



Remarks by H.E. Dr. Ahmad Masa'deh
Secretary General of the Union for the Mediterranean
at the inaugural session of the Barcelona EuroMed Forum
Barcelona, May 17th, 2010

*Director Florensa,
Your Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Good afternoon.

It is an honor for me to take part in this new edition of the Barcelona Euromed Forum. I would like to thank the IEMed, particularly his Director General Ambassador Senén Florensa, for inviting me to participate in the inaugural session of this Forum.

Once again the IEMed brings together leading experts and policymakers of the Mediterranean. In this occasion, we are here to discuss about development perspectives of the Union for the Mediterranean in a multipolar world. The contribution of IEMed to develop positive synergies and to generate new cooperative dynamics in the Mediterranean is remarkable and I would like to use this opportunity to congratulate the Institute for the great work they carry out.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Union for the Mediterranean was launched in July 2008 to contribute to the creation of a common space of prosperity, stability and peace along the countries of the Mediterranean basin. Since then, the world has undergone a period of turbulence and difficulties due to the greatest economic crisis in the last seventy years. A crisis, the impact of which can be perceived in any corner of the world and, in particular, in any part of the Mediterranean.

The solutions to this situation will only come from joining efforts, strengthening cooperation and developing common projects. In the 21st century, the future of our peoples is inevitably linked and interdependent. Thus, in this challenging moment, initiatives like the Union for the Mediterranean are more necessary than ever before. The Union for the Mediterranean is a long-term commitment and as such its validity is beyond difficult environments such as today.

This region has always been a crossroad of political, economic and cultural exchanges. Great civilizations, peoples and religions have their origin along the shores of the



Mediterranean Sea. This background is our best heritage and shall act as a motor force to overcome the difficulties and conflicts we have also witnessed, some of which continue today.

In the last two years, we have seen that this project is as necessary as complex and challenging.

In spite of the efforts put forward, the establishment of the Secretariat has gone through several shortcomings that have caused a delay in the beginning of its regular activities in its Headquarters in this magnificent Palau de Pedralbes.

Of course I would have rather started with our daily work before, but this delay shall act as an incentive to start tackling our duties and responsibilities even with more determination and commitment.

The Secretariat I have the honor to lead will contribute actively to the identification and implementation of concrete projects covering six priority areas of cooperation which are environmental protection, transport, civil protection, alternative energy, education and scientific research, and business development.

It is through concrete projects and feasible objectives that we will obtain tangible results with a direct impact on the welfare of our peoples. The Mediterranean cooperation shall be made by collective and concrete initiatives and not from bold promises and pompous statements.

These projects alone will not solve all different sources of conflict and instability in the region. But they will undoubtedly contribute to confidence building and to underpin cooperation among the Euro-mediterranean partners.

As you know, the mission of the Secretariat is essentially technical. This important mission will require the necessary funding and personal means to put all efforts together, create the necessary synergies among different actors, and overall, building partnership among those who believe in a Mediterranean region prosperous and peaceful. A strong and empowered Secretariat is the best guarantee to succeed in this ambitious goal.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This Forum comes only few weeks before the 2nd Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Union for the Mediterranean. It is our responsibility to act promptly and wisely to ensure the success of this Summit, which I am sure, it will represent a new step forward for the Euro-Mediterranean cooperation and for the Secretariat. It is time, two



years after the first Summit in Paris, to assess the work done and to design the future path learning from our experience.

Yet, the Union for the Mediterranean is much more than partnership among states. It is also partnership among institutions, regions, economic leaders and experts. This forum is a reflex of how do we have to work in the future. Only with the strong engagement of all actors, we will be able to contribute to foster welfare and cooperation for future generations in the Mediterranean.

Let me thank you all for your contribution in the debates during this Forum, and I look forward to continue cooperating with you in the near future.

Muchas gracias, moltes gràcies.