



**EURO-MEDITERRANEAN
PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY**



SECOND PLENARY SESSION
Brussels, 27 March 2006

**FINAL DECLARATION
OF THE PRESIDENCY**

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The Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA) meeting in plenary session in Brussels on 26 and 27 March 2006 declares its strong commitment to strengthening the parliamentary dimension of the Barcelona Process during these difficult times.

On both shores of the Mediterranean, those who seek a clash of civilisations are gaining more and more support. EMPA believes that only an injection of political will by all partners to relaunch the Barcelona process in all its dimensions can resolve this problem. The EMPA reaffirms its commitment to reinforcing dialogue between citizens and governments of both shores of the Mediterranean and, as Parliamentarians, to holding our executives to account, ensuring that their words are matched by actions.

EMPA has held discussions, in its committees and working groups, and today in its plenary on the current obstacles to the development of an alliance of civilisations, including the crisis over the cartoons published by Jyllands Posten, the continuing conflict between Israel and Palestine, and the continuing economic and social gap between the two shores of the Mediterranean.

On the basis of these discussions and of the recommendations which it has adopted today, EMPA:

- 1) Reiterates the call it made in Rabat on the institutions and governments of the Euro-Mediterranean region to adopt policies that can effectively relaunch the Barcelona Process
- 2) Calls on the future government of the Palestinian Authority and on the future government of Israel once in place to respect the international commitments on their respective countries to a negotiated solution to the conflict based on the Roadmap.
- 3) Calls on the future Palestinian government to fulfil the commitments under joint declarations made by the Arab League, notably the Beirut Declaration.
- 4) Calls on all Members of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership to ensure that the process of dialogue between the partners is not interrupted or sabotaged and calls on Israel and the Palestinian Authority to find ways to ensure its continuation.
- 5) Reminds all Euro-Mediterranean governments of their commitments under the Barcelona Declaration of 1995 to the principle of respect for diversity and the promotion of tolerance, and to the principle of respect for fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression.
- 6) Agrees to continue and reinforce the Israeli-Palestinian dialogue within APEM and its committees given that the road to peace, stability and economic and social progress should also be pursued by the parliamentary institution of the Barcelona process.
- 7) Reiterates its condemnation of the offence caused by the publication of the Jyllands-Posten cartoons and reminds newspaper editors of the need to exercise freedom of expression responsibly; condemns the violence which their publication provoked.
- 8) Calls on the European institutions to ensure that public grants and loans provided to support the Euro-Mediterranean partnership are not cut as a result of the financial perspectives for 2007-2013; considers that that would contradict the political priority given to the partnership.

9) Calls on the governments of the Mediterranean partners to pursue the necessary political, social and economic reforms that will encourage private investment to accompany those public funds.

10) Expresses the hope that the Israeli elections will take place in a smoothly manner.

Call Made at the EMPA Extraordinary Plenary in Rabat:

"EMPA calls on the Euro-Mediterranean Summit in Barcelona on 27-28 November 2005 to launch the policies necessary:

1) To create the regulatory framework necessary to promote economic growth and to attract more foreign direct investment to the region. To support the efforts of all Mediterranean partners to improve knowledge-based education, vocational training and access to new technologies. In this way, to improve the employment prospects of the young.

2) To support the far-reaching economic reforms and elimination of barriers necessary to achieve a Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area by the year 2010.

3) To bring new dynamism and hope to the Middle East Peace Process, strengthening parliamentary dialogue within the Euro-Mediterranean partnership and, involving to a greater extent civil society across the region in order to bring together the parties concerned.

4) To promote parliamentary democracy, enhance respect for the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of expression as well as other obligations arising from international law, notably those deriving from the regional and international Conventions to which all the Euro-Mediterranean partners are party.

5.) To promote women's rights strongly and enable their participation in social, economic and political life. Gender equality is an integral part of good governance.

6) To build capabilities within society to respond effectively to health threats and natural environmental disasters, promoting early warning systems, best practices and good governance within the administration at national and local levels.

7) To enhance their role in the fight against terrorism through Euro-Mediterranean police and judicial cooperation, while protecting civil liberties. To support effective implementation of the agreed Code of Conduct on Countering Terrorism.

8) To promote a culture of tolerance, by supporting educational measures, isolating radical behaviour and promoting social rejection of any incitement to violence.

9) To mobilise all social, economic and political actors to fight against racism and xenophobia (including anti-Semitism and Islamophobia) and to build on a common cultural heritage and respect for diversity, leading to a true alliance of civilisations. To support the UN's Alliance of Civilisations project and the activities of the Anna Lindh Foundation in particular in the

area of education and in combating the spread of false perceptions and stereotypes about people on the two shores of the Mediterranean in the mass media.

10) To promote enhanced cooperation in the area of migration by appropriate integration policies which ensure that due respect is shown for the rights and freedoms of immigrants legally resident within the EU, and that, with appropriate integration policies in place, at the same time, the latter may show due respect for the duties incumbent on citizens in their host society and the shared values of that society. "