



## **The Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean and the involvement of regional authorities through ARLEM (Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly)**

During the French EU-presidency Nicolas Sarkozy put forward the proposal for a Mediterranean Union. His vision was one of an economic, political and cultural partnership specifically between countries bordering the Mediterranean sea. These countries would form a cooperative body with a rotating presidency to deal with topical issues such as:

- Energy
- Security
- Counter-terrorism
- Immigration
- Trade

Concrete projects will include:

- Depollution of the Mediterranean sea and other environmental policies, including water management in order to improve drinking water quality and availability and use waste water for irrigation
- High-speed intraregional shipping routes for example between Alexandria and Tangiers
- Solar energy for the Mediterranean region
- A unified Mediterranean scientific and university space in order to improve agriculture and fisheries and tackle desertification
- Civil protection and disaster rescue cooperation, particularly with respect to maritime security

Potential membership: 44 countries (new countries as compared to those of the Barcelona Process are shown in bold) = EU 27 + **Albania**, Algeria, **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, **Croatia**, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, **Libya** (formerly an observer), **Mauritania**, **Monaco**, **Montenegro**, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey.

The Barcelona Declaration of 1995, its goals and areas of cooperation remain valid and the structures created continue their work (Euro-Mediterranean Committee). What will be new are bi-annual summits at head of state level, a co-presidency, a joint secretariat and a joint permanent committee made up of the countries' representatives in Brussels.

## **ARLEM**

The success of the Union for the Mediterranean depends largely on the involvement of the regions, since this would allow for the better association of the institutions of the territory and of the populations involved, as well as for a structured and multilateral approach.

Therefore, regional and local authorities have pushed for the establishment of a **Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly (ARLEM)**, made up of a number of members of the Committee of the Regions, representatives of European and international associations engaged in Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, and an equal number of representatives of regional and local authorities from the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean, as a permanent platform for dialogue, exchange and cooperation, and call for its recognition as a consultative body within the future governance of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean.

The total number of ARLEM members is 80 (40 from EU and 40 from Mediterranean partners countries). In the EU, the members of ARLEM will be designated by the CoR as well as by Associations of regional and local governments. **The 40 seats that are designated for regional governments from the Mediterranean Partner Countries will be nominated by the respective national governments. Every country that is part of the Union for the Mediterranean can appoint 3 regions to ARLEM. Egypt and Turkey can appoint 4 regions each, since their populations are substantially bigger than those of the other partner states.**

### **Conclusion:**

AER members from Mediterranean partner countries should lobby at their respective national governments to be nominated as a member for ARLEM in order to further strengthen Mediterranean cooperation at regional level as well as to promote Mediterranean integration.

