



## **VII FACM MEETING**

**Casablanca, Morocco, 9-12 November 2017**

### **PROPOSALS FOR THE VII ACM FOUNDATION MEETING**

#### **NECESSARY CONDITIONS AND CITIZENS' RESOURCES OF ACTION FOR PEACE AND PROGRESS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN**

The Mediterranean has rarely faced periods of peace and security along its history. The Pax Romana or the Ottoman Empire is sometimes presented as such, forgetting in a heartbeat that if there was peace, it benefited a dominant minority. Most of the time, this area was subjected to conflicts between residents, but violence also rouses out of ambitions from outside the region for colonization or conquest: Persians in 700 BC, Vandals in 400, Arabs from 632, Normans in 1090, The French, the British, the Germans from the 19th century up to the Second world war ... The Mediterranean has also been a victim of confrontations that went beyond it, such as the two big world conflicts, or decisions imposed from outside, such as the creation of the State of Israel.

In 1995, there was a period of optimism which was based on the negotiations about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict following the agreements signed in 1993, after the Oslo talks. It was a matter of taking advantage of this favorable window to launch a vast cooperative movement aimed at establishing the conditions for peace, security and prosperity. It was the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership signed at the end of the Barcelona Conference in November 1995.

Unfortunately, since then, the situation has deteriorated dramatically. The 2001 attacks were followed by an Afghanistan and Iraq wars. The 2007 economic crisis severely reduced European capacities to promote cooperation. The Arab revolts in 2011 have shaken up the social and political relations in the region. New wars have emerged in Libya in 2011, in Syria in 2011, in Mali in 2012, in Yemen in 2014, and so on. In 2013 a coup d'etat took place in Egypt and another one failed in Turkey in 2016. The Islamic state, or Daesh, was added to Al Qaeda with an approach of conquest and humiliation of the population in a violent and cruel caliphate, while the rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia is accentuated by their increasingly interfering in regional conflicts. New tensions have been added to those already existing: Cyprus, Western Sahara, Kurdish people, Israel-Palestine. We must as well consider the new events taking place in Syria (chemical weapons, US bombing ...), the airstrikes in Afghanistan and the new political framework in the European Union.

Since 2008, the global economic crisis has significantly affected the European Union and the basin countries in particular. From Portugal to Greece, unemployment, inequality and social exclusion have increased, to detrimental effects on democratic systems. At the same time, migratory and refugee flows



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have increased in number and intensity generating negative consequences such as the appearance of walls everywhere and the conversion of the Mediterranean Sea into a cemetery. In this context, the role and rights of citizenship are weakening and are being threatened by waves of xenophobia and racism.

In the Mediterranean area, the limitations of the international economic system are accompanied by global, agricultural and food systems that do not respond to its social, environmental and climatic needs. Indeed, the current liberal economic system prevailing in our societies, resulting in externalizations such as loss of family farming practices, excessive use of chemical fertilizers, pollution of our waters, or accelerated climate change.

The Mediterranean is experiencing a multifaceted crisis, serious and quite new:

- An increase in armed conflicts;
- A worsened economic situation;
- An aggravated environmental and climatic reality;
- A permanent terrorist threat;
- Migration flows increased;
- Illegal traffics that are destructive for States;
- A radicalization which confronts the population;
- A loss of citizenship trust in democratic political systems.

On the face of this particularly worrying fact, it is important to consider which citizen initiatives could contribute to building peace, security and sustainable and more equal development. All actors must be sought both citizens and institutions and experts.

Is it possible to renew the ties between citizens in order to overcome radicalization, interfaith hostilities?... What channels of cooperation could lead to inclusive economic convergence? What proposals could promote equality between the different peoples of the Mediterranean in the economic, political, social, cultural, educational and other fields? What measures should be recommended to promote appeasement in the various ongoing conflicts? What cooperation should be developed to combat transnational movements that use violence to make their aims prevail by invoking religion? How can migratory flows be approached within the respect for human rights and in particular for refugees fleeing conflict zones? What can the input or the contribution of the citizens to all these questions be, regardless the States or the communities of States?

The Mediterranean Citizens' Assembly (ACM) network requires specific measures to carry out the citizen actions, in other words, to move from the reflection of resistance to action. This is the issue that is submitted to the Circles and the Advisory Council for discussion. The task is certainly vast and ambitious, but it is important that citizens take over these issues, bearing in mind their impact

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on their daily lives in matters such as their freedom, security and standard of living.

## PROGRAMME

### Thursday, 9 November

Arrival of participants and dinner

### Friday, 10 November

#### 1. Opening session

8.30: departure from the hotel to the institutional base of the region

9.30: opening session

Diagnosis of the current situation in the Mediterranean and approach to the central topic "Necessary conditions and citizens' resources of action for peace and progress in the Mediterranean"

9.30 – 11.30: opening

12.00: return to the hotel

13.00: lunch

#### 2. Setting up and beginning of the work of the four agoras

15.00: Setting up and beginning of the work of the four agoras according to the following contents:

#### **AGORA 1. How can citizens contribute to the struggle against violence and hatred?**

- **Xenophobia, radicalization, migrations, ethnic conflicts, rejection of minorities, hatred, economic marginalization ...**

The concept of peace is inevitably linked to that of war, understood as an armed conflict between states or factions, which unfortunately is evident today in our wounded sea. These conflicts are compounded by the humanitarian crisis of refugees, terrorism, religious and national radicalization and xenophobia, as can be seen in Europe in particular. Hate speech, which invades social networks on the Internet, fuel these tensions. This agora will aim at identifying good practices and measures adapted to the fight against these scourges, in order to establish,

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in the long term, a veritable peaceful and serene community of the peoples of the Mediterranean.

#### **AGORA 2. Knowledge: A profitable field for Mediterranean cooperation**

##### **➤ Education, higher education, professional training, learning and culture**

Training, education and higher education are particularly suitable for the dissemination of information aimed at raising citizens' awareness of the discovery of others, the understanding of diversity and the learning of an open and caring behavior. This approach allows to promote among citizens the feeling of belonging to a community that could be that of the residents of the Mediterranean. University cooperation and scientific research between organizations in different fields, exchanges between educational establishments or between training institutions are some of the concrete examples of the creation of links throughout the Mediterranean. Furthermore, collaboration between citizens and the institutions of the Mediterranean in the field of culture can generate very positive effects from the point of view of creativity and common citizenship.

#### **AGORA 3. A vital Mediterranean ecological transition**

##### **➤ Sustainable development, the economy and the environment, as well as the climate issue**

The loss of traditional and peasant agriculture and an alimentation characterized by consumerism, to the detriment of quality and health. Economic growth often involves the lack of social and environmental progress. It is important that the ecological transition takes place in the near future, but at the same time must be accompanied by growth that allows citizens to have access to a better standard of living. In this agora, the ACM Circles will analyze the possibility that, in the Mediterranean area, the economic cooperation will be responsible and sustainable.

#### **AGORA 4. Participation: A citizen's response to the political and social needs in the Mediterranean**

##### **➤ Need for a new governance focused on participative democracy, the situation of women, young people, minorities or other components of society.**

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Nowadays, the absence or limitation of democratic practices are especially present in those countries bordering the Mediterranean. In front of this situation, citizens struggle to make their voices heard, as their participation in some decisive choices hasn't been granted yet.

Moreover, it seems that the situation of women in a good part of these countries continues to deteriorate, while the young suffer especially high unemployment rates, increasing the danger of social exclusion as a result of their lack of involvement in economic, social, cultural or political activities. This agora aims to examine the reasons behind this given situation and will seek out for possible solutions based on the notices and good practices of the ACM Circles.

**17.00 – 17.30:** coffee break

**17.30 – 19.30:** resumption of work by the four agoras

**20.00:** dinner

### **Saturday, 11 November**

**9.00 – 11.00:** resumption of work by the four agoras

**11.00 – 11.30:** coffee break

**11.30 – 13.30:** resumption of work by the four agoras

**13.30 – 15.00:** lunch

### **3. Plenary session for the presentation of analysis and propositions by the four agoras, and for general debate.**

**15.00 – 17.00:** Presentation, Conclusion of the agoras and Statement by the FACM Advisory Council

**17.00 – 17.30:** coffee break

**17.30 – 19.00:** Closing session

**20.00:** cultural dinner

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**Sunday, 12 November**

Departure of participants

### **4. ACM Foundation Advisory Council Meeting**

**9.00 – 11.00:** Advisory Council Meeting Departure of participants

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### **ACM Foundation contact**

#### **Address**

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