10TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
PALERMO
24/25 NOVEMBER 2006
EDITORIAL

BY PIERO FAGONE

A “seed” for peace. The awarding that Coppem assigns, with “Orange Seed Prize”, to two prominent figures, as Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak and Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, could find in that definition the most authentic and deep meaning because peace is the essential requirement in order to undertake real processes of civil growth and economic development, to promote culture spreading and reaffirm fundamental human and democracy rights. In brief, a necessary dimension for civil life in common and economic and cultural development. According to all these features, it seems inspired the intense activity of the Egyptian First Lady and Former President of Italian Republic, to whom, today, Towns and Regions of Coppem members’ 35 countries wish to show their greatest respect and underline the role carried out aiming to the values’ assertion of solidarity and human promotion.

The orange seed has, in Mediterranean, a very peculiar symbolic value because witnesses millenarian of relations in the region and effectively expresses the revival perspective of this tortured zone.

Since the beginning of its activity, Coppem has been aiming to contribute to reassembling of political, social and economic structure in the Mediterranean framework utilizing the extraordinary incentive of local authorities, able to express modern forms of cooperation and implement a big solidarity. For instance we can mention some significant initiatives: the Project (promoted by UN) of coastal cooperation among some cities dramatically damaged by terrorism: Aqaba, Eilat, Gaza and Sharm—el-Sheik, that one concerning Ismett (Mediterranean Institute for transplants and excellency therapies) of Palermo cast itself towards the whole region and Arab countries, and moreover the Projects of Ecomemaq on safeguard of Mediterranean maquis and Medins promoting the protection of intangible culture and improvement of Mediterranean territories.

The detail on these and other initiatives in progress will be discussed in occasion of the 10th General Assembly that, expressively, will be opened by the awarding celebration of “Orange Seed Prizes”.

Therefore, turning into the road of cooperation and common stable commitment, local authorities have the opportunity to contribute, in a decisive manner, improving life conditions of the concerned communities, promoting economic development and civil and cultural growth and, across this road, certainly improving relations among countries. The Eastern enlargement of European Union has created the frighted that the inclusion of Eastern Europe countries happens to re-balancing policy disadvantage across Northern-Southern axis. Deputy Minister of Italian Foreign Affairs, Ugo Intini, in an interview which we publish in this number, reassure that “They are not two processes which annull each other, I would actually say not, and it is very important that they proceed at the same rate according to a modern view of integration, which concern both economic and trade field and the political aspect too”. Integration which has the main point in partnership policy and, in particular, territorial partnerships, effective operating tools implementing new and more advanced economic and political prospects. Coppem News, which reaches the first five-year period of publishing, has followed, with particular attention, Barcelona Process evolution, has recorded its incomplete performances and its many failures, but, above all, has emphasized the implemented programmes and given the floor to the parties who have measured themselves in the difficult bet to recover cooperation, solidarity and life in common values in Mediterranean region, playing on local communities force and commitment.

Through this point of view, with FACM collaboration (Algerian Forum for Citizenship and Modernity), Coppem has analyzed, during a conference in Algiers, the development prospects of cooperation between Euro-Mediterranean cities and regions. From that meeting, Coppem News has been inspired to devote a supplement to Algerian context, country crossed by big turmoils of a modern reformism, but also theater of resistances which restrain processes of cultural, civil and economic progress. Both Conference and this publishing initiative have been implemented with important support of FACM.
The awarding of “Orange Seed Prize” to Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak and to the Former President of Italian Republic Carlo Azeglio Ciampi has an important value: on the one hand Coppem, through this initiative, has meant to underline the commitment and devotion of two important personalities to peace and civil and cultural promotion in Mediterranean, on the other hand, has intended to place those values of civil life in common and progress towards which Towns and Regions of the two shores aim. Along the partnership road, step by step, important goals of cooperation and solidarity are being implemented, very unimaginable regard to the Middle Est conflict.

Sicily, Coppem have fostered the starting up of an original process of whole growth which plays on important fields as civil organization, education, cultural heritage and environment, tourism, economic and trade development. From Morocco to Algeria, from Greece to Crete till Egypt, country with which we have started up different partnership projects, we want to go on along the road of a working solid cooperation, reaffirming Sicily’s role as motive-power of Mediterranean growth.

Barcelona Conference, ratifying the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, had unspecified three great zones in which developing a strong cooperation: democracy and security, economic and financial partnership, social and cultural cooperation. The reality has imposed us to face other emergencies: terrorism and illegal immigration. After ten years, taking a stock mostly disappointing, of Barcelona Process, we have agreed on a common action plan concerning immigration, justice and security, issues that did not be included in the 1995 Declaration. We must remind that the European Investment Bank (EIB) has been authorized to allocate euro 1,5 billions to utilize for loans, technical assistance and risk capitals addressing to the enterprises of south shore countries. Then, if the EU initiative will not have impulse and local authorities will not be fully involved, it will be very difficult that the 2010 date will be respected for the establishment of the foreseen big free trade area. Today, Mediterranean is the center of the political debate and the problems concerning the whole international community.

I firmly believe, and I think not to be the only one, that all Governments, all regions must assure that each country should be able to warrant for their own citizens, beyond the freedom of expression and movement, the opportunity to satisfy basic needs as food, health, work, accommodation, education, otherwise the frustration will impose to much more people to emigrate.

We cannot and will never be able to have a clean conscience when we send back desperate people who comes here looking forward to having a better life. As President of Sicilian Region, I am ashamed that so many people, that searching help, are considered at the same level of quotas to dispose.

Sicily exposes itself as outpost, with other European Mediterranean regions, of this life and solidarity counteroffensive, as regards to a peaceful, but unavoidably dramatic and destabilizing invasion. We must include this “Mediterranean question”, with no further hesitations, in the center of community foreign policy. These are the reasons which have persuades myself to launch an extraordinary development plan addressing to the countries of South Mediterranean shore, a 3rd millenarian Marshall plan, which can become a concrete example of solidarity.
SUZANNE MUBARAK

“FOR THE GREAT SENSITIVENESS AND GENEROUS CIVIL COMMITMENT SPENT ON COUNTLESS INITIATIVES LEADED AS AN ACTING SOLIDARITY, IMPROVEMENT LIFE CONDITIONS OF THE WEAKEST PEOPLE AND PROMOTION OF WOMEN’S CONDITION”

Suzanne Mubarak, Egypt’s first Lady, was born in the Egyptian province of El Menya. After completing her secondary education at St Claire’s school for girls in Cairo, she received her Bachelors Degree in Political Science from the American University in Cairo in 1977. In 1982, she obtained a Masters degree in Sociology. Sociology is one of her life-long interests, reflected in her unwavering commitment for the community. For years, the First Lady has contributed significantly to the society’s development through the establishment and sponsoring of countless associations and non-governmental organizations. In 1977, she founded the Integrated Care Society, which supports social, cultural and educational activities for children and the young and works to establish children’s libraries all across Egypt. Mrs. Mubarak chairs the society to this day. In 1991, the First Lady launched a national campaign for the widespread “Reading for All” program. The campaign was instrumental in fostering awareness for children’s illiteracy in Egypt, and the program has made strides in developing reading skills within children and youth. Amongst many accomplishments, promoted by her: the establishment of the Egyptian Society for Childhood and Development – of vital importance in rebuilding schools after the 1992 earthquake – the Suzanne Mubarak National History Museum for Children, and the Unified Law on Children. The law defines all rights that safeguard children, especially with regards to those who are either homeless or abused. A dedicate advocate of women’s rights, the First Lady has also chaired the Advisory Board for the National Council on Childhood and Motherhood, the Egyptian National Women’s Committee and the National Council for Women. The First Lady is also known for her considerable contributions to humanitarian efforts. As head of the Egyptian Red Crescent Association, Mrs. Mubarak was highly active in providing much needed aid to Palestine, Sudan and Bosnia. Through the Red Crescent, Mrs. Mubarak was also able to initiate the highly successful national campaign for safe blood transfusion. On the international arena, Suzanne Mubarak is admired for her remarkable poise and her extensive contributions to the filed of women and children’s rights. She has participated in countless international conferences including the 1992 economic Reform Conference for African Women in Geneva. She has been a key-note speaker at the African First Ladies Seminar on the Status of Women and Children in Africa, and the Second Session of the Special High Level Council in the United Nations held in New York in 1993. Among many prizes, which have been awarded to her, the following are of particular relevance:

- The Maurice Pate Award from Unicef Executive Board in recognition of her dedication and efforts for child survival, protection and development (1989);
- The Honorary Fulbright Award in recognition of her efforts in the field of child development and education (1992);
- Enrique de la Mata International Prize for Peace from the Together for Peace Foundation in recognition of her dedication in promoting child development and alleviating the suffering of victims of natural disasters (1992);
- Paul Harris Fellow in appreciation of tangible and significant assistance for the furthering of better understanding and friendly relations between peoples of the world (1992);
- The Health for All Gold Medal, the highest distinction awarded by the World Health Organization in recognition for outstanding contributions to improving the quality of life of the women and children of Egypt, and her personal commitment to international efforts to integrate health in the development process;
- International Book Award by the International Book Committee in recognition of her outstanding efforts to promote reading in Egypt (1995);
- Award of Highest Honor by Soka University (1995);
- The Degree of Doctorate of Law by Westminster College,, New Wilming- ton, in recognition of her outstanding achievements for the people of Egypt and in causes highly valued by the international community;
- The American World Book Association for Publication Award in recognition of her role in publishing books and her efforts in initiating the “Reading for All” campaign.
During the XIII parliament he has been Minister of the Treasury, Balance and Economic Planning within Prodi’s government (from April 1996 to October 1998) and in D’Alema’s government (from October 1998 to May 1999). Since 1993 he has been honorary Governor of the Bank of Italy and since 1996 member of the board of directors of the Institute of the Italian Encyclopedia.

He has held many offices of international relevance, among those: president of the Committee of governors of the European Community and the European Fund for monetary cooperation (in 1982 and in 1987); vice president of the Bank of international regulations (from 1994 to 1996); president of the Advisory Group for competitiveness within European Commission (from 1995 to 1996); President of the temporary Committee of the International Monetary Fund (from October 1998 to May 1999).

From April 1993 to May 1994, Ciampi has governed during a difficult transition phase at institutional and economic level. The electoral referendum as well as the unfavourable conjuncture characterized by a check on economic growth requested immediate answers. Ciampi’s government has ensured the enforcement of the new electoral law approved by the Parliament, through the complex work for determining constituencies, and the passage to a Parliament which was deeply renewed between the XI and XII legislatures. At economic level, the most significative actions have been concentrated on building up the institutional framework for the fight against inflation, through the agreement between the government and social parties on July 1993, that particularly has put an end to every process of indexation and characterized in the planned inflation rate the benchmark for renewals pertaining to contracts.

Furthermore, Ciampi government has started the privatization of many public companies, developing and clarifying the framework of normative reference and implementing the first operations of divestment (such as those in the bank sector, the Italian Credit, the Italian Commercial Bank, and the IMI). As Minister of the Treasury and Balance during Prodi and D’Alema governments, Ciampi has given a decisive contribution to achieve the parameters foreseen by Maastricht Treaty, thereby enabling the participation of Italy in the single European currency, since its creation.

Among the most significant measures of this period, we remind the corrective budgetary measure launched in September 1996 by Prodi government, that has enabled a lowering of over 4 percentage points in the net amount debt ratio of public administrations as to the gross domestic product, the hardest Maastricht parameter to be achieved for our Country.

On 13th May 1999, he was elected tenth President of the Italian Republic on first ballot. His mandate has ended on May 2006. Since 15th May 2006 he is life senator and joins the Mixed Group at Palazzo Madama (seat of the Senate). Carlo Azeglio Ciampi is also the author of many statements and articles as well as of some publications, among those we quote “Final Considerations by the Governor of the Bank of Italy from 1979 to 1993”, “Challenge to unemployment: promoting the European competitiveness” and “A method to govern”.
A SEED FOR PEACE
THE AWARDING CELEBRATION IN PALERMO ON 24TH NOVEMBER

BY GIOVANNA CIRINO

Egyptian First Lady Suzanne Mubarak and Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, Former President of the Italian Republic, are both Euro-Mediterranean leading personalities particularly committed in promoting the dialogue between peoples living along the shores of Mare nostrum which has always nourished and included many civilizations. On the occasion of the X General Assembly of Palermo, COPPEM will award them the prize Seme d’arancia, as recognition for the activity they have carried out that is considered an important bridge between the Islamic and Western culture. President Hosni Mubarak’s wife chairs, among other things, the Board of directors of the Alexandria Library, and one of the most beloved Italian Presidents, will be both awarded on November 24th at Villa Malfitano. The Seme d’arancia (Orange Seed) is a work of art that Emilio Isgrò, visual poet, painter and famous artist at international level, has dedicated to “goodwill” peoples as symbol of peace, prosperity and trust in a fairer future. It is a sculpture made of tuff, resin, citrus and slags, that on 21st March 1998 was donated to his native town, Barcellona Pozzo di Gotto in the province of Messina, with a ceremony in which 200 mayor gathered from all over Europe participated. This work of art, more than six meters high and exposed en plein air in the square of the Old Station, seems to explode from the belly of the Sicilian ground that is place of memory and meeting between Euro-Mediterranean cultures. This Seme d’arancia reveals Emilio Isgrò’s creative maturity and it is part of the “enlarged details” that like the “extracted letters” are one of his most important artistic stages. In the specific instance, this seed has been scaled up 9,000 times: a giant of nature that attracts attention in an urban context to be upgraded, in a city which wants to free itself from indifference and that can find in the art an instrument of civil commitment. Seme d’arancia is an artistic language, a sign joining Spain, Sicily, North Africa, Middle East, Israel and Palestine, in a unique sea. A seed that is not related to seasonal sowing, but it intends to be an everlasting symbol of a common path «for not giving up to decay and discouragement» as Isgrò said. «The art as symbol of renaissance and redemption, is necessary in every process of building - Isgrò states - I hope that such seed can continue to germinate among all Mediterranean peoples, and under the reviving shadow of that symbol, young people can grow up under the sign of freedom and tolerance». Since 2001, the city of Palermo hosts at Palazzo Ziino an installation of the Sicilian artist, entitled. “The route of Catalans” where the ants, humble workers of peace as well as symbol of trust in life are the protagonists. These ants represent the Mediterranean industriousness which is evidence of a cultural past that has made this area of the world a great one and intends to be the best wish for a future where peace is not an utopia but something it is possible to build everyday.
Relations between Italy and Egypt are based on the utmost mutual trust and cooperation. The EU promotion of research programmes, in collaboration with the Mediterranean shore countries has strongly boosted Egyptian development in favour of a greater overture to its neighbouring countries. Especially concerning Cultural Heritage, Egypt has always been among the main partners of Italy. Moreover, following the guidelines, black and white ratified in 1995, by the Barcelona Declaration, relations between these two countries are becoming increasingly strong. Increasingly strong bilateral agreements, cooperation and interaction above all a common path towards the Middle-East Process. These are some of the objectives emerging from the following interview with the Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Ashraf Rashed, recently hosted by Coppem, in view of the arrival in Palermo of the First Lady, Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak, the wife of the Egyptian President, next 24th November, for receiving the “Orange Seed award” for her commitment in promoting cooperation among the Mediterranean peoples and in pursuing objectives of peace and justice.

Mr. Ambassador, considering relations between Italy, Sicily and Egypt, what do you think about the awarding a prize to Mrs. Mubarak? We are glad for Mrs. Mubarak because the award she will receive by Coppem is also evidence of acknowledging the efforts the President’s wife has been making for development and cooperation between North and South. Mrs. Mubarak has been promoting peace awareness in the entire Mediterranean region, so, the awarding of the “Orange Seed” means that you have understood the value of her steady and real commitment.

Mrs. Mubarak is founder and president of the “Suzanne Mubarak Women’s International Peace”. How does this institution deal with the topic of women rights? Mrs. Mubarak is a leader fighting for giving a voice to our region women. It is important for women to have the same opportunities as men, on the study, research and employment plane in order to improve their condition. I am proud to be able to say that in Egypt several women are active on economic issues and more than a woman is a Minister of the National Government. I would add that among the Egyptian ambassadors all over the world, 35 are women. We certainly have to work out the complete acknowledgment of the women role, because we think it is an essential role for development both within the society and the family.

What do you think about the current relations between Egypt and Italy? I think relations between Italy and Egypt are strongly developing. We have common history and nature. In Egypt, Italian investments are developing and recently, the Banca San Paolo has took over the Alexandrian Bank. I am referring to such event only as an evidence of the trust we place in Italian businessmen. Naturally, investments are crossing our borders both ways; for instance, the owner of Wind telephone company is an Egyptian. When I talk about similitude between the two peoples, the Egyptian and the Italian ones, I don’t mean only personal or emotional characteristics but also the strong interests we are bound by.
Egypt has had the courage to undertake the peace path based on the international law. What do you think about the role these two countries are playing?

Egypt and Italy has to share the same objectives in order to keep on strengthening the peace process in the Middle East. Italy plays an essential and crucial role. The Italian Government has assumed a leading role in Lebanon in order to stop the oppression, by sending its peace forces. In the past, Italy has always had a clear political idea.

We are still far from peace and resolution of the Middle Eastern conflict. Which is the key from the Arab point of view?

The key to reach calm, stability and to stop violence is to solve the Palestinian conflict. The acknowledgment of two States, Palestine and Israel, would bring peace between both peoples.

Actually, during the last years, a real peace process has not occurred, due to the different agreements remained ignored. In this historic moment we are hopeless; people are suffering and dying. The only awareness is that such problem cannot be solved by using the force. We should understand what is wrong, since there is no justification for the death of civilian population.

You have just mentioned ignored agreements. Do you think that, after ten years, Barcelona Declaration objectives have reached their goals?

The Barcelona Process has started following three pillars: Stability and security, economic development and culture. Unfortunately, I have to notice that such objectives have not been fully reached.

Considering peace process in the Middle East, do you think the Barcelona Declaration should have searched for some links with the US initiative in order to unfold its potential?

The US and the EU play a meaningful role within the peace process. The Arab States have shown a clear position, in 2002, on the occasion of the Beirut Conference. During that session, they have offered peace in exchange for the liberation of the occupied territories and the acknowledgement of Palestinian people rights. In Beirut, Arab Governments have asked the Chairman of that summit to establish a special committee, composed of some of its member States and the Secretary General of the League of the Arab States, with the task of developing the necessary contacts in order to ensure the widest international support to such initiative and particularly the consent by the United Nations, the Security Council, the United States of America, the Russian Federation, the Islamic States and the European Union. (r.p.)
The Mediterranean history, for the most part, is the history of towns, communities highly committed not only with trade exchanges, but also with culture and science divulgation. In few words, a long thread keeps joining the different Mediterranean realities, which today have new tools to increase cooperation within a modern view of development and civil growth.

The local authorities seem as drive of a difficult, but unstoppable process of solid collaboration within a picture, an outlined perimeter at supranational level. 

In brief if European Union has outlined the Partnership’s features and drawn the lines of an Euro-Mediterranean policy, towns and Regions must give a concrete content to the choices of the countries. The role of local authorities has been the main subject of an interesting meeting, titled “Development prospects of cooperation between Euro-Mediterranean cities and regions”, which Coppem and FACM (Algerian Forum for Citizenship and Modernity) have organized in Algiers, under the aegis of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The subject has been a point of reference for a critical analysis of national and European policies concerning Euro-Mediterranean partnership.

On the one hand, there is the international dimension with which local authorities compete; on the other hand the relations between the same bodies and the central authorities of the respective States while in the background current issues concerning peace and security impend, authentic prejudicial questions for the economic development and social and cultural growth.

The Congress in Algiers has also been the occasion for a strong projection of Algerian reality, committed with the achievement of new aims long the road of modernization and more advanced civil life in common. 

Taking as starting point, the interesting debate of Algiers, “Coppem News” has considered appropriate to spread the analysis of the situation of this country and processes which go through it. Beyond collecting some of the most significant statements made during the meeting, “Coppem News” has asked to some eminent personalities to outline a contour of the most important Algerian economic sections and to describe the evolving processes marked in civil organization and presented in Algerian society.

An initiative to consecrate, as it has been made for other countries in the past, a “Special issue” to Algeria realized with FACM.
NOWADAYS local communities are suffering the consequences of a structural crisis caused by changes at political, economic and socio-cultural level. Today, the stakes consist in the contradictory development of political system dynamics that despite its red tape at central level present faster transformations at periphery level. The current issue consists in acting, seeking to stop contaddictions caused by political changes, towards objectives of assistance to the State and this through efforts both by institutions and people. A State or even a nation can stabilize and develop only through the favour of its structures and basically of its elected assemblies. Local assemblies, in particular, being the corner stone of the state structure, must fully take on the prerogatives assigned to them. Prerogatives slide of an elected assembly, and the variance of its way of behaving lead to the certain risk of political disorder which wouldn't be able to rescue the State from decline. Our country is currently going through a crucial phase particularly marked by a plural debate highlighted by facts related to the current economic situation. The integration of strategic changes in the Country, related to globalization, leads the Municipality to face consequences brought about afterwards and forces it to intervene at the source with the effect of answering to the permanent pressure of social needs. Local assemblies as well as the elected members board have to participate in it out of a sense of duty and responsibility despite citizens’ expectations that, being the main objective of their missions and the belief of their concerns, must not be hidden at all. National policy needs a new or rather a second course to the participation of third party. Testing other components of the assembly gives a substantial contribution to decision-making working out. So, the effectiveness is considerable if this same decision is subjected to an evaluation and appreciation among the population interested in. The experience reveals that the actions in which citizens’ participation is integrated, the municipality benefits by an efficiency about the result, as well as by an economy about its resources. The decisive case of COVILLE has showed that all the programmes activated in common agreement with citizens’ representatives and committees have had not only citizens’ consent but also the guarantee of their management. It is undeniable that the COVILLE municipal notice board is not restricted to be a simple sounding board for complaints and needs but it must be a place for listening and citizenry’s concertation in order to avoid that the municipality, as basic structure of the State, is reduced to a simple administrative surplus. It is essential that the directory realized by the State at assemblies’ disposal can mobilize for citizens. The economic, political and socio-cultural situation requires to undertake such management that must move from the phase of means management to the constraints one. The weakness of assemblies budgets could be mitigated by using local efforts and energies. We can consider that the growing unemployment of a great segment of people must be checked by an integration of the affected classes and this through different forms of organization (cooperative association...etc). Elected members at local level could concertate with their counterparts of other assemblies differently established in order to combine a joint effort for local or regional development and this in a view of national strategy or inter-municipal solidarity. The objectives of the local elected members within the scope of the missions assigned to them consist in: rigorous and efficient management of local public finances; research of financial resources as well as creation of wealth at local level; adjustment of assemblies’ actions with citizens’ expectations by involving them in decision-making processes; strengthening of means of communication in order to improve citizens’ participation; improving the quality of public service missions; creating an area of synergy in the perspective of joining the whole potentials stimulated by the will of improving one’s own environment; fair distribution of resources and efficient allocation by launching sustainable development actions. The reality in the objectives management as expressed above, responds to a logic of functioning that enables the Municipality to deal with the implementation of these benchmarks conforming itself to the Assembly’s policy in order to ease the city and its citizens from socio-economic red tape. The permanent maintenance of urban areas and environment drives the manager to make imperative efforts for adapting his effects to the current regulations and to pay attention to people’s needs. This delicate task is especially motivated by the fact that the elected member in the assembly makes constant efforts for preserving the Welfare State and for preventing that it can come to a standstill towards a penal State. Good Governance of citizens would make sense only if the elected member at municipal level integrate himself in sustainable development strategies without taking care of what has been realized.
PARTNERSHIP CLOSER TO THE CITIZENS

LESS BUREAUCRACY AND MORE PARTICIPATION

MOHAMED BEDJAoui, MINISTER OF ALGERIAN FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Nowadays Algeria is a country which remains deeply attached to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership considering the humble results achieved on cooperation issue. The development of Mediterranean countries needs of competitive free markets, regional integration and real cooperation among all partners. Nevertheless this process is weak, not much clear because many demands have not been able to involve people, towns, and urban networks of the two Mediterranean shores. Today, this process has big problems in its visibility because it has been confined in official meetings between officials and manager of bureaucratic practices. Therefore the Euro-Mediterranean process must be supported with some corrective actions giving it, rightly, all the possible successful opportunities for the main beneficiaries of its implementation which are people, civil society and other bodies and local actors of development. The partnership, the exchange of experiences on management policies of cities, urban economics, good governance, sustainable development, decentralized cooperation and participative policy of citizens, are fields that can be the real platform to achieve the final aim of our partnership which is that of creating a area of peace and shared prosperity.

These exchanges for local development, we hope full and fruitful, I fear, are not enough if they are limited to a flow of goods and services and if they suppress or ignore the driving element, that is the human factor”. In fact, for being real and fully eloquent, both at official and unofficial level, global partnership between local communities, NGOs and civil society needs also to be nourished by a reapproaching between our peoples, by a free circulation of people and by a continuing cultural dialogue. “ It is neither consistent nor productive that while we are devoted to a privileged partnership, restrictive policies on free people’s circulation rise between us. Of course, the international situation is difficult and delicate, consisting of tensions and different challenges, but I rather see a further issue that should drive us to make joint efforts and do everything for building together bridges of friendship and mutual understanding between our people and societies, and for facing up to the attempts of rift and disagreement.

Algeria will make every effort to contribute approaching our respective ensembles and as Algeria hopes to be able, one day, to talk about a whole ensemble that is the Euro-Mediterranean as one. We are strongly convinced that to be interested in the cooperation between cities as well as in the problems of citizens, municipalities, associations and small and medium-sized enterprises could be a new way to contribute to rebuild our partnership. Recently in Barcelona, on the occasion of the Euro-Mediterranean Summit, Heads of State and Government agreed upon some measures for a better opening of our partnership to civil society and they invited to make greater efforts towards across-the-border and decentralized cooperation. Algeria renews its availability and commitment to civil society, joins the concept of across the border cooperation that will provide our neighborhood with full mean and will add, incontestably, a new dynamic to the Euro-Mediterranean partnership. Once, our cities of both the Mediterranean shores were a real breeding-ground for exchanges and a swarming of cultures and science which have favoured an extraordinary renaissance. Cities like Tlemcen, Bejaia, Cordoba, Seville, Venice, Fès, Cairo have uncommonly inspired eminent thinkers, scholars and inventors. The latters have often spread their knowledge along the whole Mediterranean, as the great Ibn Khaldoun whose six-hundredth death’s anniversary has been celebrating.
of Algiers, Oran and Cherchell. A country expresses itself through its art: shapes, colours and materials express craft and artistic tradition of Algeria. The highly attractive nature was an inexhaustible source of inspiration to the local craft linked to the Maghreb civilization. In the art of pottery, for example, the vast repertoire of symbols obeys severe and multimillenary laws. The same is true for popular arts. Ceramics from M’sirda (Nedroma), from Mâatkas (Kabylia) or from Djemila (Setif), jewels from Beni-Yenni or from Aures, or a chiselled copper tray from Constantine or Ghardaïa, or also a carpet from Djebel Amour or Nementchas, all take inspiration from popular poetry governed by ancestral rules. Every artefact displays plastic art and mysticism reflecting the whole Algeria with its variety and richness. Popular art embodies the same thought which would generate the Mediterranean civilization with its philosophy and religious beliefs. Indeed, all towns and villages are proud of their historical origin, their archaeological heritage or their popular spa or bathing resort. Whatever cultural initiative is organised, the most important thing is to set up new relationships and to show the hospitality of the country. Timimoun – the red oasis – with its lush palm grove and its treasures; Ghardaïa and its original pentapolis; Tipaza, the ancient Roman business town, testifying the religious belief of the period with its necropolis and basilicas; Bejaia (the old Naciria) and Skikda, bright port cities; Oran, with the Pasha’s Mosque and its Spanish fortifications, the museum of De maeght; El–Kala and its national park; Batna and Rhoufi’s breathtaking gully-filled landscape; Tim gad, the Ancient; Lambasfis with its Roman remains – which was the camp site of Augustus’ third legion –, any destination you choose, you
Few months ago, in Barcelona and Cairo, we have celebrated the 10th anniversary of Barcelona Declaration. We believe that it is necessary to introduce deep changes in Euro-Mediterranean policy allowing to fully answer to the prefixed results. According to Coppem policy the three pillars of Barcelona Declaration stay effective: peace and security, economic and financial partnership, social and cultural partnership. Basic principle on which all of us must think over is even if, long these years, we have achieved some results, which do not have to be ignored, but it is not still enough. The countries of South Mediterranean shore are not still able to achieve important results on development policy. We know that the problem of the problems regards peace and security. With no peace there are no investments, there is not development. Coppem’s commitment, as all our colleagues know, has been and have always much more to aim to establish conditions for dialogue and conflicts’ political solutions; sometime local and regional authorities can make one more step in comparison with national governments. But even the subjects policy of Euro-Mediterranean partnership must undergo essential changes. 2010 is at the gates. Can the foreseen Free Trade Area be implemented under these conditions? We must try that the “social capital” education prevails exploiting territories and productive and intellectual resources. In a development policy there are no made models. Everybody starts from his reality, but it is necessary a great effort from European side in order to support the sustainable development. Recently Coppem has opened representative bureau in Cairo, Istanbul, Rabat and other representative bureau are foreseen in Bruxelles, Poznan, Dubai. Why not in Algiers? We must think over it. Coppem considers Algeria a strategic country for Euro-Mediterranean policy. With Algerian colleagues, we try to contribute to the growth of this big country.

will find the true, happy and lively nature of Algeria. The Mediterranean – the most visited region in the world – is about to reach alarming saturation levels in terms of both tourism flows and excessive exploitation of natural and cultural resources. On the contrary, Algeria is one of the few countries of the Mediterranean area, where the natural and cultural heritage is almost totally preserved. Moreover, thanks to its total extension including the most diverse natural areas and tourist resorts, its material and non-material cultural heritage, as well as its history and civilisation, Algeria is today considered by the most qualified tour operators at a worldwide level as one of the alternative tourist destinations of the Mediterranean area. This point is further supported by the following considerations: 1) Thanks to its exceptional tourist tradition Algeria might offer a wide variety of tourist opportunities being at the same time competitive and able to fulfil the needs of a vast segment of the international market of tourism. Algeria as a future tourism destination could be coupled to the terms variety, originality and authenticity. 2) Its astonishing culture, history and civilisation make Algeria a melting-pot of different cultural traditions, thereby rendering it the favourite destination of the increasingly demanding sector of cultural tourism. 3) The presence of one of the most beautiful deserts in the world, encompassing some of the sites classified as world heritage and biosphere reserve, such as the region of the Tassili – also known as the largest open-air museum of the world – made Algeria popular among travellers fond of adventure tourism. 4) The fact that it lies close to Europe can also be considered as an extra asset of the country. 5) Last but not least, the commitment of the country’s public authorities willing to improve the sector of tourism up to the level of other profit-making economic sectors within the framework of the ten-year strategic development scheme for tourism in Algeria. This strategy makes investment one of the paramount priorities of the country in view of its aim of bridging the gap due to the lack of accommodation facilities (120,000 new beds) which is one of the main issues in Algerian tourist sector.
The creation of a financial market in Algeria is an important pillar of economic reforms aimed at endowing the country with modern economic and financial tools suited to contribute successfully to introduce a market economy. Its development must contribute to ensure the transition towards a more competitive financing of national economy as well as an incentive for public saving earmarked for productive investment within a fluid, transparent and competitive financial market. The system for implementing this marked was started in 1990, but only in 1998 it has become operational. This time gap has enabled to introduce the preliminary conditions for the financial market problem both at legal and institutional level. At legal level, this phase has been marked by the commerce code modification in 1993 that introduced new financial tools cataloguing the various standards of chattels values suited to be discharged by the joint-stock companies, as well as the promulgation of the legislative decree n°93-10 23rd May 1993 relevant to stock exchange of Chattels values which constitutes the general policy law of the Algerian financial market.

At institutional level, this same phase has been marked by the creation of institutions for the market functioning such as: the Committee for Organization and Supervision of Stock Exchange operations «COSOB», in charge of supervising the market and having the supervision and organization of chattels values market to safeguard savers as main mission; the Society of Stock Exchange Management «SGBV», formed as joint stock company whose capital is undersigned by brokers and in charge of chattels values negotiations; An investment society having variable capital. The public launch of the first action of securities investment occurred in 1998 through a bondholder loan issued by SONATRACH which proposed a very attractive remuneration, that is a yearly fixed interest rate of 13%. Three transactions of actions issuing will follow from public companies: ERIAD SETIF - increasing capital of 20%; pharmaceutical company SAIDAL and EGH EL AURASSI - investing capital of 20%. By setting up the stock-exchange market of Algiers in September 1999, these actions and also the SONATRACH bond, were officially quoted on the Stock Exchange of Algiers marking a significant turning point to realize economic reforms. Stock Exchange activities have moved from 108 million DA in 1999 to 720 million DA in 2000, before starting a drop in transactions volume that in 2005 has achieved the risible level of 4 million DA. This situation is mainly due to the risible number of listed securities as well as to the weakness of equity yield rates which have achieved lower levels than credit rates granted to banks. Five years after its launch, we must ascertain that the stock exchange of Algiers has remained in its embryonic stage, leading public authorities to implement a series of measures aiming at favouring the relaunch of the Algerian financial market as from the end of 2003. Actually as from the last three-month period of 2004, after the promulgation of the law 03-04 of 17th February 2004, modifying and completing the legislative decree 93-10, about ten companies had recourse to the issue of debenture loans to finance their investments needs at lower costs so preventing the risk of rate exchange because enterprises don’t pay risk allowance related to the notation of the country. Among these enterprises we quote: SONATRACH, Air Algérie, SONELGAZ, l’ENTP, l’ENAFOIR, CEVITAL, Algérie Télécoms, la Société de Réfinancement Hypothécaire and the Arab Leasing Corporation. 2004 was marked by another salient fact aiming at giving a new impulsion to the Algerian financial market and at modernizing its functioning. It consists in the creation of a central bonds trustee called Algérie Clearing representing the last essential element of the system to enable, through a dematerialize management of bonds, a market functioning under international standards in terms of time and security in the operations processing.

Following the same thinking, it is necessary to indicate that the Council of State Control (CPE), in 2004 opted for the partial privatization of eleven public companies on stock exchange every three or four companies, this new capital should serve to relaunch stock exchange activities. So, moving to the dematerialization of stocks, launching of a series of debenture loans and creating a list of companies to be privatized through the stock exchange are all the actions launched in this last period to promote the Algerian financial market. It is necessary to remind this is the beginning of the Algerian financial market and it evolve in an environment where stock-exchange culture is not enough yet and in a financial system in full change. In this field, Algeria is called to mainly develop the financial market especially through a consistent plan of privatization, the quotation of some leading values, an escalation of debenture market, the implementation of a framework suitable for the market out of court and the development of a second market for small and medium sized enterprises. The expected objective is to build up a financial market able to ensure a consistent contribution in financing the enterprises.
ALGERIA ON INTERNATIONAL SCENARIO
THE STRATEGIES TO GUARANTEE TO THE COUNTRY AN IMPORTANT PRESENCE ABROAD

NOURREDDINE SBIA, ECONOMIST, PRESIDENT OF FACM

Algeria has recently started far-reaching reforms on various sectors, particularly on security, civil harmony and national reconciliation. Further steps have been accomplished regarding social dialogue as Governing method, through a higher involvement of citizens in managing public affairs, with the associative movement. Then the reforms have concerned the starting up of innovative social programmes in the field of housing (such as the AADL), employment, social protection and economic section. Algeria is working on the country reintegration in the world context through its significant presence in the great world forum and its active participation in establishing the NEPAD (New Economic Partnership for African Development). Another achieved objective is concerning the association agreement with the European Union and then the initiatives for the adhesion of Algeria to regional economic areas, such as the European Association of Free Trade (EFTA) and the areas for Maghrebi and Arab free trade. From this point of view relaunching and speeding up the process of adhesion of Algeria to WTO is a strategic, unavoidable and not anymore returnable choice. It will be necessary that this reintegration strategy will be carried out through a wider competitiveness of our economy, a larger controlling management and good governance as rule and factor for political stabilization and reference for every modernization at political, economic, cultural and social level. It is about deep changes of behavior and intellectual attitudes of our human resources that shall drive the structural changes process under way. In the end, these changes must involve Algerian elite to support the changes that the Country have started up, in order to build a modern State and a society open to universality. The close, global, and exhaustive reflection will allow to outline a concerted action between public authorities and civil society for a harmonious reintegration of our Country in the world context.
Algeria and the countries of Mena (Middle Eastern and North African) region seem to be the great losers of the globalization process, even though, since the second half of ’80s, the Algerian government has embarked on the path «suggested» by the international financial institutions in the movement for globalization and a series of institutional reforms of good «governance», that are:

- macroeconomic stabilization,
- structural adjustment,
- privatization.

Algeria has been able to implement the macroeconomic stabilization, but it has registered weak performances in structural adjustment, privatization and institutional reforms. Studies on Algerian economy, in the period 1970-2002, allows to ascertain a strong economic development in the period 1970-1985 and a weaker one for the period 1985-2000 (the 6% every year in 1970-1985 and the 1,3% as from 1986; so less than the 2,2% of demographic growth, that is a negative growth in per capita salaries -the 0,9% for 15 years-. As for the first period, the Country adopted economic measures of market mechanisms which are typical of liberalistic economy, such as: control of credit, maintenance of negative real interest rates, fixing of exchange rates, control and funding of rates, control of foreign trade, intervention of the State in all the sectors of economic activities, selection of import-substitution structuralist model. In the second one, Algeria implemented important economic reforms. This double contradiction might be explained as follows:

- with the success of macroeconomic stabilization and with the failure of reforms in the real sector,
- with economic growth before reforms and standstill after reforms.

The object of these studies is the management of reforms in Algeria. I will try to answer to these questions by considering the experience acquired in the sector of economic reforms in the last few fifteen years. Up to the end of ’80s, Algeria was characterized:

- at political level by an authoritarian system due to a sole party,
- at economic level by a system of administrated economy.

Two events have marked the implementation of political and economic reforms: the fall in oil prices in 1986 that reduced export incomes from 12,7 billion US$ in 1985 to 7,9 billion $ in 1986, and the demonstrations occurred on October 1988. In order to face both situations, Algerian authorities were committed in an important programme of economic reforms through the support of the World Bank and I.M.F. and in revising the Constitution to empower other political parties and pave the way for democracy. This has marked the beginning of a double transition:

- at political level, for moving from an authoritarian system due to a sole party to a democratic system with more parties;
- at economic level, for moving from an administrated economy to a market one.

Which kind of method to bring about reforms: drastic therapy or graduality? The Algerian authorities opted for a drastic therapy which had a strong action on political reforms, and for graduality about the economic reforms. In other words, they intended to go very far as for the transition towards democracy: creation of about sixty political parties, freedom of press, liberalization of media. But in practice, the drastic therapy let only a party to canalize the discontent and delegitimize the old system. Can we define this as a democratic process? Was necessary to interrupt the electoral process in order to protect democracy, even though it’d have been brought about terrorist violence? The electoral process was stopped before the first ballot. Concerning economic reforms there was a lot of hesitation, in particular to solve the problem of foreign debt and public productive sector reorganization. At institutional level, economic reforms concern in particular public companies: privatization, for example the trade organization and monopolies abolition, fiscal policies, prices liberalization. And the index of liberalized prices has moved from 10% in 1988 to 77% at the end of 1993. Due to the implementation of monetary policies that enabled the monetary surplus takeover, this liberalization of prices didn’t follow a galloping inflation. The ratio between monetary mass (M2) and gross domestic product has moved from 88% in 1988 to 53% in 1993. The exchange rate has moved from 4,85 DA/US$ in 1987 to 24 DA/US$ in 1993. It is five times over its nominal value. As to a level 100 in 1985, the real exchange rate was only of 30 at the end of 1992. A considerable effort that followed a liberalization of prices and interest rates. At fiscal level, there was the VAT implementation and income tax simplification. Although this effect of global management of economy had the effect to prevent the decay of economic activities it didn’t enable to achieve the needed rates of economic growth for social and political stability. In real terms of GDP, the medium rate of growth has been about +0,4% between 1988 and 1993, very inferior to the needed 6%. During the years 1991-1993, in full crisis at political, economic and social level, Algerian economy had to implement net transfers (payment of capital and interests less new credits) of about nine (9) billion US$ that is an average of three billion US$ every year. This could have been achieved thanks to a balance of trade surplus of 10,6 billion US$, that is a yearly average of 3,5 billion US$. So for its impact on imports volume, supplies decrease in productive sector and in general economy, presented a higher need than economic growth.

People have had to suffer the effects of economic reforms on distribution and production chain. To face this situation, since 1994 the Algerian government has joined a wide financing programme of the International Monetary Fund, launching gradual measures in transition policy and making a decisive step towards economic reforms with foreign trade liberalization, with...
the Algerian currency convertibility and the programme of fight against inflation, by fixing again an expiry date for foreign debt and by maintaining inside and outside financial balances. At the end of ’90s, the Algerian economy was still a depressed one with a weak level of imports, inadequate and not well-distributed budgetary expenditures, an increase on unemployment rate and a drop on real income as well as on life standards. Economy was much more dependent on oil income for financing the budget of State. Despite a well-established macroeconomic stabilization and a financial easiness never been equal before and the solution of foreign debt problem, the Algerian economy is always looking forward the launch of «second generation» reforms. What above-mentioned shows that although the macroeconomic stabilization is a necessary condition it is not enough to relaunch the Country, because structural reforms have not been implemented yet with the needed rate.

1. INTERPRETATION OF THE SUCCESS OF THE MACROECONOMIC STABILIZATION:

1.1. The nature of available resources:
Hydrocarbons play an important rôle in the Algerian economy. They are over the 95% of export income and over the 60% of fiscal lines policies of exchange rate has enabled to achieve the budgetary and balance of payments objectives without coercive measures. The slide of exchange rate - 4,70 DA/US$ in 1986, 35,09 DA/US$ in 1994, 66,64 DA/US$ in 1999- has enabled to maintain a rising level on fiscal income thanks to oil sector, so allowing more generous social policies.

1.2. Management of reforms implementation:
It is based on the following four pillars:

(i) A team selected to negotiate agreements with international financial institutions and to follow up the implementation of programmes. This team has maintained its mission during reforms process, even if governments have changed.

(ii) Control of programmes implementation was assigned to a committee chaired by the Prime Minister, and it met once a week.

(iii) There was a communication policy targeted to stakeholders. And so before and after every negotiation with international institutions, the government organized a meeting gathering representatives of government, trade unions, public and private patronage.

(iv) Budgetary profits achieved with the suppression on prices support have been regularly and totally earmarked for the social fund.

1.3. Powers ratio between winners and losers as to decision making process:
Decisions pertaining to macroeconomic stabilization, that is: currency depreciation, abolition of supports on prices, liberalization of foreign trade. The preparation of decision making is carried out in the utmost secrecy. This situation does not allow losers to hamper in advance decision making that, once undertaken, is imposed to everybody.

2. EXPLAINING THE INCAPACITY TO LAUNCH REFORMS IN THE REAL SECTOR:

2.1. Nature of resources:
The important rôle played by hydrocarbons in the Algerian economy enables to function as an income economy.

2.2. The management of reforms implementation:
Unlike stabilization, the structural adjustment, especially the privatization, involves representatives of government, enterprise, trade union and Parliament.

2.3. Powers ratio between winners and losers in decision making process:
Unlike stabilization, decision making process concerning structural adjustment is slow and requires the agreement of more actors.

Conclusion:

If, today, we are able to control macroeconomic stabilization it is due to the commitment showed in implementing institutional reforms in the perspective of «good governance».
The Algerian Enterprise is facing various challenges: The intensification of national competition, internationalization of market, the agreement of free trade with the European Union and the adhesion to O.M.C that is the height of this process of internationalization. It would be advisable to think that in this context we can only and briefly recall duties and opportunities offered to our Enterprises which have no more time to tergiversate. The expected confusion will bring about many advantages and some disadvantages. All depends on a rigorous groundwork. Intuitive, sole, informal and archaic management is going to become more and more infrequent. This will cause an improvement of productivity; who will benefit from this improvement? The two possible scenarios are the following:

1) World Economy will aim at every advantage on productivity since the levelling of enterprises and public institutions fails;
2) Welfare can improve in Algeria by providing an improvement on the quality of regulation and on management of economic enterprises.

Therefore, we see that the final result depends on ourselves as well well as on our capacities to manage the change at macroeconomic and microeconomic level and the interaction with the mesoeconomy. This is not easy at all considering various failures in the past.

THE MACRO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

Algeria has never accumulated so many advantages to speed up its lethargic economic reforms. We can quote at least three of these:

1. A margin of very extended political move favoured by many factors such as security, elections and other things.
2. A macro-economic stabilization that is going on.
3. Huge resources induced by a favourable oil market.

However, these positive developments don’t produce systematically a fair and durable economic growth. Many other conditions must be implemented. We can quote some of them:

1. Strategic clearing up;
2. Improving processes of regulation;
3. Reduction of bureaucratic procedures;
4. Introducing further rigour in decision making about the economic policy of the Country (Simulators...);
5. Mobilization of the finest minds of the country to draw up an open, coherent and global strategy;
6. Speeding up economic and social reforms;
7. Conceiving a precise but flexible planning for reforms;

In short, we have to introduce a coherent global engineering about the vision of the rôle we play in the globalization. This will serve to avoid false debates such as: is it necessary to privatize the agricultural and food industry, what we need to do with the effective surplus? Is it better to act all of a sudden or step by step? The science and experience have put an end to these questions. It is indisputable to tackle them in this context, but we will develop the main guidelines that the Algerian Enterprise must follow.

THE CHALLENGES OF THE ALGERIAN ENTERPRISE

Frantz Rieger defined the heads of developing countries (PVD) as intuitive ones and analytic
those of developed countries. The great challenge is to implement cultural changes for being analytic ones. Intuitive manager thinks that every idea he conceives is of course true: an analytic manager share it. Before deciding an issue he asks himself the following three questions:
1. What knows the science about this issue?
2. Which are unsuccessful and successful experiences?
3. Which lessons have been get?

Education of everybody at all levels is the most successful factor in cultural changes. So it is necessary a management bringing about change and breaking off. The last one has its rules, laws and mechanisms too. We can quote for example:
- Focusing the followers of change;
- Creating successful examples;
- Considering the complaints of those who are afraid of change;
- Preparing Enterprise so that demand comes from the bottom (sensiibilization, information, training...).

RE-FOCUSING THE ENTERPRISE ON ITS SUCCESSFUL KEY-FACTORS

It is globally accepted that the two successful key-factors of every Enterprise are:
1. The management of human keen minds.
2. The management of information.

These are the 20% of the factors producing the 80% of successful opportunities. Therefore it would be necessary give them the necessary time and resources. Algerian Enterprises, both public and private, neglect these axes of efficacy.

STRATEGIC REORIENTATIONS

Strategic focusing can not wait. What doesn’t work and especially what won’t work after, should be removed. The planning of withdrawal is a technical matter. We should rapidly invest on profitable investment field where we can get benefits and enhance our strength points. The strategic diagnosis becomes a necessity. It can be expressed or started up through a coaching. Enterprises will have the opportunity to explore, through the benchmarking, its strenght and weakness points. This analysis can lead to the need of a partnership.

Algerian Enterprises are facing the international complexity. It is difficult to compete with Japan, Europe, USA on high technology products. It is also impossible to compete with India and China on the activities with a strong wage component. So it is necessary to carve specific niches in the market or activities that are not internationalized.

THE LIVELLING

It is a last chance operation. We must make a distinction between: Reorganization, Readjustment and Livelling. Sometimes the livelling undergoes distressing decisions, because it is a matter of activities normalization depending on international productivity.

IMPROVING ITS OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

There are a lot of mechanisms to be introduced inside all the functions. But « devil is in the details». And mistakes are payed dearly for.

Algerian enterprises must introduce principles of good governance. Private enterprises have to leave unprofessional management. Here there are some important actions that are not always implemented correctly.
1. To qualify human resources: (Expenses for Training/Staff);
2. To invest on information and especially on market knowledge: (Expenses for information/added value);
3. To develop concertation: (Number of sugges-tions issued/effective);
4. To modernize the remuneration system: (variable remuneration/staff costs);
5. To introduce a management based on the achievement of results is the management essence.
6. To re-consider the managerial system as an integrated whole (reorganizing, improving one’s reports...);

The Algerian entreprise, both public and private, hasn’t get over modern management practices. Some managers are concentrated on facilities and credits. This Hard Culture undervalues...
The great majority will undergo deep changes: and these are positive for a few and negative for others. The C.N.C can’t take the place of SMEs. It gives them an expert vision enlightening them about the challenges and means to meet with them. It assists them for undertaking every wholesome action.

The C.N.C. considers that the process of livelling is not enough both in terms of quantity and quality. It would be necessary to undertake more actions in order to deepen the methodology and make it more consistent with economic dealers’ needs.

«Soft» worries... Other managers think that human resources concerns only the subordinate staff, while it must improve itself for first. These signs are negative at all. Over the half of the current SMEs takes the risk to disappear in the next five years. It is necessary to ring the alarm bell and support most of the SMEs to implement their livelling.

The C.N.C suggests the following actions:
1) Setting-up with those enterprises have implemented the livelling;
2) Communicating with the other enterprises for preventing them from mistakes in livelling and capitalizing on strenght points of the experience;
3) Sensibilization of the other enterprises to arrange that they embark on rigorous strategic and operational actions.

The C.N.C will need at least a National or International Advisor to make the benchmarking.

CONCLUSION

We expect nor more nor less that a management revolution. We shall do in five years what we were not able to implement in twenty years. A failure would mean to disappear. The Activities that are not internationalized (the great majority) will undergo deep changes: and these are positive for a few and negative for others. The C.N.C. can’t take the place of SMEs. It gives them an expert vision enlightening them about the challenges and means to meet with them. It assists them for undertaking every wholesome action. The C.N.C. considers that the process of livelling is not enough both in terms of quantity and quality. It would be necessary to undertake more actions in order to deepen the methodology and make it more consistent with economic dealers’ needs.
NEW STRUCTURES TO FOSTER INVESTMENTS
ANDI FOR DECENTRALIZATION WITH A HELP DESK AT LOCAL LEVEL

ANDI - NATIONAL AGENCY FOR INVESTMENT DEVELOPMENT

The Agency of promotion, support and follow up of investments (APSI), over eight years after its implementation and following the law n° 01-03 of August 2001, disappears and is replaced by a new Institution called National Agency for Investment Development (ANDI). Such agency, having moral status and financial autonomy, has the following mission:

• ensuring promotion, development and follow-up of investments;
• supporting, informing and assisting resident and non-resident investors;
• facilitating the implementation of legal formalities to build enterprises and concretize projects through a decentralized help desk;
• granting advantages related to investment within the current system;
• managing the fund for supporting investment regulated by art. 28 of the law;
• ascertaining the respect of commitments under-signed by investors during the exemption stage.

Organization and functioning of the Agency are established according to regulations; the decentalization of the Agency at local level will contribute to bring the investor closer to the body in charge of developing and following-up the investment. Such setting up of decentralised structures having their help desk will give particular impulse to local development, and it will enable to have access to information about economic opportunities at local level and ensure a better localization of projects.

ADVANTAGES OF THE NATIONAL AGENCY OF INVESTMENT DEVELOPMENT

Two systems of investments are expected: the general system and the derogatory one.

1. General system foresees:
• a reduced rate on matters of customs rights for imported equipments;
• VAT exemption for goods and services;
• an exemption of the right of variation for all real estate purchases.

2. Derogatory system:
It concerns investments implemented in the areas whose development needs a particular contribution by the State and those being particularly interesting for national economy.

a. Advantages pertaining to investment implementation:
• exemption of the right of variation for all real estate purchases
• enforcement of the fixed right about reduced rate registration;
• partial or total covering by the State, on assessment of the Agency, of expenses for infrastructure works which are necessary to implement the investment
• VAT exemption for goods and services
• a reduced rate on matter of customs rights for imported goods

b. Advantages after budget ascertainment:
• For a ten-years period of real activity, an exemption of the tax on the benefit of (IBS) and IRG companies on distributed benefits, exemption of lump-sum payment (VF) and of the tax on professional activity (TAP)
• As from the date of purchase, an exemption of land tax on real estate;
• extension of deficit and amortization terms.

Guarantees granted to investments:
• same treatment for Algerian and foreign personal income tax and corporation tax
• transfer of the undivided invested capital and derived incomes
• transfer of the conveyance or winding up product with possible surplus value.

According to the ANDI, eighty-five (85) projects of investments have been implemented in 2005 for a global value of 1.5 billion $ since the establishment of the Agency in 2001. The Agency has accepted about 7.000 projects for national and foreign investment, for a value of 1.000 billion dinars (12 billion $). The most important projects concern telephony, building material production and tourism, within the ANDI among the implemented or under way projects there are the following: M’sila cement factory and in the tourist sector the building of two tourist villages by a tourist company and 14 units for sea water desalination (in partnership with AEC), moreover, the redevelopment of the Mohammadia coastal area and a project named «Algiers Medina».

agriculture and forestry works and small hydraulic works. On the other hand, road maintenance activities, forestry and small hydraulic and redevelopment works, implemented by call for tenders and tender specifications, in addition to the activated employment, have enabled to develop small enterprises (piecework), so unemployed workers could ensure their integration in labour market. This component of the project supporting the social fund has been marked by the closure of the pilot programme on 30 wilayas and by the commitment of all the 63 projects of employment and 15 projects of supplying chosen in the framework of a complementary programme on 34 wilayas thanks to residual credits get by the budget foreseen for the pilot programme. The social action section of the programme in support of the social fund has been marked by the implementation and support of 28 cells of proximity working on national territory at deprived and poor districts level. The action of public authorities in terms of financial aid to disabled people has been expressed with the allocation of compensation for permanent disability to 306,468 people in the end of 2004. The financial impact of these financial aids is 6,9 billion DA in 2004. The efforts in terms of social aid during these last few years have been directed essentially towards the improvement and rationalization of social aids system management for ensuring an higher control of expenses and a better definition of needy people. A network of over 250 specialized institutes for social protection and three great centers for training ensure housing covering to over 18,500 people which are disabled or in social difficulties. Moreover, training programmes aiming at improving qualifications of the staff working both at housing covering and social aid systems as well as at social fund levels are implemented through national training centers and actions of cooperation. These actions are inscribed in the perspective of im-

Various Constitutions adopted by the country since its independence have all sanctioned principles of social justice and the right of citizens to their economic, cultural and social development. In this context, « life conditions of citizens who haven’t yet or will not have access to work have been ensured » by the constitutions of 1976, 1989 and 1996. Therefore, the implemented systems are intended to support the social classes which are object of constitutional measures through programmes aiming at responding to their essential needs as well as their socio-professional integration. Considering the assigned objectives, the social action of the State, expression and materialization of national solidarity, is based on the nature of needs and on social classes under discussion. The main channels on which it has been applied are the following: direct support to needy and poor social classes; financial aid to disabled people; housing and help to the reintegration of particular categories of population. The direct support to needy social classes takes place through the Social Fund for Development managed by the Agency for Social Development (ADS) created by the decree n°96-232 of 29 June 1996. The outcome of the actions carried out for the people under discussion points out that the number of beneficiaries of the social fund is 611,575 at the end of 2004 as for the flat-rate allocation of solidarity (AFS) granted both to senior citizens and to disabled heads of families with no resources. As for the Allowance for participating to works of general interest arranged by municipalities, for the period 1999-2004 the beneficiaries of this fund are about 931,000 employed and the mobilized sum for that period is 37 billion DA. The financial impact of the benefits granted within the social fund dispositive has been strengthened thanks to a supporting programme financed by the World Bank. This supporting programme aimed at implementing: cantiers for works of public utility at high intensity of manpower (TUP-HIMO); a programme of community development; cells of proximity social action. The programme of TUPHIMO is intended to create employment in the following fields: road works, road networks redevelopment, agriculture and forestry works and small hydraulic works. On the other hand, road maintenance activities, forestry and small hydraulic and redevelopment works, implemented by call for tenders and tender specifications, in addition to the activated employment, have enabled to develop small enterprises (piecework), so unemployed workers could ensure their integration in labour market. This component of the project supporting the social fund has been marked by the closure of the pilot programme on 30 wilayas and by the commitment of all the 63 projects of employment and 15 projects of supplying chosen in the framework of a complementary programme on 34 wilayas thanks to residual credits get by the budget foreseen for the pilot programme. The social action section of the programme in support of the social fund has been marked by the implementation and support of 28 cells of proximity working on national territory at deprived and poor districts level. The action of public authorities in terms of financial aid to disabled people has been expressed with the allocation of compensation for permanent disability to 306,468 people in the end of 2004. The financial impact of these financial aids is 6,9 billion DA in 2004. The efforts in terms of social aid during these last few years have been directed essentially towards the improvement and rationalization of social aids system management for ensuring an higher control of expenses and a better definition of needy people. A network of over 250 specialized institutes for social protection and three great centers for training ensure housing covering to over 18,500 people which are disabled or in social difficulties. Moreover, training programmes aiming at improving qualifications of the staff working both at housing covering and social aid systems as well as at social fund levels are implemented through national training centers and actions of cooperation. These actions are inscribed in the perspective of im-

Various Constitutions adopted by the country since its independence have all sanctioned principles of social justice and the right of citizens to their economic, cultural and social development. In this context, « life conditions of citizens who haven’t yet or will not have access to work have been ensured » by the constitutions of 1976, 1989 and 1996. Therefore, the implemented systems are intended to support the social classes which are object of constitutional measures through programmes aiming at responding to their essential needs as well as their socio-professional integration. Considering the assigned objectives, the social action of the State, expression and materialization of national solidarity, is based on the nature of needs and on social classes under discussion. The main channels on which it has been applied are the following: direct support to needy and poor social classes; financial aid to disabled people; housing and help to the reintegration of particular categories of population. The direct support to needy social classes takes place through the Social Fund for Development managed by the Agency for Social Development (ADS) created by the decree n°96-232 of 29 June 1996. The outcome of the actions carried out for the people under discussion points out that the number of beneficiaries of the social fund is 611,575 at the end of 2004 as for the flat-rate allocation of solidarity (AFS) granted both to senior citizens and to disabled heads of families with no resources. As for the Allowance for participating to works of general interest arranged by municipalities, for the period 1999-2004 the beneficiaries of this fund are about 931,000 employed and the mobilized sum for that period is 37 billion DA. The financial impact of the benefits granted within the social fund dispositive has been strengthened thanks to a supporting programme financed by the World Bank. This supporting programme aimed at implementing: cantiers for works of public utility at high intensity of manpower (TUP-HIMO); a programme of community development; cells of proximity social action. The programme of TUPHIMO is intended to create employment in the following fields: road works, road networks redevelopment, agriculture and forestry works and small hydraulic works.

On the other hand, road maintenance activities, forestry and small hydraulic and redevelopment works, implemented by call for tenders and tender specifications, in addition to the activated employment, have enabled to develop small enterprises (piecework), so unemployed workers could ensure their integration in labour market. This component of the project supporting the social fund has been marked by the closure of the pilot programme on 30 wilayas and by the commitment of all the 63 projects of employment and 15 projects of supplying chosen in the framework of a complementary programme on 34 wilayas thanks to residual credits get by the budget foreseen for the pilot programme. The social action section of the programme in support of the social fund has been marked by the implementation and support of 28 cells of proximity working on national territory at deprived and poor districts level. The action of public authorities in terms of financial aid to disabled people has been expressed with the allocation of compensation for permanent disability to 306,468 people in the end of 2004. The financial impact of these financial aids is 6,9 billion DA in 2004. The efforts in terms of social aid during these last few years have been directed essentially towards the improvement and rationalization of social aids system management for ensuring an higher control of expenses and a better definition of needy people. A network of over 250 specialized institutes for social protection and three great centers for training ensure housing covering to over 18,500 people which are disabled or in social difficulties. Moreover, training programmes aiming at improving qualifications of the staff working both at housing covering and social aid systems as well as at social fund levels are implemented through national training centers and actions of cooperation. These actions are inscribed in the perspective of im-

Various Constitutions adopted by the country since its independence have all sanctioned principles of social justice and the right of citizens to their economic, cultural and social development. In this context, « life conditions of citizens who haven’t yet or will not have access to work have been ensured » by the constitutions of 1976, 1989 and 1996. Therefore, the implemented systems are intended to support the social classes which are object of constitutional measures through programmes aiming at responding to their essential needs as well as their socio-professional integration. Considering the assigned objectives, the social action of the State, expression and materialization of national solidarity, is based on the nature of needs and on social classes under discussion. The main channels on which it has been applied are the following: direct support to needy and poor social classes; financial aid to disabled people; housing and help to the reintegration of particular categories of population. The direct support to needy social classes takes place through the Social Fund for Development managed by the Agency for Social Development (ADS) created by the decree n°96-232 of 29 June 1996. The outcome of the actions carried out for the people under discussion points out that the number of beneficiaries of the social fund is 611,575 at the end of 2004 as for the flat-rate allocation of solidarity (AFS) granted both to senior citizens and to disabled heads of families with no resources. As for the Allowance for participating to works of general interest arranged by municipalities, for the period 1999-2004 the beneficiaries of this fund are about 931,000 employed and the mobilized sum for that period is 37 billion DA. The financial impact of the benefits granted within the social fund dispositive has been strengthened thanks to a supporting programme financed by the World Bank. This supporting programme aimed at implementing: cantiers for works of public utility at high intensity of manpower (TUP-HIMO); a programme of community development; cells of proximity social action. The programme of TUPHIMO is intended to create employment in the following fields: road works, road networks redevelopment, agriculture and forestry works and small hydraulic works.

On the other hand, road maintenance activities, forestry and small hydraulic and redevelopment works, implemented by call for tenders and tender specifications, in addition to the activated employment, have enabled to develop small enterprises (piecework), so unemployed workers could ensure their integration in labour market. This component of the project supporting the social fund has been marked by the closure of the pilot programme on 30 wilayas and by the commitment of all the 63 projects of employment and 15 projects of supplying chosen in the framework of a complementary programme on 34 wilayas thanks to residual credits get by the budget foreseen for the pilot programme. The social action section of the programme in support of the social fund has been marked by the implementation and support of 28 cells of proximity working on national territory at deprived and poor districts level. The action of public authorities in terms of financial aid to disabled people has been expressed with the allocation of compensation for permanent disability to 306,468 people in the end of 2004. The financial impact of these financial aids is 6,9 billion DA in 2004. The efforts in terms of social aid during these last few years have been directed essentially towards the improvement and rationalization of social aids system management for ensuring an higher control of expenses and a better definition of needy people. A network of over 250 specialized institutes for social protection and three great centers for training ensure housing covering to over 18,500 people which are disabled or in social difficulties. Moreover, training programmes aiming at improving qualifications of the staff working both at housing covering and social aid systems as well as at social fund levels are implemented through national training centers and actions of cooperation. These actions are inscribed in the perspective of im-
proving the quality of services provided to the interested people and of increasing structures and social protection systems efficiency. In addition to the current aids, new measures of support have been introduced with the provision, by the National Health Service, of pharmaceutical companies aiming at favouring the access to medication for needy people. Together with the assignation of allocation and the assistance in specialized centers, the State, through fiscal and parafiscal incentives, favours social and professional inclusion of disabled people. The assessment of social action policies implemented by the State during the last few years points out some positive elements that need to be consolidated but at the same time it shows some weakness points that we must consider in order to improve the efficiency of State action towards weak groups of people. In the article concerning the outcomes of the social action of the State, we note that: State social transfert have enabled to help the weak strata of population such as disabled and old people, and children orphaned by the national tragedy. These funds could be also addressed to cover a number of gaps are have been marking the social action of the State. They are mainly related to: the weakness of focusing mechanisms of eligible population thanks to the State which strongly limit efficacy and impact as well. The absence of regulations and quantified objectives doesn’t allow to evaluate the efficacy of the action of the State in terms of social protection and to evaluate also what has to be realized in this field. The weakness of the use rate of reception capacities of specialized structures, on the one hand, because of progresses in terms of prevention programmes (especially for people with visual and motor disabilities) and on the other hand an inadequate spatial distribution. The current residential regulation doesn’t allow to take disabled adult upon oneself and so it break the continuity of the actions undertaken for disabled. This limits considerably their opportunities of inclusion at social and professional inclusion. The objective of socio-professional inclusion for disabled is not supported by a real inter-sectoral approach. Mechanisms for ex ante and ex post controls of eligibility criteria to the various dispositives, especially the social fund, are not implemented systematically. Considering the nature of deficiencies marking the social action of the State, a number of actions have been started up and implemented to improve the efficacy of social protection dispositives and their impact on the welfare of the interested population. They mainly concern: redefining the map of the system of social protection infrastructure; research of a legislative and prescribed mechanism aiming at favouring professional inclusion in allowance allocation. In this framework, incentives and structures shall be established to favour and promote employment of weak classes and/or disabled. Diversification of services in the scope of the social action of the State through covering new needs which are different from pecuniary ones particularly through developing preventive actions and organization and monitoring of aids and socio-sanitary actions from home. The institution of special funds addressed to cover the payment of family benefits, bottom drawer expenses, school equipment, books for children coming from needy families and/ or without incomes in order to avoid exclusion at school level. These funds could be also address to financing partially school refectories to fight against malnutrition. A more active mobilization of gits and the implementation of a context susceptible of canalizing citizens’ and private and public institutions solidarity.
North Africa) region to do so. Over the last decade, a period beset by economic, social and welfare problems, Algerian women have established an unquestionable position for themselves as actors in the economic and social life of the country. This has led to constant progress in the field of women’s participation in decision-making and to their access to senior positions in government, the civil service and other important areas:

- as regards senior State posts occupied by women, Algeria has four (04) in the current government, two (02) ambassadors, one (01) secretary-general of a Ministry, four (04) heads of ministerial staff, one (01) wali appointed in 1999, two (02) temporary wali, three (03) secretaries-general of wilayas, four (04) inspectors-general of wilayas and seven heads of daïra;
- as regards the magistracy, a woman occupies the important post of President of the Council of State (01); there are three (03) appeals court judges, (34) judges (out of a total of 56), (115) investigating magistrates (out of a total of 404), (11) departmental judges, including five at the Council of State and six at the Supreme Court. Of a total of 2811 magistrates 922 are women;
- the Deputy Governor of the Bank of Algeria is a woman;
- the Faculties of Natural Sciences and Humanities and the University of Science and Technology are headed by women;
- Algerian women are increasingly present in the various branches of the Armed Forces, the Gendarmerie and the national police force.

In terms of employment and economic emancipation, the number of women in the workforce has increased considerably but the overall proportion remains very small.

The integration of women into active life and into the educational sector, their involvement in the labour market and their participation in the decision-making process are important indicators of their access to economic independence and of their role as agents of development.

The Algerian State has shown considerable interest in the issue of women’s rights and has implemented several programmes, strategies, institutional measures and laws intended to ease the socio-economic evolution of Algerian women. Indeed, it was in line with the country’s general policy of adhering to international human rights instruments (and especially those designed to strengthen women’s rights) that Algeria ratified the United Nations Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women in 1996 and began the process of ratifying the Convention on women’s political rights in August 2004.

Algeria has also signed pertinent international Conventions developed by the International Labour Organization, in particular the Convention on equality of remuneration for men and women engaged on work of equal value, signed on June 1951 and ratified, and the Convention on discrimination in employment and the professions. The equal status of all citizens is guaranteed by the Algerian Constitution, which states in Article 29 that « All citizens are equal before the law and there shall be no discrimination on the basis of birth, race, gender, opinion or any other personal or social condition or circumstance » and various laws state the principle of equality for all citizens. At the level of the fundamental legal texts there has been no barrier to the socio-economic or socio-professional integration of women since immediately after national independence. Labour law allows no gender-based discrimination. Legislation guarantees women equality of rights and duties and forbids all forms of discrimination. The Constitution explicitly gives women political rights, the right to work and the right to participate in all spheres of socio-economic life. The Algerian family code, like the Tunisian and Moroccan codes, establishes the rights and duties of women and was promulgated in 1984. Acknowledgement of the active role of women in the development process was a strategically important conquest because it led the authorities to change this law in order to open the way to new forms of equilibrium based on the equal status for men and women, now universally recognized as an essential condition for lasting development.

At another level, the law regarding Algerian nationality allows an Algerian woman to pass on her nationality to her children, the first of the legal systems in the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region to do so.

The long march for equality

The women's condition has made many progresses, but ancient prejudices still resist

The Algerian State has shown considerable interest in the issue of women’s rights and has implemented several programmes, strategies, institutional measures and laws intended to ease the socio-economic evolution of Algerian women. Indeed, it was in line with the country’s general policy of adhering to international human rights instruments (and especially those designed to strengthen women’s rights) that Algeria ratified the United Nations Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women in 1996 and began the process of ratifying the Convention on women’s political rights in August 2004.

Algeria has also signed pertinent international Conventions developed by the International Labour Organization, in particular the Convention on equality of remuneration for men and women engaged on work of equal value, signed on June 1951 and ratified, and the Convention on discrimination in employment and the professions. The equal status of all citizens is guaranteed by the Algerian Constitution, which states in Article 29 that « All citizens are equal before the law and there shall be no discrimination on the basis of birth, race, gender, opinion or any other personal or social condition or circumstance » and various laws state the principle of equality for all citizens. At the level of the fundamental legal texts there has been no barrier to the socio-economic or socio-professional integration of women since immediately after national independence. Labour law allows no gender-based discrimination. Legislation guarantees women equality of rights and duties and forbids all forms of discrimination. The Constitution explicitly gives women political rights, the right to work and the right to participate in all spheres of socio-economic life. The Algerian family code, like the Tunisian and Moroccan codes, establishes the rights and duties of women and was promulgated in 1984. Acknowledgement of the active role of women in the development process was a strategically important conquest because it led the authorities to change this law in order to open the way to new forms of equilibrium based on the equal status for men and women, now universally recognized as an essential condition for lasting development.

At another level, the law regarding Algerian nationality allows an Algerian woman to pass on her nationality to her children, the first of the legal systems in the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region to do so.

The Algerian State has shown considerable interest in the issue of women’s rights and has implemented several programmes, strategies, institutional measures and laws intended to ease the socio-economic evolution of Algerian women. Indeed, it was in line with the country’s general policy of adhering to international human rights instruments (and especially those designed to strengthen women’s rights) that Algeria ratified the United Nations Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women in 1996 and began the process of ratifying the Convention on women’s political rights in August 2004.

Algeria has also signed pertinent international Conventions developed by the International Labour Organization, in particular the Convention on equality of remuneration for men and women engaged on work of equal value, signed on June 1951 and ratified, and the Convention on discrimination in employment and the professions. The equal status of all citizens is guaranteed by the Algerian Constitution, which states in Article 29 that « All citizens are equal before the law and there shall be no discrimination on the basis of birth, race, gender, opinion or any other personal or social condition or circumstance » and various laws state the principle of equality for all citizens. At the level of the fundamental legal texts there has been no barrier to the socio-economic or socio-professional integration of women since immediately after national independence. Labour law allows no gender-based discrimination. Legislation guarantees women equality of rights and duties and forbids all forms of discrimination. The Constitution explicitly gives women political rights, the right to work and the right to participate in all spheres of socio-economic life. The Algerian family code, like the Tunisian and Moroccan codes, establishes the rights and duties of women and was promulgated in 1984. Acknowledgement of the active role of women in the development process was a strategically important conquest because it led the authorities to change this law in order to open the way to new forms of equilibrium based on the equal status for men and women, now universally recognized as an essential condition for lasting development.

At another level, the law regarding Algerian nationality allows an Algerian woman to pass on her nationality to her children, the first of the legal systems in the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region to do so. Over the last decade, a period beset by economic, social and welfare problems, Algerian women have established an unquestionable position for themselves as actors in the economic and social life of the country. This has led to constant progress in the field of women’s participation in decision-making and to their access to senior positions in government, the civil service and other important areas:

- as regards senior State posts occupied by women, Algeria has four (04) in the current government, two (02) ambassadors, one (01) secretary-general of a Ministry, four (04) heads of ministerial staff, one (01) wali appointed in 1999, two (02) temporary wali, three (03) secretaries-general of wilayas, four (04) inspectors-general of wilayas and seven heads of daïra;
- as regards the magistracy, a woman occupies the important post of President of the Council of State (01); there are three (03) appeals court judges, (34) judges (out of a total of 56), (115) investigating magistrates (out of a total of 404), (11) departmental judges, including five at the Council of State and six at the Supreme Court. Of a total of 2811 magistrates 922 are women;
- the Deputy Governor of the Bank of Algeria is a woman;
- the Faculties of Natural Sciences and Humanities and the University of Science and Technology are headed by women;
- Algerian women are increasingly present in the various branches of the Armed Forces, the Gendarmerie and the national police force.

In terms of employment and economic emancipation, the number of women in the workforce has increased considerably but the overall proportion remains very small.

The integration of women into active life and into the educational sector, their involvement in the labour market and their participation in the decision-making process are important indicators of their access to economic independence and of their role as agents of development. Noteworthy too are the State’s efforts to promote the economic and social role of rural
women: these have resulted in improvements to their rate of active participation (18%) in agricultural production, a sector traditionally reserved to men, and in their steadily increasing involvement in the local management of rural areas. Paid work remains a reality for few Algerian women and an aspiration for the vast majority of them. Over 70% of working women work in urban areas. Almost 60% of women in paid work are employed in the public sector (the more developed) and 40% in the private sector (which has been expanding quickly since Algeria’s adoption of the market economy). Women who are active in the private sector are more in evidence in informal than in formal positions.

For most women ability to pursue entrepreneurial activity depends on the education and training they have received and on savoir-faire they have acquired during professional experience. Most business women use their own or family funds to finance projects; few make use of bank loans, partly because the underlying mechanisms are not well understood but mainly because of the obligations and the burdensome nature of the banking procedures. Business women also benefit from various forms of help available through ANSEJ (National Agency Supporting Employment for Young People) and ANGEM (National Agency for the Management of Microcredit). The proportion of women involved in socio-political activities remains low overall (5.5%) but numbers are increasingly constantly. Women are mainly active in associations, sports clubs, trade unions and political parties (one party is headed by a woman).

This involvement in organizations (associations, political parties, sports clubs, trade unions) is mainly an urban practice. Involvement in socio-economic activities and training/education seem currently to be elements that foster civic activities organized by women. The level of education achieved by women is crucial to their commitment in social life (52% have a secondary education) and since the end of the “black decade” of terrorism this has constituted the main opportunity for Algerian women aspiring to economic independence and to their increasing involvement in the socio-economic and political activities of the country. To find employment is the immediate aim once a woman finishes her studies; many seek to enhance their training through specialization.

Women’s increasing access to paid work, driven by necessity or by the desire to establish their independence, represents a determination to exploit their education in the labour market. By pursuing employment outside the domestic environment, Algerian women gain access to new forms of social and cultural interaction that foster changes in a traditional lifestyle which is structurally based on the division of roles according to gender. Aspects of social welfare legislation designed to protect the working woman include significant provisions for maternity; a woman can also retire at the age of 55 (instead of the usual 60) with a further reduction of a year for each child (to a maximum of three) that she is still supporting.

Despite these problems, which after all are normal, and despite the fact that women still form a relatively small proportion of the total workforce, the participation of Algerian women in the development of the country is a matter of central concern both to the women themselves and to the public authorities and is an important subject of cultural debate and discussion.

Finally, Algerian women continue to struggle against certain persistent reactionary attitudes and behaviour patterns in an attempt to foster change and the progressive evolution of Algerian society towards modernity and full citizenship.
MUCROCREDIT FOR YOUTH EMPLOYMENT
TO REFORM TRADITIONAL INSTRUMENTS INVOLVING CIVIL SOCIETY
MOULOUZ MEZIANI, SECRETARY GENERAL OF FACM

The alarming unemployment situation is certainly even more serious since 80% of the unemployed are aged under 30 and 75% are searching for their first jobs. In 1990 the Government had decided to implement a new employment tool, the Youth Employment Plan, targeted to broaden support actions for youth employment by financing, through a Youth Employment Aid Fund, not only salaried fixed-term jobs but also youth self-employment (professional craftsmen, production and service-providing artisan cooperatives, etc.) and training and adaptation actions in professional environments as well as tele-training. Thereafter a series of other business creation tools were set up entailing «large investments» managed by the National Development and Investment Agency (ANDI) including micro credit managed by two institutions: the National Microcredit Agency (ANGEM) and the National Fund of Unemployment Insurance (CNAC), passing through microenterprise managed by the National Agency for Supporting Youth Employment (ANSEJ).

The common element of these tools is the administrative management by institutions specifically created by banks with the task of financing projects. None of these tools resort to or involves, directly or indirectly, any associative movements which, though at the initial stage and unprepared, are however ready to invest. The microenterprise formula was adopted in the creation of the National Agency for Supporting Youth Employment. This new formula or microenterprise tool, implemented in 1997, consists in providing young people aged 19 to 35 with support to create their own businesses through bank loans at soft rates and interest free loans guaranteed by ANSEJ.

This formula is considered as a true remedy, although it should be stressed that a certain number of fundamental elements characterizing the socioeconomic situation in Algeria, i.e. the extroverted nature of the country’s economy which offers few, actually very few sectors of activity, and therefore the potential entrepreneurs are concentrated on service-oriented employment projects (transport, Multi-Service Kiosks, clothing) and which results in a rapid market saturation and limited use of the tool. Another limit remains to be the under-qualification and lack of experience of the young potential entrepreneurs who have neither the aptitude nor the means or willingness (especially when having to provide guarantees to banks) to become true entrepreneurs and managers. A further limit is caused by the scarce availability of premises for professional use and the deep-rooted problems related to the lack of land for industrial use in Algeria. The micro credit tool is based on the promotion of small single business activities and self-employment at home.

At four years from launch, the total implemented actions were not enough to fulfill the expectations of the interested target group or to avoid the repercussions on public authorities. Therefore the government has decided to:
• create a new agency totally designated for micro credit management: the National Microcredit Agency (ANGEM) which should have been operational since 2004;
• confer to the National Fund of Unemployment Insurance (CNAC) financing and micro credit management for micro project promoters aged from 35 to 50, at end of unemployment insurance. The youth unemployment program basically covers the microenterprises and the VSEs (Très Petite Entreprise).

It is however evident that this type of tool cannot solely resolve the youth unemployment problem, for various reasons:
All the young unemployed people are not or cannot be entrepreneurs; not all have the capacity, nor the culture or willingness to create, manage and make any type of business project, whether goods production or service providing, become profitable (microenterprise or even micro credit); the Algerian economy being essentially extroverted creates limitations on the sectors open to investments; the other sectors can rapidly become saturated or non-profit bearing; conditions and procedures for creating microenterprises are still very difficult and unattractive while qualified young people remain discouraged; the present banking system is reluctant and under-prepared to be strongly involved or financing means are insufficient for the needs of the microenterprises and of the VSEs, and; the scarce availability of premises for professional use and the deep-rooted problems related to the lack of land for industrial use are unavoidable.
ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND ENTERPRISES TO STRENGTHEN ECONOMY

THIS GOAL INCLUDED IN THE PRESIDENT OF REPUBLIC PROGRAM 2004 – 2009

ZEROUALI YOUCÉE, MINISTER OF CES MINISTRY OF SMES AND CRAFTS

The SME (Small and Medium-sized Enterprise) plays a leading rôle in relaunching the activities and economic growth. This rôle is explained with the more and more important place it has in all world economies both dominant and emergent ones. Some countries have solved and get over critical situations at economic level, other ones have announced very vigorously their development essentially thanks to SME, when they have found a favourable ground for their growth. And in these situations, most of the employment they created and a preponderant part of goods and services export have been implemented. A study by Fernando Becker Zuazua shows us that the health of European economy depends very much on SME: the 99.8% of EU enterprises are in fact SMEs. They produces the 66.2% of employment. Such percentages are high also in Spain: 99.9% of enterprises and 81.1% of the active population (support for small and medium sized enterprises in Spain. ELMERCADO de Valores/ November-December 1998 p 22)

In Algeria a law pertaining to SME was enforced in 2001 (law of orientation on small and medium sized enterprise promotion) This law defines the SME and points out the general principles of support and aids addressed to facilitate activities implementation, to develop new mechanisms of financing, to make SMEs more competitive, to incentivate the creation of new activities, to favour subcontracts and to make economic information of easier access to enterprises. In terms of the above mentioned law the number of SMEs on the end of December 2005 is about 245.842 SMEs of which 96.072 crafts, 88.829 workers in private sectors and 192.744 craftsmen.

The action is based on the active participation of society, of the micro credit target group, on the involvement of the beneficiaries and the strengthening of the actors involved (local development agencies, banks, local representatives, etc.).

hurdles to the promotion of business creation. Microenterprises and VSEs represent a vital resource for the creation of richness and employment for young people; it would be possible to create approximately 100 000 entities per year if only the administrative procedures, conditions and environment were support factors instead of obstacles. However, the development and success of the microenterprise and VSE tools shall be accompanied by the development of large investments in the public and private sectors of SMEs and SMLs, basic infrastructures, agriculture and water systems, telecommunications and new technologies as well as social aid and support programs, in particular through expected investments. In Algeria microcredit is not meant to combat extreme poverty as is the case in many backward developing countries. There would be much to gain if this concept could be properly applied within the general rules that govern these actions, more specifically involving the associative movement which is the cornerstone of the micro financing institutions, more streamlined and closer to the small potential entrepreneurs than the conventional banking institutions.

This microcredit approach completely and totally involving, with the proper degree of responsibility, society as a whole should be privileged over the conventional institutional approach, such as state agencies which function more as bureaucratic machines, though there is the willingness to do well on behalf of the managers. The banking system should also be mobilized according to the revised programs and actions for streamlining and opening up to the markets (financial and monetary). Thus, it is vitally important to deeply review laws governing associations as well as credit and monetary laws. We should strive to open up to society as a whole, providing associations with the opportunity to lobby both national and international financing institutions, to access grants and loans targeted to the development of microcredit and of micro projects on goods and services production which the uncultivated local market is in need of, and use this means to combat (being the only one) unemployment in general and youth unemployment in particular.

The action is based on the active participation of society, of the micro credit target group, on the involvement of the beneficiaries and the strengthening of the actors involved (local development agencies, banks, local representatives, etc.).
companies at local level. Incubators are structures for young entrepreneurs to assist them during the setting up of their activities, providing them with places to settle their enterprises as well as with useful advice. Facilitation centers are a space of economic animation for informing and assisting new entrepreneurs to concretize their investment projects with an adequate technical advice.

- Creation of a national agency to promote SMEs (executive decree n°5-165 of 3 May 2005). On other level, actions of levelling have been embarked on. A first programme was realized in 2000 with the advice of UNDP (United Nations Programme for Development) and UNIDO (UN Organization for Industry Development). It consists in a mixed financing of 1.200.000 SUS by UNIDO and 120 billion DA by the Ministry of Industry. These three pilot actions concern about fifty public and private enterprises.

A second programme (SME Europe development) for a period of 6 years aims at 4000 SMEs that are a growing potential. It is focused on enterprises whose dimensions range from 5 to 20 workers. These enterprises are essentially included in the private sector.

A programme of SMEs levelling for a period of 6 years, has been implemented by our Ministry. An earmarked sum of 1 billion of dinars is assigned to the national agency for SMEs development to implement this programme. The intention of strengthening communication and information among enterprises has lead the Ministry of SMEs and Crafts to implement, in addition to a National Council for Subcontract, a network of subcontract exchanges (O4) to which it assigned the mission to build up and disseminate information concerning the Algerian as well as foreign available funds for subcontract. These structures are an excellent mean, or rather a real showcase of services offers in direction of the principal great companies, giving to the movement of choice of enterprises receiving the order a reliable transparency as well as equal opportunities to SMEs.

Another body of concertation and support to SMEs has been implemented by the Ministry of SMEs and Crafts. It is the Advisory National Council (CNC) whose missions are relevant to the promotion of dialogue on a side between SMEs and owner’s associations and on the other between them and public authorities. In the matter of Handicrafts development: Handicrafts sector, broadly speaking (crafts for producing goods, service and local handicrafts) has had a certain development since when an action plan was adopted. Such plan aims at re-enabling handicrafts as for its economic and social vocation. Approximately, during the last few years the number of craftsmen has increased as follows (tab.1).

The action plan for the development of the handicrafts sector foresees a combination of organizational, technical, fiscal and financial measures which can ensure crafts heritage enhancement as driving-force to develop human and tangible potentials at local level. The main actions of this plan are relevant to the adjustment of legislative and normative system regulating handicrafts and crafts to economic and social changes in the country, and the development of training and learning programmes and thematic events. It would be necessary to indicate that, among the foreseen or already implemented measures, there are houses and museums of handicrafts, local know-how and stamping centers which are real vectors of local and rural development, in particular for the kind of activities to which they are referred.

I must conclude pointing out that a lot of observers consider the creation of 100.000 SMEs as announced in the programme of the President of the Algerian Republic (2004-2009) a challenge that involves the Ministry of SMEs and Crafts. This challenge can be achieved insofar as nowadays a SMEs distribution at geographical level is established with a re-orientation in the Southern wilayas, among those some are distinguished for having a number of SMEs very close to that of the plateau area and even to the Northern ones. By way of information, in Ghardaïa there are 4229 SMEs and they are located at Jijel level with 4.694 SMEs or at Tlemcen one with 4.509 SMEs or Bouira with 4076 SMEs. This trend confirms that development special programmes as well as regional advances and suitable support systems can turn into positive results.

Moreover, by way of the development subsidiary programme for the Southern wilayas, the State has earmarked 680 million and 3 billion DA for redeveloping rates of interest of bank credits set aside Agriculture and SMEs. In short, SME and Crafts sector, as choice of economic and social development except for hydrocarbons could be a real alternative for a better future.

### TAB. 1. EVOLUTION OF CRAFTSMEN POPULATION ON 2002-2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Production of goods</td>
<td>38346</td>
<td>43435</td>
<td>45126</td>
<td>50139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production of services</td>
<td>23901</td>
<td>26151</td>
<td>30140</td>
<td>32574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional and art</td>
<td>9276</td>
<td>10264</td>
<td>11466</td>
<td>13359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>71523</td>
<td>79850</td>
<td>86732</td>
<td>96072</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RESOURCES AND PUBLIC EXPENSE

DIVERSIFYING INVESTMENTS ACCORDING TO A GROWTH PROGRAM FOLLOWING THE COUNTRY’S NEEDS

BABA-AHMED MUSTAPHA, ECONOMIST, FOUNDER MEMBER OF FACM

Algeria is facing a new challenge: foreign revenues from the export of hydrocarbons give an appearance of wealth; in the public imagination the billions of US Dollars must fulfil social expectations. It is not a question of judging the soundness of such expectations: comparing them to the political practices and debate feeding and encouraging them will be sufficient. The products of hydrocarbons are increasingly becoming a sort of currency. Let us start our analysis by introducing the resources and their impact on foreign revenues.

Between 1999 and 2005 exports of goods and services increased from 13 billions US dollars to 48.8 billions US dollars. Hydrocarbons account for 11.9 and 45.6 billions US dollars of goods and services respectively. The increase of foreign resources highlights such a high degree of vulnerability of the Algerian economy that we might wonder whether an autonomy of 27 months from imports will be enough to protect the country from a gloomy future in case of reversal of the favourable trend as it was in 1985.

The level of exports, without considering hydrocarbons, which – together with imports – measures the country’s level of competitiveness, did not reach one million US dollars. The peculiarity of hydrocarbons in Algeria is their high level of tax exemption and their ability to concentrate financial flows at the level of the three main economic operators of the country: the Treasury, SONATRACH (the national oil company) and the bank of the latter, BEA (Foreign Bank of Algeria).

The level of dependence of public finance on hydrocarbons increased from 62% in 1999 to 76.3% in 2005. This value refers to tax revenue.

State expenditure did not grow at the same pace as revenues; however, it has almost doubled. In the bank sector there is an excess liquidity; in fact, resources amounting to DZD 1212 billion are currently frozen. From 2002 to 2005, credits to economy grew by 40%, up to DZD 1778 billion. Banks are despised due to their behaviour towards business.

No need to argue that SMEs are penalized when seeking financial coverage from banks. Neither they can obtain bond issues, a fortiori, on a developing market. On the other hand, banks are increasingly willing to work with large private companies.

In order to be more thorough, I should highlight that the relatively limited recourse to banks, also considering the available resources, is due to the peculiar situation of public companies; some of those, in fact, have no future and this is a problem for their eligibility for bank financing. For the creation of wealth, companies need to be able to afford their ambitions.

If the 2005 Financial Act envisaged an ex-ante operating subsidy to non-competitive public companies, the ex-post treatment of budget deficit of the same companies continues to be non-transparent. The same Act deprives the Parliament of the suitable control tools and, at the same time, empowers Trade Unions with the huge privilege to carry out negotiations with the government.

Financial reconstruction expenses have been ascribed to the equipment budget for a long time; the point is to cover capital losses of these companies and not to provide for their fixed-capital formation. Neither the Parliament can control the effective use of those funds recorded in the chapter of global credits whose amount has considerably increased. Moreover, the Parliament has been deprived for more than 20 years of the power of control it should exercise, as provided for by the budgetary regulation act.

The operating budget does not even fulfill the public expenditure task: that is, to reduce social inequalities. The same lack of wisdom in allocating resources for the so-called social expenses (or those considered as such) can be found in the health sector; health services which are still provided free of charge are used by those citizens who, thanks to their social status or their connections, gain access to public health facilities. Therefore, patients not entitled to free health services pass over unaware insured people, although the social security covers most of hospitals’ budgets. Public expenditure is widely linked to the historical avatar of populism. The most striking example is that of education and vocational training; students from vocational schools have poor know-how and are therefore not considered as skilled workers; among graduated people, only a few of them have the knowledge they are supposed to have acquired.

The country is in a paradoxical situation, where the more money is spent to train the young, the more foreign skilled people are needed. The administration is dramatically unprepared to plan and implement reforms.

Knowledge and innovation are the true assets of a nation: they ensure economic power and political recognition of a country. Algeria reserves the wealth deriving from oil and gas to economic infrastructures; social infrastructures have only a limited impact on the increase of revenues, to the point that the very poor living conditions of students highly contribute to their scarce results.

The government is focussing on two main measures:

- Priority is given to economic infrastructures;
- Their financial support relies totally on public funds.

The government allocates the vast majority of revenues to transport infrastructures and large water system infrastructures, including seawater desalination plants.

The history of Algeria, since its independence, shows that imports are totally inelastic vis-à-vis the decrease in foreign means of payment; not even the contingency of “war economy” in 1993 limited imports.

These choices are voluntary: Algeria bets on keeping the oil market at the level of its current basic data. Does this ensure the effectiveness of the public expenditure?

The good management of public expenditure refers to the rules governing the relevant sector: all the steps of budgetary expense are governed by laws and regulations. The selection of partners is made according to tenders or consultancy by applying the public market code. The approval of the relevant Committee of the markets and
the financial control Committee is necessary to permit any expenditure on the market. The Caisse Nationale d’Equipement et de Développement (CNED) (National Fund for Equipment and Development) set up to verify the technical and economical consistency of submitted projects on behalf of the Ministry of Finance, is not totally operating yet. This Fund shall also control the intersectoral and intrasectoral consistency of projects on behalf of the budget administration which has no longer the possibility to verify it. Such a mission is fundamental in the case of very important infrastructural projects, such as the construction of a motorway or a railway.

Most of the public investment programme relies on a scant number of public economic operators – four or five. The impact of these stakeholders is very limited: the executives being the backbone of the system should be engineers and skilled technicians. Nevertheless, as already observed, their training level has decreased over time; in addition, the most skilled workers are either employed in foreign companies based in Algeria or migrate abroad.

The system is not orientated towards the acknowledgment of one’s merits. On the contrary, cunning and “trabendo” rank first in the scale of values. Engineers and skilled technicians who decide to remain in the country, although qualified, are seldom profitably integrated in work teams; very often, they are simply marginalized. The consequent lack of motivation makes their contribution basically sterile.

State leadership is the source of any political impulse being, at the same time, the starting point of any type of economic decision. As far as the complementary programme supporting growth is concerned, the Government wants to set up a driving force to carry out infrastructures. The ambitious investment programme is presented as if it were a programme of the President of the Republic; as a consequence, the chief magistrates feel compelled to implement the programme within the due terms, being aware that any delay will be inevitably considered as their fault. Leaving aside considerations that are purely political, we can say that authorities are more likely to suppose that resource availability guarantees performance. The association of the investment programme with the highest State authority has its downside: to avoid reproach for delays, administrators may be tempted to ignore contract issues or overlook some faults or mistakes in projects execution.

Partners are aware of such a situation and might exploit it to their own profit. Money alone does not guarantee that projects are carried out properly, nor within the due timeframe. We can also maintain that there is not even the guarantee for the country that projects are carried out at the lowest cost.

Good economic management implies wise political management. This is ensured only if the various political powers play their constitutional role. That is why the starting and final step of the public expenditure process must occur with the Parliament involvement. Parliament must be aware of the financial and technical programmes and have a say in the drawing-up of programmes and in the decision-making process of budgetary operations. It also must be aware of programmes accomplishment or rather be informed of the use of fund appropriation it has authorized.

Infrastructures, properly designed and constructed, contribute to the development of the local market thereby facilitating transport of goods and greater movement of people. Heavy projects such as the construction of a motorway or the improvement of the railway system represent a fundamental investment policy. They are highly structural for the economy of the country. Although strongly improving life quality, these projects alone could not be the basis for a potential long-lasting growth.

In this framework, State obligations are several. Some of them have a financial nature and mobilize public funds, while others have a social significance:

• Revaluation of education is based on a fundamental reassessment of teachers’ material conditions at any level. Teachers play a key role in the training of the whole society and teachers must not be penalized for their inability to “sell” their services like any other civil servants.

• State should destructre demotivating and discouraging factors of manual work: vocational training must no longer play the “cinderella” role and must be totally acknowledged. Those countries where vocational training is competitive are also those where human resources are better employed, thereby ensuring top-quality and long-lasting global productivity for a country. The training system as a whole must undergo profound changes; this is the only guarantee for quality educational products. Long term educational careers, such as university courses, must be privileged to the detriment of poor quality education. Quality standards must be raised.

• Values in the field of education must be re-established: the system of discrimination and favouritism prevailing in the selection of students for the access to educational paths must be ended. Admitting a student without the required competences to a specific course is neither helpful for the student, nor for the society. It is therefore necessary to eradicate some social practices which are also evident for ordinary people. However, this exercise is even more complex than to avoid wasting public funds for projects.
The development policies in Algeria are targeted
to achieve rapid economic growth, to significant-
ly reduce unemployment and to raise the overall
growth of life and well-being of the population.
These policies also strive to put in place an effi-
cient economic system. For forty years Algeria
has chosen an economic development system
based on administrative economy. The Algerian
economy must undergo considerable reorganiza-
tion. The main challenge of this new economy is
establishing a new-technology based industry. In
order to reach this objective Algeria must cap-
ture the extraordinary potential made available
by globalization and new production methods
stemming worldwide by using the privileged in-
strument of foreign direct investment. The imple-
mentation of this strategy requires, on behalf of
the public authorities, full rigour and much
greater human resource mobility. The public au-
thorities shall operate through a direct action
(production of «collective goods») and a support
action targeted to enterprises.
Foreign direct investment constitutes one of the
most appropriate levers on which to base the in-
dustry strategy, for two main grounds: i) on capi-
tal mobility and transfer of technology; foreign
direct investment constitutes an important eco-
nomic and industrial development factor for Al-
ergia; and ii) on trade balance deficits with the
European Union; the Euro-Mediterranean Associ-
ation Agreements, largely in our favour, is an ex-
cellent framework for attracting foreign direct in-
vestments from Europe.
Foreign direct investment shall play an important
role in marketing domestic products and in re-
structuring the Algerian industry in order to pro-
duce high quality products targeted to national
and international markets.
The fundamental aspects characterizing a mar-
et economy are already in place: agriculture,
commerce and public and private enterprise
management which are already reacting to mar-
et pressures.
The adoption of a policy based on the export of
hand-made products requires total reorganiza-
tion and new direction of the industry system:

passing from delivering poor quality goods to lo-
cal markets locked in an industry system to ex-
porting products requires quality/price competi-
tiveness.
The development of a strong national demand
for Algerian hand-made products can only
strengthen the steady and resilient nature of the
country’s industrialization.
Marketing represents the key to opening up to
the international markets. The commercialization
and quality control of products necessary to be
competitive on the international markets is not
reached all at once.
The decisive test to establish that our country is
determined to adhere to the rules of the global
economic system is to join the World Trade Or-
ganization.

The industrial organization structure:

i) the size of industrial enterprises: at the begin-
ning of the 80’s Algeria had launched the break
up of large state enterprises into smaller units
spread out nation wide, and this strategy should
be continued;

ii) the level of concentration of the different in-
dustries: Algeria continues to encourage the
concentration of small enterprises in larger
units, using market methods, such as tax incen-
tives and other related measures.

An endogenous technological development:

i) a complete command of the technological
processes is vital to external economies: enter-
prises acquire know-how interacting with other
enterprises (suppliers, buyers, consultants, com-
petitors) and with specialized vocational training
institutions. More specifically, they must learn to
manage the technology acquisition process. In
this regards, institutional investment is evolving
rapidly in order to adapt and provide a user
friendly framework to the expectations of the
business world. Investment is the core element
of partnerships. The regulatory and legal frame-
work remains to be a driving factor in the con-
text of investment promotion.

Since the early 80’s, following the debt crisis,
many countries had chosen offshore investments
and implemented laws so as to attract this type
of investing.

Since 1989 Algeria has adopted the principle of
free trade and free enterprise. Applied to invest-
ing, this principle has become the material prac-
tice of a simple statement - informative and sta-
tistical - which now stands for and represents
the actual will of the investor. It was understood
that no one except for the private investors
themselves were capable of identifying the fea-
sibility of their projects, since they were putting
their very own funds at risk.
Therefore the declarative system means that the
Government shall maintain its sovereign right to
grant benefits according to established objec-
tives. Certain activities or certain goods could be
excluded from benefit schemes. This discre-
tionary aspect has been considered negatively.
At present we are trying to bring the legal
framework closer to the declarative system. This
shall be a continuous process until establishing
a total declarative system. A streamlined, simple
and transparent legal system for regulating in-
vestments is tailored to the expectations of part-
ners and of potential stakeholders who will carry
out cooperation actions with the freedom to se-
lect the opportunities that, in their viewpoint,
correspond to their required objectives.

As to dealing with offshore investments we can
state that our main policy is to attract foreign di-
rect investments, and to use them as a leverage
to our policies we must i) adopt, within the eco-
nomic context, a legal and regulatory framework
clearly established and coherent to the legal
systems of the countries where the investment
originates; ii) strengthen the accuracy of the reg-
ulation and supervision of market segments; and
iii) rationalize business practices by adhering to
the WTO.

As a general rule, each internal or offshore in-
vestment shall benefit from state incentives. The
objective of our industry restructuring policy is to
render it efficient, profitable and competitive at
both national and international levels. The gov-
ernment shall also adopt an active consolidation
policy on the industry sector.
Since the beginning of the 60s international experts including the UN, IMF and OECD had considered tourism almost a synonym of heavy industry in relation to the development process that underwent Europe. Tourism is embedded in the same context and mindset of certain petroleum countries, such as Algeria, that developed tourism without however confounding it with the "industrialization of industry". Tourism had been integrated in an overall development concept since 1966, upon the launching of the First National Development Plan - 1967/1969. This strategic idea was appropriately coined the "Tourism Charter". It aimed to implement three complementary and fundamental objectives: capital inflow, job creation and international tourism market integration. It brought on the construction of numerous beach resorts in the regions of Algeria (Moretti, Sidi Fredj, Tipaza) and Oran (les Andalouses) as well as Saharan type hotels in the southern part of the country. It is obvious that these high standard hotel facilities were specifically designed for financially strong standing clients. Following social, economic and political changes, a similar tourism strategy was implemented in 1980 which gave priority to the internal demand of the leisure and recreational sector. This new option, targeted mainly to national end-users, was accompanied by the implementation of a program against shortage of means that had supported many families and citizens who for long periods of time were in distress caused by the unavailability of various consumer products (food, appliances, spare parts, etc.).

The tourism sector, as seen in this new context, is no longer considered under an internal and external standpoint - according to market trends and fluctuations - instead through a global vision: the tourism product to make available not only to the national but moreover to the international clients is based on the international market demand and supply. Therefore, on the one hand the precise identification of the overall needs and on the other the appropriate investments required to satisfy such needs, without, of course, slacking on the quality-price ratio of the end product to clients.

Always according and in conformity to international standards. However, Algeria can at present offer a total of only 81,000 beds, the majority of which (four-fifths) do not conform to the sector's universal standards. Briefly, about twenty thousand are in a state of absolute ruin and are old. Which is ridiculous in comparison to the 230,000 beds available in Tunisia, all rigorously in conformity to international standards. It is reassuring to know that a dynamic process is underway with the aim to make tourism become a true industrial sector even though it belongs to the classical services sector. Thus, 30,000 beds representing approximately 300 projects are at present being produced on the Algerian coast, which as we shall recall extends for 1,200 km. In addition, another 250 projects have been approved by the competent authorities and 20,000 are awaiting financing.

The investment proposals submitted by Algerian promoters total approximately 800. It remains obvious that the more plausible projects are to be taken into consideration based on realistic and objective criteria. And these are the basic investment aspects of the national promoters. As to offshore investments, the United Arab Emirates Group «Immar» has identified for tourism expansion purposes an area in the Algerian coastal region covering more than 80 hectares. The aforesaid project is being finalised at organizational level and will be announced by the Ministry of Tourism as a public competition. Within the same context, we should also mention the «Accor» Group of the Algerian magnate Djillali Mehri, who has stated his desire to build 25 hotels of various categories equalling approximately 3,600 beds.

We should furthermore add other numerous projects presently in the processing, designing and production stages regarding mainly Algiers, Oran, Constantine and Tlemcen. With this, it is highly desirable and reciprocally profitable that the European promoters in the tourism sector join other promoters already active in order to support Algeria in a rapid transition from an economic system based on a single sector – synonym of an inadequate development – to a wide ranging competitive market based on creative thinking and productive work, so as to make life worthy for the present generation and set the foundations to a fruitful future for the generations to come.
Also this year, the works of the tenth General Assembly of Coppem are going to be held in Palermo at Villa Malfitano on November 24th and 25th. On this occasion delegations and representatives of the most important local institutions from the 35 Euro-Mediterranean countries will participate in. Together with the usual carrying out of the recognition of variations and adjustment on the budget 2006 and on 2007 one, the Assembly will proceed with the election of the President, vice presidents and Secretary General of Coppem. These offices are currently held respectively by Hon. Salvatore Cuffaro, President of the Sicilian Region, and by member of parliament and mayor of Rabat Omar El Bahraoui (Morocco), by Governor of Qalyoubiya Adly Hussein (Egypt), and by Executive Director of Polish cities Association, Andrzej Potawski (Poland), by Nikos Papanikroulis (Greece), mayor of Nea Halkidonia, by Nouredine Sbia (Algeria), president of the Algerian Forum for Citizenship and Modernity, and by Muzzafer Baca (Turkey), vice president of the International Foundation Blue Crescent, and by Hon. Carmelo Motta. The tenth General Assembly will open on 24th November and it is preceded, as everybody knows, by the ceremony for awarding the Prize “Seme d’Arancia”. On this occasion, after the opening statement by Gianfranco Miccichè, president of the Sicilian Regional Assembly, who will welcome the participants on behalf of all the Sicilian delegates, there will be the following statements by Diego Cammarata, mayor of Palermo, Francesco Musotto, President of Palermo Province, Omar El Bahraoui, Mayor of Rabat and first vice president of Coppem, Adly Hussein, vice president of Coppem, Luigi Cocilovo, Vice President of the European Parliament, Abdalla Abbas, Acting Director – UN Habitat, Pier Virgilio Dastoli, Director of the EC Italian Delegation, Ian Micallef, President of the Local Authorities Chamber of CLARE – Council of Europe-, Ahmad Al Adnani, ATO representative, Jeremy Smith, Secretary General of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions, Obaid Salem Al Shamsi, representative of Dubai city and Lucile Schmid, vice President of Ile de France. Morning session will end with a statement by Ugo Intini, Italian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. The assembly sessions will continue the day after at Villa Malfitano with the reports, as mentioned before, on financial instruments of the organization and with the official presentation of the V Commission focusing on “Equal Opportunities”. The programme of Coppem activities during this year has been full of events and activities, as from the meeting held on January that was useful to prepare the third Euro-Arab Towns Conference. Then on February, there were the offi-
Coppem Presidency Council has been held on 1st October 2006 in Chania, in Crete Island, host at the Municipal Hall by the Mayor Kiriakos Virvidakis, speaker of 3rd Coppem Commission “For the economic and financial cooperation”, who has welcomed on behalf of the city and participated in the works. Nikos Papamikroulis, Coppem Vice president has chaired the meeting. In the works the Vice president Adly Hussein, Governor of Qalyubiya (Egypt), 2nd Commission President Jan Mans, Founder President Fabio Pellegrini, Secretary General Carmelo Motta have participated. During the meeting it has been analyzed the main activities in progress of Coppem, composition and candidatures of 5th Commission “Equal Opportunities” of new establishment, preliminary steps of international conference of Euro-Arab towns foreseen in Dubai on March 2007, whose Coppem is one of organizing bodies and next Coppem General Assembly (Palermo, 24th - 25th November 2006). Moreover it has been confirmed that in occasion of this Assembly, the first edition of “Orange Seed” Award will be held and will be assigned to the Egypt’s First Lady Suzanne Mubarak and to the Former President of Italian Republic Carlo Azeglio Ciampi. Institutional eminent personalities of Euro-Mediterranean area and of United Nations have been invited to the award celebration. Finally the Ecomemaq project on protection of Mediterranean maquis has been illustrated, whose Coppem is Lead Partner and Crete Region is partner. Ali Abu Ghanimeh [Coppem member, Jordan University] has provided a real contribute, while the technical responsible of Crete Region, Kostas Strataridakis, has offered the largest availability of his Administration in order to plan with Coppem further project initiatives.
posal in the framework of the component 3 of the whole project which foresees the implementation of pilot projects. Network of Territorial Laboratories -RELATE is the transnational pilot project (PP) of which Coppem is partner. The project tackles the issue of migratory movements in the Euro-Mediterranean area. It is an important support to develop models of comparison and planning between different cultures that can ensure equal rights both for migrants and local communities, and an aware contribution for whom shares cultures and spaces in the respect for differences pertaining to a multicultural society. And Coppem, within II Commission activities, will coordinate the Unit 2 of Relate PP – Sensibilization and Communication. This unit foresees all the activities concerning interpartner communication, and Coppem will play a basic role in sensibilization activities through its international network. In this stage it will define the plan of sensibilization activities with the aim of involving local communities in the RELATE project areas. As for the project on regional coastal cooperation, interrupted for the situation in Lebanon, the presidency council has informed that relations to organize other meetings have been resumed. And moreover on October, in the municipal hall of Chania the Project “Ecomuseum of the Mediterranean Maquis”- ECOMEMAQ – financed by the Community Initiative Programme Interreg III B – Archimed, has been presented. This project, coordinated by Coppem, seeks the participation of prestigious International Bodies in the field of research, such as the Mediterranean Agro-Nomic Institute (IAM) in Bari, Bari University and the National Polytechnic of Athens. Moreover the partnership consists of Crete Region (Greece), PIT Demetra which includes about 13 territorial bodies from the Agrigento province, the General Authority of the Ministry of Environment of the Arab Republic of Libya. In Crete, finally, the aims of the ECOMEMAQ project, methodologies for its implementation and the pilot actions will be implemented in Sicily, Apulia, and Crete have been illustrated. On this purpose a closer cooperation between Crete Region and the Municipality of Chania to implement a pilot project in the territory of the ancient Cretan capital city is hoped for. It was a year rich in initiatives, meetings, projects for Coppem that is preparing its tenth general assembly. For the next year Coppem is preparing its participation in the III Conference of the Euro-Arab Towns due to be held in Dubai city.

A delegation of Egyptian entrepreneurs in the agricultural and food, textile, clothing and engineering industry, lead by Mohammed Ateya Ibrahim El Fayoumi, president of the Chamber of Commerce of Qalyubiya Governorate, will be in Sicily from the 20th to the 24th of November for participating in a workshop promoted by the Chamber authority of the regional capital. The working programme of the Egyptian delegation also expects a series of business visits in Western Sicily, meetings with representatives of the productive and commercial world and a visit to the diocesan museum of Catania. Economic relations between Italy and Egypt have always been very close. In fact, our country is the first outlet market for Egyptian exports and the third supplier in Egypt with a balance of trade effectively in equilibrium. Actually, on the direct investment plane, the Italian presence keeps on having a meaningful room for growth. Several Italian firms have already invested in Egypt. The city of Palermo has recently been the crossroads for new and profitable agreements. In fact, at the beginning of this year, more than five hundred entrepreneurs from Italy and from other 13 Mediterranean countries have met for undertaking economical and industrial relations, establishing joint ventures and promoting investments. Closing the busy schedule of meetings and conferences, the Egyptian delegation will take part in the works of the General Assembly of Coppem. (n.r.)
In outlining the outcome of the EU policy towards the Euro-Mediterranean region, after ten years from the Barcelona Conference, the European Parliament has been very critical and has clearly affirmed that the partnership results haven't fully met the general expectations. Do you really think that this policy could be relaunched? How does the Italian Government intend to give its contribution?

We have to be realistic, of course, but we would even be able to seize the opportunities from Euro-Mediterranean process. European Parliament realizes when underlines that many capacities are unexpressed. But we should not forget that EuroMed is an essential forum for cooperation, the only one – and I do think that it is an important occasion – in which Israel seats beside countries that do not recognize it or with which has not have normal diplomatic relations. I would say, therefore, that middle east crisis, and the long duration of the crisis which, in my opinion, is the "mother" of regional unstablness, namely the Israeli-Palestinian question, confirm the necessity to relaunch Euromed towards a more effective political perspective, in order to contribute to build that atmosphere of mutual trust which it has, up to now, been missed in the area. In particular, Italy intends to be committed in order to center the efforts on those fields which achieve more concrete results, results that people can see them implemented. I think about cooperation, civil protection, energy, environment, cooperation in migration issue. Not neglecting, of course, dialogue between cultures, commitment to overcome widespread prejudices and stereotypes, to belie clichés: I consider it, beyond a decisive intangible tool of cooperation, a real political investment too.

Do you think that the West-East EU enlargement is somehow and in a negative way influencing the recovery attempt to the traditional North-South imbalance?

I am persuaded that the keystone for development is contextual integration of Mediterranean systems across Northern-Southern line and Western-Eastern line. They are not two processes which annul each other, I would actually say not, and it is very important that they proceed at the same rate according to a modern view of integration, which concern both economic and trade field and the political aspect too. There is still a long way to go: it is a fact that, while Northern Mediterranean shore, the European one, through Euro has surely found an economic union, and more and more it is going to achieve the political one, we cannot say as much for the Southern shore. It has to be clear for all that peace, stability and development in Europe depend on peace, stability and development in Mediterranean. First of all it is necessary, aiming to a more effective
euromediterranean cooperation, that our Arab partners work for a greater cohesion and union among them. For instance, we should notice that for several projects of political and financial cooperation started up since the beginning of Euromed, one of the main obstacles is the closing border between Algeria and Morocco. We are waiting for new, clever, constructive proposals, in other words creativity and political bravery. Not missed to be honest. For example, I have been very surprised by the proposal which Egyptians have put forward during the Euro-Mediterranean Forum in Alicante at the end of October, demanding assistance to Europeans on new technologies in order to develop alternative energetic sources, as the solar one, and offering in exchange for repaying with hydrocarbons all that they will be able to economize. I believe that specific and aimed initiatives as this one, can be helpful, while the more general framework of international politics is necessarily destined to be more complex, because in Euro-Mediterranean activities all European countries don’t participate, but only those countries which according to their history and geography are closer to the Arab world.

Which role Local Autonomies should play for carrying out an effective strategy of development based on cooperation and solidarity?

I believe that local authorities can have an important role to promote a larger integration among countries of the two Mediterranean shores, above all through the speeding up of territorial partnerships. From this point of view, I positively notice that Italian Regions are performing a propulsive action. I see that local and regional authorities are going to be more and more involved in Euro-Mediterranean partnership, and that can help us very much to face common challenges and exchange experiences. With regard to this, I would like to remind that the Five-year Working Programme agreed during Barcelona Summit last year, foresees that Euro-Mediterranean partners commit themselves to increase cooperation in the fields of mutual interest even at local authorities level.

The expertise developed up till now also through the COPPEM, which gathers European and Southern Mediterranean municipalities and regions, have been carried out as new and more advanced forms of collaboration compared to the National Governments policy and have assumed a strongly positive character. In your opinion, how could they be supported and reinforced?

We have already committed very much in this direction, and we intend intensifying our efforts in the future. I remind that during negotiation of EU’s Financial Perspective from 2007 to 2013, Italy has particularly committed in order to address suitable resources to combined projects promoted by central and even local authorities, both Member States and third countries. It is also thanks to Italian action that the new Neighborhood an Partnership Instrument, ENPI, shall fund bilateral and multilateral initiatives which will involve territorial bodies overlooking on Mediterranean basin. It is necessary, in my opinion, to exploit ENPI effect on beneficiary countries, so that this instrument contribute, in a trenchant manner, to overcome the difference between political conditions and development expectations. The important news concerns the funded combined programmes between territories of Member States and neighbor countries sharing a land and sea border. This is a real qualitative leap for European Neighborhood Policy. In this framework, we have launched a specific Multilateral Programme on Mediterranean Basin, which will involve coastal regions of Member States and Mediterranean Partners. I believe we are going towards the right way.
Terrorism is almost considered the modern form of war. How can we define such a horrifying phenomenon that is filling the world with blood and is keeping on spreading tension, fear and doubts? Which measures could be adopted to check and conquer it? How should we reconcile possible actions susceptible of encroaching on the delicate sphere of human rights and the defence of these latter? The conference on “International Law and fight against terrorism. Justice and principles of human rights” has tried to find an answer for these questions. This meeting took place in Rabat on the initiative of Young Lawyers from the Arab Youth Union in coordination with the World Youth Council against terrorism. It was held under the aegis of the Arab States League and in partnership with the Moroccan Ministry of Justice. The speeches by the representatives from UN, UNESCO and ALECSO, besides those by experts, politicians and Institutions delegates, have investigated the study of this complex topic, such analysis being more difficult due to the fact that sometimes it can happen you have not the complete awareness of terrorism tragic extent. You have been told that you cannot completely understand such a phenomenon until you have seen your relatives and neighbours got killed and you know that they haven’t never done anything wrong, never committed a crime, never a murder nor an act of violence, they haven’t never hold a gun; only then you understand that their murderers are terrorists. Vincenzo Militello, Professor of Criminal Law at the University of Palermo and Director of the Department of Penal and Criminal Sciences, participated in the meeting of Rabat on behalf of COPPEM.

Mr. Militello, during the conference, the definition of terrorism has been analysed from different points of view. Which of them has particularly caught your attention?

First of all, the chance to look at the topic of terrorism from Muslims point of view. We are often used to hear the Western “side” but, on that occasion, the view was wider. Even essentially sharing the condemnation of international terrorism and the necessity to fight against it by joint means from the various states, the Muslim interpretation is strongly conditioned by further evaluations. From one hand, their concern is to stress that certain situations are due to forms of State terrorism (referring to Palestinian attacks that are seen as an answer to the Israeli occupation policy). From the other hand, anti-Americanism has been and continues to be an awareness and a culture spread among these peoples: it has been certainly increasing after US answer to September 9/11, but in its essential core, it is not different from other forms of “national pride” spread in different countries in the world, which don’t want their fortunes and business to be hetero-managed.

Islam is about peace and obedience. But there are certain realities we cannot hide ourselves from”, said Zi-
phenomenon also from another point of view. Actually, Muslim writers don’t lay the blame for the Islamic radicalism only on the Western policy, but they also acknowledge a scant willingness of Islamic communities to open out to the Western world.

Do you agree on the hypothesis that fight against terrorism entail for every citizens a price to pay, in terms of being limited in one’s freedom?

There is no doubt that any criminal phenomenon, which is a subversive one and affect basic goods of people, causes in the community the need to be protected, which entails, as much as weighty the attack is – a penal law as well, along with the relevant restrictions on everybody's freedom. The aim to cause a feeling of spread uncertainty among the communities is the particular feature of terrorism. And it is a fact that the States answer also means a penal intervention restricting individual freedom. True that a Country, especially a democratic one, has to intervene on different (social, economic, cultural) levels, but it is inconceivable that it doesn’t act at a penal level as well. I think it false and simplistic to conceive an answer to terrorism not expecting the use of criminal code as well. As a conclusion, I wish to stress that following the model of the Rabat Conference, we should be able, in our countries, to deal with topics related to the international defence of human rights, by gathering a hundred of representatives from the Islamic world and a very restricted but qualified number of Western experts. Only in such a way, the representatives of the Islamic world wouldn’t have the feeling of being surrounded, but be an integral part of a dialogue on an essential problem for all the present mankind. (r.p.)

auddin Sardar, author of the book entitled "Why do people hate America?". Do you justify, somehow, the anti-American feeling in the Islamic countries?

Undoubtedly, choosing an armed intervention for establishing immaterial values such as freedom and democracy always poses very high risks in understanding the relevant results. Personally, I don’t think it must be excluded in the presence of mass violations of essential rights, towards which the most advanced instruments of criminal law don’t seem nowadays adequate. But concerning the US intervention in Iraq, any possible meaning in the above-mentioned direction has been absorbed – at least in the collective representation – by the need to keep oil sources intact. However, Western support policies to development in countries like Afghanistan and Iraq either has to be started (due to the prime exigency to ensure conditions of social peace) or are still sporadic and far from succeeding to intervene on the structural conditions of the respective societies. As for the more general problem of comparing different civilizations, I have the feeling that the complexity of this problem is just due to the stratification of different elements - politics, religion and economy – that influence the way these two worlds look at each other. The American approach – and perhaps in general the Western one – to Muslim diversities has to find a right compromise between respect of cultural peculiarities that don’t infringe basic and essential rights and harmonization of markets.

Let’s go back to the conference of Rabat, do you think that such session was characterized by a diversity of intentions or, on the contrary by a sort of unanimous consent in dealing with the problem of terrorism?

I think it is positive that the organizers have chosen to plan this conference in an interdisciplinary way. The fact of also listening at writers, and not jurists, which have certainly a wider even less technical approach, helps to catch this phenomenon also from another point of view. Actually, Muslim writers don’t lay the blame for the Islamic radicalism only on the Western policy, but they also acknowledge a scant willingness of Islamic communities to open out to the Western world.

Do you agree on the hypothesis that fight against terrorism entail for every citizens a price to pay, in terms of being limited in one’s freedom?

There is no doubt that any criminal phenomenon, which is a subversive one and affect basic goods of people, causes in the community the need to be protected, which entails, as much as weighty the attack is – a penal law as well, along with the relevant restrictions on everybody's freedom. The aim to cause a feeling of spread uncertainty among the communities is the particular feature of terrorism. And it is a fact that the States answer also means a penal intervention restricting individual freedom. True that a Country, especially a democratic one, has to intervene on different (social, economic, cultural) levels, but it is inconceivable that it doesn’t act at a penal level as well. I think it false and simplistic to conceive an answer to terrorism not expecting the use of criminal code as well. As a conclusion, I wish to stress that following the model of the Rabat Conference, we should be able, in our countries, to deal with topics related to the international defence of human rights, by gathering a hundred of representatives from the Islamic world and a very restricted but qualified number of Western experts. Only in such a way, the representatives of the Islamic world wouldn’t have the feeling of being surrounded, but be an integral part of a dialogue on an essential problem for all the present mankind. (r.p.)
COPPEM once again has taken part in a wide ranging conference focused on cross border cooperation and lifting the tension between civilizations. Vice President Muzaffer Baca has moderated the Conference of Cross Border Regional Cooperation and Local Authorities in Caucasus held in Kars on 16th September 2006. The conference organised by Kars Municipality and INTA focused on the opportunities to create new cross border networks for cooperation and common activities. Mr Baca expressed COPPEM desire to contribute to such activities and explained in general the organization's scope and policy on such issues. Mr Nikola Sobot (Executive Director of Euroregiopn Eurobalkans), Mr Gregory Connor (Director of Centre for Border Cooperation), Mr Rune Rafaelsen (General Secretary of Barents Cross Border Cooperation), Mr Janos Lukacs (Director of Carpathian Foundation) and Mr Kai Hoelshner (Managing Director of Regio Gesellschaft Schwarzland-Oberhein) submitted good practices examples from their region in the framework of Interreg and Cross Border campaigns of EU. Mr Naif Alibeyoglu, Mayor of Kars Municipality and member of COPPEM expressed his decisiveness to implement cross border project with their counterparts from Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan and asked for assistance of international organizations to promote the peace in Caucasus region. More than 200 participants gathered at the Conference Hall of Kars Kafkas University, mostly ambassadors of different countries in Ankara, mayors from neighbouring countries and representatives of different international organizations as Mrs Gesche Karrenbrock-Representative of UNHCR in Turkey.

EUROPEAN FORUM LOCAL AND REGIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT

BY JAN MANS, PRESIDENT OF THE FORUM (WWW.EFDM.NL)

In November 2004, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, organised a hearing for representatives of urban areas and municipalities which had either already experienced a disaster or which were conscious of the fact that a disaster in their surrounding areas is inevitable and which were keen to see what they could learn from the experience of others. More than 100 participants, among them, representatives from Toulouse (industrial disaster), Enschede (firework disaster), Chernobyl (Nuclear disaster), Armenia (earth quake) and Galltir in Austria (avalanche disaster). All present at the meeting in Strasbourg were wrestling with the same questions and problems. What kind of relief should you offer the victims? What should be done about after-care? What about rebuilding? How do you cope with the media circus? What does crisis management really consist of? The participants asked me to set-up in co-operation with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe and the Dutch section of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions an European Forum for Local and Regional Disaster Management. It is an international network of individuals and authorities that has had to cope with a disaster. The plan is to collate and compile what they have learnt and to disseminate it so that others can profit from it. Participation in the network means not only collecting information but also bringing information of own experiences. This won’t help us to prevent disasters, but it will contribute to the development of an effective way of responding when disaster strikes, which is an element of major importance. Due to the fact that cities and municipalities around the Mediterranean have a great change to be confronted with a disaster, Coppem could play an important role in carrying out the aims of the Forum, but also in setting up jointly projects.
ECOMUSEUM OF THE MEDITERRANEAN MAQUIS
COMMUNITY PROJECT MANAGED BY COPPEM

BY NATALE GIORDANO ECOMEMAQ PROJECT COORDINATOR, REFERENCE PERSON FOR 4TH COPPEM COMMISSION

The preservation and enhancement of the territories with Mediterranean maquis. This is the aim of the project “Ecomuseum of the Mediterranean Maquis”, presented on the last 14th and 15th September, in the Red Hall of the Sicilian Regional Assembly seat. The project, financed by the Community Initiative Programme Interreg III B-Archimède and coordinated by Coppem, involves prestigious International Bodies working in the field of research: the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute (IAM) in Bari, Bari University and the National Polytechnic of Athens. Crete Region (Greece), PIT Demetra which includes about 13 territorial bodies from Agrigento province, the General Authority of the Ministry of Environment of the Arab Republic of Libya have also joined in the project “Ecomuseum of the Mediterranean Maquis”.

This project foresees, within 18 months at most, to activate Ecomuseum districts in the Mediterranean maquis, through a series of integrated actions, applied research and local pilot projects. Ecomemaq is included in the project activities promoted by the IV Coppem Commission. The project is aimed at enhancing territories and promoting local development through the management of environmental and cultural resources. Within this context, a model for a flexible management of Ecomuseum district will be developed, so as to be transferred, used and repeated also in other territories which, through Coppem promotion, will be included in the Transnational Network of Ecomuseum districts. “Ecomuseum of the Mediterranean Maquis”, will particularly focus on defining a strategic and programmatic framework for territorial development and marketing. Therefore, Coppem is called to involve the institutions of the Sicilian territory, such as the Assessorate of Territory and Environment and various Municipalities, Reserve Authorities and the actors of Negotiated Planning (PIT, PIR, and Territorial Agreements) in view of Structural Funds Programming 2007-2013 and their connection with the EU Neighbourhood Policy.

The aim is that of building up a programmatic table to incentivize the implementation of Ecomuseum districts which can be the driving force of marketing in territories having a tourist-handicraft vocation. In concrete terms, Ecomemaq foresees to carry out three feasibility studies during the period 2007-2013, for defining scenarios in Apulia, Sicily and Crete, to which publications and eight local project for activating Ecomuseum districts will follow: two in Sicily, three in Apulia and three in Crete. Besides local institutions also private operators, cooperatives, associations and enterprises which are able to support the production, marketing and promotion of Mediterranean maquis produce within gastronomic, beauty and pharmacology industry (such as artemisia, wild marjoram, sage etc.) will be called to participate in. Project strategic approach, that will be developed also on transnational basis, will be improved during the next meetings of the Steering Committee, the first one is expected on November in Bari, under the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute coordination.

This is what has been established during the meeting of Coppem Presidency Council, held in Chania, Crete, on the last October 1st. During this meeting it has been moreover defined that one of the pilot project to be carry out in the Greek territory can be implemented with the municipal administration of Chania, leaded by the Mayor Mr Virvidakis, member of Coppem, thereby strengthening the principles of cooperation promoted by the Standing Committee which confirms its role for promoting relations for a shared and participatory local development.
Within the framework of cooperation supervised by Coppem, last October 2005, the Rabat Region and the Sicilian Region signed a Memorandum of Understanding aimed at increasing cooperation between these two regions in different sectors such as medicine. Following such agreement, the President of the Regional Council of the Rabat Region, Abdelkébir Berkia invited the Ismett, in its capacity as a standing Observer of Coppem, in the study day focusing on the topic of: “Sanitary policy in the Region of Rabat - Salé – Zemmour - Zaer: realities and prospects”. Among the participants in the works that took place last 8th June 2006 at the Rabat Regional Council’s seat, were the representatives of Moroccan public and private institutions such as the Regional delegate of the Ministry for Health, Ed Dine Bennati, Said Oulbicha, Secretary of State in charge of vocational training and Amine El Hassani, Director of the Hospital Centre, Ibn Sina in Rabat. The topic of the meeting was the organization of the Moroccan sanitary system particularly referring to the role that local and territorial communities can play for improving their sanitary system. The Ismett, which was the only foreign institution to be invited to the meeting, participated with a speech focusing on: “ISMETT’s experience in Sicily concerning organ transplant: proposals for cooperation”. Its presentation consisted of three parts: the first one dealing with the general activity of Ismett, the second one with its research activity and the third one with its training activity and possible sectors for cooperation with Morocco. Concerning training activity, the focus was on the possible sectors of cooperation between the different institutions. Within this ambit, two guidelines were identified:
1) To start up collaboration actions between the Sicilian Region and the Region of Rabat aiming at training medical and nursing staff, with the support of the Ismett.
2) To set up forms of cooperation, also at a national level, among the Transplantation National Centre, the Transplantation Regional Centre, Ismett, and the Moroccan Government, in order to define a twinning agreement between Morocco and Italy also expecting awareness actions for local people on the topic of organ donation as well as the establishment of specialized centres for the taking of a blood sample.
Apart from this specific initiative, Coppem and Ismett have already planned to realize two joint actions respectively concerning:
1. - the preparation of a training programme for sanitary and paramedical staff from Arab countries members of Coppem, to take place every year in Palermo, supervised at a political and institutional level by Coppem, at a scientific level by ISMETT and with the logistic support of the Anfe (National Association of migrant families);
2. - the realization of a Euro-Mediterranean virtual Hospital including a computerized link among the major Euro-Mediterranean hospital facilities, so that to allow real time and computer diagnosis of any patient pathologies and to provide them with the adequate and immediate treatments.
Both initiatives, in keeping with the principles of the Memorandum of Understanding establishing the Euro-Mediterranean Socio-sanitary Coordination Centre, will be presented within the works of the I Coppem Commission, on the occasion of its X General Assembly.
The topic of the Medins Project, financed within the EC Initiative Interreg III B – MEDOCC Programme is protection, promotion and valorisation of immaterial cultural patrimony in the Euro-Mediterranean regions. The main goals of this project concern the defence of dying cultural identities and their conversion into a resource for social, economic and cultural development in the Euro-Mediterranean territories. This project, whose leader is the Cultural Heritage Department of the Sicilian Government, counts other 18 partners from Italy, Portugal, Spain, Greece, Malta, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt and Lebanon. Many of them are Regions and Municipalities member of Coppem that is also a partner with a role of coordination of the Local Authorities participating in the project, besides aiming to disseminate results and establish a Euro-Mediterranean Network of Immaterial Culture Cities. In a new way, Medins gathers the implementation methodologies of the greatest international orientations concerning cultural policies, following the very important UNESCO Convention of 17th October 2003, of which the present project is the first implementation in the Euro-Mediterranean area. In fact, this project goals are the formulation of a cataloguing system in the partner regions, aimed at identifying and classifying their immaterial cultural heritage, and setting up a flexible transnational model aimed at their valorisation, promotion and dissemination, making of it an element of protection as well as an instrument of sustainable development. In particular, within the studies phase, this project goals are the analysis of orientations concerning immaterial heritage valorisation policies in the different partner regions; the analysis of the current scientific cataloguing systems of their immaterial cultural heritage and of the public and private actors involved in the preparation, definition and implementation of a cataloguing system of immaterial cultural heritage. During such a phase, Local Authorities will be assisted by those Universities participating in the Project, whose actions will be coordinated by Unimed, Union of Mediterranean Universities, partner of this Project as well. Pilot actions mainly concern the definition of an international certification system, the definition of a logo and seal of quality and...
the implementation of an Internet website. The reached outcomes will be the object for exchange of experiences and, along with the results of needs and strength points analysis in the involved territories, will be the base for the implementation phase of the Invisible Culture Routes along the paths enhancing the territory immaterial culture, both through cultural places and events, recipes and objects. In short, such routes will suggest tours and Mediterranean beauties through what is identified as places, sounds, flavour, shapes and knowledges featuring the cultural identity of such territory. Finally, Medins also expects the implementation of processes turning immaterial culture into a show among which the excelling performance is a multidisciplinary artistic event at the historic Vucciria market in Palermo. Among the participants in this event will be also the producers of immaterial culture involved in workshops and artistic actions previously realized, such as artists, craftsmen, parades and cultural associations. Researchers, architects, set designers, archaeologists and anthropologists will be also involved. Such action goal will be to re-create, along the routes, the squares and the courts of the Vucciria buildings, an itinerary in the memory of the Mediterranean, by telling it through its living culture.

In such a way, the physical space of the entire historic market will be the true stage of the interdisciplinary representation, making of it the set of the Mediterranean cultural identity, of its diversities and common sources. Realized following techniques and recipes listed as immaterial heritage, the staged gourmet artefacts and products, “cunti” and songs, musical, dramatic, scenic, plastic, visual, playing or literary expressions of Mediterranean artists, along with ceremonies, festivals, popular, religious and pagan events listed in all the partner regions, will be the main features of the project final act. Actually, the stage of the City will become a space for comparing, exchanging and matching the various souls of the Mediterranean, aiming at spiritual enrichment of consumers, dissemination and revival of common cultural sources. (n.g.)
THURSDAY 23RD NOVEMBER 2006
14h00: Presidency Council

FRIDAY 24TH NOVEMBER 2006
Sala Gialla, Palazzo dei Normanni - Palermo (Italy)
9h00: Celebration to award the Prize “Seme d’Arancia” (Prize Orange Seed) to Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak, First Lady of the Arab Republic of Egypt and to Mr. Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, Former President of Italian Republic.
Chairman: Salvatore Cuffaro, Coppem President, President of Sicilian Region
Opening works: Gianfranco Miccichè, President of Sicilian Regional Assembly
Statements:
Diego Cammarata, Mayor of Palermo
Francesco Musotto, President of Regional Province of Palermo, Member of European Parliament
Omar El Bahraoui, Mayor of Rabat, 1st Vice President of Coppem
H.E Adly Hussein, Governor of Qalyubiya, Vice President of Coppem
Luigi Cocilovo, Vice President of European Parliament
Abdalla Abbas, Co-ordinator Special Human Settlement – UN-Habitat - Geneva Office
Pier Virgilio Dastoli, Director of European Commission Representation in Italy
Ian Micallef, President of the Chamber of Local Authorities of CPLRE – Council of Europe
Ahmad Al Aidsani, Representative of Arab Town Organization
Jeremy Smith, Secretary General of Council of European Municipalities and Regions
Obaid Al Sahmsi, Representative of Dubai Municipality
Lucile Schmid, Vice President Region of Ile de France
Conclusions: Ugo Intini, Deputy Minister of Italian Foreign Office

THURSDAY 23RD NOVEMBER 2006
15h00: X General Assembly
(Villa Malfitano, Via Dante 167, Palermo)
Participants Registration
Works opening by the senior member of the Assembly;
Check of electoral returns of new members and appointment procedures;
Appointment of Coppem President, Vice-Presidents and Secretary General;
Overview of 2002 – 2006 activities by the Secretary General;
Settlement of V Commission “Equal opportunities”;
Appointment of President and Vice-Presidents of V Commission;
Recognition of variations and Balance of the Budget 2006;
Approval of Budget 2007;
Appointment of the External Auditor for 2007;
Any other business
16h30: Works of the Commissions
Presentation of Commissions works – Mr. Michele Raimondi, Co-ordinator Programmes and Projects
I Commission: “Experiences of participation of Euro-Mediterranean Local Authorities and Regions”; President: Ian Micallef
Presentation of Commission activities: Francesco Sammaritano
Speaker: Said El Dakhak
Statements by the Commission members
External statements;
Drafting of an action plan for further activities
17h30: Presentation of V Commission “Equal opportunities”; Giovanna Cirino
18h00: Closure of works
19h00: Villa Igiea, meeting between Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak and V Coppem Commission

Saturday 25th November 2006
X General Assembly – Villa Malfitano, Via Dante 167, Palermo
08h30: Opening works
II Commission: “Immigration and emigration, actions and tools of the co-operation among Euro-Mediterranean Towns and Regions”; President: Jan Mans
Presentation of Commission activities: Alessandra Prudente
Speaker: Harrie Jeurissen
Statements by the Commission Members
External statements:
Drafting of an action plan for further activities

Presentation of Commission activities: Paolo Carrara
Speaker: Kiriakos Virvidakis
Statements by the Commission Members
External statements:
Drafting of an action plan for further activities

IV Commission: “Culture and Tourism: promotion and management of cultural areas”; President: Falah Al Omoush
Presentation of Commission activities: Natalie Giordano
Speaker: Petros Filippou
Statements by the Commission Members
External statements:
Drafting of an action plan for further activities

Closure of works
of X Coppem General Assembly
COPPEM – STANDING COMMITTEE
FOR EURO-MEDITERRANEAN PARTNERSHIP
OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

10TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
PALERMO
24/25 NOVEMBER 2006

ARS – SICILIAN REGIONAL ASSEMBLY (SALA GIALLA) h 9,00
OPENING WORKS
1ST “SEME D’ARANCIA PRIZE” AWARDING CELEBRATION
VILLA MALFITANO h 15,00
ASSEMBLY
MEETING OF THE COMMISSIONS