



Speech of H.E. Dr. Ahmad Masa'deh Secretary General of the Union for the Mediterranean

At the Shams Ma'an Solar Energy Forum

Amman, 19 May 2010

**Your Excellency Minister of Energy
Your Excellency Ambassador Karim Kawar
Excellencies and distinguished guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is indeed a great pleasure to be among such a distinguished group, I am honored and humbled. I would like to extend my thanks to Shams Ma'an for their kind invitation and generous hospitality, for their vision and will to bring this strategic project into light. I thank you very much Ambassador Kawar for leading this initiative and for being, as always, very innovative.

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, formerly known as the Barcelona Process, which was first started in 1995, was re-launched in 2008 as the Union for the Mediterranean at the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean in July 2008. The Union includes all 27 member states of the European Union, along with 16 partners across the Southern Mediterranean and the Middle East. This re-launching aimed to introduce new dynamics into the Partnership and to raise the political level of the strategic relationship between the EU and its southern neighbors, while maintaining the main objectives of the Barcelona Process, namely strengthening the political exchange to attain peace and security in the region, achieving economic development and coherence and creating social and cultural approximation.

The Union for the Mediterranean aims to offer more balanced governance, increased visibility to its citizens and a commitment to tangible, regional and trans-national projects. It was decided by the 43 Member States and the EU and the Arab league to create a Secretariat for the Union to be the central and focal executive body for the steering of the works of the Union and for procuring finance and identifying potential mega projects. Five months ago, I was honored to be elected by a unanimous vote to become the first Secretary General of the Union, in a clear show of solidarity and an unequivocal testimony by all Members States and Partners to the outstanding leadership of His Majesty King Abdullah II and the balanced policies of Jordan, this small country in size but great in its ideas and potential.



The Union for the Mediterranean identified six priority projects which are at the heart of the of Partnership's efforts, including projects for:

- the de-pollution of the Mediterranean Sea;
- the establishment of maritime and land highways;
- civil protection initiatives to combat natural and man-made disasters;
- a Mediterranean solar energy plan;
- the inauguration of the Euro-Mediterranean University in Slovenia;
- and the Mediterranean Business Development Initiative focusing on micro, small and medium-sized enterprises.

The establishment of Union for the Mediterranean (UFM) comes at a very critical time, where serious, efficient and tangible cooperation between Europe and its Southern neighbors is most needed and aspired by all our nations. I believe that it is time to move faster in order to materialize concrete impact on the lives of our citizens. But let me share with you my worries that the road ahead will not be a smooth one, and that political and financial difficulties related to the current regional and international state of affairs, will always affect our work. And most importantly, and let me be more frank, public opinion in our countries is becoming more and more fed up with initiatives that eventually do not depart from being a mere theoretical exercises. And thus we have to be careful and prudent that what is needed today is the implementation of concrete projects the result of which will be reflected on the daily lives of our citizen fellows.

As for a Mediterranean solar energy plan, the UFM will be considering investing in projects of renewable energy, in particular using solar energy and wind which are energy efficient and environmentally friendly as they help in reducing greenhouse gases, in particular projects under the Clean Development Mechanism, as defined by the Kyoto Protocol.

The UFM recognizes the considerable renewable energy production potential in the Euro-Mediterranean region that may play a key role in fighting climate change, diversifying energy sources and strengthening economies, in addition to promoting qualified job markets. This is an issue of global and regional interest which affects the future stability and social viability of all our societies. It is key for a substantive increase of renewable energy in the Euro-Mediterranean region and a guarantee to access fresh water and clean sources of energy for millions of people who lack these services.

The UFM will be encouraging its members to set targets for renewable energy production in order to ensure that renewable energy accounts for a significant proportion of overall energy consumption according to the capabilities of each



country. The UfM will encourage the formulation of country-by-country objectives for solar, wind, biomass, geothermal and other renewable sources. In addition, the UFM will be calling for the expansion of scholarships and technical training and student exchange programs in this field. We will also work on raising the public awareness about renewable energy sources since these should concern not only specialists in the field, but also the broader public. The UFM will march its efforts to call for financial and technical support for promoting renewable energy. The Secretariat will identify and also is ready receive potential projects in this respect.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

In closing, allow me to reiterate that we have a golden opportunity to utilize what nature is giving us. We can overcome the ongoing challenge of energy security while saving the environment through investing in solar energy projects; such as Shams Ma'an, which will also create job opportunities for thousands of people, and open the potential for new qualified specialties.

Pablo Picasso, has once said: "Some painters transform the sun into a yellow spot; others transform a yellow spot into the sun."

Let us transform the future of our people into a bright and clean one though deploying the solar energy. It is within our power.

-- Thank You--