



Permanent Mission of Italy
OSCE

Joint Statement on the Future of the OSCE Mediterranean Partnership
Delivered by Italy
Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation Group

Vienna, 11 May 2020

Excerpt

[...]

Last year marked the **25th Anniversary** of the Mediterranean Contact Group, today **Partners for Co-operation Group**. In view of that occasion, **our Ministers instructed us “to discuss and take stock of the Mediterranean Partnership**, with a view to providing **enhanced** support to its mechanisms, including through the Partnership Fund, and collectively identifying areas of common concern that require sustained engagement over the medium to long term”.

They also called for **“intensifying practical co-operation** with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation in areas of common interest, where the OSCE can bring added value”, **“a more strategic approach”** and **“an enhanced action-oriented dialogue** throughout the relevant work of the OSCE across the three dimensions of comprehensive security”.

Those guidelines and commitments were **followed by very constructive meetings**, such as the retreat in Valletta on June 2019 and the Mediterranean Conference last

October in Tirana, where participating States and Partners had the opportunity to exchange views on how to implement the indications of our Ministers.

[...]

Those meetings were **neither a rhetoric exercise, nor an abstract overview** of the past and the future of the Mediterranean Partnership. **Many new proposals were presented and gathered full support**, including by the Secretary General.

Now, we firmly believe that it is the right time to **build upon the commitments of our Ministers and give continuity to our efforts with concrete initiatives**, as the current pandemic is increasing the urgency of a pro-active and strategic approach.

For this reason, **we strongly support the initiative of the Albanian Chairmanship to devote a PC meeting to Mediterranean, as a follow-up of the conference in Tirana.**

Indeed, we all know that Mediterranean Partners are invited to take part in the weekly meetings of the Permanent Council. However, this practice is **insufficient for the challenges** we have in front of us and we believe that an **annual meeting** of Permanent Council entirely dedicated to the security in the Mediterranean, in relation to topics relevant for the OSCE, **should become an established practice.**

Allow me to recall another proposal. Our Ministers "called for Med-related issues to be clearly reflected throughout the relevant work of the OSCE across the three dimensions". In this respect, we reiterate our request for the Secretary General to **periodically report to the Permanent Council, at least once per year, on how this commitment is implemented** by the relevant Executive Structures of the Organization.

Let me stress that the mentioned initiatives can be implemented within available resources. We are also convinced that the **instrument of the "Partnership Fund"**, as currently regulated, appears to be insufficient for its purpose especially due to the limitations on its use in the territories of our partners. **This topic deserves further**

reflection, as well as the other proposals aimed at enhancing the potentiality of our Partnership, in synergy with other relevant international and regional actors.

In conclusion, we strongly believe that **the OSCE shall play a meaningful role in fostering the cooperation for the security in the Mediterranean**. Our appeal is not “a call” in the exclusive interest of Mediterranean countries and their peoples. On the contrary, it looks at, and addresses the **interest of all participating States and Partners**.