



UfM Secretariat and UN Women join forces to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the Euro-Mediterranean region

The Union for the Mediterranean and UN Women signed a partnership agreement to work closer on the road to Beijing +20, and undertake joint initiatives to effectively contribute towards women's socio-economic empowerment.

Barcelona, 26 September 2014. The Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Secretary General, Fathallah Sijilmassi, together with Deputy Secretaries General Teresa Ribeiro and Delphine Borione, met with the Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, at UN Women headquarters in New York. Both parties signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the two institutions.

The agreement provides a solid basis for strengthened cooperation and coordination of mutual efforts promoting gender equality, effectively advancing women's rights, increasing women's socio-economic opportunities and combatting all kinds of discrimination and violence against girls and women in the Euro-Mediterranean region. This commitment will help to accelerate efforts towards women achieving a stronger role in the Mediterranean developmental agenda.

UfM Secretariat and UN Women agree to regularly exchange relevant information, jointly promote gender equality projects and initiatives, support events, as well as organise study visits and exchange of experiences among officials and experts in the field. UN women will also be a key partner in the organisation of the next UfM Conference on Women's Socio-Economic Empowerment, set to take place in Barcelona in 2015.

"Gender equality means progress for all. It is an absolute condition to achieve inclusive growth, peace and stability in the region. The UfM Secretariat is happy to work together with UN Women to make the gender equality agenda in the Euro-Mediterranean region a reality. We stand ready to contribute to the Beijing+20 process with specific projects and initiatives, contributing with our expertise and added value to the benefit of the region's girls and women", said UfM Secretary General Sijilmassi.

"Strong leadership and political commitment from organisations like the Union for the Mediterranean is critical to advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women", added UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka. *"UN Women is looking forward to working closely with the UfM Secretariat and engaging with the countries of the region to accelerate implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action."*

About the UfM

The Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) is an intergovernmental institution bringing together 43 countries: 28 EU member states and 15 Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries. It constitutes a platform for political dialogue, coordination, cooperation and consensus building.



Union pour la Méditerranée
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Press Release

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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