



PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE MEDITERRANEAN
ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE DE LA MEDITERRANEE
الجمعية البرلمانية للبحر الأبيض المتوسط

**2nd Standing Committee on Economic, Social
and Environmental Cooperation**

Special Task Force on Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in the Mediterranean

Rapporteur: Hon. Ridha Bouargoub (Tunisia)

***Resolution unanimously adopted during the IVth Plenary Session
On 24 October 2009 in Istanbul***

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean

- a) Acknowledging the vital role that Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) play in the economies and the societal fabric of all PAM Member States;
- b) Recalling that achieving peace and political stability throughout the entire Mediterranean is necessary for durable prosperity in the region and a key element in attracting finance and foreign investment for SMEs to the South and East Mediterranean;
- c) Acknowledging that while the current economic context might impede industrial growth in the short term it could also bring about innovative economic approaches whereby entrepreneurs look for synergies of actions and exchange best practices;
- d) Concerned by the high level of unemployment, in particular among young people in the region ;
- e) Underlining however that the Mediterranean region is a potentially large reservoir of economic growth. In that respect, insists on the particular role that women play in both the formal and informal economic sectors;
- f) Recalling PAM's aims of enhancing economic and social cooperation between all PAM States through partnership. In that context acknowledges that the PAM can act as a bridge between the business world and the political world on issues of common interest;
- g) Bearing in mind that future competitiveness of the PAM countries' economies as a whole will largely depend on the success of SMEs in adapting to the current economic context;
- h) Recalling the PAM Resolution on the *Commitment towards Free Trade in the Mediterranean* adopted at the Monaco Plenary Session on 14 November 2008;
- i) Recalling the goal of the EuroMed partnership to achieve free trade in the Euromed region by 2010;
- j) Having regards to the Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Enterprise as an instrument to stimulate the exchange of good practices for SMEs in the MEDA region,

Decides

- 1) To invite all PAM parliaments to conduct a review of existing mechanisms/bodies (such as national/regional/local investment centres) aiming at stimulating investments;
- 2) To invite all PAM States to organise seminars/conferences/workshops with the participation of representatives of SMEs associations, private banking institutions/investors to reflect on the current economic context and measures that can be taken to stimulate trade at national and regional level;
- 3) Amid the current economic context, monitor the policies of PAM governments towards private banking institutions in order that these maintain inter alia their risk capital financing for SMEs;
- 4) To promote the exchange of best practices among PAM Member States with respect to access to investment - including foreign capital - as well as to education and technology with the aim to foster the transfer of know-how and improvement of skills - including managerial skills - in all PAM Member States;
- 5) To promote policies, at PAM Member States, level that place individuals – including women - at the centre of economic policies directed at SMEs be it by fostering a culture of entrepreneurship or by enabling employees to regularly follow training programmes in order to develop skills and improve their knowledge and more specifically on new technologies;
- 6) To collectively support the Euro-Mediterranean Charter for SMEs and to invite PAM Member States which are not members of the Union for the Mediterranean to consider endorsing the 10 action points of the said Charter;
- 7) To support the promotion, at national level, of educational programmes based on equality and equal opportunities as well as of social programmes that enable women to actively contribute to the economies of PAM countries be it as employers or employees within SMEs;
- 8) That parliamentarians in PAM countries shall monitor the access to finance instruments and promotion programmes by entrepreneurs, young people and women;
- 9) To further study how and to what extent PAM can serve as a networking interface in the Mediterranean region for a continuous exchange of information of SMEs actions and policies/instruments through the contributions of the various regional and international bodies interested in the region. To this end, decides to pursue and strengthen its cooperation with actors from the private sector such as BUSINESSMED and the Euromed banking network in the framework of its 2nd Standing Committee;
- 10) To invite PAM Member States to establish mechanisms such as the “ Banque de Financement des Petites et Moyennes Entreprises” (BFPME) established in Tunisia for the development and the nurturing of SMEs during all steps of their growth;
- 11) To invite PAM Member States, in view of the establishment of a free trade area in the euro-Mediterranean region by 2010, to take the necessary measures to facilitate the free movement of goods and persons to the benefit of SMEs in the region and in particular to strengthen the integration of markets from East and South of the Mediterranean;
- 12) To support the creation of a Mediterranean Investment Bank and request that it establishes funding mechanisms catered to the needs of SMEs;

13) To promote, under the aegis of PAM, the setting up of «Meetings of the External Trade and Investments agencies of the Mediterranean region»;

14) To organise in parallel to the above-mentioned initiative the participation of entrepreneurs of the Mediterranean region, for example, by business sectors.