Participants:

See annexed list of participants

OPENING SESSION

After welcoming the participants, Mr Felip, Director of the Catalonian Cooperation and Development Agency, which was hosting the meeting, gave the floor to Mr Gizard, who evoked the reasons why the CPMR had become active in the area of external cooperation. He added that the “official” creation of a working group on external cooperation would be submitted to the next meeting of the CPMR Political Bureau, in Odessa on 12 June 2009, for approval by the members.

SESSION 1: Development aid – CPMR’s participation in the European platform of Regional and Local Authorities for development

Ms Orihuela presented the European platform of Regional and Local Authorities (RLAs) for development, of which the CPMR is a member. It was within the framework of this platform, she explained, that the CPMR was organising the seminar on “Regions and development: the role of the Regions in a new global framework” on 29 May 2009 in Marseille. She detailed the agenda for this seminar and summed up its aims, which were those of the CPMR within the platform: to permit discussion and comparison of RLA practices, focusing on a territorial approach, and to reflect on new, more collaborative, practices permitting Regions to become integrated in global aid mechanisms in order to be more effective and thus contribute to the Paris Declaration. Representatives of various Member States, the European Union, UNDP and development agencies would be present. Ms Orihuela also presented a draft address from the participants at the seminar, to be adopted on 29 May and sent to the European and international institutions and Member States. She concluded by presenting a draft information form, detailing the external cooperation activities of the CPMR member Regions. The idea of these forms was to provide information for interested Regions on the cooperation activities of other Regions (themes, geographical areas concerned, actions under way, financial amounts, etc.) and thus to facilitate the exchange of experience and increase the efficiency of actions carried out in the same area or on the same theme.

Debate

Mr Cichowlaz pointed out that, up until recently, external cooperation had been a matter for national governments, which managed and accompanied the participation of RLAs. However the situation had recently changed, and the European level now increasingly supported decentralised cooperation, while still remaining a global player and working in partnership with the States and the United Nations. The European Union also had to take account of the calls for decentralisation coming from Southern States. For the time being, territorial governance was not a priority. There was a feeling that certain Member States, such as
France, were keen to address these new calls; UNDP and the World Bank were also receptive. However, it was often a question of spatial visions which did not alter the approach or the funding. It was essential for RLAs to make their voice heard in these national and international bodies, and to improve their own practices. To do this, new tools and new working methods had to be envisaged to improve the professionalism of the teams working in the RLAs.

Ms Tozzi also emphasised the need for the Regions to act in coherence with and alongside the States, as well as consulting each other. She stressed the need for territorial governance and support for decentralisation. A better knowledge of the actions taken by the various Regions and local authorities, the themes on which they were working and the areas concerned, was therefore needed. It was also necessary to envisage new working methods, and to investigate further how RLAs could contribute to effective actions.

Mr Gizard said that it was a matter of making sure we were part of a strategic vision of what we wished to see globalisation achieve. European development policy was a key policy in terms of highlighting the value of certain European principles such as good governance, territorial cohesion, democratic principles, etc. This found an echo among the regional partners in Latin America and Africa. He also underlined the gap between the supply of and demand for cooperation.

The representative of the Canaries evoked the partnerships that had been set up between his Region and certain territories in West Africa, and said there was a strong interest in decentralisation in particular. He commented on the difficulties faced by this partnership, especially in terms of control and coordination. The Region always endeavoured to work in coordination with the Spanish Development Agency, but he regretted the large number of players involved without any prior coordination. Coordination was a difficult task. He concluded by underlining his region’s special status as an Ultra-peripheral Region, pointing out that this implied certain questions, and a specific treatment of certain issues, including development.

Ms Guichet-Lebailly underlined the need to know more about who was doing what and where, and the need to work in partnership with other Regions. It was necessary to match the priorities of the RLAs in the North with the needs of the territories concerned in the South. It could also be useful for one Region to contribute funding and expertise to projects already under way, led by other Regions.

Mr Clifford indicated that this question of cooperation for development had for a long time been a centralised policy area in Great Britain and one in which RLAs had little or no involvement. He said that the amounts of funding provided today by the regional level were relatively small, and that in Wales it was often a matter of supporting small-scale projects emanating from local communities and authorities. He also mentioned the public authorities’ policies in support of fair trade, as well as voluntary organisations which sent experts to developing countries. Today Wales wanted to find new funding for its actions, capitalise on its experience, and exchange experience with actions carried out by public authorities elsewhere in Europe.

Xavier Marti then presented the situation in Catalunya, which wanted to see strategic and political approaches to the major international donors, which were beginning to take RLAs into account, especially in terms of available funding. The RLAs had to be recognised as real partners. Catalunya had partnerships with multilateral organisations, and this aspect should be investigated further. The global governance to be created must necessarily include the participation of the Regions, he added. The Regions were key players, and must take part in the debates on aid effectiveness; this was now possible following the Accra meeting. They should also take part in the code of conduct on the division of labour, as recommended by the European Union. The link between Regions and States had to be examined, as well as the contribution Regions made to development via their specific expertise.

There was further debate on what should be done after the seminar at the end of May in Marseille, and how we should organise ourselves within the CPMR in order to have a say in the debates and build proposals for the period after 2013.

Mr Gizard referred to CPMR’s work with UNDP over the last few years and its more recent collaboration with the FAO with a view to contributing to the creation of a strategic framework for relations between donors and international bodies and the regional level, in a shifting global context in which the regions must from now on be present. He also pointed out, to strengthen links with the European Commission services in charge of relations with RLAs. The Regions must take part in the definition of a new paradigm for development, which must be defined jointly at global level. This was obviously a complicated
and long-term undertaking, but one that was necessary. Beyond this participation of the Regions in a global approach, the two other priorities he wished to highlight for the working group were the coordination of actions carried out and the pursuit of the reflection on these actions and the way in which they contributed to a more effective aid. For this, it was important to involve regional economists in particular in the reflection, so as not to simply conform to the visions of the major donors, the World Bank, and the IMF, but rather to build veritable proposals.

Mr Cichowlaz pointed out that his Region received a great many requests from various United Nations Agencies. So far, there was not one single interlocutor recognised as such at the level of the UN who could organise the dialogue with the regional level. This partnership had to be built. He also mentioned the role of the European Union, which could help to create frameworks for partnerships and joint projects.

Ms Tozzi came back to the need for the Regions to share and exchange experiences (exchanges of experience and exchanges on the strategies adopted) and the need to further investigate new technical and scientific approaches, to think of new types of training for those working on the ground, and in the local authorities, and the need for a “macro-regional” approach. She spoke of the approach promoted in Italy, where the different actors involved in a given territory worked together under the aegis of the State.

The representative of the Canaries mentioned the current debates in Spain on this theme, and said he would like to see the CPMR spelling out clearly the demands of the Regions on this subject, and that these should be sent to the next European Parliament and the next European Commission, as well as to international donors. The message should concern the Regions’ external cooperation in general, not just development aid. Mr Marti added that the future Spanish presidency from January to June 2010 could be a good opportunity for the working group, and he underlined the fact that 15% of Spanish aid came from regional budgets.

Ms Moreno recommended working on political and strategic questions, but also taking sectoral approaches into account. Partner territories were also potential markets, she added, and this aspect should be taken into consideration.

The debate came to a close with the proposal by the General Secretariat to distribute among members a form on which each Region could indicate relevant information about its cooperation activities.

Ms Orihuela presented a draft version of this form and asked participants for their comments and any proposals for improving this document before it was sent out.

Ms Moreno proposed that internal as well as external cooperation activities should be included.

Mr Cichowlaz proposed adding information on the legal systems applying to the Regions’ external action in each country. This would provide a better understanding of the frameworks within which each Region had to work, since the themes chosen were often linked to the territories’ competences. He added that it would be useful to be able to differentiate actions carried out in a European framework, especially via calls for projects.

Ms Tozzi mentioned the need to mention policies as well as themes such as decentralisation, water, health, etc. She undertook to send more information about the Italian framework.

Mr Marti mentioned the need for information about the geographical priorities of each Region, with which territories they cooperated. It was also necessary to know what methods were used (multilateral, working with NGOs, etc.)

Ms Hadman proposed that partnerships on the ground should also be included; this would make the information more complete.

The General Secretariat agreed to present a new version of the form as soon as possible, and if possible before the seminar at the end of May in Marseille.
Concerning the proposed address from the participants at the seminar on “Regions and Development” on 29 May to Member States, European institutions and United Nations Agencies, Ms Orihuela presented the CPMR’s proposal, which would be submitted to other members of the platform.

Mr Marti underlined the importance of mentioning the fact that RLAs were not merely responsible for carrying out aid work, but were real partners, and that they had to be taken into account in order to make aid more effective. The Paris agenda should be modified accordingly. He emphasised that since the last meeting, in Accra, this was now possible. It was also necessary in the medium term to step up collaboration with networks of NGOs.

Before moving on to the next session, the participants underlined the need for a document to be made available for the General Assembly in Göteborg at the end of September 2009 summarising the options for action to be developed in the short and longer term in order to have an impact on this issue of development aid and promote a more important role for the Regions.

SESSION 2: Presentation, examination and adoption of the terms of reference for the CPMR External Cooperation Working Group

Marie-Ange Orihuela presented the proposed terms of reference for the “External Cooperation” working group. She indicated that the group’s main aim was to prepare the CPMR’s policy positions in the following areas (which she emphasised could evolve): development policy, neighbourhood and wider neighbourhood policy, and particularly the links to be established with cohesion policy, CPMR’s participation and action within FOGAR and nrg4SD (membership of nrg4SD falls mainly within the framework of the CPMR’s environment/sustainable development policy) and other issues related to external cooperation such as follow-up of the Northern Dimension, Eastern Partnership, Union for the Mediterranean, etc. She then gave the floor to Laura Alcoverro, representing Catalunya, which had offered to lead this group.

Ms Alcoverro thanked the participants for this mark of their confidence and said that the group would be led by the Regions’ General Directorate for International Relations. This would ensure the relevant departments were involved, depending on the issues addressed. Mr Cortadelles, Director General, would give a presentation about the group to the Political Bureau meeting in Odessa on 12 June 2009.

During the debate, the representative of the Canaries indicated that the question of the Ultra-Peripheral Regions should be added to the terms of reference, and that it was necessary to ensure the link between the different Geographical Commissions and the CPMR General Secretariat. The participants underlined the need for the group’s work to receive input from the different experiences of the Regions and the Geographical Commissions.

Ms Orihuela noted this proposal and undertook to modify the document as necessary before it was submitted to the Political Bureau in Odessa.

SESSION 3: European neighbourhood and wider neighbourhood policy

Ms Orihuela opened the session by giving a brief summary of European neighbourhood, wider neighbourhood, and partnership policy. She described the state of play of the different programmes. The majority of them had not in fact yet started, either because of a lack of political agreement (signed between the European Commission and non-EU countries) or for technical reasons linked to the technical difficulties in organising calls for projects.

She then gave apologies for the representatives of the Baltic Sea Commission and the Balkans/Black Sea Commission (BBSC) who for various reasons had been prevented at the last minute from coming to the meeting. She communicated a message from the BBSC, outlining the initiatives taken by its members to prepare the first call for projects, expected in May 2009. A technical committee had been set up, dedicated to this theme, in order to take account of the project proposals put forward by the member Regions. The BBSC also made known its reservations concerning the programme’s current organisation, and called for reflections to begin in 2010 on the future of neighbourhood policy after 2013.
Ms Tozzi pointed out that the only way of taking part in the ENPI programme (European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument) was via cross-border cooperation. She expressed her reservations about the European Commission’s approach. She indicated that a technical meeting would take place at the end of June for the national contact points of the Mediterranean programme. The meeting would look in particular at how these national contact points could support local and regional authorities so that they could take part in the programme.

Mr Cichowlaz considered this programme to be “potentially” of interest, but regretted that the management bodies concentrated mainly on technical and financial questions. A more political leadership was necessary. He welcomed the interest shown by the comitology procedure in improving contacts with partners in the South, but he questioned the capacity to raise the required 10% of national matching funding in the South.

The representative of the Canaries mentioned the Canaries-Andalusia-Morocco programme which had a budget of 32 million euros. To date, only 10% of the funding could be spent – the amount which came from the ERDF – the remainder of the funding having not yet been mobilised.

Ms Moreno indicated that it would be interesting at a future meeting of the group to be able to have a dialogue with the managing authorities.

In the debate that followed, participants regretted the technical and political difficulties that were delaying the launch of the programmes, and the complexity of the programmes. They called for a more strategic approach. The question of having a single cooperation programme for the Mediterranean, rather than a Objective 3 programme for the Mediterranean and a neighbourhood programme, was also raised.

Ms Orihuela said that an ad hoc CPMR group on territorial cooperation was being set up, to prepare the organisation’s position on this question for the next General Assembly in Göteborg in October. She proposed that representatives of the External Cooperation group should be involved. Various Regions expressed their interest in becoming involved in the ad hoc group.

In terms of a schedule, it was still too early to formulate proposals for the future of the neighbourhood programme after 2013, given in particular that the majority of programmes had not even started. The working group agreed to continue to actively monitor developments.

Before moving on to the final session, on the FOGAR and nrg4SD networks, a summary was made of forthcoming actions and meetings:

- CPMR seminar in the framework of the European platform of regional and local authorities for development: Regions and development: the role of Regions in a new global framework, Marseille 29 May 2009;
- Presentation of the External Cooperation group and its terms of reference at the CPMR Political Bureau meeting in Odessa on 12 June 2009;
- Presentation of a working paper on external cooperation (focusing on development) at the CPMR General Assembly in Göteborg, on 1st October 2009;
- Work on the mid-term review of European development policies and participation by regional and local authorities, during the second half of 2009/first half of 2010;
- Participation in the seminar organised by the city of Lyons on aid effectiveness, in the framework of the European platform of regional and local authorities for development, September 2009;
- Meeting of the External Cooperation group, venue and date to be confirmed (October 2009);
- Participation in the preparation of the conference on decentralised cooperation due to take place in Brussels in December 2009;
- Presentation of a working paper on the state of play and proposals for the future concerning the European neighbourhood policy, first half of 2010 in collaboration with the Spanish EU Presidency (January-June 2010).
FOGAR
Introducing the session, Mr Gizard described the framework in which FOGAR had been set up. He mentioned the keen interest shown by regional networks outside Europe in the European example and the way in which its networks, such as the CPMR, had learned to have an impact, not only at national but also European level, in the debates that concerned them.

He then outlined the short-term priorities for the network, some of its achievements, and the events planned for 2009 and 2010:

- The theme of food security and the link with the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) would be the subject of a summit of world regions in Dakar on 18 & 19 January 2010. CPMR had been tasked with the preparation of this summit. The FAO, the European Commission, and the governments of France and Senegal were involved in planning the event. Mr Gizard hoped that the Regions would also become involved, as Brittany already was. The Canaries, Catalunya, and Basse-Normandie expressed their interest;

- Discussions were ongoing on the role of Regions in globalisation, and in this framework DG Regio was organising a seminar on this theme on 11 & 12 May, open to partners from the five continents. FOGAR was jointly organising this event with the European Commission. One of the issues to be addressed was the “transferability” (how, under what conditions) of European regional policy to other geographical areas;

- FOGAR was also pursuing its reflections on the creation of a platform of regional authorities within the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA – Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine).

- FOGAR had also contributed to the reflections of the OLAGI network of Latin American Regions, which was in the process of finalising the creation of a Latin American school to train the leaders of the continent’s regional authorities;

- The theme of co-development was also being examined, notably at the request of the FAO and the French government’s office of migrations.

Mr Gizard then raised the question of the future of the network. As from 2010, FOGAR would have to find new sources of funding and new premises. A number of options were being examined, including the possibility for Regions to be individual members (today FOGAR is a network of networks). One thing was certain, Mr Gizard concluded, and that was that a forum for debate and reflection on the Regions and globalisation was needed. It was a question of finding the most appropriate formula.

Mr Cichowlaz started the debate by saying that it was indeed necessary to anticipate the fact that in the long term there would have to be some kind of body, a credible arena at global level, within which questions concerning the Regions could be considered. He pointed out that it had taken a long time to arrive at such a situation in Europe and said that we should expect to see delays and even longer and more difficult debates at the global level. He wondered whether we should move towards an organisation based on continents, and indicated that only Europe appeared today to be in a position to carry through such an initiative successfully. He ended by saying that it was important to reflect on the key themes that could enable a Region to position itself at the global level: innovation, training, and education.

The representative of the Canaries pointed out the situation of the archipelago (7 islands, an unemployment rate of 21%) and said that it would be difficult, today, for his Region to envisage joining an organisation such as FOGAR.

Ms Guichet-Lebailly (Basse Normandie) said that reflection on the issues was necessary, otherwise the Regions would not be able to respond to the global challenges awaiting them.

Ms Moreno referred to the first contacts initiated by the CPMR in Latin America in 1998, under the aegis of the Spanish Regions, and underlined the continuing interest of the Latin American Regions in learning from the European experience.
Mr Marti considered that the absence of Regional voices at global level on development-related issues was critical. It was absolutely essential that the sub-state level of government should be able to make its voice heard in the negotiations on aid effectiveness and the level of funding (Accra, Doha). A network such as FOGAR could and should have this role in the multilateral framework.

Ms Alcoverro repeated that FOGAR would soon be an autonomous organisation and that it was necessary to look at how the CPMR would participate in it. One of the aims of the External Cooperation working group was to organise the CPMR’s participation in FOGAR.

Mr Gizard then mentioned the links between FOGAR and UCLG, which principally represents urban areas. He said that the two organisations had undertaken to work together on the alliance of civilisations, climate change, and food security. The format of the collaboration between the two organisations was still being examined, but their respective Presidents had agreed that it was absolutely essential to join forces on certain issues.

He also mentioned the CPMR’s activities on the Regions and the crisis, indicating that a seminar on this theme would take place in Marseille in November 2009. Information from partners outside Europe would be taken into consideration during this event, since such examples would also influence what the CPMR Regions had to say on this key topic.

**Nrg4SD**

The representative from the Generalitat de Catalunya, who had taken part in the most recent nrg4SD meeting, gave a progress report on the network’s activities. The General Assembly and Political Bureau had taken place between 23 and 28 April 2009 in Quintana Roo (Mexico) as well as two seminars on integrated coastal zone management and climate change.

He also said that the network would soon have a new and reinforced secretariat, based in the Flanders Region’s Brussels office, and for which UNDP had promised to provide funding of 300,000 euros.

He gave details about the network’s activities on the question of climate change and explained how the regional level would be included in the proposals to be made in Copenhagen (Kyoto II): the network’s proposals and those of its members would be forwarded to the various national governments that would be involved in negotiating the final version in Copenhagen.

During the debates, the point was made that organisations needed time to get off the ground. nrg4SD had been created in 2003 in Johannesburg and the network was just now beginning to be truly operational, gaining recognition, and was gradually finding additional funding in order to function.

Mr Gizard commented on the work being done within the CPMR and on the European scene on the issue of climate change, and made the link with the global level. The CPMR and other nrg4SD partners would be received at the end of May by the staff of Jean-Louis Borloo (French Minister in charge of environmental affairs) to discuss the preparation of the Copenhagen summit.

Mr Richardson reiterated the legitimacy of regional authorities’ involvement at global level on this issue, stressing the fact that their actions on the ground conferred legitimacy on the Regions. He indicated that the regional level was lagging behind the urban level on this issue. He also mentioned the contacts the network had made with American States, and ended by presenting Carbon Expo, the fair and conference taking place in Barcelona from 27 to 29 May.

Mr Minoves, Director General for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Action, closed the meeting, thanking participants once more for attending, for their interest in the topic, and the high quality of the debates throughout the day. He reaffirmed the commitment of the Generalitat de Catalunya and looked forward to meeting the participants again soon to examine in further detail the different issues addressed during the meeting.

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1 United Cities and Local Governments
## LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

(as at 27/04/09)

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