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3rd Standing Committee on Dialogue among Civilisations and Human Rights

“Job creation and Unemployment in the Mediterranean”

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Abstract

In the recent months, the Mediterranean countries have shown considerable dedication to the issue of job creation in the region. In this report, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean encourages policy makers to continue their commitment to make job creation possible in the region. Notwithstanding all the important developments that have been taking place to facilitate job opportunities, further efforts need to be done in order to make employment a reality for the entire labour force in the region.

In this report, PAM puts forward the facts relevant to unemployment in the Mediterranean to provide its parliamentarians with an overview of the labour market's situation in the region. The report focuses on portraying a comprehensive picture of all the complex challenges which characterise the Mediterranean region with regards to unemployment and job creation. Furthermore, importance is also given to the interdependence between the major challenges which have significant impact on job creation. In this regard, the report calls for immediate action of all Mediterranean countries to commit themselves for the development of both the workforce and the labour market of the Mediterranean basin.

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I. Introduction

1. The Mediterranean region is characterised by a diverse geographical, political, economical and cultural dimension. Notwithstanding these significant differences, countries whose coastline lies in the Mediterranean share a common challenging future for the region. The financial crisis in the North with the austerity measures imposed on the EU Mediterranean states, the ongoing political reforms in the Balkan region, the Arab Spring in the Southern Mediterranean and the instability in the Middle East due to the Arab-Israeli conflict have triggered a feeling of uncertainty amongst the Mediterranean peoples. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) does take into account and fully understands that due to the above mentioned challenges, the region is experiencing significant changes. The demographic transformations on both shores of the Mediterranean and the exponential increase of the labour force in the Southern Mediterranean, in particular, are also having a considerable impact on unemployment and the need of job creation in the region.

2. High unemployment rates in the Mediterranean region have become a prime concern not only to the peoples themselves but most importantly to policy makers. It is of utmost importance that parliamentarians recognise the fact that the Mediterranean cannot be considered as a whole entity when it comes to labour market and employment. Unemployment is a concern present in all countries in the Mediterranean Sea; between the end of 2011 and the beginning of 2012 the rates of unemployment in some countries of the Euro Mediterranean region were; 22.8% in Spain¹, 20.7% in Greece², 9.3%³ in Italy and 9.2%⁴ in France. In the Middle East, unemployment rates in the same period, stood at 21% in Lebanon, and 25% in Egypt, whereas in Tunisia unemployment rate has reached 30%.⁵

3. A year after the Arab revolts set off, the Mediterranean region is much concerned about its future. Uncertainty lies in the extent to which the political transformations in the Southern shores will develop into reformed regimes willing to increase the participation of the people creating the ground for a competitive economic and political system. This doubt also characterises the Northern Mediterranean - the European Mediterranean and also the North Eastern shores. Despite the fact that all Mediterranean countries face unprecedented challenges, the fact that the Mediterranean economies are confronted with social and economic crisis on unequal scale should not be underestimated. The *Institut de Prospective Economique du Monde Méditerranéen* (IPEMED) foresees that, if the economic recovery of the Southern Mediterranean countries does not take place with a fast pace, the rate of unemployment in the southern part of the Mediterranean cannot but dramatically increase⁶.

4. With unemployment rates which exceeds 10 % in the MENA region and with the financial difficulties in the EU Mediterranean countries like Spain, France, Portugal, Italy and Greece, job creation is a must for sustainable development in this region.⁷ It is now time that parliamentarians take immediate action to work together to provide decent and long term sustainable jobs to the Mediterranean people.

¹ <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/28/business/global/spanish-unemployment-rate-rises-to-22-8-percent.html>

² <http://www.foxbusiness.com/markets/2012/03/15/greeces-unemployment-rate-hits-record-207-in-4q/>

³ <http://www.france24.com/en/20120301-italy-unemployment-rate-hits-record-92>

⁴ <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/68504e74-2fea-11e1-8ad0-00144feabdc0.html#axzz1qVo64O7n>

⁵ http://www.economist.com/blogs/schumpeter/2011/02/youth_unemployment

⁶ IPEMED – *Mediterranean 2030*

⁷ ILO recommendations

II. Main challenges of the Mediterranean Region

a) Demographic change

5. The demographic situation in the Mediterranean differs widely. While in the Southern part of the region, the younger generations constitute the largest percentage of the population, the Northern shores of the Mediterranean are mainly characterised by an adult population making its way out of the workforce and high percentage of unemployment amongst the youth and those above 50 years of age. For such reasons, the Southern Mediterranean will have a larger workforce which could be needed greatly by the North, where a larger percentage will drop out of the workforce in the coming decades (becoming dependent on the younger generations).⁸ Though Southern Mediterranean countries might not experience workforce shortages, they face the challenge to absorb the influx of the people in the labour force, leaving part of the potential workforce outside the labour market i.e. increasing the unemployment rate. The work opportunities in the European Union will therefore be attracting the numerous active populations in the South and East to compensate for the large percentage of people in the workforce.⁹ This dimension of the Mediterranean underlines the economic interdependence between the countries and that cooperation is therefore to be ensured.

6. The Balkan region also plays an important role in this regard. Despite the ongoing progress, compared to Europe, Balkan countries still face a number of structural difficulties when it comes to labour force shortages in some sectors.¹⁰ Notwithstanding these labour shortages, this part of the region is also faced with very high emigration rate to EU countries especially amongst the highly qualified. Unemployment in the Balkans can be reduced if the current rate of job creation is maintained in the future; IPEMED estimates an annual rate of 2.7%.

7. One other aspect which should be taken into consideration is the difficult circumstance people approaching the age of 50 or over face when they become redundant. In this regards, the European Mediterranean countries face one major concern, i.e.: the aging workforce is being shut out of the labour market as employers tend to prefer younger and “cheaper” employees. The Mediterranean countries should greatly consider developing strategic policies which address the needs of this working group.

b) Migration

8. It is often argued that circular and temporary migration in the Mediterranean could help alleviate future imbalances in domestic demographic situations. This alone, however, will neither solve the deficit of the workforce in the North, nor the excess of the labour force in the South.¹¹ What this greater mobility can compensate for are some sectorial labour deficits in the North like caring professions, construction work and other services. Furthermore, this mobility could also strengthen qualification levels from the Southern and the Balkans shores of the Mediterranean. PAM encourages further exchange through bilateral agreements between countries from both shores of the Mediterranean for the purpose of decreasing the risk of permanent migration and of brain-drain.¹² Spain is, in fact, a country which is on the border line of developing a situation of brain drain locally. A large percentage of Spain’s educated youth have been leaving their home country in search for more satisfying job opportunities abroad. Spaniards mainly migrate to Germany and France, as well

⁸ IPEMED p. 75

⁹ IPEMED p. 59

¹⁰ IPEMED p.65

¹¹ IPEMED p. 63

¹² IPEMED p.13

as Great Britain and Eastern European countries like Poland, where experienced professionals are in demand.¹³ Others move to emerging economies in Latin America like Brazil or Argentina for language similarities. In fact the language barrier is a concern which limits the possibilities of structured and regulated migration all around the Mediterranean. It is therefore of utmost importance that Parliamentarians guarantee that a framework for regional cooperation on this matter can be set up.

9. PAM acknowledges the fact that a number of Mediterranean countries have already implemented strategic policies which deal with structured migration, e.g. Italy-Egypt. This initiative focused on a controlled migratory policy of Egyptian people migrating to Italy through offering these Egyptian citizens concrete and regular job opportunities in the Italian labour market, also through the teaching of the Italian language. Such initiative should be given particular importance as it can be considered as the key to avoid informal work, more common amongst women and the youth in the Mediterranean region. Other Mediterranean countries could use it as a model in order to guarantee further cooperation between states when it comes to the transfer of knowledge and skills. The Italy-Egypt model could be taken as an example to enhance job creation across border, and considered as a soft security measure, as well as, a strategy to regulate migration. PAM has already taken the initiative to dedicate a report on migration in the region that has been adopted during the VI Plenary Session which took place in Palermo, Italy in October 2011. Emphasis should therefore be made on facilitating study and work permits for qualified and educated individuals regardless of their nationality in the Mediterranean. The PAM Fez Programme represents a good basis for this approach.

c) The Youth and Unemployment

10. The situation in North Africa after the Arab uprisings, which left many countries in a period of institutional transition, has also resulted in higher rates of unemployment amongst youth. This instability is also having a negative impact on Foreign Direct Investment which will result into less job opportunities. Youth unemployment rates are similarly large; the Mediterranean countries as a whole have an average unemployment rate of 26%, with European Mediterranean countries at 28% and Middle East and North Africa countries at 24%.¹⁴ These estimations show clearly that the region faces a worsening youth unemployment crisis. Spain is one of the Euro Mediterranean countries which is faced with very high percentages of unemployment amongst youth which figure as the European Union's worst in addition to Greece which is also going through a critical situation.¹⁵ The International Labour Organisation projects that this year the developed economies particularly the European Union will face the largest impact of unemployment.¹⁶ One favourable factor of the MENA region is that the economically active population¹⁷ in 2020 will exceed that on the dependent population — differently than in the North of the Mediterranean

11. However, in this region, the concept of “youth bulge” should not be underestimated. This concept refers to those populations which are mainly made up of a high percentage of youth and which tend to be exceptionally prone to conflicts, the latest example being that of the Arab uprisings. Due to the population’s pressure on economic growth, youth in the Mediterranean are facing great challenges. Due to a lack of motivation derived from a number of states, youth have a greater possibility of turning various forms of organised crime to comfort their despair. In some cases this has

¹³ http://www.ansamed.info/ansamed/en/news/nations/spain/2012/02/06/visualizza_new.html_75485182.html

¹⁴ <http://menablog.worldbank.org/unemployment-mediterranean-effect>

¹⁵ <http://www.economist.com/node/21528616/print>

¹⁶ ILO recommendation

¹⁷ Economically Active Population: the part of the population which is either employed or seeking for employment

also developed into religious fundamentalism and terrorism due to a feeling of alienation from their own society. Therefore, job creation should be considered as key to decrease the percentage of youth criminality and other wrongdoings in the region.

12. PAM delegates should focus their attention on the fact that a large percentage of the employed youth tends to be given short term contracts with low wages and little job satisfaction and, when they are actually assigned a job, the pay can be very low. All these obstacles which the youth encounter are creating numerous implications within the Mediterranean societies. The youth have to struggle to find a job which fulfils them and repays back the hard work they might have undertaken at a younger age.

d) Employment - A Challenge for women

13. In a region where women and young girls face particular worrisome situations when it comes to employment (giving that the percentage of women who either make part of the labour force or of the labour market is much less than that of men — the ratio is higher than 1.0 in North Africa and reaches 2.3 in the Middle East¹⁸ and the percentage of the employed between 15-64 in the European Union is that of 70.1% for males and 58.2% for women¹⁹) the integration of women in social and economic development should be considered as a top priority for the states of the region. As a result of lack of a well- developed social security systems in some Mediterranean countries, a large percentage of women are forced to engage themselves in low-quality, informal sector jobs to earn a living. In North Africa the unemployment rate of young women was that of 41.0 % in 2011 which is considered as the highest percentage in the region. When it comes to the participation of women in the labour force, North Africa is faced with the lowest participation of women — 18.4 % which is the lowest aggregate in the world.²⁰ Countries such as Morocco have made significant developments with regards to women's empowerment. In 2004, H.M. King Mohammed VI has developed the 'Code of personal status', which fights against inequality between men and women. However, more commitment is needed to make a considerable change in this regard.

14. Parliamentarians should not underestimate the progress that some countries have made in the inclusion of women in the labour market in the recent years, however PAM urges the Parliamentarians for more commitment to make women become an integral part of the economic system of the Mediterranean countries.

15. PAM has been actively working on gender issues within the Mediterranean. This is a major concern related to the Third Standing Committee — Dialogue among Civilisations and Human Rights which has developed a special Task Force on gender issues in the Mediterranean. Focus has been made on domestic violence through the creation of a report which was adopted in the PAM's VI Plenary Session in Palermo 2011.

Furthermore, recognizing the importance of the role of women in the labour force, and in society as a whole, PAM envisages to regularly update the findings of the present report. Similarly, the issue of inclusiveness with regards to people with disabilities also deserves special attention and PAM has definitely to monitor the needs of these citizens, who deserve the same rights and opportunities within our societies.

¹⁸ ILO recommendation

¹⁹ <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=tsiem010>

²⁰ ILO recommendation

III. A call for action

16. From a social perspective, employment provides the individual, both, with income and a sense of personal accomplishment. As a result of this, a job loss, or the inability to find work, reduces the person's self-esteem, creates anxiety and can lead to despair. If this becomes the reality of a large percentage of the county's workforce, the problem ceases from being individual and policy makers must ensure to present concrete policies which avoid such circumstances. Therefore, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean is calling for a more enhanced region which takes concrete actions to come up with an employment system suitable for job creation.

a) Economic growth

17. Economic development is a must for future job creation in the region. Emphasis should not only focus on North-South cooperation, but within the Southern and Eastern parts of the region too. This can be encouraged through more developed transport networks to enhance economic exchanges in the southern Mediterranean and the other parts of the region. Both the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean and EMPA, had already considered a Mediterranean investment bank set on the same principles of the European Investment Bank to focus on the needs of the region. However, such proposal was not backed by Germany, which proposed that instead of setting up a new bank, emphasis should be made on consolidating the ones which are already established. As a result, PAM established direct cooperation with the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), in order to advance on this issue.

18. Such partnerships could be designed to encourage funding for SME's which are considered to be a vital key to the creation of wealth and jobs, and infrastructure.²¹ Through SME's Mediterranean countries would enhance sustained growth rates to fight unemployment. The United Nation Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), views the establishments of SME's as prime political objective to develop further the integration of the region with the EU, as this would guarantees further dialogue between the countries. UNIDO also points out that the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean (SEM) has a great potential to succeed in the establishment of SME's for various reasons, one of them being the abundant agricultural and mineral resources found in this part of the region. On the other hand, SEM face significant limitations to generate economic growth through SME's due to limited access to technology and information and an inadequate technical qualification of the labour force amongst others.

19. Parliamentarians must recognise that human capital is a significant determinant of economic growth which has an influence on the labour market and the worker's productivity. By investing in human capital through reformed education and training systems, Mediterranean countries encourage further high quality mobility within the region. Furthermore, PAM encourages all its members to promote the importance of sufficient financial services within the region, to promote investments which can result in new job opportunities by attracting foreign investment. This would also encourage technological development and competitiveness. The need for an improved infrastructure and transport development between the two shores of the Mediterranean to enhance the success of SME's in the region has been highlighted in the 2nd Operational Meeting of the PAM Panel on External Trade and Investments in the Mediterranean 4-5 May 2010, Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland.

20. In this transition period, PAM should ensure the participation of the people to achieve political reforms which will implement new policies which are designed on the people's needs. Emphasis

²¹ IPEMED

should be made on governance, institutional structures and normative framework through legislative and regulatory policies. PAM commits itself by its ongoing will to bring the Mediterranean closer through dialogue and cooperation. It encourages all Parliamentarians to generate an economic model which will reduce inequalities by creating an environment which promotes investment and development.

b) An Interlink between Skills and Employment

21. The economic return of education in the Mediterranean region is being questioned due to the fact that in all countries of the Mediterranean young graduates are finding it hard to enter the labour market. Evidence shows that high unemployment rates are amongst the graduate youth. Therefore, parliamentarians are called to come up with clear vision on the link between skills and the labour market's needs. It has been argued that a more skilled and knowledgeable labour force is more capable of increasing productivity, raising the quality of jobs and therefore resulting in better economic returns. This makes it clear that amendments or improvement in the education system must be encouraged in order to meet the labour market's needs in the best way possible. Education provides the individual with a formative personal and social development, which will, ultimately, result in better employment opportunities. This suggests that a more educated labour force is more competitive and able to achieve growth both on a personal and national level.

22. As a consequence, this assumption can be summed up is that a less educated labour force can limit growth. The fact that workers with higher levels of education earn higher wages supports the notion that education increases per capita economic growth due to higher productivity. However, given that unemployment in the Mediterranean is very high amongst those who obtain higher education certificates, one may pose a negative view of the educational system. This reality shows that there is need to shift the labour market's demands towards skilled labour in some countries of the Mediterranean. Other countries must ensure that the labour market's needs can be satisfied through an educational system which prepares the individual for it. There will be the need to match better training and skills to the needs of the economies in the region. It is very clear that one of the ways in developing employment in the Mediterranean region is training human capital. Education and training enhances the worker's ability to perform more complex tasks through innovation and flexibility to adapt to different situations.²² Furthermore, education can be considered as the key reducing poverty and combating any wrong doings whilst also increasing higher standards of living.

c) Vulnerable employment

23. Vulnerable employment is present in all countries of the Mediterranean with a higher percentage in rural and less developed areas. Vulnerable employment refers to unsafe working conditions due to low wages and insecure work; agriculture and domestic workers continue to play a key role in vulnerable employment which also makes part of the informal sector of the economy. Creating decent jobs for the Mediterranean people is to be considered as a prime priority in the region. Importance should be given to the types of work that are being created and whether or not they are leading to economic development in the region. Stricter sanctions should be introduced for employers engaging workers without work permits, which are not in line with the rules and regulations of the International Labour Organisation. Although some areas of the Mediterranean did obtain significant growth in some areas, this lacked to develop into decent jobs and did not provide significant opportunities for the well-educated people in the workforce.²³

²² http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTMENA/Resources/EDU_02-Chap02-Education.pdf, *Economic Returns to Investment in Education*

²³ ILO recommendation

24. UNIDO has undertaken an approach which provides technical assistance to companies through strengthening the institutional environment. The UNIDO support activities take place into two forms; the first one can be described as “soft” activities which focus on the training of staff and direct assistance to experts.

25. The second form known as “hard” investment activities focuses on the acquisition and development of equipment needed by companies. This initiative by UNIDO shows clearly the need to invest in both the employers and the employees of the region to promote sustainable job creation which will result in economic growth on both a local and regional level.

26. The economic environment in the Mediterranean should be that to avoid weak performance of public employment services whilst also promoting medium sized business development. SPRING²⁴ (Standards, Productivity and Innovation Board) which is a board under the Ministry of Trade and Industry in Singapore, has already taken the initiative to finance microcredits for SME's and to challenge resources to some of the country's least developed regions.²⁵ Emphasis to avoid vulnerable employment should be made on improving the vocational education and training systems, this would provide the people with increased possibilities of employment. The European Training Foundation identifies the importance of not only empower individuals but also the well-being and the function of the labour markets. Revised social security systems such as poverty allowances and pension system, in some areas of the region should also be addressed as a prime priority to enhance social growth in the region.

IV. Current Initiatives in the field of Job Creation

<i>IPEMED – Institut de Prospective Économique du Monde Méditerranéen</i>	Together with other Euro-Mediterranean organisations (CARIM, CIHEAM, FEMISE, OME), has undertaken a project which aims to gather a scientific and economic overview of the foreseen situation of the Mediterranean 2030 and also to foster and encourage long term cooperation amongst the Mediterranean states.
<i>Euro-Med network for social Economy</i>	Has identified priorities and proposals as part of an Action Plan for the encouragement and development of Social Economy in the Euro-Mediterranean partnership. On 5 April, members of the Euro-Mediterranean Network of Social Economy organized the Conference “Ten years of Social Economy History in the Mediterranean. The Euro-Mediterranean Network of Social Economy (ESMED)”, which was held at the headquarters of the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed), thanks to support from the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID). ²⁶
<i>ILO –</i>	The International Labour Organisation has provided PAM with an up to date

²⁴ SPRING- Singapore is an agency under the Ministry of Trade and Industry responsible for helping Singapore enterprises grow and building trust in Singapore products and services. As the enterprise development agency, SPRING works with partners to help enterprises in financing, capability and management development, technology and innovation, and access to markets. <http://www.spring.gov.sg/aboutus/pages/spring-singapore.aspx>

²⁵ http://etf.europa.eu/web.nsf/pages/EU_must_engage_with_Arab_transitions_EN

²⁶ <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/49/26/48416879.pdf>

<i>International Labour Organisation</i>	four page document indicating the labour situation in the Mediterranean region. ILO has also published "Global Employment Trends. Preventing a deeper job crisis" — 2012
<i>University of Torino</i>	The University of Torino works together with PAM at a research paper on "Skilled Labour market and economic development in the Mediterranean area".
<i>North South Centre of Council of Europe – NSC CoE</i>	NSC's objective is to address global education and to develop and enhance strategies and capacity-building targeting institutions and practitioners from formal and non-formal educational sector.
<i>UNIDO - United Nations Industry Development Organisation</i>	Increasing Growth in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean Countries through Promoting SME's and Job Creation
<i>Union for the Mediterranean and the Mediterranean Chambers of Commerce and Industry</i>	The Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and the Association of the Mediterranean Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ASCAME) have signed an agreement aimed to strengthen private sector involvement in the economic and social development of the Mediterranean region (28/11/2011)
<i>European Bank of Reconstruction and Development - EBRD</i>	EBRD has established a collaboration with PAM on investments in the Mediterranean region which amounts to 2.5 billion Euros

V. Recommendations: the role of PAM parliamentarians

27. This report aimed to illustrate the main priority issues which PAM strongly believes should be addressed with immediate action; the main aspects highlighted throughout the report made emphasis to migration, demographic changes, training, education, funding for SMEs, gender equality and, most importantly, youth empowerment. The report has also underlined the importance of taking a bottom up approach to address the root causes of unemployment, because it is fundamental that the approach towards any development policy targets the problem from its roots. The report also unveils the impact the abovementioned aspects have on job creation in the region. It has been noted that understanding the interconnection between these concerns would result in a better understanding of the sort of implications unemployment is having on the Mediterranean society.

28. PAM has taken the initiative to set up a special task force for Employment and Job Creation in the Mediterranean under PAM's Third Standing Committee - **Dialogue among Civilisations and Human Rights**. However, it is important to note that this issue is also addressed in the 1st and 2nd Standing Committees. Despite these efforts, governments of the Mediterranean ought to work together with more consistency to establish bilateral and multilateral agreements for the purpose of regulating the employment and the legal status of the employees, both on a national and cross border level. Such actions would bring the Mediterranean countries in closer relations where they would be able to engage themselves in frequent regional level conferences where policy makers can adopt suitable recommendations for job creation in the Mediterranean. Furthermore, initiatives already

in place such as the Egypt-Italy initiative and the collaboration from Mediterranean Institution should be further consolidated and put into practice.

29. A reform in the education system and a commitment to improve training opportunities is to be considered as an important step for the progress in job creation in the region. The North-South Centre (NSC) of the Council of Europe took the initiative to collaborate and share their insight with PAM with regards to Education in the Mediterranean. The NSC underlined the importance of intercultural dialogue and intercultural learning as one way of decreasing the gaps between the two shores of the Mediterranean. Furthermore, in 2013 there will be the launch of a Mediterranean University on Youth and Development. In this report, emphasis has also been made to the crucial importance of regulating migration as a key strategy to create decent jobs in the region and decrease the possibility of illegal and vulnerable employment. If such policies would be undertaken, they will lead to an improvement in labour legislation which will in return enhance domestic and foreign investments which will open the way for new jobs. The European Training Foundation (ETF) continues to promote its collaboration for the transition of developing countries to harness the potential of their human capital through the reform of education, training and labour market systems in the context of the EU's external relations policy.²⁷ On this note, this report made emphasis on the fact that there needs to be a link between the education system and the labour market. PAM calls each country in the Mediterranean basin to develop local policies which would enhance development on a regional level.

30. Thus PAM envisages that investing in human capital by encouraging the exchange of knowledge and mobility is a necessity for sustainable development through job creation in the region which can also set off Euro-Mediterranean competitiveness. Furthermore, PAM has the responsibility to ensure the application of social policies that reduce inequalities and encourage the fair and equal distribution of wealth and resources.²⁸ Gender equality is an urgent concern which the Mediterranean countries should continue to advocate. The implementation of any decisions taken in this regard must be considered of prime importance. Parliamentarians have the obligation to ensure that job creation becomes the key for economic and social development on a regional level. Therefore, for a stronger economic growth in terms of employment, it is necessary to encourage a geographic redistribution of the production, greater redistribution of wealth and a regionally integrated system.²⁹

31. Never before did the Mediterranean region feel such urgent need to make cooperation possible between the Mediterranean countries. Parliamentarians must ensure that a specific framework for cooperation in the political, economical and social spheres is established in order to be able to make a combined proposal for solutions to global and shared challenges which affect the Mediterranean as a whole. It is of utmost importance that the democratic reforms in the South of the Mediterranean will be supported and for that reason, PAM encourages the support for the establishment of democracies, eradication of corruption and the abuse of power.

32. Creating jobs in the Mediterranean region is a key to the eradication of poverty and the increase of living standards. Notwithstanding the present challenges, economic growth based on a sustainable labour market can be achieved and will result in a better future for the peoples of the Mediterranean. This can only be guaranteed by the implementation of a strategic commitment to provide the workforce of every Mediterranean country with decent long term employment strategy. As already specified in the report, PAM recommends that action is mainly addressed towards human capital, migration, education, training and empowerment of youth and women to create the basis for a region which will have the pre requisites to flourish in the area of job creation.

²⁷ http://www.etf.europa.eu/web.nsf/pages/Who_we_are

²⁸ ESMED recommendations

²⁹ IPAMED Executive Summary

33. On this regard, PAM requests its delegates to:

- Develop specific Pan Mediterranean migration policies
- Make women become an integral part of the economic system of the Mediterranean countries
- Pursue their action in relation to the promotion of SMEs, as these are significant tools for job creation, especially for the youth
- Facilitate work permits for qualified and educated individuals regardless of their nationality in the Mediterranean region
- Reinforce Education and Capacity Building by Mediterranean institutions relevant to vocational training and apprenticeship
- Support and promote the participation of the community and civil society to achieve political reforms in the labour market