

**MOUVEMENT EUROPEEN INTERNATIONAL
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**Comité Méditerranée
Mediterranean Committee**



North-South Mediterranean Dialogue

Congress 2005

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“North-South Mediterranean Dialogue” Congress 2005

In 2004, the European Movement International multiplied its analytical efforts, contacts, meetings and discussions with the various actors present in the field of relations between the European Union and its Mediterranean neighbours.

Towards the end of that year of preliminary analysis, a preparatory conference “North-South Mediterranean Dialogue” took place in Malta on 27/28 November. It was organised under the patronage of the president of the European Parliament, of the secretary of the Council of Europe and of the League of Arab States. A number of observers attended the conference, among others from the upcoming Luxemburg EU-presidency, from the European Commission, the European Investment Bank, the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe, the World Bank, UNESCO, etc., as well as participants from civil societies from the South and from the North of the Mediterranean area.

The Malta meeting ascertained the necessity (i) to undertake a common initiative together with the Mediterranean countries in order to define realistic perspectives of action on the basis of a genuine dialogue; (ii) to preserve the specificity of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership contained in the framework of the EU Neighbourhood policy in an enlarged Europe; (iii) to develop and strengthen European-Mediterranean relations in various sectors; (iv) to rely on the principle of an “open dialogue without taboos” enabling partners to state their ideas free from compulsion on a multilateral, regional and bilateral level and (v) to regularly evaluate the achievements and difficulties encountered.

At the end of 2004, the European Movement International has thus been confirmed in its conviction that a Founding Congress must be organised in 2005 where the issues and debates of the EMI Malta preparatory meeting must be developed further and in greater depth.

Objectives:

- To utilise the scope of the European Movement International at the political (representation of 41 European nations), historical (over 50 years of existence) and pluralist level, which makes the EMI a political NGO which can serve to liaise and interconnect, on the one hand, the representatives of European civil society and those of civil society in the Arab world with, on the other, international inter-governmental bodies which develop programmes in that region;
- to identify partners within civil society in the Arab countries so that the project of the European Movement can be based on genuine “co-ownership”;
- to enable European and Arab civil society to develop and promote, in coordination with international and regional institutions, joint concrete projects in a similar manner as practised by the European Movement International in the framework of the construction of Europe;
- to enable the EMI to define its policy in that region, following a genuine dialogue with representatives of civil society in Europe and the Arab countries, but also with international inter-governmental institutions from Europe and the Arab world which will lead to a “Political Resolution” and/or a “Political Declaration” which is to be advocated internationally through the EMI and nationally through the 41 National Councils of the European Movement.

The European Movement International value added is manifold:

- 1/ Independence vis-à-vis concrete negotiations and current policies, allowing for a climate of confidence in the mutual pursuit of objectives and based on the ownership principle;
- 2/ Geographical coverage which goes beyond the scope of the Mediterranean and neighbourhood policies;
- 3/ Exploitation of the power of political conviction inherent to the European Movement to enhance the development of mutual links between Arab civil societies and between these and their respective authorities;
- 4/ Encouragement for the European institutions to better explain and further clarify their different policies and strategies;
- 5/ Exploitation of the European Movement International as an interface for the European institutions in their relations with civil society in Europe and in the Arab countries,.
- 6/ Creation of an arena for informal dialogue, at the disposition of all actors concerned.

To prepare the Congress, a precise time-schedule and working programme have been set up. These will have to be respected, firstly, by the attendants to the Malta preparatory meeting and, eventually, by the parties to be invited to the 2005 Congress itself.

The Structure of the Congress will thus depend on the following activities:

- 1/ During the period January 2004-February 2005, participants in the preparatory Malta meeting will be requested to complete the preliminary Report presented at that occasion;
 - 2/ during the period March 2005-May 2005, potential participants in the Congress will be requested to comment on an Intermediate Report;
- Over the same period, the EMI will be organising in the various European countries and nations South of the Mediterranean, a series of working sessions to familiarise interested parties with the Founding Congress project, to collect comments and to help identify individuals and organisations of civil society which will be actively participating in the Congress;
- 3/ a Final Report which reflects the results of the dialoguing and meeting process will be compiled to constitute the basic framework (issues, workshops, working parties) for the Congress.