

RECOMMENDATIONS OF CASABLANCA

Sub-regional Meeting

Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean, What Place for Civil Society?

Upon the initiative of the Euromed Non-Governmental Platform, representatives of national and regional civil society organizations working in the field of the defense of human rights , gender equality, social and economic development, culture, protection of the environment, as well as trade unions, held a meeting in Casablanca, on July 4, 2008, in the presence of representatives of the French Presidency of the EU and the Delegation of the European Commission, in order to discuss the « Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean » Project in view of the Summit of Heads of States and Governments which is due to take place on July 13, 2008, in Paris.

Having discussed the Euromed Partnership and the European Neighbourhood Policy, as well as the new Project « Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean », the participants at the sub-regional meeting of Casablanca reached the following conclusions:

The participants address the Heads of States and Governments partners in the « Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean », in this important occasion to the future of the region, in order to remind them of their pressing obligation:

To guarantee and promote human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

This obligation is incumbent on the European Union, its member states and their partner states as a part of their foreign policy, by virtue of the international and regional treaties and instruments.

In this framework, the « Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean » has to meet the following necessary prerequisites to ensure its implementation:

A. At the political level

1. Meet the exigencies of the peoples of this region regarding peace, security, stability and improvement of their living conditions by seriously working towards a sustainable and just solution to the conflicts in the region, based on the respect for human rights, in accordance with the international human rights law and all UN resolutions. Adopt the peace initiative of the League of Arab States while recognizing the right of the Palestinian people to a sovereign and independent state.



2. Promote the values of the rule of law and democracy, guarantee and effectively implement freedoms and human rights of all individuals, and particularly the right of freedom of expression, association, thought, conscience and religion, women's rights and equality between men and women in every sphere, the eradication of all forms of discrimination, namely those based on the ground of race, sex, national origin, language or religion.
3. Design the « Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean » as a social contract between peoples, on the basis of the idea of unity within diversity, and not as an act of uniquely economic and commercial nature based on an entrepreneurial vision of projects within the perspective of a broad free trade area.
4. Put an end to the security-driven and repressive approach to immigration, as well as to the violations of male and female migrants' and refugees' human rights, and promote the freedom of circulation and equality, and work towards the eradication of all forms of discrimination within the strict respect of international and European law; ratify the International Convention on the Protection of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.

Also promote an approach towards male and female immigrants as full-fledged actors of Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation, highlight their contribution and their role in economy and society, particularly in terms of facilitation of investments, and transfer of experience and know-how.

5. Overstep cultural relativism and put an end to the violations of human rights, namely women's rights, on the ground of respecting the difference between cultures, traditions and religions.

B. At the institutional level

6. Strengthen the position of civil society, namely the Euromed Non-Governmental Platform as a key partner in all political institutions of the Partnership, and as part of the Union for the Mediterranean Project; ensure the full participation and institutional and effective consultation of NGOs within the Euro-Mediterranean decision-making process, at all levels and by every appropriate mechanism.
7. The Presidency of the « Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean » should be exercised by the sole Heads of States who respect the principles of human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

C. At the level of projects

8. Work towards the development of the region on the basis of specific and planned objectives, develop and implement the future projects within the strict respect of the principles of human rights, including social, economic and environmental rights, good democratic governance, economic and social development, address



the challenges of the human consequences arising from climate change and food security, and grant a central position to the projects pertaining to youth, culture, education, health, environment and social issues.

The development of projects selected within the framework of the «Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean» should in no way contribute to making the South Mediterranean countries poorer and aggravating their debt burden.

Cooperation for development should not be limited to financial aid and assistance to projects. It should respect the principles of the «Declaration of Paris» on the efficiency of aid, and namely adopt the principles of fair trade and of debt depleting or restructuring.

Casablanca, July 5, 2008