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2nd Standing Committee on Economic, Social and Environmental Cooperation

“Climate Change challenges: after Paris and Marrakech”

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Since its establishment, PAM has regularly addressed the issue of climate change. In particular, together with the UN, PAM was able to gather parliamentarians from around the world to agree upon a joint statement of commitment to mitigate and contain climate change in the form of the “Malta Declaration”. The document, signed in 2009, was presented by PAM on the occasion of the COP15, held in Copenhagen, Denmark, in December 2009.
2. The report and resolution on Environment, adopted by PAM at its 8th Plenary Session (Marseille, France, 2014), explained how the perception of climate change has changed since the 1970s. These report and resolution examined the growing consciousness of the impact of climate change, in terms of human health, heat waves and extreme weather events, agriculture and food security, the economy, rising of sea-level, and drinking water. The documents also analysed the decisions taken at the UN Climate Change Conferences in Doha 2012 (COP18) and in Warsaw 2013 (COP19) and explained what Mediterranean countries could do to implement those decisions. The report also provided an overview of the effects of climate change in the MENA region, and concluded that the Mediterranean region was particularly vulnerable to climate change. The future scenario for the region was considered dramatic as, in addition to the rising of sea level and air temperatures, there would be an increase in extreme weather events such as heat waves, with great impact on agriculture, food security and water availability.
3. On the occasion of the PAM 9th Plenary Session, held in Monaco on 2 - 4 February 2015, PAM report focused on government actions needed to mitigate future emissions in the atmosphere, to increase the absorption capacity of the greenhouse gases by the natural environment and to adapt to climate change. Other main recommendations referred to energy transition, to the

carbon added tax proposal (CAT), to climate and international security. In the documents, it was underlined that the CAT would be a deterrent to the excessive use of fossil fuels and it may set a price of carbon, whereby all economic agents that emit and consume “carbon content” will have to bear the economic cost of these emissions.

4. PAM also participated and contributed to the COP21, held in Paris, in December 2015. On that occasion, PAM reaffirmed its commitment in supporting the efforts of the international community, and the UNFCCC particularly, for a constant and shared reduction of the emissions. PAM underlined the importance of promoting concrete cooperation on medium-sized projects, typically those worn by local communities, and which are targeted to address both the impact of climate change and the legitimate demands of developing countries. PAM participation at the high-level segment of the Paris Climate Change Conference underlined, once more, the commitment of the Assembly to environment-related issues, due to their critical relevance for the life conditions of the Mediterranean people. The COP21 saw the signing of the Paris Agreement, a historical document which underlines the role of governments and society for the next years on fighting climate change. An in-depth analysis of the Paris Agreement will be provided in the following chapters of this report.

II. PAM ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

5. Since the adoption of PAM Report and Resolution in Monaco, the Assembly continued its efforts on this priority topic by contributing to several international events bringing the voice of Mediterranean parliamentarians on the international arena. PAM participated and contributed to the following events:
6. **Mediterranean Climate Summit MEDCOP 21, Marseille, 4 - 5 June 2015.** In Marseille, PAM underlined the role of civil society in addressing climate change in a renewed cooperation perspective that makes local authorities, associations, businesses, and networks working as catalysts for sustainable development. Relevance was given to the citizens of the world, who demand a change on the path of green energy, sustainable development and respect for the environment.
7. **IPU Parliamentary meeting on Climate Change, Paris, 5 – 6 December 2015.** On the occasion of the COP 21, PAM, represented by Hon. Florin Urca (Romania) also participated in the Parliamentary meeting organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the French Parliament. The Meeting provided parliamentarians with an opportunity to obtain first-hand information on the main issues and approaches of COP21/CMP11, giving them the opportunity to interact with government negotiators involved in the decision-making process, gain better knowledge of the recommendations adopted by the IPU with regard to parliamentary action on climate change and exchange views on parliamentary follow-up to the Conference in Paris¹. Relevance was given to the CAT, designed to discourage the use of fossil fuels, the main sources of greenhouse gas emissions, as explained in para 4 of this report.

¹ <http://www.ipu.org/splz-e/cop21.htm>

8. **MEDCOP22, Tangiers, 18 - 19 July 2016.** The objectives of this Mediterranean gathering were to improve the existing initiatives related to the climate action in the region and to formulate innovative ideas by associations of local, national and regional society networks. The conference also enabled stakeholders to present their projects and inform about the development of these projects. Moreover, the dialogue encouraged and raised awareness of the benefit and need of actions against climate change in the Mediterranean region.
9. Among other events, PAM also contributed to:
- a) Second UN Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL) Forum, New York, 17 - 22 May 2015;
 - b) UN Briefing on Sustainable Energy for All - progress made, new leadership, long-term arrangements, SDG7 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, New York, 16 September 2015;
 - c) EDISON Conference on Energy Demand and Climate Change: A Mediterranean Nexus (in cooperation with PAM), Milan, 15 October 2015;
 - d) GEF/UNEP Mediterranean Workshop of Members of Parliament and other Stakeholders on Climate Change Adaptation in the Mediterranean Coastal Areas, Athens, 5 - 6 November 2015;
 - e) Annual International Geographical Union - IGU Commission on Mediterranean Basin - COMB Conference “The Mediterranean sustainability between climate change and human mobility”, Antalya, 1 - 4 June 2016;
 - f) World Meteorological Organization (WMO) 68th Session of the Executive Council, Geneva, 15 - 24 June 2016.

III. THE PARIS AGREEMENT

10. The Paris Agreement² was adopted at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Paris from 30 November to 13 December 2015. The Paris Agreement has charted a new course in the global effort to combat climate change and it has marked the latest step in the evolution of the UN climate change regime and built on the work undertaken under the Convention³.
11. The Paris Agreement covered many of the crucial areas⁴ identified as essential for a landmark conclusion:
- a) **Mitigation** – reducing emissions fast enough to achieve the goal of limiting the increase of global temperature;
 - b) **Transparency system** and global stock-take – accounting for climate action;
 - c) **Adaptation** – strengthening ability of countries to deal with climate impacts;
 - d) **Loss and damage** – strengthening ability to recover from climate impacts;
 - e) **Support** – including finance, for nations to build clean, resilient futures;

² https://unfccc.int/files/meetings/paris_nov_2015/application/pdf/paris_agreement_english_.pdf

³ https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=XXVII-7-d&chapter=27&clang=_en

⁴ <http://newsroom.unfccc.int/unfccc-newsroom/finale-cop21/>

- f) **Compliance mechanism**, overseen by a committee of experts who operates in a non-punitive way.
12. The Paris Agreement seeks to accelerate and intensify the actions and investments needed for a **sustainable low carbon future**⁵. Its central aim is to strengthen the global response to the threats of climate change by containing the increase of the average temperature of the planet well below 2 degree Celsius compared to pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. The Agreement also aims at strengthening the ability of countries to deal with the impacts of climate change, as well as setting a long-term direction. Countries emissions will peak as soon as possible also recognizing that peaking will take longer for developing country.
13. The Agreement implies that, in order to reach these ambitious goals, **appropriate financial flows, a new technology framework and an enhanced capacity building framework are to put in place**, thus supporting action by developing countries and the most vulnerable countries, in line with their own national objectives: setting a new goal on the provision of finance from the USD 100 billion floor, and an Initiative for Capacity Building, considered as a priority especially for particularly vulnerable countries.
14. The Paris Agreement requires all Parties to put forward their best efforts through “**nationally determined contributions**” (NDCs) and to increase these efforts in the years ahead. In 2018, Parties will take stock of the collective efforts in relation to progress towards the goal set in the Paris Agreement and to inform the preparation of NDCs. There will also be a global stocktake every 5 years to assess the collective progress towards achieving the purpose of the Agreement and to inform further individual actions by Parties⁶. By decision 1/CP.21, paragraph 22, the Conference of the Parties (COP) invited Parties to communicate their first NDC no later than when the Party submits its respective instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession of the Paris Agreement.
15. In accordance with Article 21, paragraph 1, of the Paris Agreement⁷, the Agreement shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after the date on which at least 55 Parties to the Convention, accounting in total for at least an estimated 55 % of the total global greenhouse gas emissions, have deposited their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with the Depositary.
16. As of 30 January 2017, there are 193 signatories to the Paris Agreement. Of these, 127 Parties to the Convention have also deposited their instruments of ratification, acceptance or approval. The latest instrument of ratification was received on 25 January 2017⁸.

⁵ https://unfccc.int/essential_background/items/6031.php

⁶ https://unfccc.int/paris_agreement/items/9485.php

⁷ https://unfccc.int/files/meetings/paris_nov_2015/application/pdf/paris_agreement_english_.pdf

⁸ <https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/CN/2016/CN.735.2016-Eng.pdf>

17. The Paris Agreement **entered into force on 4 November 2016**. The first session of the Conference of the Parties serving on the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement was convened in conjunction with COP 22 in Marrakech, Morocco.
18. The international community and the public opinion underlined strengths and weaknesses of the Paris Agreement. Among the strengths:
 - a) The Paris Agreement urges all nations of the world to protect the climate and all the world's biggest emitters - including the United States, China, Europe, and India - have agreed to cut their carbon pollution, speed their transition to cleaner energy, and strengthen their actions over time.
 - b) It also seeks to reduce the risks and impacts of climate change through: keeping global average temperature well below 2 °C and limiting temperature increase to 1.5 °C, both of them above pre-industrial levels.
 - c) It creates a way to ensure everyone's living up to their promises, by establishing a process for countries to review their progress in cutting emissions every five years. Just as important, this window creates an opportunity for civil society groups and citizens to keep the pressure on governments to increase their commitments to cutting emissions – also submitted every five years.
 - d) It requires developed countries to provide financial resources to assist them to reach adaptation and mitigation goals. The agreement says that "action and support" are needed. This requires early warning systems and risk-insurance facilities, as well as climate change related insurance facility supported by developed countries. The deal will also encourage trillions of dollars of capital to be spent adapting to the effects of climate change, including infrastructure like sea walls and programs to deal with poor soil, and developing renewable energy sources like solar and wind power.
19. Among the weaknesses:
 - a) The emission cuts promised by countries are still wholly insufficient.
 - b) Critics said that the United States, the world's biggest economy, might back away from the targets set in the Paris climate agreement, following the outcome of the 2016 US presidential election, which saw the Republic Party winning.
 - c) The document doesn't create a new international legal obligation.
 - d) The Agreement includes a promise by rich countries to channel at least \$100 billion annually, but does not create new international funding obligations beyond those in the Framework Convention. This also is not part of the legally binding treaty part. It was shifted into the "decisions," the second part of the agreement, which is without obligation.

IV. THE KIGALI DEAL

20. The Kigali Deal, held in Kigali, Rwanda, on 15 October 2016, completed coverage of the United Nations meeting in Paris (2015) and efforts to reach a deal on emissions reduction.

Relevance was given to cutting the worldwide use of a powerful planet-warming chemical coolants called hydrofluorocarbons, or HFCs, used in air-conditioners and refrigerators⁹.

21. The Kigali Deal included specific targets and timetables to replace HFCs with more planet-friendly alternatives, trade sanctions to punish scofflaws, and an agreement by rich countries to help finance the transition of poor countries to the costlier replacement products.
22. Finally, the Deal divides the world economy into three tracks¹⁰. The richest countries, including the United States and those in the European Union, will freeze the production and consumption of HFCs by 2018, reducing them to about 15 percent of 2012 levels by 2036. Much of the rest of the world, including China, Brazil and all of Africa, will freeze HFC use by 2024, reducing it to 20 percent of 2021 levels by 2045. A small group of the world's hottest countries (India, Pakistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait) will have the most lenient schedule, freezing HFC use by 2028 and reducing it to about 15 percent of 2025 levels by 2047.
23. The Kigali agreement was also expected to lead to the reduction of the equivalent of 70 billion tons of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, about two times the carbon pollution produced annually by the entire world¹¹.
24. Many scientists say the Kigali accord will stave off an increase of atmospheric temperatures of nearly one degree Fahrenheit (0.5 °C)¹². This deal also has been criticized by some scientists for being too weak, because the Paris and Kigali agreements together do not add up to the solution to global warming¹³. In each case, environmental advocates and countries that had pushed for a more stringent deal still called the Kigali amendment a significant step forward¹⁴.

V. THE COP22

25. The 22nd Conference of the Parties and the 12th Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (COP22/CMP12), was held in Marrakech on 7 - 18 November 2016. The Conference also served as the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA1), following the entering into force of the Paris Agreement on 4 November 2016.
26. PAM participated at the COP 22 and its President, Sen. Lhou Lmarbouh, on the occasion of the High Level Segment of the COP underlined the importance of promoting concrete legislation

⁹ http://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/15/world/africa/kigali-deal-hfc-air-conditioners.html?_r=0

¹⁰ Ibidem

¹¹ Ibidem

¹² <http://in.reuters.com/article/us-un-climatechange-deal-idINKBN12F02T>

¹³ <http://www.independent.co.uk/environment/hfcs-deal-rwanda-climate-global-warming-hfc-gases-kigali-john-kerry-air-con-a7362781.html>

¹⁴ http://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/15/world/africa/kigali-deal-hfc-air-conditioners.html?smprod=nytcore-iphone&smid=nytcore-iphone-share&_r=4

and solutions, following the decisions of the Paris Agreement. The president also urged the States in order to control their own public policies and to respect the decisions taken.

27. PAM also participated at the Inter-Parliamentary Union meeting on climate change, organized on 13 November 2016, at the margins of the COP22 in Marrakech. On that occasion PAM, represented by its President, underlined the importance to see the national transform the resolutions of Marrakech into concrete and applicable legislative measures.
28. CMA1 included the work program established at COP21, put in place various modalities, procedures and guidelines (MPGs) for the transparency regime, the information required in communicating NDCs, and the processes to take stock and raise ambition, facilitate implementation and promote compliance.
29. The COP22 covered many of the crucial areas identified as essential for a landmark conclusion:
 - a) **Finance.** With regards to NDCs, the COP22 sought to find \$100 billion dollars annually by 2020 for supporting developing countries in order to invest on cleaned energy. It also called for the setting of a specific timeline and milestones for progress. This aims at enhancing the provision of financial resources, including for technology development and transfer, capacity-building support, reduce bureaucracy, increase supporting operations and investments in innovative projects.
 - b) **Adaptation Fund.** This body exists to serve the Kyoto Protocol. About the role and existence of this organ, the discussions fell flat, with countries merely agreeing to discuss the issue and hand in their views by 31 March 2017.
 - c) **Facilitative Dialogue.** A key theme of COP22 was debating how to create a fair “rulebook” that all countries could share and have confidence in when assessing each other’s climate pledges. The technicalities of the rulebook will be discussed in 2018.
 - d) **Orphan issues.** These were tasks for which no one was assigned responsibility. They include important issues, such as common timeframes for future climate pledges, and a new goal for climate finance.
 - e) **Loss and damage.** It is a five-year work plan, which will start in 2017 and will see countries start to formally address topics such as slow-onset impacts of climate change, non-economic losses and migration.
30. A new coalition and platform were launched:
 - 2050 Pathways Platform, in order to help other places and organisations to formulate long-term plans.
 - NDC Partnership, in order to facilitate the installation of national contributions.

31. It deserves to be noted that, at the COP22, US State Secretary, John Kerry, reassured other Parties that US policies won't change, although the new elected President assertion.
32. The COP22 adopted the Marrakech Action Proclamation for our Climate and Sustainable Development¹⁵. On this, the Conference reaffirmed its commitment in supporting the efforts against Climate Change, urged the importance of promoting concrete cooperation, at all levels, for applying the tasks of the Paris Agreement. It also underlined the role of States in order to support poor countries with economic, logistic and material aids. The Marrakech Conference marked an important inflection point in its commitment to bring together the whole international community to tackle one of the greatest challenges of our time.
33. Holding CMA1 less than one year after the adoption of the Agreement itself is not only symbolic but also largely unprecedented for international agreements of this importance.
34. The Conference was, perhaps, more notable for the action that took place outside of the negotiations, with politicians, countries and organisations using it as an opportunity to announce new initiatives, strategy and finance.
35. The Paris Agreement was a complete document that set out the overarching goals and framework for international climate action. But setting out the details is a longer process, which the countries participating in COP22 have decided should be completed by 2018, with a review of progress in 2017. This timeline means that few of the loose ends left by the Paris Agreement were completely tied up in Marrakech. Instead, the process was one of defining the issues at stake and outlining what kind of initiatives will be needed by the 2018 deadline.
36. For instance, within the first five months of 2017, countries have to submit their views on the adaptation measures that they agreed to submit as part of the Paris Agreement, what features should be included as part of future NDCs, and how future climate action should be transparent. This document also calls for a number of workshops to take place, covering topics such as adaptation and transparency.

VI. THE CONTRIBUTION OF PAM

37. PAM and its parliamentarians have a key role to play in the global efforts to contrast climate change. Being climate change the result of numerous factors, the areas to contrast it are equally numerous.
38. During the PAM activities dedicated to the issue of waste management, it emerged that a modern and integrated approach would allow not only to reduce emissions generated by landfills, but also to create a circular economy system that is self-sufficient, absorbing by itself the emissions that it generates. Therefore, the continuation of PAM activities on this sector is recommended.

¹⁵ http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/marrakech_nov_2016/application/pdf/marrakech_action_proclamation.pdf

39. Productivity, Energy, Transport are, among others, sectors in which there is a wide margin to improve in terms of emissions reduction and sustainability. In tackling these issues, it is recommended for PAM to underline, in each possible occasion, that development is a priority as much as the protection of the environment.
40. In addition, PAM should continue to mobilize its constituency to reach the citizens of the Mediterranean through specific campaigns and social initiatives to be carried out by member parliaments at a national level.
41. With specific regards to climate change, PAM should reinforce its ties with all national and international actors involved in climate change, and also establish new partnerships with other actors, in the belief that cooperation is crucial and that a solution can be reached only with the efforts of all players, from institutions to individual citizens. The possibility to establish a mechanism for PAM to monitor and assess the status of implementation of the Paris Agreement could be considered, on a voluntary basis.
42. Considering the importance and utility of the MedCop as occasion for Mediterranean players to gather, discuss and exchange best practises and lessons learned, it would be useful for the MedCop to be organized also when the presidency of the COP is held by a non-Mediterranean country.