandise, economic cooperation and issues of justice and internal affairs.

26th March 2003

Political and security issues

Brussels: Meeting of the Senior Officials of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

At this meeting, the officials responsible for political and security issues deal mainly with the situation in Iraq and the peace process in the Middle East. The meeting demonstrates the desire of the partner countries to maintain the progress achieved within the framework of the Barcelona Process in a region that is experiencing a difficult period. The officials also discuss measures for advancing dialogue on political and security questions, and the start of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly. The representatives of the Euro-Mediterranean Study Commission (EuroMeSCo) present their most recent work and their proposals for future activities.

27th March 2003

Valencia Action Plan

Brussels: Euro-Mediterranean Committee of the Barcelona Process.

The meeting of the Euro-Mediterranean Committee focuses on debates concerning the implementation of the Valencia Action Plan, with regard to the second and third chapters of the Barcelona Process. There are also discussions on the recent communication from the European Commission about the enlarged Europe and the new framework of relations with neighbours

in the east and south of the Mediterranean region. The Committee also discusses the principal directives of intercultural dialogue and the Euro-Mediterranean Foundation. They also evaluate the activities of the Partnership and the Commission reports in existing regional programmes.

April

1st and 2nd April 2003

Environment

Brussels: Meeting of correspondents of SMAP (Short & Medium-term Priority Environmental Action Programme).

The participants debate the development of SMAP activities. Parties in attendance include correspondents of SMAP, and the representatives of the NGOs and of the European Commission (Directorate General «Environment»). The Commission informs participants on the progress made within the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean regional programme for the environment, financed by MEDA, and on the initiation of the evaluation of the impact of the Euro-Mediterranean free trade zone on sustainability. They also debate the synergy with other activities supported by the EU, especially the LIFE projects undertaken with third party countries.

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/smap/>

2nd April 2003

MEDA

Brussels: MED Committee Meeting.

Members of the committee approve the MEDA regional financing plan for 2003 and the financing plan for the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The MEDA plan for the year 2003 includes six programmes: support for the establishment of the Agadir sub-regional south-south free trade zone; the Euro-Mediterranean Information System on the know-how in the Water Sector (EMWIS); public administration training; Euromed Heritage III; peace projects for the Middle East, and support funds for the Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP). At the meeting, the recommended regional financing plans for the period of 2002 to 2004 are also reviewed, while the Commission re-

ports on the MEDA regional programmes that are currently underway, and on the aid programmes for the setting up of Association Agreements.

3rd April 2003

FEMIP

Istanbul: Meeting of the Policy Dialogue and Coordination Committee of the FEMIP.

Meeting of the Policy Dialogue and Coordination Committee of the FEMIP at ministerial level in Istanbul. The meeting, which includes a revision and evaluation of the FEMIP, addresses the future perspectives of the Facility. Participants agree to facilitate private investors' access to means of financing in the Mediterranean region by increasing long-term loans, the promotion of guaranteed funds, the development of new financial products, and technical support for the banking sector. At the end of 2003, a further meeting will be held, which will deal with the question of whether the FEMIP should remain within the EIB or become a subsidiary organisation.

<http://www.eib.org/lending/med/en/index.htm>

7th April 2003

Association Agreement: Egypt

Egypt: Ratification of the Association Agreement.

The Egyptian People's Assembly ratified the EU-Egypt Association Agreement, which was signed in June 2001. The agreement has so far received the consent of five of the Member States: (Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Finland and Sweden) and by the European Parliament. On 9th April, the European Commissioner of External Relations, Chris Patten, declares that the agreement is well on its way to being implemented in 2004.

9th April 2003

Intercultural dialogue

Brussels: The second meeting of the High Level Advisory Group on Dialogue between Peoples and Cultures.

This group, created by the president of the European Commission, Romano Prodi, brings together seventeen intellectuals from the shores of the Mediterranean region. At the meeting, the participants deal with the north-north aspects of this dialogue, with

particular reference to the immigrant situation in the EU.

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/commissioners/prodi/group/spirit_en.htm

9th April 2003

Middle East

Brussels: Humanitarian aid for Palestine.

The European Commission approves an additional fifteen million in humanitarian aid for the Palestinian victims of the crisis in the Middle East. The aid money is aimed at creating a store of food supplies, medicine and water, as well as providing medical teams to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable sectors of the Palestinian population, in the West Bank and Gaza as well as in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon.

10th and 11th April 2003

Free trade zone

Tunisia: Conference on the free trade zone.

The delegation of the European Commission in Tunisia, in collaboration with the Ministry of Industry and Energy, organises an international conference entitled «The Free Trade Zone: The Challenge of Competitiveness and Industrial Modernisation». The conference focuses on the Euro Tunisie Entreprise (ETE) a MEDA funded programme that has assisted in the Tunisian national plan for small and medium-sized businesses since 1996. The objective of the conference is to promote the transference of know-how and experience between MEDA countries and the EU candidate countries. The roles played by the EU programmes are also taken into account.

15th April 2003

Association Agreement: Turkey

Luxemburg: Meeting of the EU-Turkey Partnership Council.

At the forty-second meeting of the EU-Turkey Partnership Council, the first order of business is EU-Turkey relations with reference to the Association Agreement and the customs union. The ministers discuss Turkey's accession strategy, and exchange opinions on international issues that are of interest to both parties, such as the situation in Iraq and the Middle East.

23rd and 24th April 2003

The enlargement process

Brussels: Meeting of the group of experts on Economic Transition in the Mediterranean, dealing with the EU Enlargement and the Mediterranean dossier.

In their seventh annual meeting, the southern Mediterranean economic transition experts focus their attention on discussion of the economic impact of the EU enlargement on the Mediterranean member countries. The meeting is attended by several academics, Commission officials, representatives of EU member states, and for the first time, representatives of new member states and remaining candidate countries. Among the issues addressed, those of trade, investment, the flow of public finances and migrations are emphasised.

http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/euromed/etn/7mtg/concl.htm

25th and 28th April 2003

Training

Malta: Diplomat Training Seminar.

Most of the fourteenth Semi-Annual Information and Training Seminar for Euro-Mediterranean Diplomats focuses on the EU enlargement process, though the topic of dialogue between cultures and civilisations is also given importance. For the first time, diplomats from the acceding countries from Central and Eastern Europe are in attendance. The Malta seminars provide the diplomats with regular information and keep them up-to-date on relations between the EU and the member countries, and the three chapters of the Barcelona Process are contemplated.

<http://www.euromed-seminars.org/mt/>

29th April 2003

Energy

Brussels: Euro-Mediterranean Energy Forum.

The presentation of the conclusions of the three ad-hoc working groups on energy in the Euro-Mediterranean area (energy policies, economic aspects of energy, and interconnection). The forum also addresses the elaboration of a communication project and a ministerial declaration project, which must be ready for a ministerial meeting in May in Athens. The Forum also de-

bates the creation of a mechanism aimed at guaranteeing monitoring of the specific application of the adopted orientations. The importance of the FEMIP in the financing of the energy infrastructures is also emphasised.

http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/energy_transport/international/euromed/doc/conf3/annex_1_en.pdf

30th April 2003

Palestine

Brussels: The EU backs the reform of the Palestinian Authority with new forms of aid.

The European Commission announces new forms of assistance in order to support the reform of the Palestinian Authority established in the Road Map. The new instrument of support for the reform is composed of a financing fund of eighty million Euros to pay the arrears of small companies and social services, and ten million Euros for technical support to facilitate the implementation of the public finance reforms. These new reforms will be complementary to other forms of aid given by the EU to the Palestinian territories.

May

1st and 4th May 2003

Civil Society

Chania: Euromed Civil Forum.

In the general thematic framework of intercultural dialogue, four seminars are held to address the issues of cultural dialogue, religious dialogue, intercultural education and peaceful solutions and coexistence in areas of conflict. The forum devises a declaration that will be presented at the Euro-Mediterranean Meeting of Foreign Affairs Ministers in Crete.

http://www.euromedcivilforum.gr/eng_files/eng_index.htm

5th May 2003

Regional cooperation

Brussels: The Commission approves a 57 million Euro aid package to strengthen regional cooperation in the Mediterranean area.

The European Commission approves a series of actions aimed at strengthening regional cooperation between the EU and its Mediterranean neigh-

bours in 2003. With a budget totalling 57 million Euros, financed by the MED regional programme, the proposed activities will foster cooperation and dialogue among the twenty-seven Euro-Mediterranean Partners in areas such as the Middle East peace process, the professional training of civil servants, water information systems, the south-south free trade zone (part of the Agadir Process), facilities for inversion, and cultural heritage.

5th May 2003

Humanitarian aid

Brussels: The Commission allocates 210 million Euros in aid money to Jordan and Egypt, to alleviate the effects of the war in Iraq.

The European Commission announces its intention to provide 210 million Euros in aid money to alleviate the economic impact of the war in Iraq on Jordan and Egypt. The aid money comes from pre-existing budgets and seeks to help stabilise the economy of those countries that have been most affected by the war. Egypt will receive 175 million Euros in aid money in the form of budget relief, while the remaining 35 million will go to re-establishing the balance of Jordan's payments.

5th May 2003

Political and security issues

Athens: Meeting of senior officials in political and security issues.

Meeting to prepare the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference at the end of May, with regard to the first chapter of the Barcelona Declaration. In terms of political dialogue, the senior officials debate the causes of instability, the fight against terrorism, the European policy of defence and security, improving work methods, and sub-regional cooperation.

6th May 2003

Euro-Mediterranean Foundation

Athens: Euro-Mediterranean Committee Meeting.

One of the most important issues of the meeting is the ad hoc session dedicated to the Euro-Mediterranean Foundation. Participants also address the preparation of the meeting of the Euro-Mediterranean Foreign Affairs Ministers in Crete, with respect to is-

sues relating to the second and third chapters of the Barcelona Declaration. The European Commission reports on how existing programmes are unfolding.

13th May 2003

EU-Israeli Relations

Brussels: Approval of an agreement on scientific and technical cooperation between the EU and Israel.

The EU Council of Ministers approves the signing of an agreement for scientific and technical cooperation between the EU and Israel. As stipulated in the agreement, Israeli companies, universities and research centres will have access to the sixth framework programme on research and technological development (2003 to 2006), and Israel will be party to the research results. Israel will also contribute to the budget of the programme. In return, the EU research organisms will have access to Israeli research and development programmes. Cyprus, Malta and Turkey have also been integrated into the sixth framework programme. In a similar agreement, Israel has already participated in the fifth framework programme.

20th to 23rd May 2003

Energy

Athens: Euro-Mediterranean ministerial conference on energy.

The third meeting of the Euro-Mediterranean Ministers of Energy, presided over by Greece and Tunisia, following previous meetings in Trieste (in 1996) and Brussels (in 1998). The ministers adopt a declaration to strengthen and deepen cooperation in this area, establishing specific measures, taking particular advantage of the FEMIP, and demonstrating the importance of EIB lending for the modernisation process. The Vice-President of the European Commission, and Commissioner of Energy and Transport, Loyola de Palacio, present the Commission Communication on developing energy co-operation with neighbouring countries. The Commissioner also points out the necessity of a common Euro-Mediterranean energy strategy, keeping in mind, however, that the private sector is the main source of investment in the energy infrastructure. De Palacio also draws attention to the importance of

interconnecting electricity, gas and oil networks.

As a second matter, the Energy Ministers of Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia sign a declaration of intentions relating to the cooperation needed firstly to integrate their energy markets and secondly to enter the EU market at a later date. The Energy Ministers of Israel and Palestine agree to form a working group with the European Commission in order to concentrate on the identification of energy projects of common interest.

http://europa.eu.int/comm/energy_transport/euromed_conf3/doc/2003_05_21_euromed_3_ministerial_declaration_en.pdf

21st May 2003

MEDA

Brussels: Meeting of the MED Committee.

The MED Committee expresses its favourable opinion of the MEDA programme's overall contribution, and debates the revision of the national indicative programmes (NIPs) for the period 2002 to 2004. The overall contribution, which totals 25 million Euros, will maintain the reduced cost initiatives during a period of eighteen months. Such initiatives include study programmes aimed at the identification and preparation of future projects, cultural and informative activities of the delegations of the Commission, the organisation of Euro-Mediterranean meetings, in addition to several pilot programmes.

22nd May 2003

Human rights

Brussels: Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament.

The communication presented by the Commission seeks to offer strategic guidance on ways to boost EU actions within the jurisdiction of human rights and democratisation, in cooperation with the Mediterranean member countries. In the conclusions of the communication, the Commission emphasises the need to use pre-existing instruments of cooperation to better effect, particularly in such fields as political dialogue, coordination of delegations, contacts with civil society and the ways in which the MEDA programme

complements the European initiative for democracy and human rights.

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/human_rights/doc/com03_294_fr.pdf

26th and 27th May 2003

Scientific and Technical Cooperation: EU-Morocco

Rabat: The EU-Morocco Scientific and Technical Cooperation Agreement.

The Research Commissioner Philippe Busquin participates alongside the Moroccan Delegate Minister in charge of scientific research, Omar Fassifehri, in the celebration of the National Workshop on Research in Morocco. The Commissioner presents the results of the assessment of Morocco's Scientific and Technological Research System, carried out with support from the Commission. Likewise, the officials present an agreement for scientific and technical cooperation between the EU and Morocco. This agreement will facilitate the participation of Moroccan universities, businesses and research centres in the sixth EU framework programme (2003 to 2006), and will also open up Moroccan research activities to European researchers and allow for the copyrights generated by joint activities to be shared equally. The agreement will be regulated through a mixed European and Moroccan committee.

26th and 27th May 2003

Ministerial meeting

Crete: Mid-term meeting of the Euro-Mediterranean Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

The meeting focuses mainly on the common assessment of the EU enlargement process and the role of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership in reducing tensions after the war in Iraq, with regard to terrorist attacks in the region and the uncertainty regarding the Middle East peace process.

The Commission's communication on Wider Europe constitutes one of the principal bases of discussion. The ministers of the acceding countries attend this type of meeting of the first time, although Cyprus and Malta have previously participated as members of the Mediterranean region. Delegations from Libya, the Arab League and the Union of the Arab Maghreb are in attendance as guests.

The thirty-five participants express their solidarity with Algeria after the recent catastrophic earthquake, and with Morocco following the terrorist attacks there. Ministers discuss events in the Middle East and urge both parties involved in the conflict to carry out the terms of the Road Map effectively. The Ministers analyse the progress made since the Valencia meeting and debate the future development of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, especially in light of the EU enlargement and in preparation for the next ministerial meeting, scheduled to be held in Naples.

The new neighbourhood policy constitutes a means of strengthening the Barcelona Process. The ministers adopt the directive principles on intercultural dialogue, emphasizing that this dialogue, which demands the active participation of the civil society, is an effective means of preventing conflict. In a declaration that specifically deals with the Euro-Mediterranean Foundation, the creation of which is considered a priority, the ministers present their main objectives and activities.

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/euromed/conf/cret/concl.htm

28th May 2003

Humanitarian aid: Algeria

Brussels: The European Commission approves emergency relief for earthquake victims in Algeria.

The Commission approves a million Euros in aid money in response to the most urgent needs of the earthquake victims in Algeria. The relief project, managed by the Humanitarian Aid Office of the EU (ECHO), focuses on setting up outdoor hospitals, sending medical supplies, sanitary assistance (potable water and public hygiene), and providing shelter for the large part of the population who have lost their homes.

June

5th June 2003

Commerce

Brussels: Meeting of senior officials of the Euro-Mediterranean responsible for trade.

This meeting is held in preparation for the Euro-Mediterranean Trade Minis-

ters' Conference, foreseen for July 2003. The senior officials approve the ministerial discussion topics, which include issues such as Rules of Origin and the simplification of customs procedures, as well as the subject of the enlarged Europe and the Mediterranean members.

5th June 2003

Turkey

Brussels: European Parliament resolution on Turkey's request for entrance into the EU.

The European Parliament praises the reforms adopted by Turkey since October 2001, and invites the Turkish government to present, at the earliest opportunity, a road map and a schedule for adopting the Copenhagen criteria, a precondition to beginning negotiations regarding the possible accession of Turkey to the EU. The European Parliament recognises that the process it will be a long one, in which European aid will also be necessary.

5th and 6th June 2003

Research and development

Cairo: Meeting of the Monitoring Committee on Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation in Research and Technological Development.

At the meeting, the committee presents the research priorities and activities of the Research and Technological Development Programme in the Field of Cooperation with Third Countries and International Organisations (INCO) in the sixth EU framework programme on research, such as the opportunities within the MEDA programme, and the projects of the Euro-Mediterranean Research and Innovation Zone.

The Euro-Mediterranean Partners review the most recent research advances on a national scale and within the field of north-south and south-south cooperation. Two working groups debate research perspectives in the Mediterranean area: one from the viewpoint of reinforcing the participation of member countries in the sixth framework programme; and the other examining the possibility of implementing the concept of the Euro-Mediterranean research space and reinforcing the benefits through instruments such as MEDA or EIB loans. The meeting is

attended by senior officials from the Euro-Mediterranean member countries, the European Commission and the European Invest Bank.

10th June 2003

Association Agreement: Jordan Strasbourg: EU-Jordan Association Council.

The first EU-Jordan Association Council starts the initiation phase of the Association Agreement following its implementation. The participants debate the evolution of the Barcelona and Agadir processes as well as the renegotiation of the agriculture chapter of the Association Agreement. Both parties point out that the agreement that has come into force has opened a new era in bilateral relations. The Association Council establishes the periods of the establishment of the agreement, hoping to progress with cooperation and promote the liberalisation of agricultural products. In the framework of political dialogue, various opinions are exchanged on diverse issues, but particular attention is given to the situation in the Middle East.

10th June 2003

EU-Israel scientific and technical cooperation

Brussels: EU-Israel scientific and technical cooperation.

The European Commission renews its scientific and technical cooperation agreement with Israel. The agreement signed will cover Israeli participation in the sixth research framework programme (2003 to 2006). On the other hand, Israel will contribute 192 million Euros to the 16,297 million Euro budget. Research Commissioner Philippe Busquin states his opinion that research is an area where cooperation can transcend cultural barriers, with Arab and Israeli scientists working together thanks to European projects.

11th June 2003

Migration and asylum

Brussels: The Commission proposes a programme of technical and financial support for third countries in the field of migration and asylum.

The Commission adopts a proposal for the promulgation of a regulation that establishes a programme of technical and financial support to third

countries in the field of migration and asylum. The proposal, presented by Commissioners Chris Patten and Antonio Vitorino, contains a programme lasting several years (2004 to 2008, with a budget of over 250 million Euros) that brings into effect the EU communication «Integrating Migration issues in the EU's Relations with Third Countries», presented in December 2002. The 2002 communication established that cooperation with third countries in the field of migration necessitated a three-tier strategy: a global approach to the causes of migratory movements, an agreement on migration based on a definition of the common interests of the implicated countries, and distinct and specific initiatives in order to help those countries increase their capacity to manage migration.

http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/cnc/2002/com2002_0703en01.pdf

http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/pdf/2003/com2003_0355en01.pdf

16th June 2003

EU Council of Foreign Ministers

Luxemburg: EU Council of Foreign Ministers meeting.

The EU Council of Foreign Ministers adopts conclusions about the «Wider Europe-Neighbourhood», in which they demonstrate that the new policy toward neighbouring countries will not erase the existing framework of EU relations with Mediterranean countries, based on the Barcelona Process.

In separate issues, the Ministers of External Relations Council also approves the signing of two cooperation agreements for scientific and technological cooperation with Morocco and Tunisia. The agreements will increase the participation of the Maghreb countries in the EU's Sixth Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (2003 to 2006).

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/index_en.html

http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/euomed/publication/euomed_report61_en.pdf

16th and 17th June 2003

Association Agreement: EU-Morocco

Brussels: Meeting of the Euro-Moroccan Subcommittee on the Environment, Energy and Transportation.

First meeting of this subcommittee, which is one of the six working groups established in the framework of the EU-Morocco Association Agreement in order to consolidate cooperation with the upcoming establishment of the Euro-Mediterranean free-trade zone. In terms of energy issues, the priorities signalled at the meeting include the Euro-Maghreb Electricity Market, and security of installations. With regard to maritime safety, the meeting contemplates the possibility of establishing common systems by bringing the legislation into closer synchronisation. In reference to air travel, the EU expresses its desire to initiate negotiations for a bilateral agreement.

19th and 20th June 2003

The Barcelona Process

Thessaloniki: European Council of EU Heads of State or Government meeting. The meeting adopts four statements relevant to the Barcelona Process. Firstly, the EU Council's conclusions on the «Wider Europe/New Neighbourhood» are approved. In a second declaration, a work plan is adopted in order to strengthen relations with the Arab world. The meeting also emphasises the role of civil society in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. Finally, a detailed declaration on the EU's position on the situation in the Middle East is presented.

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/euromed/publication/euromed_report63_en.pdf

26th and 27th June 2003

Euro-Mediterranean parliamentary forum

Brussels: Meeting of the Working Group on the Follow-up to the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Forum.

The working group deals with the situation in the Euro-Mediterranean region, and the implementation of the Road Map. It also debates the results of the mid-term ministerial meeting in Crete, and assesses the implementation of the Association Agreements and the MEDA II programme.

26th June 2003

Technical and scientific cooperation

Thessaloniki: Agreements with Tunisia and Morocco on technical and scientific cooperation.

These agreements should facilitate the participation of both countries in the activities of the Sixth Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (2003 to 2006). They are also designed to improve scientific cooperation between the two countries and the EU, and favour their progressive integration into European Research Area. Both countries will be able to participate in regional cooperation activities, based on inte-

grated management of scarce water sources, the conservation of cultural heritage, and health. Furthermore, the researchers from the Maghreb countries will be eligible to apply for Marie Curie grants.

30th June and 1st July 2003

Intercultural dialogue

Brussels: 3rd meeting of the High Level Advisory Group on Dialogue between Peoples and Cultures.

The advisory group, made up of nineteen intellectuals from both sides of the Mediterranean, deals with north-south and south-south aspects of cultural dialogue. The debates include the perspectives of the Partnership on the new wider Europe policy.

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/commissioners/prodi/group/spirit_en.htm

Basic sources of information:

Euromed Publications:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/euromed/publication.htm

European Commission. External Relations:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/news/index.htm

The EU and the Middle East Peace Process:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/mepp/index.htm