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DON'T FORGET ABOUT THE MED: While EU eyes have been focused this week on the bloc's neighbor west of the Atlantic, **the head of [the Union for the Mediterranean](#)** is in New York trying to direct attention back down south. **[Nasser Kamel's UfM](#)** group was created as part of a campaign pledge by former French President Nicolas Sarkozy in 2008, now made up of all 27 EU members and 15 of their neighbors.

Kamel, a former Egyptian ambassador to France and later the U.K., told POLITICO's Emma Anderson outside U.N. headquarters that his main message to EU leaders while in town is to keep in mind their "unique" connection to others in the Mediterranean region — especially at a time when climate change and the pandemic have exacerbated inequalities.

Not a luxury, a necessity: "We need to understand that we are linked by history, geography, and culture and that our destiny and our future is interlinked," he said. "Cooperation for us is not a luxury, it's not a choice, it's a necessity for building co-prosperity for our people south and north of the Mediterranean."

Med alert: A major recent U.N. [report](#) found that the Mediterranean is set to be one of the worst-hit regions by climate change. "We are heating 20 percent faster than the rest of the world," Kamel said. "The world is facing a challenge, Biden just said it [Tuesday] morning, but we in the Mediterranean, our challenge is even greater ... As much as the others still have to do a lot, we still have to do more than they do."

He added that the EU's Green Deal — its package of legislative measures on the environment — must therefore include a "Mediterranean dimension" to address this, such as looking at ways to further integrate or invest in renewable energy in the region.

Otherwise, Kamel warned global warming could create so-called climate refugees, further exacerbating the EU's frets about migration in the region.

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