



Le Tenor !



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REGIONS: THE FIRST WORLDWIDE NETWORK

EDITORIAL

REGIONS OF THE WORLD: A FOUNDING

As the Committee of the Regions celebrates the 50th anniversary of the Treaty of the European Union in Rome, the Regions show that they are not only focusing on the commemorations.

On the contrary, it is thanks to their participation in the European adventure that they can play a pioneering role for a successful globalisation in peace and justice. Indeed, Europe was the first continent within which the Regions were able to get involved with a trans-national presence and cooperation. It is within the Union that they experienced the strongest recognition from the States. It is also within this framework that, through the structural funds, the most ambitious continental policy of territorial solidarity that the World has known was created and developed. All these achievements are the subject of much interest from national and regional players from the public sector, from Asia, Africa and America.

This interest was apparent in Marseille, from 5th to 7th March. At the invitation of Michel Vauzelle, President of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region and the CPMR Inter-Mediterranean Commission, the CPMR and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) brought together 1200 players from all five continents during the "First International Convention for a Regional and Local Approach to Development". The European Union provided strong support for this, through Commissioner Danuta Hübner, the External Relations Director General, Eneko Landaburu, and the President of the Committee of Regions, Michel Delebarre. Many States from both the North and South of the planet, as well as several United Nations Agencies also participated in the meeting alongside the Regional players. Substantiating the framework agreement signed in June 2006 between the CPMR and the UNDP, cooperation projects between European Regions and Regions from other continents have been introduced: the struggle against natural catastrophes in the Caribbean, regional economic development in Morocco, support for the organisation of grouping of Regions in Latin America...

This need for the participation of the Regions in the global scene could not be limited to one meeting. Since 2006, networks existing on a global scale or in other continents have given their agreement for the creation of a permanent organisation capable of ensuring the voice and concerns of the Regions are heard. On March 7th, at the suggestion of the CPMR, they also signed a Declaration on the participation of the Regions in the governance of globalisation, adopted by our Political Bureau on February 16th. Through it, in particular, they have created a Forum of Networks of World Regions whose initial presidency was entrusted to Claudio Martini and the CPMR Secretariat. One of our members, the President of Tanger-Tétouan Region, Mr Abdelhadi Benallal, invited all the Regions of the World to a second meeting in Morocco in spring 2008. Likewise, Jean-Yves Le Drian, the President of Brittany, invited the provisional Bureau to meet in Saint Malo, in October 2008, on the occasion of the Summit of Regions of the World for Sustainable Development.

Thus the Regions put themselves in working order to promote the requirements of territorial cohesion and decentralisation of development in the global world of the 21st century.

Xavier Gizard

CPMR Secretary General

MARSEILLE CONFERENCE: VIDEO INTERVIEW OF DANUTA HÜBNER, EUROPEAN COMMISSIONER IN CHARGE OF EU REGIONAL POLICY

Danuta Hübner, European Commissioner in charge of EU Regional Policy, present at the “First International Convention for a Regional and Local Approach to Development”, hopes the Regions will develop closer cooperation with Regions of third countries. She acknowledged there is a lot happening through cooperation, financial support and meetings like the one organised by the CPMR in PACA with the coordination of the UNDP. Mrs Hübner feels that globalisation has a diversified impact on Regions, and the national and community level response is not enough, which is why the proximity of partners you find at regional level can help find good responses at regional level to the global challenges.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jxPftq-WtTk>

"THE CONTRIBUTION OF REGIONS TO THE EUROPEAN EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY"

The Regions of Asturias and Stockholm with ten other Regions from the north and the south of Europe, under the coordination of the CPMR (Forward Studies Unit), launched a project called "The contribution of the Regions towards education, training and employment Lisbon Objectives". They aim to identify best practices at a regional level in the fields of education, training and employment, which contribute to the achievement of the Lisbon Agenda objectives.

Within this context, the CPMR and the partner Regions of the project wanted to continue their work by organising an International Conference to present and to discuss the outcomes of the project and to analyse the role of Regions concerning the achievement of the Lisbon objectives in coordination with national and European levels. This conference, held in Oviedo on 26th and 27th March 2007, offered a possibility to exchange experiences and practices between Regions and to reflect on how to conciliate cohesion and competitiveness objectives.

REGIONS TOGETHER FOR EUROPE

On 25 March 1957, the leaders of six European countries met to sign a historical agreement that formed the basis of modern Europe. Fifty years on, Regions from all over Europe celebrated this milestone in Rome, the city that witnessed the birth of the European Union.

Indeed, the Committee of the Regions celebrated Europe's 50th birthday in Rome on 23rd March with a special plenary session and commemorative ceremony addressed by Italian President Giorgio Napolitano, Prime Minister Romano Prodi and European Commission President José Manuel Barroso. Claudio Martini, President of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) also took part in the ceremony, underlining the contribution of the CPMR in the construction of European cohesion and European values among its Member Regions.

A declaration of the Regions for Europe, demanding an ambitious response to the expectations of citizens, and calling for the recognition of the advantages of decentralisation will be sent to EU heads of State and Government ahead of their Informal Summit in Berlin.

MARSEILLE CONFERENCE: VIDEO INTERVIEW OF BRUCE JENKS, UNITED NATIONS ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL

Bruce Jenks, United Nations Assistant Secretary General, believes the energy, the commitment to regional solutions and the commitment to looking at all levels of society is what is really important. He believes the Regions bring the government close to the people in many ways. Of the many different models, he does not think that one should consider exporting one particular model, but that the experience of different people is very valuable for many people.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hhhj9TNSqMI>

**MARSEILLE CONFERENCE: VIDEO INTERVIEW OF MICHEL VAUZELLE,
PRESIDENT OF PROVENCE-ALPES-COTE D'AZUR**

Michel Vauzelle, President of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, feels that one model should not be exported or imposed on others. Mr Vauzelle explains that there are many different cultures, each with the right to have their own regionalisation, or non-regionalisation model, which depends on the level of economic development. He sincerely hopes that the door has been opened to globalisation and to the creation, one day, of a large organisation of Regions of the World.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eYEzP-hHrVM>