



More than 100 Euro-Mediterranean parliamentarians will meet at the UfM Secretariat to discuss and exchange views on regional economic, social and security challenges and opportunities

- **Three Committees of the UfM Parliamentary Assembly (Culture, Economic Affairs and Political Affairs) will meet at the UfM Secretariat on 23, 26 and 30 January.**
- **Parliamentarians from 35 UfM member states and the European Parliament will convene in Barcelona to discuss key issues and priorities for the region.**

Barcelona, 22 January 2015. Three Committees of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean (PA-UfM) will hold their working sessions at the UfM headquarters in Barcelona. These sessions will gather more than **100 parliamentarians from 35 UfM member states and the European Parliament** to discuss and exchange views on economic, social and security challenges in the region.

These meetings will provide an opportunity to highlight the need to reinforce the already active cooperation between the UfM Secretariat and the PA-UfM. They will also serve as a forum for proactive discussions to address key strategic issues for the region such as mobility and migration, youth employment, economic opportunities and women's empowerment, in which the Secretariat has developed a growing number of significant initiatives.

The 20th anniversary of the Barcelona Process in 2015, the new perspectives of the European Neighbourhood Policy and the growing security challenges in the region lay the groundwork for a strengthened Euro-Mediterranean common agenda, which UfM institutions such as the Parliamentary Assembly and the Secretariat are working on, within the framework of their respective mandates.

The session of the Committee on Improving Quality of Life, Exchanges between Civil Societies and Culture will take place on 23 January and will focus on migration as a socio-economic growth factor. It will be chaired by **Khalid Chaouki**, a member of the Italian Parliament, with the participation of the Spanish Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, **Ignacio Ybáñez Rubio**. [Follow this link](#) to see all the members of the Committee.

The Committee on Economic and Financial Issues, Social Affairs and Education will take place on 26 January and will be chaired by **Ali Ercoşkun**, Parliamentarian at the Turkish National Assembly. Amongst many others, the Committee's three Vice Chairs will be in attendance: **Brice Hortefeux**, former Interior Affairs Minister of France; **Antonio D'Alì**, former Deputy Secretary of State in the Italian Ministry for the Interior; and **Ouadia Benabdellah**, member of the Moroccan Parliament. This Committee will focus on the economic aspects of migration and the promotion of investment in the Mediterranean. [Follow this link](#) to see all the members of the Committee.



The Committee on Political Affairs, Security and Human Rights will take place on 30 January and will be chaired by **Renato Soru**, Italian member of the European Parliament, and will also be attended by **Elena Valenciano**, Chair of the Subcommittee on Human Rights in the European Parliament. [Follow this link](#) to see all the members of the Committee.

2015 will be a year of intense activity with UfM parliamentarians. These meetings in Barcelona, which will strengthen relations between the governmental and the parliamentary dimensions of the UfM, will be followed by two additional events. Upon the invitation of the President of the European Parliament Martin Schulz, UfM Secretary General Fathallah Sijilmassi will participate in a high-level meeting with EU parliamentarians to discuss the Neighbourhood Policy and UfM activities. The meeting will take place in UfM Strasbourg, France on 11 February 2015. The Secretary General is also expected to attend the second Summit of Speakers of Parliaments and the PA-UfM Plenary Session in May 2015 in Lisbon, Portugal.

About the UfM

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

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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