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The UfM since the adoption of the Roadmap:

*Reinforced commitment to inclusive
and sustainable development in the
Mediterranean*



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The UfM since the adoption of the Roadmap: Reinforced commitment to inclusive and sustainable development in the Mediterranean

The Fourth Regional Forum presents an occasion to assess the achievements of the Union for the Mediterranean since the adoption of the Roadmap and to initiate a process of reflection on the priorities for the coming years.

The adoption of the UfM Roadmap by Foreign Ministers in January 2017 marked a turning point for the institution, both at political and operational levels. The Roadmap gave the UfM a new impetus and allowed its Secretariat to define, under the guidance and support of the Co-Presidency, a 2018-2020 strategic vision to implement an enhanced cooperation framework in the Euro-Mediterranean region that contributes to achieving inclusive development, in line with the UN 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

At the Third UfM Regional Forum, held on 8 October 2018 in Barcelona, and which coincided with the 10th anniversary of the organisation, Foreign Ministers assessed the implementation of the Roadmap and renewed their commitment in favour of cooperation in the Mediterranean.

The following sections provide an update on the state of play of the UfM Roadmap implementation, and highlight several milestones (*in blue boxes*) on the path towards regional integration in the Euro-Mediterranean.



1. Promoting an action-oriented dialogue: common regional agendas towards concrete results on the ground

1.1. Enhancing regional dialogue towards ambitious common agendas

One of the main objectives of the Union for the Mediterranean remains the facilitation of regional political dialogue between its member states. The regularity of Ministerial Meetings on strategic themes and the adoption of ambitious common

regional agendas attest to the growing engagement of UfM member states in promoting inclusive and sustainable development and strengthening regional integration in the Mediterranean.

Since 2015, the UfM Regional Forum, which brings together Foreign Ministers of member states, has become a key event in the region.

Over the past four years, the UfM Regional Forum has been gaining momentum in terms of regularity, consistency, participation and results.

A key element of the revitalization of the political dialogue is the growing ownership of this process by both the UfM Co-Presidency and member states.

During the Ministerial Conferences on Employment and Labour (April 2019) and on Trade (March 2018), UfM member states gave a new impetus to regional cooperation endeavours on social and economic integration in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

The commitment of member states to these key issues in the framework of the UfM demonstrates its strong potential as a unique framework for regional dialogue in the Mediterranean.



At the Ministerial Meeting on *Strengthening the Role of Women in Society* in Cairo in November 2017, the UfM Secretariat was mandated to establish a regional mechanism to monitor progress on gender equality, aimed at providing recommendations to policy makers and regional actors in this area.

The support of member states for this monitoring system attests to their growing commitment to achieving concrete results on such a critical front.

1.2. Building inclusive and common thematic agendas through a unique multi-stakeholders approach

The UfM Secretariat has endeavoured to engage all development actors and relevant stakeholders in its regional dialogue, across all fields of action. Such engagement complements thematic Ministerial Meetings in a large number of areas such as women's empowerment, employment, industrial cooperation, transport, sustainable urban development, environment, water, energy and climate change.

With this in mind, the UfM Secretariat has adopted a multi-stakeholders approach mobilizing governments, regional and international organisations, local authorities, civil society, the private sector and financial institutions in order to facilitate exchanges aiming to better understand the specific needs of stakeholders, to share experiences and to promote concrete projects.

Aiming to contribute to the development of a Euro-Mediterranean blue economy community, the UfM Secretariat is currently managing a virtual platform, the Virtual Knowledge Center (VKC), where stakeholders can find up-to-date information on marine and coastal areas, and discuss different initiatives and projects.

Being accessible to all member states of the UfM, the platform has been undergoing continuous evolution to better meet the expectations of its users.



The UfM Secretariat actively supports youth engagement and participation in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

The Secretariat has thus supported the launch of the Mediterranean Youth Climate Network (MYCN), which aims at promoting youth awareness, share best practices, and support local initiatives to combat climate change. The Network regularly participates in UfM meetings, including its Climate Change Expert Group, alongside government representatives and other regional actors.

Regional agendas adopted in the framework of the UfM are growing more ambitious, owing to an increasingly successful and in-depth dialogue with stakeholders.

In the fields of Transport and Urban Development, the UfM regional dialogue platforms are working on the evaluation of current regional action plans to inform discussions among member states in view of the forthcoming respective Ministerial conferences.

1.3. Further strengthening inter-institutional work and cooperation with sub-regional groups and regional actors

The pressing challenges facing the Euro-Mediterranean region are characterized by their cross-border nature, and demonstrate the fundamental importance of multilateral, regional and sub-regional cooperation. In this respect, the

UfM Secretariat endeavours to enhance synergies and complementarities among existing frameworks of cooperation in the region.

The Mediterranean ecosystem is not limited to the UfM Secretariat and includes other institutions and frameworks for dialogue bound to the objectives of the Barcelona Process, among which the Anna Lindh Foundation, the Parliamentary Assembly of the UfM (PA-UfM) or the Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly (ARLEM).

The UfM Secretariat foresees in 2020 the organisation of the first Summit of Euro-Mediterranean institutions to further coordinate their action, reduce duplication, and, more generally, support the UfM to better position itself in the Euro-Mediterranean multilateral arena.

In addition to the active engagement in many of the 5+5 Dialogue Ministerial and Technical Meetings, the UfM Secretariat co-organizes the MedThink 5+5 annual forums with the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed) since 2016.

This network of experts and representatives of think tanks and diplomatic institutions meets to discuss concrete ways of implementing the commitments made by the member states of this sub-regional entity, as well as to explore the creation of new alliances within the 5+5 Dialogue and more generally the Euro-Mediterranean region.

The UfM Secretariat supported the Summit of the Two Shores on several levels, including through the organisation of a regional dialogue in May 2019 that brought together several members of civil society from the 43 UfM member states. This initiative received an important mobilization and helped the Summit of Two Shores to reach a wider audience on themes affecting the Euro-Mediterranean basin at large, including the environment, water, energy and sustainable development, or economic challenges for empowering youth and women.

2. Ensuring the contribution of UfM activities to regional stability and human development

2.1. Human Development through Capacity-Building and Higher Education

The UfM prepares the new Euro-Mediterranean generations to face the great challenges of tomorrow. The Mediterranean has more than 30 million students and by 2030, enrolment rates in higher education will most probably reach 40%,

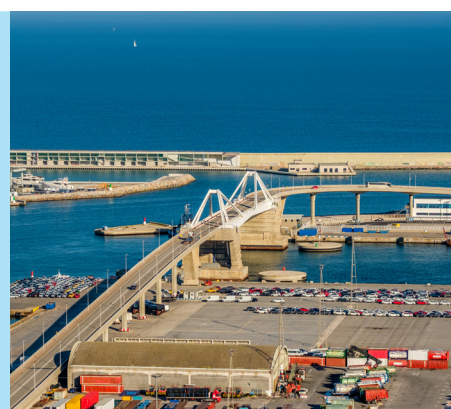
which would dramatically change the educational landscape, particularly as we witness the arrival on the job market of the most educated South Mediterranean generation in history.

The Euro-Med University of Fes (UEMF) is a center of excellence in full growth. Thanks to the support of the UfM, it has been recording a steady increase in the number of registrations, having reached a thousand students coming from all across the Mediterranean.

With curricula focused on key regional issues, UEMF is preparing new generations to build a stronger Mediterranean. In September 2019, the UEMF launched a School of Digital Engineering and Artificial Intelligence, with the largest university platform for digital engineering in Africa.

The UfM has labelled many capacity-building projects, such as TransLogMed. Developed by Escola Europea - Intermodal Transport, the project supports the implementation of efficient and innovative maritime transport solutions through more than 30 seminars and certified courses.

Training activities have started in November 2017 in various ports in Italy, Morocco, Spain and Tunisia, and will eventually benefit more than 1000 professionals.



The MedNC network, promoted by the IECD and supported by the UfM, seeks to help thousands of young Mediterranean people that are not in education, employment or training (NEETs) to reconcile them with schooling and work, and help them find their place in society.

Endorsed by the 10 member states of the 5+5 Dialogue at the Summit of the Two Shores on June 2019, MedNC brings together a network of more than 26,000 young people and 100 partner centers in nine Euro-Mediterranean countries, which develop local innovative solutions to meet the challenges of unemployment and socio-professional integration of young people.



2.2. Advancing scientific knowledge and innovation across themes of cooperation

The UfM strives to advance scientific knowledge and innovation on several key topics, bringing together the latest scientific studies and data available at

the regional level to enable the development of effective and adapted common responses.

The lack of adequate information, among other things, delays the development of effective climate action policies. Despite numerous studies, there is no coherent synthesis of risks at the regional level in the Mediterranean.

In this regard, the UfM supports efforts dedicated to the collection of existing scientific knowledge, in particular through a report of the MedECC on the risks posed by climate change in the Mediterranean, which will constitute a prominent and comprehensive scientific evaluation in this field at the regional level.

The UfM member states have mandated the Secretariat to launch a report on regional integration in the Mediterranean, which will analyse major trends and developments in the region.

An initial study defining indicators was finalized in 2018 and will serve as the basis for the first progress report, which should be published in 2020.

The promotion of research and innovation is one of the major pillars of UfM action. The Secretariat supported the launch of Euro-Mediterranean research networks in several key sectors, such as migration (Euro-Mediterranean Network of Research Institutes on Migration, Mediterranean Platform for Dialogue on the Drivers of Rural Migration), the environment, the blue economy, agronomy and food security, particularly through support for the relevant initiatives of PRIMA, BlueMed, the International Center for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM) or the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

3. Improving the Institutional Capacities of the UfM Secretariat

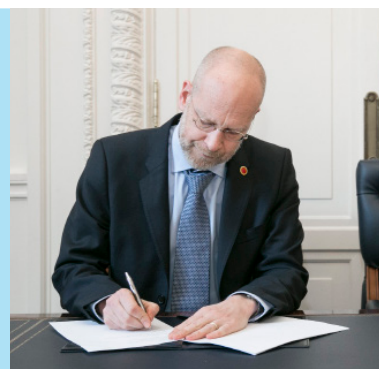
3.1. Stronger engagement with regional actors for greater impact

The UfM Secretariat has developed a long-term financing strategy that involves the establishment of structured partnerships with the region's main

donors in order to strengthen the impact of its actions.

The UfM Secretariat has signed a multiannual financial agreement with the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) in February 2017 to support the UfM Secretariat's activities towards more inclusive and sustainable development in the region.

This agreement is primarily aimed at funding the Secretariat's regional dialogue activities in the areas of women's empowerment, energy, climate action, environment, water and the blue economy.



In October 2017, the UfM Secretariat has established a partnership with the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development for the period 2018-2021.

This partnership aims to foster regional integration and job creation, especially for young people, as well as boosting trade in the Mediterranean. GIZ experts have been integrated into the Secretariat's structure to implement activities that meet these objectives.

An agreement was signed in 2014 with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to fund UfM-labelled projects in the field of gender equality.

A renewed and expanded agreement, covering the period 2019-2021, is currently being negotiated to finance projects emphasizing women and youth empowerment, as well as strengthening gender equality, in several UfM Southern Mediterranean member states.

3.2. Enhanced action on the ground for tangible results among citizens

Through the unanimous endorsement of its member states, the UfM Secretariat awards a label to regional projects that contribute to the overall goals of stability, development and regional integration, and offer meaningful impact for the citizens of the Euro-Mediterranean region. At the moment, UfM-labelled projects aim to benefit more than 15 million people, with an estimated indirect impact that includes more than 100 million people.

on the development and implementation of projects, particularly at the technical level. The Secretariat allows notably to overcome deadlocks through the mobilisation of governments and stakeholders towards the success of the projects, facilitates access to finance through a dynamic network of donors and financial institutions, and helps kick-start projects with the support of internal experts and technical partners.

These last years, the UfM Secretariat has consolidated its capacities to support and follow up

In September 2018, a proposal for the reform of the UfM label was adopted by UfM Senior Officials to streamline the labelling process, aiming towards making it clearer and more effective for project promoters and donors alike.

The Secretariat has since been working on implementing this reform by updating its internal processes, as well as the implementation of new monitoring tools, including periodical reviews of the labelled projects and the potential “delabelling” of projects that have been experiencing structural implementation problems.

The UfM Secretariat mobilises governments, financial institutions and other potential donors to broker finance for its labelled projects.

In 2018, the Gaza Desalination Plant received the necessary financing (€456 million) to launch the construction of this largest infrastructure project ever in the area, thanks to the political and financial support of UfM member states and the European Commission.

The same year, the UfM Secretariat also supported the Plastic Busters initiative in its fundraising phase and accompanied the promoter in the presentation of the project to European funds. ‘Plastic Busters MPAs’ received €5 million from the EU Interreg Med Program for the period 2018-2022.



Since 2017, the Secretariat has been developing capacity building programs for promoters of labelled projects and stakeholders in regional initiatives.

The UfM Secretariat, in collaboration with the GIZ, will offer trainings to members of ministries, customs authorities and companies involved in the Agadir Agreement with emphasis on trade policy as of 2020.

Technical assistance will also be developed for teams of the Euro-Med University of Fez to prepare their future applications for European accreditations of training programs.

3.3. Enhancing governance for better capacity for action

To cope with the exponential growth in UfM activities, member states approved, in July 2018, a major administrative reform package, in an effort to improve governance and accountability,

increase transparency, and further strengthen the Secretariat's capacity to implement concrete activities. Several actions have been undertaken in this regard.

Following the adoption of the Anti-Fraud & Anti-corruption Policy at the Senior Officials Meeting on 17 July 2018, a call for appointing members of the UfM Oversight Committee was launched by the UfM Co-Presidency in March 2019.

This Committee will be an independent and expert- advisory scheme which will assist the UfM Secretariat with respect to the matters on Anti-Fraud and Anti- corruption. It will allow the implementation of a related whistleblowing system in the framework of the aforementioned policies.

In the context of updating the governance and the internal control system of the UfM Secretariat, notably the segregation of duties among financial actors, UfM Senior Officials have approved the appointment of an Accounting Officer during their meeting in Brussels on the 17 July 2019.

Such appointment aims to further enhance the Secretariat's financial governance and reporting, and highlights the separation of duties and functions between the Authorizing Officer and the Accounting Officer for more transparency and better accountability.

4. The Mediterranean in the world: a regional partnership at the forefront of global challenges

An expanded scope of partnerships towards an enhanced Euro-Mediterranean contribution to the 2030 Agenda

The Mediterranean is at the heart of global challenges, including the transition to the fourth industrial revolution and the transformation of labour markets, climate change, desertification and water scarcity. In many ways, all the present international challenges have been approximated in the Euro-Mediterranean region, making it a suitable ground to tackle global challenges on a smaller scale, and subsequently share best practices and successful solutions with the international community aiming to inspire global action.

Since the UfM obtained observer status to the UN General Assembly in December 2015, cooperation with UN agencies and international organisations with a Euro-Mediterranean vocation has particularly grown in the last three years to achieve better synergies among international and regional actions and enable coherent implementation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals in the region.

COP22 granted observer status to the UfM in November 2016. Since then, the Secretariat has been actively involved in the UNFCCC process to promote the Mediterranean agenda on climate change.

In this spirit, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the UNFCCC Secretariat on the margins of COP24 to pursue cooperation towards the implementation of the Paris Agreement in the Euro-Mediterranean region, including necessary measures to achieve the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) objectives and National Adaptation Plans established by the Agreement.



The UfM has joined forces since 2016 with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Center for Research on Epidemiology and Cancer Prevention of Piedmont (Italy) to develop the WoRTH project: women's right to health. The project aims to improve cancer-screening policies and introduce a new approach to cervical cancer and breast cancer prevention into existing policies and services.

With a budget of 4.16 million euros over four years, WoRTH will train more than 300 professionals and benefit more than 45,000 women in Albania, Montenegro and Morocco.

The UfM Secretariat, in cooperation with other regional organisations and stakeholders, plays an active role in coordinating the contribution of the Mediterranean countries to the World Water Forum, including the one held in Brasilia in March 2018.

As a mediator, the Secretariat convened the second consultation meeting of the Mediterranean regional process partners in Brasilia to ensure a coordinated and coherent contribution of the region to the global water strategy.

CONCLUSION

Three years following the adoption of the Roadmap by the UfM Foreign Ministers, the organisation has seen its action strengthened in the areas of political dialogue, stability and human development, as well as regional integration in the Mediterranean.

Enhanced engagement of member states, along with the customary support of the UfM Co-Presidency, has led to greater dialogue and cooperation in strategic areas, with ambitious and concrete results. With growing technical expertise, the UfM Secretariat is now leading a clearer and more effective action with tangible impact on the ground for project promoters and beneficiaries.

The Secretariat, therefore, expresses its willingness to further adapt its working methodology by engaging more in cross-cutting themes, and establishing synergies between technical and political issues. Moreover, it wishes to strengthen its action on global, cross-sectoral challenges, that involve several of its cooperation platforms, hereby consolidating its action around key areas.

The UfM Secretariat is also seeking to strengthen its relations with regional and global actors, particularly the African Union and the United Nations, in order to place the Mediterranean at the forefront of global efforts for inclusive and sustainable development.



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