



PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE MEDITERRANEAN
ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE DE LA MEDITERRANEE
الجمعية البرلمانية للبحر الأبيض المتوسط

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PAM's 2nd Strategic and Action Plan 2013-2017

Introduction and background

The Mediterranean brings together different countries with multiple cultural, economic and socio-political backgrounds, which are developing at a varying pace and with variable geometry. Notwithstanding the incredible wealth of diversity that abides in and around the Mediterranean region – and which is arguably its greatest asset – today, all Mediterranean States are united by the same beliefs and aspirations: those of achieving universal respect for fundamental democratic principles and human rights, as enshrined by international law, and treaties so that all its peoples can live peacefully alongside one another and prosper together.

Since its establishment in 2005, with its Headquarters in Malta, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) has grown to 26 full Member States, with a further 6 Associate and partner Member States, and no less than 16 international and/or regional organizations with Observer Member status. PAM is the only truly pan-Mediterranean organization, genuinely representative of the interests and values of all Mediterranean countries and those that are broadly considered to have a Mediterranean history and cultural heritage.

The establishment of PAM represents the culmination of a negotiation process that started in the late 80s within the *Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean (CSCM)*, set up under the auspices of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. On 6-7 February 2005, in Nafplion (Greece) a decision was taken to transform the CSCM into a permanent regional entity. A year later, in Amman (Jordan) the Inaugural Assembly of the *Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM)* was held to elect its first president, Abdelwahed Radi (Morocco), and adopt its instruments. In addition to its Parliamentary Assembly and President, the PAM structure consists of a Bureau to inject policy guidance, prioritize and steer activities, as well as the three Standing Committees focusing on strategic areas in accordance with the PAM Charter, which are the operative arm of the Assembly. These are notably: the First Standing Committee on Political and Security-related Cooperation, the Second Standing Committee on Economic, Social and Environmental Issues, and the Third Standing Committee on Dialogue among Civilisations and Human Rights. The work of

the Committees is further broken down into specific sectors, taking the form of Special Task Forces or *Ad hoc* Committees.

The current PAM President is H.E. Senator Dr. Fayez al-Tarawneh, Prime Minister of Jordan, who is assisted by Amb. Sergio Piazzzi, the Secretary-General, and the qualified staff of the Secretariat, who administer and manage its programme of activities.

In its brief life, PAM has achieved many milestones, the most memorable being the grant of Permanent Observer Status at the UN General Assembly by Resolution A/RES/64/124, at its 64th Session, on 16 December 2009. The same year, PAM was also entrusted with the mandate of guaranteeing the parliamentary dimension of the 5+5 Dialogue among Western Mediterranean countries".

2008-2012 Strategic and Action Plan

Once established, PAM laid down its Strategic and Action plan for the period 2008-2012 to assert the centrality of the Mediterranean, and those of its Members in addressing common interests and shared concerns. By focusing on developing the tools of parliamentary diplomacy and parliamentary dialogue, the main aims of the 2008-2012 Strategic and Action Plan have been to foster and build confidence among Mediterranean States, promote regional security, stability and peace and, more generally, consolidate their endeavours.

Parliamentary dialogue

The methods chosen by PAM to develop parliamentary dialogue with national Member Parliaments and regional institutions include presenting opinions, resolutions and reports, conducting comparative surveys, exchanging information and best practices, and undertaking field missions. Their aim is to further the development of a knowledge-based culture and foster greater mutual understanding among Mediterranean parliaments and governments in the areas of competence recognised to PAM (political and security-related cooperation, economic, social and environmental issues and dialogue among civilisations and human rights). The PAM Secretariat has also set up Focal Points in each National Member Parliament delegations and Partner Organizations to facilitate information flows, coordinate with national parliamentary timetables, and issues to be addressed and act as a driver of change and reform.

PAM outreach

PAM has taken numerous important actions to develop its own visibility through the setting up of its website, as well as, the establishment of Mediterranean Day on 21st March - the first day of Spring - where special events are held in national Member Parliaments to celebrate "*Mediterraneity*". Moreover, PAM has instituted the Mediterranean Prize in various sectors in acknowledgement of outstanding contributions in furthering the interests of Mediterranean peoples.

PAM has also created the position of “PAM Roving Ambassador” to represent the interests of the Mediterranean at international fora.

Institutional role

PAM has developed its institutional role for the region by participating in and actively contributing to the activities of regional and international organizations in areas of Mediterranean interest (these include, among others, the UN Secretariat, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNECE, WMO, UNDP, NATO, the Council of Europe, PABSEC, the Islamic Conference, the League of Arab States, the European Troika, financial institutions and US Administration), as well as by conducting missions to areas requiring the attention of the Assembly. With regard to other regional initiatives, in this period PAM continued to monitor with concern the procrastinating impasse affecting the work of the Union for the Mediterranean.

Furthermore, in 2009, PAM also took the unprecedented step of setting up a Biannual Meeting of Secretaries-General hosted on rotation by a Member State, and an Annual meeting with Ambassadors, in Malta, to develop coordination strategies and find ways of working closer together.

Parliamentary diplomacy

PAM regularly holds meetings and consultations with diplomatic representatives of Members States, briefing Ambassadors in Geneva, New York and other locations on events in the Mediterranean and informing them of PAM’s activities in relation to specific issues. Importantly, since its establishment, PAM has become an important facilitator in the Israel-Palestine peace talks and is widely recognised as being a messenger of peace and dialogue by the international community at large.

Dialogue among Civilizations

In 2009, PAM adopted the Fez Programme, which lays down concrete actions to be undertaken by Member States to build on intercultural and inter-religious dialogue. Mention should be made of a PAM delegation being received, on two occasions, by Pope Benedict XVI at the Vatican State, and the fact that subsequently the Holy See joined PAM as Observer.

Trade and Investments

The “PAM Panel on External Trade and Investments in the Mediterranean” was launched in Lisbon, Portugal, on 27-28 May 2010, to inject a stronger commitment from PAM on economic cooperation and integration in the region. The Panel brings together parliamentarians, government officials and experts from the fields of economics and finance (including investment agencies, chambers of commerce, financial institutions, business and consumers’ associations, and international organisations), as well as entrepreneurs from the private sector to support trade and

investment in the region. Their aim is to stimulate economic integration and the adoption of facilitation measures in the Mediterranean area by calling for the establishment of a Free Mediterranean Trade Zone, sustaining the activities of SME's, identifying measures and instruments to attract investments and financing, and generally, by enacting measures to stimulate job creation in the region.

Whether it relates to supporting democratic transition in the South, combating corruption in the North, building durable stability and peace, promoting the use of sustainable energy or achieving regional cooperation generally, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean - where all member Parliaments are represented on an equal footing - in just six years of existence, has contributed extensively to transforming the Mediterranean area into a region that is deeply engaged in political, social, economic and cultural dialogue involving all peoples inhabiting its shores. The activities undertaken by the Assembly are a true, poignant and contemporary testimony of the rapidly-evolving situation in the region.

A vision for future challenges: strategic actions for 2013-2017

On several occasions, the PAM President, Sen. Dr. Fayez al-Tarawneh, has reiterated that the Arab Spring has permanently changed the Mediterranean region and that the role of PAM is to adapt to the needs and expectations of the region. His beliefs were fully shared by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon on the occasion of a bilateral meeting and, among others, by the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, which welcomed him in Marseille in Spring 2012.

Achieving stability, security, prosperity, democracy, effective governance, accountability, trust in the institutions, and mutual respect and peaceful co-existence, our core values, will continue to characterise PAM's vision in the forthcoming five year period. Having laid down the tools, created networks and synergies, platforms and panels, and set the "ball" of parliamentary diplomacy and parliamentary dialogue in motion" throughout the Mediterranean region and beyond, the next period needs to focus on *consolidating* PAM's position on the one hand, and *quicken*ing its responsiveness to new and rapidly-changing situations, as well as *deepening* its permeation into the social fabric of society, on the other.

Parliamentary dialogue

PAM will continue to foster parliamentary dialogue exercised through its three Standing Committees by strengthening its partnerships at the national, international and regional institutional levels, primarily with the UN and UN agencies, but also by further developing a multi-stakeholder approach with the participation of numerous and diverse organizations such as the European Union, the Council of Europe, the Arab Maghreb Union the League of Arab States, the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union and other regional Parliamentary Assemblies as PAM's Mediterranean partners. In fact, on the 6 October 2012, PAM and the League of Arab States have agreed to hold a meeting with regional organisations in order to raise awareness of respective mandates. This is

aimed at attempting to foster complementary actions by working on their respective strengths and sectoral competences. Such activity must be ensured and followed up by the liaison officers.

PAM will also continue to develop its position as the Centre of Excellence of parliamentary diplomacy in the Mediterranean region operating beyond the traditional realm of parliamentary institutional relations and engaging with bodies and representatives from various sectors including governments, Bretton Woods institutions, academic and research organizations, and members of the civil society who play an important role in the exchange of knowledge and ideas about the future of the region. Cooperation with national Member Parliaments and relevant Regional Assemblies needs to be further strengthened so that agendas can be prioritized in relation to strategic issues for the region. Parliamentary exchanges could also be encouraged so that parliamentarians can deepen their understanding and appreciation of each others' parliamentary institutions.

PAM outreach

PAM is acknowledged to be a major player in the region and in many instances a leader in raising issues of common concern to its Member Parliaments and other international organizations. To consolidate and capitalize on this recognition, PAM needs to address its outreach and communication capacity more concretely and strategically. This will require the reinforcement of the dedicated PAM Public Information and Communication Unit to enhance visibility and promotional activities, so that all opportunities for disseminating the work and conveying messages of PAM and its members are fully taken advantage of. A more and continually pro-active approach with national and regional media is imperative to entrenching public perception of PAM as a unique organisation working for the Parliaments and citizens of the Mediterranean.

Media relations also need to be improved and the involvement of Member Parliaments' own internal and Public Information Offices is considered essential for communications at the local level - alongside networking activities with journalists and correspondents, especially those responsible for parliamentary work and specific initiatives relating to the Assembly's activities. For the 2013-2017 period, the PAM Secretariat will further expand and deepen its contacts with international bodies, NGOs, sectoral agencies and civil society groups interested in the issues touched on by PAM. Technological support instruments will also be upgraded to keep abreast with new communications technologies, developments in social media, etc. The PAM Roving Ambassadors will also have to be used more strategically.

Institutional role

The institutional role of PAM continues to grow and PAM has to continue the process of consolidating its privileged position with the UN. The UN places great faith in PAM, as PAM is the only regional body that has been capable of bringing Israel and Palestine - at the highest parliamentary and negotiating team levels - to the same table, where they regularly exchange views

and build constructive dialogue. At this year's UNGA in New York, the UN Special Envoy to the Middle East informed the PAM Secretary General of his need to foment collaboration strategies with PAM in relation to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

PAM will further develop its role and responsibility in rapid response to any crisis situations affecting the security of a PAM Member country or region. A parliamentarian should ideally be appointed in each Member State, who is available and has rapid deployment capacity to be at the scene of a crisis as it develops as part of a PAM team. Furthermore, renewed attention must be given to terrorism and new threats from the Sahel region which will affect both shores of the Mediterranean. In relation to the Arab Spring democratization process, PAM, as indicated in its Statutes, should take steps to become an observer during general elections held in the Mediterranean Region.

Gender Equality and Education must continue to be at the centre of the attention of PAM activities in all the programmes and reports endorsed by the Assembly.

In relation to the creation of a platform for promoting investments and supporting productive infrastructures, PAM is now seen as a credible interlocutor of the European financial institutions, and will intensify its activities to set a specific Mediterranean funding mechanism dedicated to SMEs and job creation in the region.

Parliamentary diplomacy

PAM is resolutely committed to its vocation as the Centre of Excellence on peace and security issues in the Mediterranean region. First and foremost, PAM will focus its attention and resources to questions relating to the democratization process in the Arab Spring countries, the Israel-Palestine conflict, and the integration process in the Balkans. More importantly, PAM will further develop its local monitoring capacity of ongoing situations through its diplomacy network, supporting pre-emptive actions during periods of escalating tension and confrontation.

The Arab Spring events have raised major issues over internal security and respect for human rights and PAM will foster closer coordination with United Nations DPA, DPKO and OSCE, as well as work alongside National Parliaments to strengthen internal peace-keeping and security strategies. PAM is in a particularly favourable position to act in this capacity on account of its independence and neutrality.

Dialogue among Civilizations

Economic statistics are not the only benchmark for measuring the overall state of health of a country, and it is equally important to understand ethnic, cultural, religious, psychological and even mythological factors. PAM advocates unity through diversity and is a staunch defender of freedoms and tolerance and outspokenly decries all acts of discrimination, intolerance and extremism that tend to isolate and drive divisions between peoples. Through the work of the Third

Standing Committee, PAM will continue to work on developing the identity of the Mediterranean as a region that embraces cultural, ethnical, political, racial, religious and social diversity in which all peoples can be united through a coherent and homogenous entity and by the desire to live peacefully and prosper alongside one another.

Through intercultural and interreligious dialogue, PAM will continue to promote inclusiveness and combat all forms of extremism and discrimination, especially against women. The key to a tolerant society lies in education and PAM will continue to raise awareness among national parliaments of the results of research institutions on social inclusion, as well as collaborate with UNESCO and the North-South centre of the Council of Europe, and promote youth exchange programmes transversally.

As a result of its engagement and commitment, PAM, was officially invited to become a member of the “Group of Friends” at the high-level segment of the UN General Assembly in New York on 26 September 2012, to support the action of the UN Special Envoy for the Alliance of Civilizations. This acknowledgment is undoubtedly an incentive to deepening the activities of the Assembly in this field.

Further still, on the issue of migration, PAM will develop collaboration and cooperation activities with the European Commission and the 5+5 Dialogue on Migration in the Western Mediterranean, which has a forward-looking agenda on information exchange, joint management of international borders, agreed forms of labour migration, migration for development, and protection of the rights of migrants.

Trade and Investments

The financial and economic crisis has generated a sense of widespread insecurity and instability in countries throughout the region as a whole, regardless of whether they lie to the North or South of the Mediterranean. PAM believes that job creation is a primary factor of stability, which needs to be combined with equitable distribution of essential resources and wealth. PAM continues to believe that these factors can be achieved through the establishment of a Mediterranean Free Trade Area and the setting up of dedicated financing mechanisms aiming, among others, at channelling investments into SMEs and infrastructures.

Moreover, PAM champions sustainable development and co-development projects and will intensify its efforts to urge Member Parliaments to promote and develop environmental educational policies from an early age in schooling. Particular attention will be given to the issues of climate change and the limited availability and unequal distribution of drinking water throughout the region. In recognition of its commitment and resolve to address the many challenges relative to the question of “Energy” in the Mediterranean, PAM will facilitate and coordinate the work required to establish a “Mediterranean Community of Energy”, as decided in Ouarzate, Morocco, in September 2012. On the same issues, after having addressed the UN General Assembly high level

meeting on “Energy for All”, PAM will also actively contribute to the group established by the UN Secretary General, which will operate under the coordination of the Director General of UNIDO.

Implementation and Operations 2013-2017: bullet points

PAM events and activities are aimed at consolidating and enhancing cooperation between Member Parliaments, their MPs and civil society at the international, regional, national and local levels. During the forthcoming 5 year period from 2013-2017, PAM needs to focus its attention on becoming better equipped to face the challenges besetting the region. The way forward is therefore to continue to develop and improve existing strategies for joint action and exchange of information in a knowledge-based society founded on the principles of mutual respect and tolerance as dictated by international law and fundamental human rights.

PAM’s observer status at the UNGA has allowed it to establish a PAM Permanent Observer’s offices in Geneva, Vienna, and New York Headquarters, the later graciously hosted by the Maltese Embassy in New York. Moreover, PAM must re-consider the nature of its presence and coordination with the League of Arab states in Cairo, the liaison officers in Barcelona, in Rome for the Vatican and FAO, and in Paris for both UNESCO and OECD. Moreover, the 5+5 Dialogue has filled a gap in PAM’s own structure in the absence of a PAM inter-governmental pillar to mirror PAM activities. PAM, in its mandate to guaranteeing the parliamentary dimension of the 5+5 Dialogue, will be working with upcoming chairs to ensure synergy and complementarities of action.

Hence, PAM will give precedence to developing actions in specific strategic sectors in accordance with the mandate laid down by its Charter, and namely, in relation to the activities carried out under each of its Three Standing Committees:

Political and Security-related Cooperation

- PAM will strengthen parliamentary dialogue that aims to promote social inclusion at all levels whether local, national, regional or international level, as inclusiveness is imperative to development and preservation of the fundamental democratic values on which Mediterranean societies are based.
- PAM will continue to act as a coordinator for exchange of knowledge, lessons learned and best practices, as well as target the agendas of national Member Parliaments with issues of key importance to the Mediterranean region. All actions and events to which PAM has been invited, in which it has participated or coordinated in the region/internationally, will be promptly reported on the PAM website and information of the same disseminated among PAM national Member Parliaments through PAM Focal Points.
- PAM will assist Member Parliaments in ensuring that information on common security

strategies and policies are shared in the region; including anti-terrorism and anti-crime cooperation.

- PAM will provide the available advanced information for Member Parliaments on key security threats to the region. This will require, but is not limited to, the capacity of PAM members and MPs to deploy rapidly when required to meet with key actors in a given conflict.
- Due to the protracted impasse being experienced by the UfM, and in the hope that this institution will in the foreseeable future be able to deliver as a regional agency for mobilizing funds for major infrastructure projects in the region, PAM will further develop its ongoing collaboration and cooperation with the Co-Chairs and Members of 5+5 Dialogue, of which PAM represents parliamentary dimension.

Economic, Social and Environmental issues

Trade and Investments

- To facilitate economic development, PAM will first focus on the promotion and harmonization of legislative actions of national and regional parliaments in order to make investments and trade relations less bureaucratic. Accordingly, they must be transparent and action-result oriented, while having a regional Mediterranean focus.
- PAM Panel will continue to take targeted initiatives in promoting economic development and job creation.
- PAM will continue to promote the establishment of the Mediterranean Free Trade Area, as well as to encourage reinforced South-South commercial exchanges.
- PAM will continue to encourage public-private partnerships and investments in the region, focusing in particular on SMEs.
- Institutional relations will be developed with the EBRD possibly with the aim of setting up a specific financing mechanism to support SMEs.
- Facilitate and coordinate the establishment of the “Mediterranean Energy Community”.

Environment

- PAM will highlight the need among national Member Parliaments for environmental education policies to be provided from the earliest age. Developing public awareness and sensitivity play an essential role in the reform process.
- PAM will continue its support for the shift from fossil fuels to renewable energy and call on

member parliaments to remain committed in this transition.

Dialogue and Civilization

Women and education

- The promotion of access to education is instrumental for all parties in supporting democracy, tolerance, and solidarity in the Mediterranean region. PAM will continue to call for the “Fez Programme on Intercultural and Inter-religious Dialogue Building”, to be regularly updated and included in the agenda of all Member Parliaments.
- PAM will urge all Mediterranean Parliaments to adopt student exchange programmes that foresee the free movement of students throughout the Mediterranean region regardless of their country of origin, similar to Erasmus and Leonardo Programmes in Europe.
- PAM will continue to promote policies for the empowerment of women in all aspects of life by sensitising national parliaments to the question of gender equality and the problems faced by women hindering their participation in society.
- Moreover, PAM will continue to encourage Member Parliaments to undertake programmes to favour female access to education such as through adult literacy, vocational training and life-long learning programmes, as well as promote gender equality institutional roles and in decision-making positions in society.
- By promoting Mediterranean exchange programmes for students, PAM will continue to promote student awareness of Mediterranean issues. Moreover, PAM will continue to develop awareness of the cultural unity of the region and its strategic importance in building peace throughout the Mediterranean and beyond.
- PAM will intensify its activities in raising student awareness of Mediterranean issues, including through strengthened cooperation with the CoE North-South Centre in Lisbon, and academic and research institutes, such as MEDAC and Mistrals in Malta, and the PAM/UNESCO Chair at the University of Turin.

Communications strategy

- PAM will call for the intensification of interaction between the PAM Focal points and the Assembly through regular contact and meetings, as well as periodical questionnaires. This should include regular meetings and mutual cooperation between the media and parliamentarians on the functioning of democratic institutions.
- PAM will liaise with national Parliaments and national/regional media to create stronger awareness and visibility of Mediterranean Day at national level through PAM Focal Points

and local media. Youth activities, such as internships, will be organized at the PAM Secretariat for citizens of Member Parliaments.

- PAM recommends the setting up of a regular conference, modelled on the European Conference of Presidents of Parliament, where Presidents of PAM Member Parliaments, including a dedicated session for members of the 5+5 Dialogue and eventually one for those of the South-East European Cooperation Group, can engage in direct exchanges and bilateral talks every two years.