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37th General Assembly of the CPMR

1-2 October 2009 - Gothenburg (Västra Götaland, Sweden)

The Peripheral Maritime Regions listed below met in Gothenburg (Västra Götaland, Sweden), France) on 1-2 October 2009 for the 37th CPMR General Assembly

ABERDEEN CITY (UK), ABERDEENSHIRE (UK), AÇORES (PT), ALENTEJO (PT), ANDALUCIA (ES), ANGUS (UK), AQUITAINE (FR), ARAGÓN (ES), ARGYLL & BUTE (UK), ASTURIAS (ES), BALEARES (ES), BASSE-NORMANDIE (FR), BLEKINGE (SE), BORDER (DONEGAL, IE), BORNHOLM (DK), BREMEN (DE), BRETAGNE (FR), BUSKERUD (NO), CAMPANIA (IT), CANTABRIA (ES), CATALUNYA (ES), CENTRO (PT), COMUNITAT VALENCIANA (ES), CORNWALL (UK), CORSE (FR), EAST MIDLANDS REGIONAL ASSEMBLY (UK), EAST OF ENGLAND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY (UK), EMILIA ROMAGNA (IT), FAMAGUSTA (CY), FIFE (UK), FRIULI-VENEZIA-GIULIA (IT), GALICIA (ES), GÄVLEBORG (SE), GOTLAND (SE), GOZO (MT), HALLAND (SE), HAMPSHIRE (UK), HAUTE-NORMANDIE (FR), HIGHLAND (UK), HORDALAND (NO), IDA-VIRUMAA (EE), ISLE OF MAN (BRITISH ISLES), ITÄ-UUSIMAA (FI), JÖNKÖPING (SE)*, KYMENLAAKSO (FI), LAZIO (IT), LISBOA E VALE DO TEJO (PT), MADEIRA (PT), MARTINIQUE (FR), MECKLENBURG-VORPOMMERN (DE), MELILLA (ES), MIDI-PYRÉNÉES (FR), MIDTJYLLAND (DK), MØRE OG ROMSDAL (NO), MONASTIR (TN), MURCIA (ES), NAVARRA (ES), NOORD-HOLLAND (NL), NORDJYLLAND (DK), NORDLAND (NO), NORD-PAS DE CALAIS (FR), NORRBOTTEN (SE), NORTE (PT), ODESSA (UA), ORKNEY (UK), ØSTFOLD (NO), OSTROBOTHNIA (FI), OULU REGION (FI), PÄIJÄT-HÄME (FI), PÄRNUMAA (EE), PAYS DE LA LOIRE (FR), PICARDIE (FR), PODLASKIE (PL), POITOU-CHARENTES (FR), PROVENCE-ALPES-CÔTE D'AZUR (FR), ROGALAND (NO), SAMSUN (TR), SARDEGNA (IT), SHETLAND (UK), SICILIA (IT), SJAELLAND (DK)*, SKÅNE (SE), SOMERSET (UK), SOUSSE (TN), SOUTH OF SCOTLAND ALLIANCE (UK), SOUTH-WEST FINLAND (FI), SØR-TRØNDELAG (NO), STOCKHOLM (SE), SYDDANMARK (DK), TELEMAR (NO), TOSCANA (IT), TRABZON (TR), TROMS (NO), TULCEA (RO), UUSIMAA (FI), VÄSTERBOTTEN (SE), VÄSTERNORRLAND (SE), VÄSTRA GÖTALAND (SE), VEST-AGDER (NO), VESTFOLD (NO), WALES (UK), WESTERN ISLES (UK), ZUID-HOLLAND (NL).

(*) *Observer*

Regions present at the General Assembly should like to thank Region Västra Götaland and its President, Mr Roland Andersson, for their hospitality and welcome.

President Martini thanks all the attending participants representing National Governments, Regional Authorities and European Institutions who took part in the work of the Conference. He especially wishes to thank the Swedish Government -the six-month EU Presidency- for its attendance at the CPMR General Assembly

On behalf of its 161 Member Regions, the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe, meeting for its 37th Annual General Assembly in Gothenburg, adopted the following Final Declaration and Resolutions:

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FINAL DECLARATION FOR THE MEMBER REGIONS

THE CRISIS GIVES A NEW PERSPECTIVE TO THE EUROPEAN CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY AND REQUIRES AN AMBITIOUS POLITICAL RESPONSE FROM THE EU

1. The years 2008 and 2009 undoubtedly mark a major turning point in the process of globalisation such as it has been evolving over the last 30 years. When it hit, the financial and then economic and social crisis changed the prism through which Europe perceives its challenges. The sharp contraction of commercial, migratory and financial flows calls into question the very nature of future global economic development. Even with the hoped-for economic upturn, it will be impossible to ignore the changes brought about by this crisis.
2. Those responsible for running the CPMR's 161 member regions deal with its disastrous effects day after day. Depending on their powers and resources, they design and deliver regional public policies that, in the short term, will help their fellow citizens cope with the different aspects of the crisis and, in the longer term, ensure progress towards more sustainable development, which offers business opportunities for their companies and jobs for local people. However, they have no intention of finding themselves in this situation again. The current crisis must at all costs be an opportunity to make the necessary changes to the growth and development model that has prevailed over the last three decades. They urge European and international institutions to avoid just solving immediate problems brought about by the failures of this model, and to propose a lasting reform.
3. The coming year will thus be a test of the European Union and member states' ability to be sufficiently resilient in face of the numerous challenges affecting the continent, and their ability to take part in the next stage of multipolar globalisation. Aside from this test, there is also an urgent need to revive citizens' confidence in the Union and its political credibility. These have been in decline, as the low level of participation in the recent European elections attests. This is thus a huge challenge for the European institutions, including the Council, the recently-elected Parliament and the next Commission: if they fail, support for the efforts begun in the 1950s will crumble away.
4. The member regions firstly expect the European response to the economic situation to lead to stronger institutions and common policies as opposed to weaker and smaller ones:
 - They hope that the result of the new Irish referendum will allow the Lisbon Treaty to enter into force as an essential foundation for renewed progress in the European project;
 - They would not understand it if the forthcoming discussions during the Spanish EU Presidency on budget reform, future European policies and their multiannual funding lacked ambition due to restrictions linked to the impact of the crisis on member states' budgets.
5. If such negative temptations were to win the day, they would surely reflect, at European level, the decline of human, material and financial exchanges brought about by the crisis; such a drift would eventually pose serious threats to peace in the world and its harmonious development for the benefit of mankind.
6. In face of these risks and the danger of Europe's gradual decline on the world stage, the EU's response must be based on a system of governance that draws on the contributions of all its sources of energy. The EU's institutions must also tap into the richest traditions of European democracy and carve out a new role for subnational public authorities, particularly regional ones. The CPMR wholeheartedly supports the proposals made in the Committee of the Region's White Paper on the need for a new phase of EU governance that would involve all levels of public authorities more systematically in the design and delivery of policies with a territorial impact.
7. This is also why the CPMR member regions support the Manifesto entitled "Emerging Stronger from the Crisis, which was proposed by 17 of their number. They invite the other European regions to support it and attend the seminar on "The Regions and the Crisis" on 27 November 2009 in Marseille, France. They ask the European institutions to take into account the set of ideas generated by the Manifesto and its initial groundwork as one of the essential foundations of future European policies.

EU regional policy: the cornerstone of European action at territorial level

8. The peripheral maritime regions believe that EU regional policy should be the cornerstone of the European system for providing European territories with the means to develop their potential, so as to reduce their vulnerability in a globalised economy and maximise the benefits they can reap from it to enhance their citizens' quality of life. So they believe it is essential that such a policy should continue to be used for the whole of Europe, also after 2013 in the entire EU supporting the Lisbon goals of growth and jobs as well as the goals of Gothenburg, and that it takes into account the specific circumstances of each type of territory and Region. It should also be focused on the fundamental aspects of sustainable regional development:

- innovation and research;
- adaptation to climate change and its mitigation;
- support for human capital in a globalised economy, including efforts to tackle phenomena such as social exclusion and to allow the entry of legal migrants, who can help reduce the Union's demographic deficit.

9. Innovation, research and training are essential tools for enhancing territories' development. However, no single strategy is valid for all territories.

The CPMR considers that the efforts undertaken through regional policy must be pursued because they offer advantages both in economic terms and with regard to coordination between different levels of governance on the issue of the knowledge society. Moreover, it will be important for future developments of the European Research Area to incorporate a territorial perspective. For example, this means that more progress must be made in establishing territorial breakdowns of programmes such as the R&D Framework Programme, in ensuring regional authorities' participation in these programmes, and in developing synergies with regions on structural issues such as the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI), technological platforms, other joint technological initiatives and the coordination of research programmes.

10. However, these efforts will not be enough unless they are accompanied by a close cooperation with regions located along the Union's borders, which, due to their extensive interaction with the Union, directly contribute to the development of European regions and the whole EU. This requirement is echoed by the Baltic Sea, Black Sea and Mediterranean regions, and not least the outermost regions located in the Union's wider neighbourhood, who deal with this situation everyday. In due time, the CPMR will propose some ideas for moving European neighbourhood policy forward in this way.

Territorial cohesion

11. Reducing peripherality and improving accessibility, in order to participate in exchanges of people and goods and to fully benefit from this, is still a fundamental objective for a great many of our member regions. So they adhere to the definition of territorial cohesion proposed by the Aarhus Political Bureau (23 January 2009): *"Territorial cohesion must be a Community objective that aims to allow the inhabitants of the different territories of the Union to benefit fairly from the basic freedoms set out in the Treaty and implemented through EU policies; given that in practice, the freedom of movement and the freedom of access to goods, services, capital or knowledge rely to a great extent on the geographic or demographic characteristics of these territories."* The CPMR will strive to have this objective taken into account in all European policies in the near future and at the latest in the programming period after 2013. It will in particular ensure that the specific circumstances of territories beset by natural or geographic handicaps, which on account of their permanent or persistent nature hinder their development and give rise to a lower level of competitiveness, are given adequate treatment; these territories include islands/small island states, sparsely-populated areas in the extreme north and mountain territories, as well as Ceuta and Melilla. Lastly, the CPMR will support the outermost regions' efforts to ensure that the Treaty's specific provisions on them are implemented ambitiously by the Union.

12. The CPMR welcomes the development of macro-regional strategies at the European level, as macro-regional cooperation already is a natural way to work, keeping in mind the CPMR's geographical commissions. The CPMR looks forward to actively participating in the process of development and implementation of these strategies. Regional participation is crucial to the success and acceptance of macro-regions.
13. In the transport field, the CPMR will actively participate in the process of revising the Trans-European Networks and efforts to promote motorways of the sea and green corridors, by ensuring very specifically that the connection of major corridors to secondary land and maritime routes is subject to a debate and joint, consequent proposals.

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE NEED FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: A PRIORITY FOR THE REGIONS

Reacting to climate change

14. The other key challenge in coming years will be the fight against climate change. The CPMR member regions adopt the Policy Position submitted to them.
 - They forthwith request the EU member states and European institutions to support the involvement of regional and local authorities in the agreements adopted at the Copenhagen Conference;
 - They ask the European institutions, in particular the Commission, to be closely involved in the implementation of the White Paper on climate change;
 - They welcome the fact that the Swedish EU Presidency is giving priority to obtaining significant results at the Copenhagen Conference.

They stress the urgent need to find practical solutions to the consequences of climate change on maritime regions' territories and economies and insist that interventions under existing instruments be given priority rather than waiting for the next programming period. This approach must be based on thematic areas of intervention and geographic zones. They above all request that vulnerability studies be started by the regions at the earliest possible opportunity so that those responsible for regional authorities can develop their adaptation and mitigation strategies, along with their transnational and interregional aspects, in the best possible conditions.

At a practical level the CPMR will support policies which result in renewable energy generation being subject to a fair transmission charging process that does not discriminate against those areas where the potential for harnessing renewable energy is greatest, thereby contributing towards climate change renewable energy targets and territorial cohesion.

Exploiting maritime potential in a sustainable manner

15. In the same vein, the CPMR calls for the continuation and development of Integrated Maritime Policy initiated by the outgoing Commission and the Council. It would like to express its sincerest thanks to the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Durão Barroso, and the Commissioner for Maritime Affairs, Joe Borg, for the impetus given. The sea represents one of the most important paradigms for successful globalisation in which Europe has a full role to play, whether concerning the economy, the environment or safety. An ambitious European maritime policy will generate future activities and jobs in an open world. It must be one of the pillars of future European policies, *and built upon the foundations of good governance at all levels and efforts to take account of coastal and marine territories*. Progress especially needs to be made in protection efforts in the Mediterranean with the introduction of exclusive economic zones (EEZ), particularly sensitive sea areas (PSSA) and marine protected areas (MPA).
16. In the same spirit, the CPMR, in its Policy Position on this issue, will support the development of a Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) that is part of Integrated Maritime Policy. CFP reform offers an opportunity to devise this common policy using a different model from the one used until now, whose limitations have been highlighted by the crisis. It also gives an opportunity to send a positive sign to the communities concerned regarding the benefits the Union can bring to its citizens. The CPMR thus asks the Commission, Parliament and the Council for CFP reform, aside from the technical aspects, to be planned on the basis of these two objectives.

17. Being supportive of the need to participate in an open world, which is the way to guarantee peace and shared wealth and culture, the CPMR will pursue its commitment to cooperation with regions outside the Union. It keenly encourages the Commission to continue acknowledging the specific role and unique added value of regional and local authorities in development policies. It recalls the Regions' willingness to contribute towards efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. In this context, the CPMR calls on the EU institutions to give greater consideration to a territorial approach to development issues and to encourage the integration of regional actions in broader frameworks which include all donors working within a territory. In this respect, it welcomes the initial opportunities opened up in this direction under the current programming period (cross-border strand of neighbourhood policy, NSA & LA programmes, CIUDAD, institutional twinning schemes, etc.). Furthermore, it intends to contribute to the Palermo II process due to start in early 2010, which aims to redefine EU development policy and its associated instruments after 2013. It also encourages taking forward the European Union's efforts to support the "Union for the Mediterranean" initiative, in the hope that this might actively contribute towards peace and development. The CPMR will take part in the first conference on decentralised cooperation that the European Commission has asked the Committee of the Regions to organise.
18. Poverty, hunger and malnutrition are some of the main causes of uncontrolled migratory flows. For this reason, in its future work on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), the CPMR will seek to ensure that the policy continues to guarantee quality food for the Union's citizens thereby contributing to solving the world food problem. It welcomes the new cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the contribution of its member regions in tackling this fundamental issue. It invites its member regions to contribute to the Summit of the World's Regions on Food Security, which will be held in Dakar in January 2010 at the invitation of President of the Republic of Senegal.
19. The member regions are delighted that the future Spanish EU presidency is available to accompany to the work and meetings that the CPMR will organise in Spain in the first half of 2010 on the priorities outlined in this final declaration.
20. They give the Political Bureau and General Secretariat a mandate to implement these recommendations.

Unanimously adopted
(1 abstention on point 7 by Region Halland)

- II -
RESOLUTIONS

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**II.1 Effects of Current Cod Recovery Plan**  
(Resolution presented by the North Sea Commission)

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II.2 Launch of an Integrated Atlantic Strategy
(Resolution presented by the Atlantic Arc Commission)

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## EFFECTS OF CURRENT COD RECOVERY PLAN

(Resolution presented by the North Sea Commission)

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Whereas one of the CPMR's fundamental aims is to enhance Europe's maritime dimension and to promote sustainable development on behalf of the peripheral and maritime regions.

Whereas the North Sea region is an important maritime environment and the North Sea Commission (NSC) aims to promote the region as a major economic entity within Europe and enable regions to deal with the challenges and maximise the opportunities presented by the North Sea.

The NSC would emphasise that many coastal communities in the North Sea region depend on the maritime environment for their livelihood and sustainability. While the NSC supports the need for sustainable fisheries it recognises the impacts the existing CFP is having on fisheries dependent communities and the challenges with the current cod recovery plan, namely a requirement to reduce cod mortality by 25% during 2009. For fisheries dependent communities, these current measures have created a crisis situation where the local industry is under severe pressure to comply and ultimately remain viable. We need a holistic approach to fisheries management and long term recovery plans for coastal cod, keeping fishing dependent communities alive while recovering fish stocks. Furthermore, the EU discard policy should be reviewed due to its counterproductive effects on recovering fish stocks.

The NSC wishes to draw the attention of the European Commission to the severe economic difficulties being faced by many fishermen as a result of the revised cod recovery plan. These difficulties threaten the economic viability of fishing vessels and threaten to have serious long-term impacts on fisheries dependent communities.

As a matter of urgency, the NSC urges the European Commission to review the current cod recovery plan to mitigate the impacts it is having on fisheries dependent communities. It encourages the European Commission to recognise the pressures upon the fishing industry as a result of the many technical measures, real time closures and individual cod avoidance plans, which have been put in place by the industry, to enable the sector to continue fishing whilst avoiding the capture of cod. However the Commission needs to recognise that these measures have been put in place by the industry and time should be given for their evaluation. The NSC further urges the European Commission, to set in place more realistic timeframe targets when formulating the future CFP, and to recognise and minimise the adverse impacts of fisheries measures on those communities whose livelihood depends on it.

**Unanimously adopted**

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## LAUNCH OF AN INTEGRATED ATLANTIC STRATEGY

(Resolution presented by the Atlantic Arc Commission)

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The Atlantic Arc Regions, which have been functioning as a network since 1989, represent almost 60 million people, i.e. 12% of the European population, and constitute Europe's longest area of coastline stretching over a distance of 2,500 km.

### In light of

**The global challenges facing the Atlantic territories:** with their peripheral location, the economic crisis, climate change and the effects of globalisation, political decision-makers are being led to consider joint and sustainable responses at European level,

**The emergence of integrated macro-regional strategies:** this new approach to cooperation, initiated within the Baltic Sea and implemented by the European Commission, appears destined to become the norm and serve as a model for other transnational areas;

**The preparation of EU policies for 2014-2020:** discussions currently under way on territorial cohesion, the future of European territorial cooperation, the reform of the common fisheries policy and TEN-T appear to take on board a territorial dimension and herald a new era based on innovative and structural reforms;

**The Presidency of the European Union held by Spain in the first half of 2010:** the Spanish government could be the ideal channel through which to support this initiative.

### The Regions of the Atlantic Arc Commission call for the launch of an integrated strategy for the Atlantic Arc

They are in effect appealing to draw up a strong and proactive strategy led simultaneously by the European Parliament, European Commission, national governments and Regions in the framework of a new partnership. This involvement is required in order to meet major challenges in the areas of transport, maritime safety, environment, research and innovation and fisheries.

### To achieve this, the Atlantic Regions propose:

- ❖ **launching a broad reflection** on this strategy during the Spanish Presidency of the European Union. The *Maritime Day* in Gijón, Asturias (19-21 May 2010), could be an ideal occasion to discuss the conditions and arrangements for implementing this strategy.
- ❖ **building and developing a strategic action plan** which identifies priority issues at stake, structural actions to be implemented, available resources and those required to achieve these objectives.
- ❖ **protecting and enhancing the Atlantic area:** this strategy must firstly be designed to protect the Atlantic environment and biodiversity, particularly in the face of climate change, and secondly to enhance the territory's resources by improving accessibility and developing or strengthening the most dynamic sectors of activity.
- ❖ **promoting a renewed system of governance** closely involving the European Union, the 5 Member States concerned and regional and local authorities.

**Unanimously adopted**