



VIII meeting of the PAM Standing Committees and 8th PAM Plenary Session

Villa Méditerranée, Marseille, France

20-22 January 2014

Executive Summary

20 January:

Opening Ceremony

The VIII Plenary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean was hosted by the French Parliament and the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (PACA) Regional Council in Marseille. Hon. **Michel Vauzelle**, PAM Vice President and President of the PACA Region, welcomed all delegates, representatives, observers, Presidents and guests to the event.

President's address

PAM President, **Sen. Francesco Amoroso**, thanked the PACA region, the National Assembly and the Senate for their generous and impeccable hospitality in hosting the VIII Plenary Session in Marseille, and officially declared the Plenary open. He referred to the events of the Arab Spring as having permanently changed the course of history of the Mediterranean region. In particular, he informed the Standing Committees of the exceptional reception given by the UNSG Ban Ki-moon at the UNHQ in New York on 5 December 2013, and informed the Plenary that the UNSG had asked PAM to take an active role in the resumption of inter-parliamentary diplomacy between Syria and its neighbouring States.

As to the specific work of the Standing Committees, the First Standing Committee, chaired by Sen. Halaiqah (Jordan), had focussed on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process and the Syrian crisis, as well as strategies to combat corruption. The Second Standing Committee, chaired by Sen. Lhou Lmarbough (Morocco), had dedicated itself to the activities of the PAM Panel on Trade and Investments in the Mediterranean in the context of youth unemployment, job creation and, in a separate report, the effects of climate change in the Mediterranean. Finally, the Third Standing Committee, chaired by Hon. Maria Conceição Pereira (Portugal) had examined the role of women in the Arab Spring and the access of people with disabilities to the labour market, as well as continued its work to promote education and free movement of students in the Mediterranean area.

Addresses to the Plenary

Both **Hon. Claude Bartolone**, *President of the French National Assembly*, and **Sen. Jean-Pierre Bel**, *President of the French Senate*, welcomed the participants. A message to PAM from **H.H. Pope Francis** was conveyed by H.E. Monsignor Jean-Marc Aveline, and a political message from **H.E. Ban Ki-moon**, *Secretary General of the United Nations*, was read to the Assembly. **Sen. Andrey Klimov**, *Deputy Head of the International Cooperation Committee of the Russian Federation Council* also addressed the Assembly, as did **Mrs. Omnia Taha**, *Director of the European Affairs and Euro-Arab Cooperation Department of the League of Arab States*.

20-21 January:

Adoption of PAM Standing Committees reports and resolutions

The First Standing Committee (Political and Security-related Cooperation), chaired by **Sen. Dr. Mohammad Halaiqah (Jordan)**, PAM Vice President, adopted two reports and resolutions, namely on:

- *Political developments in the Middle East and North Africa*, and
- *Strategies to combat public sector corruption in the Mediterranean*

During the 1st Standing Committee meeting, a statement to the Assembly was made by **H.E. Karim Ghellab**, *President of the House of Representatives of Morocco*. Speeches were also made by **Mr. Stylianos Gavriil**, *Consul-General of Greece in Marseilles*, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Greece (EU Presidency), **Dr. Yousef Bataineh**, *Director for European Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Jordan*, **Hon. Fadia Dib**, *President of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Syrian Parliament*.

The Second Standing Committee (Economic, Social and Environmental Cooperation), chaired by **Sen. Lhou Lmarbouh (Morocco)**, PAM Vice President, adopted two reports and resolutions, namely on:

- *Activities of the PAM Panel on Trade and Investments in the Mediterranean - 2013*, and
- *Climate Change: Perspectives for the Mediterranean after Doha and Warsaw*

During the 2nd Standing Committee, statements were made to the Assembly by **H.E. Ilir Meta**, *President of the Parliament of Albania*, and **H.E. Laurent Novion**, *President of the Parliament of Monaco*, respectively. The Monegasque Parliament offered to host the 2015 PAM Plenary Session in Monaco, and the Albanian Parliament offered to host the 2016 PAM Plenary Session in Tirana. Speeches were also made by **Mrs. Teresa Ribeiro**, *Deputy Secretary General for Energy of the Union for the Mediterranean*, **Mr. Emmanuel Noutary**, *General Delegate of ANIMA Investment Network*, **Mr. Michelangelo Celozzi**, *Secretary General of Med-TSO*, and **Mr. Carlo Crea**, *Director of International Affairs of Terna S.p.A.*

The Third Standing Committee (Dialogue among Civilizations and Human Rights), chaired by **Hon. Maria da Conceição Pereira (Portugal)**, PAM Vice President, adopted two reports and resolutions, namely on:

- *The role of Women in the Arab Spring*, and
- *Access of people with disabilities to the labour market in the Mediterranean*

During the 3rd Standing Committee meeting, a statement to the Assembly was made by **H.E. Mohamed Cheikh Biadillah**, *President of the House of Councillors of Morocco*. Speeches were also delivered by **Mr. José Angel Oropeza**, *Director of the Coordinating Office for the Mediterranean of the International Organization for Migration*, **Mr. Geoffroy d'Aspremont**, *Responsible of the Secretariat of the NGO Mediterranean Citizens' Assembly (MCA)*, as well as by **Hon. Nabila Benomar** and **Mrs. Marion Denantes**, *Climate Parliament (NGO)*.

A Memorandum of Understanding was also officialised with the **University of Catania**, and was signed by **Professor Giacomo Pignataro**, *Rector of the Athenaeum*, and **Amb. Sergio Piazzi**, *PAM Secretary General*.

VIII PAM Plenary Session

22nd January:

Opening of the VIII Plenary Session

In his opening address, **H.E. Sen. Francesco Amoruso**, *PAM President*, called on his colleagues to build trust and faith within their institutions and insisted on the imperatives of good governance and responsibility.

Speeches were also made by **H.E. Amb. Shamel Nasser**, *Assistant Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Egypt*, **H.E. Margareta Wahlström**, *UN Assistant-Secretary General and Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR)*, **Hon. David Saganalidze**, *Vice President of PABSEC*, **H.E. Samia Hassan Seid Ahmed**, *First Deputy President of the Arab Parliament*, **Mr. Christian Blondin**, *Director of the Cabinet of the Secretary General and the External Relations Department of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO)*, **H.E. Alberto di Luca**, *Ambassador of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta to the Republic of Serbia*, **Mr. Luciano Morelli**, *President of Confindustria Caserta*, **Mr. Andre Buttigieg**, *Vice Chair of the Institutional Working Group of MEDREG*, and **Mr. Cesare Sacerdoti**, *CEO of CSE-Crescendo*.

Future work plan of the Three Standing Committees

Sen. Halaiqah, President of the First Standing Committee, informed the Plenary that his Committee would continue to implement the PAM Strategic Plan 2013-2017, which expressed the PAM core values, and continue to build dialogue, promote the Middle East peace process, assure humanitarian aid channels were open in Syria, and monitor the

democratization process in the Arab Spring States. The delegation of Bosnia and Herzegovina asked for a PAM delegation to visit Sarajevo to try to break the political deadlock that was preventing the country from moving forward. **Sen. Lmarbouh**, President of the Second Standing Committee, informed the Assembly that it would continue to promote the activities of the PAM Panel and was dedicated to establish a Mediterranean Free Trade Area through co-development. It had also been asked to report on the environmental consequences of armed conflicts in the Mediterranean. **Hon. President Pereira**, President of the Third Standing Committee, stated that the Third Standing Committee would continue to address key challenges in the region, with particular attention to interreligious dialogue and the status of women. In the debate that followed, **Turkey** offered to host a meeting of the Third Standing Committee.

Amb. Gerard Putman-Kramer, PAM Permanent Observer to the UN (Geneva), reported on the current situation in the Syrian conflict and called for humanitarian assistance corridors to be kept open.

Report on financial situation PAM 2013

PAM Secretary General, Amb. Sergio Piazzì, explained that 2013 had been a particularly tough year for PAM due to the non-payment of membership fees by a number of members, which had resulted in a considerable budgetary shortfall. For 2013, PAM had received only Euro 590,000, in other words, more than Euro 150,000 below the agreed budget. In 2009, in Istanbul, the Plenary had discussed and agreed to adopt an operational budget of Euro 912,000 per year. This would have allowed PAM to create a reserve fund of Euro 150,000. Given the protracted global economic crisis, the budgets of national parliaments were cut, hence the Assembly reduced its own budget, cancelling the reserve fund and stripping the current budget to a bare minimum of **Euro 750,000**. Moreover, the Maltese Government had generously restored PAM Headquarters, the Palazzo Spinola. In 2013, the Headquarters Agreement between PAM and the Government of Malta expired. Negotiations are ongoing to extend it on the same conditions as in 2007. The PAM Secretary-General added that the PAM Permanent Observers to the UN worked on a voluntary basis.

In the debate that followed, **Palestine** questioned whether or not any decision had been taken by the Bureau to appoint PAM Ambassadors to the UN offices. To this, the PAM President confirmed that a decision had been taken by the Bureau and the President in 2011. **Malta** suggested that it would be appropriate to conduct an evaluation to review the activities of PAM in view of its growing importance in the international community. A similar proposal was made by Sen. Abdouh and Sen. Lmarbouh of Morocco, who will provide a written proposal to the Secretariat. Furthermore, the PAM Secretariat was conducting a self-appraisal on its performance in view of the PAM SGs meeting in Athens on 5 May. A consolidated proposal will then be submitted by the SG to the Bureau for implementation, as soon as all the elements are available. Any actions to improve the functioning and methods of PAM are always appreciated. The Assembly adopted the report of the Secretary General.

2013 PAM Prize Award Ceremony

The laureates for the 2013 Pam Prize were Hon. EDGARD MAALOUF (Lebanon), Sen. BENEDETTO ADRAGNA (Italy), ISODORA ŽEBELJAN (Serbia), NOUREDDINE BOUTARFA (Algeria) President of MED-TSO (received by MICHELANGELO CELOZZI, Secretary General of MED-TSO).

Closing ceremony

The **PAM President Francesco Amoruso** again thanked the Presidents of the French National Assembly and Senate and praised the work of President Vauzelle. All the reports and resolutions were adopted unanimously. He also stated that the only solution to the Syrian crisis was political and highlighted the importance of the Italian MFA initiative, planned for 3 February, which would host a high-level meeting on the humanitarian challenges of the Syrian crisis, jointly organized with the UN. PAM would continue to follow very closely events in the Arab World.

There being no further matters for debate, the Plenary was closed.