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41. Considers that the Committee of the Regions, through its Lisbon Monitoring Platform, should continue monitoring progress on the ground of the future EU2020 strategy and that Member States should be asked to report yearly, in a structured manner, on the progress made;

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42. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.

## Union for the Mediterranean

P7\_TA(2010)0192

### European Parliament resolution of 20 May 2010 on the Union for the Mediterranean (2009/2215(INI))

(2011/C 161 E/19)

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the Barcelona Declaration adopted at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, held in Barcelona on 27 and 28 November 1995, establishing a Euro-Mediterranean partnership,
- having regard to the Commission Communication to the European Parliament and the Council entitled 'Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean' (COM(2008)0319),
- having regard to the approval of the 'Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean' by the Brussels European Council of 13 and 14 March 2008,
- having regard to the Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean, held in Paris on 13 July 2008,
- having regard to the final statement issued at the meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Union for the Mediterranean, held in Marseille on 3 and 4 November 2008,
- having regard to the statements issued by the Bureau of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA) at its meetings in Paris (12 July 2008), Cairo (22 November 2009) and Rabat (22 January 2010),
- having regard to the conclusions of the inaugural meeting of the Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly (ARLEM), held in Barcelona on 21 January 2010,
- having regard to the final declaration of the Euro-Mediterranean Summit of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions, held in Alexandria on 19 October 2009,
- having regard to its previous resolutions on the European Union's Mediterranean policy, in particular those of 15 March 2007 <sup>(1)</sup> and 5 June 2008 <sup>(2)</sup>, and its resolution of 19 February 2009 entitled 'The Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean' <sup>(3)</sup>,

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ C 301 E, 13.12.2007, p. 210.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ C 285 E, 26.11.2009, p. 39.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ C 76 E, 25.3.2010, p. 76.

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- having regard to the conclusions of the Second Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Strengthening the Role of Women in Society, held in Marrakesh on 11 and 12 November 2009,
  - having regard to its resolution of 15 November 2007 on strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy <sup>(1)</sup>,
  - having regard to the recommendations adopted by the committees of the EMPA at its sixth plenary session, held in Amman on 13 and 14 March 2010,
  - having regard to the recommendation of the EMPA adopted on 13 October 2008 in Jordan and forwarded to the First Meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean, held in Marseille,
  - having regard to the statute of the secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean adopted on 3 March 2010,
  - having regard to Rule 48 of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the opinions of the Committee on International Trade and the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (A7-0133/2010),
- A. whereas the Mediterranean basin is an area of key importance for the EU and, in a multipolar and interdependent world, large regional integrations will be better positioned to play a leading role and to cope with social, cultural, economic, environmental demographic, political and security-related challenges,
- B. whereas the European Union must adopt a strategic view that takes into account all these challenges in its relations with its southern neighbours, giving priority to the social, economic and democratic development of the region,
- C. whereas, in accordance with Article 8 of the Treaty on European Union, the Union shall develop a special relationship with neighbouring countries, aiming to establish an area of prosperity and good neighbourliness, founded on the values of the Union and characterised by close and peaceful relations based on cooperation,
- D. whereas the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) is a means of further strengthening the regional and multilateral dimension of Euro-Mediterranean relations, revitalising prospects for the establishment of an area of peace, security and prosperity for 800 million people, and offers the ideal framework for addressing the social and economic challenges, promoting regional integration and guaranteeing the co-development of the partner states,
- E. whereas the neighbourhood policy, by placing the emphasis on the deepening of differentiated bilateral relations, is unable, in itself, to contribute to a shared process of integration and significant reform in the region; having regard to the opportunity offered by the establishment of the UfM to strengthen complementarity between bilateral policies on the one hand and regional policies on the other, in order to achieve more effectively the goals of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, based on the mutual recognition of common values such as democracy, rule of law, good governance and respect for human rights; whereas Member States should be urged to commit themselves to implementing the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENO) in a coherent and credible manner in accordance with Article 8 of the Treaty on European Union,

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ C 282 E, 6.11.2008, p. 443.

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- F. having regard to the need to build on the achievements of the Barcelona Process, the goals and achievements of which must be reinforced by the UfM in accordance with the Paris Declaration of 13 July 2008, and to refrain from duplicating or overlapping existing political instruments or institutional levels in order to ensure that the numerous instruments for Euro-Mediterranean cooperation are effective and consistent,
- G. whereas, for the last 15 years or so, Mediterranean countries have been rapidly developing new trading and economic relations (for example with Russia, China, Brazil and the Gulf states) and their societies have been undergoing substantial changes (in terms of consumption patterns, mobility, demographic transitions and so on) with implications for internal – in particular territorial – balances,
- H. whereas limited cultural exchanges cannot, by themselves, bring the peoples of the Mediterranean closer together; whereas Europe is gradually losing its cultural significance among its Mediterranean partners,
- I. having regard to the significant growing disparities between European Union Member States and Mediterranean third countries and the worrying structural problems of a socio-economic and institutional nature, which call for strong common responses in the shared interest of all the states participating in the UfM; whereas the potential for economic growth of the Mediterranean third countries encourages this view; having regard to the need for an improved South-South regional integration,
- J. whereas the regional context in which the UfM is taking shape continues to be characterised by conflicts and political tensions, which have undermined and slowed down its establishment since the Paris Summit of July 2008; whereas the Middle East Peace Process has come to a standstill,
- K. whereas the effects of the economic and financial crisis have come on top of the already existing political, economic and social challenges in the partner countries, particularly in relation to the problem of unemployment; whereas it is in the common interest of these countries and the EU to bring down unemployment rates in the region and to offer its people, particularly women, young people and the rural population, hope for the future,
- L. whereas the resumption of the peace process in the Middle East and the concrete prospects of a lasting comprehensive solution are of the utmost importance for the development of the Euro-Mediterranean relations and the functioning and the implementation of the projects of the UfM,
- M. whereas the UfM's two major innovations, namely its institutional set-up (co-presidency, joint permanent committee and secretariat) and operational focus (integration projects), must function effectively and transparently so that they improve the standard of living of citizens, who are the main beneficiaries of this project,
- N. whereas the UfM's secretariat needs to become the structure's linchpin, whereas its effectiveness will depend on the ability of its staff to work independently and whereas the presence of a senior Israeli official and a senior Palestinian official cooperating within an international organisation at regional level is unprecedented and gives grounds for hope,
- O. whereas Mediterranean regions are directly affected by transnational issues such as sustainable development, security of energy supply, migration flows, cultural exchange and tourism and also have to face transnational difficulties such as water management and access to water, pollution and the development of transport networks; whereas, therefore, local and regional authorities play a key role in facilitating the development of sustainable spatial planning policies that are appropriate to local characteristics and the implementation of practical and inclusive projects,
- P. having regard to the major issue of agriculture in Mediterranean countries, by dint of its socio-economic influence, its effects on the environment and its implications in terms of territorial balance,

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- Q. whereas 60 % of the world population with little water is concentrated in the southern part of the Mediterranean region and in the Middle East and whereas, by 2025, 63 million people could, according to UNDP reports on the Arab world and the Blue Plan, be affected by water shortages,
- R. recalls the decision taken by the Ministerial Conference for the UfM of 4 November 2008 in Marseilles to reduce the digital divide between the two shores of the Mediterranean which resulted in the BB-MED (broadband for the Mediterranean) proposal,
- S. whereas, since the Paris Summit, the projects announced by the UfM have so far been suffering from general underfunding, which risks delaying their implementation,
- T. having regard to the importance of migration flows and the various challenges they create on both sides of the Mediterranean in human, social, cultural and economic terms,
- U. having regard to the crucial importance of the capital flows represented by the funds migrants send to people of countries on the southern shore of the Mediterranean,
- V. having regard to the recent entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty and the institutional changes it has produced, on the one hand, and the ongoing debate about the operation and financing of the UfM, on the other, which make it essential for the European Parliament to monitor developments connected with the UfM as closely as possible in order to help ensure the outright success of the Barcelona Summit,
1. Calls on the heads of state and government within the UfM, who will meet in Barcelona on 7 June 2010, to do their utmost – after two difficult years – to make this meeting a success, with a view to setting up the UfM's institutions, implementing major projects and making progress on all the components of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation;
  2. Remains concerned by the absence of a clear definition of the EU's Mediterranean policy or of a long-term strategic vision for the development and stabilisation of the region, despite the creation of the UfM; calls for the Euro-Mediterranean integration process to become a political priority for the EU once more;
  3. Calls on the governments of the UfM member countries to deeply revise and step up political dialogue; emphasises that mutual respect and understanding are essential elements of that dialogue and reaffirms that the promotion of and respect for democracy, the rule of law and human rights, be they civil, political, economic, social, cultural or collective rights, must be clearly enshrined in the objectives of this new initiative, in particular through the strengthening of existing mechanisms; underlines, in this regard, the importance of respecting the freedoms of expression, thought and religion, in addition to the need to ensure the protection of minorities, including religious minorities; stresses that women's rights, gender equality and the fight against discrimination based on sexual orientation require particular attention; reiterates its support for democratic political organisations and civil society on the southern shores of the Mediterranean and pays tribute to the valuable work done by women's organisations;
  4. Takes the view that political tensions and regional conflicts in the Mediterranean basin must not hinder tangible progress towards multilateral cooperation in specific sectors, and that it is through the implementation of major integration projects and open political dialogue that the UfM will help to develop a climate of trust conducive to pursuing common justice and security goals in a spirit of solidarity and peace; stresses, however, that the UfM will not be fully successful unless the various regional conflicts are settled, in accordance with international law, making the Mediterranean a single shore of peace;
  5. Stresses the urgency of achieving a fair and lasting solution to the conflict in the Middle East and calls for the firm commitment in this regard of the EU and of all UfM member countries; reiterates its call for the immediate resumption of meaningful negotiations in the context of the peace process, with a view to

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achieving a two-State solution – an independent, democratic and viable Palestinian State and the State of Israel, living side by side in peace and security and with internationally recognised borders; encourages the important contribution that the UfM can make to the improvement of relations between Israel and the Palestinian National Authority, also thanks to the cooperation between the Israeli and Palestinian representatives within it;

6. Regrets that the decolonisation process of Western Sahara is not yet finished;

7. Welcomes the appointment of the Secretary General and the adoption of the statute of the secretariat and recommends that, in preparation for the Barcelona Summit, the UfM's institutional and operational structure be completed by taking the following steps:

- providing the secretariat with the necessary resources, both financial and statutory, to operate effectively and independently; stressing the urgency of making the secretariat fully operational and the need for its staff to be selected on the basis of merit, with due attention to the principles of geographical distribution and gender equality;
- clarifying the criteria for approving, funding and implementing major projects and specifically setting the priorities for the next 3 years;
- ensuring joint representation of EU participants (Member States, the Council and the Commission) in accordance with the Lisbon Treaty, while at the same time fostering active participation by all Mediterranean third countries;
- ensuring the democratic legitimacy of the UfM by confirming the EMPA as an integral part of the institutional structure;
- stepping up coordination with EU projects and programmes approved by the specialised ministerial conferences, with a particular focus on possible synergies;
- allowing 'variable-geometry' cooperation arrangements open to countries and multilateral institutions wishing to work together on projects of common interest;
- ensuring smooth cooperation between the secretariat and the Commission, and clearly defining their respective remits; calling on the Commission to play an active role in the UfM and asking for greater clarity regarding its participation in this new institutional structure;
- developing communications to ensure the visibility of the UfM's activities; informing citizens on the UfM's major projects and progress, in particular via a comprehensive website;
- ensuring the UfM's democratic legitimacy in such a way that decisions are taken in a transparent manner, and that the European Parliament, the EMPA and the national parliaments are involved in the decision-making process; emphasises that, as its parliamentary wing, the EMPA must be recognised as an integral part of the UfM;
- ensuring dialogue with all the stakeholders (local authorities and Civil Society Organisations) and making sure they are involved in the decision-making process concerning the major projects;

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8. Recalls that the Paris Summit identified six main horizontal strategic sectors (civil protection, maritime and land highways, de-pollution of the Mediterranean, the Mediterranean solar energy plan, the Mediterranean Business Development Initiative and the Euro-Mediterranean University), in most of which projects have already been undertaken as part of the EuroMed partnership; underlines, therefore, the importance of carrying out a highly detailed assessment of the regional programmes and of the resources already used within the framework of the EuroMed partnership and hopes that the selection of projects funded under the UfM will be based on the added value criterion at both regional and local level; calls for the swift implementation of these priority projects;

9. Considers it essential to guarantee, increase and mobilise project funding through a combination of public and private funds; in this context:

- calls on the UfM's members to allocate project funding commensurate with the issues at stake, and expects an historic commitment from participants at the Barcelona Summit;
- emphasises that, in the period leading up to the end of the 2007-2013 financial perspective, any financial contributions made by the Union should not affect existing or planned Euro-Mediterranean regional projects; underlines the need to increase substantially the funds allocated to the southern dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy and EU contributions to UfM projects in the EU's forthcoming financial perspective for 2014-2020, while taking into account the effects of the economic and financial crisis;
- welcomes the steps taken by financial institutions at national, European (EIB-FEMIP, EBRD) and international (World Bank) level which are already active in the region, emphasises the need to identify synergies in connection with major projects, and proposes that a Euro-Mediterranean investment and development bank be set up to consolidate the North-South parity basis on which the UfM operates;
- emphasises the role of the European Investment Bank (EIB), which is coordinating three of the six priority projects (de-pollution of the Mediterranean, the Solar Plan and the maritime and land highways);
- underlines the need to pave the way for greater cooperation and better financial and economic integration between the UfM member countries, particularly between the countries on the southern shore;
- welcomes the recent launch of investment funds for the financing of UfM projects, including the InfraMed fund for infrastructure projects, and calls on the various stakeholders to encourage the development of similar initiatives and to promote cooperation between investors, in particular long-term investors;
- is keen to see the establishment of investment funds intended to finance sustainable development projects by local and regional authorities;

10. Encourages efforts to improve the economic and legal environment in third countries, making it a priority to set up viable and credible sub-regional financial institutions able to attract foreign investment; also calls for:

- the drafting of a common investment protection charter for Mediterranean third countries in order to harmonise and enhance such protection and encourage investment;
- the establishment of an insurance and financial guarantee system for investors, based on the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) and tailored to the Euro-Mediterranean context;
- reforms designed to reduce red tape and in particular to improve and simplify the performance of contracts;

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— the promotion of gradual and real harmonisation of labour laws, respecting the rights of workers in UfM member countries;

— the improvement of access to credit for SMEs and of the provision of credit options and microcredit;

11. Hopes for an improvement in the economic and legal environment in the region, an essential guarantee for future investment; insists on the objective of favouring the development of human resources and employment in line with the Millennium Development Goals for fighting poverty; underlines that the preservation and the development of strong public services is another important precondition to guarantee sustainable development in the region;

12. Believes that increased South-South bilateral and multilateral economic cooperation would result in tangible benefits for the citizens, as well as improve the political climate in the region;

13. Stresses the vital need to develop South-South trade, which accounts for just 6 % of world trade, and thus to take action to extend the Agadir Agreement; draws attention to the interest these countries have in stepping up their relations and their trade so that they form a united, strong economic area which is attractive to investors and capable of defending the region's interests and boosting its development; emphasises that the UfM must make it easier to respond to requests for technical and financial assistance with a view to promoting South-South economic integration; considers that extension and simplification of the pan-Euro-Mediterranean system of cumulation of origin might help in this regard;

14. Highlights the importance of the current negotiations on the Europe-Mediterranean Free Trade Area and encourages the UfM member countries to work on harmonising their positions in the context of WTO negotiations;

15. Calls on the Commission to take account in trade negotiations of the results of existing impact assessments and to assess the effects of the liberalisation process, in the light of climate change and the economic and social crisis, and to enable this to be applied gradually and asymmetrically, as necessary, while protecting comparable production sectors on both shores of the Mediterranean, which are more likely to face competition as a result of greater liberalisation; calls on the UfM to select projects mainly according to social and economic and environmental mitigation needs;

16. Hopes that the association agreements will be reviewed in the light of the new requirements deriving from the financial, economic and social crisis and the food and energy crises; points out that one of the main objectives of creating a Euro-Mediterranean free trade area must remain that of boosting trade in the service of development and poverty reduction, and hopes that the Road Map adopted at the ministerial summit of 9 December 2009 will help to achieve this objective;

17. Views it as regrettable that socio-economic, commercial and energy aspects, such as direct foreign investment, employment, energy efficiency, the informal economy and poverty reduction, were overlooked in the Paris declaration, and calls for this to be remedied at the Barcelona Summit;

18. Points out that migration policies are one of the priorities of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership and calls on the member countries and institutions of the UfM to pay special attention to the coordinated management of migratory flows; stresses that the construction of the UfM is inseparable from a harnessing of human resources and strengthening of exchanges between the peoples of the Mediterranean, and encourages, in addition to the regulation of flows and combating of illegal immigration, the gradual facilitation of freedom of movement between the two shores, the strengthening of integration arrangements for migrants, the drafting of active policies to promote employment and the improvement of conditions for exercising of the right of asylum; considers that the Euromed Ministerial Conference on Migration, held in Albufeira on 18 and 19 November 2007, should be continued;

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19. Invites UfM member countries to simplify transfers of funds from migrants to people in their home countries, in particular by endeavouring to reduce the costs incurred;
20. Recalls the importance of what is known as the fourth chapter of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation (on migration, social integration, justice and security) and highlights the need for the UfM to drive forward cooperation on this chapter;
21. Emphasises the strategic importance of issues such as agriculture, rural development, adaptation to climate change and rational water and energy use in Mediterranean countries and calls for cooperation in the farming sector to be made a political priority; encourages the UfM member countries to work towards aligning as far as possible their positions in the context of WTO negotiations and to move towards a greater convergence of Euro-Mediterranean agricultural policies, particularly in relation to compliance with appropriate social standards, food, phytosanitary and environmental safety, and product quality; takes the view that these policies should include the requirements of sustainable development (including the conservation of natural resources), enabling regional markets to emerge eventually, whilst taking into consideration the specific competitive situation of Mediterranean farmers and the need to retain a strong agricultural sector;
22. Underlines the need to establish a regional agricultural policy in line with the Euro-Mediterranean Road Map for Agriculture, to preserve local food production and food security, and to promote production, distribution and diversification of typical Mediterranean products and the development of small and middle farming adapted to sustainable development; in the light of growing food insecurity in many Mediterranean partner countries, calls on the Commission to accept partner requests regarding extended safeguards and quick procedures to implement them in times of food crises;
23. Reaffirms its support for the environmental dimension of the UfM and stresses the importance of the Euro-Mediterranean initiative for the de-pollution of the Mediterranean; welcomes, in this regard, the launch of the second phase of the Mediterranean Hot-Spot Investment Programme - Project Preparation and Implementation Facility (MeHSIP PPIF); considers that progress in the specific area of prevention of sea pollution is a matter of urgency and that particular attention should be paid to the Mediterranean, given that it is an enclosed sea; points out that all UfM projects should be planned and carried out in cooperation with existing programmes with regard, in particular, to the UNEP Mediterranean Action Plan for the Barcelona Convention;
24. Calls on the partner states, as part of the UfM's major land and sea transport projects, to improve infrastructure in order to aid the movement of people and goods in the Mediterranean and to encourage a sustainable transport policy, taking into consideration the requirements of sustainable development, greenhouse gas reductions, energy efficiency and intermodality; emphasises that such efforts must be carried out in connection with environmental, industrial, public health and land planning policy; stresses the need to develop maritime highway projects in order to encourage modal shifts and create safe, clean and sustainable commercial shipping routes;
25. Takes the view that enhancing port and land transport infrastructure may help to promote economic growth and trade between Euro-Mediterranean countries;
26. Stresses the need to strengthen cooperation in the field of energy and calls for the immediate promotion of development plans to encourage the diversification of energy supply sources and routes, thus making a decisive contribution to energy security in the Mediterranean region;
27. Recalls the high potential of sources of renewable energy – in particular wind and solar energy – in the Euro-Mediterranean region; supports the swift, coordinated implementation of the Mediterranean Solar Plan, the main aim of which is to establish, by 2020, 20 GW of new renewable energy production capacity in the Mediterranean, and industrial initiatives such as DESERTEC, in addition to the adoption of a Euro-Mediterranean energy efficiency strategy; hopes that the projects will, as a matter of priority, meet the needs of supplier countries and stresses the effects that the strengthening – particularly on the southern shore – of the network infrastructure, the gradual establishment of an interdependent regional market and the creation of a new industrial sector, such as that of solar components manufacturing, will have on the economic development of partner countries;



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28. Calls for further promotion of, and support for, the 'Solar for Peace' initiative within the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Energy Market Integration Project (MED-EMIP);
29. Recommends that the countries participating in the Euro-Mediterranean process join the 'smart cities' initiative envisaged under the Strategic Energy Technology (SET) Plan;
30. Supports the promotion of trans-Euro-Mediterranean interconnections in the electricity, gas and oil sectors in order to improve energy supply security; emphasises the importance of completing the Mediterranean electricity loop and supports the development of a southern gas corridor; encourages the use of reverse flows where it is justified in terms of security, cost-effectiveness and viability;
31. Stresses that the 20-20-20 climate objectives will affect gas demand significantly, therefore the creation of an LNG action plan for the UfM member countries would improve diversity and security of supply, especially for countries relying on sole suppliers;
32. Stresses the importance of progress in LNG technology and investments in LNG vessel transportation capacity and LNG re-gasification terminals; points out that, alongside infrastructure development, maritime security is also a necessity;
33. Emphasises the urgency of developing stronger cooperation in the field of civil protection in the Mediterranean region to combat natural disasters, particularly earthquakes, floods and forest fires; encourages the creation of a Euro-Mediterranean forest fires institute;
34. Stresses the importance of developing, within the UfM framework, new projects focusing on education, school and university exchanges and research as ways of bringing the peoples on both sides of the Mediterranean closer together and fostering development; considers that priority should be given, with the active involvement of civil society, to the creation of a genuine Euro-Mediterranean higher education, science and research area and, in this regard:
  - welcomes the creation of the Euro-Mediterranean University (EMUNI) and calls on partner institutions to deepen their commitment to the development of its activities;
  - calls for increased funding to be devoted to academic exchange programmes such as 'Erasmus Mundus' and for better information to be provided on existing exchange programmes; more specifically, calls for inspiration to be drawn from the experience of the 'Averroës' European programme;
  - calls for a an ambitious Euro-Mediterranean junior Erasmus programme to be set up, as a way of stepping up school exchanges between UfM member countries;
  - calls for more structured cooperation in the field of higher education and research in order to encourage the mutual recognition of qualifications, the introduction of joint qualifications and common graduate schools, with a view, in particular, to increasing mobility for researchers, backed up by measures to combat the brain drain;
  - would like special attention to be paid to bringing training, research and innovation closer together, with emphasis placed on dialogue between universities and enterprises and on public-private partnerships in the field of research;

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35. Calls for new projects designed to promote cultural exchanges and mutual understanding between societies to be put on the UfM's agenda in the very near future, in particular through the adoption of a Euro-Mediterranean strategy for cultural affairs and the development of intercultural and interreligious dialogue; encourages the implementation of projects by the Permanent Conference of the Mediterranean Audiovisual Operators (COPEAM), in particular that of a Euro-Mediterranean TV channel, and the repetition of successful initiatives such as the Arab Week and EuroMedScola; welcomes the action of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, the Arab World Institute and the Anna Lindh Foundation, in particular the latter's organisation of the Forum for intercultural dialogue in Barcelona in March 2010; calls on the countries and institutions that are members of the UfM to continue their commitment to the UN Alliance of Civilizations;

36. Welcomes the choice of Marseille-Provence as European Capital of Culture in 2013; the project has a strong Euro-Mediterranean dimension intended to bring together the peoples on both sides of the Mediterranean; emphasises that the purpose of this highly symbolic cultural project is to drive concrete, innovative action to improve the dialogue between the cultures of Europe and the Mediterranean;

37. Underlines the importance of establishing industrial policies to improve economies of scale, while supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and strengthening high-technology sectors; calls on the UfM member countries and institutions to play an active role in supporting SMEs, with particular emphasis on efficient financial services and technical and administrative assistance, thereby creating a strong entrepreneurial base, especially in sectors that contribute to economic growth in the Mediterranean countries;

38. Stresses that the purpose of the EMPA is to become the parliamentary assembly of the UfM, which will guarantee its democratic legitimacy, and supports the proposal of the 6th plenary session of the EMPA held in Amman on 13 and 14 March 2010 that the name of the EMPA should be changed to Parliamentary Assembly – Union for the Mediterranean (PA-UfM);

39. Recalls its remit within the EU's budgetary procedure, and emphasises the need for the EMPA to immediately take on more significant responsibilities by being involved in consultation and democratic supervision in respect of defining the areas of work, regularly monitoring the projects undertaken, and budget implementation; calls on the various relevant EMPA committees to carry out regular hearings of the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretaries General; takes the view, however, that this higher level of responsibility must go hand in hand with improvements in the operation and working methods of the EMPA, including granting the necessary human and financial resources and bringing the EMPA's work more into line with that of the other UfM institutions; welcomes the decisions taken to this end at the 6th plenary session of the EMPA held in Amman on 13 and 14 March 2010;

40. Welcomes the recent establishment of the Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly (ARLEM) and calls for efforts to ensure proper coordination between the ARLEM's activities and those of the EMPA, in particular through joint meetings or reciprocal invitations for members of their respective bureaux to attend working meetings; emphasises the need for these assemblies that bring together elected representatives from both sides of the Mediterranean and promote the exchange of best democratic practice;

41. Calls for civil society, the social partners and the numerous professional and socio-professional networks developed as part of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership to be consulted regularly and involved in the UfM's activities and projects, and encourages:

- the general assembly of economic and social councils, and similar institutions, to consider establishing a Euro-Mediterranean economic and social council;
- the development of projects to facilitate business relations, investments and business partnerships between both sides of the Mediterranean, such as the Invest in Med Programme;
- the establishment of a network of Euro-Mediterranean Chambers of Commerce and Euro-Mediterranean industrialist and trade union associations;

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- the extension of the industrial cooperation group for implementing the Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Enterprise to include representatives of SMEs so that it can become the tool which will enable the removal of obstacles to growth and to the development of SMEs;

42. Welcomes the commitment, reaffirmed during the 2nd Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Strengthening the Role of Women in Society (Marrakesh, 11-12 November 2009), to promote de jure and de facto equality between women and men, to combat violence against women and to respect the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of women as well as men; calls urgently for concrete steps to be taken in this direction and recommends the adoption of a UfM project on women's entrepreneurship and enhancement of their involvement in public life; recalls its consistent position that respect for traditions and customs must not be a pretext for the infringement of women's fundamental rights;

43. Calls on the Council, the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Commission and the newly-established European External Action Service to take the necessary steps to ensure coherent EU participation in the UfM, and to involve Parliament in framing EU policy;

44. Welcomes the recent accession to the UfM of countries of the Western Balkans, which are applicants for accession to the EU;

45. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the President of the Council of the European Union, the President of the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign and Security Policy, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the co-presidency, the Secretary General of the UfM, and the governments and parliaments of the partner states.

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## The need for an EU strategy for the South Caucasus

P7\_TA(2010)0193

### European Parliament resolution of 20 May 2010 on the need for an EU strategy for the South Caucasus (2009/2216(INI))

(2011/C 161 E/20)

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the South Caucasus, including its resolution of 15 November 2007 on strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) <sup>(1)</sup> and its resolutions of 17 January 2008 on a more effective EU policy for the South Caucasus <sup>(2)</sup> and on a Black Sea Regional Policy Approach <sup>(3)</sup>,
- having regard to its recent resolutions of 17 December 2009 on Azerbaijan: freedom of expression <sup>(4)</sup>, of 3 September 2008 on Georgia <sup>(5)</sup>; of 5 June 2008 on the Deterioration of the Situation in Georgia <sup>(6)</sup>; and of 13 March 2008 on Armenia <sup>(7)</sup>,
- having regard to the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council of 3 December 2008 entitled 'Eastern Partnership' (COM(2008)0823),

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ C 282 E, 6.11.2008, p. 443.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ C 41 E, 19.2.2009, p. 53.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ C 41 E, 19.2.2009, p. 64.

<sup>(4)</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2009)0120.

<sup>(5)</sup> OJ C 295 E, 4.12.2009, p. 26.

<sup>(6)</sup> OJ C 285 E, 26.11.2009, p. 7.

<sup>(7)</sup> OJ C 66 E, 20.03.2009, p. 67.