



PRESENTAZIONE DI
PRESENTATION BY

ENRICO RIZZARELLI

AL FORUM
AT THE FORUM

**“LO SVILUPPO DELL’AFRICA:
UN’OPPORTUNITÀ PER L’EUROPA, PER L’ITALIA E PER LA SICILIA”**

**“DEVELOPING AFRICA:
AN OPPORTUNITY FOR EUROPE, ITALY AND SICILY”**

Taormina
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Enrico Rizzarelli, Università di Catania



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**TOWARDS A EURO-MEDITERRANEAN
HIGHER EDUCATION & RESEARCH AREA**
**First Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference
on Higher Education and Scientific Research
(Cairo Declaration - 18 June 2007)**



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This Conference aims at:

A. In Higher Education:

Creating a Euromed Higher Education Area:

1. *Approximating the Euromed Higher Education Systems;*
2. *Promotion of a Permanent Euromed University Forum;*
3. *Promoting Educational Innovation and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT);*
4. *Promoting mobility through exchanges of higher education students, teachers, researchers and administrators;*
5. *Enhancing participation in the Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window.*



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B. In Research and Innovation:

Towards the creation of a Euromed Research Area :

1. *Modernizing Science and Technology, R&D policies in the Mediterranean Partner Countries;*
2. *Supporting Institutional Capacity Building, including human and research infrastructure development;*
3. *Enhancing the participation of the Mediterranean Partner Countries in the Framework Programmes while taking into account their particular needs, as well as areas of mutual interest and benefit between EU and Mediterranean Partner Countries;*
4. *Promoting innovation in the Mediterranean Partner Countries and enhancing exploitation of the RTD outputs by society and industry;*
5. *Favouring mobility of researchers;*
6. *Enhancing participation of the Mediterranean Partner Countries in the "People" Specific Programme of FP 7.*



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Ministers commit to undertake appropriate measures to realise the following actions:

- 1. Approximation of the Euromed Higher Education systems with relevance to the Bologna process and ECTS system***
- 2. Support the implementation of the Euromed University Forum objectives***
- 3. Exploit the use of innovative methodologies and ICT to enhance Higher Education***
- 4. Enhancing participation to a Euromed Scholarship Scheme in the framework of the Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window***
- 5. Support Euromed Higher Education Programmes***
- 6. Integration of the Mediterranean Partner Countries in the European Research Area***
- 7. Promote innovation, knowledge-sharing and its return on the Industry and economy in Mediterranean Partner Countries***
- 8. Enhance Effective Mobility in the Euromed region***



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International Master

Economics and Administration of Cultural Heritage

Landscape Design and Environmental Planning in the Mediterranean area

Mininvasive Surgery and new Technologies



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International Master

Students with the Master degree: **81, 70%** coming from:

- Benin – Egypt – France – Jordan – Lebanon –
- Lybia – Morocco – Russia – Syria – Spain – Tunisia - Turkey.

Students attending the Master programs for the academic year
2007-2008: **36, 86%** coming from:

- Algeria - Egypt – Jordan – Lebanon - Lybia – Morocco –
- Pakistan - Spain – Tunisia - Turkey – Uganda



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The learning process of the SSC continues as a partner for the implementation of the Cairo Declaration and of the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument (ENPI).

This is the reason why the Scuola over and above its traditional mandate, in coherence with the social and economic evolution of the Mediterranean Area, aims at developing the “**European Mediterranean College**”: a Centre of excellence for all the involved stakeholders in the Neighbourhood Policy, focusing on training, organizations of internships, documentation centre and accompanying measures to reinforce partnerships.



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The new ENPI (14,9 Billion € for the period 2007 – 2013) and the implementation of the FTA with eligible Mediterranean Partner Countries (MPCs), represents a strategic milestone in the External Relations of the Union. However, in order to secure the ENPI full implementation and the actual involvement of EU and MPCs concerned stakeholders, accompany measures in terms of awareness, information and training are necessary.

ENPI calls for the involvement of EU and MPCs Local Authorities (LAs) in the programming and in the project design phase. This means: to join and manage ENPI financing schemes so that trans-border cooperation becomes a top priority in the policy agenda of the LAs, to date still too much focused on domestic and internal matters rather than on external relations. For European LAs, trans-border cooperation has become only recently a priority after almost 10 years of experiences of Cohesion Policy and related Programmes. LAs in MPCs need to be supported in order to become proactive stakeholders in this respect.



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The College of Europe for the Mediterranean in Catania means sharing with MPCs LAs the positive and negative experiences related to the management of EU financial resources.

For example, in the framework of the financial perspectives 2000 – 2006, Italy committed only 67% of 2,5 Billion € from the Axes Culture in the Structural Funds. If this is the situation in the domestic scenario, where national actors gained experiences with regional funds, it goes without saying that the need to support MPCs LAs is straightforward



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The idea: a dedicated centre of excellence for ENPI

The College is not envisaged only as a “courses supplier” but as a physical meeting place aiming to foster strategic thinking, development of the partnership and project ideas.

To date, ENPI is not supported by a dedicated Centre of Excellence. The College of Europe has the Headquarters in Bruges (Belgium) and a venue in Natolin (Poland) for the new Member States.

The idea is to develop at the Scuola Superiore di Catania a Centre of excellence for ENPI. The venue of the College will be at the Scuola Superiore with residential facilities in order to foster exchanges and interactions among the participants. The College will work following a networking approach with the European Commission, National educational and research Centres in EU and MPCs, the Italian Ministry for External Trade, the Italian Foreign Ministry, the Collège d'Europe of Bruges, the University of Barcelona, the European College of Parma, etc.



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Once the Scuola will be established and the first running period will be carried out, it is expected to open a campus of the Scuola in a South Mediterranean Country following the approach of “**One Scuola two campuses**”.

The driving concept is to offer the same quality services and educational facilities to local stakeholders. Potential venues where to establish the campus are Egypt, Libya and Tunisia because of the existing partnership with higher education institutions there.



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The training target

The training target of the Centre is the executive education area and the fulfilment of the needs of the stakeholders involved in ENPI:

Officials of central and local authorities of ENPI Countries
Officials of central and local authorities of EU member states
interested in ENPI working areas
MPCs University Managers
MPCs Researchers in selected areas (Engineering, Physics, Law,
Chemistry, Economy, Biotechnology, Energetics, etc..)
Representatives of EU and MPCs intermediate professional and
entrepreneurial associations
Enterprises and civil society organisations. This is a key sector,
“engine” of the economies which shows high difficulties in
understanding and taking advantage of EU financing and policies
instruments.



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The activities

The activities of the Centre will be developed along four axes:
Training and seminars, Organisations of Internships, Documentation
and research centre of ENPI and Accompanying measures for the
establishment of the partnership.

Life long learning and executive education training will be integrated
by seminars and workshops. An operational plan will be fine-tuned
on the basis of the training needs of prospective participants.
Training subjects have been identified on the basis of ENPI priorities.



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a. Training and seminars

Political dialogue, international relations, institutional framework
Economic and social development
Internal trade
Procurement
Justice and internal affairs
Energy
Transport
Environment
Heritage and tourism
Health
Information society
Research
Programming, project design and management in ENPI
University management and capacity building following the
recommendations of the *Bologna* process (ECTS system, three cycles
system, mobility enhancement)



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b. Internships

The integration process between EU and MPCs Local Authorities cannot underestimate the “people-to-people” relation to be achieved through a “working together” approach. This is the rationale that justifies the organisation of internships for MPCs Administrators who will play part of their activities in EU Local authorities and vice versa. Other and above exchange of knowledge and professional experiences, the internships will allow the development of jointly project ideas.

Giving the nature of the Scuola, dedicated internships will be carried out as well for MPCs researchers in the following selected areas: physics, chemistry, engineering, law, landscape planning and economics of cultural heritage, in the Scuola facilities and in the laboratories of the Scuola network. The expected outcomes from these internships for MPCs researchers are three folds:

Increase their research capacity

Reinforce their fund-raising capacity and managerial skills of international research projects

Increase their networking capacity in order to identify European partners for applying to international project research



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c. Documentation and research centre of ENPI

Several Institutional and non-Institutional actors produces comprehensive documentations and research papers on ENPI. However, information is scattered and there is a lack of collection and management of the works produced. Herewith you may find some examples of available information :

Today, 23 March 2007, the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Banking Federation (EBF) have joined forces to organise a conference on the issue of financial transfers from migrant workers in the Euro-Mediterranean area.

The Association of International Studies (AEI) in collaboration with the EuroMeSCo Secretariat and with the support of the European Commission, is organising a seminar on "Migrants Rights – From Existing International Conventions to a Euro-Mediterranean Charter" on 30-31 March 2007 in Tunis.

15 March 2007

European Parliament adopts resolution on Euro-Med relations

Without a documentation centre, information will not get transformed into knowledge and, then, in culture. It will be difficult for a MPCs and for a EU official interested, for example, in immigration policy to have a global vision on the



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PRE-COLLEGE

The Euro-Mediterranean College project is linked to another School (SSC) project designed to attract young people from around the Mediterranean to take up its courses.

From the outset, the School's vocational campaigns and advertising have been toward attracting secondary school students from around the Mediterranean. However, even though good relations have been forged with a variety of institutions and Italian cultural institutes and notwithstanding the reasonable number of foreign students applying to the School, the expected results are unsatisfactory. In reality, very few pass selection to begin a course at the School



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We have deduced that there is a notable educational difference between young foreigners and young Italians and which may be due to various factors, the following being most significant:

non-homogeneity between foreign and Italian scholastic systems. For example, in some foreign countries mandatory schooling is different to that in Italy;

diversity of school course content;

insufficient, if not inexistent, knowledge of Italian and Italian culture.



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To try and eliminate these formative differences initially required for admission to the School, interventions are necessary to increase the competitiveness of foreign students for the School's courses of excellence.

Among other investments the School is planning:

an increase in vocational campaigns and advertising the expertise of the Scuola Superiore di Catania in other Mediterranean countries such as Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Turkey, Libya, the Lebanon, Morocco, Syria and Jordan;

More specific vocational preparation and pre-School training for secondary school students intending to apply for the Scuola Superiore di Catania.

This gave rise to the idea of a Pre-College within which to run vocational and specific training courses for fourth and fifth year secondary school students as well as for teachers from those Mediterranean countries.



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To create a Pre-College the first thing is to establish (or strengthen) links with:

Ministry of Foreign Affairs: in particular with the General Management for Cultural Promotion;

Italian cultural Institutes in other Mediterranean countries;

Italian schools in those countries;

The Ministries of Education in those countries;

Secondary schools in those countries;

School associations.



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The second phase concerns selecting a group of students (max 30 per year) from the penultimate year of secondary school. The selection will take place in close collaboration with Italian Cultural Institutes on the basis of:

1. School career
2. Self-Proficiency and Vocational Test

The third phase, however, specifically concerns the educational strategies for 'potential' School students.

In particular, in loco educational strategies are expected as well as vocational and training periods at the School.



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The following summarise the types of preparation foreseen by the School:

Italian language courses, as well as participation in cultural events about Italy (film surveys, cultural meetings etc.) to take place in the Italian Cultural Institutes of those countries.

Objective: to acquire knowledge of the Italian language and culture; Themed distance-learning personalised for each student on the basis of test results (Self-Proficiency and Vocational Test). These courses would run along the lines of the science course the student intends to follow. Whenever possible the methodology would be e-learning. Even here, the help of the Italian Cultural Institutes is indispensable in providing the PCs and Internet needed to access these courses. The courses would be run by accredited teacher-tutors based in the various scientific sectors of interest to the students; these teacher-tutors would become year-long student mentors.

Objective: to reduce the educational gap by providing specific basic, theoretical and practical courses (with a lot of time for exercise) which align with the requirements of the School's Admissions Test.



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Once integrated preparation during the school year has finished, all the foreign students selected will join one or more residential vocational courses at the Scuola Superiore di Catania during the summer months.

Collateral activities will be organised such as visiting the School's and University's laboratories as well as visits to Faculties of choice. High priority will be given also to organising cultural meetings and recreation and having themed seminars of general interest run by more senior students or ex-students.

Objective: to encourage student familiarity with their chosen context: the School itself, its students and staff, the courses and research of the School and University of Catania, its city and the relationship between them and School members so as to empower the students with a sense of belonging to the School and to harmonise international relations.



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Ministers commit to undertake appropriate measures to realise the following actions:

1. Approximation of the Euromed Higher Education systems with relevance to the Bologna process and ECTS system.

This could be achieved through the following actions:

- a. Structured cooperation to promote the comparability and readability of Higher Education systems in the Euromed area, notably through the further development of the current MERIC network, aiming to facilitate the recognition of merits;*
- b. Cooperation, including technical assistance through existing schemes to establish Education and Training paths based on systems of comparable transferable credits;*
- c. Support Mediterranean Partner Countries in the establishment of comparable Quality Control and Accreditation schemes;*
- d. Develop - parallel to higher education reform - initiatives to support market-based reform in the field of Technical, Vocational Education & Training (TVET);*
- e. Institutional Capacity Building and Human Resource Development by supporting joint teaching and training programmes for academic, technical and administrative staff;*
- f. Cooperation, including through existing schemes to increase the relevance of the awarded degrees to the Mediterranean Partner Countries labour market needs.*



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2. Support the implementation of the Euromed University Forum objectives, notably:

- a. Promotion of knowledge and information society;*
- b. Improvement of quality of education and research;*
- c. Encourage collaboration and dialogue among higher education institutions;*
- d. Increase the efficiency of higher education institutions;*
- e. Increase the involvement of civil society in education*



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3. Exploit the use of innovative methodologies and ICT to enhance Higher Education

This could be achieved through the following actions:

- a. Cooperation between Euromed Distance universities;
- b. Cooperation aiming at the creation of a Mediterranean Digital Library and portal including translation between Euromed languages.



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4. Enhancing participation to a Euromed Scholarship Scheme in the framework of

the Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window, including by providing a more flexible framework and by studying the possibilities of joint funding to allow increased participation.

5. Support Euromed Higher Education Programmes

This could be achieved through the following actions:

- a. Sustain the TEMPUS Programme with a more strategic orientation through university networks and participation of Higher Education ministries;*
- b. Strengthen the participation of the Mediterranean Partner Countries' universities in the Erasmus Mundus Actions.*



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6. Integration of the Mediterranean Partner Countries in the European Research Area.

This could be achieved through the following actions:

- a. Promotion of links between centres of excellence in the Euromed region;*
- b. Promotion of joint networks of Excellence in fields of mutual interest, e.g. renewable energy, biotechnology, environment, etc.;*
- c. Promotion of regional initiatives in RTDI;*
- d. Promotion of contact points in Mediterranean Partner Countries' Universities and research Institutes to disseminate information and promote participation in FP7;*
- e. Promotion of National funds in Mediterranean Partner Countries for Scientific Research and Development;*
- f. Explore the possibility of co-finance by Mediterranean Partner Countries in FP7 for coordinated activities;*
- g. Enhance the participation of Mediterranean Partner Countries in FP7;*
- h. Cooperation in capacity building in:*
 - i. Formulating research projects;*
 - ii. Particular areas of mutual interest.*



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7. Promote innovation, knowledge-sharing and its return on the Industry and economy in Mediterranean Partner Countries

This could be achieved through the following actions:

- a. Promotion of the creation of national and regional innovation funds within the Mediterranean Partner Countries to support innovation and exploitation of research outputs by industry;*
- b. Implementation of the 'Euromed Innovation & Technology Programme', which aims at developing innovativeness in Business firms (esp. SMEs);*
- c. Promote the participation of Mediterranean Partner Countries in activities related to innovation, including under the EU Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP);*



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8. Enhance Effective Mobility in the Euromed region

This could be achieved through the following actions:

- a. Establishing Mobility Centers and Portals as well as promoting mobility contact points in the Mediterranean Partner countries;*
- b. Establishing national programmes of mobility and open access to incoming mobility from EU Member States to Mediterranean Partner Countries;*

In this framework, Ministers make a call to facilitate exit and entry procedures, including visa procedures for students, researchers and teachers among Euromed countries



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9. Attain Brain Circulation and Knowledge Dissemination

This could be achieved through the following actions:

- a. Support to expatriate researchers through networking opportunities and allowing periodic research sabbaticals to countries of origin;*
- b. Promotion of a regional network of Institutes for Advanced Studies & Research, through which European Academic Institutions cooperate with selected Mediterranean Partner Countries' Universities to form the best human capital;*
- c. Address the issues linked to brain circulation, notably through strengthening the return phase in the different mobility programmes*



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Implementation & Follow-up:

The existing Monitoring Committee for Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation in RTD will be complemented, as appropriate, with the creation of an expert group so as to cover Higher Education, with a view to implementing the conference objectives, deliverables and actions.

They will meet periodically, or as required, to review the achieved progress and report to the Euromed Committee, not later than the second semester of 2008.

The second Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Higher Education and Scientific Research, will be held in 2009 to assess the achievements made in this regard, as well as promoting further co-operation



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To date, the issue of education and RTDI did not receive the sufficient attention it merits in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. Only at the Barcelona Summit, Euromed Partners have recognised for the first time in the Five-Year Work Programme the crucial role of education for political, social and economic development, as well as the major importance of the research, innovation and Human Resources Development as a key to modernization. The Monitoring Committee for Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation (MOCO) in RTD was initiated and meets regularly since 1996 providing valuable input to bi-regional S&T Cooperation, *inter alia* to the Framework Programmes.

In this vein, the 8th Euromed Ministers of Foreign Affairs agreed in Tampere (27-28 November 2006) upon the importance of convening the First Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Higher Education and Scientific Research, which represents a landmark step in this regard.



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Building on the objectives and actions stipulated in the Five-Year Work Programme of the Barcelona Summit and on the goals of the Catania Declaration 2006;

Recognising the importance of literacy, primary, secondary, higher education and technical and vocational education and training for the development of the human capital of the region;

Underlining the necessity of reducing disparities in educational achievement between Euro-Mediterranean countries under internationally recognized education standards, as well as facilitating the mobility and employability of students and researchers and supporting the economic development of the region;

Emphasising also the urgent need to support a labour market based reform of Education, including Technical, Vocational Education and Training as well as convergence to frameworks of qualifications;

Investing the opportunities provided by new information and communication technologies that allow bolstering distance learning and permanent training systems in the Euromed area;



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Acknowledging the necessity to structure the collaboration between high quality training institutions and Centres of Excellence in order to uphold the development of a Euro-Mediterranean research area;

Stressing the need to link the industrial and productive sectors through cooperation in the scientific and technological fields, based on the conclusions of the Sixth Euromed Conference of Ministers for Industry, and in particular those related to the promotion of innovation and competitiveness;

Underlining the importance of Euromed cooperation in supporting the development and modernisation processes in higher education, especially through the TEMPUS programme, as well as fostering the RTDI in cooperation with Mediterranean Partner Countries, in particular through the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7);



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Welcoming the Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window and the prospects offered by the Euromed scholarship scheme for university students and higher education staff from partner countries endorsed by the Euro-Mediterranean Summit in 2005, which will add to the existing funding opportunities both by European Union Member States and Mediterranean partners;

With the aim of upholding the EU's commitment at the Barcelona Summit to increase significantly funding devoted to education in the Mediterranean region through EU assistance and Mediterranean partners' national plans and raise education as a priority sector within the ENPI;

In this regard the Slovenian initiative for the establishment of a Euro-Mediterranean University will constitute an important step forward through a cooperation network of existing universities.