



Union for the Mediterranean launches new project to reinforce transport and trade in the Mediterranean

The Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) launched today the **LOGISMED Training Activities (LOGISMED-TA)** project, which aims at reinforcing the Mediterranean logistics sector. This key project will serve as a vector for development in the Southern Mediterranean countries in view of facilitating transport and strengthening trade flows in the region.

Barcelona, 17 June, 2013. The Ministers of Transport of Morocco and Tunisia; the European Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy, Štefan Füle; and the Vice-President of the European Investment Bank, Philippe de Fontaine Vive, took part at the Launching Conference of the UfM project *LOGISMED Training Activities (LOGISMED-TA)*, where they expressed their support and commitment to the success of the project.

Fathallah Sijilmassi, Secretary General of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), announced that LOGISMED-TA will be initially launched in Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia. The project will be implemented in ten Mediterranean countries during the period 2013-2018 and will lead to the creation of five new logistics platforms. A representative from the Ministry of Transport of Algeria announced during the conference that Algeria will also join the project. LOGISMED-TA will enhance the competitiveness of the logistics in the region, complementing existing trainings programs and supporting the Mediterranean partners in their efforts to improve the qualifications of the personnel in the sector. He highlighted that: *"The logistics sector is a vector for development in the Southern Mediterranean countries. LOGISMED-TA will contribute to reinforcing transport and stimulating trade flows in the region"*.

Commissioner Füle stated that: *"The logistics sector in the Southern Mediterranean region plays an essential role in boosting socio-economic development and facilitating trade between both sides of the Mediterranean, for which a well-skilled labour force is vital. The activities supported by the program adopted today will help to achieve this"*.

LOGISMED-TA is an UfM project promoted by the European Investment Bank (EIB) and funded by the European Commission (€3 million) and the Deauville Partnership Transition Fund (€3.4 million).

The need for competitiveness of the logistics transport sector in the Mediterranean region has been demonstrated by several studies: the still insufficient number of logistics operators and the lack of qualified staff in the logistics sector are the major weaknesses that affect trade in the region.



STATEMENTS

Statement by H.E. Aziz Rabbah, Minister of Equipment and Transport of Morocco

“The LOGISMED-TA program is open to the needs of logistic operators, transport companies and relevant public authorities in this sector and can contribute to the amelioration and harmonization of the logistic training offer in the countries of the Mediterranean basin.

Within this framework, the organization of training activities on areas of common interest will foster the creation of a Mediterranean network of experts at different levels of the logistics chain, which will contribute to the positive and coordinated evolution of the transport and logistics sector in the Mediterranean basin.”

Statement by H.E. Abdelkarim Harouni, Minister of Transport of Tunisia

“We value this project because the Mediterranean cooperation will not advance without paying attention to transport, and transport cannot improve without logistics; and in this field, we have a plan to develop the logistics, basically through relying on the human factor and modernizing the infrastructure. Within this context, we started preparing for a conference to be held next October in Tunis, with the participation of high level officials and experts from the Maghreb countries.”

Statement by Philippe de Fontaine Vive, Vice-President of the European Investment Bank

“The European Investment Bank is pleased to take the leadership in the first transport project which has received the UfM label, co-financed by the European Commission and the Deauville Partnership Transition Fund. Our role is to foster investments in infrastructure and bring partners, creating synergies and the necessary conditions for a successful project.”

Statement by Jonathan Walters, Executive Secretary, Deauville Partnership Transition Fund Steering Committee

“The MENA Transition Fund, with 30 partners, was created by the Deauville Partnership to support the reform process in Arab countries in transition. One of our main domain areas is competitiveness and integration, and the UfM and LOGISMED-TA project fit perfectly within this priority”.

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, established in Barcelona in 2010, focuses on implementing regional cooperation projects and initiatives in areas such as energy, environment, education, transport, business development and social affairs. The Secretariat works in close collaboration with governments and with an active network of Euro-Mediterranean partners to assist project promoters throughout the entire project cycle: from technical assistance to project implementation, including financial planning and fundraising.

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