



PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE MEDITERRANEAN
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الجمعية البرلمانية للبحر الأبيض المتوسط

PAM Secretariat response to the
EU Consultation: "Towards a new European Neighbourhood Policy"

This document represents the contribution of the Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) to the consultation process launched by the European Union titled "Towards a new Neighbourhood Policy" on 4 March 2015.

In the left column, there are the questions extracted from the joint consultation paper. In the right column there are the relative responses.

II. Lessons Learned and Questions on the Future Direction of ENP

Extracted Questions	Reply
<i>Should the ENP be maintained? Should a single framework continue to cover both East and South?</i>	PAM supports the ENP, but for what the South is concerned, recommends it to be reinforced, ensuring a coherent approach by all bodies of the EU system, but separate from that of the Eastern Partnership
<i>Should the current geographical scope be maintained? Should the ENP allow for more flexible ways of working with the neighbours of the neighbours? How can the EU, through the ENP framework, support its neighbours in their interactions with their own neighbours? What could be done better to ensure greater coherence between the ENP and the EU's relations with Russia, with partners in Central Asia, or in Africa, especially in the Sahel and in the Horn of Africa, and with the Gulf countries?</i>	The geographical scope of the Southern Partnership should be maintained. It should replace the UfM and take over its functions, because the UfM, due to its weaknesses and lack of substance, has become an unnecessary and costly partner to the EU. A special chapter of the ENP should be opened with the Gulf countries, due to their interrelations with South and East Mediterranean countries.
<i>How could a more comprehensive approach with more active involvement by Member States give the policy greater weight? Would stronger co-ownership of the policy be preferred by partners?</i>	The ENP would greatly benefit from a direct association with institutions such as PAM. PAM represents the national parliaments of all the countries of the Mediterranean, EU and non, in an autonomous and balanced manner.
<i>Are the Association Agreements and DCFTAs the right objective for all or should more tailor-made</i>	Association agreements have shown their limitations, due to the conditionality of EU

<i>alternatives be developed, to reflect differing interests and ambitions of some partners?</i>	policies. For this reason, a more pragmatic approach of the ENP is recommended.
<i>Are the ENP Action Plans the right tool to deepen our partnerships? Are they too broad for some partners? Would the EU, would partners, benefit from a narrower focus and greater prioritisation?</i>	Action Plans are a useful tool but they are not adequate to the reality of the Mediterranean today. A degree of flexibility by the EU is required to respond in a rapid and coherent manner to the challenges being faced by the region.
<i>Is this approach appropriate for all partners? Has it added value to the EU's relations with each of its partners? Can EU and/or partner interests be served by a lighter reporting mechanism? Should the reporting be modulated according to the level of engagement of the ENP partner concerned? How can we better communicate key elements?</i>	The ENPI communication system is not accessible by external partners, and key actors of the region. As an example, ENPI has always refused to report on PAM activities, even when these were carried out in direct cooperation with EU institutions.
<i>Can partnerships be focussed more explicitly on joint interests, in order to increase ownership on both sides? How should the ENP accommodate the differentiation that this would entail? Are new elements needed to support deeper cooperation in these or other fields?</i>	Indeed, joint interests are key to the success of the ENP, and sub regional activities could be envisaged.
<i>What further work is necessary in this area, which is regarded as key by all ENP partners? How can the ENP further support the management of migration and help to draw the benefits of mobility?</i>	Major work is required on migration issues. It is necessary to associate the countries of the South and key partners on political and legislative initiatives, such as PAM, to the discussions being held in Brussels, due to the current crisis being experienced by EU border countries.
<i>How can the EU do more to support sustainable economic and social development in the ENP partner countries? How can we empower economically, politically and socially the younger generation? How to better promote sustainable employment? And how can these objectives be better linked to indispensable reforms in the fields of anti-corruption, judicial reform, governance and security, which are prerequisites for foreign direct investment?</i>	Policies, strategies and joint initiatives are key to sustainable development, which is itself key to political and military stability. It is suggested that there should be organization of large consultative processes, open to governments, parliaments, private sector and financial institutions, to identify the key elements of a sort of Southern Marshall Plan for the countries neighboring southern Europe.
<i>How should the ENP address conflicts and crises in the neighbourhood? Should CFSP and CSDP activities be better integrated in the ENP framework? Should it have a greater role in developing confidence-building measures and post-conflict actions as well as related state- and institution-building activities? Should the ENP be</i>	The ENP should not deal with military and political confrontations, as this field should remain the responsibility of the EU Council. On the issue of terrorism, PAM has noted that different branches of the EU Commission organise similar training activities, which are however not coordinated among themselves and often overlapping with unnecessary duplications

<i>given a strengthened focus on working with partners on the prevention of radicalisation, the fight against terrorism and organised crime? Should security sector reform be given greater importance in the ENP?</i>	and waste of resources.
<i>Is the multilateral dimension able to deliver further added value? Are these formats fit for purpose? How can their effectiveness be strengthened? Can we more effectively use other, more flexible frameworks? Can we better cooperate with other regional actors (Council of Europe, OSCE, League of Arab States, Organisation of the Islamic Conference, African Union)?</i>	The ENP should indeed establish a structured cooperation with key regional partners, including international organizations as PAM, which opens the door to strategic cooperation between EU institutions and other countries at time of war and crisis, especially in cases of interrupted diplomatic relations between the two.
<i>How should the ENP further develop engagement with civil society in its widest sense? Can more be done to network different parts of the partner populations? What more can be done to promote links between business communities? With and between Social Partners (trade unions and employers' organisations) and to promote social dialogue? What can be done to promote links between scientific communities, universities, local authorities, women, youth, the media?</i>	ENP should develop a coherent approach to civil society, and private sector. The ENP should also build on instruments established by PAM, often in cooperation and with the support of the EU, to address, at the legislative level, interaction with the private sector and the academia. Reference is made to the PAM Panel on Trade and Investments in the Mediterranean (often used by the EC to address key messages to the South) and the PAM Academic Platform.
<i>How can the ENP do more to foster religious dialogue and respect for cultural diversity, and counter prejudice? Should increasing understanding of each other's cultures be a more specific goal of the ENP and how should this be pursued? How can the ENP help tackle discrimination against vulnerable groups?</i>	ENP should recall that the EU is a secular organization, and as such has always taken a distant approach from the religious identities of its own countries. Now that Islam is considered as a fertile ground for terrorism, specific activities, through institutions such as PAM, should be explored to foster inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue.

III. Towards a Partnership with a Clearer Focus and More Tailored Cooperation

1. The Challenges of Differentiation

<i>Should the EU gradually explore new relationship formats to satisfy the aspirations and choices of those who do not consider the Association Agreements as the final stage of political association and economic integration?</i>	Yes. As indicated above.
<i>How should the EU take forward the tasking of</i>	Not applicable to PAM

<i>the 2013 Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius of the long-term goal of a wider common area of economic prosperity based on WTO rules and sovereign choices throughout Europe and beyond?</i>	
<i>Is there scope within the ENP for some kind of variable geometry, with different kinds of relationships for those partners that choose different levels of engagement?</i>	Yes, in the interest of the EU itself, as it is demonstrated by policies of countries such as Algeria.

2. Focus

<i>Do you agree with the proposed areas of focus? If not, what alternative or additional priorities would you propose?</i>	PAM agrees with the area of focus, except security (as stated above).
<i>Which priorities do partners see in terms of their relations with the EU? Which sector or policy areas would they like to develop further? Which areas are less interesting for partners?</i>	Having witnessed the failure of the UfM, and its parliamentary assembly, to deliver, PAM recommends, in its own capacity, for the EU to build on the value added of parliamentary diplomacy and to develop a strategic partnership with PAM in all relevant aspects of the ENP, as all southern partners are members of PAM
<i>Does the ENP currently have the right tools to address the priorities on which you consider it should focus? How could sectoral dialogues contribute?</i>	Current tools are administered in a waterproof approach by different DGs. A rationalization of EU/ENP activities is necessary, in order to secure coherence and complementarity.
<i>If not, what new tools could be helpful to deepen cooperation in these sectors?</i>	
<i>How can the EU better support a focus on a limited number of key sectors, for partners that prefer this?</i>	The EU can do it, by adopting a cluster approach, open to all interested countries and partners. PAM can assist the EU in this.

3. Flexibility – Towards a More Flexible Toolbox

<i>How to streamline Action Plans to adapt them better to individual country needs and priorities?</i>	This can be achieved through country-specific round tables aimed at jointly identifying needs and priorities. PAM can assist the EU in this.
<i>Is annual reporting needed for countries which do not choose to pursue closer political and economic integration?</i>	Annual reporting is required, as an instrument to record and measure the level of cooperation with any given country.
<i>How should the EU structure relations with countries that do not currently have Action Plans?</i>	

<i>How can the EU adapt the ‘more for more’ principle to a context in which certain partners do not choose closer integration, in order to create incentives for the respect of fundamental values and further key reforms?</i>	“More for more” is not conducive to dialogue with southern countries, which look at this approach as a new colonial policy by Brussels.
<i>How to assess progress against jointly agreed reform targets when a partner country experiences significant external pressure, for instance armed conflict or refugee flows?</i>	There are international institutions, such as UNHCR, OCHA or the IOM, who can assist the ENP with substantive data and field-based reporting. The EU should not duplicate with the UN.
<i>How can the EU engage more effectively and respond more flexibly to developments in partner countries affected by conflict situations?</i>	The Office of the High Representative should lead the process, in consultation with UN counterparts, and political organizations such as PAM, which has already been used by the EU to carry out delicate and sensitive missions on its behalf. However, the absence of an EU common foreign policy is perceived by southern partners as a major weakness. Individual EU countries have more influence than the EU itself.
<i>What tools would the EU need to respond more effectively to fast-changing developments in its neighbourhood?</i>	The EU needs to adopt and follow a coherent policy, and develop a monitoring mechanism able to provide informed suggestions to decision makers.
<i>Are the choice of sectors and mechanisms for delivery of EU financial support appropriate? How could its impact and visibility be enhanced?</i>	For many southern countries, financial support from the EU is the only matter that counts. However, the lack of a solidarity/development financial mechanism is seen as a major obstacle by southern partners. A free-trade area, as envisaged many years ago but never implemented, would indeed facilitate economic cooperation in the Mediterranean basin.

4. Ownership & Visibility

<i>What do partners seek in the ENP? How can it best accommodate their interests and aspirations?</i>	PAM member states (EU and non) would like to see a real partnership between the Assembly and ENP. This could develop in a number of practical initiatives aimed at strengthening common policies and approaches to the challenges of the region.
<i>Can ways of working be developed that are seen as more respectful by partners and demonstrate a partnership of equals? How should this impact on annual reporting ?</i>	Many southern partners often describe the EU approach as imposed on them. A more inclusive approach would indeed help.
<i>Can the structures of the ENP be made more</i>	PAM recommends the creation, within the ENP, of a special interface dedicated to parliamentary

<i>cooperative, to underline the partners' own choices and to enable all civil society actors across partner countries to take part?</i>	institutions, such as PAM, to jointly address key issues such as the relations with civil society.
<i>Can the ENP deliver benefits within a shorter timeframe, in order that the value of the policy can be more easily grasped by the public? What would this require from the EU? And from the partner country?</i>	Yes, it can be done by streamlining procedures and reporting requirements.
<i>How can the EU financial support be recast in an investment rather than donor dynamic, in which the partner country's active role is clearer?</i>	Financial support will become an investment the moment that joint governance mechanisms with the beneficiary countries are developed.
<i>How can EU Member States be involved more effectively in the design and implementation of the policy, including as concerns foreign policy and security related activities? How can the activities in EU Member States be better coordinated with the ENP?</i>	As long as EU member states have different approaches to the countries of the South, and the EU is perceived as a large bureaucratic entity without a coherent and shared policy, unfortunately no real security and foreign relations activities will be credible.

Response completed on 20 June 2015 by

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