



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

Conclusions by the UfM Secretary General Mr. Nasser Kamel

UfM Ministerial Conference on Employment and Labour *Cascais, 3 April 2019*

Dear Co-Presidents,
Distinguished Ministers and Heads of Delegations,
Excellencies,

First of all, please allow me to **express my gratitude** to the Government of Portugal for hosting the fourth Ministerial Conference on Employment and Labour in this wonderful city.

As you know, UfM Ministerial Conferences and the Ministerial Declarations that they yield do not only convey a message of hope for the region, but also **establish an action-oriented agenda** that sets priorities, mobilizes stakeholders, identifies optimal courses of action and sets clear mandates.

Once more, these Conferences **demonstrate the potential of UfM co-operation on employment and labour as a vehicle to develop an effective, genuine and inclusive opportunities that align with the UfM social dimension.**

Conventional wisdom holds that **economic progress and social cohesion should go hand in hand**, but to emphasize this conviction in the Ministerial Declaration is to confirm that what we have been doing for years now is perfectly aligned with the political vision of the Member States.

Emphasis on Social Dialogue is very well integrated into the UfM mindset, and I take the chance to recall the Declaration on Social Dialogue that was adopted during the 3rd UfM Ministerial Conference on Employment and Labour which took place in Jordan on 26 and 27 September 2016.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I assure you that the **four concrete priorities for action identified today by the Ministers in their Declaration** will guide our compass towards intensifying our efforts in supporting the creation of decent jobs opportunities and fostering entrepreneurship; mobilizing public and private stakeholders to create partnerships and synergies; building inclusive Labour markets to integrate potentially vulnerable and disadvantaged groups; as well as investing in quality education systems and training, skills and employability.

The Ministers' call on the UfM Secretariat to **broaden and intensify its action on employment and labour** is something that we receive with enthusiasm and determination.

Moreover, the Ministers' confirmation of the role of the UfM Secretariat to accompany and broker finance for labelled projects as well as to ensure appropriate co-ordination with the various stakeholders is already imprinted into our DNA.

Such **mandates, among others, tasked to the UfM Secretariat** will be honored through diligent and focused work on concrete initiatives and activities that contribute to realizing the goals set and meeting the ambitions shared by our peoples in the region.

The Ministerial Declarations, the UfM Roadmap and the Paris Declaration serve as our frameworks of reference, while our belief that **common challenges call for coordinated responses** drive us towards achieving our mission aiming to fulfill the shared vision of our Member States.

Thank you.