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**MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN**

Meeting of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties  
to the Convention for the Protection of the  
Mediterranean Sea against Pollution and its  
Protocols

Cairo, 1-2 April 1996

**REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF  
THE CONTRACTING PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION FOR  
THE PROTECTION OF THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA AGAINST  
POLLUTION AND ITS PROTOCOLS**

## Introduction

1. The Meeting of the Bureau was convened in Cairo, at the Hotel El Gezira Sheraton, on 1-2 April 1996 upon an invitation from the Government of Egypt.

### Agenda item 1: Opening of the Meeting

2. The Meeting was called to order by H.E. Mr. Nourine Benomar Alami, Minister of the Environment of Morocco and President of the Bureau. H.E. Ms. Elisavet Papazoi, Vice-President (Greece), H.E. Mr. Atef Ebeid, Minister of Enterprise and Minister of State for Administrative Development and Environment Affairs, and Mr. Salah Hafez, Chief Executive Officer, Vice-President (Egypt), Mr. Dror Amir, Vice-President (Israel), and Mr. Joaquin Ros, Rapporteur (Spain) were present. Mr. Jacques Devèze, attended the meeting as an observer from France. Mr. Slimane Zaouche, Vice-President (Algeria) was not able to attend the meeting.
3. Mr. Lucien Chabason, MAP Coordinator and Mr. Ibrahim Dharat, Senior Programme Officer of MAP, represented the Secretariat. Mr. I. Dharat acted also as Technical Secretary of the Meeting.
4. The President of the Bureau welcomed all members of the Bureau and thanked the Egyptian Government for the warm and the customary hospitality.
5. H.E. Mr. A. Ebeid, Minister in charge of the Environment welcomed the presence of the Ministers of the Environment as well as all other distinguished members of the Bureau. He expressed his gratitude to accepting the offer of Egypt to host the Bureau meeting in Cairo and pointed out that Egypt strongly support all initiatives that directed towards the protection of the Environment in the Mediterranean and anywhere in the world. He emphasized that we should cooperate globally and act nationally. It is only through cooperation that we can protect the environment. Finally, he assured the participants that his country will continue to be committed to the decisions of the Bureau.
6. H.E. Ms. E. Papazoi expressed her pleasure to have the meeting of the Bureau in Egypt.
7. Mr. D. Amir read a message addressed from H.E. Mr. Yossi Sarid, Minister of the Environment of Israel, expressing his regrets for not being able to attend the meeting due to the election period in his country. The Minister reiterated his country's commitment to MAP.
8. Mr. J. Ros thanked Egypt for its kind invitation and read a message addressed from Ms. Christina Narbona Ruiz, Secretary of State for the Environment of Spain, expressing her regrets for not being able to attend the meeting due to the election period in her country.
9. Mr. L. Chabason expressed, on behalf of the Secretariat, his thanks and appreciation to the Government of Egypt for the warm welcome and hospitality.
10. The list of participants is contained in Annex I to this report.

Agenda item 2: Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and organisation of work

11. The meeting adopted the Provisional Agenda contained in document UNEP/BUR/48/1. The organization of work suggested by the Secretariat in the Annotated Agenda, contained in document UNEP/BUR/48/2 was modified. It was agreed to accept the invitation of the Arab Academy of Science and Technology (AAST) to visit its premises in Alexandria. Therefore it was decided to conclude all items of the Agenda during the first day and review and adopt the decisions concerning the items of particular interest at a later hour during the day (20.00 hrs). With regard to the rest of the report of the Bureau, it was decided to authorize the Rapporteur and the Secretariat to prepare it and send it to the members of the Bureau for their comments before it is finalized.

Agenda item 3: Progress report by the Coordinator on the implementation of activities carried out since the last meeting of the Bureau (Rabat, 9-10 November 1995)

12. Mr. L. Chabason, MAP Coordinator, gave a general presentation of the progress report, contained in document UNEP/BUR/48/3 and focused on some important topics, i.e. the preparation for the 1997 programme budget of MAP, the Terms of Reference of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development, the Regional Activity Centre for Cleaner Production and the preparation for the forthcoming meetings of MAP.
13. He pointed out that MAP is being working to conclude the process of finalization of the legal framework. The Conference of Syracuse (March 1996) was able to amend the Land-Based Sources Protocol (LBS) with an ambitious objectives. The Tunis meeting of the National Focal Points for Specially Protected Areas (SPA) finalized the three annexes stipulated by the new protocol concerning specially protected areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean. The three annexes will be submitted to the meeting of the Contracting Parties for adoption.
14. He mentioned that the Conference of Plenipotentiaries concerning the draft protocol on Hazardous Wastes will be convened in Izmir (Turkey) at the end of September 1996. In this connection he was informed orally by the Turkish authorities of their acceptance of the proposed dates for the Conference.
15. After an exchange of views, the Bureau took note of the progress report, of the Coordinator contained in document UNEP/BUR/48/3.

Agenda item 4: Exchange of views on Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation

Agenda item 5: Implementation of the decisions of the Ninth Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties (Barcelona, 5-8 June 1995), the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Barcelona Convention (Barcelona, 9-10 June 1995), and the Bureau of the Contracting Parties (Rabat, 9-10 November 1995)

16. Concerning the various topics included in his progress report the Coordinator referred to the specific recommendations proposed by the Secretariat in relation to the various issues described in the progress report and requested the Bureau to take action on these recommendations.

17. The Bureau reviewed in detail the various topics under agenda items 4 and 5 and took the following decisions:
  - (a) Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation
18. The Coordinator stated that the Barcelona Conference (27-28 November 1995) has stressed the strategic importance of the Mediterranean and the commitments of the participants to give their future relations a new dimension based on comprehensive partnership. They also have stressed the need for reinforcing coordination with MAP. The Conference has also allocated financial resources to finance a short and medium-term priority environmental action programme. Part of these funds will be directed towards the protection of the Mediterranean environment through the new financial mechanism established by the Conference (MEDA) which is based on bilateral cooperation.
19. He also mentioned that it would be desirable that the European Commission increase its voluntary contribution to MAP which has not been increased since 1989.
20. The Vice-President from Greece stressed the importance for MAP to be present through out this procedure of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation. She proposed the establishment of a working group from the members of the Bureau to examine the priority fields of action which are of common concern to all Mediterranean countries for presentation to the new EU mechanism for financing.
21. The Rapporteur from Spain stated that other activities within the Action Plan approved by the Barcelona Conference could be treated as environmental activities, such as liquid and solid wastes and water resources. He pointed out that the problem is that the European Commission will probably give priority to channel funds through bilateral rather than multilateral cooperation.
22. **At the end of the discussion, the Bureau decided that:**
  - a. **the President of the Bureau and MAP Coordinator pay a visit during April 1996, to Brussels, with a view to conduct consultations with EU on MAP/EU cooperation within the framework of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation and the possibility of increasing of EU voluntary contribution to the Mediterranean Trust Fund (MTF).**
  - b. **a working method of cooperation with EU is to be developed during the meeting of the National Focal Points (Athens, 6-10 May 1996) and the Extraordinary meeting of the Contracting Parties (Montpellier, 1-4 July 1996).**
- (b) General outlines on the preparation of the programme budget for 1997 and the status of contributions to the Mediterranean Trust Fund (MTF)
  - (i) Contributions to the MTF
23. The Coordinator informed the Bureau that all major contributions for 1995 has been received. With regard to Italy he pointed out that the system for paying contributions has been changed in Italy which should help in the smooth payment of the future Italian contributions. He stated that MAP is not in a financial crises as the case in the last few years. 1995 and 1996 activities are being implemented.

24. The Rapporteur from Spain pointed out that the Spanish authorities are waiting for the official letter from UNEP requesting the payment of the 1996 contribution.
25. The Coordinator informed the meeting that he has sent an urgent letter to UNEP Headquarters requesting that UNEP should send to all Contracting Parties the notice concerning their contributions to the MTF.
26. The Vice-President from Greece informed the meeting that her country's contribution for 1996 has been paid.

(ii) Preparation for 1997 budget

27. The Coordinator gave a briefing on the proposed 1997 budget which will cover, beside the various activities, the new developments concerning the personnel of MAP and the increased operational cost. New activities emanating from MAP Phase II have to be covered in this budget, i.e. the implementation of the protocols on SPA and biodiversity, the Land-Based Sources and the new activities within the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD). There will be also a need to finance meetings to be held in 1997, such as the Tunis meeting of the Contracting Parties. All these activities require an increase in 1997 by 7% of the ordinary contributions to the Mediterranean Trust Fund which, in the Secretariat view, is not an excessive increase. In this regard he expressed the view that the EU may be suggested to increase its voluntary contribution to MAP.
28. With regard to MAP personnel, the Coordinator informed the meeting that Mr. L. Jeftic, Deputy Coordinator will retire on 31st August 1996, and the FAO Senior Fishery Officer's post will be closed by the end of 1996. The Monaco laboratory engineer (IAEA) is also leaving for retirement in the middle of 1997. All these developments will give MAP the opportunity for restructuring with no increase in its staff.
29. During the exchange of views on the 1997 budget, the member of the Bureau from Spain pointed out that it would be difficult for him to commit his country on an increase of 7%. He added that an increase of more than 3,5% will present difficulties for Spain. All other members of the Bureau gave their full support to the Secretariat proposal for an increase of the EU voluntary contribution.
30. **At the end of the discussion, the Bureau decided:**
  - a. **to take note of the proposal of the Secretariat to increase in principal, by a 7% of the ordinary contributions of the Contracting Parties to the Mediterranean Trust Fund (MTF) in order to finance the various activities of MAP Phase II;**
  - b. **to authorize the President of the Bureau and the Coordinator of MAP to conduct the necessary consultations with the European Union concerning both the possibility to readjust the EU voluntary contribution and the financing through MEDA of some priority projects within MAP Phase II;**
  - c. **to approve the proposal of the Coordinator to submit to the Contracting Parties within the budget provisions the creation of an official post of Deputy Coordinator, a post for a MED POL Coordinator and a post of a Senior Marine Officer within MED POL, by converting the present post of**

**Senior Marine Scientist, the post of Senior Fishery Officer (FAO) and the post of IAEA Maintenance Engineer (Monaco).**

(c) Cooperation with METAP

31. The Coordinator pointed out that intensive consultation has been undertaken with the World Bank concerning MAP/METAP cooperation. He cited three issues for possible cooperation, i.e. capacity building, prevention of pollution at hot spots and coastal areas management. He stressed that the spirit of cooperation rather than competition is shaping MAP/METAP cooperation.

32. **The Bureau decided that:**

**The Secretariat should continue its consultation with the World Bank with a view to strengthening cooperation on the three topics of capacity building, prevention of pollution at hot spots and coastal areas management.**

(d) Extraordinary meeting of the Contracting Parties

33. The Coordinator explained all the preparatory stages being taken to convene the Extraordinary Meeting in Montpellier, on 1-4 July 1996 and informed the meeting that a host country agreement is being finalized.

34. The observer from France thanked the Bureau for inviting France to participate in the present meeting and gave more information on the preparation for the Montpellier meeting, the place where it will be held and pointed out that the funds to cover the costs of the meeting will be transferred to MAP soon.

35. **The Bureau took note of these information.**

(e) Meeting of Government-designated Experts on the preparation of guidelines for the management of dredging spoils

36. The Rapporteur from Spain gave information on the preparation for convening the expert's meeting in Valencia, on 20-22 May 1996.

37. **The Bureau took note of these information and urged the Contracting Parties to participate actively in the meeting.**

(f) Meeting of Technical Experts on Toxic Reduction in the Mediterranean Sea

38. The Coordinator informed the Bureau on the preparation for the technical experts meeting which will be held in Marseille, on 2-4 October 1996.

39. **During the brief discussion, the issue of the status of this meeting as well as other expert meetings was raised and it was recommended that this issue should be clarified by the Secretariat and report back to the Bureau.**

40. **The Bureau took note of the information concerning the meeting and urged the Contracting Parties to participate actively in the meeting.**

(g) Information and Training

41. During the exchange of views on this agenda item, the need for utilizing Internet within MAP was stressed and it was recommended that a budget line for this purpose has to be allocated in the 1997 budget.

(h) Legal Framework

(i) Status of MAP Legal Instruments

42. The Coordinator briefed the meeting on the status of the Barcelona Convention and its protocols and urged Contracting Parties to speed up the process of ratification/accession to MAP legal instruments.
43. He also briefed the meeting on the results of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the amendments to the Land-Based Sources Protocol (LBS) held in Syracuse on 3-7 March 1996 as well as on the meeting of the National Focal Points for Specially Protected Areas (SPA) held in Tunis on 25-27 March 1996. Three annexes stipulated in the new Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity were proposed by the Tunis meeting and recommended for their final approval by the meeting of the Contracting Parties in Montpellier.
44. During the discussion, the members of the Bureau welcomed the progress achieved with regard to MAP legal framework.
45. The representative of Spain informed the Bureau that the issue of the status of the three states of Croatia, Slovenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina and the exact dates for their accession to the Barcelona Convention and its protocols, has been solved through the Depositary State (Spain). The issue of succession has been also resolved within the United Nations. Therefore, the status of signatures and ratifications prepared by the Secretariat should take these developments into account.
46. The representative of Egypt confirmed that the issue of succession has been solved by the United Nations on the basis of Security Council resolution No. 47/1. All three states are considered as successors on an equal footing to the old Yugoslavia.
47. **The Secretariat took note of these information and will take the necessary action.**

(ii) Third meeting of Legal and Technical experts and Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the draft protocol on Hazardous Wastes in the Mediterranean

48. The Coordinator briefed the meeting on the steps which had been taken by the president of the Bureau and the Secretariat, in conformity with the relevant decisions taken during the Rabat meeting of the Bureau. The various steps are discussed in detail in the progress report contained in document UNEP/BUR/48/3. He also informed the meeting that he has received an oral agreement from the Turkish authorities on the Secretariat proposal for the new dates for the two meetings to be held in Izmir (Turkey).
49. An exchange of views took place on this issue, during which the representative of Spain pointed out that a basic problem still exists in relation to the scope of the protocol, namely, is it a maritime protocol or a terrestrial protocol ?.

50. During the discussion, the Bureau was informed that in the occasion of the recent meetings convened within MAP in Syracuse and Tunis, political issues were raised again. In the debate that followed, all members of the Bureau were of the opinion that the tradition that shaped MAP for the last twenty years, of avoiding political controversy, should be followed.

51. **At the end of the discussion on this item, the Bureau approved the following recommendation:**

**The Barcelona Convention for the protection of the Mediterranean Sea against pollution has been for more than 20 years a peaceful meeting forum. It has succeeded up to now to avoid political controversy during MAP meetings. Yet, the Bureau has been informed that after the Barcelona meeting of June 1995, initiatives were taken to raise political issues using the framework of MAP meetings, including technical meetings. In connection to the above, the Bureau has agreed:**

- a. **to invite Contracting Parties to abstain from political statements that are not relevant to MAP objectives and are not in line with International law, reminding that the ultimate goal of MAP should strictly be directed towards environment protection, sustainable development and regional cooperation in these fields;**
- b. **that this recommendation is reflected in the report of the meeting of the Bureau which will be distributed to all Contracting Parties**

(i) Establishment of a new Regional Activity Centre for Cleaner Production (CP/RAC)

52. The Coordinator introduced the item and recalled the decision of the Contracting Parties at their Ninth Ordinary Meeting (Barcelona, 5-8 June 1995). He referred to the new information submitted by Spain concerning the Barcelona Centre which will be financed by Spain.

53. The Vice-President from Greece pointed out that the new information were submitted lately and there is a need for their review by the Greek authorities. Therefore, she proposed to postpone the discussion of the item till the next meeting of the Bureau. She also informed the Bureau of the Greek/UNIDO Centre for cleaner production and stressed the need for close technical cooperation between the two centres.

54. The Rapporteur from Spain pointed out that he agrees that full cooperation is needed between the two centres. However, he does not agree to postpone the discussion of the agenda item to the next meeting of the Bureau. The Contracting Parties have already approved the setting up of the Barcelona Centre and that the Centre should start functioning immediately.

55. In the course of the discussion, all members of the Bureau stressed the importance of cooperation between the Centres.

56. **At the end of the discussion, the Bureau decided:**

- a. **to take note of the presentation made by the representative of Spain concerning the Centre for Cleaner Production in the Mediterranean, recalled the decision of the contracting Parties to accept the offer of Spain to create a Cleaner Production Centre within MAP.**



- b. to request Spain to submit to the next meeting of the National Focal Points (Athens, 6-10 May 1996) and the Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties (Montpellier, 1-4 July 1996) a more detailed 1997 programme of activities to be implemented within MAP by the Cleaner Production/Regional Activity Centre (CP/RAC).
- c. that all Cleaner Production Centres operating in the Mediterranean region should cooperate and coordinate their activities with a view to strengthening Mediterranean cooperation in this field and avoiding duplication of work.

(j) Sustainable Development

(i) Draft Terms of Reference of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD)

57. Mr. I. Dharat, Senior Programme Officer, presented document UNEP/BUR/48/4 on the Terms of Reference of the Commission (TOR). He briefed the meeting on the contents of the document which synthesizes the various comments received from the Contracting Parties and proposes certain procedures to be followed concerning the Terms of Reference (TOR), the venue and the dates for the first meeting of the Commission.

58. The Bureau exchanged views on the draft TOR, and agreed to propose the following guidelines to the forthcoming meeting of the National Focal Points in relation to certain important issues:

Status of the Commission

- (1) The Commission shall be established as an Advisory body within the framework of MAP.

Composition of the Commission

- (2) The Commission shall consist of one representative from each Contracting Party to the Barcelona Convention and representatives from local authority networks, socio-economic networks, Non-Governmental Organisations and individual experts (the number of representatives of non-Contracting Parties will be agreed upon through negotiations).
- (3) All representatives shall participate in the Commission on an equal footing.
- (4) As an advisory body the Commission shall have no voting system. It shall adopt its decisions by consensus.

High Level Consultative Group

- (5) As the Commission is to be an advisory body to MAP, there is no need to establish another consultative group.

59. With regard to the venue and dates of the first meeting of the Commission, the Bureau decided:

- a. to accept the offer of Morocco to host the first meeting in the City of Fez, during the month of December 1996. The exact dates to be agreed upon in consultation between the host country and the Secretariat. In this connection the Secretariat recalled that an amount of US \$ 40,000 is available in the 1996 budget for this meeting. Spain offered also to cooperate in the organisation of the first meeting of the Commission;
- b. to request the meeting of the National Focal Points (Athens, 6-10 May 1996) to review and finalize the draft Terms of Reference on the basis of the comments received from the Contracting Parties and the guidelines proposed by the present meeting of the Bureau;
- c. to request the Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties (Montpellier, 1-4 July 1996) to consider and approve the final version of the draft Terms of Reference as well as the dates and venue proposed by the Bureau for the first meeting of the Commission.

(ii) Mediterranean policy Workshop on Sustainable Development of Coastal Areas

- 60. The Coordinator briefed the meeting on the preparation for the Workshop to be held in Santorini (Greece), on 26-27 April 1996, its objectives and the expected output.
- 61. The Vice-President from Greece gave additional information concerning the Workshop and expressed the wish that all Contracting Parties will participate in this meeting.
- 62. **The Bureau took note of the information and requested its members to ensure the participation of their countries on a high level in the policy Workshop.**

Agenda item 6: Date and place of the next meeting of the Bureau

- 63. The Meeting decided to convene the next meeting of the Bureau in Athens (Greece) during the second half of October 1996. The exact dates will be agreed upon through the necessary consultations.

Agenda item 7: Any other business

- 64. The Secretariat distributed two information documents for the attention of the participants, one on the composition of the Bureau of meetings and conference of the Contracting Parties (1975-1995) (UNEP/BUR/48/Inf.3), and another on the Directory of Non-Governmental Organisations - MAP partners (UNEP/BUR/48/Inf.4).
- 65. **The meeting took note of the two documents.**

Agenda item 8: Adoption of the report of the meeting

- 66. The Bureau convened its second session on 1 April 1996 at 20.00 hrs during which it adopted three decisions concerning the 1997 budget, the raising of political issues in the framework of MAP and the Cleaner Production Centre in the Mediterranean. The Bureau authorized its Rapporteur and the Secretariat to prepare the report including the decisions of the meeting concerning all other items and send it to all members of the Bureau for their comments before it is finalized and distributed.

Agenda item 9:        Closure of the meeting

67.    After the customary exchange of courtesies, the President on behalf of the members of the Bureau thanked the host country for the excellent organisation of the meeting and of the hospitality shown.
  
68.    The President declared the meeting closed on Monday, 1 April 1996 at 21.30 hrs.

**ANNEX I**

**List of Participants  
Liste des Participants**

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