



Barcelona  
*8<sup>th</sup> July 2011*

**A statement by Ambassador Youssef Amrani, Secretary General of the Union for the Mediterranean, on the EU High Representative and Vice President of the Commission, Mme Catherine Ashton, towards the Southern Mediterranean in her speech before the European Parliament yesterday**

"I welcome the renewed commitment expressed by the EU High Representative and Vice President of the Commission, Mme Catherine Ashton, towards the Southern Mediterranean in her speech before the European Parliament yesterday. I share her vision on the need to support deep and sustainable democracy that should go hand-in-hand with food security, safety and job creation. The Secretariat is encouraged by the on-going process of reshaping of the European Neighbourhood Policy, its adaptation to the changes in the southern Mediterranean region and the determination to turn commitments into reality. I welcome the appointment of the Special Representative for the Southern Mediterranean and the creation of a task force to coordinate EU and international financial assistance to the region. The Secretariat stands ready to work in close cooperation with both the EU Special Representative and the task force to promote joint regional projects. I believe that a strong regional dimension in Euro-Mediterranean relations, including coordinated efforts to promote regional economic integration and transnational projects, will be essential to enhance the chances of economic growth, stability and peaceful democratic reforms in the Southern Mediterranean".

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