

# MINUTES

## INTRODUCTION AND CONCLUSION

### FOR A NEW EURO-MEDITERRANEAN ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

**Coordinator: Taoufik MJAIED**, Journalist, France24

#### Opening and introduction

**Jean-Louis GUIGOU**, Delegate General and founder of IPEMED

**Radhi MEDDEB**, President of IPEMED's Board of Directors

**Ahmed BOUZGUENDA**, Chairman, IACE

#### Closing session

**Elisabeth GUIGOU**, Chairwoman of the Foreign Affairs Committee at the French National Assembly

**Hatem ATALLAH**, Diplomatic Advisor to the Tunisian Prime Minister

**Eneko LANDABURU**, Former Ambassador

**Joachim BITTERLICH**, Former Ambassador

**Neemat FREM**, Vice-Chairman of IPEMED's Supervisory Board, Chairman of Indevco



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### FOR A NEW EURO-MEDITERRANEAN ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIPS

"We are determined to make South and North converge and go even further. Europe, the Mediterranean and Africa are taking a fresh look at each other. The creation of a Europe/Mediterranean/Africa axis can hold strong for twenty, thirty or fifty years!" said Jean-Louis Guigou, Delegate General of IPEMED. "FDI has played a predatory role for too long. The act of trade isn't necessarily an act of faith. Coproduction works. The number of companies in the South moving up to the North is increasing and vice versa. It creates value and employment in both North and South. And I congratulate business leaders. They anticipate quickly and act fast," he added.

"Employment is the keystone of the Euro-Mediterranean area. In Tunisia, some talk about the high numbers of unemployed and others about the lack of labour. Co-sourcing can be a solution for the flow between companies in the North and South," pointed out Ahmed Bouzguenda, chairman of the Arab Institute of Business Leaders (IACE).

For Radhi Meddeb, IPEMED's president, "Coproduction is a win-win game between North and South. In the South, a refusal to coproduce would condemn us to dispersal in globalization. For the North, refusal would lead to marginalization, a loss of economic efficiency and, ultimately, regression." For the IPEMED president, "North and South have points in common: sluggish growth, if not nil or negative, abyssal debt, unemployment and foreign trade deficits that are causing us to close in on our identities. The challenges are the same: employment and especially young people's employment, which constitutes an advantage in dynamic countries and a burden in those that aren't working."

Radhi Meddeb noted that, "The Mediterranean area has always been a place of intense human circulation. The diaspora has a role to play in rapprochement and economic integration. Its members can promote the economic development of their countries of origin. We should therefore establish complete freedom to circulate skills. After all, visas only date back to the 1970s."

"We have every reason to be optimistic and believe in ourselves. The primary asset in bringing the North and South Mediterranean closer is the diaspora," commented Elisabeth Guigou, Chairwoman of the Foreign Affairs Committee at the French National Assembly. "We need to continue arguing for this European political priority with countries in the southern Mediterranean. There is a strategic advantage in continuing to develop a Euro-Mediterranean policy. We need to involve the business world more," she continued.

"We should create clearer categories in the European Union for Mediterranean Countries. Differentiate those who want special, strategic relations with Europe and for whom Brussels needs to be more present, act more. This is the case for Morocco and Tunisia for example. Greater presence, including on the mobility issue," said Eneko Landaburu, former ambassador.

*“Companies are the key to the renewal of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, provided that they cooperate. They now need political impetus so that this movement can grow and accelerate,”* concluded Neemat Frem, CEO of INDEVCO and Vice-president of the EMCC business initiative, closing the debate.

### **About EMCC**

Committed to improving Mediterranean integration, the directors of IPEMED's founding companies set up a vast movement of business leaders, EMCC (Euro-Mediterranean Competitiveness Confederation) in 2009. EMCC speaks in a single voice and campaigns to bring the two sides of the Mediterranean closer together through economics. Instigated by the CEO of GDF-SUEZ Gérard Mestrallet, EMCC is currently chaired by Xavier Beulin, CEO of Sofiprotéol, in his capacity as Chairman of the IPEMED Supervisory Board.

[www.emcc-forum.org](http://www.emcc-forum.org)

### **About IPEMED**

The Economic Foresight Institute for the Mediterranean Region (IPEMED) is an association recognized as in the public interest that aims to bring the two sides of the Mediterranean closer together using economics. Financed by major public and private Mediterranean companies that share its values, as well as territorial authorities, it works to raise awareness of the common future and converging interests of countries in the North, South and East Mediterranean. IPEMED's values are political independence, and parity between North and South in the way it is governed and organizes its work. It puts the emphasis on the economy, fosters an operational approach to its projects, and works for the long term. IPEMED is presided by Radhi Meddeb and directed by its founder, Jean-Louis Guigou.

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