



Union pour la Méditerranée  
Union for the Mediterranean  
الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط

## Press Release

### **Civil Society and Parliamentarians call for reinforcing the Union for the Mediterranean**

**The importance of giving an impetus to the implementation of the regional cooperation projects in the Mediterranean promoted by the UfM Secretariat was at the center of debates during the Anna Lindh Foundation Mediterranean Forum and the Summit of Presidents of UfM Parliaments.**

**Barcelona, 9 April, 2013.** From 4 to 7 April, the Secretary General of the UfM, Fathallah Sijilmassi, took part in several Euro Mediterranean meetings in Marseille. During the four days, representatives of UfM governments, local authorities and parliamentarians met with the civil society in the framework of the Anna Lindh Mediterranean Forum to discuss prospects for socio economic development in the Mediterranean and the need to build a common future. The delegation of the UfM Secretariat was actively engaged in these activities and in the dialogue developed between the institutions and the citizens of the Mediterranean.

#### Anna Lindh Forum

The Anna Lindh Foundation organized a civil society forum on 4-7 April in Marseille bringing together more than a thousand representatives of civil society, young people, artists, locally-elected officials and economic players from both shores of the Mediterranean. The aim of the forum was to provide an innovative and participative space for debate, networking and good practice exchange on intercultural dialogue initiatives. The Secretary General moderated a debate on the opportunities for youth, together with Philippe de Fontaine Vive, Vice-President of the European Investment Bank, among others.

The Secretary General also took part in the closing ceremony of the Forum along with the European Commissioner Stefan Füle, the French Minister for Women's rights, Najat Vallaud-Belkacem, the President of the Anna Lindh Foundation André Azoulay, and President of the European Social Committee Mr. Nilson.

#### Summit of the Presidents of Parliaments

In parallel to the Forum, a Summit of the Presidents of UfM Parliaments was convened. It was the first summit ever organized by the Parliamentary Assembly of the UfM. The Presidents adopted a final declaration supporting Euro Mediterranean cooperation and the role of the Secretariat of the UfM. It stated:

- Being strongly in favour of further strengthening the role of the UfM as an inclusive project-oriented scheme, which has a tangible positive impact on the lives of the peoples of the region, and applauding the efforts made this year by the UfM



Union pour la Méditerranée  
Union for the Mediterranean  
الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط

Secretariat to implement regional projects in the areas of water management, the promotion of women's entrepreneurship, employment and logistics.

- Believe that the visibility of the UfM cooperation framework should be enhanced. Its purpose is to devise solutions in the form of infrastructure, environmental, energy, job-creation, youth and educational projects which should have a recognisable public profile. The national parliaments and the PA-UfM should significantly contribute to forging strong political support, thereby enabling the UfM to focus on project implementation, which is its main task. 2013 is therefore the year of projects and we call on our governments to provide the necessary funding and to honour the commitments they made at the UfM summit in Paris in 2008 and as part of the Deauville partnership; take the view that the considerable needs in terms of infrastructures and support to SME in the region all for the creation of a Development Bank for the Mediterranean.

Martin Schulz, President of the European Parliament and President-in-Office of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean praised the work undertaken by the UfM Secretariat in difficult geopolitical circumstances and called for providing it with political and financial support to enable it to fulfill its mandate. He also underlined the importance of giving an impetus to the implementation of UfM projects at a time of major regional political and economic upheaval.

### More info

Declaration adopted by the Speakers of the Parliaments of the Union for the Mediterranean in Marseille:

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/the-president/en/press/press\\_release\\_speeches/press\\_release/2013/2013-april/press\\_release-2013-april-4.html](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/the-president/en/press/press_release_speeches/press_release/2013/2013-april/press_release-2013-april-4.html)

### About the UfM

The Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) is a unique Mediterranean institution bringing together 43 countries (27 EU member states and 16 Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries). It constitutes a platform for political dialogue, coordination and consensus building.

The Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean was established in Barcelona in March 2010. It focuses on delivering regional cooperation projects and initiatives in areas such as economic and social development, higher education and students' mobility, infrastructures and regional interconnection, as well as sustainable development. As a catalyst of projects, the UfM Secretariat assists the projects promoters throughout the entire project cycle, from project structuring to technical assistance, including financial planning and fund-raising, as well as project launch, implementation and monitoring.

### Media UfM

Isabel Pardillos  
[isabel.pardillos@ufmsecretariat.org](mailto:isabel.pardillos@ufmsecretariat.org)  
T. +34 935 214 198  
[www.ufmsecretariat.org](http://www.ufmsecretariat.org)