



United Nations
Office for South-South Cooperation



Union for the Mediterranean

South-South In Action

The Union for the Mediterranean

An Action-driven Organization for Regional Cooperation and Development

South-South in Action Series

The Union for the Mediterranean: An Action-driven Organization for Regional Cooperation and Development

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AFD	French Development Agency (Agence Française de Développement)
AMU	Arab Maghreb Union
BAPA	Buenos Aires Action Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation Among Developing Countries
BDC	Business Development Centre
BMZ	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany (Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit)
COP	Conference of the Parties
EBRD	European Bank of Reconstruction and Development
EIB	European Investment Bank
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FTZ	Free Trade Zone
GCDP	Gaza Central Desalination Plant
GIZ	German Agency for International Cooperation (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit)
GWP-MED	Global Water Partnership – Mediterranean
IDB	Islamic Development Bank
IFI	International Financial Institution
ILO	International Labor Organization
LAS	League of Arab States
MedNC	Mediterranean New Chance
MENA	Mediterranean and North Africa
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MYCN	The Mediterranean Youth Climate Network
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OME	Mediterranean Organization for Energy

PPP	Public-Private Partnership
PWA	Palestinian Water Authority
SGD	Sustainable Development Goal
SOM	Senior Official Meetings
SPREF	SEMed Private Renewable Energy Framework
SSC	South-South Cooperation
SWRO	Sea Water Reverse Osmosis
TRC	Triangular Cooperation
UfM	Union for the Mediterranean
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP/ MAP	United Nations Environment Programme / Mediterranean Action Plan
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNOSSC	United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WHO	World Health Organization

Foreword

Recent years have demonstrated that the scope and scale of the challenges we face in the Euro-Mediterranean region, relating to security, irregular migration, unemployment and climate change, require a swift, balanced and concerted approach. However, while these challenges are of regional dimension and call more than ever for collective responses, the level of regional integration in the Mediterranean remains amongst lowest in the world.

A study commissioned by the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) has indeed shown that, out of all trade flows occurring in the UfM region, 90 percent are within the European Union, 9 percent between the North and the South, and only 1 percent among southern and eastern Mediterranean countries themselves.

In light of these figures, and also considering the huge potential and benefit for enhanced regional cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean region, the importance of regional mechanisms and frameworks such as the UfM is becoming increasingly pivotal. The UfM embodies today the willingness of 43 member States, under the active leadership of its Co-Presidency assumed by the European Union and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, to strengthen regional cooperation between the EU and its Southern partners, and also between Southern countries themselves, through a pragmatic and yet ambitious approach.

The UfM is in a privileged position to facilitate regional cooperation and strategic partnerships with key stakeholders in the Euro-Mediterranean region, and plays an essential role in fostering synergies and joining collective efforts to address the three interrelated priorities of the region - human development, stability and regional integration - ultimately contributing to the

achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In light of this action, the United Nations granted observer status for the UfM in the General Assembly in 2015.

South-South and triangular cooperation have emerged as ways to provide increased opportunities for collaboration, as well as to accelerate human and sustainable development. Recognizing this, the UfM has joined forces with the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), under the framework of the memorandum of understanding signed in January 2017, to actively foster these cooperation modalities within the Euro-Mediterranean ecosystem and amplify its action as the Mediterranean chapter for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. We look forward to continuing to reinforce our partnership with UNOSSC in our action towards an effective regional cooperation, and enhanced development and stability in the Euro-Mediterranean region.



Fathallah Sijilmassi,

Secretary General, Union for the
Mediterranean

Foreword

The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) was established to promote, coordinate and support South-South and triangular cooperation globally and on a United Nations system-wide basis. We support United Nations Member States, United Nations entities, intergovernmental organizations, and other stakeholders to identify, replicate and scale-up local, regional and global solutions to development challenges, in order to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

South-South in Action is one of UNOSSC's flagship publication series. Launched in 2016, it provides a space for our partners to promote and celebrate their South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives.

I am pleased to present this edition in partnership with the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM). This unique intergovernmental organization brings together 43 States from around the Mediterranean, offering them a space to develop collective solutions to shared regional challenges. As an organization comprised of States from both the North and the South, the UfM is a natural platform for achieving development gains through both South-South and triangular cooperation.

The UfM is based on principles of equity and mutually beneficial partnerships amongst countries with various political, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds. It promotes a co-owned relationship between developed and developing countries of the Mediterranean, a shift from traditional donor-recipient relationships. As is made evident in this publication, the organization actively encourages both triangular North-South-South relations, and exchange between Southern countries. Key areas of focus include building regional stability and empowering youth.

In particular, the cases presented here make clear the importance of strong institutional mechanisms for South-South and triangular partnerships. Institutional mechanisms, such as that provided by the UfM, assist with building political will, mobilizing resources, and implementing projects. This is especially important for projects of a regional nature.

I am pleased to share this publication with all interested parties. I hope that the cases presented and lessons learned enable other stakeholders and regional organizations to effectively utilize and scale up their South-South and triangular activities, as a complement to North-South activities, towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

Finally, I wish to take this opportunity to thank our partners at the UfM for the hard work and dedication that has gone into this publication.



Jorge Chediek

Envoy of the Secretary-General
on South-South Cooperation
and Director, United Nations Office
for South-South Cooperation

Acknowledgements



Implementation Seminar Young Women as Job Creators in Spain, 2013

We would like to thank the staff members of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and the Union for the Mediterranean for their active participation and commitment during the preparation of this edition of "South-South in Action".



We would like to express our gratitude as well towards the Co-Presidency of the Union for the Mediterranean for their support and extend our warmest appreciation to Ms. Cristina Giner and Mr. Roger Albinyana for their valuable contributions to the report.

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Executive summary

This edition of “South-South in Action” focuses on the Union for the Mediterranean, an intergovernmental Euro-Mediterranean organisation that provides a unique forum to enhance regional cooperation and dialogue among its 43 member countries. The report explores the extent to which the UfM’s institutional framework, specific methodology and concrete actions for stability, development and regional integration in the Mediterranean provide key tools to promote South-South and triangular cooperation in the region.

Chapter I provides an overview of the UfM’s policy framework, institutional governance – which is intrinsically linked to the concepts of co-ownership and variable geometry – and methodology of action. It outlines the key role that the UfM plays in translating political decisions into activities, projects and initiatives with tangible impacts on the region’s citizens.

Chapter II focuses on the relevance of the UfM’s global, regional, sub-regional and local multi-stakeholder partnerships that enable the organization to work under flexible cooperation models, including through South-South and triangular cooperation modalities.

In Chapter III the UfM’s contribution to

these modalities is showcased. This section presents a selection of UfM labelled flagship projects and initiatives, including their policy framework, components, partners and results, and presenting testimonials from the voices of promoters and beneficiaries. The selected projects address some of the most pressing challenges in the region including employment, education and water management, in accordance with the main decisions taken by the UfM at a political level and directly contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Finally, the report looks at the work conducted by the UfM under the leadership of its Co-Presidency assumed by the European Union and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and with the active involvement of its member States, for the promotion of human and sustainable development in the region. With a new Roadmap for Action, endorsed by its Ministers of Foreign Affairs in January 2017, the UfM continues to strengthen political dialogue among its members; reinforce its vertical and horizontal partnerships; enhance regional cooperation through its activities and projects; and consolidate its capacity for action as a unique regional chapter¹ for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

¹ The UfM aims to promote regional responses to address the global challenges faced in the Euro-Mediterranean, in line with the Sustainable Developments Goals. As such, it enhances greater links between the common regional agenda, adopted by the UfM member States by sectors, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, ultimately contributing to its implementation in the Euro-Mediterranean region.



Implementation Roundtable of the project Forming Responsible Citizens in Morocco, 2016

Introduction

The Union for the Mediterranean (hereafter referred to as UfM) is the intergovernmental Euro-Mediterranean organization gathering all 28 countries of the European Union and the 15 countries of the South and the East of the Mediterranean. As a direct continuation of the Barcelona Process², the launch of the UfM in July 2008 was designed to reaffirm the political ambition of its member States to strengthen regional cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean area. Following the establishment of its Secretariat in March 2010 in Barcelona, the UfM has been continuously working, under the leadership of its Co-Presidency assumed by the European Union and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, as well as with the active involvement of its member States, on the enhancement of regional dialogue and cooperation for the promotion of human development, stability and regional integration in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

The scope and scale of the challenges faced by the Euro-Mediterranean region relating to security, radicalization and terrorism, irregular migration, unemployment or climate

change, have reached unprecedented levels and require, more than ever before, to be addressed through a comprehensive, balanced and concerted approach. In this regard, the importance of regional frameworks such as the UfM are becoming increasingly pivotal to foster effective cooperation, especially in one of the least integrated regions in the world.³ Although inter-regional cooperation can be channeled through a national approach, it becomes both more efficient and a multiplier of opportunities through regional mechanisms that gather all concerned countries.

This report shows how, through its institutional framework and governance, its working methodology, and its role as platform for global, regional, sub-regional and local multi-stakeholder partnerships, the UfM acts as a unique regional chapter for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Euro-Mediterranean region, fostering effective dialogue among its member States through South-South and triangular cooperation modalities.

² The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, also known as the Barcelona Process, was created in 1995 as a result of the Conference of Euro-Mediterranean Ministers of Foreign Affairs held in Barcelona on 27 and 28 November under the Spanish presidency of the EU. The founding act of the Partnership in 1995 and Final Declaration of the Barcelona Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference is called the Barcelona Declaration, which is often used to refer to the Process itself. The Partnership culminated a series of attempts by European countries to articulate their relations with their North African and Middle Eastern neighbours: the global Mediterranean policy (1972–1992) and the renovated Mediterranean policy (1992–1995).

³ A UfM study conducted in 2014 shows that within the UfM region, 90 per cent of the economic flows correspond to intra-European exchanges, 9 per cent, to the trade between Europe and its neighbours from the Mediterranean, only 1 per cent is the value of the trade between the countries of the southern and eastern rims of the Mediterranean.

Indeed, these modalities have emerged over the last decade as a way to accelerate sustainable development, increasing the opportunities for cooperation and assistance and providing diversity and richness of experiences and practices. South-South and triangular cooperation, as a complement to North-South cooperation, are increasingly included in the policies and strategic frameworks of United Nations entities and other international institutions and organizations. The importance of complementary modalities for development have been reaffirmed in numerous United Nations declarations and agreements including the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness of 2005, the Accra Agenda for Action of 2008, the Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness of 2011, and currently the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted in 2015. These all note the need to build upon different models other than the traditional “developed to developing countries” cooperation.

In this context, and in view of the key role the UfM plays in the promotion of stability and development in the Euro-Mediterranean region, the United Nations granted the observer status to the UfM to the General Assembly in 2015 (A/Res/70/124). In addition,

the UfM and the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) during the II UfM Regional Forum held in January 2017 in Barcelona. This MoU is designed to reinforce and amplify the action that the UfM has been undertaking within the framework of its mandate to address the challenges in the Euro-Mediterranean through regional cooperation and dialogue.

Building on this momentum, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of UfM member States and their representatives adopted, at the occasion of the II UfM Regional Forum, a new “Roadmap for Action” to strengthen regional cooperation in the Mediterranean and implement a positive agenda for the region. This agenda will capitalize on the immense untapped potential in the region, particularly its youth. This way forward, which includes enhancing political dialogue among its member States, contributing to regional stability and human development through specific activities, strengthening regional integration and the consolidating the capacity for action, is bound to foster and strengthen the role of the UfM in advancing South-South and triangular cooperation in the Mediterranean, and contribute to the achievement of the of 2030 Agenda.



SECOND UFM REGIONAL FORUM

Mediterranean in Action: Youth for Stability and Development
Barcelona, 23-24 January, 2017

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Chapter I: Institutional Framework and Structure of the Union for the Mediterranean

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South-South cooperation can be defined as a “process whereby two or more developing countries pursue their individual and/or shared national capacity development objectives through exchanges of knowledge, skills, resources and technical know-how for their individual and/or mutual benefit within and across regions” (SSC/19/3).

Triangular cooperation refers to development initiatives led and owned by Southern actors, supported by multilateral organizations and/or Northern partners. It “involves Southern-driven partnerships between two or more developing countries supported by a developed country(ies)/or multilateral organization(s) to implement development cooperation programmes and projects. Evidence shows that in many instances, Southern partners in development cooperation require the financial and technical support and expertise of multilateral and/or developed country partners in the course of assisting other developing countries (see TCDC/9/3). Northern partners also benefit by being able to take advantage of increased institutional capacity in the South and to increase the impact of their aid disbursements by leveraging the sources of multiple Southern partners” (SSC/19/3).⁴

South-South and triangular cooperation are not a substitute for, but a complement to, North-South cooperation. These modalities are based on principles of mutual benefit and common interest between countries, respect for national sovereignty and ownership, establishment of partnership among equals, non-conditionality in cooperation and non-interference in domestic affairs.

Based on the principles of co-ownership and variable geometry, the UfM policy framework, institutional governance and methodology of action promote the core values of South-South and triangular cooperation, seeking to enhance complementarities between different stakeholders acting in the region and to create synergies.



UfM labeled project “Forming Responsible Citizens”, 2017.

⁴In the framework of the UfM, triangular cooperation is mainly fostered through the support of the EU to Southern-driven initiatives.

Principles and Objectives of the Union for the Mediterranean

The UfM, which brings together all 28 countries of the European Union and 15 countries of the southern and eastern Mediterranean (Box 1), is engineered to be the comprehensive framework for regional cooperation and dialogue in the Mediterranean to collectively address three interrelated priorities of the region: regional stability, regional human development, and regional integration through sustainable interconnectivity and development.

As a direct continuation of the Barcelona Process and in line with the goals set out at the Barcelona Declaration of 1995, the creation of the UfM in July 2008 reaffirmed the political will to strengthen cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean region. Indeed, at the Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean⁵ held on July 13th 2008, Heads of State and Government reasserted the central importance of the region on the political agenda of all countries, while stressing the need for better co-ownership by member States and for more relevance and visibility for their citizens.

In that sense, the Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit stated that the “UfM aims to build on the consensus to pursue cooperation, political and socioeconomic reform and modernization on the basis of equality and mutual respect for each other’s sovereignty”. The institution therefore works under a pragmatic approach established on two core principles:

- **Co-ownership**, which is based on equitable functioning and shared responsibility, mainly through the UfM Co-Presidency;
- **Variable geometry**, a flexible principle that allows every member country to take part in the activities of interest to them.

Box 1: Member States of UfM⁶

• Albania	• Greece	• Netherlands
• Algeria	• Hungary	• Poland
• Austria	• Ireland	• Portugal
• Belgium	• Israel	• Romania
• Bosnia and Herzegovina	• Italy	• Slovakia
• Bulgaria	• Jordan	• Slovenia
• Croatia	• Latvia	• Spain
• Cyprus	• Lebanon	• Sweden
• Czech Republic	• Lithuania	• Syrian Arab Republic (self-suspended in 2011)
• Denmark	• Luxemburg	
• Egypt	• Malta	
• Estonia	• Mauritania	• Tunisia
• Finland	• Monaco	• Turkey
• France	• Montenegro	• United Kingdom
• Germany	• Morocco	• State of Palestine

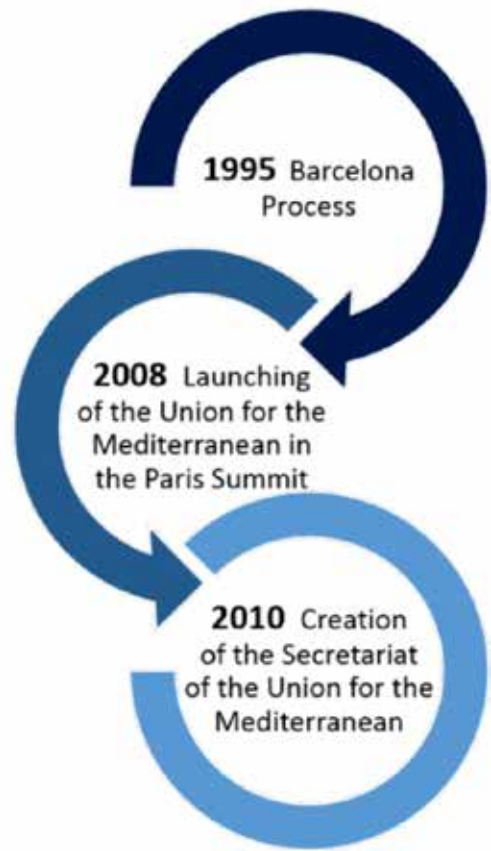
⁵ The Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean signed on July 13th 2008 by the 43 Heads of State and Government launched the UfM, with a view of reinforcing the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (known as the Barcelona Process), building on the Barcelona Declaration of 1995. The Paris Summit established the objectives of the UfM: achieving peace, stability and security, as work as a multilateral partnership with a view to increasing the potential for regional integration and cohesion.

⁶ Libya has an observer status in the UfM.

The Barcelona Process is launched in 1995 with the aim to strengthen relations between Europe and the Southern Mediterranean countries, in the framework of an enhanced Euro-Mediterranean association that contributes to achieve peace and security in the region.

In 2008 the Euro-Mediterranean partnership is given a new impulse with the creation of the Union for the Mediterranean. The work of the UfM is driven by a Northern and Southern Co-Presidency, currently assumed by EU and Jordan.

The UfM Secretariat is created in Barcelona serving as the operational institution that empowers the regional dialogue among the UfM Member States and stakeholders, fostering synergies and coordination among them and promoting regional projects and initiatives with a direct impact on the lives of the citizens.



A Secretariat was created by a decision of the UfM Heads of State and Government on 4 November 2008 in Marseille, France, as the operational institution to implement these principles, through the empowerment of regional dialogue, the creation of synergies and the implementation of concrete projects and initiatives with tangible impact on the citizens of the region. The UfM Secretariat statutes were adopted on 3 March 2010 by a decision of the Senior Officials of UfM member States. A headquarters agreement was signed between the UfM and the Government of Spain on 4 May 2010, granting the Secretariat the privileges and immunities of an international organization under Spanish law.

Institutional Governance of the Union for the Mediterranean

The governance of the UfM is an expression of the core principles that leads its pragmatic approach in the region, as it is established through a process designed to ensure co-ownership of decisions and shared responsibility by the Northern and Southern Mediterranean countries. Indeed, aiming at the establishment of common and shared agendas, the UfM designed a unique institutional governance structure that is capable of providing an environment for horizontal, inclusive and dynamic interaction among all member States.

The Co-Presidency

In a political demonstration of the commitment to uphold the principles of ownership and partnership, the UfM Co-Presidency was created, ensuring that Northern and Southern partners are placed on an equal footing. The Co-Presidency was jointly assumed first by France and Egypt between 2008 and 2012. Since 2012, it is assumed by the European Union on the Northern side⁷, ensuring a close link with the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), and by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on the Southern side, allowing its full appropriation by the Southern countries. The Co-Presidency applies to all levels: summits, ministerial meetings and Senior Officials' Meetings (SOM).

In this framework, Ms. Federica Mogherini, Vice-President of the European Commission and High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and Mr. Ayman Al Safadi, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of Jordan, actively co-chair the UfM Presidency,

promoting a common agenda between Northern and Southern Mediterranean countries in key strategic areas.

Senior Officials Meeting

UfM member States meet on a regular basis at the level of senior officials from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the 43 countries. The Senior Official Meetings oversee and coordinate the work of the UfM; engage in political dialogue on the region's key issues; decide on Ministerial meetings to be held in the framework of the UfM; approve the work programme and the budget of the Secretariat; and discuss activities and project proposals submitted by the Secretariat for approval and endorsement. UfM senior officials take decisions by consensus.

The Union for the Mediterranean Secretariat

Based in Barcelona, the UfM Secretariat is the platform to operationalize decisions taken by member States, including preparation of Ministerial meetings, facilitation of regional

⁷On a permanent basis.



Second UfM Regional Forum, 2017.



“

Union for the Mediterranean aims to build on the consensus to pursue cooperation, political and socioeconomic reform and modernisation on the basis of **equality and mutual respect for each other's sovereignty**”...

”

dialogue platforms and development of strategic regional projects. The action of the UfM Secretariat at these three levels is operated through a specific methodology, described hereafter, based on dynamic multi-partner networks and the exchange of best practices and innovative methodologies.

The UfM Secretariat operates under the direction of the Secretary General, supported by six Deputy Secretary Generals (DSGs), each in charge of a sectorial division: Social and Civil Affairs; Higher Education & Research; Business Development; Energy and Climate Action; Water and Environment; and Transport and Urban Development. The Secretary General and the DSGs are appointed by member States for a three-year term, renewable once. Three DSGs are nominated by EU countries and three by Southern and Eastern countries.

The UfM Secretariat team consists at present of 60 local and international staff members from over 20 countries, including diplomatic and technical personnel seconded by member States and partner institutions such as the European Commission, the European Investment Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and France's Caisse des Dépôts.

The composition of the Secretariat, both at DSG and staff levels, further consolidates the UfM core principles of co-ownership and shared responsibility.

How does the UfM Work?: An Action-Driven Methodology

The UfM has consolidated an action-driven methodology, with a common ambition of creating effective links between the policy

dimension and its operational translation into concrete projects and initiatives to address the challenges of the region and its key interrelated priorities. This methodology is composed of three dimensions: political forums, dialogue platforms and regional projects - namely the "Three Ps" (Figure 1).



An Action-driven Methodology Fostering South-South Cooperation

The UfM Secretariat implements decisions taken at political level through regional and sub-regional dialogue forums, following through on Ministerial commitments and promoting initiatives to foster regional cooperation. In turn, project outcomes keep policies relevant through a multi-stakeholder and inclusive approach based on the principle of variable geometry, which helps seize opportunities by exchanging best practices, sharing experiences and identifying innovative approaches in alignment with regionally agreed priorities and in close cooperation with approaches to lasting challenges.

- 1. A political dimension, of Ministerial and governmental representatives' meetings, that defines the priorities of UfM work through the adoption of common agendas in key strategic areas** (UfM Regional Forum - Foreign Affairs Ministerial Meeting, Sectorial Ministerial Meetings, Senior Officials Meetings).

Through declarations adopted by consensus of the 43 UfM Ministers, Ministerial Conferences address strategic priorities in the region and define the scope and objectives of common Mediterranean agendas in specific fields. In providing guidance and endorsement at a high political level, Ministerial Meetings reinforce the work of the UfM and its Secretariat, paving the way for the development of new initiatives and projects. potential to benefit the citizens of the region and promote regional development.

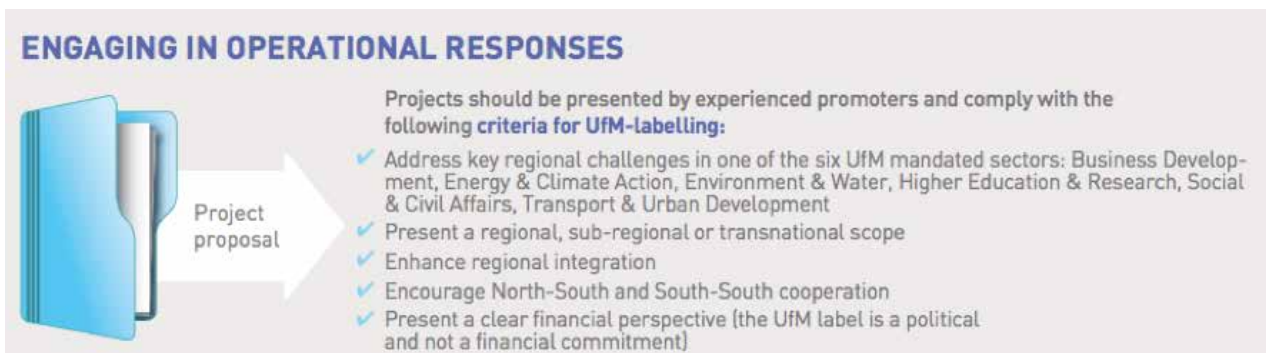
- 2. A policy dimension, structured around regional dialogue platforms**

involving not only representatives from government institutions and experts, but also regional and international organizations, local authorities, civil society, private sector and financial institutions. This close multi-stakeholder interaction between national experts and stakeholders, in all areas of development covered by the UfM, is a fundamental tool to facilitate exchange on ministerial mandates; better understand stakeholder needs; share experiences; identify best practices; and promote concrete cooperation projects with potential to benefit the citizens of the region and promote regional development.

- 3. A projects dimension, through the identification and support of concrete regional cooperation projects** that enhance partnerships and interactions in the region between promoters, partners and beneficiaries through the scaling-up effect and the development of innovative initiatives.

Box 2: Most Recent Ministerial Conferences

- Strengthening the Role of Women in Society (Cairo, November 2017)
- Sustainable Urban Development (Cairo, May 2017)
- Water (Valletta, April 2017)
- II UfM Regional Forum – Ministers of Foreign Affairs (Barcelona, January 2017)
- Energy (Rome, December 2016)
- Employment and Labour (Dead Sea, Jordan, September 2016)
- Regional Cooperation and Planning (Dead Sea, Jordan, June 2016)
- I UfM Regional Forum – Ministers of Foreign Affairs (Barcelona, November 2015)
- Blue Economy (Brussels, November 2015)
- Digital Economy (Barcelona, September 2014)
- Environment and Climate Change (Athens, May 2014)
- Industrial Cooperation (Brussels, February 2014)
- Energy (Brussels, December 2013)
- Transport (Brussels, November 2013)
- Strengthening the Role of Women in Society (Paris, September 2013)



The UfM Secretariat acts as a catalyst of projects, accompanying promoters throughout the project lifecycle and enhancing regional dialogue to create synergies for partnerships. It provides continuous support towards ensuring the implementation of projects through assisting with technical expertise, networking opportunities and enhanced visibility, and takes stock of particularly innovative ideas with the view to scale them up to a more regional level.

All projects must fully comply with the general UfM project criteria, which are in line with the aims and principles of South-South and triangular cooperation:

- Contribute to the overall goal of enhancing cooperation, integration, peace and sustainable development in the Mediterranean region, and demonstrate meaningful impact for the population and progress in the region;

- Comply with principles and rules of international law and development cooperation while taking into account the principle of variable geometry;
- Be of regional, sub-regional or transnational nature or national in the framework of a regional initiative;
- Demonstrate added value and complementarity to existing efforts and initiatives, coherent with local, national and/or regional strategies, with a potential for replication and expansion of regional scope;
- Include effective community engagement and stakeholders' consultations and adequate participatory processes;
- Ensure partnerships and synergies with relevant organizations and institutions working in related and associated programs, projects or initiatives.

Mediterranean in Action: A New Phase of Strengthened Regional Commitment

Under the leadership of the UfM Co-Presidency and with the active involvement of its member States, recent years have marked a turning point for the UfM, both at the political and operational levels.

The scope and scale of the challenges faced by the Euro-Mediterranean region require, more than ever before, swift, collective and concerted responses. Given this context, the UfM continues to amplify its action and work proactively towards greater levels of integration and cooperation in the region. It has, in this sense, developed a growing activity and a specific methodology that have given new momentum to the regional cooperation framework and yielded concrete positive results:

- Fifteen Ministerial Conferences have taken place over the last five-years on key strategic areas (Box 2, above). These have been complemented by regular senior official meetings that have been held since 2010, gathering the 43 UfM country representatives.



Ministerial Meeting on Regional Cooperation and Planning, 2016.

- More than 200 structured regional dialogue forums and expert meetings have been organized, involving over 20,000 stakeholders from around the Mediterranean, including parliamentarians and representatives of international organizations, civil society organizations, international financial institutions, development agencies, the private sector, as well as university networks and think tanks.
- Project implementation is accelerating and has already produced positive results on the ground, with a clear potential to develop further over the years to come. Altogether, the UfM counts 50 labelled projects worth more than € 5 billion: 28 labelled projects focusing on human development particularly youth unemployment, women's empowerment, mobility and higher education; and 22 projects on sustainable development, including on climate action, urban development, water and environment. More information on these projects are presented in Chapter III.

With an increased number of ministerial meetings, regional dialogue platforms and labelled projects, the UfM has entered a new phase, building on the progress achieved so far. Its increasing and expanding activities demonstrate that windows of opportunity exist for the development of regional cooperation.

In this sense, the need to strengthen the UfM as the expression of co-ownership in tackling shared challenges in the Mediterranean was highlighted in the latest review of the EU's "European Neighbourhood Policy". The review of the Policy outlined the EU's political will to further invigorate cooperation with the UfM and give priority to its regional cooperation

efforts, promoting a truly shared agenda between the North and the South.

Drawing from this momentum, the UfM is determined to continue developing a positive agenda for the Mediterranean through concrete activities based on common interest in order to more effectively address challenges faced in the region and contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

2017: A New Phase for the Union for the Mediterranean with the adoption of the Roadmap for Action

In January 2017, the institution organized the II UfM Regional Forum, bringing UfM Ministers of Foreign Affairs and their representatives with regional key players to review the UfM action-oriented activities and achievements.

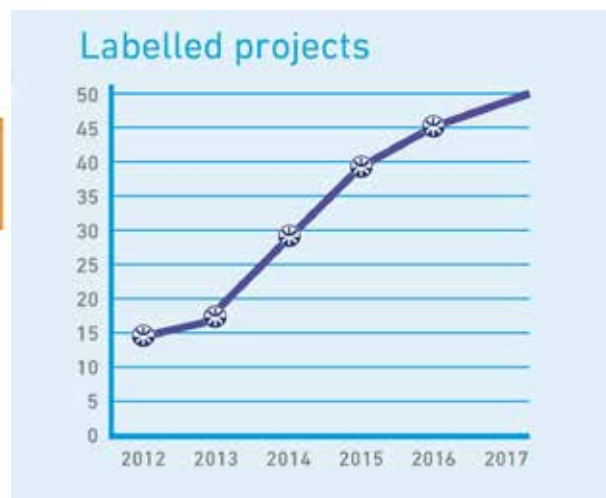
An important landmark was reached at this occasion with the adoption by the UfM Ministers of Foreign Affairs of a Roadmap for Action, entitled “The Union for the Mediterranean: An Action-driven Organisation with a Common Ambition”. The adoption of the Roadmap launched a new phase, with a strong political impulse that reaffirmed the commitment of the 43 member States to work together for a deepened and effective Euro-

Mediterranean regional cooperation agenda through the UfM. It set the organization to work towards addressing the socioeconomic root causes of growing challenges that are confronting the Mediterranean through a collective, inclusive and coherent approach.

This approach has four main objectives:

1. Enhancing political dialogue amongst member States on key regional issues. The deeper and more comprehensive this dialogue will be, the more effective will be the operational activities of the Secretariat to address current challenges.
2. Ensuring the contribution of UfM activities to regional stability and human development;
3. Strengthening regional integration; and
4. Consolidating the capacity of the UfM through impact-focused actions.

Within the framework of the 2030 Agenda, the UfM has intensified its cooperation with key global, regional and sub-regional initiatives and organizations, consolidating its multi-stakeholder approach as a tool for developing and reinforcing South-South and triangular cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean region.



Euro-Mediterranean region.



Photo: Med4Jobs Initiative - YouMatch project, 2016.



What are the faced challenges related to youth employment services in Jordan

Job Orientation

- ① a change in the mindset of the Society + the extended family.
- ② Job orientations to start in school right before they choose their Uni Specialization
- ③ Lack of Role models, or anyone that kids can look up
- ④ Lack of Specialization " Jack of all trades, Master of none"
- ⑤ the private sector to be more involved in Youth Career

YouMatch

Towards better job matching for youth.

www.youmatch-global



Chapter II:

The Union for the Mediterranean, a Key Framework for Enhanced Regional Cooperation

Chapter II: The Union for the Mediterranean, a Key Framework for Enhanced Regional Cooperation in the Mediterranean

The Nairobi outcome document of the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (A/Res/64/222) notes that a multi-stakeholder approach is paramount for South-South and triangular cooperation, involving not only governmental actors but also non-state actors. It sets South-South cooperation as a process whereby developing countries can pursue development objectives through “regional and interregional collective actions, including partnerships involving governments, regional organisations, civil society, academia and the private sector”. Within this framework, the UfM acts as multi-stakeholder platform in the Euro-Mediterranean region, establishing a global and regional hub of connections to improve cooperation and dialogue for the implementation of the SDGs.

In line with the priorities of member States, the UfM Secretariat has a clear objective to expand and consolidate its role as a regional platform for all Euro-Mediterranean actors to foster synergies, as it is in a unique position to facilitate regional cooperation and strategic partnerships with key regional stakeholders. The UfM also actively works on consolidating

global partnerships with a wide range of international organizations engaged on fostering South-South and triangular cooperation. Among these, the United Nations system has been a priority partner for the UfM in the last years.

Institutional Partnerships

The UfM Secretariat works with various Euro-Mediterranean institutions that form its immediate eco-system. It fosters close relations with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean, the European Parliament, and national parliaments of UfM countries and their respective committees to ensure more visibility for UfM work and reinforce synergies in the region. It also maintains a close interaction with the Anna Lindh Foundation (ALF), working in the area of intercultural and interfaith dialogue in the Mediterranean, and cooperates as well with

“The Union for the Mediterranean Secretariat is determined to continue joining forces with the international community to address global challenges and implement the Sustainable Development Goals in the Euro-Mediterranean region through tangible and concrete activities and initiatives, especially for youth in the region”.

Fathallah Sijilmassi, Secretary General of the Union for the Mediterranean



“

UfM has strengthened its working relations with international and European institutions active in the Euro-Mediterranean region... particularly in issues related to youth, women's empowerment, promotion of intercultural dialogue and prevention of extremism and radicalization.

”

the Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly in order to develop its territorial dimension.

The League of Arab States is also a key partner for the UfM in the region. An MoU was been signed between the two organizations on 18 October 2017 with a view to strengthen mutual collaboration and promote regional cooperation activities, capitalizing on the potential of South-South and triangular cooperation in the region. In this regard, several actions and initiatives have also been developed in the last years with the Arab Maghreb Union.

Furthermore, the UfM has strengthened its working relations with international and European institutions active in the Euro-Mediterranean region, namely the Council of Europe and its European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity (also known as North-South Centre), the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the European Training Foundation and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, particularly in issues related to youth, women's empowerment, promotion of intercultural dialogue and prevention of extremism and radicalization. The UfM Secretariat has also worked to develop close relations with the Economic and Social Councils of its member States in the framework of the Euromed Summits of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions, to build strong networks, increase inclusiveness and identify ways of cooperation.

The Secretariat intensified its cooperation with the Deauville Partnership. The UfM Secretariat hosted the second SOM of this initiative at its headquarters in Barcelona

on 22 November 2016, under the Japanese Presidency of the G7, to examine progress made on economic governance and support to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and review future activities.

The UfM Secretariat is also increasing connections with regional and sub-regional initiatives, including being involved in the activities developed under the framework of the 5+5 Dialogue and actively participating in its sectorial dialogues and meetings on themes such as water, higher education, and research and innovation. In addition, the Secretariat seeks to strengthen its relations with member States of the Agadir Agreement with the aim of reinforcing sub-regional economic integration in the region.

Lastly, the UfM Secretariat continues to build more inclusive partnerships with non-governmental organizations and other actors, either as partners in regional policy dialogue forums, as participants in its technical platforms or as promoters and partners of UfM-labelled projects at the operational level. Under this framework, the Secretariat continues to widen and deepen its network of institutional and public affairs partnerships with organizations, associations, think tanks and initiatives throughout the region, such as: the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed); the Euro-Mediterranean Study Commission (EuroMeSCo); Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI); Istituto per gli studi di politica internazionale (ISPI); the Association of the Mediterranean Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ASCAME); BUSINESSMED; the Mediterranean World Economic Foresight Institute (IPEMED); Casa Árabe; Casa Mediterráneo; the Center for Mediterranean Integration (CMI); the Intermediterranean Commission of the Conference of Peripheral

Maritime Regions of Europe (CPMR); the International Road Transport Union (IRU); the Office of Economic Cooperation for the Mediterranean and the Middle East (OCEMO); the Agency for Sustainable Mediterranean Cities and Territories (AVITEM); the Observatoire Méditerranéen de l'Énergie (OME); the Regional Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency; and the Mediterranean Tourism Foundation.

Financial Partnerships

In recent years the UfM Secretariat has aimed to gradually move to a more structured long-term relationship with major donors and IFIs active in the region.

The UfM Secretariat works closely with the EIB, the EBRD and the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), as well as with a number of governments and national cooperation agencies, notably those from France, Germany, Norway, Spain

and Sweden. The UfM has, for instance, signed a multi-annual financing agreement in early 2017 with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), the first of its kind with a member State, to deepen and amplify UfM activities promoting regional dialogue. The UfM has also joined forces with the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), through the signing of a joint declaration in October 2017 to push forward regional integration, support the creation of a wide range of employment opportunities, in particular for youth, and boost trade within the region and beyond.

Finally, the UfM has also been developing relations with Arab donors as they become increasingly involved in triangular cooperation,⁸ and has been consolidating its relations with businesses for a better involvement of the private sector in financing and developing projects.

⁸ World Bank (2010), Arab Development Assistance. Four Decades of Cooperation, Report. <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTMENA/Resources/ADAPub82410web.pdf>

UfM labeled project "Forming Responsible Citizens", 2016.



Global Partnerships: The Union for the Mediterranean and the United Nations System

In December 2015, the United Nations granted the Observer Status to the UfM, paving the way to strengthened collaboration with United Nations entities and to new strategic partnerships in the regional priority areas, as identified by UfM member States.

Women's Empowerment

In view of strengthening the role of women and enhancing their socioeconomic empowerment in the region, the UfM Secretariat signed an agreement with UN-Women in 2014. This agreement is designed to reinforce relations between the organizations particularly under the framework of the UfM Regional Dialogue on Women Empowerment. Under the Regional Dialogue, UN Women co-chairs with Egypt the working group on combating violence against women and gender-based violence.

The Secretariat works with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) on the UfM-labelled project "Women's Economic Empowerment in the MENA Region", implemented in several Southern Mediterranean countries, as well as with the World Health Organization (WHO) on the "Women's Right to Health" project. This last project, which aims to strengthen national policies on women's health in Albania, Montenegro and Morocco in partnership with national health ministries, encourages in-country, North-South and South-South cooperation, while fostering the exchange of knowledge, best practices and strategies

tailored to local economic, social and cultural characteristics.

Youth Unemployment and Employability

At the Third UfM Ministerial Meeting on Employment and Labour, held in Jordan in September 2016, Ministers emphasized the need to take action in response to recent commitments by the United Nations for the promotion of employment and decent work, including the transition from the informal economy to formal employment. The UfM Secretariat and UNIDO have worked closely together to advance inclusive and sustainable development in countries of the Euro-Mediterranean region, in particular through the project "Establishment of a Regional Platform for the Development of Cultural and Creative Industries and Clusters in the Southern Mediterranean", which aims at fostering entrepreneurial cooperation among the cultural and creative industries.

The UfM Secretariat has partnered with the International Labour Organization (ILO) to address unemployment challenges in the region, and more specifically to promote innovative solutions in the area of employability and decent work. In a clear example of this engagement, ILO signed a partnership with AmidEast, promoter of the UfM-labelled project "Skills for Success: Employability Skills for Women", to implement the project's activities in Egypt.

Lastly, a MoU was recently signed with the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) to capitalize on the potential of tourism to enhance sustainable economic growth, social inclusiveness, decent employment, SMEs

development and poverty alleviation.

Preventing Radicalization and Terrorism through Enhancing Intercultural and Interfaith Dialogue

The UfM Secretariat signed a partnership agreement with UNESCO in October 2015 with the aim of promoting initiatives and projects focused on youth, intercultural and interreligious dialogue. The Secretariat also closely works with UNDP and UN-Women on these areas under the framework of the recently launched regional expert group on “The Role of Women and Youth for the Promotion of Peace and the Prevention of Violent Extremism in the Euro-Mediterranean Region”. The action of the UfM in this area is further detailed in Chapter III.

The UfM Secretariat also agreed with the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) to define concrete ways to collaborate, based on existing synergies

and complementarities. This collaboration will happen in coordination with ALF, which also plays a fundamental role in developing greater cultural exchange in the region. As a member of the Group of Friends of UNAOC, the UfM Secretariat takes part in the meetings of the Alliance, notably to discuss its Mediterranean Strategy and concrete means of collaboration to improve intercultural dialogue and cooperation between the diverse nations and communities in the region.

Energy and Climate Action

The UfM Secretariat participated in the United Nations Climate Summit 2014, organized by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, which brought together world leaders from governments, financial institutions, the private sector and civil society to champion an ambitious vision and catalyze action to address climate change. Following this



Second UfM Regional Forum, 2017.

meeting, and in accordance with the UfM Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Climate Change adopted in May 2014 in Athens, the UfM has been involved in the drive for a Mediterranean climate action agenda and has been closely working with the United Nations in the fields of energy and climate change.

Linking the regional agenda to the global one, the UfM Secretariat has obtained Observer Status to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and actively participates in the Conference of Parties (COP) to the UNFCCC. It participated in COP21 and COP22, both of which were held in UfM Member States - France and Morocco – and promoted several major initiatives, including the launch in Marrakesh, together with the European Commission, of the UfM Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Platform to facilitate climate change mitigation and adaptation in the Euro-Mediterranean region. The UfM Secretariat has also brought the Mediterranean dimension to the COP23, organized under the Presidency of the Republic of Fiji in Bonn, Germany, through the organization of two side-events, one focused on climate finance and energy transition⁹, and one focused on the involvement of youth in climate action.

Furthermore, in line with the key role of finance

in its climate action strategy in the region¹⁰, the UfM Secretariat co-organized the UNFCCC 2017 Forum of the Standing Committee on Finance, “Mobilizing Finance for Climate-Resilient Infrastructure”, in Rabat, Morocco in September 2017.

Water, Environment and the Blue Economy

The UfM Secretariat works with the United Nations Environment Programme / Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) in the area of water and environment to promote activities on pollution prevention and control in Mediterranean coastal and marine waters. UNEP/MAP is a UfM strategic partner, and the organizations are working on the UfM-labelled project “Plastic Busters for a Mediterranean Free from Litter”. This project directly supports the implementation of the UNEP/MAP Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean. The Regional Activity Centre on Sustainable Consumption and Production of UNEP/MAP and UNIDO are also a close partner of the UfM Secretariat in efforts to promote sustainable consumption and production in the Balkans, Turkey, the Southern Mediterranean and the broader Euro-Mediterranean region.

The UfM Secretariat has also partnered with the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean, hosted by the Food and

⁹The UfM launched during this side-event a study on the status of climate finance in the Mediterranean region. Financed through the European Union Facility on Integrated Maritime Policy and Climate Change, this study gives an overview of the specific funding flows related to climate finance in the region and provides a basis to address the question of energy transition.

¹⁰Through the 2014 Ministerial Declaration of Athens on Environment and Climate Change, Ministers of UfM member States have recognized the need for more strategic planning of environment and climate investments in the region, and agreed to increase resources to tackle this global challenge. Furthermore, the Roadmap for Action of the UfM, adopted in January 2017 by UfM Ministers of Foreign Affairs, aims to develop the existing regional dialogue on climate action with a strong focus on climate finance.

Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in the field of Blue Economy. In addition, the UfM Secretariat has an ongoing collaboration with the FAO network “Silva Mediterranea” dealing with forestry, desertification and land degradation.

Finally, during the last edition of the World Water Week organized by the Stockholm International Water Institute, the UfM Secretariat participated in the United Nations High-level Panel on Water.

The Union for the Mediterranean Urban Agenda

Fostering sustainable urban development is paramount to effectively advance integration, stability and human development in the Euro-Mediterranean region. The UfM Secretariat and UN-Habitat closely work to strengthen collaboration towards the definition of a regional strategy to implement the new UfM Urban Agenda. Both parties agreed to find common responses to the pressing challenges facing urban areas in the Euro-Mediterranean

region and have identified several areas of collaboration.

On the margins of the Second UfM Ministerial Conference on Sustainable Urban Development held in Cairo in May 2017, and following the signing of a MoU between the UfM Secretariat and UN-Habitat in April 2016, both organizations signed a Letter of Intent to further strengthen their institutional collaboration with the aim of catalyzing effective, coordinated support to countries and cities towards the common aim of harnessing urbanization as a solution to barriers to sustainable development.

South-South Cooperation

As evidenced throughout this report, the UfM promotes the values and principles of South-South cooperation through its institutional governance, its working methodology, its multi-stakeholder approach and numerous institutional partnerships, as well as through its action for the implementation of the SDGs. In this regard, the UfM signed a MoU with UNOSSC in January 2017 to further encourage South-South and triangular cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean region. The institutions will work together to address regional challenges through economic empowerment, skills development and leadership-building activities, while promoting knowledge on South-South cooperation modalities by showcasing and scaling-up development solutions from the South. In addition, the agreement outlines cooperation on high-level policy debates and technical exchanges towards strengthening institutional partnerships through South-South and triangular cooperation.

“The effects of climate change and the phenomenal shift towards urbanization – 6 out of every 10 people in the world are expected to reside in urban areas by 2030 – are already being felt and are bound to intensify in the coming years. There is thus a need to mobilize all actors, national governments, local authorities, academia, businesses and citizens, to ensure that the growth of cities and urban areas is turned into opportunities. The UfM has a central role in furthering these goals in the Mediterranean region.”

Dr. Joan Clos, Executive Director of UN-Habitat







Chapter III: **The Union for the Mediterranean, a Regional Chapter for the Achievement of the 2030 Agenda**

Chapter III: A Regional Chapter for the Achievement of the 2030 Agenda

Heads of delegations and high representatives of Governments, gathered in Nairobi for the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation in 2009, recognized the importance of SSC as a manifestation of solidarity among people and countries of the South that contributes not only to their national well-being and their national and collective self-reliance, but also to the attainment of internationally agreed development goals.

The UfM works for the enhancement of South-South and triangular cooperation as effective means of achieving the 17 SDGs¹¹. The organization particularly aims at consolidating human development and promoting sustainable development as main drivers for stability and integration in the Mediterranean region.



Med4Jobs Initiative - New Chance Mediterranean Network (MedNC), 2016.

¹¹ The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development refers specifically to SSC and triangular cooperation in SDG 17, which stresses the need to have a “revitalized and enhanced global partnership that brings together Governments, civil society, the private sector, the United Nations system and other actors and mobilizes all available resources”.

By concentrating all efforts on two main pillars of action, fostering human development and promoting sustainable development, UfM projects and initiatives contribute to stability and integration in the Euro-Mediterranean region. This section presents the action of the UfM as a regional chapter of the global agenda, notably through showcasing three UfM flagship projects on areas of common interest and mutual priority for the region, namely the Med4Jobs Initiative, the Euro-Med University of Fes (UEMF) and the Desalination Facility for the Gaza strip.

Box 3. SDGs Related to UfM Projects and Activities on Human Development

SDGs to be achieved through UfM projects and activities on human development

SDG 3: *Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.*

SDG 4: *Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*

SDG 5: *Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls*

SDG 8: *Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.*

SDG 17: *Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnerships for sustainable development*

The UfM Roadmap for Action adopted in January 2017 highlights that there is no development without security, and no security without development. It sets forth the need to strengthen the development-security nexus to create an environment conducive to socioeconomic development and to address, through a global and balanced approach, the challenges of the region. As the scope and scale of these challenges have reached unprecedented levels, the impact of UfM activities on regional stability through their connection with the development dimension is essential.

Human development is a key driver for stability and security in the Euro-Mediterranean region. Issues such as youth employability, higher education and women’s empowerment are at the very heart of current regional challenges, be they economic growth, social cohesion, irregular migration or efforts to counter radicalization and extremism. Addressing root causes is therefore essential to regional stability.

The UfM Secretariat has amplified initiatives targeting, in particular, young people and women’s involvement in socioeconomic life, education and mobility, vocational education and training (VET) and research and innovation. In addition, intercultural and interfaith dialogue in the Mediterranean remains an important underlying dimension of all regional cooperation activities in the framework of the UfM.

Emphasis on Human Development



Box 4: Youth at the Heart of the UfM Strategy for Stability and Development

Southern Mediterranean region

Almost
60%
of the REGIONAL
POPULATION
is currently under
the age of 30



30%
YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT



one of the HIGHEST YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT
RATES IN THE WORLD

Comprising nearly 60 per cent of the total population, young people constitute one of the greatest assets for stability and development in the Euro-Mediterranean region. Young people play important roles in energizing development, growth, poverty reduction and societal well-being, as well as in fostering regional cooperation and integration. Their active participation in intercultural exchanges and dialogue is also essential, as young people are the ambassadors of the shared values that the UfM seeks to advocate for and promote in both the North and the South.

The region has one of the highest youth unemployment rates in the world, sitting at 30 per cent overall, rising to around 50 per cent for young women specifically. At the same time, the number of young people under the age of 15 is forecast to increase by over 18 per cent by 2020, with 2.8 million young people entering the job market each year in the region.¹²

Youth is thus at the core of the UfM regional strategy. Its new action-oriented Roadmap

is centered on young people’s potential to promote stability and development. The UfM offers a unique platform for capitalizing on young people’s potential in the region and turning them into its strongest asset.

The UfM Secretariat is developing a global and more comprehensive Strategy for Youth, including them not as mere beneficiaries but as active key players and engines of Mediterranean integration. Under this framework, it collaborates closely with regional partner organizations as well as with youth networks, economic hubs for innovation, the private sector and with networks of universities and research centers, in order to make youth success stories visible and increase their impact on the ground.

- **Political Forum/Ministerial meetings:** at the Second UfM Regional Forum, held in Barcelona in January 2016 under the theme “Mediterranean in Action: Youth for

¹² Anthony O’Sullivan, Marie-Estelle Rey, and Jorge Gálvez Méndez (2011). “Opportunities and Challenges in the MENA Region”, OECD.

Stability and Development”, UfM Ministers of Foreign Affairs adopted a new Roadmap for Action calling for the implementation of a Positive Agenda for Youth in the Mediterranean through the facilitation of higher education, VET, employability, health, youth empowerment and mobility, and the mainstreaming of gender equality, thus promoting social inclusiveness.

- **Regional Policy Platforms:** structured regional dialogues on topics such as employment, women’s empowerment, education, youth employability and mobility, regularly include international organizations, parliamentarians, civil society organizations, IFIs, development agencies, private sector representatives, universities and think tanks. These platforms follow up on decisions taken at the Ministerial level, thereby ensuring implementation of concrete initiatives and projects on the ground such as the Mediterranean Initiative for Jobs (Med4Jobs) outlined in more detail below.
- **Regional Cooperation Projects:** the main objectives of more than 15 of the 50 UfM-labelled projects are to empower young people and enhance their capabilities, skills and economic inclusion. Within projects, activities range from promoting entrepreneurship and access to finance to vocational training, employability, mobility and social engagement. Of the 200,000 beneficiaries directly targeted by UfM-labelled projects, more than 100,000 are young men and women.

Promoting Job Creation and Inclusive Growth

Job creation remains a top concern at the international, regional and national levels and will continue to be a priority of development cooperation activities in the years to come, particularly in the Euro-Mediterranean region. Indeed, the countries of this region have among the highest unemployment rates and decent work deficits in labor markets, affecting mostly youth and women. The share of the informal economy remains very high, and prospects in terms of job creation remain bleak. Full and productive employment and decent work for all have therefore acquired a central place in policy-making in the region, being understood as critical for economic growth, social cohesion and poverty eradication.

In this context, the UfM Secretariat is engaged in the implementation of specific projects and initiatives focused on the development of businesses, employment opportunities and



Med4Jobs Initiative - New Chance Mediterranean Network (MedNC), 2016.

employability skills. There is a specific emphasis on youth and women, thus addressing cross-cutting issues such as the promotion of women's socioeconomic empowerment and the enhancement of youth employability, as well as a particular attention to SMEs, which are considered vectors for innovation and economic growth in the Mediterranean region.

"The development of the private sector, the fostering of job creation, the fair distribution of economic benefits as well as the strengthening of regional cooperation and integration are key factors contributing to national economic development. Therefore, a concrete action with a real impact on the citizens' well-being is paramount. For all these reasons, the UfM Secretariat, through its Business Development division, is positioning itself as a partner of choice, a trusted adviser and a credible knowledge broker."

Sudqi Al-Omouh, Deputy Secretary General in charge of Business Development



Field visit - Desalination Water Facility in the Gaza Strip, 2016.

Box 5: Agadir SME Programme – Fostering Regional Integration through South-South Cooperation



The Agadir Agreement for establishing a free trade zone (FTZ) between Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia was launched in Agadir on 5 August 2001, was signed in Rabat on 25 February 2004 and entered into force on 27 March 2007. The FTZ was created in order to develop economic activities, support employment, increase production and improve the standards of living within the signatories' member States. The agreement offers new opportunities for expanding commercial exchange among the four members, and between them and the European Union, providing preferential access to these markets based on cumulation of origin.

The project "Agadir SME Programme" aims at reinforcing economic integration and contributing to economic development and income generation through SME-led growth. Specifically, the project seeks to enhance competitiveness of SMEs and improve their supply capacity and ability to ensure wider use of the cumulation of origin¹³, in view of increasing intra-trade among the four Agadir Agreement member countries and their exports to the EU, as well as creating synergies and a new economic dynamism to strengthen sub-regional economic integration. The project aims to attract foreign direct investment to the Agadir Agreement member countries and to remove trade barriers and impediments to integration.

In September 2016, UfM Ministers of Employment met in Jordan at the occasion of the Third UfM Ministerial Conference on Employment and Labour. They committed to work together to address the challenges related to employment, employability and decent work, and to support the UfM Secretariat to implementing the Framework Action Plan on Employment, coordinate among donors and enhance policy dialogue through the labelling and promotion of cooperation projects in the area of youth employability and inclusive growth. These projects are to be completed under the framework initiative Med4Jobs.



¹³The concept of cumulation of origin allows products of one country of a free trade zone to be further processed or added to products in another country of that zone as if they had originated in the latter country.

Case Study: Med4Jobs

Med4Jobs is a UfM flagship initiative that aims to help increase the employability of youth and women, close the gap between labor demand and supply, and foster a culture of entrepreneurship and private sector development. Developed by the UfM Secretariat, Med4Jobs is a cross-sector initiative that seeks to promote and replicate a number of visible private sector job creation projects in the southern and eastern Mediterranean region.

Growth in the Euro-Mediterranean region has not enabled the creation of sufficient jobs in recent years. Med4Jobs aims to contribute towards bringing job creation to the center of the socioeconomic development debate, notably by shedding light on employment at local and national level. It is conceived as a cross-sectorial, project-based initiative, driven by the need for an integrated regional initiative in the area of job creation. It covers both the supply and demand side of the labor market by targeting three core issues:

- **Employability:** identifying and scaling-up across the region successful training experiences that address the mismatch between skills and labor market needs.
- **Job intermediation:** replicating successful job facilitation and intermediation experiences.
- **Business enabling infrastructure:** developing business enabling infrastructure for SMEs, such as incubators and coaching programmes.



The programme focuses on three approaches:

- **A vertical approach**, which seeks to ensure consistency and alignment with national employment frameworks as defined by ministries of employment.
- **A horizontal approach**, through the participation of a wide range of stakeholders such as international institutions, universities, private sector companies, as well as the exchange of best practices between countries.
- **A bottom-up approach**, which aims, through projects, to raise awareness and generate reflection on ways to address unemployment in the region. Lessons learned through Med4Jobs projects should also help policy-makers to better fine-tune their employment policies in the region.

Med4Jobs directly contributes to the 2030 Agenda, in particular to SDG 8 targeting the promotion of sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment

and decent work for all; to SDG 4 ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all; and to SDG 5 related to achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls, as numerous of its projects aim at fostering business entrepreneurship as a pillar for women empowerment.

The Med4Jobs initiative has been supporting an increasing number of projects. Three are highlighted below as clear examples of South-South and triangular cooperation.

Generation Entrepreneur: Providing Business Skills Training through a South-South Cooperation Approach

Generation Entrepreneur aims to develop and sustain an environment of entrepreneurship throughout North Africa and the Middle East by providing business skills training to youth from Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the State of Palestine and Tunisia. Developed by INJAZ Al-Arab, the project seeks to support and develop an entrepreneurial ecosystem at multiple levels, from grassroots business education in primary and secondary schools to hands-on training on business creation. Generation Entrepreneur also covers private sector mentorship and seed funding for real enterprises.

Approximately 79,000 school and university students will benefit from the training

programmes promoted by the project, and numerous job opportunities will be created upon successful completion of mentorship, incubation and graduation of the start-up programmes.

Maharat Med: A South-South Cooperation Model to Develop Youth Employability and Entrepreneurial Skills

The Maharat Med project aims at embedding an entrepreneurial spirit amongst youth, transforming job seekers into job creators, building capacities and enhancing youth employability skills. Developed by the Jordanian non-profit organization Business Development Center (BDC), it aspires to encourage employability projects on a multi-dimensional level in Egypt, Jordan, the State of Palestine, and Morocco, by bridging the gap between the output of education systems and labor market requirements.

The project's approach tackles the problem of unemployment from both the demand and the supply side: it trains students to be ready for future work, and it helps them to start their own businesses. The programme relies on 4 pillars: employment; entrepreneurship; education; and finally engaging Maharat Med beneficiaries in social work and community service activities. The private sector is involved in the entire process, particularly in training activities.

Field visit - Desalination Water Facility in the Gaza Strip, 2016.



Given the internationally recognized success of the programme in Jordan, BDC garnered the support of the Med4Jobs Initiative to work with other Mediterranean partners facing the same challenge to upscale and replicate Maharat Med in other Mediterranean countries, providing an excellent example of South-South cooperation within the UfM framework.

YouMatch Toolbox Project: Bringing Sustainable Employment for Youth through Triangular Cooperation

The new Global Initiative on Innovative Employment Services for Youth, developed by the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ) under the Med4Jobs job intermediation pillar, assists policymakers, private sector representatives and civil society actors to initiate an ongoing dialogue on innovative solutions to address the challenge of bringing youth into sustainable employment. The project focuses on selected employment services for young people in Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, the State of Palestine and Tunisia, and aims at promoting regional peer-learning and knowledge-sharing in the field of youth employment.

The objectives of this project are to promote innovative employment services; build on knowledge generated within the beneficiary countries; share good practices and lessons learned; increase the visibility of the approach;

and find partners to advance the adoption and implementation of promising solutions. The results and recommendations of the YouMatch Toolbox are shared on the platform of the global initiative and introduced in relevant discussions at the regional and global levels.

Based on case studies of existing approaches within the southern Mediterranean region, a peer group, together with a facilitators' team, analyze substantial criteria and success factors for the implementation of the identified tools and help in their development and elaboration, towards implementing innovation and transferring projects in one or more partner countries.

Improving Student Mobility and Employability through Education



YouMatch: Regional Dialogue on Employment Services for Youth (MENA), Amman, Jordan, July 2016,

Box 6: Interview with the promoter of YouMatch Toolbox

DEUTSCHE GESELLSCHAFT FÜR INTERNATIONALE ZUSAMMENARBEIT (GIZ) GmbH



Promoter of YouMatch Toolbox

Q: Why is the project relevant for the region?

A: The YouMatch Toolbox project aims to improve employment services for youth in order to address one of the most severe socioeconomic challenges of the MENA region – high youth unemployment and the mismatch between labor market supply and demand. The development of innovative solutions to improve job orientation, preparation and matching is therefore of vital importance to the countries of the region. YouMatch enables the elaboration of such demand-driven solutions by local practitioners in a cross sectorial approach.

Q: What is the UfM added value in the project?

A: The UfM political endorsement of YouMatch Toolbox guarantees the highest political support to the project. This institutional buy-in of national policy-makers is key for the active involvement of ministerial staff and local practitioners in YouMatch working groups. On this basis, innovative solutions for employment services are developed by the network partners, and results of the cooperation within the YouMatch network can be integrated into the policy process and adapted to different country contexts.

Q: Why do you think the notion of Southern “co-ownership” in this project is important?

A: Southern “co-ownership” is crucial to YouMatch Toolbox as all activities build on local experiences and lessons learned in the field of employment services. In the YouMatch network, innovative approaches to employment services are developed based on peer-to-peer exchanges between public, private and civil society stakeholders from both the Southern UfM countries and Sub-Saharan Africa. South-South exchange takes place within and across regions participating in YouMatch Toolbox, and this local knowledge is enriched with international expertise on a demand-driven way.

Q: What is (or will be) the impact of this South-South / triangular cooperation project on the daily lives of citizens?

A: YouMatch has recently launched the Open Innovation Fund for Employment Services (OIFES) to pilot innovative projects aimed at improving employment services for youth. These projects are implemented within six months, and citizens benefit very concretely from the results of OIFES projects. For instance, an innovation project aimed at improving job orientation for secondary school students is being implemented in both Jor-

dan and Morocco. The project, developed under the framework of South-South cooperation between the two countries, will be piloted at two schools in each country. Students in Jordan and Morocco will therefore very soon benefit from an improved employment service in terms of job orientation.



Med4Jobs Initiative - YouMatch project, 2016.

Box 7: Interview with a beneficiary of YouMatch Toolbox

Reem Hoseh works at the Civil Service Bureau in Amman and is a speaker of one of the YouMatch regional working groups, which implements an innovation project on “Career Essentials for Youth at Educational Institutions.”

Beneficiary of YouMatch Toolbox



Q: Why is the project relevant for the region?

A: “Career Essentials for Youth at Educational institutions” is an innovative project that developed within the framework of the regional exchange of the YouMatch Toolbox project working groups. It focuses on students between the age of 14 and 16, who face the challenge of deciding on a career path that matches both their competencies and market needs. Jordan and Morocco need such a project to help build the capacity of counsellors at schools, for example through delivering specialized trainings on career counselling. This will provide counsellors with the tools required to support youth in addressing and tackling career-related challenges. In addition, capacities of 200 students will be built by training them on: (1) self-assessment of competencies (knowledge, skills, attitudes and motivation) relevant to career planning; and (2)

career guidance, including awareness on labor market needs and career opportunities.

Q: What is the UfM added value in the project?

A: Without the help of YouMatch Toolbox, our innovation project would not have been implemented as it developed out of the regional network. For this network, the political support of the UfM is very crucial as it both enables project implementation on the ground and guarantees institutional sustainability.

Q: Why the notion of Southern “co-ownership” in this project important?

A: Since youth in the southern Mediterranean countries often face same or very similar challenges related to career planning, one of the main objectives of the project is to share experience and knowledge among different countries. The Jordanian and Moroccan

teams will work hand in hand to implement the same toolkit to train consultants and students. In addition, consultants from the State of Palestine will attend the training sessions, and lessons learned will be incorporated from our Egyptian partners with the youth employment program “A Step towards Tomorrow”.

Q: What is (or will be) the impact of this South-South and triangular cooperation project on the daily lives of citizens?

A: Since the project is working on changing the attitudes of students, families, and the community as a whole, the impact will not necessarily be felt in the short-term. However, in the medium-term we aim to have a very concrete impact on the life of citizens, both in Jordan and Morocco. Through the project, secondary school students will have access to career guidance and will be able to better take career decisions based on their own competencies and the needs of the labor market.





Field visit Euro-Mediterranean University
of Fes, 2017.

“

More than 32 per cent of enterprises in some southern and eastern Mediterranean countries have identified labor skill levels as a major constraint to hiring.

”

The UfM region counts a growing number of university students, with gross enrolment rates in higher education foreseen to rise to 40 per cent by 2030.¹⁴ The “youth bulge” in the region is changing dramatically its education outlook, with some southern Mediterranean countries having a higher percentage of higher education students per thousand of population than the EU. Yet educational efforts are still not matching the ambition of the region’s large young population, despite the current generation being the most educated ever in the southern Mediterranean, in particular with regards to enrolment in VET.

One of the reasons for high levels of youth unemployment is a persistent mismatch between the skills acquired in the education system and the requirements of the labor market. More than 32 per cent of enterprises in some southern and eastern Mediterranean countries have identified labor skill levels as a major constraint to hiring. At the same time, young graduates in the southern Mediterranean experience amongst the highest levels of unemployment for higher education graduates in the world, at 25 per cent. Moreover, rates of young people not in education, employment, or training (NEETs) in these countries range between 15 per cent and 32 per cent, thus making higher education and VET key priorities for the region, as well as for the UfM agenda.

The UfM Secretariat is committed to consolidating the role of the UfM as a regional platform, facilitator and driving

force of cooperation between higher education institutions, whose contribution to countering radicalization, promoting a Euro-Mediterranean identity for new generations of students and equipping them with the skills needed is central and needs to be further supported. Furthermore, the UfM Secretariat is engaged in deepening cooperation and integration in research and innovation among UfM countries.

Given the added value that regional mobility may offer to youth employability, and following specific commitments in the field of education of four major Ministerial meetings, the UfM Secretariat has launched the UfM informal regional dialogue process on higher education internationalization and academic mobility in the Euro-Mediterranean region, aiming at strengthening regional cooperation and synergies in this field. This work aims to amplify quality partnerships between educational institutions throughout the Mediterranean and further enhance North-South, South-North and South-South academic mobility.

In particular, this regional dialogue process envisions: improving shared knowledge and understanding of internationalization trends and policies, as well as mobility flows and available funding in the region; facilitating continuous peer-learning among UfM countries on policies and practices addressing common challenges and priorities; and fostering the implementation of joint projects and initiatives, whilst

¹⁴World Bank, “Breaking even or breaking through : reaching financial sustainability while providing high quality standards in Higher Education in the Middle East and North Africa”, Factsheet.



shaping a regional strategy on higher education internationalization and academic mobility in the Euro-Mediterranean area, reinforcing regional integration and increasing the involvement of UfM countries in related UfM-labelled projects. The UfM Secretariat also actively participates in the Mediterranean Committee on Education for Sustainable Development, which promotes the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development and its Action Plan.

The UfM has labelled six projects in the field of higher education and research, among the Euro-Med University of Fes and the Mediterranean New Chance (MedNC) project. This last project addresses challenges of youth unemployment (mainly of NEETS) and early school leaving, but also the risk of radicalization by promoting the exchange of best practices among centers working for the socio-professional integration of young people in six Euro-Mediterranean countries.

The Euro-Med University of Fes



Case Study: The Euro-Med University of Fes

The Euro-Med University of Fes (Université Euro-Med de Fès, UEMF) is a regional center of excellence promoting dialogue, intercultural exchange and cooperation in the fields of higher education, research and innovation. Its regional approach is reflected in the diversity of nationalities of the students and staff, as well as in the content of its study programmes which focus on important topics for the integrated development of the Mediterranean region. The UfM Secretariat is actively supporting the efforts of the UEMF.

Initiated by the His Majesty King Mohammed VI, King of Morocco, the Euro-Med University of Fes aims at building a new generation of young people with a unique Euro-Mediterranean profile. Within an international environment, UEMF seeks to deliver high standard multilingual and multi-dimensional programmes in engineering and in humanities and social sciences, complemented by cross-cutting classes on Euro-Mediterranean history, civilization, heritage and languages, and courses in ICT and entrepreneurship. A number of these programmes are already

in place, and others will be launched in partnership with well-known higher education institutions from several Euro-Mediterranean countries.

The promotion of international student mobility and the reinforcement of graduates' employability and entrepreneurial skills are key priorities of UEMF. These priorities are in line with conclusions set by the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Higher Education and Scientific Research (Cairo, 2007) and the recommendations of the recently reviewed ENP.

The project directly contributes to the global agenda, in particular to SDG 4 which aims at ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all, whilst also responding to the UfM strategic goal of fostering employability and inclusive growth in the region. It also contributes to SDG 8 on the promotion of sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.



Box 8: Key Figures

7,000 students from across the Euro-Mediterranean region and Sub-Saharan Africa in 2024

650 highly qualified professors, researchers, administrative and technical personnel from different origins across the region

80 per cent of students participate in mobility experiences

20 per cent of students granted with full or partial scholarships

26 hectare eco-friendly and world-class campus



Box 9: Interview with the UEMF President:

Prof. Mostapha Bousmina

President of the Euro-Med University of Fes



Q: How can UEMF contribute to the pressing challenges of the region?

A: The role of UEMF is to constitute a regional platform to promote intercultural dialogue and cooperation between the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean. From an academic and cultural approach, UEMF plays a key role in regional integration through the mobilization of students from all over the region, due to the fact that UEMF programmes are addressed at students from the Euro-Mediterranean sphere, MENA region and Sub-Saharan Africa. Considering the current instability in the region, this university is more relevant than ever as it contributes to the education of the future citizens of the region, as well as to building a shared area of peace and prosperity.

Q: What is the added value brought by the UfM to this project?

A: Once the UEMF was awarded with the UfM label, the UfM implemented all the political, technical and financial tools to accompany it in four issues.

- First, the UfM has provided political endorsement from the 43 UfM member States and assisted with building an international human resources team. In this respect, the UfM has been instrumental.
- Second, I would highlight its technical support. The UfM has assisted UEMF in building its business model, which has been crucial to ensure financial contributions from the European Commission, the European Investment Bank and some other donors. I doubt that this could have been possible without the support of the UfM.
- Moreover, the UfM has been key to our communication efforts, giving the necessary support to create materials such as the logo of the University, website, and presentation documents.
- Finally, regional networking has been as well an important issue. In this regard, the UfM supported the UEMF to consolidate institutional, academic and socioeconomic partnerships in the Euro-Mediterranean region, fostering a strong network. This network is crucial to achieve the goal of student mobility as well as the regional dimension.

Fostering Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment

Women’s rights and opportunities are still lagging behind those of men in the Euro-Mediterranean region. While women make up more than half of the university population, approximately 53.5 per cent, in the EU countries they comprised only 29 per cent of members of parliament in 2016. These figures are even lower in most southern Mediterranean countries, where they account for just 16 per cent of parliamentarians, and only 1 in 4 working age women are employed. By comparison, the European and global average is slightly more than 50 per cent.



Second UfM Regional Forum, 2017.



“

The Mediterranean region is undergoing a strong urban transformation which calls for a bottom-up approach and regionally-applicable solutions, to address an increasing number of demographic, socio-economic, environmental and technological challenges both at local and regional level.

”

Picture by the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) – European Commission, 2013.

“Responding to youth needs, developing women’s empowerment and gender equality, and enhancing civil society participation are the main priorities of the Union for the Mediterranean in the field of social and civil Affairs. We aim at putting the human being and people’s welfare at the heart of our mission”.

Laurence Païs, Deputy Secretary General in charge of Social and Civil Affairs



Second UfM Regional Forum, 2017.

In accordance with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the UfM Roadmap for Action, the UfM emphasizes and supports the instrumental role of women and their decisive contribution to human development, prosperity and stability in the Euro-Mediterranean region. In coordination with all member States, it continues to develop the regional cooperation and dialogue agenda to advance women’s participation in public, social and economic life. It is estimated that the region could increase its per capita GDP by 25 per cent through enabling women’s equal participation in public life and the labor market.¹⁵

This agenda includes the implementation of specific projects and initiatives with a focus on women, such as:

- Over 25 projects with more than 200,000

beneficiaries and a regional impact on human development have been officially launched. Projects with a specific focus on gender equality are benefiting more than 50,000 women.

- Building a common regional policy agenda through the UfM Ministerial meetings on “Strengthening the Role of Women in Society”. During the UfM Ministerial Conference on the Role of Women in Society, held in Cairo in November 2017, Ministers defined the priorities and adopted a roadmap for cooperation in the fields of gender and equality. This represented an important milestone. The Fourth UfM High-Level Conference on Women, to be held in Portugal in 2018, will follow up on the 2017 Ministerial meeting and will identify specific and strategic solutions to promote the full participation of women in society,

¹⁵ OECD (2014), Women in Business 2014: Accelerating Entrepreneurship in the Middle East and North Africa Region. <http://www.oecd.org/publications/women-in-business-2014-9789264213944-en.htm>

in partnership with key regional actors.

- Providing a regional platform for cooperation and dialogue between key stakeholders in the Euro-Mediterranean region to enhance cooperation, partnerships and complementarity between actors within a multi-stakeholder approach.

Recognizing the crosscutting dimension of gender equality and women's empowerment, the UfM Secretariat will continue to work to ensure gender mainstreaming in all its sectors of intervention, projects, partnerships and activities. Gender has been integrated in the project template for promoters, and gender-sensitive results indicators are requested for all new project proposals.

Preventing Radicalization and Terrorism through Enhancing Intercultural and Interfaith Dialogue

With the pressing issues of radicalization and extremism in the Euro-Mediterranean region, it is essential to exert all efforts to bridge any potential cultural divides in order to fight extremism and all forms of racism, and to build upon common heritage and aspirations. Intercultural and interfaith dialogue in the

Mediterranean is an important underlying dimension of all regional cooperation activities in the framework of the UfM.

The prevention of terrorism has always been present in the Euro-Mediterranean agenda, from the Barcelona declaration in 1995 to its 10th anniversary commemorations, in 2005, when the Euro-Mediterranean Code of Conduct on Counter Terrorism was adopted. The UfM Secretariat can play a facilitator role in promoting best practices and enhancing confidence-building measures, to contribute to the deconstruction/counter-narrative of radical discourse and ideologies. The UfM Roadmap adopted in January 2017 considers the possibility of updating this Code of Conduct to take into account recent evolutions, in line with the United Nations Global Counterterrorism Strategy that was adopted in 2006 and reviewed in 2016.

At the initiative of Spain and the UfM, a High-level Meeting on Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue was organized in July 2015 in Barcelona, in partnership with stakeholders such as the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC), the King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Inter-religious and Inter-Cultural Dialogue



MED-COP / side event of the COP22, 2016.

(KAICIID) and ALF. This first inter-institutional meeting on intercultural and interreligious dialogue created a network of key actors of this field in the region, who agreed to strengthen cooperation and take joint action to achieve a wider and more significant impact.

Lastly, the UfM Secretariat, together with UNDP and UN-Women, organized an expert meeting in July 2017 on the Role of Women and Young People in Promoting Peace and Preventing Violent Extremism in the Euro-Mediterranean. This meeting will lead to the presentation of actionable recommendations to governments in the Euro-Mediterranean region and the setting of a regional action plan, with the aim of supporting and empowering women and youth in preventing extremism and radicalization in the region.

Emphasis on Sustainable Development



The UfM Secretariat is amplifying its action to promote the regional agenda on sustainable development, in line with the 2030 Agenda and relevant UfM Ministerial Meetings and Declarations. Special emphasis has been placed on the multiplier effects of infrastructure transport networks; sustainable urban development and the digital economy;

Box 10: SDGs Related to UfM Projects and Activities on Sustainable Development

SDG 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

SDG 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

SDG 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

SDG 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

SDG 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

SDG 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

SDG 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

SDG 14: Conserve and sustainable use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

SDG 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forest, combat desertification and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

fostering regional cooperation in the fields of energy, environment and water; and relying on the climate action agenda as a driver for innovation, job creation and green growth.

Facilitating Transport and Mobility over Sea and Land

The Mediterranean is a sea that brings people together. It is a highway for commerce and exchange. However, it has been shown that insufficient logistics can cause a loss estimated at 6 per cent per year in trade volume between countries.¹⁶ Easy and safe access to flows of goods and people over land and sea is therefore essential for improving relations, enhancing regional trade, and consequently for the prosperity and development of the region.

Following the UfM Ministerial Conference on Transport of 2013, the UfM Secretariat has begun working for the establishment of an efficient, integrated, interoperable and sustainable transport infrastructure network in the Mediterranean with the ultimate aim of fostering socioeconomic development and cooperation in the region.

To this end, the UfM Secretariat will create the UfM Regional Platform on Transport Connectivity and its dedicated working groups, which bring together government representatives, key regional and international partner organizations, IFIs, and the private sector, with a view to creating a comprehensive strategy to address challenges facing the transport sector in a holistic and integrated

way. The UfM Secretariat aims to organize a UfM-IFIs Transport Project Committee back-to-back with the UfM Regional Platform. Moreover, the UfM Secretariat will continue supporting the development of transport projects in the Mediterranean with structuring and regional long-term impact, and connecting these with financing instruments, in particular from IFIs and the private sector.

Within this context, the UfM Secretariat supports projects aiming at the construction of motorways, the modernization of railway systems and the development of logistic platforms and motorways of the sea in the region. Particular attention is devoted to cooperation in the areas of maritime transport and urban development.

Promoting Sustainable and Integrated Urban Development

Currently, 60 per cent of the Mediterranean population lives in urban areas. With one of the fastest urbanization rates worldwide, the region's urban population is expected to increase by an additional 22.5 million by 2030¹⁷ due to continuing rural-urban migrations and urban growth. Mediterranean cities are also experiencing high vulnerability to the effects of climate change such as increased water scarcity, and extreme weather events such as droughts, forest fires and heat waves.

The Euro-Mediterranean region is thus undergoing a strong urban transformation, which calls for a bottom-up approach and regionally applicable solutions to address

¹⁶ The World Bank Middle East and North Africa Region (2010), Economic Integration in the Maghreb. <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTMENA/Resources/Maghrebpub.pdf>

¹⁷ Second Ministerial Conference of the UfM on Sustainable Urban Development, "Union for the Mediterranean Urban Agenda". Cairo, 2017

an increasing number of demographic, socioeconomic, environmental and technological challenges both at local and regional level. In line with the 2030 Agenda, the Second UfM Ministerial Conference on Sustainable Urban Development held in 2017 represented an important milestone towards the implementation of a comprehensive and integrated UfM Urban Agenda, addressing particularly SDG11 to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable, with a view to improving the quality of life in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

both the public and private sectors, and will translate into concrete projects and initiatives.

This conference also saw the launch of the UfM-labelled Imbaba Urban Upgrading Project, which aims to positively impact more 2 million people living in one of the most populated urban areas in the Giza Governorate in Egypt. Currently, the UfM has labelled a total of five urban development projects, including Imbaba, which are expected to improve the living conditions of more 7 million people in Egypt, Morocco, the State of Palestine, Tunisia and Turkey.

These projects have been selected by the Urban Projects Finance Initiative (UPFI) . an initiative where the UfM is actively engaged along with its partners and project promoters to develop flagship sustainable and innovative urban projects that van serve as best practice examples and are potentially replicable in the region.

"The improvement of living conditions in our region, where urban growth is rapidly increasing due to demographic and environmental pressure, is key to sustainable development. A holistic approach which brings together governments, institutions, donors, the private sector and all the key stakeholders is crucial to provide the region with collective and concerted answers."

Ihab Fahmy, UfM Deputy Secretary General in charge of Transport and Urban Development

Following the Ministerial Conference, a UfM Regional Platform on Sustainable Urban Development was created, with its thematic platforms and working groups, as well as the organization of the UfM-IFIs Urban Development Project Committee Meetings. This will result in enhanced policy dialogue among UfM member States, financial institutions, regional organizations and stakeholders from



UfM labelled projects EMUNI, 2016.

UfM-labelled Projects in the Field of Urban Development

- **Imbaba Urban Upgrading Project's** main objective is to strengthen the integration of Imbaba, one of the most populated urban areas within the Giza Governorate, with the rest of Greater Cairo, by providing its inhabitants with the basic facilities, infrastructure and services that are currently lacking.
- **The Sfax Taparura Project** aims to clean-up the northern coast of Sfax, Tunisia's second biggest city, restore its beaches and create 420 hectares of land to increase the size of the metropolitan area, for the benefit of its inhabitants and those of Greater Sfax.
- **Bouregreg Valley Development.** The metropolitan area of Rabat-Salé-Témara, the second biggest in Morocco in terms of population and economy, is divided by the Bouregreg Valley. The development of the valley will provide the area with a high-quality urban zone and bring the two towns of Rabat and Salé closer together to help forge new links.
- **The Multi-Site Urban Regeneration Project** in Jericho will improve living conditions for 50,000 inhabitants of the city and Jericho Governorate, by reorganizing and upgrading important public and leisure facilities and extending the city's green spaces. These interventions will bring about the revitalization of those areas, benefiting commercial activities and local economic development.
- **The Izmir Urban Integrated Waste Management Project** will provide high-quality integrated solid waste management for Izmir, and will adopt an exemplary, innovative and environmentally friendly urban infrastructure approach.

Field visit Euro-Mediterranean University of Fes, 2017.



Addressing the Challenges of Climate Change

The Mediterranean region has been identified as one of the major hotspots of climate change in the world. Indeed, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), a temperature rise of 2 degrees to 3 degrees Celsius is expected in the region by 2050.¹⁸ The adverse consequences of climate change on the countries of the region are thus numerous and interdependent, and require a collective response.

Through the 2014 Ministerial Declaration of Athens on Environment and Climate Change, Ministers of UfM member States have recognized the need to ensure that measures and policies required to address environment and climate challenges are clearly identified as priorities, and have also agreed to increase resources to tackle this global challenge.

“Climate change is a challenge for the region, but it is also a tremendous source of opportunity for achieving more equitable, inclusive and sustainable development models. We must take advantage of the situation to foster investments, reactivate technological transfer, create job opportunities for young people, promote the key role of women and develop production and consumption models that contribute towards sustainable development efforts.”

Jorge Borrego, UfM Deputy Secretary General in charge of Energy and Climate Action

The UfM is engaged in the development of a common and region-wide Mediterranean Climate Agenda through a permanent dialogue amongst member States and stakeholders, taking into account the main challenges and priorities of the region: access to climate finance; involvement of youth; and the role of local authorities and private sector. It acts as a unique platform to facilitate and promote regional dialogue and cooperation, notably within the UfM Climate Change Expert Group, as well as through concrete projects and initiatives.

Climate finance has proven to be one of the most crucial aspects of the global effort to address climate change. In this sense, the new Roadmap for Action of the UfM aims to develop the existing regional dialogue on climate action with a strong focus on climate finance. In cooperation with IFIs and donors involved in the Euro-Mediterranean region, the UfM launched a study on the status of climate finance in the region (more details in Chapter II). In 2016, the UfM held a Regional Finance Cooperation Committee on Climate Action, bringing together national representatives, IFIs and donors to contribute to the strengthening and better harmonization of finance flows in the region. The UfM is, in this regard, engaged to amplify efforts towards more balanced financial flows between mitigation and adaptation to climate change projects in the region.

Lastly, in response to the growing number of engaged youth organizations in the intergovernmental climate change process, the UfM Secretariat actively promotes the key

¹⁸ European Environmental Agency (2014). “Horizon 2020 Mediterranean report Toward shared environmental information systems”, EEA-UNEP/MAP joint report.

role that youth play in tackling climate change. The UfM has supported the development of youth-driven initiatives involved in this field, such as the Mediterranean Youth Climate Network (MYCN).¹⁹ The UfM has also previously published a report on “Key Players’ Perspective on Climate Change in the Mediterranean”²⁰, which was presented at the COP22 as a unique compilation of views from the key Mediterranean actors currently involved in the field of climate action.

Promoting Energy Connectivity and Sustainable Energy Supplies

The Mediterranean region is home to an increasing population with growing energy demands. By 2040, it is estimated that there will be a 98 per cent increase in energy demand in southern Mediterranean countries.²¹ By the same year, zero-emission energy sources are projected to make up 60 per cent of installed capacity in the region, and renewable energy production could increase, under the appropriate conditions, by 365 per cent in the upcoming 3 years.²²

Fostering investments in the energy sector is therefore the way forward to build a sustainable and resilient economy in Mediterranean countries. These countries are expected to require an investment of approximately €25 billion per year for the next 30 years. The UfM is thus committed to enhance cooperation and

dialogue to promote energy connectivity and sustainable energy supply in the region.

Following the Ministerial Conference on Energy of 2016, three regional dialogue energy platforms were created: UfM Regional Electricity Market Platform; UfM Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Platform; and UfM Gas Platform. Through these, the UfM Secretariat fulfils its role as a platform for cooperation and dialogue for UfM member States, financial institutions, regional organizations, industrial enterprises and experts working towards the enhancement of synergies in the fields of renewable energies and energy efficiency, integration of electricity markets and gas in the Mediterranean region.

The UfM has labelled three specific projects targeting renewable energy production and energy transition:

1. Tafila Wind Farm, a Jordanian project which breaks new ground for renewable energy projects in the Mediterranean, covering 3 per cent of the national electricity demand and aiming to create substantial jobs for qualified workers;
2. SPREF (SEMed Private Renewable Energy Framework), a project developed by EBRD aimed at encouraging the growth of private markets for renewable energy in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia, and supporting countries to meet renewable

¹⁹The Mediterranean Youth Climate Network (MYCN) is a network of youth associations deeply concerned about the effects of climate change in the Mediterranean region and strongly involved and engaged to take action and make it a priority while contributing to international and regional climate fora. For more information: <http://ufmsecretariat.org/youth-a-key-driver-to-reverse-climate-change-in-the-mediterranean-region/>

²⁰http://ufmsecretariat.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/UfM_SectoralReport_2016_EN_web1.pdf

²¹Observatoire Méditerranéen de l’Energie, Mediterranean Energy Perspectives 2015

²²EIB FEMIP, Study on the financing of Renewable Energy Investment in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean Region, October 2010.

energy targets;

3. UfM Energy University by Schneider Electric that will provide free and specialized education programmes for energy professionals, as well as a platform for global networking, to develop expertise in energy efficiency and renewable energy.

In this thematic area, the UfM is stepping up its partnership with global, regional and sub-regional initiatives and organizations, including the private sector, to develop a comprehensive strategy on energy and climate action cooperation in the Mediterranean. To this end, the UfM Secretariat organized the first UfM Energy Business Forum in October 2017 in Cairo, where more than 150 high-level government officials, representatives of large private companies and start-ups working on renewable energies, as well as IFIs and development banks, discussed new business and cooperation opportunities to reinforce a sustainable and climate-resilient energy transition in the Mediterranean region.

Preserving Natural Resources, Protecting the Mediterranean Sea and Promoting Access to Water

The Mediterranean faces environmental threats to its biodiversity, natural resources, habitable areas and health with many regions on the northern and southern shores being confronted with water scarcity and droughts, or falling victim to floods and fires. The work of the UfM Secretariat focuses on supporting the priorities identified by the UfM Member States in the relevant Ministerial Declarations on Environment and Climate Change, on Blue Economy and on

Water, recalling the importance of the both the Paris Agreement on Climate Change the 2030 Agenda.

The UfM Secretariat addresses this thematic area through the development of major impact projects, by focusing on main regional priorities towards sustainable development, and by working to de-couple socioeconomic growth from environmental degradation. Therefore, it considers the impact of environmental factors on the regional development agenda as well as the risks they pose in aggravating the current global challenges faced by the region.

Through the protection of the marine environment and the promotion of Blue Economy, the UfM Secretariat is committed to the H2020 Initiative for a Cleaner Mediterranean, which aims to tackle 80 per cent of the pollution in the Mediterranean by 2020, and thus contributes to preserving this heritage and this resource for the future while contributing to the implementation of SDG 14 Life Below Water.

The UfM Ministerial meeting on Water held in Malta in April 2017 agreed to develop a UfM Water Agenda to help member States implement sustainable and integrated water management policies, and contribute to a sustainable livelihood for the region's citizens. It is expected to address as priority work areas: water; employment and migration; the water, food security, energy and ecosystems nexus; water and climate change adaptation; and water access and sanitation. It directly contributes to SDG 6 by addressing the adverse effects of climate change in the region, but also by promoting innovative approaches to the sustainable development of the region.



“

Mediterranean countries face growing challenges due to the increasing water scarcity and depletion of natural resources, further exacerbated by climate pressures. With a view to contributing to the sustainable development agenda and goals, the Union for the Mediterranean is uniquely placed as an intergovernmental organization to address common threats to our environment and to support the socio-economic development of the region.

”

Miguel García-Herraiz, Deputy Secretary General in charge of Water and Environment

Case Study: Desalination Facility for the Gaza strip

The Desalination Facility for the Gaza Strip project is a landmark operation consisting of three integrated projects in the Gaza Strip: the construction of a 55 million cubic meters desalination Sea Water Reverse Osmosis (SWRO) plant; a North-South conveyance system; and a Non-Revenue Water reduction project. The desalination plant, which will be the largest infrastructure project to be built in the territory, will provide more than 1.8 million people living in the Gaza Strip with drinking water when it begins operations.

This will have a direct impact on public health and the humanitarian situation in the territory, but will also have benefits for the environment in the region and for the development of the Gaza strip. By reducing over-pumping, the plant will take the pressure off Gaza's coastal aquifer and contribute to its regeneration and sustainability. Building and operating the new installation will mean new jobs, while more available water will mean more opportunities for development of the economy in Gaza, in particular in agro-industries.

This Desalination Facility is a clear example of regional cooperation projects fostered by the UfM. The UfM Secretariat has been working closely with the Government of the State of Palestine and all concerned parties by helping to secure the engagement of a number of IFIs and international organizations in this initiative. Efforts have been led by the European Investment Bank to advance technical preparations for the desalination plant, including a technical assistance operation financed by the European Commission that will allow the Palestinian Water Authority to tender engineering, procurement and construction before the end of December this year. Working closely with one of the main supporters of the project, the European Union, this flagship project counts on the commitment of numerous international partners including the EIB, the IDB, the UN and the World Bank, as well as of southern Mediterranean countries.

Efforts to build a desalination plant in the Gaza Strip in Palestine took a big step forward during 2016 and 2017. On the technical side, the feasibility study and environmental impact assessment have both been completed, paving the way for launching a public tender for building the plant. Advances have also been made in terms of project management and funding, including a framework for governance, a specific funding mechanism comprising two trust funds and pledges from major donors including the Islamic Development Bank and the European Commission. The main political actors, including the Governments of the State of Palestine and Israel, have given their written support for the project.

Box 11: Interview with the Chair of the PWA

H.E Mazen Ghunaim – Minister of Palestinian Water Authority (PWA). Mr. Ghunaim is member of the Arab Council of Ministers and leads the negotiations committee on the permanent status of water with Israel



Q: Why is the project relevant for the region?

A: People living in the Gaza Strip suffer a shortage of fresh water because the main source of supply is groundwater from the coastal aquifer, which has been overexploited for a long period of time. This has led to a critical condition of poor quality that threatens its future sustainability. The construction of the Gaza Central Desalination Plant (GCDP), a SWRO plant with an initial capacity of 55 million m³/year and future expansion up to 110 million m³/year will help to ease this water shortage and to recuperate the aquifer in the long term.

Q: What do you think is the UfM added value in the project?

A: A project of this size and complexity needs the intervention of multiple international stakeholders. The assistance of the UfM as the main facilitator actor to coordinate the efforts within those stakeholders is an invaluable asset. The UfM experience in getting on board different potential donors will be the first added value to the project, and its future participation convening meetings and easing relationships between all the involved actors will be of great interest for the project.

Q: Which is (or will be) the impact of this project in the daily life of the citizens?

A: The estimated population of the Gaza Strip is 2 million people consuming around 200 Mm³/year of water from the coastal aquifer via more than 4000 wells, for both potable and agricultural uses. The natural recharge capacity of the aquifer in the Gaza Strip is of around 55 Mm³/year, so there is an annual deficit of approximately 145 Mm³/year. At the same time, due to the depletion of the aquifer and the seawater intrusion the quality of the drinking water is very poor, only 3 per cent of the domestic pumped water can be considered acceptable under the WHO standards. All this makes the present project vital for the citizens in Gaza.

Conclusion

As a unique action-driven organization for the enhancement of regional cooperation and development in the Mediterranean, and a regional chapter for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the UfM has developed in recent years a specific methodology and a growing activity to promote human and sustainable development, capitalizing on the immense untapped potential of the region - particularly its youth.

With an increasing number of ministerial meetings, regional dialogue platforms and labelled projects, the UfM has entered in a new phase, both institutionally and operationally, building on the progress achieved so far. Its expanding activities and increasing results demonstrate that windows of opportunity exist for further development of regional dialogue and cooperation.

This impetus comes within a context of multi-faceted challenges that demand, more than ever before, new frameworks and mechanisms of cooperation such as the one provided by the UfM, which can put forward efficient responses in coordinating efforts with all global,

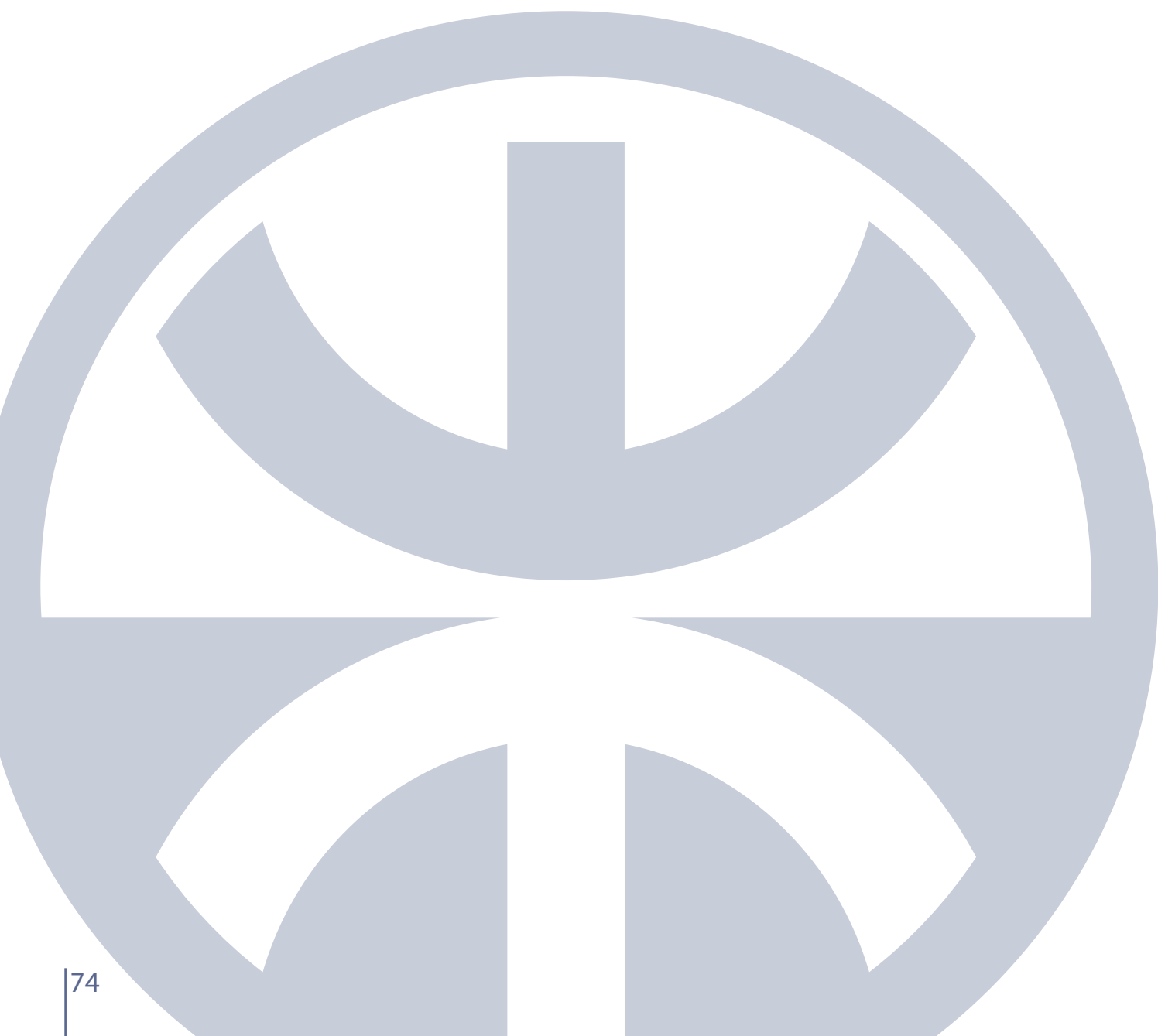
regional, sub-regional and local actors.

As the United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres recalled in his recent remarks to the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in July 2017, “it is important to recognize that there is a paradox because challenges are more and more global, there is no way any country can solve them by itself. We therefore need global answers and multilateral governance forms”. He further highlighted “the enormous potential of the Agenda 2030; because it is an agenda aiming at a fair globalization, at not leaving anyone behind, eradicating poverty and creating conditions for people to trust again in not only political systems, but also in multilateral forms of governance and in international organizations.”

In this sense, the UfM will pursue its active engagement with all the relevant stakeholders at its three levels of action (political forums, policy platforms and projects) through its inclusive multi-stakeholder approach and its core values of co-ownership and equal footing decision-making, crucial for seizing opportunities with the development of regional and

sub-regional networks, the identification of new and innovative methodologies, and the exchange of best practices and experiences.

In its way forward, the UfM will therefore continue to foster South-South and triangular cooperation. It is committed to strengthening its role in advancing these frameworks of collaboration within the Euro-Mediterranean region, and will continue to aim at addressing human and sustainable development challenges based on a truly shared and co-owned agenda, through a reinforced regional political dialogue and amplified interlinks with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.





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