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The reaction of the 27 member states of the Euromediterranean partnership to the terrorist attacks of 11 September against the USA, was significant and important, confirming the strong will to continue in the direction of the common objective of realizing original and effective forms of Cooperation with the intention of bringing about free trade zones destined to influence a new dimension in relationships between the old Continent and the bordering countries in the near East.

Local administration and the regions of the countries involved in the partnerships Committed in Tunis, to the Coppem initiative in analysing problems related to immigration, spoke out and reasserted their role for the promotion of harmonious and pacific relations in a framework of solidarity between peoples.

To sum up, the outline traced at the Barcelona conference demonstrates greater elements of continuity in the awareness of processes defined on that occasion and the fact that they have now become irreversible.

Coppem news questioned the strategy defined at that time but subsequently found firm confirmations starting with that of the European Commission. In an interview given to us, Armando Varricchio, diplomatic advisor to President Prodi, affirms that after 11 September “it became clear to all the principal Partners that multilateralism represents a decisive response to those who intend to take us back to an era of closed markets and protectionism”. He adds significantly: “ for this reason j must reconfirm European Commitment to the achievement of the objective for 2010”.

Thus, it would seem, that Coppem is right in rejecting the idea of policy changes, in the light of the barbarous acts of terrorism committed and continuing with its agenda of tasks already for some time defined.

For this reason the Tunis Conference on Emigration went ahead and similarly the General Assembly has been confirmed and will take place in Marrakech on 11-12 November.

This appointment will enable the discussion of topics which influence economic development, strengthening of Services, collaboration in both Scientific and Cultural fields and should create the premises for giving the partnership a wider scale of operations, above all, as a result of the new regulations of the Meda Project, with which an attempt has been made to simplify greatly the procedures of access to finances from the meetings of Marrakech, directed by the documents presented by the Commissions, of which we are offering an articulate synthesis, fundamental elements should emerge and, whatever may be the case, these should bring us closer to an intense stage of research and elaboration, developed by the Standing Committee, the staging of the achievements, related to initiative, responsibility and collaboration between different partners all seriously committed in a shared project of enduring development.
Marrakech for peace and development

Arab and European Institution, together toward the Euromediterranean Partnership

by Lino Motta

The international meeting on migratory issue in Tunis was a great important event. To choose such a thoughtful and complex subject and to confirm the initiative in such a dramatic international situation proved to be wise as well as courageous. It is worthy to be remembered that even the President of European Commission Romano Prodi (with his meaningful comments) and the President of the Italian Republic Azeglio Ciampi and Ben Ali, the President of Tunisia (who had granted the sponsorship for this event) expressed their appreciation for this event.

The numerous participation of the institutional representatives in the Mediterranean area, the profound and useful debate, the decisions summarized in the final document, the echo of the meeting on the means of communication, allowed Coppem to get further representatives.

It is clear what towns, provinces, regions, think about decisive political issues.

It is always difficult to summarize the political result of an international meeting, but our Vice-President Omar Bahraoui, mayor of Rabat, expressed the considerations of all of us present in Tunis.

Bahraoui said with great effectiveness: “you Europeans must not stop emigration with more or less repressive acts – emigration cannot be stopped in this way, because, your prisons are more comfortable than their origin houses”.

It is necessary to face the profound causes of the migratory phenomenon and to act consequently – you Europeans must contribute to create an economic development as well as Japan and Corea did.

Bahraoui finished saying that the economic and social cooperation must carry out a difference in quality and quantity.

It is just starting from this political argument already outlined by President Fabio Pellegrini at the opening of the works of the meeting that we arranged to meet one another on November from 10th to 13th in Marrakech.

In the first year of the Coppem, the four commissions have worked on some decisive themes: institutional, cultural, economic-financial, environmental ones and so one.

In Marrakech, Coppem wishes to mark a new step: a first elaboration of planning addresses and consequently some operative and positive lines of action or contact.

The policy of Euromediterranean partnership of the local and regional powers begins to produce some common contents.

The request for a strong growing of the role of the decentralized cooperation in justified by the political conditions and planning lines based on a serious and detailed confrontation of the institutional representatives of more than a hundred thousand local authorities.

The contribution of international organism such as Ccre (Council of the Municipalities and Regions of Europe) and Ato (Arab Town Organization), is surely decisive, because all of us know their prestige and their experiences acquired during the years essential for the elaboration of their appreciated managers.

Peoples, cultures, religions meet in Tunis and Marrakech…to contribute to the construction of a better world of peace.
A support system for the integration of immigrants

Agreement at the Tunis congress on the migratory issue, convergence among Onu, Ue and COPPEM

by Roberta Puglisi

A minutes silence, a minute to remember the victims of the incomprehensible tragedy of the 11 September, which changed the course of history

Tunis, the natural choice for the bringing together of different religions, cultures and life styles was chosen to hold the International Conference on “the migratory issue”, organised by the Standing Committee of the Euromediterranean partnership (COPPEM). Three days of discussions from 27th to 30th September 2001, between thee two shores of the Mediterranean gave the opportunity to the main institutional representatives of the European Countries and Thirds Mediterranean, to speak on behalf of its people about their own proposals for coming to terms with the issue of immigration with the common purpose of immigrant integration. Local Authorities, and different regions were the focus of the meeting, as well as the integration process. Peace and economic development of the Euromediterranean area in a difficult period, especially today when the relationship between the west and Arab world is going through a time of high tension.

A minutes silence, a minute to remember the victims of the incomprehensible tragedy of the 11 September, which changed the course of history. The tasks of the International Conference on the migratory issue began only after this silent prayers whose significance was heightened because it was felt that behind Coppem’s presidential seat there was the whole world.

According to Fabio Pellegrini, Coppem’s President who introduced the proceedings, the migratory process, mustn’t be stigmatized because such a flux is part of our history, colonization and also un element for the social, cultural and economic growth of the planet. Societies which encourage and promote development are open, whereas those which remain closed are destined to disintegrate and it is on this point underlined by Pellegrini regardless of customs and religion that there was unanimous agreement. However do open societies, welcome immigrants supporting them until they become a part of the community? Statistical data are not particularly positive in this respect because it emerges that not only the number of immigrants is increasing but that the integration of these immigrants is getting more and more difficult leading to the formation of ghettoes. This leads one to think that the policies adopted up till the present time have not been appropriate as the issue has still not been resolved on this matter, regarding policy Omar Bahraoui, the mayor of Rabat, capital of Morocco, argued with disappointment that as long as that category of European researchers exists which continues to defend the political struggle against the migratory flux, those who insist on strict controls, reinforcement and blocking of the migratory flux, the issue will not be resolved because, the people who adhere to such a category have a xenophobic outlook which neglects to mention the eventual outcome of unveiling the undeclared workforce of immigrants. In actual fact, uncontrolled policies are never successful: repression and refusal do not prevent immigrants from living even under desperate conditions, the same conditions which initially convince them to leave their own countries. Exodus and immigration have always been the consequence of poverty, where the natural tendency is that of moving towards the wealthier states. It is impossible to close the borders because there will always be those who cross the seas, arrive by lorry or hidden in the hold of a ship and even those who walk for days risking their own life. Is this modernisation?

No, and about this no body has any doubts: Italy, Tunisia, Greece, Spain, Belgium, Turkey, Morocco, Jordan, Syria, Kuwait, Finland, Malta, Egypt, France.
The representative institutions of these states present during the course of the conference to set up new systems aimed at the development of countries which have a great need for economic support and the promotion of the selection, training and information about immigrants. Immigration is experienced in the western countries, as a threat to their wealth, Franco Providenti, President of the Aiccre federation in Sicily, highlighted, this point and how it determines the worldwide increase in ideological, religious and social contradictions seriously damaging culture and the benefits of cooperation. Therefore, working together with definite aims for the creation of small and larger projects which fight against poverty and desperation encouraging the development of the men and women involved into becoming citizens of the world. Among the proposals there was that of the Minister of the Tunisian Republic for social relation, Hedi m’Henni who after having thanked President Ben Ali for his patronage of the three days of interesting talks, cited Tunisia as an example of how over the last few years notable changes have reduced the divide between the two sides of the Mediterranean and as regards immigration, for providing a framework of immigrants in all their economic and social aspects without making them feel isolated or different from tunisians who live in Tunisia. Tunisia has chosen to open up to other countries and insist on working together with other countries to create stability. On maintaining the balance there was also full agreement from the United Nations. ONU representative Benedetta Oddo, underlined the importance of the partnership for social and cultural growth and the exchange of interest. On behalf of the United Nations, Benedetta Oddo expressed her readiness to move in the direction of equal opportunity shared by all States. COPPEM is also moving in this direction. The Standing Committee, an already operating body, addresses the local authorities which in their role as will have to perform an essential function in the new scenario in order to contribute to the difficulty in managing the migratory issue overcoming the limits of the prevalent centralism which leaves many questions unanswered.

As far as unresolved problems are concerned the President and the Secretary of the Aiccre International Scientific Commission respectively, Angelo Lauricella and Hassen Slama, the director of institute for International Affairs Roberto Alboni and the delegate of the International Migration Organization Barbara Fridel, have highlighted a common denominator in their reports: the laying out of a policy which emphasises cooperation between central and peripheral bodies based on mutual benefits. According to the experts, the State must guarantee at the level of international relations, the regulations for public order and justice, providing adequate health-service assistance and equip schools to later from children from other religious and cultural backgrounds. The city Councils must be committed to helping immigrants on their arrival and the management of their eventual residence.
The Charta of the migrations adopted in Tunis

The partnership a useful means of bringing together the commitment of Regions and Towns to transform migration into an important resource for common development.

The Tunis meeting on the migratory issue ended with the approval of a final document. From this resolution appears the important social and cultural role that the local authorities can carry out to ensure that the migratory phenomenon, the importance as a resource both for the countries of departure and for countries of eventually destination.

The premises have been outlined a framework of strong synergy among institutions, enterprises and financial systems and above all a common commitment has been taken for the respect and guidance of the migrant’s rights to prevent all forms of intolerance, xenophobia and racism. Here is the complete version of the document:

The Local Administration and the Regions of the Countries of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership in Coppem, considering that:

- the migration issue has a relevant importance in the euro-mediterranean partnership within political-institutional, economic-financial and cultural aspects;
- in the transitory period of realisation of the free trade zone, considering the demographic development from southern and eastern Mediterranean, and awaiting the improvement of their socio-economic conditions, there will be new migratory flows;
- the promotion of a partnership characterized by a pronounced cooperation negotiated among the
aim towards the partnership from the point of view of balanced management for migration

European Commission and the Countries who signed the Declaration of Barcelona in 1995;

insist on the important role that they are bound to carry out in view of a harmonic and peaceful co-existence in the Euromediterranean area, respecting the different origins, socio-economic and religious conditions, promoting solidarity among people;

express the will to arrange forms of cooperation between local powers for the resolution of migratory flows;

the hope for the necessity of a string cooperation to carry out exchanges for experiences in view of local policy which can support migratory flows or individual immigrant;

agree on the necessity of a strong cooperation to establish the correct means;

confirm the will to support the development of local Mediterranean economies, thanks to work of the emigrants.

commitment to the development of conditions for an integration and a productive return to the countries of origin.

agree on promoting synergy at a local level between institutions, enterprises and financial frameworks.

proposal of the employment of financial means of the MEDA program and of international cooperation.

reconfirm the priority of respect for migrant rights for solid growth of human, social and cultural aspects.

consider this meeting between administrators of local and regional powers an important step toward shared, peaceful, development of migratory processes in the Euromediterranean area.

Tunis 28th – 29th September 2001
Local Authorities on active subjects of migration policies

Interview to the Mayor of Tunisi that highlights the significant contents of the Coppem Conference

by Roberta Puglisi

Abbes Mohsen, Mayor of Tunisi, displays extraordinary observations on the evaluation of the migration issue and the state of relations with the cities and the regions of Europe. The city of Tunisi is achieving great progress both in the field of the equipment of civil infrastructure and that in economic and cultural activities. Relations between Tunisi and Italy are very strong as proved also by the recent meetings by president Ben Ali with the highest Italian authorities. Coppem, in choosing Tunisi as the headquarters for this international conference on the “Migration Issue”, made an informed decision involving Tunisi as a trustworthy partner that is convinced of the validity of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. On these themes Coppem news heard the first citizen Of Tunisi.

The international conference of Tunisi on “The Migration Issue”, organized by Coppem, do you consider it a political event of change? The international conference in Tunisi on “The Migration Issue” is a political event that we understand to be an efficient means of change and consolidation, of cooperation and of friendship not only between our countries, but also between those in the Mediterranaen area.

Do you believe that the Local Authorities must have a more incisive role in the management of migration flows? Why not? Drinking sweets doesn’t harm. It would be a good thing if Local Authorities could have a decisive role in the management of migration flows. Mainly for the benefit of citizens, Local Authorities are able to deal with both problems and aspirations.

What has been the policy of the Tunisian Republic until now adopted for the economic and social frameworks for immigrants? Above all, it needs to be noted that for Tunisi, the migration solution isn’t a panacea, it’s only a temporary situation. The Tunisian colony overseas is not, therefore, abandoned to its’ destiny. Just the opposite. It is a subject of concern and of a very supportive framework (diplomatic and consular missions, advantageous customs measures, seminars and meetings that aim at the strengthening of the ties with one’s country, colonies that enhance the second generation…)

What given statistics do you consider relative to the exodus of citizens of the Tunisian Republic? It’s normal that the increase in population and politics of the generalization of teaching cause an added demand for work and it’s normal that we turn to immigration to fill this space, caused by the unsuitable offers of work/ demand for work. Nevertheless, we mustn’t lose sight of another migratory factor of a rather cultural nature. In effect, the ties that solidly bind us, our geographical proximity, our cultural affinity and the exchanges between people of our countries, represent many factors to promote a migration that is not only economical but that is also capable of creating solid ties between our two peoples ,with whom friendship is deeply rooted.

Do you believe that immigration is a consequence of poverty? Not necessarily. Why couldn’t it be the will to demonstrate openness between people?

In the light of the events of 11 September, that rocked the world, do you believe that economic, social and cultural relations, between the western world and the arab world could suffer negative consequences with the possibility of a mutual shutting down? Absolutely not. Just the opposite, we would like to render the situation more positive and turn these events into a means of learning, to create a greater awareness in terms of intollerance, of misunderstandings and of exclusion. We have lived through centuries of agreements and also the punic wars that are honoured in our museums that weren’t able to create irreversible damage.

How incisive is the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, in your opinion, in the growth between countries? Incontestably, it has a very positive impact. A similar joining of forces for effective cooperation couldn’t be considered diversely.

In your opinion, what has been , until now, the European initiative to enhance the peace process in the Middle East? Europe knows perfectly well how to choose the most appropriate approach worthy of this. In spite of all this, it is morally bound to act according to it’s convictions, in accordance with a world ethic that revolts against every injustice and to avoid painful situations like those that we are living today.
The most efficient means for cooperation

The access of Meda Projects ensured by more streamlined procedures

by Natale Giordano

The terrorist attacks of New York don’t stop the cooperation process between Europe, Mediterranean countries and the near East. Just the opposite, the validity of the contents of the Partnership sanctioned in December 1995 in Barcelona, is today being reproposited. Armando Varricchio, the prime diplomatic councilor to the president of the European Commission, Romano Prodi, in the interview published here, confirms the European commitment to continue on the path towards the liberalization of the commercial exchanges in the Euro-Mediterranean area predicted for the year 2010. In this prospective, the Local Authorities’ Partnership, are called upon to achieve new strategies for the strengthening of communication between diverse communities and to promote the integration between the two shores of the Mediterranean. The operational means, singled out in the Meda programme, have been refined and made more agile, enabling the streamlining of the procedures established to gain access to financing. The Partnership is, however, only a segment, also if important, of the complex policy of the European Union that has as its’ great aims: integration, peace and development.

The European Union plays a major role in the context of world economy, but its’ political weight is not in proportion with its’ political strength. Will this change Foreign Policy and Common Safety (PESC) of the European Union after the tragic events of 11 September in the U.S.A? Rather than changes I would talk about a further impulse to accelerate integration. At the next Summit of Laeken in December decisions will be made on the plans of action for the unfolding of the Force of rapid reaction that will be able to count on 60,000 permanent staff. But apart from military means, Europe has already assumed a series of important decisions after the events of 11 September: the strengthening of common measures against the struggle of terrorism; the struggle against financial crime and the coordination of operations in support of the economy and the most relevant productive sectors. All this is foreign policy and in all these fields Europe has reacted and will continue to react in a humanitarian manner.

What priorities will the European agenda have on the Middle Eastern issue? Now, as never before, exists the awareness that peace, safety and the same economic well-being depend upon the stability of the Middle Eastern area. It’s no mystery that Europe has always complained about its’ vast economic commitment in the area as if it were assisted by a suitable political role. It seems to me that all the relevant sections have now understood how our position aspires to the greatest possible harmony and how Europe has the means and the contacts to be able to offer whichever global partner the solution to the Middle Eastern situation.

Has the Commission arranged measures which permit a better access to the Meda programme? What are they?

We have great expectations of this network of relations that can deepen the cooperation between the 27 Countries of the Barcelona Conference
We know that the first Meda programme has suffered structural problems that have limited its’ effectiveness. The new regulations have been prepared to streamline, as much as possible, the foreseen procedures for the access to financing, entrusting direct responsibility to our delegations of the Mediterraneen countries, evaluating the administrative decentralization. We have also made available fact sheets for deft consultation that should enable a greater understanding of the different stages of the financing process.

Which major role will the Local Authorities and the civil collectives have on the obtaining of the objectives of the 27 Euromediterraneen Countries that were given in Barcelona in 1995?
The role of the Autonomies is outlined in the White Book on the Governance approved last July by the European Commission. Only by involving local realities is it possible to join legitimacy and efficiency, with the knowledge that these realities are depository.

It is true also in the case of the Euromediterraneen cooperation that wherever it deals principally with the strengthening of communication between civil societies and the promotion of cultural integration between the two shores of the Mediterraneen. We have great expectations of this network of relations that can deepen the cooperation between the 27 Countries of the Barcelona Conference. The Commission is ready to supply every support.

President Prodi has, more than once, expressed homage to the principle of subsidization, the necessity of the Commission to be supported by consultative action of international delocalized bodies according to the headquarters of community Institutions. Some, which EuroMeSco in Portugal and Femise in France, have already displayed their functional worth. Do you believe that an organization like Coppem, network of the Local Authorities of the 27 Countries, can hold the position of the role of Consultant Agency of the European Commission for the Euromediterraneen Policy?

The various organizations that create the strengthening of local networks correspond to the abovementioned objectives. Each one offers its’ experience and sensitivity to the communication necessary in the Euromediterraneen area. Coppem has this vocation, and for this reason, we regard its’ activities with great respect.

Do you think that the instability that exists today in the politico-economic environment at an international level will influence the process of the liberalization of the exchanges in the Euromediterraneen area, predicted for 2010?

Just the opposite. From the first moment of the tragic events of 11 September it is clear that all the principle international partners that multilteralism represent a decisive answer to whomever wishes to take us back to an era of the shutting down of markets and of protectionism. For this reason I can’t confirm The European committment to pursue the objectives of 2010.

Our Euromediterraneen partners need to acellerate the necessary economic reforms, and aboveall, promote regional exchanges and collaborate mainly between themselves. The European economic operators will, in fact, be more relevant to those markets if they will be able to count not only on national levels but also on regional ones.
Decentralised international co-operation is increasing both in scope and intensity all over Europe. Not only between the EU-members but also with its neighbours. In the south the Euro Med-cooperation is in focus and of a strategic interest for the development of the whole region. The important Coppem - initiative is here doing a lot to further encourage this co-operation.

In the northern part of Europe there is a parallel illustrated by the intense cooperation around the Baltic Sea Region. Not at least EU:s relations to Russia are of great concern for the future of this region – and for all of Europe.

Many people are today involved in the construction of a future Europe, hopefully characterised by an economic and a democratic development that will make it possible for people to “live a good life”. But in order to achieve this goal, we have to strive for an open Europe that is co-operating with its neighbours. As EU-members we are depending on a positive development in our neighbouring countries - in the north as well as in the south. And they are depending on us.

In the northern “Baltic Sea Region” many contacts have been established during the last decade between national, regional and local levels of society. At the governmental level of co-operation a Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS) has been erected, drawing up the guidelines to encourage integration – economically, politically and culturally – within the region. One ambition is to support the EU-integration of the Candidate countries Poland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in the region. Another ambition is to develop the relations with Russia, not at least at the local “people-to-people” level.

The decentralised co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region has grown out of solidarity with people in the former communist countries – and also from a knowledge of our mutual interdependency. In this region there are well functioning economies with advanced public and private enterprises on one side – and on the other rapidly growing economies and democracies. The potential future market might be a very flourishing one.

Today Sweden’s 289 municipalities have around 350 (!) twin towns or similar relations in Russia, Poland, Estonia and Lithuania. Most of these relations have been established during the last decade, after the political changes in Eastern Europe. Also the 21 Swedish county councils and regions have an intense and growing co-operation with their neighbouring regions.

The Swedish government is endorsing (also economically) this decentralised co-operation and considers it to be an essential part of Swedish foreign policy in the Baltic Sea Region. I know that the decentralised co-operation in the Mediterranean region is also considered to be an important part of the Euro Med-policy.

To summarise: today there is an impressing amount of quite concrete, mainly positive results from decentralised co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region. But now there is a need to discuss how to continue the future co-operation in this region in a creative and progressive way. One essential question is how to further develop the relations with Russia, Ukraine and Belarus.

In Northern Europe we lack specific knowledge about the Euro Med co-operation, although it’s given a high priority for the next years by the European Union. However, from a northern and also Swedish perspective there is a sincere wish to discuss decentralised co-operation - experiences gained and possible ways forward - with persons engaged in the Euro Med co-operation. We are in both regions engaged in a decentralised co-operation around the external borders of the European Union, a co-operation of a strategic importance to peace, stability and economic growth. We have our “northern” experiences, while you have your “southern” experiences. Let’s share them together in a discussion about the future of Europe – and its neighbours.
Operatives of the work commissions of Coppem

by Michele Raimondi

Coppem, in less than a year since its’ inauguration, has rapidly launched a series of initiatives within the Euro-Mediterranean partnership process initiated with the Barcelona Declaration of 1995.

The institution of the work Commissions was already foreseen as part of the regulations of Coppem, approved at Gaza on the first of July 2000.

The desired aim was to guarantee a positive collaboration between local and regional authorities within the sphere of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, towards the elaboration, on the part of the Commissions, of analysis and proposals on set themes, that would lead to solid aims to be subjected to the Committee on the occasions of plenary meetings of its’ 86 Members of 27 countries.

On the basis of certain decisions, Coppem (Palermo, 27-28 November 2000), instituted four Commissions, each composed of a President, two Vice Presidents, two speakers, about twenty members, brought about by 27 countries of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

The Presidential office of Coppem, reuniting in Palermo on 18 April 2001, defined the themes to be assigned.

The adopted framework is as follows:

I Commission “Political and Institutional Commission”:
Theme of the report: The role of local Authorities and regional Institutions for the achievement of the objectives in the Barcelona Declaration.

II Commission “Commission for the cooperation between cities and regions”
Theme of the report: Decentralised cooperation: urban transport systems, saving energy and the environment.

III Commission “Commission for the economic and financial cooperation”:
Theme of the report: Economic and financial Partnership.

IV Commission: “Commission for culture, technology, tourism and environment”
Theme of the report: Sustainable development regarding history and cultural heritage of the city.

On certain themes, the Secretariat, with the consult of experts of the International Scientific Committee of Aiccre (that, as noted, manages the workings of the Secretariat of Coppem), have been presented at the riunione of the Commissions organized in Palermo on 6-7 July 2001, to discuss the contents and carry out the necessary modifications.

The resulting documents have been further studied in depth in the successive riunione of the Commissions in Tunis on 27 September 2001, and there, the final texts were prepared to be subjected to approval by the Plenary Riunione of Coppem, forecast at Marrakkesh next 10-11 November 2001.

The documents, which today constitute the formal base from which to proceed, add further steps towards the coherent development of projectual action for a more concrete final operative.

The point of reference for harmony and co-partnership, extended to all the Local and Regional Authorities that wish to commit themselves to the common course of action for the elaboration of solid growth, in respect of the programmatical methods adopted by Coppem and in the context of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.
I COMMISSION:
The role of local Authorities and regional Institutions for the achievement of the objectives in the Barcelona Declaration.

President:
Barbel Dieckmann (Germania)
1st Vice President:
Adly Hussein (Egitto)
Vice President:
Halil Posbiyik (Turchia)
Co-speaker:
Adly Hussein (Egitto)
José Morales Jimenez (Spagna)

An analysis is made of the role of Local Authorities and the regional institutions in the context of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, according to the results of the Ministerial Conference of the 27 countries. A proposal is made to launch the development of a finalized programme for the cataloguing and spreading of diverse tipologies of decentralising local Authorities in force in the countries of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, that can add to the joint-partnership growth in the role enforced by Local Authorities.

II COMMISSION:
Decentralised cooperation: urban transport systems saving energy and the environment

President:
Jacques De Grave (Belgio)
1st Vice President:
Joseph Borg (Malta)
Vice President:
Fidias Sarikas (Cipro)
Co-speaker:
Fidias Sarikas (Cipro)
Manuel Sanchez Fernandez (Spagna)

After the analysis of the state of the Euro-Mediterranean policies in the indicated sectors, the attention is focussed on the transport sector, and it is suggested that the development of a projectual course directed at the transfer of experience conducted in the cities represented in the sphere of eco-compatible mobility and of the initiatives towards mitigating the impact of transport on the socio-economic and environmental structures.

III COMMISSION:
Economic and Financial Partnership

President:
Abbas Mohsen (tunisia)
1st Vice President:
Jan Manhs (Paesi Bassi)
Vice President:
Tommy Holm (Svezia)
Co-speaker:
Alberto Botta (Italia)
Abdel Karim Mosbah (Tunisia)

A survey is made of the complexity of local development, also in connection with migratory flows and with the prospective of the liberalization of the exchanges in the Euro-Mediterranean area.

The tasks of Coppem are underlined to stimulate and assist all the initiatives of the Local Authorities of the 27 countries aimed at the integration of economic and financial processes. A proposal is made to utilize the support of MEDA and the other programmes of the European Commission.

IV COMMISSION:
Sustainable development regarding history and cultural heritage of the city.

President:
Nidal Al Hadeed (Giordania)
1st Vice President:
Keith Whitmore (UK)
Vice President:
Lea Tolonen
Co-speaker:
Gülcin Güner (Turchia)
Keith Whitmore (UK)

Examples are illustrated of activities aimed at the sustainable development in the sector of conservation of historical heritage, of eco-compatible tourism, and of the integrated management of the coastal areas, proposing enquiries on the significant experience made by cities, to evaluate and carry out the transportability of these experiences, to come to an agreement with the European Commission and be in synergy with the initiatives and debates underway in International contexts.
The European Commission approves the Unimed Cultural Heritage

Three billion Italian lira have been allocated and there are 25 Mediterranean basin partners interested in the restoration, conservation and promotion of cultural heritage. This is the basis of the Unimed cultural heritage project approved by the European Commission last month. For three years, 25 representatives from Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Italy, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey, will face their own experiences aiming at the evaluation of the impressive cultural heritage of the Mediterranean basin, the millennium cradle of civilization and peoples. In this project promoted by Unimed, a network which unites 81 Universities in the Mediterranean, the AICCRE, secretariat of COPPEM, will have a strategic role: coordinating the municipal activities of the different provinces and regions. In fact it will be the local authorities who will provide the data for the eventual cataloguing and information as regards the administrative procedures necessary for the carrying out of the restoration work. Contextually, a coordination committee, with its head office in Lecce, will provide those who will work in the cultural heritage sector and the environment sector, through both traditional and distance activities, for the acquisition of new technologies in the field of cultural heritage. The project is made up of various points and in fact its objectives are numerous:

- creation of a database which comprises data which is relative to artistic-monumental sites, legislation in the field of cultural heritage and the administration procedures of every single country necessary for the carrying out of the restoration;
- creation of an internet portal, which will make the data usable through the installation of a research outlet ad hoc;
- selection of the most significant cases on the subject of conservation, restoration, promotion and the creation of a “store of the procedures”.

The development of project activity and its results will be made known to all the interested States through the publication of brochures, informative material and newsletters. Seminars and work shops will also be organized.

Vincenzo Chiarello Med Europe Export

MED EUROPE EXPORT for the internationalization of enterprises

Looking at foreign markets utilizing a specialized structure. This is one of the incentives that has pushed certain Palermitan entrepreneurs to constitute a special syndicate for the purposes of export, capable of offering efficient services and opportunities of investment and the development of extra domestic markets.

The Med Europe Export began like this in 1996, and the multi-sectorial syndicate for the internationalization of enterprises, with the headquarters care of the Association of the Industrials of the Provence of Palermo.

Since its’ beginning the activity of Med Europe Export has looked at, with particular attention to the Mediterraneaen countries, not only geografical neighbours but also traditional and cultural.

The experiences of the past few years, with the organization of commercial missions in different foreign countries, the participation of and specialized manifestation in Italy and overseas, the organization of visits by foreign operators care of the headquarters of the syndicate agencies, consented to Med Europe Export the possibility of consolidating its’ relations with foreign operators and representatives of Authorities and national and international Institutions. The achievement of a joint venture in Egypt, the setting up of commercial relations with Emirate Arabs United, Lybia and the ever-increasing intense relationship with Tunisia are some of the finishing lines reached by the agencies of Med Europe Export. The number of agencies syndicated has more than quadrupled compared to the initial five at the time of construction.

In the agencies and the sectors of merchandise represented, methodology of operation and operative strategies have been perfected. The level of awareness of the need to ensure adequate continuity of the initial relations has grown, creating the need to transform these into real opportunities of development for the syndicated agencies.

Vincenzo Chiarello Med Europe Export
The environment is the decisive game of our future

Valencia’s Province promotes a municipal network for sustainable development

by José Luis Ferrando Lada

Solidarity consists of also ecological awareness and, consequently, a clearly decisive bet on sustainable development. The World Commission on the Environment solemnly reminds us that, “sustainable development requires the satisfaction of the essential necessities and extends the opportunity of achieving aspirations of a better quality of life to everyone”.

The primary needs are defined socially and culturally while sustainable development implicates the spreading of values which encourage levels of consumption ecologically possible to which, rationally, everyone can aspire. A constant line of protection and scrupulous care of our environmental context will constitute the prejudicial conditions to achieving all the policies undertaken by Council of Valencia.

The recovery of the environment is the necessary answer to guarantee a future of quality of life, in the long run, of actual survival. The environmental impact, the recovery of degraded spaces, the maintenance and cleaning of beaches, together with the prevention of fire risks, indicate clearly, in a complex framework of operations, the contents of an environmental policy for short, medium and long term efficiency.

From the beginning of the current legislature, Council of Valencia is favouring decidedly the sustainable development of the Municipality of the Province. Until November 1999, the Council approved Agenda 21 involving the Municipality of the Province, towards operations and the creation of a network of Municipalities committed to the policies of “sustainability” which remains our principal aim.

The Charta of Xativa, presented in that historical place in May 2000 by the Council President of the Province in front of 200 Syndicates and representatives of the royal territorials, marks a milestone in the quest for sustainability. At Xativa in March 2001, life was given to the networks of the Municipalities of Valencia on sustainability, with the intention of...
including 160 Municipalities together with 25 companies in the environment sector. This initiative was made just recently by the House of Deputies while the Senate, with one motion, decided to promote this project at a government level.

The Council of Valencia, regarding the environment Service - Section of prevention of forest fires - was given a precise task in the field of both assistance and economic-technical cooperation in the provincial municipalities for the defence of our mountains and natural heritage which we must conserve and preserve via the formation of a group of specialists (forest bodies) in the indirect struggle – prevention - and in the direct struggle - extinction of forest fires. The prevention, the localization of the left and the speed of the operation permit the putting out of fires without difficulty, creating as least damage as possible. This, naturally, is possible if one can face the fire in the moment in which it starts. But practical experience has taught us that this is very rare. Forest fires provoke not only economic loss - but also the destruction of fauna, flora and the climate. Effects difficult to gage, that cause irreversible damage to our environment.

For all these reasons, we must develop policies linked to the environment, for the protection of nature and ecosystems. In this world projected towards a total globalization, it appears necessary to globalize also the new environmental culture, because we cannot promise nature efficient protection if that which we strive to conserve, others try to destroy.

The Council of Valencia has offered, with this initiative, a small contribution, but we hope that many other regions support sustainable development in the environment.

"We must develop policies linked to the environment, for the protection of nature and ecosystems."

Asessor del Presidente de la Exc. Diputacion de Valencia
Malta and Cyprus in the Ue: a new impulse for the partnership

After Marrakech projects launched under the initiative of Coppem

di Joseph Borg

It is necessary to arrange pilot projects in order to be realized in all countries of the partnership

With Malta and Cyprus as effective members of the Ue, the Euromediterranean partnership will receive a greater impetus. There is the need to complete the process of reinforcement and enlargement of Europe and the consolidation of exchanges and cooperation with the Countries of the south shore and near East.

It is my opinion that the Coppem plenary session in Morocco, will mark a turning point because from the phase of the socio-economic analysis we must arrive at the operative stage, that is, actions, projects, achieved tasks.

In this way will be possible to give a contribution to the reinforcement of the partnership. Moreover the construction of the partnership of the Mediterranean peoples is our main dream.

I consider positive the creation of the two monthly bulletin “Coppem news”, an extraordinary mean addressed to widen the knowledge, in the different areas of our region, of the Standing Committee activities, to reaffirm the ideals of peace, cooperation and socio-economic development.

As member of Coppem, I am fully aware of the political and financial help Aiccre and the Sicilian Region is giving to the realization of Coppem’s aims.

The four Commissions established are in full gear in drafting their reports which are to be presented at the plenary session in Marrakech. As Vice President of one of the commissions dealing with “Decentralized cooperation, mainly relating to urban transport system, saving energy and the environment”. I wish to thank the other members of the commission, the two experts, together with the Secretariat, for doing all they could to finalize this document that will be presented at the plenary session.

Hoping that this report will stimulate the necessary debate in producing a pilot project, that any member country of this partnership would be able undertake.

Considering Coppem’s activities, it appears necessary to provide it with financial means and political support appropriate for its mission.

The European Union should understand the importance of this long awaited launch initiated with the Barcelona Conference. All Countries that share the idea to create a great free trade zone and the European Countries, must realize that action is needed rather than lip service if real Euromediterranean plans will ever be initiated.

Vice president II Commission

"It is necessary to arrange pilot projects in order to be realized in all countries of the partnership"
Projects could be developed and achieved based on mutual respect and common needs

by Gülşin Güner

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights after the Second World War was a gigantic step towards a human society in which every individual has self-respect and care for others. It is common sense that all the world and the future generations would benefit from such an order in which every individual has equal rights, freedoms and means of development like others. Unfortunately, further steps for creating an international system to this end were slow to take place.

At the end of the 20th century, the industrialised part of the world, including Europe, has entered a new phase, which is usually called the “post-industrial stage”. The third world countries are again slow to adopt recent technological innovations. However, this stage does not base on “raw materials” but on “information” and “knowledge”, which can be more efficient, effective and useful to the degree that they are shared. Now there is the possibility of a rapid development for the underdeveloped part of the world. This can only be achieved if religious, ethical and cultural tolerance is promoted all around the world, and mutually beneficial effects of cooperation between north and south are realised.

European Union, which was born out of a similar dream after the Second World War and which is a challenge against nation states, can be taken as a positive move in the course of the human development. Most of the countries surrounding Europe, including Turkey, have already expressed their will to strike out on a difficult path leading to the creation of open societies and they have taken steps in the course of integration with Europe. The Barcelona Declaration, which can be regarded as a part of the enlargement strategy of Europe, is the expression of the will of economic integration with Europe in a free trade zone on the Mediterranean, which will eventually lead to the strengthening of the democratic structures against authoritarian structures and provide solutions for the problems such as corruption, unemployment, racism, religious and cultural intolerance, migration and regional, international, intercultural conflicts. The vital point here is that: the prospect of competitive market forces alone cannot bring any solution, as economy, health, safety, the environment, consumers and citizens are all interrelated with each other if the solutions are to be sought on the basis of the rule of law. In this regard, the “enlargement” policy of the European Union offers gains on all sides.

In-depth debates and huge steps are taking place at the nation states level. However, most of the work in this process is still to be done by elected political representatives at all levels and above all the people. That is to say, Coppem, which was created by the Local Authorities, Regions, Provinces and Municipalities as a network of dialogue and cooperation on the Mediterranean, is to shoulder a hard work and make protracted efforts to improve the living conditions of the people living on the huge territory it covers. Elected representatives of Coppem, its experts and staff members, who provide invaluable contribution to its objectives, as well as the bodies supporting Coppem have already brought this initiative at an exciting stage, which is likely to mark the dawn of a new era turning the Mediterranean basin into an area of peace and fraternity.

I am happy to take part in this process. I believe that we: people coming from different realities and cultures have come together, created and given example of the Mediterranean fraternity under the roof of Coppem. At least personally, I can say that this is an experience which should be lived by every people from every kind of social context.

Language –at least for myself as I can only speak English other than Turkish-, lack of information about the work done by individual local administrations for solving their problems and lack of means for communicating with these local administrations both on their social contexts and on practical recommendations seem as a group of obstacles before this task. However, beautifully designed Coppem News and the Coppem web page, as well as the future actions such as Coppem news portal will surely be the media for speeding up and lending greater dynamism to the process of collaboration and participation in Coppem activities. Thus can the negotiable, acceptable, strategic and effective projects be developed and the prospect of structural reforms are brought on the agenda of the “people on the street” if real improvements are to be made basing on mutual respect and common needs.

Peace, freedom and development are extremely important tasks which should not be deposited solely with the governments. Only when the well-being of all, including the most vulnerable people and ecosystems, is given priority over corporate profits shall we achieve genuine sustainable development and create a world of justice, equality and peace where fundamental human rights including social and economic rights are respected, I assume.

It is certain that there is a light for the planet and its inhabitants at the end of the tunnel, but the recent incidents and the ongoing process in the world have shown once again, unfortunately, that this light can be of “Heaven” or “Hell”, both of which we have enough “visions” to choose or not to choose from.

Municipality of Alany (Turkey)