



CPMR INTERMEDITERRANEAN
COMMISSION

Summary and conclusions of the plenary meeting of the Intermediterranean Commission

19 October 2017 – Helsinki (Helsinki-Uusimaa - Finland)

INTRODUCTION

Apostolos Katsifaras, President of the Intermediterranean Commission and Governor of Dytiki Ellada Region (Greece), welcomed the participants and thanked Helsinki-Uusimaa Region for hosting the meeting. He spoke about the last General Assembly in Naples, at which the Intermediterranean Commission had been presented with an award for its contribution to the development of the Mediterranean region. The action plan of the Intermediterranean Commission, as well as those of the working groups, had been approved in July. He also referred to the partnerships (e.g. UfM) and actions (e.g. projects) developed over recent months. He underlined in particular the contribution made by the Intermediterranean Commission to the work of the CPMR, and commented on the general context in the Mediterranean, placing our actions in a context of working towards peace and economic growth for this region. He recalled the European values of solidarity and cooperation, in particular on the issue of migration, one of the many challenges facing the Mediterranean today.

Apostolos Katsifaras then outlined the aims of the meeting, in particular the debate on the amendments to the CPMR's Final Declaration. He ended his introduction by putting the minutes of the General Assembly in Campania in 2017 to the vote. The minutes were unanimously approved.

DRAFT CPMR FINAL DECLARATION 2017

Apostolos Katsifaras pointed out that the Intermediterranean Commission's priorities on the major issues of concern to us were already included in the proposed text, since the document had been drafted in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Intermediterranean Commission.

Davide Strangis, Executive Secretary of the Intermediterranean Commission, introduced the amendments and explained the process for dealing with them. During the meeting, the only amendments which would be discussed were those which had been submitted before the deadline date (some of these had been previously communicated by the Secretariat of the Intermediterranean Commission). The Executive Secretaries of the different Geographical Commissions had met the previous evening with the CPMR General Secretariat, to begin to identify points on which mediation could be possible, given the high number of amendments submitted. During the meeting of the Intermediterranean Commission, it would be possible to modify the text of the amendments submitted by the members of the Intermediterranean Commission, to merge amendments if appropriate, to abandon others, or to support the amendments submitted by other Geographical Commissions. **Davide Strangis** reminded the meeting that any amendments submitted by the Intermediterranean Commission and its members would need to be justified and submitted to the "Final Declaration Overview Group" for discussion and final submission to the CPMR Political Bureau. The Bureau provisionally approves the document before it is debated and definitively adopted by the CPMR General Assembly.

Davide Strangis projected a table showing the different amendments, highlighting those which specifically concerned the Mediterranean. He also mentioned the preliminary opinion which was at the origin of the initial discussions with the Secretariat and the Executive Secretaries of the other Geographical Commissions. He presented the amendments proposed by other Geographical Commissions which were relevant to the Intermediterranean Commission. He pointed out that it was preferable to avoid being too specific in the wording of the amendments with regard to the Mediterranean, unless it was particularly

CPMR Intermediterranean Commission

6, rue Saint-Martin - 35700 Rennes (FR)

Tel. +33 (0)2 99 35 40 60 // +34 93 554 50 49 - Email: davide.strangis@crpm.org - Twitter: @IMC_CPMR

<http://cpmr-intermed.org>

important; this was one of the roles of the Final Declarations of each Geographical Commission. The CPMR Final Declaration had to be a text which was representative of all the Geographical Commissions.

The members approved most of the proposed amendments presented, and also supported some of the amendments proposed by other Geographical Commissions, with some qualifications. There were discussions over the following points, for example:

In point 7 of the Final Declaration, an amendment proposed by Dytiki Ellada and Ionia Nissia proposed to delete the mention of “para-diplomacy”. **Guillaume Huet**, Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur, thought it would be worthwhile and innovative to retain this notion. In his view, it neatly describes the diplomatic action of a whole region, also encompassing other stakeholders of civil society. Catalunya and Andalucía supported this point of view, with some qualifications. **Davide Strangis** proposed including the notion of “territorial diplomacy”, which had been used in other contexts and declarations. However, **Andreu Iranzo**, Generalitat Valenciana, pointed out that there could be a legal problem here, given that the Regions do not have competence for diplomacy. In the absence of a unanimous view on this point, due to lack of time for further debate, and given that there had already been a number of debates on the concept of “territorial diplomacy” and “para-diplomacy” at the level of the Mediterranean (for example in the context of the Mediterranean Committee of the UCLG), **Davide Strangis** said that to avoid conflicts of this kind, if Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur and the remaining members agreed, we could stick to the proposed amendment: “the key contribution that the *Local and Regional Authorities in political fora* and regional cooperation make to...”. **Guillaume Cros**, Occitanie Region, also thought the notion of territorial diplomacy was interesting, but agreed with the consensus suggested by the Executive Secretary and the other members.

On points 46-53, which concerned climate issues and could face problems being adopted because they related very specifically to the Mediterranean, **Guillaume Huet** said that it was important to highlight the many climate challenges faced by our sea basin and its unique situation as a global “hot spot”. The same argument would apply to the more detailed questions concerning the Arctic, cited in another amendment (point following point 48). He took the opportunity to mention the major climate conference on the Paris Agreement taking place in his Region on 21 November, and invited the member regions of the Intermediterranean Commission to attend. **Guillaume Huet** said he wished to see the proposed amendment retained as such in the Final Declaration, as far as possible. The members of the Intermediterranean Commission agreed with the idea of discussing and negotiating with the other Geographical Commissions. One possibility would be to slightly alter the wording of the amendment to make it more inclusive and to also encompass the “hot spots” of the other Geographical Commissions so that the amendment could be unanimously adopted rather than being rejected.

Concerning point 55 on transport, **Andreu Iranzo** pointed out that a report on this topic had been submitted to the Committee of the Regions by his President, who was the rapporteur, and that it encompassed these positions. Nonetheless, it was important, he said, to retain this amendment and the point, and not delete it as proposed by the Baltic Sea Commission. The same applied to the remaining points on transport.

The Secretary noted all the comments made and proposals for slight rewording of the amendments as initially presented, as well as the guidelines suggested for discussing these amendments. He promised to bring all these consolidated proposals to the attention of the Final Declaration Overview Group with a view to the discussion in the Political Bureau (For information, following the mediation process, the majority of the Intermediterranean Commission’s proposal were included in the Final Declaration).

See the [Final Declaration of the CPMR - Helsinki 2017](#)

INTERMEDITERRANEAN COMMISSION INTERNAL ISSUES

Davide Strangis, Executive Secretary of the Intermediterranean Commission, briefly outlined these points. He presented the financial documents for the Intermediterranean Commission, which would be definitively approved by the CPMR General Assembly. The balance sheets for 2016 and 2017 were globally positive, due in particular to cooperation projects. This was also the case for 2018. **Davide Strangis** thanked

Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region for providing office space on their premises for one of our staff members.

Davide Strangis briefly reviewed the [report on activities](#) since July 2017 and the [general calendar](#) of the Intermediterranean Commission, which includes project meetings, working group meetings, CPMR meetings and events organised by the Intermediterranean Commission's partners. He drew attention to the next meeting of the Political Bureau in Murcia (14-15 February 2018) which would probably take place in parallel with a meeting of the PANORAMED project (Axis 4 of the Med Programme) and the General Assembly which would take place in Patras (end June/beginning July 2018). The calendar is regularly updated and published on our website. Lastly he mentioned the PANACeA project events due to take place in Barcelona, and the important [events which would take place in Naples](#) from 27 to 30 November as part of Innovbluegrowth and the work of the UfM on the blue economy.

Guillaume Cros wished to add a final point: he thought that the Common Agricultural Policy could be added to the issues addressed by the Intermediterranean Commission and the CPMR. **Davide Strangis** responded that this question would need to be examined, in particular in relation to the work of the other CPMR Geographical Commissions. He pointed out that some of the amendments to the CPMR Final Declaration referred to this.

Manuel Pleguezuelo Alonso, Murcia, spoke about the actions of the "Transport" working group and the work being done in the context of the Mediterranean corridor, in particular the letter recently sent by the Intermediterranean Commission to the Coordinator of the Med Corridor. This included among other points a request for cross-border coordination meetings/working groups, and for more information to be sent to the Regions prior to the Fora so that they were better able to prepare their positions. He invited all the members of the Bureau and the working groups to take part in the meetings in Murcia in February.

Apostolos Katsifaras closed the meeting, emphasising the need for our actions to be carried out as close as possible to the general public (communication, participatory approach, accountability and implementation). He thanked the participants for their contributions and invited them to take an active part in the future meetings, especially the General Assembly in Patras and the Political Bureau in Murcia.

CONCLUSIONS

The plenary meeting approved:

- the minutes of the General Assembly held in Campania in 2017;
- the consolidated contributions or proposals for amendments submitted by the Regions of the Intermediterranean Commission to the CPMR Final Declaration;
- the financial documents (2017 accounts and draft budget for 2018 to be approved by CPMR);
- the report on activities from July to October 2017.

The plenary meeting noted the dates of forthcoming meetings, in particular the meeting of the Bureau, due to take place in Murcia (Spain) on 14/15 February 2018 and the General Assembly in June/July in Patras (Dytiki Ellada - Greece). Note was also taken of important meetings due to take place in Naples on 27/28 November (InnoBlueGrowth-Seminar on Blue Energy) and 29/30 November 2017 (UfM conference and workshops on the blue economy in the Mediterranean).