

Brussels, 5 November 2007

## **Promoting regional co-operation in the Mediterranean to support peace, progress and inter-cultural dialogue**

***The European Commission has earmarked over €97 millions to fund regional projects in the Mediterranean under the 2007 budget. These projects will address challenges with a regional dimension and promote interstate co-operation on issues of mutual interest, thus promoting increased security, stability and prosperity. In 2007 the actions will focus on peace, disaster prevention, investment promotion, support to the private sector, intercultural dialogue, gender equality and information and communication. This funding comes on top of the bilateral cooperation that the European Commission is implementing with the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership southern Members<sup>1</sup>.***

The following initiatives will be financed:

The Partnership for Peace Programme (€5 million) will promote communication and mutual understanding in the Middle East Peace Process. It supports actions designed to rebuild mutual trust between the peoples of the Middle East through reconciliation, build capacity for conflict resistance, empower marginalized parties and launch joint development policies and strategies.

The Programme on Prevention, Reduction and Management of the Disasters of Natural and of Human Origin in Mediterranean Region (€4.4 million) aims to strengthen the level of civil protection in the Euro-Mediterranean region and to ensure the continuation of institutional cooperation between EU and Mediterranean countries.

The Programme on Investment Promotion (€9 million) will support the private sector/SMEs and will strengthen public-private dialogue on this area. It will develop mechanisms encouraging new flows of Foreign Direct Investment and will strengthen the current process of investment promotion between both sides of the Mediterranean, contributing to increase trade in the region.

The Programme on Gender Equality and Civil Society (€8 million) aims to improve gender equality and particularly to strengthen the role of women in society, as well as to enable stakeholders from civil society to contribute to a more democratic debate at the national level and within the Euromed partnership, notably with the governmental institutions and the parliamentary authorities.

The Programme on Dialogue between Cultures and Cultural Heritage, Euromed Heritage (€17 million), aims to strengthen and consolidate mutual understanding and dialogue between the cultures by the promotion of Mediterranean cultural heritage and the raising of public awareness.

---

<sup>1</sup> Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the Palestinian Territory, Syria and Tunisia. Israel, also a member of the Partnership, does not receive cooperation assistance from the European Commission.

The Information and Communication Programme (€12 million) will implement a communication strategy with its European Neighbourhood Policy partners to raise awareness and understanding of people of the partner countries in their relationship with the EU.

The FEMIP, Facilité euro-méditerranéenne d'investissement et de partenariat, (Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership Facility) (€32 million) managed by the EIB, supports the private sector and strengthens the role of the local financial sector, notably by providing capital to the private sector. Technical assistance will also be mobilised to strengthen FEMIP operations with a special focus on private sector development.

€10 million will be dedicated to ensure quick commitments on small actions and projects, and enable the European Commission to act with flexibility.

EU relations with the countries of the Southern Mediterranean and the Middle East are now directed by the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and the cooperation funded by the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument (ENPI) that has been launched in 2007.

On Monday 6 November Euro-Mediterranean Ministers for Foreign Affairs will be meeting in Lisbon<sup>2</sup> to review progress on the implementation of the 5-Year work programme agreed at the Barcelona Summit in 2005 and outline the priorities for 2008. The Foreign Ministers will discuss how to pursue this reform agenda, to bring concrete results, suggest further activities for the Code of Conduct on countering terrorism and discuss the Middle East Peace Process and situation in the region.

More information at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/index_en.htm)

[http://ec.europa.eu/external\\_relations/euomed/index.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/euomed/index.htm)

---

<sup>2</sup> [IP/2007/1639](#) Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: advancing regional co-operation to support peace, progress and intercultural dialogue