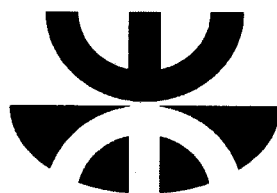


**New Edition
October 2008**



EUROMED

**VADE - MECUM
OF THE
EURO-MEDITERRANEAN
PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY**

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This vade-mecum brings together the basic documents relating to the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly and contains practical information for users. It is a provisional edition which will be updated as the Assembly's work proceeds.

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**From the Forum to the
Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly**

The Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA), established in Naples on 3 December 2003 by decision of the Ministerial Conference of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, is the most recent institution of the Barcelona Process. The EMPA opened its proceedings in Vouliagmeni, Athens, on 22 and 23 March 2004. The EMPA Presidency is held on an annual basis by each of the members of the Bureau in turn, in the order decided by the Bureau. Its Bureau consists of the Presidents of the European Parliament (EP), of the Jordanian Chamber of Representatives, of the Italian Chamber of Deputies and of the Moroccan Chamber of Representatives. The Bureau coordinates the business of the Assembly. The working languages are Arabic, English and French. Texts adopted by the EMPA are also available in Hebrew and Turkish and in the other official languages of the European Union.

1.1 From the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Forum to the EMPA

The Barcelona Euro-Mediterranean Conference¹ launched the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership in November 1995 with a view to promoting an area of peace and shared prosperity by the pursuit of a common strategy on political and security issues and economic and cultural affairs and human exchanges. Participants also recognised the need to develop inter-institutional relations further, especially at parliamentary level, and called on the European Parliament (EP) to take the requisite action to that end².

Accordingly, EP representatives and delegates from the partner Mediterranean parliaments met for the first time in Strasbourg in March 1997 and decided to endow the Barcelona Process (BP) with a parliamentary dimension by setting up a Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Forum.

Following a number of preparatory meetings, the first Forum was convened in Brussels in October 1998. It was attended by delegates from the EP and from the national parliaments (NPs) of the EU Member States and of the associated countries, under the joint chairmanship of the President of the EP and the President of the Moroccan Chamber of Representatives.

The Forum subsequently developed inter-parliamentary relations, basing its actions on the principles of equality, shared responsibility and solidarity. It also adopted declarations and resolutions on specific issues, in particular migration.

The fourth Forum, which met in Bari, Italy, in June 2002, set up a working party to be specifically responsible for preparing the ground for the establishment of a genuine Euro-Mediterranean Assembly and for the drafting of the Assembly's rules of procedure.

The Forum's conversion into an Assembly, as proposed in an EP resolution adopted in April 2002, was actually approved in Valencia, Spain, by the Fifth Euro-Mediterranean Conference. The subsequent Ministerial Conference in Naples rounded out the Valencia proposal and formally launched the EMPA in December 2003.

¹ Participants: the EU Council, the European Commission and the Foreign Ministers of the EU Member States and of the associated Mediterranean countries.

² A significant antecedent to this initiative was the European Parliament resolution, adopted on 6 May 1994, on the establishment of a Mediterranean Assembly.

The recommendation made by the Forum to the Sixth Euro-Mediterranean Conference, setting out the arrangements for the conversion of the Forum into a Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly, was annexed to the final document adopted in Naples.

The EMPA's inaugural sitting was held in Vouliagmeni, Greece, in March 2004.

The Joint Declaration of the Summit of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean (Paris, 13 July 2008) stresses that the EMPA will be the legitimate parliamentary expression of the upgraded Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

1.2 The Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly today

Nature and functions of the EMPA

The EMPA is the BP's parliamentary institution and plays a consultative role.

- It provides parliamentary impetus, input and support for the consolidation and development of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.
- It expresses its views on all issues relating to the Partnership, including the implementation of the association agreements.
- It adopts resolutions or recommendations, which are not legally binding, addressed to the Euro-Mediterranean Conference.

Membership

The EMPA consists of parliamentarians appointed by:

- the national parliaments of the EU Member States;
- the national parliaments of the Mediterranean partners;
- the European Parliament.

The EMPA consists of a maximum of 260 Members, of which 130 are Europeans (81 from the EU NPs and 49 from the EP) and 130 are from the NPs of the EU's Mediterranean partner countries (MPC), so as to guarantee parity.

It is organised on the basis of national delegations and EP delegation. It meets in plenary session at least once a year.

Presidency and Bureau

The EMPA Bureau consists of four members, two of whom are appointed by the NPs of the Mediterranean countries, one by the EU NPs and one by the EP. They serve a four-year term and hold the Presidency of the Assembly on the basis of a yearly rotation in order to guarantee parity between the EU component and the component of the Mediterranean partners. The other three members act as vice-presidents.

Committees

The Assembly consists of four standing committees and an ad-hoc committee, each of them having a four-member Bureau. The permanent committees are responsible for addressing the partnership's main strands:

- the Committee on Political Affairs, Security and Human Rights;
- the Committee on Economic, Financial and Social Affairs and Education;
- the Committee on Improving Quality of Life, Exchanges between civil societies and Culture;
- the Committee on Women's Rights in the Euro Mediterranean Countries.

Deliberations and decision-making process

The EMPA takes decisions by consensus in the presence of half-plus-one of the delegations of each of the two component parts, i.e. the European Union side and the partner countries.

Where no consensus can be reached, the Assembly adopts decisions by a qualified majority of at least two-thirds of the votes of the members present from each of the two shores of the Mediterranean, in the presence of at least half of the members plus one of the two components of the Assembly.

Relations with the Euro-Mediterranean Conference and the European Commission

The EMPA is complementary to the Barcelona Process institutions. Representatives of the Euro-Mediterranean Conference and of the European Commission attend its meetings and have the right to speak.

Observers and guests

The following may secure permanent observer status:

- representatives of NPs of Mediterranean countries which are not Member States of the EU or involved in the Barcelona Process;
- representatives of NPs of non-Mediterranean countries which have applied for accession to the EU, provided that negotiations or discussions with a view to accession have been officially opened;
- consultative and financial Barcelona Process bodies;
- regional parliamentary and intergovernmental organisations which have requested such status.

The permanent observers shall be entitled to speak.

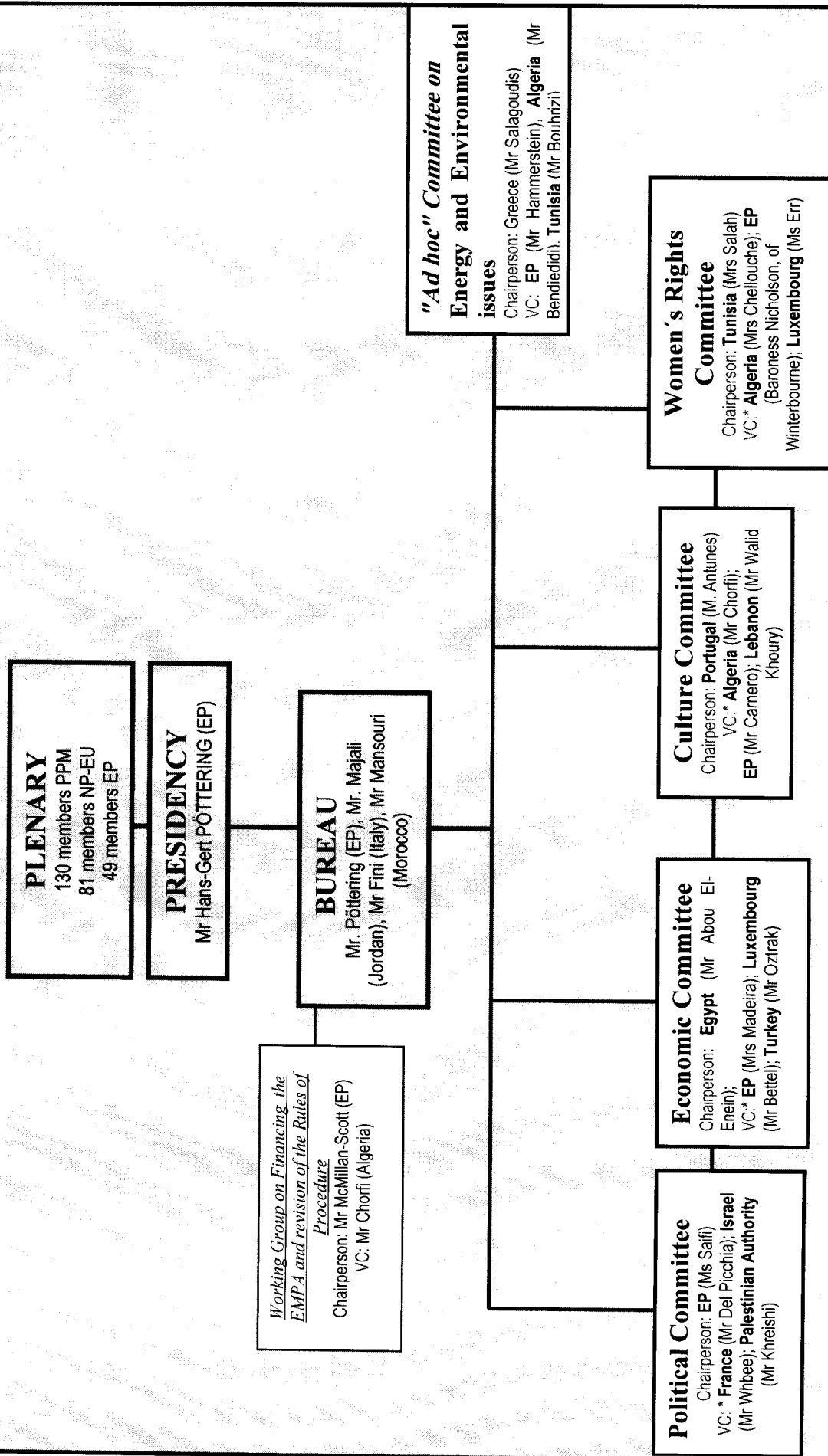
Representatives of Libyan Parliament attend meetings as permanent observer to the Barcelona Process since 1999. The European Investment Bank, as financial body of the Barcelona Process, was also granted the permanent observer status. At the Plenary sitting in March 2007 in Tunis, the European Economic and Social Committee, as consultative body of the EU, became permanent observer to the EMPA.

Other organisations may be invited by the Bureau.

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EMPA's Organisation Chart

ORGANISATION CHART OF THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY



* in alphabetical order

3

Composition of the Bureaus of the EMPA bodies

EURO-MEDITERRANEAN PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

COMPOSITION OF THE BUREAU OF THE EMPA

adopted at the plenary meeting, Athens 27-28 March 2008

2008 March 2008/March 2009	2009 March 2009/March 2010	2010 March 2010/March 2011	2011 March 2011/March 2012
Mr Hans-Gert PÖTTERING [EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT]	Mr. Abdel-Hadi MAJALI [JORDAN]	Mr. Gianfranco FINI [ITALY]	Mr. Mustapha MANSOURI [MOROCCO]

COMPOSITION OF THE BUREAUS OF THE EMPA PERMANENT COMMITTEES

The Athens Plenary of March 2008 approved the allocation seats among EMPA delegations. The current situation is as follows:

Committee	Chairperson	Vice-Chair	Vice-Chair	Vice-Chair
Political	Ms. Tokia SAIFI [European Parliament]	Mr. Hasan KHREISHI [Palestine]	Mr. Robert DEL PICCHIA [France]	Mr. Majalli WHBEE [Israel]
Economic	Mr Mohammad ABUL-ENEIN [Egypt]	Mr Xavier BETTEL [Luxembourg]	Ms Jamila MADEIRA [European Parliament]	Mr. Faik OZTRAK [Turkey]
Cultural	Mr Antonio ANTUNES [Portugal]	Mr Miloud CHORFI [Algeria]	Mr Carlos CARNERO [European Parliament]	Mr Walid KHOURY [Lebanon]
Women Rights	Ms Afifa SALAH [Tunisia]	Ms Fatima CHELOUCHE [Algeria]	Baroness NICHOLSON OF WINTERBOURNE [European Parliament]	Ms Lydie ERR [Luxembourg]

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**Ad-Hoc Committee on Energy and Environment
and Working Group Rules of Procedure**

On 28 March 2008 in Athens the plenary agreed by consensus on setting up an ad-hoc Committee on Energy and Environment.

Subsequently, on 11 June 2008, the EMPA Bureau decided that the ad-hoc committee will have the mandate until March 2010 and will comprise 40 members, as follows:

- 20 from the Mediterranean partner countries;
- 12 from EU National Parliaments;
- 8 from the European Parliament.

The Bureau of the Committee is composed of members of the following delegations to EMPA:

Chair: 2008 - 2009: Greece (Mr. Georgios Salagoudis)
 2009 - 2010: Austria (Mr. Stefan Schenach)

Vice-Chairs: Algeria (Mr. Mohamed Bendjedidi)
 European parliament (Mr. David Hammerstein)
 Tunisia (Mr. Abderrahmane Bouhrizi)

The composition of the Working Group on Financing of the Assembly and revision of the EMPA's Rules of Procedure, established in 2005, has also been changed by decision of the EMPA Bureau on 11 June 2008. The Working Group is composed as follows:

- it has a numerical strength of 20 members,
- membership of the Working Group is limited to the following ex-officio members:
 - members of the bureaus of the four EMPA standing committees
 - one member from each of the Parliaments represented in the EMPA Bureau

The mandate of the Working Group was extended until March 2010 and its Bureau confirmed for the same period:

Chairman: Mr. Edward McMillan-Scott (European Parliament)
Vice-Chairman: Mr. Miloud Chorfi (Algeria)

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Rules of procedure of the EMPA

Rule 1
Nature and objectives

1. The Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly ('EMPA') is the parliamentary institution of the Barcelona process with consultative power and based on the Barcelona Declaration. It contributes to enhancing the visibility and transparency of the process and, consequently, bringing the Euro-Mediterranean partnership closer to the interests and expectations of the public.
2. The purpose of the Assembly shall be to bring parliamentary support, impetus and influence to the consolidation and development of the Barcelona process. It shall debate in public issues arising from the Barcelona process, in particular, and all matters of common interest that are of concern to the member countries.
3. Membership of the Assembly is voluntary and the Assembly will maintain an open-minded approach to participation in its work. The seats which will possibly not be occupied remain at the disposal of the parliaments to which they have been allocated.

Rule 2
Composition

1. The members of the Assembly are parliamentarians appointed by the parliaments of the partner countries participating in the Barcelona process and the European Parliament.
2. The Assembly shall consist of no more than 260 members, 130 European members (81 members of the EU national parliaments and 49 members of the European Parliament) and 130 members of the parliaments of the Mediterranean partner countries of the European Union, on the basis of equal representation. Delegates shall be appointed, where possible, for a minimum period of one year.
3. The Assembly shall be composed of delegations from each national parliament and the European Parliament.
4. The member parliaments shall undertake to ensure that women parliamentarians are represented in their delegations, in accordance with the legal provisions of each country.

Rule 3
Competences

1. The Assembly may adopt positions on all aspects of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership. It shall monitor the application of Euro-Mediterranean association agreements and adopt resolutions or make recommendations to the Ministerial Conference with a view to achieving the objectives of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership. When asked to do so by the Ministerial Conference, it shall issue opinions proposing, where appropriate, the adoption of relevant measures for each of the three aspects of the Barcelona process.
2. The deliberations of the Assembly shall not be legally binding.

3. On a proposal from the Bureau, the Assembly may decide to send ad-hoc delegations.

Rule 4

Presidency and Bureau

1. The Bureau of the Assembly shall consist of four members, two appointed by the parliaments of the Mediterranean partner countries of the European Union, one appointed by the EU national parliaments and one appointed by the European Parliament.
2. These appointments, including the order of rotation of members, shall be submitted to the Assembly for approval.
3. The term of office of the members of the Bureau shall be four years; this mandate is not renewable and is incompatible with the office of a member of a government. In the event of the resignation or termination of service of one of its members, the replacement shall be appointed for the remainder of the term of office.
4. The Assembly shall be chaired by one of the members of the Bureau, in rotation and on an annual basis, thus ensuring parity and alternate South/North presidencies. The three other members of the Bureau shall be Vice-Presidents.
5. The Bureau shall be responsible for coordinating the work of the Assembly. It is the body responsible to represent the Assembly for matters regarding relations with the other institutions.
6. The Bureau, following a decision by the Assembly to send an ad-hoc delegation, shall determine the setting-up, composition, mandate, and reporting obligations of such delegation.

In urgent cases, the Bureau may take such decision on its own initiative.

Rule 5

Parliamentary committees

1. The Assembly shall be organised in four parliamentary committees which are responsible for monitoring the following aspects of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership:
 - (a) committee on political affairs, security and human rights;
 - (b) committee on economic and financial affairs, social affairs and education;
 - (c) committee on improving quality of life, exchanges between civil societies and culture;
 - (d) committee on Women's Rights in the Euro Mediterranean Countries.

The Guidelines for the meetings of the parliamentary committees of the EMPA are defined in Annex 1. The Guidelines are approved by the Bureau and are attached as an annex to the Rules of Procedure.

2. Parliamentary committees shall consist of 70 members (Committee on Political Affairs, Security and Human Rights; Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs, Social Affairs and Education; Committee on Improving Quality of life, Exchanges between Civil Societies and Culture) or 50 members (Committee on Women's Rights in the Euro Mediterranean Countries), 35, respectively 25, members from the Mediterranean partner countries of the EU and 35, respectively 25, European members (22, respectively 15, members of the EU national parliaments and 13, respectively 10, members of the European Parliament).

Committee members shall be appointed by the delegations from each national parliament and the European Parliament.

3. Each parliamentary committee shall elect from among its members a chairman and three vice-chairmen, considering the criterion laid down in Rule 4.1 and in accordance with the structure adopted by the plenary upon the proposal of the Bureau; their term of office shall, in principle, be two years. The office of committee chairman and vice-chairman shall not be compatible with the office of President of the Assembly

Committees appoint rapporteurs on specific items of their agenda. The rapporteurs will report to the committee concerned.

Committees shall examine questions and documents which are referred to them by the Assembly.

4. Each parliamentary committee shall meet at least once a year.
5. The committees may meet between sessions of the Assembly.

Provisions of rule(s) 9.1, 9.2, 9.3 and 10.2., 10.3, 10.4 shall apply also to committee meetings.

6. The Assembly may decide to set up ad hoc committees, if necessary. The Bureau of the Assembly shall determine their composition and Presidency, ensuring a balance and parity between the two sides.

Rule 6 **Ad-hoc delegations**

1. The Bureau shall set up, either following a decision by the Plenary or, in case of urgency, on its own initiative, ad-hoc delegation(s) and decide on the nature, duration, number of members, composition, mandate and reporting obligations of such delegation(s).
2. When taking such decision, the Bureau shall bear in mind and seek to ensure that the principles of the Barcelona process are respected, and in particular the North/South Mediterranean equilibrium, adequate representation of the three components of the Assembly, mutual understanding and transparency, without preliminary exclusion and safeguarding total impartiality.
The Bureau shall also designate the member who will be the Head of Delegation.

3. In accordance with its remit, the delegation will submit for approval by the Bureau its work programme.

The Bureau, should the need arise, may also decide on further implementing provisions enabling the delegation to carry out its mandate.

4. The travel expenses for the members of such delegation shall be borne by their respective national Parliaments.
5. The Head of Delegation shall draft a report on the activity and results of the delegation, which shall be submitted to the EMPA Bureau and, subsequently, to the Assembly.

Rule 7

Relations with the Euro-Mediterranean Conference of foreign ministers and the European Commission

1. The role of the Assembly shall be complementary to the other institutions of the Barcelona process.
2. The representatives appointed by the Euro-Mediterranean Conference of foreign ministers and by the European Commission shall attend the Assembly's meetings and shall be entitled to speak.

Rule 8

Observers and guests

1. On a proposal from the Bureau, and pursuant to Rule 10(3) of these Rules of Procedure, the Assembly may grant permanent observer status at its meetings to:
 - the representatives of the national parliaments of the countries of the Mediterranean region which are not members of the EU and that have not subscribed to the Barcelona process;
 - the representatives of the national parliaments which are not Mediterranean, but which are candidate countries, provided that the European Union has officially commenced discussion and negotiations with the country concerned in view of its accession to the European Union;
 - the institutionalised consultative bodies and financial bodies of the process of Barcelona;
 - the regional parliamentary and intergovernmental organisations which request such status.

Other organisations may also be invited by the Bureau to attend a meeting of the Assembly.

2. The permanent observers shall be entitled to speak.

Rule 9
Conduct of proceedings

1. The proceedings of the Assembly shall be public, except where otherwise decided.
2. Members of the Assembly may speak when authorised to do so by the President of the sitting.
3. The President of the sitting shall open, suspend and adjourn sittings; he or she shall ensure observance of these Rules, maintain order, call upon speakers, limit speaking time, put matters to the vote, announce the results of votes and close the sitting. In agreement with the members of the Bureau, he or she shall rule on any matter arising in the course of the proceedings that is not covered by these Rules of Procedure.

Rule 10
Debates and decision-making

1. The Assembly may adopt resolutions and make recommendations relating to the Barcelona process for the attention of the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference and the Council of the European Union and the European Commission.
2. Amendments to a text tabled for debate and adoption by the Assembly shall be submitted in writing by a deadline to be announced by the President of the sitting.

Each amendment may only relate to one paragraph. No amendment shall be admissible if it does not directly relate to the text which it seeks to amend. An amendment shall lapse if it is inconsistent.

a) Amendments shall have priority over the text to which they relate and shall be put to the vote before that text.

b) If two or more mutually exclusive amendments have been tabled to the same part of a text, the amendment that departs furthest from the original text shall have priority and shall be put to the vote first. If it is adopted the other amendments shall stand rejected. If it is rejected, the amendment next in priority shall be put to the vote and similarly for each of the remaining amendments. Where there is doubt as to priority, the President shall decide. If all amendments are rejected, the original text shall be deemed adopted unless a separate vote has been requested within the specified deadline.

Acting upon the request of a Committee that has adopted a text on the basis of consensus, the Bureau may decide not to open a deadline for amendments to the plenary.

3. The Assembly shall act by consensus and in the presence of half of the delegations plus one within each of the two component parts of the Assembly, namely, the European component and that of the partner countries.

When it is not possible to reach a consensus, the Assembly shall take its decisions by a qualified majority of at least two-thirds of the votes of the members present from each of the two shores of the Mediterranean, in the presence of at least half of the members plus one of the two components of the Assembly. The Chair shall establish such a presence before the vote begins.

4. Each delegation shall have a number of votes equal to the number allocated to it and, during the vote, shall have the right to express reservations and/or to abstain constructively.

Rule 11

Meetings and agendas

1. The Assembly shall meet at least once a year in the place chosen at each meeting by the plenary sitting. Special arrangements must be made when the meeting of the Assembly takes place in a country which does not have official diplomatic relations with one of the member countries of the Barcelona process and of the Assembly.
2. The draft agenda shall be drawn up by the Bureau and adopted by the Assembly in plenary sitting at the start of its work.
3. The draft agenda shall be forwarded by the President to the parliaments represented in the Assembly at least one month before the opening of the session.
4. Any delegation may ask for an additional item to be entered on the agenda. The Bureau shall propose to the plenary sitting, the addition of supplementary points.

Rule 12

Drafting committee and working groups

1. The Assembly may decide to set up a drafting committee to prepare resolutions, recommendations and opinions. The members of the drafting committee shall be designated by common accord; it shall comprise, on the one hand, at least five members from the EU national parliaments and the European Parliament and, on the other, at least five members from the parliaments of the Mediterranean States participating in the Barcelona process.
2. The Bureau, after consulting the parliaments represented in the Assembly, may set up working groups whose membership and powers it shall determine. The working groups may be instructed to draw up draft reports and draft resolutions for the Assembly, subsequent to the approval of these texts by the relevant committees. The number of working groups shall not exceed two per year. Second part of Rule 5 paragraph 5 applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to working group meetings.

Rule 13

Languages

1. The official languages of the Assembly are the official languages of the European Union and Arabic, Hebrew and Turkish.
2. The official documents adopted by the Assembly shall be translated into all the official languages of the Assembly.
3. Working documents will be made available to members in French, English and Arabic, as working languages, by the parliament organising the meeting.

The draft agenda, the programme, the committee reports and resolutions or declarations of the committees, the draft final declaration, the rules of procedure and the list of participants shall be the only official documents of the Assembly and will be distributed upon registration.

4. During debates in the Assembly, each member may speak in one of the official languages of the Assembly, interpretation being provided into the working languages only, without prejudice to the provisions of Rule 14(6) of these Rules of Procedure when meetings of the Assembly are held at the European Parliament.

Meetings of parliamentary committees and, where appropriate, working groups, shall be conducted in the above working languages, without prejudice to the provisions of Rule 14(6) of these Rules of Procedure.

Rule 14

Expenditure: funding of organisation, participation, interpretation and translation costs

1. The parliament that is organising a session of the Assembly or a meeting of one of its committees shall be responsible for the practical arrangements for the session or meeting.
2. The Assembly may, on a proposal from the Bureau, decide that a contribution from the other parliaments that are members of the Assembly is necessary to cover the costs incurred in organising a session of the Assembly or a committee meeting.
3. The travel and accommodation expenses of participants shall be borne by the institution of which they are members.
4. The organisation and costs of interpretation into the working languages of the Assembly shall be met by all the delegations.
5. When a session of the Assembly or a committee meeting is organised by the European Parliament, it shall be responsible for the practical arrangements and interpretation costs depending on requirements and the facilities available.
6. The cost of translation of the official documents adopted by the Assembly into the official languages of the European Union shall be defrayed by the European Parliament. The translation of these documents into Arabic, Hebrew and Turkish shall be the responsibility of the parliaments in which these languages are used.
7. Each delegation shall be responsible for the translation into at least two working languages of the documents it submits.

Rule 15

Secretariat

1. The EMPA General Secretariat, based in Brussels, should consist of senior staff (2), experts (maximum 2) and highly trained and skilled personnel (maximum 10). The posts of Secretary General and Deputy Secretary General are the senior staff. The

Secretary General's term is 4 years, renewable once. Selection shall be made by means of an open procedure. Equity shall be applied by appointing a Secretary General from the one shore and a Deputy Secretary General from the other shore, alternating. The overall composition of the Secretariat has to be balanced.

2. The salaries and other expenses of the staff of the Secretariat shall be borne by their respective parliaments.
3. The parliament which is hosting a session of the Assembly or a meeting of one of its committees shall provide assistance with the organisation of these meetings.
4. The translated versions of the reports shall be sent to delegations as soon as possible before the Plenary Sitting.

Rule 16

Amendment of the Rules of Procedure

1. Any delegation may propose amendments to these Rules of Procedure. Such proposed amendments shall be translated and forwarded to the Bureau, which shall submit them to the next plenary sitting.
2. Amendments to these Rules of Procedure shall be adopted by consensus.
3. Unless otherwise specified with the approval of the Assembly, amendments to these Rules of Procedure shall enter into force at the following session.

**Guidelines for the
meetings of the parliamentary committees of the EMPA**

(as modified by the EMPA Bureau on 11 June 2008)

Committee meetings and membership

1. In line with the Assembly's programme of activities as approved by the EMPA Bureau, ordinary meetings of Committees shall be convened by their Chairman, upon consultation with the committee Vice-Chairs. Their number may not exceed four per year. Further meetings may be convened upon request from the Committee concerned and subject to authorisation by the EMPA Bureau.
2. In case a vacancy is established, the delegation to which the seat is allocated shall appoint a replacement member within three months at the latest. It shall notify the EMPA Presidency, the concerned committee's Chair and secretariat of the appointment.

Presidency and discipline

3. By analogy with the presidency of the Assembly, the chairman of a committee shall direct the proceedings, ensure the Rules of Procedure are observed, maintain order, give speakers the floor, declare discussions closed, establish the presence of a quorum, put issues to the vote and announce the outcome of votes.
4. If the chairman is unable to attend, he shall be replaced by the vice-chairman best able to ensure the smooth running of the meeting.
5. If he is unable to attend a committee meeting, a vice-chairman may be replaced by a member of his delegation, provided that he has informed the committee chairman of this substitution in writing.
6. No member may speak unless called upon to do so by the chairman of the committee. A speaker may not be interrupted except for points of order. If a speaker departs from the subject, the chairman shall call him to order and may, on the second occasion, forbid him to speak for the remainder of the debate on the same subject.
7. The chairman shall call to order any committee member who creates a disturbance during the proceedings. Should the offence be repeated, the chairman may exclude the offender from the room for the remainder of the sitting.
8. It shall be forbidden to use language that is insulting towards peoples or contrary to the open and respectful spirit of the debates.
9. Each delegate shall sign the register of attendance of a Committee meeting.
10. Different badges shall determine access to the meeting room and the duty areas within it. No one may occupy the seats reserved for committee members.
11. Officials of the national parliaments of the Barcelona Process member states and of the European Parliament, diplomatic representatives and members' personal advisers shall occupy the seats reserved for them in the room.

Internal regulations and decision making procedures in Committees

12. The Committees may discuss other items without report and advise the EMPA Bureau in writing that the said items were discussed.

13. Two or more Committees may, either on the initiative of their Chairpersons or at the suggestion of the EMPA Bureau, hold joint meetings on subjects of common interest to them, provided paragraph 1 of these guidelines is applied.
14. Subject to approval by the EMPA Bureau on a case by case basis, Committees may appoint representatives to attend a conference on a topic related to their field of interest, to undertake a study or fact-finding mission. Committees may, upon notification to the Bureau, invite experts to give their opinion on a topic under discussion if they consider such opinion necessary to the effective conduct of their work.

Substitutes and voting methods

15. Any full member who is unable to attend a committee meeting may be replaced by a substitute from the same component of the Assembly (i.e. the component of the Mediterranean partner countries, the EU National Parliaments' component and the European Parliament component). The committee chairman shall be informed of any substitutions and they shall be indicated in the record of attendance attached to the minutes.
16. Within the committee, the substitute shall have the same rights and be subject to the same obligations as the full member.
17. The position of committee chairman may not be occupied by a substitute.
18. The committees shall normally vote by show of hands. If the result by show of hands is doubtful, there shall be a fresh vote by standing and sitting.
19. No one may speak in between the various stages of a vote.

Public debates

20. Committee meetings shall be public unless the committee decides otherwise.
21. All committees reserve the right to hold meetings, in specific cases, without the presence of anyone not belonging to the committee or its secretariat.
22. Meetings shall be systematically open to representatives of the Barcelona Process institutions, in particular the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference, the Council of Ministers of the European Union and the European Commission. They shall be entitled to speak and may at any time ask the Chair for permission to make a statement. The Chair shall decide when the statement may be made.
23. The gallery shall be open to the public, who shall remain seated and keep silent. In the event of an excessive number of requests, priority shall be given to those made on behalf of committee members and by civil society representatives.
24. The minutes of each meeting shall be drafted by the committee's secretariat and distributed to committee members before the opening of the next meeting. At the beginning of each meeting, the chairman shall submit the minutes of the previous meeting to the committee for its approval.

25. At the chairman's request, the committee secretariat may take the floor.

These guidelines shall be applied in all cases where specific provisions are not provided for by the Rules of Procedure of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly and where they do not contradict the Rules of Procedure.

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