



PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE MEDITERRANEAN (PAM)

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Building on our common Mediterranean heritage

Working Paper on the Strategy and the Action Plan of the PAM
2008-2012

I. INTRODUCTION

The Mediterranean Sea is the common heritage of the Mediterranean States. From time immemorial, the history of the Mediterranean has been characterised by migrations and commercial exchanges, colonisation and independence, disputes and solidarity. The effects of these often-turbulent relations are still felt today at the global level. The region has also bestowed upon the World some of the greatest civilisations as well as the three major monotheistic religions that continue to influence our daily lives.

PAM's primary mission is to assert the centrality of the Mediterranean area and reaffirm the key role of its Members in addressing their common interests and shared concerns through a forum that specifically serves that purpose.

PAM represents a unique opportunity to bring together representatives of Mediterranean States who can interact on an equal footing under the auspices of their own parliamentary assembly. Such parliamentary dialogue primarily serves the aim of giving Mediterranean peoples the opportunity to examine issues of direct concern to the region, as well as promoting mutual understanding and respect among its citizens; secondly, to develop forms of cooperation thereby taking full advantage of the land and sea-based human and natural resources of the region.

More specifically, PAM's mission is to develop cooperation between its Members by promoting political dialogue and understanding, notably, by:

- fostering and building confidence among Mediterranean States;
- promoting regional security, stability and peace;
- consolidating the endeavours of Mediterranean States;
- presenting opinions and recommendations to national parliaments and governments, regional organisations and international fora.

II. BACKGROUND

THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION



In ancient times, it was the most important trade route and cultural crossroads for the peoples of the region and beyond. The rich ancient history brought by the Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Persian, Phoenician, Carthaginian, Greek, Roman and Arabic cultures that blended in the Mediterranean, is crucial to understanding the origins and development of the modern World. Since the dawn of civilisation, the particular climatic geological and geographical characteristics of the Mediterranean, have offered a favourable environment in which human communication, exchange and dialogue have prospered. It has also undergone numerous colonisations, dominations and occupations, and witnessed countless battles, conflicts and wars, the effects of which are still with us today.

Geographically, the Mediterranean Sea is almost completely land-locked covering an area of approximately 2.5 million square km (965,000 square miles). It is unique in that it embraces three continents: Europe to the north, Africa to the south, and Asia to the east. Today, the Mediterranean remains of enormous importance for global commerce, and continues to serve as a natural vehicle for 30% of world maritime trade, guaranteeing the prosperity of the region as a whole. Equally, the intense commercial activity is not without its potential hazards; 25% of the world's oil tankers navigate the Mediterranean and we are perfectly aware of the risk of ecological disaster and long-term detrimental consequences for the environment.

PARLIAMENTARY DIPLOMACY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

Parliamentary diplomacy in the Mediterranean illustrates the importance attributed to this region in recent times. It is an essential tool that allows MPs from the region to meet, debate, as well as exchange lessons learnt and experiences. There are several parliamentary institutions with a specific interest in the Mediterranean. However,

these fora vary in terms of their composition and membership. Some do not give full coverage to the Mediterranean area, while others extend far beyond it but have a mandate that is limited to performing specific tasks with different objectives and priorities.

There is renewed interest in the region as its strategic importance continues to grow, and this further justifies the establishment of an intra-Mediterranean consultation and coordination mechanism specifically for that purpose; this is served by the aims and objectives of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean.

PAM is a tool of regional parliamentary diplomacy where the various countries are represented on equal footing, as reflected in the composition of the Bureau and in the decision making procedures of the Assembly and its Committees.

This unique Mediterranean forum for parliamentary dialogue is different from ongoing inter-governmental processes, but is complementary to them. Parliamentary dialogue takes advantage of the vision, freedom of action and the multiple relationships that parliamentarians enjoy both with parliaments, governments and the people with whom they are in direct contact and they represent.

ESTABLISHMENT, MANDATE AND ROLE OF PAM

In view of the precarious situation in the region and the Middle East, in 1992 the Mediterranean States members of the IPU met in Malaga to set up the Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean (CSCM). In due course, the CSCM was able to meet in an atmosphere of security and stability and became a process for genuine cultural dialogue and partnership with the aim of ensuring balanced growth of the region.

In 1995, the CSCM met again in Valletta, to agree on the establishment of “An Association of Mediterranean States” to be made up of a Mediterranean Council, an Assembly and a Secretariat.

In reviewing the Valletta conclusions, at the third CSCM meeting in Marseilles in 2000, the members resolved to establish “in the long run, a Parliamentary Assembly of Mediterranean States”.

In 2002, the IPU Conference held in Marrakech set “The Fundamental Characteristics of the future Parliamentary Assembly of Mediterranean States”.

The Coordination Committee of the CSCM met in Nice in 2004 to finalise the Statute of the Assembly, which was subsequently adopted in Nafplion Greece in 2005 at the session of the fourth and final CSCM. The members attending agreed to transform the CSCM process into a Parliamentary Assembly and, moreover, agreed to hold the inaugural session of the Assembly in Amman, Jordan, in 2006.

At the inaugural session of PAM, the Members agreed on the composition of the Bureau, with Morocco taking up the first Presidency. Agreement was reached on establishing the seat of the General Secretariat in Malta. The Assembly agreed to hold

its second session in Malta in 2007. The members of the Assembly reaffirmed the importance of its platform for political dialogue, under the conviction that the creation of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean would serve as a forum for political and economic cooperation as well as a dialogue among cultures, civilisations and religions.

STRUCTURE AND ORGANIGRAMME OF PAM

The Assembly is the principal body of PAM. Its aim is to govern the organisation and activities of PAM. To this end, it develops a long-term programme implemented on the basis of annual work-plans drawn up for each of its three Standing Committees. It also examines and approves the allocation of the budget. The Assembly meets at least once a year.

The President and Bureau are responsible for coordinating the work of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean. The Bureau comprises eight members each equally representing the principal sub-regions of the Mediterranean.

Three Standing Committees, which are central to the functioning and deliberations of the Assembly, focus their attention on the following strategic areas:

- Political and security-related Cooperation and Regional Stability;
- Economic, Social and Environmental Cooperation, Development and Partnership; and
- Dialogue among Civilisations and Human Rights.

In order to implement the decisions taken by the Assembly on its annual and medium-term five year work plan, the Standing Committees determine their priorities from the key issues indicated by the Assembly. Each Standing Committee reports regularly to the Assembly on its activities. On certain issues, the Committee may agree to assign the discussion to an *Ad Hoc* Committee or a Special Task Force specifically created for that purpose. Where necessary, experts may be invited to address these organs.

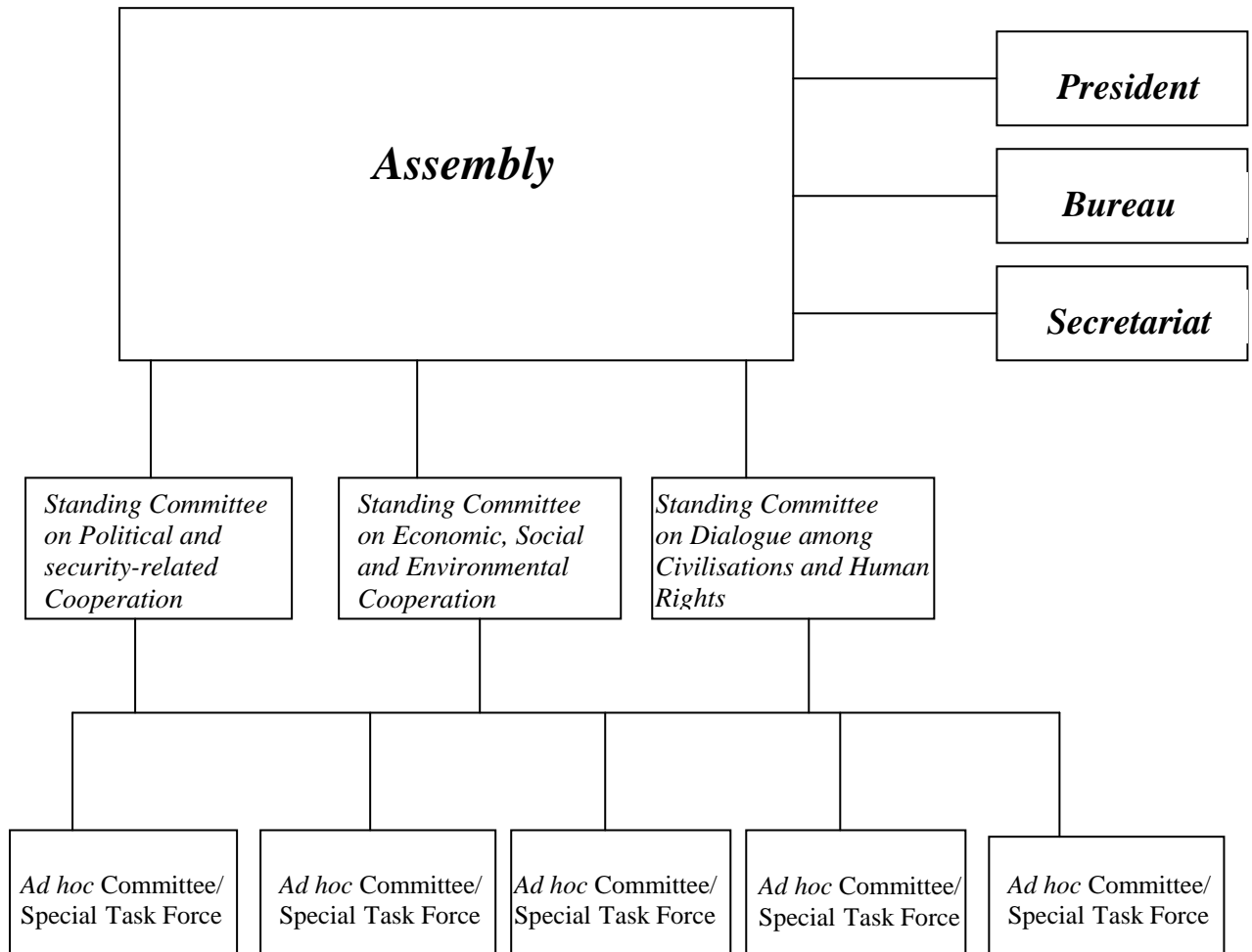
The Assembly may decide to set up an *Ad Hoc* Committee (for critical issues meriting the attention of the Assembly for an unspecified period) or a Special Task Force (for a specific team to tackle issues within a given time frame) upon recommendation by the Bureau. This process is commenced by one or more than one Member requesting the setting up of a Committee or Task Force to their competent Standing Committee. The President of the Standing Committee then forwards the request to the Bureau together with his advisory opinion on the matter. If the decision of the Assembly is favourable, the competent Standing Committee also determines the composition, terms of reference and the duration of each of the *Ad Hoc* Committee or Special Task Force.

Moreover, the Bureau may approve other forms of consultations involving the participation of parliamentary, academic and official exchanges, as appropriate.

The Secretariat has its seat in Malta, and is responsible for following-up on the decisions taken by the Assembly, as well as providing coordination, assistance and support to the work of the Committees and other bodies established under the aegis of

PAM. It is also responsible for the promotion and visibility of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean.

Organisational Chart of PAM



III. VISION, CHALLENGES, STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

The vision of PAM is for a stable and prosperous Mediterranean based on common values and shared aspirations

PAM is uniquely placed to highlight and address in a concrete way common concerns of Member States in the Mediterranean region by providing a democratic platform for political dialogue and the development of cultural, economic, social and human exchanges and the promotion of good governance. In other words, PAM is a strategic instrument to sustain and promote peace, freedom and sustainable development.

PAM will be fully involved in the process of addressing regional challenges, be they political, economic or social in nature. The region suffers several ills. Political differences and disputes, which in one way or another have their roots in the past centuries, must be addressed. The situation in the region has been further exacerbated by a new political and economic order that was born out of the end of the cold war. These changes to the international political scene have brought several new challenges, such as those presented by the effects of globalisation, which have taken the region by surprise, and for which it was largely unprepared. International and internal migrations, terrorism, money laundering, organised crime, environmental degradation, and human trafficking are but a few of the problems that the countries of the region are faced with, and which cannot be dealt with in isolation from one another. Furthermore, there is an urgent need to reverse the trend of fostering the belief that we could be moving towards a clash of civilisations. Each of these issues has to be addressed by the Assembly and its three Standing Committees. The benefits to be gained from “in-house” Mediterranean cooperation and understanding will be reaped by the countries comprising the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean.

In order to effectively address these challenges and attain both its overall and sectoral objectives in a coherent manner, the three Standing Committees will have to prioritise their work from among, inter – alia, the following issues:

First Committee:

- Confidence-building measures to promote peace and security;
- Combating terrorism;
- Organised crime;
- Trafficking in drugs, arms, human beings;
- Money laundering;
- Promoting the peaceful settlement of disputes;
- Promoting methods of good governance
- Energy as a Mediterranean strategy (*).

(* **Note - Energy as a Mediterranean Strategy.** This is also a possible item for consideration by a PAM ad hoc Committee in the light of the specialised nature of the topic. The key issue here is the security of oil supply. As demand continues to grow in

China and India supplies from the Middle East Gulf are likely to be absorbed by them. The question of adequate supplies for the future will become crucial to PAM Members.

Second Committee:

- The Mediterranean and the effects of globalisation;
- Economic and financial issues, including industry, agriculture and fishery;
- The possibility of setting up a Mediterranean Development Bank, as well as an organ to examine the potential for attracting direct foreign investment;
- Strengthened cooperation amongst willing partners;
- Water management;
- E-government;
- Enhanced development of North-South and South-South economic cooperation;
- The environment, ecology and global warming and climate change;
- Technology transfer;
- Possible joint activities with national constituted bodies, like trade unions and Chambers of commerce;
- Migration flows
- Integrated resource management(*).

(* **Note - The Mediterranean Sea** – The immediate environment of PAM is the sea, which links all the members to one another. In view of its intrinsic wealth, consideration should be given to the setting up of a network to facilitate integrated resource management. The network would seek to bring together the regional management of fishery, shipping, as well as marine and coastal environmental protection. The network should explore how far it would be possible to go in the direction of establishing a Mediterranean marine space as common heritage of all the Mediterranean littoral peoples.

Third Committee:

- Youth as the leadership of tomorrow;
- The role of women in society and gender issues;
- Education for all;
- The value of culture and heritage;
- Sport;
- Media and information;
- Dialogue among religions;
- Alliance of civilizations (*).

(* **Note** - The Committee may consider as a major single issue the Common Heritage of the Mediterranean and Dialogue among Religions and Alliance of Civilisations.

IV. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

MEDIUM-TERM ACTION PLAN 2008-2012

FOCUS AND AIM

A five-year plan serves the purpose of transforming PAM's vision into action and tangible results. It will allow strategic priorities to be determined, proper planning of activities, in-house coordination and establishment of partnerships with other institutions with similar or comparable interests. This action plan will include the activities for a biennial budgetary period in order to ensure continuity and coherence of operations based on predictable budgets and timely mobilisation of resources. The medium-term plan will focus on the activities of the Assembly and the Standing Committees and any *Ad Hoc* Committees and Special Task Forces established. It will also focus on the specific activities entrusted to the Secretariat.

One of the aims is for PAM to become a Centre of Excellence on Mediterranean Parliamentary Affairs, with a vision of providing a common platform for dialogue in its areas of competence and serve as a mechanism to facilitate the rationalisation of initiatives for the benefit of all its members.

The medium-term plan will lay down a calendar to harmonise the work and activities of the Assembly, the Committees and the Secretariat.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

It is critical for PAM to establish close contacts with other international and regional organisations, as well as academic and research institutions, the private sector and civil society. Partnerships with other national, regional and international actors relevant to the Mediterranean area are essential to the implementation of PAM mandate.

In order to make PAM effort all inclusive and accessible to anyone who wishes to contribute to its vision, it is imperative to establish links with other Parliamentary organisations concerned with Mediterranean affairs, and build partnerships with, inter-alia, other European-Mediterranean Organisations, notably: the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE, the Assembly of the Western European Union, the European Parliament, the EMPA, the IPU, the Maghreb Consultative Council and the Arab Inter Parliamentary Union.

POLITICAL COMMITMENT – A SHARED VISION AND RESPONSIBILITY

PAM represents the will of its Member States to be an action-oriented organisation to develop the collective vision through concrete projects for everyone's benefit. It will attempt to bring out the best from its Members and exploit every situation for

common interest. Every project or activity will be a partnership, and therefore it will be crucial to have the closest relations possible with all national parliaments. This will ensure optimum allocation of both input and resources. The commitment and dedication of each of its MPs, whether individually or as a team, is critical to the very success of PAM.

PAM EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

In addition to its statutory activities and regular meetings, and in order to inform the general public of its role, PAM will have to engage, with the assistance of national parliaments, private sector and civil society, in the organisation and sponsorship of political, cultural, sport, youth events and other activities that further its vision of the Mediterranean.

WORKING METHODOLOGY

In its initial stages, the Assembly, in similar fashion to other international and regional parliamentary assemblies, will act as a forum for debate on key issues and exchange of experiences, practices and lessons learnt. It will act as a laboratory for regional parliamentary initiatives, as well as a common work platform. It will have a consultative character and will form and issue opinions, as well as make recommendations to national parliaments and governments, to regional fora and international organisations.

Thanks to the commitment and active participation of their individual members, national delegations will be the driving force of the system, as they constitute an essential bridge between PAM and national/local institutions whose interests and concerns they reflect. In this capacity, they also represent the Assembly at the national and local constituencies, thus ensuring a two-way channel that is essential for communication and interaction.

In an initial phase, the Assembly will meet in a plenary session once a year. However, the option of meeting as and when necessary will be retained.

Debate in the Assembly is prepared and supported by the work of the Standing Committees. The three Standing Committees, through their respective sectoral activities, prepare and provide the Assembly with reports and recommendations on specific subjects. After debating and endorsing the reports, all Members of the Assembly have the responsibility of conveying the conclusions to national parliaments, and then reporting back to the Assembly on their impact and implementation at the national level.

To date, the Standing Committees have met once focusing their attention on a single theme. PAM now has its own support structures, which allow for and require the Committees and their respective Members to engage in an extended set of priority issues. In order to allow the Committees to play the critical role entrusted to them, it has been recommended that at least two meetings are held each year. These meetings will be strategically placed in the annual calendar (preferably in the second half of January and in September), in order for their Members to debate and approve the reports and/or take note of progress made, and allow for a team-building process to take place among participants.

The work of the Committees will be based on the activities of rapporteurs, who will lead the *Ad Hoc* Committees and the Special Task Forces. The rapporteurs will report regularly to the Standing Committees on the progress made in their respective groups and on the recommendations to be formulated to the Assembly. These working groups, which will ideally be composed of a core of 5 – 6 participants, will be open to all interested members of the Assembly in order to ensure the widest possible participation in debate on any given topic. For practical purposes, it has been suggested insofar as is possible that working groups should use a single working language for their activities. The parliament hosting meetings of *Ad Hoc* Committee and the Special Task Forces will bear interpretation cost, if required. Once working groups have produced a final draft of the report and recommendations, this document will be translated into the official languages of the Assembly, Arabic, English and French. By using this approach, MPs are entrusted by the Bureau and Standing Committees with the responsibility of preparing detailed proposals on issues of interest and concern to the Assembly in consultation with their colleagues, experts of the sector, partner parliaments, international institutions and civil society.

OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

In order to inform national constituencies, regional and international institutions, and the public at large about the work and mandate of PAM, it is essential to have a clear communication strategy based on a number of activities involving all members of the Assembly, including their national public information officers. The strategy builds on the following elements:

- Identification of key messages spelling out the vision, the scope and the approach of PAM, so that every PAM Member is able to convey a consistent message to their national institutions, constituencies and media;
- Establishment of a dedicated network of media personalities;
- Creation of an attractive and user-friendly PAM website, in the official languages of the Assembly. The web site would include all information relative to the Assembly, its subsidiary bodies, its members, background documents and archives, brief papers by themes, directory of its members, calendar of events, photo-archive, study and job opportunities, useful links, and list of contacts at the Secretariat;
- The strategy will also build on the organisation of interviews by international and national media of PAM MPs, as well as the publication of articles on PAM and the preparation of Op-eds, as required;
- The regular publication of press releases, a PAM Bulletin and a Fact Sheet will contribute to promoting the work of the Assembly and its members;
- The organisation or the sponsoring of cultural, sport and youth events will also contribute to the implementation of PAM outreach strategy;
- Holding of regular information meetings with ambassadors from PAM region (an informal group);
- Appointment of PAM Good Will Ambassadors;
- Establishment of a PAM Graduate Study Programme;
- Institution of an annual “Day of the Mediterranean”;
- Establishment of PAM Award programme.

V. THE WAY FORWARD

Based on the assumption that the methodology described above, in accordance with the terms of the Statute and Rules of the Assembly, is endorsed by the participants, the success of PAM depends on the collective efforts of all its members dedicating their attention, time and energy to furthering its goal. This requires their ongoing commitment in all the institutions, fora, national, regional and local assemblies, and academic and economic organs where they work and represent PAM's vision.

With a view to achieving the objectives laid down in this strategy document "Building on our Common Mediterranean Heritage", the members of PAM present at the second session of the Assembly, meeting in Malta from 22 to 24 November 2007, are determined to promote the centrality of the Mediterranean by way of coordination, cooperation and consultation at the regional level.

Central to attaining those goals are the fostering of political will, the enhancement of economic development and sharing values and cultural specificities that are predominant throughout the Mediterranean region as a whole.

The members present hereby reaffirm their political will to promoting and achieving this vision