



## Mediterranean Cooperation Alliance Statement

### Following Commissioner Šuica's Hearings

*The Mediterranean Cooperation Alliance is dedicated to fostering a sustainable, inclusive, and cohesive Mediterranean region through strengthened territorial cohesion, multi-level governance, and cross-border cooperation. By promoting place-based policies, empowering local and regional authorities, and facilitating partnerships that address shared challenges such as climate change, territorial resilience, and socio-economic disparities, the Alliance aims to position the Mediterranean as a hub of concord, collaboration, and innovation. Advocating for sustainability, social inclusion, and cultural dialogue, it calls for strategic EU engagement to ensure the Mediterranean's priorities are reflected in European policies, reinforcing its role as a bridge between Europe and its neighboring regions. It has been a strong advocate for the creation of a Mediterranean macro-regional strategy, adopting a geometry-variable and multi-level governance approach, to strengthen the impacts of cooperation on territories and policymaking, while giving more space to regional and local diplomacy in the basin.*

In this sense, the Mediterranean Cooperation Alliance:

1. **Welcomes** the creation of a specific European portfolio directed to Mediterranean issues and **acknowledges** the designation and confirmation of Ms. Dubravka Šuica as Commissioner for the Mediterranean. The Alliance **wishes** the Commissioner the best for this mandate.
2. **Expresses** its support for the priorities highlighted during Commissioner Dubravka Šuica's hearings and **reminds** of the key role of the Mediterranean area to secure a stronger and more resilient Europe through addressing the Mediterranean dimension of all EU policies.
3. **Recalls** that the Mediterranean, as a region marked by cultural diversity and shared challenges, demands a cohesive, more human approach to socio-economic development that strengthens its proper integration while acknowledging its role as a bridge between all its shores.
4. **Reminds** of the European Parliament's Report on *The role of Cohesion policy in addressing multidimensional environmental challenges in the Mediterranean basin* (2023)<sup>1</sup>, the European Committee of the Regions' Opinion *Towards a macro-regional strategy in the Mediterranean* (2022)<sup>2</sup>, and the European Economic and Social Committee's Opinion *Towards a Strategy to develop cohesion in the Mediterranean* (2013)<sup>3</sup>. Among other initiatives from the Alliance itself<sup>4</sup>, these

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<sup>1</sup> 2022/2059(INI).

<sup>2</sup> CDR-2167-2022.

<sup>3</sup> ECO/342-EESC-2013-01-01-3017.

<sup>4</sup> [Towards a draft Action plan for a future Mediterranean macro-regional strategy \(2024\)](#), Statement in response to the European Commission and the High Representative Communication on a "Renewed partnership with the Southern

reports all underline the benefits the creation of a macro-regional strategy for the Mediterranean would bring to the area in terms of strategic alignment to tackle key shared challenges.

5. **Recommends** that the new Pact for the Mediterranean capitalizes and builds its contents including the key principles outlined in the abovementioned productions, notably: integrated territorial development and cross-sectoriality, the subsidiarity principle and multi-level governance, and territorial cooperation.
6. **Underscores** the essential importance of integrated territorial development as a guiding principle of policy frameworks, ensuring economic, social, and environmental dimensions are addressed holistically. Moreover, in accordance with article 174 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, the insular characteristics of the Mediterranean should be taken into consideration. Such approaches are essential to advancing territorial cohesion and aligning with broader Euro- and Mediterranean objectives. **Adds** that integrated territorial development should not only address strategies but also include a cross-sectoral approach to reinforce the creation of holistic solutions to shared challenges.
7. **Acknowledges** Commissioner Šuica's recognition of subsidiarity and the pivotal role of local governance that resonates deeply with our commitment to decentralized decision-making. Enhanced collaboration between EU institutions, Member states, and subnational governments is critical to ensuring policies that are both inclusive and effective in meeting the needs of Mediterranean communities.
8. **Wishes** that the new Pact for the Mediterranean relies on robust multi-level governance that empowers local and regional authorities to lead as key actors in translating Euro-Mediterranean priorities into tangible results. In the Mediterranean, fostering these partnerships is key to addressing complex and interconnected issues in a way that reflects the lived experiences and aspirations of citizens.
9. **Reminds** that territorial cooperation remains a cornerstone of progress in the region, enabling innovative cross-border and transnational partnerships that address shared concerns such as climate adaptation, sustainable resource management, and socio-economic disparities. Programs such as Interreg Euro-MED, NEXT MED, PRIMA (to cite a few) exemplify the potential for fostering solidarity and shared responsibility in tackling transnational issues, positioning the Mediterranean as a model of regional collaboration.
10. **Asks** Commissioner Šuica and the European Commission that the Pact for the Mediterranean works towards more coordination between funding mechanisms and policy instruments to ensure more efficiency. Including an approach as that of the *Draft Action Plan for a Mediterranean macro-regional strategy* would activate the abovementioned key principles, establishing a clear framework to conjugate with a stronger empowerment of the Union for the Mediterranean.<sup>5</sup> It is only by

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*Neighbourhood. A new Agenda for the Mediterranean*" (2021), Constituting the Mediterranean Cooperation Alliance – Declaration (2019).

<sup>5</sup> [Towards a draft Action plan for a future Mediterranean macro-regional strategy \(2024\)](#).

strengthening platforms for intercultural dialogue and territorial cooperation that the Mediterranean will be able to maximize its potential as a driver of economic and social progress.

By aligning with the Mediterranean Cooperation Alliance's principles, the new Pact for the Mediterranean can ensure that Euro-Mediterranean policies and initiatives not only address local and regional challenges but also contribute to a sustainable, inclusive, and resilient Mediterranean. As Alliance, we stand ready to work collaboratively to co-build the Pact for the Mediterranean alongside member states, local and regional administrations, the private sector, academia and civil society to build an integrated future that reflects the shared values and aspirations of the region.

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**Roberto Occhiuto**

President of the  
CPMR Intermediterranean Commission  
President of Regione Calabria



**Salvador Illa**

President of the Pyrenean-Mediterranean Euroregion  
President of the Generalitat de Catalunya



**Nicola Drobrosavić**

President of the Adriatic Ionian Euroregion  
President of the Dubrovnik-Neretva Region



**Clare Hart**

Vice-President of MedCities  
Vice-President of Montpellier Métropole

