



**Doc. 11507**

23 January 2008

## Euro-Mediterranean: call for a Council of Europe strategy

### Motion for a recommendation

tabled by Mr Denis BADRÉ and other members of the Assembly

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This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

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Co-operation between countries on either side of the Mediterranean is of crucial importance both in ensuring the sustainable economic development of that region's countries and in fostering their security and stability.

Co-operation along such lines has been substantially stepped up by the European Union which, as of 1995, established, under the "Barcelona process", a Euro-Mediterranean partnership (Euromed) pursuing three objectives: definition of a common area of peace and stability through the reinforcement of political and security dialogue; the construction of a zone of shared prosperity through an economic and financial partnership and the gradual establishment of a free-trade area; and the rapprochement between peoples through a social, cultural and human partnership aimed at encouraging understanding between cultures and exchanges between civil societies. This gave Euro-Mediterranean relations an institutional framework, complemented by the setting up of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA) in 2004. In addition, the southern Mediterranean countries are also involved, in various respects, with the European neighbourhood policy. Finally, on 23 October 2007, in Tangiers, the President of the French Republic, Mr Nicolas Sarkozy, delivered an address on the plan for a Mediterranean Union, which rekindled the debate on relations between the two shores of that sea.

The Council of Europe would benefit from adopting such a policy in order to make the Mediterranean an area of dialogue and co-operation guaranteeing peace, stability and prosperity. By adopting a "Mediterranean strategy" the Council of Europe, in line with its tasks, would help to propagate democratic values, the rule of law and respect for human rights beyond the frontiers of Europe.

It is true that the Council of Europe has already forged relations with the countries on the southern shore of the Mediterranean. In particular, the Assembly is examining questions concerning that region, through the activities of its committees or by participating in the inter-parliamentary conferences of the Mediterranean and Black Sea basins.

The partnership between the Council of Europe and the Mediterranean countries would benefit, however, from being deepened and institutionalised, so that regular and concrete dialogue is maintained on common problems, such as water management, intercultural and interfaith dialogue or migration. Moreover, the Assembly could develop its relations with the national parliaments of the Mediterranean states. Such a policy would help develop the Council of Europe's external relations, but should naturally be co-ordinated with the initiatives carried out by the European Union under Euromed or its European neighbourhood policy.

To this end, the Assembly invites the Committee of Ministers to study the ways and means of placing relations between the Council of Europe and the countries of the Mediterranean region on a formal footing.

*Signed (see overleaf)*



*Signed*<sup>1</sup>:

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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe  
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